THE POLITICS OF TRADITION IN BALUAN
SOCIAL CHANGE AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE PAST
IN A MANUS SOCIETY

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This thesis is the original work of the author except where otherwise acknowledged.

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To Pia and Eva
In this thesis I explore the recent historical development of Baluan culture. I begin by arguing that the sphere of cultural phenomena must not be regarded as a coherent unity. Instead, several domains of loosely interrelated institutions and idioms may be distinguished. Although the domains – as fields of meaning – are defined in contrast to each other, there exists no necessary logical or functional relation between them. The particular configuration of cultural domains is the result of a society’s specific history, in which non-cultural factors play a major role.

The three dominant cultural domains of contemporary Baluan society are *gavman* (institutions and concepts pertaining to Western type government, education and development), *lotu* (institutions and symbols of the Christian churches) and *kastam* (cultural entities which are regarded as belonging to tradition). These domains are evident in the cultural practice of Baluan people as well as in their discourse. Baluan Islanders refer to them as different ‘ways of doing things’.

In the thesis I am concerned with the genesis of these three cultural domains in the colonial history of Baluan Island. My focus is on *kastam* which was first developed as a negative category through the comparison of Western and indigenous cultures. Since the 1960s a remarkable revaluation of tradition has taken place. Throughout the thesis I endeavour to link cultural changes to other developments of a political, economic and demographic nature. In addition, I pay attention to the way in which individuals contributed to the social and cultural changes through their conceptual and practical innovations.

An important source for my reconstruction of the Baluan past is the oral tradition maintained by the islanders. I try to convey some of the richness and diversity of this tradition, while at the same time investigating its relation to the three cultural domains discerned. In the conclusion I try to clarify the theoretical conceptions that have informed my analysis and presentation of data.
# CONTENTS

| ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS                           | xi |
| INTRODUCTION                              | 1 |
| **1. DOMAINS, DISCOURSE AND HISTORIES**    |    |
| Story of three brothers                   | 13 |
| Kastam, gavman and lotu                   | 13 |
| Practice, discourse and leadership        | 22 |
| History and histories                     | 30 |
| **2. HISTORIES OF LAPAN**                 |    |
| Titles and hierarchy                      | 47 |
| Mortuary feasts                           | 47 |
| Stories of leadership and warfare         | 51 |
| The power of lapans                       | 59 |
| **3. OVERTURE TO GAVMAN**                 |    |
| The precolonial situation                 | 77 |
| Early contacts                            | 78 |
| The establishment of a colonial state      | 82 |
| Manus accepts gavman                      | 87 |
| **4. THE ADVENT OF LOTU**                 |    |
| The arrival of the missions               | 105|
| Stories about the lotu                     | 105|
| The success of the missions               | 110|
| Lapan, gavman and lotu                    | 117|
| **5. TRADITION AND EMANCIPATION**         |    |
| The contract-labour experience            | 131|
| The objectification of tradition          | 131|
| The Paliau revolution                     | 143|
| Incorporation and consolidation           | 150|
| **6. THE STORY OF DEVELOPMENT**           |    |
| The state                                 | 183|
| Church and school                         | 184|
| The economy                               | 191|
| The present situation                     | 198|
| **7. THE FORCE OF KASTAM**                |    |
| Polpolot, or the renaissance of tradition | 223|
| Kastam reinforced                         | 224|
| Life, land and remittances                | 232|
| Kastam, bisnis and leadership             | 245|
| **8. THE POLITICS OF REPRESENTATION**     |    |
| The Long Story of God                     | 265|
| Makasol history                           | 265|
| Representations by villagers               | 269|
| Political emancipation and kastam         | 279|
| **CONCLUSION**                            | 295|
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MV Pam moored at the jetty of Lipan in Baluan. In the background is Lou Island.

Lain in Mouk village to discuss preparations for our farewell party.
Friday 7 March 1986, Lorengau, Manus. Pia – my wife – and I were told to be ready at sunrise as the skipper of MV Pam wanted to depart early. However, the better part of the morning was spent waiting for more cargo. At eleven the ship’s anchor was finally lifted and her moorings cast. We left Lorengau jetty in ideal circumstances: no wind or rain and a calm sea. After about half an hour we entered the narrow Loniu Passage bordered by mangroves and thick jungle. I had a conversation with Malai of Pam Island who told me that he had read ‘Dr Mead’s book’. He knew what anthropology was about. I contemplated how my own ideas about anthropological fieldwork had grown increasingly vague, the closer I had come to realising my project of many years. This annoyed me as I wanted to be able to explain properly what I had come to do. But how do you explain something you do not yet know yourself? Although other people on the boat had not read Margaret Mead’s work, they were familiar with anthropologists. What I told them suited their expectations sufficiently: I was going to study and describe people’s customs and history.

When we came out of Loniu passage, we had to sail through a small opening in the reef. Although there were some waves, the sea appeared peaceful: ‘Pacific’, I thought. In the far distance we saw two islands. The larger and closer one was Lou. To the right, and partly hidden behind Lou, we saw the vaguer contours of Baluan, the goal of our journey. The boat stopped at Lago on Lou to unload timber and then sailed on to Pam. I was told that the inhabitants of this island owned the ship as a collectivity. Because only a few passengers had to travel to Baluan, we changed to a speedboat. The sun had set when, at great speed, we approached the island, though we could still discern that the entire north coast was settled. When we climbed the jetty of Lipan village, it was already dark. Children carried some of our luggage and the provincial member of Balopa (a constituency comprising Baluan, Lou and Pam), Mr. Molat Aumbou, welcomed us. We were expected.

The next day we explored the island. Baluan, about five by four kilometres large, is the top of an extinct volcano. Its slopes rise to 230 metres above sea level
and then drop steeply, about 80 metres down to the overgrown bottom of the crater. Volcanic activity is evident from the hot water springs which emerge close to the shore and which are mostly covered by the tide. A reef surrounds the island and prevents high seas from battering its coast. The soil is dark and fertile but strewn with black basalt rocks. Many of these rocks have been used to build stone walls which surround gardens and former house sites. These walls can be found over the whole island, indicating intensive habitation over a long period. At present most of the 1000-odd residents live in six villages on the north coast (see map 2). There is a small settlement on the south coast and a number of families live in isolated places near the coast, up the hill and even on the rim of the crater. About a third of the Baluan people live elsewhere, mostly in towns. Pia and I were accommodated in a fibro and corrugated iron house in Lipan close to the school. It had been built in the late 1950s for a single government officer and was unoccupied on our arrival. It became our main residence for the next two years.

Monday 22 February 1988, Lipan, Baluan. We had been waiting for more than a week for the wind to ease. A large party to celebrate our farewell had been staged on Sunday 14th and we had planned to leave soon afterwards. My involvement in the organisation of the party had increased my awareness of the complexities of such an endeavour and had once again impressed on me the measure of social adroitness a local leader needed in order to be successful. The fierce wind reminded us of the isolation of an island community. The sea had not been ‘pacific’ for many months and had frequently made travel dangerous or even impossible. Yesterday, however, the skipper of the canoe which was going to take us to Lorengau indicated that we could give it a try. The same day we distributed our remaining furniture, clothes and other presents to our friends and acquaintances in Lipan. Distributions are important social occasions on Baluan and give status to the giver, if performed properly. That no one complained publicly was a happy indication that we had learned some lessons about appropriate gifts to different kinds of relations. When we left the Lipan jetty for the last time – with garlands of flowers around our necks and listening to a farewell song composed for us – I considered our good fortune to have ended this adventure in such a way. Soon, drenched by high waves, I was

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1 The prehistorian H. McEldowney has mapped a great number of these walls and will discuss them in her PhD which is in preparation.
forced to contemplate one of the ultimate risks of fieldwork. I imagined a rusty patrol box full of notebooks and tapes on the bottom of the ocean and fine carvings, presents from our friends, being washed onto distant shores. Would I do it all again? Then I was undecided, but now I know that I would.

This thesis is the result of multifarious journeys. In addition to the physical journey, of which I have described the beginning and the end, Pia and I had to travel across cultural boundaries. We had to make sense of unfamiliar actions and words, as Baluan people had to make sense of us. This was far from easy and moments of crisis were unavoidable. Nevertheless throughout our fieldwork I became more firmly convinced that all human beings share a common fond whatever the particular pattern of their cultural lace. This shared foundation of humanity is the very precondition of the discipline of cultural anthropology: without it cross-cultural communication would be logically impossible. In practice, I experienced this common humanity continually in everyday situations but especially in the warm friendships that developed over time despite our considerable cultural differences.

It seems to me that a fieldworker's personality is his or her prime research instrument. Although I would not go as far as Schwartz (1978:432) who practically equates culture and personality, I do not doubt that there is a very intimate relationship. Whenever I sensed that my spontaneous reaction to an event was considered by my hosts to be funny, inappropriate or unwise, I had learned something new. I do not need to argue that anthropology, or any social science, can never be objective. If some social scientists attempt to obscure this fact by hiding behind their 'objective' research techniques, anthropologists cannot do so because their personalities are central to the data they produce. Just as the shape of a crystal determines the way it refracts light, so does the anthropologist's personality in part determine his or her description of a culture. Equally important, of course, are academic conventions and fashions and the anthropologist's position within the academic discipline. But we should not underestimate the influence of personality.

2 He says for example: "A set of personalities constitutes the distributive locus of a culture. A personality is the individual's version and portion of his culture. A culture consists of all of the personalities of the individuals constituting a society or subsoiety, however bounded." Schwartz defines personality as 'the total set of experiential derivatives of an individual' (ibid:430). These include those unique to an individual and those 'held in common with various subsets of individuals'. The latter part of this definition refers to the structural aspect of personality. For the following discussion I understand personality to include the internalised aspects of an individual's gender, social and ethnic position.
As most anthropologists share a Western background, their cultural biases tend to converge, making communication between themselves relatively easy. However, the peoples described may have difficulties recognising their cultures in the depictions of anthropologists, because some parts will have been overemphasised and others neglected. Knowledge production works through contrast and an anthropologist's description may therefore work rather like a distorting mirror. The general shape of a culture will be recognisable to its members in such a mirror but may appear out of proportion to them. Of course a good anthropologist, through sensitivity in research practice, should be able to eliminate some of the kinks in the mirror to reflect more adequately the reality of the people studied. Only then has some truly valuable knowledge been gained as the mirror reflects back on the anthropologist's own culture.

With these caveats I offer the following study. If I describe some attitudes as belonging to Baluan cultural praxis (or habitus, a word coined by Bourdieu which I will frequently use to refer to basic dispositions), it may be inferred that I found them contrastive with my own. Baluan people may not necessarily select the same elements of contrast.

Though rarely mentioned in books on research methods, the establishment of trust is crucial to anthropological work. An anthropologist should avoid actions which might cast any shadow of doubt on his or her motives. A context of suspicion makes research very difficult if not impossible. It is therefore imperative that anthropologists accept the cultural rules of their hosts and try to understand their expectations. The establishment of trust involves all possible forms of communication, both verbal and non-verbal, but language is of course the most important of them.

On Baluan three languages are spoken: Baluan, Titan and Tok Pisin. The last is spoken by everyone, Titan is spoken by the inhabitants of Mouk and a few other individuals, and Baluan is spoken in the other villages and by a number of Mouk people. Outside the island, Baluan language is only spoken by the inhabitants of the Pam Islands (about 300 people) but Titan is the most widely distributed language in Manus with close to 4000 speakers.

I began my fieldwork by learning Tok Pisin in which I achieved fluency within a few months. Soon I began to study the Baluan vernacular and I sustained my effort throughout fieldwork. As a pattern of Tok Pisin use had been established, however,
it was difficult for me to get sufficient practice. This situation was aggravated by my long absences from the island. I needed to study the religious and political movement of Makasol in Lorengau and to do archival research there and elsewhere. Tok Pisin was the language of Makasol and of all public gatherings generally. With 30 different languages spoken in the province, Manusians were used to Tok Pisin as their main inter-cultural medium. As a result I never achieved any proficiency in Baluan language. In this regard my situation was similar to a number of other inhabitants of the island who had come from elsewhere by way of marriage or adoption. These people would respond in Tok Pisin to a question posed in the vernacular. I could conduct simple interviews in Baluan language but resorted to Tok Pisin for more complicated discussions. I regret this linguistic deficiency, but the scope of my research (as well as the lack of any linguistic training) prevented me from becoming more fluent.3

Apart from language study I made use of the conventional anthropological tool kit of village census, genealogical enquiry, participation in all kinds of public activities, and interviewing. These methods, if applied systematically, form a necessary complement to observation and are a safeguard against an unduly impressionistic anthropology. They help to rectify some curves of a too readily distorted anthropological mirror (though they may add some other kinks if used uncritically). Baluan people participated in such research efforts with good humour. They are a people with a keen interest in their own society. I could easily recognise an attitude Margaret Mead (1975[1956]:95) had observed in Pere almost six decades earlier: "For even then, the Manus had a touch of social engineering in their thinking". Baluan people liked to discuss aspects of their society with me and also wanted to have information about my own and other societies I knew. I developed great respect for the sociological awareness of many Baluan people and for the wisdom of some of their leaders.

My position was that of a chronicler of a kind. Baluan people thought it good that I was writing down what they were doing as well as their customs and history since no one else had the time or energy to do it. Initially I enjoyed the position of a detached observer. This was facilitated by our living situation, since the house we

3 An additional difficulty was the multilingual background of my wife and I. Together we spoke Dutch and sometimes German, whereas we were still struggling to write and speak good English.
hired officially belonged to the school (though the land it was built on was a matter of dispute). Slowly we began to take part in some of the ceremonial exchanges which were performed frequently. Initiated as a kind of playfulness on both sides, our participation soon demanded that we became socially defined in more precise Baluan terms. Thus we became incorporated into the Sauka clan. This certainly had advantages as it provided more of an insider's view of kin practice and ceremonial exchange. A disadvantage was that it generated some local envy. A more defined kinship position also implies restricted access to particular knowledge of other groups. This did not matter much at the time, because I had already shifted my attention to a study of the descent groups in other villages.

My trip to Baluan was not only a geographical and a cultural journey, it was also an excursion in time. By this I do not mean that Baluan people live in another time, although their attitudes towards time sometimes differed from mine. Far from constructing an implicit denial of coevalness (Fabian 1983), I simply mean that I am interested in the historical development of contemporary Baluan society. Although the description of atemporal cultural or social systems often has been a dominant practice in cultural anthropology (cf Thomas 1989a), I believe that narrowing our point of view in such a way is not justified. Societies are always in a state of flux and we therefore have to study process as well as structure. As an undergraduate student in history, I found that most historians I read lacked a systematic approach to the societies they studied. That motivated my decision to enrol also in cultural anthropology. However, I have never lost my interest in the particular, in the careful description of chains of events. This thesis may therefore be regarded as an exercise in both anthropology and history.

Again I was lucky in my choice of Baluan. Unlike some other Manus societies (Mead 1934:195, J. Carrier 1987a), Baluan people have a lively interest in history. In part this is the result of a revival of tradition since the 1960s, a process which I document in this thesis. Independent of this politically and economically motivated revaluation of tradition, however, Baluan Islanders have maintained a rich oral tradition. In the following chapters I examine some of the diversity of this historical heritage.

4 Of course this is an old point of debate. Some recent studies addressing this problem in relation to Polynesian and Melanesian ethnography are Thomas (1989a), A. Carrier (1987) and the collection edited by J. Carrier (n.d.).
Baluan stories about the past will be presented as histories in their own right which function within a particular island discourse. I will also critically use the information contained in them to make my own construction of the past. For this purpose I have collected stories in Baluan and other south-eastern islands. In addition, I spent several months doing archival research in mission stations and government archives (see bibliography). The result of these investigations is my version of the Baluan past. I do not intend to write 'The History of Baluan' for Baluan people. As I have mentioned, Baluan Islanders have a rich historical tradition and do not need an outsider to write their history for them. However, I do write for Baluan people because I know that they will be interested in my version of their past. There is no doubt that there will be disagreement about interpretations and even 'facts' according to good Baluan practice. But I offer my history as a possible interpretation from the vantage point of an outside observer who had the time to listen to many stories and to dig up sundry old documents in archives and libraries.

In addition to the three kinds of travel mentioned above – geographical, cultural and temporal – this thesis is also the account of a theoretical journey. During my graduate study in Nijmegen, thanks to the inspiring scholarship of my teachers Ton Lemaire and Jan Pouwer, I became strongly influenced by marxist and structuralist approaches. Research proposals written at that time bear witness to this dual theoretical orientation. However, when I had moved to The Australian National University and prepared myself for fieldwork in Manus I was struck by the following passage by Schwartz (1978:419-420):

When I was just out of graduate school I found myself doing field work among the Manus people of the Admiralty Islands of Melanesia. Armed with the notion that there is a culture to be discovered, I confronted my informants with the sorts of questions that had been handed down to me. To my confusion, I encountered such diversity of opinion that I asked myself, "Where is the culture?" Had I been misled by overly systematized ethnographies, on which I had been raised as a student? Or was it that the Manus somehow represented an abnormal situation? The conspicuous individuality of informants, their characteristic styles, their stubbornly individualized viewpoints, their lengthy discussions both in response to my questions and in terms of their own problems of action, their constant litigation of culture – were all these things the effects, perhaps, of acculturation?
Schwartz goes on to suggest that this diversity is not the result of colonial history: it is a characteristic feature of Manus culture, and, Schwartz postulates, of culture in general.

Before leaving for fieldwork I presented a seminar delineating my research problems. One of the issues I raised then was how to conceptualise the relationship between individual and culture. Apart from Schwartz's own distributive model of culture, which underrated the social dimension of cultural phenomena, I considered Berger & Luckmann (1967) and Bourdieu (1977), who advocate a Hegelian or dialectical approach to the problem (though starting from different premises). I do not pretend to have advanced the solution of this theoretical question in any way (and my thesis is not a treatise in social theory)\(^5\), but my debt to these authors will be apparent in the following descriptions and analyses.

In developing my thoughts about such theoretical questions I was guided and strongly encouraged by my supervisors at ANU, Roger Keesing and Michael Young, who were joined by Margaret Jolly after my return from the field. These scholars combine a grounding in thorough ethnographic study with high-level theoretical reflection on the nature of cultural phenomena and the place of individuals therein. Moreover, all three have a strong interest in history. This happy combination of empirical study and theoretical reflection has, more than anything else, determined the approach taken in this thesis.

Although I was alerted by reading Schwartz (and by research projects of my supervisors), it was not until I was in Saluan that I realised the full import of his remarks. Like him, I was confused by the enormous variety of opinions I encountered. Apparently, there was not a single issue about which easy consensus existed. Moreover, I sensed that Saluan people put great value on individuality and autonomy and that a creative reordering of their culture was almost everyday practice. This thesis, then, is an attempt to do justice to the creativity of individuals while at the same time examining the constraints and determinants of individual action.

Individuals do not 'invent' culture out of nothing. They manipulate existing patterns of meaning and may influence prevailing institutional arrangements. These cultural entities do not have a life of their own but are the result of human practice.

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\(^5\) See Otto (1990) for my present position concerning this fascinating problem.
As such, however, they are in some way structured, because only in that way can meaning be generated. This may be considered as my structuralist premise. In addition, I also assume that individual creativity in shaping culture is constrained and determined by factors of a different nature, which can be described as belonging to ecology, demography, economy and politics. This may be regarded as a modified marxist premise.

Far from suggesting that these three aspects of social practice — individual creativity, cultural patterns and political and material circumstances — can be easily distinguished, I endeavour to show how they are intricately intertwined. Their separation is only the result of our conceptual activity. The view of culture espoused here, therefore, is not that of a semi-autonomous system which can be studied in isolation (cf. Sahlins 1976). Rather, I believe that a more political and dynamic conception of cultural phenomena is appropriate such as the one formulated by Keesing (1990:57):

Such a view of the cultural (I avoid ‘culture’ deliberately here, to avoid reification as best I can) would take the production and reproduction of cultural forms as problematic: that is, it would examine the way symbolic production is linked to power and interest (in terms of class, hierarchy, gender, etc.) and would hence probe what I have elsewhere called the ‘political economy of knowledge’.

In this thesis I explore the political history of the contemporary cultural sphere in Baluan. Although I argue that this sphere cannot be considered as a unity or a functionally coherent totality, I detect a degree of structuredness in the cultural practice of Baluan individuals. I suggest that there are three main fields or domains of interrelated institutions and connected idioms. The interrelation of the institutions within a domain is loose and analogical rather than strict and well-defined. It is the result of the conceptual activity of individuals practising their culture and not of some abstract and unconscious functional design underlying the culture as a whole.

I will refer to the three semantic and institutional domains by the names used by Baluan people themselves. Gavman indicates the cluster of institutions pertaining to Western type government, education, and development. Lotu is the sphere of religious institutions and kastam refers to those cultural entities which are considered as belonging to Baluan tradition. Kastam therefore is ‘culture’ objectified, ‘tradition’ consciously named and performed. To trace the emergence of this domain
is the main task I set myself in this thesis. Thus I am concerned with the politics of culture generally and with the politics of tradition in particular. In order to situate the contemporary domain of *kastam*, I also have to investigate the genesis of the other domains in relation to which *kastam* receives its particular significance.

In the first chapter I introduce the main themes of the thesis and develop some of the concepts which I use in the following descriptions. The second chapter is mainly concerned with the precolonial past, when the contemporary cultural domains did not yet exist. By examining part of the present discourse belonging to the domain of *kastam*, in particular oral histories, I attempt to reconstruct leadership practices in the era before colonisation. The focus on leadership gives a vantage point from which to investigate the relation between individual action and cultural and other constraints. Changing leadership patterns is therefore a major sub-theme of the thesis.

In chapter 3 I explore the origin of the domain of *gavman* in the acceptance by Manus people of a colonial government. Missionary activities led to the creation of the domain of *lotu* which is the subject of chapter 4. The next chapter has a key role in the thesis. It investigates the beginnings of the objectification of tradition which precedes the establishment of the domain of *kastam*. The revolutionary Paliau Movement rejected the indigenous tradition as an impediment to progress, while reinforcing *gavman* and *lotu*. *Kastam* was permitted to exist only as a negated category. Chapters 3 to 5 thus deal with the origin of the three contemporary cultural domains and cover the colonial history of Baluan until about 1950. In all three chapters I investigate the relation between individual action, cultural change and political and economic circumstances. In addition, I look at the contemporary historical representations pertaining to the changes described.

In the last three chapters, which deal with Baluan's history from the 1950s to the present, I have separated these various aspects. Chapter 6 depicts the political, demographic and economic developments. These form the background against which I try to explain the cultural changes described in chapter 7, notably the revaluation of tradition and the establishment of a separate domain of *kastam*. In chapter 8 I look at the historical representations which concern these changes, especially the Paliau revolution and its aftermath. The conclusion reconsiders the
theoretical concepts introduced in the first and later chapters to make sense of the confusing social reality that is Baluan society past and present.

It is appropriate to warn the reader about what I do not describe, as I leave out much of the material which forms the traditional substance of anthropology theses. In vain the reader will look for an elaborate description of social structure, kin terminology or exchange systems. I only give minimal descriptions where I deem them necessary for the understanding my argument. The reason is simple. I intend to pursue the dynamics of contemporary Baluan cultural practice in a different place.
Chapter One

DOMAINS, DISCOURSE AND HISTORIES

This chapter begins with a story of some events in the lives of three brothers. The story, based on facts, serves to introduce the central argument of this thesis: Baluan cultural practice should not be conceived as constituting an undivided and coherent whole. Rather it is organised according to several clusters of concepts and institutions which can be regarded as somehow related to each other. Concepts and institutions from different clusters do not necessarily relate to each other and may even be contradictory. I argue that the way Baluan people talk about their society supports my thesis. Rather than referring to general cultural rules, they distinguish three main 'ways of doing things' – according to gavman (government), according to lotu (church) and according to kastam (tradition). After discussing some concepts to describe this perspective on cultural practice, I introduce the other important themes of the thesis: the politics of signification, the genesis of the contemporary configuration of cultural domains and the importance of oral histories, both as a source of information and as a discursive practice.

Story of three brothers

Meme, Ngi and Ngat are brothers.¹ They are all about fifty years old. Meme, who is the eldest as his name indicates², was little more than ten when their father died. Their mother remarried soon afterwards and her husband became a foster-father to

¹ To protect the identity of the people in this case study I have changed their names. The clan names used are also fictitious.

² The Baluan language has two series of 7 names indicating the order of birth: one for male children and one for female children. The male series is: Meme, Ngi, Ngat, Aiawai, Kuam, Yeip, Silip. The female series is: Alup, Asap, Ninou, Maiau, Ngason, Non, Sowai. Both series have an eight term 'Ngaipw'en', which means 'no name'.

the children. Ngi still uses the name of his foster-father, thereby claiming that he was adopted.\textsuperscript{3} The new father belonged to a different clan, but he was related to the clan of the boys through his mother. Thus, he was able to pass on some elementary information concerning their genealogy and clan history. However, his knowledge was necessarily more shallow than that of a core agnate and to the present day the brothers regret the early demise of their father. The emotional bereavement\textsuperscript{4} has long since been forgotten, but the loss of knowledge has not been compensated. Meme told me several times how difficult it is for him to regain badly needed information by combining bits and pieces from various sources.

Meme is the leader of Umtan Meme, a patrilineal descent group which consists only of himself, his two brothers, their children and their sons' children. The brothers have an older sister, who is also a lineage member, but her children are not. The leadership of the lineage is bestowed on Meme by the rule of primogeniture. After his death the eldest surviving brother will succeed him. In the next generation the sons of Meme will have seniority over the sons of the other brothers. The regular successor as lineage leader would be Meme's eldest son, even if he were younger than one of the sons of Ngi or Ngat. Painfully aware of his own problems resulting from his father's early death, Meme did not allow his son to go to high school. Instead he kept him at home to learn as much of tradition as possible. Meme's son is an eager student who has made a diagram of his genealogy and keeps a written account of all the exchanges that his group is involved in.

As the senior man of his lineage Meme has the right and the obligation to take precedence in exchanges which concern Umtan Meme. He is the first to speak on behalf of this lineage and the first to give or receive presents. If the transaction is the fulfilment of an obligation for one of his brothers' children, the true father will also speak, but only after Meme has opened the ceremony. Meme also leads in land matters. He has to represent his lineage at land disputes, although others may assist him in this task. Meme does not control the lineage's land as he cannot make

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\textsuperscript{3} Adoption gives rights to the property of a patrilineage, most importantly its land.

\textsuperscript{4} In 1928-29, investigating a culturally closely related group, Margaret Mead made the following observations: "The loneliest children in the village were the boys whose fathers were dead"(Mead 1975[1930]: 88); and: "These were the loneliest boys, the most unplaced. Their fathers died too late for their reabsorption into some other household"(ibid:31).
any major decision without prior consultation with his brothers. Rather his leadership is a matter of precedence and representation.

Umtan Meme is one of the three lineages of the clan Ponga. Meme claims that he is the lapan, that is the traditional leader, of this clan. His claim is, however, vehemently contested by Nola, a woman of the lineage Umtan Poruan. The previous lapan of Ponga was Nola's father's elder brother's son, who died in 1984. Nola is the only surviving lineage member of her generation and she will occupy the leadership of her descent group until her eldest son, who works in Madang, returns to the village. Her two deceased lineage brothers did not have male offspring. Nola denies that Meme has any right to call himself lapan, because the clan leadership traditionally belongs to her lineage. She points out that both her elder 'brother' and her father's elder brother were acknowledged lapans of Ponga. A lapan family has special names for things like its slit gongs (kil), its marriage beds (pat), its baskets (kun), its cowrie shells (naet), etc. Nola is the guardian of this information and she also has extensive knowledge of the names of gardens and land areas which belong to her clan. In her opinion the real point of Meme's claims to clan leadership is that he is trying to appropriate land which rightfully belongs to her lineage. She holds the view that the land has been divided in the past. Therefore, Meme cannot use the fact that she is a woman and the only survivor of her lineage to reclaim the land for his own line.

Meme uses several strategies to substantiate his claims. In the first place he stresses that Baluan custom does not allow a woman to be the leader of a clan. He does not contest that Nola's elder 'brother' was the previous lapan, but Nola's lineage lacks a successor in a direct male line, and therefore the lapan title has to be transferred to him. To strengthen his position he has recourse to genealogical reasoning (see figure 1). He asserts that both Nola and he are descendants from the same man. However, Nola originates from the younger son of this man. Meme thus belongs to the senior line, but two generations ago the lapan title was handed over to the junior lineage. The reason for this was that the representative of this group was a much better orator than Meme's ancestor, who was too quarrelsome and intemperate. Meme's genealogy goes back further than Nola's. In her version there is no known connection between the two lineages. Meme has not yet disclosed the
FIGURE 1: GENEALOGY OF CLAN PONGA
Meme's version
missing link in public. He says that he will save this for the land court, when the case is heard.5

The main argument for Meme's leadership is that he was given precedence during the pailou (mortuary exchange) for the previous lapan. A special ceremony (kup) was carried out which indicates the transfer of lapanship from one generation to the next. Meme's son has written a short account of this ceremony:6

When Meme commenced his work, he held the ropes connected with the two pigs for the kup of L.7 in his hands. Nola positioned herself behind him and P. and M.8 held his shoulder. Nola held the shoulder of Meme and the lapans gave him power.

Then Meme took responsibility for everything: family, land, narumpein9, all the dead, male and female children, big puron10, small puron, good and bad. The two houses were now joined under the leadership of Meme. Meme controlled all the work for both houses on Saturday [...] July 198[.].11

In addition to this account Meme's son has kept a record of the kind and the exact amount of gifts presented during the pailou and of the people who attended the ceremony. The list of names should help him to find witnesses, if these are required in a future court case.

A last argument used by Meme is put in the idiom of adoption. Nola's father had two elder brothers. The eldest, K., who was a lapan, did not have children and adopted the younger brother of Meme's father to stress the bond between the two lineages. The adopted son had only one daughter, Alup, who gave birth to three children before taking her own life. K. was succeeded as lapan by his younger brother N., who transferred the title to his only son L. and not to K.'s adopted son.

5 About a year after I had collected the first information on this case, Meme came up with an even more extended genealogy which attributed a female link to Nola's ancestry. The court case had still not been heard.

6 Translated by the author from the original Tok Pisin text.

7 L. is the deceased lapan for whom the ceremony is held.

8 P. is the leader of the third lineage of Ponga and M. is the lapan of a related clan.

9 Narumpein are the descendants of women of the lineage who married out.

10 Puron is the generic term for all kinds of exchanges.

11 I have omitted the exact date.
L. remained without offspring and adopted Alup's three children, when she died. Not much later he himself passed away. The three children went to Meme, who claims that he adopted them with the prior consent of L. According to Meme this has to be understood as the explicit approval by L. of the transfer of lapanship to the other – i.e. Meme's – lineage.

What we see so far is a contest for leadership in traditional terms. The means invoked are: ideologies of male leadership, patrilineal descent and seniority of the first born; knowledge of owned names, of land boundaries and of genealogical connections; practices of traditional ceremonies and of adoption. The arenas in which this struggle is publicly fought are both modern and traditional. In land disputes the genealogical and historical knowledge of the contestants is tested, but during ceremonial exchanges both performance and knowledge are assessed. A lapan has to prove himself by tirelessly carrying out the 'work' for his clan.

Meme has spent most of his life on Baluan. He was already 16 when the government introduced primary education to the island in 1951. After completing the three grades that were offered, he went to Rabaul to be trained as a carpenter. Subsequently he worked two years in the service of the Baluan Local Government Council and thus visited several places in Manus before permanently settling on Baluan. His younger brother Ngi followed a different career, the possibility of which had only just been opened to Manus people. As one of the brighter students of the Baluan Primary School he was given the opportunity to continue his education at the Lorengau Central School for one extra year. At that time new primary schools were being opened everywhere in Manus and an enormous shortage of trained teachers had developed. An Emergency Course Teacher Training was established in Lorengau and Ngi was among the first group to be instructed.

Immediately after finishing his one year training course Ngi started to teach, first under supervision at the Central School and soon afterwards independently, in various places in Manus. For two years he worked outside Manus, in Madang. He resigned and settled on Baluan in 1980, after 24 years of service. Soon he joined the local political scene and he became the secretary of the local branch of Makasol, a political movement which then opposed the introduction of a system of community

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12 Land courts are a specific articulation of the modern state and the sphere of traditon. I discuss this point in chapter 7.
government. When it became clear that Makasol was losing this battle, Ngi stood as a candidate in the 1984 community government elections. He convincingly defeated the sitting member of the Interim Community Government, who was an important traditional leader but less educated and involved in numerous land disputes.

The leaders of Makasol continued to oppose the Community Government. Ngi confessed that he was still a Makasol follower at heart and that he had joined the Community Government to ensure that it would adhere to ideals of the Local Government Council, which was the preferred governmental system of Makasol. According to Ngi there was no real difference between the two types of government as the '6 rules' of the Community Government emulated the '14 rules' of the Local Government Council.

Although no-one in the village openly opposed the new government system, many still had strong sentiments in favour of the Local Government Council and Makasol. An oft-heard reason was that Makasol heeded kastam, whereas the Community Government did not. Asked for further explanation, people would mostly refer to methods of conflict settlement. Community government members and their followers were alleged to resort only to village and higher courts in order to settle their disputes, but Makasol would prefer the traditional way, namely mediation by lapans. Prudently, Ngi paid rhetorical tribute to the latter point of view, but in practice he did not escape the stereotype many had of community government officials. In trying to enforce his authority Ngi often had recourse to threats of court cases, fines and imprisonment. This led to a serious conflict with one of his komiti, the Tok Pisin term for the elected officials who assist a community government member in organising the community work. This particular komiti, who was married to Ngi's elder sister, resigned and challenged Ngi in the next election. He was supported by the lapan who had been dethroned by Ngi in the previous election.

This conflict was fought within the political sphere though it concerned the way the government should follow or incorporate traditional practices. Ngi's superior rhetoric and political insight helped him to mobilise more support than his challengers. While he was able to capitalise on his education and knowledge of Western ways, he continued to profess his support for kastam. With a clear majority he was elected to a second term as community government member.
Ngï's zeal in exercising his authority brought him into collision with his elder brother and this was a conflict of a different kind. On the morning of a day which was reserved for community work, Ngï decided that the whole village should go to the various graveyards to cut the grass. Meme opposed this decision, arguing that it was hardly a pressing need and that the dead would not mind a little bit of grass above their heads. It was far more urgent to go to the bush and prepare new gardens, as it was the right time: the rain would soon come and make further cutting and burning impossible. Since his argument made perfect sense, he marched off with his family. Ngï, however, could not tolerate this challenge to his authority, even though it came from his elder brother, whom he had to respect and to follow in traditional matters. He summoned his brother to the village court and succeeded in having him sentenced to pay a small fine. In this instance not only two brothers but two different spheres of authority clashed. The arguments were cast in different idioms and there was no middle ground on which the conflict could be settled. Only by using his institutional power was Ngï able to score a small and doubtful (because widely disapproved) victory.

Ngat, the youngest, went to primary school on Baluan together with his two brothers. He was, however, not selected for further training and remained on the island. Except for a short period as a labourer in Lorengau on Manus Island, he has lived on Baluan ever since. He was a very active and ambitious man, who aspired to more status than he seemed predestined for on the basis of his junior birth and modest education. For five years he acted as a village komiti under the Local Government Council. This position often attracted hard working young men who lacked the background to become a lapian or a political leader of higher stature. While he was trying his luck in the political arena, Ngat became more and more involved in the organisational work of the Catholic Church. His moment of glory came when he was elected president of the Baluan Catholic parish. This position gave him ample opportunity to organise big feasts and to make speeches in public, which contributed to his rise in status.

Ngat's two elder brothers were also members of the Catholic Church. Meme was very dedicated and his son had firm plans to become a catechist. Ngï, however, had recently shown interest in the competing Church of the Seventh Day Adventists. Members of the latter, which had a strong missionary ethos, had been seen to visit
him regularly. The rumour spread that Ngi had written a letter to ask for the erection of a SDA Church building in his hamlet. This led to considerable friction within the lineage. Ngi denied the existence of the letter, but his occasional flirtations with the SDA continued. He said that as a Christian, one should be open to discuss the word of God with members of other denominations. Privately he told me that he did not care to which religion he belonged, but that his policy had been to adopt the one that was dominant in the place he lived in.

An open conflict developed between Ngi and Ngat in their respective capacities of community government member and church leader, because Ngi once again felt that his newly acquired authority as a community leader was threatened. Ngat's wife, Asap, was the president of the Mama Katolik, a women's club organised by the Catholic Church. She introduced the idea of reciprocal help between members of the club in cleaning and planting their gardens. This went on for a number of weeks until Ngi lost his composure during an official village meeting. He accused the Mama and the president of the parish of encroaching upon the domain of the community government by organising their own community work. They should first have consulted him as the representative of the government. A long speech followed about the responsibilities of the different types of leaders. Many people were mistakingly acting as political leaders, but only the members of the provincial and community governments were true 'politicians'. The government was the highest authority and covered the other organisations as an umbrella. The themes of the speech were familiar and were supported by the other community government members. Interestingly, no-one questioned Ngi's claim that he should be informed of any public activity, although there is nothing in the constitution of the community government to warrant this. His definition of his authority as a government representative went unchallenged, at least for the time being.

Although the conflict between Ngi and his younger brother was phrased in terms of the authority and competence of different kinds of leaders, there was more to it than that. Ngi's wife Maiau was the president of the Baluan Women's Club, which was the competitor of the Mama Katolik. The latter was associated with the church, whereas the former was seen as intimately linked with the government. For various reasons a split had occurred between the two clubs to the extent that they no longer would take part in each other's functions. The success of the Mama's
mutual help scheme was a thorn in the side of Maiau and it provided her with an opportunity to mobilise a new resource, that of public political debate. Thus the quarrel between the two women was generalised to their husbands, and it precipitated the conflict of competence between the two brothers.

Kastam, gavman and lotu

This short but true story of three brothers demonstrates that there are several ways to obtain status and authority in Baluan.13 These ways have to be seen in the context of different sets of institutions and different idioms in which to talk about these institutions. I suggest that the social reality of Baluan can be conceptually divided into different institutional and semantic spheres or domains. The spheres which can be identified in the example of the three brothers are those of tradition, modern government, and Church. In the following I will refer to these spheres by the Tok Pisin words also used on Baluan, namely kastam, gavman, and lotu. Competition for leadership may be carried out within the idioms and institutions of one domain, as has been illustrated by the confrontations between Meme and Nola (kastam), between Ngi and his brother-in-law (gavman), and between Ngi and his two brothers (lotu). These confrontations may involve different organisations with divergent ideologies such as the SDA and Catholic Churches, but the conflict between these organisations does not necessarily entail any disagreement about basic social categories. However, if the struggle for leadership is fought between institutional spheres, different definitions of authority are unavoidably at stake. This has been illustrated by the conflicts between Meme and Ngi (kastam versus gavman) and between Ngi and Ngat (gavman versus lotu). Conflict resulting from contradictions between the lotu and kastam spheres also occurs although there is no example of this in the story of the three brothers.

It is my contention that the distinction between these three spheres must be part of any understanding of the political dynamics of contemporary Baluan society. It is

13 There are more ways to obtain status – ‘a name’ – than the ones described here. A man may have the reputation of being a very good woodcarver or a very successful fisherman. However, these forms of prestige do not imply political authority whereas the three types presented in the story do.
also my contention that this is the way most Baluan people reflect on their own society. I will begin with the last point.

The Baluan language contains a word that, if applied to groups, comes very close to the traditional anthropological concept of culture. The word *nurunan* may refer to individuals as well as groups and indicates everything that belongs to and is distinctive of a person or group. It includes material possessions, physical and mental qualities and ways of doing things. A very similar concept has been described by Schwartz (1975:122) for the Titan language, which is a minority language on Baluan.14

Ethnic group, village, clan, lineage, and individuals comprise a hierarchy of material and nonmaterial property-bearing entities. Admiralty Islanders have terms such as the Manus word *kaye* which, applied to any of these levels, means any and all of the following: way, manner, kind, fashion (the actual Pidgin English gloss), property or attribute, and inherent characteristic of that object [...] Although the conception is different, it tends to cover what we mean by culture, when applied to groups, or personality, when applied to individuals.

Baluan speakers sometimes also use the Titan word *kaye* and in addition they have a pronoun construction to convey the same conception. *Sap tao*, for example, means 'that what belongs to you' and *sap te pari musau* refers to 'whatever belongs to the white people'. The concept of *nurunan* and its equivalents is used by Baluan people to make sense of the experiential diversity of their society. They divide their lived-in world into ways of doing things that belong to *kastam*, ways that belong to *gavman*, and ways that belong to *lotu*.

The sphere of *kastam* is very wide. It includes traditional leadership practices, ceremonial exchanges, traditional rights to land and sea, agricultural and fishing practices, belief about illness and the power of spirits, and finally traditional ways of solving conflicts. When Baluan people refer to these things, they often use the Tok Pisin word *kastam* or the phrase *pasin bilong ples*, which means 'the ways of the village'. The latter phrase stands in opposition to *pasin bilong waitman*, 'the ways of

14 See also Mead (1975[1956]:96). Young (1971:60 ff.) reports a very similar concept on Goodenough Island, viz. *dewa*: "In most contexts *dewa* can be translated as 'custom', if this is given its widest sense of regular, patterned behaviour. Thus, it is possible to speak of the *dewa* of a group ('traditional usages') and the *dewa* of an individual ('habits' or 'idiosyncracies'). *Dewa* further refers to various kinds of things ('artifacts, cultifacts and mentifacts') "if they form part of a descent group's heritage" (ibid:60).
white people'. In Baluan language the same opposition is rendered as *nurunan panu* (=village) versus *nurunan ip musau* (=white people) or also as *sap te pari panu* versus *sap te pari musau*. Baluan people may also refer to *kastam* by talking about *nurunan ip palsi*, which can be translated as 'the ways of those who lived before'. A frequently used Baluan word of the same semantic domain is *puron*. It is the generic term for all kinds of ceremonial exchanges and official gatherings, and its Tok Pisin equivalent is *wok kastam* or *kastamwok* rather than *kastam*.

*Gavman* belongs to the introduced 'ways of [the] white people' and has no Baluan equivalent.\(^\text{15}\) Although its literal translation is government, it encompasses much more than that. *Gavman* not only indicates all levels of government including its representatives, but it may also refer to the judiciary, to village court officials, to hospitals and aid-posts, to government schools, to co-operatives, to agricultural and business development projects and even to banks. In its widest meaning it may be identified with all aspects of modern development.

Although *lotu* is also something introduced by [the] white people, it is clearly not *gavman*. People perceive more continuity between *lotu* and their own culture, as they have traditional ways of talking to the ancestors. Moreover, contact with God is not understood as something that belongs to the white people only. Baluan has even produced its own prophet, who founded a local Christian Church. *Lotu* is a Tok Pisin word of Fijian origin (Mihalic 1971:124). As a verb it means 'to worship' and as a noun it can refer to religious service and to the church as an organisation. There is no Baluan equivalent and if the word is used to denote the sphere of church activities - for example in the phrase *sap te parial lotu* or *ol samting bilong lotu* (all the things belonging to *lotu*) - it includes all the institutions attached to the Church, such as women and youth groups, religious instruction in school or elsewhere, missionary activities and the spiritual care of the sick.

The division of social life into three separate spheres is not unique to Baluan or even Manus. Similar distinctions have been reported for other places in

\(^{15}\) It was sometimes said that in the time before the government was established *lapans* carried out the work of *gavman*. 
Melanesia. As an example I quote from Neumann (1988:86), who worked among the Tolai of East New Britain.

Today, Tolai define their identity in three ways. They say their individual lives and their society are based on *matanitu*, *lotu* and *balanagunan*. *Matanitu* and *lotu* are terms which have been introduced by Pacific Island missionaries and are now part of the Tolai vocabulary. *Matanitu* stands for 'government' and includes the introduced political structures from the councillor to the prime minister, as well as western style education, the judiciary and the police. *Balanagunan* (or *varkurai nigunan*, as some people say instead) denotes the entity of 'traditional' Tolai customs. The three are seen as being strictly separate and one interferes with another only in exceptional cases.

Foster, in an unpublished paper (n.d.:8-9), describes a different categorisation of social life on Tanga in New Ireland. Trying to delineate the meaning of *kastam* he finds that *kastam* is not *lo*, which stands for 'law' or 'government', and not *lotu*. However the main opposition which gives *kastam* its present-day meaning is *bisnis*, which he glosses as 'practical conduct exclusive of wage-labor (*wokman*) that generates a cash income'. He says:

The contrast between *kastam* and *bisnis* is the key relationship of the taxonomy that gives *kastam* its current meaning. Put otherwise, it was only the emergence of *bisnis* as a category of lived practice that crystallized the taxonomic definition of Tangan *kastam*.

