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MAN LONG TAON:

Migration and Differentiation Amongst the
To'amba'ita, Solomon Islands

Ian Leonard Frazer

Thesis submitted for the
Degree of Doctor of Philosophy
of the
Australian National University

April, 1981
Except where otherwise acknowledged in the text, this thesis represents my original research.

Ian Leonard Frazer
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In a study that has taken so long there are many people to whom I am indebted for assistance and encouragement. Trying to understand the migratory experiences of others has involved me in much moving around, all of which depended on sponsorship and numerous acts of kindness and goodwill along the way. Most of the work for this study was carried out at the Australian National University, but at various times I have also been employed at the Victoria University of Wellington and the University of Otago and I would like to extend my thanks to all these institutions.

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ORTHOGRAPHY

The first studies of the To'ambaia language were carried out by SSEM missionaries, principally James Caulfield and Clara Waterston. I was told by Shem Irofaalu that Clara Waterston's main informants were Lamoingu (from Uala) and Fotewane (from Aeniggaule). The main goal of the missionaries was to provide translations of the Bible and other literature used for religious instruction. A translation of the New Testament was published in 1923 as Na Alaofau Falu, British and Foreign Bible Society, London.

In the course of her work Clara Waterston produced a dictionary of the language incorporating material provided by James Caulfield. This has not been published but only exists in typescript. I had access to a copy in the possession of Ariel Otalifua from Malu'u. Amongst the To'ambaia, the most widely used orthography is the one introduced by the early missionaries, and this is what I have mainly followed here. I have also referred to B. D. Hackman, A Guide to the Spelling and Pronunciation of Place Names in the British Solomon Islands Protectorate, Honiara, 1965. Names given on the maps, Figures 1 to 4 and Figures 6 and 7, are shown in the orthography suggested by Hackman. In the text, prenasalization is not always shown, for example, Nggwaasi (Figure 4) becomes Gwaasi in the text. As a rule b is prenasalized as mb and d is prenasalized as nd. The glottal stop is shown with an apostrophe, for example, bi'u.
# GLOSSARY

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<td>abula le'a la</td>
<td>good deeds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>afefeea</td>
<td>places beyond Malaita, more especially places of wage employment</td>
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<tr>
<td>ainifasia</td>
<td>agnatic descendants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>akalo</td>
<td>ancestral spirit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bisi</td>
<td>hut for separation of menstruating women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bisi angaru'u</td>
<td>hut for separation of women during childbirth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bi'u</td>
<td>men's house</td>
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<tr>
<td>bi'u'i wane</td>
<td>group of men belonging to the same men's house</td>
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<tr>
<td>botho 'ana fera</td>
<td>(pagan) first pig reared by newly married couple, dedicated to ancestral spirit centrally responsible for well-being of their household</td>
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<td>butete</td>
<td>sweet potato</td>
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<tr>
<td>daraa</td>
<td>bachelor</td>
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<tr>
<td>faalu</td>
<td>clean, new</td>
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<tr>
<td>fa'amemengoa</td>
<td>(pagan) rite accompanying introduction of young boy into men's house</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>falea</td>
<td>giving</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fanga bila</td>
<td>selfish</td>
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<tr>
<td>fanua</td>
<td>land, country, territorial district or estate</td>
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<tr>
<td>fanua arai kwao</td>
<td>land of the white man or white master; places of wage employment</td>
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<tr>
<td>fingua</td>
<td>public gathering</td>
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<tr>
<td>gafo</td>
<td>to beg with deceit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ila wane</td>
<td>married man</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ilito'ona</td>
<td>try, test, experiment</td>
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<tr>
<td>Term</td>
<td>Meaning</td>
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<td>---------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>kala wane</td>
<td>young man</td>
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<tr>
<td>koko'o</td>
<td>kinship term, used reciprocally between grandparents and grandchildren, maternal uncle and nephews and nieces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ko'o</td>
<td>from koko'o but also used for other kinsmen; a term of address between friends (To'ambaita speakers only); term of address and ethnic label for To'ambaita speakers</td>
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<tr>
<td>kwaimani</td>
<td>friendly</td>
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<tr>
<td>labatania</td>
<td>spoil, destroy</td>
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<tr>
<td>lae</td>
<td>go</td>
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<tr>
<td>la tolo</td>
<td>hills, mountains</td>
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<tr>
<td>le'a</td>
<td>good</td>
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<tr>
<td>liliu</td>
<td>wander around, walkabout</td>
</tr>
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<td>liu</td>
<td>go, wander</td>
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<td>luma</td>
<td>family house</td>
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<td>mama</td>
<td>mortuary feast</td>
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<tr>
<td>ngwaikwalina</td>
<td>descendants through women</td>
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<tr>
<td>oewane'a</td>
<td>mad, foolish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ramo</td>
<td>fighter, warrior</td>
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<tr>
<td>se'e le'a</td>
<td>marriage celebrations following exchange of wealth and bride being taken to groom's place</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sigirarafo</td>
<td>state attained by person who has begun courting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sore le'a la</td>
<td>(Christian) thanksgiving rite by newly married couple with their first pig</td>
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<tr>
<td>tala</td>
<td>path</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tala ba'ita</td>
<td>big path, road</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tharii</td>
<td>unmarried, adolescent girls</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to'a thathala</td>
<td>adolescents, people unencumbered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wane</td>
<td>man</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wane bulu</td>
<td>black man</td>
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</table>
wane kwaimani
le'a nau  my good friend
wane ni foa  pagan priest, ritual specialist

**Pidgin**

basis  passage, recruiting place on the coast
en  end of month
hip ap  heap up, bring together
kambani  company, do things together, share with others
kaon  a debt, an account, buy on credit
kontrak  do things alone, not share
long kui  long trousers
liu  1. wander around, walkabout
  2. unemployed person
meka  deceive, trick, ingratiate oneself
misis  white mistress, any white woman
niu sam  new recruit, new migrant
osos  deceive, flatter
ran bae ea  get by on an empty stomach, exist without money
sitirik  trick, deceive
stesin  commercial plantations
sukulu  school, Christian (person, settlement, etc.)
switim  bribe, flatter
wantok  belonging to the same language group; in some cases used to refer to kin only, in other cases anyone from the same language group, more rarely, used to refer to (or to address) any friend.
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<th>Abbreviation</th>
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<td>BSIDF</td>
<td>British Solomon Islands Defence Force</td>
</tr>
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<td>BSIP</td>
<td>British Solomon Islands Protectorate</td>
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<tr>
<td>PWD</td>
<td>Public Works Department</td>
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<tr>
<td>SDA</td>
<td>Seventh Day Adventist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SILC</td>
<td>Solomon Islands Labour Corps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSEC</td>
<td>South Seas Evangelical Church</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSEM</td>
<td>South Seas Evangelical Mission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WPHC</td>
<td>Western Pacific High Commission</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Note: Shows district boundaries as at the time of fieldwork, and the two study areas. Note that for administrative purposes there are now eight provinces: Honiara, Western and Malaita (the boundaries of which coincide with those shown in the map); Santa Isabel; Guadalcanal; Central Islands (Nggela, Savo, Russell Islands, Rennell and Bellona); Makira-Ulawa (the islands of San Cristobal and Ulawa); and Temotu (all the remaining islands that were formerly part of Eastern District).
Figure 2  MALAITA, SHOWING GEOGRAPHICAL BOUNDARIES OF THE MAIN LANGUAGES AND DIALECTS

Figure 3
MALAITA, SHOWING SUB-COUNCIL AREAS AND SOME
WARDS IN THE NORTH-WEST OF THE ISLAND

Source: K. Groenewegen  Report on the Census of the
Population of the British Solomon Islands
Protectorate, 1970. BISP Government,
Honiara, 1972.
Figure 4. NORTH-WEST MALAITA, SHOWING TOPOGRAPHY AND SETTLEMENT

Chapter One

INTRODUCTION

The To'ambaita people of North-West Malaita, upon whom this study is based, are already well known in the anthropological literature through the work of Ian Hogbin who did fieldwork on Malaita in 1933 (Hogbin, 1939). The monograph he wrote, Experiments in Civilization, addresses itself directly to the many changes - political, economic and religious - then taking place amongst the To'ambaita after more than half a century of European contact. The fieldwork for this study took place between 1971 and 1976, during three trips to the Solomon Islands. Originally my main concern was the understanding of socio-economic change on Malaita, taking into account the numerous events affecting the To'ambaita in the nearly four decades between this period and the time of Hogbin's work. Amongst other things, major policy changes instituted by the British Administration immediately following the war (Bathgate, 1975), introduced an era of planned development specifically directed at village agriculture and village economic relations. A major concern of my original study was to provide a better understanding of the transformations taking place at the village level (Frazer, 1973).

1. The first trip from January, 1971 until April, 1972 was supported by the Ministry of Overseas Development (UK), for the Administration in the Solomon Islands. The subsequent trips from October, 1973 until December, 1974, and from July, 1975 until February, 1976, were financed by the Australian National University.
One of the things that emerged from my first study on Malaita was the high level of mobility amongst the To'ambaita. Regular movement for wage employment, first described by Hogbin, still continued, with a much greater number of people moving in and out of the area. Whereas in the past, most movement was in the direction of commercial copra plantations, now a large number of To'ambaita were travelling to town. On later field trips, it was changes associated with wage labour migration that became my central interest.

The study presented here is about migration and about living in town. For the To'ambaita, living and working in town is an extension of their experience and of the opportunities available to them on Malaita. People living in town are still regarded as belonging to communities on Malaita, they still act as if they were members of those communities. Migration is taking place as part of To'ambaita life, and not an escape from it. This is something that emerged in the course of my fieldwork and has influenced the kind of approach that I have taken in the presentation of my findings. One half of this study is about the To'ambaita on Malaita and what migration has meant to the To'ambaita from the perspective of specific local groups; the other half is about the To'ambaita in town and the way in which they have made themselves part of Honiara urban society.

What the To'ambaita are involved in is a continuing process of circular or cyclic migration, a form of movement that has been extensively documented in many other parts
of the world including other parts of the Pacific region (Mitchell, 1961a, 1961b; Elkan, 1967; Jackson, 1969; Chapman, 1970; Garbett and Kapferer, 1970; Bedford, 1971; Garbett, 1975). In colonial territories like the Solomon Islands it was the separation of capitalist modes of production from the main concentrations of the indigenous population that established the conditions for this form of migration to emerge. Residential and social segregation is not as strictly controlled in the Solomon Islands as in southern Africa where circular movement has been the subject of extensive investigation (Mitchell, 1961a; Parkin, 1975); nonetheless it has grown up in the Solomon Islands under a system where it was in the interests of the dominant political authority and commercial firms to limit and control the degree of involvement in wage employment and the kind of involvement in wage employment possible by Solomon Islanders.

The circumstances under which circular migration emerged shows the need to take into account wider level political and economic forces as well as social, economic, and cultural factors relating to those societies in which migration is taking place. The need to study migration on more than one level of analysis has been recognized by several different researchers (Mitchell, 1961a, 1969; Germani, 1965; Garbett, 1975; May and Skeldon, 1977). In a study of circular migration in Rhodesia, Garbett (1975) shows that by moving between different levels of analysis there is much greater scope for understanding variation in migratory behaviour. At the macro-level he shows how
political and economic decisions made by the politically dominant white minority, and ecological factors affecting rural agricultural production are variables which have a strong influence on the rate of migration, or aggregate movement of Rhodesians between rural areas and centres of wage employment. Macro-level variables are seen to act as broad constraints, setting the limits within which choices relating to movement are made. At lower levels of analysis movement is analysed in terms of more immediate constraints and pressures represented in the social, political and economic circumstances of particular groups or individual migrants.

Since the early pioneering work of anthropologists in south, central, and eastern Africa, there has been a tendency to avoid mono-causal explanations of labour migration. In an influential review of this work, Mitchell (1961a) makes a distinction between the necessary conditions for labour migration and sufficient conditions. The reason for making this distinction lies in the differential impact of factors affecting migratory decisions. Mitchell argued that in the African context it was economic factors that created the necessary conditions for migration to take place. Looking at movement in aggregate, it is economic factors that are seen to exercise greatest influence on variation in the rate of migration between different areas. At another level of analysis when trying to understand why some individuals move and not others, personal and social factors need to be taken into account. These are what are seen as creating the sufficient conditions for movement,
Part of the problem here is the nature of different forces bearing on decisions relating to migration. Gugler (1969) argues that non-economic factors may influence the rate of migration just as readily as economic factors. He argues that there is a need to take into account the complete range of collective forces bearing on movement in order to explain it adequately. There is no real disagreement here, only a question of the analytical importance that is given to the different variables affecting movement.

In this study of To'ambaita movement, wider level political and economic decisions are taken into account in as much as they bear on the pattern of movement and changes in this pattern. An overview of migration on Malaita is presented but no attempt is made to analyse gross variation in the pattern of migration between different parts of Malaita, and different parts of the Solomon Islands. Differences in the rate of migration are only discussed on a very small scale looking at variation between settlements within one local area, relating differences in the pattern of movement to differences in the level of socio-economic development. In terms of the explanatory framework mentioned above, it might be said that in this study, explanation of migration is confined to lower levels of abstraction and generalization with primary emphasis being given to social and cultural factors bearing on To'ambaita movement.

Difficulties posed by the study of circular migration in non-European countries provide the taking off point for
an influential critique of migration studies by Garbett and Kapferer (1970). Given a form of movement that is continuous over an extended period, what they stress is the need to view migration as an on-going process, and in doing so, to take into account the total context within which migration is taking place. In the case of circular migration this context is going to include home areas of migrants as well as the places to which they travel. The concept which they suggest using to describe the total social context throughout these different locations is the concept of field. By viewing migration as the outcome of a decision-making process, patterns of movement and individual acts of movement may be understood in terms of the different sets of conditions operating during the course of movement and throughout the total context in which movement takes place.

What Garbett and Kapferer give special attention to, are changes in the course of movement through time, this being a central aspect of circular migration. The main feature of circular movement is that migrants eventually return to the place from which they originally departed.

2. The concept of field used by Garbett and Kapferer is essentially similar to Swartz (1968:9): 'A field is defined by "the interest and involvement of the participants" in the process being studied and its contents include the values, meanings, resources, and relationships employed by these participants in that process. The contents and the organization, as well as the membership, of the field change over time as new participants become involved; former participants disengage; new resources, rules, meanings or values are brought to bear or old ones are withdrawn; and relations within the field change.' (quoted by Garbett and Kapferer, 1970:184).
In many societies in which such migration has been observed this is something which can be anticipated but not something that can be guaranteed at the time at which migration begins. The course of migration is in fact conditional on subsequent events, largely unforeseen by the migrant.

It has been recognized that one of the main influences on variation in migratory behaviour are changes associated with the individual life cycle (Mitchell, 1969; Garbett and Kapferer, 1970). Factors relating to life cycle circumstances often have an important bearing on the decisions which individuals make with regard to movement. The significance of this has been observed in other parts of the Solomon Islands (Bathgate, 1975). So important is this aspect of migration amongst the To'ambaita that life cycle differences form part of the framework in terms of which much of the material on To'ambaita migration is presented.

When the direction of migration is towards urban centres, the study of migration merges with and simultaneously becomes a study of urbanization, where this refers to changes resulting from movement to town and residence in town. In the area of urban studies there is some disagreement amongst anthropologists as to the proper scope of urban research. Studies carried out in Melanesia, as in other parts of the world, show a clear division between those anthropologists who confine themselves to particular migrant groups (Oram, 1967, 1968a, 1968b; Ryan, 1970; Salisbury and Salisbury, 1972; Strathern, 1975), and those who have approached urban research, treating the town
as a system of relations forming some kind of totality on its own (Lucas, 1972; Rew, 1974). An early proponent of the latter approach was Gluckman (1961), who with other anthropologists working in southern and central Africa (Epstein, 1958; Mitchell, 1966), recognized the importance of studying urban dwellers in terms of urban social relations. Out of this work there emerged a much better understanding of urban social systems than had hitherto been provided by studies of single migrant groups. One thing which they wanted to avoid was analysing urban relations from the perspective of rural society, introducing misplaced evaluations into the understanding of urban life.

While the approach suggested by Gluckman was a necessary corrective in the development of urban studies, it still left problems for those approaching urban studies through the practice of circular migration. While it was possible to give greater emphasis to urban-based relations, extra-urban ties could not be ignored if the behaviour of town dwellers was going to be fully understood. One way around this was suggested by Mayer (1962). Out of his study of the Xhosa and their migration to East London in South Africa, he makes a strong case for treating migrancy as a topic for study in addition to the study of town and town-based relations. In other words, the two approaches taken by anthropologists in carrying out urban research are regarded as complementary rather than competing forms of explanation.

What is important about Mayer's research is that he
shows the value of treating rural and urban locations as part of the total context for studying migrants living in town. Rural and urban relations are treated as part of a single field of relationships. As Garbett and Kapferer indicate (1970:193), he is able to show how differential involvement in this total field helps explain differences in Xhosa responses to town life, and differences in their pattern of migration.

In terms of the distinction made by Mayer, the study presented here is primarily a study of migrancy. This means that the town of Honiara tends to be treated more as an environment for To'ambaïta migrant life (Strathern, 1975: 2), and is not itself studied as a total system. Even so, the distinctiveness of Honiara as an urban environment is taken into account and made part of the analysis. If town is only treated as the context of behaviour, and not 'the object nor a goal of research' (c.f. Fox, 1972: 61), special consideration is given to the nature of that context. Again there is some similarity here with the work of anthropologists in southern Africa. Urban contexts have been described in terms of 'external determinants' (Mitchell, 1966 49-50), or 'extrinsic factors' (Southall, 1961:5; c.f. Epstein, 1967). Following Bellam (1970), primary importance is given to the administrative and political background to Honiara's growth, and the effect that this has had on the choices available to To'ambaïta migrants.
Outline of the Thesis

As pointed out above, this is primarily a study of migrancy amongst one language group from Malaita, with particular emphasis on contemporary movement between Malaita and Honiara. Almost as much emphasis is given to the rural background to migration as is given to the life of migrants in Honiara. After one chapter (Chapter 2) dealing with the history of labour migration on Malaita, the rest of the thesis falls into two parts. The first part, chapters 3, 4, and 5 is mainly about the To'ambaita on Malaita. The second part, chapters 6 to 10, is mainly about Honiara and the life of To'ambaita migrants in Honiara.

One of the features of this study is the small population which it covers, and the small number of people for whom information on migration is presented. In the first part of the thesis, covering the rural background to migration, I confine myself to settlements in one locality of North-West Malaita. Details of migratory experiences and participation in wage employment are given for one part of the To'ambaita area only. This area is sufficiently large and the size of its population such that there is considerable variation within and between its settlements. They show differences in religion, agricultural production, income from agriculture, education, and other variables relating to involvement in the cash economy and standards of living. This variation makes it more representative of the To'ambaita region generally than might appear from
the fact that the study is confined to one locality.

One reason for this approach is because it allows me to take advantage of the first study and to build on the findings that came from it (Frazer, 1973). Besides this, one of the main objectives of this study was to gain some understanding of the influence of social and cultural variables on migration. Before beginning fieldwork I knew that migration for employment had been going on for nearly one hundred years and that it had become an accepted part of rural life. One aim then was to understand how migration fitted in with the rest of To'ambaïta life and the kind of inter-connections between wage labour movement and other social processes. It seemed as if there would be much greater scope for this if fieldwork was concentrated amongst one local group.

In those chapters dealing with the rural side of migration the relationship between movement and the life cycle is given much importance. A separate chapter (Chapter 5) is given over to looking at this aspect of migration, showing how movement for wage employment is something that has come to be associated with young men, and in the opportunities that it provides, fits in closely with the interests and concerns that are prominent at this time of life.

The second half of the thesis dealing with Honiara, and To'ambaïta life in town, begins with a description of Honiara and a brief account of the growth of the town. Attention is given to those features of urban growth
and urban structure that contribute to the distinctiveness of the town as a place to live and seek employment. It is shown how the growth of Honiara has been closely controlled and determined by administrative policy. What comes out from this is that Honiara is a town which for much of its existence has better served the interests and demands of its expatriate European and Chinese residents rather than Melanesians; the main point being that, in the policies adopted by Government and employers, there has been very little encouragement given to Melanesians to regard Honiara as a place to stay, except only temporarily for employment. Only in recent years has this begun to change, and the opportunities provided to Melanesians for living in town more permanently, begun to improve. Outlining some of the main changes that have taken place sets the background to To'ambaita movement to town.

Following this, Chapter 7 describes the history of To'ambaita movement to town. The main emphasis at first is on To'ambaita employment in town, and changes in the pattern of employment. Expanding job opportunities are the basis for increasing differentiation amongst To'ambaita town dwellers. Being involved in town employment from the beginning they were able to take advantage of new opportunities as they became available, all the time participating more fully and continuously in urban life.

Chapters 8, 9 and 10 take up the life of To'ambaita migrants in town in some detail. Beginning with Chapter 7 where the history of To'ambaita movement to town is
described, presentation of information follows closely some of the main differences recognized by To'ambaaita migrants amongst themselves; differences relating to age and experience in town, and differences relating to employment. In Chapter 7, contrasting attitudes towards employment and job mobility are related to age differences and, to a lesser extent, to education. This is carried through in Chapter 8 where the different kinds of living arrangements are described. Increasing experience in town and upward mobility have become associated with new living patterns made possible by changes in government housing policy.

Chapter 9 concentrates on one of the most distinctive features of To'ambaaita migration to town, the increasing significance of 'walkabout' activity, described by the To'ambaaita term, liliu. Living in town is seen as living in a very public place. Liliu activity is something that is closely associated with public places. In town, involvement in the life of public places has grown and evolved as a way of taking advantage of the multiple opportunities that arise in the urban environment. It is also an important aspect of communication amongst the To'ambaaita in town. Despite being widely dispersed, residentially and in the jobs that they fill, they continue to maintain close relations with one another while they are living in Honiara.

In Chapter 10, the framework provided by perceived differences amongst migrants is again used to describe the main features of social relations amongst To'ambaaita migrants. The central importance of local group ties in
town is brought out, beginning from the time that new migrants arrive in town, persisting as people become more settled in employment and lengthen the time spent away from home. Taking up the position of young men, it is shown how they are involved in certain transitional processes affecting their relations with each other and the kind of life that they lead in town. The life style of young bachelors contrast with that of older settled migrants, particularly the upwardly mobile. With greater economic security in town, they continue to maintain their relations with other To'ambaita migrants and take a more responsible attitude towards their relations with people at home. The final part of this chapter concentrates on one side of To'ambaita life in town - their involvement in urban churches - that makes them part of a distinctive urban institution and at the same time also forms part of a strong link with rural communities. In their involvement in urban churches, differentiation is proceeding in terms which are continuous with rural life. In the concluding chapter I review and discuss some of the main findings of this thesis.

Experiences associated with migration are continuously changing and evolving. New developments were in train even as I was leaving the Solomon Islands in early 1976. In describing the situation as I observed it I have adopted the convention of using the 'ethnographic present'. Where I have done this, it refers specifically to the situation amongst the To'ambaita in 1974-75. Information relating to an earlier trip is treated historically. With regard to administrative details and governmental policy it should be noted that everything presented here belongs to the
period just before internal self-government (January 2, 1976), and political Independence (July 7, 1978).

Most of the names used in this thesis are pseudonyms. This is the case in all places where field data is used to illustrate different aspects of To'ambaita migration and where particular patterns and arrangements are analysed in detail. In a few places I have also used real names; specifically in those sections dealing with historical events where there is no point in trying to disguise the role played by particular individuals.

One potential source of confusion in this study is the use of the term 'migrant'. The term is used in a general sense to refer to anyone who leaves home, regardless of the circumstances under which they leave, their reasons for leaving, and the length of time that they spend away from home. I have hesitated trying to make a distinction between 'migrants' and 'townspeople' (c.f. Mayer, 1961), or any similar kind of distinction. There are major differences in relative stability amongst To'ambaita people living in Honiara and some have established themselves more securely than others. Even so, none can be assumed to be permanent town dwellers with complete certainty. At various points in this study it does become necessary to differentiate those who have left Malaita in terms of the length of time that they have been away. Where necessary I make this explicit by adding 'short-term' and 'long-term' to indicate relative differences in experience of town living. I have tried to avoid use of the term
'townsmen' but occasionally refer to 'town-dwellers' or 'town residents'. The terms are used interchangeably with 'migrant' to refer to people living in town however long they have been there.

Use of the term 'migration' may also create difficulties. In the study of population mobility a case has been made for restricting use of the term 'migration' to movement involving permanent change of residence, and to describe all other movement in which there is no permanent change of residence as 'circulation' (Gould and Prothero, 1975:41). In these terms this study is primarily about 'circulation' rather than 'migration'. Whether or not this distinction is followed, the central problem is being able to identify permanent as opposed to non-permanent changes in residence. As this is one of the main issues in this study, it was easier for me to use the term 'migration' to refer to To'ambaita movement generally, including what can be identified as permanent changes in residence as well as all temporary movement.
Chapter Two

LABOUR MIGRATION: HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Labour migration on Malaita as in many other islands of the Pacific had its beginning in the demand for cheap labour from commercial farming and plantation development in Queensland, Fiji, and to a much lesser extent New Caledonia and Samoa. Labour was first taken from Malaita in the early 1870s as recruiters began extending their field of operations from the New Hebrides into the Solomon Islands. Over the next 30 years the Solomons came to equal the New Hebrides as a major source of labour, providing more than half the number of recruits for Queensland alone. In the last years before that country was completely closed to recruits from the Pacific. The end of recruiting for Queensland coincided with capitalist expansion into the Solomon Island group, and labour demand was sustained virtually without interruption, building up rapidly to equal and surpass earlier rates of recruiting within the first decade of commercial development. Since that time, with some interruptions caused by the copra depression of the early 1930s, the Japanese invasion of the Solomons in 1942, and the post war Massina Rule movement, there has been a continuous demand for labour up to the present day.

Reliable figures are not available for all periods, but there are indications that this labour market, except for those interruptions mentioned, has continuously absorbed between four and eight per cent of the Solomon Island population from the latter period of the Queensland
labour trade through to the present. As the most heavily populated island of the group and one which has responded more positively than most to labour demand, Malaita has consistently contributed a greater proportion of the labour force than any other island, for the most part making up 65 to 75 per cent of the total numbers in wage employment during any particular period.

From the beginning, labour demand has been predominately in countries and on islands other than Malaita, so that participation in the labour market has depended on leaving home and travelling overseas. Much of this thesis is concerned with the pattern of movement and the many different social and cultural changes which have resulted from accepting these employment opportunities. The focus will be on local areas of the To'amba'ita region, particular settlements, households and individuals; here it is necessary to set out briefly the nature of these employment opportunities and the way in which they have been presented to the To'amba'ita. This is necessarily a broad overview of the situation, the setting forth of the changing economic and political conditions under which the To'amba'ita themselves have made decisions and evolved certain courses of action relating to and involving movement to other islands. Many details of local response to labour demand will be included in later sections of the study; however certain trends in the response pattern as a whole will be included here insofar as they may be seen to influence as well as reflect prevailing conditions.
From one point of view, what is being looked at here are the conditions under which a wage labour force has been developed within the Solomon Islands. Dependent on men trading into the capitalist sector through selling labour time, commercial and political interests set conditions which insured a continuous labour supply without absorbing that labour supply completely within the monetary economy. This formed the basis for a pattern of temporary involvement in wage labour through circular movement between sources of labour and employment centres. Many mechanisms brought this about, but one of the most important was what Bettison has called 'the tradition of a subsistence wage' (1960). Real wage rates were set without regard to market mechanisms at a level considered to be adequate for the subsistence requirements of a single worker whilst working in the capitalist sector, with a small margin to meet the requirements of him and his family (Arrighi, 1970:200). Up until 1942 this principle was embodied in government regulations which set basic rates for wage labour at a level meant to provide no more than 'pocket money'.

Apart from their tax obligations, no natives of the Protectorate have any financial responsibilities in respect of either themselves or their families and few natives have any idea of the value of money. (W.P.N.C., 1936).

No minimum wage was set in the post-war period although the same principle set the limits to current rates. When minimum wage legislation was reintroduced in 1971 the 'tradition of a subsistence wage' was enunciated again in the first report of the Wages Advisory Board (1971) when it recommended a minimum rate of pay commensurate with the
needs of a single manual worker. Not only does this system closely restrict the degree of involvement in the cash economy through wage employment, but it also leads to a situation where the subsistence sector of the economy is subsidizing the capitalist sector. By employing a transitory labour force at fixed rates of pay, the latter avoids responsibility for the long-term welfare needs of those it employs (Meillassoux, 1972). All this has only been possible with the assistance of the Government. Significantly, as in the Rhodesian situation described by Arrighi (1970), political mechanisms have played a much more important part in the regulation and control of the labour market than the actual manipulation of wage rates by commercial interests.

The full range of rewards available from taking employment overseas will be considered in detail in later sections of this study. For the present it can be seen that labour migration represents a distinctive form of involvement in the monetary economy. The nature and extent of that involvement has depended on demand for the goods being offered and the conditions under which labour time could be traded in order to acquire those goods. From the beginning there was a selective response to the rewards offered. In the early period of migration there was a reasonable balance between the means of production and subsistence requirements on Malaita; participation in the monetary economy could therefore be 'discretionary' in the sense described by Arrighi (1970;206), being unnecessary
for the fulfilment of basic subsistence needs. In time, many items, including cash itself, were transformed into 'necessary' requirements and Malaitans became dependent on wage labour to meet those needs; however this was a highly selective process operating to an extent and at a rate insufficient to satisfy labour demands fully under the conditions set for employment.

The effect of this selective response to labour demand on the rewards and conditions of employment varied during different periods of labour migration. This is not easy to discern as there was a tendency to keep wage rates low and constant in favour of other mechanisms for manipulating and sustaining the market, but in relation to recruiting itself, during the Queensland labour trade and the first 20 years of Solomon Island employment, the value of rewards did change and increase as a direct result of competition amongst recruiters. Labour supply went up during this period and when allowance is made for other factors contributing to this situation, it does suggest that Malaitans were much more responsive to changes in rewards and conditions than the Administration and commercial firms were prepared to believe. Certainly there was no passive acceptance of employment under the conditions offered even though it was not until the latter half of the historical period under review that labour began to organize collectively for the improvement of employment conditions.

Selective acceptance of employment opportunities,
amongst many other factors such as the changing demand for labour from employers and social and demographic changes on Malaita itself, gave rise to considerable fluctuations in labour supply. These fluctuations, taken in conjunction with key transition points in the history of the Solomon Islands, make it possible to divide the history of labour migration into four distinct periods, each marked by increasing or constant labour supply followed by a temporary lull during which numbers decreased or fell away to nothing. These four periods are as follows:

A. The Pacific Labour Trade: 1870 - 1911.
   In this period there is a steady increase in recruiting from the Solomon Islands, and Malaita in particular, building up to a maximum during the last years of the trade.

B. Solomon Island Recruiting: 1905 - 1941.
   Except for a drop in numbers due to a dysentery epidemic and the 1914-1918 war the rate of recruiting increased steadily from 1905 onwards, then remained high until 1925 when there was a slow and steady decline right through until 1941.

C. The War and Maasina Rule: 1942 - 1952
   From December, 1942 when the Solomon Islands Labour Corps was formed, recruiting built up rapidly to levels well above the immediate pre-war period, remaining high until the end of 1949 when the S I L C was disbanded.
   Between 1945 and 1949 there was a complete hiatus in recruiting and wage employment through a boycott imposed by the Maasina Rule movement.

D. The Post-War Period: 1949 to the present.
   After recruiting recommenced in 1949, employment numbers built up rapidly to reach war-time levels by 1953. From that time to the present there has been a continuous and steady increase in the absolute numbers of people in wage employment.
A. The Pacific Labour Trade: 1870 - 1911

The first men were taken from Malaita in the early 1870s, undoubtedly seized in complete ignorance of what was required of them. These visits are mentioned by Renton (Marwick, 1935:38), and reiterated in oral traditions from many different areas (see also Corris, 1973: 26-27). The following is taken from an account given by a man named Irokwai, now living near Malu'u.

The first ship went past on top of Bathakana Island. The people saw it and were frightened. It was a sailing ship with three masts and was becalmed between Bathakana and Dai island to the north. The people watched and hid from the ship saying it was something from the dead. After three days of hiding and watching some men took a canoe and went out to investigate. Drawing near they were addressed in a language they could not understand, shown calico and other good things over the side of the ship. This was the beginning of the whiteman here. The men climbed up the side of the ship the better to see the things, were seized and taken away. On shore people waited and watched but the canoes did not return and the men were given up for dead.

Despite many popular accounts of the labour trade, this kidnapping of men for overseas work only took place during the initial period of contact with the island and soon gave way to more regular recruiting on a voluntary basis. As Corris (op. cit.) points out, this came about through the confluence of two main factors: on the one hand the Queensland Administration, under pressure from Britain, set up regulations for the appointment of Government Agents responsible for supervising recruiting and for ensuring that labourers were returned to their homes; while on the other hand, there was a developing awareness amongst the
islanders themselves of what recruiting involved and the kinds of benefits which it offered.

It was to be some years before Government Agents began to exert influence in the manner intended by their appointment. However as the first men returned to their homes with the goods they had earned and stories of life abroad, interest in recruiting began to build up on Malaita. Here is Irokwai again.

After a long time the ship returned and this time came close to the reef near Malu' u. People crowded on the shore and watched as the men returned with large boxes full of calico, knives, axes, tobacco and many other things from Queensland. They said the whiteman had been very kind to them. That was when recruiting started at Malu' u.

For the first time there was some understanding of what contract labour entailed and the kinds of rewards which it brought, on an island where there had been little trading with Europeans before that period, and where there was an immediate demand for steel tools, firearms, and a range of lesser items.

The process being discussed here whereby recruiting came to be accepted on a voluntary basis with a fair degree of knowledge about what was being offered, probably developed very slowly over a period longer than is suggested by oral traditions, going through stages which affected different areas of the island at varying rates in subsequent years. Coastal dwellers, and particularly the saltwater people of the lagoon areas in Lau and Langalanga, made up the larger proportion of recruits in the first
10 to 15 years of recruiting, and it was not until the late 1880s that the people from inland hill areas, including the To'amba'aita, were brought into the labour trade on a regular basis. Official recruiting figures show that over the 36 year period, from 1868 to 1904, in which Malaitans were recruited for Queensland alone, 76 per cent of the total were recruited in the last 16 years of that period, from 1888 onwards (Price with Baker, 1976:115). These figures do not include those recruited outside the administrative procedures for accepting labour into Queensland but they do indicate that there was a steady increase in the rate of recruiting right up until the time when Queensland was eventually closed in 1904. Although recruiting for Fiji went on until 1911 it conforms to much the same pattern. What is significant about this for understanding the experience of Malaitans overseas is that the majority of them were recruited at a time when "the regulation of recruiting was at its most strict, when conditions on the plantations were at their best, and when the rewards for labour migration were at their highest" (Corris, 1973:43).

As this statement suggests, conditions of employment varied considerably according to the period of recruitment, the country, and the location and size of estates. During the early period of employment illness was common, mortality rates were high, workers were treated badly and kept under poor conditions with little recourse to authorities responsible for supervising their employment. As the Queensland Administration brought down more
regulations and upgraded the Immigration Department, there was some improvement in the conditions, and better treatment of labourers generally. Corris (ibid, 86) estimates that at least half of those who worked in Queensland signed on for second terms of employment. Often men went home first, then recruited again at a later date, so that in the last half of the labour trade all ships had a good proportion of experienced men, over 25 per cent in the last 10 years of the Queensland trade. One advantage of signing back was being able to command further increments on the standard wage (£6 per annum in Queensland, and £3 per annum in Fiji), experienced men being offered up to two and three times the basic rate.

The period of the Pacific labour trade is a period of steadily increasing labour supply. The selective response to recruiting and the hazards imposed by frequent attacks on recruiting vessels for the purposes of stealing or retaliation, meant that the supply was not always up to the demand. The resultant competition worked to the advantage of Malaitans, primarily through the advance payments given for recruits. Through local leaders who assumed the role of recruiting agents in the areas over which they had some influence, recruiters were obliged to meet specific demands for goods such as firearms (see Wasm, 1893) and increase the amount and range of goods offered. These agents, also known as 'passage-masters', assumed an important place in the labour trade, using their power and influence to form informal partnerships with passing recruiters through whom they acquired increasing amounts of trade goods in return
for ensuring the safety of the recruiting vessel, as well as assisting with, and often being able to guarantee, a supply of recruits. In a comprehensive account of these men and their activities Corris (1973: 60-70) discounts any suggestion that they used coercion to supply the recruits required; rather he sees them as having a semblance of control over the recruiting process to the extent that they could make it difficult if not impossible for recruiters to obtain labour; they could also make it difficult for people to recruit without going through them in the first place. Being able to manipulate the affairs of others in this way was no more than an extension of those controls which all leaders aspired to as they used their organizing and fighting abilities to gain ascendancy within and between local residential groups. In this context the gains, which often included a temporary or long term monopoly over certain trade items, fell to particular leaders and the groups within which they were recognized, the rewards from recruiting thus being used to consolidate local political advantage.

Oral traditions of the To'ambaita place the introduction of firearms and steel tools at the same time as the return of the first workers from Queensland and Fiji. Within a short time, despite imperfections in the weapons and restrictions on their usefulness, firearms assumed a major role in the internecine fighting common on Malaita at the time. More than anything else during that period, recruiting gained impetus from the demand for arms and ammunition. This persisted through until the
end of the Pacific labour trade despite regulations passed by the Queensland and Fijian Governments in 1884 prohibiting the passing of guns as presents and preventing guns being taken back by time-expired labourers. These regulations were circumvented by recruiters and traders who ignored them or operated out of territories where they did not apply, and by the islanders themselves developing a highly effective smuggling network through which time-expired men could purchase and return home with the weapons they required. So effective was the trade in arms that by 1902 it was estimated that Malaita was 80 per cent armed; certain firearms had become essential to the weaponry maintained by all residential groups at the time.

Besides steel tools, the other major item of trade during this and subsequent periods was tobacco. Woodford in his Annual Report for 1902-03 described tobacco and other trade goods being 'poured out on Mala by labour ships like dirt for the purchase of recruits'. Concerned at what effect the cessation of recruiting for Queensland would have on Malaita, Woodford implied that such items had become 'necessary' requirements and Malaitans had become dependent on the monetary economy through their involvement in the labour trade.

As from the end of 1903, Queensland was officially closed to labour from Pacific island countries through the passing of the Pacific Island Labourers' Act of 1901. By

2. Mala is one of the alternative names given to Malaita.
provisions in the same Act all Pacific islanders were required to return to their homes as the last negotiated contracts expired. This legislation and the subsequent repatriation of more than 7000 islanders was surrounded in controversy, brought on primarily by the fact that many labourers had become long term residents in Queensland and did not want to return to their home islands. Although different points of view were exaggerated to suit the purpose of those concerned, the arguments against repatriation highlighted disparities between conditions then prevailing in the islands and the kind of life which labourers and many time-expired men were living in Queensland. For the 30 years duration of the trade, Europeans penetrated no further than the beaches of the island and Malaitan society, unconstrained by political subordination, remained unchanged except for the incorporation of selected technology; axes, knives, arms and dynamite - and other items of trade such as tobacco. Many men moved easily between one universe of activity and the other, but large numbers, for reasons relating as much to their position in home communities as to the kinds of changes which they had experienced abroad, could not. Eventually some concessions were made in the regulations governing repatriation and 1,654 islanders from many different Pacific territories remained in Queensland (Corris, 1973: 131). The rest returned and reached the Solomons at a time when other forces besides the labour trade were beginning to have their effect and were bringing about big changes in Malaita society.
B. Solomon Island Recruiting: 1905-1941

The declaration of a Protectorate over the southern half of the Solomon Islands declared under the Pacific Order in Council, 1893, was prompted by fears that France would forestall Britain in gaining control over the islands (Scarr, 1967: 254-255). However the main thrust of British interest derived from a need to control the expanding labour trade and provide protection for the increasing number of British subjects in the area. When Queensland passed legislation in 1890 to terminate the Pacific labour trade it appeared as if political control of the islands would be much less urgent, but this legislation was rescinded in 1892 and the rate of recruiting became much greater than before. So it was that the labour trade played an important part in the succession of moves which led Britain to take control of the Solomons, and this in turn paved the way for large scale commercial development within the new Protectorate.

The first Resident Commissioner, Charles Woodford, took up residence in 1897 after presenting a favourable and well-received report the year before on the commercial prospects of the group (Scarr, 1967: 262-263). Woodford was already familiar with the territory from an earlier scientific expedition. As a result of that expedition he had become an enthusiastic advocate of plantation development. This was just as well as the conditions laid down for the establishment of a Protectorate made commercial development an immediate priority if the Administration was to survive and become effective.
Approval for establishing control over the Solomons was conditional on the Administration being self-supporting with a supplementation from imperial funds (Scarr, 1967:256). Such a policy determined a pattern of co-operation between the Administration and capitalist interests from the beginning, with long term consequences for the way in which a wage labour force was developed in the Solomons.

Several trading ships and shore stations were operating in the Solomons from the 1870s onwards, offering limited employment to Solomon Islanders. Through chance factors entailed in the small size and variable range of business operations, the unpredictable nature of employers, and their often precarious relations with those amongst whom they lived, there were many risks involved in working under these conditions and no regular pattern of recruitment is apparent. This did not come until the late 1890s and early 1900s when more ambitious traders, having already alienated large tracts of coastal land, began large scale coconut planting. This included Vickham and Wheatley in the Western Solomons and Olaf Svensen on Guadalcanal (Corris, 1973:106).

None of these interests had the potential of the newly formed Pacific Islands Company which, in 1898 looked as though it would initiate the commercial take-off necessary for the Administration to survive. Despite much encouragement from Woodford and despite extensive land purchases and lease allocations, this company failed to commence operations. By a series of chance circumstances
they made over their investment opportunity to the large British soap manufacturer, Sir William Lever, who was then concerned with developing a regular copra supply for the company oil mill at Balmain. Lever's Pacific Plantations Limited was incorporated in 1902 for this purpose and began by acquiring all the concessions of the Pacific Islands Company. Further extensive purchases and leasehold negotiations were made in 1905 when the company also took over the assets and leases of Olaf Svensen, up until then the biggest trader and planter in the Solomons. Work was commenced in the same year, maintaining the demand for labour almost without interruption from the time when Queensland closed, and giving administrative revenue the boost it so desperately required. By 1907 it was estimated that there were 1,200 men employed on Solomon Island estates with at least half working for Lever's. By 1911 the total work force was up to 3,940.

In the transition from recruiting for Queensland and Fiji, to recruiting for work in the Solomons, there was little change in actual recruiting procedures, with each company using its own vessels, dealing through influential 'passage-masters' wherever they were established, and offering presents for each recruit. From the beginning the Administration assumed control over recruiting and employment conditions. Labour regulations provided for such things as the issuing of recruiting licences, the inspection of plantations and the collection of reports about workers from employers (Corris, 1973: 107). The length of contracts remained at three years until 1911.
when they were reduced to two years, and the basic wage remained at £6 per annum with rations, until 1923 when it was doubled.

Notwithstanding this apparent continuity between labour recruiting for Queensland and labour recruiting for Solomon Island estates, there was a big contrast in actual working conditions. The Solomons was a frontier, in a way which Queensland by that time was not, and labour suffered accordingly. Living conditions were inadequate, illness and mortality rates were very high and maltreatment from plantation staff was common. Employers readily violated recruiting and employment regulations, with little to fear except a reprimand or slight fines, whereas workers broke contracts or committed other offences at the risk of severe penal sanctions or relatively high fines. The regulations provided little protection as the Administration, limited in numbers and pre-occupied with the widespread fighting and homicide in different parts of the group, did very little to enforce them. In the circumstances, desertion was common as the only means of escaping maltreatment or recruitment under false pretences; even so it was a criminal offence and deserters were liable to be imprisoned for the remainder of their contracts.

In 1910 provision was made for the appointment of an Inspector of Labourers to supervise recruiting contracts, inspect plantations and ensure that employers conformed with the regulations, but from the beginning this office was ineffective through the lack of facilities for travelling
between islands and plantations and because of minimal encouragement from the Government (Annual Report, Inspector of Labourers, 1913). This was of some concern to the first man to hold this office, W. R. Bell, aware of the important role which the Department could play in checking abuses within the system. But he was transferred to the District Administration in 1915, posted to Malaita, and replaced by more compliant officials prepared to accept no more than a token role in the supervision and handling of labour affairs. This was the price of what Brookfield (1972:72) calls mercantilism, the responsibility to those companies and their backers whose investment allowed the colony to pay for itself. Even Woodford must have despaired when he complained with some understatement that 'far more attention is devoted to the preparation of copra than to the preservation of natives who produce it' (Annual Report, 1919-1920).

More comprehensive regulations were introduced in 1921, further augmenting the responsibilities and duties of the labour office, but the facilities remained far from adequate for the tasks required, and labour affairs continued to receive no more than cursory treatment. Under these circumstances, with a large number of plantations further divided into smaller estates widely scattered throughout the islands, rarely subject to inspections or visits from outside officials, employers and their overseers assumed almost absolute autonomy in the day to day running of their estates. For the most part unorganized and ignorant of the regulations under which they might have had some
protection, workers had no recourse except on the occasion of rare visits by administrative officials or by attempting to pass complaints through their immediate overseers. As a rule it was only serious incidents resulting in death or widespread illness which were reported, and communications were such that officials did not arrive to investigate until a few days after the event. Even then situational constraints inhibited communication between labour and officials so there was a tendency to accept information given by employers. In nearly every respect the risks and rules were one-sided; the assault of Europeans by Solomon Islanders for example, was covered by a different set of legal sanctions than the assault of Solomon Islanders by Europeans (Hogbin, 1939:164-165).

Notwithstanding these conditions, the rate of recruiting showed a steady increase up to the early 1920s except for interruptions caused by a dysentery epidemic and the 1914-1918 war. As the number of plantations expanded, there was a lot of competition amongst recruiters; this in turn led to marked variation and a general increase in the value of rewards given for recruiting, to the extent that by 1918 the retail value of the so-called 'beach-payment' was equivalent in value to two years' wages at the basic rate. Two kinds of payment are discernible, one to the passage-masters and the other to the relatives of recruits themselves, given as a form of compensation for the man's departure. By straight bargaining, trickery and other means, agents and others extracted as much as they could from recruiters in return for allowing men to leave (McLaren, 1923; Dickinson, 1927).
Under pressure from sectors of the plantation industry, most notably the Gizo branch of the Solomon Islands Planters Association, new legislation was introduced in the early 1920s as a move to prohibit beach payments, either as gifts to passage masters or as presents to relatives of recruits. At the same time the gains which had been made in the combined value of rewards for recruiting and employment were given recognition and the basic wage was doubled from £6 to £12 per annum. In place of beach payments, recruiters were permitted to advance up to one quarter of a recruit’s wages in cash at the time of recruiting. This looked like a marked improvement in the returns for wage labour except that with the cash advance it was only possible to purchase half the value of tobacco and other goods previously given as a beach payment. Furthermore the burden of import duty on these goods, and especially tobacco, was shifted from the supplier to the consumers who could now only acquire such goods through cash transactions. In effect nothing was gained through these regulations and a lot was lost, more particularly as an annual head tax on adult males was introduced at the same time, one of the most blatant political mechanisms for attempting to increase and control labour supply.

In combination, these regulations were designed to put recruiting on a more formal and business-like basis, eliminating competition through the giving of presents for recruits, giving recruits themselves a fairer return for labour, and making cash far more important as a medium of exchange in these transactions associated with labour
recruiting. Being further implicated in the cash economy in this way, Malaitans were economically more vulnerable, the head tax and the import duty on imported goods being cases in point.

In support of these regulations, there was some concern that under the previous system of beach-payments those who stood to gain from such rewards could put pressure on and actually coerce others into recruiting. The evidence is that such coercion did not exist; rather it was a misinterpretation of an inter-dependent relationship between those who wanted to take employment and those who did not. Basically, this was a relationship between leaders and other senior relatives, who under normal circumstances had the power and influence to co-opt labour for feasts and raids which they organized, and their junior relatives. In the emergent involvement with the cash economy, however much a residential group was dependent on trade items and other returns from wage labour, they relied on a small section of the group to supply those needs at any one time. Such a system of relations was only reinforced by the new regulations, as the imposition of an annual head tax made those out of employment even more dependent on those prepared to take work.

Partly as a result of a failure to get permission for importing alien labour in order to boost the limited supply in the Solomons, investment in the plantation industry began slowing down after 1920 (Brookfield, 1972). Production kept rising as existing holdings matured but
there was little further expansion in the planted area. Employment numbers remained high until 1926 when there began a steady decline all the way through until the beginning of the war. This was due to the fall in copra prices during the economic depression in the early 1930s and the resultant halving of wages in 1934, but it also suggests that there was a much more selective response to labour demand at a time when there was very little change in employment conditions, and little opportunity for manipulating and improving the rewards from wage labour. Significantly, recruiting declined at a time when cash itself had been transformed from a 'discretionary' to a 'necessary' requirement in Malaitan communities through introduction of the head tax. Without doubt the tax was strongly resented from the start and did not have the effect intended. It was largely responsible for the death of Bell and his party at Sinalagu in 1927 and throughout the 1930s after wages had been halved, individuals and groups argued forcibly, and in many cases successfully, for exemptions and reductions in tax rather than be subject to indentured labour.

The employment situation in the Solomons reflected no more than the rigid two tier hierarchy characteristic of a colonial society. With the pax Britannica finally achieved on Malaita in the 1920s, political support of economic expansion was now complete, colonialism entered its high phase, and the dualism which resulted from such an expansion began to penetrate Malaita itself. After the regulations of the early 1920s, trading became separate from
recruiting, even though some firms and individuals continued to combine both interests (on separate boats), and this led to more intensive trading around the island with the establishment of a number of shore stations. The dual price structure for trade goods common on plantations and other commercial centres was carried to Malaita and was the basis for many complaints throughout the 1930s (W.P.A. File No. 49/11, 1939).

A thin veneer of participatory government was introduced into the upper level of the hierarchy with the formation of an Advisory Council in 1921 but amongst the non-official members drawn from the missions and employers, labour had no representation and very little support. A three man Labour Commission met in 1929, appointed after representations from an employer's body in 1926 (W.P.H.C. 1929). Labour was not represented and no radical changes in the system of indenture were recommended. Several years after this Commission made its report, systems of indentured labour came under criticism from the International Labour Office which recommended removal of more repressive sanctions, if not replacement of such systems altogether. The Administration in the Solomons argued against any changes by stressing the exceptional conditions then prevailing, sources of labour being widely removed from employment centres and the supply being well below the numbers demanded. In actual fact, in a situation where Malaitans and others were responding selectively to labour demand under the current conditions the Administration felt bound by much more fundamental logic.
without native labour ... the islands would be non-revenue producing. Without revenue there could be no administration and without Government Administration the male population would once more be engaged in head-hunting expeditions and tribal wars. (W.F.H.C. 1930).

Having become the cornerstone of political subordination, no compromise was possible in the indentured labour system.

C. The War and Maasina Rule: 1942-1952

As the Japanese invasion of the Solomon Islands became imminent in early 1942, the majority of plantation workers were repatriated to their homes, and plantation staff began leaving the country or taking up positions with the defence forces. Regular commercial employment came to a standstill, but it was not long before the war itself created new demands for men, either through serving with the British Solomon Islands Defence Force (B S I D F) or working as support labour in the Solomon Islands Labour Corps (S I L C). Many Malaitans volunteered in the former, serving for the most part under commissioned British officials on duties connected with the skeletal administrative structure maintained during the conflict. Others saw action with reconnaissance patrols operating in Japanese occupied areas on Guadalcanal and other parts of the Central and Western Solomons. Much larger numbers recruited for the S I L C, formed in December 1942 for the purpose of meeting the labour demands of the large American bases established in the Central Solomons.

Men were recruited for 12 months at £1 a month, and
organized into units under expatriate British and Australian officers. Most of these officers were former plantation overseers and managers with extensive experience in the pre-war Solomons, so in this respect service in the S I L C was not much different from plantation experience. In every other respect though, the contrast was total and extreme. Two points may be mentioned here. In the first place American bases provided opportunities for earning much more than the basic wage, through taking part time work after hours, as well as selling a wide range of curios and handicrafts to American servicemen. The Americans were prepared to pay generously for a variety of services and mementoes, as well as make freely available many of the goods and materials around the bases. In this way, work with the S I L C far surpassed any previous experience. Secondly, there was the behaviour of the Americans themselves, completely contradicting the stereotype view of whitesmen current at the time. Not only did the Americans fail to uphold many of the conventions bearing on relations between Europeans and Solomon Islanders but they openly discussed and questioned many of the attitudes and ideas underlying these conventions.

Recruiting for the S I L C reached such a high rate that it was the subject of special investigations by Captain Hogbin, Government Anthropologist at that time. He estimated that for North Malaita 90-95 per cent of males in the 17 - 24 age group were away from home at one time compared with only 70 per cent in the pre-war period. Furthermore much larger numbers of married men were recruiting,
to the point where it was seriously affecting subsistence production in a number of areas (W.P.A. PG/44). It was not that cash requirements had suddenly become much greater, only the attraction of work was much more exciting, under much better conditions, and much more rewarding than in the past.

The war marked a major turning point in the future course of development in the Solomon Islands, closing an era in the employment history of Malaitans which left vestiges in later years but could never be completely repeated in the same way again. Possibilities for rehabilitation were opened up, encompassing changes in the educational, medical and political spheres, along with changes in the pattern of agricultural production. Export production by foreign-owned companies would be supplemented by cash crop production amongst Solomon Islanders. There was a hint of these and other moves in the late 1930s when better medical services were being discussed, an educational survey was conducted, an agricultural officer began work on Malaita, and Native Councils and Native Courts were set up on an experimental basis on Malaita. None of these measures signified any long-term improvements or changes in the kind of administrative and economic structure then prevailing. That there was concern for a much more enlightened policy of development accompanied by grants-in-aid and more extensive government services in the immediate post-war period is clear; whether this concern would have been given the impetus and urgency that it sorely required is doubtful were it not for events on Malaita and the emergence of the Massima Rule movement.
This movement had its beginnings amongst the 'Are'are speakers in the south of Malaita. These people had been subject to extensive government investigations during the early 1930s, owing to a concern with demographic imbalances and evident depopulation. In 1939, after consultation with local leaders, a scheme for improving conditions in the area was set in operation, focusing on the dispersed settlement pattern, certain social practices which it was felt were affecting population growth, medical services and agricultural production. In the way in which it was formulated this program depended to a large degree on government control and guidance, so it was soon interrupted by the war. Although Japanese forces did not occupy Malaita on any large scale, administrative services were curtailed owing to the general emergency in force at the time.

Despite the war the 'Are'are people continued to feel some concern for the issues which the Government had attempted to alleviate, and carried on meetings and discussions about the need for change in social and economic conditions. As these ideas were being discussed men began returning from service in the S I L C on Guadalcanal, giving some urgency to the felt need for change while greatly expanding the range of issues under consideration. Out of these two primary experiences there resulted a course of action which envisaged nothing less than a new socio-economic order on Malaita, rejecting completely the dependent, hierarchical and exploitative structure characteristic of pre-war colonial
society. An elaborate structure of officials and procedures was devised, along with specific proposals for building new villages and starting large farming projects. This was put into effect throughout most of the island until ultimately the movement and its multi-faceted program came to penetrate nearly every aspect of people's lives at the time. One of the strong points in Maasina Rule doctrine was total opposition to the indentured labour system current up until 1942. The movement imposed a complete boycott on labour recruiting around Malaita, demanding a basic wage of £12 per month, twelve times the rate paid to contract workers with the S I L C.

In its early stages, the Maasina Rule movement encompassed a broad range of issues but as it gathered momentum and negotiations with the Government became more ambiguous and indecisive, attention focused on the administrative and judicial functions within local sub-districts. A small start to indirect rule had been made in the early 1920s with the appointment of Government Headmen and continued in the early 1940s with experiments in Native Courts and Councils. A large number of government appointed officials became involved in Maasina Rule from the beginning or joined the movement as it progressed, others remained outside; regardless, the movement had the support of an estimated 96% of the population and was not prepared to tolerate any alternative authority in sub-district affairs. The Government felt bound to support those who were loyal against the majority of the island's population and saw the 'illegal'
Maasina Rule courts as sufficient pretext for putting into effect a massive operation designed to suppress the movement. In a number of raids around the island using police escorts and a variety of support craft, documents and Maasina Rule funds were seized and over 30 leaders were arrested. Taken to Honiara for trial on charges of sedition, 22 of the leaders were found guilty and sentenced to an average of four years' imprisonment.

Had this been all, the movement might not have had the importance it did in Solomon Island history; as it happened, the arrests and subsequent trial of the movement's leaders marked the beginning of a new phase of activity on Malaita, a prolonged and determined campaign of civil disobedience in which thousands of men were arrested and sentenced to short terms of imprisonment. The main focus of this campaign was the Government's attempts to break down Maasina Rule villages and subsequently to call a census of the population and recommence the collection of head tax. This was to be the uncompromising test of a complete return to political subordination. The census was never fully completed but by 1950 after some villages had experienced three or four waves of arrests and imprisonment, gardens had become run down and unproductive, and after the Government had agreed to release on licence the nine most important leaders of the movement, the majority of people began paying the head tax and giving in to government pressure. It was not the end of the movement however, as a number of splinter groups and regional associations kept it and the principles for which
it stood alive. One immediate result of Maasina Rule was an island-wide council which began preliminary meetings in 1952 and was opened in 1953. It was a short term compromise for those elements which had kept the movement going for nearly eight years, still somewhat short of the new order it had set out to create.

D. The Post-War Period: 1949 to the Present

Leaving aside political developments on Malaita, a turning point in the course of Maasina Rule was marked by return to large scale labour recruiting and renewed demand for cash income from wage employment. In 1949 a few hundred men recruited for work and in late 1950 over 700 men were cleared through Auki for work on other islands. The numbers then increased rapidly, until by early 1953, recruiting had been so intense in some areas, such as the north of Malaita, that there was a temporary ban imposed on labour movement. By that year employment levels were much higher than the immediate pre-war period.

From the beginning there were marked changes in recruiting procedures and in the movement of labour generally. New regulations introduced in 1947 reduced the length of contracts from two years to 12 months or less and imposed a £2 per capita tax on recruiters for those men employed on written contracts. In 1949 a total of 355 written contracts were registered, but in subsequent years this procedure lost favour in preference to verbal contracts which avoided the tax. For this reason and also
because employers considered that prosecutions made under indentured agreements were no longer practicable, the system of indenture lost favour with employers and conditions of employment became much more flexible than before, allowing labour, under verbal contracts, to leave the job or be fired with a month's notice either way.

It was also reported at this time that large numbers of people were seeking or taking work outside the administrative procedures for clearing labour from Malaita, using loopholes in the legislation to effectively offer themselves for work at the place of employment, getting to such locations either by employer-operated vessels, mission boats, private cutter boats, government vessels (often carrying, free of charge, men looking for work), canoes, or other means. Accurate figures are unavailable but reports suggest that up to half the people in wage employment during the early 1950s could have engaged in this way. The procedure would have favoured those living on the coast and in lagoon areas, and all those on the western side of the island generally with ready access to whatever forms of transport were available. It should be noted also that by avoiding administrative procedures for taking employment it was also possible to avoid paying the head tax. In this way the independent movement of labour first began in the Solomons, arising out of changes in the labour regulations, the growth of alternative employment locations, and increased opportunities for inter-island travel.
Indentured employment did not pick up again after the war but employment under contract did continue with fluctuating numbers into the 1960s. The final decline began in 1964 with the withdrawal of Levers from labour recruiting. In that year 80 per cent of workers in agriculture and forestry were employed on contracts, by 1970 it was less than two per cent (Dept. of Labour, Annual Reports).

One other change in employment conditions also evident in the early 1950s was the increasing preference amongst workers for a full cash wage in lieu of rations supplied by the employer. The value of the ration accounted for over half of the basic wage and the choice in most cases was between $10 in cash, or $4 plus rations per month. Eventually regulations made it necessary for wages, whether or not rations were supplied by the employer, to be expressed in cash terms and by 1970 there were very few employers continuing to supply rations. Although such changes had the effect of making workers more independent of employers, the immediate repercussions were very similar to, and only one step further than changes in the early 1920s when beach payments were prohibited in favour of a cash advance on wages; workers now became dependent on retailing services for food as well as trade goods, in a situation where these services were for the most part controlled by expatriate European and Chinese traders. This disadvantage was overcome in many instances by subsistence production at places of employment. For large numbers there was a new dimension to living abroad, readily and succinctly described by everyone who lives in
town today as 'living by money'.

These changes in working conditions ran parallel with a significant shift in the kind of employment available and the location of this employment. After regular employment began in the post-war period the total number of Solomon Islanders in employment rose to almost 12,000 by 1972, an estimated 6.8 per cent of the population, and three times the number employed in 1953. In that year it was estimated that over half the work force was employed in the copra industry. In absolute terms that figure only fluctuated slightly in the following 20 year period; employment in agriculture accounting for a smaller and smaller proportion of the work force. Through changes in operational procedures and limited expansion by foreign-owned plantations, the industry which was the mainstay of employment in the Solomons for the first four decades of this century came to demand much less labour than before. The large increase in the over-all work-force came about through growth in other sectors; government services expanded rapidly and the Government replaced Levers as the largest employer in the country. This growth in the public sector gave a further boost to small manufacturing, commerce, building and construction, and a range of smaller industries and services.

Much of this growth was located in Honiara, which from the beginning offered many opportunities for casual and long-term employment. By 1960 nearly one-quarter of those in wage employment were working in Honiara, by 1970 it was
closer to over half the work force. As in pre-war years, Malaitans continued to make up the larger proportion of those in wage labour compared with other island groups, and the pattern of movement from Malaita reflected those changes taking place in the employment situation as a whole. By 1973 for example, 46 per cent of Malaitans in employment were working in Honiara.

The expanded workforce was also a much more highly differentiated work force as Solomon Islanders began moving into positions of skill and responsibility. The copra industry had appointed local overseers and supervisors from an early period but the structure of plantation employment and the attitudes of European staff kept such advancement to a minimum. It was an area in which colonial dualism was most pronounced.

That it would take many years of character training, apart from the education, before the natives would be suitable to take any responsible position in a firm - whether it would ever be possible to get a native upon whom one could rely is a matter for conjecture, and does not bear out the results obtained from similar experiments carried out in other island territories, where it has been found that they are most unreliable. (W.F.A., W.R. Carpenter to Educational Adviser, F 24/9, 1939).

Few employees in the pre-war era were able to overcome such restrictive barriers.

The transformation of the post war employment situation came primarily from the development of education services. Until that time education had been left solely
to the missions who provided a rudimentary service for a selected few in a limited number of locations. A Department of Education was formed in 1946 and the Government began subsidizing the existing mission network as well as setting up its own elementary schools in areas where the missions were less active. Government aid enabled the missions to expand their services so that they continued to control the greater part of primary and secondary education, with teacher training, technical education, and other subsidiary services in the hands of the Government.

As a result of Maasina Rule, Malaita was given priority in these administrative programmes; a number of elementary schools were established in sub-districts of the island along with a national primary school situated near Auki. The latter was subsequently converted into a secondary school and shifted to Honiara.

The development of an education program put Solomon Islanders in the position of taking more and more of the skilled employment opened up by industrial expansion and the growth of government services. By 1966, for example they occupied 1,130 (54%) positions out of a total 1,759 in the Public Service, in 1973 it was 1,621 (74%) out of 2,167.

The opportunities for education have only partially been made available to people in their home areas. However the demand for education has created its own movement pattern depending on the location of schools and the levels
which students have aspired to or been able to afford. Education, and whatever movement has been necessary to gain education, has only been preliminary to later movement in search of employment, having the effect of stimulating movement for employment rather than orientating people towards their home areas. Since the early part of this decade, primary school leavers have not always been able to get employment; the future course of formal education became the subject of a special committee formed to review policy and recommend revisions more relevant to the long term economic and social needs of the Solomons.

During the 1950s wage levels remained fairly constant, except that by providing bonuses and instituting a system of piece work, many employers made it possible for workers to raise their earnings well above standard rates. These incentives, along with shorter and less restrictive contracts, contributed to the more positive response to employment opportunities in that period. Wage rates were no longer determined by government regulations; nevertheless by assuming a much bigger role as an employer, Government also assumed de facto responsibility for fixing prevailing wage levels, a situation openly recognized in the industrial disturbances of the early 1960s.

As in many other fields, Maasina Rule was the precursor for organised industrial action. That it had a strong political thrust was no more than an acknowledgement of the Government's predominant role in determining conditions of employment; topical then because of the way in which
the British Administration fixed wage rates for the S I L C and tried to control the full range of rewards available to workers with the Corps.

For the next decade, in the absence of workers' associations and without a government department for handling labour affairs, the situation was relatively quiet. Whatever dissatisfaction existed was channelled through local leaders, especially members of the Malaita Council. Although severely limited in its powers and functions, the council was the only representative body for making known and acting upon the special needs and concerns of the people at village level. In 1960, one year after a Labour Department was formed under a Commissioner whose role it was to look into and advise on labour policy and labour affairs, the Malaita Council made enquiries on behalf of an interested group of Kwara'ae and Langalanga people about starting a trade union. The British Solomon Islands Workers' Union was formed and registered in mid-1961. By the end of the year there was a membership of 1,811, concentrated almost entirely amongst stevedores and copra workers. In 1963 the British Solomon Islands Building and General Workers' Union was formed to represent workers in other fields of employment, particularly government and other workers in town, and the former union became the British Solomon Islands Ports and Copra Workers' Union. Despite their separate registration, both unions tended to share resources and personnel during the period in which they remained active.
Through lack of experience, mis-management of funds, poor relations with employers, and the problems inherent in trying to organize a mobile and to a large extent transitory labour force, both unions ran into difficulties and eventually became inactive by the end of 1965. They had some success negotiating agreements for workers in particular industries, most notably the ports' workers, but also many failures. Strikes involving members of both unions, amongst copra workers on Levers' estates in 1964, and amongst government workers in Honiara in 1965, went ahead without strong support and proper direction from union leaders. In each case their failure led to complete disillusionment with the unions concerned and the withdrawal of active involvement from that time on.

Looked at in relation to changes in the labour market, the failure of workers' associations in the early 1960s points to a major difficulty in all attempts to improve working conditions. It was a time when more people were offering for work than there were jobs available, drawn out of the subsistence sector by the more flexible working conditions and higher returns from wage labour. In the past, shortages of labour had been felt most acutely by commercial interests. From as early as 1911 firms such as Levers had been petitioning Government for permission to import alien labour. Having failed in these endeavours, investment was cut back and eventually reduced to a minimum, and labour requirements were consolidated. Limited demands for cash and the system of indenture did not encourage labour to offer in numbers
greater than required. It was not until after the war when there was increasing involvement in the cash economy and labour began moving more freely between Malaita and places of employment that more was offering than could be absorbed. This manifested itself more in Honiara than other centres but in all cases it meant that employers could fire and hire workers without difficulty.

The industrial disturbances of 1962-65 involving two general strikes initiated by government workers in Honiara and one strike on Levers' estates, highlighted one important aspect of Government policy then beginning to have a marked effect on the structure of the work-force in wage employment and the migratory pattern by which this work force was sustained. The expansion of the public sector through increased expenditure on government services and the flow-on effect in other industries such as the building and construction industry, led to an increased and expanding demand for skilled workers - artisans, tradesmen, clerical staff and supervisory staff - within Government and private industry. Wage rates were accordingly higher, encouraging those coming through the education system, (and turning education into a major investment amongst rural people), as well as others being promoted through on-the-job training. Either way, the returns to skilled employment began to exceed a subsistence wage and in this sector of employment there was the basis for semi-permanent or permanent involvement in wage labour. Other factors such as an acute shortage of married accommodation in Honiara and other employment centres continued to discourage such
a transition until recent years, but in wage levels alone there was the basis for moving more permanently out of the subsistence sector.

For the majority of the work-force however, the 'tradition of a subsistence wage' has continued to determine wage levels and discourage long term involvement in wage employment. There are people fully absorbed into the monetary economy at this level, although in order to survive they tend to be subsistence wage labourers supplementing their cash incomes with garden production, rent-free houses of local design and construction, and other subsistence activities. Many settlements in and around Honiara have grown up on this pattern, and a number of plantations such as Levers have encouraged workers on the same basis by providing land for gardens and settlements (see Larson, 1968).

Wage levels have been kept under restraint to prevent inflation in other sectors of the economy and also to prevent large income differentials between those within the subsistence sector (the large majority of Solomon Islanders) and those in wage employment. Through the development of cash cropping and increasing use of cash in a wide range of transactions within subsistence economies, rural incomes now vary so widely that such a policy must depend on very arbitrary considerations. Furthermore it presupposes that economic forces are paramount in the movement of people to employment centres. The emphasis in this chapter has been on such forces insofar as they
have determined limiting conditions on the opportunities for living and working abroad. However as Corris (1973:59) pointed out in relation to the Pacific labour trade, the acceptance of employment opportunities involving temporary migration overseas was not determined by economic stimuli alone; other factors relating to the individual's position within society at the time, individual ambitions, and the attraction of overseas travel were also important. A balanced view is only possible when movement is looked at from the point of view of Malaitans and the societies in which they live. This is the concern of the remainder of this thesis.
Malaita is a large and mountainous island, 185 kilometres long and up to 40 kilometres long. For the outsider, it is an island, the geography of which is largely determined by accessibility and the main channels of communication with the outside world. This is doubly significant, for it is these links which have also determined a distinctive pattern of economic development on the island, with marked differences in growth between the main centre, its periphery and remoter parts of the island. All approaches are from the west, and most people reach the island by sea or by air from Guadalcanal or Ngela. The main landfall is at Auki, on the west coast. This has been the administrative headquarters since 1909, when the first locally-appointed government official set up residence there. In that time it has not grown very large, remaining an administrative and service centre, run by a small enclave of Europeans, exercising control over the island, and providing a limited range of welfare and extension services. Because of these services, and because also Auki operates as a port and marketing centre, agricultural growth and associated business development has been greatest in the neighbourhood of the station and
along the coast running north from it. A limited amount of employment is offered by those government departments with branch offices there and a small number of stores and trading businesses, but for most people Auki is only a transit station, a place to solicit different kinds of government assistance, and a jumping off point to other parts of the Solomons.

From Auki, boats circumnavigate the island, calling at major anchorages around the coast. Except for walking tracks, this was the only form of access to the rest of the island until the early 1960s, when a limited road construction program was begun. The first road ran north from the station passing around the coast, eventually being pushed through to Fouia on the north-east coast in 1971. More recently this coastal road has been extended south from Auki. In selected places short feeder roads have been pushed into the interior. All this road construction has helped to boost coastal settlement and stimulate cash crop development. It has also attracted local investment in transport businesses, now providing passenger and freight services between different points in the road network.

For this study, fieldwork was conducted in the north of Malaita amongst people known as the To'ambaíta, already the subject of a detailed anthropological study carried out by Hogbin in 1933 (Hogbin, 1939). Travelling north from Auki, the area occupied by the To'ambaíta includes the far north-western promontory of the island bounded by a
line running from Fo'ondo and the Aero River in the south, to Tabaa and the Tabaa River in the north. The road from Auki passes right around this promontory, and it is along this road that most To'ambaita settlement is concentrated. The administrative centre of the area, and a major centre for the whole of north Malaita, is at a place called Malu'u on the north coast, chosen originally because of its suitability as an anchorage and well-known in the past as a recruiting 'passage' in the north of the island.

Since 1948 Malu'u has been the site of a small government station. Originally a police outpost, set up as part of the campaign to suppress Maasina Rule, it grew into a centre for the provision of various welfare and extension services, with a school, hospital, an office of the Agricultural Department, a Court House and a postal and banking service. There are also three trade stores at Malu'u, two owned by Chinese who also trade in copra. With all these services Malu'u supports a small population of salaried workers, mainly government servants, and, for the most part, strangers in the To'ambaita region. A small number of local people are employed as labourers. The foreshore at Malu'u is the site of a large bi-weekly market attended by vendors and buyers drawn from a wide area of north Malaita. It is also the embarkation point for a weekly shipping service to Honiara, providing an alternative route to that of Auki, for people wanting to travel to other parts of the Solomons.

Malu'u is the place where a labour migrant from
Queensland, Peter Ambuofa, began one of the first Christian settlements on Malaita (Young, n.d.). This led to visits from missionaries and the establishment of the South Seas Evangelical Mission. Unable to obtain a suitable site in the north, this mission eventually made its headquarters at Onepusu on the south-west coast of Malaita. Despite this, it has always been very strong in the To'ambaita area.

It was Christianity and the influence of Christian missionaries which was a major factor in bringing about large-scale resettlement of the island from inland areas to the coast. By 1970, nearly 80 per cent of the To'ambaita people were living within two kilometres of the coast, mostly clustered into large village-type settlements, each identified with one of several Christian sects represented in the area. Some places achieved greater growth than others, one of these being the stretch of coast either side of Malu'u, which in 1970, had one of the heaviest population areas in north Malaita.

It is in this area, in the largest settlement listed in the Malu'u Sub-District (1970 Census), in the village of Manakwai, that the fieldwork upon which this study is based was begun in 1971. On subsequent visits research was extended to include a number of other settlements in the same locality as Manakwai, and most of what is presented here is specific to this part of north Malaita.

Back to the Beginning

The To'ambaita comprise one of five major dialect
groups found in the north of Malaita which collectively make up the Lauic or Bali language group. Linguistic analysis is still being carried out, but this language group would appear to be one of five or six main language groups found on the island (Ross, 1973; Keesing, 1975). As far as the Lauic group is concerned, moving south from the To'ambaita through the centre of the island, the other major dialects are Baelelea, Baegu (Ross, 1973), and Fataleka (Russell, 1950; Guidieri, 1972, 1973). With the To'ambaita, all these groups are traditionally 'bush' people who, in the past, lived mainly in the mountainous interior of the island as horticulturalists practising taro and yam cultivation. The other major dialect group in this language are the Lau (Ivens, 1930; Maranda and Kongas-Maranda, 1970). They live mainly on artificial islands located in a lagoon off the north-east coast. Other Lau settlements are found in Suafa Bay, on Basakana Island, and near Bitu'ama on the north-west coast. The Lau are essentially a maritime people, dependent on fishing. Where they have been able to gain access to land, this is supplemented with garden production. Divergent ecological adaptations between bush and saltwater people has given rise to a complementary economic relationship, marked by regular exchange of sea produce for garden produce at specially organized coastal markets. Much transformed by the use of cash for many transactions, these markets continue today, and play a very important role in the social and economic life of north Malaita people generally.
Within each dialect group there are lesser dialectical contrasts, each associated with even more precise localities. Generally speaking, people are competent in more than one major dialect and most people from neighbouring dialects are able to understand and communicate with each other. This situation is strengthened by a great deal of interchange between people from different parts of the north Malaita region. Inter-marriage and ceremonial exchange visits are common, besides the more regular interaction which takes place at produce markets and some long-distance trading of seasonally produced foodstuffs. When brought together on plantations, in town, and in other places to which they travel, north Malaita people recognise a common affinity and readily form supportive alliances.

Confirming what the linguistic evidence suggests, oral traditions describe how the people living in the north of Malaita are all descended from common ancestors. Except for recent genealogical history there is not complete agreement as to who the original ancestors were, which parental groups they belonged to, and how different descent branches came to be formed. It is generally agreed that the major descent groups to which the To’ambaia people belong, are branches of parental groups ancestrally located in the Baelelea area (in the vicinity of districts known as Mota and Morondo) and, in some cases, from further south in the Fataleka region. Broad similarities in traditional beliefs and in cultural practices, only confirm this. One aspect of this is that the boundary between the To’ambaia and their immediate neighbours, the Baelelea, is
much less precise and clear cut than it would appear. There is rather, a continuous gradient of change, running from south-east to north-west, characterised by minor dialectical shifts and small variations in cultural practices. In earlier literature and in many government reports, the Lauic dialects, including To'ambaita and Baelelea, are given the status of separate languages. Even taking the view that they are best seen as dialects, the question still arises as to how much unity and coherence can be attributed to groupings based on language differences. In reality language is only one of a number of criteria used to differentiate and categorize other people. It is really only important in specific kinds of contexts, where stereotype distinctions are made. Significantly these contexts are found primarily outside Malaita, arising mainly as the result of travel to other islands and other countries.

For north Malaita people generally, of far more importance are distinctions based on descent and descent group affiliation. In recent times, religious affiliation has also become very important and it is these two aspects of organization which need to be taken up now.

The promontory occupied by the To'ambaita people is broken up into named territorial districts or estates, called fanua, varying in size from two to eight square kilometres. As far as can be ascertained it is also the same for other parts of north Malaita, except that there may be greater variation in the size and status of various estates. Each of these estates is associated with specific groupings of people, who collectively take their name from
the name of that territory. The widest grouping associated with an estate includes all those people who claim descent from the founding ancestor, or the most distantly remembered ancestor of that territory. As the founding ancestor is usually buried in one of the burial grounds in the territory he founded, and this is the focal point for sacrificial rites carried out by the descendants of that ancestor, it will be useful here to follow the terminology used by Keesing (1968) for the Kwaio, and call this category, made up of all the known cognatic descendants of a common ancestor, a shrine descent category.

Within the shrine descent category two sub-categories of descendants are distinguished, those who are descended through all male links from the founding ancestor (called *aunifasia*) and those descended through one or more female links (called *ngwaikwalina*). None of these categories or sub-categories ever comes together as a cohesive group, nevertheless it is membership of these categories which is the basis for the formation of discrete groups. Identification in terms of such categories gives people the most fundamental and basic rights which they are able to claim. In exercising these rights, particularly the right to use land, descent-based groupings are formed and continue to be maintained.

For the time when he did fieldwork in 1933 Hogbin (1939), describes the group of people who actually take up residence in a particular territory as the most important unit of social organization amongst the To'amba'ita.
Ideally, these local groups were composed of a core of patrilineal descendants of the founding ancestor joined by their in-marrying spouses. In reality such groups were augmented with varying numbers of non-agnatic relatives, affines, and, in some cases, unrelated refugees from other districts. Two factors which contributed to a patrilineal bias in the composition of local groups were firstly, a preference for patrilocal residence after marriage, and secondly, a tendency to give priority to agnates in the transfer of rights and in succession to authority. The mixed fortunes of human existence in production, in reproduction and in inter-group relations, did not always make it possible to conform with a strictly patrilineal ideology and there are many examples of local groups being composed partially or totally of non-agnates. Ultimately the composition of local groups depended very largely on political processes. The size and composition of groups fluctuated markedly according to the activities and fortunes of leaders and aspiring leaders competing for political advantage.

A source of confusion for the ethnographer is the fact that *fanua* names are used variously to refer to a particular territory, to the group of people living in that territory (or who only recently vacated it), and to a much larger category of people made up of known cognatic descendants, the shrine descent category. Difficulties arise when it is recognized that the To'ambaita belong to more than one cognatic category. This gives people a choice of where they may take up residence and exercise rights to
use land. Although it is generally agreed that everyone should make themselves aware of the kinds of choices that are available to them, that is, the number of cognatic categories which they belong to, the question of making a choice does not always arise. In pagan society women generally live with their husbands and men continue to live in the fanua in which they grew up. This is also the preferred practice amongst Christians except that most Christians of this immediate generation, or the generation just past, have moved out of their natal fanua as a consequence of their conversion. The result of this is that To'ambaita people have been exercising choices in relation to land on a scale that is unprecedented in recent history. Moreover, local groups in Christian areas are now much more heterogeneous from the point of view of descent, than they were in the recent past.

Before the arrival of Christianity it was believed that ancestral spirits (akalo) were responsible for the survival and protection of the living. Continued well-being and success depended on carrying out regular sacrificial rites, and conforming to certain rules relating to individual and social behaviour. Meeting the demands of ancestral spirits was one of the most important moral obligations shared by co-descendants, and made them members of a single ritual community. Just as everyone belonged to more than one cognatic descent category, so they participated in more than one ritual community, the number depending on the number of ancestral spirits (determined by divination), necessary for individual well-being. At the core of each
ritual community were those living in the territory of the ancestors in question. Under their ritual specialist they took responsibility for the organization and performance of major rites. Participation in these rites was one of the most important ways of validating and continually affirming membership of particular descent categories and local groups. Amongst Christians this has been lost. Ancestral shrines are remembered but completely unattended and genealogical knowledge, once central to the performance of ancestral rites, is now preserved insecurely on paper and only recited in court hearings. Despite this, identification with particular family continues to be important amongst Christians and pagans alike, still giving people their primary social identity, and descent remains the fundamental principle through which a person's relationship to land and place is defined.

Descent was a major integrating force in pagan society. It was not the only one, and it did not preclude counterpressures for separation and division. How this worked in practice is best explained by working from the smallest unit of organization towards the largest. The most basic and fundamental unit is the family household, made up of a man, his wife, and their children. Such a unit achieved coherence primarily through the organization of their own subsistence production. Individual households would be established soon after marriage, as the newly married couple separated off from the husband's parents and began working towards completely independent household production. New dwellings were not always built in the
same living area as the parents, but separate from them.
Once established, with a family house (luma), a men's house (bi'u) and huts for the separation of women during menstruation and childbirth (bisi and bisi ancaru'u), each family household formed a separate hamlet.

For the purposes of household production these household/hamlets operated very largely independently of each other, but for other purposes they joined together to form larger social and political units. The most important of these I will call a men's house group, composed centrally of a group of men belonging to the same men's house (bi'u'i wane). This group might be seen as a minimal lineage, generally of three generations depth, organized patrilineally, around a group of married male siblings (and parallel cousins), their senior male relatives, and their unmarried sons. What gave this group its coherence and unity was firstly, some division of responsibility amongst its members, according to their different skills and abilities, and secondly, their participation, as a single group, in competitive feasting activity and competitive exchange. The size of such groups, their unity and coherence, depended largely on the ability of their leaders. Succession was determined ultimately by ability, not necessarily seniority and was often surrounded by rivalry and competition. There was a strong moral obligation to avoid this but without any firm rules relating to succession, and a strongly competitive ethos, conflict was not always avoided. It was not uncommon for brothers to split apart and to organize completely separate groups of followers
around completely separate ritual houses. From evidence collected on a large number of fanua it is apparent that the groups resident in different fanua were invariably split into more than one of these men's house groups, forming separate minimal lineages of the descent-based local group. Depending on their relative size and strength, and the ambitiousness of their leaders, men's house groups of the same fanua sometimes came into conflict with each other. Only with strong and influential leaders was unity achieved at higher levels of organization.

At this point we might return to the question of the way in which people differentiate and categorize each other in north Malaita, and the way in which this fits in with linguistic divisions. We have already noted how fanua names are used interchangeably to refer to groupings of people based on descent. It follows from this that some fanua names are regarded as senior to others. From the point of view of descent they are major shrine descent categories; parental groups, senior to lesser groups broken off from them through successive sub-divisions of the descent category. By a process of incorporation and inclusion senior fanua names often come to refer to a region which encompasses many other smaller fanua. This operates according to distance. For any particular location in north Malaita, as you move away from that location, people are differentiated in terms of more and more inclusive categories. What is significant here, is that it is fanua names (and to a lesser extent the names of men's houses and/or hamlets) that are used to differentiate people in
this way, and it is this form of differentiation which takes precedence over differentiation according to linguistic categories.

The large-scale movement from inland areas to the coast, which has taken place in this century, has meant that people have been moving out of their ancestral territories on an unprecedented scale. This exodus came about primarily through the acceptance of Christianity (with encouragement from the Government). It has been accompanied then by the acceptance of new beliefs and by major changes in social organization. Before considering these, there is a need to make two points concerning the whole resettlement process. Firstly, it has been a slow and gradual process. By 1939, 45 years after Peter Ambuofa first started preaching at Malu'u, only half the To'ambaite people were living in Christian settlements. By the early 1970s it was just over 90 per cent with small groups of pagans still remaining in the interior. For the eighty years that the new religion has been represented in the north, there has been a slow and gradual rate of conversion, with people joining existing churches in small numbers; sometimes a single branch of a local group moving at one time, only rarely an entire local group moving at once.

The second point to note is that the direction of movement has depended very largely on being able to gain access to, and occupancy rights on, coastal land. When movement first began, the coastal lowlands were only very lightly inhabited in contrast to the hills where most people lived. Ancestral shrines and old settlement sites
confirm that coastal fa'aua once supported active local groups, but by the beginning of this century they had either been wiped out or absorbed by more powerful neighbours. In setting up separate settlements, church teachers and the missionaries who advised them, did not have to contend with active local groups. Competition for land meant that there was still a need to establish occupancy rights, but this operated within a different political context. Churches, at least during the early period of their growth, were keen to build up their numbers. They readily welcomed people who wanted to escape from trouble or conflict in their home areas, using this as a way of strengthening their congregations in what they saw as a running battle (over souls) with pagan groups. Descent group affiliation was secondary to religious affiliation. More so since ancestral rites - the primary focus of descent category affiliation - no longer had any place under Christianity.

The settlements which came to be established on the coast, were then, essentially immigrant settlements. Their leaders were church teachers and the focal point of their organization was the church. Larger and more heterogeneous than pagan settlements, they came to represent quite new forms of organization. The family household continued to operate as an independent production unit, but outside productive activity and domestic work there was no longer the separation of sex-specific domains of activity. In other aspects of domestic life, and in public life, men and women now shared a common domain. Men still took the
lead and occupied positions of public authority, as represented in the church, but this no longer depended on maintaining specially-sanctioned, male-specific, areas of activity. This breaking down of boundaries based on sex went even further than this. Sanctions were put on certain kind of behaviour once integrally associated with masculinity and with being a man. It was considered unchristian to want to retaliate and avenge wrong-doing, to have a quick and violent temper, and to be aggressive and assertive in relations with other people. It follows from this that for pagans at least, Christianity came to be seen in terms of qualities and values associated with women, representing a weak and passive way of life, unbefitting for men. Not unexpectedly, men who became Christian compensated for this in different ways, not the least by the aggressiveness with which they preached and proclaimed the new religion. Taken in conjunction with the other changes which took place, such as the elimination of the men's house, and the discouragement of claims for compensation, the growth of Christianity was not without some degree of tension and unease. In later parts of this study it will be argued that certain pagan values relating to gender, did come to reassert themselves amongst Christians, and that one of the things which made this possible was involvement in labour migration. This became an area of activity and achievement associated specifically with males and the achievement of manhood.

Christian settlements came to form what may best be described as local church communities. In the early days
of the South Seas Evangelical Mission in north Malaita, as these communities grew, they segmented into smaller, residentially separate branches, each of which continued to maintain connections with and accept the authority of the parent church. In this way a hierarchy of authority developed amongst church teachers, and, throughout north Malaita at least, as the mission grew in strength, it became a well-integrated and co-ordinated organization. Regular meetings of teachers, inter-visiting between churches, frequent conferences, and the occasional revival meeting, promoted close bonds between all mission members. Missionaries were resident at Malu'u up until the early 1930s. It was mission policy though to give as much autonomy as possible to local church teachers, so their departure at this time, was not an important transition in the development of the local church.

Much of the discussion about the growth of Christianity so far has been confined to discussion about the South Seas Evangelical Mission, this being the strongest mission amongst the To'ambaita. From the turn of the century, the Melanesian Mission (Anglican) was also represented at Malu'u, with followers based in the settlement of A'ama (Hogbin, 1939:175); in comparison with the South Seas Evangelical Mission, they experienced slow growth in numbers, and they have never threatened the South Seas Evangelical Mission as the majority church in the To'ambaita area.

This situation continued until the early 1950s, a
period which marks the beginning of increasing church factionalism. Reacting to changes in local church organization introduced by European missionaries attempting to gain control of the mission after Maasina Rule, the then head teacher of the Malu'u church, Shem Irofa'alu, left the mission with a large group of followers. He and his followers remained in isolation for eight years and eventually joined the Watchtower Movement. Since then Jehovah's Witnesses have become the second largest church amongst the To'amba'ita, making many conversions amongst the remaining pagans, while also making inroads amongst established churches.

Further splits amongst the followers of the South Seas Evangelical Mission (which became an autonomous church, the South Seas Evangelical Church, in 1964) and the introduction of other new sects created even more divisions within the Christian population. By the early 1970s, there were at least ten sects amongst a population of less than 5000 people, with ever-increasing sectarian conflict.

In many respects, the followers of different sects tend to organize themselves into closed groups, limiting their interaction with each other. Intermarriage between members of different sects is discouraged by threats of suspension and expulsion, and mutual participation in feasts and other ceremonial events is generally avoided. Through their regional and national bodies, there is a tendency for each church to organize regular gatherings amongst themselves, on a local, regional, or island-wide
basis, giving rise to new lines of long-distance interaction and exchange, based on religious affiliation. Such a development has been boosted by improvements in communication, with more regular shipping services, new road construction, and the setting up of transport businesses. In late 1975, for example, church singing groups were leaving, and passing through the village of Manakwai, almost on a daily basis, often travelling large distances to and from other parts of the island.

Despite everything which has been described for the history of Christian influence in the To'ambaita area, descent group affiliation is still an important aspect of social organization and still gives people their primary social identity. Descent is still the fundamental principle through which a person's relationship to land and place is defined. Small church communities are often organized on the basis of descent, in the same way as local groups in pagan society, and large local church communities readily differentiate themselves into units which resemble lower level lineages or branches of descent categories. Although ancestral rites are no longer carried out, closely related agnates still recognize a strong moral obligation to show mutual concern for each other and assist and co-operate to their mutual benefit. Because of this, and because newly married couples are still inclined to set up residence in the neighbourhood of the husband's parents, co-resident clusters of close agnates remain a feature of church communities.
People of the Headland

Much of what has been discussed in these pages for the To'ambaita will become clearer with the introduction of people from one locality, a place where most of the fieldwork for the Malaita side of this study was concentrated. This locality is on the northern side of the To'ambaita peninsula and three to five kilometres west of Malu'u. It encompasses several territories or *fanua* stretching from the coast several kilometres into the hills behind (Figure 4). Within these *fanua* and distributed throughout them are twelve settlements ranging in size from small hamlets made up of a single household, to an exceptionally large village with a total of 39 households. The majority of people living in these settlements claim primary affiliation with one or other of two hill territories known as Takiniano and Gwaasi. Through inter-marriage the people from each of these territories are closely related to each other. Numerically and politically, the Takiniano people are the largest and strongest group in the locality. In keeping with local usage, it will be convenient to refer to this population as all being from Takiniano. The territory from which they come is not large. Its southernmost point is Mount Fauiwane, a prominent landmark where the boundaries of several territories intersect with each other. From Mount Fauiwane, Takiniano stretches north across a shallow basin formed by the two main ridges of the To'ambaita peninsula, and then down the northern side to a point about half way to the sea. Here it borders with the sea-side territory of Ambuialalamoa. To the west of Takiniano is a small
Figure 5 TAKINIANO DESCENT GROUP, MAIN BRANCHES

Settlement/Religion

- Manakwai S.S.E.C.
- Manakwai S.S.E.C.
- Tharii Pagan
- Fausiu S.S.E.C.
- Takiniano Pagan
- Rande J. Witness
- Manakwai S.S.E.C.
- Manakwai S.S.E.C.
- Niumara J. Witness
- Manakwai S.S.E.C.
branch territory of Lalunggu. On that side it borders with a separate and much larger territory known as Liimambo. To the east, Takiniano borders with Gwaasi.

Most of the people who today think of themselves as members of the Takiniano descent group trace their descent from a particular ancestor who lived nine to ten generations back (No. 1, Figure 5). This man had three sons, each of whom heads a separate branch of the descent group. Not all of these branches or sub-divisions of them are found in this locality or have the same degree of residential cohesiveness as each other. Son 4 left Takiniano in his lifetime after a quarrel with 2 and 3, and his descendants have been living well outside Takiniano ever since. They enter very little into this study. The descendants of 2 and 3 on the other hand, continued to inhabit the Takiniano area up until the turn of this century, and are now the most prominent residents in Takiniano and surrounding territories.

In 1974 there were only 21 people living in Takiniano proper. Together with another 15 people living in the southern part of Takiniano (under Mount Fauiwane) in an area known as Larade, they are the last remaining pagans in the area, the only people to still venerate and depend upon territorial ancestors. The main body of Takiniano people are all Christians and have moved out of the ancestral territory to live in downhill and coastal settlements on the border with Ambuilalamoa and in Ambuilalamoa proper.
Movement from the hills to the coast only began in the early part of this century. Before this time Takiniano people visited the coastal region temporarily to harvest the canarium almond (ngali), to cultivate yams, and to gather coastal sea foods, but it was only when some Queensland labour migrants decided to become Christians that permanent settlement was established there. The prime mover here was a man called John Alaimania (No. 9 in Figure 5). For a while after coming back from Queensland he stayed with Peter Ambuofa at Malu'u. Then around 1909 it was decided that he should form a branch settlement of the Malu'u church in the coastal territory immediately below Takiniano. This move had the full support of pagan relatives who saw it as a way of bringing that land more closely under their control. They also wanted their Christian relatives to live closer to Takiniano. The first Christian settlement was at Aniuke, a short distance from the sea, and on the boundary between Ambuilalamoa and Liimambo. Movement into this area was not opposed at the time, as neither of the fanua concerned had descendants sufficiently united and strong enough to assert rights over the land. Takiniano people were only asserting hegemony on the basis of superior strength. In later years, when the pax Britannica was in force, other claimants began to assert themselves and compete with Takiniano people for coastal land.

For the first three decades, growth of Christian settlement was slow. Alaimania died in 1925 and was succeeded by Misaka Suluorea (No. 10, Figure 5), a close
relative in the same branch of the descent group. By 1939 there were around 100 people living at Aniuke and in small Christian hamlets associated with Aniuke, compared with 93 still pagan and living in Takiniano (BSIP, 1939 Census). Amongst the Christians, most belonged to, or were married into that branch of the descent group headed by 5. From the part which they played in the introduction of Christianity and in developments which followed from this, they became a leading force in the course of change amongst Takiniano people generally. This was confirmed during Maasina Rule when another descendant of 5 (Figure 5), and a close relative of Misaka Suluorea, a man named Arnon Atomea (11), was appointed to the position of Head Chief for the To'ambaita region in the Maasina Rule Movement. This took place at a meeting of all Malu'u church teachers on April 5, 1946.

Because of its prominence in Maasina Rule, Aniuke suffered heavily in the government campaign to suppress the movement. This began with a dawn raid on the village in August, 1947 and continued for the next two to three years as followers of the movement resisted demands for a census and the payment of tax. In the course of government harassment many residents of Aniuke and Thaubulu moved back into the hills, reoccupying some of their old hamlets and starting new ones.

Between 1939 and 1956 the relative proportion of Christians and pagans making up this population changed substantially as large numbers of pagans made decisions
### TABLE 3.1

**Takiniano - Gwaasi Religious Affiliation**

1939, 1956, and 1974

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Settlement/locality</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Settlement/territory</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Total</th>
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</thead>
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<td><strong>PAGAN</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>CHRISTIAN</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gwaasi</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>Aniuke</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Takiniano</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>93</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>总数（62.1%）</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>100</td>
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<td>264</td>
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<td><strong>1956</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
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<td>Gwaasi</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Aniuke</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>163</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Takiniano</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>Adi</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Larade</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Fiti</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>总数（16%）</td>
<td>52</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>272</td>
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<td>324</td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gwaasi</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Manifao</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Takiniano</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>Kwaithafu</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Larade</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Niumara</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>总数（3.7%）</td>
<td>36</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>380</td>
<td></td>
<td>416</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: ESIP Govt files
Field notes
to become Christian (Table 3.1). During Maasina Rule a large group of Gwaasi people joined with the Takiniano followers of the movement at Aniuke. By the early 1950s most of these Gwaasi people had become Christian and joined the SSEM. During the same period there was constant movement of Takiniano pagans into the Aniuke church community. While this appears to be an indication of the political influence held by Atomea, Suluorea, and other church teachers in the Aniuke church, it was also around this time that the first major split in church affiliation amongst this population became evident. This localized rift followed lines of division which were emerging regionally following attempts by SSEM missionaries to reorganize the mission after Maasina Rule. This was when Shem Irofa'alu, the former Head Teacher of the Malu'u church and a leading figure during Maasina Rule decided to leave the SSEM. While the main body of Takiniano Christians decided to stay in the mission, a minority of local people, including most of the Gwaasi Christians decided to remain followers of Shem Irofa'alu. With him they too eventually became Jehovah's Witnesses. In the early 1960s a small group of Takiniano pagans, under the leadership of John Aunao (12), also became Jehovah's Witnesses and followers of Shem Irofa'alu.

By the end of the 1960s and the early 1970s the number of pagans were reduced to a small proportion of the population (just under 10 per cent). They formed three separate settlement clusters, at Larade, Takiniano, and Lalunggu, ranging in size from one to three households.
Each of these residential groups has its ritual specialist (wane ni foa) and its own men's house. Although autonomous for many different purposes, the different groups are also inter-related and are closely in contact with each other. The fact that they are still pagan is an important dimension to the common bond they have with each other. The rest of the population, all Christian, form two distinct groups in terms of their church affiliation. Each of these two groups, made up of Jehovah's Witnesses and members of the South Seas Evangelical Church, make up local church communities, with their own church teachers and elders, and their own central church buildings in which meetings are held at regular intervals. The main church (Kingdom Hall) for the Jehovah's Witnesses is at Ngalifasi, for the SSEC at Manakwai. Not all of the people belonging to each of these churches live in the same settlements. Members of the SSEC live mostly in the village of Manakwai and in neighbouring hamlets, while the Jehovah's Witnesses are much more widely dispersed, being found at Ngalifasi, Fausiu, Gwaunatalatoli, Kwaitafa, Niumara, Manifao, Rade and Fiti.

The oldest and most unified of these congregations is the SSEC at Manakwai. They are the direct successors of the first church established by John Alaimania at Aniuke, and owe much of their coherence as a group to the fact that the majority of members belong to Takiniano and are descendents of ancestor 1 (Figure 5). A large number of the adult members of the church have been through mission training school under the original policy
of the mission that all adults should play a full and
equal part in the running of local churches, and should
undertake the requisite training in order to do so.
Many men have had experience as full time workers for the
national church organization, as teachers, evangelists,
visiting Pastors and administrators. Playing such a part
nationally and regionally has added considerably to the
strength of the local church.

Being residentially dispersed, the Ngalifasi church
plays a rather more reduced role in actual settlement
organization than the church at Manakwai. They do demand
a strong commitment from their followers however,
encouraging regular attendance at services, daily study
within the family, and frequent periods of evangelizing
amongst non-adherents. The church also offers strong
guidance as to acceptable family life and emphasises the
necessity for a respectable public image. This is given
importance despite minimal interest and involvement in
the wider society. They play no part in local or national
politics and show little interest in the advice and
assistance offered by government extension services.
Like the SSEC but on a much smaller scale, the Jehovah's
Witnesses also support a number of full time workers,
mainly involved in proselytizing work for the church.
None of the members of the Ngalifasi church had reached
the level where they were receiving regular monetary
support from the parent body, although one young man
from the settlement of Kwaithafu is working for the
church in Honiara.
Both of these local church communities exercise a great deal of control over their respective followers. They are in open competition with each other, and with other sects making inroads into the To’ambaita area, and they are continually sensitive to any action which might discredit them in the eyes of the opposition. This makes their respective activities of continual public concern. Each church attempts to impose restrictions on interaction between its members and members of opposing churches, regardless of kinship, descent group affiliation, or any other form of relationship. In practice each church acts as a jural authority in many affairs which originate within the domestic domain. Marriage is a striking example. Each church discourages marriage outside its membership, offers firm advice as to whether bride-price should be transacted and, where acceptable, offers advice as to the limits on its value. Members of the church are discouraged from assisting with marriages which, in the eyes of the church, are improperly or wrongly contracted, regardless of how closely the people concerned are related. Inevitably such restrictions come into conflict with recognized kinship obligations, and are a frequent source of tension and conflict amongst Christians.

So far, the research population has been divided up in terms of religious affiliation and descent group affiliation. From the point of view of migration, what will also become important is variation in economic achievement and in the degree and kind of involvement which these settlements have in the cash economy.
Migration, being very largely for wage employment, will have an important bearing on this, although it will not be until later on that we will be able to draw conclusions about the relationship between movement and economic inequalities. What does have a great deal of relevance for understanding present-day economic disparities and differences in movement is the varying lengths of time which people have been in the mission (and also living on the coast). Besides other things this correlates closely with differences in the level of interest in, and experiences of, formal education (Table 3.3). From the point of view of these factors then, the settlements studied divide readily into three separate groups, which will be referred to by their location as: (A) Hill, (B) Downhill, and (C) Coastal (Table 3.2).

Group A settlements are all located in the hills. They consist of three hamlets with an average of two households in each and nine inhabitants. The people are all pagan and are still living in the territories occupied by the immediate ancestors. Together they represent a way of life much more representative of the past than any of the other settlements studied, their activities having many similarities to the situation described by Hogbin in 1933 (Hogbin, 1939). Most subsistence production is confined to the immediate territories in which settlements are located and much of the ordinary daily activity continues to take place within these territories. Social visiting and interaction mostly takes place with other pagan settlements located in the hills. This
# TABLE 3.2
## RESEARCH POPULATION
Settlements: May, 1974

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Settlements</th>
<th>Resident Population</th>
<th>Absentees</th>
<th>Single Persons</th>
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<td>HH M F Total</td>
<td>HH M F Total</td>
<td>M F Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Group A - Pagan: hilly</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Takiniaro</td>
<td>3 9 10 19</td>
<td>- - - -</td>
<td>1 - 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tharii</td>
<td>1 1 1 2</td>
<td>- - - -</td>
<td>- - - -</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Larade</td>
<td>2 7 3 15</td>
<td>- - - -</td>
<td>- - - -</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>6 17 19 36</td>
<td>- - - -</td>
<td>1 - 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Group B - Christian: downhill</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manifa'o (JW)</td>
<td>3 6 10 16</td>
<td>- - - -</td>
<td>1 - 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kuaitahu (JW)</td>
<td>3 6 5 12</td>
<td>- - - -</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Niumara (JW)</td>
<td>6 13 17 30</td>
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<td>- - - -</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rade (SSEC/JW)</td>
<td>3 9 6 15</td>
<td>- - - -</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fiti (SSEC/JW)</td>
<td>4 16 15 31</td>
<td>1 3 - 3</td>
<td>8 - 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>19 50 54 104</td>
<td>1 3 - 3</td>
<td>8 - 8</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Group C - Christian: coastal</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Ngaliiasi (JW)</td>
<td>6 13 23 36</td>
<td>- - - -</td>
<td>6 - 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Musakawa (SSEC)</td>
<td>39 106 105 271</td>
<td>9 20 18 38</td>
<td>16 3 19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tausi (SSEC)</td>
<td>3 7 6 15</td>
<td>- - - -</td>
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</tr>
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<td>Gwauatuatoli (JW)</td>
<td>2 7 9 14</td>
<td>- - - -</td>
<td>2 - 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>50 133 145 276</td>
<td>9 20 18 38</td>
<td>25 3 28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>75 200 216 416</td>
<td>10 25 18 41</td>
<td>34 3 37</td>
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**NOTES:** HH household; M male; F female; JW Jehovah Witness; SSEC South Seas Evangelical Church

**SOURCE:** Fieldnotes
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Cohort</th>
<th>Total Men</th>
<th>Local</th>
<th>Junior</th>
<th>Senior</th>
<th>Post</th>
<th>Adv/ Bible Spec.</th>
<th>School</th>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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</tr>
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<td>Before 1910</td>
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<td>1940-1949</td>
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<tr>
<td>1950-1959</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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<td>37</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TOTAL** | **146** | **38** | **48** | **25** | **6** | **9** | **16**

*Source: Field Notes*
includes specially arranged mortuary feasts and ancestral sacrifices attended by people from many local groups, marriages, and other special exchanges. Visits to the coast are confined to visits to the market and local stores, attendance at court hearings, and working for an on-going custom movement. Involvement in cash cropping is recent and still at an early stage. There is frequent involvement in casual employment offered locally by coastal producers. There is no interest in formal education.

Group B settlements are located downhill from ancestral territories midway between them and the coast. They consist of five hamlets with an average size of four households and 21 inhabitants. The people are all Christian, mainly Jehovah's Witness with some SSEC. Conversion and movement out of ancestral territories has taken place in the last 25 years. Like the pagans, activity associated with subsistence production and other day to day tasks is confined largely to the immediate area in which they live. Church membership demands regular visits to the coast and attendance at periodic conferences held in more distant parts of North Malaita. Involvement in the church has totally replaced mortuary feasting and ancestral rites. Much interaction and inter-marriage takes place with groups of similar religious affiliation. In these settlements there is greater dependence on cash income, although agricultural resources are little more developed than they are for pagans. Besides selling garden produce, pigs, copra and cocoa,
they are largely dependent on wages for cash income. There is some interest in casual employment offered locally, but a much stronger propensity to seek employment through travel outside Malaita. Interest in schooling is limited. So far, less than half of the children eligible for schooling in the last 10 years, have actually attended school.

Group C settlements are all located on the coast. They consist of one large village (Manakwai) with 39 households and 211 inhabitants, and three smaller hamlets. The people are all Christian, mainly SSEC, with two hamlets made up of Jehovah's Witnesses. Their conversion and movement to the coast dates back nearly 70 years. This has given them much longer and more advanced involvement in cash cropping, with regular and increasing incomes from agricultural production. Despite this, there are wide disparities in income from local sources and poorer families readily take casual employment as it comes up locally. More prosperous families regularly hire labour for various production tasks. Several household heads are employed locally on a regular basis, including some in career work with the Government. In these settlements there is a very high level of interest in formal schooling with close to maximal attendance amongst eligible children.

With their much longer association with Christian missions, their advantageous location, their strong interest in education, and very intensive involvement in
cash cropping and various business activities, these settlements are in the forefront of change. Sited on the new road, and well placed to take advantage of extension services, marketing and trading facilities, the residents of these settlements have diversified their activities much more widely than the inhabitants of inland settlements, and are much more mobile as a result. A case in point is a new producers' co-operative, based at Manakwai, started in 1969 and now responsible for processing and marketing much of the cocoa produced in north Malaita. This co-operative has branched into retail trading and transport services. Two to three people are employed full time and a much larger number work part time. Much of this work takes the residents long distances to the east and south of Malaita buying up cocoa beans and providing a transport service as required. Through this service, social visiting and exchange visiting between church communities is taking place more widely and more regularly than it did before.

In the Path of the Whiteman

Take a look, these gatherings (such as this mortuary feast) will soon be finished.
(Suota, at a mama, January, 1974)

Our greatness, the greatness of our custom, our place, has come to an end; it has been surpassed by the greatness of the whiteman.
(Aunao, 1973)

There are hints of resignation and despair in the above statements taken from two elderly men, one still a pagan, the other, a man who has only been a Christian for
the last 10 to 12 years. In terms of the values which most Takiniano people now accept, neither of these men would be considered to be very successful or very well off. They have been overtaken and left behind by the course of events in the Takiniano area. Suota lives alone with his wife at Tharii, has no followers, and is unlikely to have a successor. Aunao has spent most of his life as a pagan, achieving widespread renown as a priest and as an organizer of mortuary feats, working and achieving great success within customary values. He only became a Christian in 1962 after many of his compatriots in feasting and exchange had already left the hills, and at a time when the demands of ancestral spirits were becoming increasingly onerous.

In poor command of the knowledge and understanding associated with Christian ritual practice, subordinate to younger, formally-educated teachers, and a long way behind in all the other achievements which have come to be associated with Christian life, he feels himself to be in a distinctly disadvantageous position relative to many other Takiniano people.

It is only in retrospect that these men have become certain about the course of history. Forstelling the future course of events is always a highly speculative exercise, especially so in times such as the To'ambaia have been experiencing, when the possibilities for alternative courses of action have widened considerably. If there is one way in which the events of this century might be described, it is as a process of being steadily integrated within a wider politico-economic world. What
is important to understand about this, is that it has been very largely mediated by To'ambaita people themselves. Responding to opportunities for innovative action, they have developed and consolidated connections which have made them part of larger social and political formations. This process (which continues) has taken place very slowly and in ways which have tended to heighten and increase the divisions within To'ambaita society, rather than reduce them. According to the role which different people played in mediating new lines of action, so new forms of differentiation developed accordingly. This needs to be seen in the context of political action, through processes where the relative importance of new and unprecedented forms of differentiation and achievement, are determined in relation to existing forms. This is the framework within which the course of change in this century is best understood. It provides some basis too for seeing the significance of European influence in this process, and the kinds of divisions which emerged out of it.

Describing the life of To'ambaita people as he found it in 1933, Hogbin (1939) attributes the most important changes which he witnessed to the activities of commercial enterprise, Christian missionaries, and the British Administration. A large proportion of the population on Malaita at that time were still pagan, but even they, along with those who had become Christian, were leading greatly different lives from the lives of their parents and grandparents before them. Hogbin's description of pagan activity with its strong emphasis on competitive
feast-giving and the activities of men trying to enhance their reputation and prestige through production and exchange, already shows some of the effects of the Pax Britannica and over 40 years involvement in labour recruiting. Homicide is outlawed, and the means for exacting revenge drastically reduced. Opportunities for achieving fame (through fighting) and accumulating wealth (through blood bounties), were reduced accordingly, and the obligation to avenge deaths attributed to sorcery made that much more difficult. Steel tools have completely replaced stone technology, with some effect on the organization of labour-time in productive activity. Despite all this, pagan life showed many continuities with the past: in the organization of production; in the importance given to exchange (for the accumulation of wealth and the conversion of wealth into prestige); in the regular performance of sacrificial rites; in the continuing recognition given to pollution taboos; in the separation of different domains of activity based on sex; and in many other activities.

This was far from the case amongst Christians, and it was across this divide that the most pronounced changes were taking place. It can be said in fact, that conversion to Christianity was basic to all the important changes evident in the recent history of the To'ambaita. Some of these, like resettlement on the coast, have already been mentioned, others include the introduction of formal schooling and the diversification of household production. Christians, of course, looked to Europeans - missionaries
and administrative officials - for a great deal of support, and they were far less autonomous than pagans as a result. These relationships opened up a range of possibilities, some of which were more attractive and more readily adopted than others. The opportunities for formal schooling, for example, were readily taken up by people from Christian settlements. One possibility, subservience to a paternalistic regime, the Christians were bound to reject, and this is why there are increasing signs of disaffection with the Government from the 1920s onwards. Leaving this aside, the kinds of possibilities which Christians did identify with, such as schooling, gradually set them on a divergent path of development from the pagans.

The first government program which Christians identified with closely was the Pax Britannica itself. For a long time it was hardly an organized program, as much as a makeshift and very clumsy exercise in colonial rule. The only protection offered to those who accepted the Administration was what could be organized through the visits of British warships and smaller vessels. Even when a resident officer was posted to Malaita in 1909, the situation did not improve greatly, and the first Christians were in some despair over their position. In view of the pacifist, non-retaliatory moral code which they had been persuaded to accept, a strong and effective government presence was vital if they were going to hold their own against the pagans and become a viable alternative community. This was reason enough for them to co-operate with the Government in whatever way they could. The first
locally-appointed representative in the To'ambaita area came from amongst the Christian population. Originally appointed as a Special Constable, this first District Headman was Stephen Gorii, a man who had been to Queensland, and who had originally attached himself to the settlement founded by Peter Ambuofa.

In time, Gorii achieved considerable fame and power around Malu'u, informing on, and apprehending people who refused to comply with the new law. He was not always successful and many pagans continued to ridicule and deride him along with other Christians. A major turning-point in pagan-Christian relations came about in 1915 when Gorii and other Christians, along with a party of government police, took part in a punitive raid on a man's house at a place called Aitoli, deep in the hills of the peninsula. Four of the occupants in the house died, and their leader was arrested soon after the raid, adding up to a major triumph for the Christians.

The Aitoli raid made it clear that British rule was going to apply to everyone. The then District Officer on Malaita, William Bell, saw to that by making his presence felt throughout the To'ambaita area soon after the raid. It also showed that the Administration was ready and able to support those people who supported them, something in which they were then very consistent for the next few decades. It wanted, and expected, the To'ambaita people to believe that what they had to offer was in the best interests of everyone. In truth, beyond the introduction of the British legal code, the Administration had very little
to offer, and even in that, there were some doubts as to
the equity of British justice, doubts which were to become
stronger as the years went by, and constitute an important
factor in the strength and popularity of Maasina Rule.

For historical, political and practical reasons, Christians formed themselves into a world completely
separate from pagans. This began when the first Christians
returned from Queensland and were ostracized by their pagan
relatives who feared what might happen to them if ancestral
tabooS were violated. When missionaries arrived some
years later, they strongly supported continued separation,
conceiving of it in terms, very popular amongst missionaries
at that time, as a division between the forces of good and
evil, locked in battle, with nothing in common between them.
Christians would have to forgo all practices associated
with traditional beliefs and the ancestral spirits.
Interaction between the two groups was minimized. This
applied to people related through descent, even people
from the same family if they split over the decision to
convert. In effect, Christians and pagans formed themselves
into separate moral communities. In this respect,
Christian communities were now ideally the adherents of
a universalistic moral philosophy, in contrast to the
pagans, who followed a much more particularistic code.
In practice, as evidenced by their behaviour towards the
pagans, Christians also behaved in particularistic ways,
aligned into factions, formed on the basis of a variety
of different criteria.
That Christianity came to be used as a new political force there is little doubt. Stories of Peter Ambuofa's experiences after his return from Queensland draw attention to many tests of achievement between him and those who opposed him. It was a power struggle on more than one level. He had to succeed to validate the choice which he had made and prove his worth relative to his contemporaries; he also had to succeed to validate the power of the god he now believed in and to prove the superiority of that god over the ancestral spirits. Ambuofa himself, proved his capabilities well before the Aitoli raid. Many of his brothers had joined him by then and the steady growth of the Malu'u community was evidence enough of his success in a society where fame and following were closely equated. But it was not until Aitoli that the ascendancy of Christian leadership over the pagans was really assured. The pagans were no longer a real physical threat. Competition and conflict would continue, but the ground rules now came from the Christian side, not the pagans, something which was a significant victory in itself. The Christian side included the Administration and it is here that we see the political significance of being open to the possibilities which came with European contact. In their struggles with each other, the To'ambaïta were open to new alliances.

The Aitoli raid was not marked by any noticeable increase in the rate of conversion to Christianity. It did mean that from now on the Christians would be secure, and the two groups would be forced to co-exist. More
than this, Christians were now in a position to take up other possibilities. It would seem to be far from accidental that major cash cropping projects were begun in the years after the Aitoli raid. Stephen Gorii, now retired from government service, planted a large area of coconuts on ground known as Teekwali, below the territory of Gwaasi, and a man called Sale Eloa, who had also been to Queensland and had subsequently worked for many years with Levers, took up land with his relatives in the territory of Afoa, opposite Basakana Island.

By the early 1920s Christians and pagans alike had become dependent on a range of imported items. These were obtained almost solely through labour recruiting and the labour trade. Involvement in wage employment did not affect the pattern of subsistence production. Most recruits were single men whose labour contribution to household production was dispensible, and whose income from labour was never large enough to support the rest of their families for any length of time. For married men participation was more critical, as their absences did affect household production. There was little encouragement from employers for them to take their families with them, so that they did not recruit at anywhere near the same rate as single men.

As people became more dependent on imported goods and, from 1923 onwards, were forced to pay an annual head tax (levied on adult males), the limited means of income became more of a problem. To some extent the cash which
came into local groups was circulated as gifts and through exchange. Trade goods and small amounts of cash were also transacted in local markets, but generally speaking, there was insufficient cash in circulation to make it easily obtainable.

From the beginning many people had difficulty in paying the tax. In reporting this for 1933, Hogbin points out that the redistribution of earnings between labour recruits and their relatives was much more effective amongst pagans than it was amongst Christians. By doing away with certain customary practices, the SSEM in particular, created a situation where young people were much less dependent on their parents and other senior relatives than they were before. This was a time when they were encouraging their followers to get married without exchanging bride-price, to do away with competitive feasting, and to avoid making claims for compensation amongst themselves for sexual violations or other offences. All of these things involved the exchange of accumulated wealth. They were commitments which were beyond the capacity of individuals to fulfil on their own, making it important to develop and maintain networks of interdependence with a wide circle of exchange partners. Under the mission this was lost, and although there remained a strong obligation to continue giving assistance to relatives, it was an obligation now much easier to avoid.

While the demand for cash remained, and the opportunities for wage labour were unattractive and
impracticable to everyone except the young, there was some encouragement to find alternative income opportunities. The most obvious alternative was to expand household production so as to include a marketable cash crop. There is evidence to suggest that there was interest in this from the earliest days of Christian settlement, and it was also being encouraged by missionaries. The animosity between pagans and Christians, and difficulties with land tenure, prevented all except a few from planting on any significant scale. Peter Ambuofa, the first teacher at Malu'u, planted extensively as did Gorii, the first Headman, and Sale Eloa. Both Gorii and Eloa made plantings which owed much to their overseas experience, setting up holdings which had the appearance of small-scale commercial plantations. Following this precedent, two other men, Maekali, and Ba'etalua, formerly policemen under Bell, and subsequently appointed Headmen in the late 1930s, also made large plantings. What emerged then, is the involvement of men, already influential as leaders in the Mission or as representatives of the Government, acting on advice and encouragement received from these external sources. Furthermore, these men were able to use their positions and their influence to organize labour to assist them with their projects. This was done mainly on a traditional basis, workers being rewarded with food and small gifts. The resources established in this way, became the property of the men who organized their establishment. They began receiving a regular income from them in the 1930s, as the demand for copra picked up
after the economic depression. Other people began to follow the lead of these early producers but nowhere near on the same scale, and planting was not very extensive before the war broke out. With that event, interest in coconuts was supplanted by other concerns.

The events of the 1940s mark a major turning point in the course of change amongst the To'ambaita. It is not the occasion here to go into these events in detail, except to show the divisions which were apparent and factors which determined the subsequent course of development. Leaving aside the events of the war, the two events with long term consequences for Malaita, were the Maasina Rule movement, and the emergence in Britain of a new policy towards its overseas territories. In both of these events there was recognition of the need for change. Maasina Rule was primarily a reaction towards the pre-war situation in the Solomons. In North Malaita it climaxed a struggle for power between the Head Teacher at Malu'u, Shem Irofa'alu, and the District Headman, Maekali. Embracing the cause of Maasina Rule, Shem Irofa'alu, along with other church teachers, took the lead for the majority of To'ambaita people, Christian and pagan alike, who became followers of the movement. Amongst other things they sought changes in the existing relationship with the Administration, and much of their resentment was directed against its representatives in the north, Maekali and Ba'etalua, after they refused to join Maasina Rule. The Headmen and their supporters, including people like Sale Eloa, were isolated as a result, and became more heavily
dependent on the Administration than they had ever been. They were not disappointed, and the assistance which they received came to be used as part of an intensive propaganda campaign against the movement. This was how changes in colonial policy began to be felt. The newly created Government Trade Scheme was used to set up retail outlets on Malaita, buy copra, and to generally stimulate local trade, things which were of greatest assistance to Maekali and other government supporters. In attempting to discredit Maasina Rule the Government wanted to show that economic improvement was possible only under their terms. The message which it conveyed to the majority of people was that some people were being greatly favoured by the Government and they, and the Administration they represented, should be opposed.

When Maasina Rule was brought under control in the early 1950s and the new policies for the development of the island were just beginning to be felt, it was the people who remained loyal to the Government who were in the most advantageous position. In an already familiar pattern, new programs for the improvement of agricultural production, for the provision of better marketing and trade facilities, and for improved welfare services, were all introduced through those who identified most closely with the Government. During this period we have a picture of Sale Eloa, with his plantation, store, houses, church, copra drier, cattle and pigs being described as a 'shrewd businessman', with Ba'etalua, and others, part of a developing 'class of gentlemen farmers' (Tour Reports,
The same reports describe large numbers of people, former followers of Maasina Rule, moving back into the bush, returning to live in small hamlets, resentful and suspicious of the Government and little interested in its policies for change.

There was one departure here, with considerable significance for the Takiniano people, and particularly those who remained on the coast at Aniuke, and later, the village of Manakwai. Arnon Atomea, a leading church teacher, and Head Chief during Maasina Rule, became closely implicated in the implementation of government policy after being released from prison in 1950. It was a condition of his release, as it was for all the other Maasina Rule leaders, that he should co-operate with the Government. To begin with he was put in charge of the new Government Primary School at Malu'u. Later he helped initiate projects designed to improve agricultural production, such as the introduction of hot-air driers for processing copra and the introduction of cacao as a second major cash crop. As far as the school went, people were at first cautious and enrolment was low, with only 25 to 30 pupils. Many of the first students went on to the newly established King George VI school near Auki, as a result of which interest in formal schooling at Malu'u gradually built up. When the Department of Education was set up in 1946, schooling was already strongly associated with missions and the mastering of Christian ritual knowledge. It followed then, that it was mostly the children of Christians who
enrolled in the new government schools. This included the children of Headmen and prominent church teachers.

The situation which existed at this time is that the majority of people still had a need for some kind of cash income and that labour recruiting was still the primary means for satisfying that need. Except for the annual head tax, re-introduced in 1949/50, the need for cash was still a highly variable one. Most people were still basically subsistence producers supplementing their subsistence production with cash income in whatever way they could. The high earnings which people received from war time work on Guadalcanal, the higher wages for plantation work which came into effect from 1949 onwards, and the money which a few producers were receiving for copra, meant that there was much more cash in circulation locally than before the war. This is evident from the great interest there was in setting up businesses and in the turnover of some of these businesses. Stores, hawking businesses and bakeries sprang up throughout North Malaita from 1949 onwards, mostly started with capital contributed by small groups of 'shareholders'.

A striking feature of all these developments was the pronounced disproportion in the range of income being received at that time. For the majority, the only income was what could be earned through labour migration. Labourers themselves were on a basic wage of around $4.00 per month. Others, unable to work, and without any marketable resources, had to rely on gifts, petty trading and exchange. At the other end of the scale were people like Sale Eloa,
marketing, according to one report in 1952, 60 to 80 bags of copra per month, worth on estimate several hundred dollars. In some cases, as in the case of the District Headmen, their copra production was augmented with a regular salary, the returns from running stores, and other businesses.

In these circumstances the circulation of cash took a new turn, presaging new kinds of production relations amongst the To'ambaialta people themselves. Big copra producers, and wage earners, began to hire labour locally in the management and expansion of their crop holdings. Men were taken on, commonly on a casual basis, to clear new ground, carry out planting, to clear between trees, and to cut copra; sometimes paid on an hourly basis, sometimes on a task basis. Labour was available from people without cash crop resources, unwilling or unable to recruit for employment elsewhere. This must have taken place on a very small scale in the beginning, as there were few people who could afford to hire labour. It was something though which was bound to develop, while everyone shared some need for cash income, and the very large disparities in income remained.

In the years following Maasina Rule, as people got over their initial disillusionment and frustration, there was increasing involvement in cash crop production. Coconuts were the major crop, except that in the late 1950s, the Government launched an intensive campaign for the establishment of cacao as a second cash crop. For a few
years between 1958 and 1962, cacao was given priority over coconuts and large areas were planted. In the long run it failed to live up to expectations and although some planting continued, attention shifted back to coconuts. As a result of this, villages in the forefront of such activity, such as the village of Manakwai, built up large areas of cash crop resources. There is great variability in the size and productivity of these resources with large areas yet to come into production, but cash crop production is now an established feature of household production for all family-households. In every case cash crop production is organized in such a way as to supplement subsistence production rather than replace it. There are many reasons for this, one of them being the variable productivity of crops like cacao, and great fluctuations in market prices for copra and cocoa. Only very large producers are assured of a good steady income.

In all these developments, the most critical factors for continuing social and economic differentiation are land and education. Limited availability of land is now affecting the rate of expansion of cash crop resources. Where the Takiniano people have settled, in and around Manakwai, there is about two kilometres of flat land backing on to steep hills behind. By 1971, most of this had been taken up with coconuts and cacao, with small pockets still being used for gardens. Under the incentive of new planting subsidies offered by the Government, coconut planting is now proceeding up the hills behind, but there is not the certainty that production will match
lower areas. Unless land is claimed in other territories, planting on the hill is the only option for cash crop expansion. In all the time that planting has been taking place, land rights have been a constant source of contention and dispute, with protagonists becoming increasingly bitter and aggressive. Large scale cash crop planting and the settlement of coastal land raises issues not easily resolved according to customary principles, and yet, this is the way in which people have tried to resolve them so far. Pre-emptive planting of crops like coconuts with a productive life-span of 70 to 80 years, effectively gave the people who planted those trees semi-permanent rights over the land they occupied. Up until now, most people have retained rights to trees planted in this way in the face of all objections. Large disparities have emerged according to who was first to settle on the coast, and the amount of planting which they have done while living there.

Similar inequalities are apparent when we look at the effects of education and differential involvement in career employment. Following on from the development program introduced by the Administration after the war, Solomon Islanders were encouraged to enter into vocational employment. Some of this involved in-service training, but regardless, the demand was mainly for young people with some background of formal schooling. In the early 1950s the only people eligible were those who had been to village church schools, or who had attended mission training schools. Atomea, with his background of training with the South Seas Evangelical Mission, was given a
position as the first teacher at the new Government Primary School at Malu'u. His first cousin, with some village school training, began a career in the police force during the same period. Later, as children passed through the government school system, they were guaranteed progression into skilled and qualified employment of various kinds. The higher the standard reached at school, the greater the certainty of uninterrupted continuity between school and some kind of career employment. Up until now schooling has never been compulsory in the Solomons and, within the particular generations concerned, the numbers involved are a small proportion of the total number of children. When Atomea first began teaching at Malu'u, there were 25 to 30 children in the first class, and only four of these came from Aniuke. It is estimated that in the Aniuke - Takiniano area at that time there were from 80 to 90 school age children. By the early 1970s, the first four students from Aniuke, were all in high income, regular employment. Interest in schooling grew slowly, and was confined mainly to children from Christian settlements. In 1974, a large proportion of eligible school age children at Manakwai (65 out of 74) were attending the Malu'u school. In other settlements the attendance rate was much less. For most of the hill settlements (including Jehovah's Witnesses as well as pagans), none of the eligible children were being sent to school at all. As regards this variation in school attendance, it should be noted that a small fee is levied for each child at school, and this is a major inhibiting
factor for families with low cash incomes. This is one reason for the low interest in schooling amongst hill settlements.

The advent of formal schooling opportunities and changes in the employment opportunities for Solomon Islanders, had important consequences for migratory behaviour generally. This will be taken up in later sections. What is important are the inter-relations with other changes taking place in the Takiniano-Manakwai area. Most people who have gone into regular employment have also maintained links with home. They control, either wholly or in shares with others, variable amounts of resources, often established and maintained through cash remittances. In this way they have also become involved in the employment of labour at home, mostly on a casual basis. Success in employment has gone hand in hand with improvements in agricultural production. These are the two kinds of achievement which today, have the greatest significance for the To'ambaita. Together, they mean much closer involvement in the cash economy, and in the wider world generally, and they determine control of the resources necessary for participation in that world.

Taken overall, recent To'ambaita history shows gradual changes in the mode of participation in the market economy. In the beginning, participation began through labour recruiting and this continued right through until very recent times. Confined mainly to employment within the plantation sector, there were definite controls on
the level of achievement possible through this mode of participation. Income tended to be fairly constant from one local group to the next, even from one generation to the next, while wages on plantations remained static. What inequalities there were, were usually only temporary, and tended to be evened out through redistribution (more effective amongst pagans than Christians). This situation changed as the mode of participation changed. As indicated, change took place in two directions; through diversification of household production, and through the introduction of opportunities for variable achievement within the work-force. Both changes only became pronounced after the war, from the late 1940s onwards as a result of changes in British colonial policy. But as has been noted, the social and political alignments which existed then - between Christians and pagans, and between those Christians who were close to the Government and those who weren't - largely determined the pattern of participation that would develop. While for some groups such as pagans, the form of participation (labour recruiting) in the market economy remained constant, and the mean return from employment did not improve greatly, for others there were marked improvements and relatively large increases in income.