On Baluan the Tok Pisin word *bisnis* is known and used, but it is not unequivocally connected with a separate sphere of experience or a separate set of institutions. It is an ambiguous category because it is used both in the context of modern development and in the context of *kastam*. Many people, especially the elderly, will say that ceremonial exchanges are *bisnis*, because it is possible to make a profit on the food provided. Others will maintain exactly the opposite, pointing

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16 Interesting comparative material concerning Vanuatu and the Solomon Islands is presented in Keesing and Tonkinson (1982). Keesing (n.d.b) gives a graphic illustration of the collision between several 'universes of discourse' in Honiara. He concludes that "my data suggest that Kwaio precept and practice allow and sustain multiple 'world views' (just as ours do)". In this thesis I do not engage in an explicit and systematic comparison with ethnographic data from non-Manus societies, but I shall occasionally refer to significant parallels or contrasts in footnotes.

17 See also Neumann (1988:180)

18 Schwartz (1982:396), writing about the Titan speaking people of South Manus, makes a similar observation: "Ceremonial exchange is thought of as 'business' and seen as a profitable engagement."
out, that customary obligations are detrimental to any serious bisnis enterprise. Although Baluan people certainly generate money by selling garden produce and cash crops, this has not led to a separate sphere of bisnis. In chapter 7 I shall investigate why this is the case.

Institutional and semantic domains

I have shown that Baluan people make a division between three different ‘ways of doing things’ when they discuss their own society. However, I cannot simply take their ‘emic’ categories and make them into the building blocks of my ‘etic’ description without further theoretical reflection and justification. What do I mean when I talk about domains of a society? I propose to conceive of cultural domains or spheres as institutional and semantic fields. The term institution I use in the broad sense of a unit of social action with a more or less standardised meaning. The relative unity of the institutions and idioms of one sphere as opposed to another is based on their semantic cognition and common origin. Of course, such an institutional and semantic sphere is a conceptual construction and it exists only so far as it is realised in the practice and discourse of a group of people. It seems important, though, to maintain a distinction between meaning and enactment, between institution and practice. In discourse and in practice people are consciously and unconsciously guided by the idioms and institutions of their culture, but in the process they may rearrange and revalue those institutional meanings. It will be clear that this distinction derives from the basic Saussurean opposition between langue and parole. I further refer to Sahlins (1981 and 1985) who aptly demonstrates and elaborates on the revaluations of meaning in practice.

The conception of society as having different spheres is as old as European sociology, and even older. My inspirations are twofold.19 Firstly, there is a lineage of thought which, via Berger and Luckmann, and Alfred Schutz, goes back to the

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19 After completing this thesis Lindstrom (1990a) came to my attention. It appears to me that Lindstrom’s adaptation of Foucault has definite bearing on the approach taken in this thesis. My concept of institutional and semantic domains has clear affinity with Foucault’s concept of an ‘order of discourse’ as defined by Lindstrom (1990a:15): “This [order of discourse] consists of (1) a finite body of shared codes and knowledge content (a ‘culture’ or ‘subculture’); and (2) a set of discursive procedures, apparatuses, and institutional arrangements that regulate the ‘practice’ of that knowledge”. Sometimes it leads to bitterness and disappointment when the anticipated ‘price’ is inadequate or when the amount of consumables is seen as falling short of the ‘price’.”
psychologist William James. The last developed the conception that experiential reality is to be divided into 'sub-universes'. Schutz (1967[1945]) introduced this idea to sociological theory and rebaptised the divisions as 'finite provinces of meaning'. Berger and Luckmann (1967) returned to the older term and used the phrase 'sub-universes of meaning'.

The second and more important influence is Pierre Bourdieu, who added to the existing term of ‘a universe of discourse’, the concepts of ‘a universe of practice’ and ‘a universe of practice and discourse’ (Bourdieu 1977:110). This is a valuable extension of the terminology because it emphasises that the societal subdivisions do not only concern speech and communication but action as well. The phrase ‘universe of discourse’ derives from logic. According to De Morgan’s definition (1847:41) it refers to: "a range of ideas which is either expressed or understood as containing the whole matter under discussion". Although this concept comes very close to what I am aiming at, I refrain from using the term ‘universe’ because it has the connotations of encompassment and closure. The boundaries of the institutional and conceptual domains are not always neat and clear-cut.20 It is precisely on the fringes of the spheres that new meanings are most often created by the practice of articulating individuals. Moreover, I want to maintain a distinction between practice and discourse on the one hand and domains of institutions and meanings on the other, as I have explained above.21

Bourdieu uses the phrase ‘universe of discourse’ at two different levels. He speaks of ‘a universe of discourse’ as a subdivision of society, but also of ‘the universe of discourse’ as opposed to ‘the universe of doxa’, which is the undisputed and undisputed. I will continue using the term in the latter sense, because it signifies the very important distinction between what is spoken about and what is taken for granted. For Bourdieu’s first sense, in which universe of discourse is to be put in the plural, I prefer to apply the phrase ‘institutional and semantic domain of a society’. The three domains which I discerned in the practice of Baluan

20 Here I disagree with Neumann (1988: 86, 180) who assumes that the "separation is fine but sharp". The situation I encountered was more like the one described by Lindstrom (1982:320-321) for Tanna: "Definition of kastom, setting its bounds, however, is an ongoing and continuous political task – definitions reinforced or altered in daily political conversation". I return to this important point of the ongoing political contestation of accepted meanings in the next section.

21 Clearly, De Morgan’s definition refers to the structural on systemic aspect of a universe of discourse – ‘a range of ideas’ – rather than to the discursive practice itself.
people are part of their universe of discourse. This emphasises the fact that this
division is not taken for granted but is the object of discussion and contestation.

In their theory of institutionalisation Berger and Luckmann (1967) develop an
insight which I consider of major importance for understanding the nature of
institutional and semantic domains. I quote from their work at some length because
they formulate their argument very clearly and cogently.

In principle, institutionalization may take place in any area of collectively
relevant conduct. In actual fact, sets of institutionalization processes take
place concurrently. There is no a priori reason for assuming that these
processes will necessarily "hang together" functionally, let alone as a
logically consistent system (ibid:80).

It follows that great care is required in any statements one makes about the
"logic" of institutions. The logic does not reside in the institutions and their
external functionalities, but in the way these are treated in reflection about
them. Put differently, reflective consciousness superimposes the quality of
logic on the institutional order (ibid:82).

Following this I stress that the institutional spheres within Baluan society are not
distinguished on the basis of the different functions they perform. From the point of
view of function the spheres overlap. Although there certainly is some specialisation,
similar functions are addressed by the institutions of different domains, for example
in the preservation of health, the realisation of social integration, the organisation of
leadership and land ownership. This functional overlap occasions many potential
and actual conflicts, some of which have been illustrated in the story of the three
brothers. The spheres are conceptual fields, not functional units. If there is a clash
between spheres in the practice of interacting individuals and groups, the conflict is
primarily between contradictory meanings rather than between interfering functions.

It may be helpful to give an example of what I oppose by this view. For this, I
will use a text from the structuralist-functionalist tradition which long dominated
Melanesian and Pacific ethnography. In his introduction to 'Politics in New Guinea'
(1971) Peter Lawrence makes a strict dichotomy between Western and New Guinea
societies. The first distinctive feature is that the former are characterised by a bias
towards secularism, whereas the latter are not (ibid:4-5). Although a lot could be
said about this, it is the second distinction that interests me here.

In the second place, these [New Guinea] societies are generalized rather
than compartmentalized. Unlike western society, they can be analysed only
as totalities and not into theoretically separate systems with specialized functions: economic, religious or political. Exactly the same groups or persons in specific relationship to each other carry out all economic, religious and political actions (ibid:5).

There are two major points of disagreement between this view of society and the one I support. In the first place I assume that New Guinea societies are compartmentalised just as Western ones, although in a radically different way than is conceptualised by Lawrence. He defines the sub-systems of a society in relation to their functions and this is the second point of disagreement. I do not deny that there may be a specialisation of functions between different spheres, but there is always considerable overlap, even between the systems that are distinguished in Western societies. The conceptual and institutional divisions of a society have to be understood in the context of the history of that society. The development of a society also creates the concepts through which reflection about that society takes place. Clearly, this point of view has Marxist antecedents.22

The distinction between economic, religious and political spheres has its roots in the history of European societies. I do not hold the relativist view that for this reason these concepts may not be applied to non-western societies. I accept that analysis of different societies with the help of these concepts may lead to useful results. However, I also maintain that an understanding based only on this division is necessarily partial and biased, because the institutions of the society studied are taken out of their meaningful context. Therefore I take the 'emic' institutional division as my point of departure. In order to understand the contemporary configuration of institutional spheres I have to study the history of Baluan society. The spheres of gavman and lotu have their origin in colonial history and the sphere of kastam assumed its shape and content only in articulation with the two other spheres. It may be argued in defence of Lawrence and others, that they were concerned with the construction of a traditional society abstracted from Western influences, and that for this reason New Guinea societies were assumed to be non-compartmentalised. However, not only is it a fallacy to ignore colonial history, but there is enough

22 In Otto (1984) I examine literature on the relationship between an emerging economic ideology in which the economy is perceived as a separate sphere, and historic changes in European societies, especially the development of a market economy. I return to these epistemological questions in the conclusion to the thesis.
evidence that cultural change did not begin with Western colonisation. There has always been influence by outside forces, importation of new institutions and technologies, and internal incremental change. Therefore, the image of an original undivided society should be banished to the realm of anthropological myths of origin.

Let me briefly summarise the characteristics of the institutional and semantic domains that have so far emerged. Different domains are not characterised by the specific functions they perform. They are spheres of semantically related institutions and idioms, which have to be understood in their historical genesis as well as in their present configuration.

Practice, discourse and leadership

After this theoretical intermezzo on the nature of conceptual subdivisions of society I return to what is the actual substance of social life: the practice of individuals and groups. I started this chapter with a description of some events in the lives of a few individuals. A discussion of three institutional and semantic domains was necessary in order to understand the conflicts of signification which occurred in the interaction between these individuals. I argued that this subdivision corresponded to a division made by Baluan people themselves consciously reflecting on their own society. My conceptual partitioning of Baluan society both followed the indigenous distinctions and tried to place them in a theoretical framework. Now I have to examine more closely the relation between social practice, which refers to the total field of action and discourse, and the conceptual division of institutions and idioms I have made.

Interaction between people may be guided primarily by the institutions and semantic values of one domain. An example is the competition for clan leadership between Meme and Nola as described in the first part of this chapter. Their arguments were cast in the idiom of kastam and their strategies were oriented towards the rules that prevail in this sphere. The dispute between them was confined to generally accepted definitions of reality and never did the actors challenge the prevalent meanings and divisions of society.
The discord between Ngi and his two brothers about Church membership exemplifies the competition between two of the three main denominational organisations on Saluan. This competition predominantly concerned the domain of *lotu*, but it also affected the articulation of domains, because the Catholic and SDA ideologies differed considerably in the way the relation between *lotu* and *kastam* was defined. Although the Catholics admitted that there were irreconcilable contradictions between *lotu* doctrine and some *kastam* practices, they had in general a much more positive attitude towards *kastam* than the Seventh Day Adventists. A similar point can be made for the *gavman* sphere where the opposition between Makasol and Community Government also found expression in divergent opinions about the articulation of *gavman* and *kastam*.

When social practice moves across domain boundaries the different idioms may come into open conflict. I give an example of an innovative articulation of the spheres of *kastam* and *gavman* which was publicly challenged. It happened during the campaigns for the elections of a National Parliament in 1987. When one of the contenders for the Provincial seat visited Baluan, some of the *lapans* of Lipan organised a ceremony they had never staged in such a context before. In support of this particular candidate, the only white contestant, and also in support of a local candidate for the Manus Open seat, the *lapans* reenacted a ceremony which in the past had a character of compulsion. One of the leading *lapans* of Lipan presided over the event. On either side of him sat two other *lapans* who represented the two subdivisions of Lipan, Lipan Poiom Puli and Lipan Kapului.23 The central *lapan* carefully cut a bunch of betelnut into smaller pieces which he put in front of him on a piece of cloth. Then he proceeded by loudly calling out the names of the major lineages of Lipan and handing over a small bunch of betelnut to the representatives of those lineages. The traditional meaning of this ceremony is that those who accept the betelnut commit themselves to the cause for which the betelnut is distributed, be it warfare or participation in a major feast. Although most bunches of betelnut were accepted, a few remained on the floor. In two cases no representatives of the group called were present, but two persons showed their disagreement with the proceedings by refusing to accept the gift. The leading *lapan* was furious and

23 Poiom Puli means 'under the mountain' and Kapului refers to 'place of a house'. Lipan Kapului includes Pungkanau and Loye (see map 2).
muttered that those people did not understand kastam. He had, however, more than one string to his bow and went on to distribute the remaining pieces of betelnut to the community government, the provincial member, the Mama Katolik and the teachers.

The lapans had supported one local candidate for the Manus Open seat, but there was another contestant for the same seat who also originated from Baluan. He came from the other side of the island and had worked as a magistrate outside Manus for many years. When he heard about the action of the lapans he was understandably annoyed. During his campaign on the island he launched an attack on the people who had organised the betelnut ceremony. I quote from his speech.

Our kastam is as follows. If a lapan accepts the betelnut during a distribution, he must follow his promise. For example he must produce food or kill a man. This kastam is good. In the time of elections there is a law which belongs to the elections. This is the law of freedom of choice. You are not allowed to follow the kastam. The betelnut becomes something bad, because you break the law of freedom of choice.

I have a list of all the lapans who accepted the betelnut. After this meeting is over I will put them in a Mbuke pot and cook them. Then they will know whether they were wrong or not. I have said this already to the provincial member: this is bribery.24

Later during the same meeting the lapan who had led the betelnut ceremony stood up. First he praised the candidate saying that the points he had made surpassed the good things they had heard from others. Then he went on as follows.

I want to challenge you concerning the way of the betelnut. The betelnut is not a worthless thing, Poruan. Whatever ways we take from other countries, the betelnut belongs to Manus. I, I divided the betelnut. It was given to me and my mouth is able to defend it (give it strength). Only at the last moment you have come and destroyed all the other candidates.

The candidate gave the following answer.

24 By threatening to prepare the lapans for his meal the candidate challenged them in a traditional way. He then indicated how he would be able to deal with them, namely in terms of gavman. What the lapans had done was construed as bribery by the government and could thus be prosecuted.
I accept your challenge, because you agree with me. In fact you are challenging yourself. If you follow kastam, go straight to kastam. If you follow another law, you have to stick to that.

This example has shown how some traditional leaders tried to extend their influence into the domain of gavman. This was supported by some representatives of the government sphere who thought they would profit from the choice of the lapans. But this powerful alliance was publicly opposed and challenged on the basis that they improperly mixed things that belonged to two different domains. It was clear that the speech of the angry candidate made a deep impression.

In the story of three brothers Ngi, as a gavman representative, came into conflict with his elder and his younger brother because he felt that they infringed upon his domain. Meme, the traditional leader, did not accept his younger brother's authority to decide on community tasks when he disagreed with the latter's judgement on priorities, and consequently he was taken to court by his own sibling. Ngat, the youngest, was publicly put in his place as a church leader by Ngi during a village meeting. The conflicts arose because there is an overlap between the institutional domains as far as their functions are concerned. Both traditional and Church leadership involve the organisation of communal activities, and a sharp distinction with community work as organised by the community government can only be fought out in practice. The examples clearly show that the struggle for leadership may be at the same time a struggle between different definitions of reality. People who have risen to prominence within one domain will try to secure and increase their influence by propagating the institutional sphere they stand for. Thus, conflicts between different types of leaders often involve disagreements about the articulation of different spheres.

The story of the three brothers also points to another connection. If there is a conflict across different institutional and semantic domains the success of the individual participants depends not only on the amount of public support they can command. We have to look at all the power resources that are at their disposal. In part, the nature of these political resources differs from one domain to the other. If Ngi, for example, adheres to the rules which pertain to his own gavman domain, he is backed up by the very powerful institution of the state. Hence, he was able to challenge his elder brother and have him sentenced in a village court. In the
following chapters I will examine how various forms of power resources are connected with the institutions of the three domains.

There is another point which needs mentioning here, although I am not able to elaborate on it until later in the thesis. The examples I have given concentrated on individuals who had a special interest in one of the institutional domains in which they had acquired status. I have shown how the interest in a particular domain was connected with certain aspects of the life histories of those individuals. Meme as the eldest had best chances in the kastam sphere. Ngí had a definite advantage in the domain of gavman because of his education and training, whereas Ngat lacked any special qualifications and worked his way up in the domain that was left over: that of lotu. If we look at the preferences of a large number of people, some structural relations between the three spheres and the interests of certain categories of people emerge. There is no simple equation as the idiosyncrasies of people's biographies play an important role, but certain categories of people have more affinity with a particular sphere than others. The relevant categories are: residents as opposed to migrant workers, the old as opposed to the young, women as opposed to men, educated as opposed to non-educated people, and those with a high traditional status as opposed to those with a low status.

Discourse and leadership

Thus far my argument has concerned the relation between social practice and the conceptual subdivisions of society. I understand practice as encompassing both action and discourse. I have emphasised that the societal subdivisions do not only concern discursive practices but all kinds of social action. I therefore defined the subdivisions as institutional as well as semantic domains. All the examples given include both action and argument. It is, however, useful to separate discourse from the total field of social practice and to examine its special role in the articulation of the different spheres of society. I am aware that it is problematic to make a sharp distinction between discourse and action. If we consider, for example, the reenactment of a traditional ceremony by some lapans of Lipan, than it will be apparent that this event can be described as both action and discourse. Actions are often as much intended to convey specific meanings as is pure speech. However, in
the following discussion I will limit the meaning of discourse and define it as public speech.

Discourse in this limited sense was an important feature of Baluan culture. When I first arrived on the island I was impressed by the enormous amount of time people spent talking on official occasions. This was in sharp contrast with what I was accustomed to in my own culture. Of course I asked myself why people engaged in so much public speaking. In the following I will formulate some tentative answers.

The first observation had to be that Baluan was still predominantly an oral culture. On the island information was passed on by way of mouth. Cultural and historical knowledge was mainly stored in people's heads, although the young increasingly used exercise books and even tapes to assist their memory. If residents needed to contact their relatives elsewhere in Manus, they had to travel there. Communication with migrant workers outside the province was conducted by mail but more frequently by telephone in the provincial centre Lorengau. Of the modern means of communication only the radio was important in village life. It provided national and local news in addition to entertainment. Talking and listening was, therefore, the mode in which culture was transferred and social life was regulated. Group communication necessarily involved public speech, which was the main avenue of influencing public opinion.

The ability to make a powerful public address had been an important aspect of leadership in the past. Although a leader's renown – ngaian or 'name' – was mainly based on the size of the feasts he had organised, and in precolonial times also on his feats in warfare, his oratorical qualities contributed significantly to his success. During the preparations for an important event the leader had to motivate his followers and at the time of a feast he would try to inflate his name by selfpraise and by challenging his competitors. The ability to deliver a good speech was still an important part of leadership at the time of fieldwork and may have been even more relevant than in the past, as some of the other avenues to distinction had decreased in importance. The capacity to impress with words was highly valued and a man who was not able to express his concerns publicly in well-chosen words was not esteemed.

Connected with the previous point was a belief in the power of words. It appears that Baluan people conceived of a more direct relationship between word and effect
than is current in Western societies. The speech of strong leaders was thought to carry special powers to manipulate and motivate people. Some men possessed magical means to enhance this power. Speaking to the ancestors (tenten) was considered a very effective way to influence the health or success of kinspeople. Talking, therefore, was not just a way to communicate thoughts. It was often intended as an action with a direct impact on the world.25

In times of rapid change the importance of discourse seems to increase. When, in the years immediately following the Second World War, Paliau and his followers were trying to revolutionise their own society, they organised many meetings which often continued through the night. The introduction of new definitions of society and the forging of a new consensus needed a lot of talking. When I arrived on Baluan the hegemony of Paliau was clearly over,26 and it is possible that the divisiveness which resulted had caused an increased intensity of public communication.27

At the time of fieldwork the different institutional domains provided a variety of arenas for the contention of alternative definitions of reality. In the gavman sphere there were community government meetings, village meetings, court sessions, meetings related to the school such as those for 'parents and citizens', and less formal gatherings such as the lain at the beginning of every day designated for community work. Although these meetings mostly had agendas which concerned practical issues, the discussion easily led to fundamental problems and oppositions within the society. Sometimes these problems became the main point of the agenda. For example, a series of meetings was organised to discuss the place of traditional leadership in the present time. The predominant opinion among the elderly was that the work of traditional leaders or lapans was wrongly disregarded during the Paliau reforms. It was high time to reinstate the power of the lapans as this would probably solve problems of law and order which seemed to be inherent in modernisation. During the meetings innovative articulations of the domains of gavman and kastam were tried out. For example, it was suggested that there should be two kinds of meetings within the community government: one for the lapans, who would form a

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25 I return to this point in chapter 4, where I discuss tenten, and especially in chapter 5, where I examine the rhetoric of Paliau Maloat.

26 The hegemony was never complete as I will argue in chapter 7.

27 Of course this is only speculation as I have no means to assess the amount of public speech before my arrival.
kind of Upper House, and one for the whole population, the House of Commons. Although this idea was accepted at the time, it was never put into practice.

The sphere of kastam also offered a variety of occasions to debate basic social tenets. Every ceremonial exchange involved a period of public speech-making during which even outsiders to the event could stand up and give their opinion. Often the discourse related to the minutiae of the exchange itself and people commented on the amount of gifts or the proper adherence to the rules. Not infrequently, though, the discussions extended to the value of kastam in general and its relation to other kinds of institutions. The chance of this kind of general discussion occurring was enhanced when representatives of the government or the Churches were themselves participants in the exchanges. This happened especially during bigger exchanges and I attended many occasions when the 'lineage of the government' was called to receive a gift. In such cases the government representative would be tempted to deliver a speech in which he had to take a position vis-à-vis the particular ceremony or kastam in general.

The sphere of lotu, specifically concerned with the formulation of a world-view, naturally had its own venues for the propagation of ideas. The services always included a sermon. The Seventh Day Adventists held Sabbath school during which people could ask questions. All denominations engaged in religious instruction during community school hours and organised workshops for the youth. The church groups were never short of reasons for organising feasts during which food was distributed and addresses were made. Because government representatives as well as lapans were always invited to contribute a speech, these feasts were important occasions for these leaders to articulate their views concerning the extension and legitimacy of their own domain.

Public discourse was dominated by elder men. This was especially so in the sphere of kastam, where younger men may only speak if authorised by their seniors and where women were always represented by male relatives. Only once did I see a woman play a leading role in a ceremonial exchange and this was clearly considered an anomaly. In government meetings everyone was allowed to speak and both women and young men sometimes ventured their opinions. Nevertheless

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28 The woman acted in a funeral ceremony for her deceased younger brother. The case was exceptional, firstly because the woman was highly educated (she was an university lecturer), and secondly because the paternity of her brother was disputed.
the balance was clearly in favour of older men with established reputations who were mostly very skilled in making public addresses. Because church feasts were often organised by women’s clubs they offered an opportunity to a few leading women to make speeches. The same applied to events organised by the gavman women’s club. However, all these occasions were dominated by men, and women’s organisations always had male mentors. Young, unmarried women never spoke in public. They told me that they did not have the strength to stand up in front of a group of people. They would forget whatever words they had prepared in their head. A few of the middle-aged women were very outspoken and they were obviously beyond embarrassment.

Although public discourse was predominantly a male business, it does not follow that women had no influence on the content of what was said. In ceremonial exchanges, for example, some elder women were often consulted as they had considerable knowledge. Moreover, women took part in these exchanges on their own account. If they wanted to say something they instructed a male kinsman to make the points on their behalf. Many of the opinions which were expressed in public arenas were prefabricated in more private discourse at home. Some women exerted considerable influence on their husbands’ or their brothers’ thinking. Through their husbands or brothers they were also able to bring their conflicts into the open, as was illustrated in the story of three brothers by the dispute between the presidents of two women’s clubs.

Let me return finally to the question I raised earlier. Why was discourse so important on Baluan? I have already suggested some explanations. Firstly, the nature of the means of communication made Baluan culture primarily oral in orientation. Secondly, I pointed to the relation between social status and public speech. The capacity to speak well in front of an audience enhanced a person’s social standing. Thirdly, I mentioned that Baluan people generally had a greater belief in the efficacy of talking than many Westerners are inclined to have. Certain types of speech were believed to have a direct impact on reality. Fourthly, I suggested that periods of rapid social change require intensive discussions to put people’s opinions in line.

Two additional explanations I formulate as hypotheses. I assume that the level of institutionalisation was relatively low on Baluan, at least at the village level. The
institutions were, as it were, only semisolid. Therefore people were better able to influence their institutional environment through discourse than in a society where the institutions have more solidity or inertia by virtue of their scale, material backing, legal codification, or whatever.29 Talking could more readily result in actual changes in Baluan society. In this sense the indigenous belief in the efficacy of speech was certainly appropriate. Of course we should not lose sight of the relations between Baluan and the outside world, as I have stressed earlier. Baluan, though an island geographically, was not an island in the theoretical sense. Copra prices and national politics had their influence on village life. But within the constraints set by these larger forces Baluan people were able to shape their institutions as they best fit them.

My second hypothesis concerns a fundamental disposition of the Baluan people. Independence of the individual was highly valued. Of course this disposition or habitus, to use Bourdieu’s term, has to be understood in relation to the features of Baluan society, such as the traditionally small political units, the importance of personal networks and the high level of individual economic independence. What matters here is that this tendency to autonomy made any form of leadership a fragile business. Leaders were continuously assessed and criticised and their followers easily became annoyed if they did not deliver the goods. Therefore a lot of talking was required to explain projects and to win people’s support. Prestigious enterprises such as the construction of a road could fail because some individuals refused to cooperate and did not allow the road to cross their land. Such a failure undermined a leader’s authority. To avoid this he had to invest a lot of time in persuading all parties involved to accept some form of compromise. If an important decision had to be made, all self-respecting individuals wanted to assert their autonomy by contributing an opinion. Leadership was never easily accepted and the bases for authority could become a matter of discussion. Is it surprising then that one of the main themes of the Baluan universe of discourse was leadership?

In the following chapters leadership will also be one of the main themes of my discourse. The reason for this is that it allows me to explain structural social

29 Carrier (1987a:128) makes a similar observation concerning the changeability of Ponam society in Manus: “Numerically and spatially, therefore, they were much more likely to be able to co-ordinate themselves to change their social arrangements voluntarily than were larger and more dispersed societies”.
changes while at the same time paying attention to the role of individuals. The changes I will describe involved shifting resources of power and authority. Individuals made use of the new opportunities and contributed to the direction of the social changes by their creative actions.

History and histories

In this thesis I examine the historical development of the three institutional and semantic domains of contemporary Saluan culture. In particular, I endeavour to reconstruct a political history of the domain of *kastam* which necessarily includes an account of its articulation with the other two domains. My reconstruction is based on documentary evidence and oral histories. Both forms of data have to be interpreted in the context of their production. Written sources have to be checked against other historical data, including oral ones, in order to examine what they teach us about the authors and their role in the events they describe. Oral sources also have to be checked against other available evidence. The circumstances of the production of oral histories are more directly accessible to the anthropological observer than those of written sources.

Oral histories are part of the contemporary discourse in a society. Therefore I have to analyse those parts of the discourse on Saluan that are relevant for my own history of the three institutional spheres. I do not intend to give a comprehensive treatment of historical knowledge on Saluan. Nor will I be able to examine all contemporary discursive practices. My aim is to explore those forms of oral history that are relevant to the genesis as well as to the present configuration of institutional domains. By limiting myself in this way I am able to focus on the politically relevant histories. I will treat these histories both as pieces of information for my own reconstruction of the past and as histories in their own right.30

To give sufficient weight to oral histories and to demonstrate some aspects of their form and content I will quote extensively from recordings made during my

30 Compare Neumann (1988) who makes the relation between indigenous histories and his own construction of Tolai history the central problem of his thesis. See also Gewertz and Schieffelin (1985).
fieldwork. Thus I hope to convey some sense of the perspectives on the past Baluan people entertained. In addition I will examine the discursive practices connected with these oral histories: was knowledge of them restricted or open; who would relate them and under what circumstances; what interests were involved in telling or hiding the stories? These questions will be raised in connection with specific forms of histories presented in the following chapters. I end this chapter with some general observations about the modalities of Baluan oral tradition. First, however, I discuss local variations in historical knowledge and interest in the past, and also problems of gaining access to this knowledge.

When Margaret Mead visited Pere on Manus Island in 1928-29, she arrived at the following conclusion.

It is not possible to get any very accurate information from the Manus themselves concerning their past. They are a people essentially uninterested in history of any sort; they have only a few of the slightest and scantiest of origin myths to which they hardly ever refer. The only war stories which are told are events which occurred in the lifetime of living men; past events, instead of being reworked into the miraculous and the legendary, tend to be pared down to anecdotes which finally lose their individuality (Mead 1934:195).

This observation by Margaret Mead serves as a contrast. If it had been true for Baluan in the 1980s, this thesis could not have been written. A concern with the past varies enormously in different places and even within the same society during different periods of its history. Margaret Mead made her observations in a different Manus society in a different time. She described a society with a very limited interest in history. However, there may have been more historical knowledge than she was aware of. I suggest this because I have collected histories in other Titan speaking

31 These discursive practices were an important aspect of leadership and social inequality. Compare Keesing (1982a, n.d.c) and Lindstrom (1984, 1988, 1989, 1990a and b) for a theoretical and comparative approach to the general issue of the relation between knowledge management and power.

32 James Carrier (1987a) characterises Ponam as a society with relatively little interest in history. He contrasts this with mainland societies such as those of the Kurti, whose oral traditions were recorded by Kuluah (1977). Carrier (personal communication) suggests that the greatest difference occurs between trading and fishing societies on the one hand and agricultural ones on the other. This is also my impression. Even within such a small island as Baluan, inland clans appeared to have more ‘stories’ than coastal clans. The difference is only a relative one and concerns mainly mythical stories. I do not have an explanation for this except that such stories confirm a clan’s ownership of the land. The problem with this explanation is that fishing people claim ownership of the reef and sea (see J. Carrier 1981, Carrier and Carrier 1983, and Otto 1989).
societies in Rambutyo and Baluan, who have all preserved oral traditions concerning their breakaway from Pere and their subsequent migrations to the places where they live today. Crocombe (1965:44-61) gives a detailed history of the Mbuke people based on their oral information. The Mbuke people also originate from Pere and their split, as well as those of the Baluan and Rambutyo groups, occurred several generations before Mead did her first fieldwork in Pere.

There may be several reasons why people do not disclose their historical knowledge to a residing anthropologist. In the first place there is the private character of much historical knowledge in Manus; I return to this point shortly. Second, history in Mead’s Pere apparently did not have the same importance in public discourse as it had in Baluan in the 1980s. Therefore, there was simply less chance that the subject would be raised in the presence of a researcher. Third, there may be particular reasons why people do not want to talk about their history. An example will clarify this. When I was in Mouk village on Baluan, people were very reluctant to talk about their ancestors’ involvement in the murder of a German trader, Mr Maetzke. There were two main reasons for this. People were unsure about the nature of my interest in the story. As a white man from a country close to Germany, I might well be a party in the conflict and I might use the knowledge to the disadvantage of the Mouk people. More importantly, the murder of Maetzke had triggered a punitive expedition by the Germans. Baluan Island was raided because the Mouks were hiding there. The result, however, was that Baluan people also suffered from the German attack. At present Mouk people live on Baluan on a piece of land that was given to them after the Second World War as part of the changes brought about by the Paliau Movement. The Mouks fear that the story of the punitive raid may spoil their relations with the host population and undermine their rights to the land, which are sometimes disputed. They claim that for this reason their parents did not want to tell the story even to them.

Historical knowledge was very unevenly distributed in Baluan. Moreover it was confusingly diverse and not seldom contradictory. This variability may be frustrating for the researcher attempting to construct a neat picture of the past. However, it also

33 Within Baluan the interest in genealogical and historical knowledge had increased significantly since the late 1960s in relation with the intensification of land mediation. I discuss this in chapter 7.

34 I will expand on this story in chapter 3.
gives an insight into Baluan historical practice. What were the main features of this practice?

The first observation is that historical knowledge is preserved by groups or individuals for whom that knowledge has some relevance. If we disregard personal histories for the moment, it will be obvious that the kinds of histories we find in a society relate to the kinds of groups that compose it. Political entities in pre-colonial Manus were very small (see Schwartz 1963). The largest unit was the village within which a fragile unity existed between its component clans and lineages. Therefore, we might expect to find histories which are related to lineages, clans, and villages. In the more recent history of Manus new social entities have developed which have produced their own histories, e.g. the local churches and the Paliau Movement.

A second important aspect is the restricted quality of certain histories. In traditional Manus culture historical knowledge was far from being a public affair: the specific knowledge of a lineage or clan was guarded jealously as its property. Such knowledge was something that should be hidden from others and only used or displayed if required. The image of the large leaf of the breadfruit tree (yongkul) was sometimes used to convey the idea of concealment. As a result of such secrecy historical knowledge was transmitted through many different lines of people and the histories were rarely compared. Therefore, it should not surprise us that at the end of these lines of historical transmission substantially different histories emerge even when they purport to record the same events.

The third point concerns the reproduction of historical knowledge or, in other words, the ways in which histories are transmitted across generations. Throughout

35 A history may be relevant for very different reasons: it may part of a group's self-definition or self-understanding (compare J. Carrier (1987a) who argues that history is less important for Ponam social self-conception than is their kinship-exchange system); it may be a charter for change; it may be related to land claims, etc. Many of these interests will surface in the following chapters.

36 Surprisingly, this point does not receive a lot of attention in Manus ethnography. Only Lola Romanucci mentions that she had problems eliciting an important story from a key informant because he was afraid that others might get to know his story. "Plusieurs des opposants nous avaient déjà donné leur version de l'histoire; Pothin, quoique notre principal informateur, s'était montré jusqu'alors réticent, tout en laissant entendre que nous aurions bien tort d'ajouter foi aux récits que nous avons obtenus. S'il accepta finalement de nous contenter sa version, ce fut à la condition expresse que personne du village n'entendrait la bande magnétique" (Romanucci 1966:37). The story Pothin is reluctant to tell is connected to very real interests, namely claims to leadership and land (compare my point 5 in the text). The fact that some of his opponents had already given their versions may have prompted him to put his story "on the record". From the point of view of the villagers a writing and recording anthropologist is obviously a new resource, the consequences of which are hard to foresee.
Manus I was told the same story of how private knowledge was transmitted in the past. Very early in the morning, one to three hours before dawn, an adult man would rise and rouse his eldest son or another favourite younger relative, taking care not to awaken others in the house. Then, in a low voice, he would start to recite all the knowledge he wanted the boy to learn. Stories about the feats of the ancestors, about the intricacies of ceremonial exchanges, about the names of the land and the properties of the lineage were thus given to selected kinsmen only. These were trusted not to dissipate the knowledge carelessly and were expected to become the future leaders of the group.

An important consequence of this mode of transmission is the high risk of knowledge loss through the early death of a kinsman. Not all knowledge was equally restricted and some was shared by all members of a descent group. Women of a lineage often had substantial knowledge of its history and some damage could be repaired by consulting them. However the premature demise of a knowledgeable person meant an irretrievable loss of information and may have contributed to the variation in historical knowledge between lineages and clans.

The fourth aspect of oral history I want to mention are differences between individuals' possession of knowledge. I have already indicated that some persons were selected to receive the knowledge belonging to a lineage. This is only one side of the matter however. Motivation and inclination were also important factors (compare Keesing n.d.c). A highly motivated person could influence the process of knowledge transmission to a certain extent. Older people were dependent on others for many of their needs. If somebody took care of them they could offer some of their knowledge in exchange. In general, knowledge was not seen as something to be received freely: one had to earn it. Even if a boy was not selected by his father as the main recipient of lineage lore he may gather considerable knowledge by looking after another knowledgeable relative. In such a way he could even gain access to the histories of other lineages, for example by maintaining a good relationship with his mother's brother or father's sister's husband.

37 Women would also pass on information about their own lineage and clan to their children who by definition belong to a different clan. Thus some of the knowledge of a lineage was preserved by its narumpein.

38 Barth (1987) systematically investigates the consequences of the oral mode of transmission of knowledge: both the loss of knowledge and the proliferation of variants.
The final point concerning histories is certainly not the least important. Oral history cannot be dissociated from the present-day interests of individuals and groups, and those interests may very well influence the content of the histories that are presented in a public context. In Baluan stories about the past are clearly relevant for claims to status, leadership, and land. It is, therefore, not surprising to find different versions of the same stories between individuals from the same lineage, between lineages within the same clan, and between clans in the same village. The connections between interest and the content of a story will be examined in the next and other chapters (especially chapter 8).

The features of the historical tradition that I have described clearly place some limitations on my presentation of that tradition. Insofar as information was given to me as private or restricted knowledge, I will not be able to use that information. However, much of the traditional discourse has become more public in recent years and many stories were general knowledge, albeit in conflicting versions. I will try to describe some of this diversity while protecting the interests of my informants. When I relate a version of a story, the reader should be aware that it is only one version among several and that my choice of that version does not necessarily mean that I support its content against conflicting representations.
MAP 2: BALUAN ISLAND

- SDA church
- Catholic church
- School
- SDA 'outreach' church
- Makasol church

Territories

LEUT

Villages

Mouk

Hamlets

1 Poiom Puli
2 Pungkanau
3 Loye
4 Pungap
5 Pumbanin

Kilometres
Chapter Two

HISTORIES OF LAPAN

In this chapter I am concerned with leadership practices in the period before colonisation began to have a major impact on Baluan society. At that time the cultural domains presented in the previous chapter did not exist. My data on leadership suggest, however, that there were other discriminations and oppositions in precolonial Baluan society, particularly between ascribed and achieved status, but also between feasting and warfare, and between original residents and newcomers. The main source for the following reconstruction are oral histories, all of which belong to the contemporary domain of kastam. Therefore I deal not only with the past, but also with a particular contemporary discourse which has bearing on issues of land ownership and political leadership.\footnote{I further examine the interests connected with this particular discourse in chapter 7.}

Titles and hierarchy

During the period of my fieldwork the topic of lapan (traditional leader) figured prominently in public discourse. The discussion was stimulated by a request from the Manus Cultural Council to make a 'rule of culture' and to nominate the 'head of the lapans'. Pokowei Paril from Lipan village was vice-chairman of the Manus Cultural Council and brought the two points forward in a meeting for the whole island. The suggestions were taken up enthusiastically. Everyone agreed that it was the work of the lapans to decide on a rul bilong kalsa and therefore it was necessary to find out first of all who the lapans were. The ensuing discussions continued for the full duration of my stay in Baluan and they generated a wealth of historical information.
Early in the discussions it was noted that not all lapans have equal status. Lapans have titles or names of honour which indicate their status, and there appears to be a hierarchy of these positions. However, there was no consensus about the exact order of the ranking (cf Jolly 1991). The three most important titles are buai (crocodile), peu (shark), and pul (moon). The name buai is associated with a lapan who is a feared warrior. Peu is also a fighting lapan but pul is a man of peace who organises big feasts. Many people consider buai as the leading lapan. In the past he decided on peace or war and he also organised large scale exchanges to make his name. The dominant view was that peu and pul are second to buai, but there was disagreement as to their mutual ranking.

A radically different opinion was that pul is the true head of the lapan. He is 'the moon whose light shines high in the sky'. In this view the name buai does not imply a lapan status but only means that the person is a warrior. If a pul, who is a lapan of peace, engages in warfare, he receives the title buai as well. Therefore, the highest ranking lapans are often pul and buai at the same time.2 The second most important lapan is the peu, who is a warrior as well as an organiser of lapan feasts.

The people who were generally recognised as the descendants of the leading lapans in their villages almost all claimed the title buai or buai in combination with pul for themselves. Villages without a buai had a peu and a number of villages had a peu next to but a little below a buai. Every major clan had a leader with the title pul, which means that most villages contained several lapans with this name. This suggests that in practice a hierarchy was used with the following ranking: buai, peu, and pul. These three names of leading lapans are far from exhaustive. Individual clans often had their own specific names for their leaders, such as monowei pul (eagle moon) or monowei pang (eagle rain). Where I came across this in the private histories of clans, informants could readily translate these titles into the three tokens of public discourse mentioned.

Other names of lapans which appeared in public discussions referred to leaders of lower status who were supposed to support the leading lapans in their projects. I will present these titles roughly in the order of their ranking, although this is often dubious and a matter of dispute. Kop, which means lime as well as lime gourd, is the

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2 A staunch supporter of this point of view was affiliated to a lineage which claimed the titles pul and buai and which had to defend its supremacy against a closely related lineage with the title buai. Not surprisingly this view was also held by some of the lapans with the title pul.
title of a peace-making *lapan*. If he holds his lime gourd above his head and sprinkles the lime, this means that the battle should stop.3 *Poron* is said to be a soldier of the *buai*. The name indicates something that is sharp, for example a splinter or a fishbone (*poron nik*). *Mwat* is the bandicoot, a house builder and an active supporter of a higher *lapan*.

*Kosom* is another warrior of a fighting *lapan*. The name means dagger. *Ngoren* is said to be the last *lapan*, just like the last bunch of bananas of a banana tree.4 The etymology of the word is not clear. *Menai* is a true helper of a big *lapan* and is able to produce large quantities of food. The image is appealing. *Menai* is a mollusc (*Ovula ovum* or white cowrie) living in the sea, which has a beautiful white shell, called *naet* in Baluan. Normally the shell is totally covered by the dark flesh of the animal, just like the big *lapan* is covered by his followers. In times of danger the animal quickly withdraws into the shell. On Baluan only high ranking *lapans* have the right to decorate their houses with these white shells. *Memeng* is a ruffian, someone who steals and spoils other people's property. *Teli* is a man who has been beaten in a battle, a man without a house, a rubbish man.

When we consider these different names, it becomes clear that two elements are of paramount importance, namely warfare and feast-giving; the latter is connected with peace. An important political leader who had a great interest in and knowledge of the tradition but whose own *lapan* status was very much disputed, tried to group the *lapan* titles into binary oppositions on the basis of this distinction. In several attempts at various times he came to different conclusions. This suggests that he was trying to rationalise and structure his knowledge rather than merely represent a handed-down tradition.5 To one side of the opposition he put those leaders who were *lapan* by right of birth. At the other side were *lapans* who received

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3 As the chewing of betelnut (areca nut) is and was an important pastime on Baluan (except for members of the SDA church) it is not surprising that it has been an important locus of symbolic production. The distribution and sharing of betelnut and the various uses of lime have received a range of meanings, which were central to social life (asking for allies in a war, establishing a friendly relation, insulting someone, offering peace etc.).

4 One of the men who were knowledgeable on this topic had the opinion that the sons of a leading *lapan* were respectively in order of birth: *pul*, *peu*, and *ngoren*. He was one of the supporters of the idea that *pul* is the highest *lapan*.

5 Compare Berger and Luckmann (1967:82) quoted in the previous chapter: "[...] reflective consciousness superimposes the quality of logic on the institutional order."
their title as a result of their military power. What I present here is one of his versions which is the most consistent with information I received from others.6

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>original lapans</th>
<th>war lapans</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>pul</td>
<td>buai</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kop</td>
<td>peu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mwat</td>
<td>poron</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ngoren</td>
<td>kosom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>menai</td>
<td>memeng</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Although no one else constructed anything similar, the opposition was relevant and widely acknowledged. It found expression in various ways, for example in the shouts a lapan could use when he started a big feast. If he called out kironapon it indicated that his leadership had been passed on to him from his ancestors, but if he shouted poroki he asserted that his own power (porok) had made him lapan.

In the discussions about the re-establishment of lapan in public life all the titles mentioned above were used as if they referred to leaders of lapan status. However, often a distinction was made between a big lapan (buai, pul, and peu) and a small lapan (the rest). It appears that the new discourse had effected an expansion of the meaning of lapan. When I probed the matter with knowledgeable and respected informants, they asserted that only men with one of the three highest titles were considered lapan in the past. The other titles referred to people who were leaders only within their own lineages. In relation to a lapan they were called lau, which can be glossed as 'people' or 'followers of a lapan'. Underlying the hierarchy of titles was a system of dual rank. Descent groups led by a lapan had higher status than descent groups without such leaders. Individual members of a lapan family could be referred to as narulapan (son of a lapan), whereas members of low ranking lineages were called sayo. The devaluation of the lapan title can possibly be understood as the result of a complicity between those who tried to gain status by claiming the name for themselves and those who accepted this to extend the support for the rehabilitation of traditional leaders. Both groups had an interest in the expansion of the domain of kastam.

6 Other versions were: (1) pul : buai; kop : peu; mwat : poron; ngoren : kosom; teli : menai; (memeng remains a rest); and: (2) pul : buai; mwat : peu; kop : poron/kosom; teli : menai; ngoren : memeng. The most conspicuous difference with the version given in the text is that menai was placed at the side of the war lapans, which is in conflict with other information I received about this title.
Mortuary feasts

Another point emphasised in the discussions about traditional leadership was the connection between mortuary feasts and the ranking of lapan. There were several types of mortuary feasts which conferred differential status on the organiser. Because the Baluan material appears to be quite different from what has been described in other parts of Manus and because we have very little information about lapan feasts in Manus generally, I describe the ceremonies in some detail. I do not deal here with the funeral ceremonies and exchanges which were performed immediately after a death. The feasts described were held several years after the death of an important leader in order to commemorate his name. They were organised by his successor who made his own name by so doing. The following historical reconstruction is completely based on oral information since the lapan feasts were discontinued around 1946.