As the means of participation in the market economy changed, so To'ambaaita found themselves competing for relative advantage within that economy. It is this competition which is now determining the direction of social and economic change and leading to ever-increasing dependence on cash. Everyone has a strong interest in building up the level of their income. Hence the
increasing amounts of time put into cash cropping activity and a strong propensity to try out anything thought to bring in money, or to make money 'grow'. As incomes have increased, purchased food (imported food and locally-produced market produce) has come to make up a larger proportion of household consumption. Purchases of consumer goods, clothing, and other items have also increased. House construction and style are also changing with increasing preference for imported materials and foreign (government) designs. As much as they are dependent on cash income, all these changes have also become conspicuous markers of inequalities in income. They are now amongst the most important measures of success and achievement. Referring back to the beginning of this section where, in the words of Aunao, change is equated with ever-encroaching European influence, we can see now that what this means for the To'ambaita is increasing participation in, and increasing dependence on, the market economy.
Chapter Four

AFEEEA AND WAGE LABOUR MIGRATION

One of the names used for the places where To'ambaita have commonly taken wage employment is afeea from the word afea 'to float on the sea'. It is a name which also comes up in traditional stories. In that context it is considered to be a very remote and distant land, a place at the bottom of the sea, i 'aena asi, at the far ends of the cosmos, where certain ancestors and powers associated with them are said to have originated from. The central idea here is of things with important cultural significance, reaching Malaita by way of the sea. When ships first arrived off the island they fell into this category as well. Most of the ships which came were after labour. They, and the places to which they carried men from Malaita were all controlled by Europeans or people of European descent. Since then, the places where men have taken wage employment and where Europeans are in direct control have come to be known as afeea. Travel on the sea, wage employment, and being under the direct authority of Europeans came to be synonymous. This is expressed most explicitly in another term for these places, fanua arai kwao 'land of the white master'.

As readily as the To'ambaita distinguish between those places where they have become involved in wage employment and their home areas, so they also separate experiences in the two places. Journeys to afeea and the experiences associated with them constitute prominent and unique episodes in each person's biography, remembered and talked about
long after they have taken place. They made up a significant part of the continuing experience of each family and local group. In this chapter, some of the details of this experience are presented; the trips taken; the length of time people have spent away from home; the places they have been to; the kind of work in which they have got involved; and the things which they have achieved out of it. Much of the information is presented from the point of view of people living regularly on the island, the residents of those settlements making up this part of the study. Detailed life histories were collected for the majority of these people, concentrating in particular on movement outside the To'amba'ita area and their involvement in outside wage employment.

The beginning of labour migration amongst Takiniano and Gwaasi people goes back into the last century when they became involved in the Pacific Labour Trade. When the first movements took place is not known with any certainty although it is commonly believed that some Gwaasi men were amongst the first To'amba'ita to ever go away, probably some time in the late 1870s or early 1880s. The eldest men living in 1974 were born just before the turn of the century, between 1895 and 1900. Their migratory experiences begin around 1914, ten years after recruiting for Queensland ceased and three years after men stopped travelling regularly to Fiji.

In discussing the history of Takiniano movement and the kinds of changes which have taken place in the migratory
pattern, discussion will be confined to this period, beginning around 1914 and coming through to the present. In that time, taking all the men born before 1960 (N = 146) we find that, up until 1975, 133 (91 per cent) had had some experience in outside wage employment. Table 4.1 (a) shows the total number of adult males in each group of settlements and the number with outside work experience. Of the 13 men who hadn't been away by 1975, two had physical disabilities which prevented them from seeking employment, six were still at school, or proceeding with full time specialist training, and five were still at home. Only one of these men, a pagan from Larade in his early twenties (the eldest of the group without migratory experience), showed complete disinterest in wage employment and in travelling to those places where work could be found. His attitude is regarded as exceptional, a display of eccentricity only made by a few isolated individuals.

The sixty years in which the present population have been taking wage employment divides readily into three main periods, bounded by the beginning and the end of the Second World War in the Solomon Islands. The first period covers the three decades up to the beginning of the war in 1942, the second takes in the period of the war from 1942 to 1945, and the third from 1946 onwards. This is shown in Table 4.1 (b), along with the number of men from each settlement group who worked during each of these periods.
### TABLE 4.1
Takiniano Labor Migration
(Men Born Before 1960)

(a) **Work Experience by Age Cohorts**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Period</th>
<th>Settlements</th>
<th>Group A</th>
<th>Group B</th>
<th>Group C</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
<th>With work experience</th>
<th>Time Employed (yrs)</th>
<th>Average (yrs)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Before 1910</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>70.45</td>
<td>7.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1910-1919</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15 (13)</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>7.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1920-1929</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>19 (18)</td>
<td>155.95</td>
<td>8.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1930-1939</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>24 (24)</td>
<td>178.25</td>
<td>7.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1940-1949</td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>40 (40)</td>
<td>373.65</td>
<td>8.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1950-1959</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>26 (26)</td>
<td>76.40</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>12</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>146</td>
<td>133 (130)</td>
<td>904.7</td>
<td>7.0</td>
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</table>

(b) **Work Experience by Period of Employment**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Settlements</th>
<th>Group A</th>
<th>Group B</th>
<th>Group C</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-war 1914-1942</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>War 1942-1945</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-war 1946-1959</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1950-1959</td>
<td></td>
<td>9</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970-1975</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Fieldnotes
Participation in Outside Wage Employment

In the one hundred years or more that Takiniano people have continued to engage in wage labour, they have done so without becoming totally committed to regular wage employment. We can look at this from two different perspectives. From the point of view of individuals it means that each person only spends a small proportion of their working life in employment. For all the men in this population who have had some experience of wage employment up to and including 1974, the total average time in wage employment is around seven years. The working life of men being estimated at 49 years (from 16 to 65 years of age), then the average time spent in wage employment is 14 per cent of their working life. From the point of view of local groups, the men engaged in wage employment at any one time, are a small proportion of the total eligible population. In May, 1974, of a total 121 working age men, only 41 were engaged in wage employment (34 per cent).

What this shows is a population that is far short of being totally dependent on wage labour for its livelihood. However, this is not a stable situation. The level of involvement is steadily increasing. The change that has taken place between 1931 and 1974 is shown in Table 4.2. In this Table the estimates for 1931 and 1939 are based on census records for Malaita as a whole, whereas the calculation for 1956, 1971 and 1974, are based on information collected from Takiniano settlements. Assuming that the pre-war island-wide figures are
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of adult males</th>
<th>Number in outside employment</th>
<th>Per cent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1931</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>14 - 18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1939</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1956</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>12.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>42.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1974</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>33.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: ESIP Census Report, 1970
Malaita Census 1939
Malaita Census 1956
Fieldnotes
representative of Takiniano people at that time, up until 1956, the level of involvement in wage employment is well below twenty per cent. Between 1956 and 1971 a marked change takes place with the rate of participation moving up around 40 per cent. It drops back to 34 per cent in 1974 but is still more than double earlier levels of involvement.

Explanation for this increase needs to take into account changes in the Takiniano area, as well as changes in the opportunities for employment, and for living outside Malaita. What the evidence suggests is that it is changes in the opportunity structure outside Malaita that has had the biggest influence on this trend. In the Takiniano area itself there has been an overall increase in the population from 324 in 1956 to 492 in 1974. This has led to increasing pressure on land, particularly on the coast where the majority of people live and where most land is taken up with coconuts and cocoa. During this period cash crop production increased steadily as new plantings came into production. It is not possible to make any estimate of earnings in 1956. However, going on the age of trees and the length of time that they have been in production, it can be assumed that the growth in income from cash cropping has been quite significant. This means that the change in the rate of outmigration has taken place at the same time as there have been improvements in agricultural productivity and in income from rural production.

Evidence from other parts of the Pacific is not consistent; some studies report a positive association between cash cropping and outmigration (Bonnemaison, 1977), other studies
report a negative association (Harris, 1972; Salisbury and Salisbury, 1972; see also May and Skeldon, 1977).

During the time of increasing migration amongst Takiniano people, two major influences on their migratory pattern were firstly the growth of Honiara and the availability of urban employment, and secondly, movement into career work and higher status occupations within the urban work-force. I will discuss both of these influences as part of a more general account of Takiniano migratory experience.

Looking firstly at the places in which Takiniano people have taken work, Table 4.3 shows the changes in preference for particular locations between 1914 and 1975. Before the war, most employment was on commercial copra plantations. Men travelled to *stazin* (commercial estates) in places such as the Russell Islands, Northern Guadalcanal, Santa Ysabel, Choiseul, Vella Lavella, and the Shortland Islands. During times when recruiting was heavy some choice was possible. Those who went away took into account the reputation of employers, their travelling companions, and conditions on particular estates. Over time these factors changed and there were no estates that were consistently attractive as to be preferred over all others.

During the war, all commercial operations in the Solomons were suspended, and the only job opportunities were those which arose in the course of military operations and in the efforts of British officials to maintain some kind of administrative presence while the war was going on.
### TABLE 4.3

**Takiniano Wage Employment: Location of Employment**

**(Adult Males born between 1895 - 1959)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No. %</td>
<td>No. %</td>
<td>No. %</td>
<td>No. %</td>
<td>No. %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total men in employment</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malaita (a)</td>
<td>1 (4)</td>
<td>4 (16)</td>
<td>1 (2)</td>
<td>5 (6)</td>
<td>4 (4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Auki</td>
<td>4 (16)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3 (6)</td>
<td>13 (15)</td>
<td>11 (11)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malu'u (b)</td>
<td>2 (8)</td>
<td>7 (28)</td>
<td>2 (4)</td>
<td>15 (17)</td>
<td>15 (15)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Cristobal (c)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1 (1)</td>
<td>1 (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kirakira</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2 (2)</td>
<td>1 (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Santa Isabel</td>
<td>4 (16)</td>
<td>6 (40)</td>
<td>1 (2)</td>
<td>2 (2)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talagi (d)</td>
<td>4 (8)</td>
<td>7 (68)</td>
<td>5 (6)</td>
<td>13 (13)</td>
<td>5 (5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guadalcanal (e)</td>
<td>8 (32)</td>
<td>25 (48)</td>
<td>10 (20)</td>
<td>5 (6)</td>
<td>3 (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honiara</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>31 (60)</td>
<td>50 (60)</td>
<td>75 (76)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russell Is.</td>
<td>7 (20)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>28 (32)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choiseul</td>
<td>3 (12)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>8 (9)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shortlands</td>
<td>2 (8)</td>
<td>1 (2)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vella Lavella</td>
<td>5 (20)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>10 (19)</td>
<td>19 (22)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kolombangara</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>10 (10)</td>
<td>8 (7)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gizo</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>8 (5)</td>
<td>3 (3)</td>
<td>5 (5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local vessels</td>
<td>2 (8)</td>
<td>4 (8)</td>
<td>4 (5)</td>
<td>1 (1)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Notes:**

(a) Places on Malaita apart from Auki and Malu'u.  
(b) Includes places in and around Malu'u station.  
(c) Places on San Cristobal apart from Kirakira.  
(d) Includes Gavutu and Makambo.  
(e) Places on Guadalcanal apart from Honiara.

**Source:** Fieldnotes.
The majority of men who took work travelled to Guadalcanal and joined the Solomon Islands Labour Corps and the British Solomon Islands Defence Force. Some casual work did become available locally through the setting up of an observation post by a unit of the Royal New Zealand Air Force at Tolombaita near Cape Astrolabe, but this was only operational from October, 1943 until February, 1945.

When work first began after the war, in 1949-1950, plantation work was still the main work offering, so men continued to travel to the Russell Islands, Northern Guadalcanal, and the Western Solomons as commercial estates came back into production. At the same time some work was being offered in Honiara which had become the new administrative and commercial centre of the Solomons after the destruction of Tulagi during the war. Men were required for rehabilitation and maintenance work, and other jobs associated with a town and port complex. At first there was little advantage over plantation work. In both cases men worked under contract, for fixed periods of time, lived in barracks and were limited to unskilled, manual work. One thing in favour of Honiara was shorter length contracts - three to six months, compared with 12 months for plantation work. Short term work included stevedoring, now more readily available than before the war. During the 1950s gangs were recruited from within the To'ambaita area through three brothers living at Po'ondo.

A decisive factor in the growth of urban employment was the phasing out of labour recruiting during the 1960s.
Levers stopped recruiting on Malaita in the mid 1960s, and other commercial firms pulled out soon after this. The last year that To'ambaita men were recruited for plantation work was in 1969. They still took plantation work after this, but only by offering themselves on the job. Even before recruiting began winding down, many men were picking up casual work in town, and a nucleus of Takiniano workers was building up there. As job opportunities increased through the 1960s, so the number of Takiniano people in town expanded. Out of the 99 men who took employment between 1971 and 1975, 75 (76 per cent) worked in Honiara. This degree of concentration is much higher if we take into account those people listed as working on Guadalcanal (13 out of 99). All these men were working on the Guadalcanal Plains east of Honiara, with one or other of several companies engaged in commercial agriculture—oil palms, rice, cattle rearing, coconuts. The preference for northern Guadalcanal, in and around Honiara, reflects the kind of opportunities that have grown up there.

One factor relating to wage employment since 1960, is the increasing number of jobs on Malaita and particularly in the To'ambaita area, in and around Malu'u. Compared with opportunities elsewhere, the number of jobs involved here is relatively small, 15 per cent of all workers between 1960 and 1975. They arose through the expansion of Malu'u Government Station and the construction of a road from Auki to Malu'u.

Turning now to the kind of work in which Takiniano men have engaged, the record shows that they have mostly taken
up unskilled and semi-skilled occupations (Table 4.4). In pre-war years, most men engaged in plantation work: clearing and planting new estates; maintaining existing plantings; cutting and drying copra. Those less suited or less attracted to manual work, including many who recruited when they were still young and physically immature, mainly took up domestic work, serving as cooks and house-help in European households. Beyond this, the range of alternative jobs was very limited. Several men joined the constabulary and became solodia (policemen), others engaged in casual stevedoring work. One man worked as an assistant for a Chinese store-keeper, another as a full-time church pastor.

After the war, men continued to engage in plantation work up until the early 1970s but there was a steady decline in the numbers involved. In the early 1950s it is estimated that seventy to eighty per cent of men in employment took up plantation work. Twenty years later there are less than ten per cent involved.

Even as Takiniano men took on other kinds of work than plantation labour, it was mainly unskilled and semi-skilled jobs that they went into. In town, where the greater number of job opportunities became available, most of the jobs they took were in building and construction. Towards the late 1960s and during the early 1970s, factory employment begins to be important. Already familiar with town and established there in a small way during the 1950s, Takiniano migrants (and To'ambaia migrants generally) were in a good position to take up new job opportunities.
TABLE 4.4
Takiniano Wage Employment. Type of Employment

(Adult Males, born 1895 - 1959)

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>No.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total men in employment</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>25.00%</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>25.00%</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unskilled/Semi-skilled</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Copra plantation</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>(80)</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>(65)</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other agric.</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public works, building</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>constr. etc.</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Factory/manufac.</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ports</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>(20)</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>(38)</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Domestic</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>(28)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>(8)</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Storekeeper</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>(4)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>(8)</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seamen</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>(4)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>(10)</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drivers</td>
<td>-</td>
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<td>Category</td>
<td>Number</td>
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<td>----------------------------------------------</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SILC (a)</td>
<td>-</td>
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<td>BSIDP (b)</td>
<td>-</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clerical/time-keeping</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skilled/tradesmen etc.</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supervisors/overseers</td>
<td>2 (8)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Govt. Police</td>
<td>4 (16)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assis. Headman</td>
<td>1 (4)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Court Interpreter</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Govt. Extension</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Govt. Teaching</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Govt. Medical</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Govt. Admin.</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Mission Teaching</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pastor (c)</td>
<td>1 (4)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mission, Church Admin.</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: (a) Solomon Islands Labour Corps  
(b) British Solomon Islands Defence Force  
(c) A fully supported position with South Seas Evangelical Mission.  
Source: Fieldnotes.
Two developments helped to strengthen and extend their involvement in wage labour and influence the pattern of labour migration. One was the success of some men being put in charge of recruiting and employing labour, and being given jobs with responsibility in the work-force; the other development was the movement of Takiniano migrants into career employment with the Government.

In all sectors of employment, advancement within the work-force has been relatively slow. As much as employment is characterised by a great deal of job mobility, most movement has been sideways between jobs of similar status and income. Not entirely though. Before the war, two men were employed as overseers. After the war the numbers are not much higher as a proportion of the total number involved, but their responsibilities are greater, and their influence on the migratory pattern more significant. By the late 1950s there are men in charge of particular estates, responsible for recruiting and supervising their own gangs employed on those estates.

The main example is given by a man from Fiti, who got the job of recruiting workers for Kwan How Yuan to work on one of their estates on Vella Lavella in the Western Solomons, at a place called Ruruvai. Starting in 1958, Oteinao and his relatives recruited and supervised gangs on this station for nearly eleven years. Oteinao is not from Takiniano himself but related through marriage. His sister married a Takiniano man in the mid-1930s, and he married a Takiniano girl in 1955. Men from Takiniano
and all the groups with which he has some connection through descent or marriage, figure prominently amongst the men he recruited. Gangs were made up almost entirely of To'ambaita workers. It was regarded as an advantage to work with close relatives and wantoks. Another advantage was the flexibility they had in organizing their work. Payment was according to the weight of copra produced, and this allowed them to greatly increase their earnings. Other benefits included being able to cultivate gardens on company land. In doing so they produced most of their staple food requirements and found it much easier to support dependent relatives on the job. A number of men took their wives and families to Ruruva'i.

This kind of development, with local groups like Takiniano forming close connections with particular work-places, did not remain confined to plantations and plantation work for too long. During the 1960s the same links grew up in town. In 1968 a man from Manakwai got the job of Factory Supervisor at the Solomon Islands Tobacco Factory, then just newly established in the Solomon Islands. It was a position through which he could get jobs for others, and the number of Takiniano people at the factory steadily grew. By early 1972 there were 14 men from Manakwai and neighbouring settlements out of a total factory work force of 63. This lasted until late 1972 when the supervisor, Jim Umafaalu, was killed in a motor accident. Significantly, many men left the factory immediately after this and returned to Malaita. This is one reason for the big drop in the level of participation in wage employment between
Plate 1: Boarding a boat at Malu'u for Honiara.

Plate 2: Migrants working at the tobacco factory, Honiara.
1971 and 1974. Amongst the men who left employment during this period (through death or returning home), were twelve employees from the tobacco factory.

It was through the success of a few key individuals in the 1950s and 1960s, that Takiniano migrants came to be associated with particular locations and particular work sites. One thing about this is that it took place during the time when many of the formal controls surrounding the movement of workers were gradually dismantled and done away with. This was the period when labour recruiting went into decline and regulations prohibiting the movement of people outside their home areas were abrogated. In different ways there was much more freedom of movement than previously. While this also allowed people to exercise more independence over where they went to, and how long they worked for, job opportunities were such that men from the same local group came to depend on each other for what they could get. In this regard it was the men who achieved higher positions in the work force who were able to offer the most assistance to others.

The most conspicuous successes in employment in the 1950s and 1960s followed from education. Children passing through Malu'u school, some of them going on into higher primary training and secondary schooling, became teachers, tradesmen, marine trainees, medical assistants, administrative officers. Without any schooling it was possible to achieve some limited success, as with those migrants who became drivers, semi-skilled tradesmen, and work supervisors. With schooling, long term careers opened up, mostly in government service. With good salaries,
the promise of a pension after twenty years service, subsidized accommodation, special leave arrangements, and various other benefits, Civil Servants became the elite amongst all migrant workers.

This development in Takiniano labour migration has so far been confined to the people of Manakwai village, to members of strong Christian (SSEC) families. A greater long-term commitment to wage employment is offset by much higher incomes than the majority of migrant workers. Taking place within the last fifteen to twenty years, this also has contributed to the increased involvement of Takiniano people in wage employment.

New Patterns of Circulation

The pattern of movement which has arisen out of Takiniano involvement in wage labour over the last one hundred years is best described as a process of constant circulation (Bedford, 1971; Chapman, 1970; May, 1977; Mitchell, 1959). Rather than abandon or totally separate from their homes, the Takiniano people have continued to engage in wage labour by constantly moving back and forwards between Malaita and the various places in which employment has been offered. They have mostly taken work on a temporary basis during brief sojourns outside Malaita, in the course of lives largely lived out and centred on Malaita. Just as the destinations of these journeys and the type of work entered into, has varied from one period to the next and from one individual to the next, so the length of time of these journeys and the
number of journeys undertaken has also varied. In as much as they have determined the kind of job opportunities available, external factors have throughout, had a far-reaching influence on the pattern which prevailed.

Up until the 1960s, most journeys for employment were made available through fixed terms of service. Jobs were obtained by recruiting in the To'ambaita area and contracting to work for set periods of time. Before the war the maximum length of time of these contracts was two years and most trips were of this duration. After the war, this was reduced to twelve months and many employers offered work for periods shorter than this; in some cases for six months, in other cases for three months. This form of employment took migrant workers to specific locations for fixed periods of time. The formal controls surrounding employment largely determined the nature of their involvement. Moreover, while employers were able to get labour under these conditions they made very little attempt to encourage or develop a more stable and permanent work-force (Sykes, 1958).

Within these constraints most men confined themselves to short-term absences from home, going away for up to two years at any one time before returning home again. The standard pattern consisted of short term trips broken by periods of residence at home again. Here is part of the record of a man from Niuluma who started work in the early 1930s. On each of these trips he was employed in copra cutting.
Trip 1  Mamara Station, Guadalcanal, 2 years;
Trip 2  Samata Station, Russell Islands, 2 years;
Trip 3  Taneba Station, Guadalcanal, 2 years;
Trip 4  Mudimudi Station, Vella Lavella, 2 years.

After each trip the man spent a short time at home before going away again, the interval depending very much on how soon it took for another recruiting ship to arrive signing men for a place that interested him. This same man continued to take trips for wage labour after the war (after he was married), but with much longer periods of residence on Malaita in between each journey. Another example shows how the period of absence was affected by changes in the terms of recruiting. This is the record of a man from Takinian who first started working in 1960 and took the following trips between 1960 and 1963.

Trip 1  Teami Station, Russell Islands, 12 months;
Trip 2  Ruru vai Station, Vella Lavella, 12 months;
Trip 3  Lute Station, Choiseul, 12 months;
Trip 4  Honiara (Ports Authority) 3 months
  Ruaniu Station, Guadalcanal, 2 months.

Again each of these trips was broken by an interval at home. Both of these cases show the influence of contract recruiting on the pattern which developed. This pattern continues in the record of those who have gone away since contract recruiting went into decline, in the late 1960s, except that there is much greater variation in the length of time which people stay away. Not bound by contracts, it became possible to exercise much greater freedom in the length of time worked. The following record illustrates
this. The man concerned is from Ngalifasi.

Trip 1 (1963) Santa Ysabel (accompanying relatives, too young to work);

Trip 2 (1965) Lute Station, Choiseul, 12 months;

Trip 3 (1969-1973) Honiara, Tobacco Factory, 3 years 7 months; builder's labourer, 4 months; Guadalcanal plains, plantation labourer (oil palms), 6 months.

On his last trip this man was away for four and a half years, taking three different jobs for variable periods of time. Like him, there are many others who began work in the 1950s and 1960s, whose experience alternates between plantation work and work in town.

One thing which is apparent from these case studies is a tendency for men to take more than one job. The following table illustrates this. It is based on the record of 79 men in the population studied, all of whom may be seen as short-term workers. None of their journeys or the jobs they have taken have been longer than five years. Between them they have taken up to 357 jobs (an average of 4 to 5 jobs each). The average length of time spent in one job is fourteen months.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No. of Jobs Taken (1914 - 1974)</th>
<th>No. of Men</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In looking at the way in which movement and employment have changed amongst Takiniano people, it is necessary to draw attention to the relationship between journeys and jobs. In earlier years it was usually the case that a trip to asefa was equivalent to taking one job. They were essentially the same thing, each journey lasting as long as the job itself. The main departure from this pattern has been when people have stayed away longer than usual, extending their journeys and their involvement in employment beyond the usual contract period. People have done this either by changing jobs without returning home or by committing themselves to more regular work in one location or with one employer. This is something which is evident throughout the history of wage labour movement, although not as significant in the past as it has become in recent years. In pre-war years it was only a small minority of migrants who did this. Of the 25 men who worked during this period, there are only three who stayed away from home, or who stayed in employment for longer than three years at any one time. In one case, a man (now living at Nanakwai), recruited for work on Vella Lavella during the early 1930s then stayed on there until he was repatriated home at the beginning of the war, ten years later. He changed jobs a couple of times but continued to work in the same area on Vella Lavella all that time. While only a small proportion of men took this kind of action before the war, in later years this situation changed and long-term absences and long-term involvement in employment became much more pronounced. Such departures from the basic pattern are sufficiently distinct to be treated as
different forms of movement. People who prolong their absences and their involvement in wage employment in this way will be described as long-term workers. Of 116 men who first began working before 1970, there are 37 (32 per cent) who fall into this category.

In making this distinction it is possible to identify a tendency towards more continuous and regular employment amongst Takiniano migrants. It is something which has arisen directly out of changes in the nature of opportunities for employment, and is a development which helps to explain the sharp rise in the level of participation in wage employment between 1956 and 1974 (Table 4.2). A good indication of what is happening is provided by the record of those men who were currently in employment in May, 1974. By looking at the length of time which they had been working (either in one job or through several jobs and continuous absence from home), out of a total of 42 men employed at that time, 14 (33.3 per cent) had been in the same job for five years or longer (Table 4.6). This figure is a lot higher (23 out of 42, or 54.8 per cent) when based on men who have been continuously absent and living in employment but who have changed jobs during that time. There is not the data to do the same kind of calculations for earlier years but it can be assumed that for those in employment at any one time for any period before the 1960s, the proportion of long-term workers would have been very small. Most of the men who engaged in wage labour only did so for short periods of time.
TABLE 4.6
LENGTH OF TIME IN EMPLOYMENT
(Based on men employed in May, 1974)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period of employment</th>
<th>Number of Men</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>In single job</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>less than 12 months</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 to 2 years</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 to 3 years</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 to 4 years</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 to 5 years</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 to 6 years</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 to 7 years</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 to 8 years</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 to 9 years</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 to 10 years</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>greater than 10 years</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>42</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

One of the main factors contributing to more regular employment is advancement within the work-force. Prominent amongst long-term workers enumerated in May, 1974, are Civil Servants, skilled workers and tradesmen (including classified workers with the PWD and other government departments), men in supervisory and managerial positions, and some employed with the SSEC.

The important thing about this development is that it has not completely replaced the older pattern of movement and employment. While some men have entered into regular employment there are others who have continued to take short term periods of work, interspersed with periods of living at home. Changing opportunities for movement have given
rise to a more highly differentiated migration pattern, with a great deal of variability in the extent to which migrants have become stable, committed wage employees. To the extent that some have become more stable and continuous workers than others, they have also made themselves more secure in places of employment, putting themselves in a position from which they have been able to sponsor and influence further movement from home. The situation now is that Takiniano people are living in a number of different locations outside the To'ambaita area and outside Malaita, and there is a great deal of movement and shifting around between all these places. There are some people (still the majority) living at home who make intermittent trips outside Malaita to visit and to work; there are others, more or less securely established in wage employment, who live continuously outside Malaita and make intermittent trips back home; and there is a third category who move back and forth between the other two, temporarily unsettled and not completely bound to any location.

In order to show what the present pattern looks like in more detail, I will summarize the main features of Takiniano movement between 1971 and 1975. In doing so attention will be given to the differences between coastal, downhill and inland settlements. The trend which has just been described for Takiniano people as a whole, towards more continuous and regular employment, is not the same for all settlements. In passing from pagan (Group A) to Christian (Groups B and C) settlements, from small bush
hamlets to large coastal villages, there is an element of continuity, but there is also progressive elaboration and differentiation arising from the more ready acceptance of acculturative forces by coastal residents. It is true that there are much larger numbers of people involved from one group of settlements to the next, allowing for much greater variation in movement and employment. This variation is not on one level though. New forms have emerged, in addition to older patterns. In coastal settlements the proportion of people prolonging their absences from home is much higher, and their commitment to employment is much stronger. Here, long-term workers have become relatively stable urban residents. As such they are more able to look after dependent relatives, further increasing the number and kind of people moving back and forth between Malaita and town. This, in turn, is associated with a much more complex pattern of interaction between migrants and their relatives still living on Malaita.

Before expanding on this, there is one general point, common to Takiniano as a whole, concerning the sex and age of migrants. For the total population studied, only 56 per cent of all adults travelled between 1971 and 1975 (Table 4.7). Differentiated in terms of sex, the movement of adult men (75.8 per cent) is much higher than the movement of adult women (35.2 per cent). In terms of age, young single men have a much higher rate of movement (89 per cent) than older men (66 per cent). Taken as a whole this shows that the probability of going away is very high amongst Takiniano men; it reaches a peak
## TABLE 4.7

MOVEMENT OUTSIDE MALAITA

Takiniano - Gwaasi - Settlements, 1971 - 1975

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>SETTLEMENTS</th>
<th>MOVERS</th>
<th>NON-MOVERS</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Continuous</td>
<td>Occasional</td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Absence</td>
<td>Absence</td>
<td>In</td>
<td>Other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>In Work</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Other</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>%</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 1. Young, Single Men (born before 1960)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Continuous Absence</th>
<th>Occasional Absence</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Group A</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group B</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group C</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Continuous Absence</th>
<th>Occasional Absence</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**%**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Continuous Absence</th>
<th>Occasional Absence</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>57.1</td>
<td>42.9</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 2. Married Men, Widowers, Old Bachelors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Continuous Absence</th>
<th>Occasional Absence</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Group A</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group B</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group C</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Continuous Absence</th>
<th>Occasional Absence</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**%**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Continuous Absence</th>
<th>Occasional Absence</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15.8</td>
<td>24.2</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Young Girls (born before 1960)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>100.0</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>100.0</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td></td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>37.5</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>40.5</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>59.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>40.6</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>65.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>61.1</td>
<td>38.9</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Married Women, Widows, Spinsters

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>32</th>
<th>63.3</th>
<th>60</th>
<th>100.0</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>46.7</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>53.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>23</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>53.3</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>23.1</td>
<td>71.9</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TOTAL: 42 19 47 55 163 56.0 128 44.0 291 100.0

%: (37.4) (62.6) (100.0)
during adolescence and early adulthood, and then falls away as men move into married life.

Takiniano movement today, as in the past, bears a close relationship to the life cycle. In all settlements, it remains a common practice for young men, between the ages of 14 and 20, to leave home and seek employment. Today, instead of going to plantations, they mostly choose to go to Honiara.

In the population studied, 56 out of 63 young men (88.9 percent), travelled outside Malaita between 1971 and 1975. Of the seven that did not go away, one was still at school, and five were too young. Only one man in this group, a pagan from Larade, was prepared to say that travel outside Malaita did not interest him, and that he had no intention of going away.

Looking at the length of time which people stay away, some of the differences which were described earlier are readily apparent. Basically, there were two kinds of movement between 1971 and 1975. One group of migrants were continuously absent from home. Most of these live in town as relatively stable urban residents. Some of them have been living there for up to ten years. They often return home for their annual holidays but their regular abode is in Honiara. A second group of migrants, are those who travel for shorter periods of time, sometimes making multiple trips in between residence on Malaita.

Regular absentees or long-term migrants, include nine older men (8 married and 1 widower) and 32 younger men,
including three at secondary school. There are also nine older women (8 married and 1 widow), and seven girls. Except for the boys at school, all the males are in regular employment; mostly as Civil Servants, government workers, factory workers and store assistants. A number have part-time businesses, but none are fully self-employed. The older women and many of the young girls are dependents living with working males (husbands, fathers, sons or brothers). Four of the young girls are working.

As described earlier, commitment to long-term wage employment has paralleled growth in the importance of education amongst Takanian people. This accounts for the fact that most long-term workers have also had some success in employment. Educated career workers in the Civil Service stand out here. Their commitment to regular employment is bolstered by regular promotion and other rewards for continuous service. Although they have not always achieved the same privileges and advantages, other school leavers have had similar kinds of success. It is success in employment, following from education, that has largely encouraged a commitment to regular wage employment.

With success in employment, settled migrants are a major influence on further movement amongst Takanian people. Having control of their own quarters and higher than average incomes, they are able to look after new migrants and visitors to town, in effect, sponsoring the movement of others.

Many of the migrants who have settled into long-term
employment are married men. The households they set up in town provide hospitality to a much wider range of people than households formed by bachelors only. Married couples accommodate other married couples, married women travelling alone, adolescent girls (often brought into town to help look after younger children), and other dependent children. Such households regularly contain occupants additional to the migrant and his immediate family.

The people who made short-term trips outside Malaita between 1971 and 1975, include a large proportion of men taking employment temporarily, as well as many others visiting their relatives in places of employment. Since a commercial shipping service began operating between North Malaita and Honiara in the late 1960s, on a weekly basis, travelling to town has become relatively easy. Travelling for things like special medical or dental treatment, church business, co-operative society business, special town purchases, visiting kin, is now taking place with greater frequency. Above everything else though, it is now much easier to go looking for temporary employment. Just to give an example; in 1973 and 1974, three men from Niumara and Manifao travelled to town and worked for six monthly periods on the oil palm estates just out of Honiara at Ngalibi'u. Other men recruited for short periods of work with the Ports Authority, took casual work at the tobacco factory, and picked up some of many other casual job opportunities available around town. In Table 4.7, amongst those who made temporary trips, all the young men, and just under half of the older, married men took up work
while they were away. The people who travelled for other reasons were mainly older, married men.

The preference for short-term temporary work as opposed to regular continuous employment revolves around many factors. Age, education, and the achievement of success in employment are critical. All older men who go away, only do so temporarily. They leave families and close kin behind, committed to returning to Malaita within short periods of time. Young men are divided. Those with the qualifications to get good jobs, go into regular work as a matter of course. The choice with others comes down to a matter of individual disposition. Some young men remain mobile, change jobs frequently, continue to move between Malaita and Honiara. Others settle into continuous employment with or without a good job. This raises the question of motivation. It is not a topic which lends itself to ready answers, but will be taken up now to give a better picture of Takiniano migratory experience.

Motivation - one thing or many things?

When asked the reasons for going away, the most common explanation given by Takiniano migrants is because they want to earn money. Given that they have mostly migrated for employment, this can hardly be doubted. Given also that labour migration, up until recently, was the major source of cash, the expressed motive would appear to fit the facts.

Throughout the whole time in which labour migration has been taking place, opportunities for money earning on
Malaita and in the To'amba'i area compare unfavourably with the opportunities provided by employment. It was only with the development of cash cropping that an alternative to the trading of labour time became available. The establishment of cash crop resources has only taken place very gradually over the last 50 to 60 years, originally confined to a few coastal residents. Even in post-war years, as income from cash cropping has increased, it has not been as great and as reliable as income from wage labour. Disparities in income between rural producers and wage earners have continued right through until the early 1970s.

For confirmatory evidence on what labour migration means economically, it is only necessary to look at the origin of common items found in village and hamlet households. Household inventories conducted in Manakwai in 1971 - 1972, showed that amongst the major possessions in each house - things such as items of furniture, cooking utensils, garden tools, clothing, calico, bedding, torches, etc. - the greater number were acquired through earnings from wage employment. In some cases up to ninety per cent of all possessions are from this source. It is particularly the case that expensive items such as sewing machines, bicycles, radios, fencing wire, and wrist watches, have mostly been obtained through wage employment. Fourteen out of sixteen sewing machines (average value $56.00) enumerated in Manakwai in 1971, were obtained in this way (Frazer, 1973: 147).

The importance of labour migration for obtaining
personal and household items is much greater amongst pagan and downhill settlements, than it is for coastal dwellers. This follows from differences in their involvement in, and success with, cash cropping. Some pagan households have little means of earning money except through labour migration. As an illustration of this, the income and expenditure resulting from various periods of employment, for a man from Larade, are shown in Table 4.8. Wanetolo is a pagan, 28 years old. He was married in 1966 and now has three young children. His household also includes his widowed mother and a younger bachelor brother. Altogether, he has made four trips to afeafa, three before his marriage and one since. In each case, except for the third trip of three months, he is able to account for the disposal of income relevant to his livelihood at home. The proportion of his income not accounted for was spent during his time away on food, gambling, movies (in town) and other running expenses.

In these twelve years, this has been Wanetolo's main source of income. At home he trades some of his garden produce at the market to meet small expenses - tobacco, salt, soap, fish - and feeds pigs and manufactures pan-pipes to get shell money and other forms of traditional wealth. For things like clothes, tools, household utensils and luxury items, he relies on periods of wage employment. His spending on each trip reflects his circumstances at the time. Hence on the second trip, when involved in courting and anticipating marriage, he spent money on toiletries and exchangeable wealth items like rings, a
TABLE 4.8

Income and Expenditure: Larade Labour Migrant
(1960 - 1972)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trip 1</th>
<th>Trip 2</th>
<th>Trip 3</th>
<th>Trip 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Peami, Russell Island</td>
<td>Peami, Russell Island</td>
<td>Peami, Russell Island</td>
<td>Honiara</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 mths</td>
<td>12 mths</td>
<td>3 mths</td>
<td>12 mths</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Income (a)</th>
<th>$156.00</th>
<th>$156.00</th>
<th>$30.00</th>
<th>$240.00</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expenditure</th>
<th>Calico, shorts, shirts</th>
<th>44.10</th>
<th>16.00</th>
<th>14.05</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Knives, axes</td>
<td>3.90</td>
<td>2.35</td>
<td>7.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tobacco, pipes, cig. paper</td>
<td>7.70</td>
<td></td>
<td>6.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Torches, batteries</td>
<td>2.20</td>
<td></td>
<td>1.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Kerosene</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Soap, scent, combs</td>
<td>3.70</td>
<td></td>
<td>1.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hand rings</td>
<td></td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Wrist watches</td>
<td>15.00</td>
<td>16.00</td>
<td>25.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Boxes (for storing valuables)</td>
<td>6.00</td>
<td>5.20</td>
<td>10.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Umbrellas, mats</td>
<td>3.50</td>
<td></td>
<td>1.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Household safe, cooking utensils, cutlery</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>21.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cash: savings &amp; gifts</td>
<td>20.00</td>
<td>20.00</td>
<td>34.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tafuli'ae, porpoise teeth</td>
<td>25.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cash stolen</td>
<td>30.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Boat fare</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>8.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total accounted for:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trip 1</th>
<th>Trip 2</th>
<th>Trip 3</th>
<th>Trip 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$98.90</td>
<td>$127.70</td>
<td>$434.50</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Extra non-itemized spending: food, dice, other living costs.

Notes (a) Income includes average wages only. Some extra money was earned from bonuses, but there is no record of this.

(b) Tafuli'ae are ten-string shell valuables, a traditional wealth item.

Source: Fieldnotes.
watch, tafuli'ae and porpoise teeth. A major item of expenditure on his last trip involves things of use in his house.

The economic benefits of labour migration are indisputable, but as a total explanation for Takiniano movement, it does not account for all the facts of the situation, and is not adequate without some qualification. To begin with, the rate of migration has tended to increase rather than decrease with the development of cash cropping and improvements in money earning on Malaita. This does not change the economic significance of labour migration; it does show though, that in Christian settlements there is now an expanding interest in cash earning, responsive to whatever opportunities are available, and for whatever people have qualified themselves, through education and different forms of training. At Manakwai, and amongst Takiniano people in general, success in cash cropping and success in employment go hand in hand; the families who have the largest holdings of coconuts and cocoa are also families whose members have become Civil Servants, skilled tradesmen, and other highly paid workers. Movement into different kinds of skilled and professional work goes far beyond the economic needs associated with living in the village; it is part of the urge for on-going success in the cash economy.

Movement to centres of wage employment has become a very common and acceptable form of activity. The precedent is so well established that the need for people to explain themselves is not always given a great deal of importance.
This varies between different categories of people and according to the degree of disruption associated with movement. Some people have more freedom and are less answerable for their actions than others. Bachelor men have most freedom of all. As a rule they are able to leave home as and when they please. For them, having an explanation for going away is not always relevant or important. If anything, it denies what they most set out to achieve - their independence. In such cases, it is sufficient just to be able to go away; explanation does not really matter.

Besides this, travel today is not treated in the same way and with the same importance as in the past. This is because moving around has become much easier than it was, places of employment much more accessible. As part of this, there are now many more Takiniano people settled in employment, living in town and elsewhere, making up a network of familiar ties between whom travelling can take place. People who do go away are not as isolated and cut off from home as they used to be. They are able to maintain close communication with home and return there if and when it becomes necessary. In the past, departures from home were major events, described by one man as comparable with a death in the settlement. This is rarely the case today.

To put the question of motivation in proper perspective it will help to distinguish between three main kinds of movement in Takiniano experience. Firstly, there are
short-term trips undertaken with a clear commitment to return home within a specified time period. Contract work (what little still goes on) comes within this category, visits to kin, journeys to town for all sorts of other reasons. This accounts very largely for the movement of older people. They are unable and unwilling to leave their families, their gardens, their pigs, and everything else at home for too long, and so only go away for short periods at any one time. This kind of movement bears some relationship to the availability of work. It increases amongst older men, when casual jobs — obtained with certainty before they leave home — become available to them.

A second kind of movement lies at the other extreme to this. This is movement undertaken with the declared intention of permanently leaving home. Such movement is regarded as exceptional. It is tantamount to abandoning home and everyone living there, a form of action only undertaken under extreme circumstances. No cases occurred during fieldwork, although there are people now living in other parts of the Solomons who left home in this way. This form of migration is usually a direct result of social conflict. One man, now living in the Western Solomons, left home in this way after his father refused to sponsor his marriage, at a time and with a girl of his choice. Resentful of his father's action, he has chosen to absent himself permanently from Malaita. This kind of migration, characterised by a conscious decision to leave home permanently, only accounts for a small proportion of the total number of people who leave home.
A third form of movement lies somewhere in between the two forms just described. This is movement in which the length of time which a person intends to stay away is left open and unstated. Other intentions, such as where the person is going and what they are going to do, are sometimes left open as well. From the point of view of duration, it is a form of movement which is largely open-ended. Movement is an experiment, the consequences of which are largely unknown. Leaving home like this means being open to future circumstances, unforeseeable and unpredictable at the time of departure. It is conditional, subject to a wide range of chance events. There is the possibility that journeys will be brought to an end within a short space of time; there is the possibility that they will become long-term, permanent absences from home.

An important feature of open-ended movement is that there is no express intention to leave home permanently. That could be a consequence but not part of people's intentions when they depart. The expectation - expressed by the migrants themselves, as well as people at home - is that these migrants will return. The taking up of careers with Government or other kinds of work following schooling, is one form of open-ended movement. However secure their jobs, migrants are reluctant to express a total commitment to regular employment. There is always the intention of returning home, and the possibility of doing it sooner rather than later.

With short-term movement, this last form of movement is the most common kind taking place amongst Taniniano
today. It has only become common since the early 1960s, when people began leaving home independently, rather than as recruits under contract to employers. These are the circumstances under which most young people leave home, this being the ultimate expression of independence by them. As much as they provide any explanation for movement, it is mostly an economic explanation. As such, it might be seen as a rationale in keeping with accepted values and interests amongst adult To'ambaïta. It is the case that at the time at which many young people leave home, they do not ascribe to the values of their parents or older To'ambaïta people generally. There is not always the same interest in being productive, making money, or making journeys and work worthwhile and rewarding.

The crucial point is that afefe is now a place where young people can find a great deal of independence and freedom, where they can take up an alternative life-style based on some degree of money earning and involvement in the cash economy, largely separate from Malaita. What they now get out of going away goes far beyond the kinds of economic objectives that once characterised labour migration. Throughout the history of labour migration, there have always been some rewards in migration itself, satisfactions to be had from moving around, living in new and different places, meeting other people. With urban movement this aspect of migration stands out much more clearly. Earning money in employment is just as much the means to living an alternative style of life to that on Malaita, as it is the central objective of movement.
In view of this, as they themselves recognize, it is being simplistic to try and reduce migration to any single motive. People who go away have 'many, many things on their mind, not just one thing', in keeping with the multiple opportunities that travelling opens up.

The relationship between migration and the life cycle is taken up in detail in the next chapter. The migratory experience of Takiniano people has been summarized and the main features of their pattern of movement, past and present, been described. Local populations, like the Takiniano people, have become increasingly more mobile in recent years. There are a growing number of people living in employment, much larger numbers of people travelling between Malaita and Honiara. What is presented here, is only half of the picture. In taking up the other side - the life of migrants in town - I will also introduce a much wider population of To'ambaita migrants. However Takiniano people will be included in this population, and the relationship which they have with people at home, will be taken up as part of a more general account of To'ambaita migrants living in Honiara.
Chapter Five

MIGRATION AND THE LIFE CYCLE

To better understand the significance of the patterns which have just been described, the way in which they have developed and changed, and the way in which they fit in with other concerns, it is necessary now to start looking at the relationship between movement and the life cycle. The study of migration histories, along with information on contemporary movement, highlights certain distinctive features in the pattern of Tainiano movement. More than anything else it can be seen that the propensity to leave home and take employment varies significantly with sex and with age. There is a much higher incidence of movement amongst men than amongst women, and amongst men, movement is much more pronounced during adolescence and early adulthood than it is in later life. Leaving aside the movement which takes place in childhood, which is often very largely outside the control of the individual and depends on specific sponsorship and assistance, independent unassisted movement generally begins during early and middle adolescence. It then continues through adolescence as migrants prolong their absences from home, or continue to make a succession of journeys separated by periods of residence at home. After marriage, travel does not cease but does tend to become much more controlled than earlier movement. For those men who settle down on Malaita, travelling becomes much less frequent and of much shorter
duration than it did before they were married.

Looking at the age at which movement begins in the first place, the average age for going away as a *niu sum* (new worker) is 18 years. While this suggests that men only start work in late adolescence, the statistic is much more a reflection of the way in which opportunities have been offered, than an indication of when interest in employment begins. During the days of contract recruiting, the minimum age for employment in adult work up to 1960 was 16 years; after 1960 it became 18 years. People younger than this could only be employed as domestics or in 'light duties'. As it happened, without proper census records, it was difficult to determine age with any accuracy, and the standard test of acceptability used by recruiters and Government officials alike was checking for axillary hair. This was the official test of manhood used for determining eligibility for tax as well as the ability to engage full time in wage labour. In practice it was a test for which most young men were eager and anxious to qualify. In recalling their migration experiences most men describe a strong interest in going away and getting a job starting well before they could get recruiters to accept them (or government officials to pass them). In many cases also, well before parents and other senior relatives were prepared to let them go. Sometimes it was possible to get around these restrictions; as for example, by engaging for domestic work or 'light duties' of various kinds, or by just running away. This only involved a minority, and most recruited under normal circumstances,
as soon as an opportunity presented itself and they could get accepted.

It follows, from the age at which men usually begin their experience of migratory wage employment, that there is a tendency also to then concentrate much of their experience in wage labour in the years immediately following this, the years of late adolescence and early adulthood. Significantly, these are also the years before most men get married. The average age for marriage amongst men in this area is 26 years. The extent to which employment is concentrated in the years before marriage may be illustrated by contrasting the years of working life that there are before and after marriage, and the proportion of time spent in wage employment in each of these two different periods. This is shown in Table 5.1. The figures are based on information from married men only. Assuming that the period of working life for the average man extends from 16 to 65 years of age, a span of 49 years, and the age of marriage is 26 years, then twenty per cent of working life comes before marriage and eighty per cent following. Involvement in wage employment on the other hand, shows a much greater concentration in the earlier period. The 84 men concerned here average a total of 7.9 years in wage employment. Out of this they spent 4.5 years in employment before they were married (57 per cent of the total time in employment). What this shows is that while single men spend just as much time in employment as they do at home, as they get older and after they are
married, men travel and take on wage employment much less frequently, with much longer intervals of residence on Malaita.

**TABLE 5.1**

**EMPLOYMENT AND THE LIFE CYCLE**

(Married men only N = 84)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Life Cycle Phases</th>
<th>Working Life Years Per Cent</th>
<th>Years in Wage Employment Years Per Cent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-marriage (16 - 26)</td>
<td>10  20</td>
<td>4.5  57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-marriage (26 - 65)</td>
<td>39  20</td>
<td>3.4  43</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| 49  100 | 7.9  100 |

The tendency to concentrate employment in the years before marriage has been just as common for those who have taken short periods of work, as for those who have worked more regularly and continuously. Again this is something which has changed with changes in the opportunity structure. Whereas in the past, men took a multiple number of journeys/jobs between puberty and marriage, now there is a tendency to stay away more continuously during this period of life. For some, mostly Civil Servants and other higher income workers, this then continues after they are married.

In looking at the relationship between wage labour movement and the life cycle, the period of life when the most important movement takes place readily divides into two distinct phases, bachelors'hood and married life. In the separation of these phases, marriage constitutes a critical
threshold. Except for death, it is a transition that surpasses all others in the kind and degree of social recognition that is given to it. The fact that movement and employment begin in the earlier period has far-reaching implications for the form which movement takes and for the kind of life which migrants lead while living away from home. Opportunities for movement and employment have lent themselves very well to the interests and concerns of males, and in particular, males during adolescence and early adulthood. So much so, that amongst the To'ambaita, travelling to afsefa and the experiences associated with migration are closely identified with that stage of life.

The Life of Daraa

In contrast to the beginning of married life, the onset of adolescence when girls become thari'i and boys become daraa is not marked by any formally-organized transition rite. There are no initiation rites or other similar ceremonies during this period. That important changes do take place is well recognized and given a great deal of public attention, but only as part of the continuous, informal interaction which characterises everyday life. The period of adolescence begins with the physical and sexual changes associated with puberty and continues into early adulthood until the time of marriage. For men, this period may last ten to fifteen years; for women, with a much younger marrying age, it is a much shorter length of time. Because of the accompanying biological changes, to a very large extent, adolescence is recognized and
Plate 3: Larade Migrant and his sleeping quarters, tobacco factory.

Plate 4: Worker and Visitors at tobacco factory quarters.
expressed through the body. It is this which draws greatest attention and response from others and which in turn, heightens self-awareness in the developing individual. Physically, adolescents are said to be the equal of adults. They are capable of doing similar amounts of work and have reached the age where they are able to reproduce. From this point of view they are said to be 'ready for marriage'. But immediately, this introduces one of the anomalous aspects of this state, as in practice, people remain in readiness for a decade or more. While in one sense they are adults, in many other ways they are not. At the heart of this dilemma is the central limitation of adolescence. Physically and sexually the developing individual has become an adult, socially and psychologically he lacks the experience of being an adult and of living in the adult world. It is only after puberty that he really begins to gain that experience and thereby go through other aspects of the maturational process. In many ways, it is not until marriage, or even after marriage, that people really attain full adult status and begin to take up full adult responsibilities.

What all this suggests and underlies is that adolescence is a very formative period in the life of the individual. Physical and sexual maturation give rise to new possibilities for interacting in the world and with the world. In social relations in particular, marked transformations take place as the range of social contacts is widened, and existing contacts take on new and different forms. This has a marked effect within the sphere of domestic relations, as
it usually means breaking away from the influence and control
exercised by parents and other elder relatives and
becoming much more closely involved with peers.

Amongst the To'mbaita, parental control is not
normally very severe on children. There is the expectation
that children should conform to, and as much as possible,
assist with, the normal routine of the household, but even
in this there is a lot of flexibility and variation in
what actually takes place. In childhood the demands are
not too great and most children can usually carry out what
is required of them as well as spending a great deal of
time playing with each other. Looking after younger siblings
is the most onerous task. Where possible the responsibility
is given to girls, rather than boys. In fact, boys are
given very few tasks and unless they go to school, have a
great deal more freedom than girls. This is the case even
as they get older and become capable of doing the same
kind of work as their parents. While they may be able to
work just as hard and just as much as their parents, it is
much more common for girls to make this kind of contribution
than boys. One reason for this is that there is much more
work that they can do in the gardens and around the house.
A great deal of routine household work is regarded as
women's work. Besides this though, there is a much greater
interest on the part of parents, elder siblings and elder
guardian relatives, in restricting the unsupervised
interaction of girls outside the immediate family. Girls
need to be protected and supervised, kept within the
purview of those who have responsibility over them.
Boys then, have a great deal of freedom, and while this is not always the case, their behaviour often suggests a strong desire to transcend all the limitations and constraints associated with childhood. Many informants described situations in childhood which they said, made them aware of their inferiority and their dependence on their parents. An assertion of authority by their parents which they resented and were unable to counteract; a distribution of food or valuables in which they were left out or were only given a small share; a decision made concerning family or wider lineage affairs in which their opinion was ignored or ruled out; the necessity to carry out certain tasks around the household; the inability to do certain things because of immaturity or inexperience. However limited the effects of these and other things might have been (noting that single events often assumed critical significance for future action), few children do not experience parental authority and restraint at some time during their childhood.

Exercising greater independence is a matter of degree. It is only in exceptional cases, even when children leave home and take up migratory employment, that they cut themselves off completely from their parents. In practice they may depend on their parents for all their needs and requirements right up until the time they are married. Whether or not they do this, there is the feeling that they are not really independent until then, marriage being something which parents always accept responsibility for. Most parents accept this responsibility regardless of whether their children make any contribution beforehand or
not. It is not something which usually imposes obligations on children, so long as their parents are alive and are in a position to meet the demands which marriage makes.

The freedom associated with the years before marriage may be depicted by reference to an expression commonly used of adolescents, to'a thathala, 'light people'. What this conveys is the idea of people completely unencumbered and unrestrained by commitments and responsibilities, free to do what they want, when they want to. There is also the idea that everything is easy for them as well. Being uncommitted, they can pursue a timetable of their own; stay up all night (and sleep during the day), stay up for nights on end; take up work outside the household; visit other settlements and other places; attend public events such as feasts, marriages, church services, markets, and conferences, more easily and more regularly than older people; undertake long journeys (with little or no explanation); and in all sorts of other ways do things which older people are unable or less easily able to do. This does not mean that there is no commitment to anything at all, only that there is a concern with things that older people have either grown out of, or do not have the time for, or may not feel are as interesting or as important as they are for younger people. Hence an interest in courting, playing football, dice-playing (and gambling generally), drinking, playing the guitar and forming 'string bands', taking time out fishing and hunting, and visiting other settlements.
To illustrate the kind of life which young men lead, the following record is taken from fieldnotes. It describes a typical fortnight in the life of a young man from Fiti, 20 years old. The period is late 1973.

Saturday  From Fiti, travel down to Malu'u and attend market (meeting friends, visiting stores, and finding out what is going on). In the afternoon join a game of football with other young men from Fiti, Niularm, Radu, Takiniano and the coast, played at Takiniano (on a dance ground in the hills). Return to Niularm in evening (cousin's house) for all night game of dice.

Sunday  Rest and sleep all day at Niularm in cousin's place.

Monday  Stay at Niularm and visit new hamlet nearby, Ekwe, where another cousin is building a new house.

Tuesday  Continue on at Niularm and Ekwe (resting, playing the guitar, searching around for betel nut, setting up love magic for girl in neighbouring hamlet).

Wednesday  Attend market at Malu'u and spend afternoon hunting wild pig around Takiniano. Return to Niularm for the night.

Thursday  From Niularm, attend feast at Takiniano (a small mortuary feast). Return to Ekwe and Niularm to spend night.

Friday  Spend the day at Niularm and Ekwe. Return to Fiti in the evening.

Saturday  From Fiti down to Malu'u market and then join football at Takiniano. Return to Niularm for the night.

Sunday  Cross over to Suidaraa on south side of peninsula, visit lineage 'brother'.

Monday to Thursday. 'Spend at Suidaraa and other settlements, visiting Bita'ama market, dice-playing, and mostly keeping company with other peers.

Friday  Return to Fiti.

Although he is from Fiti and his parents live there, this young man hardly ever slept there during this period. Even when he did return to Fiti he did not sleep at his father's or his mother's place (both separated), but with a close friend about the same age in a small bachelor house.
Besides spending very little time in his home hamlet, he spent no time at all working with his parents or with any other relatives in normal production work. There is nothing unusual about this and nothing unusual about the casual visits to other relatives. There was no pressure on him to stay at home or to engage in more productive activity. Daraa generally have a large degree of freedom to pursue courses of action independent of the more routine and regular activities surrounding family households. The form and style of living developed at this time of life diverges markedly from other adult activity. Unless they leave the To'ambaíta area, daraa do not normally separate from their parents entirely, often depending on them and other older relatives for meals and other things (including cash) which they might require. Compared with the life of older married people, daraa activity does have a certain randomness and casualness about it. It is not bound by routine commitments. Additional evidence for this comes from a tendency for some young men to disregard religious boundaries, attending church services and mortuary rituals with equal facility, making friends across the boundaries, and also interacting, through football, dice and other activities, much more freely than older people.

In all this, relations with peers of the same sex assume maximal significance. Casual friendships which existed in childhood, now form the basis for deep intimate relations. New desires and feelings, new wants and demands, all the new possibilities and interests which now open up in adolescence are more easily approached and shared in
Plate 5: String Band.

Plate 6: Looks football team.
the company of peers. In many ways and in many directions it is an exploratory period, for which reliable support and concern is important. While older relatives give advice and encouragement, their interests are different and their outlook has changed. Their support cannot always be relied upon in the same way as it can with people of similar age. Amongst these attachments, there often develop very close and intimate bonds. In such cases, young men, often close relatives, will come to affirm mutual concern for each other in everything that they do. These kinds of friends plan and co-ordinate their activities very closely, to the point where they are inseparable. Such relationships may continue for many years, up to and also after marriage.

In talking about peer group interaction, emphasis is put on relations amongst people of the same sex. The reason for emphasising this, in the first place, is because these are the most open and public relations which can be observed at this time. The relations which young men form with each other are on open display as they move around together and constantly seek out each other's company. Besides this, adolescence is a time for courting and forming relations with the opposite sex. While this is something which is given much importance, in contrast with other forms of interaction it is surrounded with a great deal of subterfuge and secrecy. Public displays of affection or of close friendship in such cases, are totally avoided. Meetings only take place in private and most communication is kept secret, often taking place through intermediaries.
in complicity with the people concerned.

It is always expected that courting should take place during adolescence. Daraa and thari'î are expected and encouraged to meet and interact together. One popular view has it that adolescence only begins when this kind of interest arises. The term sigirarafu is used to describe the changes in appearance which are said to accompany the beginning of interest in courting. This is when young people begin to look cleaner and smarter, lose all their roughness and the grubbiness associated with childhood. In short, this is when young people become much more attractive, and also take more pride in their appearance. Courting then, is closely associated with changes in self-identity.

Once begun it becomes a constant preoccupation and something over which a great deal of time is spent. It is an activity which generates a great deal of worry and anxiety on the part of those who participate, and on the part of their close relatives. It is not unknown for some people to be so upset about the course of a particular relationship as to take very extreme action; committing suicide, or in the case of men, leaving home for an indefinite period of time. To be successful depends on being able to attract and to hold other people's interest and affection. From this point of view it might be said that much of what young people do during this period is directed towards making themselves acceptable and attractive to others. This is what people do anyhow in maintaining and enhancing their self-esteem, self-evaluation being
something which arises out of all social interaction. While this is so, the responses are not always so explicit and important as they are during courting. Many of the interests, the attitudes and the styles which young men adopt are said to be expressly concerned with their attractiveness and their acceptability to the opposite sex. The significance of this is more readily apparent when it is realized that marriage is an unforeseen and unpredictable achievement. While there are few young men who are ever anxious to get married, there is always the realization that getting married is open to many different chance factors. Having a successful and active courting life does not change this, but it does offset some of the anxieties.

In courting activity in particular, there is much concern with personal standing and reputation. There are several aspects to this. In the first place it is an activity around which there is much competition and rivalry. Being able to form a relationship in itself is something which affects each person's relative standing with others. (Becoming sigirarafu is a form of achievement.) Beyond this there is competition for particular partners, for the number of partners a person can have relationships with, and for who is courted. In all these things it is mainly peers and contemporaries from the same local area who are competing with each other. Besides this, reputations are also influenced by what partners do to each other. Being mostly done in secret, much depends here on the kind of information, whether by
observation, rumour, slander, or any other means, which becomes public. This is something at the heart of gossip, the kind of information which people spread and discuss about each other. Information about courting and sexual relations is always keenly sought and used. In all this it can be seen why it is that courting tends to be a very secretive and covert activity, and why people are very reluctant to let their actions become too widely known.

Peer group interaction in adolescence, and discussion of courting, draws attention to sex-specific aspects of this developmental phase. As much of the behaviour and activities associated with adolescence are sex-specific, it is relevant to consider how this fits in with other aspects of social organization and settlement life. Here we find that there have been significant changes brought about by the introduction of Christianity. Amongst pagans, because of beliefs about the different powers associated with men and with women, and because of the separation of domains of activity associated with the sexes, the transition between childhood and adult life is a markedly different process than it is in Christian communities.

The separation of the sexes begins at a very early age. Young boys are introduced into the men's house (bi'u) soon after they are weaned through a special rite (fa'amemengoa), part of the purpose of which is to instil into the young child certain male-specific qualities and attributes given a high value in later adult
From that early age male children move between the two domains of activity represented in the men's house, where they normally sleep with the men of the settlement, and the family house, where food is prepared and families normally gather in the evening. As the child grows up he is incorporated even more closely and responsibly in the activities and affairs associated with the male domain; attending feasts and rituals; playing the pan-pipes; joining in formal dances; and just sitting around in the company of other men, chewing betel nut, smoking and talking. By the time of adolescence, boys are now capable of playing a full part in this side of hamlet life. Because adolescence gives rise to interests which are just as much sex-specific as they are age-specific, the men's house and the life which is embodied in it, fulfil important functions at this time. Quite apart from the male-dominated ritual cycle of mortuary feasts and local group exchanges (in which young men play an important role anyhow), young men are also able to pursue those things of importance to them, separate from the rest of hamlet life.

1. During this rite a special mixture is prepared and applied to the mouth of the child and to other parts of the body. Each of the ingredients is associated with special qualities. They include ginger and lime which are supposed to make a child quick-tempered and aggressive, and promote a tough and assertive personality. Other ingredients, taken from special trees and shrubs, instil the ability to persuade and influence people through oratory and help to develop powers of understanding and intelligence. On each occasion of this rite it is not expected that all children develop the same character and personality. Invariably different individuals come to exhibit the two kinds of qualities mentioned separately. Hence, one person may become tough to the point of being a feared fighter, (a rang), while another, may be more conciliatory, (a leader, with the ability to learn, persuade and organize people).
In the living arrangements of Christians, especially Jehovah's Witnesses and followers of the SSEC, there is no men's house. All the family live continuously in the same dwelling without any division within the domestic sphere dividing activity exclusive to either sex. The institutionalized context within which men in pagan society find their greatest satisfaction and fulfilment is not maintained in Christian society. The stress is rather on a more total and unified domestic arrangement; that is, at least up until adolescence. It is the practice now, in Christian households, for sons to build themselves a separate dwelling in their early teenage years, generally a small one roomed structure, handy to the family house, but removed from it. Such a practice is not surrounded by any of the same conventions associated with the men's house in pagan society. There are not the same restrictions on its use or the same association with ritual activity. They might better be distinguished as bachelor rooms or bachelor houses. What we find in Christian settlements is that young men tend to seek each other out, using their bachelor quarters as a regular gathering place, or some other venue where they are able to maintain some degree of privacy from the rest of the family.

It can be seen from this that in Christian life the emphasis given to sexual differences has changed. Traditional beliefs concerning the sacredness of men and the pollutedness of women are not upheld, and the organizational arrangements based on these beliefs have altered accordingly. In as much as adolescence sees the emergence
of sex-specific forms of behaviour, this is significant, because whereas in pagan life there is a pre-existent domain of male activity, centred on and represented in the men's house, in Christian life, this does not exist and arrangements there are much more family oriented.

In both worlds young men are encouraged to play an active part in adult affairs, to participate fully in household activity and in the public life of their local group, or their settlement. In reality, there is a lot of variation in the extent to which young men take up these concerns and the extent to which they pursue their own alternative interests. While they may get involved in these things, there are few who show the same degree of interest and commitment as do older men. When they do take such a path, they are said to be mature ahead of their time, to behave like married men (ilawane) not daraa, in other words it is considered exceptional rather than normal behaviour. It is only in married life that people are expected to show a strong commitment to production and productive work. This is associated with the responsibility of a family and the demands which come from setting up and maintaining a household. Christians and pagans alike mark the beginning of this phase of adult life, with special rites which always take place after marriage. The rite takes a different form in either case, but is surrounded by very similar ideas and meanings for those involved.

Amongst pagans the rite is called botho ana fera. A newly married couple set aside the first pig that they rear together and dedicate it to the ancestral spirit considered
to be most centrally responsible for the success of their life together: producing children; establishing and maintaining a household; accumulating and exchanging wealth. When fully grown, this is sacrificed and shared with close lineal relatives of the groom (usually members of the same settlement cluster or settlement). Amongst Christians a newly married couple similarly also set aside the first pig that they rear together. When fully grown it is used for a **sore lea la**, a 'thanksgiving' to God, conducted by the Pastor, and also attended by immediate relatives and neighbours in the same church community. Through this 'thanksgiving' the couple seek the blessing and protection of God on them and their life together. In both cases we see the kind of concerns which are instilled in a young couple as they begin married life. This is the time when they are expected to take a strong interest in productive work; this now being central to their well-being and to the success of their life together.