Unlike the disagreement about the hierarchy of lapan titles there was a clear consensus about the ranking of mortuary feasts. The most important one was called kau, which means kava, or tukangkau, ‘to crush the kava root’. The origin of this name was not known. Although kava drinking was connected with the funeral ceremonies immediately following a person’s death, it was not practised during a kau. Other names for this feast are kauruktuk, which also means to crush the kava root; and naluai liplip, to bring the food.

A kau required several years of preparation. The mourning observances for a deceased lapan could last more than a year and during this time the activities of his successor and other kin were very much restricted. Because the funeral exchanges involved a heavy investment of energy and resources for a lapan family and their network, normally two to three years would elapse before the successor announced

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7 Schwartz (1962:239), who did some fieldwork on Baluan, makes mention of the difference: “On Baluan, ceremonial exchange, feasts, and display of wealth seem to have centered more around the deaths and the mourning observances of important men than around marriage, but this additional emphasis on death was within the more familiar system of affinal exchange.”

8 One of the contemporary lapan of Lipan claimed to have organised a lesser lapan feast (kanensangkai) for his father in 1982. This is the only example of such a feast after 1946. In general people said: “We are not able to do that anymore.” At present the focus is more on marriage payments (mossap) and on the exchanges immediately following someone’s death (pailou).

9 Tukangkau also refers to a big flat stone on which the kava root is crushed.
that he was planning a kau. The proclamation was done during a small ceremony in which cooked food was distributed and the slitgongs were played in a particular way. A very large fish was normally part of the food offered.\(^\text{10}\)

The start of the kau preparations was called i nga lapan (he eats the lapan). The new lapan would ask his supporters (paralan) to begin raising pigs for the big distribution which was to take place at the end of the kau. He himself would have marked five to ten piglets from his own herds for this purpose. The supporters consisted of three different groups. In the first place the organiser relied on his patrilateral relatives. These included his own patrilineage and the other (agnatically related) lineages of the same clan, which formed his basic support group, but also his patrilateral cross-cousins\(^\text{11}\) who were his narumpein. The second group were his matrilateral relatives to whom he was narumpein.\(^\text{12}\) The third group of contributors were his affines (kauwat), who were the recipients of bridewealth (mossap) and related payments for his wife. Depending on the name of the organiser, more distantly related lineages and clans could also join in.\(^\text{13}\)

When the pigs were almost big enough the lapan would determine a time. All his supporters should then clear and plant a large garden of yams and mamis (Dioscorea esculenta, or lesser yam). After about nine to twelve months the garden food was ripe and the last stage of the preparations began. Every supporting lineage of some standing would carve a sinal. This is a carved and painted beam about 10 metres long, 20 centimetres wide and 15 centimetres thick.\(^\text{14}\) The sinal was laid

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\(^\text{10}\) Apparently this small ceremony was open to innovation and the originality with which it was conducted could contribute to the fame of the organiser. When Sameal of the Sauka clan announced a kau for his renowned father Ponaun, he introduced a new game which was a competition in spear throwing at the stems of banana trees. The fruits of the trees were eaten during the ceremony. This happened during the time of the Japanese occupation and the game was replayed at the festivities of the Balopa cultural show in 1987. Sameal was not able to complete this kau, because he died suddenly and prematurely. His younger brother Ngat Moyap organised a lapan feast for Sameal immediately after the war, which was one of the last two on Baluan (people disagree on whether this was a kau or the somewhat smaller kanensangka). The other post-war lapan feast was organised by Otto Nembou of Pungap.

\(^\text{11}\) Especially first generation cross-cousins, who were considered as very close relatives "as if they were brothers".

\(^\text{12}\) This group will be the main receiver of gifts when he himself dies (see below in the text).

\(^\text{13}\) The structure of abutu and festivals in Kalauna, Goodenough Island (Young 1971:190-1) is remarkably similar.

\(^\text{14}\) These figures are based on the dancing beams I have seen during the Balopa cultural show of 1987. According to Bühler (1935:26) the length of the beams ranged from 10 to 20 metres.
horizontally on three forked poles of about two metres planted vertically into the ground. The leading men of the lineage would dance on the *sinal* on the day of the feast. After his supporters had finished, the organising *lapan* would have two beams carved. One was a *sinal* like those of the others, strong enough to carry a number of men, and the other was of a different kind which was called *mui*. This beam was of the same length but thinner than the *sinal* and rested only on two poles. A maximum of three men could dance on this beam, one in the middle and one on top of each of the two poles. The result was that the ends of the *mui* would swing up and down when it was danced upon.15

The production of the various dancing beams was surrounded by ceremony. Every step of the process, from the cutting of the tree in the bush to the final presentation, was accompanied by a lavish meal for the participants. All the garden food grown for the *kau* and some of the pigs would be used for the preparation of the beams. It is possible that a distribution of cooked and uncooked garden food and cooked pig occurred at the final presentation of the *sinal* or *mui* to its owner.

For the final part of the *kau* all the contributors would bring their pigs and *sinal* to the house of the *lapan*. The pigs were transported hanging from carrying sticks with their legs tied together. The *lapan* house had a large rectangular and flattened clearing in front (*kulului*) where the feast would take place. The *mui* and *sinal* were set up in front of the house and, if there were many, some of them could be placed along the sides of the *kulului*. The pigs were laid down in rows in front of the dancing beams.

On the day of the feast a large crowd would gather around and on the *kulului* of the *lapan*. Some of the contributors had already brought their *sinal* and others were still arriving. People from the other villages and even from other islands were present. A stick was planted at the outer end of the *kulului* and a bunch of betelnut was hung on it. A large wooden bowl (*brukei*) was placed underneath. After introductory speeches the feast would start with the leading *lapan* and his supporters dancing to the tones of the slitgongs towards the stick with the betelnut. One of the contributors then took off a number of betelnuts to indicate the number of pigs he had brought and put the nuts in the bowl. The company danced back to the

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15 I have seen this during the Balopa cultural show of 1987 and it was an impressive and fascinating sight indeed.
sinal and repeated this procedure until all the participants had had their turn. Next, the bowl was carried to a place in front of the house and the nuts were counted with a loud voice.\textsuperscript{16} After the total number was known an enormous festive commotion would break out. The important men danced on their sinal, naked except for their ornaments of strung shell (\textit{sapul}) and dogs' teeth (\textit{lipamui}) and a white cowrie shell (\textit{naet}) on the top of the penis, which was swung around and caught between the legs. The organiser made the ends of his mui move up and down like the wings of a bird and the rest of the people danced in front of the beams and among the pigs while lime was sprinkled around.

After the dancing the distribution of the pigs began. First it was the turn of the leading \textit{lapan} to give away his own pigs. He could not expect any return on these gifts in the future as he made them in the name of his father. ‘He made \textit{lapan}’ (\textit{i pe \textit{lapan})}. The recipients were collectively called \textit{kui} while the givers were referred to as \textit{pumbiw}. The first group to receive a gift and therefore the most important \textit{kui} were the relatives of the deceased \textit{lapan}'s mother. “On Baluan we give to the mother”, \textit{lapan} Otto Nembou used to tell me. However, the 'sisters' (\textit{samsol}) and the \textit{narumpein} of the dead \textit{lapan} were also to receive gifts. This group of patrilateral kin had an ambiguous position as they had also contributed to the feast.\textsuperscript{17} Next, the supporting \textit{lapan}s would distribute their pigs. They were not bound by the same rule as the central organiser and they would make their gifts in such a way that they could expect a return of money (\textit{kokom})\textsuperscript{18} in the future. After the distribution of the pigs was finished everybody went home or to stay with relatives. There was no sharing of cooked food during this feast.

A \textit{lapan} feast of a smaller scale was called \textit{kanensangkai}. \textit{Sangkai} is the black paint put on the body during mourning observances. \textit{Kanen} is meat and symbolises good food in general. \textit{Kanensangkai} is thus the food which is given to commemorate a dead person. For this feast only the organiser made a \textit{sinal} but not a \textit{mui}, which

\textsuperscript{16} This custom was re-enacted during the 1987 Balopa cultural show. However, the nuts represented notes of ten kina instead of pigs.

\textsuperscript{17} This is somewhat speculative as it is difficult to reconstruct exchange patterns which ceased to operate long ago. However, my evidence suggests that the pattern was similar to that of a pailou, which is the distribution (of different things, however) that takes place immediately after someone’s death and which I had the chance of studying more extensively.

\textsuperscript{18} \textit{Kokon} consisted of dogs’ teeth (\textit{lipamui}) and a special kind of shell (\textit{Imbricaria punctata}) processed and strung on a thread (\textit{sapul}).
was to be used exclusively during a *kau*. There would be considerably fewer pigs but garden food was included in the distributions. Although the number of people involved was smaller than in a *kau*, this was still considered a big feast. The pattern of contribution and distribution was the same.

A *lapan* feast which was accorded the same importance as *kanensangkai* was called *pau*. It consisted of the distribution of large quantities of coconut oil (*pau*) and was the monopoly of the Pungap clan. The last *lapan* of this clan to plan a *lapan* feast, Otto Nembou, could not organise a *pau* because of wartime conditions. Instead he made a *kau* during which 20 to 30 pigs were distributed, five of them his own. There were two dancing beams, one *sinal* and one *mui*, both prepared by Otto himself. The *kau*\(^\text{19}\) was started around 1942 and was completed in 1946, just before the Paliau Movement put an end to this kind of feast. It was the last traditional *lapan* feast held on Baluan.

The three feasts described above were the prerogative of the three highest *lapans*: *buai*, *peu*, and *pul*. Other leaders were not only practically unable to organise anything of such scale, but were formally prohibited from doing so. There were, however, two mortuary feasts which any man who could mobilise the necessary resources was allowed to organise. One was called *woyu*. This was, like those described above, a distribution of food in front of the house of the organiser, but it was on a much smaller scale and there were no dancing beams. Normally only one pig was cut and divided between several heaps of food. The *mamis* (*suwe1*) were presented in baskets (*lik*) which were hung from bamboo sticks or were put in wooden bowls (*brukei*). The yams (*mwaien*) were tied to a branched stick (*yayai*).\(^\text{20}\) In addition to the food, claypots, mats, and baskets could also be given. The pattern of distribution was the same as the other feasts. Some informants said that half of the gifts would be presented to the deceased’s mother’s family and the other half was for his patrilateral kin (*samsol* and *narumpein*).

The smallest of the mortuary feasts held to commemorate the name of an important man was the *kolorai*. The name refers to a type of song which is sung in two voices. The melodies of the two voices are fixed but people compose their own

\(^{19}\) By some informants, who did not organise their own *lapan*, it was referred to as *kanensangkai*.

\(^{20}\) This mode of presentation was still practised in feasts of various kinds (*kastam* and *lotu*) during the time of my fieldwork.
words in a linguistic register which is now dying out.\textsuperscript{21} A \textit{kolorai} was quite distinct from the other feasts because it would be held inside the house of the organiser during the night. The visitors were served with cooked food, betelnut, tobacco, and probably also kava. They would sing in pairs about the life and deeds of the deceased. Others cried when they were moved by the songs and the memory of the dead. At daybreak everybody went to sleep. If there was enough food there would be another night of singing and eating, and at the end of the feast a small distribution of food took place. One informant added that in his clan the \textit{narumpein} were asked to build a house in which the \textit{kolorai} was to be held. The organiser had to feed them and his affines would contribute a pig. After the feast the \textit{narumpein} would not only receive food, but could take anything they wanted in and around the house.

Because the ranking of the \textit{lapan} feasts was not disputed, an investigation of feasts actually held and remembered shed some light on the hierarchy of \textit{lapan} titles. The last \textit{lapan} feasts were held by the parental generation of the people who are now in their fifties or older and who were witness to these occasions.\textsuperscript{22} It appears that in the period of roughly 25 years preceding the start of the Paliau Movement in 1946, at least eight ceremonies were held which apparently deserved the name \textit{kau}. Four of those are beyond any doubt in this category, namely two organised by the lineage Umtan Kanawi (clan Muiou) in Lipan,\textsuperscript{23} one by the clan PulianPaluai in Manuai, and one by the lineage Umtan Popol (clan Yongkul) in Parioi. The other four were most likely also \textit{kau}, although possibly on a somewhat smaller scale as some of the informants referred to them as \textit{kanensangkai}. These are the \textit{lapan} feasts of the clan Sauka in Lipan, the lineage Umtan KuamKondai in Pungap, the lineage Umtan Sapou (clan Yongkul) in Parioi, and the lineage Umtan Ngi or Tile in Perelik. All but two of the organisers of these \textit{kau} feasts had the title \textit{buai} or \textit{buai} and \textit{pul}. The two exceptions were the, \textit{lapan} of the Sauka clan who was \textit{peu} and \textit{pul} and the \textit{lapan} of Umtan Saleap (Yongkul) who was \textit{peu}. In that period the Sauka clan, which consisted of two lineages, was clearly asserting itself because

\textsuperscript{21} At the time of my fieldwork only some of the old people knew this register and were able to compose and sing the songs.

\textsuperscript{22} The only exception is Otto Nembou of Pungap, who is still alive.

\textsuperscript{23} One was organised by Kanawi for his father Pokarup and the next by Lungol for his elder brother Kanawi.
it had become numerically very strong. Umtan Saleap organised its *kau* when the *lapan* of the leading lineage (Umtan Popol), who was *buai*, had died and his successor was still far too young to make a mortuary feast for him.24

The other leaders with the title *peu* had either made a *kanensangkai* or, in a few cases, a feast of lower status if the strength of their lineage had declined. Although a *lapan* with the title *pul* was formally entitled to prepare a *kau* to honour his predecessor, no example of this was remembered. Instead the name *pul* was most frequently associated with the lesser public ceremony of *woyu*. This information confirms the hierarchy of titles suggested above, namely *buai*, *peu*, and *pul*. We may thus conclude that the *lapan* titles associated with fighting (*buai* and *peu*) had a higher status than the one which referred to peace (*pul*). The titular war leaders were the organisers of the largest feasts, at least in more recent history. It is interesting, however, that a number of the leading *lapans* also acquired the title *pul* in addition to their more warlike names of honour. We might speculate that the adoption of this title with its reference to peace and originality widened the basis of their legitimacy.

Discussions about the mortuary feasts also indicated that the prestige of leaders with the same *lapan* title could vary considerably. The main criterion for renown was achievement, whereas the titles tended to be hereditary. It could thus happen that a clan or lineage claimed a certain title for its leader, although it had not been able to perform the corresponding ceremonies for several generations.25 Clearly, there was a fluctuating ranking of clans and leaders according to their influence and prestige, and *lapan* feasts were the prime occasions for challenging someone else's name in public.

The crucial factor in a *lapan*'s performance was the amount of support he could command. According to my informants a *lapan* relied mainly on his kin and affines. His principal support group was his own lineage and patrilineally related lineages, which directly shared in the fame he was able to build up. It was essential for him to maintain a delicate unity between these groups, as division could easily occur.

24 A brother of the deceased *lapan* planned a *kau* but died during the preparations.

25 A good example is the Munukut clan whose leader had the title *buai*, but there are many other cases.
Secondly a *lapan* was helped by his ‘sisters’, their husbands, and their children (*narumpein*), and, thirdly, by the lineage of his wife or wives.

However, there was another group which could add considerably to the power basis of a *lapan*. It appears that a strong leader often gathered around him a small group of predominantly young men, who were refugees or war captives taken or bought by him. Only a few informants mentioned this, but investigation of genealogies proved that it was in fact general practice to recruit outsiders. A *lapan* tried to secure the continuing support of these dependants by giving them land and a wife. Gradually these clients and their descendants would become full members of the lineage and could even attain high status.26

A *lapan* not only had a title but distinguished himself from other people in a number of ways. Only a leading *lapan* could receive and distribute a complete bunch of betelnut during a public ceremony. He possessed a special shell (*yanul*) with which he would cut the bunch in smaller parts for the lineages he represented. If he made a speech a *lapan* would call attention by shouting “uh, uh, uh”. This was called *wukwuk* and was strictly forbidden to lesser leaders. A *lapan* had the prerogative of building a bigger house and decorating it with a painted forefront (*lo*), with carved posts27 and white cowrie shells (*naet*) hanging from the top of the entrance. Every *lapan* lineage had its own form of decoration and its own names for things as different as slitgongs, ceremonial beds, canoes, spears, baskets, shells, and money. These things were the property of the lineage and appropriation by another group would prompt a violent reaction.28 Many if not all of these distinctive features implied a hierarchy. It was, for example, more prestigious to wear a belt of dogs’ teeth on the head than around the waist and only the most important *lapan* had the right to wear a *pwenbul*, a delicately carved circular decoration made of shell and turtle which was attached to a necklace.

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26 A prime example of this is the lineage Umtan Saleap (clan Yongkul), who are the descendants of one of the five men captured by Popol (*lapan* of Yongkul) three generations ago. The leader of Umtan Saleap attained the title *peu* and organised a *kau*.

27 The central posts of a house were called *nurui* and the carvings on them *mamaron*.

28 One story relates how most of the able bodied men of the Luibuai clan were killed by members of the Muiou clan after they were lured into the house under the pretence of a ceremonial payment. The massacre was a punishment for the unauthorised use of a specific Muiou way of carrying baskets and putting flowers in the hair.
Stories of leadership and warfare

The stories about the deeds and fights of individual *lapan* leaders in the past constitute an important historical source. Because these stories often go back six generations, they can help us to reconstruct some aspects of leadership in the period before colonization. The *lapan* stories are not matters of public knowledge, but are still guarded by descendants of the key figures in the stories; they come into the open only if there is a dispute about land or leadership status.

These *lapan* stories give valuable additional information concerning the process of the appropriation and transfer of leadership in precolonial times. They are an important counterpoint to the dominant ideology that *lapan* is an inherited status and cannot be acquired by other means. A related genre consists of the songs (*polpolot*) about the exploits of the ancestors. They describe some of the events which are related in stories but do so in poetic language and in a very abridged form. For this reason, I will not deal further with them here.

In the history of Lipan village the name Lolokai holds a central place. The story of how a boy from Lasei on south-coast Manus drifted to Baluan when he was fishing is widely known because it is connected to the histories of many clans. The boy, Nakei, was adopted and renamed Lolokai by two men from Lipan who had no children. Lolokai married two women and had four sons, who became a considerable force in Lipan. Through a policy of marriage, warfare and intimidation, Lolokai’s descendants became the leaders of Lipan. When the Germans arrived about four generations after Lolokai, the first *luluai* of Baluan they appointed was from Mulou clan, the direct patrilineal descendants of Lolokai’s eldest son. This *luluai*, Kanawi Pokarup, had the *lapan* title of *buai* and *pul*. The second most important clan of Lipan at that time were the Sauka, descendants of Lolokai’s second son. Their *lapan* had the title *peu* and *pul*.

The story of Lolokai and his sons has many versions which are linked to contemporary disputes about land. There is another story of a complete stranger who became *lapan*, namely Tarau from Rambutyo Island. As a small boy he was captured in his home island by a group of Titan speaking people who lived close to the north coast of Baluan, in pile dwellings surrounding the tiny islet Mondalei (near Sone). Tarau was bought by Pila-u, the *lapan* of Sone, through a brother whose
Titan trade friend (kauwat) had taken the child. News of the boy spread and one of the two lapans of Perelik wanted the child. He sent his wife, who was a sister of Pila-u, to ask for him. In all the versions of this story much is made of the way she humbled herself to impress on her brother that she really wanted the child. As a result Pila-u could not refuse, and Tarau was taken to Perelik, where he became a leader owing to his qualities as a warrior and an organiser. He was able to set up the defence of this village, which was often under attack before his time. His son married the daughter of the lapan of Pungap, who had the title buai, and his grandsons became the first and second luluai of Perelik. The leader of Tarau's lineage received the title buai, which did not exist in Perelik before.

To give an impression of the genre I will cite one lapan story extensively. I have chosen the story of the lapan of Yongkul clan in Parioi because it combines various aspects of the transfer of leadership in an elegant way and also because it is relatively unproblematic with regard to present disputes. Five versions of parts of the story were recorded on tape. The version which I follow closely is from Kalai Poraken, who is a descendant of the central figure in the story in a direct male line. His position as main lapan of Parioi is undisputed. Two versions were told by members of the Poipoi clan, also in Parioi, which transferred the leadership of the village to Yongkul. Two other versions were derived from informants belonging to Manuai village. Both were descendants of the key figure in the following story, although not in a purely male line. As we shall see, one branch of the Yonkul clan moved to Manuai to become the leading lineage there. All the informants have claims to lapan titles. Kalai is buai and pul and his two fellow villagers (from two different lineages of the Poipoi clan) both claim the title pul. One of the Manuai informants is lapan of the Poipoi clan in Manuai and is also pul, whereas the other is the daughter of the last lapan of PulianPaluai who held the title buai. Although Kalai was not as a talented storyteller as some of my other informants, his version was by far the most elaborated one. The following is a close translation of this version (some repetition is omitted).

29 There are two clans with the name Poipoi. One belongs to Manuai village and the other to Parioi. The two clans are genealogically related.

30 Her name is Yamat (see figure 2). The story was told on her account by her daughter's husband who is a specialist in genealogies and lapan stories.
I want to tell the story of the clan Yongkul. The name of the man of this clan is Kanau Kolpai. Kanau had one sister who married to Munukut Karin. She gave birth to two boys. One was called Marankopat and the other Silapwe. One man had died and the boys' father decided to make a large meal to end the period of mourning and to send the mourners home. He told the boys that he wanted to use the fruits of the breadfruit tree which stood close to their house. At the time of the feast each of them should harvest part of the tree. However, Silapwe did not obey this and took all the breadfruit. Then there was a quarrel between the two brothers. Marankopat said: "Never mind, you stay with our father and I shall go to the family of our mother". Marankopat left and arrived at Maksik, the place of his uncle. Very early in the morning he waited at the back of the house while it was raining gently. His uncle's wife woke up and wanted to go out. Then she saw him waiting. She told her husband: "Your sister's son (woliam) stands outside the house". "Go and call him to come inside". She asked Marankopat to enter the house and he talked about his trouble. His uncle said: "All right you can come here". Marankopat lived with his uncle, grew up and married.

In those days the side of Lipan would often attack the side of Mun, which are the people of Sone, Parioi, Perelik, and Manuai. The men of Lipan would capture some people of Mun and sell them to the islanders of Lou for obsidian and wooden bowls. The people of Lou would then eat the Saluan captives.

All right, Marankopat used to hear this when he still lived in Munukut. He was married now and he asked his uncles to build a house. They made a house for him. They erected the houseposts and put the rest to it. While they were still working on it, the men of Lipan

31 The speaker retrospectively connects Kanau Kolpai with the name Yongkul. This is however an anachronism. The place where Kanau lived was called Maksik and the origin of the name Yongkul is explained in the story.

32 The other versions refer to Salnun as the place of origin of Marankopat. This is not really a contradiction, as at present many consider Salnun to be incorporated by Munukut Karin. Historically, however, this was apparently not the case.

33 I leave out a digression about food in the past: taro and tree fruits.

34 Interestingly the episode about the quarrel over the breadfruit appears in all the versions but without the complication of the mourning ceremony.

35 One version relates that he stood there in his warrior outfit: with a spear in his hand and a shell on the top of his penis.

36 Often referred to as Kum, this means 'the east'.
went up the mountain to Manuai. They chased away the people and caught one boy. They put him on a bed and four men carried him. They went down along the road in Pumaliok on their way to Lipan. The mother of the boy was crying and called the name of Marankopat. Marankopat took all his spears and ran to Pumaliok. When he met the men of Lipan carrying the boy, he killed one with his spear. They left the boy and fled, taking the dead body with them. Marankopat untied the boy and called the mother to come from Manuai and get her child back. The mother came and received the child. Marankopat went back to his uncles who were building his house. He said to them: "The name of this house you are making is Yongkul". Then he told them the name of the spear with which he killed a man of Lipan: "The name of this spear is Kumkilamut". The uncles finished the house which was now called Yongkul. The meaning of Yongkul, leaf of the breadfruit tree, is that it protects you from sun and rain. Therefore, the house was called Yongkul. If the men of Lipan would come again the people of Kum could find protection under this house. The meaning of the name of the spear, Kumkilamut, is that the eastside (Kum) could not come to fight any more and kill the people of Mun because there was a strong man to chase them away.

All right, Marankopat had a son, Keket. ...(Kalai went on to give his genealogy: Keket – Popol – Poruan – Poraken – Kalai)...

This part of the story deals with the establishment of the house of Yongkul as the leading lineage of Parioi. Although there are a number of differences between the various versions, one is of special interest. In the story above we are informed that Marankopat married, but neither the name nor the clan of his wife is mentioned. In the versions of informants from the Poipoi clan (in Parioi) the marriage of the key person is of prime importance. This person is called Keket Kopat instead of Marankopat and we are told that he married a daughter of the lapan of Poipoi, Asap Tumolen. When Keket Kopat had proven his prowess in the fight, leadership of the Parioi settlement was officially handed over to him by Tumolen’s father. He received the yanul to cut the betelnut, the flat stone to crush the kavaa root, and a large

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37 Another version elaborates on their destructive activities: putting fire to the houses, killing the pigs and breaking the clay pots.

38 Other versions have the boy tied to a stick with hands and feet together like a pig.
clamshell to feed the pigs so that he would be not only a lapan of war but also one of big feasts.

The second episode of the story describes how a member of the Yongkul lineage moved to Manuai to found the lapan house of PulianPaluai. The name means literally 'mountain of Baluan' and its connotation was that this house was on top of all the other lineages of Baluan. In Kalai's version Marankopat's son Keket had two male children, Popol and Ngi Kuian. The wives of the two brothers had an argument (a common theme in many lapan stories) and Kuian decided to leave Parioi. He went to Manuai and took with him his Yongkul lapan status. His line of descendants has provided the leader of Manuai ever since. There is a substantial difference between Kalai's version of this episode and those of the two Manuai informants. The discrepancy is of a similar kind to the one we have seen in the episode concerning the transfer of leadership in Parioi. Kalai does not give us details about Kuian's mother or wife. In the Manuai versions it is essential that Kuian went to the place of his mother. The precise genealogical connections are different in the two versions (see figure 2), but it is stressed in both that the leadership of Manuai was given to Kuian as an act of free choice by the residing lapan.

To clarify the genealogical links described in this story I will give a simplified diagram of the pedigrees which relate to the different versions. This also serves to illustrate some of the diversity that occurs through a mode of transmission of historical knowledge that favours private over public discourse. However, compared to standard practice in Baluan the three versions are remarkably similar. This testifies to Kalai's undisputed position as the main lapan of Parioi. The line of descent from Keket to Kalai is identical in the three versions, just as the line from Kuian to Yamet. Differences occur in the name of the man who came from Salnun to live with his mother's brother Kolpai of Maksik in Parioi; in the name and clan membership of women; and in the genealogical relations between Keket, Kuian, and Popol as well as between Kuian and Aliokui. As a consequence the generational relationship between the two opponents of episode three, Poruan and Aliokui (see further), is different. The diagram gives only those names which are relevant to the story and subsequent arguments and it represents a very stripped down version of what is actually known.
The third episode concerns a fight between the houses of Yongkul and PulianPaluai. Again I follow Kalai’s version closely.

All right, this clan split into two parts. One part went to Manuai and was called Umtan Kuian and the other stayed in Parioi and was called Umtan Popol. I will now talk about the time of Aliokui and Poruan. The two had the following dispute. Aliokui wanted to be the head lapan and Poruan said: "No, I am in the original lineage of the lapan and I remain the head". This dispute came up and Aliokui looked for a way to kill Poruan. Poruan went to the bush to work in his garden. Poruan had two wives. One was called Posiam and the other Sapou. In the afternoon they returned from their work and they were ambushed by Aliokui and his line. They fought and Poruan was killed. Poruan carried his son Poraken. When his father died Poraken fell onto the ground and a stone wall broke down and covered him. The group of Aliokui did not kill Poraken. Poraken stayed alive.

....[digression about Sapou who was pregnant from Poruan, remarried on Lou, and gave birth to Komet who became luluai of Rei village and waitpus of Lou]....

All right, the people of Parioi wanted to take revenge on Umtan Kuian for the murder of Poruan. When they were mourning for Poruan and killed pigs for this purpose, they took a prime part of a pig and put an obsidian dagger (kosom) inside it. They sent this to Umtan Palasip, because a woman of Yongkul had married to this clan. They followed this woman when they sent the dagger to Umtan Palasip. Palasip cut the piece of pig and found the dagger. He called his people and said: "We have a big thing at hand now, because they have sent us this dagger". They wondered who would be fit to eat the piece of pig. One person was very skilled in spear throwing. His name was Kanau. He has descendants who live in Manuai now. They told him: "You must eat this piece of pig and kill Aliokui". All right, they went to the lapang, which is the place where they practised fighting. Palasip told Kanau now: "If you do not shoot at Aliokui, I will shoot you". When they were ready to go, Aliokui called Kanau and said: "Let us go to the fight". They went and some others stayed behind, because it was a practice ground and many people went there to practise or to watch. Aliokui threw his spears up the hill and the people there dodged them. Then the people uphill shot their spears and the group of Aliokui moved backwards. When they wanted to go uphill again, Kanau hit Aliokui with his spear. One of the people on the hillside called out that they had killed a man. The people thought that someone from above had killed Aliokui,

39 Umtan Kuian is another name for PulianPaluai and Umtan Popol is the main lineage of Yongkul.
but this was a trick. Someone from below had shot him. This was to pay back the murder of Poruan by the line of Aliokui.

This episode shows that competition between leaders did not always take the peaceful form of feast-giving. Moreover, it gives us some insight into practices of warfare which included not only open battle but also, often preferably, strategies of ruse and ambush. The fight was between two groups which were patrilineally very closely related, and it should be noted that one group relied on its affines to carry out the revenge. This emphasises the central importance of marriage relations in the formation of alliances.

Many lapan stories refer to warfare. Of course it may be argued that this tendency is inherent in the genre, as it is focussed on important events in the lives of leading men. However, there is no reason to suspect that the fights did not actually take place, for the separate and diversified traditions of the different clans concur on these central events. The frequency with which fights are mentioned in these stories leads us to believe that warfare was prevalent in Baluan. Fights occurred between major divisions of allied groups such as Mun (west) and Kum (east), but conflicts also arose between neighbouring clans. The story of Yongkul cited above offers an example of both.

It is not possible to assess the scale of the wars with any precision. The stories usually name only one or two killings but occasionally they refer to a much higher number. It is self-evident that the scale of warfare was limited by the size of the groups involved. Clans and lineages were small and political alliances unstable. It appears that sometimes a whole clan was defeated and decimated. The survivors fled to relatives in other places where they were assimilated by local clans. Their descendants are known as puan nin, literally 'fruit from the war'.

Of course warfare was not restricted to groups on Baluan. The seafaring Titan people were feared for their raids on distant islands. It is likely that certain groups of Titan speakers were allowed to live close to Baluan in exchange for protection against other Titan groups. There are also stories of Baluan war leaders who

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40 This episode is also part of another clan's history, namely Munukut who were the victims of this trick because they were wrongly accused of the killing and had to endure the revenge.

41 See chapter 3. The oral traditions of Mbuke Island (Crocombe 1965) and Rambutyo Island point to the same pattern in these places.
ventured outside their island to attack distant enemies. One good example is the story of Kuam Kondai, lapan of Pungap, who killed the lapan of Mbuke Island in order to avenge the murder of an affine.42 The story testifies that lapan Kuam Kondai had friends (kauwat) in places as far as Pere. Kuam Kondai was also a dreaded warrior within Baluan, who caused several groups to move from their land. An imminent conflict with Manuai was avoided only because the lapan of Manuai, Kuian, asked Kuam Kondai's daughter for his son. Again, this underlines the strategic importance of marriage.

The lapan stories present important evidence for the reconstruction of precolonial leadership patterns. Their contribution to the general picture of lapan in the past can be summarised by the following points. In the first place they stress the relevance of warfare to leadership processes. Because the threat of war was constant, a leader had to have the qualities of a warrior. This concurs with earlier evidence that a lapan of the highest status had a title which implied military aggressiveness. The stories indicate that both violent appropriation of lapan status and the voluntary transfer of leadership in exchange for protection occurred.

Secondly, the stories make clear that alliances forged through marriage were very strong. In some cases the transfer of a lapan status was rationalised in this manner. A lapan could extend his power base enormously by one or more successful marriages and it appears that this was common policy. From stories, genealogies, and other sources a tendency is evident for lapan leaders to find marriage partners for their children in other lapan lineages.

Another common theme is that a man goes to the place of his mother to become a leader, because there is no strong man or no male heir at all in that group. In the case of the leaders of Manuai there are three mother-son links in five generations, but this is exceptional.43

Apart from affinal relations, alliances could be forged by adoption. The descendants of both Lolokai and Tarau still maintain relations with the clans from

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42 Almost an identical story was told by a representative of a different but related lineage with the name of another ancestor in the leading part. The two lineages have the same apical ancestor. This is another example of how historical diversity may occur. The discrepancy is clearly related to the issue of conflicting leadership claims.

43 The links are (in figure 2, version 3): Malemal-Kuiam; Palmal-Tuwain; and Yamet-Kondai.
which their ancestors came (in south Manus and Rambutyo respectively) and there are many other examples.

A fifth point is that in four of the six villages an outsider founded the leading lineage.\textsuperscript{44} In the case of Parioi and Manuai the outsider was a close matrilateral kinsman, but in Lipan and Perelik he was a complete stranger who was adopted into a local clan. Interestingly, new leaders seem to produce new names. We have seen the origin of the names Yongkul and PulianPaluai in the story above, and we may add the clan names Muiou, Sauka, and PuliaLipan in Lipan. According to some informants the origin of the village names Lipan and Perelik was also connected with the emergence of new leaders.\textsuperscript{45}

Finally, the stories have made us aware how different clans have diverse perspectives on the same events. One group may stress an affinal or kin relation whereas the other will primarily point to military power. In the story presented above the divergencies are relatively minor. If there is an acute leadership conflict, the versions of past events tend to conflict more dramatically.

The power of lapans

In the previous two sections I have dealt with an important part of the historical discourse within the domain of\textit{kastam}. This discourse was analysed both as a phenomenon in its own right and as a source of information for the reconstruction of the past. To conclude this chapter I compare the evidence presented by the Baluan oral tradition with the literature on other Manus societies.

\textsuperscript{44} This had not evolved into a generally accepted ideology that the leader should be an outsider. The idea of originality certainly carried weight, as is demonstrated, for example, by the appropriation of the title\textit{pul} by some newly established\textit{lapans}. Newcomers were sometimes disparagingly referred to as ‘drifters’ (\textit{wokoka}). The idea of the power of outside leaders had supporters as well. During a time of intensive discussions about leadership I was told several times that all the important leaders of Baluan came from elsewhere. Not surprisingly my informants were descendants of these newcomers. It appears then that both conflicting values were present in discourse and were used by those who had an interest in them.

\textsuperscript{45} The villages were established as concentrated settlements around the leading lineage(s).
First there is the question of rank. The binary opposition between *lapan* and commoner appears to have been widespread if not universal in Manus. Schwartz wrote in 1963, compiling the material available:

Most, and possibly all, Admiralty Island ethnic groups had a two-rank system. People of the higher rank were known as *lapan*, those of the lower rank as *lau*. All living members of a lineage shared the same rank (Schwartz 1963:65).

In a footnote (ibid:94, 7ff) he says about his sources: "The greatest uncertainty is about North Coast Matankor, and the people of the Western end of the archipelago." Later research has completed the picture. Romanucci reports the presence of *lapan* in Mokereng (1966:36)46 and James and Achsah Carrier inform us concerning Ponam that:

Formerly the *lapan* were a hereditary elite, with individuals and patrilineal groups having the status, and with men passing it on to their children (Carrier and Carrier 1989:69).

Although the dual rank system is generally referred to as a *lapan-lau* opposition, this may be slightly misleading. On Baluan the term *lau* indicated the followers of a *lapan* viewed as a group, rather than people of low rank. A person of low status was called *sayo* and as an indication of rank this, rather than *lau*, was the opposite of *lapan*. The word *lapan* primarily indicated a high-ranking leader, but could also refer to the status of a descent group (cf. A. Carrier 1987:94). Individual members of a *lapan* lineage were called *narulapan* (son of a *lapan*). It is possible that the Baluan practice was rather different from that in other Manus societies. The system of formally ranking *lapan* statuses through additional titles has not been reported elsewhere.47

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46 She writes in a footnote (no 1): "Le terme indigène pour <chef> est *lapan* et implique un statut hérité qui néanmoins doit être confirmé. Il y avait habituellement plusieurs familles *lapan*; celle qui visait au pouvoir l'obtenait soit par l'accord des autres soit par la force". Her information about Sori is rather vague (Romanucci 1985:53, 54).

47 A possible indication of a similar practice is found in Schwartz (1963:66): "In a census inquiry about rank in an Usiai group, there were several instances in which, when a man was referred to as a *lapan* by others, they added as a reason that he had given some particular feast, his largest being named - much as one cites, in an academic résumé, the highest degree attained." Concerning the Titan Mead only mentions that in every old village there was a *lapan* family which had "the hereditary right to furnish the *luluai*, the war leader of the village" (Mead 1961[1937]:216; see also Mead 1934:204). This
Although it is generally assumed that the rank of lapan is inherited, this is qualified by both Mead and Schwartz.

There is reason to believe that claims to lapan blood which cannot be supported by conspicuous affinal exchange lapse and that rich lau in a few generations come to be regarded as lapan. There is the saying that "if a lau man is strong he will purchase for his son a pilapan, a female lapari" (Mead 1934:204).

So dependent was the assertion of rank upon attained prestige that it might be better not to call the rank system hereditary at all, but to see, rather, a cross-generational transient effect (Schwartz 1963:66).

Mead argues strongly that the distinction lapan - lau was functionally unimportant in Titan society. What really mattered was performance in the exchange network. Unequal economic achievement would cut across the rank division and could in the end change the markers. In effect, the lapan – lau idiom became, still according to Mead (1961[1937]:216), the formal model which defined the relationship between a rich entrepreneur and his dependants. This discrepancy between ideology and economic reality led Mead to suggest the following interesting hypothesis.

As rank, with the exception of the luluañship, is non-functioning in Manus, and does not even, like the kinship system, provide a pattern for new and anomalous activities, it gives every evidence of being a survival of an institution analogous to those found in other Oceanic societies, but which is of little real importance in Manus culture (Mead 1934:206).

The Baluan material clearly supports the point that lapan status, although primarily conceived as hereditary, certainly also depended on performance. We have seen how some lapan stories describe the transfer of the highest lapan

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48 This is also stated in the older German sources. See for example the compilation of Nevermann (1934:326-327). Interestingly Bühler (1935:26) finds that the Titan have an hereditary leadership status (Häuptlingswürde) whereas the Usuai have not. Unfortunately, he does not elaborate on this.

49 She says for example: "The result is that a few aggressive initiating men finance half the marriages in the community which splits up into three distinct classes which have very little to do with the lapan, lau distinctions. These classes are rich and powerful economic entrepreneurs, the dependent relatives of these men, and men who are poor and obscure, but who are not dependent upon others" (Mead 1934:328).
position to a strong warrior. There is also evidence that failure to make prestigious exchanges eroded the status of some lineages. On the other hand, it is important to note that the leading lineages were remarkably stable in the more recent (and therefore accessible) history. Yongkul in Parioi has held authority for six generations, PulianPaluai has done so for five generations in Manuai, and the descendants of Tarau have been leaders of Perelik for four generations. Muiou and Sauka clans were dominant in Lipan for six generations until they were eclipsed by Paliu Maloat after the Second World War. Of course, we can attribute the success of these groups partly to "a cross-generational transient effect", but in my judgement the force of an ideology of inherited seniority is also important.

In Baluan the rule is that the eldest son inherits the status of his father and becomes the leader of his younger siblings. Seniority is reflected in the kinship terminology as well as in the naming system. The terms for younger/older sibling of the same sex are extended to other lineages so that all the sons of the younger brother become saneing to the sons of the older brother who are toung to the former. Genealogical ranking of lineages and clans is certainly important, although again, the order can be changed through performance. The leading clans of Lipan, for example, descended from the first and second born sons of Lolokai. Clans originating from his younger sons have lesser status. The descendants of the first born who became known as Muiou were split into three lineages. At the time the Germans arrived the genealogically second lineage had outmatched the first and provided the first luluai of Baluan. However, the genealogical order is not forgotten and the takeover has to be explained.

Although formal hierarchy is not predominant in present-day practice, it can be reconstructed as a pervasive feature of traditional Baluan culture: kinship terminology, Japan titles and feasts, and physical distinctions testify to this. We can

50 It is not clear what the influence of pacification has been on this. However, in most cases the period of colonial peace concerns only the last two generations.

51 Incidentally, Paliu Maloat also descended from Lolokai but from a younger son.

52 The birth order names are reproduced in chapter 1. The relative kinterms are toung ('my older sibling of the same sex'); naing and saneing (both 'my younger sibling of the same sex'). Naing is mostly used for real siblings only, whereas saneing applies to all classificatory brothers and sisters.

53 Within the second clan of Lipan, Sauka, the genealogical ranking between the lineages has persisted unaltered.
only speculate about past practices but we may assume on the basis of the evidence that formal ranking was, as an ideology, an important power resource. As such it could not stand on its own and had to be supported by other, perhaps more fundamental sources of power.

Before taking a closer look at the basis of a traditional leader's power, I would like to revive Mead's hypothesis. Is it possible that the importance of rank in traditional Baluan thinking is a survival of an older social structure in which inherited status was actually predominant? Pawley (1982:33,46) suggests that hereditary chieftainship was an old Austronesian institution which has evolved into less hierarchical social forms in Melanesian societies, mainly through culture contact with non-Austronesian speaking communities. Part of his argument is based on the reconstruction of the Proto-Oceanic contrasting pair: *lapa(t) 'big, great' and *diki 'small'. The Manus word lapan appears a regular reflex of the POC *lapa64, which Pawley connects with a concept of chieftainship.55 In Manus languages the term lapan seems universal and, as far as I have been able to determine, it always indicates a leader with a more or less hereditary status, and it has connotations of 'big', 'good', 'superior', and 'possessing special powers'.

Returning to more recent history there is the question of the basis of a leader's power in Baluan during the early period of colonisation and some time before that. One source of power has already been mentioned, namely the (possibly 'surviving') institutions and ideologies of an hierarchical social order. In the struggle for leadership this institutional and ideological order gives an important structural advantage to a person born in the right place.

A second form of power is dependent on the performance of a leader. It is the prestige he is able to acquire through feast-giving. The most important and prestigious ceremonies were undoubtedly the lapan feasts staged to commemorate the name of a deceased leader. Unfortunately, there is little information on this kind

54 Pawley, personal communication. The -n of lapan represents a fossilised third person singular concord suffix.

55 On the basis of evidence from San Cristobal Pawley suggests that in Proto-Polynesian one part of the opposition had been lost and that *qariki, literally 'the little one', had become the term for noble or chief. The explanation is that the little one was the first born son and successor of *qualapa, 'the great one'. Both terms of the pair are still present in several languages of south-east Solomons. For example in Arosi language araha is 'chief' (and ar'i his 'oldest son'), and in Lau the word for 'chief' is alafa (ibid:39-41). See also Lichtenberk (1986) who criticises Pawley's reconstruction and revises the gloss of *lapati to 'leader' generally, as opposed to hereditary chief.
of feast elsewhere in Manus. Mead writes that no such feast took place during her stay in Manus and that it was therefore not possible to get very detailed information. She describes it as "an inter-village affair with the luluai of each village as organiser" (Mead 1934:195). A very similar picture is given by Carrier and Carrier (1985:508): "[Lapan feasts are] prestigious exchanges between the leaders (lapan) of different communities." Like Mead they mention that one community would sponsor such a lapan feast only once every generation. The most detailed information is given by Schwartz (1963:82-83). His description of the pattern of distribution differs markedly from my data concerning Baluan.56 Interestingly, he mentions that the recipients did not make an immediate return, which is unlike the usual affinal exchange pattern (Schwartz 1963:83). This resembles the Baluan practice. The rule was that the organiser of a lapan feast could not expect any return for his pigs. This was meant to be the ultimate gift, made exclusively for the name of his father. In fact it was the most direct investment a leader could make in his own name.

Except for a short reference by Schwartz to Usiai feasts there is no mention in the literature of the kind of ranking of lapan feasts described above. It is not clear whether such ranking was totally absent or whether it was considered too unimportant to be mentioned.57 In any case, the available evidence suggests a number of differences between Baluan and some other Manus societies. In particular, it appears that the occurrence of this kind of feasts was more frequent in Baluan villages than "the once in a generation, if at all" (Schwartz 1963:82) reported elsewhere.

In Mead's depiction of the old Pere culture the main source of inequality was the performance in affinal exchanges, especially bridewealth payments. Because young

56 He writes: "Such a feast was culminating, practically the last enterprise of an unusually strong leader. Basically, it seems that the distribution was a simultaneous payment by the leader as Ion kamal, representing his patrilineage and clan (but not the multi-clan village), to all of the scattered lom pein wherever there were women who had married out of the patrilineage or clan. But also, payments were made at the same time to those for whom the leader, as lom pein, had received wives for himself, his sons, and his wards" (Schwartz 1963:82). The Titan concept of lom pein equals the Baluan narumpein. As has been described above the principal recipient on Baluan was the lineage from which the mother of the deceased lapan had come. The organiser is narumpein to this group, but he does not receive a wife for himself nor for his sons from this group. The narumpein of the organiser are both contributors and recipients to the feast.

57 Schwartz (1963:82) gives three different names for lapan feasts, namely wuru, tjinal, and lapan, but he does not speak about different degrees of prestige attached to them. Probably these are Titan terms. On Baluan tjinal was equated with kanensangkai, and wuru may be linguistically related to woyu.
men were unable to supply the necessary valuables for marriage themselves, they were dependent on older relatives who acted as financiers. Through the institution of adoption the concept of a relative could be extended almost at will. This was used by rich entrepreneurs to increase their influence and prestige, because the young men whose bridewealth they had financed had to work for them in return.

It is possible that strategic adoption for economic gain was not as widespread on Baluan as in Pere. People maintained that a lapan only paid the bridewealth for his own sons or younger brothers. Preferably the wife would be from another lapan family and then the marriage ceremony would be a great affair. If people were not rich, they would stage a more modest ceremony or they could even go as far as to omit it altogether. The only indication of payment on behalf of others that I found was when a lapan with non-kin dependants such as war captives or refugees would acquire a wife for them.

Investment in other people's marriages may not have been prominent on Baluan, but the general picture of the leader as an economic entrepreneur is certainly valid for Baluan as well. A prestigious leader would be able to initiate a lot of exchanges, often with distant trade partners. A big lapan feast in particular could attract many distant relatives and friends. Exchange took place not only within the ceremonies themselves but also around them. The ceremonial gatherings provided fora around which much private trading could occur. Thus, a lapan and his supporters would have the opportunity to obtain goods which were scarce or absent on Baluan, such as obsidian, clay pots and sago. The immaterial 'symbolic capital' of prestige could certainly be converted into material wealth.

A third resource of power was also based on performance. It was the repute a leader had built up through his military activities. If we call the feast-giving aspect of leadership the management of prestige through exchange, we may call this aspect the manipulation of fear through violence. This includes both the intimidation and protection of followers and the pursuit of feats of war against other groups. The importance of violence for processes of dominance and subordination should not be underestimated. When a key informant explained to me why a leading lapan was mostly buai and pul at the same time, he pointed out that people helped such a man in all his projects not only because of loyalty but also out of fear. Even today

strength, aggressiveness and courage are highly valued qualities, although people will often stress that a real leader should also distinguish himself through his capacity to solve conflicts in a peaceful way.

The ubiquity of warfare in precolonial and early colonial Manus is attested by many early, predominantly German, written sources. Fortified villages are reported in the literature as well as in oral tradition. Nevermann gives an elaborate description of some of the wars and raids happening around the turn of the century, based on German reports (Nevermann 1934: 329-335). Of course, we must be cautious in generalising the picture we find in these early sources. Some of the authors certainly relished accentuating the fierceness of the 'savages' they had encountered. Moreover, the disruptions of the contact period and especially the seizure of firearms by some Manus groups had probably intensified warfare. The combined evidence of oral tradition and written history leaves little doubt, though, that warfare was an important aspect of precolonial Manus life.

Of the modern anthropologists working in Manus only Schwartz seems to appreciate fully the importance of warfare in precolonial leadership processes in Manus (especially Schwartz 1963). The Baluan material substantiates the claim that we should not underestimate this aspect. In the lapan stories change of leadership is always rationalised, at least partly, with reference to the warrior qualities of the new leader, and the highest lapan titles are those associated with warfare.

Of course the highly-born, fighting and feasting lapan could not function without a strong support group. This points to another resource of power which cannot be reduced to any of the three mentioned already. This is the power of demographic realities, of sheer numbers. A lapan of a small clan obviously did not have the same chances of becoming a paramount leader as the lapan of a numerically strong group; Baluan oral tradition has examples of the decline of leaders whose kin groups had dwindled. A lapan depended not only on his own descent group for support but on his affines as well. A successful marriage policy was thus of prime strategic

59 Parkinson (1911: 400) writes for example: "Wohl nirgends ist der Kriegszustand ein so permanenter wie bei den Moanus,[...]. An Veranlassungen zum Kriege fehlt es, wie aus dem Vorstehenden schon ersichtlich ist, niemals, aber auch ohne Veranlassung allein aus Kampflust zieht man in den Krieg. Das Töten eines Feindes ist die Hauptsache; die Eroberung des Gebietes ist Nebensache, tritt aber ein, wenn der Feind gänzlich vernichtet und aus seinen Wohnsitzen vertrieben wird". He also describes sea battles (1911:401).

60 See for example Moseley (1876-77:413).
importance for the continuation of *lapan* power. Genealogies give evidence that men of *lapan* families frequently married more than one wife and that this distinguished them from members of other lineages. Child adoption was another way to extend a support network because the family who supplied a child became an ally. Numbers could also be increased by adopting war captives or refugees.

Apart from his immediate support group a *lapan* had his network of trade relations. An influential leader was in a better position to maintain such a network than a commoner. This indicates how the four aspects of power were closely interwoven. It is perhaps better to say that they were cumulative: nothing creates success like success. A leader with a large primary support group was able to stage big feasts which would enhance his prestige and thus his ability to attract trade partners. This in turn would increase the commitment of his close followers. A successful warrior would not only oblige his supporters but could extend his labour supply by having war captives work for him. In all this, personal qualities and performance were essential. The structural advantages of rank and large kin groups would only count if they were put to work.

The four resources identified above were, in my opinion, the basis of a leader's power in the past. It is likely that there were yet other aspects to his leadership, especially oratorical abilities and knowledge. We shall see that these two features are important in more recent history. It is, however, very difficult if not impossible to establish their relative influence in the more distant past.
Pokut Narumbuai speaks during a meeting of lapans

These lapans all claim the title pul
Otto Nembou, lapan of Pungap who organised the lapan feast in Baluan in 1946

Sauka Paril, one of the few surviving members of the Leut clan. She has eleven children of her own.
Chapter Three

OVERTURE TO GAVMAN

This and the following two chapters deal with the colonial history of Manus and Baluan until about 1950. It is not my aim to present a comprehensive historical narrative but to identify qualitative social changes which became constitutive of modern Baluan society. For this purpose I alternate summary descriptions with more elaborate narrations and analyses of selected events. The changes that I describe are, of course, my own reconstruction of past events on the basis of the evidence available to me. However, I try to show how the selected events emerged from the encounter between different parties, each having different interests and ideas about what was happening. Throughout the three chapters I give special attention to the ways the historical changes are remembered and narrated in contemporary Baluan society. Thus, I am concerned with two things simultaneously: the reconstruction of the past, for which Baluan oral tradition is one of the main sources, and the articulation of history in present-day Baluan.

The different domains of modern Baluan culture that have been identified in chapter 1, namely gavman, lotu, and kastam, have their roots in the colonial period. In this chapter I describe the political and economic system before colonisation and the beginnings of gavman. Chapter 4 deals with the introduction of lotu and chapter 5 traces the origin of kastam.

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1 Historical representations concerning the events of the Paliau Movement, described in chapter 5, are more elaborately presented and analysed in chapter 8. The reason for this is that knowledge of the post-war developments, described in chapters 6 and 7, is necessary to understand certain aspects of these representations.
The precolonial situation

Political units in precolonial Manus were small. The largest groups were villages which consisted of one or more patriclans. Political organisations combining several villages did not exist; there were only temporary alliances for the sake of warfare. Within a multi-clan village political leadership was tenuous and was only effected in the case of warfare or a large-scale exchange. A leadership conflict could easily result in village fission with one or several clans moving away to form a separate residential unit. Although clan leadership was probably better defined than village leadership, descent groups were subject to the same process of fission. A discontented lineage could break away and form a separate clan; it could also move to another village. This situation of small autonomous groups without overarching political structures has been aptly characterised as 'political atomism' (Schwartz 1963:68).

Local groups were frequently engaged in conflicts. Recently split segments of a village could fight each other, but normally a more distant group was the antagonist. In the previous chapter I stressed the prestige attained through warfare and this was certainly a strong motivation. Moreover, it was important for a group to maintain an outward appearance of strength because a weak group would attract raiders. Schwartz (1963:85) gives the following succinct description.

Given the prevalence of unbounded warfare, each group was a centre, exerting toward all other groups an outward aggressive pressure upon which its survival, defence, or expansion depended. The relative position of each local group depended on its numbers, strength, leadership, and the frequency and effectiveness of its outward thrusts. Groups reduced in strength beyond a certain point collapsed and ceased to be a centre. They became extinct or merged (rather than amalgated) with a larger group. Their territory was penetrated or occupied, although, in the case of merger, not with this appearance.

However, precolonial Manus was not just a collection of politically autonomous and warring local units. In fact, from an economic point of view the villages were well integrated in an areal system of trade and exchange. This integration was based on

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2 The system of economic integration has been extensively dealt with elsewhere. Mead (1930) first described the importance of trade in the Admiralties. Schwartz (1963) gives an elaborate depiction of pre- and early-contact Manus culture. He considers not only the economic interdependence of the various groups but also other related subjects such as political organisation, kinship system and
local specialisation in the production of goods. In the first place different groups occupied different ecological niches. Some villages specialised almost exclusively in fishing. Those were the inhabitants of the small sand cays north of Manus mainland and the Titan speaking groups living in pile dwellings in the lagoons of south Manus and the south-eastern islands. These fishing people depended completely on their trade with agricultural villages for their starch and most other materials. The people of Manus mainland were 'landlubbers' and eager to exchange their sago, taro, betelnut, trees and other bush materials for the fish provided by their trading partners. In addition to the ecologically based exchange of food many villages were specialised producers of trade items such as shell money, wooden bowls, clay pots, soup ladles, combs and carved beds. Sometimes the specialisation depended on exclusive access to a particular natural resource such as the obsidian used for spears, which was found mainly on Lou Island. More often, however, this ecological exclusivity did not exist and the specialisation was in fact a monopoly, which was generally accepted and if necessary defended.

Through exchange and trade the specialised products of one village would be distributed to other Manus villages. There were regular markets between pairs of villages which dealt mainly with the barter of food. During big ceremonial exchanges all kinds of products could change hands and these would find their way to other places through trade partnerships. These trade relations were very important and were often promoted by intervillage marriages. A trade friend would allow delayed repayment of a debt and this made it possible to make long-term plans for big feasts.

Of course warfare could be very disturbing for intervillage trade and exchange. In fact, every market was a tense affair and the different parties never left their warfare. To indicate the integration of the Admiralty Islands populations he introduces the term 'areal culture', which he explains as follows: "That is, not only are the cultures historically related but they are so interdependent culturally, and otherwise ecologically, that each must be considered a part-culture not sufficient or fully understandable in itself" (1963:89). Carrier and Carrier (1985 and 1989, especially chapter 2) describe the integrative system from the vantage point of north Manus. They focus on the articulation of kinship and economics but also pay attention to other aspects of society. Because of this extensive coverage in the literature I present only the minimal information necessary for my argument. The reader should be aware that this account is condensed and simplified.

3 An example are the people of Ponam Island studied by J.Carrier and A.Carrier.

4 Examples are the people of Pere, studied by Mead and Fortune, and the Titan speaking people of Mbunai, studied by Schwartz.
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weapons at home. Equally, a big ceremonial exchange could end in fighting; there are examples in the oral tradition of such exchanges intentionally used to lure an enemy into ambush. However, warfare also contributed to the maintenance of a system of local specialisation and intervillage trade. Production monopolies and access to special natural resources were forcefully defended. Beach areas were generally too dangerous to settle, so that the land people could not learn to fish and the sea people could not cultivate the land. Warfare also frequently led to the taking of captives. Sometimes this would result in a marriage which was later ceremonially acknowledged, thus establishing a new connection between two villages. It also happened that captives were sold and adopted in another community. I know of several cases where this initiated a lasting trade relationship. In the case of war these trade partners could offer refuge. Thus it is incorrect to see warfare and trade as mutually incompatible: their articulation constituted the specific configuration of the precolonial regional system of Manus.

As far as food was concerned the people of Baluan were relatively self-sufficient, unlike the 'fishing' societies and the 'agricultural' societies described above. As in some of the other south-eastern islands their land was fertile and produced a variety of food crops. The islanders also knew how to fish and did not depend on others to provide for their protein needs. Nevertheless, the island was part of the areal system of exchange relations. Obsidian spear points had to be imported from Lou, pots came from Mbute and shell money derived from Ponam. Sagoleaf, one of the main building materials, had to be obtained from elsewhere in large quantities because the island had little sago of its own. The main staple produced on the island was yams and these were readily exchanged with trade friends (kauwat) for taro from Lou or sago from the mainland and Rambutyo. Typical products of Baluan handicraft which entered the exchange system were carved wooden bowls, delicately shaped lime spatulas, and soup ladles consisting of half a

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5 Compare J. Carrier and A. Carrier (1989:70) and A. Carrier (1987:88) who also emphasise that warfare could lead to new links between villages through the marriages of captives.

6 Compare Macintyre (1983), who describes the articulation of warfare and exchange in a Massim society.

7 The islanders kept domestic pigs for large feasts and also occasionally hunted wild pigs. The main source of protein, however, was fish.
coconut shell attached to a carved handle. Other export items were coconuts, betelnuts and various other tree products.\(^8\)

Although Baluan people seem to have traded directly with other groups the people of Mouk occupied an important position as middle men. The latter are a Titan speaking group who, according to their own oral tradition, originated from Pere village. It appears that the Titan speakers, also called the Manus, experienced a period of vigorous expansion during the second half of the last century. Many groups left the area around Pere and founded new villages near the south coast of Manus mainland and near the islands south and south-east of Manus. There was probably competition between the groups for access to new potential markets and clashes between them were frequent. The history of the various groups is confusing because there was much movement back and forward and also because sections of clans joined other villages. The Mouk people (then called Lomot) had several temporary settlements before they reached Baluan. They lived in various places around the island before they settled near the islands of Takumal and Mouk towards the end of the nineteenth century. From the latter island they derive their modern name.\(^9\) Their ranks were strengthened, on their own request, by the arrival of the Machapal clan, a feared warrior group.

Old Baluan people remember their parents' and grandparents' fear of the sea people from Manus, the *Mwenisiai*, who were notorious for their sudden raids on the islands. It appears, however, that the Lomot settled near Mouk and Takumal with the approval of local groups, because it is said that they received the islands as a gift.\(^10\) I assume that the presence of the Mouk settlers protected the Baluan people to a certain extent from attacks by other Manus groups. The people of Mouk were certainly important in the provision of sago, which they obtained from other places and traded for coconuts, betel, yams, etc. In addition, fish and coconut oil from Mouk entered into the exchange system.

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\(^8\) My oral information is confirmed by Mead (1930:119), who did field research in Pere in 1928 when the regional trade system was still functioning.

\(^9\) Mouk Island is so called by the Mouk people themselves. Baluan people call the island Maput and also refer to its former inhabitants by this name. Takumal Island is called Takmal in Baluan language.

\(^10\) This is confirmed by people from both parties. There are people on Baluan who claim that they still own the islands, but this is not taken very seriously.
The precolonial period I have described lives on in the stories guarded and preserved by individual clans and lineages. There is no general history of this period, only partial descriptions of events as remembered by particular descent groups. The stories recount migrations and rejections, fights and quarrels, victories and defeats, large feasts and cunning tricks; and they establish the adoption of people who became the progenitors of existing descent lines. Some examples of these stories were given in the previous chapter.

Early contacts

In this self-sufficient universe of trading, feasting and warring groups, sporadic visitors arrived who were of a different colour. They began to be seen from the sixteenth century onwards and they came from various countries: Spain, Portugal, the Netherlands, Great Britain, France, and later also the United States, Germany and Australia. I am not interested here in who saw what first. The person whose naming of the Archipelago has survived is the British captain Philip Carteret. When in 1767 he arrived in the islands he called 'Admiralties', he was welcomed by a shower of spears. Other visitors were able to engage in more friendly relations. D'Entrecasteaux, in search of La Pérouse, made a stop in the archipelago in 1792 and bartered with the local people from his ships. He saw no sign of European products, which could have given him a clue for his quest. Less than a century later this situation had changed considerably. People on the 'Challenger', which anchored near north-west Manus in 1875, and Miklouho-Maclay, who visited south-east and north-east Manus in 1877, observed the presence of European goods.

The idea that the natives who we met were frequently in contact with European ships was soon confirmed, among the gear they had with them on the pirogue was a small mirror, some knives and an axe. Besides the various native ornaments on the arms and legs of our new acquaintances, were bracelets of many coloured beads, by the form and quality of which the traders on the schooner concluded that a ship from Australia had been here before us (Miklouho-Maclay 1876: 68).

The Admiralty Islanders had possibly traded with Europeans before our visit within tolerably recent time. They came off at once to the ship in the utmost hurry, in a strong breeze, thinking probably that she was not coming
into the harbour, and they held up all sorts of articles of barter. They brought off their tortoiseshell ready done up in bundles, and they knew the relative value of various qualities. The chief had a large European axe, which I believe was not procured from the ship, and many natives had hoop iron adzes (Moseley 1876-77: 412).

Such small shell adzes were abundant enough still, but in most cases the shell had been replaced on the handle by a piece of hoop-iron (Moseley 1879:467-68).11

These quotations and other statements indicate that contact had become more frequent in the decades preceding the last quarter of the nineteenth century.12 From the reaction of the local people we may infer that they had mainly encountered traders interested in tortoise and pearl-shell and that they had probably escaped the devastating experience of blackbirders. Whalers called at the Admiralties only occasionally.13 By the 1870s a regular trade had developed between foreigners and indigenous people. The goods that attracted the white traders at this time were tortoise, pearl-shell and bêche-de-mer. In addition they collected native artefacts. Romilly (1887:113) writes somewhat later: "In those days we were all wild about curios, and certainly a better place for obtaining them than these islands could not be found." The islanders appeared extremely eager to trade for the goods offered to them by the white people: "thimblefuls (used as a measure) of trashy beads" (Mikloucho-Maclay 1879:146), pieces of red cotton cloth, pieces of hoop iron, large nails, knives and axes. The colourful beads and cotton must have been a welcome variation on the many traditional ornaments with the additional attraction of novelties, but there was no doubt about what the islanders really wanted. A contemporary observer wrote: "Iron was the great thing where with to fetch 'em,

11 Mikloucho-Maclay (1876:81) reports the same thing for Loniu at the south-east coast: "It could be noticed that the small iron tools of poor quality have almost supplanted here the old axes which were made by grinding shells."

12 There must have been considerably more visits than the 'official' ones mentioned in Wichmann (1909-12).

13 Romilly (1887:112) states that "it is probable that it [Admiralty Islands group] had been visited by whalers before that time [1875]." From about 1817 onwards British whalers sailed close to the islands, on their way from eastern Indonesia to the whaling grounds near New Ireland and Buka, but probably did not stop often if at all. It appears that the inhabitants had the reputation of being dangerous. In the journal of the British whaleship 'Gipsy' (6-8 Oct. 1840) they are called "fierce remorseless savages of whom little is known." Journals of American whaleships have only a few references to the Admiralties from 1854 onwards (information from Norah Forster).
axes ranking first, hoop iron second" (Swire 1938:129). Of course, the white traders were cautious not to inflate their prices, and Mikloucho-Maclay noted in 1879 that the indigenous people had not yet discovered the difference between iron and steel. Nor had they yet developed a taste for tobacco and spirits, unlike, for example, the inhabitants of the Western Islands (west of Manus).

Relations between black and white were not always peaceful. Mikloucho-Maclay (1876:67) describes how, in 1875, an English skipper approached Rambutyo Island looking for trepang. He had 30 newly recruited men from Yap on board. When numerous native canoes came out to him, he became scared and fired at them. The islanders fled and in a victorious mood the skipper sent his Yap labourers in pursuit. These unfortunate men got stuck on the reef in a sloop they could not handle and consequently they were speared to death by the local islanders. The skipper fled hurriedly to save his own skin, leaving his labourers easy prey for the local warriors.14

The trade in these islands was so promising that a further development of Western penetration began: the establishment of resident traders. Four traders from a Singaporean firm15 were on board the schooner ‘Seabird’ with Mikloucho-Maclay, when it visited Manus in 1876. Two were to be landed in the Western Islands and the other two on Manus. The Italian Paldi was set up in the village Pubi (near Loniu) on the south-east coast and the Irishman O’Hara stayed on the island Andra off the north coast (Mikloucho-Maclay 1876:81,89). In Mikloucho-Maclay’s 1879 diary we read about the plight of these two men. Paldi did not survive long. After a few months he was robbed and killed, but the story circulated that the people did not want to eat his flesh (1879:179,180). O’Hara found his property being plundered when he returned from bathing one day. He survived thanks to the care of an old man who took pity on him and who gave him food and shelter. About a year after he landed on Andra, O’Hara had the good fortune to be found by a small American cutter. He persuaded the captain to sail to Loniu in order to pick up Paldi. When the natives there, who had come out in great numbers to trade, realised that the white visitors wanted Paldi, they attacked. In the ensuing battle more than fifty local people

14 Nevermann (1934:6,7) attempts to describe the same event in a less damaging way for the skipper, but confirms that 28 labourers from Yap were killed. He also refers to Mikloucho-Maclay’s version.

15 Mikloucho-Maclay (1879:155) does not give the full name of the firm.
were killed according to the skipper's estimate, partly because they were not fully aware of the effect of guns (ibid:155-157). Some of the above information Mikloucho-Maclay received from a Malaysian seaman, one of his travel companions in 1876, who had fled the boat because of the cruelty of the captain. Three years later Mikloucho-Maclay was able to trace him on the mainland near Andra and he bought his freedom with a ransom (ibid:175,176). The seaman knew the name of the old man who had looked after O'Hara, and the philanthropist Mikloucho-Maclay went back to Andra to reward this man with some gifts. "The old man Mana-Salayoo was deeply moved, he even wept" (ibid:180).

The next resident trader of whom we have a record is the Scotsman Donald Dow. He was employed by the Forsayth company and settled on the north coast of Rambutyo in 1881, to buy trepang (Nevermann 1934:7). Not long after his arrival on the island he was encountered by Romilly (1887:114).

He [Dow] had been six weeks on the island when we found him, and had collected so much bêche de mer that he refused our offer to take him away, saying that he preferred sticking to his fish. [...] If he was not killed, he said, and if the captain of the Dancing Wave remembered to pick him up, he would be a rich man for life, with the fish he had already got. Whether he ever was picked up I never heard.

Dow must have been a very successful trader indeed. Before Romilly's visit an attempt had already been made on his life, but he was defended by local villagers. He did not retire a rich man though; more than a decade later, in 1893 or 1894, he was killed while still working as a trader on Rambutyo (Nevermann 1934:9). Around the same time two newly established traders on Pak were also murdered. On both occasions the islanders were able to capture a considerable number of firearms. However, by that time they did not have to deal only with individual traders or companies. A powerful new organisation had appeared on their horizon: the German colonial state, which undertook to punish offenders against its laws. A new phase in black-white relations had begun.

Until then, the old system of autonomous groups connected and divided by trade and war was soundly intact. The white people had been no more than occasional participants in this regional network. They were welcomed as trading

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16 The establishment of the colonial state was motivated, at least partly, by trade interests. It is outside the scope of this thesis to discuss this side of the history.
partners because they had much-coveted goods. Occasionally they were treated as enemies, especially when they were off their guard or when they made the mistake of wanting to stay. The islanders were very much in control of the situation and they had been able to incorporate the visitors into their own system. Interestingly, this initial period of contact does not seem very important in Baluan oral tradition. There are a few stories, for example, about Captain Cook looking for land, and about the first iron obtained from a German ship in the Western Islands, but not many people know these stories nor are they very interested in them today. This may indicate that Baluan was relatively peripheral to the early traders (which is not certain), but it may also reflect the fact that the early traders were peripheral to the lives of Manus people.

For the traders Manus people were formidable trading partners. They are uniformly described as keen and assertive negotiators, quick to learn new things. Their warlike habits and treacherous strategies also rate frequent mention. It was apparently hard for the observers to understand local leadership patterns. Obviously some men had more to say than others, but they did not receive 'ceremonious respect' (Moseley 1876-77:414). Even the careful observer, Mikloucho-Maclay, gives some confused information about the absence or presence of 'chiefs'.

Although most of the contact was conducted between men, women were more in evidence than in some other parts of New Guinea, according to the sources. They were generally considered ugly. In these islands it was the men who spent much time on their appearance, a fact which inspired Moseley to some ethological reflections. The men appeared to disapprove of direct contact between white

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17 The situation in the Western Islands was completely different. These small islands with their relatively peaceful populations had attracted resident traders at an earlier stage than Manus. The inhabitants had to bear the full negative impact of early colonisation: they were kidnapped (Miklouho-Maclay 1876:98), their ranks were decimated by disease, their land was taken, and in cases of revolt they were defenceless against punitive raids.

18 This changes when there was a serious clash with white people such as on Pak, where two traders were killed and where the people suffered several punitive raids as a result. These events are well preserved in the memory of the people there. A similar occurrence on Baluan will be described below.

19 Compare for example Mikloucho-Maclay (1876:79 and 1879:176,178).

20 *Amongst the lower races of savages, decoration follows the law which is almost universal amongst animals. It is the male which is profusely ornamented, whilst the female is deprived of decoration. This condition is almost entirely reversed by civilisation, and the grade of advancement of a race may, to some extent, be measured by the amount of expense which the men are willing to incur in decorating
people and their womenfolk, but they were not always able to prevent it. Sometimes the men offered the favours of their women to the visitors. In a few cases this may have been part of a strategy to put a white man off his guard.\textsuperscript{21} For the early visitors Manus was a fascinating, frightening, and savage place, but for most of them it was primarily a place in which to make a profit.\textsuperscript{22}

The establishment of a colonial state

The Admiralty Islands were declared a German protectorate to be administered by the New Guinea Company in an imperial letter dated 17 May 1885. The islanders were unaware of this event and did not experience any consequences from it until much later. In 1893-94 three resident traders were killed, two near Pak Island and Donald Dow on Rambutyo. As the company administration had other priorities and few means, an attempt to punish the culprits was not made until January 1896 (Nevermann 1934: 9). The campaign failed totally as the leader of the expedition decided that it was useless to enter the dense jungle without guides and interpreters. During a second attempt, in 1898, the colonial agents again did not land but were able to establish contact with some islanders who told them that Dow's surviving labourers were held on Sivisa. The labourers were released in a peaceful way. Then Pak was visited. Because it was not possible to land owing to high seas, this island was shelled as retaliation for the killing of two traders five years previously.

In 1897 the naturalist and butterfly collector Cayley-Webster visited the Admiralties and nominated the inhabitants "certainly the wildest and strangest people I had ever beheld in my life" (1898:302). He tried to induce them to catch beetles and butterflies for him in exchange for beads and iron because his own

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\textsuperscript{21} This happened to Mikloucho-Maclay, who did not accept the women offered to him and who was able to prevent an ambush by great presence of mind (Mikloucho-Maclay 1879:160-162).

\textsuperscript{22} Much more can be said about the images of the 'natives' in the early documents, but this has to await another opportunity.
hunters were too scared to leave the ship. Cayley-Webster was very wary himself and moved his ship whenever he felt threatened by the number of the natives or when he mistrusted their apparent friendliness. Much to the relief of his crew he finally "set sail for the slightly more civilised country – New Britain" (1898:317). His butterfly collection had gained only a few new species.

At that time the inhabitants of Manus had a reputation as wild, treacherous and dangerous people. However, this did not stop other white people from visiting the islands in search of economic gain. In 1898 the little uninhabited island of Kumuli was settled by Molde and Maetzke, two traders belonging to the Hernsheim Company. The following year the Australian pearler Hamilton started operations in the archipelago. Both enterprises would incur considerable loss of life and stock. The history of Hamilton's company in Manus is described in some detail by King (1978:esp. 99-112). Here I retrace some of the events that befell the settlers of Kumuli and their black neighbours. Kumuli lies close to the larger island of Waikatu, which was inhabited in 1897 (Cayley-Webster 1898:311) but not in 1899 (Schnee 1904:164). To the north-east are the Fedarb Islands, the largest of which is Sivisa, and to the north-west lies the hilly island of Lou, by far the largest in the area. South-west are the two Pam Islands, and further in the same direction lies the big volcanic island of Baluan with the two rocky islets, Mouk and Takumal. With the settlement of Kumuli the colonisation of this area began in earnest.

Kumuli was well situated among the other islands. There was a natural sheltered harbour, St. Andrew anchorage, and the tiny island could be easily defended. The new traders were not only interested in bêche-de-mer and shells, they also collected coconuts which could be processed into copra on the island. In 1899 the administration of the colony was handed over by the New Guinea Company to the German Government. As one of his first acts the new governor, von Bennigsen, made a trip to New Ireland and Manus in the company of the imperial judge Dr Schnee. On Kumuli they saw considerable supplies of copra and other goods, which indicated a profitable trade (Schnee 1904:163).

They also visited the two islets near Baluan, which they called Mouk Mandrian and Mouk Lin, meaning respectively big Mouk and small Mouk in the language of the Titan speaking inhabitants. Mouk Lin is now generally known as Takumal. The inhabitants of the two islands belonged to the same language group but were not on
friendly terms with each other at the time of the visit. With the help of trader Maetzke, von Bennigsen exhorted the villagers to maintain peace with the traders.\footnote{Schnee (1904:163) adds: "as far as this was possible with the limited language knowledge of our guide" (in original: "soweit dies bei den geringen Sprachkenntnissen unseres Führers möglich war").} Apparently the natives did not feel at ease with their visitors as they had hidden their women (Schnee 1904:162). After leaving Kumuli von Bennigsen went to Pak with the aim of retrieving the firearms that had belonged to the two murdered traders. He only succeeded in obtaining one old gun and one revolver and even lost one of his native guides who did not return after he followed the local people in an attempt to persuade them to surrender their firearms.\footnote{He was found about one year later helping local people in their wars against each other and the whites. He was captured but perished with Molde on their way to Matupit in East New Britain (Schnee 1904:207).} As punishment for the natives' disobedience and in retaliation for their crime six years earlier, von Bennigsen sank all the canoes he could find and burned down three villages.\footnote{Before setting fire to the houses the most beautiful artefacts were taken away for the 'Museum für Völkerkunde' in Berlin (Schnee 1904:170).} This was the first time in Manus that the colonial government destroyed native property on a large scale as a punitive measure.

Although it is almost certain that the news of this show of force rapidly spread over Manus, it did not deter some Mouk men from murdering Maetzke only weeks after von Bennigsen's visit. This happened when his colleague Molde had left the station to visit the company's headquarters on Matupit in East New Britain. When Molde returned, some natives were still on Kumuli feasting on the meat of the labourers they had killed. They fled and were hotly pursued by Molde assisted by the men of Sivisa, also a Titan speaking group. These people had saved those labourers of Kumuli who had managed to escape. When Molde approached Baluan Island, he was shot at and had to turn back. The village of Mouk Mandrian had been deserted and the natives of Sivisa set fire to the houses (Schnee 1904:181-184).

*The punitive expedition against Baluan*

The ensuing punitive expedition was a major confrontation between the colonial power and indigenous peoples and was the first one of its scale in Manus. It was an
important event both for the islanders and for the representatives of the state who wanted to establish their authority. The former were fighting an enemy who could draw on increasingly awesome means of inflicting death and destruction which came from an ill-understood outside world. As earth movements leave traces in the landscape, this little social earthquake precipitated sediments in the form of memories, written down or passed on by word of mouth. I will look at the same events from three different perspectives. First I follow the way they were presented by the two main white actors, governor von Bennigsen and imperial judge Dr Schnee. Then I look back through the eyes of contemporary Mouk people, and finally I give the version which belongs to the oral tradition of a Baluan clan whose ancestors became involved in the events.

The colonial point of view is well documented through Schnee's book (1904:181-208) and a report by von Bennigsen (DKB 11:326-332).26 The news of the murder of Maetzke and the plunder of Kumuli reached the colonial headquarters in Herbertshöhe on 11 September 1899. Due to lack of a ship and sufficient policemen the government could not organise a punitive expedition until January 1900. By that time it was also known that another two white people had been killed in the Admiralties. They were the captain and steersman of a Forsayth company sailing schooner, who were caught unawares when trading near Papitalai on the north coast of Manus. To avenge both crimes von Bennigsen assembled a considerable police force, adding labourers from Hernsheim and Forsayth companies to his own men so that he had a total number of 70 men, all with at least some training in handling firearms. Dr Schnee went ahead with all the police on the Hernsheim motor schooner 'Mascotte' and von Bennigsen followed somewhat later on the warship 'Seeadler'.

At Kumuli Schnee took on board twelve men from Sivisa and Mouk Lin to serve as guides. Consequently he went to the little island of Alim, where he was to meet von Bennigsen. By accident his men found some Mouk people on the island. They killed four of them and took one adult and one boy prisoner. In spite of the fact that they searched the island several times, two Mouk men managed to escape, as Schnee learned later. The two men had dug a hole and covered themselves with

26 There are also administrative documents by Schnee and von Bennigsen in the archives of the 'Reichskolonialamt' (RKA 2987: 131-140, 174-223) but these add little to the two reports mentioned.
brushwood and leaves (Schnee 1904:193). When von Bennigsen arrived, he officially dispossessed the Mouk people of Alim Island. He later handed it over to Molde, Maetzke's colleague, as compensation for lost property and as a reward for his assistance in the punitive expedition (OKS 11:328).

The next target was Baluan, where the Mouk people had settled after leaving their exposed village near Mouk Island. Before sunrise the whole party went ashore in six small boats. Von Bennigsen, Schnee and their native police force were joined by three white traders. Sivisa men acted as guides, which indicates that they had contact with Baluan before. After 20 minutes the party reached the first village, where the alarmed inhabitants beat the large drums and produced a deafening battle cry. The villagers fled the gunfire but defended themselves with stones and obsidian tip spears when the party moved on along a bush path. The native police were very reluctant to go any further. Schnee (1904:195) commented:

Perhaps the sterling New Ierlanders and Bukas begin to realize that they are dealing with an adversary who is naturally more intelligent, more cunning and in every respect more dangerous than they are themselves in their natural disposition.27

However, the loyal policemen were persuaded to continue and the party occupied three consecutive settlements. The fleeing villagers were pursued by small groups of native police. Schnee (1904:196-97) wrote that only two of his policemen were wounded, whereas about 20 'Mouk people' were killed. How he ascertained this number, he does not mention, and von Bennigsen omits any information on this point. In the villages they found goods looted from Kumuli and some pigs which they took as their booty.

From the sea they approached another village which they could not reach by land. This village, which consisted of pile dwellings, was shelled by the warship's cannons. Von Bennigsen (DBK 11:329) wrote: "In der beschossenen Niederlassung sollten sich der grössere Theil der geraubten Gewehre und viel Munition befinden."28 Why he thought this, he does not say. Next, the punitive party landed again and discovered some other

27 "Vielleicht dämmert auch in den braven Neumecklenburgern und Bukas das Bewusstsein, dass sie es hier mit einem von Natur intelligenteren, hinterlistigeren und in jeder Hinsicht gefährlicheren Gegner zu tun haben, als sie selbst es ihrer natürlichen Anlage nach sind".

28 "In der beschossenen Niederlassung sollten sich der grössere Theil der geraubten Gewehre und viel Munition befinden".
settlements further inland. In this case the villagers made use of rifles for their defence. Schnee mentioned only one casualty on the enemy's side and none on his own. The huts were destroyed after they were plundered by the Sivisa people who had arrived by canoe in great numbers and whom von Bennigsen (ibid.) called 'our friends'.

When they had fulfilled their task of punishing the Mouk people to their own satisfaction, von Bennigsen and Schnee went to Pitiluh Island, north of Manus, whose inhabitants were assumed to have participated in the murder of the two Forsayth traders. According to Schnee 25 Pitiluh natives were killed. The punitive party was not so successful in Papitalai, another village involved in the double murder. The village was destroyed but the inhabitants escaped in the thick jungle of Los Negros. On the way back the colonial officers visited their 'friends', the people of Sivisa (DKB 11:331, Schnee 1904:204). Kewenu, the chief of this island, had participated in the whole campaign. Nevertheless, his people harboured different thoughts about the friendship and had moved their womenfolk out of sight. At night a big dancing feast was organised on Kumuli, where natives from different regions performed their dances: they came from Gazelle Peninsula, New Ireland, North Solomons and Manus. Whereas Schnee found most dances rather monotonous and boring, he was apparently impressed by the 'wild' Manus performance. He even ascribed corresponding sentiments to his policemen who allegedly watched these Manus natives, "undoubtedly superior to them in intelligence and boldness", "with a mixture of fear and interest" (1904:206).

Schnee seems to have relished his romantic view of these dangerous and impressive 'savages'. Von Bennigsen's report was more down-to-earth and

29 Schnee (1904:204) expressed astonishment about the distrustful character of the Manus. "How enormously suspicious these sly Manus are, appeared from the fact that even these friends of ours had removed all their women out of the village and brought to safety somewhere else before we arrived. When we expressed our surprise about this, they showed us at last one old and ugly woman who greeted us with a grin." (Wie ungeheuer misstrauisch diese verschlagenen Manus sind, ging daraus hervor, dass selbst diese unsere Freunde vor unserer Ankunft alle ihre Weiber aus dem Dorf entfernt und irgendwo in Sicherheit gebracht hatten. Als wir unsere Verwunderung darüber äusserten, wurde endlich ein altes hässliches Weib herbeigebracht, welches uns grinsend begrüsset.)

30 Compare for example Schnee (1904:205). "They look splendid, these slender and yet strongly built savages with long falling hair, when they march on in proud posture holding an obsidian spear in the hand, completely naked, in front the white shining penis shell, at the back of their neck a long eagle's feather fixed in a small carved head." (Sie sehen prachtvoll aus, diese schlank doch kräftig gebauten Wilden mit lang herabfallendem Haar, wie sie gänzlich nackt, vorn die weissleuchtende Penismuschel,
concerned with the justification of their actions. He described the intervention as beneficial for the coastal people because they were in danger of exhausting themselves completely through perennial warfare. The attacks on Europeans he explained, probably correctly, as primarily stemming from the desire to acquire firearms and ammunition so as to have an advantage over opponents. He clearly stated one of the main aims of his mission to establish a colonial state, namely to obtain a monopoly of the use of violence (DKB 11:331).

It will be absolutely necessary for the future to keep a close watch on all events in the archipelago, to punish every action against Europeans emphatically and speedily, and to impress also on tribes, which first of all trouble other islanders through attacks, that warfare is a privilege of the government.31 [my emphasis]

Before expanding on this last point I will first turn to the view of events as it was shared by some Mouk people at the time of my fieldwork. I recorded six accounts by senior men and women who were generally considered as knowledgeable and in a proper position to tell the story.32 The events surrounding Maetzke's murder were widely known but there was still considerable uneasiness among Mouk people about them. Therefore I will not follow the story of any one informant in particular but summarise what was common to all versions. It is important to note that this compilation is based on accounts from all three clans involved: Lomot (three accounts), Machapal (two) and Polot (one).

When the Germans arrived in Manus, groups of Titan speaking people were still moving around to find a good place to settle. The Lomot clan had arrived at Baluan, where they planned a major feast. However, their preparations were disturbed by the Polot who at that time already possessed some guns. For their protection the Lomot invited the Machapal clan to join them. The feast went ahead and at least part of the Machapal continued to stay

31 "Unbedingt nöthig wird für die Zukunft sein, dass man allen Ereignissen innerhalb der Gruppe ein wachses Auge leit, jedes Vorgehen gegen Europäer nachdrücklich und schneuinstig bestraf und auch den Stämmen, die in erster Linie die anderen Insulaner durch Angriffe belästigen, zum Ausdrucke bringt, dass das Kriegsführen ein Sonderrecht des Gouvernements ist."

32 Three of the informants, two men and one woman, lived in Mouk village on Baluan and three others, two women and one man, in Mouklen village on Rambutyo. The latter village broke away from Mouk in the mid 60s. Three of the accounts were recorded on tape and three in writing.
with the Lomot at Mouk. Later the Polot enticed the Lomot to attack the German traders who had established themselves on Kumuli. The Polot lived close to Kumuli, which was in fact their island, and had regular contact with the white newcomers. They sent a dagger to some relatives in Mouk, a message conveying a strong request to attack a common enemy. The aim was to appropriate the white men’s firearms. The Lomot accepted the invitation and killed trader Maetzke (‘Masika’) in a well planned campaign. Immediately after this the Polot went over to the white men’s side. When the other trader returned, they informed him that the Lomot had killed Maetzke. Later they helped with the punitive expedition, in which many Lomot people were killed. Consequently the Lomot put a curse on the Polot and that is the reason the latter are not numerous anymore and that their main island (Waikatu or Polot) is sinking.

The main feature of this story is the animosity between two clans of the same language group. First the Polot tried to prevent the Lomot from making their name in staging a major feast and later they lured them into a disastrous war venture. The white people’s role is reduced to that of convenient allies who were deceived and cunningly used to defeat the competitors. How does this story fit with the description of events by Schnee and von Bennigsen? The latter observed enmity between Mouk Lin and Sivisa on the one hand and Mouk Mandrian on the other. There is little doubt that the people whom the Germans called Sivisa, after the name of the island, indeed belonged to the Polot clan. They probably stayed at Waikatu before Kumuli was occupied by traders and later moved to Sivisa (see above, reference to Cayley-Webster and Schnee). Waikatu, or Polot as it is locally known, still belongs to the Polot clan. It is not unlikely that the village near Takumal, called Mouk Lin by Schnee and others, belonged to the same clan. At that time there was much movement back and forward by clans and subclans. The Lomot, or at least part of this clan, also stayed on Sivisa at some time and they still maintain a claim to that island.

The animosity between the Polot and Lomot clans can perhaps be explained as resulting from their competition for access to the favourable markets of Baluan and Lou. The intruding white people were quickly recognised as sources of superior arms and as possible allies. According to the oral history recounted above, the Polot clan possessed some guns before the murder of Maetzke. These may have been derived from the murder of Dow on Rambutyo some years previously. As we have
seen, some of Dow's surviving labourers were on Sivisa, when they were handed over to German officers in 1898 (DKB 9:244). From that time onwards the Pelot were probably considered as 'friends' of the government, a situation they expediently exploited.

Although I was given six accounts of the story, there was a general reluctance on the part of Mauk people to talk about the murder of Maetzke or to give me all the details. The general excuse was that the old people, who knew the story, had died and that they had not informed the younger generation properly. There were two main reasons for this reticence. First, the story concerned the murder of a white person and my informants were still somewhat apprehensive about the consequences of telling it to another white person. Second, and more importantly, the punitive raid which resulted had not only killed Mauk people and destroyed their property; Baluan people too had become victims of the revenge of the colonial government. Representatives of the latter were not only deceived as to who their friends were, but they also punished – at least in part – the wrong people. Because the Mauk people nowadays live on Baluan Island, it is understandable that they did not want to emphasise this sensitive episode of their colourful past.

Baluan people were, however, well aware of the historical events and they freely discussed with me these two reasons for Mauk reticence. They also pointed to another reason for killing a white man, apart from appropriating his weapons and other possessions. Apparently, much prestige was attached to such a feat. This is reflected in the third version of events, belonging to the Sauka clan of Lipan village.

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33 In Lenkau on Rambutyo I recorded a story which explains why Dow's labourers were found on Sivisa. The narrator was Thomas Pangkiau from the Seye clan (13-8-87). According to this story Dow was killed by his own labourers after he had beaten their foreman. The men fled in Dow's boat taking his 10 guns with them. Owing to strong wind and high seas they drifted towards Pelot and Sivisa, where they were captured by the people of these islands. The Pelot men took possession of the firearms and used them to harass the neighbouring villages, including those of their own language group.

34 A similar situation occurred on Pak where I also collected some stories about executions of white people. I was asked whether I would use the information in a court case against the local people.

35 This version was recorded in writing from the most senior man of this clan, Lapanin Solok, on two different occasions. Lapanin did not like tape recorders and therefore I had to make quick notes when he was telling me his many stories. The version presented here is not verbatim but reconstituted from my notes. The story is also known outside the Sauka clan, though in less detail.
Solok, my grandfather, had made a palisade around the settlement. At that time the Sauka lived at Pumaleu near the mountain. The white people came and destroyed the fence. They also broke the arm of Ngat Manoi. Ngi Parumui was hiding in the top of a tree and saw how they hit little Ngat with the butt of a rifle. After this they threw him over a stone wall into a garden named Punai, belonging to Aiap. They killed a man from Puimat. Ngat Manisiai36 shot his spear at a white man who was walking behind. He killed the man and tried to get his gun. However, they shot back at him and he had to run away. After this the Sauka moved back to the place they had lived before, called Sauka.