Socially, adolescence is an outward looking period of life. There develops a strong interest in meeting others, making new social contacts, exploring more widely than the immediate home environment. In behaving in this way, young people begin to make themselves known much more widely than was possible in childhood. Becoming known is an important part of becoming a person, of acquiring a 'personal identity' (Goffman, 1972b:227). A familiar Pidgin phrase used in joking as well as abuse, illustrates this: **Hu savi long yu?** 'Who knows you?'. To be
completely unknown is to be insignificant, of no importance, not worth consideration, in short, not a person. In reality this cannot happen, but there can be large differences in the way that you are known. In growing up, everyone learns that as a person they should command a certain amount of respect and consideration from others. They also learn that this does not always come automatically; it is something over which each individual must be prepared to exercise some control. Being known by others, and knowing others, is a process surrounded by ideas of relative worth. These ideas do not fit into some kind of unidimensional framework; they are based on a wide range of different attributes, given different kinds of importance, singly or in combination, by people in different circumstances. What they represent, in effect, are various forms of achievement only more or less attainable according to individual temperament and opportunity. Ideas of relative worth and relative achievement are the basis for reputation, an aspect of social differentiation which is extremely important amongst the To'ambaita.

In discussing some of the qualities which young men admire and seek to emulate, there are at least two sets of qualities that are important. One of these has a strong basis in traditional behaviour, the other is more closely associated with Christian life and with other European influences. The first set of qualities is associated with the idea of being tough and assertive, always ready to avenge insults and to counter threats from other people.
The emphasis is on being brave and courageous, being prepared and willing to meet and counter any and all public threats and challenges, in whatever way they come. The idea is to take an aggressive and challenging attitude towards the rest of the world, and to heighten the effect of this, as much as possible, by showing complete disregard for personal safety and the consequences of one's actions. What is represented in these values is a strong urge to dominate, to see social encounters as confrontations in which it is always important to come out on top. This is very close to the Spanish, Latin American, concept of machismo, and also has strong parallels in other parts of the Pacific (Marshall, 1979). For the To'ambaita there are well recognized precedents for this kind of behaviour. It is something which was at the heart of To'ambaita ideas of manliness in the past. It was through their aggressiveness, their willingness and readiness to avenge insults, and their eagerness to throw out challenges, that men competed for status and prestige. The bravest and most renowned fighters were known as wane ramo. By their actions as assassins and bounty hunters they were able to wield tremendous influence and power in the areas in which they lived (Hogbin, 1939:94). This was something which was common throughout much of Malaita, (Ross, 1973: 190; Keesing, 1978).

Traditional ideas of manliness, as epitomized in the figure of the ramo, inevitably came under strong pressure from Christian missions and from the British
Administration. Pagans, remaining defiant for as long as they were able, saw in Christianity, ascendancy of the female side of Malaita life. Christians, as a whole, were no better than women, and were regularly abused as such. All this required that men find new meaning for themselves in the kind of life that Christianity offered. This might have been achieved more completely except that not everyone became Christian and not all Christians conformed equally readily to mission doctrine. While open exhibitions of aggressiveness are much less frequent in view of sanctions imposed by churches and by the law, and there is not the same willingness to avenge insults and to make challenges as there was in the past, there is still a lot of evidence for this behaviour. Where it is most strongly in evidence is amongst the young. What this suggests is that for many young people, traditional ideas of manliness provide a model with which they are able to closely identify and follow in their interaction with others. Significantly enough, such a model gains

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2. The following incident illustrates the kind of pressure (and the burden) put on those who became Christian. 'In reaching the Kalkie 'biu' we found a large number of men gathered, some excited, but others cool and advising rightly, but just outside the door a new arrival at school was calling on them to avenge the murder. I went to him, but just then a young Christian came rushing up from his work, stopped at the door, and leaning forward with axe and spear upraised and body quivering, began inciting the others to vengeance. Leaving the first I went to speak to him - it was terrible to see the look in his eyes. I seemed to feel a distinct opposition to me saying the name of the Lord Jesus Christ in reasoning with him, but I did, and soon he left the axe and the spear in my hands and went quietly into the 'biu'. After some time we were able to take our trouble to the Lord in prayer, and then all were calm.' (Not in Vain, 1906: 70)
much support from more recent acculturative influences: Kung Fu and Western films; the introduction of boxing and other physical sports; comics.

It is part of the argument of this thesis, that the relative importance given to different sets of values as a basis for behaviour changes throughout the life cycle. While traditional ideas of manliness are not totally dominant during adolescence and early adulthood, they are widely prevalent; much more so than amongst older people, and probably just as much in competition with the values commonly associated with older (married) life.

The following story arose during conversation amongst a group of To'amba'ita men in Honiara in 1974. The conversation turned to stories of past migratory experiences, and in the course of this, one man recounted the following incident. While it reflects admirably on his ability and his behaviour and there was no way of checking either then or subsequently on the veracity of the event described, the behaviour described by the narrator represents a display of toughness and personal courage that drew much admiration from those who heard about it.

It was in 1954, when I was serving on the 'Makila'. On that ship there was a man named Furei, a saltwater man, who was the Bosun. What is more, it was all his people who were on the ship as well. Only one other, a man named Awen was from To'amba'ita. The rest of them were friendly enough except for one thing. It was their custom as things went not to respect anyone. Their tendency was to look down on us all the time, not to treat us like men, but like something else. I noticed then, but it didn't worry me. In those days, I really felt good, and knew I was strong. Because of this, I didn't ever talk much, mainly kept quiet. Didn't laugh much either.
Sometimes I might say something, but I would say it, then keep quiet again. I wasn't used to joking and mixing it with the others, because I had a quick and violent temper. Suppose you and I were talking together and I made a mistake. We might laugh once and that would be it, not a second time. I couldn't take it, I would be angry. Well, to get back to the ship, once we were all on board and it was a holiday. The others went and got some beer, ten cases. That was a time when it was only two pound a case. They bought the beer and we all started drinking. We had drunk three cases with seven cases still to go, when a man by the name of Soe, a saltwater man, started fooling around. He did any kind, sang out, swore, knocked things over, made a lot of noise. When I heard this I began to get angry and said to him, "Friend, let us drink quietly, don't start fooling around. If you keep fooling around I will have to send you off the ship. We are responsible for this ship and you just come from on shore (he was a visitor)." Well, he heard me, and was feeling strong enough, and said "My man, don't talk to me, this is a company boat." Then another man spoke up as well, one of them, "Hey man, don't you know yet. This is Soe. He is a bad man, tough and violent." Well when he spoke, Soe heard him, and he knew that there were all his wantoks there with him. There wasn't another man from To'ombaitsa on board at the time. And so he said, "My man, don't talk, you keep quiet, just don't talk, you not fit for anything. I haven't heard anything yet that you or your father have done." Well, when I heard that my belly was really sore. But I didn't let on. "That doesn't make me angry my friend," I said. So that was going to be that. Then suddenly I leapt to my feet. At the same time he leapt to his feet as well, and as he leapt up he threw a punch at me. When his fist flew out, this made me start, and I ducked under his arm, then grabbed it as it came past, twisted it and threw him to the deck. As he landed on the deck I kicked him in the arse, then grabbed him and throw him into the sea. At the same time as he hit the water I jumped off the ship and landed on the wharf. I didn't want any of his mates to throw me in the sea as well. They were all saltwater people and could have tossed me over straight away. I am no good in the sea. So there I was on the wharf. I yelled after them, "Anyone cross, want to take me on, then come and take me on now." But no-one came down. Why then, I could have been possessed by Satan.

3. i.e. ancestral spirits.
I was someone else completely. I stamped around the wharf, thought back for Malaita, my mother and my father, far away too much. Was I going to die and they wouldn't see me again? Right then I was sweating and shaking all over. Were they going to come after me or not? There were plenty of them, and they could have killed me easily. Even so I knew I had killed someone else already, and I was feeling very strong. Something that my father had taught me, had come to me already. I knew that they were no match for me. Behind, that bloke swam ashore and climbed on board again. It was then that Furei, the Bosun spoke and told all the others to leave. "Go ashore, all of you," he said, "what you are doing is wrong. This ship is not the place for it. All of us on the ship here, we are not interested in fighting. It was you who brought that custom here. That's all right. Now you can leave." So he sent them packing. They went ashore and by that time were very angry, and yelled back at us. "Never mind, some day we will get you at Yandina." Well I waited and waited, and that day never came. Waited and waited for a day when they might show their anger and kill me but it never came. I told them: "Come the day when you want to kill me, the man that comes after me, you had better cut some hair before you come, and leave a relic for your children, save something for them to remember you by before you come after me. Suppose you try and kill me during the day, then you won't see the sunset that day; suppose you try and kill me during the night, then that night you won't see the sun rise."

I knew well then that our custom was still strong in me so it was easy for me to talk like that. I couldn't do it now. I am much older and tired. Anyhow nothing happened after that. Later on, they had a fight with Kwaio people but not with me. There were times when I tried to provoke them, make them cross, but it didn't have any effect. We worked together a lot after that but they never tried to get me back.

Quite clearly, the narrator here presents himself in a good light, totally in command of the situation, getting the better of someone else (different language group) in

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4. *Pidgin word kill* does not imply that the man is dead, merely that the person speaking has got the best of him in a fight.
a fight which he was able to provoke. The story epitomizes all the qualities of bravery and courageousness which young To'amba'ata men most admire. It is significant also that the narrator makes explicit reference to the source of his strength. It came to him from the ancestral spirits, his home place, something passed down to him through his father. This is basic to his identity as a man from Malaita. This man was brought up as a pagan, although by the time of this incident his family had become Jehovah's Witnesses and he himself would have been nominally a Christian. In reality, he was not committed to either, being a pagan or a Christian. He did find part of his pagan background particularly opposite for the life which he led living and working outside Malaita; in particular, the emphasis on physical toughness, fighting ability, being ready and capable of taking a dominant position in social encounters. In a number of ways, the narrator of this story, does in fact present himself in the style of a ramo.

Taken further, to its most extreme form, the kind of behaviour being discussed here becomes such that people become (or appear to become) totally indifferent to the rest of the world, to any kind of social commitments or social obligations. Young men often affect an air of being completely oblivious to others.

Me ... when I was darga I went in whatever way I liked. I got into fights and nearly got myself killed, but whatever I did it didn't matter. There was nothing then that worried me. I was completely free.
The idea is to be totally independent; in Pidgin, mi faatem laef bilong mi nomoa 'I am taking care of my own life'; to do things in your own way, in your own time, and, as much as possible, in total control of every situation encountered.

A second set of qualities revolves around achievements associated with Christian living, with education, wage employment, and living in town. Ever since regular contact with Europeans began, the To'ambaia have also adopted different aspects of European living - wearing clothes, washing regularly, using cutlery and other household utensils, becoming literate. Many of these practices came to be associated with mission life and with those who were Christian. In time they became more widespread, but because they often depended on cash income and other forms of contact with Europeans, and because there was not equal enthusiasm about them, their adoption became the basis for marked social differences. In these values there is a tendency to denigrate pagan life, and all things associated with the past. Amongst some it goes further than this and shows itself in contempt for many different aspects of living on Malaita - working in gardens, living in poor houses, washing in streams, cooking with fires. Originally this arose from a tendency amongst Christians to adopt mission notions of respectable and acceptable behaviour. This is still very strong on Malaita. Church teachers lead the way, as for example, in the adoption of European eating habits and in the kind of clothes which they wear; in most cases, imitating closely the behaviour of mission staff. Jehovah's Witnesses have taken this a
step further still and instruct their followers, through play and through pantomime, in the need for being clean and well-dressed, of always looking and acting in a clean and respectable manner. Only a small number of young people consciously aim to adopt such models and to follow them as closely as they can. But a much larger number of young people are influenced by these values in ways which, taken overall, point in the same direction. To be Christian, to be educated, to be literate, to keep clean and dress well; these are all things which are given a great deal of importance.

Many different points have been emphasised in describing the life of daraa. The picture presented of their position in relation to the wider society, suggests a group whose interests and concerns set them apart from the rest. This results as much from their actions as it does from the attitude which others adopt towards them. While older people see them as being on the path to adulthood and judge them in terms of values which they want them to adopt, and hence readily describe them as being irresponsible, immature, and unreliable when they fail to do this, daraa themselves make their choices in terms of immediate interests and create a way of life in which the emphasis on independence and freedom is paramount. The idea of being on the boundary depicts this well. It also comes close to the sense in which many young people see themselves. In relation to religion, for example, there is a tendency for daraa to take a very casual approach to what is demanded, to underplay the differences between them, forming
Plate 7: Migrants from Dafu and Kisike.

Plate 8: Migrants at Sunday Service, Kingdom Hall, Honiara.
friendships which cross religious boundaries, attending feasts and services on either side, and altogether taking a less serious view of adult religious practice. This is very pronounced amongst migrants. One young man from a pagan settlement said that he attended many church services when he was working on plantations. He described his position then as being 'in between the two prayers' (i ma'alutano ro fo'a eki), that is, in between pagan and Christian life. In a more general sense, being 'in between' might well describe the position that daraa, through interaction with the wider society, find themselves in.

Daraa and Migration

In numerous ways, labour migration lends itself extremely well to the interests and concerns of young men. This is something which will become very clear in later parts of this study when migrant life is described in much greater detail. Here, this aspect of migration may be discussed from the point of view of the position of young people in To'ambaita society. While their interests often put them on the periphery of adult life, being able to leave home villages and hamlets, which are centrally associated with adult life anyhow (see Strathern, 1975), makes it possible for them to pursue their inclinations much more easily than if they stayed at home. Even if they do not escape adult concerns and adult demands completely, by putting them at a distance, they can at least avoid them, or get around them much more readily than if they
were living in the same place. This can be seen in relation to normal household work. Young men living at home do not always contribute to this, but there is always the obligation to do so. By going away, this is avoided completely. The same goes for many other pressures and demands. What this means basically is that leaving home has become the ultimate expression of adolescent freedom and independence. Moreover the effectiveness of this is greatly enhanced by also being connected with the taking up of wage employment, and the opportunities which that provides for being economically independent of home. From the point of view of short-term benefits, wage employment gives young people immediate economic equality with adults living at home; in many cases, depending on the work that they are able to get, it often makes them better off. For this reason, and because it also represents productive activity, it is a form of independent action which fits in closely with adult attitudes and adult values.

All this suggests that young people go away in order to totally separate from home. On the contrary, most who go away still see themselves as part of that society they left behind. It is from this point of view that some of the other advantages connected with labour migration must be understood. What is of great relevance for dama in their relations with people at home, is that labour migration enables them to effect transformations in their personal standing - with others, and with society in general - more effectively and readily than if they stayed at home. This is related to the things which it is possible
to achieve by going away - changes in physical appearance, economic gains, special skills and abilities, the status associated with experience of the wider world, and the status associated with achievements within the work-force.

Taking up changes in physical appearance - because of the length of time which people spend away from home, the kind of work which they get involved in, the different diets which they come under, and the fact that many who go away are at an age when noticeable physical changes may be expected anyhow, migration has come to be closely associated with changes in physical appearance. It is a very widespread view that living in asefa makes young people grow faster and come to look much stronger and cleaner than if they stay at home. This is mainly attributed to the diets of imported food, especially the rice and tinned meat which have long been standard rations for wage labourers. It might be expected also that engaging in regular physical work as was the case when most people took employment on plantations, and is still the case with

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5. Making changes in bodily appearance is something, the importance of which extends into many other contexts, including some of traditional origin. Being able to effect changes is in fact a highly coveted skill amongst pagans, surrounded by many beliefs, stories and magical knowledge. One important context is found in relation to ancestral sacrifices. On these occasions, the priest/organizer (wane ni fo'a) usually separates himself from his family and the rest of those with whom he lives. In this time he neglects his appearance, lets his hair grow long, doesn't wash, and generally becomes very rough and dirty looking. This continues until at the climax of a ritual sequence, at a large public feast (mama) he makes himself as attractive and handsome as possible for a grand public re-appearance. In doing so, the aim is, to effect as great a transformation in appearance as possible.
many workers today, must play an important part in their physical development as well. Whether it is through work or through other means, young men are all very conscious of the possibilities and take a great deal of interest in different ways of improving their physical appearance. Being a visible expression of their maturity (and toughness), and basic to their recognition as adults, it assumes a great deal of significance for them. In certain cases some young men prolong the length of time which they stay away from home so as to maximize the effect of the transformation which they are able to achieve. So important is this transformation, and so closely connected with migration, that people who do not go away are said to be of much poorer appearance than others, not as good-looking and not as clean as they might otherwise be. Some put across the idea, that by staying home all the time, working continuously in the gardens and living under the kind of conditions found at home, people become prematurely old, losing the attractiveness of youth very quickly.

Besides filling out physically, people who migrate are able to enhance their appearance in other ways as well. In particular, by the clothes they wear and any possessions such as watches, sun-glasses, transistor radios and tape recorders, different kinds of bags and hats, etc. which they can display. People recently returned from abroad inevitably make themselves conspicuous in public places for a short time after their return. It is an accepted way of showing something for the experience and using whatever achievements can be displayed to draw public
attention. Even if only temporarily, migration is a way of making yourself different, enhancing your personal identity and self-esteem accordingly. This is something which has been going on throughout the history of labour movement. Here is one man from Fiti describing the way in which he dressed up for a public event just after the war (and a period of service in the SILC).

... had a watch on my hand, a special night watch (luminous dial), trousers that I had picked up at Tenaru (long kuit), a pair of American boots on my feet, a special strap that the Americans had given me, and a knife from New Zealand, one of those knives with five fingers.

In earlier times the clothes and possessions were different again, but the conspicuousness of those who wore them and the image which they were able to effect was much the same.

Discussion of clothes and personal possessions draws attention to cash income and what this means for those who go away. Amongst all the achievements made possible through migration, that which probably has the greatest importance so far as the people left at home are concerned, is cash income or whatever can be measured or equated with cash income, the jobs which people obtain, the businesses they engage in, their success with dice and other forms of gambling. Being able to obtain a regular cash income is a form of achievement in itself. Beyond that there is everything that that income makes possible. The biggest attraction for young people is not so much what they can do with that income to improve their position at home, but the way in which they are able to change their pattern of living, and also exercise much greater control over
what that pattern shall be. Basic to the pattern is 'living by money', that is, using cash for all basic requirements. What this means also, to a greater or lesser extent, is being drawn into forms of consumer living and consumer spending which have a great deal of enjoyment in themselves and which are made possible by regular incomes. Hence a life of attending movies, dances, and other forms of entertainment, buying new and fashionable clothes, drinking and smoking regularly, eating prepared foods regularly, riding in taxis and buses, and indulging in whatever else town and other places of wage employment offer. Not available at home, or only available to a lesser extent, this is the kind of life that many young people find attractive. Being based on a high level of personal spending, it is particularly associated with the young, they being at an age when that kind of behaviour is most easily pursued.

In the life which has been made possible through migration there are other aspects with particular relevance for young people. They go back to what was discussed earlier about interaction amongst peers and the sex-specific nature of much daraa behaviour. Because of the number of people who go away and the way in which they have established themselves in places of employment, migration sets up ideal opportunities for unrestrained interaction amongst young men, and the pursuit of those things which interest them. Depending on the circumstances of movement and employment, it is common to spend most, if not all the time travelling, living in the company of peers and with other men,
Plate 9: Manakwai migrants, low-cost house Bokonafera.

Plate 10: Hanging around Chinatown.
(including people from other language groups). Labour quarters found on plantations and in town, have much of the character of men's houses or bachelor rooms; places for friendly, informal interaction, venues for drinking and gambling, havens of security amongst numerous strangers in a very public world. When brought together in these places, relations with peers are heighted by the extended range of experiences and challenges which they are able to share together. Expanded in this way, this world of experience and interaction opens up much wider alternatives than would otherwise have been possible. Having more choices greatly enhances people's feeling of independence and freedom.

Clues to all this come from many sources. In particular there are the periodic conversations which take place, largely amongst men, in which they recall and share their experiences. While these conversations and participation in them, is an activity which takes place amongst equals, there is an undertone of rivalry in what people are able to recount, and in the uniqueness of what they are able to contribute. What is clear from this is that the world over which men now establish their reputations is a very wide one, extending far beyond the confines of the To'ambaita area; and a critical period for pursuing the experiences which contribute to reputations is when men are daraa, the period when they are most mobile and most free to try out new experiences and try themselves.
Chapter Six

THE GROWTH OF HONIARA

Amongst the main urban centres of the Pacific, the town of Honiara is one of the youngest and smallest in the region. In 1974 it was just over thirty years old, and had a population of nearly 14,000 people, less than eight per cent of the total population of the Solomon Islands. Relatively small and new in regional terms, Honiara looms very large within the Solomon Islands. It is the only urban centre of any significance throughout the Archipelago, and as such, has played a major political and economic role in the development of the country and in the working through of political independence.

Since it first came into existence, Honiara has been drawing migrants from most island and language groups throughout the Solomon Islands. For most of the time that the town has been in existence, Solomon Islanders have made up a majority of its inhabitants. Yet for a long time they have also occupied a very marginal position in the life of the town. They provided labour in return for which they enjoyed very few rights and privileges. Honiara was essentially a European enclave, representative of European interests and European concerns. In recent times, Melanesians have begun to play a more prominent and significant role in the life of the town. The slow devolution of power preceding Independence, gradually increased the opportunities open to them, and removed some of the restrictions surrounding their position in town. Interaction between Honiara and the Solomon Island
hinterland grew as a result, enabling transformations which contributed to the distinctiveness of Honiara as a Melanesian town.

There are, in effect, two sides to Honiara's history: the over-riding influence of colonial rule which has dominated the life of the town throughout much of its existence; and the growth in numbers and in importance of its Solomon Islander population, forging a new tradition of urban living out of their wide cultural diversity and their recent social history. This experience has been adaptive and innovative. Honiara is a place which has fostered a new dynamic in Solomon Island experience, with on-going implications for the total population on which it draws.

In this chapter Honiara will be introduced and described, with special emphasis on the two sides of Honiara's history and growth. The picture presented here, and the issues, set the background for understanding To'ambaita experience. Through constant migration to town, the To'ambaita have participated closely in its history and been involved in all the changes which Melanesians, as a group, have experienced.

The Making of a Colonial Town

For over forty years from the time when, in 1896, a Resident Commissioner was first posted to the Solomon Islands, the headquarters of the British Administration and the main centre of European activity in the group, was at Tulagi, in the Florida Islands. In keeping with a stable
administrative presence, and minimal economic growth, Tulagi remained a small settlement, of little consequence beyond the fact that it was the seat of administrative power. During the war it was evacuated, and subsequently suffered heavy damage from Japanese air raids. When the war ended, the British were based temporarily at Lungga, on North Guadalcanal, working in co-operation with the American command. The Americans had established an extensive military complex on the northern coast of Guadalcanal, one of the largest supply and transit bases established during the Pacific campaign. Rather than return to Tulagi and rehabilitate the old town, the British decided to take over some of the American facilities, and set up new administrative headquarters on Guadalcanal. Hence the Solomons found itself with a new capital, created out of a war surplus military camp (Tedder, 1956; Bellam, 1970).

As in pre-war times, the needs of the Administration provided the main rationale for having a small centralized town in the Solomon Islands, and it was the Administration which largely dictated the form taken by the town, and the rate at which it proceeded to grow. Commercial development was very slow, as two of the largest companies involved in commercial trading in the Solomon Islands before the war did not take up operations there again when the war ended. Government stepped in to try and fill the gap with a small Trading Corporation, but beyond this, and a handful of Chinese traders, the town attracted very little commercial interest during the first few years of its existence. The slow rate of development continued for nearly fifteen
years. For much of that time, government spending was tied to internal revenue (Bellam, 1970: 72), and the town grew very little beyond the basic infrastructure originally acquired from the Americans. In 1959, the population stood at 3,548, less than three per cent of the Solomon Island total (McArthur, 1961).

But even as the 1959 census was being taken, things were beginning to change. The late 1950s and early 1960s saw a change in policy towards the Solomon Islands, and large increases in the level of aid coming from Britain. Many new government building projects were begun in Honiara, and this investment initiated a period of growth and expansion which has continued through to the present day. With this new investment and with the increasing importance given to government services, the role of the town as a centre of government administration and government authority, remained dominant. But there were many opportunities for private enterprise to exploit as well, and there were parallel developments in this sector contributing to the overall growth which took place during this time. Between 1959 and 1965 the population of Honiara almost doubled; by 1971 it had tripled, reaching 11,191 (Groenewegen, 1973). In the latest inter-censal period, between 1970 and 1976, the rate of growth is not as high as during the 1960s, but at 5.6 per cent, it is still nearly two per cent higher than the rate of growth for the country as a whole.

The development which took place from the early 1960s onwards was not confined to Honiara itself, but enveloped the immediate hinterland as well. Northern Guadalcanal
became an important growth area, attracting new investment and many new forms of productive activity. The main concentration of activity was on the Guadalcanal Plains, a rich and fertile part of the coast located a short distance east of Honiara. It is an area which has drawn a lot of interest from Government and commercial companies alike ever since the earliest days of European settlement. Europeans began acquiring land in the area from 1896 onwards, and by 1920 had alienated a total of 55,883 acres (Lasaqa, 1972: 34). Some of this land was put into commercial copra production. More recently, with encouragement from Government, it has become the site for rice, oil palm, and cattle industries. All of this development is controlled by overseas companies, and in total, it represents a significant concentration of foreign investment in the country as a whole.

While foreign companies and expatriate planters have taken the dominant role in commercial agricultural production on northern Guadalcanal, hinterland development has not been left totally in their hands. The rehabilitation and extension of war-time roads greatly improved access to Honiara for indigenous producers as well. Since the early 1960s, indigenous production has turned more and more towards the production of garden crops for sale in Honiara market, and this is now the most important source of income for a large proportion of the population living within reach of the town (Bathgate, 1978a, 1978b). Indigenous Guadalcanal residents are the main producers, but those involved in this include many migrant groups as well, including a number of Malaita migrants. This has become one line of interest stimulating further migrant settlement in and around Honiara.
Figure 6  HONIARA, SHOWING SUBURBS AND MAIN TEMPORARY HOUSING AREAS WITHIN AND IMMEDIATELY OUTSIDE TOWN BOUNDARY

Source: Lands and Surveys Dept., Honiara, 1969.  (Boundary redrawn to show present town limits.)
The township of Honiara extends over an area covering six miles along the coast and one mile inland; in total approximately 4,500 acres. Within this area there is a narrow coastal plain, less than a quarter of a mile wide, which gives way to steep grass-covered hills, dissected by narrow valleys reticulating inland. A main road runs from east to west along the coastal plain, and provides access to the Guadalcanal hinterland on either side of the town. Nearly all the commercial and industrial development which has taken place in Honiara, as well as many of the administrative officers, educational institutions and other institutional facilities in town, are located along this main road. If there is a centre, it is around the Point Cruz port area, the place where all residents from beyond Guadalcanal, and many from Guadalcanal itself, embark and disembark on ships which service other islands and the Guadalcanal coast. In an area one mile either side of Point Cruz, all the largest commercial businesses are located, a large number of administrative offices, churches, a cinema, and the main produce market. Some light industry is located in the main part of town, the rest is located in the suburb of Kukum, three miles to the east. On the road to Kukum, one mile from Point Cruz, on the Matanikau River, is the commercial area of Chinatown, made up of numerous small trade stores, owned and operated by Chinese businessmen (see Figures 6 and 7).

Residential development in Honiara has gone through a number of phases and provides explicit expression of some of the more entrenched social divisions that grew up with the town. In the early period of the town's growth the
Source: Redrawn from Lands and Surveys map 967b, Honiara, Guadalcanal, Scale 1:10,000.
effect of government policy was to create racially segregated residential areas. The main division was between areas of 'low density' European housing, and areas of 'high density' Solomon Islander housing (Bellam, 1970:77). Political Independence and the advancement of Solomon Islanders within the government bureaucracy, means that the most expensive housing is no longer the exclusive preserve of whites; nonetheless, housing development continues to reflect broad differences in socio-economic status amongst the town's population. The suburbs originally set aside for Europeans are located on the ridges above the coastal plain and along the foreshore to the west of the main town centre. Consisting of large expensive houses, laid out on a pattern representative of middle class suburban Australia, these suburbs continue to be the most exclusive residential areas in town.

The residential areas in which Solomon Islanders predominate, fall into three main categories. There is the institutional housing provided largely for single men, and consisting of barrack-type buildings and dormitories used to house single workers, police recruits, students, and other residents accommodated in large numbers. The heaviest concentration of these quarters is in the suburb of Kukum, on the eastern side of town. Constructed during the early 1960s, and controlled by several large employers, this became the first large suburb given over to Solomon Island accommodation. As such it took on the appearance of an extensive labour camp, housing the majority of workers employed in town. In recent years, as other types of housing have become available, the pressure on these quarters has eased,
and the proportion of the town's population living in them has been decreasing.

Secondly, there are numerous small housing estates, made up of low cost family houses, built by Government and the Solomon Islands' Housing Authority. Most of these estates have been sited in the valleys which extend inland from the coastal plain. There are up to ninety houses in each estate, and originally they were planned with the intention of encouraging some degree of communal autonomy in each. There is little evidence of this now, except on anything but an informal basis. Each of the estates is ethnically mixed, and each forms a dormitory suburb for residents who regularly work in and visit other parts of town. Communal facilities include little else but small retail stores, and in some cases, primary schools. These estates now comprise the main form of family housing available to Solomon Islanders, and have come to account for an increasing proportion of the town's population.

A third form of residential development in Honiara consists of settlements and housing areas, designated as village areas. In these places, building sites are leased from the Government, and people are able to construct houses with minimal restrictions on design and materials. In many cases bush materials are used, and traditional forms of construction followed. Some of these settlements take the form of urban villages, made up of people from the same rural localities. They began as squatter settlements, but have now been granted legal occupancy rights. Other areas are ethnically more diverse. Besides the three forms of
housing just described, other Solomon Islanders live in more dispersed quarters, provided by employers, and attached to places of employment. This includes domestic servants and store assistants living in European suburbs and in commercial areas, as well as factory hands and other workers living in areas of light industry.

Like other Melanesian towns (Brookfield, 1971: 394), population growth in Honiara has been largely the result of migration. Prior to the Japanese invasion of Guadalcanal in 1941, there was only one Melanesian village, the village of Mataniko, on the site presently taken up by the town (Bellam, 1970: 72). Continuing to live in the vicinity of the town, these villagers are the only truly indigenous inhabitants of the area. The majority of the population is from elsewhere, drawn from many different places, within and outside the Solomon Islands. Having a migrant population, Honiara is marked by racial and ethnic diversity. The main groups from outside the Solomon Islands are Europeans (mostly from Britain, Australia and New Zealand), Chinese, Micronesians (from Kiribati and Nauru), and Fijians (Table 6.1). From within the Solomon Islands, there are people from every main island and language group (Melanesian and Polynesian) throughout the territory (Table 6.2). In the growth of the town, and in the organization of social and economic services, racial divisions - between Europeans, Chinese and Solomon Islanders in particular - have figured much more prominently than ethnic divisions between Solomon Islanders. This follows from the position occupied by each racial group within the political and economic structure of the town, and of the country as a whole. Up until the time
### TABLE 6.1

**POPULATION OF HONIARA: MAIN RACIAL GROUPS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1959 (Nov.)</th>
<th>1965 (Oct.)</th>
<th>1970 (Feb.)</th>
<th>1976 (Feb.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Melanesian</td>
<td>2618</td>
<td>n.a. (iii)</td>
<td>8621</td>
<td>12051</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polynesian</td>
<td>125</td>
<td></td>
<td>616</td>
<td>875</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Micronesian(i)</td>
<td>14</td>
<td></td>
<td>350</td>
<td>347</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race</th>
<th>1959 (Nov.)</th>
<th>1965 (Oct.)</th>
<th>1970 (Feb.)</th>
<th>1976 (Feb.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Solomon Islanders</td>
<td>2817</td>
<td>5406</td>
<td>9537</td>
<td>13273</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>European</td>
<td>363</td>
<td>624</td>
<td>796</td>
<td>914</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>266</td>
<td>444</td>
<td>482</td>
<td>368</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others and not stated(ii)</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>240</td>
<td>326</td>
<td>387</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TOTAL**        | 3543         | 6684        | 11191       | 14942       |

**Notes:**

(i) Gilbertese  
(ii) Includes Fijians, Part-European, and Part-Chinese  
(iii) n.a. Not available

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Council Area of Birth</th>
<th>No. Living in Honiara</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Males</td>
<td>Females</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shortlands</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choiseul</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vella Lavella</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roviana</td>
<td>208</td>
<td>103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maroivo</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>WESTERN DISTRICT</strong></td>
<td>545</td>
<td>235</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malaita</td>
<td>2861</td>
<td>1322</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pelau</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luaniua</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sikaiana</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MALAITA DISTRICT</strong></td>
<td>2939</td>
<td>1369</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Area</td>
<td>Population</td>
<td>Houses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
<td>--------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guadalcanal</td>
<td>1264</td>
<td>887</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ngela</td>
<td>271</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Savo</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Santa Isabel</td>
<td>360</td>
<td>177</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Munggaba-Munggiki</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russell Is.</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CENTRAL DISTRICT</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Houses</th>
<th>Population Density</th>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Total Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Makira</td>
<td>174</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>244</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>244</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ulawa</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Santa Cruz</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reef Is.</td>
<td>197</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>215</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>215</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vanikoro</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utupua</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anuta</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tikopia</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>107</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EASTERN DISTRICT</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Houses</th>
<th>Population Density</th>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Total Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>6122</td>
<td>3033</td>
<td>9155</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>155650</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

of this study, just prior to Independence, the three groups formed a racially-stratified hierarchy; the separate divisions of which were readily apparent in different aspects of Honiara life.

Bellam (1970) has described the way in which this hierarchy manifested itself during the 1950s and 1960s. Expatriate whites occupied the highest strata. They were employed by Government or by overseas companies with branches in the Solomon Islands. A small number were self-employed. Those who worked with Government were employed to provide administrative and professional skills required in the setting up and running of different branches of the Administration. Occupying higher level positions throughout, they were the elite in a slowly expanding bureaucracy. In the private sector as well, Europeans also filled higher level executive and professional positions, so that all in all, a pattern existed in which all government departments, private commercial firms, and various other urban institutions, such as churches, and sporting groups, were all run and controlled by expatriate whites. In Honiara urban society they occupied positions of greatest authority and responsibility. It followed that their incomes were so much higher than the incomes of Solomon Islanders as well. With other benefits and privileges, they were able to enjoy a

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1. Bellam gives figures for wage disparities in 1966. Solomon Islanders had an average annual wage of $360; European families $5,500 - over fifteen times the Solomon Island figure (1970:82). For the majority of Solomon Island workers, on the minimum basic wage in town, the disparities were much greater than this.
standard of living much higher than any other group working in the Solomon Islands. Notwithstanding this, European residents were not a very stable population. Many were employed on short term contracts, many were subject to periodic transfers, within and outside the Solomon Islands. This made them a relatively mobile population, only living temporarily in the Solomons. As such they were not expected to have a strong commitment to the town and its long term development.

Chinese residents in Honiara occupied an intermediate position in the urban hierarchy. Being brought to the Solomons originally as artisans (Jaracy, 1974), they had much less prestige than whites. Most were self-employed and worked as traders and commerical agents. Being self-employed and being residents of two to three generations standing in the Solomon Islands, they were amongst the most stable and permanent residents in town during the 1950s and 1960s. This began to change in the years leading up to Independence as many families decided to emigrate. By organizing a large number of their businesses in the same locality, Chinatown, the Chinese give the appearance of being a strong close-knit community. In truth, businesses are organized mainly along family lines and there is strong competition between them. The most successful businesses, by no means confined to Chinatown, are amongst the largest in the Solomons, operating plantations, trading and passenger boats, light industry of various kinds, cinemas, taxis, restaurants, transport businesses, as well as trade stores and supermarkets.
On the lowest level of the hierarchy and much more numerous than everyone else were Solomon Islanders. In the 1950s and 1960s, most Solomon Islanders worked as wage earners in town, employed by Government, by commercial firms, and by European and Chinese householders. Up until 1958 a large number of those who worked in town were recruited for work in their home areas, and only took work on a temporary basis. They were engaged in unskilled and semi-skilled work, for which they were paid a 'bachelor wage' (Sykes, 1958:29). By 1960, except for the Ports Authority, recruiting for town work had largely ceased, and people seeking work there travelled independently. There was still a high rate of turnover of urban workers, and they continued to be a very transient population. The overwhelming majority of the Solomon Island population during this time were young, single men, or married men who had left their families at home. Discriminatory legislation and the discriminatory behaviour of Europeans and Chinese, severely circumscribed the range of their activities in town, and of all residents there, they were the least committed to urban living.

The position of different racial groups in Honiara follows directly from the dominant role played by Government in the administration of the town, in its development, and in the organization of many of the social activities associated with it. Like other Pacific Island towns, Honiara grew up as a town 'administered by expatriates, for expatriates, and according to expatriate models' (Ward, 1973:367). To begin with, Government owned 90 per cent of the land taken up by the town, and therefore had a free hand in its planning and development. While there was
very little evidence of long term planning in the early years, what did take place - in the organization of residential areas in particular - came to reflect the rigidly hierarchical relations of a colonial society. Such relations were accentuated by the high priority given to expatriate housing. Government devoted almost half of its expenditure on housing to its expatriate staff, even though they only made up ten per cent of the payroll (Bellam 1970: 73). Up until 1958 the town was administered directly by the District Commissioner for the Central Solomons. When the first Honiara Town Council was formed in that year, it was composed of members nominated entirely by the High Commissioner. It wasn't until 1969 that elections were conducted for the Council (ibid, 76). Representation at the national level has been equally slow in emerging. In the old Legislative Council (1960-1969), Honiara was represented by expatriate Australians, originally nominated, and later elected. In 1970, a Solomon Island trade union organizer, Peter Salaka, was elected to represent Honiara in the newly formed Governing Council, the first time that the majority of the town's residents achieved direct representation at the national level.

Government was also the largest employer in town, and as a consequence, took a leading role in the determination of wage rates, and in defining housing policy. Both of these matters had a critical influence on the position of Melanesians in town. While the majority of workers were in unskilled employment, getting a 'bachelor wage' and being offered bachelor accommodation, there was little encouragement to commit themselves to regular wage employment
and to long term residence in town. It was only when
government policy changed that the position of Melanesians
in town could improve. The period when this began to take
place was during the 1960s. What the main changes were,
and the way in which they affected the life of Melanesians
is discussed in the next section.

Melanesians in Honiara

Since Honiara was established there has been one major
study carried out amongst the Melanesian population of the
When this study was conducted, the town was still relatively
small. There were probably just over 4000 resident Solomon
Islanders (Table 6.1), and those who were in employment,
were largely confined to unskilled and semi-skilled jobs.
Later studies of movement to Honiara from different parts
of Guadalcanal were carried out in the mid 1960s (Chapman,
1970), and in 1971 (Bathgate, 1975). In describing the
position of Melanesians in Honiara, both Bellam and Chapman
draw attention to their peripheral position within urban
society; the fact that restrictive government policies
supported by a compliant commercial sector, gave them few
options for participating in the urban economy, few
alternatives in their living arrangements. They provide
strong evidence in support of the view that Melanesians in
Honiara were a very transient population.

In a sample of 120 workers which he interviewed in 1962,
Bellam found that 66 per cent had been in town for less
than three years (1964: 46). When broken down in terms of
occupation, the figure for lower paid workers - the
majority of workers in town - was much higher than this.
Amongst labourers, domestic servants, and semi-skilled
workers, 33 per cent were residents of less than three
years standing. Of all the labourers interviewed, only
three per cent had been living in town for longer than six
years. Investigating movement from the Weather Coast in
1965-66, Chapman found that villagers who took working
visits to Honiara, averaged only seven months working in
town. The sample upon which these findings are based is
small, nineteen men and three women, and only includes
people without special occupational skills or formal
educational experience. Nonetheless, their experience is
summed up with the conclusion that stays of over twelve
months in Honiara were considered to be exceptional (1969: 134).
Supporting this picture of temporary residence in town is
other evidence, provided by both Bellam and Chapman,
showing that Solomon Islanders living in town at that time,
were strongly orientated towards their home villages, the
majority of them intending to return to those villages
within a short period of time.

This picture of a highly transient population of
Solomon Islanders living in Honiara during the early 1960s
is a very persuasive one. Nevertheless it is also clear
that some workers were staying on in employment longer
than others, and that there was some degree of variability
in the behaviour and attitudes of the population. There
was in fact, in 1962, a small minority of workers, more
committed to urban employment and urban residence than the
rest. The main thing that separated them from everyone
else is that they were better educated and more qualified, and occupied higher level positions within the urban work force (Bellan, 1964). Prolonged residence in town was associated with upward job mobility.

The 1960s were a period of rapid population growth in Honiara. Between 1959 and 1970, the number of Solomon Islanders in town tripled, by 1976 it had quadrupled (Table 6.1). The view of some is that with this rapid growth, the number of Solomon Islanders prolonging their stay in town was also increasing (Hughes, 1969). Solomon Islanders were becoming more committed to long term urban residence. With the evidence from his village studies, Chapman disputes such claims. His conclusion is that despite population increase, Solomon Islanders in town were no less mobile than previously (1969: 132-133). Taken further, the assumption here is that population growth during this period is more the result of an increase in the volume of people travelling to town, rather than any change in the length of time which people were spending in town.

In view of the many changes which were taking place in Honiara at this time, this view of Solomon Island movement is contrary to what might be expected. In certain vital areas of urban living, in housing, and in employment, opportunities changed in such a way as to encourage more permanent urban residence. Given that there is already some evidence for more protracted residence amongst Solomon Islanders in town from the work of Bellan in 1962, it would seem important to consider whether this is part of a trend which gradually becomes more pronounced. Such an
argument would be strengthened if opportunities for upward socio-economic mobility were also expanding during this period.

In the remainder of this chapter, changes affecting the position of Melanesians in Honiara between 1962 and 1974 will be taken up and discussed. Particular attention will be given to changes affecting the position of Melanesians in the urban economy, and changes in housing policy. How Melanesians responded to these changes is something which can only be discussed in detail for the To'ambaita and will form the subject of later chapters. Evidence presented so far for the To'ambaita, demonstrates that in the 1960s and early 1970s, some migrants were gradually prolonging their residence in town, staying away from home much longer than in the past, while at the same time, the volume of people travelling to town increased as well, with a high rate of circulation between Honiara and Malaita.

In making an interpretation of the position of Melanesians in Honiara during the 1960s and early 1970s, a factor which has a lot of bearing on the subject is the nature of interaction between Honiara and rural areas. Most studies, including this one, show that Melanesians have taken up urban employment while also maintaining close ties with rural villages. If Melanesians are beginning to extend the period of their residence in town, then the question arises, as to whether this also means a weakening in their attachment to places of origin. Both Bellam and Chapman present evidence bearing on the rural orientation of urban residents in support of their argument for seeing Solomon Island town dwellers as transient residents. The
assumption is that there is a close correlation between length of residence in town and rural orientation. An argument of this thesis is that there is much more variability in this relationship than has so far been recognized; it is not as clear cut as has been assumed. At the two extremes of migratory behaviour the relationship is straightforward. At one extreme, we have villagers who make short trips for specific objectives and return home when those objectives have been met. At the other extreme, we have migrants who leave home permanently, and settle in town without any intention of ever returning to the place from which they came. In between these two extremes, are people who leave home for varying periods, often indefinite about when they will return, and who exhibit a range of attitudes and feelings and behaviour towards rural places of origin. Some extend their stays in town over long periods while continuing to be strongly attached to home villages. What we are looking at here are relationships which are much more variable than has been recognized. This indicates adaptability as well, an aspect of behaviour which should not be neglected during periods of rapid social change.

The main stimulus for population growth in Honiara during the 1960s, was an expanding demand for workers. New opportunities opened up within the urban economy. Between 1930 and 1970, the total officially enumerated workforce in town expanded three and a half times from...
1,411 to 5,041 (Table 6.3). It is estimated that Solomon Islanders comprised between 80 and 90 per cent of the work-force. While the public and private sectors of the economy expanded in parallel, Government remained the largest employer throughout this period. Growth of the public sector was related to political and economic changes leading up to Independence. The number of Solomon Island Civil Servants working in Honiara grew from 320 in 1956, to 580 in 1966 (Bellam, 1970: 74). By 1973 the number had reached 907 (Civil List, 1973). It is estimated that throughout this period Civil Servants made up between 15 and 20 per cent of the total number of Solomon Islanders working in Honiara. Government employment in the Civil Service, with its numerous graded levels, provided the prototype for hierarchical relations in town. It also provided an important measure of the opportunities for upward mobility within the urban social order. Higher level Civil Servants, with good incomes and access to better housing, became the new elite amongst Solomon Island workers.

Outside the Civil Service, government employment extended to a large force of labourers, tradesmen and supervisory staff, employed by several urban-based departments. Right through until the time of this study, the

2. Enumeration of the work-force by the Department of Labour, began in 1959. It was confined to employers with ten or more workers, and so does not include many categories of workers, e.g. domestic servants, store assistants, etc. As well as this the method of enumeration was changed in 1965, distorting any comparison before and after this date (Department of Labour, Annual Reports, 1959 - 1970). Despite this, as the only statistics available, and as an indication of broad trends, the figures are useful.
**TABLE 6.3**

**ENUMERATED EMPLOYEES IN HONIARA**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Solomon Islanders</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Non-Solomon Islanders</th>
<th></th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>125</td>
<td></td>
<td>4237</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1411</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1962</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4329</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1388</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1963</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4352</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1631</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1964</td>
<td>603</td>
<td>204</td>
<td>4329</td>
<td>603</td>
<td></td>
<td>1388</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1965</td>
<td>496</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>4376</td>
<td>169</td>
<td></td>
<td>665</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1966</td>
<td>525</td>
<td>203</td>
<td>4131</td>
<td>209</td>
<td></td>
<td>734</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1967</td>
<td>502</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>4555</td>
<td>691</td>
<td></td>
<td>5246</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1968</td>
<td>418</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>571</td>
<td>5198</td>
<td></td>
<td>5198</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1969</td>
<td>445</td>
<td>143</td>
<td>588</td>
<td>5041</td>
<td></td>
<td>5041</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>4044</td>
<td>302</td>
<td>4329</td>
<td>4932</td>
<td></td>
<td>4932</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>4125</td>
<td>204</td>
<td>4329</td>
<td>5041</td>
<td></td>
<td>5041</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1972</td>
<td>4237</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>4376</td>
<td>4915</td>
<td></td>
<td>4915</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1973</td>
<td>3978</td>
<td>203</td>
<td>4181</td>
<td>5246</td>
<td></td>
<td>5246</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1974</td>
<td>4319</td>
<td>236</td>
<td>4555</td>
<td>5198</td>
<td></td>
<td>5198</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Department employing the largest number of workers was the Public Works Department (PWD). They employed over 600 workers in 1974 (Table 6.4), nearly 14 per cent of the enumerated work-force for that year. Taken together, the Civil Service and the PWD provide a good indication of what was happening to the urban work-force during this period and a measure of the influence which Government was able to exercise. In wages policy, and in the provision of opportunities for advancement, Government took a leading role. Their dominating influence over the urban economy remained unchallenged throughout this period.

Opportunities for advancement expanded in the 1960s, but only expanded in selective ways. In the Civil Service, it depended a great deal on education and on opportunities for further training. In the PWD this was still the case, except that limited opportunities opened up for those without any formal educational qualifications as well. Examined more closely, the PWD provides a good illustration of the degree of upward movement that was possible for the average urban worker during the 1960s and early 1970s.

During the 1950s, labour for this Department was mostly obtained through recruiting of workers on short-term contracts. Most were employed as unskilled labourers and there was little concern about the high rate of turnover. By the end of the 1950s, sufficient labour was offering at the gate for recruiting to be no longer necessary. This meant that men were now taking on employment in town under a much more open-ended arrangement than existed previously.
# Table 6.4

## Public Works Department, Work-Force, Honiara

1962 and 1972

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Labourers</th>
<th>Classified Workers</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>Level 1</td>
<td>Level 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1962</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1972</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: CCL to Acting Chief Sec. 11.3.63

During the early 1960s, the high rate of turnover characteristic of the previous decade continued. In 1962, for example, it is estimated that 61 per cent of labourers employed by the PWD, stayed on the job for less than 12 months. Despite this, there were some men who were staying on longer than before and a small core of stable workers began to grow within what was otherwise a highly mobile work-force.

In order to raise the level of skill amongst PWD workers, and to encourage a stronger commitment to regular employment, Government introduced a scheme in 1960 for grading workers according to skill and experience. At the same time they made sure that the average worker had the opportunity to achieve promotion within the structure so created. To get promotion, workers were required to pass graded trade tests. At higher levels they had to show supervisory ability as well. Those who passed these tests were known as classified workers. Within each level of skill, workers were differentiated according to the number of years of service, each extra year of service commanding another increment of salary, up to the maximum for that level. Originally there were three main grades of classified workers; later, a fourth was introduced and the scope for differentiation widened further. Under this system, on-the-job training was introduced to assist workers to reach the standard necessary for promotion. Figures for the number of workers employed as labourers and classified workers in 1962 (Table 5.4), suggest that first level promotion was in the grasp of at least 50 per cent of workers, but that higher level promotion was much
more difficult. The number of workers employed by the PWD throughout the 1960s is shown in Table 6.4. What this shows is that the proportion of classified workers to labourers gradually increases, as the total number of workers increases. In other words, the average level of skill, and of income, amongst PWD workers shifted upwards over the period from 1962 until the early 1970s. Opportunities for advancement, at least to the first level of trade proficiency, grew as the total number of workers grew. From the point of view of increasing worker stability, the significance of this is that the income of the average PWD worker moved closer towards a wage on which it was easier to look after a family in town.3

The classified worker system gave encouragement to workers who were able to demonstrate the necessary skill and experience. It was a system which came to be recognized by private employers as well, who stood to gain from an increase in the number of skilled workers entering the work-force. Information collected amongst town workers in 1974, suggests that there was a certain amount of movement from the PWD into private sector employment (much more than in the other direction), between 1962 and 1974, so that the scope for upward mobility was much wider than PWD figures alone suggest. To the extent that some degree

---

3. PWD wage rates in 1974, were considerably above the minimum wage recommended by the Wages Advisory Board in 1974, ($21.69 per month) and the estimated average wage ($25 per month). (Report of the Wages Advisory Board of the BSIP, 25 July, 1974, Report 2). PWD Labourers began on $29.70 per month, and received $35.20 after three years service. Class 1 classified workers began on $38.50 per month.
of upward movement was within the grasp of at least 50 per cent of workers, the system was also a form of encouragement towards greater worker stability, and it is this aspect of PWD experience which must be examined now.

Comparing the length of service amongst workers in 1962 with workers in 1974 (Table 6.5), it was found that workers in 1974 overall had a much longer record of service with the Department. Whereas in 1962, the average length of service for all workers is 2.6 years, the average length of service in 1974 is 6.1 years. In 1962, only 19.1 per cent of workers had been with the department for more than five years, in 1974 the number of workers in the same category is 50.1 per cent. In the same year 11 per cent of all workers had more than ten years experience with the department.

As might be expected in an hierarchical organization of this kind, the average length of service increases as you move up the different levels of the hierarchy, from labourers to classified workers. There is not the information here to work out the proportion of labourers who become classified workers. It is not an automatic promotion, even though large numbers achieve it. What Table 6.5 suggests is that, whether they receive promotion or not, nearly 87 per cent of labourers do not work as labourers for more than five years, and none at all for more than eight years. Even though the average length of service amongst labourers in 1974 is longer than in 1962, it is not a great deal longer, and it would appear that employment at this level is still relatively temporary.

In discussing changes in the Honiara work-force
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Labourers</th>
<th>Classification Workers</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>No.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1962</td>
<td>228</td>
<td>50.6</td>
<td>223</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1963</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td></td>
<td>n.a.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1964</td>
<td>222</td>
<td>49.2</td>
<td>229</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1965</td>
<td>244</td>
<td>51.6</td>
<td>229</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1966</td>
<td>260</td>
<td>53.8</td>
<td>223</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1967</td>
<td>217</td>
<td>43.3</td>
<td>278</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1968</td>
<td>274</td>
<td>42.9</td>
<td>364</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1969</td>
<td>344</td>
<td>47.1</td>
<td>336</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>292</td>
<td>42.4</td>
<td>398</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td></td>
<td>n.a.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1972</td>
<td>257</td>
<td>36.5</td>
<td>448</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1973</td>
<td>208</td>
<td>32.9</td>
<td>424</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1974</td>
<td>185</td>
<td>30.5</td>
<td>422</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: Figures for 1962 - 1970 taken from PMD Annual Reports.
Figures for 1972 - 1974 from employee records: they are an average of monthly returns. The 1974 figures are based on the average of returns for January and March only.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>13 -14</td>
<td>14 -15</td>
<td>15 -16</td>
<td>16 -17</td>
<td>17 -18</td>
<td>18 -19</td>
<td>Over 20 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| 188    | 99.9   | 84     | 99.9   | 194    | 99.9   | 142         | 99.8   | 382    | 99.9   | 226    | 99.9   |

Notes: The 1962 figures are based on a survey conducted by the Commissioner of Labour in that year. See COL to Acting Chief Secretary, 11.5.63. The 1974 figures are based on information taken from PWD workers' cards. They include workers in two sections of the PWD, the Roads and Bridges section, and the Maintenance section. They are the two largest sections of the PWD, and include an estimated 40% of all workers for the PWD in Honiara.
between 1960 and 1974, there is not the same evidence available for understanding change in the private sector as there is for the public sector. During the 1960s, the number of overseas owned and European controlled businesses, and the number of Chinese controlled businesses employing Solomon Islanders in Honiara, grew. They ranged from building and construction firms, to wholesale and retailing companies, to those engaged in the manufacturing of food, tobacco, soft drinks, and furniture. In industries such as the building industry, the demand for skilled workers opened up considerable opportunities for advancement; in wholesaling and retailing, and in processing and manufacturing, such opportunities were much less significant. Wages being so low, businesses and private householders could afford to be labour intensive; this meant that the greater number of opportunities lay in low-paying work. Taking into account the large number of people employed in domestic service — probably around ten per cent of Solomon Islanders employed in Honiara — and also the large number of people employed as store assistants, and in other similar work, it can be assumed that much of the growth in the private sector, meant an increase in the number of low-paying jobs, more than higher level positions. For career employment generally, the private sector was much less attractive and more limited in what was available, compared with Government. One exception to this, and a development which affected employment prospects for unskilled

4. In 1962 there were 328 full time domestic servants employed in Honiara (Department of Labour Annual Report, 1962); in 1966 an estimated 450 (Bellam, 1970:84).
and semi-skilled workers, was the establishment of industries offering higher than average wages for specialized work. In the early 1970s, the newly established Taiyo Fishing Company, was a big attraction from this point of view. Men employed on catcher boats earned several times the basic wage in town.

One of the most significant changes accompanying urban economic growth, was greater differentiation amongst Solomon Island workers. Whereas in 1960, over 50 per cent of workers were in unskilled employment and earning little more than the basic minimum wage, by the end of the decade unskilled workers comprised less than 50 per cent of the work-force. Honiara gradually developed a more open system of mobility for Solomon Islanders; nevertheless a system in which the limits imposed themselves very quickly. Within the formal employment sector, opportunities narrow very rapidly as one moves up the income ladder. While large numbers of Solomon Islanders have been able to raise themselves above the basic wage, they have not been able to raise themselves very far. Even though it is based on figures for the total enumerated work force in the Solomon Islands, Table 6.7 gives some indication of what the earnings range of Honiara workers could have been between 1971 and 1973. Over 50 per cent of workers earn less than $349 a year.

There is one other development relating to Solomon Island participation in the urban economy which must be taken up. Bellam (1970) depicts the economy of Honiara as being controlled almost totally by non-indigenous interests.
### TABLE 6.7

**SOLOMON ISLAND EMPLOYEES ENUMERATED BY EARNINGS RANGE:**

1971 - 1973

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Range of Annual Earnings</th>
<th>1971</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>1972</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>1973</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than 200</td>
<td>1,867</td>
<td>16.6</td>
<td>1,863</td>
<td>15.3</td>
<td>1,357</td>
<td>11.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>200 - 299</td>
<td>3,475</td>
<td>31.0</td>
<td>3,230</td>
<td>26.6</td>
<td>2,854</td>
<td>24.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>300 - 399</td>
<td>1,451</td>
<td>12.9</td>
<td>1,720</td>
<td>14.2</td>
<td>1,701</td>
<td>14.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>400 - 499</td>
<td>890</td>
<td>7.9</td>
<td>1,273</td>
<td>10.5</td>
<td>1,131</td>
<td>9.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>500 - 599</td>
<td>596</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>656</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>685</td>
<td>5.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>600 - 699</td>
<td>552</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>595</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>737</td>
<td>6.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>700 - 799</td>
<td>397</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>477</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>544</td>
<td>4.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>800 - 899</td>
<td>593</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>463</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>385</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>900 - 999</td>
<td>291</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>506</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1,000 and over</td>
<td>255</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>262</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>204</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total All Ranges</td>
<td>11,215</td>
<td>99.3</td>
<td>12,146</td>
<td>100.1</td>
<td>11,853</td>
<td>99.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Without capital, without business experience and expertise, without much outside support, Solomon Islanders have been unable to compete with Europeans and Chinese in establishing their own businesses. During the 1960s, there were only two areas in which Solomon Islanders made some impact: in the marketing of garden produce in Honiara; and in fish marketing. The former was dominated by Guadalcanal villagers from the immediate hinterland of Guadalcanal; the latter by Malaita immigrants living in villages they had established in town. The marketing of garden produce has grown into a major source of income for many Guadalcanal villages (Bathgate, 1973a,b). Taken in conjunction with growth in the number of transport businesses as well, this is now one of the most flourishing entrepreneurial activities, totally controlled by Solomon Islanders and centred on Honiara. In recent years, Guadalcanal villagers have been joined by immigrants on Guadalcanal, mostly from the island of Malaita.

The history of fish marketing is much less successful. Fishing groups, from the Lau Lagoon area of Malaita, began trading fish (caught off the Guadalcanal coast) in Honiara during the late 1950s. Approached by Government through the Department of Co-operatives, they were encouraged to organize themselves as Co-operative Societies. Some did this, one remained a private company. All became interested in expanding their operations and forming themselves into a Fish Marketing Association with common market facilities. This took place over a number of years (during which time they accumulated some of the capital required), and a modern fish market was opened in central Honiara in 1966.
It did not remain open for very long. With boats breaking down, there was difficulty keeping up a regular supply. As well as this there were breakdowns of machinery in the fish market. Government eventually withdrew its support and the business folded. The fish market was sold to an expatriate businessman (Bellam 1970: 83), and has been operated by expatriate business interests ever since. Lau migrants still trade fish, but on a very small scale, using canoes and nets.

In the late 1960s and early 1970s, independent Solomon Island business activity branched into several other areas. The economy continued to be dominated by non-Solomon Islanders, and most Solomon Islanders continued to depend on wage employment for income in town, but opportunities for other forms of money earning, and for self-employment, were beginning to grow. A number of Solomon Islanders began retail trading, some of them in stores built in the new, low-cost housing estates, others in Kukum and Chinatown. In 1974 there were several Solomon Islanders trading in Chinatown, taking over stores vacated by Chinese families departing the country before Independence. Besides retail trading, other Solomon Islanders began small maintenance and repair businesses. Some of this is done by people keeping up regular jobs and doing independent work on the side; in other cases, men have gone right out on their own and are fully self-employed.

One of the most impressive areas of entrepreneurial initiative amongst Solomon Islanders in town, and one of the most visible of informal income opportunities to develop,
Plate 11: Hanging Around Chinatown.

Plate 12: Taxi belonging to Tabi Company.
is the running of taxi services. In January, 1971, there were only five registered taxis in Honiara, four of them run by a European and one by a Chinese businessman. Three and a half years later, in June, 1974, there were 69 registered taxis, and the number was still increasing (it was up to 83 in May, 1975). Solomon Islanders first began running taxis in late 1971, and by June, 1974, they owned and operated a total of 34 (49 per cent of the number registered). Of the other taxis, 31 (45 per cent) were owned by Chinese businessmen, and 4 (6 per cent) by a European. Most of the taxis, including those owned by the Chinese, are driven by Solomon Islanders. Amongst the taxis run by Solomon Islanders, some are owned and operated by individuals, others are run by groups, operating as a joint enterprise. Except for the fact that drivers have to have a licence, and the vehicles have to have a special road check every three months, and must be especially licensed, there are few regulations surrounding the operation of taxis. So far, owners and drivers have worked out their own controls and arrangements in competition with each other. The possibility of large earnings, the lack of restrictive regulations, and the availability of loan finance, are factors which have helped the industry to flourish.5

5. The lack of regulations may not last too long. In April, 1975, a Public Transport Committee was appointed to look into the running of taxis in Honiara and advise the Minister of Works and Public Utilities. Their report recommends much closer control over taxi businesses. If accepted, it will undoubtedly have a constraining influence on the industry (see The Taxi Industry in Honiara, Report by the Public Transport Committee).
Expansion and increasing differentiation within the work-force, and the growing number of Solomon Islanders earning money outside of regular wage employment, are the two biggest changes affecting Solomon Island involvement in the urban economy, between 1960 and 1974. Solomon Islanders now occupy a wide range of positions in a work-force that is much larger and more widely differentiated than it was; they are also involved in all sorts of independent business activity, and other forms of money earning made possible by urban growth. With these opportunities, people appear to be staying in town longer than they did in the past, committing themselves to long term urban residence. Economic changes are not the only changes that have helped to bring this about. It is also necessary to look at changes in living conditions; in particular, the availability of different kinds of housing for Solomon Islanders. Housing policy in Honiara went through several major changes during the 1960s. The number of houses being built and the type of houses being built, began to reflect the needs of urban residents more closely than before. This meant that there were less constraints on Solomon Island living arrangements.

The fact that Government owns ninety per cent of the town land, makes Honiara quite exceptional amongst urban centres of the Pacific. Besides this, it is also the case that Government has built and come to control the largest number of houses in town. Being the largest employer it had the greatest obligation to provide accommodation, and consequently played the biggest role in new house construction. Both sets of circumstances have helped to
inhibit property speculation but they have also restricted
the growth of property ownership in town. This is
particularly apparent amongst Solomon Islanders. None of
them owned their own homes in Honiara in legally acceptable
ways, during the first twenty years of the town's growth.
While this reflects on the nature of Solomon Island
involvement in town during this period and highlights their
position as sojourners rather than committed urbanites
(Nelson 1976), it also draws attention to the
restrictiveness of government controls on housing and the
poor economic position of Solomon Islanders within the
urban social order. During the 1960s a compromise approach
to housing emerged which went a long way to allowing the
kinds of houses which Solomon Islanders were demanding, to
be built in town, giving them more independence as town
dwellers, and reflecting more closely the degree of
commitment to town living and wage employment growing
amongst them.

During the early 1960s, most employers were not
prepared to provide anything more than bachelor accommodation
for the majority of their workers. This was what was most
convenient. When new housing was constructed for Solomon
Island workers in the suburb of Kukum, east of Honiara, in
the early 1960s (the first big expansion of the town
affecting Solomon Islanders), it consisted almost entirely
of barrack-type bachelor accommodation. There were
differences in the units provided for classified workers as
compared with labourers, but these were differences in the
size of rooms shared by groups of workers, rather than
differences in basic design. As the biggest landlord in

Plate 14: FWD driver and his son, married quarters, Kukum.
this case the Government acted as if it expected that the work-force would continue to be made up mostly of transient workers. Some accommodation suitable for families was constructed during this period but construction was slow and expensive. The rate of building was far below the demand for family accommodation, and many higher income workers as well as labourers, were offered nothing but bachelor quarters. Private employers felt no compulsion to act ahead of Government, so the shortage was similar for workers in both sectors of employment. The result was that in the mid 1960s, the majority of town workers had very little choice when it came to the availability of family housing.

It was during this period that Solomon Islanders began to pursue one alternative which represented a total departure from government housing policy. They took over unoccupied land within the town boundary, and began to build houses of their own, much simpler and cheaper than official designs. Government reaction to such 'squatter' development was mostly negative, but with some support from more enlightened officials with the administration, a housing policy more in tune with local needs and less confined by expatriate standards began to emerge. In 1964, certain areas of town were designated 'village areas', and council by-laws were changed to allow house construction based on traditional designs and using bush materials (Tedder, 1966: 38).