In this story the Sauka people are not portrayed as passive victims of a brutal enemy; they were able to hit back at the intruders. That the death or wounding of a white person is not confirmed by the colonial sources37 is not important in this context. What matters is that the Baluan people claim an active and respectable role in their own history. The same proud and defiant attitude I also encountered on Pak: "They [the Germans] did not beat us. They killed us but their side had casualties too. Even one of their boats went down in a storm and all the people drowned". We may rightfully ask whether Schnee's unsubstantiated claim that his men killed twenty 'Mouk' people was of a similar nature: retrospective self assertion and justification.

There can be no doubt that Baluan people and settlements were attacked in the punitive raid. The combined oral tradition of Mouk and Baluan is strong evidence. It also fits the accounts of Schnee and von Bennigsen. Although some goods from Kumuli were found in the first villages occupied by the punitive party, there was no evidence of the use of guns. The party was only fired at when it attacked the next village at the other side of the mountain. This village had pile-dwellings in Titan style. It is likely that the Mouk people had exchanged some of their booty with their Baluan hosts, but that they had kept the captured firearms to themselves. What I understand of the geography as described by Schnee also fits the recollections of settlement sites by Baluan and Mouk people. Therefore, I assume that the first three

36 Ngat Manisiai was a famous warrior of the Sauka clan who lived two generations before Lapanin and whose exploits were recounted.

37 It is even positively denied in the Annual Report of German New Guinea of 1899-90: "No Europeans were wounded on any of these expeditions" (Sack and Clark 1979:194). However, the same passage in this report also gives Baluan and Mouk people their due: "The police troop led by the Governor and Dr Schnee met with significant resistance on only one occasion, on the big punitive expedition in the Admiralty Group at the beginning of the year 1900."
settlements taken by the punitive force belonged to Baluan people and that only in the second place were Mouk settlements attacked. It is clear that the colonial agents were not aware of the complicated ethnic situation they were dealing with. They followed the guidance of their ‘friends’, the people of Sivisa, who were able to turn the situation to their own advantage.

Manus accepts gavman

If the colonial officials had hoped that the large-scale punitive action would intimidate and pacify the Manus, they were soon disappointed. Several Manus groups were now in the possession of guns and they made ample use of these in raids on other, less armed, clans. It may even be assumed that the availability of more effective weapons temporarily intensified warfare. Mouk and Polot oral traditions testify to this and contain stories of long and successful pillaging expeditions made possible by the military advantage of guns. These raids are also reflected in colonial documents. Villages such as Loniu, which did not have any real firearms, sometimes tried to confuse their enemies by making precise imitations (DKB 19:623, DKB 20: 898). This indicates how much importance was attached to the possession of these weapons, whether they were actually used to shoot with or only to impress the enemy.

On Kumuli a white hospital orderly, Wostrack, was temporarily put in charge of the native police to protect the station. Together with trader Molde he organized some expeditions against aggressor clans (RKA 2989:39-49). At the end of 1900 Molde perished on his way to Matupit, probably in a storm. His successor Carlbourn was murdered in 1901, together with two native policemen and 6 labourers, when he was at Mbuke for trading purposes. The local population which belonged to the Titan language group was incited to the murder by the people of Sivisa. This was in fact a repetition of what happened earlier with the Mouk people. The only difference was that the colonial government now learned of the conspiracy. Schnee (1904: 207)

38 Compare for example Nevermann (1934:329-355) who compiles most of the written documents on internal warfare.
remarked dryly that the former 'friends' of the whites had changed their behaviour. The major part of the Sivisa people (Polot) fled to Rambutyo. In 1902 yet another trader on Kumuli was visited by a government official who reported: "Despite the hostilities of the natives the trader has done very well; he supplied the company Hernshein and Co with about 28 tons of copra and about 7000 green snail shells" (DKB 13:198).39 On 1 January 1903 there were a total of 7 white traders in the archipelago (DKB 14:499).

Although there were a few more killings of white and coloured traders in the following years, the colonial occupiers seemed to have learned their lesson. The residents of Kumuli felt seriously threatened on several occasions, but they were able to frustrate planned attacks by extreme watchfulness (DKB 19:855). More and more the punitive expeditions were aimed at retrieving firearms from clans which had raided other native groups. In the colonial records we find the names of the Mouk people, the Machapal and the people from Sivisa and Polot (see for example DKB 19:622-23). All three groups changed their settlement sites several times during these years. There were also expeditions against coastal people of Los Negros and the islands north of Manus. Towards the end of the decade some inland people of west Manus became a problem, especially because they were difficult to pursue in the inaccessible interior of the big island. The methods used by the government to force the natives to give up their guns were the destruction of property, especially houses and canoes, and the capture of hostages.

A new development was that groups which were attacked by others started to request help from the colonial administration. We read that in the year 1907 two 'chiefs' from Pam went to Herbertshöhe for this purpose after ten of their men were allegedly killed by raiders, armed with rifles (DKB 19:623). Complaints also came from Baluan and Lou. In February 1909 two chiefs from Pak appeared in Herbertshöhe and were given caps and sticks, according to the annual report (Sack and Clark 1979: 290) at their own request. After this they visited other islands with their new insignia of authority, exhorting the inhabitants to maintain peace. They induced their own people to sell even their obsidian spears to a Chinese trader (DKB 20:898). It is clear that by that time many Manus people had grasped the idea of an

39 "Trotz aller Feindseligkeiten der Eingeborenen macht der Händler doch noch ein ganz gutes Geschäft; er lieferte an die Firma Hernsheim and Co. etwa 28 Tons Kopra und etwa 7000 Stück green snail shells ab".
independent party which would not attack them without reason and which could be
called upon in the case of a threat by another native group. The white people were
now considered not only as a source of trade goods and weapons but also as a
possible source of protection.

This was a dramatic change of attitude among people who had relied entirely on
themselves for their defence and for whom alliances were always temporary and
untrustworthy. Not all groups were equally prepared to give in to the powerful
outsiders. Some Titan speaking groups, especially, continued their resistance for a
long time. The reason for this may be found in their precolonial position of
middlemen and traders, which was supported by their military superiority at sea. The
establishment of a colonial order threatened their dominance on which they in part
depended for their livelihood (cf. Carrier and Carrier 1989:75). The confrontation
between these native groups and the colonial power was not only a fight for
weapons and goods, but also a struggle for control. However, these groups also
decided in the end to give up their resistance, weary perhaps of the periodic
destruction of their villages and aware that the war could not be won.

The word 'decided' is used advisedly, because I believe that there was a
conscious choice in the islanders' change of behaviour. There was no objective
reason why they could not have continued to fight for much longer. They were
certainly not forced to surrender: the punitive actions were too small and too
intermittent to achieve this. Instead, when the natives became convinced of the
continuing presence of the colonial agents, they made a rational decision in favour
of the best alternative. It can be said, therefore, that both violence and consent were
involved in the establishment of the colonial state in Manus.

40 Schwartz (1976a:165) arrives at a similar conclusion: "In going through my collection of war stories,
ballads, and accounts of pacification, I have sensed that a feeling of relief must have accompanied
pacification, even though narration of war stories still lights all eyes. Melanesians welcomed the
existence of state power, in this case an imposed colonial administration, that could settle disputes and
retaliate for violence. They welcomed the cessation of many of the concomitants of warfare: the sneak
attack, ambush, raiding, kidnapping of women and children, cannibalism, torture, extreme indignities
inflicted on captives, and the continual need to be concerned with defense. In other words, a large
element of rational appraisal on the part of Melanesians contributed to pacification" [my emphasis].

41 Compare Godelier (1978:176): "Tout pouvoir de domination se compose de deux éléments
indissolublement mêlés qui en font la force: la violence et le consentement. Notre analyse nous conduit
nécessairement à affirmer que des deux composantes du pouvoir la force la plus forte n'est pas la
violence des dominants mais le consentement des dominés à leur domination". See also Guha (1989),
who analyses the constituents of power. His analytical framework will be introduced in the next chapter.
Many of the reports on punitive expeditions end with the note that it was absolutely necessary to establish a permanent government station on Manus in order to secure a lasting peace in the archipelago (see for example DKB 19:624 and 856, DKB 21:992, Sack and Clark 1979:244,265,275). However, it was not until 1911 that the funds for this became available (DKB 22:983). On 1 October 1911 governor Hahl published a decree making the Admiralty Islands and the Western Islands a separate district with a government station at Seeadler Harbour under the name Manus (DKB 22:926). The erection of a station started on 25 October and it received the following personnel: one station leader, one police master, one medical assistant and 50 native policemen. As leader of the new station was appointed the agricultural assistant Georg Zwanzger (Amtsblatt 3:216).

In the German documents Zwanzger appears an unimportant colonial officer because we look in vain for some mention of his name and deeds in the official German journal concerning colonial affairs (DKB) and in the archives of the government department for the colonies (RKA). For Manus people, however, he was the man who established the government in their archipelago. Under the name of Suansi he was known in all the villages I visited. Often referred to as the first kiap of Lorengau, he is credited with the final pacification of the islands. For this purpose he gathered all the chiefs of Manus in Lorengau and showed them an enormous warship 'Sanot', saying: "If you do not listen to me, this ship will shoot you in your villages". For contemporary Manus people this signifies the end of traditional warfare and the beginning of the 'good time'. For them Suansi stands at the beginning of a new era characterised by the presence of gavman.

Of course the white people were not only interested in stopping intertribal warfare. In addition to the trade goods which have already been mentioned, they were also looking for land to make plantations and for labour to work them. Although

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42 It can be assumed that part of the rationale for these rather elaborate descriptions was to persuade a reluctant government to give more money.

43 Kuluah (1977:184), who received his information from the Kurti people in north Manus, spells this name as 'Sweinzin'.

44 This is confirmed in the draft annual report for 1913/14 (Sack and Clark 1980:60): "At the present time, the local natives no longer have any firearms in their possession."

45 This warship was probably the armed cruiser 'Scharnhorst' mentioned in the draft annual report for 1913/14 (Sack and Clark 1980:61).
labour recruitment began before the establishment of the government station, it only really developed after 1911. The absence from home of large numbers of young men would have a tremendous impact on Manus cultures. I will discuss this in chapter 5. Land alienation remained relatively restricted but seriously affected the communities concerned. Another, though unintended, consequence of colonisation was the introduction of new diseases. The annual report of 1911-12 mentioned that possibly up to 14 per cent of the population succumbed to an epidemic of dysentery (Sack and Clark 1979:340). In several villages I was told stories of such epidemics, but the arrival of white people was never blamed for this.

The establishment of a state order had important consequences for leadership processes. In the previous chapter I stressed that warfare was one of the main fields in which a leader could make his name. The foreclosing of this possibility must have put great pressure on the other major arena for enterprising leaders, that of competitive feast giving (cf. Schwartz 1963:88). This process has been observed for many places in Melanesia. Keesing (n.d.d) concludes:

In many areas, leaders in warfare were transformed into, or upstaged by, leaders in production and exchange. Warfare and exchange, it would seem, had long been complementary arenas for power and prestige; the closing off of one arena opened up the other for intensified and escalating competition.

A new resource for status was introduced with the offices of luluai and tultul. These new leadership positions created by the colonial state were generally held by acknowledged traditional leaders. At least this was the intention of the colonial government and on Baluan this also had been the practice. In Lipan, Manuai, Parioi and Perelik the offices of luluai were acquired by the most important lapans, whose positions were not contested at the time. Sone village presented some problems because it was in fact a government-induced merger of two smaller villages: Pungap and Sone. The untimely death of several luluais in this place added to its instability.

46 Compare Firth (1983:103): "Within two years the number of Admiralty Islanders signing on as labourers had risen from 320 to 823."

47 Young (1971:256), for example, discusses the impact of pacification in Goodenough Island: "By claiming a monopoly of the use of force, the government eliminated traditional procedures of leadership formation and social control. Developed as an alternative procedure to fighting, competitive exchanging could become a true surrogate for it. Indeed, peace not merely 'permitted' the elaboration of food exchanges but, given the cultural premises, virtually necessitated it." See also Young (1985:188-190).
As the leading lapans were eager to assume the new offices, they probably viewed them as reinforcements of their authority. 48

However, in some other places in Manus the choice of the first luluais was apparently also determined by a leader’s ability to speak Tok Pisin. According to oral information, this was the case in Mouk and Pak, among others. How this affected power relations within these villages I have not been able to pursue in any detail. The ability to communicate with white people probably contributed to a person’s authority until such time as most men could speak the new lingua franca.49 It is significant though, that the luluai position tended to remain within one lineage. Therefore, the claim that a lineage received this position as a result of the language ability of its leader certainly has bearing on contemporary leadership disputes. Within Baluan the ability to speak Tok Pisin was never mentioned as a consideration for selection. It is likely that most men had mastered the lingua franca by the time they qualified for the government office as Baluan was one of the first areas to supply indentured labourers (see chapter 5). In Baluan villages, then, the first institutional positions of the domain of gavman were appropriated by traditional leaders, the lapans.

48 Compare Mead (1975[1930]:226):" As men of personality are usually chosen, the government appointment increases their influence in the village."

49 After 1911 most young men signed at least one labour contract, so this linguistic advantage did not last very long.
Chapter Four

THE ADVENT OF LOTU

This chapter examines the genesis of the contemporary domain of *lotu*. It was established when Manus people accepted Christianity as a new 'way of doing things'. Several missions competed for the attention of the indigenous people. Initially, there was hardly any interest in what they had to offer. Manus people then changed their attitude quite suddenly and on a large scale. Islanders who had never seen a missionary made long and sometimes dangerous journeys to learn about the *lotu*. How to explain this dramatic change of attitude is the central question of this chapter.

First I examine the reports of missionaries about the difficult beginnings of their work. This introduces their point of view and provides some clues for an explanation of their final success. Next, I look at indigenous representations of the events. These adopt a completely different perspective and suggest some other reasons for the spread of the *lotu*. In order to comprehend the attraction of the new creed, I discuss some underlying aspects of the traditional religion. It appears that there was continuity under the changes: the new way of doing things could be readily accepted because it accorded with some basic dispositions or *habitus* (Bourdieu 1977). Finally I look at the conversion process from a sociological perspective and compare it with the introduction of *gavman*. Both domains offered not only new ideas but also new institutional opportunities. Their creation has to be understood in the context of colonial power relations.

The arrival of the missions

Missionaries settled relatively late on the Admiralty Islands. They were preceded by traders and other colonial agents (see previous chapter). Of course there had been
the occasional clerical visitor. At the end of 1885 the Wesleyan missionary R.H. Rickard toured Manus on board a trading vessel. He considered the region as a possible new mission field (Rickard 1886), but his Church made no efforts to cultivate it. Only in 1913, two years after the establishment of a permanent government station in Lorengau, was the first missionary settlement on Manus built in Papitalai by two Catholic priests and one Catholic brother. A year later the Evangelical mission of Liebenzell started its work in Lugos, not far from Lorengau. As European organisations these missions have, of course, produced their own written histories. I briefly follow the early years of the Catholic mission as depicted by its missionaries.1 I have chosen the Catholics because they became important in Baluan though, interestingly, the Liebenzell mission had in many ways a very similar history.2

The first attempt to bring the Catholic faith to Manus was by way of a native catechist. As a young man Po Minis left his native village Papitalai and worked in Ralum on New Britain. Stricken by illness he went to the Catholic mission in Vunapope for treatment. After recovering he stayed there to receive some education. He proved an eager and talented pupil and was finally admitted to the school for catechists. After training he was sent back to Papitalai to commence the conversion of his people. In the village he acquired a leading role, which probably depended as much on his possession of a gun as on his alleged adoption by a local Japan. At that time Papitalai was conducting a feud with the neighbouring village of Loniu and, understandably, Po Minis led a pay-back raid on this village. Unfortunately a German cruiser arrived in Papitalai not long afterwards in 1904: Po Minis was arrested and convicted to serve ten years exile in Kavieng. But then the Catholic Bishop of New Britain, Ludwig Couppé, intervened; not only was the reputation of the mission stained by the events but it appeared that the conviction had taken place without proper procedures. For this reason Couppé was able to achieve the release of Po Minis.

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1 For this period I rely completely on the history as it is presented in published letters and articles to the faithful at home, on whom the mission depended for its funding. For the post-war period I have also found unpublished letters, journals and other manuscripts which complement the 'official' history.

2 See for example Walter (1953 and 1981). An outline of the Catholic history of the early mission in Manus can be found in Borchardt (1932 and 1933), and in Dahmen (1957).
In 1906 Bishop Couppe travelled to Manus and the Western Islands. During this trip Po Minis was left behind in Papitalai. On a second trip to Manus, in 1907, the bishop stayed two weeks in Po Minis' village, where he was treated with all possible honour and hospitality. On that occasion he acquired the first piece of land for his mission in Manus by payment to Po Minis (HM 24:446-47). Until the present day some people dispute Po Minis' right to dispose of this piece of land. The story of Po Minis is fascinating and well documented. He is also well known in Manus' oral tradition: for Manus people Po Minis is the man who brought the Catholic Church to their islands. He is a prime example of a leader who rose to power by using the new resources at his disposal. Hempenstall (1978:155) writes:

The long confrontation between one Manus Islander, Pominis, and the Germans is a striking illustration of the New Guinean ability to exploit the new sources of power while giving precedence to relations with neighbouring groups of islanders.

He used his new power resources not only in relation to neighbouring villages but also to achieve and maintain a leading position within his own group.

Although Bishop Couppe had a pied-à-terre in Manus through Po Minis and the ownership of a piece of land in Papitalai, he hesitated to send missionaries to this place. In a letter published in 1911 he explains his motives (HM 28:344).

After numerous and troublesome travels, [...], I became convinced that the archipelago of the Admiralty Islands would be most suitable for a new mission station because of the density of the population, which is about 80,000 souls, and because of the intellectual superiority of the natives. However, their wild, excitable and warlike character made me hesitate. All the white people who have so far risked to enter the main island of the group had to pay for their audacity with their lives. [...]. The continuous blood feuds between the different villages would have put the lives of my

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3 Oral information in Papitalai and Mokareng, October and November 1989. Po Minis had kin ties in both communities. Compare also Hempenstall (1978:157).

4 In Vunapope Po Minis was the main informant of Fr Meyer who recorded a collection of Manus myths (Meyer 1907-1909). He was also an informant on the Titan language for Dr Schnee and Fr Meyer. He often acted as interpreter for white visitors to Manus. Presumably this added considerably to his power. His name frequently occurs both in mission sources (for example many issues of HM) and in government sources (for example RKA 2993). Part of his story has been reconstructed by Hempenstall (1978:155-157). It would certainly be worthwhile to put more pieces of the puzzle of his biography together.

5 In 1913, after discovering that the interior of Manus was rather thinly populated, the government estimated the total population at not more than 13000 to 14000 (Sack and Clark 1980:63).
missionaries directly at risk. Therefore prudence commanded that I postpone my plans for the time being, the more so since the government has intentions to build a police station in the region, which would provide greater security.6

Interestingly, the bishop reproduces the same stereotypes of Manus people we have encountered earlier. They are described as more intelligent than the other inhabitants of the Bismarck Archipelago, but at the same time more temperamental and dangerous. For this reason the bishop first concentrated on the development of other areas. In 1912, however, he returned to Manus to buy more properties in several parts of the islands and in 1913 he sent three missionaries to Papitalai to start the first mission station in the region.

The three missionaries had expected that the bush had been cleared and a house built for them, because their arrival had been announced beforehand and Po Minis had received a considerable amount of money to make preparations. Nothing had been done, however, and only with government help were the three men able to hire local labourers who assisted them in setting up the station (HM 50:243).

Although the missionaries do not mention it, I surmise that Po Minis did not like the idea of having the mission so close to home. This meant both unwelcome supervision of his actions and competition for his own valued resources: the white man’s knowledge and goods.

The station was a complete failure. Po Minis remained aloof and was fully involved in local politics. The missionaries learnt the local language and read the mass for the labourers and themselves. The local people, however, showed no interest in being taught and even the labourers stopped attending the religious services as soon as their contracts had finished. People in the neighbouring village of Loniu joked about the missionaries who learned to speak the Papitalai language,

6 "Nach diesen zahlreichen und beschwerlichen Reisen, [...], war ich zur Überzeugung gelangt, dass sich der Archipel der Admiralitätsinseln für ein neues Missionszentrum noch am ehesten eignet, sowohl mit Rückicht auf die Dichtigkeit der Bevölkerung, die sich auf annähernd 80000 Seelen beläuft, als auch im Hinblick auf die geistige Überlegenheit der Eingeborenen selbst. Indes ihr wilder, reizbarer und kriegerischer Character machten mich bedenklich; alle Weissen, die es bisher gewagt haben, die Hauptinsel der Gruppe zu betreten, mussten ihre Kühnheit mit dem Leben büßen; [...]. Die beständigen Blutfehden zwischen den verschiedenen Dörfern hätten meine Missionare unmittelbarer Lebensgefahr ausgesetzt. Es erschien mir folglich als ein Gebot der Klugheit, mein Vorhaben einstweilen aufzuschieben, zumal die Regierung sich mit dem Gedanken trägt, in jenem Gebiete eine Polizeistation zu errichten, wodurch für grössere Sicherheit vorgensort wäre".
whereas some of their men had learned the more prestigious Tok Pisin7 as native policemen. Through lack of transport the missionaries were practically confined to their area. Their situation was so desperate that in 1916 Bishop Couppé decided to close the station and to move his missionaries 60 kilometres westwards to Bundralis. In that place the bishop had also acquired a property which had been developed by a German planter as a coconut plantation for the mission.

At first the station in Bundralis did not seem any more promising than Papitalai. The linguistic situation was even more complicated, with six different languages spoken in the area. The missionaries started by learning the language spoken in the three neighbouring villages, which numbered only 48 men in all (HM 50:272). One of the missionaries, Fr Borchardt, wanted to set up a boarding school for boys, but could not get any pupils at first. Then a sick and neglected boy was brought by his father who could not look after the child properly. Fr Borchardt had his first student. The second one worked as a contract labourer on the plantation. The missionary freed him from his duties to help him with language studies. This young man took his little brother to the station for treatment of a nasty sore on his leg. Of course the boy had to stay for proper treatment and in the meantime he could be instructed: the Father now had three students. Slowly the number of pupils increased. They stayed at the mission station and in 1919 the missionaries baptised 32 of them.

Outside the school religious work had not made any progress. The people waited and watched the missionaries closely. In 1919 Fr Borchardt was able to prevent 80 people from being forced into contract labour by a government official. In acknowledgement of this more people attended the Sunday mass. Then, in 1922, a dramatic change occurred. In the mission chronicles this is called the mission’s year of jubilation (‘das Missionsjubeljahr’), because the Church celebrated three centuries of ‘Propaganda’, the propagation of the faith. In Manus this coincided with an enormous increase of indigenous participation in mission activities. Large crowds attended Sunday masses and babies were brought to the priest to be baptised.

In 1923 a new missionary arrived to replace one who had left. At that time it was decided that the first language he should learn was Tok Pisin, although the general opinion was still against it. In Manus there were so many languages that the use of

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7 At that time Tok Pisin was called ‘Pidgin’, ‘Pidgin English’, ‘Negro English’, ‘Tok Boy’, or even ‘Tok bolong Waitiman’ (HM 50:310). I will use only the modern name for this language.
Tok Pisin appeared to be the only solution. Fr Borchardt and Fr Klaarwater, the new missionary, made a serious study of the language and developed a grammar. In 1928 they made Tok Pisin the official language of the Catholic Church in Manus. In that year the first Catholic Day ('Katholikentag') of Manus was organised in the reopened station of Papitalai, and through the use of Tok Pisin people from many different language backgrounds were able to understand the sermon.

In Papitalai there were also people from Rambutyo and Nauna, two islands far to the south-east and the east of Manus mainland. They had never been visited by a missionary or a catechist. Fr Borchardt writes about them (HM 48:240):

This conversion belongs indubitably to the Mirabilia Dei, the miracles of God. [...] Rambutyo and the even more remote 'Nauna' can be called Catholic islands. They became this without catechists and without missionary. The missionary did not go to them, but they came to the missionary, thereby risking their lives, to gain the eternal life. They themselves gave this as the reason for their coming.8

At this point in the narrative I will turn to indigenous accounts of the spread of the Christian faith before attempting an analysis of the events.

Stories about the lotu

Stories about the missions may be considered as a separate genre in Manus oral tradition. In contrast to the lapan stories presented in chapter 2 they are not confined to kin groups. They are considered public knowledge and in general outline the stories of the different missions are indeed widely known. The most detailed stories about a particular mission are provided by its members. For them the stories are part of their self-understanding and self-definition as a separate denominational group. Young people have a keen interest to learn about the history of their church from older members who witnessed the arrival of the lotu when they were young.

8 "Rambutjo und das noch einmal so weit entfernte ‘Nauna’ sind katholische Inseln zu nennen. Sind es geworden ohne Katechisten und ohne Missionar. Nicht der Missionar kam zu ihnen, sondern sie kamen zum Missionar, unter Einsetzung ihres Lebens, um das ewige Leben zu gewinnen. Sie selbst gaben dies als Grund ihres Kommens an"."
Some people have extensive knowledge of the histories of more than one mission. It is a subject people like to talk about and it was not difficult to collect stories about the lotu in the places I visited. The main concern of these stories is to describe the road along which a mission reached a particular place. The diffusion of the lotu is ascribed to individuals who received the new knowledge at a certain place and took it somewhere else. The agency of local people is stressed.

Let us return to the expansion of the Catholic mission to the south-eastern islands and see how it is described by one of the most knowledgeable people on Pundro Island near Rambutyo: Lungat Polou.

I want to tell the story of how the mission reached us. The mission came together with the Germans. Two missions came: the Catholic mission and the Talatala mission\(^9\), both from Germany. The two came together and stayed. There was no other church yet, only those two. When Australia ousted Germany, the lotu stayed. The church was in Manus for many years. And we, the islanders of Rambutyo, and also Pak, Tong and Nauna, did not have the lotu. I do not talk about the Talatala but on the side of the Catholics there was a young man, he was from Ndriol\(^10\). He was called Sion. His father was Pokau. He married a woman from Papitalai. Her name was Hi Chachi. She was from Los Negros\(^11\). Her father was Po Minis. Previously, when the Germans came, Po Minis worked for the Germans. He went all the way to Germany and the Church belonged to the Germans. Po Minis brought the lotu from Germany back home to Manus. The lotu was in Papitalai, a long time, and we in Rambutyo did not know it. But the daughter of Po Minis married Sion. […] His Christian name was Thomas. All right, these two took the lotu to Ndriol. All the other places of Rambutyo did not have the lotu yet; Nauna, Pak, Lenkau, Penchal, they did not have it. Ndriol got the Catholic Church first. […]\(^12\)

From Ndriol the lotu went to Palamot, to Nauna, to Lenkau, to Penchal; we all went to the Catholic Church. The people of Mouk, who used to paddle to Ndriol, they too got the lotu from Ndriol. There was a young man from Mouk, his name was Polin; he came to take

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9 This is the Evangelical mission.

10 Lungat belongs to this village. Pundro is a new settlement by Ndriol villagers. It was established as part of the changes in the early Paliau Movement (see map 3).

11 This is the island on which Papitalai lies.

12 Here Lungat interrupts his story to answer a question of mine. He explains how the people discarded their ancestral skulls and magic by throwing everything into a hole.
the Catholic Church from Ndril to Mouk. The *lotu* was now in Mouk; from there it spread to Mbuke, to Mwenai, to Pere. It came to Rambutyo and afterwards it spread along the south coast of Manus. At first, when the *lotu* was yet on the mainland it did not go to the south coast. It came to Rambutyo and after that it went that way. That is it.

The general theme of the *lotu* stories is clearly demonstrated by this example. The Church was first at a particular place, in this case Germany, and was brought to Manus by the actions of local people. Two additional points are exemplified by this story. In the first place it was often young men who moved the *lotu* from one place to another. One reason for this, of course, is that these youngsters did most of the travelling and therefore came into contact with the new phenomenon. There is, however, another side to the story as these people were generally not in a position to assume a leadership role in their villages on the basis of traditional criteria. Some of the young men, such as Sion in the above example, belonged to a *lapan* family and had the prospect of leadership status later in their career, but this certainly did not apply to all of them. It can be assumed that the introduction of some new knowledge or a new way of doing things would add considerably to someone’s standing in the community and that ambitious young men were generally willing to take the risk of failure that attended any innovation.13

The second point is the importance of affinal relations in the transfer of the *lotu*. Although the church was spread through all kinds of relationships, marriage connections are often mentioned in stories about the *lotu*. This is consistent with the general importance of marriage alliances in the regional system of exchanges. Affines were essential knots in the networks through which not only material goods flowed but also bits of information and ‘culture’. Because of the reciprocal obligations between affines it was possible to request all sorts of things as part of the on-going exchange between them and it was very difficult to refuse such requests.

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13 See Schwartz’s (1975:112) comment about the diffusion of ritual innovations in Manus: “Diffusion of such innovations and their further elaboration takes place within the entrepreneurial framework of aspirant leadership.” Compare also Allen’s (1981) description of the importance of innovation in the acquisition of status in North Vanuatu. Lindstrom (1982:322) makes similar observations concerning the introduction of Christianity in Tanna (South Vanuatu): “...politically active islanders colonized Christian knowledge to control its communication [...], its interpretation, and its implementation [...]. ... Their status depended on their control of Christian, rather than traditional, knowledge.”
In the above story we learn the names of three men: the one who brought the church to Manus, the one who moved it to Ndriol (his father's name is given for further identification) and the one who took it to Mouk. The last piece of information was possibly added because the story teller knew that I lived on Baluan. Without doubt he could have given many more names but they were not relevant in the context. When I visited some of the places mentioned in the story, namely Lenkau, Penchal and Mouk, I got the detailed stories of who moved the lotu from Ndriol to that place, what the relationships were, etc. The stories clearly have a regional focus within the general framework of the main events. Let us look at the same story from a Baluan perspective.

All right. I am Otto Nembou Pokut. I am from Baluan. The name of my village is Pungap. I want to tell the story of the movements of the Catholic mission before it reached Baluan. All right, at first the mission was in Vunapope, in Taliligap. There were four men: one from Lou, called Keleme; one from Papitalai, called Po Minis; one from Baluan, called Mwat; one from Pam, called Polen. These four men went to Taliligap before the church was established there. They were there and wanted to be trained as catechists to be able to take the word of the lotu to Manus. They were there and the one from Lou died, Keleme died. The one from Baluan did not obtain it and came back to the village where he died. The one from Pam failed. He did not receive it to take to Pam. The one from Papitalai, Po Minis, took the lotu to Papitalai.

However, I do not know in what year the lotu came to Papitalai. When it arrived in Papitalai, I was still small in my mother’s arms. When the lotu came to Papitalai and stayed there, there were three or how many Fathers: Fr Borchardt, Fr Russ, Fr Dahmen, another Father. All right, Fr Borchardt stayed in Papitalai, Fr Russ and Fr Klaarwater were in Bundralis, Bipi got a Father only later, and Fr Beermann was in Bowat. When these four fathers arrived for the first time, they came to Baluan. I was still small, I did not shave yet. The fathers came to Baluan, Fr Borchardt, Fr Russ, Fr Klaarwater, Fr Dahmen; they

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14 Otto became a catechist himself and served in different places in Manus. He still considers himself a Catholic, although officially he is not a member of the Church since he divorced his first wife to live with another.

15 This is possibly Fr Utsch who arrived in Manus in 1932.

16 Fr Dahmen came to Manus in 1930.

17 Fr Beermann worked in Manus only after the Second World War, from 1952 onwards.
came and requested one mountain, called Sulpu, in Baluan. They wanted to build a house on it so that the mission could be established on this mountain. But no, the first luluai of Lipan, his name was Kanawi Pokarup, he did not like it. He did not give his approval and they went back to Papitalai. They stayed there and one man, the luluai of Papitalai called Pokop, also did not like the lotu to be in Papitalai. Po Minis prevailed, however, and the Church stayed in Papitalai. At that time Baluan did not have the lotu yet.

All right, the church started to move, first to Rambutyo. When the lotu was there, men from Mouk mixed with men from Rambutyo and they went to Papitalai to Fr Borchardt. They took the lotu from Fr Borchardt to Rambutyo. The lotu stayed there and Mouk people brought it to Mouk. After it arrived in Mouk, it came to Baluan. Inside Baluan the first place where the Catholic Church settled was Lipan. The rest of Baluan did not go to it yet. They went one by one.

Otto continues to relate who the catechists were. He mentions Polin from Mouk who was the first to serve in the church built in Lipan. The name of the church was Thomas. Polin's successor was a local young man of relatively modest status, namely Payap, also called Pomat, from Loye in Lipan. The luluai of Lipan, Assungkiau, was one of the first to accept the new faith. Payap later took the lotu to the neighbouring villages of Manuai and Sone. Otto stresses the role of one of his classificatory fathers, Lima, in bringing the Church to Pungap, which is now politically merged with Sone. The villages of Parioi and Perelik had not accepted the new Church by the time representatives of the Seventh Day Adventist Church arrived in Baluan. They were sent by a brother of Lima, called Kuam Panak, who worked as a policeman in Kavieng. Otto continues to give the story of the arrival of the SDA Church in full detail.

I have reproduced part of Otto's story here because it puts the agency of Baluan people concerning the introduction of the lotu further back in history than do other versions. When Po Minis was in Vunapope to learn about the Catholic mission, there were, according to Otto, also men from Baluan and the neighbouring islands of Pam and Lou who had the same intentions. This is certainly possible because the men of this area were amongst the first to be recruited due to the proximity of their

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18 Other versions also stress Payap's initiative in bringing the lotu to Lipan. However, he was not yet a catechist then.
villages to Kumuli. Of the four men only Po Minis was successful. Later some missionaries arrived on Baluan to buy land. This could refer to bishop Couppé's journey in 1912 when he tried to acquire properties in the islands, or to some later undocumented event. The missionaries were turned away by the luluai. Again Baluan people took their fate into their own hands. Quite realistically the advent of the Church was not without set-backs.

Otto's narrative clearly exemplifies another characteristic of the stories about the lotu: in distinction to the lapan stories they deal with the relatively recent past. The main actors generally belong to the parental generation of the - older - informants. Moreover, many of these informants have participated in these events as children. This gives an added quality of authenticity to these stories because the narrator may say not only nga yong (I have heard), which is the hallmark of a pwapwa (story), but also nga ning (I have seen).

As we have learned from Otto's story, SDA missionaries arrived on Baluan. This was probably around 1935. The SDA Church started its activities in the Admiralties much later than the Catholic and Evangelical Churches. Baluan was, after Tong Island, only the second place within Manus where SDA representatives landed. The missionary work was done mainly by Solomon Islanders. After Baluan this mission spread to Pam, Lou and then the Manus mainland. Conversion to this Church produced similar 'miracles' as we have noted for the Catholics. An official church historian states the following, after describing the precipitate conversion of the inhabitants of Mussau and Emirau (St Matthias Island): "A similar miracle occurred in 1936 on Lou Island in the Admiralty group, every inhabitant joining the church" (Maxwell 1966:118).

Let us see how the SDA Church came to Baluan. The story teller is Ngat Kalou Solok from Perelik.

I will talk about the start of the lotu in Baluan. The first time this church came to Baluan it arrived in Patangkon; that is where now the Mouk people live. When the SDA arrived, I, Kalou Solok, was in the Catholic Church. I became a member when the Catholic Church

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19 According to one version the bishop acquired the (uninhabited) island Takumal. This is, however, not confirmed.

20 I discuss some underlying epistemological assumptions in the next chapter.
arrived. [...]. After one year or about six months — now knowledge has come and we can know the precise date of something, but in the past this was not the case. In the past we were still real bushmen. All right, the SDA mission arrived. One man, he was a policeman just as Paliau Maloat and Poruan, his name was Kuam. He was from Pungap. He was policeman in Kavieng. He accepted the SDA and sent it to Baluan. It came straight to Patangkon.21 When it arrived the village Pungap had already accepted the Catholic Church. All right, Pungap is the village of the mother of my father. When they arrived, an old man called Lima told them: I have already a lotu, I cannot accept this one. My father was in the bush. When he came back he heard about it. He went and talked with the people of his mother’s village. He said: if you have already this church, that is all right, it is for all of us. Keep it. And the lotu that has come to you now, give that one to me. And I will take it to Perelik, because Perelik has not got a lotu yet. They agreed to his request.

Ngat further relates how his father Solok made one last big Japan feast for his deceased brother and then moved his village down to the coast where the SDA church had been built. He describes the subsequent expansion of the SDA Church in Manus. Within Baluan, Parioi village had joined the new lotu of their neighbours. As a result of a fight between boys of the two villages, the Parioi leaders decided to build their own church and have their own missionary.

Ngat’s story emphasises again the importance of affinal relations in the spread of intellectual or spiritual goods. These are considered property just like material goods and may be requested and given within the appropriate relationships. Another point which emerges from this example is how the lotu could be used to maintain and enforce traditional divisions within the society.22 In the past the west (Mun) had often fought the east (Kum). In having their own Church the west did not owe any debt to the east, but could proudly pursue the strength of its own faith. Competition

21 Ngat leaves out the passage of how the missionaries were sent from Patangkon, which belonged to Lipan, to Kuam’s village, Pungap. This passage has become important in recent times because of the expansion of the SDA Church to Lipan.

22 Schwartz (1975: 124-25) elaborates on this point in the context of his discussion of ‘cultural totemism’. He compares the mission sects to ethnic groups with similar totemic features. The missions split up the existing ethnic groups and became, according to Schwartz, ‘virtually endogamous’. Schwartz explains that endogamy was not so much a rule as the result of practices. This last point does not appear to apply to Baluan, where intermarriage between SDA and Catholic groups continued. It was generally expected that the wife would take on the religion of the husband, but this was not always the case.
between the two Churches has been a persistent feature of Baluan history ever since.

A last point, illustrated by all three stories, is the importance of contract labour in the diffusion of new ideas. Po Minis was a labourer in East New Britain when he learned about the Catholic mission and Kuam Panak worked as a policeman in Kavieng where he contacted Seventh Day Adventists. The migrant workers became the intermediaries between different cultures, especially their own and the Western culture. They also exchanged culture items such as magical charms and food plants between themselves. The main media of this cultural interchange were the *linguae francae*, especially Tok Pisin which was well established in Manus before it was officially adopted by the Churches.23

**The success of the missions**

The stories of the missionaries and the indigenous stories about the *lotu* give rise to one central question: why was there such a sudden and widespread enthusiasm for conversion to the Christian Churches? The missionary answer is straightforward. The sudden success is ascribed to the grace of God, who rewards human efforts by effecting a miracle. The indigenous stories generally do not refer to reasons for the adoption of the *lotu*, as they are more concerned with the actual road along which the *lotu* moved and the names of the people who moved it. Sometimes an explanation is incorporated into the story. In one case the missionary is given poison by a *luluai* and a white planter. The missionary is unaffected and this proves the strength of the *lotu*. In another story a person who mocks the new religion loses his tongue and is only cured by the prayers of the believers. One story teller elaborates

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23 Keesing (1986) argues that the significance of plantation networks and plantation cultures for the regional distribution of ideas and cultural elements has generally been overlooked or undervalued by anthropologists. He also makes the following point relevant to my discussion: "Acquiring cultural knowledge from their counterparts, as well as Europeans, was one way young men could hope to gain status on their return to home communities: one could almost say that they had a common 'class interest' in sharing their 'cultural capital' with one another."
on the power of the (Catholic) missionary to predict correctly a person's death. This filled the people who witnessed it with fear and respect.24

When I specifically inquired into the reasons for conversion I got different answers. Sometimes the missionary point of view was repeated: "The power of God changed our minds." Occasionally people referred to the advantages of learning how to read and write. On Baluan this was mainly mentioned by SDA members, because on this island the first missionaries were accompanied by teachers.25 A third reason to be given was the assistance rendered by mission converts in curing sick people. Mead (1975[1956]:92-93) observed this very process in Pere before it turned to the Catholic Church. A very sick person did not respond well to the traditional treatment. A Catholic convert from another village who happened to be visiting was brought in "to add his religious powers to those of practitioners of the local religions". Interestingly, she adds the following footnote:

In other parts of the Admiralties where conversion was a slower matter, notably on Baluan, accounts state that a favourite method of making converts was for the catechist to help to cure someone who, if cured, was then bound to become a convert (ibid:93).26

An aged and important Baluan informant, Lapun Sanewai, said precisely this. He was the younger brother of Payap, the first Baluan catechist. Lapun explained that the first converts visited sick people to pray and talk. "Many of them recovered. The people were won over to the church through sickness alone."27 It appears that this was indeed the predominant motivation for conversion to Christianity in Baluan (and some other places in Manus): a relation between religion and illness was explicitly formulated or implied in many accounts pertaining to both the past and the

24 The same story teller also related how the dog of the missionary was attacked by a crocodile while the mass was being read. After the service both dog and crocodile were found dead. "We saw it and therefore we feared and respected the mission."

25 Generally, however, people made disparaging remarks about the early mission schools, because, in the opinion of most Baluan people, proper education began only after the Second World War (see chapter 6).

26 Paliau Maloat, the well known Manus reformer (see chapter 5), told the same thing to Schwartz (1962:246): "... he said that Christianity had come slowly to Baluan. People who seemed about to die were baptized. If they recovered, they remained Christians."

27 Another person who was very explicit about this connection was Lungat Polou of Pundro, whose story about the arrival of the kolu has been quoted in the text.
present. To substantiate the claim that this belief played a major role in people's conversion to the new creed, I will first discuss some aspects of the traditional religion.

It is self-evident that we have to know the principles of the old religion in order to understand what attracted people to Christianity. Fortune (1931 and 1935) made an elaborate study of the religious beliefs and practices of the Titan speaking people of Pere in 1928-29, that is, just before their conversion to the Catholic Church. Although there is an obvious risk of distortion in trying to reconstruct a 'traditional' religion almost 60 years after a group of people adopted Christianity, it appears from the available evidence that the Baluan religion was very similar to the one described by Fortune. I summarise its main tenets relevant for further discussion.

Human beings possessed a spiritual component, a 'soul' (malowan yamat). When a person died this soul became a free-ranging spirit (silal). Spirits were feared and considered dangerous to human beings except for their own mortal kin whom they normally protected. In particular the ghost of the last deceased male adult of a lineage was powerful and called upon for guardianship.\(^2^8\) He was addressed as lapan, tamong (father) or by his proper name. Collectively the ghosts of a lineage were referred to as iptupunep (our ancestors) by lineage members. Although they were benevolent towards their own surviving kin, they could inflict illness upon them. This would occur if there was a problem between the lineage members which affected their mutual relationship. The problem could range from adultery to theft and non-cooperation. It was also possible that one of the lineage members had asked an ancestor to make someone of his or her family sick as retaliation for some wrong-doing. This was done by speaking to the ancestor (tenten). Father's sister (saing) and father's eldest brother (tamong) were especially powerful in this respect. The ghost would take someone's soul away and this resulted in sickness and ultimately, if not treated in time, in death.

If someone was ill, it was imperative to find out the cause of the illness. If the cause was not immediately clear to the people involved, the services of a diviner could be invoked. This man would use betelnut, lime, a pepper leaf, and his saliva to

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\(^{28}\) Fortune (1931:84) summarises this attitude to spirits as follows: "Manus religion may be regarded, in this respect, as a result of a fusion of two attitudes. On the one hand is the fear of the ghosts. On the other hand is the love of one's own who are dead. So we get ghost on the one hand, Sir Ghost [the guardian] on the other."
get answers from the spirits. The way the red-coloured saliva would run on the pepper leaf would determine the answer to a question, which could take only the form of yes or no. This practice was called poi and could also be used to answer other questions such as whether it was safe to sail out or wise to stage a ceremony on a certain day. Sometimes the ancestors would speak directly to the living through a person in a state of trance or possession (imat). Another way of communication was via dreams.

Once the cause of the disease was known, the treatment could be determined. In case the ancestral ghosts were imposing the ailment as a punishment or warning, the concerning social conflict should be solved by reconciliation and the payment of some compensation. This would lead to the recovery of the patient, sometimes immediately. Although the ancestors accounted for a large number of cases, there could also be other causes for illness. One was the voluntary or involuntary breach of a food taboo (napun). These taboos were inherited in the female line and the resulting disorder had to be treated by senior women in this line. Serious illness could also be caused by an encounter with silal or spirits of the bush (pwalei). People depended on their ancestral ghosts for protection against these evil spirits. Once affected, recovery might be impossible. Sorcery was a plausible though relatively rare explanation for sickness. All informants stressed that Baluan did not have its own sorcery, but that it was sometimes bought from outsiders. The treatment for sorcery was countermagic. Finally, it was considered possible that an ailment had purely physical causes, for example a fall or a spear wound. In this case the disorder should disappear in due time, otherwise alternative causes must be found.

This short overview serves to show the intrinsic relationship between the traditional religion and ideas about illness and its cure. The protection and support of the ancestral ghosts was not limited to a person’s good health. The guardians were also asked, for example, to strengthen efforts in organising a feast or to provide safety on a hazardous voyage. Outside one’s own territory the power of the ancestral ghosts was limited, however, and the danger of being afflicted by foreign spirits much greater.29 Spiritual assistance could be requested for all kinds of

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29 Fortune (1935) describes how in Pere the existence of a guardian spirit was tied to his skull which was kept in a wooden bowl hanging from the raft within the house. The people of Pere lived in pile dwellings in the lagoon. The Baluan people, who made their houses on the ground, buried their dead
ventures but it appears that health and sickness was a primary focus of spiritual attention – at least in the representations of Baluan Islanders. What they expected from their guardians was the same as the people of Pere, namely 'life, long life, and no accidents' (Fortune 1931:84), states of being that were highly desirable yet extremely precarious.

It has often been remarked that Melanesian religious systems are pragmatic and have a materialistic bias. Mead (1975[1956]:85) formulates it as follows (see also Schwartz 1976a:166, 200).

Religion was a severely practical matter, a way of preventing illness, restoring the sick, obtaining immunity, gaining protection from warfare and dangerous journeys, and obtaining success in growing food, catching fish, or carrying on trade or courtships.

Although I agree in part with this general characterisation, I believe that words like 'practical', 'pragmatic' and 'materialistic' reveal as much about the anthropologist's cultural biases as it does about Melanesian ones. We use these terms to contrast the image we hold of our own religions ('a spiritual force for human salvation') with one we reserve for Melanesian religions ('a technology').

Apparently, Western religions are preoccupied with the afterlife such that rewards for good behaviour are generally not considered visible in earthly existence. Although Manus religions fully accept some form of afterlife, their main concern is with the present and the immediate future. I think the opposition between this-worldly and other-worldly is less appropriate, because the Manus present includes those who are in their afterlife, i.e. the spirits. These beings are actively involved in earthly affairs and have to be dealt with accordingly. We may call this a practical religion, but I prefer to call it a concern with efficacy. This concern not only underlies what we delimit as the field of religion, but all aspects of life. Every form of knowledge and

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30 See for example Lawrence (1964:9,28-29) and Lawrence and Meggit (1965:18).

31 Both quotes are from Lawrence and Meggitt (1965:18).

32 Of course there are many exceptions to this generalisation. It appears to me, that the oppositional characterisation of Western religions does as little justice to them as it does to Melanesian religions.
every action is ultimately measured against the criterion of its efficacy, i.e. its contribution to the valued aims of life: health, longevity, power and wealth. True knowledge is efficacious, whether it falls within our categories of technical or theoretical knowledge. True knowledge, therefore, is power.

This concern with efficacy and the belief that knowledge, if true, is efficacious may be considered as a basic disposition, as part of the habitus\textsuperscript{33} of Baluan people and Manus people in general.\textsuperscript{34} If this assumption is correct, the disposition would be slow to change and should therefore be recognisable in the practices of Manus people over a long period of time. I believe that this is indeed the case. I will show that this habitus helps explain the sudden conversion of Manus people to the Christian Churches. In the next chapter I try to demonstrate that the same habitus led to the rejection of the missions by Paliau and his followers. I also believe that this habitus is still relevant for understanding present practices in Baluan and Manus: for example, the fascination with formal schooling.\textsuperscript{35}

Although I described the principles of the traditional religion in the past tense, many of the beliefs are still held today.\textsuperscript{36} Of course there are enormous differences between individuals. For example, some people ignore their food taboos completely without any negative consequences, whereas others stick to them rigourously and explain their ailments by involuntary breaches. It can be said, though, that the spirits and ancestral ghosts are alive and well. They are still generally regarded as a possible and probable cause of illness and appropriate action is taken if the infliction is considered to be of their making. The difference from the past is that the situation

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{33} I derive this important concept from Bourdieu (1973:63-64 and 1977:78).
\item \textsuperscript{34} Carrier's (1984:59-60) description of Ponam attitudes to knowledge confirms this: "What is it that underpins success on Ponam? [...] The answer, in typical Ponam fashion, is quite straight-forward: knowledge (and, of course, the effort to implement that knowledge)." It appears that this characterisation of Manus habitus has much wider application in the Melanesian region. Compare Lindstrom (1990b:248) who discusses the significance of knowledge in Melanesian cargo cults: "Knowledge of something provides several sorts of power over that thing, including the power to produce, and reproduce it."
\item \textsuperscript{35} Recently the Manus University Centre was officially opened. On that occasion premier Stephen Pokawin made the following statement in his official address: "The changes in our country show that education is the only road to better living, it does not matter where you live. We need better knowledge to make use of what we have and with the knowledge from outside, to improve our province and standard of living" (Times of Papua New Guinea, 12 April 1990, page 5). I return to the peculiar Manus interest in formal education in chapter 6.
\item \textsuperscript{36} This is not to deny that there are also new beliefs of Christian origin.
\end{itemize}
is complicated through the availability of alternative explanations. What we call religious knowledge is judged on the basis of its perceived efficacy just like other forms of knowledge. A preferred field for discussing this efficacy, now as well as in the past, appears to be the realm of health and disease.

This raises the problem of the emergence of cargo cults with their focus on wealth. Cargo cult type movements appeared in Manus after the Second World War. It may be that my perspective is biased through present-day opinions. Although a beautiful church building is certainly considered a visible sign of success and efficacy, most people are now convinced that wealth acquisition is not the proper domain of the Church. The pre-cargo-cult investigations of Fortune and Mead appear, however, to confirm my conclusions. My hypothesis would be that a relative shift to cargo was a result of the historical encounter with enormous Western wealth in combination with the acceptance of Christian millenarian messages, phenomena which are generally accepted as explanations for the occurrence of cargo cults (cf. Schwartz 1973:170). I do not say that the concern with wealth was absent in the old religion. Richness and success were visible signs of ancestral strength and support. It appears, however, that matters of health had special attention. This preoccupation with health continued throughout the cargo cult phases. There was continuity within a relative shift of value fields to which the efficacy of the new religion was directed. Another point is that the fixation on cargo has possibly been overemphasised by Western observers (cf. Keesing 1978). What emerged from my discussions with participants in the cults is that unlimited wealth was only part of the millenarian dream — which also comprised an existence without death, without illness, without effort and without need, an existence in which everything was available for the wishing.

Let us now return to the events described in the first two sections of this chapter and see if the above discussion has brought us any closer to understanding the initial resistance to the missions and the subsequent general and rapid conversion. When the first missionaries arrived to settle, they were received as any other uninvited settler: with suspicion. People waited to see whether the new arrivals posed any threat or whether they could be of any use. Surely, the three men did not

37 There is no space to elaborate on this. Compare, however, Achsah Carrier’s (1989) study of modern Ponam theories of illness and Lola Romanucci’s (1969) article on traditional and modern curative practices in Manus, especially amongst the Titan speakers.
look very impressive, cramped as they were in their little hut and suffering from diseases. They did not seem particularly wealthy or powerful compared to some other white people the islanders had encountered. In Papitalai they did not raise any interest apart from the wages and the tobacco they provided.

The same happened at first in Bundralis. People waited and watched. Reluctantly they sent to the missionaries some young boys, who were mostly sick and unwanted anyway. This was also a way of finding out what was going on. The missionaries had some success in treating these boys and also a few other people. By itself this medical success cannot explain the growing attraction of the mission. The government also treated indigenous people and the existence of Western medicine was no secret. However, the attitude towards Western medicine was not very favourable, as Mead (1975[1956]:88) reports for Pere in 1928.

In 1928, the Manus did not want medicine; they hid their sick from government inspections; they resisted our occasional attempts to deal with an extreme case. Only in the case of a wound were they willing to accept our help. Catgut and iodine were seen as technological improvements not involving religious principles.

The missionaries, however, did not just treat wounds. They did things that made sense in the context of serious diseases. They taught the boys to pray to God, whom they called Our Father, to ask Him for recovery. They also taught the boys that God could see them if they sinned and that sin would lead to misery. On the other hand, God would protect the righteous against evil spirits and give them eternal life. The missionaries told stories about miraculous recoveries effected by God's son. All this was absorbed by the boys and repeated back home. The missionaries were willing to share their knowledge and to extend God's protection to others, but there were certain conditions. First, people had to pass an examination to demonstrate that they had sufficient knowledge and had correctly learned the new formulas and prayers. Then they had to prove that they could live according to the

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38 One leader is even reported to have said: We do not want anything to do with the religion, but we can use tobacco (HM 50:271).

39 Compare the following observation by Mead (1975[1956]:177): "But the Mission, while always generous in the care of the individually sick or hurt, had not interfered with the primary connection between illness and death and sin, so that missionization had brought no increased sense of the importance of Western medicine, but rather an increased sense of the power of God over matters of health and illness."
laws of the church, which meant that some of the traditional customs had to be discarded.40 Finally they were expected to make contributions to the church during the Sunday collections.

Although many of these things were new, they made sense in terms of people's *habitus* and own religious beliefs. They understood that the missionaries wanted them to replace their own ancestral ghosts with others who were claimed to be more powerful and they were willing to give it a try when the mission began showing signs of success. The boys were healthy and dedicated. In addition to religious knowledge they were acquiring the valuable skills of reading and writing, which could give them better jobs as contract labourers. The mission station itself had also improved and consisted of more and better buildings. Perhaps there was some truth in what the missionaries were preaching.

When more converts were joining the Church, news about the missionary achievements was spread. It was told in terms that appealed to Manus people. Stories about unlikely recoveries found eager ears and examples of the missionaries' foreknowledge inspired fear and belief. Prescience was highly valued and was a definite proof of the power and efficacy of someone's knowledge. Unintentionally the missionary reports testify to the importance of people's hope of recovery from illness in their conversion to Christianity. Fr. Borchardt, for example, describes what a difficult journey people had to make to attend Sunday mass. But even the sick came! And though the Father disapproved of this, he was not able to stop them (HM 50:306). Father Borchardt also witnessed miraculous recoveries.

A pagan woman from Powat had turned totally blind in both eyes. She recovered completely through her own prayers and those of the new converts. I can confirm this as an eyewitness in every detail.41

Once this kind of story became widely known, the movement got a momentum of its own. Enterprising young men made long and sometimes dangerous voyages to see the wonders with their own eyes and to receive the new knowledge at first

40 Particularly those connected with ancestor worship, sorcery, polygamy and sexually explicit dancing.

hand. They transferred the *lotu* to their own villages, which had never seen a missionary or a catechist. So eager were the people to join in the new and powerful practices they had heard about, that they even risked their lives travelling by sea in bad weather. This prompted the visiting bishop to remark: "These people are almost fanatically Catholic". A miracle had occurred!

It appears that the choice of mission was determined by historical circumstances and practical considerations. People from Mouk maintained relations with people in Ndriol and so they came into contact with the Catholic faith. As a result of this the Catholic Church reached Baluan before any other denomination. Mead (1975[1956]:92) describes how the people of Pere made a conscious choice between the two missions then available, Catholic and Evangelical.

So the Manus were deciding, in 1929, to become Catholic, for three carefully thought-out reasons: because the Catholic missionaries taught their converts to read and write in the lingua franca of Pidgin English instead of in a local language and this would give them access to a wider world; because they did not collect as much money; and because they practised auricular confession. The idea of confessing one's sins to a single person instead of to the entire community was an alluring one to a people whose confessions were now blazoned forth with drum beats to the entire community.

We have seen how two Baluan villages decided to take on the Seventh Day Adventist Church, because their neighbours were already Catholic, thus reproducing traditional oppositions. The Adventists had the additional advantage that they provided some elementary schooling in English so that people could sing the English hymns. The SDA also put stress on cleanliness and health matters and instructed people to keep certain food taboos. Although the new regime was quite severe it made sense to people raised in the old religion.

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42 "Die Leute sind ja fast fanatisch katholisch" (HM 50:138).
Lapan, gavman and lotu

The advent of the *lotu* not only entailed the adoption of new religious ideas, it also had some broader social consequences. The old religion was consistent with the political atomism described earlier (see Schwartz 1963:67). Every patrilineage had its own guardian ghosts who were threatening spirits to members of other lineages. The ghosts exercised benevolent control over their living kin by administering illness in the case of social conflict. Thus, the old religious system encouraged lineage solidarity while at the same time maintaining particularism. In the new religious system loyalties were extended also to non-kin. God was not exclusive, although the different missions were. The church organisations fostered new allegiances which counteracted the existing particularism while at the same time creating new divisions.

In the old system there were no religious leaders. Everyone could speak to the ancestors although some categories of kin had more chance of being heard. The diviners may be considered as religious specialists. Their practice was considered a technical skill learned from someone who had already been initiated. They did not have special religious knowledge. Although it is possible that diviners could exercise some influence through their answers, they did not have leadership status. With the arrival of the churches new leadership opportunities arose. A Catholic catechist or a SDA pastor was someone who had acquired extensive knowledge to lead and instruct others in religious matters. These ideological leaders could wield considerable power through their interpretation of current events. To assist the catechists and pastors in religious and secular matters the church organisations had various other leadership positions such as deacons, elders, youth leaders, etc. Thus the *lotu* offered a new terrain for people with leadership aspirations.

Sometimes the adoption of the new creed prompted the migration of a complete village. This was the case with Perelik on Baluan. After the *lapan* had made his last big *lapan* feast, he moved his village to the coast where a church had already been built. This movement was also a result of the colonial peace which made it possible to settle in an exposed area with better access to the sea and therefore to trade relations. Moreover, government officers had been encouraging people to concentrate their hamlets in easy accessible places to make patrol and inspection
more manageable. Thus government policy coincided with the wish to be close to a church in stimulating the migration and concentration of villages.43

The lapan who moved Perelik village to the coast was called Solok. When his eldest son, Korup, was talking to me about the history of his family and his village, he gave in fact a succinct synopsis of the developments that have been described in the last three chapters.

Maluan [Solok's elder brother] was the leading lapan of Perelik and he became the first luluai of this village, that is he also became gavman. Thus he was two times leader. Solok succeeded Maluan as lapan and as luluai. Then he brought the lotu to Perelik. Thus he was three times leader.

Although lapans could play a leading role in the adoption of the lotu, as the example of Perelik shows, this was not necessarily the case. In some Baluan villages the contribution of a lapan to the acceptance of the lotu was mentioned, but the main honour for its introduction was given to someone else. Thus the distribution of new religious ideas and the organisation of church structures provided opportunities to obtain prominence for people who had no prospect of achieving a lapan status. Of the two new forms of leadership mentioned by Solok, the first, the one of gavman, was more or less completely appropriated by the traditional leaders, but the second, the one of lotu, was not.

In the last two chapters I have traced the origin of two institutional and semantic domains which give form and meaning to present-day life on Baluan, namely gavman and lotu. Both were the result of the encounter between a colonial power and an indigenous population. It appears that the terminology developed by Guha (1989:229-232) to analyse Indian colonial history is also applicable in this case. He states that any relation of power inequality logically implies two terms, namely dominance and subordination. Dominance may be further divided in two constituents, coercion and persuasion. Likewise subordination comprises two interacting elements: collaboration and resistance. Whereas the mutual implication

43 There is some indication that there may have been an additional reason for the movement of Perelik, namely the wish to be away from the old spirits who were causing too many illnesses. This consideration was an important cause for migration in the past together with warfare and the need to cultivate a different area of land.
of dominance and subordination has the universal validity of logic, the precise relationship between coercion and persuasion, and between collaboration and resistance is historically contingent. Guha calls this contingent relationship the organic composition of dominance and subordination (ibid:231).

It may be concluded that in the establishment of gavman, coercion far outweighed persuasion on the side of the dominant power. The subordinated party first reacted with resistance but then made a conscious choice for collaboration. The acceptance of the colonial state’s claim to a monopoly of violence resulted in the end of intervillage warfare. This was a substantial, qualitative change of the old system and depleted one of the power resources of traditional leaders. They responded by shifting their power base to exchange activities and to the acquisition of gavman offices.

The lotu found its place in Manus culture mainly by persuasion. Again the indigenous people reacted by resisting first and then by whole-heartedly collaborating. The persuasion had succeeded because it found resonance in the people’s habitus and own religious ideas, albeit for different reasons than the missionaries had intended. Manus people were attracted by the prospect of longer, healthier and easier lives. This was not exactly what the missionaries had preached, but it was the message that came across. The collaboration of the people resulted in a lotu Manus’ style which was inevitably not the same as the Church’s Western style. People interpreted beliefs and practices in their own ways. Sociologically, the lotu opened up a new field for ideological specialists and for ideological manipulation.

One aspect of the new ideological attitude was the rejection of certain customs as bad, because they contributed to death and disease. Indentured labourers took these ideas and their cultural background to their workplaces where they were able to exchange thoughts with people from other regions. This resulted in a certain objectification of their own cultures: the precondition for the emergence of a concept of kastam. These points will be developed in the next chapter.

44 To the extent that missionaries exploited existing fears, a form of violence was also part of the conversion process. Anxieties which came into play were the fear of death, the fear of a greater power and, finally, the fear of being left out. To do justice to the missions it must be added that informants generally acknowledged that the lotu also freed them from a number of their fears.
Today stories about the advent of the *lotu* and the introduction of *gavman* are being told. They have one central theme in common: they stress the agency of local people. Sometimes *lotu* and *gavman* are even combined in one story, such as the one told by Karol Molean (Loamat, Pundro Island).

Two men brought the Catholic mission and the *gavman* administration from German Rabaul in New Britain to Manus. Their names were Po Minis from Papitalai, he brought the Roman Catholic mission to Manus, and Lankirap or Pochili, who brought the *gavman* administration from Germany to Manus. Because both went out to Rabaul [...] the Germans took both men to be trained in the work of the mission and the police of Germany. When they had been instructed, they were sent back to commence these two kinds of work in Manus.

Manus people do not represent themselves as the victims of colonisation.45 Rather they have made the best use of possibilities presented by historical circumstances.

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45 There are some exceptions of groups who have lost their land, such as the Seye of Rambutyo. Their plight is presented as the result of the treachery of other native groups or individuals and the naivety or complicity of the colonial agents.
Kisokau Aiwait of Munukut and his wife Nakop. Kisokau is talking about the power of the missionaries. Kisokau organised a polpolot (ch. 7).

Paliou of Lipan and Nakiau, his wife. Paliou is a practising diviner who uses the method of poi (ch. 4).
Paliau Maloat in 1987.

Makasol members listening to Pallau's words in Lorengau.
Chapter Five

TRADITION AND EMANCIPATION

The contract-labour experience

In the preceding two chapters I traced the emergence of two contemporary social domains, gavman and lotu. I focussed mainly on the political consequences of these developments though they had economic repercussions as well.1 As suggested in chapter 3, the establishment of colonial peace probably led to an intensification of large-scale exchange activities because the entrepreneurial energy frustrated by the prohibition of warfare could be directed only to this alternative arena of competition for power and prestige. In the long run, however, colonial peace contributed to the decline of large-scale exchange, as Carrier and Carrier observe (1989:78). Warfare was a constitutive factor of the regional system of specialisation and exchange: production monopolies and privileged access to natural resources could and would be defended by force. The foreclosure of this means of enforcement gradually diminished the importance of economic and ecological specialisation. Land-based people started to occupy the coastal area and learned to fish for themselves. This was, however, a very slow process before the outbreak of the Second World War. On Baluan, for example, the first inland village to move to the coast was Perelik around 1935.

The emergence of lotu also affected the exchange system since missions opposed particular traditional ceremonies and practices which involved ancestor

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1 Note that the subdivision of Baluan society into domains or spheres of kastam, gavman and lotu follows the indigenous – emic – conceptualisation of social reality, which has explanatory value for understanding present-day political and social processes. At the same time I cannot avoid using another subdivision of society which is entrenched in Western social theory, namely the analytical dissection of societies into economic, social, political and ideological spheres, dimensions or aspects. Both emic and etic perspectives are needed to elucidate the social changes in Baluan society. I return to these epistemological problems in the conclusion.
worship or sexually explicit dancing. Achsah Carrier's (1987:106) description of the last lapan feast on Ponam is illuminating.

The last Ponam lapan exchange was held in about 1920 by Kuluah Kelepe, then the lapan of Kehin. It was large and important, but ended in disaster. Kuluah Kelepe's only son, who was then a student at the Bundralis Mission school, fell ill in the midst of the celebration and died before it was completed. The priest at Bundralis had spoken out against lapan exchanges before, and although he did not rebuke Kuluah Kelepe for holding the lapan, God's disapproval was patent to all and no more were held in Bundralis Parish.

Again we see that illness and death were regarded as empirical indications of the truth or power of certain practices and theories. Lapan exchanges on Baluan continued until just after the Second World War. A possible explanation for this persistence is that the missions reached Baluan considerably later than Ponam, in the early 30s as against 1916. In addition the mission presence on Baluan was significantly weaker than on Ponam, at least as far as the Catholic part of the island was concerned, because the priest lived far away and visited only occasionally.2

But the strongest impact on the indigenous economies prior to World War II undoubtedly came from the indentured labour system. Under this system local labourers entered contracts of several years duration which they could not terminate during the time of their 'indenture'. For the colonial administration this was a way to ensure a continual supply of labourers for plantations, trade and administration purposes. The government defended itself against critical voices condemning the effects of this system on native populations and cultures by claiming "that work on a plantation is the most hopeful means of introducing the native to civilization" (Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia 1923:52). The system was presented as clearly in the interest of the local people (at least of men):

Whether by means of the present system or in other ways, the native must be induced to work; for the experience of neighbouring islands seems to make it clear that unless the native is given both physical exercise and interest in life, to replace the occupations and excitements of his former savage life, he will surely die out (ibid.).

2 It appears that the Seventh Day Adventists were generally more strongly opposed to traditional practices. The last lapan feast in Perelik was given by Solok just after he accepted the SDA church and before he moved his village to the coast in the late 1930s (see chapter 4).
Even the very low wages were allegedly for the good of the labourers:

The amount of wages paid to labourers – minimum, 5s. a month, maximum (unless in special circumstances), 10s. a month – may seem small, but it must be remembered that the wants of the native are few, and that he might not make wise use of a larger wage (ibid.).

On contradictory grounds, substantially higher wages in Papua and the Solomon Islands were explained by the higher productivity of labourers there (ibid.).

What may be said retrospectively about the effects of indentured labour on the indigenous populations and cultures? Recruiting started relatively late in the Admiralties, but it is likely that, at least initially, it contributed to the spread of new and old diseases. An old man remembered that his uncle, who was one of the first men from Pam Island to work for the Germans, returned home with tinea, an affliction which has been part of life on Baluan and Pam ever since. The German annual report for 1912-13 (Sack and Clark 1979:360) mentions that probably more than 1200 people fell victim to a dysentery epidemic in Manus. During the inter-war period, for which we have statistics from the annual reports to the League of Nations, the population of Manus remained more or less stationary (see table 1). Thus indentured labour cannot be blamed for a population decrease, at least not during that period.

However, the impact on local economies was significant. Although wages were low, they resulted in a flow of Western products into the villages. These articles gradually replaced locally manufactured artifacts and thus undercut the regional system of specialised production and exchange. In 1928 Mead (1975[1930]:231) observed that large wooden bowls were no longer made and that less skill was applied to the manufacture of smaller bowls in spite of the availability of steel tools. Industrial cloth had almost completely replaced bark cloth. It appears that Manus people did not cling to their own products and that they readily opted for the more efficient, durable or more colourful imported substitutes (for example glass beads; see Mead 1975[1930]:232). Although people could also earn some money by trading sago, coconuts, tortoiseshell or pearl shell, a large quantity of Western products entering the villages was supplied through wages from indentured labourers (see ibid: 230-234).
<table>
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**Explanation of columns:**

I. The total population of Manus District including all indentured labourers born in the District.

II. The total number of adult men including all indentured labourers born in the District.

III. The total number of indentured labourers working in Manus District.

IV. The total number of indentured labourers born in Manus District.

V. The total number of indentured labourers born in Manus District and working in Manus District.

**Notes:**

a. The data in this table are derived from the annual reports to the League of Nations on the administration of the Territory of New Guinea (Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia 1922-1941).

b. For these years no data on the number of indentured labourers born in Manus District are available; therefore total population figures cannot be calculated. The bracketed figures refer to the population not including indentured labourers.
Carrier and Carrier (1989:78-79) point to another effect of labour migration on indigenous economies, namely the depletion of productive men in the villages. This, they argue, led to a shift in the sexual division of labour and also to a shift from the manufacture of luxury goods to the production of food. Although these developments may have occurred locally, the available figures do not support that within Manus as a region the absence of men was as large and as critical as the Carriers assume.

Labour recruiting was initially unsuccessful in the Admiralties as we can read in the German annual report for 1898-99 (Sack and Clark 1979:178). In 1905 a mere 17 men signed on for work in the archipelago and Samoa (Firth 1973:172). The 1906-07 annual report mentions that a number of recruiting campaigns were successful, "particularly for the [police] troop" (Sack and Clark 1979:265). The number of recruits increased steadily, especially after 1911 (see Firth 1973:173). The highest figure is 823 for 1913, which presumably refers to the total number of Manus men under contract.3 The estimated population was between 13000 and 14000 (Sack and Clark 1980:63). This means that contract labourers constituted only between 6.33 and 5.88 % of the population. A note in DKB of 1909 (20:897) gives an interesting insight into the age of the male population recruited, at least at that time. During a labour inspection on Noru, an island north-east of Manus mainland turned into a coconut plantation, almost two thirds of the thirty labourers, mostly from Baluan, were "physically not yet fully developed" boys. These adolescents had been recruited by the Japanese plantation owner Komini, who 'explained' that the 'natives' readily gave their children for contract work because this may keep them out of the hands of their enemies, but that they refused to let their strong men go since they were needed for warfare. The absence of these adolescents would presumably not have affected the productivity of the village community very much.

For the inter-war period I have collected the statistics supplied in the annual reports of the Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia to the League of Nations. Only from 1923 onwards do we have figures which refer to the regions from which the labourers were recruited as opposed to the regions in which they were recruited.

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3 See Firth (1973:173) and Sack and Clark (1980:155). In the section on Manus of the Draft Annual Report for 1913-14, we read that 672 Admiralty Islanders signed new contracts or extended old ones (Sack and Clark 1980:65). We also learn that a total of 2311 labourers were employed in the district. Presumably these were predominantly non-Manus men.
TABLE 2: MANUS INDENTURED LABOURERS
AS A PERCENTAGE OF THE POPULATION 1923–1940

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Explanation of columns:

I. Total number of indentured labourers born in Manus District as a percentage of the total population.

II. Total number of indentured labourers born in Manus District as a percentage of the total number of adult men.

III. Number of indentured labourers born in Manus District and working in Manus District as a percentage of the total number of indentured labourers born in Manus District.

IV. Number of indentured labourers born in Manus District and working in Manus District as a percentage of the total number of indentured labourers working in Manus District.

Note:

a. The data for calculating these percentages are derived from the annual reports to the League of Nations on the administration of the Territory of New Guinea (Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia 1922-1941).
employed. The population figures are differentiated into males and females, and adults and children (under 14). The population figures are always exclusive of indentured labourers. Therefore we have to add the number of indentured labourers from a particular area to get the total population of that area. In order to obtain the total number of adult men in Manus I have added the number of indentured labourers to the number of (resident) men. Although labour statistics are generally not differentiated according to sex, the number of women under indenture appears to be negligible. In 1937, for example, there were only 311 women compared to 40259 men in the Territory of New Guinea as a whole.

In table 1 I reproduce the relevant population and labour statistics for Manus from 1921 to 1940 and in table 2 I compute some percentages. It appears that indentured labourers accounted for an average of 6.76% of the total population in the period from 1923 to 1940 with an absolute top of 13.42% in 1923. If we look at adult men only, indentured labourers amounted on average to 19.78% of the total number of men during the same period. This means that on the whole only one adult man in five was absent from the village as an indentured worker in any one year except for 1923 when 3 in 10 men were under contract. We may assume that the majority of the labour force consisted of young men, who were generally not yet married. In precolonial society men of this age group acted as warriors but did very little other work. For these reasons I conclude that generally within Manus the absence of men for work did not unduly affect the productivity of village economies.

This temporary absence may in fact have had a positive effect as Mead (1975[1930]:233-234; 1975[1956]:72-73) suggests, because the prohibition of warfare had deprived young men of their principal occupation. Without an outlet for their energy the young men may have become a source of serious disturbance to village life. War had also provided men with female captives, who were used to provide the sexual gratification otherwise denied by puritanical mores. In this respect pacification also meant sexual deprivation for unmarried men.4 For these reasons

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4 This appears to have applied especially to the Titan people as described by Mead. Inland groups had other ways of dealing with this problem according to Mead (1975[1930]:235) and also according to an anonymous manuscript (Pasin bilong ol Manus) which I found in Bundralis Mission and which was ascribed to Fr Dahmen. As far as I was able to reconstruct Baluan did not have the same kind of organised premarital sex as these mainland groups, but there was much greater sexual licence than in Titan villages.
the system of indentured labour was a welcome alternative for villagers and labourers alike:

The young men are taken out of the village during these years when the community has no way of dealing with them. They become an economic asset instead of a military one of doubtful value (Mead 1975[1930]:233).

The indentured labour system not only had an economic impact on the villages, it also affected the relationship between young and old men. In the precolonial situation marriage initiated a period of dependence and subordination for young men, because they became heavily indebted to the older men who had paid their bride-wealth: their fathers, father’s brothers, adoptive fathers or elder brothers. Contract labour offered young men the possibility of gaining some wealth at an early age. In most cases this wealth was appropriated by their elder relatives as soon as the labourers returned to the village, but at the same time it improved the status of these young men and gave them some early credit in exchange relations (see Mead 1975[1956]:234).

The old people clearly had an economic interest in having young dependants away at work. Their wages brought greatly coveted goods back to the village and initially local leaders would also receive a bonus upon recruitment of their dependants (see A. Carrier 1987:97 and Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia 1923:53). In the long run, however, contract labour would make the young people less dependent upon their elders. Not only were they able to contribute to their own bride-price, but they could escape the power of the older generation altogether by staying away at work. Indentured labour offered a permanent alternative for men who did not want to return to their villages.5 This was also realised by the old men. Some informants born in the late 1920s told me that their fathers were very much opposed to their going away for work out of fear that they would not return. A boy who tried to escape was sometimes pursued by his relatives. Nevertheless, it appears that most men did return to their own places where they knew the customs and held titles to land and other property. Marriage into another indigenous community was a less attractive alternative, because it was

5 Mead (1975[1956]:73) and Schwartz (1962:224) make similar points.
likely to mean permanent dependence. The same applies to continuing service for white people.6

Once returned the ex-labourer was readily absorbed into the old system of reciprocal obligations. Nevertheless he was not quite the same man as if he had never been away. He had gained some knowledge of life outside the small circle of his own village; he had met labourers from other cultural backgrounds; he had been in regular contact with white people; moreover, he had learned a language in which he could communicate across cultural boundaries. This cross-cultural experience may have been one of the most important effects of the indentured labour system, because it confronted people with different ideas and practices and enabled them to take a more distanced view of their own culture.

The labour statistics show that Manus men under indenture mostly remained in Manus district: an average of 72% over the period 1923–1940.7 However, these men also came into contact with labourers from other areas, as Manus men formed on average only 43.79% of the total labour force in Manus district. It may be assumed that almost all men went through the experience of contract labour. The ratio of 1 in 5 at any one time makes this likely. In Lipan village, where I did a complete census in 1986-87, 12 of the 17 men born before 1930 had signed contracts before the Second World War. The 5 who had not were the youngest of this group. If we take the post-war period into account, all 17 men had work experience away from their village. Although I did not investigate this systematically in other villages, I have not met one man of this age group without labour experience.

The indentured labour system may be said to have had both unifying and diversifying effects. Men from different villages and language groups met each other as colleagues under indenture. They learned to refer to themselves as men from Baluan or men from Manus. New friendships cut across clan and village boundaries and could be the basis of future trade partnerships. On the other hand contract labour also led to diversification because men went to different places and to different types of jobs. Some were only able to get plantation work, others became

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6 There were a few men who preferred this option or the previous one to returning home.

7 Interestingly there is a steady decrease from 1932 onwards, from 83.8% in 1932 to 51.39% in 1940 (see table 2).
domestics or worked as crew on a boat. The pinnacle of native possibilities was undoubtedly a career as policeman. Manus men were believed to be very good policemen and many were recruited for this work, at least until the Rabaul strike in 1929 for which they received part of the blame (see Mead 1975[1956]:78-81).8

As a result of different careers as contract labourers men returned to their villages with unequal knowledge of the white men's world and with divergent experiences of other areas. Contact with different missions contributed to this diversification. This may put Mead's (ibid: 218) observation into perspective:

In the late thirties, the culture, for all its appearance of good adjustment, was evidently moving toward the state in which each man's view of what was happening was more dependent upon his own individual experience, lacking the stabilizing effect of a great body of traditional behaviour.

Another factor differentiating men was the amount of knowledge they were able to gather about their traditional culture, their genealogies and land possessions. Although it may have seemed relatively unimportant to them at the time, this knowledge is at present one of the important discriminating factors between men of the age group I have already mentioned, those born before 1930. The men who stayed at home longer and listened to the stories of their kinfolk now have an unequivocal advantage over those who went away early and returned late. The men who missed out lament their lack of knowledge as they depend on others to support them if their land-claims are contested. Thus, the acquisition of new experience, knowledge and skills through indentured labour was often counterbalanced by a loss of locally available information.9

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8 The Rabaul Strike has been described in detail by Gammage (1975). His moving story confirms the role played by Manus policemen. One of the leaders of the strike was N'Dramei from Pitylu Island in Manus, who was the senior native police sergeant-major in Rabaul at the time.

9 Mead (1975[1930]:233-234) addresses the problem of the possible loss of essential knowledge through absence from the village as an indentured labourer. She concludes that this did not apply to the Titan-speaking Manus because they did not have a body of magic lore and esoteric knowledge which would take a long time to acquire. By the time the boys went away for work they had already received all the necessary training and information. She notes that it may be different for the "agricultural and more magically dependent Usiai [the inland people of Manus mainland]", but she does not mention the loss of genealogical and historical information or the loss of knowledge concerning traditional practices, especially ceremonial exchanges, which was in no way esoteric.
As few women went away, their lives became less diversified than those of their menfolk. They had less knowledge of the white man's world and often could not speak the *lingua franca*. On the other hand they did not miss out on traditional knowledge. For this reason old women are at present a much valued source of knowledge, particularly concerning genealogies and clan histories. Contract labour made men's and women's worlds grow apart further, at least temporarily. Men were the intermediaries with the outside world and became through their exposure to new ideas the agents of cultural change. Women remaining in the village became the unappointed custodians of traditional lore.

The way in which the indentured labour experience is remembered in contemporary Baluan reflects the unifying and diversifying character of this experience. The stories which are told reflect in the first place the life histories of individual men. They are not tied to particular groups in the way that *lapan* stories are connected with lineages, *gavman* stories are part of village histories and *lotu* stories are related to different church groups. The stories do not seem to serve a special interest such as group identity or ownership claims. Instead they are remembered because they relate personal experiences and are told because they are entertaining.

Although part of individual biographies the stories may also have a unifying effect because sometimes they refer to an experience which was common to a group of men who were not otherwise related. An example of such a common experience was working for the Australian entrepreneur Jack Thurston, who appears to have had a special relationship with Baluan, where he recruited a large number of his labourers. He took them to Yamel near Maprik in the Sepik district to work in the

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10 Jolly (1987) critically examines the historical images of the small minority of Melanesian women who did go away to work. Moreover, she investigates the impact of labour migration on the relation between men and women in north Vanuatu villages. It would be worthwhile to explore how such changes are reflected in the self-image of women as presented in autobiographical narratives (cf. Young (1983b) and Keesing (1985, 1987), whose analyses indicate a marked difference between male and female perspectives and representations).

11 After World War II it became more usual for women to accompany their husbands when they left the village as workers or missionaries. Women also went to schools and had access to paid employment as teachers, secretaries and nurses.
alluvial goldfields. When the Second World War broke out he had 22 Baluan men and some women in his service in the Maprik area. Because the road by sea was cut off he decided to try to reach Papua over land together with some other white men. A large part of his workers he had to leave behind under the care of his trusted Baluan overseer Kina. Ten strong Baluan men went with him on an epic journey from the Sepik river to the Fly river and from there to Port Moresby. The whole company consisted of 8 white men, 20 armed labourers (including the 10 men from Baluan) and 60 carriers. With Jack Thurston as the leader they completed the expedition in 9 months. The story of this adventurous trip, just like similar stories, unites Baluan men from different clans, villages and religious denominations.

The old people who tell these stories about their own lives also keep memories of the experiences of their fathers and uncles who were the first generation to sign work contracts. It appears that a number of Baluan men went to Samoa. When they returned they were dressed like Europeans with long trousers, shoes, shirts and ties. They could also speak Tok Pisin. The Australians would later prohibit the use of European clothing by the natives and the memory of this conspicuous sign of inequality still appears to sting. People make other comparisons between the Germans and the Australians. The former would not pay much but would give you a lot of goods after you finished your contract. The Australians let you pay for the things they gave you. The Germans beat you with a stick if you had broken the rules but the Australians would put you in the calaboose. The latter were strictly opposed to miscegenation whereas the former were not.

12 Nelson (1976:268) shows that gold was by far the most important export product from the Territory of New Guinea in the pre-war years (from 1933 onwards) unlike the 1920s when copra was the main money earning product.

13 I have recorded three long accounts from participants in this journey, namely Kanawi Keket, Kisokau Aiwai and Mukiu Saneam.

14 Meleisea (1980) has collected personal accounts from four men, who were recruited in German New Guinea to work in Samoa and who stayed there.
The objectification of tradition

During their time as contract workers young men were able to exchange ideas and information with men from other cultural backgrounds. Keesing (1986) has made this important point with special reference to plantations, which absorbed the majority of indigenous labourers. Plantations and other work places were the nodal points in area-wide networks through which cultural ideas and historical information flowed throughout the Melanesian region. Among other things accounts of 'cargo cults' and 'cargo' ideologies were transmitted along the lines of these labour networks (ibid: 166). But work places of indentured labourers did not just perform as switchboards in areal communication systems; they were also ideological power houses in which new ideas were formed and old ideas transformed. It may be, for example, that plantations were major breeding grounds for the development as well as the propagation of 'cargo' ideas. In isolated places especially, the arrival of the cargo was the outstanding event in an otherwise uniform existence.

The planter was seen by the native as someone who lived away from home in order to make money, and whose life pivoted on the arrival of cargo which represented all the good things of life, food, mail, beer. "When the cargo comes" was the phrase oftenest on the lips of white men [...] (Mead 1975[1956]:83).

Cargo came in boxes which seldom betrayed their contents. When eagerly broken up, they might or might not contain hoped-for articles (ibid.).

The ways of "the cargo" assumed in native eyes an aspect as inscrutable as the ways of Providence itself. Only God knew, in words sometimes profane, sometimes religiously prayerful, as some planter's wife, struggling to make sago pudding without any vanilla, prayed that the next cargo would contain at least "something to flavour with" - only God knew what would and what would not come in the "next cargo" (ibid: 84).

This kind of experience, hybridised with Christian and indigenous religious concepts, may have contributed to the development of cargo ideologies which, back in the villages, could crystallise into actual cults.15

15 The literature on cargo cults is extensive and it is outside the scope of this thesis to undertake any comparisons. It appears, however, that two different perspectives have been opposed in the discussions on these phenomena. One perspective, exemplified by Lawrence (1964), focusses on cultural factors. The other, forcefully represented by Worsley (1968), emphasises social and economic factors. In the following description of the Paliau Movement I attempt to conjoin both perspectives.
An important ideological effect of the contract labour experience was the conceptualisation of a native way of life as opposed to that of the white people. The ability to differentiate cultures or ways of life goes back to older roots. In chapter 1 I showed that the Baluan language has ways of referring to those material and immaterial things which characteristically belong to a group of people. The same has been observed of the Titan-speaking Manus by Schwartz and Mead.

The detachment which made it possible to look at the "system" came, as it has come to Europeans, from a knowledge that their own culture was only one among many; *kaiye e joja* (customs of ours exclusive of the person spoken to) had been compared for generations with *kaiye e ato* (customs of theirs) and *kaiye e aua* (customs of yours). People were well aware of differences between their own ways and those of their neighbours; trade friendships and periodic intermarriages kept this sense of the reality of difference lively (Mead 1975[1956]:96).

In an important article Schwartz (1975) shows that even small differences in customs or language were used to differentiate groups. To refer to this process he coins the term 'cultural totemism' which he sees as a particular form of totemism: not natural species but cultural traits are used to indicate the identity of one group as opposed to another. According to Schwartz such cultural totemism, as well as 'natural' totemism, was pervasive in the Admiralty Islands area. An important aspect of cultural totemism is that culturally distinctive traits are considered as the property of a group "in the dual sense of an attribute and of a possession or a patent" (ibid: 117). These properties, whether they are a certain technology, a dance or a way of wearing body decoration, may not be simply adopted by another group. The permission to use them has to be acquired from the owning group, for example through marriage, kin reciprocity or purchase.

An example of how an introduced Western cultural entity was treated in this traditional way, has been given in the previous chapter. The spread of the *lotu* followed largely kin and trade relations. People often stressed that they had acquired the *lotu* through proper channels and could thus be considered rightful owners. Another aspect of cultural totemism in the Admiralties, also illustrated in the dispersal of the church, was the role of enterprising young men who hoped to gain status by introducing an innovation. Schwartz assumes that the diffusion and elaboration of innovations generally took place "within the entrepreneurial framework of aspirant leadership" (ibid: 112).
Awareness of cultural differences, therefore, was by no means a result of the increased exposure to these differences in the contract labour context. What was new, however, was the realisation that the different indigenous cultures had something in common as opposed to the Western culture. This common background was abstracted and referred to as the 'way belong native' and its opposite was rendered as the 'way belong white man' (Schwartz 1962:224). The conceptualisation of this binary opposition also entailed a comparison of both ways of life. Based on the values of the indigenous cultures this evaluation clearly adjudicated in favour of the Western culture. The way of the white man appeared to be more powerful and the lives of the white people seemed easier, healthier and wealthier. As a result one's own culture was viewed critically. What was it that caused and maintained the perceived inequality? The culture as a whole was seen as something received from the ancestors: it was often referred to as pasin bilong tumbuna, the 'way of the ancestors'. Something in these ancestral ways was thought responsible for the backwardness of Melanesians. Thus, indigenous cultures were generalised, related to the past and critically assessed in one conceptual move. This move is the creation of a concept of 'tradition' as a political term.

What I have described as a general process happened, of course, in the minds of individuals and in some individuals much earlier and more consciously than in others. These enlightened individuals returned to their villages and may have started attempts to reform parts of their societies. As is apparent from the discussion above, the Melanesian or at least the Manus concept of tradition did not imply that the ancestral heritage was unchangeable. It had to be judged on its merits and the bad parts could be rejected. The acceptance of the lotu was an example of this process. Conversion to Christianity may thus be understood as the adoption of some key elements of Western culture in an attempt to become more equal.

Schwartz (1962:228,229,243) mentions two secular attempts at cultural reform in Manus prior to the Second World War. Both were led by men who had worked as native policemen and had travelled widely in the Territory. Mead (1975[1956]:81)

16 Schwartz (1976a:174) calls this situation of being defeated by others in terms of one's own values 'value dominance'. He observes that this was the consequence of contact between Melanesian and Western societies: "The value system was not replaced or undermined so much as it was overwhelmed on its own terms. By their own previous standards Melanesians were suddenly impoverished, dominated, overpowered." Value dominance lead in the Melanesian case to 'status deprivation' which was "intolerable, directly and profoundly damaging to the self-evaluation of the Melanesian" (ibid: 178).
correctly emphasises the importance of serving in the native constabulary for the development of leadership qualities. However, after the war men with different careers, such as clerks, boat engineers and catechists, also started to lead local reform movements (Schwartz 1962:230-238). Napo of Mbuke, an island south of Manus, was a successful native police officer, who had been put in charge of an outstation in the Middle Sepik area. In his home village he was very critical of many aspects of the ancestral culture and he attacked in particular the big marriage exchanges which he wanted abolished. He was strongly opposed by the older generation and initially also by the missionary, who feared that he would interfere with religion. Against this opposition Napo persevered and, backed by the younger men, he was able to make some progress until his reform project was caught up by the Paliau Movement after the war.

The other pre-war reformer described by Schwartz was Paliau Maloat, who after the war became the leader of a regional movement named after him. In 1953 Paliau dictated an extensive autobiography to Schwartz (1962:239-244) in which he was specifically concerned with the development of his ideas. I relate some aspects of this autobiography supplemented by other sources, because Paliau's life is particularly illuminating of the process in which tradition became objectified.