Squatter housing is one of two developments which totally transformed the living arrangements of Solomon
Islanders in Honiara in the late 1960s. The other development involved large-scale construction of low cost houses suitable for family accommodation. In combination, these two developments meant a very rapid increase in the total number of housing units available to Solomon Islanders and a very radical change in the type of house in which they normally lived while living in town. It is these changes, along with the economic changes just described, that have had the greatest significance for the emergence of a town, representative of the majority of its inhabitants. The two developments are of sufficient importance to discuss in some detail.

One of the first squatter settlements to be established in Honiara was on the sea front at Kukum. It was inhabited by Lau migrants from the island of Foueda in north-east Malaita, and came to be known as Vaivila, or the Fishing Village. The Lau people started this settlement in 1956-57, when Foueda migrants began fishing off Kukum beach. By 1965 there were 29 households occupied by 175 people.6 Being from the same settlement on Malaita, they shared the same language, the same customary ideas about living in a community, and the same religion (Seventh Day Adventists). Their settlement took the form of a village community located within the confines of town. Some of the men held regular jobs, others concentrated on fishing. As well as this, most households cultivated their

6. Information from 1955 census and from notes provided by M. E. P. Bellam.
own gardens on land behind the suburb of Kukum. In later years a branch settlement formed on land a short way inland from Kukum beach. Both settlements have been surveyed by Honiara Town Council, and limited to a fixed number of house sites.

During the 1960s, similar types of settlement grew up in other parts of Honiara, including a number located in small inland valleys on the southern boundary of the town. Characteristically, these settlements were started by men who had jobs in town, were dissatisfied with the accommodation provided by their employers, and who wanted somewhere to house their families and live within the wages paid to unskilled and semi-skilled workers. Each settlement was formed by people from the same locality. Some organized themselves around a village church. With leadership provided by senior men and by their church activities, they formed distinct village communities. The majority of them were made up of Malaita immigrants, most from Kwara'ae. Other settlements include immigrants from Cebong, Java and from the Gilbert Islands (Kiribati). In all cases, they have built houses which were cheaper and more comfortable than they otherwise had access to through employers.

During the 1960s, Government was under a lot of pressure to control squatter settlements and to prevent them from becoming permanent. Accepting that they fulfilled a need not provided for by existing arrangements for accommodation, tacit approval was given to their existence, while at the same time, steps were taken to control further expansion. The greatest concern was over the provision of
basic services, but once it was accepted that they served a useful role in the growth of Honiara, the rain sites were surveyed, and steps were taken to provide whatever services were possible. By 1973, a number of approved areas had been surveyed and provided with basic facilities, and the occupation of the land legalized through the granting of temporary occupation licences and fixed term estates. In a survey conducted by the Honiara Town Council in 1973 of all existing settlements, fifteen settlements were recorded, consisting of 346 households and a total population of 1,168.7 This was 8.9 per cent of Honiara's population at that time. Taken as a proportion of the Melanesian, Polynesian, and Gilbertese population of Honiara, from which the residents of these settlements are drawn, the proportion is just over ten per cent.

Besides those migrant communities living within the town boundary, large numbers of Malaita migrants have formed settlements further outside the town limits, in the east towards Lungga, Tenaru, and the Guadalcanal Plains, and also to the south and west of the main town boundary. Land used by these migrants has been obtained from Government, from commercial companies, and from customary land-holders on Guadalcanal. Most of the migrants only have temporary use rights under variable forms of arrangement and agreement with the owners. These usufructory rights extend to the use of land for gardens as well. Growing

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out of the standard pattern of movement, the settlement of Malaita migrants on land in and around Honiara, within the last ten to fifteen years, constitutes a secondary form of migration, highly adaptable to opportunities provided by the town at this stage of its growth and development. Most of these migrants are earning money, either through wage employment or by engaging in independent business activity—producing vegetables for sale in Honiara market, running taxis and trucks, supplying firewood to Honiara residents, operating retail outlets.

The second major development in housing in Honiara has been the construction of numerous low-cost housing estates. In 1967-68, Government initiated a program of prefabricated house construction, enabling them to build fast and cheaply, a large number of houses suitable for family accommodation (Hughes, 1969). All these houses were made available to government staff. Soon after the program started, occupants were encouraged to purchase these houses, and offered special incentives to do so. Most took the option of renting. At the same time as this was taking place, non-government employees were given the opportunity of purchasing similar types of houses through a Home Purchase Scheme started by the Honiara Town Council.

8. In 1974, allocation to employees, of low-cost houses controlled by Government, was in the hands of a special Housing Committee. Applicants are graded on a point system according to the number of years that they have been in government service, their income, and the size of their families.
Both arrangements had not been in operation for very long, before the Solomon Island Housing Authority was established, set up to take the major responsibility for large-scale low-cost house construction and to assume control over all existing loan schemes. Full time operations of the Authority commenced in 1971, and this is now the main body through which Solomon Islanders are able to purchase their own houses in Honiara (Woolard, 1973).

Not all low cost houses are being bought by Solomon Islanders and used as family houses. Private sector employers are also buying these dwellings for use as labour quarters. This has had the effect of distributing workers more widely through new residential areas. While there is still a large concentration of workers living at Kukum, where the old labour quarters are sited, the occupancy of these quarters is not as heavy as it was in the 1960s. As the range of residential options in and around Honiara has expanded, a pattern of residential mobility has developed, whereby workers have been able to move out of the standard labour quarters into various other types of housing.

Between 1969 and 1973 it is estimated that 738 low-cost houses (of less than $5000 in value) were built in Honiara. Roughly one third of these were built by the Housing Authority, another third by Government, and the rest were built privately. During the same period house ownership amongst Solomon Islanders becomes noticeable for the first time in Honiara's history. From a situation in 1967,

when no Solomon Islanders owned houses in the main part of town, it is estimated that, by the end of 1973, a total 360 houses had been bought or were in the process of being purchased by Solomon Islanders. As significant as this is for changes in the social and economic structure of the urban population, this rate of growth in home ownership is well below what Government projected when low-cost house construction began.

There are two main reasons for this. Firstly, in 1974 there were still a large number of employers providing accommodation for their workers. 10 In some cases this was without charge, in other cases rents were imposed. Few employers had begun to charge economic rents, so that most accommodation was still heavily subsidized. This was the case with government housing. While all housing was subject to some rental charge, it was still at a very low level. While many workers are able to gain access to subsidized housing, there is not the same incentive to purchase their own houses. A second reason is the relatively high cost of house purchase for the average town worker. Even though Government has modified building standards in town considerably over recent years, current minimum standards still make houses relatively expensive to build and purchase. In the years that low-cost house construction has been

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10. Regulations requiring employers to provide housing for those of their employees, and their dependents, unable to return home at the conclusion of each day's work, were still in force in 1973-74 (Labour Ordinance, 3/1960; 20/1964).
taking place, the cheapest unit so far has been priced at $800 (plus $100 for the land). Given the requirement that payments for house purchase should not exceed one quarter of a worker's salary, this house still only comes within reach of workers earning a minimum salary of $45 a month. When the average urban wage is somewhere between $20 to $25 a month, it can be seen that house ownership, under these terms, is something which is still only going to be available to a minority of town residents.

During fieldwork in 1974 and 1975, housing arrangements in Honiara were under the influence of a major change in government policy. It was an important transitional period in which certain elements of past policy remained in force, while specific changes were in the process of being implemented. By steadily expanding the number of houses available and the type of house being built in town, by charging economic rents for the house which it controlled, and by encouraging people to purchase their own homes, it was the idea of Government that more of the cost and responsibility for housing in Honiara should be transferred from employers to the workers themselves and to town residents generally. It is the intention of Government, that in contrast to the past, workers and residents should ultimately take full responsibility for their own housing arrangements, in compliance with standards which they consider to be acceptable. In 1974 all the details of this policy had not been fully worked out, and the changes associated with it were only just becoming evident. In this policy are profound implications for the kind of involvement in wage labour that has been characteristic up
until this time. There is the expectation that there will be much greater long-term commitment to employment amongst people living in town. It is still uncertain as to whether this expectation will be matched with corresponding increases in urban wage levels sufficient to make house ownership a practical possibility for workers at all levels of income.

Although there was a big improvement in the housing situation in Honiara by 1974, shortages of particular types of housing were still apparent. As before, where shortages are greatest is in the availability of family accommodation; and the people most affected are those on lower incomes. Private sector employers have been very slow in this regard. The Solomon Islands Tobacco Company, for example, with a work-force of 60 to 70 men, only provides married quarters for four to six of its employees. The rest of the quarters are only suitable for bachelor men. Solomon Delite, a bakery which began operations in 1972, also employs around 60 men, but provides no married quarters at all. Those workers who are married (around 25 per cent), are given a small housing allowance ($3 to $40 a month) in lieu of the appropriate accommodation. In 1974, the situation for low income workers, was very much as it always had been, with employers providing the minimum necessary accommodation.

What all the evidence on housing in Honiara shows is that while there have been marked changes in the type and number of houses available to Solomon Islanders, these changes have not affected all workers in the same way and
to the same extent. Those who have enjoyed the greatest advantages have been higher income workers. For lower income workers there is still little choice outside the old-style bachelor accommodation. The only way in which lower income workers have been able to get around this limitation has been by building their own houses in areas set aside for that purpose.

Taken together, improved opportunities for Solomon Islanders in employment and in housing, might be expected to have had a noticeable influence on the movement of Solomon Islanders to Honiara. Evidence has already been provided to show that Solomon Islanders are now staying in employment longer than before. Commitment to more permanent employment is more noticeable amongst career workers and those in skilled and professional employment, but others too, are staying on as well. Given these changes we might expect the Solomon Island work-force to be increasing in age, and to be made up of a much higher proportion of married men than in earlier years. With better availability of family housing, there should also be more married men living in town with their families. Some evidence supporting these expectations is given in Table 6.2. The number of married men in the work-force would appear to have increased, in absolute terms, and as a proportion of the total. At the same time a much greater proportion of married men are now living in town with their families, rather than being separated from them.

Changes in employment opportunities and changes in housing, are two of the most important changes that
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Marital Status of Workers in Honiara</th>
<th>Location of Families of Married Workers in Honiara</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Single</td>
<td>Married</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1962</td>
<td>85.6</td>
<td>14.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(survey of PWD workers)</td>
<td>(326)</td>
<td>(55)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1965</td>
<td>73.5</td>
<td>26.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(2661)</td>
<td>(975)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>63.1</td>
<td>36.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(3250)</td>
<td>(1900)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes:
(a) These figures are based on a survey conducted by the Commissioner of Labour in late 1962 amongst PWD workers in Honiara; see Commissioner of Labour to Acting Chief Secretary, 11 March, 1963. The number of workers surveyed is given in brackets.
(b) Based on 1965 census in Honiara, analysis of original census cards by author. Figures given by Bellam (1970:84) and provided by Chapman, appear to be grossly inflated. (Figures in brackets represent total population Solomon Island males living in Honiara, 16 years and over).
(c) Based on information given in Report of the Wages Advisory Board of the BSIP, 6 August, 1971, Report No. 1, p.5. Figures in brackets comprise total male, Solomon Islander work force in Honiara in 1971.
affected the position of Solomon Islanders in Honiara between 1960 and 1974. From a situation where Honiara represented little more than a large labour camp, with a highly mobile, predominately male, and mostly unskilled work-force, the town has now become a place in which there are much wider socio-economic differences amongst Melanesians, where there is a small but growing core of relatively stable and permanent town dwellers living on estates and in villages in their own houses, and where there is now a much more balanced and representative population structure.

It is true that there is still a high rate of mobility in and out of town, but the movement which is taking place today is much more complex and diverse in form, than movement which took place in the past. In the early 1970s Honiara was beginning to look like a town in which Melanesians were much more than temporary passing workers; now they were beginning to look like experienced town dwellers, choosing amongst the ever increasing opportunities characteristic of a rapidly expanding urban centre. What these opportunities are, how widespread they are, and what they mean for migrants in the long term for their relations with each other, and for their relations with people still living in rural areas, are some of the questions which will be taken up in later chapters, as To'ambaïta experience in town is presented in greater detail.
Chapter Seven
THE TO'AMBAITA IN TOWN

The To'ambaïta have been living and working in Honiara ever since the days when it was only a war-time service camp. They have an association with the town that is as old as the town itself. Throughout this time it has largely been a provisional association. Honiara has been a place to visit and take employment, a place for making short term gains, rather than a place to live in preference to living on Malaita. Having said this, it must also be said that their association with Honiara and their involvement in the life of the town has been continuously changing throughout the years that they have been working there. Opportunities in town have not remained constant but have grown and expanded, and the To'ambaïta have responded accordingly, taking up new jobs and new forms of money earning, trying out new housing arrangements, joining different urban associations, and in many other ways trying out (ilioto'ona) what the town has to offer. They have been very responsive to a rapidly changing opportunity structure and consequently the pattern of their movement to town, and the pattern of their life in town, has been changing also. As part of what is happening, an increasing number of migrants are settling into long term wage employment and semi-permanent residence in town. Originally, as a place to live and work, Honiara was very little different from the plantations and other places to which they travelled before. People only visited town and worked there temporarily, each journey a short break in
the course of lives largely spent on Malaita and centred on that island. For a good proportion of people who travel to town today, this is still the case. It is still only a place to visit temporarily. For others though, it has become much more than this; it has become their regular abode. They have begun to look like committed townsmen much more than rural visitors to town.

In the remaining chapters of this thesis I will be looking in detail at the position of To'ambaita people in Honiara, as it was observed in 1974-75. I will look at the way in which they have established themselves as town workers, the jobs they have taken up, their attitudes towards employment, their understanding of the urban social order. I will also look at the different dimensions of their life outside the context of employment, the pattern of their relations with each other, with other town residents and with people still living on Malaita. In doing this, attention will be given to transitional processes in the life of town residents, the small shifts that are taking place in people's relations with each other in the course of living in town. Such processes follow directly from increasing differentiation, and it is from this perspective that they will be described and analysed.

As a direct result of the way in which employment opportunities have changed and Honiara has grown, the life of migrant workers is much more varied and complex than it was in the past. Amongst the To'ambaita there is much greater diversity in their attitudes towards employment, in the occupations which they fill, in the places where
they live, in their life-styles and the activities and interests which they pursue in town. Settled town migrants, upwardly mobile, strongly committed to long term employment and deeply involved in urban associations, co-exist with others who have advanced very little, have very few prospects and are much less involved in wider urban relations. Besides these there are younger, more itinerant town dwellers, indifferent towards employment, having few chances of advancement, and also little involved in wider urban relations. Others fill positions somewhere in between these different types. To add to this complexity we must also take into account varying interaction between migrants in town, at all levels of experience and achievement, and people still living on Malaita. Throughout the places in which they live, the To'ambaitsa form part of a diverse and constantly changing field of social relationships, a field in which there are both continuities and discontinuities: at the level of interaction; and at the level of ideas, beliefs and values. Aspects of this will emerge here as To'ambaitsa town dwellers are introduced, and the main forms of variation amongst them are described. In later chapters, some of the main contrasts will be taken up in more detail.

The To'ambaitsa people living in Honiara are not concentrated in any one location; neither have they confined themselves to any particular line of employment or place of employment. They have taken up positions throughout the urban occupational structure, scattered
themselves throughout the different residential areas of town. Except for the fact that they have a common language and come from the same region on Malaita, they are a very fragmented and widely distributed group of town residents. Amongst other town dwellers they identify themselves, and are identified, as To'ambaïta. In some contexts this identification may be subsumed by a more inclusive one, in which they are identified (or identify themselves) according to the island as a whole, as 'Malaitans'. In the places to which they travel, this broader form of identification is probably just as common as the lesser one based on language; something which has arisen out of the long history of labour migration on Malaita. It depends on interaction with other island groups, and with immigrants from other countries. In contexts in which ethnic identification is based on language and the region from which they come, the term by which the To'ambaïta are distinguished, used as a label and a form of address is ko'o, from the kinship term koko'o.¹ Despite this designation, there is limited unity and little wider integration amongst To'ambaïta-speakers as a group. This does not mean that they have made themselves totally part of urban forms of association, only that rural-based principles of organization operate at levels below the

¹ The term koko'o is used reciprocally between grandparents (FF, FM, MF, MM) and grandchildren (SS, SD, DS, DD), and between maternal uncle (M3) and nephews and nieces (ZS, ZD). The term is also used more generally for other kinsmen. It is often used as a form of friendly greeting between kinsmen.
level of the language group as a whole.

The main principles of organization in town are kinship and settlement of origin on Malaita. Groupings formed on this basis are some of the most important groupings found amongst To'ambaiana migrants. Their significance is connected with the fact that most town residents are still first generation migrants. The majority of adults living in town were born on Malaita, and spent their early years there. As much as some residents may be separating more permanently from Malaita through town employment, this is still at a very formative stage. Rural principles of organization are still a major influence on patterns of interaction and association amongst To'ambaiana people in town.

Being a widely dispersed and very mobile population, no attempt was made to carry out a census amongst To'ambaiana speakers in 1974-75, either in Honiara itself, or in any of the other places to which they have migrated from Malaita. However, with official census data, it is possible to gain some idea of the number of To'ambaiana people living in Honiara and their distribution throughout the Solomon Islands. Table 7.1 shows the distribution of people who gave To'ambaiana as their first language in the national census conducted in February, 1976. Only persons over five years of age are included in these figures, but what they show is that 78 per cent of To'ambaiana

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2. Except for one preliminary report (Population Census 1976, Preliminary Results) released in 1977, the 1976 census results have not yet been published. Information given here, and other information relating to the 1976 census, was provided by M. Batbgate.
### Table 7.1

**Distribution of To'ambaïta-Speakers - 1976**

(Persons Over Five Years Old Only)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Council and Sub-Council Areas</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Per Cent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Malaita I</td>
<td>458</td>
<td>8.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malaita II</td>
<td>3484</td>
<td>66.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malaita III</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malaita IV</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malaita V</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malaita VI</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malaita VII</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Malaita (and Malaita District)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Per Cent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Honiara</td>
<td>435</td>
<td>8.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guadalcanal (excl. Honiara)</td>
<td>378</td>
<td>7.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russell Is.</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ngela</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Santa Isabel</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Savo</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Central District**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Per Cent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Makira</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Santa Cruz</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ugi</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Eastern District**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Per Cent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Marovo (inc. Kolombangara)</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roviana</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vella Lavella</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choiseul</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shortland</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Western District**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Per Cent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>159</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total**

|        | 5231   | 100.0   |

**Source:** Text Table 18, unpublished 1976 Census
speakers are living on Malaita and 22 per cent elsewhere. Less than half of those living outside Malaita are living in Honiara, but it can be assumed that the majority of those enumerated in rural Guadalcanal are living in close proximity to Honiara, working on plantations and living in settlements to the east and west of the town. This being so, the biggest concentration of To'ambaita migrants outside Malaita, is on northern Guadalcanal, in and around Honiara. Other concentrations of migrants are in the Russell Islands, working on commercial plantations, at Tulagi (on Ngela), mainly working for the Taiyo Fishing Company, and on Kolombangara Island in the Western Solomons, working for foreign-based timber companies.

Using these figures, and information from the 1970 census, my own estimate of the number of To'ambaita people in Honiara (of all ages) in 1974 is 506, with another 439 living outside Honiara on Guadalcanal. These numbers do not appear to be very large, but if we look at the Honiara figure alone in relation to the rest of the Melanesian population in town, and if we also look at this figure as an index of 'urbanization' amongst the To'ambaita, in both cases, they are above average in relation to the rest of the Melanesian population. As a group they comprise 4.6 per cent of the Melanesian population in town, a figure one per cent higher than the proportion of To'ambaita speakers in the Melanesian population of the Solomon Islands as a whole. From the other perspective, out of all To'ambaita speakers in the Solomon Islands, 8.3 per cent are living in Honiara (Table 7.1). Of the total
Melanesian population in the Solomon Islands only 6.6 per cent are living in Honiara. What this confirms is that Honiara has become an above average preference as a migrant destination amongst the To'ambaitha.

Without having carried out a census in town, it is not possible to say accurately the relative importance of different localities on Malaita as places of origin for migrants in town. During fieldwork I met migrants from all over the To'ambaitha region and gained the impression that all areas were represented in the urban population, including pagan settlements and inland hill settlements. Some areas have a longer history of movement to town than others and may well be more heavily represented in relation to others, but it is not possible to substantiate this. As much as this is the case, it is probable that the relatively more prosperous and economically developed villages on the north coast of the To'ambaitha Peninsula, in the vicinity of Malu'u, have a relatively higher number of migrants than other areas. This part of the To'ambaitha region does have a longer and more continuous history of movement to town. It is also the most densely populated part of the To'ambaitha Peninsula.

Partly as a consequence of previous fieldwork on Malaita, and my approach to fieldwork in town, it is people from the north coast with whom I mainly worked in town, and from whom I collected much of my information about To'ambaitha migration (see Table 7.2). Initially my main contacts in town were people from the village of
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>No. of Men</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Population on Malaita % (iv)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Northern coast(i) (Malu'u Ward)</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>66.4</td>
<td>51.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central Hills(ii) (Nggwai'au Ward)</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>11.2</td>
<td>22.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern coast(iii) (Fo'ondo Ward)</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>22.4</td>
<td>25.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes:  
(i) Main settlements: Manakwai, Ngarawaruau, Malu'u, 'Aenathaia, Naboaroa, Loina.  
(ii) Main settlements: Kafototo, 'Aisika, Nggwai'au, Ndalo, Afca.  
(iii) Main settlements: Abuamena, Anokwasi, Mbita'ama, Kwaiana, Ulungga.  
(iv) In the divisions used to show the different places from which migrants originate, there is close (but not total) correspondence with ward boundaries used in the 1970 and 1976 census. The census wards are shown in brackets in column one. The figures given in column four are based on figures given in the 1970 census.

Manakwai and neighbouring hamlets. Being well known by them, and being especially interested in their migratory experiences, it followed that I should seek them out and use them as an initial contact group. Throughout the period of fieldwork in town they remained a valuable source group. In terms of the total number of To'amba'ita in town they are a sizable segment. They have had a lot of success in town but this is not total, and there is wide variability in their achievements. It was clear though, that a broader coverage of To'amba'ita migrants would be necessary to gain a more representative picture of their experience in town. In the first instance I relied upon my Manakwai and Takiniano contacts to help me achieve this, treating them as intermediaries for meeting others. After a while I found that I could readily find other people on my own. By following up successive social encounters, I gradually built up a large and widespread group of contacts. In time, this extended to many non-To'amba'ita town dwellers as well, but in this study they will only be mentioned as part of the universe which has relevance to the To'amba'ita.

In order to give some idea of the relative importance of certain differences amongst To'amba'ita migrants and the trends which are indicated by them, I have collated information on those To'amba'ita migrants whom I was able to contact in 1974. The information was not collected at one time, but over a period of nearly six months from March to August, 1974. Not having done a full census, it cannot be said that this constitutes a properly selected
sample of To'ambaita migrants. It does have one advantage from the point of view of this thesis, in that being weighted in favour of particular parts of the To'ambaita region (Table 7.2), it helps to show the kind of variation that is emerging amongst rural-based groupings in town. There is also reasonable confidence that what is shown here, is representative of differentiation within the total To'ambaita migrant population.

The number of people for whom information is presented here is 199. This is 39 per cent of the total number of To'ambaita migrants thought to be living in Honiara in 1974. The majority of them (66.4%) come from the north coast of the To'ambaita Peninsula (Table 7.2). As explained above, this cannot be taken as evidence for a higher rate of movement to Honiara from this area in contrast to the other areas, even though there is a high probability that this is the case. The demographic structure of this study population is shown in Figure 8. Seventy per cent of the population are males, and the greater proportion of them are in the 15 to 40 age range. The high sex ratio shown here, 70.3 males per 1000 persons (compared with 67.3 per 1000 for the total Melanesian population in Honiara in 1970) is probably not a true reflection of the demographic profile for all To'ambaita migrants in Honiara. Most of the women represented in the study population are either married and living with their husbands, or young children under the age of five. Females not attached to households headed by male migrants, are not represented here. From my enquiries it is clear
Figure 8 TO'AMBAITA MIGRANTS IN TOWN: AGE-SEX STRUCTURE

TABLE 7.3

Study Population: Marital Status (Males)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Marital Status</th>
<th>No.</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Av. Age (years)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Single</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>21.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Married, Widowed, Divorced</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>35.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>27.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
that the number of women in this category is very small. Added to this population, they would reduce the sex ratio slightly but would not greatly alter the marked imbalance between male and female numbers. The reason they are left out is because of the difficulty of working amongst them. There is still a lot of restriction put on the movement of women outside Malaita, and a lot of restraint on their interaction with other people. Young women do not have the same freedom and independence as young men. They are rarely allowed to travel except in the care of a married couple or other older kin prepared to act as guardians. The exception to this are those girls furthering their education, enrolling in secondary schools, and various specialist training centres such as Bible Training Schools, Nurse Training Schools, the Technical Institute, and elsewhere. While the number of girls going into higher level training is increasing, and many of them take up employment after they complete their courses, few take up work in Honiara. There is only one included in this study population. One or two working women that are included are older women working as domestics in European households in town.

Even though the majority of men are under forty years of age and To'ambaita migrants still comprise a relatively youthful population, the age range is now much broader than it would have been amongst earlier migrant populations. A growing number of migrants are now lengthening the time they spend in town and in urban employment. Young single migrants still dominate, making up 59 per cent of
men over 15 years of age in this group, but older, married men comprise a growing second layer of town residents (Table 7.3). This process is sufficiently advanced now for a form of generation gap to emerge. Young bachelors are referred to as kala wane 'young men'. They mostly live in bachelor quarters and maintain a very itinerant life-style. Many older men are married (ilawane). The most prominent, and those amongst whom the contrast with young bachelors is greatest, are those that have been successful in employment, enjoy high incomes, and have taken up new, family housing in the various suburbs of town.

Family groups, consisting of young couples and their young children, are a new feature of town living. They represent a form of stability that stands out in strong contrast to the more itinerant life-style of the young. Amongst the To'amba'aita in town, married status is closely connected with higher occupational status. Most family groups are headed by well-educated, upwardly mobile, migrants with incomes that are well above the urban average. The number of family groups in town from particular areas, is a rough measure of the kind of position that people from those areas have achieved in the urban economy. Amongst migrants from pagan settlements for example, and those from inland Christian settlements, there has been very little upward mobility and they have few family groups living in town. The majority of family groups are formed around migrants from large coastal, Christian villages, such as those found on the north coast around Kalu'âu.
Underlying the kind of disparities being described here are marked differences in educational background. Having such a critical influence on job prospects, education is a major factor underlying perceived status differences in town. Designation as sukuulu has two levels of meaning, one which places the person as someone from a Christian settlement, and secondly, as a person with formal education. It is latter usage which is now the most common form of usage in Honiara. Most of those referred to as such, are migrants who have completed five to seven years of primary school training or longer. Amongst the To'ambaita they are still a minority, making up less than thirty per cent of men surveyed (Table 7.4). Nearly one third of adult men in Honiara have had no formal schooling at all, and another 24 per cent have a background of training in village schools only, mostly under village teachers or church elders.

**Table 7.4**

**STUDY POPULATION: EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND**

(Men only)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Schooling</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No schooling</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>31.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Village/Church schooling</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>23.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary 1 - 4 years</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>16.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary 5 - 7 years</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>15.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher training (secondary technical institute, etc.)</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>13.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>105</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** Fieldnotes
The picture of To'ambaita town dwellers which we have so far is of a relatively small migrant population, divided into groupings based on settlement or locality of origin, with little wider level unity as a linguistically-defined or geographically-defined group. They are a youthful migrant group, largely made up of young single men, with few people above the age of forty, and relatively small numbers of women. Within the age range found amongst To'ambaita migrants, there are distinct generational differences, made more contrastive by differences in marital status, employment and housing. In the rest of this chapter, I want to elaborate in more detail, on To'ambaita employment in town; in the next chapter on residence and residential groupings. Before doing this, and by way of presenting some of the background, a brief sketch of the history of To'ambaita movement to Honiara is presented in the next section.


During the war To'ambaita men travelled to the north coast of Guadalcanal in large numbers as recruits in the Solomon Islands Labour Corps. Most only stayed for twelve months, but some got into positions where they stayed longer. A small number were still working there when the war ended and the American transit camp became the new capital of the Solomon Islands. They were working for the British as orderlies and policemen. As the British began restoring their Administration to its former strength Honiara was little different from Tulagi as a place to
work and live. Officialdom restored, there was the dominating presence of administrative authority and order, a place with little room for Solomon Islanders except as workers and servants. During this period the majority of To'ambaita people were involved with Maasina Rule on Malaita and thought little of taking work in town or elsewhere. Some made their first visit to Honiara in police custody, arrested and committed to trial for their part in the movement. Those that were prepared to work for the Administration, mostly did so in order to get away from Malaita and the troubles associated with Maasina Rule.

It was when Maasina Rule began to weaken in 1949-50 that regular recruiting for work in Honiara began. North Malaita was chosen for this, partly because of the disruption brought about through Maasina Rule, and also because there were loyal Headmen and other sympathizers prepared to act as agents for government departments. Most of the recruits were drawn from Christian villages in the vicinity of Malu'u. Others who wanted to work recruited for plantation employment. This became the pattern for the 1950s. Those who went to town recruited on Malaita, signing on at one or other of the 'passages' (basis) around the north Malaita coast, and taking work for periods from three to twelve months. Most worked as labourers or stevedores, employed by the Department of Public Works, or the Government Trade Scheme. There was a lot of cleaning up and salvage work after the war, but also maintenance and some construction work going on.
Plate 15: Stacking Copra, Ports Authority workers.

Plate 16: Policeman in town.
While in town, labour migrants occupied labour quarters close to the town centre, large converted quonset huts left over from the war. Even though recruiting covered a wide area of Malaita, drawing gangs from several language groups, men liked to travel with some companions from their own settlement or immediate locality. For the To'ambaita this was usually done in such a way that small groups of men, known to each other, and with some pre-existing kinship tie, or co-resident tie, were able to occupy their own rooms in the labour quarters provided for them in town. Migration did not preclude inter-ethnic contact and the formation of strong ties with other workers. Travelling on boats, working on the job, and also filling in spare time around town, provided many opportunities for wider interaction.

The ready availability of short-term contract work for people prepared to go to Honiara during the 1950s, meant that many men gained some experience of working in town at this time. Town was so small, the opportunities so limited and the position of Solomon Islanders so restricted, that Honiara was little different from the other places to which they travelled. There was one difference though, that was to become more pronounced, and that was the availability of casual work. Storekeepers, traders, small businessmen of one kind or another, and private householders were often looking for assistants and domestic help. After they gained some experience in town, To'ambaita migrants readily took up some of this work. One man recalls going to town as a recruit under contract for six months work.
with the PWD. While in town he got friendly with a Chinese carpenter working in Chinatown, and after finishing with the PWD stayed on and worked for the carpenter for another six months, helping him build a new store in Chinatown. Another man from Fiti had a very similar experience around 1957-58. He would have taken on another job still and joined an overseas ship for six months, except he was prevented by his wife's relatives.

I had just got married when I recruited and went up to Honiara. Went up and worked for trading (British Solomon Islands Trading Company). Three months I worked for them. It was my second time in Honiara. Recruited with Talosui from Po'ondo. That was when he and his brothers, 'Urukona and Beni Eleomea, three brothers from Manafi, held wak fri (work free).³ I recruited with my father-in-law, G. Left my wife with my elder brother. We stayed in Honiara for six months altogether, three months with trading and then three months in Chinatown with Ho kee. Helped him to build that two-story place just next to Mataniko Bridge. Just before we finished I wanted to sign with another company, with Mr. Lawson, at A.V.A. and join the steamer Muliana, spending six months at sea. K. was in town then, from my wife's side. He swore on his head to stop me signing, so I didn't go. We returned home after six months in Honiara."

While men were prepared to take up casual work, it did not mean that they stayed on in town very long. Some employers would have liked workers to stay on in the job, but they didn't always provide the incentive to do this. Most men preferred to remain relatively mobile, frequently changing jobs and places of work, and alternating periods of employment with trips back home. The man from Fiti who had two trips to Honiara in the 1950s, subsequently recruited for plantation work in the Western Solomons.

³. Wak fri was the term used for recruitment with the British Solomon Islands Trade Scheme then responsible for port work in Honiara.
The preference for contract work in Honiara (and elsewhere), during the 1950s, was mainly influenced by the kind of shipping services that operated between Malaita and other islands. It was difficult for men to get from one place to another outside the usual recruiting arrangements. Those who did take up casual work had to show some initiative to get to town and to make trips home again. The following case concerns a man from Ulungga who first went to Honiara in 1953 when he was only 14.

When K. first came to Honiara in 1953, his elder brother was already there, working for the Trade Scheme. K. travelled on a government boat from Auki, in company with a Fijian family he had become friendly with in Auki. A cousin of his was working in Auki at the time. While staying with the cousin, K. started visiting the Fijians and became very friendly with them. When they were transferred to Honiara, they offered to take him with them. He had to ask his father, but knowing his elder brother was in town, he didn't oppose the trip. In Honiara K. stayed with the Fijian family doing house work in return for board and pocket money. When they left for Fiji he took up with another Fijian family under the same arrangement. After 12 months his brother got him a job with the Trade Scheme, washing cars in the workshop. An overseer befriended him there and taught him how to drive. After getting his licence he was put on mail delivery as a regular job.

K. Stayed on in town for three years before returning home. He made a visit home by joining a Chinese trading vessel working out of Honiara around the Malaita coast.

Throughout the 1950s most To'ambaita who went to town, only went there as recruits under contract to departments and companies in town, but by the late 1950s Honiara was beginning to expand, more casual work was being offered,
and independent travelling was becoming much easier. Besides Chinese trading boats, government ships and mission boats, there were a number of private cutter boats operating around the north Malaita coast. By 1960 most people employed in Honiara were independent migrants rather than contract migrants; independent, open-ended movement was now the most common form of movement to town. In the circumstances, the length of time people were spending in town now became much more variable. We can see this in the case of K. above. While there were still those who preferred to confine their visits to short periods, whether they were working under contract or on a casual basis, others were less concerned about how long they stayed away, extending their residence in town indefinitely. Growth in the number and range of employment opportunities meant greater variability in the nature of To'ambaita involvement in urban employment, and in the length of time which they stayed in town. A lot of those who took up work in town, did so after previous experience elsewhere, mostly on plantations. The experience of a man from Bilimasikete illustrates this pattern.

L. grew up in the Maasina Rule village of Aniuke. He went to the village church school run by the church teacher. In 1959 when he was 16, he recruited at Malu'lu for work on a plantation in the Western District. He worked there for 12 months. On the way back to Malaita, their boat stopped at Honiara. He met a cousin

4. By 'independent' I mean, no longer reliant on an external agent to get to town (see Baxter, 1972: 109; Strathern, 1975:3).
in town and decided to stay there and look for work. He didn't have to look long before he got a job with the PWD as a labourer. He stayed in this position for 12 months, then sat a test which qualified him for promotion as a classified worker. In this position he persuaded a friend of his in town, a man from Lau, to teach him how to drive. Getting his licence, he became a driver for the PWD and stayed working for them for another seven years.

L. was away from Malaita for nearly ten years, nine of those being spent in Honiara. When he became a driver he didn't advance any further with the PWD, but during the 1960s this was a prestigious job amongst To'ambaaita workers, and gave him an above-average position amongst the rest. When he did return to Malaita in 1969 it was to get married and to live on Malaita again permanently.

It can be seen from this that young men, already predisposed to travelling for employment, readily took up new job opportunities in town, settling into long periods of wage labour without much forethought or special planning. All indications are that by the early 1960s, many young men were quite willing to take up casual work. As can be seen from the cases given, one thing that facilitated their interest, was the presence of kinsmen in town. Once some started working there, others followed more easily. Some villages and local groups were more strongly represented than others in this regard but there were still migrants from all over the To'ambaaita region.

The growth of open-ended movement in the early 1960s did not greatly change the kind of work which migrants were taking up in town itself. The range of jobs expanded,
but it was still mostly low-paid, unskilled work that they went into. Becoming a driver was one of the best jobs that men without schooling could aspire to. The To'ambaita did not show any strong preference for particular kinds of employment, but distributed themselves quite broadly throughout the range of jobs available. They worked for European employers just as readily as Chinese. There were some migrants in domestic service, some working in stores around Chinatown and Honiara, groups of men working for the British Solomons Trading Company and the Ports Authority, and others working for various government departments and private firms in town. One industry in which there was more openings than most was the building and construction industry. A leading employer here was the PWD and there was a relatively large group of men working for them. Others joined private construction companies as they established themselves in town.

The main exception to the pattern of employment which has been described so far, was recruitment to the Civil Service. This goes back to the time when such opportunities were first made available to Solomon Islanders, when a local Civil Service was established in the early 1950s. Work for Government at this level was not new. There were men working as administrative assistants and policemen well before the war, during the early days of the Administration. In those days many pagans joined the Police Force on short-term contracts. It was more common though for those who did take up work with the Administration to come from mission settlements. When looking for clerical staff in
particular, they always turned to those with mission training. It was the same after the war, except that now there was an expanding opportunity structure. New government departments were set up, as Government established the bureaucratic organization considered necessary for post-war development in the Solomon Islands. Solomon Islanders with the necessary background and qualifications were being asked to commit themselves to long-term employment with government. Despite the ill-feeling that built up through Maasine Rule, Christian To'amba'aita were well disposed to taking up these opportunities. Those with mission training had the qualifications required. 5

The first recruits to the Civil Service were mainly policemen and administrative assistants. In time, as the service expanded, and as more students progressed through newly established schools on Malaita, they went into other Departments - Education, Agriculture, Marine, Geology, Medical and Treasury. Some of them took up government work by way of special training schools, such as the Agricultural Training School, the Police Training School, the British Solomons Training College. During the 1950s the number of To'amba'aita in the Civil Service was still a very small proportion of the total number of people in wage employment. Only half the population had a mission background at the beginning of this period, and not all

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5. In 1953-54 recruits for the police force were required to be able to speak English or Pidgin English, be able to write English, Pidgin or their own language. (B.S.I. Annual Report, 1953-54:35).
of them had the training that would qualify them for government work. Not all of those who did have training were interested in such work anyhow. After it was established in 1951, the Malu'u primary school began to take over from the missions as the facility for early education. Preparing people for senior primary and later secondary training, it became the principal pathway to higher level government employment. But for a long time enrolment was low and these opportunities remained limited to a small proportion of To'amba'aita children.

Early recruits to the Civil Service tended to be drawn from large well-established Christian villages, such as those in the vicinity of Malu'u. Many came from families with a long and close association with the SSEM. The advantage which these families had already gained through being the first to move to the coast and take up coastal land, was now extended into the field of employment. Civil Servants were the most privileged workers in the Solomon Islands. They were given annual leave, special housing, and had good prospects for promotion and for earning above average wages. As well as this there was the incentive of a pension at the conclusion of their service with Government.

Those that joined the Civil Service did not necessarily get posted to Honiara. They were subject to transfer wherever they were required, depending on which departments they worked for and the positions they held. A lot of To'amba'aita were in the Police Force and the Marine Service, two departments requiring greater mobility than most.
Even those who worked for other departments were often posted to smaller district stations. Taken overall, many Civil Servants were subject to frequent transfers throughout their careers. So while Civil Servants came to look like committed, long-term workers, they were not always very stable town residents.

In the 1950s and 1960s there was a lot of prestige attached to employment with the Civil Service. Here were the best opportunities for career employment. Undoubtedly this was a distinct and privileged sector of the urban work force, a sector in which hierarchical relations were most pronounced. To'ambaitea migrants became aware of the possibility for upward mobility, but also aware of how limited those possibilities were. Civil Servants began to set a special pattern for long-term commitment to wage employment. With upper level classified workers, they commanded the limited amount of family housing that the Government provided for their Solomon Island employees. Under these conditions, where the prospects for family housing in town were limited to higher paid workers, the situation developed where the first people to stay on in employment after marriage were those employed at higher levels of the work-force. Income disparities went together with age and married status. Only when low-cost housing became available in the late 1960s, did family housing start to become available to workers over a wider income range. The pattern that was set earlier still continued though, and could still be discerned in 1974-75, as described at the beginning of this chapter.
Outside the Civil Service, the prospects for upward mobility amongst town workers were quite restricted. The best opportunities were in the building and construction industry. In the PWD, where there were a large number of To'ambaita workers during the 1960s, it was relatively easy to achieve classified worker status on the first level of the scale, but much more difficult to advance higher than this. Education was the limiting factor to further advancement. Even though on-the-job training was given, the necessary trade tests were much easier for those with previous school training. Some were able to acquire special skills, such as learning how to drive, but this only gave them limited advancement and did not lead to regular upward promotion.

In the private sector, prospects were even more limited. In factory work, retail trading, domestic work, and other service industries, there was little opportunity for promotion. Again, the main exception was in building and construction. Education was still a pre-requisite for success, as can be seen in the case of a man from Loina village, a large SSEC village east of Malu'u.

Kwao'abu went to village church school for a number of years, then qualified for admission to a senior primary school run by the SSEM at Su'u in southern Malaita. He passed the Senior Primary Certificate in 1960. He wanted to take up training as a mechanic but was turned down for that, and instead entered the British Solomons Training College for a two year course in carpentry. Successfully completing the course he started work in 1963 with the Express Building Company as a building foreman on $24 a month. Twelve months later he joined a new construction company set up by Cubay, a businessman from the New Hebrides. Kwao'abu met the expatriate foreman of this company through
involvement with the SSEC in town. They became friends and Kwa'o'abu stayed with the company for the next eight years, being given more and more responsible positions throughout. In his final year with the company he was getting $200 a month, placing him in the highest earnings range achieved by Solomon Islanders in employment (amongst the top four per cent - Ann. Abstract Statistics, 1972:135).

This man has the most successful record of all those who took up work with private industry in the 1960s. While it shows the kind of upward mobility that was possible in the private sector, it also shows the importance of education and training for such success. A number of To'ambaita migrants took up work with Gubbay's and other private building companies during the 1960s but only a small number became semi-skilled and skilled tradesmen compared with the number of men who reached the same level as classified workers with the PWD.

In the last six to eight years, much of the expansion in private sector employment has been in factory work. A number of new factories started up during this time, and in two cases To'ambaita migrants were taken on at a senior level during the early part of their operations, enabling them to provide openings for many other To'ambaita migrants. The Solomon Islands Tobacco Company began operations in 1967 and took on a To'ambaita school teacher, Jim Umasaalu, as factory supervisor. By 1972, in a work-force made up of 63 men, there were 53 from the island of Malaita, and 31 from the To'ambaita area. It was one of the biggest concentrations of To'ambaita workers in town. Like To'ambaita recruiting agents in former years
working for commercial plantations, the Trade Scheme, and other companies (and like 'passage-masters' at the turn of the century), Jim Umafaalu became well known throughout the To'ambaaita area (and the whole of North Malaita) as someone through whom work in town could be obtained. His influence was such that in Manakwai and surrounding hamlets he boosted the rate of movement for a couple of years through providing certain jobs for people in town. Since he died in late 1973, there has been a fall-off in the number of To'ambaaita migrants working in the tobacco factory, but it still remains a locus of To'ambaaita employment (Table 7.7). At Solomon Delite, a bakery and food processing factory, another senior To'ambaaita man started work in 1972, just as the factory started operations. He was able to get work for others, and now that factory is a focal point for To'ambaaita employment as well. There were ten migrants working there in early 1974.

During the time that they have been working in Honiara, the To'ambaaita have largely taken up jobs offered by non-Solomon Islanders. They have worked for Government, for European companies, and for Chinese businessmen, the main interests providing employment in the urban economy. As mentioned in the last chapter, attempts by Solomon Islanders to exercise entrepreneurial initiative and find a more independent place in the economic structure of town, have not been very successful. Like most other Solomon Island migrants, the To'ambaaita have been content to accept employment offered by established interests, rather than
venture into money earning on their own account. They have not had the capital, the expertise, the land, or any other resources through which they might be able to do this. Now this is beginning to change. Evidence for this is largely confined to experienced town dwellers, some of whom are running their own businesses while still holding a regular job in town, and others who have made themselves completely self-employed. Retail trading, operating taxis and trucks, produce marketing, and independent contracting, are the main activities that they have got into. The number of people supporting themselves here is still small compared with the total number working in town, but because of the high level of skill and experience that To'ambaïta migrants now have through wage employment, and because they now have money to invest in business, it is certain that there will be expansion in this area. It has reached the stage where the best entrepreneurs are also employers, providing work for other migrants on a regular basis.

The organization of these businesses and their significance for To'ambaïta migrants living in Honiara will be covered in a later chapter. In presenting this outline of the history of To'ambaïta employment in Honiara, the emergence of entrepreneurial activity amongst town residents, stands as a new phase in the whole record of money earning through migration to Honiara. Independent business activity has become something preferable to wage employment particularly as it has the potential for providing the same, if not a higher, level of income. Because of the capital required though, it is mainly
high-income workers (Civil Servants and classified workers), who are starting businesses, and this is only accentuating the disparities that have already evolved in the arena of wage employment.

Leaving aside self-employment, the picture we have here of To'ambaita employment in town over the last twenty-five years is of increasing divergence within the migrant population. Those with formal school training have taken up skilled and professional employment in increasing numbers throughout the 1960s, moving into higher levels of the work-force. Balanced against this, there has been continued involvement in unskilled, low-paid work in many sectors of the economy. Most upwardly mobile workers, and some of those in low-paid work, have settled into specific jobs and become relatively stable town workers. Others have continued to approach employment more casually, perpetuating under new circumstances the more established tradition of only taking work for short intervals at one time. While some migrants have become relatively stable in employment, the rate of movement between Malaita and Honiara (in both directions) has increased. As recruiting dropped away during the 1960s and interest in plantation work declined, increasing numbers of men looked to Honiara for work. Regular commercial shipping services, operating between Malaita and Honiara, came into operation at this time, and this made it easier to get to and from town. Both factors - the increasing number of people settling into long-term employment, and the higher rate of movement between
Malaita and Honiara — increased the number of people living in town, and contributed to the overall character of the town's population. Differences in relative mobility created a complex system of relationships between town residents. Even though they didn't always encourage it, those who were least mobile and more settled in town, helped to promote and sponsor the movement of others. In becoming settled workers they created the conditions which made it possible for other To'ambaita migrants to go on seeking more casual employment. New migrants continued arriving in town: some of them with school training, in a good position to take up career work; others only looking for casual jobs; in all cases dependent on their kin in town for accommodation and assistance while looking for work. This is an on-going situation. It means that there are ever-widening disparities between town residents, based on the number of years of experience in town, years of experience in wage employment, attitudes towards wage employment, and levels of success in the urban occupational structure.

The trends which I have described for employment may be easily seen looking at information relating to migrants amongst whom I worked in 1974. The information is based on 105 men, 15 years and over, in the study population. Table 7.5 shows the length of time spent in town and the total length of time spent in migratory employment. The figures given under length of time in town do not necessarily refer to time spent in urban employment. A high level of mobility amongst some migrants during
different phases of their experience, made it too difficult to get this data. Even so it can be presumed that a large proportion of the time indicated here has been spent in employment. At one extreme there are new migrants with less than six months experience in town; at the other extreme, a number who have been in town for more than ten years. The short term nature of much urban movement is still apparent. More than fifty per cent of the men have less than three years experience. This is explained in part by the youthfulness of the population living in town, and variation in their commitment to urban living. Taking into account migratory work experience in places other than Honiara (added to urban experience in column 2, Table 7.5), 41 per cent of men have worked in other places. The length of time which men have spent away in migratory employment is much greater than might be suggested by urban experience alone. Nearly half the group have spent five years or more away from Malaita, and 18 per cent over ten years.

At the time at which I questioned migrants about employment in 1974, 25 out of 105 (23.8 per cent) were not in a regular job. This included visitors, men newly arrived and searching for work, and others who had either lost or left jobs that they held previously. Of the rest, two were self-employed and all the others were in regular work with town employers (Table 7.6 and Table 7.7). It will be noted that there are four men working for Solomon Islanders (To'ambaia and non-To'ambaia), three as taxi drivers. The three men in church work are mainly in
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Length of Time in Town</th>
<th>No.</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Length of Time in Migratory Employment</th>
<th>No.</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0 - 6 mths</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 - 12 mths</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 - 2 years</td>
<td>19</td>
<td></td>
<td>18.1</td>
<td></td>
<td>11</td>
<td>10.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 - 3 years</td>
<td>23</td>
<td></td>
<td>21.9</td>
<td></td>
<td>12</td>
<td>11.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 - 4 years</td>
<td>11</td>
<td></td>
<td>10.5</td>
<td></td>
<td>10</td>
<td>9.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 - 5 years</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td></td>
<td>11</td>
<td>10.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 - 6 years</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
<td>8.6</td>
<td></td>
<td>11</td>
<td>10.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 - 7 years</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 - 8 years</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 - 9 years</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td></td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 - 10 years</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 years and above</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td></td>
<td>19</td>
<td>18.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Total             | 105                    | 100.1 | 105 | 100.1 |
### TABLE 7.6

**STUDY POPULATION OCCUPATIONS, MAY 1974**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Professional</th>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Government administration</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agricultural extension</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church administration (SSRC)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dentist</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building contractor</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agricultural research</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Semi-professional</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Clerical workers, bookkeepers</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Museum assistant</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salesman / representative</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telecommunications technician</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building supervisor</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church-evangelical (JW)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Police</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>13.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Power station operator</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skilled</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bus driver</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taxi driver</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other drivers</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Painter</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carpenters/joiners</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mechanic</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Printer's assistant</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>20.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Semi-skilled</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Domestic</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classified workers (FWD)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Store assistants</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electrical assistants</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>19.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unskilled</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Labourers</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Store workers</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Factory hands</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>21.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Unemployed (inc. visitors) 23 21.9

**TOTAL** 105 100.0

**Notes** Occupational levels taken from Howlett, et. al. 1978.

**Source:** Fieldnotes
### Table 7.7

**To'ambaita Migrants' Employers, May, 1974**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employers</th>
<th>No.</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Government and Semi-Government</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civil Servants</td>
<td>11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daily Paid Workers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classified workers</td>
<td>18</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labourers</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solomon Islands Ports Authority</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solomon Islands Electrical Authority</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solomon Islands Housing Authority</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Churches</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Seas Evangelical Church</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Watchtower Movement</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Private Companies and Individuals (non-Solomon Islanders)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solomon Island Tobacco</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solomons Delite Bakery</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail and wholesale trading</td>
<td>17</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Domestic service</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Private Individuals (Solomon Islanders)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taxi operators</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Casual work</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Self-Employed</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building contractor</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taxi operator</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Unemployed</strong></td>
<td>23</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>105</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Fieldnotes
administrative and clerical work, except in the case of the Jehovah's Witness, where evangelical work is also involved. Town churches such as the SSEC have grown into large associations in the last ten to fifteen years. Being national organizations their activities are not confined to town, but the town side of their operations tend to have a central place in the wider organization. The establishment of administrative offices and other facilities have added to this role. It means that they provide some employment in town. In the case of the SSEC there are several administrative and clerical positions and also jobs in their Bible and Book Store attached to the church. Having a long and close association with the SSEC, To'ambaita members of the church are well placed to pick up some of these jobs. Many more were working for them in 1974 than is indicated by these numbers and in fact, probably take more positions than most other language groups. Except for executive positions, the jobs are not highly paid and do not have many privileges connected with them. Even so, the church does provide a loose kind of career structure, with strong links to villages and village churches, its own training institutions (Bible Schools), and opportunities for overseas service and experience. One of the men shown here only started work for them in 1974 after two years at Bible school. He is doing clerical work at present but could easily branch into other spheres.

The importance of employment with Government is made clear amongst this group, with half of the men in employment working in this sector. The number of Civil
Servants (11) is not considered too high. There would be three to four times this number of To‘ambaia people in the Civil Service altogether. The large number of daily paid workers are mostly working for the PWD. This is one department in town in which the To‘ambaia have been working continuously all the way through, and in which they are quite strongly represented. They fill positions in all branches of the Department, in maintenance, road and bridge construction, mechanical repair work, plumbing, painting, joinery, and in clerical work. The high number of classified workers relative to labourers conforms with a tendency which is apparent in the history of PWD employment. Compared with labourers, amongst whom there is a high turnover, classified workers tend to stay much longer in the job.

One other feature of PWD employment with some significance for the To‘ambaia, are the opportunities which have been provided for movement between different parts of the Solomon Islands. Being the largest organisation carrying out construction work in the Solomons, with depots in all the main centres besides Honiara, it has provided good opportunities for transfers between different islands. Many of those in Honiara in 1974, started work for the PWD on other islands, including Malaita, before transferring to Honiara. Some of the older men are now interested in transferring back to Malaita, to be closer to their homes; with present government plans for decentralizing government services, this could become a real possibility in the near future.
Plate 17: Employer Controls on Visitors

Plate 18: Sleeping quarters, Kafo'ota migrant, Chinatown.
In private sector employment there are significant concentrations of workers in factory employment and in retail and wholesale trading. The latter is almost totally confined to employment with Chinese businessmen, operating stores and wholesale businesses in Chinatown and in the main part of Honiara. There has been a tendency for migrants to attach themselves to particular businessmen, developing personal relationships with the traders concerned. Some of these relationships go back ten years or more. Individual traders do not, as a rule, employ large numbers of workers, so it is an area of work in which migrants are dispersed between many different employers. There is one store in Chinatown, bigger than most, which has been employing To'ambaite migrants for over ten years. They mostly come from villages close to Bita'ana on the south side of the To'ambaite Peninsula; the villages of Buamena, Anokwasi, and Kwai'ana. The workers live at the back of the store and have a friendly relationship with the trader. Generally speaking, there is fairly high turnover amongst workers in this field, men only working for short periods with the same employer. The work is amongst the lowest paid in town, there is very little scope for promotion, and the quarters offered to workers often poor and run-down.

Amongst migrant workers there are few men in domestic service. This is something the To'ambaite have tended to avoid. It means working in isolation from other migrants under the direction of white, female householders (misig). As bosses, European women do not rate highly and people
prefer to avoid the work. The two men concerned here both stressed the fact that they worked for the male head of the house. It is different in the case of To'ambaita women, and there were several in domestic work in 1974, although they are not represented in these tables.

In the case of skilled workers, a feature of their employment is the number working as drivers, 13 out of 21. It is an attractive line of work for migrants, because it is a skill which doesn't demand education, is relatively easy to pick up and carries with it a great deal of prestige amongst young town dwellers. Moreover it has become a very marketable skill as well, in demand on Malaita (as the number of vehicles on the Malaita road increases), as well as in town. In the past there were not a lot of opportunities to learn how to drive and get a licence. More recently, taxi operators have been offering themselves as driving instructors, offering lessons for $2 an hour. Sometimes this depends on wantok connections or some special relationship with the operator concerned. The advent of taxis is something which in itself has added to the attractiveness of learning how to drive.

Reflecting the wide range of jobs that they are in, and the varying levels of skill and responsibility that they have achieved, those in employment have a wide range of incomes (Table 7.3). The tabulation of income is based on income from formal employment only. It does not include other forms of money earning. Unemployed are included here with no income at all, even though, outside the field of formal employment they do earn money in other ways.
TABLE 7.3
STUDY POPULATION: INCOME RANGE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Income per month S.I.$</th>
<th>No. of Migrants</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0 - 10</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>21.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 - 20</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>16.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 - 30</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>14.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 - 40</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>13.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40 - 50</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>12.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50 - 60</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60 - 70</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70 - 80</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80 - 90</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90 - 100</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100 - 150</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>150 plus</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>105</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Fieldnotes
It is not included here because information on this was very hard to obtain and, by all accounts, would appear to be negligible compared with the total income from formal employment. It can be seen that over fifty per cent of migrants are earning less than thirty dollars a month. Of those in employment (82), more than half are earning less than forty dollars a month. The only data available against which this income range might be compared is the earnings range for all Solomon Island employees in 1973 (Ann. Abstract Stat., 1973:135). Comparison suggests that this group of To'ambaaita fit closely within the range for all Solomon Islanders, considering that the data apply to two different years, and the Solomon Islander figures are based on the total work-force, not just Honiara.

Table 7.9 illustrates the trends described earlier concerning the relationship between level of employment, sector of employment, and marital status. A much larger number of married workers are working for Government than in the private sector. They are also more concentrated at higher levels of the work-force. We can expect that married workers will be older and have been in employment longer, but the conclusion here is also that those who have not been successful by the time that they get married are much more likely to leave town employment and return home again than those who are successful.

**Migration and Attitudes Towards Employment**

Reflecting the range of their achievements in town, the To'ambaaita hold widely contrasting views and attitudes towards employment. An objective summary of their position
### TABLE 7.2

**STUDY POPULATION: OCCUPATIONAL LEVEL AND MARITAL STATUS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupational Level¹</th>
<th>Single</th>
<th>Marital Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Public Sector</td>
<td>Private sector &amp; churches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semi-professional</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skilled workers</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semi-skilled workers</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unskilled workers</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Employed</strong></td>
<td>14</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Unemployed, visitors</strong></td>
<td>13</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Fieldnotes
as given in the last section, suggests increasing involvement in the urban economy over 25 to 30 years of movement between Malaita and Honiara. The involvement is not all at the same level. Everyone has not had the same kind of opportunities. Allowing for the fact that many town workers have come to Honiara after employment elsewhere, there has been a tendency for men to start working in town at much the same age. Beyond this, urban employment has favoured the educated and those from more prosperous Christian settlements. So far they are the ones who have advanced the farthest, building on advantages their parents gained during earlier phases of the colonial administration. Success in employment has followed from ready acceptance of the acculturative influences of mission and Government.

The contrasting views of employment held by migrants reflect closely the chances of success that they have within the hierarchical structure of wage labour. Hierarchical thinking about wage labour is deep and well-established. Older views are characterised by the simple separation of Europeans as employers and Solomon Islanders as employees, together forming a closed system with few opportunities for advancement. Amongst educated and more experienced migrants such views have largely been replaced by a more extended conception of hierarchical relationships making a more open system for Solomon Islanders. The difference in thinking here corresponds in part to a difference between government employment and employment in private industry. Long involvement
in government employment and the success which they have had, means that there is widespread understanding of the Civil Service hierarchy and the system of grading daily paid workers. Here we have an elaborate structure of graded employment against which they are able to measure and compare their relative success.

Civil servants and higher level classified workers are generally quite willing to talk about their progress in this structure. The kind of concern which they express about their jobs and their job prospects shows a high degree of career consciousness; the idea of being involved in work where progressive improvement and success is possible and is desirable. The increasing pace of localization has meant that those in the Civil Service and in other limited parts of the economy are being given a lot of encouragement to move into higher level positions. This extends to offers of trips to other countries for extra training and experience. A Field Officer with the Department of Agriculture, for example, recently took a short training course for administrative officers held in Fiji. He has further prospects for extra agricultural training in England, all of which will help his further promotion. In all this, some feel as though they are not being given enough recognition and encouragement, that they are being denied the opportunities they deserve. It is not a widespread feeling though, and such ambitiousness did not show out very strongly in the discussions which I had on this topic.
The position of educated migrants making progress in this way and the opportunities open to them, stand in strong contrast to the rest, those without education and without any specialist skills. For them, education, or suku lu status means total separation in the urban opportunity structure. It is here too that the feeling of being exploited is most common. Some of the terms in which this is expressed are more easily understood by looking at wider conceptions of Honiara and parallels between wage employment and work relations in traditional To'ambaita society.

One concept which the To'ambaita have of Honiara is as a large public gathering (fingua). There is the idea of large numbers of people being brought together (Pidgin - hip ap) in one place. Social gatherings have a political dimension. In traditional society they arose mainly out of the activities of prominent men. The ability to organize a large gathering was in fact one of the signs of a man of status. It is not being overly simplistic to say that the size of gatherings was some measure of status. From this point of view, Honiara fits in with the more general view of places of wage employment. They are all places that have been built up and 'brought together' by the activities of Europeans, hence the designation, fanua arai kwao 'land of the white man (or white master)'. Solomon Islanders who go to town and take on employment put themselves under European control and authority. Wage employment means working for Europeans, subordinating your labour to their interests and concerns. In doing so, you
also forfeit some degree of individual autonomy and freedom and make yourself dependent on employers. Pursuing the parallel with traditional life further, there is a precedent for doing this. It is specifically associated with adolescence and the path to adulthood. Young men were expected to attach themselves to established leaders, and to subject themselves to their direction and authority. It was not a very formalized relationship; nonetheless aspects of super-ordination - sub-ordination were involved. In doing this young men gained experience, ensured their own protection and security and learned how to achieve success in the adult world. It was also a way of gaining valuables and building up obligations with older men against future needs. While working for established leaders was a contribution to their ambitions and their success, it was a contribution with reciprocal benefits, some specific and others more generalized. Ensuring future support in getting married was one important consideration. All of this took place in a relatively open society, where young men could compete for success and hope to move beyond their subordinate position.

Big men and their followers were living in an entirely different situation to migrants in wage employment, but the comments of people living on Malaita and living in Honiara suggest an evaluation of employment in similar terms. There is the idea that work is a contribution to an employer's status, more generally described as 'making the white man high'. For those in low-paid unskilled work, there is also the feeling that it is a contribution
that is not adequately requited. The feeling of being used or exploited is greater, the longer people remain in the same job without getting a significant increase in income or some other benefits from it. A young migrant about to give up his job at the Solomon Delite factory after 18 months, explained that he hadn't seen anything follow from ('in front of' maana) his work, and he didn't want to go on giving his labour to the white man. The factory is operated by a group of Honiara businessmen and has a Chinese manager, but he still phrased his experience in these terms. To'ambaita migrants do not have a good understanding of the differences in income between them and the owners and managers under whom they work. They know that the gap is very large, even if only from observing differences in life-style and living standards. Behind their feelings of being hard done by through employment, is the belief that their wages are only a pittance, a small fraction of the wealth controlled by those who provide employment.

As a general statement about To'ambaita feelings, it can be said that there is a lot of unease and ambivalence about staying in employment. This is not something that is confined to low-paid, unskilled and semi-skilled workers, although it is much more pronounced amongst them. There is the feeling that they have made themselves dependent on employment in a way that they are not comfortable with, and do not fully accept. One man, a long-time labourer with a company based just out of Honiara, described their position (talking about Solomon Islanders generally - wana bulu 'black man') as utter
foolishness (oswane'a la) 'We go and work for the white man, become his servants, and stay like that for the rest of our lives.' The loss of freedom and autonomy is felt very strongly. The longer they stay in employment, the more it seems that they forfeit control over their lives. A copra-cutter working at Lungga, just out of Honiara, reflected on his position in this way:

I work now at Lungga. I am nearly bald, and I am still only getting $14 a month. Sometimes I am there, I hold my knife, work, work, change my knife to the other hand, work, work, until my eyes are transfixed. I never talk but I think a lot, and I think of my life, and I think, the white man, he has ruined me completely. No matter how hard I try, there is nothing that I can do to change things.

This man lives with his family at Lungga and has been working for Levers for many years. Not all migrants, in Honiara or elsewhere, have got into this position, committing themselves to one employer for a long period of time without much improvement in their income or conditions of work. Some others have expressed similar despair.

At this point I want to discuss one aspect of employment in more detail. It concerns the length of time which migrants spend in particular jobs and the practice of shifting between jobs and places of employment. High rates of job mobility have been described for a migrant group living in Port Moresby (Strathern, 1975:113 ff). For the Melpa it is something largely under individual volition, not attributable to circumstances outside their control. Hence it has a bearing on their attitudes
towards employment. For them, changing jobs is a way of asserting independence in a situation where it is being threatened and denied. Amongst To'amba'ita migrants the level of job mobility varies considerably. An examination of work histories shows that there is a difference between those who commit themselves to steady and continuous work and those who remain mobile, frequently change jobs, and often spend time out of work altogether. Basically it is a contrast between highly mobile, short-term workers on the one hand, and steady, long-term workers on the other. Between these two extremes, variation proceeds along a continuum with a middle area in which attitudes and behaviour are not easily defined in such terms.

One reason for proceeding with caution in making this distinction is because mobility and stability are relative conditions which vary closely with age, and length of experience in town. A new migrant may start off frequently changing jobs and shifting residence and then gradually become more stable as he settles into a particular job over a long period. The longer migrants spend away from home, the more likely it is (if they haven't already done so), that they will become more permanent in one job. It may not necessarily arise from any definite decision to do this; nonetheless, this is what is observed. As a rule, older migrants with many years of town living behind them, tend to be more committed to town employment than younger men and those visiting town for short periods of time. High job turnover and constant movement within and between work-places is, in fact, something specifically associated with the young. It is behaviour typical of
Men with a high rate of job turnover, rarely spend more than 12 months in one job. The length of time in particular jobs tends to range from one day to several months. In many cases periods of residence in town, whether employed or not, are interspersed with visits back to Malaita, or visits to other employment centres. High job turnover is closely associated with a high rate of residential mobility as well, often changing sleeping places within Honiara, as well as moving between different work-places. In most cases these men are confined to unskilled employment. The following record of one young man's experience is reconstructed from several conversations over an eighteen month period. Fufuli comes from the village of Dada'ame, on the southern side of the To'ambaite Peninsula.

I first came to Honiara in 1969 when I was fourteen. I stayed with my elder brother. He was working in the tobacco factory. I stayed with him for two months and then returned home again. I was too young to work then. For the next three years my father sent me to school, at One and then at Bala (Anglican villages in north Malaita). At the end of 1972 I came to Honiara for a second time. Stayed with my brother again but soon got a job at Solomons Delite (bakery) where an uncle (on father's mother's side) was working. I worked on the delivery truck. We delivered bread and cakes to stores around Honiara. Later I was taken off delivery and put in the factory on night shift. After six months I went home again and stayed home for three months. I returned to Honiara again in October, 1973 and again got a job with Solomons Delite. Stayed there until the middle of February 1974, then I left the job to go back down to Malaita. Went down to Malaita at the end of February for my brother's
marriage and se'ele'a. I returned to Honiara after the se'ele'a had finished in June and couldn't find a job anywhere at all. I stayed with a wantok, E. at Nola'ale. He is a big-man in Honiara. Married a Langa girl and works for Gubay as a foreman. He has always been kind to me. Gave me a room to sleep in. After, I couldn't find any work in town and decided to go out to CDC (Solomon Island Plantations at Egalibi'u on (Guadalcanal Plains), he drove me out there in his mini-moke. Got a job within a short time and was put on weeding and clearing around the trees. It was really hot and tiring. There wasn't much food either. None of my wantoks had any food. There were not many wantoks there that I could eat with, and those there were didn't have much food. I only worked there for four days, and after two weeks came back to town. Came back with six dollars. I went and stayed at Solomon Delite with my uncle, but soon got a job in Chinatown at Ip Choy's store. There was a wantok already working there and I joined him. I didn't stay in Chinatown but went and stayed at Tuvaruhu with a friend (a young Baeleleia man he had known at school and met in town). This friend works for Medical and has a room in a house at Tuvaruhu. We shared the room together. I was fed up with wantoks then, and wanted to live somewhere else. There were too many wantoks in E's room at the labour lines, and not enough food. I stayed with Ip Choy until late August. He finished me then because there wasn't enough work. Copra short. I was having a lot of luck with dice then and didn't worry about getting another job for a while.

Around October I travelled up West (Western District). Obtained my basis (care) by promising to work for Levers on their plantation at Karekana on Kolombangara Island. When I arrived they gave me a copra knife and told me to start cutting copra. I refused. I said that I only wanted to work with cattle and didn't know how to cut copra. They sacked me and told me to leave the station.

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6. These are marriage celebrations which last two weeks or more, after valuables have been exchanged and the bride has come to live with her husband. The celebrations are largely confined to young people, contemporaries of the bride and groom. Generally they are festive occasions, associated with feasting and feasting. They often draw young men back from town for temporary visits to Malaita.
Kept the knife they gave me and stayed there until the end of the month, sleeping with wau tokas. End of the month got a canoe crossing over to Gizo. There I went and stayed with L. (classificatory father). He worked with Agriculture (Department of Agriculture) in Gizo. One of their big-men. On the day I arrived got a job at the Gizo Hotel doing casual work. Only lasted a month. At the end of month got into a fight with my boss, a man from Shortland Islands. He swore at me while we were arguing, swore on my mother, so I left. Later I got a job with the Trading Company, and stayed with them for eight months. I worked in the cargo shed on the wharves. Once we went across to Noro, on New Georgia for two weeks where Taiyo had a wharf. After eight months, nine of us were all put off at once, told to finish. Said there wasn't enough work and we should take two months holiday, July and August, then start back again. I didn't want to stay. Got into too many fights. Once punched a Gilbertese man. We went to court and he was fined. We had been drinking and got into a fight over a bicycle. He was fined $10. Got into another fight with a man from Lord Howe (Ontong Java) and a man from Makira (San Cristobal). Me and another Langa Langa man took them both on. Taken to court again. This time I was fined $15 or prison for one month. I paid the fine. There was another fight at a dance. I was playing in the band with man from 'Are'are, man from Langa Langa, and a man from Sirbo. We were playing when the fight started. A man got rough with one of the girls. She didn't want to dance with him and he pulled her. Everyone was in then; 'Are'are, Malaita, Gilbertese, Western, Makira. A man from Shortlands tried to punch me but I had a key in my fist and punched him with that. Made a mess of his face. (Long detailed account of this fight.) Went to court again, before the D.C. Was told would have to leave Gizo, me and another 'Are'are man. So they paid my fare back to Honiara. Now I am here staying in Honiara with K. (another classificatory father). He wants me to work their taxi and is training me now. Should get my licence soon and be ready to take the taxi over.

Over a period of 32 months this man had seven jobs altogether. The longest period he worked was eight months. He visited Malaita twice, travelled to other work-places on Guadalcanal and spent some time in the Western Solomons.
Twice he was given notice, but otherwise he left jobs because he was dissatisfied, had other things that he wanted to do, disliked his boss, or just wanted a change. In all my conversations with him he was totally indifferent to wage employment, adopting the attitude that he could 'take it or leave it', it didn't worry him whether he had a job or not. He wasn't going to stay in any job that he didn't like, or live anywhere that didn't appeal to him. He was not going to be beholden to an employer or to wage labour generally.

Throughout my fieldnotes there are periodic entries referring to similar experiences and similar attitudes amongst young migrants.

I. arrived back from Tulagi yesterday. Finished with Taiyo after two months. Says he didn't like the pay but this was met by disbelief from the others.

F. talking with L. this afternoon. Sacked from Marine after an episode on a trip to the Eastern Outer Islands. He and another two crew took a boat during the night to visit some girls in a local village. Got caught, dismissed when they returned to Tulagi.

I. hanging around Manakwai room. Has just left Delite after 4 weeks. Hasn't got another job. Didn't like the work that he was given.

Met C. in the market. No longer with Sze Tu King. 'Rubbish work', making cakes all the time, and only $14 a month.

M. arrived back in town today on the 'Sandra'. Looking for work again. Staying with E.

W. looking for work. Left job with P. (Chinese businessman) some time ago. Said he wasn't paid enough. Today he went around all the offices and stores in Honiara looking for a job. Tomorrow he will try to talk 'the hills' (referring to houses on Kolae Ridge). (When I saw him again one week later he had a job as a gardener with a German store manager living on Kolae Ridge.)
E. just arrived from Maleita. Staying with his father at Delite. Hasn't started looking for work yet.

Movement in and out of town, in and out of work, is a constant feature of life in town amongst the To'ambaits. The rate of movement tends to increase around Christmas time and the beginning of the year. It also tends to be slightly greater at the beginning and end of each month, as some people plan their movements to coincide with monthly pay periods. Except for this, it is something which is going on all the time.

The term most commonly used to describe this kind of movement is liu or liliu 'to wander around, to walkabout'. It accentuates the mobility element in this behaviour and underplays the fact that those involved do work occasionally. This is in keeping with the kind of attitude towards work that is part of a high level of job mobility. The word has now become part of Pidgin-English, meaning specifically someone who is unemployed and very mobile. Unemployment and frequent job changes are something that are more common amongst young people than any other group of town migrants. They are also the ones with least experience of living in town. It is something which distinguishes them from other migrants, not only because of their different attitude towards employment and staying in one job, but also because those that are highly mobile are in a dependent relationship with those that are more settled. This is the only way in which itinerant residents are able to maintain the sort of life-style they have adopted. This comes out clearly in the case of Fufuli
above. In all the places that he visited and during all the time that he was in Roniara, there were other kinsmen and friends that he could go and stay with, have meals with, and generally rely upon for whatever he needed at the time. The main figures were a succession of elder kinsmen, all preceding him in the places he went to, all relatively more stable and committed to regular work. Some of these figures are successful, higher level Civil Servants. The presence of these kinsmen and other mentoks in various places, is what makes the movement of others possible. At least in the early stages of migration it is crucial to new migrants. As they gain more experience they learn to rely on other contacts and broaden the pattern of their dependence.

Even though they do not deny them the kind of support that they demand, older migrants tend to be critical of the behaviour of their younger kinsmen. They explain such behaviour in terms of differences in responsibility. Kala wane are inexperienced and immature. Their minds are still green yet (manatana 'a bibina 'u nari), not mature ('a ne'i si rafo); they have not learned how to behave sensibly. This has important implications for relations between older and young migrants, and the kind of interaction that takes place between them; it will be taken up in a later chapter. Here I want to look at this from the point of view of employment.

Those who have been successful in employment are also inclined to take it seriously, to be conscientious about
their work and about the relations which they have formed through work. The career thinking, that I mentioned earlier, is part of this. There is the attitude that commitment to regular work is valuable and worthwhile. These are also the men who are most critical of the young. Settled migrants who have been much less successful are not so critical. They complain about the obligations imposed on them to help younger migrants, but are less inclined to disparage them for their indifferent attitude towards employment.

The kind of thing that all migrants who have committed themselves to regular employment feel is the loss of freedom and autonomy that this then leads to. A technical assistant with the Post Office, with 12 years' experience working in town (and earning more than $70 a month) described his feelings in terms of a contrast between living at home (fanua kia 'our land') and living in town.

At home, you work following your own mind. If you feel tired you sit down. If you want to rest, you rest. Here, it is different. Even if you are tired you have to keep working.

While there are many who have settled into regular employment, they are not all completely happy with the restrictions which this imposes on them. Those who only take work for short periods of time, do not avoid these restrictions completely, but they do exercise a much greater degree of autonomy as employees. Their indifference towards wage labour represents a refusal to be bound by it at the cost of their own freedom and ability to do the
things that they want to do. One young man wrote on the
back of his T-shirt 'Me no care one way go'; it is a
feeling shared by many of his contemporaries.

The uneasiness which all migrants feel towards wage
employment points to a much more fundamental dilemma in
the position of the To'ambaaita at this time, and that is
their dependence on money. Migration after all, is often
explained in terms of the need to earn money, in the words
of a Pidgin song sung by Fred Maedola, "Dola noona neken
mi lusim hon". ("Dollars only, made me leave home.")
In these terms it is not so much the white man that has
made a fool of them in drawing them into wage labour, but
their need for his kind of wealth (malefo arai kwao).
It is a form of dependence which is much more real in
town where people also 'live by money', in contrast to
Malaita where they are said to live by their gardens.
This opens up a completely new facet of migrant living,
taking us well beyond the field of employment. It will be
taken up in a later chapter.
Chapter Eight
LABOUR LINES AND LOW COST HOUSES:
TO'AMBAITA HOUSEHOLDS IN HONIARA

For the To'ambaita, housing in Honiara is still closely tied in with employment. With a few exceptions they have not yet become sufficiently self-reliant to house themselves independently of jobs. Only a few people have built or bought their own houses, the rest readily take up and rely upon whatever their employers provide. Those without jobs rely on the people with jobs for places to stay. In the location of housing, and the people who live together in particular places, residential arrangements tend to take off from the pattern of employment in Honiara. Because some people are buying their own houses, and employers now offer a better range of houses, housing arrangements are beginning to reflect differences in socio-economic status. It is one of the main ways in which settled migrants are beginning to differentiate themselves. The more successful workers are able to command better quality and more private housing, while those who remain in low-paid positions continue to have very little choice.

As described earlier (Chapter Six), the main difference in housing which has grown up in recent years is the separation of family housing from bachelor quarters. These are the two main types of housing in which migrants are living in Honiara. Bachelor quarters are the older more traditional form of migrant housing, the standard form of housing that employers still find it easiest and cheapest
to provide. It is still the only kind of housing offered to low paid workers, and it is they who are the main occupants of this type of living quarters. Older, more successful migrants have gradually been moving into family housing in the various estates that have sprung up in Honiara since the late 1960s. In this chapter I will discuss these different living arrangements and interaction patterns associated with them.

The households and wider residential groupings formed amongst bachelor workers have an important place in the interaction patterns of migrants in Honiara. Of all the different age groups in town, bachelors are still the largest category in the migrant population. Amongst them, we have the widest representation of villages and hamlets on Malaita. Most newly arrived migrants join these groupings and through them gain their early experiences of urban living. Few young migrants live singly; they mostly share rooms with others. Whether they form part of larger labour lines, or whether they live in isolated quarters near places of employment, the rooms that they occupy are focal points for interaction between close kinsmen and people from the same settlements and localities on Malaita.

The place in which this has been going on for the longest time and which has become a major living area for the To'ambaita is the FWD labour lines at Kukum. The To'ambaita have been working for the FWD in relatively large numbers ever since they first started coming to town. In the transition from contract work to steady employment
in the late 1950s and early 1960s, they soon established themselves on a more long-term basis in the quarters that the FWD provided. In the early 1960s new quarters were constructed at Kukum and it was here that they adopted a pattern which is still current today. Allocated sleeping space at random according to when they signed on, they gradually rearranged themselves so as to share rooms with kinsmen, people from the same settlements and localities on Malaita, and with wantoks. Their numbers were such that it did not take long to gain control of several individual rooms (each holding four to six occupants). These were scattered throughout the lines. It was impracticable to try and gain control over adjacent rooms in whole barrack blocks, so in each case they had neighbours from different language groups.

The arrangement today is that To'ambaita FWD workers (and their kin) occupy six rooms spread throughout the labour lines (Figure 9). Each of these rooms is known by the village from which migrants originate; settlement and locality of origin are the main organizing principles. A long time resident of the labour lines and recognized head of one of these rooms in 1974, described the arrangement to me in this way.

We divided things like this. Section Manakwai, their room (described as bi'u, or men's house) over there. That is L. and all them. Section 'Aenathaia, the house of A. and them, separate again, over there. Section Kwaiana, over there, and then this room, belonging to us, people from Buamena, One, and Na'o. So we worked it out like this. If anyone comes along looking for a place to stay, if they come from Na'o or One, then they stay here with us. If they come from Manakwai,
Toombaita/Boeleleai rooms

Village of origin:

1. Manakwai
2. Manathia
3. Malatu
4. Buame, One, Anokwasi
5. Folotana
6. Kwadien

Figure 9: Map showing Toomabaita family rooms
then they go and stay with I. and the others. If they come from Kwaiana, then they go and stop in the Kwaiana room.

Such a description of PWD living arrangements condenses drawn out historical processes, but it shows clearly how divisions existing on Malaita are maintained in the context of bachelor quarters. The identification of rooms in terms of villages (they are all large coastal, Christian villages), rather than descent groups or descent group territories, shows how important villages have become as residential groupings on Malaita in Christian times. It is also noticeable that an alternative way of referring to these quarters is by the name of the most senior occupant. This is similar to what happens in pagan settlements on Malaita. A men's house (bi'yu) shared by a group of closely related men, may be referred to by the name of the man who acts as leader for the group. As households made up of groups of men from the same place (te'e bārē'e wane), the parallels are quite close.

Even though they have not always been occupied by people from the same villages, some of these rooms have been occupied by To'ambaite migrants for almost as long as they have been built. During the 1960s, supervision of these quarters by PWD authorities and police was not regular and it was relatively easy to share them with non-PWD workers and visitors. This made their association with particular villages or localities much more pronounced, as such links were continually being renewed. They were some of the main places used by new migrants and visitors to town. As more and more people began...
travelling to town, they became key locations for To'ambaita interaction, footholds of privacy and moral commitment in an otherwise very public and open environment.

Each room in the labour lines forms a separate household although definition as such is not easy. They have their own cooking facilities - mostly kerosene and wood stoves, but share toilet and washing facilities with the rest of each barrack block. Furniture is minimal, a table and benches in the front and beds inside. The rest is what migrants purchase themselves - boxes, mats, pillows, blankets and a selection of personal possessions.

In each household the longest serving and more experienced members usually take a leading role, but the authority that they exercise is minimal. Much depends on how many occupants are working and have an income, for it is in the provision of food that co-operation is largely demanded. In at least two rooms brothers are living with each other, with close male kinsmen attached. In both cases the eldest brother assumes charge of the household, making sure food is available and cooked when required. The most common arrangement for food is to buy staples, such as rice and sweet potato, in bulk on pay-day, one bag or basket at a time, and to purchase other items such as cabbage, coconuts, bread, tea, sugar, tinned fish, tinned meat, on a day to day basis, as they are required and can be afforded. Unless there are younger unemployed kin to do the work, household responsibilities are shared amongst everyone living in the room.
Short acquaintance with these households gives the impression of close friendly relations amongst their occupants, people treating each other as equals; if not brothers in fact, then brothers in practice; ideally, contributing food and meeting other expenses on a reciprocal basis, and sharing responsibilities amongst themselves. But they are not without some degree of dissension and conflict. The main reason for this is their instability and the varying economic circumstances amongst their members. Up to half of young bachelors living in town are unemployed. Those that are employed are amongst the lowest paid workers in town. This combination of factors means that bachelor households have very low incomes and unreliable incomes. Added to this is their high turnover and varying recognition of the obligation to share resources. This obligation is strongest amongst close kinsmen, but there is also a feeling that people from the same descent group and people from the same villages should help and assist each other whenever necessary. Some go further and say this obligation extends to all wantoks or people from the same language group. With low incomes, bachelor households cannot sustain a high level of dependency. This adds to their instability for it means that individual members adopt different strategies to get around this. Income earners try and avoid contributing more than they have to (balancing this with other expenditure around town), those without an income shift around according to where they may best find the support they need. Bachelor households are not isolated and totally self-reliant households made up of people who are
closely and continuously dependent on each other. They form part of an extensive network of households, linked by their individual members. There are links to kinsmen, other people from the same village, friends, and wamtoke. Through these links, further sharing takes place and patterns of inter-dependence are spread more widely. The extent to which this is evident depends on the size of local groups to which people belong, and the number of people that they have living in town.

Some of these things may be illustrated by looking at one room in detail, a room in the FWD labour lines known amongst To'ambaista migrants as the Manakwai Room.

Situated in one of the blocks originally constructed and set aside for classified workers, this room is now controlled exclusively by migrants from Manakwai and surrounding hamlets. Most of the occupants are either from Takiniano or Gwaasi descent groups. The room is part of a block in which there are three other rooms. They are occupied by migrants from Marovo (Western Solomons), Small Malaita, and Roviana (Western Solomons). These other residents are also FWD workers. Some of them are known to To'ambaista migrants in the Manakwai room but there is little interaction between them. They maintain completely separate eating and sleeping arrangements. One of the original occupants of the Manakwai room was Ben Ri'iniima from Manakwai. He started work with the FWD in 1966. Employed as a time clerk, he was immediately allocated classified worker accommodation. At first he shared the room with workers from other language groups, but as they
left or moved into other quarters, other To'ambaïta migrants moved in. By 1967 and 1968, he and others from Manakwai had exclusive use of the room. Through them it came to be used by non-PWD To'ambaïta migrants looking for a place to stay in town. For young men newly arrived in town, it was one of the first places that they chose to visit and to stay in. Ri'iniu ma himself lived in the room until 1971 when he got married and became eligible for a government house in the Tuvaru hu housing estate. Other occupants left before this, and in all the time that Manakwai migrants have been using the room there has been a constant turnover of people staying there. During this period, just about every male from the Manakwai area who has ever visited town, has spent some time in this room. It is used as if they all had an automatic right to stay there. Because of this the PWD quarters constitute very public quarters for Manakwai migrants, shared and used by what is potentially a very large group of people living in, and moving through town. Needless to say, it is also a contact point and gathering place for people from this area, a temporary abode for anyone ever short of a place to stay, a distribution centre for mail, food, messages and information from home, and a regular gathering place during the hours when people are not working or moving around town.

In early 1974 the senior occupants of the room were three PWD workers, Limalalamaoa (2) a 38 year old married man from Kwaithafu (whose wife and children were living on Malaita), Afabulu (3), a 27 year old classified worker
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<th>Residents</th>
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<td>1. Ngalifasi</td>
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<td>2. Kwaithafu</td>
<td>Driver (PWD)</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Manakwai</td>
<td>CW (PWD)</td>
<td>x x x x x x x x x x x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Ngalifasi</td>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td>x x x x x x x x x x x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Ngalifasi</td>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td>x x x x MALAITA -</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Kwaithafu</td>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td>x x x x x x x x x x x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Ngalifasi</td>
<td>Mechanic (S.I. Service St.)</td>
<td>x x x x x x x x x x x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Manifao</td>
<td>Lab. (S.I. Plantations)</td>
<td>x x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Manakwai</td>
<td>Lab. G.P.L.</td>
<td>x x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Niumara</td>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td>x x x x x x x x x x x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Manakwai</td>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td>x x x x x x x x x x x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Manakwai</td>
<td>Carpenter</td>
<td>x x x x MALAITA -</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Kwaithafu</td>
<td>Church Envang.</td>
<td>x x</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TABLE 8.1**

PWD LABOUR LINES, ROOM CENSUS, MANAKWAI ROOM APRIL - MAY 1974
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Village of Origin</th>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>April 9</th>
<th>April 16</th>
<th>April 23</th>
<th>April 30</th>
<th>May 7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>14. Ngalifasi</td>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Kwaithafu</td>
<td>Driver (Bismark)</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Manifau</td>
<td>Lab. S.I.P.L.</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. Gwaunatala-</td>
<td>Lab. Sol. Del.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>toli</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. Fiti</td>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. Bokolo</td>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. Niumera</td>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. Ngalifasi</td>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. Gwaunatala-</td>
<td>Lab. Sol. Del.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>toli</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23. Aisiko</td>
<td>Driver PWD</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x x x x x x x x x x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24. Aisiko</td>
<td>Taxi Driver</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x x x x x x x x x x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25. Aisiko</td>
<td>Store Assist.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x x x x x x x x x x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26. Dafu</td>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x x x x x x x x x x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Daily Occupants: 8 7 6 1 1 8 6 5 7 7 5 8 9 7 7 6 8 9 1 1 6 6 7 6 8 9 1 0 1 5 1 2 1 0 1 0 1 0 1 0

Source: Fieldnotes
(class 1) from Manakwai, and Feo (1) a 26 year old labourer from Ngalifasi. Another regular was Rafi (7), a 19 year old mechanic from Ngalifasi working for the Solomon Island Service Station. Three unemployed younger men (4), (5) and (6), younger brothers and distant kinsmen of the others also stayed regularly in the room. Besides them there were many others constantly visiting, sometimes sleeping overnight, sometimes sharing meals, otherwise just passing by. During April and May I kept a record of the people who stayed overnight in the room (Table 8.1). One man (4) arrived from Malaita during this period, and three others left for home. The number of people using the room fluctuated between five and sixteen. Some have quarters in other parts of town. Some are from right outside town, working on the Guadalcanal Plains and only visiting Honiara at week-ends.

Of all the people staying in the room during this period, the largest number are clan brothers and cousins belonging to Gwaasi and coming from the hamlets of Ngalifasi, Gwaunatalatoli, Kwaitaifu, and Manifau (Figure 10). Only four are actually from Manakwai; two of these are distant kinsmen of the others. The number of people from particular settlements in this locality fluctuates considerably. Manakwai residents were much more dominant in the past. Because it is the largest and best-known village in the locality, it is still the place by which the room is identified, and by which its residents identify themselves. It will be noticed that on the First of May, four men from Aisiko and Dafu moved
FIGURE 10
MANAKHAL ROOM, PWD LABOUR LINES:
GENEALOGICAL TIES OF MAIN RESIDENTS,
APRIL-MAY, 1974.

11, 12, 18, 19 not shown
in, men only very distantly related to the others. They are able to exercise some claim on the room through (23) who is a PWD employee. He has a distant kinship link with Gwaasi and Takiniano. As well as this, the three men from Aisiko and many of the Gwaasi men are Jehovah's Witnesses. One man (13) is a full time worker for the church, and he and (23) are close friends through their involvement with this sect.

The three senior occupants owe their seniority to the fact that they are the most experienced and longest serving workers amongst those staying there. They are also older siblings of other room-mates and visitors. None of them has much authority over the rest. The most senior man, Limalalama, commands respect amongst all the men from Gwaasi including other members of this descent group living elsewhere in town. His position may be described as wane ni sore do kulu 'the man who speaks for us'. He is expected to give a lead and to represent the others whenever this might be required. In dealings with those PWD officials who supervise the labour lines for example, he acts as spokesman. If anyone in the room gets into a fight or argument with someone else in the labour lines he may intervene. In the actual running of the household itself, he tries to ensure that those who can, contribute food on a reciprocal basis. He has no authority to enforce this though, and can only rely on his ability to talk and persuade the others.

During April and May, eating arrangements in this room
were the cause of considerable conflict and argument. Between six and nine people were staying there regularly, but only four of them had jobs and a reliable income. As bachelor workers their incomes are relatively high - (1) earns $35.20 a month, (2) $32.45, (3) $42.35 and (7) $30 - but they do not all buy food to share with the others. An arrangement exists where the main income earners buy food (mainly bags of rice and sweet potato) in turn, each pay-day (fortnightly or monthly). A wider obligation exists also, obliging people who commonly use the room or who eat there to contribute and reciprocate whenever they can. The extent to which people meet this obligation varies. In town, money makes it possible to obtain food easily and privately - buying puddings and other prepared foods at the market, having meals at small restaurants, buying casual snacks at stores. In a public household, like the Manakwai room, food is used very quickly and not everyone is as capable of reciprocating, or as willing. Moreover the household is not the only context in which reciprocal sharing of income takes place. Drinking with other kinsmen and work-mates, going to the movies with friends, playing dice, are just some of the other kinds of sharing that go on.

During April (1) had little money after spending it on a drinking session with work-mates the previous pay-day. He often stayed overnight and took meals with kinsmen living just out of Honiara; (3) did not share with the others either. He rarely buys food for the household and now eats most of his meals with a kinsman from Fausiu, living
in his own house at Vura. (7) buys a lot of his meals around town and also contributes very little to the household. At the beginning of the month, (6) bought a bag of rice (for $7.50) with his last pay (he left a job working for a tailor in Kukum at the end of March). The bag of rice lasted for 12 days with the additional purchase of bundles of cabbage, coconuts and the occasional tins of fish. (2) also bought rice and a bag of sweet potato to see them through the month. He was the only other person to buy food that month. Sharing it with him were (4), (5), (6), (7), (10) and (11). By the 23rd of April, there was no food left and no-one was buying food any more to share at the house. All said that they had run out of money. Individual members were doing a lot of visiting around other households and getting meals elsewhere whenever this was possible. When they ran out of food, (2) chastised the others, and threatened to leave and go back to Malaita. He claimed to have spent $28 on food for the household that month. One reason for his anger was knowing that the others would be unlikely to reciprocate. No-one was very worried by his threat to go home, and it was clear that he really had no way of sanctioning the others except by verbally abusing them.

Migrants in the FWD labour lines are only one amongst a number of concentrations of To'ambaïta migrants in bachelor quarters at Kukum. There are others in the Port's Authority labour lines and in factory compounds two to three kilometres further east, at Solomon Delite and the tobacco factory. There were 13 migrants living at Solomon
Delite in early 1974, and about half this number at the tobacco factory. At Solomon Delite only half the residents are employed at the factory, two others have jobs as taxi drivers, the rest are unemployed. In both these places migrants come from settlements all over the To'ambaitsa region, but again arrange themselves so as to share rooms with kinsmen and people from the same settlements on Malaita. The people in one room at Delite are shown in Figure 11. They all come from Fiti. Only (1) works at Delite, (5) drives a taxi and the other three are unemployed. (1) and (5) purchase food for this household, and the younger boys (2) and (4) do most of the cooking. At the tobacco factory there are few extra residents, mainly because the management does not allow quarters to be shared with kinsmen and wantoks except on a supervised basis.

One change evident at the factory is the provision of a small number of married quarters. One To'ambaitsa man with a staff position in the factory lives in one of these units with his widowed mother; another newly married worker has a second unit with his wife.

Except for the family quarters at the tobacco factory, the kinds of quarters described so far are all bachelor quarters. In Kukum the distribution of these quarters has given rise to wider-level groupings based on the pattern of employment. These groupings take their name from work-places, hence there is a 'tobacco' group, a 'Delite' group, a 'PFB' group, and a 'Flores' group. It is the close relationship between employment and living quarters that contributes to the inclusiveness of these
groupings. The constant turnover of workers in some of these places, and the visiting that goes on between them, means that these groupings are poorly integrated and not very stable. They are basically informal groupings, with which people identify in a restricted range of contexts, and which are associated with a number of spare-time activities. This includes dice games, drinking parties (with beer, spirits, methylated spirits, and various drinking brews), casual games of football, fishing trips and occasional excursions out of town. In the past, tobacco workers formed a football team which played in the Honiara competition (Plate 6). Not all the team members worked for tobacco, not all of them were To'ambaia migrants, but their Captain and organizer was both, and virtually created this association. The name taken by the team was Koos, based on ko'o, the popular ethnic label and term of address for To'ambaia migrants in town.

Outside the factories and labour lines of Kukum, there are a small number of bachelor quarters scattered amongst other places of employment. This includes a number of migrants living in Chinatown. The biggest concentration there is at Sze Tu Ming's store. Most of them are from Buamena, Anokwasi, and Na'o, and their quarters are another gathering place for migrants from that area.

The distinctiveness of bachelor households throughout town lies in their rural-based form of organization. The same aspect of organization also makes them part of wider level groupings which reduces the exclusiveness of
households as such. Each is part of a network of households, linking small groups of peers from the same places on Malaita. People in these groupings are constantly interacting with each other as friends and kinsmen. As peers they share the same kinds of interests and concerns. Living in town, most of them are separated from their parents and kinsmen of that generation. This adds to the distinctiveness of the groupings which they form. Amongst them there is constant movement in and out of town, in and out of particular jobs. This affects the stability of household groups as such, but contributes a great deal to wider level unity amongst them. It is a form of unity which tends to limit interaction outside their own rural-based groupings with other non-To'amba'aita residents in town. It doesn't limit it entirely though, for despite the kind of contact which they maintain with one another, they also disperse themselves amongst places of employment and the urban population generally. With longer experience in town, new contacts are made, new relationships formed. This is not something that becomes apparent from looking at residential groupings, and will be taken up in a later chapter dealing more broadly with interaction amongst To'amba'aita migrants.

The standard labour lines, such as those provided by the PWD, are not popular quarters to live in. The concrete block construction does not make for comfortable dwellings and draws much critical comment. Their inadequacy as family quarters is felt more strongly by older men. As well as this, there is poor security and a real lack of privacy in what are very densely inhabited
and ethnically heterogeneous neighbourhoods. Solomon Islanders have never had any say in labour line construction and there is very little scope for adapting them to their liking. One alternative to this, building cheaper more comfortable houses out of bush materials and salvaged materials, has not been taken up by To'ambaita migrants in the same way and to the same extent as other Malaita migrant groups. Around 1966-67, a few To'ambaita workers, including two PWD workers, set themselves up in temporary houses on the banks of the Mataniko River, but they were not there long before they were forced to evacuate by government authorities.

A number of migrants have built their own houses using cheap forms of construction in places out of town, at Lungga, Tenaru, and further east on the Guadalcanal Plains. The land they are on belongs to large companies such as Lever's Pacific Plantations Limited and Guadalcanal Plains Limited, and the building rights they have are only temporary. A Honiara-based taxi operator built a leaf house at Tenaru in early 1974 on land owned by Lever's. He has temporary rights to clear the land and plant garden produce for sale at Honiara market. Building the house, clearing the land and planting the gardens provided work for several kinsmen. The house is only a temporary dwelling and is hardly likely to be used for more than two to three years.

The main initiative for house building and house ownership in town has come from upwardly mobile workers. With their education and their mission background they
have been much influenced by European ideas and values. Taking their lead from this direction, they have accepted the kind of housing recommended and encouraged by Government.

One of the first To'amba'aita migrants to build his own house was Kwao'abu, a successful self-employed building contractor. Now 34 years old he has been in town since 1963. In 1968, while working for a private construction company as a foreman-carpenter, he was encouraged to build his own house by the European supervisor, a close friend at the time. Kwao'abu was engaged to be married and wanted to move out of the bachelor quarters provided by the company. He took a long term lease on a section above the Kukum shopping centre, and adopted a standard government design in building on it. He built the house in his spare time, but in the construction and financing, received much help from his employer. He and his wife and their three children are the sole occupants of the house, with a teen-age girl to look after the children. Close kinsmen visit and stay with them from Malaita, but the house is not open to people from Loina, the village from which Kwao'abu comes. He employs some younger migrants in his business (as well as non-To'amba'aita migrants) but houses them in bachelor quarters elsewhere.

A second venture into house ownership took place at much the same time and also involved a migrant from Loina. Aged 54, Malefo came to Honiara in 1965 and took up work as a classified worker with the EJD, after working for them for three years on Malaita. Older than most migrants
moving into Honiara, he came to town seeking medical
treatment for one of his children. He decided to move into
town with his wife and four children. The two oldest sons
took up work in town around the same time. In town, his
wife took up domestic work with an SSEC missionary family
and the family lived in servants' quarters next to the
house. In 1968 the Government launched its low-cost
home-ownership scheme through the Honiara Town Council.
Being a classified worker and he and his wife both working,
they decided to join this scheme and purchase one of the
houses at Bokonafera. One of the main things that prompted
them to do this was the impending marriage of their
eldest son. They felt it was important to have a place
of their own so the couple could stay with them after they
got married. The house cost $1500. They paid $110
deposit and paid the rest off in monthly instalments for
seven years up to 1975. When they first started, Malefo's
wages ($13 a month) just covered the instalments ($17.18),
and they lived on his wife’s income. Since then the two
eldest sons have both married and are both renting houses
from their employers in Bokonafera. Malefo and his wife
share their house with some other migrants, mainly close
kinsmen from the same clan as Malefo, Balikafe. A clan
brother, operating a taxi in town, stays with them now.
Other kinsmen regularly visit and have meals with them.

Since 1969 three others have bought houses at Vura,
the latest low-cost housing estate in Honiara. Also
higher paid workers (earning over $50 a month), they have
entered into long-term financing arrangements with the
Plate 19: Migrant from Aisiko and his Kwai friend.

Plate 20: FWD Classified Worker, his father and his children, Vura Housing Estate.
Solomon Islands Housing Authority. So far then, house ownership is still at a very early stage although it could become a major option for the present generation of upwardly mobile workers as they get married and continue to live in town. Using the positions that they have achieved as skilled and professional workers to take advantage of such arrangements, what they are doing is making use of approved lending and financing institutions to obtain the capital required. They do not necessarily see this step as a long term commitment to living in town, for they also know that they can sell up these houses at any time in the future. Malefo's wife was no longer happy living in town when I talked to her in 1974 and now wants to return to Malaita. It is impossible to say whether they will return or not; the point is made to show that going back to Malaita is just as much an option for those who have bought houses as it is for those who haven't.

House ownership is a major investment for To'ambaita town dwellers. It marks a new phase in their experience of living in town. Taken in combination with their higher level positions in the work-force, the move into house ownership is a mark of some prestige amongst town residents. It is regarded as a highly visible sign of success in town, and earns the respect and approval of other peers. For house-owners themselves it is another aspect of ilito'ona, 'trying' what the town has to offer.

The first ventures into house ownership in the late 1960s were the exception amongst To'ambaita migrants. Most continued to rely on housing supplied by employers;
most lived in bachelor quarters. The biggest change came about when low-cost family housing became available for renting from Government from 1968-69 onwards. Many migrants took these houses up as they became eligible for them, moving into the new estates of Bokonafera, Kola'ale, Vara Creek, and Tuvaruku. Just as in the allocation of bachelor quarters, applicants had to take their chances on what they were offered. A big demand for these houses meant very little choice in what they were given. Government made no attempt to achieve ethnic homogeneity in any of the estates, and those who applied for these houses were bound to be dispersed. A new form of residential mobility began, from the labour lines into low-cost family housing, closely associated with increasing years of service, promotion, and married status.

The Toambaita people living in these houses are mostly married men with their wives and young families. Most are employed as classified workers, Civil Servants or in other high positions, earning over $40 a month. The case of a Class 111 carpenter from the village of Manakwai illustrates the pattern.

Basi'o li began working for the PWD in Honiara in 1968 after four years working for them on Malaita. When he first moved to Honiara he stayed in the labour lines at Kukum, in the Manakwai room. Late in 1969 he was offered one of the new houses in Bokonafera III, and took up residence there in September. His brother (working in the tobacco factory) and another Manakwai man moved in with him. In mid-1970 he married a Kwara'ae girl whom he met in town and they set up house together at Bokonafera.
The couple now have three young children, twins, three years old, and a son born in 1974. Close kin, such as parents and younger siblings, stay with them when they are visiting town. Occasionally Basi'oli's wife goes down to Malaita and the house reverts to a kind of bachelor quarters (Plate 9). During these periods especially, the house is a gathering place for Manakwai migrants; people are given meals, play cards, and sit around and talk. Basi'oli has a lot of interest in spare-time business schemes, most of which are run jointly with other Manakwai migrants. This means regular gatherings at the house working on business matters. In 1974 this involved running a taxi in town.

Bokonafera III consists of a single line of 15 houses, located in one of a number of valleys branching behind Vavaea Ridge. Five other To'ambaitya migrants (mostly classified workers) occupy houses in this particular estate. The rest are people from Kwara'ae, 'Are'are, Marae, Savo, Simbo and Ranongga. Each house only has two rooms and an open veranda for cooking, eating and sitting around.

Basi'oli and other Bokonafera residents grow bananas, pawpaw, cassava, cabbage, and pineapples around their houses but have to go further inland if they want to plant larger gardens. Two-thirds of married To'ambaitya migrants living in family housing in Honiara keep gardens in town. These range from small plots consisting mainly of cassava and hibiscus cabbage, to larger, full-scale gardens with yams, sweet potato, cassava, hibiscus cabbage, onions, tomatoes, beans and other vegetables. One family living in the
Tuvaruhu estate have gardens sufficiently large to make them self-sufficient in garden food. They still buy food - rice, bread, fish, tea, sugar, and biscuits - mainly to vary their diet. They regularly make gifts of food to other migrants, including kinsmen living in the labour lines.
Not all households with gardens have the same success.
In many cases the land is poor and gardens are too small.
As well as this, theft is common.

Low-cost houses are not the only family houses that To'ambaïta migrants have taken up in town. They also live in a number of older-style married quarters, including semi-detached concrete block dwellings arranged in small compounds in Kukum and other parts of town. They are much the same size houses as the others, and as households occupied by couples and their children, are very similar in form to them. Apart from these, there is higher grade government housing allocated to Civil Servants as they move up the public service scale. There are few To'ambaïta migrants in housing above the lowest levels. The highest paid and most successful Civil Servant stands out here. An Administrative Officer, in District Administration, he lives in a large house formerly occupied by European officers on Kolaa Ridge. In terms of privacy and isolation the contrast with other family housing is immense.

In contrast to bachelor quarters, family households are generally more prosperous. Higher incomes and garden production mean a more regular and more varied food supply. The same arrangements exist for buying food -
Plate 21: Selling handcrafts to Tourists.

Plate 22: PWD Driver and his family, Tuvaruha.
purchasing staples in bulk on pay-day and other food on a
day-to-day basis - but there is greater variety and
evidence of more expensive food. A popular purchase for
family households, for example, (mostly on pay-day) are
large frozen fish - tuna or skipjack worth $4 to $5. Such
purchases are extremely rare in bachelor households.
Family households are much more economically self-contained
and self-reliant. They always have one regular income
(that of the husband), augmented through garden production,
occasional part-time jobs, and other forms of money earning.

Family housing has led to new patterns of interaction
in town. Amongst older men, peer group relations continue
to be important, but there is now the responsibility of
looking after a family. Spare-time activities are just as
much family-centred as peer-oriented. In some cases the
shift in emphasis is almost total. Family households,
with their gardens and other concerns, have become the main
domain within which men spend all their spare time. In
other cases men continue with peer group activities. For
women, the transition leading to family life in town is
much less easy than it is for men. Married women are
far less happy about urban living than their husbands.
They do not have the same tradition of urban living, the
same background of involvement in wage employment.
Neither do they have the same freedom to move around town
and involve themselves in urban activities. Some are
prevented from going out alone by their husbands, others
are restricted by the responsibilities of young children
and other household commitments. The new housing estates
are lonely and impersonal places. They lack any sense of community and the intimacy and familiarity of rural villages. Living in them is made worse by their location, in cramped and airless valleys hidden from the main part of town. The contrast with other residents is not unheeded. A five-year resident of Ekonafara described it in this way:

We stop in this hole (grave) here. Up on the hill there is cool fresh air. Only the dead are put in holes. So the Europeans put us down here. This is what they think of us. Solomon Islanders can stay under the hills; they are dead, they belong in a hole.

Once happy in town and prepared to accept an urban life, this woman has grown doubtful and disillusioned. Some women make frequent trips to Malaita, alternating periods of residence in town with time at home. One married couple moved home permanently in 1974, mainly as a result of the wife's wishes. Family living marks a turning point in the course of To'ambaita urban migration. It is a change that revolves around women, and how it proceeds will depend a great deal on them.

The households set up in the new housing estates have taken a different form from households in the labour lines. Basically they are more private. At least this is what their occupants believe to be the greatest contrast between the two places. In reality, they are both very densely populated neighbourhoods; the difference is that occupants of low cost houses have more control over the use of their quarters. Bachelor migrants do not always
have to share rooms with people with whom they do not want to share them, but they often have to share the same buildings and facilities. Moreover the use of most quarters which they use is subject to control by employers. Between the demands that are put on them by kinsmen and wantoks and supervision of them by employers, bachelors have quite tenuous control over the places that they use. As people lengthen the time that they spend in town, this is one thing that they try and improve upon. It bears on their interaction with other people and the kind of strategies adopted for managing social relationships in town.

In this chapter a major residential transition amongst To'ambaaita migrants has been described, movement from bachelor quarters to family housing. It is closely associated with upward mobility in the work force and married status. It remains here to look at some exceptions to this pattern and see what light they throw on the processes of differentiation involved.

One exception is the failure of older migrants to get better and more private housing. Family housing is much more readily available to government workers than to others, and to those in higher positions and with longer experience, than to those without. Others do not have the same choice, and are forced to go on living in bachelor quarters if they want to stay in town. They do have the option of going home, and close examination of migratory histories shows that there is a tendency for men to return to
Malaita around the time of marriage. Employment may
continue for some time after marriage, but it is associated
with a definite decision to live permanently on Malaita.

W. works at the Solomon Delite factory, where
he shares a room with a cousin from the same
hamlet on Malaita. During 1974, his father,
living at home on Malaita arranged for him to
got married. The girl is from another descent
group and a distant hamlet to W. The marriage
will take place at Christmas time. W. takes
his annual holidays then. He plans to return
to Honiara without his bride, leaving her at
his parent's place, and working in town for
another twelve months. He will then return to
live on Malaita.

Even if W. had the opportunity to move into married quarters
his low wages would make it difficult to look after a
family in town.

A different pattern from this has become evident
amongst young bachelors who have had more success than
their peers. Some of these men have been able to find
quarters where they have more privacy and over which they
have more control.

R. is a building supervisor with the Solomon
Island Housing Authority. Formerly he was a
classified worker with the F&O and lived with
others in the Manakwai room (he comes from a
hamlet near Manakwai). Soon after joining
the Solomon Island Housing Authority, he
found that he could apply for one of their
houses at Vura for purchase. He has now been
living in the house for more than two years,
no longer dependent on employer housing, or
on kinsmen and wantoks for a place to stay.

R. still visits the Manakwai room occasionally but never
has meals there and now interacts very little with other
Manakwai migrants. Some other men stay at his house but
he doesn't encourage it, except amongst close friends. He is very ambitious, has had a great deal of success so far, and is critical of his younger peers living in the labour lines. Others describe him as being selfish and proud; they feel he is no longer conforming with appropriate behaviour between peers from the same area, no longer affirming their equality with each other. He is in fact taking up interests and pursuing activities which set him apart from the others. He is one who sees himself as a committed town resident; his new house and reduced involvement in rural-based groupings are part of this. Not all bachelor migrants have the chance to obtain quarters with similar privacy; not all of them would want to, even if they had the chance. This does show though, that with these opportunities, this kind of differentiation does become apparent.

Living arrangements in town are an aspect of migration in which the constraints of wage employment and town living generally, are much in evidence. With housing being largely in the hands of employers, migrants have been left with little choice in where they live and in the kind of house they live in. They have been able to exercise some control over who they live with, and in this respect there have developed distinctive patterns of interaction, largely based on rural principles of association and responsibility. Living arrangements introduce two dominant patterns of interaction, interaction between peers, and interaction within families. In a later
chapter I will elaborate on these patterns in greater detail, placing them within the context of urban interaction patterns generally. Before taking this up though, a wider view of Honiara is required, a view which takes account of the public side of urban life.
Chapter Nine

LIVING IN PUBLIC PLACES

Long taem mi lusim mami an dadi blong mi, 
mi no tink back long hom blong mi, 
mi kan go back tu si lu moa 
bikos mi liu long taon nomoa.

(Left my mother and father a long time ago, 
don't think about my home anymore, 
I can't go back to see you again, 
because I just walkabout around town.)

(Song by Peter Lui)

Short acquaintance with Honiara shows that people 
living there spend much time out in the open. The main road 
and other public venues are regularly crowded with town 
dwellers, creating a picture of constant movement and 
action within the wider urban landscape. In the social 
life of town, street activity is amongst the most conspicuous 
of all aspects of town living. As part of living in town, 
it is difficult to avoid some involvement in the public 
arena. Given certain interests and predispositions, this 
involvement may be extended to the point where it becomes 
more important than anything else. Yet even when we become 
aware of this, street activity is one aspect of town life 
that is quite easily dismissed, considered of little 
interest by the urban researcher. At first glance what 
goes on in the streets appears to be only epi-phenomenal, the 
inevitable consequence of social and economic aggregation. 
The streets and other public places only link together 
other more important venues within which people pass their 
time and gain their livelihood. What goes on in the 
streets could be said to be nothing more than what we
Plate 23. Wandering around Chinatown.

Plate 24. Casual gathering, main road, Honiara.
might expect in a densely populated and economically diverse urban environment; people fulfilling routine commitments and demands as workers and residents, travelling to and from work, shopping for food, meeting ships, making use of urban services, visiting kinsmen, doing all the things that need to be done as a result of living and working in town.

If this were all, then there would be no reason to take any further interest. I want to show here that street life is much more than this, that for the To'ambaita it is central to the whole experience of migrating to town and living in an urban centre. Their life in town reveals that public places are not just treated as the means to get from one part of town to another, they also have a definite attraction of their own. People deliberately involve themselves in public life, to the point where this is one of the most time-consuming (time passing) activities in town. People who travel to town show a definite preference for the public arena, and one of the aims of this chapter is to try and understand what this preference entails.

The first indication that we have of the importance of street life is in the different concepts of Moniara held by To'ambaita people. In the first part of this chapter I will describe some of the views which they hold of town as a place to live and work. After this I will look at street activity itself, beginning with the terms used to describe this activity, then moving on to look at
behaviour referred to by these terms. This will show how it is that people go about involving themselves in the public life of town. I will then look at the kind of things that result from wandering around town; what it is that people get out of this activity. In a final section I will consider the significance of this for the To'ambaïta. It will be argued that in street activity we have one of the most distinctive aspects of To'ambaïta migration, a form of adaptation to a world of diverse and constantly expanding opportunities, which allows them to take advantage of those opportunities, and, in the process, helps to maintain a relatively high degree of integration within those rural-based groupings to which they belong.

**Town as a Public Place**

As a place to visit and live in, there is one concept that figures prominently in To'ambaïta discussions about Honiara, and that is the view of Honiara as a large public place. The main parallel on Malaita is of a main thoroughfare, talamabaita, 'big path'. The essential feature of roads and other public places is that they are open to anyone and everyone who wants to use them. Public places do not have the same restrictions associated with them as does the space making up settlements and the territories in which they are located. There, space is brought under the control of particular individuals and groups; there, the use of space is surrounded with culturally-prescribed expectations governing interaction between persons as members of local communities. The contrast being made here is more relative than absolute.
Interaction in public places is also constrained by expectations of what is appropriate. The only thing is that, in contrast to the prescribed and familiar domain of settlements, public domains are more diverse and less predictable. There is a difference in the number and range of people who come into contact with one another. In public places people come together from widely separated localities. There are more opportunities for interaction, and for different kinds of interaction.

In the experience of the To'ambaaita, Honiara is a much larger public place than any on Malaita. This is largely a question of scale, meaning the number of people brought together and the geographical (and cultural) range from which they are drawn. Honiara is where people from many different places are brought together

fanua ifana to'a 'e'eta ki sui bana 'place belonging to many different people'. There is no restriction on who goes there. Hence the image of a main road. Pursued in more detail, the picture that people have is much more complex than this. In town, it is recognized that there are private areas controlled by specific people and specific groups. Sleeping quarters, labour lines, private houses, clubs and offices, all constitute restricted space with limited access set apart from the public domain. Notwithstanding this, To'ambaaita views of Honiara draw attention to the visible, open, public aspects of town life.

We might add to this picture, one other aspect of public
settings. They are contexts that tend to engender a lot of interest and excitement. In traditional life, public events were periodic occasions, short interruptions in the day to day routine of life in and around settlements. They were occasions to look forward to and get a lot of excitement from (Hogbin, 1969:68-69). Many people also see Honiara in the same terms. It is a concept which is closely linked to the main group of people who migrate to Honiara, young men or daraa. In town, there is the combination of people at a relatively unconstrained time of life, living in a place which, by its nature, is also considered to be relatively free and unrestricted. The enjoyment and excitement of periodic public occasions is carried to a new extreme, described as the se'e thathala mba'ita 'ana taone 'the big happy in town'.

Olo Raua Long Taon (Wandering around Town)

As an approach to understanding the public side of life in Honiara and its significance for migration generally, I will begin by taking up key concepts in the vocabulary used by the To'amba'aita for describing street activity. The terms I am introducing here are essentially terms used for describing different forms of mobility, even though, as I will elaborate later on they signify much more than this. As much as they do describe different forms of mobility, they are used to describe journeys and excursions of variable scope and duration, from the larger journeys which take people into town and to other places of wage employment, to smaller excursions
which are undertaken within these places. In discussing movement and mobility with the To'ambaits, two forms of description become evident: one which highlights the purposeful and directed nature of movement, and another which puts emphasis on movement itself, rather than anything which people set out to achieve through movement. Terms which come within the latter category are common, and it is these terms, and the behaviour which they describe, which will be the main focus of attention in this chapter. What I want to show is that, at whatever level we are looking at movement, it makes a great deal of difference whether it is described in terms of fixed goals and objectives, or whether it is described problematically (Goffman, 1972:152-153); that is, as behaviour of which the outcome is uncertain and yet to be determined. I want to show that when examined closely, To'ambaits concepts relating to movement draw attention towards the problematic, and this has a lot of bearing on what migration and living in town means to them today.

In Pidgin-English the most common term used to describe movement around town is *wokabact*, 'to go for a walk, to take a stroll'. The equivalent term in To'ambaits is *liu* or *liliu*, a word which is also found in a number of other Malaita languages.\(^1\) In recent years *liu* has also become part of Solomon Islands Pidgin,\(^2\) used as a verb to

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1. Inc. all North Malaita languages and Kwaio.
2. It is difficult to know when *liu* first began to be used in Pidgin, but it was most probably during the 1950s (see BSI News Sheet, No. 7, 1974:4-5, reported speech of Pulepada Ghana in the Governing Council 'the word "liu" has only come into the Pidgin language in the past ten years with the growth of Honiara'.

describe the act of wandering around (mi liu olabaet long taon nomoa 'I am just wandering around town'), and also as a noun to describe people visiting town and people who are out of work (sing. liu, masta liu; plur. lius). The latter usage, as a term of reference for the unemployed has risen in prominence as unemployment in town has become more conspicuous. There is frequent publicity about the liu 'problem' in town, unemployment being said to be connected with increasing levels of crime and other forms of unsociable behaviour. lius are regarded as a problem mainly because, being out of work, they are forced to depend on others for food, money, and places to sleep. (It is those upon whom they depend who commonly regard them as a problem.) In other words, as a term of reference for people in town, it connotes the idea of imposing on others in a non-reciprocal way. There are parallels here with English and Australian pejoratives such as 'scrounger' and 'bludger'.

The fact that wandering around town as a form of behaviour is closely linked with forms of negative reciprocity is quite significant, but before discussing this aspect of town life, a more general introduction to liu behaviour is required. Used in the vernacular, liu does not have the pejorative connotations that have come to be associated


4. 'To bludge ... means to impose on ... any indolent person who imposes on others' Baker, S.J. 1972 The Australian Language: 129-130.
with Pidgin usage; it describes behaviour which is as common on Malaita as in town and which, in town, has far-reaching adaptive advantages for To'ambaita migrants.

To give some idea of the sense of the term *liu* and the behaviour which it describes, it is helpful to contrast it with another To'ambaita word used to describe the act of going or moving around, the word *lae*, meaning 'to go, to walk'. In situations where people use the word *liu* to describe their behaviour, attention is directed towards the act of wandering around rather than anything which might be achieved from wandering around. It is movement undertaken for its own sake, rather than movement directed towards any specific goal or objective. When it is required to be more precise, then *lae* is the more appropriate word, hence *nau lae uri Malu'u* 'I am going to Malu'u', compared with *nau ku liliu bakua* 'I am just wandering around'. Other phrases may be used to emphasise the directed nature of movement more strongly, as for example *lae tolo ngada* which means to go in a very fixed and determined manner. The contrast being developed here is simply a contrast between closed, purposeful movement directed towards some specific goal or objective, and open random movement not necessarily concerned with any immediate objective at all, that is, action which appears to be relatively free and uncommitted. As far as duration is concerned, people may *liu* for a relatively short period of time, from several minutes to a few hours, or they may *liu* for a much more extended period, for several weeks, months, or even years. The term is used just as readily
to describe hanging around the village for an hour in the evening as it is used to describe an extended trip to Honiara or places further afield.

In Manakwai it is very common for men to leave their houses in the evening and wander through and around the outskirts of the village, visiting other houses, sometimes gathering by the main road, at the co-operative store, underneath someone's copra drier, at the cocoa fermentary. It is behaviour which is informal, totally relaxed and casual. What might be regarded as 'filling in time'. The extent to which people do this, and the way in which they do it, varies. Such wandering around may be extended for lengthy periods, taking in visits to houses in other settlements, hanging around the stores at Malu'u. Undertaken too frequently, it is behaviour which draws pointed criticism. It means spending time away from one's regular abode, being a person with ten (numerous) toilets (te'e tafulu talawane), a man who eats in ten (numerous) houses (te'e tafulu luma), a person who passes from one house to another (makele'a luma ba 'e fula boto ner). As we have seen in an earlier chapter of this thesis, this is behaviour which is more common amongst young men than anyone else. It may be combined with covert drinking, gambling, playing the guitar, and the usual idle and friendly conversation constantly passing between peers.

In Christian and pagan life, liu activity is something which is closely associated with public space and public events. It is largely carried out in the open amongst
other people. In pagan life this connection is made explicit in a practice known as lililu buira mama 'wandering around after the mama'. Mama are mortuary feasts, in the course of which ancestral sacrifices are made. Large numbers of pigs are killed. With shell valuables and other food, the meat is shared and exchanged with kinsmen and political rivals from other local groups (see Hogbin, 1939: 63 ff). During the time that this takes place the organizer of the feast and his local group place themselves in a state of sacredness (abu) with their ancestral spirits, restricted in what they are able to do and where they are able to go. The event that marks the end of this state and which brings the sacrifice to a climax is a large gathering during which puddings are exchanged, pan-pipes blown, and organized dancing takes place (ibid, 64-70). It is a festive occasion when everyone dresses up and makes themselves as attractive as they can and set out to enjoy themselves. On the day following this, lililu buira mama takes place. The festive feeling of the main event continues, everyone dressing up and decorating themselves again, but now people are more relaxed, unrestrained by any fixed program of activity or entertainment. Nothing is organized in a formal sense, as it was the day before. It is a day for gathering together in a friendly way, enjoying the feeling engendered by a successful sacrifice and the playing of the pan-pipes. The relative contrast with ordinary everyday life presented by this occasion, is most apparent in relations between the sexes. Men and women interact more openly
and freely than is normally the case. For the young, it is a day when assignations (fa'andami) in the forest are encouraged, a day given over to enjoying each other's company, pursuing friendships in an atmosphere of open sociability. Courting, in fact, is one thing which is closely connected with liliu buira mama.

While it is only one aspect of liliu activity, the association of courting with such informal and unstructured behaviour is significant, for it shows that liliu activity can be, and is, associated with specific interests which do give it some kind of purpose and reason. More than this though, the kind of interests we are concerned with here, are characteristically problematic. In courting, people pursue close relations with the opposite sex, hoping that such relationships will prove pleasurable and compatible, and that they will enhance the personal life of those involved, enhance their social standing, their reputation. Courting though, is notoriously unpredictable. Desired relationships are sometimes difficult to initiate and difficult to maintain. Many things can and do go wrong. While people in early adulthood are strongly drawn towards the possibility of partnerships with the opposite sex (both casual and long-lasting), it is an activity surrounded by risk and uncertainty. This is reflected in the fact that, even now, much importance is given to love magic and other 'aids' believed to facilitate individual motives and intentions. In all this, liliu activity has a special kind of significance. Being open, undefined, and contingent, it is the perfect way for young
people to spend time in each other's company, to test and explore new liaisons, in the context of free and informal interaction.

In town liu behaviour has taken on new and far reaching significance for To'ambaita people. It has come to encompass much of what migration and living in town means to them. Many people who visit town are said to liu only, as shown in the following joking exchange:

IU go wea? 
Mu go fo taon ia. 
Go fo liu noona! 
Where are you going? 
I am going to town. 
Just go to walkabout!

Many people at home on Malaita have the idea that wandering around is a big part of town life. It features in many Pidgin songs and is a recurring aspect of any conversation about Honiara. In truth, people living in town do spend a lot of their time 'hanging around' public places, and this is one of their most popular pastimes. There is a strong preference for passing time in the public arena. It is a selective preference though, and before entering into some discussion about what it means for urban migrants, there is a need to clarify what such a preference entails.

Strictly speaking, liu behaviour describes the action of people wandering around town without any specific purpose or objective, sometimes described as wokaboat rating 'to take a walk, go nowhere special' (Simon and Young, 1976:119). Doing this, and being able to do this, means being without any immediate obligation or commitment.
For visitors and people out of work it is something that they can do all the time; for town workers, it is something which normally they must leave until after working hours. In practice, there is a lot of overlap in what people do during working hours and what they do after working hours; elements of liu behaviour are found in both contexts. Nonetheless, making this distinction does help to emphasise the feeling of freedom and openness that is closely associated with liu activity. Here are two accounts of wandering around given to me by two different informants. The first man, Waneburi, is a young, married man from Hiunara. He came to town hoping to find short term employment, but up until the time of this incident, had been totally unsuccessful.

I left Delite (labour quarters, Solomon Delite) and wandered along the main road towards town. Came to the Kukua labour lines and called into the Mankwai room. Some wantoks were there talking and sleeping. We strolled for a while, then, A suggested we go and see the football at Lawson Tana. Left the labour lines and walked along the main road towards the football ground. There was a big crowd there and I didn't want to stay. Thought I might hang around Chinatown for a while. Left the others and followed the main road down to Mataniko Bridge. Took off there into New Chinatown. Called into True Heaven (Chinese store) and had a look at all his things. Then wandered up the road around New Chinatown. On the other side was the film shop. Had a look at all the pictures in the window there, then came around the corner to Victory Enterprise store. 0 works there from Darowara. We strolled for a while and he gave me a smoke. Didn't know about any jobs. Left there and crossed the main road into Chinatown proper. Hung around the first store for a while, then crossed the road and called into Shiu's place. K was serving there (a distant 'brother'). We strolled for a while. Just got his licence and has started driving a taxi. Wants to go down to Malaita but wants to work with the taxi for a while before going home. Doesn't know about any jobs. Had another smoke
there and then wandered off towards the other end of Chinatown. Called into Chan Wing Motors, Quan Hong and Wong Pew. Then Sze Tu Ming. No wantoks working there today so I kept going. Came to Chow Leong and sat down in front of the store for a while, just opposite the Community Centre. Then followed the road back to the labour line. Came to Lawson Tara and had a quick look for the others, but they had left, and I kept going to Delite.

Despite two previous trips to Honiara and more than four years experience living in town, Wanseburi does not have a lot of confidence wandering around the streets, and is inclined to confine interaction to those people whom he knows, his To'sambaita wantoks. This was a major consideration in the route which he took and in the time which he spent wandering around. Several wantoks were known to be working in Chinatown, and on this occasion he came across two of them, both working in Chinese stores. The second example comes from a young man from Buamena. He is not married and this is his third trip to town. He is currently working in a Chinese store. Here he describes his experiences one Saturday afternoon, after finishing work at midday.

I left Chinatown and returned to Tuvarahu where I am sharing quarters with H. We and I were at school together. He works with the Medical Department. The quarters we share belong to Medical. H wasn't at the house when I got there so I just broke in, changed my clothes and set off for town again. Stopped a taxi half way back. Kwara'ae man, old friend of mine. Asked him if he would lend me $2 till en. He agreed. Took it out of his earnings. Gave thirty cents back for fare. Got off at the market. Met my brother R at market. He is here to fix up the marriage of F, Him and T. Bought a pudding and gave it to R, and then thought I would go and hang around the football at the Town Ground. Left the market and called into Friendship Store. Met a friend there from Western Solomons. He and I went up to Town Ground together. Watched
the football for a while and then decided to go and see D at Rove. He has a house just near the Town Ground. Reached his house but he had gone to Vura. A girl was there, a visitor to town, looking after D's children. Stood with her for a while, then returned to Town Ground. Hung around until play finished about five. Caught up with W, and T, and we all came back through town together. Sat around Chinatown for a while and T took a bus to Kukum. I wandered back to the labour lines. Everyone was playing dice in A's room and I joined in for a couple of hours. Lost 40 cents. Decided to go and see F at Vura.

In this case Fufuli is much more sure of himself in town, and consequently more random in his movements. His contacts include many non-To'ambaita 'friends' as well as kinsmen and other To'ambaita residents. Knowing more people in town, and having more experience, increases the possibilities for action. This heightens the episodic nature of liu behaviour, one incident following another with little forethought or planning.

Taken in its barest and most visible form, liu behaviour suggests little other than the most aimless and most trivial of pastimes. The loitering around store verandahs, the casual strolling along footpaths on the main street, gathering at the market, at the wharves, at football games, hardly appear to have much importance or meaning for those involved. Initial enquiries tend to reinforce this observation. Personal explanations of liu behaviour are consistently vague, rarely going beyond the self-evident 'just hanging around' as if the streets were the logical place to spend free time, and that being there was sufficient explanation in itself, requiring no further elaboration. As with promenading in other places,
Plates 25 and 26: Hanging around Chinatown.
other societies (Alexander, et al 1977:169), public places appear to provide their own attractions, people seeking out each other's company, seeing each other and being seen, observing each other and being observed. Pursued further though, enquiries show that there is much more to this behaviour than this. What we find is that even though activity is not pre-planned and is not subject to precise foreknowledge in the same way as more organized activity is, many things arise out of it. Indeed, what we find is that this has many of the characteristics of eventful activity, activity which is both problematic \(^5\) and consequential \(^6\) (Goffman, 1972:152-153; 159-160).

Before discussing this in more detail, some general observations on behaviour in the public domain are in order. The public places in which people like to spend their free time when they are in town, are mostly found in the central part of Honiara (see Figure 7), in an area stretching from Town Ground in the west, to Chinatown and Lawson Tama in the east. This part of town takes in all the shops and stores of Central Honiara, the main picture theatre, the wharves, various business houses, offices of the Guadalcanal Council, the Honiara Club and Honiara market, offices of the Honiara Town Council, several city churches, the Public Works Department, Chinatown and the Community Centre. Some people have living quarters in

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5. "The term problematic is here taken in the objective sense to refer to something not yet determined but about to be." (Goffman, 1967 (1972): 152-153).

6. "... the capacity of a payoff to flow beyond the bounds of the occasion in which it is delivered and to influence objectively the later life of the better." (Goffman, 1967 (1972): 159-160).
this part of town, most live elsewhere - in the labour lines, housing estates, temporary housing areas, and various institutional complexes located in other parts of town. By and large, public places constitute an arena of activity, separate and distinct from the main living areas. People who hang around public places make a conscious decision to do so, moving away from quarters in which they normally sleep and eat.