Paliau was born, probably around 1910, in the village of Lipan on Saluan Island. By descent he was not favoured to become the leader of Lipan, in contrast to what he wanted Schwartz (ibid: 239) and others, including myself, to believe. He was not untruthful in pointing to the big man Lolokai as one of his ancestors, but Paliau's

17 She observes: "A generation later, after World War II, it was police boys who had returned to their villages who became the organizers and leaders of native movements in various parts of New Guinea, overactive yeast in situations of rapid change [...] Learning to be a police boy meant, from 1928 on, learning to manipulate a system and make quick, accurate judgements about power, when it could be abused, when it must be obeyed."

18 I have recorded several autobiographies of different length presented by Paliau in different circumstances in 1986-87. These deserve separate consideration but are not suitable for reconstructing the development of Paliau's ideas before World War II. Not only are they recorded 33 years later than Schwartz's interview, but they are also more stylised, incorporating events of world history, and are adapted to Paliau's present-day claims: especially the claim that he was in possession of all his knowledge from the time he was still in his mother's womb. However, in spite of some anachronisms, the general outline of autobiographical events prior to 1946 has remained virtually the same. There is another printed autobiography, dating from 1970 (Ward 1970:144-149), which is very interesting from a comparative point of view. For the following reconstruction of Paliau's life I draw also on oral information obtained from other Saluan people, some of whom were more knowledgeable about genealogical and local history than Paliau himself in spite of claims to the opposite.
father was affiliated only to the most junior of the four lineages descending from Lolokai, namely Pulialipan, and then only through his mother. Paliau was still very young when both his parents died. He had no living siblings. His mother's and his father's family quarrelled about the right to look after him. As a result Paliau stayed sometimes with Ninou Namwet, a real sister of his mother, and sometimes with Joseph Paril, a man related to his father. Paliau did not feel properly cared for. He was an orphan and his plight was typical of the boys whose fathers had died too late to make reabsorption into another household easy (see Mead 1975[1930]:91). He lived between houses and also stayed regularly with another relative of his father, a leader of his father's father's clan (Sapongopen).

A crucial event in his early life was his first public appearance during a major feast. His adoptive father Joseph Paril, who had some claims to Japan status, had organised the feast and he told Paliau to stand on the sinal (dancing beam) and make the speech he had taught him. After making some dance movements on the beam Paliau was to start his speech but he was confused and could not find the words. He dropped off the sinal and collapsed on the grass. There he lay ill until the dancing was over. Finally he got up and went home. This event was a major embarrassment to the boy. The performance of a speech on a sinal was considered very prestigious but also very dangerous. Any mistake could cause illness or even death. By dancing and shouting on the dancing beam a Japan would challenge his competitors who might try their powers of sorcery to cause him to fall down. Paliau recovered from his temporary sickness but an old man, who was the main recipient of the gifts, died. Paliau made a connection between his own recovery and the death of this man: if he had died the old man would have lived.

After this débâcle Paliau turned away from this kind of custom completely. He decided that it was wrong because every time a feast was held many people died as a result. It is significant that Paliau places the beginning of his criticism of traditional culture in his youth before he had any work experience. Mead (1975[1930]) suggests that Pere children were not really integrated into their parents' culture until they were married, observing that they were able to have a critical and disinterested view of their parents' behaviour. It appears that the same applied to Saluan culture. For Paliau this general attitude of disinterest was intensified through his social
position as an orphan and his failure to be drawn into status achieving activities. He felt extreme alienation from his own society.

It is also significant that Paliau connected traditional customs with illness. As elaborated in the previous chapter, health and disease were preferred testing grounds for the rightness or wrongness of ideas and practices. However, Paliau mentioned that he did not then believe that deaths after a feast were caused by the spirits of the dead. The reason he gave for his disbelief was his childish ignorance; therefore he was not afraid as a child to go out of the house at times when spirits roamed and made the place unsafe.

We may only guess what would have happened to Paliau in a precolonial situation. Thanks to his superior intelligence he might have become an innovator of some sort and he could have gained some status that way. It is also possible that his relatively low descent status and his early failure in a big feast would have stigmatised him for life. In any case his influence would never have extended beyond his own village. In actuality, contract work offered him a chance to leave the village and spread his wings.

When he was marked for tax, he went away to find work. First he was employed by Chinese traders. Speaking about this period he observed that on every return to the village all his earned goods and money were divided among his relatives who came to greet him. He felt that this custom was wrong because it again reduced him to 'rubbish' each time. He had gone out to earn money for tax and he still had nothing. Then he joined the police. He gained a lot of experience in different places but on his return home he discovered that everything was still the same. His things were divided by his adoptive father Joseph Paril. He stayed in Manus for two years and travelled around seeing the same kind of practices in other places. Angry and disappointed he rejoined the police.

I found that I didn't like the way of life of the Admiralties. I could never go back. But when I went to Rabaul it was the same as in the Admiralties. I left Rabaul and went to Salamoa. It was the same there. I went as policeman to Madang. It was just the same. I went to Finschaven and observed the customs of the natives there. It was again the same. Lae, also, and Kavieng were the same. Then I thought, our cultures are only of one kind (Schwartz 1962:242).
Everywhere he went he found similar customs: people were exhausting their energy in big feasts and wasting their money as if it had no value. Then he developed a plan. He saved all the money from his monthly wages. With this he bought a box of tobacco which he sent to Joseph Paril with the firm message that he should not distribute this but should sell it and keep the money. Paril obeyed and made £15 from it. When Paliau returned to Baluan he carried another £20 so he had a total capital of £35. In a village meeting he put this money into the custody of the luluai Ngi Asungkiau. The appointed village leader should use it to pay the taxes of men who did not have enough money. This would prevent them from being put into jail. However, these men had to repay the sum lent to them so that the fund could be used over and again. The luluai acted as requested and the scheme proved a success. Paliau instructed the leader that he should help not only the men of the different Baluan villages but also the men of Mouk, Pam and Lou. Later Paliau brought another £15. Thanks to the success of the fund he was able to persuade other Lipan villagers to contribute their own money.

Before he returned to work he gave the luluai some advice: he should try to prevent fighting between villages and should not seek revenge.

You can't be too angry. You must do only what is good. All of these big feasts that are given on Baluan, sometimes you should think about them. If you got rid of a few of them, you won't regret it. They cause sickness, and many of our people of Lipan die (Schwartz 1962:243).

By this time Paliau had reached a senior position in the native constabulary. He was first sergeant and had no native officer over him in Rabaul. The importance of his training and experience in the police force should not be underestimated. As part of his training he had learned to organise and command groups of people. The models of society he would later apply in his reform movement bear strong similarities to the order and disciplined behaviour of a police camp. He also became closely acquainted with white people of authority and learned how to deal with them. From his fellow policemen he learned how to read and write in Tok Pisin. Paliau had never been baptised and had not attended Christian instruction because the church arrived on Baluan after he had left for work. From people around him he picked up
the basics of Christian doctrine and sometimes he attended religious services. His work and experience as a policeman had a critical formative influence on his thinking about his own society and that of the white people.

Paliau was back in Rabaul when the war broke out. As in other parts of the western Pacific, this war had an enormous impact, especially in Paliau's home area. To avoid having to attack Rabaul, which the Japanese had turned into a fortress, the American army occupied Manus without much resistance. In Seeadler Harbour they built a huge naval base from which further advances could be made. For Manus people the presence of the American army offered an unprecedented insight into the power and wealth of Western culture. Relations between local people and soldiers were more equal than they had been with white people before the war. Moreover, the American army also contained black soldiers who were able to handle equipment just like white people. If there had been some dissatisfaction with the native way of life before the war, the experience of the war increased this considerably. Fighting also kept a large number of Manus men away from home longer than previously. These men, who would otherwise have been enmeshed in the old culture by means of marriage payments made for them, returned home after the war without stakes in their parental exchange systems. A number of them were in their early thirties, an age at which a married man could have regained his independence and be ready to conduct exchanges in his own name. These returned workers were ready to lead, but not along the lines of their fathers. Something had to happen.

The Paliau revolution

It is impossible to gauge accurately the impact of the war and the presence of the American army on the feelings and thoughts of Manus people. Clearly, after the war there was general dissatisfaction with things as they had been before the arrival of

20 This point has been developed by Mead (1975[1956]:220-224).
the Americans. This dissatisfaction became apparent in the maelstrom of events which developed soon after the termination of war activities. A deputation of Manus men led by a paramount luluai requested the Americans, through the commander of the United States naval base, to take control of their archipelago in place of the Australians.21 There were also local attempts at reform of indigenous society, both 'secular' and of the 'cargo cult' type. Finally there was the highly successful Paliau Movement which acquired a regional following.

It is not feasible to deal in detail with any of these events here. The knowledge we have of some of them is extensive, thanks particularly to the work of Schwartz (1962) who meticulously gathered information on many earlier events during his fieldwork in 1953-54. In addition there is an abundance of administrative sources, especially with regard to the Paliau Movement. The missions also produced relevant documentary information, as the events affected them directly. Instead of trying to represent the complexity of the various post-war developments, I discuss four points which I consider of central importance to the Paliau Movement: the politics of knowledge; the use of rhetoric; Paliau's message; and Paliau's plan for reform.

Before developing these points I have to give a minimal outline of what happened after the war. Schwartz (1962:228-237) describes six localised attempts at reform, mainly on the south coast and in the southern and eastern islands. Five of these were led by men with considerable work experience. The sixth local reformer was a relatively young man whose claim to leadership was based on a dream in which his deceased older brother, a Catholic catechist, appeared to him. I mention this to emphasise that many aspects of the Paliau Movement were not unique to this movement. The local reform plans were similar in that they were directed against elements of the old culture. They stemmed from an often explicit resentment of the inequality between black and white. None of the local attempts was particularly successful. Not only were the programs partial and predominantly negative; the young men favouring reform were also strongly opposed by the older established leaders.

Paliau returned to Manus later than most other men because he had been held in Rabaul for trial. He was accused of collaborating with the Japanese, who had given him a very influential position in organising the indigenous labourers in

21 See reports by Jones and Melrose, Australian Archives A518/1, Y840/1/1.
Rabaul. This position had raised his status enormously among indigenous people but had made him suspect in the eyes of the allied forces. Paliau was not convicted, however, and on his return to Manus he started to organise meetings in his home island Baluan and also in Mouk. A meeting house was built in Saponparunbuai, an area in Lipan where the Catholic church now stands, and daily gatherings extended well into the night. Paliau’s speeches attracted many men from other villages, who had heard the news that he had come with a special message. In an atmosphere of high expectations a full-blown ‘cargo-cult’ erupted in Ndriol on Rambutyo. In a dramatic break with the past, people destroyed their property and awaited the arrival of Western wealth. The ‘Noise’\textsuperscript{22}, as it was called in local Tok Pisin, moved quickly to other villages thanks to the excellent transport system of the Titan-speaking people. From Ndriol it spread to other Rambutyo villages and Mouk and thus followed the route taken by the Catholic Church some 15 years previously. It affected many villages on Baluan, Mbuke and the south coast of Manus. The feverish hope of near-fulfilment unified young and old in the destruction of the material tokens of their traditional culture: dogs’ teeth, shell money, slit gongs, canoes.

The inevitable disillusionment when the dreams failed to materialise united the ‘cargo’ villages behind Paliau who was offering an alternative route to the same end: emancipation from and equality with the white people. The resistance of the old generation was broken now the vestiges of old distinctions were gone. Paliau became a leader of unprecedented stature whose influence extended far beyond his native island. People came from afar to listen to his words and they adopted his plans to reorganise their society. New villages were built which sometimes united people from different ethnic backgrounds. A totally different social order was maintained in these villages where any trace of traditional practices was considered backsliding. Truly a revolution had taken place. It appears that the reforms were built on some traditional assumptions but consisted at the same time of genuine transformations. Let us look in some detail at the four points I have mentioned.

\textsuperscript{22} The word ‘Noise’ refers to the shaking, the excited talk and the destruction of goods which accompanied the millenarian expectations.
The politics of knowledge

A central element of Paliau's legitimacy as a leader was his claim to have had privileged access to knowledge. In the previous chapter we have seen how conversion to Christianity was related to the belief that this presented a more powerful or more efficacious kind of knowledge than the traditional religion. It seems apt to expand here on some of the basic principles of the underlying epistemology. I derive these from present day Baluan practices and opinions, but they appear to apply equally to the events of the Paliau Movement.

The most reliable form of knowledge (mapai) stems from what you have seen and experienced yourself. James Carrier (1984:60) comes to the same conclusion concerning Ponam. People primarily trust their own senses: whatever is learnt from watching or doing something constitutes the solid core of knowledge of the world. Dreams or visions are a special category of experience and have to be treated with due skepticism. They may generate real knowledge if they are inspired by God or by benevolent spirits. The truth value of dreams is evident if they lead to accurate prescience. This does not happen too frequently but there are a few especially gifted individuals. Carrier (1984:61) did not find that revelation played any role in Ponam but divination was used occasionally. On Baluan divination is still practised to establish the cause of illness and misfortune, to retrieve stolen or lost property or to discover the best time for a future venture. At the time of my fieldwork there was only one active diviner in Lipan, who used the traditional method of areca nut and piper leaf. He was frequently consulted.

Dreams and other forms of divination may be considered a special form of knowledge which is received from a knowledgeable person or entity, in this case God or some ghost. In general, knowledge which is not based on experience may be accepted as true if the effects of that knowledge are manifest. New information is

24 See chapter 4 for a description of this method. There were a few other men who were initiated to perform this technique but who generally refused to use it. One middle-aged man was a diviner of a different kind. He used visions which he could call up at will. This technique did not belong to local Baluan culture but was given to him by a man from west Manus. The services of this diviner were also in strong demand. Both forms of divination were believed to be based on communication with the ancestors. A third form of communication was through spirit possession. I heard about a few spontaneous cases but it did not appear to be an institutionalised form of contact with the spirit world and no acknowledged specialists existed.
thus tested against its efficacy in the experience of the receiver of the knowledge.\textsuperscript{25} The perceived efficacy may concern such different things as the successful repair of an engine, the organisation of a feast that attracted many people, the healing of a sick person and, ultimately, the ability to make correct predictions.

Things you have only heard from someone else without any evidence of their truth have a completely different status. They are just stories (\textit{pwapwa}). However, narrators may claim a higher or truer reality status for what they are saying by adding that they have seen it with their own eyes. If people retell stories, they often comment on the reliability of the original narrator. The listeners may have a different opinion and the sentences "He (she) is ignorant" and "He (she) is a liar" are not infrequently heard. In summary we may establish the following hierarchy of the reliability of knowledge: the highest status belongs to those things you have seen with your own eyes; in second place comes knowledge you have seen the effects of, whether that knowledge derives from dreams, divination or from other human beings; a much lower status is attributed to those things you have only heard about.

Carrier (1984:73) states that: "On Ponam, access to knowledge is about as unrestricted as it could be." On Baluan the situation is quite different. Many kinds of knowledge are restricted in some ways. Stories concerning a lineage’s history and genealogy are closely guarded and are only fully told to selected individuals (see chapter 1). Even first born sons may miss out on this information if they do not respect and properly care for their fathers. More generally, knowledge is not something that is lightly disseminated. Apart from gossip, information of various kinds is mostly considered as something of value that has to enter relations of reciprocity. This includes technical know-how, expertise in organising feasts and knowledge of good fishing spots. Outsiders are left to find out for themselves. A way to conceal knowledge from outsiders without avoiding talking about it altogether is to use metaphorical language.

The idea of concealment through metaphor certainly played an important role in the ideology of the Paliau Movement. In Tok Pisin, the Movement’s communicative vehicle, this kind of metaphor was referred to as \textit{tok piksa} (Schwartz 1962: 151ff.)

\textsuperscript{25} Of course this experience may be biased towards the expectations raised by the new information.
and also as *tok bokis*\textsuperscript{26} which more explicitly denotes the hidden nature of an image’s true meaning. In the previous chapter I have shown that the missions were embraced as a way to healthier and longer lives. Understandably this often led to disappointment. When the American army appeared with its enormous material wealth, the idea that the white people had been hiding something all along was hard to avoid. This is very clearly expressed in a text which was written down in the early years of the Movement by a Catholic catechist.

The reason for this [the Movement and especially the Noise] was the sight of all the things of the white people. During the war this was already in everyone’s mind. When Paliau wanted to begin [his work], they went ahead with him. Their thoughts are as follows, they say: when the white people first arrived at our place, they lied to us, and now we have seen something real with our own eyes, and at present we cannot listen to the stories of white people anymore, they are liars.\textsuperscript{27}

It was assumed that the missionaries had been able to conceal the core of Western knowledge by using *tok piksa*. Therefore a lively speculation developed concerning the true meaning of the images used by the *lotu*. As an example of such an explanation I quote from an account collected by Schwartz (1962:260). It concerns the image that the door of Heaven is closed and Petrus is holding the key. It gives a wonderful synopsis of some central tenets of the Movement and emphasises the importance of knowledge and the role of Paliau.

What kind of key is this that the missionary speaks of? It is not a key. It is the minds of men. As long as men cling to the ways of the past and follow all of the fashion no good of their fathers, their minds are closed, this key remains unturned in the lock. But now we have

\textsuperscript{26} Schwartz uses an anglicised form of spelling and writes ‘talk picture’ and ‘talk bokis’. As Schwartz (1962:151,412) informs us, *tok piksa* not necessarily implies that the meaning is purposely concealed from outsiders whereas *tok bokis* does.

\textsuperscript{27} From a typed account (probably by Fr Dahmen) found at Bundralis Mission. The text is written in the Catholic Tok Pisin and spelling of the time: “Written by M. Tapo, Kateket. Has bolong en long lukim ologeta samting bolong Vaitman. Long taim bolong wor na despela samting i stap pinis long tingting bolong ologeta man. Vantaim nau Paliou i laik girapim nau, ol i gohet vantaim long en. Em ting bolong ol olosem, ol i spik: em ol vaitman pastaim ol i kamap long yumi, em ol i giulanam yumi, na samting tru nau yumi lukim long ai bolong yumi, na long despela taim nau yumi no ken harim tok bolong ol Vaitman moa, ol man bolong giulan.”
found the meaning of the key. Our minds must be cleared of the ways of Lucifer, we must think of God, then our minds will open. We will be all right. Now this key is in the hand of Paliau. It is just like the key that God gave to Petrus, but it is not a real key, it is knowledge. Paliau has gone ahead in finding knowledge. He holds the key that will open the door for us.28

A crucial aspect of Paliau’s leadership was that he claimed to be able to supply the knowledge which was being withheld by the white people. He had received this knowledge through direct revelation by God in one or more dreams.29 During the war Jesus had appeared to Paliau and given him the true meaning of the bible, thus favouring him to lead the indigenous people out of their predicament into a worthier and more human existence. Apart from this major revelatory experience Paliau had other dreams in which he was warned about future events such as the bombing of the house in which he was staying. These predictions came true and established far and wide the reliability of his knowledge. Up to the present many people, friends and foes alike, are convinced that Paliau has special powers of insight and foreknowledge and numerous examples of accurate predictions can be supplied.

28 When J.H. Wootten, a staff member of the Australian School of Pacific Administration, spent five months in Kawaliap, a village in central Manus, in early 1947, he was confronted with similar ideas after the initial distrust towards him had subsided. He was told: "If only you would not hide your tingting [thoughts, ideas] from us, we could be brothers....You and I and my children would sit down at one table, sleep in one house. We would not have to go away while you eat...[...] If the white man would only open his hand, we would be brothers. But he keeps it tightly shut. He has locked all his knowledge in a box, and where are we to find the key?" (Rowley 1965:166-67). These statements clearly echo the ideas of the Paliau Movement which was joined by the majority of Kawaliap villagers soon after. They migrated down to the coast later and formed a composite village with Titan speakers (Pelikawa). The sentences "You have hidden your knowledge. Now God is sorry for us and is sending us a little understanding." (ibid: 166) presumably refer to Paliau. The disappointment with the mission is clearly expressed in the following paragraph: "Some of our men have been to school with the mission. We were looking for a road and we thought we had found it. But the road was not straight. They taught us only tokboi. The road turned and brought us back to ourselves, our own tokboi. They did not show us the straight road that would lead us on to your knowledge, your idea, your language" (ibid: 166).

29 See Schwartz (1962:247, 258). Note the difference with the way in which Paliau had presented the gradual development of his understanding to Schwartz in the long dictated autobiography. The invocation of revelation certainly had a lot to do with the politics of knowledge. I do not imply that Paliau doubted that his dreams had come from God or that he had not had them. But the way his knowledge was presented to his followers was crucial to its acceptance. Vis-à-vis Schwartz he confirmed that he had had the dreams but he played down their importance in his development. At present Paliau asserts that he had all his knowledge already at the time of his birth. This is an even stronger claim to truth than revelation through a dream.
It appears, then, that Paliau was able to exploit traditional attitudes and institutions to build a completely new organisation and a new leadership role for himself. I assume that the epistemology of the Movement was basically traditional. This cannot be more than a hypothesis because there is not enough evidence for a completely convincing reconstruction of pre-movement attitudes. However, the continuity of epistemological principles from the start of the Movement to the present suggests durability and what we know of the traditional religion is in accordance with these basic principles (see chapter 4). Paliau's role as an innovator certainly had precursors in the old culture, since the successful introduction of a new cultural element could help an aspirant leader to establish his claims.

What was new, however, was that Paliau's innovations did not concern parts of the culture but the culture as a whole and, secondly, that the influence of his leadership extended to more than 30 villages. This gigantic expansion was made possible by the colonial peace, the establishment of local church organisations and the common experience of most men as contract labourers. Paliau's role as an ideological leader, as someone who redefines basic tenets of a culture, was preceded by the work of the missions. Paliau used the disenchantment with white missionaries to occupy, as it were, the ideological space created by the lotu. A large part of the imagery he employed was derived from Christianity, though interpreted in a creative way on the basis of indigenous precepts. Paliau's ideological revolution manifested both continuity and transformation.

30 An area of uncertainty is, for example, the importance of dreams in pre-war Saluan culture. Fortune (1935:36-37) mentions that the inland people of Manus had seers who received information through dreams. The Pere people did not have such seers among themselves but they used the services of the inland specialists. Dreams were certainly important in the Paliau Movement as Schwartz (1962) shows. They were even recorded in writing if people thought they contained an important message (ibid: 285). Stephen (1979) demonstrates that the appreciation of dreams as a means of communication with the spirit world was widespread in Melanesia. It may be that the use of dreams as sources of knowledge had increased in the Paliau Movement as compared to the pre-war period. This possible increase might be explained by the contract labour experience of many Manus men which brought them in contact with other Melanesian cultures. An equally plausible explanation is suggested by Stephen. In times of crisis people look for innovations which enable them to deal with the new circumstances. It is understandable that this would put more pressure on the traditionally accepted sources of new knowledge such as dreams, possession and trance.
The use of rhetoric

The assertion of special and relevant knowledge was undoubtedly an important aspect of Paliau’s rise to power. However, the possession of knowledge in itself was not enough; it was necessary to be able to communicate it. Rhetoric, therefore, was crucial. In chapter 1 I commented on the importance of public speech in Baluan society, both in the present and in the past. There is one dimension of oratory on which I want to expand, namely the effect of talking on reality as perceived by Baluan people. The power of words is most conspicuous in the traditional practice of talking to the ancestors with the aim of influencing people or events. This kind of speech, called tenten, could be used to harm or to help people. It could cause someone to fall ill – or to recover. Words were also important to move and motivate people, for example in warfare or in the organisation of a feast. The speech of particular leaders was considered to be especially powerful, they were masters of ‘strong talk’ (kamou porok). Certain types of magic could be obtained and used to increase the power of words in order to convince people or to attract them to a feast. It may be concluded, then, that talking was seen as an action to influence reality and not just as a way of passing on information.

This general characterisation of the assumed efficacy of speech appears to apply both to the pre-war and the post-war period and still holds for the present.\textsuperscript{31} Paliau was and is considered a uniquely gifted person whose words carry great power. His reputation did not bloom without good reason. Paliau was and to a certain extent still is an orator of exceptional calibre. This has been testified by Mead, Schwartz and many others who heard him speak. Rachel Cleland (1981:179) commented:

Paliau was a magnificent orator and his powers of the voice had carried his people with him in developing his new idea.

As outside observers we may attribute this power of Paliau’s voice to his unusual mastery of the art of rhetoric. An important aspect of his talent is that he is able to pick up any new information presented to him and weave it into the general

\textsuperscript{31} It holds in general outline but there are, of course, considerable differences in what individuals believe and do. For example, magic to strengthen one’s speech is still used but certainly not by everyone.
scheme of his story. I have witnessed this more than once when attending his meetings. During the early beginnings of the Movement, Paliau presented to his followers a long story in which he had integrated into a meaningful whole many of the ideas and images which were available in the contract labour culture of which he had been part. This story comprised both a theology, a history and a partial autobiography. An extensive version has been published by Schwartz (1962:252-262) under the title ‘Long story of God’. The story played an important role in the early stages of the Movement and was retold countless times.

The structure of the story is such as to give the highest possible authority to the message contained within it. A paradigmatic association is established between God, Jesus and Paliau as sources of knowledge. Therefore, listening to Paliau is listening to the true word of God. The crucial sin of both the fallen Angels and Adam and Eve is that they did not obey the word of God. In the Tok Pisin of the movement this is rendered as ol i no harim tok. The central virtue is harim tok and the meaning of this includes: to listen to the words, to understand them, to heed the advice and to obey. The efficacy of this knowledge of God is believed to be immediate and in this world rather than in some sort of after-world. To obey the word of God is equal to attaining the good life whereas not listening leads to punishment and suffering. This gives enormous power to Paliau’s words as they derive directly from God. The rhetorical structure of the Long Story of God can thus be summarised as follows: listening to and heeding Paliau’s words means that real knowledge is achieved and this in turn will lead to a better life.

Paliau’s message

What, then, was the content of the story which Paliau was able to imbue with such authority? The story explained the plight of the Manus people and showed them a way to overcome their predicament. It offered meaning to the widely felt

32 Mead (1975[1956]:200) also comments on this “facet of his particular genius, his ability to seize the materials offered by a situation and use them.”

33 I have made a structural analysis of the ‘Long story of God’ in my MA thesis (Otto 1985). This analysis owes much to Jan Pouwer’s seminars and to his own unpublished analysis of this myth. I further compared the ‘Long story’ with the older myths collected by Fr Meyer (1907-1909). There is no space to present more of my findings here.
dissatisfaction with things as they were and at the same time it mobilised this feeling into a political movement for radical social reform. Before discussing Paliau's political program I will give a brief outline of the narrative or syntagmatic structure of the 'Long story of God' enlivened by some telling quotes (as rendered in Schwartz 1962:252-262).

The story begins with the creation of the world out of the power of God's thought. Adam and Eve were created, along with the prophets, and these first human beings shared with God the power that whatever they thought could materialise. Unfortunately this paradisical situation or 'first order' did not last. A fallen angel seduced Eve and Adam (in that sequence) to commit the sin of disobedience to God's order. The result was the introduction of all the scourges of human existence: hard work, pain, warfare, illness and death. Knowledge of God was lost because He had concealed Himself.

It is tempting to compare this essentially Christian story with the plot of a number of the old Manus myths collected by Fr Meyer around the beginning of this century (see Otto 1985:92-100). These also contain the image of a primordial time in which death could be reversed and in which major transformations were possible. The end of this situation was caused by human beings who broke a moral rule. Hence the inevitability of death. It is equally tempting to look for the origin of 'cargo' belief in the transformation of this traditional pattern of thought under the influence of Christian imagery and a vision of the white man's riches. In the Long Story, God's thoughts are the origin of everything that exists. As long as the minds of human beings were open to God and obeyed his order, everything would appear as they wished. This is the most radical transformation of the basic belief in the efficacy of knowledge. The sin of disobedience closed the possibility of direct production through thinking because God hid Himself from human knowledge and as a result human beings were thrown into a condition of misery and toil.

In the old myths the situation established by the original sin is permanent. In the Long Story, however, God has compassion for humans, who are his creatures after all, and he sends Jesus down to teach them the proper way of life.

Jesus said men should not be angry. They should not quarrel and fight. "I am Jesus. I have come down because of all these ways of men. Everyone must listen and obey. All the ways of your ancestors from the past, now, at this time, you must be rid of them. I, Jesus, have
come to take the lead in this. I, Jesus, I am like a dividing line; the sin of Adam and Eve lies behind me. I have come to the fore. All men must follow me, Jesus, alone (Schwartz 1962:255).

Jesus went around teaching and curing the sick. Finally he was arrested by the Judah, which in this context refers to the government. They beat him and mocked him: "What are you now? You are nothing but a boy" (ibid.). Jesus was put onto the cross and to his left they hung John Brown. By his death Jesus paid for all people including those he had not been able to visit. He had instructed his apostles to bring his message to all corners of the earth. However, the Judah prevented this.

But all the Judah [they equated the Judah with the government], they blocked this talk. The government said: "You cannot bring this message to the native. If you do, I will cut your throat. Why? Because I have police and soldiers. You must obey me. You cannot spread these ideas. Wait, you must submit these laws of Jesus to an assembly. You must alter the book. The real talk of Jesus must be omitted. Instead, you must use talk picture. For the sake of deception, this must be made into a different book. You missionaries can take with you another book, but the true Bible must remain here. This book that changes the talk of Jesus will be passed off on the native (Schwartz 1962:256).

As a result of this the people of Manus and New Guinea remained ignorant. Again God pitied these people and he sent different agents to bring his message. Subsequently he tried the Germans, the Australians and the Japanese. None of these informed the indigenous people but instead exploited them. Then God thought of America because this country had black people too. Although the Americans were willing to help the natives, they were obstructed by the Australians who had returned to New Guinea. Therefore God had recourse to another way. He searched for a man whose mind was straight. He found Paliau in Rabaul and revealed his knowledge to this man through Jesus, who appeared to him in a dream.

It will be clear from this summary that the message of the Long Story is oppositional. It gives voice and meaning to feelings of resentment and resistance. In

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34 Similar positive images of the Americans, resulting from their war-time presence, existed in many other places of the western Pacific. In some places the images were very persistent; see for example Lindstrom (1979 and 1981).
an attempt to explain the native’s pitiful plight Paliau identifies the causes in the interaction between God and several categories of people. Following Gramsci (1971) it could be said that this story is structured by a ‘series of negations’ which apply to the colonial situation from the native point of view. The negations of Paliau’s political program are threefold: it is anti-tradition, anti-mission and anti-government.

The traditional indigenous culture is equated with the situation of all humankind after the fall. This condition is characterised by warfare, hard work, suffering and the absence of knowledge of God. As a result of God’s compassion with his creation Jesus starts teaching the people of the earth how they should live in order to escape from this suffering. He instructs them to leave behind the ways of the ancestors. The places that are visited by Jesus become all right. However, his message does not reach the people of Manus because it is kept back by the white people. Now Paliau is able to bring this knowledge to the black people of New Guinea who should also rid themselves of their errant ancestral ways.

The missionaries have pretended to bring God’s message but in reality they have kept the indigenous people in error. This has created a situation which is even worse than that of the old culture, as is apparent through an increase in death and illness (Schwartz 1962:252,258). However, Paliau is able to reveal the true knowledge of the missions and knows how to decipher the tok piksa used to conceal it. He explains the real causes of illness and teaches people how to maintain or to regain health. His theory of sickness amounts to an interesting transformation of the traditional belief that illness is caused by the spirits, often in retaliation for a sin. Any disturbance of someone’s mind through anger, envy or anti-social behaviour leads to sickness. Whether the affliction is a direct result of the disturbance or produced by God’s immediate anger is not clear. Both opinions were presented to Schwartz (1962:261). The cure or prevention of illness is to straighten the problem with the person affected and to show this publicly by shaking hands. If one sticks to these rules, one will only die of old age.

The third negation concerns the government. In the Long Story the government compels the missionaries to change the true message of the Bible. The government is the force which keeps the natives down with the threat of violence. It also exploits their labour: the Germans used the natives ‘as if they were trucks’, the Australians treated them ‘like oxen’ and the Japanese killed many of them (ibid: 256). The power
inequality between white and black people is referred to in different ways. Jesus is called a boy by the Judah and is thus associated with indigenous men, who are called boys by the white rulers. A white man in turn wants to be addressed as *masta*. Crucified with Jesus is John Brown, an American fighter against slavery in the mid-nineteenth century. The only country that is all right is America, which also has a black population.

The obvious solution for the resented inequality would be that either America took over from Australia or that the indigenous people formed their own government. Neither solution is explicitly mentioned in the Long Story as presented to Schwartz, although the possibility of another country coming in is left open. On the basis of other evidence it is indubitable that the desire for political self-determination was strong.\(^{35}\) I assume that it was Paliau's strategy to veil the Movement's insubordination, at least to outsiders, as he was well aware of the power of the white colonial government. Further developments within the Movement testify that a form of self-government was definitely on his agenda.

The categories in which Paliau's ideological resistance against the established order were cast, were the products of colonial history. I have traced the origin of the categories of government (*gavman*) and mission (*lotu*) in the preceding two chapters. The first half of this chapter was concerned with the development of an indigenous concept of tradition. Paliau's negation of the natives' subordination was articulated in the very terms on which the domination was based. This process is known from many other places where an oppositional group attempts to phrase its resistance. Keesing (n.d.a) comments on this phenomenon:

> However, the evidence of colonial social formations – and, I think, other social formations as well – points toward a less strong, Gramscian, form of the dominant ideology thesis: that even in their opposition to domination, ideological as well as political, subordinate classes frame their struggle at least partly in terms of the conceptual categories that structure their subordination.

\(^{35}\) This appears clearly from the documentation on the request of Manus leaders to the American military commander (see reports by Melrose and Jones, Australian Archives A518/1, Y840/1/1); from the subsequent actions by people within (and without) the Paliau Movement such as the burning of *luluai* hats and village books, the organisation of their own political structure, etc.; from the documentation concerning Paliau's trial for unlawfully appropriating governmental powers (including witness accounts); and from the oral accounts of the early Paliau Movement I have collected (these form, of course the weakest evidence, as the accounts are inevitably affected by later events).
This is not surprising, as Keesing explains, because the way in which social reality presents itself to subordinated groups is structured by the institutions of domination which are supported by the ruling ideology (ibid.). Consciousness of this situation is thus likely to develop within the categories of domination, namely as a negation of them. Another reason for the – inverse – reflection of dominant ideology in the categories of resistance is the logic of oppositional politics. In order to fight a situation of inequality, subaltern groups have to face the dominant on their own battleground, that is, in terms of the latters’ categories.36

If we look carefully at the terms used by Paliau there is a distinct disparity between the negation of tradition and the other two negations. The ‘way of the native’ was valued as inherently negative. The only way to attain equal footing with the white man was to abolish tradition completely. This meant breaking the chains of the past but also implied the end of the leadership of the older generation. Paliau’s quest for emancipation was not just from white people but also from indigenous leaders, whose dominance was based on the institutions of the past. The abrogation of these institutions meant the end of the power of the lapans. The negative attitude towards tradition is not surprising, as the concept of the ‘way of the native’ was developed as the anti-thesis of the positively valued ‘way of the white man’.

The negations of government and mission are of a different order. Unlike tradition these institutions were not seen as inherently bad. What was wrong with them was their use by white people who, led by their selfishness, maintained an unjust inequality between themselves and indigenous people. Paliau’s negation concerned the white man’s corruption of both mission and government aimed at deceiving the natives and depriving them of the real benefits of these innovations.37 Paliau’s aim was to fulfill the true projects of gavman and lotu for the benefit of the people of Manus and New Guinea.

Paliau fulfilled the true mission of the lotu by revealing the knowledge which had been concealed by white missionaries. He showed that it was wrong to allow some

36 See Guha (1983), who documents the inherently oppositional character of the cultures and politics of subalternity with reference to colonial India. Thomas (n.d.) documents the process of oppositional culture creation in Fiji. He concludes: “[...] certain cultural terms [...] are to be read at least partly as meanings predicated upon their opposites: they thus derive directly from indigenous confrontations with, and representations of, the other (i.e. intrusive foreigners).”

37 This is in fact a variation of the classical conspiracy theory.
traditional customs to persist as had been the mission's policy. Such slackness had led to a very dangerous mixture of old and new which had even caused an increase of illness and death. Jesus' true message was that all ancestral customs had to go. The white government equally had not served the native well. It had subordinated and exploited the black people instead of improving their lives. Therefore indigenous people had to organise themselves and work for themselves, because this was the only way they could achieve a prosperous and more equal society.

_Paliau's plan for reform_

Paliau was not only a theoretical innovator of great imagination and a naturally gifted orator, he was also a very practical man who was able to organise his followers' daily life and who was a shrewd political operator. These abilities have made him an unparalleled leader who has maintained a pre-eminent position throughout his life.\(^{38}\)

I summarise here only Paliau's reform plans at the beginning of his movement.\(^{39}\) As events developed these plans were adapted to changed circumstances such as new government and mission policies and to developments within the movement itself. Paliau incorporated all the new information he received. For example, when he was detained and instructed by government officials in Port Moresby, he heard about the possibility of introducing native councils. Using such information Paliau was able to inaugurate changes which pre-empted moves by the government. In this way he was able to claim full credit for the introduction of a native representative system, the Saluan Native Village Council. He was a very astute politician indeed. Here, I only

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\(^{38}\) Mead (1975[1956]:197) gives the following characterisation of Paliau's leadership: "It took us a long time to understand the way in which he had to combine a sense of divine mission sufficient to focus the enthusiasm of the mystical fanatics in his following, an ability to make rational and effective plans that would keep the loyalty and admiration of responsible, intelligent lieutenants, and finally, an ability to work with government officials as someone anxious to learn all he could about their methods and goals. All three - the sense of mission of one who was fulfilling a divine plan, the sense of great intellectual competence in which he towered over his followers in statesmanship and planning, and a genuine puzzlement as to how his program was to be related to the wider world - all three of these threads in his complex personality were real and integrated. He, indeed, adeptly and responsibly, tried to be 'all things to all men'."

\(^{39}\) I derive these mainly from Schwartz (1962:262-266) but also from Mead (1964 and 1975[1956]), selected government sources (Patrol reports, Fienberg 1950 and others from Paliau file) and oral information.
deal with the initial plan as there is no space to follow its continual adaptation in practice.

Paliau's plan was directed at removing many of the traditional social divisions. He was opposed to the antagonism between different ethnic groups and favoured the creation of mixed villages. The seafaring and fishing Manus should leave their lagoons and move to the shore. Here they could be joined by inland people, who were to leave their settlements in the bush. The old clan divisions did not have a role in the new organisation, which stressed village unity. One leader, called pesman (first man), should represent the whole village without favouring kin groups. The traditional ranking system should be suspended. In Paliau's view there was only one lapan, namely God, and all people were his followers (lau). Initially the village pesman were designated by Paliau. Often they operated alongside a luluai appointed by the government. Not surprisingly this led to confrontations with the colonial administration.

Economically, Paliau advocated the complete abolition of traditional feasts and exchanges. Marriage arrangements were to be restricted to one payment of a fixed amount of Western money. Work should be organised at the village level with some days free for individual pursuits. Decisions on communal projects were taken in a meeting of the whole village. Every morning the pesman could assign certain groups to specific tasks. Trade was to be conducted on a communal basis, within and between villages. Access to land and reef for gardening and fishing should be granted freely irrespective of who the original owners were. The yield of food production was to be shared and distributed according to need.

An important aspect of Paliau's economic plan was the pooling of money. This was not a new idea and appears to have been common practice among contract labourers. However, Paliau was able to induce people from different villages to contribute to a common fund which grew to a very sizeable amount. The money came largely from war damage payments by the Australian government – which

40 Crocombe (1965:63) observed the following practice in Mbuke as late as 1963: "A part of the 'new way' adopted on Mbuke in the 1940's was the 'abolition' of individual rights to land and reefs. More precisely, it is a reduction of individual or descent group rights relative to those of the community as a whole. Boundaries are still known, but except for that part of his land on which one has economic trees, anyone may garden, hunt, or forage anywhere without prior permission."

41 Fienberg (1950) counted Australian £8,126.6 and US $586.55.
Paliau is said to have predicted – and also from wages and other payments earned from the Americans. Paliau emphasised that money should not be wasted by buying things in European or Asian stores. He also prevented young men from accepting contract work. The underlying idea is clear. All the indigenous resources should be saved and used only for the advancement of the local community. The power of money in Western society was well understood but not the technicalities of its functioning. It was thought that a large reservoir of money would enable the natives to buy their emancipation in the form of their own stores, boats, plantations, etc. and that this would eventually force the white men to leave. Paliau’s plans for an economic boycott was a serious concern not only to traders and recruiters but even to the most well-meaning government officials as it diametrically opposed their vision of native development.

The new culture which was given shape in thought and action by Paliau and his followers was called nupela pasin, or the ‘new way’. It included a new ideology which consisted in a rigorous reinterpretation of Christianity. The new ideology legitimated the proposed social and economic reforms as directly related to a state of health. Any disturbance of the mind or tingting was believed to cause illness. Paliau’s prescriptions were so many ways to avoid or to cure such a disturbance. In addition to the reform measures already mentioned, a number of ‘laws’ were formulated which included rules such as the prohibition of malicious gossip and the prohibition of intentionally or carelessly provoking anger in other persons. Public confession and reconciliation were to be important aspects of a harmonious village life.

Many of these original ideas were carried out, at least to a certain extent. There were times of enthusiasm and times of drift. To an outsider village life within the Movement would sometimes give the impression of a well disciplined military camp. Houses were built on stilts in straight files. A bell regimented the daily activities: in the morning a sign was given for rising, washing and praying; then all villagers had to line up for the distribution of work tasks; sometimes drills were practised; in the afternoon there was again a meeting for the distribution of food, for religious service or for some political discussion; after a certain time everyone was expected to be in their houses. There were social experiments on many terrains: for example mixed bathing to lose shame and the non-violent resolution of adultery by paying a price to
the woman. Many of these experiments were given up after a while, but some lasted. A conspicuous innovation was a concern with dates and with the recording of events. This may be understood as the development of a Western type of historical consciousness concerned with the recording of progress on a linear and universal time-scale. Also conspicuous was the use of Western clothing, especially during meetings and religious services.

If we compare the nupela pasin with the old culture it becomes obvious that they are based on radically different principles of sociality. Whereas traditionally kin ties were predominant, the new way favoured the bonds of a village community. The organisation of work and exchange through one's individual network of kin and affines was replaced by the organisation of these things by a residential group. The particularism of the old entrepreneurial system was superseded by a communal and centralist system with appointed (and later elected) leaders. The old culture favoured individual differentiation both through effort and ascription. The nupela pasin was clearly egalitarian in outlook. Economic integration was traditionally based on ecological specialisation and monopolised production. Paliau and his followers wanted to eliminate these differences and make every person able to cater for all needs. The fishermen were to plant gardens and the gardeners were to learn how to fish. Monopolies and restricted ownership of resources should not be maintained and access to land and water should be free. The religious particularism of the old culture was to be replaced by the religious centralism of Christianity. There was only one God for all human beings and this God was the common origin of the tingting of every individual. Instead of the individualised time reckoning of the past (see Mead 1975[1956]:64-67) the indigenous communities should be brought in line with universal history.

This comparison shows that Paliau's plan for social reform was truly revolutionary, as it comprised radical transformations of many aspects of society. It also gives us an insight into how revolutionary change works. It is true that many of Paliau's ideas can be traced back to his experience with Western society as a contract worker and a native policeman. But a close consideration of his plan for a new society demonstrates that this plan was consistently developed as an antithesis to the traditional society he rejected. The oppositional transformations he deployed may be summarised as follows: communalism versus individualism; centralism
versus particularism; equality versus inequality; unification versus differentiation. Although Paliau's conscious project was the emulation of white society, the actual vision he developed of this society and of the ideal condition of his own culture cannot be understood without taking into account the logic of oppositional transformation. This logic was applied to those aspects of indigenous and Western cultures that had come into relief through the colonial experience. The creation of a new culture thus involved three points of reference: the image of Western society, the image of indigenous society and the image of a Utopia.

Incorporation and consolidation

Paliau's revolution did not take place in a void but in the context of colonial power relations. The categories of gavman and lotu did not only represent innovations in indigenous societies but also referred to forces which were outside the control of these societies. How did these organised forces react to the actions of Paliau and his followers? The documentation concerning these responses is extensive, especially from the colonial government, but I limit myself here to a brief description.

When rumours of 'an outbreak of cargo cult' reached government headquarters in Inrim, presumably in January 1947, a patrol officer was sent to investigate the matter. Paliau, as the suspected instigator, was taken to Inrim and then sent on to Port Moresby, together with some other native leaders from Manus. This was done at the initiative of the Director of District Services and Native Affairs, who wished to explain to these men the working of the Administration and the plans for native development. The investigation found no evidence that Paliau was the originator of the cult which had started on Rambutyo, but concluded that he had been involved in its occurrence on Baluan (PR 1947:3). In Paliau's absence there were other outbreaks of cult activities with clear anti-government aspects such as the burning of

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42 After the war district headquarters were set up on this plantation but were later moved back to Lorengau, which had been the administrative centre before the war.