Talking about the areas which people frequent during liu trips, we find that people visit a wide number of places besides just wandering around the main streets of town. They include hotel bars, stores, eating places, the market, sports fields, churches, around the wharves, parks and gardens, and any other place in town which is open and reasonably accessible to town-dwellers. Characteristically, the places where people hang around, are places that are free and open to whoever wants to pass through (c.f. Lieber, 1976:326). In this respect, liu trips may take people well away from the central part of Honiara, even beyond the boundaries of Honiara itself. With taxis and other forms of transport, it is not uncommon to visit places in the country surrounding Honiara.

When looking at the number and kind of people who spend time in public places and the nature of their behaviour, we find there is a definite rhythm to street life. Throughout each day a wide cross-section of people use the streets. During the week, days usually begin with people making their way to work, vendors setting themselves up in market. They are followed later by others less constrained
by specific obligations, people looking for work, taking advantage of urban services, or just wandering around. Along with the activities of town workers and town businessmen, by mid-morning there are considerable numbers of people out on the streets, hanging around stores, moving between different venues. Around midday the level of activity changes as workers take a lunch-break and many people adjourn to their houses, to the market, and to other places where food is available. Throughout the afternoon activity slowly builds up again, reaching a peak late afternoon as people finish the day's work, and wander through town on their way back to the various suburbs. At night other changes take place. There are now many more men than women on the streets, particularly young men wandering around in small groups and hanging around the stores, picture theatres, and hotels in town. This is the pattern on workdays, set in the main by the routine of commercial life and administrative offices in town. At week-ends it is mostly the Chinese stores that stay open. The market carries on a reduced trade, but there are other attractions such as various sporting fixtures and the activities of town churches. Even though public activities are more dispersed, there is enough to keep a steady flow of people on the streets and in various public venues.

In the longer term, the biggest influence on this pattern is the system under which town workers are paid. Payment on a monthly basis has been a long-standing arrangement in town. Some employers changed to a fortnightly system in the early 1970s and others were
planning on it, but most workers are still being paid monthly, and this cycle continues to have a strong influence on the intensity of street activity. The end of the month is known as the \textit{en}. Except for infrequent and exceptional occasions such as Queen's Birthday celebrations and Royal visits, the \textit{en} is when street activity reaches its maximum level. With money in their pockets, more people use the market, visit stores, go to picture theatres and hotels, gamble and simply wander through town, than at any other time of the month. Their numbers are boosted by many out of town visitors; workers from outlying plantations, people visiting from home. This is a time when movement and action reach a peak, the town is said to shake (\textit{jisuisu}) and be much more exciting and dynamic than usual. Because of the crowds, many find it uncomfortable and dangerous. Drinking reaches a high level, fights and accidents are common. Town is more exciting but is also more risky and unpredictable.

If everyone spends some time hanging around public places, they do not always do it in the same way, to the same extent, or with the same interests in mind. The kind of people that \textit{liu} in town include most town dwellers, but depending on their age, sex, marital status, socio-economic position, and the length of time that they have been living in town, there are marked differences in the extent to which they \textit{liu} and in the kinds of things which they get out of it. There are differences too in the way in which people go about it. It is behaviour which is subject to individual predispositions and individual
capabilities, ideal for the expression of what is referred to in Pidgin-English as stael 'style', or fasion 'fashion'.

Making one general observation, men tend to exercise much more freedom than women in wandering around town and in taking up things that follow from it, and young single men much more than married men. If liu behaviour is closely associated with one category of people, then this would be daraa, or young single men, more than anyone else. This is taken to the point where some say that married men should not liu in town at all. This stems from the idea that liu behaviour is closely associated with the interests of daraa, things which married men should have grown out of. Besides, people who have the responsibility of a family do not have time to liu. In reality, there are married men who continue with the same interests as daraa, and who wander around just as much. As well as this, it is not uncommon for married men to wander around with their families. In some contexts and at some times, families make up a large proportion of public crowds. There are some differences between daraa and older men.

7. In Pidgin-English the term stael has only come to be used very recently. It is heard only amongst younger To'ambaita people and is still considered to be innovative. It is used descriptively to refer to particular ways of doing things. There are parallels in Black-American English. A person is said to have stael when they show good control, exceptional skill, and introduce some kind of individuality into whatever they are doing. One context in which I frequently heard the term being used was in conversation about Solomon Island singers. Only the best have stael.
and they do mean that married men tend to be more selective and wander around less. It does not mean that married men never wander around at all.

New arrivals in town and short-term visitors are inclined to spend a great deal of time in public places. In this there is something of the behaviour of the tourist, taking in a new location. They are keen to absorb the unfamiliar sights and activity of the capital city. There is one exception though, to their behaviour and the behaviour of tourists. Honiara is a place in which it is possible to make familiar contacts quite readily. The new arrival is just as interested in finding out who else is in town, what they are doing, and where they are, as he is interested in town life itself. The number of To'ambaïta in town now, means that no one is ever going to travel to town and not meet someone whom they don't know already. Key contacts are usually sought out and not left to chance, but in other cases it is only through wandering around town that encounters are made.

I was able to observe some of this with a family from Niumara visiting town in June 1974. The head of the family A, an old man of 65 years, was last in town in 1968, when he came to arrange the marriage of one of his sons. On this occasion he brought his wife and daughter for their first visit to Honiara. From the time when they first arrived in town, they were in contact with kinsmen living in town. A is a leading man from Takiniano and also has close links with Gwaasai so had an immediate point of
contact with a large number of people from those two
descent groups. His wife's brother and many of her
younger kinsmen are also in town. Some of these people
visited A and his family as soon as they arrived;
despite this, they were still keen to wander around as soon
as they could, to see the sights and stores, but also to see
who else was in town and what they were doing. No sooner
had they arrived than they took every opportunity to wander
around, first going to a church service and meeting a
small group of wantoks there, then later wandering regularly
through the main part of town. On one occasion, soon after
they arrived, I found the family in the market, where A
was trying to sell a small parcel of betel nut he had
brought to town to get extra money. It was near the
middle of the day and during the hour that I was with
them, more than twenty wantoks passed by, greeting members
of the family, talking and joking with them (Jusela liu
oleban long tao! 'You people walkabout around town!'),
exchanging gossip and news about home.

There are good reasons for finding out who else is
in town. Kinsmen in particular and wantoks generally are a
source of information about jobs and places to stay.
They mean security in case of any trouble, and are also
obliged to help newcomers with small gifts of cash. In
wandering around, people newly arrived in town are able to
work out the kind of assistance and support that they
might be able to rely upon while they are in town.

As people become more familiar with town, there is a
tendency to be more selective in the time spent wandering around and in the places which are visited. Selectivity comes with experience, in knowing what the public domain provides and how best to take advantage of it. It also follows from taking employment. Once locked into a regular job, there is less freedom to hang around town. On the other hand, through earning money, there is more scope for doing things. Most people in town expressed a preference for having some money with them when they are wandering around. It is not considered to be very enjoyable empty-handed. For a small number of people, being empty-handed does provide an extra challenge. It is still possible to get something out of town — to get meals, to see exciting things, even to earn money — it just requires more experience and initiative. Even so, where people do have money it does heighten living experiences; much more than without. There is more scope for doing things, more freedom, more enjoyment.

... with seleni (shilling) in my pocket, go any way, do anything ... smoke King Size and not finish before throw away ... talk fast, any kind. Buy food, eat fast, and don't worry about finishing. Way of town now. Seleni nambawan samting (money is something very important). Feel very happy with seleni. It is like a second Spirit. You know this SSEC spirit, it takes people, grips them, no savi naa.

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3. In 1970 there was a revival in the SSEC in the Solomon Islands following a tour by a party of evangelists around SSEC communities. Underlying this revival were strong pentecostal influences and it came to be referred to as a time of the 'spirit'. Griffiths, (1977) gives some of the background from the point of view of the SSEC. For outsiders, like the man using the expression here, this development in the church is viewed very cynically.
These are the thoughts of a less constrained resident of the labour lines, a man who has been in town for many years and knows well how to enjoy himself. Like many others he always becomes much more active in the public arena around pay-day, combining liu activity with the spending and sharing of his earnings.

Experienced town dwellers tend to follow more of a routine in their involvement in the public arena. There are still occasions, such as lunchtimes and after finishing work, for hanging around the market, wandering through Chinatown, and spending time in other popular places. It is very common for young men in the labour lines, for example, to return to their rooms after work, have a meal, change their clothes and then wander off around Chinatown or the main part of Honiara. At weekends and the end of the month they will vary this to take in things like games of football, drinking session, and games of dice. Particular interests, such as playing dice, lead to quite selective movement around town.

Those who become most selective of all, are mostly older town residents, married men and higher income workers. Liu habits tend to change with age, married status and socio-economic success. This is also connected with increasing self-reliance in town and greater
Throughout this discussion so far, I have implied that most wandering around is done on foot and through relying on the different transport services available in town—buses and taxis. Successful workers are able to afford bicycles, motorbikes, and in a few cases, their own cars. Others are running taxi businesses, giving them access to a vehicle when they want it. Wandering around public places does not stop, it only becomes easier. Greater mobility gives people more status, increases the opportunities of which they are able to take advantage.

'O fulato'ona ta si do le'a? (You come across anything good?)

Wandering around town is seemingly uneventful behaviour but it does have the potential of being very rewarding. Herein lies the key to its importance. Wandering around town (like migration itself), is a way of taking advantage of opportunities made available in town. Without doubt, liu activity is consequential and uneventful, but in a way that is problematic. Much of what happens is unexpected and fortuitous. Those who wander around are never completely certain what they are going to see, who they are going to meet, what they might receive. Even when they have a good idea of what to expect, they do not know how rewarding such experiences will be, for the kind of experiences which result from wandering around town, are experiences which are variably exciting and enjoyable. A chance encounter with wantoks may turn into nothing more than an exchange of pleasantries; on
the other hand it may also become a highly enjoyable joking session giving a lot of satisfaction to all involved. The fortuitousness of liu activity is easily explained by the nature of Honiara as a busy, constantly expanding urban centre, and by the high rate of mobility amongst To'ambaita migrants continually moving in and out of town, continually changing jobs and moving between quarters in town. In travelling to Honiara, To'ambaita migrants have made themselves part of a very fluid, diverse and dynamic environment. Liu activity is especially well suited to taking advantage of opportunities in such a social arena.

In the terms which they use to describe them, the To'ambaita see close parallels between liu behaviour and gambling. Both activities come within Goffman's idea of 'action', being 'activities that are consequential, problematic and undertaken for what is felt to be their own sake' (1972:185). Both forms of activity need to be understood in terms of the intensity of action associated with them, as much as the content (ibid). Dice games are made more exciting according to the number of people participating and the level of their participation. Similarly, wandering around town always reaches a peak during periods of greatest activity such as at the end of the month. In dice games the focus of attention is explicit; wandering around town, much less so. It is still the case though, that things of value are obtained through both, and there is as much excitement in trying to obtain them as there is in actually being successful.
Much of what people achieve through wandering around town is intangible. A good conversation, for example, is impossible to measure or describe in objective terms, but this is the sort of thing that has to be taken into account, for this is a good part of what makes urban living attractive.

Some of the things that happen to people through wandering around town have already been mentioned. In taking this further it should be noted at the outset, that as part of the unpredictability of town life, liu episodes can well be minimally eventful. Waneburi, whose experiences were described earlier, reported a number of experiences to me in which nothing much happened to him at all. During a two to three month stay in town, he failed to get a job, and spent all of his time alternating between wandering around town, and sitting around the sleeping quarters of his maternal uncle and other kinsmen. Aside from keeping in touch with kinsmen, in-laws and wantoks and soliciting lots of small gifts from them in the way of tobacco, betel nut, clothes and some cash, his experiences in the public arena amounted to a couple of near fights, going to the movies several times, and taking in the usual range of town sights. Towards the end of the trip he came back once with a new watch which he said he had found, and on the last day before catching a boat home, struck up a promising friendship with a girl he met in a Kukum store. Except for that, he described his time in town as 'just putting one leg after the other every day' (nawku alua bakua 'aeku i tala sulia bonci) and was quite happy to
return home when he did. This man was actually in town against the wishes of his wife and, in keeping with certain To'ambauna ideas about the dangerous effect of 'heavy thoughts' (manata kulua) on migrants, he blamed her for his lack of fortune on this trip. This would support the more general point that wandering around town is best enjoyed by those who have the greatest freedom to do so.

Leaving aside the usual range of attractions in town—the picture theatres, the stores, construction activity, occasional accidents, constant traffic, sporting events, and endless social diversity—it is the social encounters that people make, that are amongst the most important consequences of wandering around town. For those that wander around, the probability of meeting someone they already know is very high. Public places are sufficiently confined and the number of To'ambauna living in town sufficiently large to make this a virtual certainty. This includes a considerable number of people who work in the public domain—bus-drivers, taxi-drivers, store assistants, policemen, office-workers, stevedores, delivery workers, and many others. The nature of wandering around is such that such contacts are often sought out. Small clusters of migrants frequently gather in the stores where To'ambauna people work. Whether they are sought out or not, these contacts give this activity much of its consequentiality, for it is through such contacts that information is exchanged, experiences are shared, gifts are exchanged, news is given, and new activities taken on. The importance of this for new arrivals has been described.
For the unemployed it is equally important, as it may well be the means to their survival, a way of getting money and meals.

The possibilities offered by social encounters become much greater as people grow older and have more experience behind them. Another man from Niutara, an older brother of Waneburi, arrived in Honiara in May, 1974. He only came to town for a short period and did not need to look for work. Even so he still enjoyed spending time wandering around town. He has more than six years of plantation experience behind him, as well as three earlier trips to town. Two episodes which he recounted for me, will help to show the kind of things that happen to men with his background.

I left the Manakau room at the Kukus labour lines about 5.30 and headed towards Kukus stores. Went into a couple of stores and looked at all their clothes and other things. Hadn't gone far when I was greeted by an old friend of mine, a man from Talise District, Guadalcanal. We worked together on a plantation at Kere, on Guadalcanal nearly ten years ago. He was really happy to see me, asked me many questions - what was I doing in Honiara, where was I staying, how long was I going to be in town. He said he was going to meet some friends and couldn't stay with me. Before he went though, he bought some bread and cakes, with a tin of fish, and gave them to me. I thanked him, explaining I didn't have any money, then we parted. I took the food back to the labour quarters, where I shared it with L and the rest of them in the Manakau room.

I was sitting around Chinatown watching people go past. As I watched, a man from Guadalcanal went into the store opposite, Frank Leong's store. He had a bag of betel nut. I knew he would be selling it to all the Chinese. After he came out and stopped near me, I started talking to him:
'You trying to sell some betel nut?' 'Yes,' he said, 'I am selling some betel nut.' 'Oh friend, I am just dying for some betel nut. My mouth is really bad, but I haven't any money. If I had any money, I would buy some of your betel. I am really desperate.' 'Is that true,' he said, 'you would buy some if you had some money.' We stopped for a while, then I took out a small packet of cigarettes. 'Would you like a cigarette?' He took one, then we sat down. We smoked for a while, then he said: 'Take some betel if you want one. Just take one out of the bag.' So the two of us sat there, and I started talking really nice to him. I talked to make him feel extra good. He took his bag of betel, took out ten fruit, and gave them to me. 'Not for buying,' he said, 'I am giving them to you for nothing.' 'Oh that is really good,' I said. Then I started asking him what he was doing and where he came from. He told me that he had been to the market, and was in Chinatown waiting for his brother in a truck taking passengers back to their place. Said he would be going back just as soon as his brother arrived. We sat there for a long time, then I told him: 'You people have it really good, being close to the market. You can sell your food at the market all the time. You have a lot of ground here too. We people on Malaita, haven't got much ground. We just grow butete (sweet potato), that is all.' Then he told me: 'This time, plenty people from Malaita work on our ground. Lots of different people from Malaita. You, suppose you want to work with me. That is all right. You come and plant butete on my ground. There is still plenty of ground not being cultivated.' And so we sat there. He told me there was land there just lying idle and I was welcome to come and plant on it.

Being offered the chance to use land on Guadalcanal is not all that unusual in the circumstances, although it doesn't always happen amongst people who just meet in the street. No one else reported this kind of experience during the time that I was looking at liu activity, but those who heard this story, accepted it, as part of what can happen in town. On this occasion the To'ambaita man decided
that he couldn't afford to bring his family across from Malaita, and he didn't want to take up the offer without them.

Knowing the kind of possibilities that there are in town, has a lot of influence on the way in which people go about involving themselves in the public arena. Liu activity has many of the characteristics of strategic behaviour (Whitten and Whitten, 1972: 250). Despite the fact that people setting out to wander around town do not always know what they are going to encounter, they do have some idea of the range of possibilities that exist, and the best ways to take advantage of these possibilities. This is taken into account when making decisions about wandering around, deciding when to go, where to go, and who to go with. It also influences interaction in the public arena. The case given above shows how one man set out to see if he could get himself some betel nut.

Understanding the strategic side of Liu behaviour throws light on the selectiveness that goes on as people become more experienced, and the changes that take place as understanding of public places improves. It is from this point of view that we can understand changes that accompany socio-economic success. Young men, with their greater mobility, more limited resources, and indifference towards regular work, get a great deal from wandering around town that is relevant to day to day survival. Looking out for meals, money, places to stay, new job possibilities, they adopt wide-ranging strategies to keep
themselves up with what is going on. A strong interest in sexual conquests may be added to this. In all the liu episodes that I collected, this was one preoccupation that figures prominently amongst younger men. Older men, more settled in town, often more successful and materially self-reliant, can afford to adopt a different approach to public life, choosing more selectively the places to which they go and the companions with whom they mix. It was noticeable that the most successful men confined themselves to very occasional visits to popular public places like the market and Chinatown (travelling there by car rather than on foot), and that except for this they preferred to limit their wandering around to specific contexts such as urban churches or social clubs. Needless to say, in going to such places they are also being more selective about the companionship that they seek.

In describing liu behaviour as strategic behaviour would suggest that it is governed more by planning, forethought, and calculation than was acknowledged at the beginning of this chapter; that it is, in fact, very much goal directed. Certain kinds of liu behaviour are governed by specific objectives. One middle-aged man described his main objective in wandering around, as trying to keep his stomach full (pan kwai susu bahu uria kwai ambusu). Taking into account that many visitors to town complain about the lack of food, this is not such an unusual objective. If this is at all exceptional, it is only because this man is more honest and brazen than others, and more willing to impose himself on others for what he wants.
He is as capable of getting meals from complete strangers as he is of wanting. Others have equally specific objectives, whether this is money, sex, betel nut, tobacco, or seeing a favourite movie. It is the case though, that however much people focus on specific needs, success is still often problematical. This is what is distinctive about liu activity and what it shares in common with courting and gambling. People involved in these things, readily adopt various strategies to increase their chances of success. It does not mean though that success becomes an absolute certainty. Amongst those who wander around public places, for whatever reason, it is still common to hear the greeting, put at the beginning of this section; 'Culato'ona ta si do le'a? 'You come across anything good?' Similar to greetings used amongst poor, Black, Trinidadian men (Lieber, 1976:333), this is as much a request for information, as a form of greeting; recognition of the fact that all sorts of things can happen in town, and it is appropriate for migrants, facing the same interests and problems, to compare and share their experiences.

Street Activity and Migration

Physically and socially, the streets and public places of Honiara are at the interface of what is a very diverse and highly differentiated urban society. Solomon Islanders have made that area their own, more than any other racial group living in town. They are also the poorest and most disadvantaged group making up the different levels of the urban hierarchy, and we must consider how much influence
this has had on their preference for life in the public arena. For much of the time that they have been migrating to Honiara, Solomon Islanders have been treated as temporary residents, with little security and little encouragement to make a permanent home there. However much they have been interested in settling in town, gaining the right to do things in their own way has been a long and difficult process. In building their own houses, forming their own settlements, starting their own businesses; it is only recently that they have had any noticeable success. Finding themselves a more settled and secure position within the urban social order, has been a slow process. Throughout, it has been the public domain, that has been the main part of town, that they have been able to make their own. Pointedly, it is a domain that no-one can really control. By its nature it could never be an escape from or a solution to their insecurity or their marginal position in town; it could only underline it. Some of the best evidence for this comes from songs composed by urban migrants. In one of the earliest and most popular songs about Honiara, 'Wokabasthi long Saenataene', a central image of town, the Chinese trading area, is one that is taken from the public domain. The life associated with it is given little positive value. The tone is self-denigrating, the feeling of despair and fatalism is very strong.9

9. Wokabasthi long Saenataene, makanu bosi amga long kona suitim ap, seeken bed, kikis baek enikaeni, iasi iu laf, haf sens wata nating. (contd over)
Associated with low socio-economic status in the past, the preference for life in public places is still strongest amongst people at that level of Honiara society today. Young, low-paid and unemployed residents still make up a large proportion of Solomon Islanders in town, and they are one of the most visible groups in the public domain. It is difficult to see how the supposed preference of this group of people stems from the existence of a real choice between different alternatives. Lack of experience, and lack of success limits the choices which people have in town. Solomon Islanders continue to have less choices than other racial groups. On the other hand, to see this as an explanation for the predilection which they show

9.(contd)

Tingting back long iu
lusiim hon long taem,
tu yia ova mi no lukim iu
man i karangge, karangge hod i lusiim mani.

Nomata mi dae long Honiara,
santing mi lus hon taem long iu
bat sapos iu ting long mi iu kan wait fo tu yia moa
letem kan laet sikiin lelebet.

Walkabout round Chinatown,
make a course for the corner,
throw up, shake head, kick all about,
you laugh, water on the brain for sure.

Think back to you,
a long time since leaving home,
haven't seen you for two years
which is why I don't like you
man stupid, stupid head to lose money.

Doesn't matter if I die in Honiara
What I have lost with you, is lost a long time,
but if you think of me, you can wait two years more,
Let my skin get a little lighter here.
for the public domain under-estimates the significance which this side of Honiara life has for them. As Lieber (1976:324-325) points out, there is a tendency to view itinerant life-styles in negative terms, as evidence of some kind of maladaptation amongst those who have experienced oppression and different kinds of deprivation within the societies to which they belong. In the Honiara situation there are factors which make life in the public domain worthwhile and attractive. So much so, that involvement is not limited to those on the lowest socio-economic level, but extends to a wide range of Solomon Island residents. Socio-economic success has some bearing on the kind of involvement that takes place. However, this does not detract from the overall significance of this activity in the lives of town residents.

There is no basis either for seeing Solomon Islander involvement in street life, as a rejection of, or an alternative to, the more private life of urban households. If there is rejection of any aspect of urban life going on, it would be the domain of work and the work-place rather than in domestic life. Amongst the largest category of people who involve themselves in the life of public places, young men, there is continuity between the life centering on private households and what goes on in the open. Interaction amongst peers takes place just as readily in the two domains. The instability of bachelor

10. Lieber (1976:324) takes up this argument in the ethnography of Caribbean societies.
households is related to urban itinerancy, but it does not stem from a rejection of those households as such. In the case of family households, they are so recent that it is still too early to identify any definite tendency. Just as peer relations and peer interests continue into married life amongst men, there is also a continuing interest in the life of public places. Only a small number use this as a way of escaping from an unsatisfactory domestic life or domestic conflict.

There is a much greater contrast between the work-place and public places. The reason for this is the highly structured nature of work and work relations. In taking on employment, migrants subordinate themselves to employers, accept relations of inequality and the limits this puts on their personal freedom. Even though they may minimize their involvement in formal employment, migrants are, as a rule, unable to escape it completely. Employment is the means to livelihood in town; it is inextricably linked with migration and urban living. It is this though, that also adds to the significance given to the public domain. Accepting a system of work for which they have very little sympathy, there is added attractiveness in that domain in which they are able to assert the contrastive values of equality and independence. In recent years Solomon Islanders have been able to find more independent forms of money earning in the public domain. Taxi operations stand out here. Not surprisingly, money earning of this kind, allowing people to avoid formal employment totally, has become highly popular.
Liu activity revolves around things which are provided in public places. Basic necessities such as food, material goods, and various social services are provided through stores, markets, offices and administrative buildings located in central Honiara. People must go into these places where these services are located to take advantage of them. In doing so they also wander around and take advantage of other aspects of public life. Liu activity in fact, goes beyond the immediate, predetermined interests which people set out to satisfy, and is associated with other things, less certain, unpredictable, and problematic. Those who gather at the market can be fairly certain that they will meet others with whom they can converse and share information. They may be much less certain about who they are going to meet, what they might learn and what they might achieve.

Honiara is a dynamic and fast-changing environment. A large population and an expanding economy means that opportunities for money earning are constantly growing and changing. The high turnover of people in and out of town, the rate at which they change jobs and change sleeping quarters, means constant flux in To'amba'aita relations with each other. Migrants keep up with this principally through the interaction which goes on in public places. It is here that people learn who are the latest arrivals in town, what is going on in town and on Malaita, who repairs motor vehicles, counters sorcery, has land for gardens, is selling firewood or garden produce. They find out what is being shown at the picture theatres, where dice games are
going on, which stores have the best and cheapest goods, which stores give credit, whether there is anyone with shell money or porpoise teeth to sell. They find out about accidents, deaths, impending marriages, and special court cases. In short, they keep up to date with everything going on in town through what they share and exchange during casual encounters in the street. The majority of To'ambaita residents in town do not have telephones or read newspapers. They still depend on face-to-face contact to communicate with each other, and help to ensure this by regularly meeting in the streets.

Public thoroughfares link together the multiple units making up the social and economic order. This applies as much to individual town dwellers and the groups which they belong to, as it applies to the various branches and sub-divisions of the urban economy. It is in and through public places that town dwellers make contact with one another. For the To'ambaita, this means that despite their dispersed residence in town and the wide range of jobs that they hold at one time, they are able to see each other and be seen by each other, just as frequently as they use and share the public arena. While there is something random about this, the relatively small area in which the main activity nodes are located - the area taken up by central Honiara - and the frequency with which town dwellers tend to use this area, helps to ensure the likelihood of regular contact. The probability of meeting people is enhanced in some places and some times, more than others. Large numbers of people, for example, regularly gravitate
towards the wharves at times when ships are scheduled to leave for Malaita or just arrive from Malaita. Other venues in which regular contact is made include the market and town churches.

Close kinsmen and close friends do not normally leave their interaction with each other to chance. If they are not already sharing the same quarters in town, they frequently visit each other, and gather together at living quarters which they occupy. But town residents do not limit interaction to close kinsmen or people from the same settlements on Malaita; they make many other contacts as well. One of the consequences of migration is that town dwellers come into contact with people from widely distant parts of the To'amba'ita area and from all over North Malaita. In a socially diverse place like Honiara, being from the same language group and from the same region on Malaita, is considered to be a good basis for friendly interaction. Solidary relations are formed through working together, sharing the same living quarters, and through meeting each other in public places. The To'amba'ita people in town do not form a clearly bounded and closely united ethnic group, but they do maintain a high level of interaction with each other through regular contact in public places, and to this extent promote some degree of ethnically-based cohesion amongst themselves. Through this there is a constant flow of information, people sharing news and gossip with one another, monitoring each other's movements, changes of job, trouble with the authorities, urban successes, urban changes. Street activity creates
channels of communication between pockets of privacy (Suttles, 1971:73), between individual residents and individual households, and between other rural-based groupings represented in town.

It is still the case that a large proportion of those who move to town, regard themselves as temporary visitors; people not abandoning their homes on Malaita, but leaving them with the intention of eventually returning to them. Migration is considered to be necessary if they are going to take advantage of a wider range of opportunities than exist on Malaita itself. In view of this, and in view of what has just been said about the communicative role of liu activity, it can be seen that itinerancy has as much to do with the maintenance of existing social and cultural roots as it has with taking advantage of new and distant opportunities. Interacting with each other in town, To'ambaíta migrants are also re-affirming their association with Malaita and their intention to return there.

More than anything else, liu activity has arisen out of To'ambaíta interest in wage employment, and the various opportunities associated with employment centres. Up until recently, most people travelled to town in order to take up employment. Since the recruiting of town workers gave way to more independent job seeking, those interested in wage employment have had to be more active in their search for jobs. It is said by the To'ambaíta that it is at this time that liu behaviour came to be more strongly associated with migration. Taken in its broadest sense, it can be
seen that the practice of wandering around or going walkabout, whether this refers to an inter-island journey or a stroll around town, is a way of seeking out and keeping up with numerous opportunities, some of which revolve around employment and money earning, but others which bring all sorts of benefits to the people concerned.

Honiarra offers many things to those who live there, all the attractions of a busy, densely populated urban centre. There is much that is exciting and enjoyable, that comes within the 'big happy long town' (se'ethathala-ba'ita'ana teone). This is what To'ambaite migrants seek just as much as they are interested in some kind of economic gain. In either case, success is highly problematical, and it is this aspect of urban migration and street activity that is encompassed in its description as just wandering around.
CHAPTER TEN

EASTERN AND MONEY: SOCIAL RELATIONS AMONGST TO'AMBAITA MIGRANTS IN HONIARA

As migration to town has only been taking place for a relatively short period of time, and people are moving to town without totally abandoning their homes on Malaita or breaking the social ties that they have there, there is much continuity in social relations between the two places. When people leave their homes on Malaita, the opportunities for wider social interaction are greatly increased. Taken overall though, the To'ambaïta still show a strong preference for interaction with each other. A description of To'ambaïta social relations in town would have to start with a description of their relations with each other. For a large number of people a full description would not add many more people after this. For them, it is other To'ambaïta migrants who are their main contacts in town; it is amongst people belonging to their own language group that most social interaction takes place.

This does not preclude wider interaction. Once drawn into the urban economy, interaction with non-To'ambaïta town residents is unavoidable. As experience in town grows, the process of meeting new people and developing new social relationships is continuous. Through employment and residence in town, through involvement in public places, and through active interest in urban voluntary associations, the number of ties which migrants have with non-To'ambaïta residents is constantly growing and changing. All this
has been going on for as long as To'ambaita people have been moving to town. It is still the case though, that their strongest ties, and those which they consider to be most important are those which they have with each other.

As with Hagen migrants living in Port Moresby (Strathern, 1975: 244 ff.), there is little evidence for enduring social groups amongst the To'ambaita. In their domestic arrangements and in the numerous informal action groups in which they participate, some kind of group identification is common. The two kinds of groups with which town dwellers mostly identify are groups based on settlement of origin and those based on descent (or territory of origin). In both cases there is strong ideological support for solidary ties amongst those who belong to such groups. Beyond this though, any kind of formal group organization is completely absent. To'ambaita migrants tend to develop solidary ties under more flexible, less structured arrangements.

This poses some difficulty in identifying major trends and differences in the pattern of interaction amongst town dwellers. There is the danger of confusing short-term situational shifts in behaviour with long-term processural trends (Mitchell, 1996: 44), and being unable to separate the two. As a way of getting around this, I shall adopt a processural framework and look at changes in the pattern of To'ambaita social relations as a function of increasing experience and success in town. As much as this approach parallels life-cycle changes within the context of urban
living, it also fits in with the way in which the To'amba'aita perceive some of the main differences amongst themselves as town residents. Many of the practices and different forms of behaviour through which migrants differentiate themselves are described in terms of age differences. Hence this will be the main guiding framework in the pages that follow.

Taken in the long term, To'amba'aita migration is accompanied by close and continuing ties between rural and urban dwellers. People living in town continue to recognize and adhere to rural principles of association; they still give expression to rural values and rural sentiments. This helps to promote solidarity ties between town dwellers. Nonetheless, through living in town and taking advantage of the urban opportunity structure, they face many choices which compete with and threaten the strength of their ties with each other. The kind of choices they face, and the choices they make, change as experience grows and there is greater success in the urban economy. The most important changes are closely connected with life cycle processes. While migrants of all ages face choices which have some influence on their relations with each other, (and with people at home), the choices are different as men get older, become more settled in town, and move up the income scale.

What will be described in this chapter are aspects of town living common to different age groups, looked at within the wider framework of urban social relations.
Kala Wane (Young Men)

It is during the period of adolescence that To'amba/ita men usually begin to take up residence in town and start their involvement in wage employment. A job provides economic self-sufficiency and some degree of domestic security. Young men do not always achieve this very quickly after getting to town. They go through a transitional phase, when they spend much time out of work and changing jobs. Some young men prolong this phase indefinitely, or have it prolonged for them by the lack of urban job opportunities; others become self-supporting within a short period after reaching town. The high rate of job mobility and the high rate of unemployment (between 25 and 50 per cent), shows that economic self-sufficiency is not easily achieved. Amongst the bachelors that I contacted in 1974, only 38 per cent were still working in the same jobs in which they started when they first arrived in town.

Economic self-sufficiency has some considerable bearing on social relations. It is closely associated with another transition that adolescents are involved in, affecting the kind of relations which they have with other people. Until they are self-supporting, adolescents must depend on others for their basic needs. Dependence does not end as they grow older, it is an on-going feature of the human condition. There is the expectation though, that as people do get older and become productive members of the community, their transactions with others will become more reciprocal rather than one-sided; that social relations will be
characterised by mutual inter-dependence rather than on-going dependence, with benefits flowing in both directions.

In going through these transitions in the urban context, young bachelors have evolved a distinctive life-style of their own. A central feature of this life-style is the degree of freedom which they exercise in the recognition of social obligations and in the conduct of social relations. What I described earlier (Chapter Five) for young men on Malaita, is carried through into urban living. As part of this, they learn how to manipulate exchange relations with each other and with other town residents, seeking advantage from continuing dependence on others, exploiting opportunities for negative reciprocity as much as recognizing the obligation to reciprocate in a more balanced way. The maneuvering in which young men indulge, is made possible by their indeterminant status, as neither children or adults, by the large number of potential social relations in town, and by the delayed time element in generalized exchange relations.

Moving into town at this time of life young migrants have a wide circle of pre-existing social relationships to draw upon, gained from their rural background and their rural experience. The family group into which they were born, the people with whom they grew up, local descent group relations, wider consanguinal relations, the people with whom they went to school, and people met through church and other activities, all constitute a wide circle of social contacts known with varying degrees of intimacy
and familiarity. Spread between Malaita and Honiara, relations within this universe of familiar social ties form the basis for on-going social interaction in either location.

Irobi'u (No. 6, Table 8.1, Figure 10) is a young 16 year old migrant from the hamlet of Kwaithafu, a short distance behind the village of Manakwai. He first arrived in Honiara in January, 1974, after finishing primary school at Malu'u in 1973. Irobi'u belongs to the Gwaasi descent group and he travelled to town with a close kinsmen from Gwaasi, a clan 'brother' going back to town after spending Christmas on Malaita. Three older brothers all work in Honiara, one a driver with the PWD, the second a full time worker with the Jehovah's Witnesses, and a third a driver with a private contracting company. Irobi'u stayed with the eldest brother when he arrived, moving into the Manakwai room at the labour lines. From there he quickly learned the whereabouts of other clan brothers and cousins, and young men from the same local area as him. Within a week he got a job, through a kinsman on his father's sister's side, a cousin working at Solomon Delite. Several friends of his were working there, including some of his Gwaasi kinsmen. He moved in with them and ate with them, only contributing something after he got his first pay.

At Solomon Delite, Irobi'u did not like the work or the pay, and when a school friend told him of another job with a Chinese tailor in Kukum he decided to leave Delite and take it. At the same time, he moved back to the PWD
labour lines so he could be close to the Kukum shopping centre. The new job was better paid but it only lasted two months. He was put off at the end of March. Earning $20 a month for two months, he got enough money to buy some clothes, see a few movies, contribute some food to the Manakwai room where he was staying (a bag of rice at $4.70), and still have a small amount of cash on hand. Now unemployed, he stayed on in the Manakwai room, continuing to make enquiries amongst kinmen and friends about further job vacancies. In six weeks nothing else came up and towards the end of May he went back to Malaita to work at home with his parents. His brothers had to buy his fare. They also gave him some money to take home for their parents. One of the main reasons he left was because of the tension amongst people staying in the Manakwai room, and the number of people depending on those men with regular jobs to buy them food and give them money for living in town.

During this first trip to town, the contacts which Irobi'u made followed largely from his immediate concerns, finding a place to stay, having meals, and finding work. The number of people he relied upon was not large, reflecting his inexperience and diffidence about imposing on other people besides his brothers and other close kin.

Out of all those people whom the new migrants knows when he first arrived in town, those that have the strongest moral obligation to give him support and assistance after he arrives are close kinsmen, especially people from the same local descent category as the new migrant; that is,
co-descendants from the same local area. Irobi'u, for example, was able to draw support from all his Gwaasi relatives from the same area as himself. These are people whom the migrant refers to as to'a nau ki or imole nau ki 'my people'. This person-centred category may extend to all co-residents from the same area on Malaita (in the case of large villages such as Manakwai, this will include non-kin as well as kin), and to other kin such as maternal relatives, father's maternal relatives, or other non-resident members of the same descent category. Given the number of people living in town today, and the ramifying nature of To'ambaita kinship relations most migrants have a large network of ties that may potentially be activated when they get to town.

Amongst young men, their closest social ties are with their peers, particularly those who come from the same local area on Malaita. Their ties with each other are such that they form loosely bounded groupings, distributed between the different places in which they work and sleep in town. They maintain solidary ties with each other through constant visiting and interaction together. The strength of such groupings does not depend on any kind of formal organization; there are no formally instituted leaders, no hierarchy of statuses; no institutionalized meeting places. They are first and foremost groupings of men who regard each other as equals. Their strength comes primarily from the moral obligation which they share as kinsmen and people from the same place on Malaita, and secondarily, from the transactions which take place between
them.

Within groupings of peers, young men develop numerous, on-going reciprocal ties, with varying degrees of understanding and personal commitment. Discussion of domestic groupings in Chapter Eight showed how this operates in the context of the household. Men sharing quarters together, accept an obligation to buy and share food as their income makes this possible. Closely related peers co-operate in many other ways as well; wandering around town together; paying for each other to go to the movies; pooling their money for drinking sessions; combining together for fishing and hunting trips outside Honiara.

For some time after migrants arrive in town, rural-based groupings form exclusive social worlds outside of which they have few other social ties. With increasing experience in town, new social ties are formed: some of them with other To'amba'aita migrants, previously not known on Malaita; in other cases with non-To'amba'aita people from within and outside the Solomon Islands. Meeting new people is neither avoided or discouraged. The To'amba'aita place too high a value on sociability generally, to do that. The way in which it takes place though, means that new social ties are formed that do not completely replace rural-based social ties, but are additional to them.

Few To'amba'aita migrants ever dissociate themselves entirely from home ties. The ones that do are a very small minority of those living outside Malaita. Those that I heard about, had a grudge against close kin or could not
return home because of some long-standing conflict with people at home.

There are two major influences on the inter-personal ties that develop amongst To'ambaita migrants. One is moral and arises from the obligations and expectations that are shared through birth and residence on Malaita. The other is transactional, and arises from the kind of interaction that takes place in the course of inter-personal relations. In many cases these influences coincide in such a way as to promote continuing solidary ties between people from the same local area.

Wae'asi and Kononia are cousins (Kononia being Wae'asi's FFIBDS), from the hamlet of Gwaunatalatioli. They are around the same age (19 and 21), and grew up together after Kononia's father (a Baalelelea man) moved back to his mother's place with the family. (His mother is a woman of Gwaasi.) Kononia has been working in town for six years, Wae'asi for five. For the past three years they have both been working at Solomon Delite where they share a room and prepare their meals. Besides conducting their own cooking arrangements, buying their own food and kerosene, they regularly borrow money from each other, and occasionally operate a rotating credit system taking it in turns to pool some of their wages. In their spare time, they do many things together, going to the movies, visiting friends, wandering around town.

The friendship between Wae'asi and Kononia does not prevent them from interacting with work-mates, other Gwaasi people, and other To'ambaita people around town. They are both self-supporting, earning $24 a month, and interact with others on this basis. This means spending money on social relationships (Strathern, 1975: 326) including their own. Kononia's biggest expenditure is the remittance of money home. He is the eldest son, in a large family with few
cash-earning resources at home. He remits between 30 and 50 per cent of his income each month. Wae'asi is also the eldest son in his family. He remits money regularly as well, but not as much as Konomia. Besides this, both men are involved in a range of exchange relationships with work-mates and wantoks. The transactions involved are all small amounts of money - up to a maximum of $3. They involve small gifts and loans to visiting kinsmen and wantoks, and small loans to other town residents.

Much of their spending may be seen as an investment in their friendship. The money they spend on food and other household expenses is a contribution to this, just as is the money they spend around town. In the urban context, an existing kinship relationship and childhood friendship has been carried through and reinforced by reciprocal exchange and mutual inter-dependence.

Close friends are described as wane abula le'a nau 'my man (who) does good', wane kwaimani le'a nau 'my good friend'. In their ideas about friendship the To'ambaita place much importance on the transactional side of friendly relations. There is a big difference between those who are friendly in conversation only, and those who support their friendliness with prestations of one kind or another. Without giving (fale la) and without good deeds (abula le'a la) of one kind or another, friendship is superficial and incomplete.

Defined in these terms, young migrants find most of their friends from amongst their peers, mostly those with
some pre-existing rural tie. The fact that kinsmen and co-residents have a moral obligation to provide mutual assistance and support is one reason for this. It is also the case that just as soon as they arrive in town, as much as they depend on them, new migrants are drawn into an on-going system of obligation and reciprocal transactions with home people. The exigencies of urban living have a marked influence on the way in which friendship patterns develop.

I began this section dealing with the position of young men in town, describing one of the changes which takes place in their relations with others, from a position of one-sided dependence, through to a position of mutual inter-dependence. In terms of Sahlin's spectrum of reciprocities (1974: 191 ff.), inter-dependent relations are conducted according to a combination of balanced reciprocal exchange, and generalized reciprocal exchange.

Much of the help which migrants receive when they first arrive in town, and as long as they are out of work, does not carry an immediate obligation to reciprocate. It is not 'paid for' through some kind of immediate balanced transaction. There is however, a more general obligation to reciprocate in the future, and in that sense a debt is incurred. In many cases there is no time limit on when a favour should be reciprocated, and no calculation of what is exchanged.

With generalized reciprocal exchange, transactions are 'putatively altruistic' (ibid, 193), described by the
To'ambaita in terms of giving (fale la). There is no time limit on the commitment to reciprocate, only the expectation that the recipient of hospitality on one occasion will be generous in turn at some future date. Balance is not considered necessary or desirable, except in as much as there should be transactions in both directions. In the short term, balances are unavoidable. Through them, exchange pathways are created (kwaea tala 'beat a path') and are kept 'alive' (marukia).

The delayed time element in generalized reciprocal exchange, and the fact that the obligations associated with such exchanges are situationally defined and contingent on future circumstances, allows for a lot of flexibility in the manipulation of exchange relations and the meeting of exchange obligations. This is something specifically associated with the young, part of what is described as birangaa kala wane 'the custom of young men'. In the exchange of favours that take place in town, the line between acceptable reciprocal exchange and unacceptable, negative reciprocity, is sometimes very difficult to distinguish. A central feature of bachelor behaviour is short-term negative reciprocity, where they actively seek favours with no immediate intention of reciprocating. This is one way in which young men facilitate and maintain an itinerant life-style and is something integrally associated with their liu behaviour.

At this point I want to take up the experiences of a young migrant, three years older than Irobi'u, and with
more experience working outside Malaita. Fufuli is from the hamlet of Dada'ame, near Buamena, on the southern side of the To'ambaita peninsula. Some of his experiences have already been described in Chapter Seven, to illustrate high job mobility. In all the time he has spent away from Malaita he has frequently changed jobs and changed sleeping quarters. Not exceptional for a young migrant, this kind of mobility is made possible by a large number of kinsmen living throughout the Solomon Islands. I will take up one period of his experience only, three months spent in Honiara between June and September, 1974. This was his fourth trip to Honiara. On this occasion, no members of his immediate family were in town; his elder brother had just returned home; his parents and younger siblings were all living in Dada'ame. The following is not a complete record of his social contacts during this period, but as full an account as possible from what I saw of him.

June 20 Fufuli arrives in town with peer friend from Buamena, a man named Wane'abu. Neither has more than $2 on them. Fufuli goes and stays with B, an elder 'brother' from Buamena. B has his own house at Kolalale and a high-paying job. Gives Fufuli a room to sleep in and meals for several days. Fufuli visits relatives at Solomon Delite, JBM (Joy Biscuit Manufacturing), the tobacco factory, and in Chinatown. No job vacancies anywhere. He and Wane'abu decide to go out to Sol. Is. Plantations at Ngalibi'u on Guadalcanal Plains.

June 27 Driven out to Ngalibi'u by B. There, Fufuli and Wane'abu move in with older peer friends from the Buamena area. Fufuli moves in with R and L from Buamena and Anokwasi; Wane'abu moves in with A and H from Anokwasi and
Raubabate. They do not get work immediately but have to wait until the new month. Their kinsmen give them meals but are not generous with food; some resentment about the way in which Fufuli and Wane'abu have imposed on them. On a couple of days they go and see I, living in a temporary settlement and growing butene near the rice farm. I's wife is from Buamena and she gives them a meal on each occasion.

Start work with Sol. Is. Plantations, weeding oil palms. Neither Fufuli or Wane'abu like the work. It's very hot and boring. They are still hungry all the time and decide to return to town.

July 6

Fufuli and Wane'abu return to Honiara (with one week's pay each - $6). Fufuli goes and stays with 'uncle' on his father's mother's side at Sol. Delite, one of his Faiiili relations. There are other peer friends in the Delite labour lines, including men from Gwaasi and Takiniano (his mother's descent group), and he spends some time with them as well. From Delite visits friends at tobacco, JAM, and the FWD labour lines. Fufuli makes Delite his base for the next three weeks, but rarely eats there, visiting widely around town. Other contacts around town include:

- O, a distant 'cousin' from Buamena, a relative on his father's father's sister's side. O and his younger brother work for the FWD and occupy a room in the FWD labour lines. Fufuli gets on well with them, and sleeps there occasionally instead of returning to Delite.

- A sister-in-law married to a Kabu'ole (Fufuli's descent group) 'brother', working as a domestic on Kola'a Ridge. She is separated from her husband but is still friendly with Fufuli.

- Distant consanguinal relatives from Ga'galu and villages south of Buamena, living at Tuvamatu.

- Takiniano relatives on his mother's side in the Kanakwai room at the FWD labour lines.

- Distant Kabu'ole relations from the village of Manakwai living at Bekefare. One man, Basi'oli, Fufuli's 'father' is planning a new cattle project at Buamena with Fufuli's father and likes to talk to Fufuli about this and other things at Buamena.
- a small group of Bua101ena migrants, working in Chinatown, all peer friends and kinsmen of Fufuli.
- R, his 'father' three generations removed, working at Solomon Motors, with quarters just below Kola'a Ridge.
- R, a Habu'ole 'sister' originally from Nanakwai, now married to a Simbo (Western Solomon) man in the police force. They live at Rove in police housing.

July 24
Drinking session with To'amba1ita friend at Technical Institute. This man is courting a cousin of Fufuli and asked him to visit him so they could drink together.

July 26
Used money he was paid at Ngalibi'u to join dice games at PWD labour lines (their pay day). Joined the game in A's room - a To'amba1ita man from Po'ondo. Overnight he won just over $60.

July 27
Dance at Community Centre with Wane'abu and two friends from Bua101ena.

July 28
Starts driving lessons with D, a cousin from Bua101ena running a taxi in town. D charges $2 a lesson.

July 31
Starts work with Ip Choy in Chinatown. R, another peer friend and distant 'brother' (three generations removed) starts work at the same time, both on $5.50 a week. They join W, from a village near Bita'ana who has been with Ip Choy for 2 years. Around this time, Fufuli meets an old school friend one day when he is wandering around town; a Baelelea man, James, from a village near Katakwalao. James works in the hospital pharmacy and shares a house with other hospital employees at Tuvaru1u. James invites Fufuli to share his room with him. Fufuli is glad to take this up. Some of his older kinsmen have been talking at him lately, and this is a chance to get away from them.

Working in Chinatown, he does not always go back to Tuvaru1u. Sometimes he stays with W, in his small shed at the back of Shiu's store; sometimes he stays with other Bua101ena migrants at Sze Tu King's store; sometimes he goes and visits O at the labour lines.

August 5
Bank Holiday. Fufuli and James join Bua101ena migrants on fishing trip to Doma plantation west of Honiara. W borrows Ip Choy's jeep to get there, six of them altogether.
August 10 Another fishing trip with Buamena, Chinatown friends.

August 11 Fufuli joins a pati at Tuvaruha, being held in the house next to James' quarters. The pati is organized mainly by Gela migrants, but Fufuli recognizes an old friend from Ataa (east Malaita), and accepts his suggestion to join in.

August 14 Decides to move away from James' house (and James) at Tuvaruha back to labour lines and O's room. James is not very forthcoming about buying food, is the reason given by Fufuli for moving.

August 18 Another driving lesson with 'cousin' D.

August 19 Goes to a pati at Lengakiki Ridge, organized by Ulungga migrants (a village south of Buamena). Fufuli has a distant and tenuous kinship link with these migrants. One Ulungga man is an old work-mate. He noticed him buying food for the pati in Chinatown, and used the chance to join in and go with him to Lengakiki Ridge.

August 22 Another visit to R and her husband at Rove.

August 24 Finishes work with Ip Choy. Not enough copra coming in to keep Fufuli and F employed so they are both finished. Fufuli still living with G and younger brother in labour lines. He contributed bag of butate to the household on August 17, and now wants to keep last pay for dice.

August 26 (PWD pay day) Joins dice game in A's room. Loses money in first 2 hours, borrows some to keep going, and has the same amount he started with by morning.

August 27 Another dice game in Manakwai room. Loses money.

Now sleeping regularly in O's room at labour lines.

August 28 J, a younger 'brother' (two generations removed) arrives from Malaita. Fufuli joins up with him to wander around town.

August 29 Fufuli, J, and Manefaba hanging around Kukum market get friendly with a Guadalcanal woman from Tasimboko, married to a former Buamena man (left Malaita 40 years ago and never returned). This woman and her daughters are friendly and eventually give Fufuli half the food they intended to sell.

August 31 Dice at the labour lines. Borrows money from J, to play with.

In the interaction which takes place during this period,
Fufuli readily uses some of his kinship ties for immediate advantage with little concern about any kind of reciprocal exchange; in other cases he makes some attempt to achieve a more balanced relationship and is generous in turn as resources allow. Mobility is a key factor in this, for it is a way of manipulating ties to best advantage. Amongst his contacts in town are a number of older migrants in good jobs and regular quarters, readily capable of meeting the obligation to provide food to anyone that turns up at the appropriate time, and able to provide other kinds of assistance as well. Fufuli relies on these contacts a great deal. He could stay more permanently with any one of these older kin; the only disadvantage is that older men are disposed to giving advice and censuring the exploits of their younger kin. This is the reason why, at one point, Fufuli moved in with a school friend, James, at Tuvaruhu. He said at the time, that he was sick of being reproached by his wantoks (using the term to refer to kinsmen and co-residents from Kalaita generally), and he would rather live with someone else. This didn't last long, and it did not stop him continuing to visit his relatives and joining in activities with them. He was being selective though, and avoiding obloquy as much as possible.

Fufuli's closest friends are peer friends, from Buamena and neighbouring hamlets. They are all kinsmen, 'brothers' and 'cousins' up to several generations removed. There is no one friend closer than the rest, with a similar relationship to the relationship between
Konomia and Wae'asi; rather there is a wide network of intimate contacts with whom he shares company and exchanges favours, depending on where he is at any particular time. The strategy of spreading friendly relations widely amongst peers is a common one. It derives basically from an understanding of, and an ability to use, the idiom of friendship, defined in rural terms, with its emphasis on equality in social relations, and transactions governed by generalized reciprocal exchange. With To'amba'ita migrants, friendship is just as readily extended to non-kin and non-To'amba'ita town dwellers through encounters in employment and in other contexts. Fufuli's contacts include former work-mates as well as kinsmen and wantoks. Itinerant town dwellers lead an uncertain and unstable existence, with limited resources and a tendency to rely on others. Transactional relations shift accordingly. But just as easily as they change, so they can be easily taken up again.

As their experience grows, migrants like Fufuli build up an extensive network of on-going relationships, with obligations on both sides. With close kin, and especially those older than him, Fufuli takes more than he gives. It is of no concern to him. These are moral claims, which may or may not be reciprocated in the future. Regardless, it is not something to worry about now. Except for balanced exchanges such as loans of money, reciprocal obligations are situationally defined. This means returning some favour in the future, when, and if, that ever becomes possible.
B was sitting around the labour lines today; he arrived in town last week and is still without a job. While we were there, R called in from Ngalibiu. He greeted B (with surprise) and soon after took him aside and gave him some money. B explained later that he had helped R in a similar position two years previously.

On this occasion R did not know B was in town until he happened to meet him. Because he had just been paid, he was able to fulfill an on-going obligation to offer help to B. It is these kinds of relationships in which migrants become involved. Whether migrant X is going to be able to reciprocate help given in one instance by migrant Y at some future date, will depend on whether their paths ever cross again, and X's economic circumstances when that happens. If, at a time when they meet again, X is still out of work, or is otherwise poorly off, all he needs to do is apologize for not being able to help and leave the obligation to Y open.

To the extent that they are as mobile as each other, and to the extent that they make exchanges with people with whom there is some likelihood of continuing social relationship, then the possibility of some kind of balance is high. This is one reason for making transactions with kinsmen and people from the same local area. (In the case above, R and B are from neighbouring hamlets on Malaita.) However it is not safe to assume that everyone will treat the exchange of favours with equal responsibility and concern. The situational element in exchange relations is very easily manipulated and this is what takes place amongst young migrants in town, in order to get maximum advantage from the day to day relations in which they are
involved and with whatever resources they command.

The deliberate manipulation of social relations is described by many terms. In To'ambaita, gafo or gafogafo means to 'beg with deceit'. Pidgin words with a similar meaning are meka 'to deceive or trick', sitirik 'trick', switim 'bribe' or 'flatter', osos (from Lau 'osa'osa deceive or flatter'). People who make a habit of turning up at other people's places around meal-time are said to meka for food, exploiting the obligation that the To'ambaita recognize, to offer food to visitors.

In meka behaviour the idiom of friendship is carried through and used in manipulative ways for specific gains. Basically, it means ingratiating yourself with someone else in such a way as to eventually be offered things of value. Pufuli provides an example from his (numerous) experiences.

... this man, a RWD worker from Western Solomons I used to meet him occasionally at the market. One day he met me there and asked me for some tobacco to roll a cigarette. We sat and smoked for a while. I asked him 'What is your place like? Any good?' He replied: 'Yes our place is good.' I said: 'How much is it to buy a girl?' He said: 'Five pound only.' And we stories about Malaita men who had married girls in the Western Solomons. I told him about K, brother of N. 'Plenty girls stop yet?' I asked him. 'Plenty, true,' he said. So I said to him: Sometime, let us go walkabout together.' 'That is alright', he said 'suppose you want to go with me, I have got a sister, I will introduce you sometime.' 'Oh no,' I said, 'I am an old man.' 'You might be an old man, but when you get to our place, you will be sorry.' So we stories and later he took me home to his place; paid for me in the bus down to KG VI. There, he told his wife to cook some tea and while she was cooking he took me off to the pictures. Insisting on paying for me all the time.
Where meka behaviour really becomes a test of skill and ability is in the field of sexual relations. The most accomplished practitioners are able to solicit sexual favours, even ingratiate themselves with families to the point where they are eventually offered girls in marriage.

What is indicated here is a high degree of self-interest in social relations, more than older To'ambaite people would accept as appropriate in conformity with kastom. The self-seeking of the young in town means that they depend on and take advantage of kinship relations and language group relations, yet do it in such a way as to put themselves above the constraints and responsibilities that such dependence entails. Specifically, they disregard the obligation to reciprocate.

Money and Social Relations

Collecting detailed and comprehensive information on the spending patterns of young migrants was extremely difficult. The fact that many have uncertain incomes based on a combination of gifts, loans, gambling and casual employment is an initial problem; beyond that there is a general reluctance amongst young men to disclose too much about what they earn and how they spend it. Deception is common amongst themselves and with outsiders. Giving false and misleading information is a common way of manipulating social relations for short-term advantages.

I called in to see me about 7 o'clock. Talked for a while. Hadn't eaten and quite concerned about everyone in their room. Said that they were completely out of food and out of money until the end of the month (another week). Went
on like this, and inevitably asked to Kaon (borrow) some money till en, to buy some food for everyone in the room. I gave him $2.

Met A later on and asked him what H had bought for them. Looked surprised. Told me that they hadn't seen H all night. They heard from someone else that he had gone to the movies.

With strategies like this being employed all the time, it was very difficult to keep track of the numerous transactions in which young migrants are involved.

The three forms of spending that Strathern (1975:316) describes for Hagen migrants - spending on subsistence, spending on urban style, and spending on relationships - also have some applicability to the To'ambaia. To encompass all spending that goes on I would add a fourth category as follows:

A. Subsistence: food, meals bought in town, rent, water, kerosene, firewood and other household expenses.

B. Personal: tobacco, cigarettes, beer, dice, cards, movies, clothes, transport.

C. Transactions/Social Relationships: gifts, loans, credit, rotating credit arrangements (kambani), remittances.

D. Savings and Investments: bank deposits, overseas investments, joint business investments, chain letters.

The majority of migrants are paid monthly and one noticeable feature of spending patterns is that most spending is done within a few days of being paid. This is when people buy meals in town, purchase expensive food, have drinking sessions, place dice, organize pati, pay debts, purchase clothes, make small gifts of money,
ride in taxis, go to the movies, and try to buy sufficient food to last until next pay day. In the last endeavour they do not always succeed. Even if a migrant or a migrant household buy sufficient for their needs, the demands of visitors and itinerant town dwellers, often means that they run out before next en. Once all money is spent and food has run out, it becomes necessary to borrow money, steal food, make meals and food from other town dwellers, or eventually get by with nothing, ran bae ea (get by on an empty stomach). Higher paid workers adopt the same spending pattern, with the exception that they are treated more favourably by store-keepers in town, and are given credit until the next pay day.

In recent years, different sectors of the work-force have had their pay day changed. Government workers are paid on the 26th of each month. Others are paid fortnightly or half-monthly. A small proportion of casual workers are paid weekly. With this variation, it means that there are now more opportunities for town residents to borrow from each other during the times that they are short. Workers in different industries maintain alternating credit arrangements. With overlapping pay cycles they take it in turns to help each other through their respective pay periods. All regular bachelor workers tend to be involved in numerous small-scale ($1 to $2 in value, maximum of $5), borrowing and lending arrangements with each other, each man having multiple partners - up to six or eight - with whom they are in some kind of debit or credit relationship. The number of partners, who they are, and
the value of debts and credits, is constantly changing from one pay period to the next. Such arrangements mostly take place amongst workers in regular contact with each other, and the partners involved include many non-kin and non-To'ambaita friends and work-mates as well as kin and wantoks. While borrowing and lending takes place amongst friends, these transactions, (mostly described as *kaon* transactions), are distinct from gift transactions (*fale la*), governed by generalized reciprocal exchange.

Regular rotating credit arrangements as found amongst urban migrants in New Guinea (Strathern, 1975; Skeldon, 1977), are neither common or long-lasting amongst the To'ambaita. The only cases that I observed involved pairs of workers, agreeing to pool some of their wages for short periods of time on an alternating basis. The amounts went up to 50 per cent of wages, and the practice was described as going *kambani* (*company*) with wages. Migrants will often initiate something like this in anticipation of making a trip home. Someone with his annual holidays coming up will *kambani* with others in advance, in order to have a large sum of money at the time when he is ready to go home.

Taking into account that anything up to one-half or two-thirds of wages may be channelled through debit and credit arrangements of the kind mentioned earlier, by far the largest amount of spending amongst young migrants is on subsistence and personal expenditure. This includes money spent on food and meals, and spending on beer, dice,
movies, clothes and other entertainment around town. During a two month period in 1974, two M&D workers living in the labour lines, earning $35 to $40 a month, spent around $5 a month on food (making up the rest of what they ate through visits to relations, gifts of food from home, and gifts from town residents with gardens), and they spent $20 to $25 each on beer, dice, and movies. Both of them borrow extensively and keep outstanding debts with several other workers.

Like the money that is spent on food for household consumption, much of the money that is spent on beer and dice is also a contribution to social relationships. All drinking in town takes place in company. Men either go to one or other of the public drinking places around town, or they buy supplies at a store and drink in their quarters. Preferences vary from one month to the next and from worker to worker. Those who go to hotels, drink as much with their work-mates and other town friends, as they drink with wantoks and kinsmen. By drinking in hotels they show their interest and involvement in wider social relations, and in public activity generally. Hotel drinking tends to be heavy and expensive. Those involved, drink out their money within a very short period. Drinking done in sleeping quarters is more private and exclusive. Here only friends drink together, or small groups of peers from the same area of Malaita. If they are all working, those involved will put in roughly equal amounts of money to buy the drink. With many who are unemployed, and others working under different pay arrangements, it is an activity in which
generalized reciprocal exchange is common, with short-term negative reciprocity.

More specific spending on social relationships, as when money is given, or it is borrowed or loaned from others, is another feature of migrant spending. It is here that we get into the area of remittances. In considering this, it is useful to separate transactions with people at home from transactions with other town residents.

People at home believe strongly that going to town is a way of earning a good and reliable income. Those who go into wage employment are automatically assumed to be better off financially than people still living at home. Whether this is true or not, it means that there are constant demands for small gifts and support of one kind or another, passing from Malaita to Honiara. The demands are more pressing when people actually visit town, something which they are now doing in increasing numbers as travelling becomes easier. Visitors to town impose an immediate obligation on their working kin to look after them and provide them with gifts of money and town purchases.

Bitalia is a young migrant (18 years) from Dafu. This is his third trip to town. He has been working for an electrical contractor for just over 12 months. He is paid $13 a fortnight. These are some of the requests and payments he made in March and April, 1974.

1.3.74 $4 to younger brother newly arrived in town. Letter from his father requesting him to send a bag of rice ($4 to $5) down to Malaita.
13.3.74 $4 to younger brother; $10 to his FBW ('mother') visiting town for two weeks and staying with her son. She did not ask for money but Bitalia felt a strong obligation to help her.

29.3.74 $4 to younger brother; $1 to eldest brother passing through Honiara.

12.4.74 $4 to younger brother; $1 to distant cousin newly arrived in town.

26.4.74 $2 to younger brother; $2.50 to father's brother newly arrived in town on his way to work at Sol. Is. Plantations oil palm estate at Ngalibiu. This 'father' wanted Bitalia to buy him a bag of butter and a cooking pot to start him off in his job. He passed on another request from Bitalia's maternal uncle (MFBS) to buy him a pouch watch (second time he has made the request).

Bitalia has more requests for help from his relations than he can afford to meet. During this period, he deferred requests from home and only made gifts to those relations who turned up in Honiara. Meeting these requests alone took 47 per cent of his income. This was the highest amount spent on home relations of all the young migrants that I questioned on this. It is not insignificant that Bitalia is a pagan, from a relatively poor locality with a strong commitment to the obligations and expectations that exist between kinsmen.

Amongst itinerant workers like Fufuli, remittances are negligible. The money that they earn is mostly spent in town on food and personal interests. Fufuli received requests for help from home during July and August, 1974 but ignored them. His elder brother, just newly married, wrote and asked him to buy a cooking pot and other kitchen utensils to help him set up his household. Fufuli ignored the request. His reaction was that his brother
should have thought of these things when he was working in town and bought them then. He wasn't going to let his brother's needs interfere with his own interests in town.

The two PWD workers that I mentioned earlier, over the two month period concerned, sent $6 and $10 respectively, no more than 12 per cent of what they earned. Both men have widowed mothers and are under constant pressure to send money home. Generally speaking, bachelor migrants find it easiest to put off or ignore requests from home completely, and to confine their gifts to those home people who make the trip to town. Town dwellers in employment have an obligation to help new arrivals in town with small gifts - including members of their own local descent group, and co-residents from the same locality as them. These prestations can go on for as long as close kin and others remain in town without work. People like Sitalia, for example, will go on supporting younger siblings with food and money for months at a time. Kononia and Wae'asi are paying a younger kinsmen living with them $1 a month each while he is in town. These gifts extend to female kin, sisters-in-law, mothers, sisters and cousins, now travelling and living in town in ever-increasing numbers.

Taking into account both kinds of spending on social relations for young bachelors, this takes up most of their expenditure after subsistence and personal spending. Purchase of major consumer items is little evident amongst this group. Only two men, amongst all the men living in To'ambaita rooms in the PWD labour lines, own bicycles
(costing $40 to $50 each). Only one man, amongst all the To'ambaita migrants living throughout Kukum, owns a motorbike. Only higher paid workers earning more than $40 a month are able to save for such items. Spending on personal interests and meeting social obligations also affects savings and investments. Few bachelor migrants have bank accounts. Those that do, have very small deposits in them. From time to time migrants are encouraged to save money and they respond positively to incentives to do so. When Jim Umafaalu was working at the tobacco factory he persuaded workers to open savings accounts and make regular deposits. By May, 1972, two-thirds of the factory work-force had opened accounts. Since Jim Umafaalu died, those who are left at the factory have lost interest and the idea has not been carried on. In other cases, small groups of brothers and close related kin have started joint savings schemes to meet impending commitments or to launch some joint investment project. One FWD worker mentioned earlier, is involved in saving money with two brothers for a marriage coming up in the near future.

Money is indispensable for urban living, but it is difficult to earn, easy to spend, and at the centre of major inequalities which young migrants resent and barely comprehend. Money earned is quickly dissipated by urban living; it is also quickly dissipated through meeting social obligations. This is the kind of choice which young migrants face. With them, the larger proportion of their earnings goes on urban living. Accusations of
selfishness and wastefulness are treated lightly. Spending freely is part of their style; it is also what makes town exciting and attractive as a place to live. The main decision that they face is how much they want to do this alone, and how much they are prepared to share with others. Given the interests that they have, the option of doing things alone, of going kontrak\(^1\) is a very attractive one. At a certain point this means jeopardizing their relations with others, particularly wantoks.

Rafi has just moved out of the Nanakwai room. He is fed up with conditions there, the lack of co-operation, shortages of food, and constant visitors. He now lives in a room provided by employer, organizes his own meals, and spends much time wandering around town on his own rather than with wantoks. He prefers to do things kontrak.

D visited town this week (several years older than Rafi, married, lives in a neighbouring settlement).

D: 'Why don't you live with your people anymore? Why don't you wander around with your people anymore?'

Rafi: 'They waste my money. As soon as any wantoks join me my money is finished straight away. They always spoil (labatania)everything I earn. Anyhow, what does it matter?'

D: 'This is rubbish kastom that you are following. It is very bad. You should always stay with your wantoks. You never know what might happen, when you might need help.'

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1. Kontrak is a Pidgin term used to describe any action in which a person does things on his own, and does not share with others. This usage originates from that period soon after the war, when labour migrants were given cash in lieu of rations, and began to take responsibility for their own subsistence arrangements while in employment. Now it is used to refer to any kind of individualistic behaviour, as when a person buys and cooks his own food, goes to the movies by himself, or does anything else on his own.
Rafi: 'That is all right. This is what suits my mind. This is what I want to do. The trouble with wanka is that they waste all my money, finish it every bit.'

D: 'What is more valuable, your people or money?'

The final pointed question reveals the dilemma that young town workers are in. There was no attempt during this conversation to ascertain whether there was any imbalance in the transactions taking place between Rafi and other home people. Relations with home people cannot be reduced to these kinds of calculations. There is a higher moral commitment to share with others, regardless of short-term imbalances.

Once they begin earning money in town, young migrants find that they have a choice between spending it on themselves or sharing it with others. What they are being told by older men from home is that, if they are going to conform with kastom, continue to recognize home values, and maintain their home relations in good repair, then they do not really have a choice, the appropriate thing is to share with others. The way in which they resolve this dilemma is mainly to share amongst themselves, and thereby maintain friendly relations with their peers, as well as do the things that they like doing in town. Hence their involvement in widely ramifying networks of borrowing and lending, and the sharing that takes place through drinking sessions, dice games, going to the movies, and sharing food.

It is while living in town, living in the cash
economy, that young To'ambaia first become self-supporting. They do so while also remaining part of a wide network of social relations, bound by obligations of mutual support and mutual concern. Money may be used to maintain and consolidate these relations. It may be used to extend them and invest in new friendships. Spending on social relations is what is expected and demanded of them. The alternative is spending it on themselves. For people looking for independence this is an attractive option. Not many carry it through to the extent where they live alone and spend most of their money on their own. This is extreme behaviour, constrained by accusations of selfishness (fanga bila la) or pride (nau ni ba'ita). The person who chooses to go kontrak may ignore these accusations. Most people cannot, and would rather adopt other strategies which involve sharing but interfere the least with the things that they enjoy in town. This is why young migrants largely share amongst themselves. The sharing involves small gifts and small borrowing and lending transactions. Through them, peers are able to maintain good relations with each other, while also taking best advantage of what town has to offer them. This means that money forms the basis for an alternative life style in town, important to birangaa kala wane, the 'kastom of young men'.
Bus-Driver and Classified Worker: Settled Migrants in Town

An increasing number of migrants are committing themselves to long term wage employment and extended residence in town. Out of 105 men surveyed in 1974, 57 (54 per cent) have been in their present jobs for two years or longer, while 27 (26 per cent) have been in their jobs for five years or more. Older, stable workers now comprise a significant proportion of the migrant population. Of those who have been in their jobs for two years or more, sixty per cent are earning over $40 a month. Not all settled workers are successful, yet they do have higher average incomes than younger migrants. More reliable and successful money earning is one of the critical differences between them.

A stronger commitment to wage employment and more extended absence from Malaita raises the possibility of permanent separation from rural life and rural activity. We might expect some weakening in rural social ties, a
reduced interest and lack of involvement in village affairs. So far there is very little evidence for this amongst the To'ambaigia. On the contrary, older migrants appear to have much closer ties with people at home than younger, less experienced migrants. As they settle into regular employment and command higher incomes, To'ambaigia town dwellers affirm their attachment to rural communities and kin relations; they take a more responsible interest in village affairs. In town, they remain just as much a part of groupings formed by close kin and people from the same settlements on Malaita as other migrants. Not only this, they often play a leading role in the activities of these groupings, taking a close interest in what everyone is doing, intervening in the case of trouble, organizing gatherings periodically, and in other ways helping to maintain rural ties in town.

This may be illustrated by describing the role of one senior Civil Servant in organizing a *pati* for migrants from his village. The man is Rofeafau and he is in his late thirties.

Rofeafau has been living away from home for over twenty years. This includes some years working in town when he was young, several years of formal schooling including three years in Rabaul, Papua New Guinea, and ten years in government service. The occasion for the *pati* was a birthday celebration for his youngest children, twins just one year old. He has been married since 1969. The *pati* was held at his house, family quarters rented from the Government, on Lengakiki Ridge, near the Department of Geological Surveys where Rofeafau works.

Ulungra is a Seventh Day Adventist village and Rofeafau and his wife are keen members of this church. This had a lot of bearing on the timing
Plates 27 & 28: Pati held by Ulungga migrants, Honiara.
of the pati, who came to it, and the food that was provided. The pati was held on a Sunday. Just over 30 people attended altogether (Plate 25). Most of those who attended are from Ulungga or neighbouring hamlets. They included Rofeafau's brother and his family, a group of his maternal relations, a large group of his wife's relations, and another family distantly related to Rofeafau. Coming from the same locality on Malaita, most of the people who attended the pati are also Seventh Day Adventists. Amongst the group at the pati young single men stood out as a section on their own. After them were a number of slightly older men, married, with their wives and families in town. The youthfulness of town residents is readily apparent. None of the group here were over 40 years of age.

The main purpose of the pati was the sharing of food cooked in front of Rofeafau's house. Supplies of fish, chickens, coconuts, sweet potato, cassava, taro and other food was brought in through the week-end. Rofeafau contributed the largest quantity, but most of those who attended also contributed food in keeping with To'ambaia kastor. The young couple with whom I went (the daughter of Rofeafau's brother and her husband) took one chicken, a sack of sweet potato, and some purchased fish. Other families made similar contributions. People gathered early on Sunday morning to make an oven and cook the food. After it was cooked and everyone had arrived, the oven was opened and food was laid out on leaf mats under the trees in Rofeafau's backyard. After eating, everyone stayed around to clean up and talk, returning to their homes again late afternoon.

Besides showing the kind of role that older men are playing in maintaining rural ties in town, this pati also shows how rural values are being upheld in the context of urban living and employment. The pati was conducted very much along the same lines as it would be if it were held on Malaita. Even the food was similar; the main difference being that most of it had to be purchased.

It was explained to me that this was a To'ambaia pati and not a European pati, the distinction revolving around
the way in which it was organized, the food that was eaten, the way in which food was prepared and served. Attendance at European pati is controlled by invitation, whereas with proper To'ambaita pati there is no such restriction. In the event, except for me and one or two others, it was only Ulungga people and their relatives who attended this pati. Being on a Sunday, being in a relatively inaccessible part of town, being mainly Seventh Day Adventists (with their food restrictions), and being an occasion where those who attended would be expected to contribute some food, it did not draw many migrants outside of those from Ulungga and those closely related to Rosetafau.

Organizing pati is one way in which senior migrants bring together people from the same area, and help to sustain on-going exchange relations between them. Holding prestigious positions in the work-force, they enhance their standing further in a more traditional way, by sponsoring these small feasts. So far, pati, in this form are relatively infrequent events. This was the only one that came to my notice in 1974. Children's birthday celebrations are one reason given for organizing such events, marriages held in town are another. These are not the only kind of pati however that migrants organize. There are others which are more exclusive events, limited to selected friends, and conducted much more along European lines. These pati will be discussed towards the end of this chapter.

While extended residence in town does not mean the
Plates 29 & 30: Feast at 'Aisiko on Malaita.
gradual abandonment of home ties and decreasing involvement in village-based social relations, neither does it mean lack of involvement in wider urban relations. Increasing experience in town, more settled employment, leads to many new social contacts in town. Put very simply, migrants become involved in at least two sets of relations, one of which is centred on the area which they moved away from on Malaita, the other of which is centred in town, but also includes the numerous ties that have been built up as a result of migratory experience.

In elaborating on this I want to introduce two long time town dwellers from different localities on Malaita, one, a man named Basi'oli, a classified worker (Class III), and the son of a church teacher from Nanakwai, the other a man named Sisifiu, a senior bus driver with the Guadalcanal Bus Company, brought up as a pagan and now a Jehovah's Witness from the high bush village of 'Aisiko. Both of these men earn between $70 and $80 a month – the exact figure varying according to overtime, bonuses, and special rates.

Basi'oli is 28 years old and has been working for the PWD for nine years, three years on Malaita and six years in town. As a class III carpenter he takes responsibility for new construction projects, and supervises his own gang of workers. He is married to a Kwara'ae girl he met in town, and they have three children. They live in Bokanafera, where they have been renting a house through the PWD for over four years.

Sisifiu is 37 years old and has been working in town
since 1964. He married on Kalaita in 1969 to a girl from a distant branch of the same descent group. When he returned to Honiara soon after this he found that his wife was involved with someone else and so he decided to stay in Honiara and divorce her. He has been in town ever since. He lives in quarters provided by the bus company at their depot in New Chinatown, occupying a small room on his own.

Both of these men have worked in other places before coming to Honiara. This includes plantation work in the Russell Islands and for Sisifiu, a period of work in the Western Solomons. Over the years that they have been away from home, and especially while they have been in town, they have come to know a large number of people. For Basi'oli this includes past and present work-mates in the PWD, people met during time spent in the PWD labour lines, neighbours from Bokonafera, other members of the SSBC in town, and many more. Sisifiu has friends dating from his years in the Western Solomons and in the Russell Islands. There are others from several years he spent working with the Ports Authority, and from the job he is in at present. In both cases, their friends and acquaintances are numerous and ethnically heterogeneous. Besides a large number of To'amba'aita migrants, they include people from Tikopia, Sikaiana, the Western Solomons, Santa Ysabel, Ontong Java, San Cristobal, and nearly every other language group on Malaita. Many of their acquaintances are only people with whom they exchange greetings in the street, or talk with occasionally; others, and those whom they regard as friends, are people with whom they drink periodically, share
meals, and exchange all sorts of favours. Basi'oli, for example, has Baelelea friends living in settlements just out of town, through whom he gets firewood, sweet potato, and other vegetables. A close friend at work is a Tikopia man. They sometimes drink together, and visit each other's houses for meals.

Basi'oli and Sisifiu also include a wide number of kinsmen, people from their home settlements, and wantoks generally, amongst their social ties in town. For Sisifiu this includes migrants from several hamlets in the hills of the To'ambaita peninsula: 'Aisiko, Gwai'au, Kafot'ota, Dafu, Manafiu. Some of his immediate kin ties are shown in Figure 12 (where he is No. 24). Amongst those he considers as 'his people' (to'a nia ki) are numerous brothers and cousins, their spouses and children, several people a generation senior to him, sisters and cousins who have married into other groups and their husbands. Being in the hills, the place that Sisifiu comes from has no cash crop resources, and is relatively poor compared with the coastal areas in which most To'ambaita live. In hill settlements, labour migration is the major source of cash income, young men going away for variable periods of time, older men taking short trips only. Heavily dependent on labour migration, few migrants have any formal education, so they are also restricted in the jobs they are able to take up. The highest paid work that they aspire to in town, is work as drivers or semi-skilled tradesmen. There are no Civil Servants, classified workers or professional workers amongst 'Aisiko migrants. Sisifiu is the most senior worker
Figure 12  'AISIKO BUS DRIVER: GENEALOGICAL TIES

Living in Town

24 SISIFIU Bus Driver
47 Store Assistant
52 Taxi Driver
57 Store Assistant
60 Unemployed
61 Driver
63 Driver
67 Unemployed
73 Store Assistant
74 Store Assistant
78 Factory Hand

Living on Malaita

1 - 9;
11 - 12;
14 - 23;
25 - 42;
44 - 46;
48 - 51;
53 - 56;
58 - 59;
67 - 72;
73;
75;
79 - 81.

Living Elsewhere

10 Western Solomons
13 Guadalcanal (Black Post)
43 Guadalcanal (Rere)
64 Tulagi (Taiyo Fishing Co.)
65 Tulagi (Taiyo Fishing Co.)
66 Tulagi (Taiyo Fishing Co.)

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4, 6, 8, 10, 12, 13, 15,
18, 22, 27, 33, 37, 39, 55,
58, 67, 70, 71.
and the most highly paid amongst people from this locality.

Sisifiu feels a strong obligation to his relatives and keeps in close touch with most of them, in town and on Malaita. One of the things that contributes to the cohesiveness of local group relations is constant visiting between town and Malaita. In Figure 12 there are nine young men who spend most of their time in town and six elsewhere in the Solomons. During 1974 another seventeen visited town for short periods of time, looking for casual work, visiting younger kin, seeking dental treatment, sorting out church matters, and simply just wandering around. Not all of these visitors prevailed on Sisifiu; for many though, he was their main contact and the person upon whom they relied the most.

Despite continued residence in town, Sisifiu affirms that he is careful not to neglect his kinship ties. He makes a point of keeping in touch with 'his people', visiting their quarters, looking out for them around town, doing things for them when necessary. He is always generous with people from home, letting them stay in his room if necessary, providing meals, making gifts of money, and doing other favours. He is also under constant pressure to send money home, as well as presents of one kind or another. Some of the obligations he was under in July-August, 1974 are as follows:

- brother (18) visited town, and stayed with him. In town to visit sons but relied on Sisifiu for several meals. Took Sisifiu's tape recorder with him when he went home.
- sister's daughter (71) visited town with her father, a man from Fasteska, East Malaita. Sisifiu gave them two bags of rice ($3.60) - a present for his niece (koko'o).
- brother (27) briefly visited town on church business. Stayed with Sisifiu and ate with him. Sisifiu gave him some money ($20) and presents for his children and children of (20) and (21).
- 'father' (6) visited town for dental treatment, and asked Sisifiu to pay for his new teeth ($10).
- request from brother (20) for new sewing machine; Sisifiu regards this request seriously, for (2) is the person who nursed him when he was a baby. He has priced sewing machines in town and knows where he will get one when he has the money.
- son-in-law (70) passed through town. Had a drink and meal with Sisifiu.
- two 'brothers' (33) and (39) passed through town on their way to take up temporary jobs at Kgalibi'o oil palm plantation. Stayed a night with Sisifiu.
- a son-in-law (54) and 'father', came to town to work for Ports Authority and spent much time with Sisifiu.

Generosity is said to be an important aspect of To'ambaita kastom; with one's own people it is a moral obligation. Sisifiu feels that it is important to uphold kastom in town. He also knows that it is a constant drain on his resources; birangai kanalio labatania malefo 'our kastom is wasteful of money'. Being generous and complying with the expectations and demands of his relations, enhances his reputation as a successful town worker and a good person. By sharing his success with his relations through material transactions, he is 'keeping alive' those of his social ties that originate on Malaita and make him part of a community on Malaita. Those who accept his favours accept the obligation to reciprocate. It is a form of investment, governed by generalized reciprocity, the outcome of which is mostly unknown. To illustrate the kind of thing that has happened to him; when he was younger, working for the Ports Authority, he often took in distant
kinsmen visiting town for short periods of time. When he married in 1969, two of these men contributed tafuli'ae to his marriage in return for the help he gave them.

In town, 'Aisiko migrants are only one part of Sisifiu's total social network. He has many other friends with whom he also maintains relationships based on material exchange. This includes workmates at the bus depot, where he is the only To'ambaita employee. His closest friend is a Kwaio man whom he met in Yandina more than ten years ago. They have a bond with each other, based on generalized reciprocal exchange, which Sisifiu considers to be much stronger and more important to him than any of his kinship bonds, including those with his closest brothers. They have a relationship which is based on complete trust and respect for each other. Through this relationship Sisifiu has met many other Kwaio migrants. He has become so friendly with them, that they have offered to arrange marriage for him with a Kwaio girl, and to let him settle on their land. He has no reason to abandon his own people, and is following a strategy of maintaining good relations with all sides.

Sisifiu's friends and acquaintances come from all levels of the work-force; his closest friends in 1974 were lower-paid workers and unemployed. Job success has enhanced his status amongst his peers and younger kin without putting himself beyond interaction with them. Employers have recognized in him a strong commitment to work, and an ability to lead and organize others. In his present job
and in many of the jobs that he has held in the past, he has been given a senior position as leader of his section (in days past he was a bosboi with Levers at Yandina). Success has not led to any significant change in his life-style, nor has it had any influence on his choice of friends. In interaction with others, he adheres to standards and principles that he learnt on Malaita, from his father (a pagan priest), his elder brothers and senior kin. This means continuing to maintain respect for all 'his people' and sharing resources with them when this is expected. There is no attempt to restrict interaction to people on a similar income, or people with similar experience. If he feels different from any section of people in town it is mostly kala wane. It is not such as to preclude interaction with them; he only limits the terms on which interaction takes place. This means giving advice and encouraging responsibility in social relations amongst them according to what he regards as proper To'ambaita kustom. Most of the ties which he has in town are maintained through casual and informal interaction in the context of his quarters and around various public places. He attends church infrequently and feels uncomfortable there. Except for that, and membership of a trade union in 1975, he does not belong to any special associations or clubs in town.

The active ties in Basi'oli's social network also include people from home and people at home. He is the eldest son in a large family (see Figure 13, where he is No. 13). Most of his kin are living on Malaita, some are
Figure 13  MANAKWAI CLASSIFIED WORKER: GENEALOGICAL TIES

Living in Town

19  BASI'OLI Classified Worker

1  dependent on 8
8  Staff Salesman
15  Civil Servant (Field Officer)
16  dependent on 15
17  dependent on 18
18  Civil Servant (Policeman)
20  dependent on 19
23  unemployed
26  Labourer
27  dependent on 26
28  dependent on 29
29  Civil Servant (Policeman)
32  Civil Servant (Marine Service)
36  Unemployed

Living on Malaita

2  -  7;
9;
10  -  14;
21  -  22 (and children)
24  -  25;
30  -  31;
33 (and children);
34  -  35;
37  -  39.

Those who visited Town, 1974 - 75

3, 11, 21, 24, 30, 34.
living in town and elsewhere. He visits Malaita at least once a year for his annual holidays; similarly, his father, brothers and sister are regular visitors to town, staying with him at Bokonafera. When he got married in 1970 there was one ceremony in Honiara and one at home on Malaita. His father sponsored the marriage, and seventeen people contributed to the $350 that it cost. All the contributors were relatives and friends from home. His wife spent the first six months of their married life on Malaita, and has since returned there regularly for visits. Basi'oli is one of a number of migrants (an estimated 25 per cent) who have married non-To'ambaита girls met while living away from Malaita. He is friendly with his in-laws—but deliberately avoids being too generous and encouraging. He sees them as a potential drain on his earnings. His closest and most important ties are with his family and with related peers from Manakwai. These bonds now exercise a strong influence on his activities and his ambitions. Significantly enough, his interests span both Malaita and town and are not exclusive to either location.

Being highly paid and with a house in town, Basi'oli is in a good position to help other migrants. Like Sisifu he tries to be generous with home people, sharing money and food when the obligation arises. There is always an obligation to help new arrivals. It can be avoided if they are not encountered for a few days, and it is well past pay day. Basi'oli is calculating in this regard. When he does encounter someone, he tries to fulfil the expectations they have of a successful worker in town. 'If there are only
shillings in my pocket, I go and buy them food—lots of it. I'm too ashamed just to give them silver. If I have notes in my pocket then I give them notes—$1 or $2. Notes impress; people think they are something big and valuable.' Even though he complains about the propensity of young people to meka in town, he readily meets the obligation to provide meals to those people who visit his house in the evening. This extends to letting people stay with him when they have nowhere else to go. All this means that amongst home people he is a man of some influence and status, earning respect through giving more to others than he receives from them.

Kanakwai is amongst the more prosperous To'anbaita villages. Most residents now have cash crop resources and a regular income from agricultural production. Basi'oli's family do not have extensive holdings, yet their income is sufficient to meet all necessary requirements. This means that Basi'oli is not being requested for the same kinds of things as Sisifiu or being pressured for assistance in the same kind of way. It does not follow that he spends less on home ties or regards them as any less important; only that he spends money in different ways and with different consequences. In discussing this, it is necessary to take account of his main contacts in town and what he has been getting out of urban experience.

Having grown up in a Christian village since the war, and having had some years of schooling, Basi'oli belongs to a peer group that has had a lot of success in wage
employment. His close friends include other classified workers and tradesmen, Civil Servants, self-employed businessmen, men in different kinds of professional work. They include just as many non-To'ambaita migrants as To'ambaita, yet when it comes to discussing and evaluating his position in relation to others in town, it is other To'ambaita migrants about whom he is most concerned and who have the greatest influence on him and his ambitions. He is an ambitious man and as much as this means rivalry with his peers, it is mainly people within his own language group with whom he is competing. Moreover it is competition that is being played out on Malaita as much as in town.

One thing that has some bearing on the importance which Basi'oli gives to home ties, is that he is the son of a church teacher. His family is not part of the Takiniano descent group except peripherally through a distant female tie. The places from which they originate are Kabu'ole and Larade, territories to the south of Takiniano. Some co-descendants live at Larade, some at Buamena on the other side of the peninsula to Manakwai. There is more land at Buamena than Manakwai, and with his brothers, Basi'oli sees opportunities for co-operation amongst members of their descent group in starting a cattle farm and other projects on this land. But this is not his only investment interest at this time.

Amongst his co-descendants and distant kin are a higher level Civil Servant (No. 15, Figure 13), a trainee salesman and staff member at the tobacco factory (3), a bosun with the Marine Department (32), and a Corporal in
the Police Force (not shown in Figure 13). All of these men are earning more than $60 a month, and have good prospects for continuing promotion in their respective careers. They are not always living in town at the same time; when they are, they take the opportunity to meet regularly and spend time together. Out of this they have launched several joint investment projects on Malaita and in town, financed through regular contributions from all of them. Largely initiated by Basi'oli and his 'brother', Kuburu (15), these projects form part of on-going joint business activity, put under the name of 'Tabi', a To'ambaita word meaning to branch or fork. Originally Basi'oli started a small retailing business with a hawking licence in his house at Bokonafera, selling tobacco, soap, rice and other food to other To'ambaita migrants and to neighbours at Bokonafera. Around the same time they started collecting money for a cattle project at Buamena, to be set up and supervised by a relative at Buamena (11, Figure 13) and his sons. In 1973 two further projects were begun, a scheme to build a family house on Malaita, at Nanakwai, out of imported building materials, and a taxi business in town. In November, 1973, Basi'oli took his annual holidays on Malaita and in that time built the house, a large building now shared by his father and brothers. Around the same time, November, 1973, the five partners bought a car to run as a taxi in town. They employed a man from Fiti as their driver, inviting him to share in the business. The taxi business was still operating in early 1976 when I completed fieldwork. None of the profits were shared out but were being saved and
used for further investments.

Taking these successes further, in 1974 Basi'oli bought a new house at Vura in town, through the Solomon Islands Housing Authority. Originally it was intended for their taxi driver, but Basi'oli decided to move into the house himself, and leave Bokonafera.

With the people that he has brought together on these projects, and the projects themselves, Basi'oli is affirming his commitment to home ties as much as he is furthering his success and standing in town. All these projects - the new house on Malaita (only the second of its type at Manakwai), the taxi business, and the new house in town - brought Basi'oli and his friends much prestige in 1973-74. It shows that as a successful worker in town, he is just as much involved in rural-based relationships as in urban society and with urban ties.

With their higher incomes Basi'oli and Sisifiu have a slightly better standard of living than younger contemporaries in town. What this means is that they eat better. Sisifiu spends his money in the same way as daraa, spending most of it soon after he is paid - paying off debts, drinking with friends, joining in games of dice, buying food, making gifts to kinsmen. With a larger income there is much more money to spend on social relations. Nearly each month he makes major gifts up to $10 or $20 in value to people visiting town or people at home. He runs out of money just as soon as younger town dwellers,
but is better able to get credit from Chinese store-keepers. Starting the first week after pay-day he buys his food on credit. In this way he is able to maintain the same level of hospitality with *wantoks* throughout the month. Each month he spends up to half his pay in advance. Either directly or indirectly, the larger proportion of his wages are spent on social relations.

Basi'oli is more calculating in what he spends on social relations. He not only puts money into savings and investments, but uses this form of spending as an excuse for not being overly generous. Relations can be given smaller gifts, even put off altogether with excuses about putting money into a house, or into some kind of business.

Amongst people from Christian villages, this is a new development in their involvement in the cash economy. It is accepted that money can be excluded from the normal sharing that takes place between friends and kinsmen, when it is intended for some special objective - an impending marriage, a business project, building a house. The difference between Basi'oli and Sisifii comes out when we look at savings and investments. Sisifii does not have a bank account, has made no investments in any financial institutions or business enterprises. What money has not been used for living expenses and personal spending, has been 'invested' totally in social relations. Basi'oli has saved and invested his money in various ways over the years. He has accounts in two trading banks in town ($32), the NSW Permanent Building Society ($60), Turf Investment ($32), Solomon Island Investment ($100), and Ilite'ona Co-operative Society (Manakwai) ($57). Contributing to these
schemes has been a matter of 'trying things out', looking for further success in the cash economy. More recently he contributed money to houses in town and on Malaita, and the taxi business.

This is the direction in which success is leading in town. Both Basi'oli and Sisifiu are settled and successful town residents. Both of them are pursuing 'rural oriented strategies' (Salisbury and Salisbury, 1972), using their higher incomes to reinforce and consolidate home ties as much as to meet the demands and pleasures of urban living. Sisifiu is keeping 'alive' obligations amongst his numerous relations and friends against the day when he may return home, re-marry and settle back on Malaita. Basi'oli also, except that he is using his money more conspicuously, is looking for prestige and future returns from special investments in town and on Malaita.

The practice of maintaining rural ties and meeting the obligations associated with them, is an important form of investment, for it means that older migrants continue to protect their land and other property rights on Malaita, ensuring their long term security beyond the time when they no longer want to work in town, or are no longer able to work.

The idea of returning to Malaita is a recurrent topic of interest amongst settled town dwellers. It arose in conversation with Basi'oli and Sisifiu on several occasions, and indeed, in conversation with most settled workers that I spoke to. The intention to return home is very strong.
Moreover it is not something that forms part of an ideology through which To'ambaita town dwellers affirm their common ethnic identity and the solidarity ties that they have with each other (c.f. Strathern, 1977). There is a degree of conviction behind present To'ambaita feelings that makes their expressed intentions of returning home, very convincing. Despite the fact that they have settled into regular employment, older and more experienced town migrants - whether or not they have high incomes - express open doubt and uncertainty about continued residence in town. The feeling that involvement in wage employment should only be temporary is still very strong, even amongst Civil Servants who have the most secure jobs in the work-force. It is not so much job security that is of concern here but the long term benefits of living continuously in employment outside Malaita. For migrants who have limited prospects in town the question is a critical one. For those whose prospects are good, there is the difficult choice between remaining in employment and also participating more fully in urban society and urban institutions, or returning to Malaita. That people are staying on longer in town, does not mean that the choice is no less important, only that a decision is being postponed.

In the lives of Sisifiu and Basi'oli I have shown diverging examples of success in town. They are divergent examples because of the different patterns of investment.

2. Since fieldwork was completed I have heard that Basi'oli has returned permanently to Malaita. With his own house in town, a secure job, and a high income, he was as stable a To'ambaita town dweller as any that I came to know.
followed by each man. Basi'oli is looking for a steadily improving standard of living and further income growth. Sisifiu is spending most of his higher earnings on social relationships, with uncertain gains in the future. Undoubtedly his behaviour has something to do with his quasi-bachelor status. Marriage and a family are a recognized incentive for family-oriented investment, and investment directed towards further income growth. Sisifiu's success is exceptional for someone of his background. It is also limited. He is unlikely to advance much further in the work-force. Basi'oli on the other hand, has good prospects. He is also one of a number of contemporaries at a similar level of achievement.

One thing that emerges from this, is that socio-economic differences amongst the To'ambaita in town are continuous with similar differences on Malaita. Whether they migrate or not, the To'ambaita are now pursuing success with a single system of values. The opportunities are different in both locations, but what people are aiming for is much the same. The system of values within which they are seeking success are those held by the dominant Christian population. The institution which sanctions these values and the life based on them, is the church. Significantly, this is an institution which spans rural and urban locations. This brings me to one area of To'ambaita life in town that has so far not been mentioned, their involvement in urban voluntary associations. I will now take up this aspect of migrant life by way of concluding this chapter.
Voluntary Associations and To'ambaitya Social Relations

There are a large number of voluntary associations in Honiara. They include churches, workers' associations, political parties, sports and social clubs, ethnic and regional associations, special interest clubs of one kind or another, service organizations and charitable institutions. Some are multi-ethnic and multi-racial in composition, others are confined to particular immigrant groups, some from within the Solomon Islands, others made up of non-Solomon Islanders. Taken overall, European influence has been strong in the setting up and running of these organizations. In relation to their numbers in town, Solomon Islanders are not nearly as active in this side of Honiara life as European residents. Only in the last ten to fifteen years have urban associations come to have real importance for Solomon Islanders.

The To'ambaitya are no exception to this. For one section of the migrant population, those who have taken up an itinerant life style, there is no interest in urban associations at all. Young bachelors generally, have very little to do with formally organized groups in town. Their life shows a preference for informal and unstructured interaction. Similarly with many older migrants as well. The main exception in both cases is the interest that is shown in town churches, and to a lesser extent, in workers' associations. As much as the To'ambaitya have become involved, these are the associations that have drawn most interest.
The churches in town form large multi-ethnic and multi-racial associations. Considering that missionary work and the establishment of churches in the Solomon Islands preceded urbanization, the oldest churches first began work in town as part of pre-existing national organizations. Their policy in the main, was to provide for the needs of those of their rural adherents who migrated there (Tippett, 1967:332). As Honiara grew, they grew also, and now, besides serving large urban congregations, they also occupy dominant positions within larger national organizations. It is because of this, and because of their influence in rural areas, that churches are rather exceptional amongst urban associations; except for one or two island or regional associations, no other groups in town have rural-urban connections of similar strength and significance.

Ethnically based or regionally based organizations have never been very strong in Honiara. To some extent churches fulfill some of the same functions. This is because regionalism is a major factor in the history of church growth in the Solomon Islands. Amongst the largest and oldest churches, congregations mirror closely their different spheres of influence within the Solomon Islands. The Methodist church for example, draws most of its followers from the Islands of Choiseul, New Georgia, and Vella Lavella in the Western Solomons. The Anglican church draws much of its following from the Eastern and Central Solomons, while the majority of people belonging to the SSEC come from Malaita and Guadalcanal. Even though there
are few regions or islands in which one church is totally dominant, this aspect of church organization fosters ethnic ties and reinforces wider level ethnic differences amongst town residents. Churches constitute an organization within which ethnic amalgamation on a regional basis is taking place. The SSEC, for example, has been, and still is, a major force in promoting wider unity amongst the people of Malaita. As well as this the churches are also having an influence on inter-ethnic marriage. An increasing number of To'ambaita are marrying outside their language group. Those that do, tend to marry within the same religion, each church forming a larger endogamous community.

Census enumerations of the population in Honiara in 1970 and 1976, show that just over ninety per cent of the population claim nominal affiliation with five main churches (Table 10.1). These figures represent the potential active membership of these churches. They include members of all ages. Despite this, active involvement in town churches is much below the potential involvement given by these figures. In the shift to town, churches lose some of their support and influence (Tippett, 1967:333). If regular attendance be taken as a minimal measure of involvement, less than half of the enumerated membership of the SSEC are actively involved. As for those who do more than just attend services regularly, and who also go to fellowship meetings, prayer meetings, study and training groups, sports groups, youth groups, and so on, the numbers are much less again, coming down to a small proportion of those claiming to belong to the church itself.
## TABLE 10.1
### COMPOSITION OF THE POPULATION OF HONIARA
#### BY DENomination: All RACES 1970 and 1976

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Church Denomination</th>
<th>Number of Adherents</th>
<th>1970</th>
<th>No.</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>1976</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Diocese of Melanesia (Anglican)</td>
<td>3,852</td>
<td>34.4</td>
<td>4,990</td>
<td>33.4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roman Catholic</td>
<td>1,707</td>
<td>15.3</td>
<td>2,123</td>
<td>14.2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Seas Evangelical Church</td>
<td>2,673</td>
<td>23.9</td>
<td>3,500</td>
<td>23.4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Church (Methodist)</td>
<td>1,080</td>
<td>9.7</td>
<td>1,308</td>
<td>8.8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seventh Day Adventist</td>
<td>993</td>
<td>8.9</td>
<td>1,587</td>
<td>10.6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian Fellowship Church</td>
<td>157</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>167</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jehovah's Witness</td>
<td>263</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>334</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bahai</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pagans</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>539</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Religion</td>
<td>269</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>372</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Stated</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Totals</strong></td>
<td>11,191</td>
<td>99.8</td>
<td>14,952</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources  Table 17, Census 1970
Basic Table 23, Unpublished 1976 Census
Most of the migrants with whom I worked in Honiara were either members of the ESEC or Jehovah's Witnesses. Today these are the two strongest churches amongst the To'ambaita. In town To'ambaita migrants are prominent in both churches but in neither case is attendance at church as high as it is on Malaita. Families living in town make a point of attending church regularly, young bachelors much less so. Many visitors treat church services as a highlight of their trips to town. The way in which the To'ambaita have made themselves active in these churches follows from the churches' strength in villages on Malaita, and the strong links between rural and urban branches of each national organization. In the ESEC, many To'ambaita people have taken on full-time and part-time positions with the wider organization. A Nanakwai man, and former government teacher, Arnon Atomesa, was a town Pastor for three years before being appointed as national secretary of the church. He still lives in town, takes town services, and plays an active part in the urban church. Several other migrants are employed in administrative and office work. With the Jehovah's Witnesses, one migrant works full-time, a number of others devote a great deal of their spare time to church work.

Churches in town constitute one venue through which people from the same places on Malaita keep in touch with each other. This is particularly noticeable for members of the ESEC, less so for the Jehovah's Witnesses. It means that people from the same villages and local areas, form distinct sub-groups within the church organization.
Beyond this, each church forms a wider community within which members develop other friendly ties, and more extended interaction takes place. Outside the work-place, churches are one of the main institutions within which the To'amba'itai become involved in inter-ethnic social relations. Those who are actively involved in church life, regard the friends that they have made under these circumstances as amongst their closest social ties. For members of the SSEC these wider contacts often begin before they come to town - being fostered by conferences on Malaita, attendance at SSEC schools and Bible Training centres.

Originally introduced from outside, churches in the Solomon Islands still show the influence of their parent bodies. To a large extent they are transplants of metropolitan models, some of them being branches of larger international organizations (e.g. Jehovah's Witnesses), others still maintaining their earlier connections. Even though it is an independent church, the SSEC is still linked to an overseeing body that is based in Australia and still retains the original mission title - the South Seas Evangelical Mission. Through this link the church in the Solomons continues to accept assistance and advice from expatriate visitors and missionaries. In consequence, Europeans still play a role in the urban church. In 1974 it had a New Zealand Pastor and other expatriate staff.

Except for employment, the church constitutes one of the main institutions through which the To'amba'itai have come into close inter-personal contact with Europeans. For
some migrants their Australian and New Zealand friends have been a major influence on their careers and their success in wage employment. This is the case with Kwao'abu, one of the most successful To'ambaitya migrants in town, briefly referred to in Chapters 7 and 8. Early in his career as a carpenter he made friends with a New Zealand foreman whom he met through the church. Important decisions which Kwao'abu made subsequently - such as building his own house in town, and going into business on his own - were due to influence and advice of this expatriate friend. In recent years Kwao'abu has made trips to Australia and New Zealand through church connections, further enhancing his prestige amongst To'ambaitya migrants, and the town's population generally.

Even though they haven't had the same success, this kind of influence can be repeated for several other migrants.

Leni finished Standard Seven primary school in 1965 when he took up a carpentry and joinery course at the British Solomons Training College. There he made friends with one of the instructors, a man from New Zealand, and a strong member of the SSEC. Leni believes that he would not have got through Training College without the help and encouragement of his friend. Soon after finishing the course, this friend offered to take him to New Zealand for further training and experience. Leni took this up. When he returned to Honiara he was in line for an instructor's job at the Honiara Technical Institute. He wasn't in this job long before he succeeded in getting the position of Building Inspector for the Solomon Islands Housing Authority. Each of his promotions benefited from recommendations made by his New Zealand friend. Soon after joining the Housing Authority, Leni took further advice and bought his own house through the Authority.
The kind of influence being shown here goes much further than this. Expatriate friends are encouraging long-term commitment to employment and to living in town. They are also providing models of living in keeping with standards and conventions found amongst middle-class, suburban Australians and New Zealanders, continuing a process which was begun with the introduction of missions at the beginning of this century. The only difference now is that for people who are inclined to take up European models of living it is now much easier to do this in town, with a regular income and with all the usual urban facilities, than it is in the village. Notions of respectable living transplanted during the earliest days of the mission, adapted and reinforced by subsequent missionary contact, are a major influence on upwardly mobile workers in town.

I spoke above of the church as a larger community transcending local group ties. For those who choose to be active in it, it is a very close community. This follows from the kind of bonds which members have with each other. Kwao'abu's closest friends are all members of the SSEC. Some are men he went to school with, others that he has met since he started working in town. They include men from other parts of Malaita, Australians and New Zealanders. Amongst his Solomon Island friends in the church are a number who are having the same kind of success as he is in town. For these upwardly mobile members, the church encourages the expression of socio-economic success in town. There is much emphasis on being well dressed, on living in European style houses, on adopting a European
standard of living.

Taken in conjunction with the kind of importance that is given to compliance with church teachings, the concern with respectability shown by active church members shows a strong tendency towards exclusiveness and elitist behaviour. One example of this is provided by Kwao'abu and four of his closest friends. They are all higher income workers who own or rent family housing in town. They have formed themselves into a group they call Evangelical Outreach. They meet regularly, taking it in turns to gather at each of their houses, have supper together, sing and pray, and discuss ways in which they might help the work of the church. Through this group they all make substantial financial contributions to the church. The avowed purpose of this group is evangelical. At the same time though, it can be seen that these men are affirming their common interests and ambitions as upwardly mobile town residents.

Another example provides a contrast with Soseafau's nati that I described earlier on. During 1974, a prominent member of the church held an engagement party for his daughter at his house in town. The girl was engaged to an 'Are'are man she had met through the church. The party was restricted to a few close friends of the girl's parents, all of them active and prominent church members. Many people from the same village that they come from were excluded, many of their relations were not invited, including closely related members of the same descent group. Described as fale bute'e do 'giving a parcel', if an
engagement party were held on Malaita it would not be restricted to invited people but would be open to all close kin, especially closely related members of the same descent group. When they heard about this party, other To'amboita town dwellers described it as being unacceptably restrictive, a departure from proper To'amboita *kastom*. It was said that the girl's parents had taken the *kastom* of white people, and in doing so set themselves apart from others. This was the new way of prosperous migrants (*to'a inoto ki*) in town. Unlike the *pati* that was described earlier, prosperity in this case is not being shared amongst relatives and people from the same area, it is being used more exclusively.

Up until 1975 there were no other voluntary associations in town that drew the same degree of interest and commitment amongst To'amboita migrants as urban churches. In 1974-75 two new workers' associations were formed in town; one, the Solomon Island General Workers' Union formed mainly amongst workers in private industry; the other, the Government Non-Established Workers' Union, formed by FWD employees. In both cases, To'amboita workers showed strong interest in these unions. Such an interest is not new. When the first trade unions were formed amongst Solomon Island workers in the early 1960s, a large number of To'amboita workers joined them as well. Their main incentive then was to get higher wages, but the unions they joined were not successful and did not remain active beyond 1965. Higher wages are still a strong incentive for union interest now but there is also more appreciation
of other advantages relating to conditions of employment generally.

One difference between the early 1960s and 1974-75 is the level of differentiation amongst Solomon Islanders in the work-force. In the early 1960s, differentiation was still at a very low level, with few Solomon Islanders in higher level occupations. In 1974-75 this is no longer the case. Large numbers of Solomon Islanders have moved into higher level positions in the work-force.

The organization that comes closest to representing the interests of higher level workers is the Civil Servants' Association. It is a body which has fluctuated in strength and importance ever since it was formed in 1954. It is only since 1969 that it has come to be largely controlled by Solomon Island Civil Servants and to be used for furthering their interests. Going on the attitude of those Civil Servants whom I met during my fieldwork, it is not an organization which gets much support from To'ambaita Civil Servants. They are not so committed to their jobs and to their relations with other Civil Servants that they want to support this association.

Overall then, by the end of 1975, To'ambaita interest in workers' associations was much stronger amongst lower income workers than it was amongst those at higher levels of the work-force. At this stage it is still too early to say whether workers' associations will become the basis for increasing differentiation amongst To'ambaita workers. Going on present circumstances it would seem doubtful.
In either case, support for workers' associations is not being given in preference to other social ties. It cannot be taken as a sign of greater commitment to employment or living in town. It is action which they might just as easily have taken (and did take) in earlier periods, given effective leadership and organization.

In view of the limited significance which workers' associations have played so far, and in view of the limited significance of all other urban associations for the To'ambaits, there is a need to consider the importance of churches more closely. What I would like to argue here is that because of the part which churches play in To'ambaits' settlements on Malaita, To'ambaits' involvement in church activity in town, however total or partial this is, may be seen as one form of rural-oriented strategy amongst town dwellers. In terms of social relations this is fairly straightforward. Churches in town bring together people from the same villages on Malaita and help them to maintain their ties with each other. Besides this, as much as they impose the same regulations on behaviour and uphold the same values, urban churches represent institutions that are upholding what are now seen as rural values and rural forms of behaviour. Taking this into account shows why there is not the same support for churches in town as on Malaita. Their stringent attitude towards smoking, drinking, gambling and dancing, cuts across some of the main interests of young men, things which contribute to their enjoyment of town. This is why many young migrants are indifferent to church membership, just as they are
indifferent towards adult values generally.

The church is an institution which not only encourages success in town but is also believed to help contribute to that success. This is shown by the experience of Basi'oli in 1974. In late 1974, the taxi business ran into trouble. Earnings were lower than usual and repairs were becoming increasingly expensive. Basi'oli was reflective. He decided he would have to be a better Christian, a more active member of the SSEC church. His reasoning followed from observation of Kwao'abu and other successful businessmen. Some of the most successful men in town attribute their success to the lives they lead as members of the SSEC. They regularly attend church services, refuse to work on Sundays, pay a tithe to church funds, and avoid smoking, drinking, and gambling. Until late 1974, Basi'oli was inconsistent. Some months he paid a tithe, other months he didn't. He did not always go to church and wasn't worried about working on Sundays. Reflecting on the trouble that they were in with the taxi, he decided that he would become a Christian businessman like the others and fall in line with church teachings.

The role being played by the church in town, and the importance being given to it, fits in with the pattern of development on Malaita. Because socio-economic success in town has become closely linked with success on Malaita, a process is in operation that is continuing to reinforce the importance being given to the church, and to status within the church. Today it is members of the oldest
Christian families who have achieved greatest success in town. This follows from early mission training in these families and their early involvement in post-war education. It is the same families who are already in the forefront of developments on Malaita; they were the first to move to the coast and establish holdings of coconuts and cocoa; they are now amongst the largest and most successful cash crop producers on Malaita. In the emergence of socio-economic differences, rural and urban dwellers form part of a continuous field of relationships (Swartz, 1963; Garbett and Kapferer, 1970). Within that field the church has become a central institution, helping to link rural and urban dwellers, but at the same time encouraging the progressive achievements that they are making in the cash economy.
Chapter Eleven

CONCLUSION

You go to the whiteman's land,
Go after those men with long noses,
Desert me and go.
Go after the shilling in his basket,
Where lights shine all around,
Windows flash,
Bridges rumble with cars,
The wharf shakes with ships,
Roads cross all about,
Trucks pass without rest.

(Girl to her lover—To'ambaita song)

Movement to Honiara and the changes associated with it are part of a long historical process which began when people were first taken to Queensland in the last century. For most of this time the To'ambaita have been taking on wage employment by travelling to places beyond Malaita where capitalist enterprise has been located. Up until recently few migrants ever regarded wage employment as a means to separate permanently from home. Some severed ties with Malaita for social reasons, married and resettled in other places. The majority of people only went away temporarily, returning home after short absences from Malaita.

Labour migration became part of To'ambaita life in such a way that it was an experience very largely confined to a particular period in the life of men, the period of adolescence and early adulthood. Even within this period the experience was circumscribed further, limited to fixed periods of time according to whatever opportunities became
available through the recruiting that took place on Malaita.

For most people this experience and the achievements that came from it, had their greatest relevance on Malaita itself, in the home places of the people concerned. By going away, young men enhanced their reputations and their status at home; by earning money on their own account they made an important contribution to their families' incomes and exchanged relations with a wide circle of kinsmen (Hogbin, 1939: 168-169). As much as movement became an accepted part of life on Malaita it was also very largely subordinate to that life, serving interests and concerns which were, for the most part, centred on Malaita. Except for a small minority, travel was not used as a way of abandoning communities or replacing the life represented in them. It was only a means of achieving things that otherwise could not be achieved by staying on Malaita.

This is still the case today, except that the structure of opportunities available through migration has changed and expanded. During the last ten to fifteen years the kind of jobs available and the conditions of employment have changed dramatically. The biggest influence on this has been the growth of Honiara. In taking wage employment today, there is the added attraction of living in a rapidly-growing urban centre. While for some people - those who make occasional trips of short duration - travel is still only an adjunct to their life on Malaita, there are others for whom it is much more than this. These people have turned their absences from home into an
extended alternative existence, chosen and pursued in preference to living on Malaita.

Or at least, this is how it appears. The distinction being made here is a very fine one. It is not always easy to say in the case of particular individuals living in town (or other places outside Malaita) whether they are only temporarily absent from Malaita or whether they are committed urban residents living out an alternative life, separate and distinct from life on Malaita. One of the difficulties here is that prolonged absence from Malaita is, for many people, the unintended consequence of cumulative, day-day decisions affecting where they live and how they support themselves. Few people leave home with the clear intention of staying away for a long time; large numbers leave home with their future intentions completely open and undecided. This is very much the case with young men. Whereas in the past, when men recruited for employment, most travelled for fixed periods of time; today, travelling without the assistance of external agents, under their own initiative, the period of absence tends to be left open.

What begins with a measure of uncertainty also continues with uncertainty as well. Long after migrants have left home, found employment and become experienced urban residents, they remain non-committal about remaining. Except for short-term visitors, most migrants avoid being decisive about their future movements and future intentions. A few will say that they have no intention of returning
home at all. These are people who either have no close relatives living on Malaita, or people who have relatives but have broken with them. Except for these cases (and they are only a minority), most migrants say that they intend to return home; most are also unwilling or unable to say when this might occur. The option of returning to Malaita is recognized, given a great deal of importance, and always, as far as possible, kept open.

One of the things which I have tried to show in this study is that at the time of life when migration most commonly takes place, during adolescence and early adulthood, there is little incentive to stay in home communities and settle on Malaita. Compared with married men, young men have few responsibilities and commitments, and they have a lot of freedom and independence. There is not the same interest in starting garden production or building up agricultural resources. That is something demanded by the responsibilities of a family, and can be put off until then.

The record of migratory behaviour so far shows that the question of remaining in town and living away from Malaita on a long term basis, is contingent on a number of factors. One of the most important is being able to find work and earn money. By the late 1960s and early 1970s, there was an over-supply of labour in town and unemployment was on the increase. Not everyone who goes to town seeking work is certain of getting a job. People who leave one job cannot be certain of getting another when they want it. As I have shown, people without work are able to find places to sleep and eat, activating ties
with kin and friends in town and other migrant destinations. Constant mobility has become a feature of the life of young migrants, made possible by the large number of To'ambaita living away from Malaita and the practice of using kin ties for meeting immediate needs. Some young men maintain this life-style for long periods of time. At a certain point though, unless they settle into a regular job, returning home becomes the best option and this is what they do. It was noticeable that during 1974 none of the To'ambaita migrants in town who couldn't find work stayed on in town for more than six months. Most of those who failed to find a job returned home well before this.

For those in employment, much depends on the nature of their work and the positions they occupy as to how long they stay in work. To'ambaita experience shows that migrants are unwilling to stay in the same job for a long period on a low level of pay. Amongst those men who have been in the same job for two years or more, sixty per cent are earning more than $40 a month, 88 per cent more than $30 a month. In 1974 the average urban wage was estimated at $25 a month (Wages Advisory Board, 1974:9), indicating a high level of success amongst those in regular employment. While they go on being successful, it is likely that many To'ambaita migrants will commit themselves to continuing residence in town, especially when they qualify for family housing and the other privileges that have become available to high income workers. For those who have not had much success, continuing to earn around or below the average urban wage, there is
much more reason to leave employment and return home. The decision is critical at the time of marriage, and this is when many town residents decide to return and settle on Malaita.

It can be seen from this that long term commitment to wage employment and living in town, depends a great deal on what people get out of it and the extent to which they feel constrained and exploited by it. There is another side to this which cannot be ignored and that is the advantage of having a regular cash income. Regardless of whether they need the money, most people who go away and take employment make themselves better off financially than if they stay at home. They are also able to improve their standard of living. In housing, in diet, and in general appearance, 'living by money' in town can be easier and more pleasant than living at home. Here the concept of faalu meaning 'clean or new' is important. Life in employment removes the need for working in gardens, for building and maintaining houses, for carrying water, for washing in streams, for eating a monotonous diet, for cooking on an open fire, for wearing old clothes. People who live in town are said to grow faster, look cleaner, wear better clothes, and to generally have a much better and healthier appearance than people who live at home on Malaita.

It would be a mistake to suggest that To'ambaita views about town are totally consistent. Not everyone in town is better off than at home. Many people eat poorly,
disregard a proper diet, live in what are seen as very uncomfortable dwellings and have very dirty and unhealthy jobs. The expense of living in town is a constant complaint and the idea of living by money, still considered much less satisfactory than living by garden production at home. The standard of living that employment in town makes possible is not available to all, and until it is more readily available, it will only have a limited influence on the decision to stay in town.

To'ambaita migration forms part of their increasing involvement in the cash economy. In the life that they now lead, and the standard of living to which they aspire, there is considerable stress on material gain and constantly increasing income. They depend on cash for basic needs and have a strong interest in obtaining more secure and more reliable cash incomes. In the last fifteen years, while there has been increasing success in employment, there has also been economic growth on Malaita through the diversification of agriculture and involvement in a range of small business activities. While wage employment as a means of earning money is very attractive at certain points during a person's lifetime, and can continue to be attractive for a considerable length of time depending on how much success people have, it is not the only way of earning money. Neither is it an option that the To'ambaita take to the exclusion of all else. We have seen that, as in the past, even now the To'ambaita generally regard migratory employment as an option to take for limited periods only, and not for the whole of their
One of the consequences of economic growth on Malaita and upward mobility amongst those in wage employment, is increasing socio-economic differentiation throughout the places in which the To'ambaita are now living. Differentiation is such that the same families are having success on Malaita as in employment. As much as the To'ambaita are involved in a continuous field of relationships between Malaita and town, there is stratification throughout this field, continuous between both locations. Historically, this began on Malaita at the turn of the century with the establishment of Christian settlements on the coast and the separation of Christians and pagans. It was then that the transformation from subsistence producers to peasant farmers began and, with that transformation, emergent stratification based on differential involvement in agricultural production. This has now reached the stage where there are large differences between families in the extent of resources which they control and the level of production that they have achieved.

I stress the idea of family success rather than individual success. Even though descent groups and descent-based groupings have diminished in importance amongst Christians and much cash crop production is organized and controlled by family households, there is still some degree of cohesiveness and co-operation amongst wider groups of kin, particularly groups that form lower-level segments of descent groups, such as sets of brothers and
cousins and their families. The co-operation that takes place within these groupings spans rural and urban dwellers, and is a contribution to continuing success in both places. It includes assistance with school fees (increasing the chances of further involvement in skilled and professional employment), making contributions to marriage expenses, finding or providing employment (on Malaita and in town), providing capital for agricultural development and business projects and assisting each other in many other ways when this is required. Through the sharing and co-operation that takes place within these groupings, there is some redistribution of resources within them. This process is much more extensive than this, if we also take into account the assistance that is given through other personal network ties. This sharing of resources helps to minimize the effect of income differences amongst the people involved, throughout the places in which they are living. It is the case though, that there are major differences in the level of success achieved by these wider family groupings, and that inequality at this level is becoming more pronounced. We can see this in a comparison between Basi'oli and Sisifiu. Amongst his immediate kin, Basi'oli is one amongst a number of high income workers - Civil Servants, skilled tradesmen, managerial staff. Basi'oli and his kin are now furthering their success, investing their money in further income-producing businesses and agricultural projects. Sisifiu, on the other hand, is a member of a kin group that so far has had very limited success in employment and on Malaita.
The tendency for elite workers to interact with each other and develop ties based on common socio-economic status in preference to ethnic ties, as observed in other studies of town dwellers (Jacobson, 1973), is not very pronounced amongst the To'ambaita. The only context in which I observed this was in the context of church activity. Many high-income workers are active in town churches. It is through these associations that they find a model for living, appropriate to the level of success that they have achieved. It is also through these associations that they find friends who have reached similar levels of success in town. Again, it is significant that churches are an institution that spans village and town. While they provide a venue for inter-ethnic interaction, they also help to reinforce ethnic ties within sectarian boundaries. Why they, amongst all other voluntary associations in town should attract upwardly mobile town-dwellers might be explained in terms of the history of church activity amongst the To'ambaita and the fact that the present generation of successful town workers come from families that have played a leading part in the growth of church communities on Malaita. We must also take into account the degree of integration, at the local-group level, between rural and urban society. Higher-income workers continue to be part of local groups on Malaita. They still recognize rural ties, visit Malaita occasionally, and make investments there with a view to eventually returning home. Making themselves active in urban churches they affirm their commitment to rural relations and rural values.
What has been shown in this thesis is that economic differences correspond very closely with age differences and that some of the contrasting styles that are found amongst town dwellers and differences in attitude and outlook are perceived in these terms. Young bachelors have evolved a life of their own, an adolescent sub-culture not completely specific to urban living, but achieving its fullest expression in that environment. Peer group relations are paramount. They form the basis for the closest friendships and most important transactional ties. They manifest themselves in domestic arrangements amongst bachelors and in the organization of most spare-time activity. What is most distinctive about bachelor life is the emphasis on mobility, as shown by the time spent in leisure activity and the importance given to it. Since men began leaving home without the assistance of external agents, and since they started living in town, a lot of movement has evolved into a form of itinerancy with much less of a commitment to regular employment. Mobility is the key to pursuing interests and meeting needs, the achievement of which is never certain, always problematic. This ranges from getting employment itself, obtaining food and shelter, and enjoying some of the many different pleasures offering in town. Money is the means to surviving in town and to doing many of the things bachelors enjoy doing. Incomes are low and sometimes uncertain, something which has some bearing on the nature of their relations with each other. In exchanges with others, short-term negative reciprocity is common; nonetheless, the greater stress is on relations...
marked by mutual inter-dependence, with obligations being situationally defined.

One thing that makes their life distinctive is the way in which bachelors spend their money. A large proportion of their earnings goes into town living, into maintaining an urban style of life. In this respect the economic rationale of migration has been transformed, a transformation that often draws comment from people at home.

Young men (daraa) go to town with many things on their mind. Older men, married men (jlawane) are different, they only think of one thing. Married men thing of wealth and riches in town, earning money, learning business, picking up what they can. Young men, on the other hand, live for dances, movies, dice, drinking, screwing. This is what fills their minds all the time. They are not interested in having something to show for their work, anything good. They are only there to have a good time.

This depiction of the contrasting motives behind urban migration of bachelors and older men was given to me by a strong Christian from Manskwai and is undoubtedly overdrawn. Not everyone sees motivation in such simple terms. What can be said though is that young people prefer to spend their money on things in town, and to share with each other in doing so. This reduces the chances of having something to show for their work, but it is a dilemma which they would rather not worry about. At least, not until they make a visit home.

The contrast between kala wane (young men) and older more experienced migrants, is not one in which there is a total difference in their ideas about town living and in
life that they lead. It is more a difference in emphasis. The main contrast is with married men. Here peer group relations give way to family responsibilities. There is less time spent wandering around town, more concern with gardens and with meeting various household requirements. Married men are more settled and more responsible in their relations with others.

People of different ages continue to maintain ties with each other through encounters in public places and through the visiting that takes place between houses and quarters throughout town. They do not form totally separate groupings. The relationship between them tends to be asymmetrical however, with much more being given and offered by older men than they receive in turn. With their greater experience, better incomes, and more secure control over quarters, older and more settled residents are able to provide all sorts of help and assistance to younger (and newer) migrants. They accept the obligation to assist younger kin and thereby accept the use of their resources for maintaining and promoting close ties between home people.

It is apparent though, in considering age differences, that amongst the To'ambaita in town there is not one set of values and one urban life style common to all people living there. Depending on age, length of experience, occupational success and marital status, there are variants of urban living. The interpretation which I have put on these here emphasises continuity between To'ambaita values and behaviour on Malaita and To'ambaita values and behaviour
in town. At this point it will be useful to compare this with some of the other studies that have been done on rural-urban migration in Melanesia.

Many of these studies deal with single ethnic groups and span the multiple locations in which people from these groups are living (Oram, 1967, 1968a, 1968b; Ryan, 1968, 1970; Baxter, 1972; Salisbury and Salisbury, 1972; Strathern, 1975). One of the central issues addressed by these studies is the nature of change taking place amongst migrants living in town. Some migrant groups such as the Toaripi and the Hula have been migrating to Port Moresby in relatively large numbers for long periods of time. They have established their own settlements in Port Moresby where they organize themselves and conduct relations with each other very much along the same lines as they do in their places of origin. Besides this, they continue to maintain close relations with people in rural areas and there is a lot of interaction between them. Rural people are always visiting town; town dwellers show less inclination to go the other way (Toaripi), but still take a close interest in rural affairs. Ryan (1970) describes the spatially separated Toaripi communities as forming a single social system. One point which would appear to have some bearing on the strength of Toaripi ties in town is their limited success in the urban work-force. There are a large number of unemployed (20 per cent, 1964-65) and the rest are only in unskilled and semi-skilled occupations.
A similar situation exists with the Orokaiva (Baxter, 1972), even though they are much more dispersed than the Toaripi and have not formed stable settlements in the towns in which they are living. Amongst the Orokaiva, rural and urban dwellers are equally well off economically, and have had similar acculturative experiences. Migration has always been a primary source of innovation and new experiences and is just as much an established tradition as it is with the To'ambaita. Drawing parallels with the Toaripi, Baxter sees Orokaiva migration and urban living as integral with village life. He emphasises the complementarity of village and town (quoted by Strathern, 1975:398). Town has become an essential part of the Orokaiva world, providing advantages and benefits that do not exist in the rural situation. Orokaiva people do not jeopardize their ties with each other by seeking work in town; they not only maintain close ties but in some cases, enhance their position and status through migration.

There are close similarities between the Orokaiva situation and what is taking place amongst the To'ambaita. As I have shown in this study, To'ambaita movement has become an accepted tradition, continuing over three to four generations, being accepted in local communities as a way of making achievements otherwise not possible through staying at home. Town is part of the To'ambaita world, made more so by the kind of visiting that is taking place, and the things which people in either location are able to do for each other. There would seem to be much greater economic disparities between rural and urban
dwellers amongst the To'ambaita. The proportion of unemployed is similar, but amongst the employed, To'ambaita migrants show a much greater range of achievement and upward mobility. As I have shown though, this has not led to any significant weakening in ties between To'ambaita migrants, or any weakening in ties between town dwellers and people at home.

In another study of rural-urban migration in Papua New Guinea, Strathern (1975) provides a slightly different picture from that presented by the Toaripi and Orokaiva. Hagen migrants living in Port Moresby see themselves as part of a different social world from home, no longer governed by the same values or guided by the same expectations and aspirations held by home people. There is so much of a divergence between urban Hagen society and rural society that Strathern describes the former as an alternative system (1975:418). Hageners are relatively new migrants in Port Moresby. They have much less experience than others and are less well established. They are also a relatively youthful migrant group. As Strathern points out, their alternative life in town must also be looked at in terms of differences in age between town migrants and people at home.

The main contrast with the To'ambaita is in the effect of acculturative influences on rural society, and in the different attitudes towards migration. Hagen people are dubious about the benefits of migration and have not yet come to accept it as a necessary part of their life.
This is where the divergence with town living begins. It is carried through in what happens to Hagen migrants as they become more involved in urban-based relationships. Earning money in town makes it possible to fulfil some of the expectations that rural people hold about migration. Living in town though, makes demands on migrant incomes which mean that they use money in different ways from people at home. They are drawn into urban-based relationships with interests and concerns that make them part of a separate, urban-based system of exchange and obligation.

I have shown in this study that this is also something that happens to young To'ambaita migrants. They too pursue strategies and adopt attitudes which set them apart from rural society, and make them part of an alternative system; even so, I would rather stress the continuity between rural and urban society and see rural and urban dwellers in much more of a complementary relationship with each other. One thing that lends support to this interpretation is the extent to which migration has been and continues to be a major source of new ideas, special skills and capital for projects on Malaita. As with the Orokaiva, migration provides many benefits and advantages for rural To'ambaita, with the kind of aspirations that they now have.

Honiara has come to play an important part in To'ambaita life. More than eight per cent of them now live there and a much larger number than this visit town
throughout the year. There is constant movement between Malaita and town. So far though, this movement is running strongly in both directions; suggesting that whatever the To'ambaita are getting from Honiara, they are still taking it selectively, without abandoning Malaita totally.

Underlying To'ambaita ideas on town and the position that they find themselves in at this time, there is a basic dilemma. In becoming Christians and putting themselves under the authority of the British Administration, the To'ambaita gave acceptance to European influences on their lives and on their standard of living. In the kind of living that they took up and in the expectations they developed, they slowly increased their material needs. There was increasing demand for clothes, bedding, cooking and eating utensils, household furniture, luxury items of one kind or another, tools and many other items. The list expanded as more and more of these imported goods were encountered and as the possibility of obtaining these goods improved. Some still remained discretionary rather than necessary, but it is in the nature of people's aspirations now, to continually increase the number and range of things upon which they depend. For people living on Malaita, town is a very attractive place for obtaining what they need and achieving the standard of living to which they aspire. Their commitment to a way of life strongly influenced by Europeans and European institutions has brought them to the threshold of making a choice between still living on Malaita, or living permanently in town. As it turns out, not everyone has the same choice,
and for many people the outcome is predetermined by the limited opportunities that are open to them in town, and the fact that they are in a poor position to take advantage of these opportunities. At the same time there are enough opportunities to attract a large and increasing number of people to town. In the circumstances it is likely that ideas about town will change and it will become accepted as a place for long-term, even permanent residence.
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