43 The Report to the General Assembly of the United Nations for 1950-51 (Commonwealth of Australia 1951) gives November 1946 as date of the outbreak, but this is contradicted by most other documents.
official hats (of luluais and tultuls) and village books. Paliau was implicated by some people, but he later denied any involvement and no evidence was produced.

To keep the area of the movement under close observation a government substation was established in Patusi, on the south coast of Manus, in May 1947. After Paliau’s return to Manus in July 1947 rumours went around that Paliau had received special powers from the Administrator. In reply to a report on these rumours the Director of District Services in Port Moresby stated that Paliau’s confidence should be won so that he could be used in explaining administrative policies to the people of Manus. There were several patrols to Baluan and other islands to investigate Paliau’s activities. In general, reports were sympathetic towards the movement and headquarters was confirmed in its view that Paliau could be of "great assistance to the Administration" if he were "properly handled and guided" (letter Jones 5-7-48).

In the meantime Paliau and his followers worked energetically on carrying out their plans for reform. The people of Mouk had left their rocky island and settled on Baluan on newly cleared land where they were joined by a large part of the Lipan villagers. The rest of Lipan also resettled together with the majority of Manuai villagers who had come down from their dwelling-places in the bush. The people of Sone had predominantly joined the movement but the majority of the Seventh Day Adventist villages of Pariol and Pereilik had remained aloof. They were opposed to Paliau on religious grounds but it is not unlikely that the old rivalry between west and east Baluan also played a role in the division. It appears, however, that religion was the most important factor as the other SDA villages in the area also kept to themselves and saw Paliau as one of the false prophets they had been warned against. These SDA villages were carrying out their own reform plans of Westernisation and had established very clean villages with well-constructed houses. The majority of Paliau’s followers belonged to the Catholic Church but

44 National Archives of Papua New Guinea, CA 35-6-38.
45 Only the leaders of Manuai and a few loyal followers did not join the movement. Kelu Salikioi, who was tultul at the time, gave as the reason for this that Paliau had sent the other luluais and tultuls of Baluan a letter but had omitted to mention the names of the Manuai leaders. They all joined the SDA church but it is possible that the luluai already belonged to this church.
46 As early as 1946 a patrol officer commended the quality of the houses in Lou, which was completely SDA. He found one village on this island the most advanced he had seen in Papua or New Guinea and ascribed this largely to the influence of two Solomon Islands missionaries. He adds rather
members of the Evangelical mission also joined in when the movement reached their villages.

After the joint village of Mouk and Lipan was established the officials of the old village sections announced their wish to resign in favour of a common *luluai* and *tutul*. The Mouk section itself consisted of three divisions with their own leaders and the total population of the new village approached 500. Paliau was nominated as *luluai* and his long-time Mouk supporter and lieutenant Lukas Chauka was nominated as *tutul*. This nomination was fully supported by the Patusi patrol officer and the Director of District Services approved the appointment in May 1949. In all the villages within the movement, village councils had been set up by the villagers themselves and they were applying 22 'laws'. The investigating acting district officer Gow took a very positive attitude towards this development (PR 1949:3). He commented that all the allegedly new laws were contained in various forms in the Native Administration Regulations but that they were enforced rather rigidly by the village councils.

Much thought and hard work has been contributed by Paliau and his supporters in developing these councils as far as they have gone, and without any direction or supervision by Administration officers it is remarkable how successfully they are functioning (ibid: 11).

Village councils were in operation in other parts of the Territory as advisory bodies to the *luluai* but legislation was in preparation to establish official native councils as a replacement of the system of appointed village heads. Gow commended the general progress in the area of the movement and recommended that priority should be given to this district when the introduction of official councils was begun. He found that "Paliau is not actively attempting to sway native people against the present government policy" (ibid: 4) and gave as evidence the fact that wherever he went the first thing people did was sing "God save the king".

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47 Earlier, both the patrol officer and the Manus district officer had suggested Paliau's nomination as the successor of the ailing *luluai* of Lipan. This was before the creation of the new joint village of Lipan and Mouk. To the officers' surprise Paliau was not nominated then and the villagers were very evasive about the reasons for this. The patrol officer suggests in his report that Paliau's position was possibly stronger without government backing (PR 1947-48:2).
However not all government officers were as positive about Paliau's accomplishments and some were becoming increasingly nervous about his growing power. They took various signs of insubordination much more gravely than did Gow and others. These signs included persistent rumours about Paliau's 'real' claims, unwillingness of people from the Movement area to work for Europeans or to buy in European shops, unwillingness from the part of village leaders to discuss village disputes or to refer them to government magistrates, and indeed general unwillingness to do anything without Paliau's approval. In January 1950 a patrol officer in Patusi produced witness accounts of an anti-government speech by Paliau. Paliau was taken to Lorengau and was found guilty on two different charges, namely influencing another luluai in the performance of his duty, and spreading 'false reports which tended to cause trouble among the people'. The reports amounted to the usurpation by Paliau of the power to appoint magistrates. Paliau was sentenced to 6 months' imprisonment with hard labour.

During Paliau's absence from Saluan an investigation was carried out which found him guilty of insubordination in unequivocal terms. The officer claims that he was able to obtain information in spite of the strict secrecy of the movement, thanks to the temporary shock caused by Paliau's conviction (PR 5-1950). Understandably Paliau's followers were very upset about his imprisonment and repeatedly tried to obtain his release from the district officer. When the United Nations Trusteeship Mission visited Manus in May 1950 for a triennial inspection, they were approached by a number of luluais and other village officials from the movement area. Much to the embarrassment of the administration the luluais protested against Paliau's conviction, which they did not understand, saying that Paliau had done a lot of good for them. The acting director of District Services was present and promised that he

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48 Some conclusions of the investigations were: "Paliou [sic] has a complete government set-up of his own. He has informed all the people that he is authorised by Port Moresby and KING-BERRA [derived from Canberra] to do this. The district Office is at LIPAN MOUK. He has his own officials in all affected areas and some other. Approximately one-fifth of the people of Manus had openly ceased to take any notice whatsoever of the Local administration. All orders were issued from Lipan Mouk, and this meant from Paliou. Paliou has set up his own system of jurisdiction and has enumerated laws for the people to obey. Fines and imprisonment have been inflicted on the people by men selected by him in the various villages. Cases are also taken to him at Lipan Mouk. He has set up a new religion of which he is the absolute dictator. [...] He has lied, and twisted the statements of government officials to give the Manus peoples the idea that he is carrying out the work of the Government and of God."
would send a special officer to Baluan to institute village councils as soon as possible.

Fienberg, the officer who was preparing the installation of village councils in East New Britain, was urgently called to Manus and arrived on Baluan in July. After he had done his preparatory work he was succeeded by a patrol officer who was to reside on Baluan for the permanent supervision of the council. The Baluan Native Village Council was formally proclaimed on 14 September 1950 as one of the first three such councils in New Guinea. The other two, Vunamami and Reimber, were in East New Britain and a fourth one, Rabaul, was established there in May 1951. The sub-districts of Kokopo and Rabaul in East New Britain were the government's acknowledged testing areas for the development of council type organisations as these areas were economically well advanced. The hasty introduction of a village council in Baluan was motivated by political pressure alone, as its population and its economic base was deemed too small for a viable council by the expert (Fenbury 1978:279). Fenbury, who laid the foundation of the council in Baluan, even states that council regulations were finally approved because the Administrator was worried about the developments of the Paliau movement (ibid: 52). The annual report on Manus for 1949-50 puts it as follows:

These councils are being introduced with a view to giving an outlet to the surplus energy of the Paliau followers and at the same time letting them see that we are, as an administration, prepared to do something in their development (page 4, see also AR 1951-52:3 and AR 1952-53:2).

In Paliau's absence elections were held and Papi Poiem from Lipan became the first chairman of the Baluan Council. In the meantime a rather heated discussion was conducted about the administration's attitude towards Paliau. As mentioned earlier, government staff in Manus had become increasingly anxious about Paliau's power and they advised the Director of District Services that Paliau should be deported to another district after his term in prison had finished. One patrol officer depicted Paliau as "a pro-Jap. anti-White native with very evil intentions" who was a "little demi-God" to his followers (PR 1950:6). The acting assistant district officer who carried out an investigation uses similar terms:

49 At the time he worked on the introduction of local councils he was called Fienberg but he later changed his name.
[...] I say without hesitation that Paliau is an evil man. He is self-seeking, arrogant and a man whose word can never be relied on; he is not interested in the real welfare of the people, but only in attaining his own mad lust for power (letter to District Officer, 14-2-1950).

The officer introducing the council on Baluan agreed that Paliau should be deported as he considered him "to a large extent a racketeer" (Fienberg 1950:11). The acting director of District Services accepted the advice from Manus and recommended that Paliau be deported for one year. However, the Administrator Colonel Murray did not approve Paliau's deportation notwithstanding an emphatic letter directly from the district officer in Lorengau. Instead Paliau was taken again to Port Moresby:

so that frank discussions could be had with him designed to clear his mind of anti-social and anti-Government trends and to give him a clear understanding of the useful part he can play in the gradual evolution of the indigenous people of the Territory (letter from J.K. Murray, administrator, 27-6-1951).

Paliau was kept in Port Moresby for more than four months, during which time he also visited Kerema district in the company of a co-operative officer to see the people produce copra with government assistance. On his return to Manus in March 1951 Paliau was "most circumspect in his behaviour" (Commonwealth of Australia 1951:29). Soon he was elected a member of the Baluan Native Village Council and subsequently he became its chairman, a post he held until its amalgamation with the North Coast Council in 1965.50 Although Paliau's leadership of the newly established council involved government recognition of his position, it also in effect reduced his power. The council was permanently supervised by a resident Native Affairs officer. Moreover, from the start it included the non-movement villages of Baluan, which opposed Paliau's religious authority, whereas the faithful villages on the south coast of Manus and on Rambutyo, constituting the majority of Paliau's following, were not included until some years later.51 Paliau's energies were used up

50 Paliau was also elected president of the new Multi Racial Council (1965) and he became the member for Manus in the First House of Assembly in 1964.

51 Mead (1975[1956]:192) comments critically: "This nineteenth-century divide-and-rule policy, combined with the subtler and more ethically complex plan of electing Paliau president of the truncated council, was said by some to have clipped his wings." See also pages 204-205 ("Here sat Paliau, a prophet in his own country, his wings very surely clipped").
to a large extent in pursuing improvements in his home area and in the factional politics which were part of this process. Paliau’s power, which had been uncontrolled and a threat to government authority, was channelled into more manageable forms and was effectively incorporated into the government apparatus.

The Catholic mission was not so lucky. The area in which Paliau’s influence extended had been predominantly Catholic. During the war the Catholic missionaries of Manus had been deported and murdered by Japanese soldiers.\textsuperscript{52} Except for one, the priests, who went to Manus after the war, were new to the area. Fr O’Connell, an ex-army chaplain, established himself on the south coast, at first in Pere. Soon he encountered secrecy and suspicion. When he found out what the reason was, it came to a confrontation. The father refused to administer the sacraments if the people did not change their minds and behaviour. That was the last thing they contemplated although most did not want to break openly with the mission. The stern reaction of the mission was regretted by the administration:

The situation is not helped, in my opinion, by the determined stand of the fathers of the Catholic Church who have refused to administer the sacramental rights of their church to Paliau and his followers. While they may be justified by ecclesiastical law, their actions may be interpreted as a general European objection to any progress by natives (letter from district office, 15-12-1947).

As a result of the conflict about 3500 Catholics were excommunicated. This was a very painful loss to the church and the radical stance taken at the time was later seen as an ill-fated mistake (Fr Beermann, personal communication). However, the first two priests on the south coast fought what they saw as irrational and immoral behaviour with Irish fervour and with all the religious sanctions they possessed. They could not win. Their German successor in 1949 aptly depicted the “cargo cult” as motivated by a “still vague but strong urge for liberation from white tutelage” (HM 59:169).\textsuperscript{53} He saw Paliau as a demagogue and a religious reformer with a political

\textsuperscript{52} They were three sisters and three priests. One Catholic father survived because he had left Manus for medical treatment and was taken prisoner in Rabaul. Also murdered were five Evangelical missionaries from Manus and one child, two white planters and several Chinese (no number is given; they were presumably traders).

\textsuperscript{53} In German the text reads: “Hinter dem Kargokult in Manus steht ein zwar noch verschwommener aber starker Befreiungsdrang von der Bevormundung der Weissen.”
program of nationalism and communism in native form (ibid: 187). His movement was "anti-white deep at heart" (ibid: 188).

The mission changed its policy to a more cautious and patient approach. A few people on Baluan had remained or returned to the Catholic Church under the leadership of Paliau's own cousin Molean Pokasau. These people stayed in the separate Lipan settlement and became the focus of warm missionary attention. Very slowly over the years this group would gain in numbers. Paliau, in the meantime, had set up his own church organisation. Religious services were led by ex-catechists very much along the lines of Catholic liturgy. Although membership of the Baluan Native Village Council was, of course, not exclusive to followers of the Paliau Church, Paliau tried to use his political success in inducing people to join his church, sometimes also called Lotu bilong Kansol (the Church of the Council). This intermingling of political and religious authority remained a concern for the Catholic mission during many years as it was directed against its followers.\textsuperscript{54} Conflicts occurred also around the establishment of schools. After the war the SDA mission had started an intensive campaign of missionisation, promising education to converts. As a response the Catholic mission set up mission schools in all the villages under their influence (Kelly n.d.:51). When a school was established on Baluan, this was actively boycotted by the Council which had started its own government-funded school. As the boycott was clearly illegal it was finally given up (HM 1955:102).

In chapter 4 I introduced Guha's terminology for the analysis of dominance and subordination and I have shown how this can be applied to Manus colonial history. It is useful to return to this terminology in order to make a comparison of the reactions by mission and government to the Paliau movement. It appears then that the original policy of the Catholic mission has to be characterised as coercive rather than persuasive. The fathers threatened to withdraw basic religious services and when this was not enough they actually implemented these sanctions. The result of this use of coercion was an irreparable split between the parties and the creation of an

\textsuperscript{54} In a letter of 11 October 1960 to the Bishop the missionary fathers of Manus jointly express their concern about Paliau's active anti-mission policy and give examples of this.
independent indigenous church. Later the mission changed its policy to a persuasive approach and was able gradually to regain part of its lost field.

As mentioned above, the Seventh Day Adventist communities in the area were generally very successful in keeping their flock within the Church. As my data are rather sketchy and largely based on secondary and oral sources I have not attempted to outline the history of SDA reaction to Paliau. The evidence available to me, however, points to the conclusion that the SDA leaders used an effective mixture of persuasion and coercion. Many of the features that formed the attraction of Paliau’s message could also be found in the teachings of the SDA Church. The millenarian expectation of imminent fulfilment was kept well alive; dreams, visions and predictions to be found in the Bible played an important role in the theology; active health care, concrete material progress and education were top priorities of a very well-organised church. It appears that SDA villages were energised almost to the same extent as Paliau villages (Sr Theodora, personal communication). In addition to these concrete and visible rewards for membership, non-participation carried a heavy sanction: only true SDA believers would be admitted to God’s eternal kingdom. Paliau was one of the false prophets the Bible had warned against and following him would mean certain ruin. Ideological supervision within the Church was very tight with a whole series of minor and major sanctions for defection from the right way. Thus persuasion was strongly supported by coercive measures.

The policy of the government was cautious at first. The developments in the area were seen as an ‘outbreak of cargo cult’ known from other areas. The preferred approach was to enlighten the natives so that they would realise the futility of their irrational pursuits and would become aware of the government’s willingness to help and develop them. For this purpose Paliau and some other leaders were taken to Port Moresby, because the government expected to employ their authority in guiding the indigenous people. Only when the law was clearly or ostensively broken, did the government react with arrest and imprisonment: for example in the case of the burning of official hats and village books and in the case of the murder of the instigator of the cargo cult on Rambutyo (Wapel).

55 The similarities between the Paliau Movement and the SDA Church is well worth more extensive research.
When the cult activities subsided and Paliau pursued a more secular program of reform, the administration approached this positively at first. It was headquarters' clear intention to use his influence rather than oppose him. It appears, however, that a number of government officers overlooked or turned a blind eye to clear signs of anti-government behaviour and propaganda. In part this may be attributed to Paliau's political shrewdness as he tried to avoid an open confrontation. Increasingly though local officers became worried that the situation was growing out of hand. Evidence of Paliau's insubordination was produced and he was convicted. This was not enough for the apprehensive officials and they argued strongly for his deportation. Only at the highest level of government was this call for a coercive approach halted. Instead a program of political and economic development was embarked upon in the hope that it would channel the unleashed energies. A council was established with Baluan as its headquarters, which was both from a geographical and from an economic point of view a rather awkward choice. However, the policy of persuasion worked, and Paliau and his followers were gradually incorporated into the government system by giving them a limited and controlled form of self-determination and by supplying them with education, health care and opportunities for economic development.

If we look at the organic composition of dominance and subordination, we see almost a reversal of the earlier situation described in chapters 3 and 4. When the missions first arrived they relied primarily on persuasion and they were able in this way to turn an initial resistance into eager collaboration. After the war the Catholic mission took immediate recourse to coercion in response to the perceived threat to the faith. The reaction of Paliau and his followers was to step up their resistance resulting in a complete break between the parties. On the other hand the government, which had established itself predominantly by coercion at the beginning of the century, now relied more on persuasion. This policy was successful and the potentially risky as well as embarrassing development of indigenous resistance was gradually transformed into exemplary collaboration.

What was the result of all these developments if we look at it from the perspective of social history, particularly with regard to the origin of the present-day

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56 Baluan is a rather remote, outlying island. After a number of years the headquarters were transported to Bunai on the south coast and then, after amalgamation with the North Coast Council, to Lorengau.
division of social life in three spheres? In the first place the sphere of gavman had
been established more firmly in the lives of villagers. While it was still possible
formerly to see the government mainly as an outside force with some
representatives within the village, now gavman had become a part of everyday
village life. Meetings had to be attended, representatives were elected, rules
accepted and applied. The initiative for this development had come from the
villagers themselves who longed for a life different from that of their parents and
more equal to that of white people. The drive for self-determination had been
incorporated by the government by implanting government institutions of limited self-
rule into the villages.

Secondly, although some church organisations lost a considerable number of
members, lotu remained a well established component of life in the villages. The
main difference was that a new church was instituted besides the three already
present. Within the Paliau movement the distinction between gavman and lotu was
initially blurred. Paliau was a political and a religious leader at the same time, and
his religious message supported his political vision and vice versa. In the beginning
of the movement his lieutenants or pesman often combined the role of secular
leader and that of religious instructor. As Paliau consolidated his movement in
council organisations (this is before the 'official' council) and a church structure
these roles became separate again. There were misineris, often ex-catechists, who
led the praying and preaching, and there were councillors who led the distribution of
work and the organisation of village meetings. When the official council was
established by the government, people of different religions took part in this
organisation. It may be concluded that in practice the division between gavman and
lotu was eventually maintained within the Movement, although Paliau continued to
use his leadership in both fields to support one cause with the other.

The third contemporary sphere, namely kastam, had only been developed as a
negative category, namely as something that had to be rejected. The most dramatic
result of the Paliau revolution was that all traditional activities were virtually
abolished within the villages of the Movement. The sphere of kastam existed only in
its negation. This had fundamental consequences for the functioning of society. In
chapter 3 I identified as the basis of social integration in traditional Manus
communities a system based on the mutual articulation of kinship, exchange and
warfare. As a result of colonial developments and especially as a result of the Paliau revolution this had changed completely. The integration of society in the new order came to depend predominantly on political organisation and on religious organisation. When the traditional sphere of society became named, its central function was superseded by the newly developed domains of gavman and lotu.

This, of course, had far-reaching consequences for the power resources available to aspirant leaders. The new order signified the demise of the traditional lapans. Not only had it become improper to invoke one's lapan rank, but all the traditional insignia of status had been thrown away and all the traditional ways to increase prestige had been abolished. This did not preclude that a certain respect was maintained for families which had produced strong leaders in the past. However, the new political offices stood wide open for everyone who could garner enough votes, and in fact many men of traditionally low status were elected. The practice that lapans were given the gavman positions which had prevailed under the luluai system had definitely ended. The introduction of elections meant a qualitative change in the system of political leadership. It must be emphasised that this was the accomplishment of the administration, as it was often Paliau's practice to appoint leaders rather than to have them elected. The lotu sphere continued to provide alternative leadership positions and the creation of a new church added to the proliferation of opportunities for ambitious young men. Thus it may be explained that in some places, for example Pak Island, all four churches existed close to each other.

Paliau's leadership deserves separate consideration as it was unique and has not been repeated. In the previous section I examined Paliau's ingenious use of the politics of knowledge, his rhetorical mastery, his great imagination, absorbent mind, practical insight and political shrewdness. I have also mentioned that Paliau's leadership, though not based on descent, certainly had traditional aspects. His role as an innovator and an orator had a traditional basis. It may even be argued that his

57 Crocombe (1965:59-60) who visited Mbuke, one of Paliau's strongholds, in 1963 assumes that "the hereditary criterion still has at least partial validity on M'buke today". He comments: "While considerably more data is necessary to draw detailed conclusions, the impression gained is that leaders are elected from among those who possess the personal qualities of integrity and ability to negotiate, with priority being given to those with most non-traditional experience, those in the higher age groups (but must be still physically active) and those who have traditional claims to leadership by criteria of descent."
long service in the police force had gained him *kudos* as a warrior. However, Paliau was not just an innovator in the traditional sense of someone who gained prominence by introducing a new element into the culture. Paliau's reforms concerned the culture in its totality and his leadership stature had correspondingly large dimensions. This was only possible because the circumstances allowed such a leadership position to develop. Paliau was certainly an unusually gifted individual but this does not explain his success. He came at a time when there was widespread and deep-rooted dissatisfaction with the status quo. There were other capable men looking for alternatives. Paliau's vision was, however, far more comprehensive, and when the cargo cult had swept away the vestiges of the old culture, many were prepared to follow his guidance. Paliau was, as Mead (1975[1956]:188) has put it, a "man who met the hour".
Chapter Six

THE STORY OF DEVELOPMENT

The previous chapter examined the genesis of an indigenous category of tradition and its subsequent denunciation by the Paliau Movement. Tradition became objectified as a negative value and the pursuit of practices identified as customary was officially rejected. This situation did not last and traditional exchanges were gradually reintroduced into village life. This process was reinforced by national developments which entailed a recognition and positive revaluation of tradition. Moreover, kastam became a crucial factor in the complicated interaction between village and town, especially in the articulation between local and national economies. By the time I did my fieldwork in the late 1980s, kastam had become a conspicuous, though contested, sphere of village life. In the next chapter I explore the history and the consequences of this gradual but radical revaluation of tradition. In contrast to the dramatic transformations of the Paliau revolution these changes took place over several decades.

In order to contextualise the gradual re-emergence of tradition I have to describe first some important post-war political and economic developments. This chapter is predominantly based on administrative sources, such as patrol reports, annual reports, minutes of meetings, correspondence and statistics. It thus unavoidably favours an outside or administrative point of view of local developments, although through these documents the voices of indigenous people can also be heard. The bias is justifiable, however, as I want to give a picture of political, ideological and economic changes from a Western point of view before I examine the way these changes have been defined and incorporated by local people.
The state

In the previous chapter I described how the subversive threat of the Paliau Movement was effectively neutralised by the introduction of a native village council. The acting district commissioner W.M. English remarks complacently:

On the native Administration side there has been a marked waning of the radical elements of the movement commonly known as the 'Paliau' Movement and a general dissipation of discontent amongst natives because of the 'psychological' success of the Native Village Council at Baluan. It cannot be said that the Baluan Village Council is a firmly established one financially and economically; but is has served the emotional purpose admirably and should be placed on an all-round firm basis when - or rather if - the South Coast area is incorporated in the Baluan Council (AR 1952-53:111).

Despite such colonial complacency the psychological and political success of the Administration was counterbalanced by the political and economic success of the Paliau Movement. The latter had forcefully demonstrated the widespread desire for emancipation from white tutelage and had achieved official recognition of this in the form of limited self-government. The Administration, shaken up from its pre-war lethargy, embarked upon a program of native development, and Baluan, the centre of the Movement and of the new council, received privileged attention. A Native Affairs officer was stationed on the island to supervise political and economic developments and a government school was opened in 1951, the first one outside of Lorengau staffed by a European teacher.¹

Although the colonial government regained the cooperation of the south-coast people through the introduction of a village council, its 'psychological' success was never complete. The same district commissioner quoted above had complained a year earlier that "there has been a marked tendency among some natives in this and other areas to regard the Council as being beyond the jurisdiction of the Administration and to be a law unto itself" (AR 1951-52:199). It is unlikely that this indigenous attitude had changed completely within one year, notwithstanding the efforts of the government. Signs of native discontent with the colonial administration are recorded occasionally in the reports. In particular the visits of missions from the

¹ The first teacher was Mrs Landman, the spouse of the first Native Affairs officer stationed on Baluan.
United Nations were used by the local people to express their dissatisfaction with the government. In the 1958-59 annual report we read that a number of men "within the 25-40 age group" had expressed their view "that the work of the Administration is nothing more than a sop to the people to hide the real aim which is, they believe, to maintain the European in his present apparently privileged position" (AR 1958-59:19). The author explains that this view stemmed from dissatisfaction with the rate of progress and was based largely on "illogical reasons and a lack of appreciation of the task involved" (ibid.). It is clear, however, that resentment about the inequality between white and black, which had prompted the Paliau revolution, remained a major concern for the people of Manus. In the 1961-62 annual report it is expressed very explicitly:

The most significant trend appears to be a greater demand for equality with the European in all things. During the United Nations Mission's visit they not only demanded the right to drink alcohol but demanded that the standard of hospitals and schools be the same for everybody. At the Public Service Association meeting opinions were expressed that there should be equal pay for equal qualifications and the idea of expatriate allowances or different privileges was not favourably received (AR 1961-62:3).

The demand for equality was not so much greater as more detailed and more sophisticated than previously. Significantly, the district officer reporting this again blames "a lack of understanding certain fundamentals" demonstrated by "some illogical arguments" (ibid.). He urges a greater activity on the part of the Administration to overcome this "dangerous ignorance on a number of commonplace subjects" (ibid: 4). This image of the insufficiently enlightened natives (who do not understand the necessity of their relatively modest condition) is most illuminating of the attitude of the colonial government. The people of Manus, on the other hand, were eager for more education but not for the kind of information the district officer wanted to provide. They desired knowledge which would make them equal to Europeans and were in a hurry to achieve this goal.

The Baluan Native Village Council originally comprised only a part of the area involved in the Paliau Movement. It was gradually extended. In 1954 most villages on the south coast of Manus and on the southern and eastern islands were included. As a result the council, then renamed Baluan Local Government Council, became financially viable and was one of the biggest in the Territory (AR 1955-56). Some
groups within the southern area refused to join, however, mainly because they were opposed to Paliau on religious grounds. In 1957 a further nine villages were added to the Baluan council. Most of these villages were on the northeast coast and had been Paliau supporters from the beginning of the Movement.

The rest of the north and west coast villages were strongly opposed to the council. They identified it with the Paliau Movement and its religious aspects, which they categorically rejected (AR 1957-58, 1958-59). The Catholic and Evangelical missions had begun their work on the north coast and their organisations were more firmly rooted there. As a result both churches had been able to thwart Paliau's influence in that area. Their success, however, hindered attempts by the government to introduce the council system. In 1960 the district commissioner O'Malley still saw "fear of Paliau influence" as "perhaps the biggest single [factor] preventing the majority of the North coast villages participating in Local Government activity" (AR 1959-60:12).

In the same report he makes an interesting observation:

As an instrument of administration, the Baluan Council leaves much to be desired. It hangs together more by the prestige of the President Paliau than by a unification of thought and action amongst the Councillors and the electors (ibid.).

Although this statement is perhaps exaggerated, it points to an important phenomenon: even within the new institutions of gavman, traditional patterns of group formation and leadership continued to have an influence, albeit in a new configuration and on a different scale. To a certain extent Paliau was a kind of super lapan who personified the new institutions which he claimed as his own innovations. For the people within the Movement he was a symbol of unity and strength; for the people without he was an opponent who had to be denounced, just as competing lapans had endeavoured to deflate the reputation of their rivals.

In spite of the 'Paliau factor' the North Coast Native Local Government Council was finally proclaimed in October 1962. Eight villages, however, continued their opposition and were not included. The most outspoken was Ponam. The North Coast council did not exist for long because there was a strong push from the Administration for the amalgation of the two councils. Most villages seemed to be in favour of this and by the end of 1965 elections were held. The new council was
instituted as a multi-racial council, following the policy of the central government, and was officially opened in January 1966. Continuing opposition from Ponam almost made it unconstitutional, but at the last moment the former luluai agreed to accept the office of councillor.² Paliau Maloat was elected as the first president by a majority of three votes (out of 33).³

Although the extension of the council was a success for Paliau as well as for the Administration, it inevitably meant that Baluan had lost the central position it enjoyed previously. With the inclusion of the south-coast villages in the Baluan council, M bunai became a second centre; later many meetings were held in Lorengau where a council centre was erected in 1962. The council headquarters were permanently transferred to Lorengau in 1964, although a new council house had been completed in Baluan in 1960. The decreasing importance of Baluan was also reflected in the staffing of its patrol post. In 1959 an officer with the position of assistant district officer was replaced by a cadet patrol officer, who, according to the 1959-60 annual report, was not really qualified for the difficult task of supervising the council. The Baluan patrol post remained intermittently staffed with cadets until 1965 when all administration was conducted from Lorengau. The last major building work undertaken by the council in Baluan was the construction of a health centre, which was planned in 1964 and completed in 1967. At that time Baluan was a well-equipped and prosperous community. When I conducted my fieldwork in the late 80s many of the council buildings were in a state of critical disrepair and had not been replaced. They were mute signs of a more glorious past and explained why many people still felt a strong attachment to the abolished council system.

Throughout its existence the local government council had the authority to make rules and to raise taxes. The rules concerned things such as maintenance of houses, roads and public areas, hygiene, truancy, registration of marriages, trade stores, outboard motors and dogs. Tax revenue was spent entirely within the council area. It was mainly used for the construction of schools, teachers’ houses, aid posts and facilities such as water pumps or tanks. The council employed people to build these things, and also clerks, aid post orderlies, nurses, agricultural advisors, and –

² Ponam and Andra continued their opposition, however, and refused to pay taxes (opposition by Ponam people is mentioned as late as 1972, in the last AR available (1971-72), and in PR 1971-71:2).
³ From 1968 the majority of the executive committee of the council, including its president, consisted of north-coast members.
initially – teachers. One of the accomplishments of the Baluan council was the introduction of an annual (later biennial) agricultural and handicraft show in 1956. During the first show 400 sea-going canoes were moored along Baluan’s shores. Later the venue was moved to Lorengau. It became a very popular event, attracting up to 8000 visitors and participants.

Originally the council was not directly involved in economic enterprise as this was the domain of the cooperative societies. It had adopted rules to promote planting and maintenance of cash crops but failed to enforce them. Agricultural workers employed by the council supplied advice to local farmers. In 1959 the Baluan council acquired a motor boat, M.V. Peu (meaning shark in Baluan language), but it had to sell the vessel in 1967 because it had been running almost at a constant loss. From 1968 the council took a more active role in economic development, for example by partly financing a cocoa drier and a road on Lou. Thus it gradually took over the role of the faltering cooperative organisation.

Outside the council system there were other political developments. In 1957 two indigenous members, one of them Paliau Maloat, were appointed to the Manus District Advisory Council reflecting a growing concern of the colonial administration with local representation in higher levels of government. This trend resulted in the establishment of the first House of Assembly in 1964. Out of six candidates Paliau Maloat was elected as the first representative for Manus Open Electorate. Understandably he had not been the preferred candidate on the north coast and many people felt that he should have resigned as president of the Baluan council (AR 1963-64:9). However, Paliau did his best to represent all Manus people. In annual reports (AR 1964-65:19 and 1965-66:16) we read that "he is carrying out his position very well" and that he toured the district after every House of Assembly meeting. We are also informed that Paliau did not take as much interest in his church as previously with the likely aim of being more acceptable to the north coast people: "Paliau is probably more interested in politics than in his lotu" (AR 1965-66:22). In 1966 Paliau was elected the first president of the newly established Manus multi-racial council so that he then held the two most important political positions in Manus. The following year, however, he was defeated for the presidency by a relatively young man from Lou Island. Although the reporting district

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4 See also AR (1964-65:27).
commissioner remarked that "this loss [...] could very well be the turning point in his career" (AR 1966-67:15), this was not yet the case. Against expectations Paliau was re-elected as Manus Open representative for the 1968 House of Assembly with a comfortable majority. It appeared that he polled well even in areas traditionally opposed to him. In 1972, however, Paliau lost his seat to 31-year-old Michael Pondros Pokayou, who was president of the Manus Workers' Association.

Another development in the same year was the establishment of an Area Authority for Manus District.5 The purpose of this new type of political organisation was to provide an over-arching authority for the local government councils in one district. As Manus had only one council, overlap of functions was inevitable, an obvious point which the Minister for local government could not avoid in his opening address on 15 December 1972.6 The councillors elected eight of their members to the Area Authority. During the first meeting of the Authority two candidates were nominated for the presidency, namely Joel Maiah and Paliau Maloat. As both received four votes, even in the third round of voting, the ballot was finally decided by a draw: Paliau Maloat again became the first president of a new institution in Manus, albeit this time without a majority vote. He had strongly supported the introduction of this new level of government, but he was not allowed to enjoy his new leadership position for long. In a meeting of the Manus Local Government Council in June 1973 Paliau was ousted from the Area Authority by a majority decision and replaced by another councillor. The president of the council, J. Maiah, explained (letter of 26-6-73):

5 In the proclamation signed by the Administrator on 25 October 1972 its functions were described as: a) advising the Administrator on the development of its area; b) advising the Minister for Local Government on the allocation of rural development funds; and c) the exercise and performance of such other powers and functions as may be conferred on it under that Ordinance (this is the Local Government Ordinance indicating that the Authority may assume 'powers and functions' of the Local Government Council). The Area Authority covered the same area as the Local Government Council except that the Western Islands were also included.

6 The minister, Mr Boyamo Sali began his speech with: "The Area Authority and the Council have been given different functions. Whilst some matters may be of concern to both bodies, unless they are matters which properly come within the functions of both, each should be careful not to re-open matters which have been properly discussed and settled by the other body. This would be a waste of time but more seriously it would end in weakening both bodies. Both the Council and the Authority should each try to do a worthwhile job; the point I wish to stress here is that each should do its own job and not the other's." [sic!] A little later he said: "The establishment of an Area Authority gives the people of the District a say in the affairs of their District. A council does the same thing."
The only reason is that most councillors said that Mr Maloat used his position as Chairman of the Area Authority to convince the village people that he is the only big boss in the District and also interfered with other councillors’ wards.

By that time Paliau’s dominance in district politics clearly had come to an end. The government institutions he had helped to create were strongly established and were not longer dependent on his prestige. Paliau remained a councillor for years to come as he was still very popular in his own electorate. In the 1975 council elections he polled by far the largest majority of any candidate in the district.

After national independence, which was greeted with enthusiasm in Manus, further decentralisation and the formation of provincial governments was on the political agenda. The Manus District Area Authority, which had been extended to 15 members, was transformed into the Interim Provincial Assembly in 1977. Two years later the Manus Provincial Government was officially instituted. The province was divided into 15 constituencies which each elected one representative to the Manus Lapan Assembly.\(^7\) The provincial government had assumed all powers and functions of the local government council, which thus became redundant. In 1980 fresh elections for the council were still held, but the provincial government was already making preparations for an alternative form of third level government: the community government.\(^8\) The abolition of the local government council was finalised by the approval of the Governor-General in April 1982. In the following years 15 community governments were established corresponding with the areas of the 15 provincial constituencies. Every community government consisted of up to nine members. This new form of government therefore resulted in a considerable increase of paid government positions.

The officially stated aim of community government was to give local people a greater say in the government of their own place. While it certainly effected some progress in this direction,\(^9\) it also extended the sphere of the state in Manus villages by giving more people a vested interest in its continuation. It thus consolidated the

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7 Paliau Maloat was elected as member for Balopa, consisting of Baluan, Lou and Pam. In the 1983 elections he was defeated by his erstwhile close helper Molat Aumbou, who had been headmaster of the Baluan primary school for 15 years.

8 See Pokawin (1983) for a description of the institution of community government in Manus.

9 Budgets and discretionary powers were, however, very limited.
development which started with the incorporation of the Paliau Movement by the colonial state. The gradual increase of indigenous participation in government, culminating in national independence, went hand in hand with the expansion of the state as an organisation – resulting in greater state influence on the daily lives of villagers.¹⁰

**Church and school**

In contrast to the government the Churches appear to have lost ground in recent times. After the split between Paliau and the Catholic Church in the late 1940s, the denominational situation stabilised. There were four main Churches then: the Catholic, Evangelical, Seventh Day Adventist and Paliau Church. Following the turmoil of Paliau’s revolution all four competed for converts in order to consolidate and even increase their ranks. One of the main strategies used was the extension and improvement of education. In pre-war years conversion had been accompanied by some form of schooling but this was generally of low standard and geared towards missionary needs. Now the missions put enormous effort into building up their teaching services. Village schools were erected in the areas of influence, teachers were trained, even a high school was opened.¹¹ As all Churches did the same thing, there were no major gains or losses: each mission remained largely confined to its own area. The Paliau Church did not have its own schools but adopted government education after the introduction of the council. This merger of religious and political interests contributed to the idea that local government council and Paliau Church went hand in hand in spite of government efforts to demonstrate the opposite. As a result the predominantly Catholic north coast area showed initially no interest in government schools, just as they were opposed to the introduction of a council. Paliau himself did not hesitate to use education as a strategic means to further his interests. As late as 1969 we read that he influenced the establishment of

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¹⁰ This expansion of state influence was reinforced by the introduction of institutions such as village courts and village peace officers.

¹¹ By the Catholic Church in Papitalai.
government schools in an attempt to maximise his own support by 'outflanking' a Catholic school (PR 1968-1969:1).

The missions exercised a strong influence on people's minds and initially their impact on village affairs had exceeded that of the government. In 1965 district commissioner O'Malley wrote:

Their [the missions'] influence can be felt when any project is placed before the people and it is well known that the people discuss with the Mission the activities of the Administration and any commercial enterprise in the district. The missions appear to have a certain hold over the people as was in evidence when efforts were first made to establish a Council on the north coast and some members of the mission were against the move (AR 1964-65:19).

Because the council was finally established O'Malley concluded that "it is felt the mission influence has declined and certainly it is not as strong as a few years back" (ibid.). In later years annual reports regularly contain comments on the missions with the general tenor that mission influence, though still strong, was decreasing. In 1968, for example, district commissioner A. Gow wrote: "Mission influence is still great but on the downward grade. People are beginning to think for themselves and do not discuss everything with the mission" (AR 1967-68:18). Of course these observations may well have been inspired by wishful thinking, but certain institutional developments contributed to the relative decline of the church sphere. The Education Ordinance of 1970 and the Teaching Service Ordinance of 1971 put administration schools and 'schools nominated by other education agencies meeting certain prescribed conditions' on the same legal basis, with equal government funding and government control of the curriculum. As a result the Catholic and Evangelical missions gradually withdrew from the costly exercise of providing primary education. The SDA Church, however, maintained its own schooling system although they were not able to support schools in all SDA villages.

12 They maintained other forms of schooling in Manus, namely a high school (Catholic) and vocational training (both Catholic and Evangelical).
Another field in which the missions had done important work was health care. Health centres and even a hospital had been established and were staffed by missionary workers. In this field the same development occurred as in education. The improvement and extension of the government health system finally made the missionary effort redundant. By leaving the crucial institutional domains of health care and education to the government the missions certainly lost some of their previous influence. In addition, relaxing attitudes towards church membership in the villages made it easier for people to change their church allegiance or to withdraw from church participation completely. Most people remained church members, however, and religion continued to be a major ideological force guiding people's thoughts and behaviour in matters of death, illness, and social relations. Church organisations such as youth and women's clubs provided the institutional context for training, socialising and mutual help.

Like the other churches the Paliau Church had stabilised its membership around 1950. Contrary to the hope and expectation of government and missions it continued to exist as an independent church. I have already mentioned that Paliau was able to gain credit for his own organisation by using improvements introduced by administration and council. Around 1964-65 he appeared to have distanced himself from the Church in order to gain political acceptance as the representative for Manus in the House of Assembly (AR 1964-65 and 1965-66). In the annual report of 1965-66 the 'feeling' is expressed that his 'lotu movement' is 'dying out'. However, in the following years (AR 1967-68, 68-69, 69-70) we read that the 'Paliau church is still a very strong influence' which is able to gather around 3000 people for Christmas celebrations. In the late 60s and early 70s a prophet operated in the Paliau area of Rambutyo. His name was Muli and he was one of the brothers who killed the cargo-cult prophet Wapei in 1947. Muli founded a new village, Liuliu, but his influence remained confined to the north Rambutyo area. After his death – and failed resurrection – the movement dissipated. The Paliau Church received a new impetus in 1978 with the return to Manus of some well-trained young men,

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13 Note that apart from pursuing more narrowly defined religious goals the missions tried to fulfil the expectations people had of them: the provision of health and knowledge (see chapter 4).

14 Established by the Evangelical mission in Lessau in 1964.
especially Paliau Lukas and Peter Kuwoh. The revitalisation included a new liturgy, a new political program and a new name: Makasol. Paliau, who had lost a great deal of his political influence by that time, became again the inspirational centre of his Church. I will return to this in the next chapter on the revaluation of *kastam* (see also chapter 8).

It is relevant to trace in more detail the development of education in Manus as it illuminates the ideological stances of both the administration and the indigenous people. Moreover, the introduction of a first class school system led to a significant change in the economy of the district.

In the early years of the Paliau Movement opposition to European supremacy included not only a boycott of economic enterprises but also of education services. No child of the Movement area was allowed to attend the government central school in Lorengau nor any of the mission schools. The very knowledge provided by these institutions was suspect because it had not contributed to reduce the inequality between Europeans and natives. A few ex-catechists conducted classes but this was unsatisfactory because of the limited knowledge – European knowledge that is – these men possessed. The introduction of a village council, understood or explained as official recognition of the Movement, effected a radical change of attitude towards government schooling. The interaction between state and Movement was clearly a two-way process. On the one hand the state extended its influence by incorporating the Movement, but on the other hand the Movement was able to adopt government institutions as its own and reap the benefits from state support.

In the 1950-51 annual report we read:

> There has been a complete change in the Paliau Movement natives’ attitude towards Government schools. Formerly, they refused point blank to attend these schools, claiming that they could learn sufficient from those few Paliau followers whose education is so limited that they can hardly write and read in "pigin" English. They are now pressing for admittance (page 9).

Apparently this was still a rather conservative assessment of indigenous interest in education because in later annual reports we are informed that there was ‘an

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15 Paliau Lukas was the first PNG housing commissioner and Peter Kuwoh had served as a captain in the PNG defence force.
almost fanatical thirst for education' (AR 1956-57:34, cf AR 57-58:46 and 59-60:30). This is hardly surprising if we consider indigenous assumptions about knowledge and efficacy (see chapters 4 and 5). Western knowledge was seen as the key to obtaining a standard of living equal to that of Europeans. Hope of acquiring this knowledge was shifted from the missions to the newly established government schools which were adopted by the native village council.\textsuperscript{16} In supporting these schools council people and government pursued completely different agendas which derived from different theories about knowledge and the future of indigenous society. For the villagers the primary aim of education was to achieve equality with white people. When this aim appeared to elude them they were understandably disappointed. During a United Nations Mission's visit in 1962 some people expressed the opinion that the natives were given an inferior standard of education since even after six or seven years of schooling they were not able to get the same jobs as Europeans. Three years earlier, during another UN visit, people had complained that the schools were not good because they taught children only how to read and write but not how to make cement, glass or steel (AR 1961-62:3).

The Administration had other objectives. In 1957 district commissioner Preston White wrote in the concluding paragraph of his section on education:

\begin{quote}
It seems that ultimate success in our work in Manus has chiefly to do with the mind. If through our sound and consistent guidance we can foster in the people the growth of a sure belief in themselves and in their own capacity to face and overcome their problems, we will finally defeat the cult tendency to discard the philosophy of practical work and effort as a means of progress; thus we may hope to avoid the unrewarding reversion to reliance on the supernatural powers of their ancestors as the providers of material benefits (AR 1956-57:35)\textsuperscript{17}.
\end{quote}

Preston White's successor largely copied this paragraph in his 1958 report making but a few additions: one of these was to characterise as "peculiarly Manus" the "tendency to discard the philosophy of practical work and individual effort as means of progress" (AR 1957-58:46). He believed that "their almost fanatical thirst for education" would assist in combatting the prevalent "cult thinking". In their

\textsuperscript{16} I am talking only about the Paliau Movement area here.

\textsuperscript{17} In the margin is a hand-written comment, probably by someone in headquarters of the Department of Native Affairs: "This must be a common objective in the application of policy by all Departments if we are to achieve real progress as opposed to international window dressing".
grossly paternalistic attitude both district commissioners missed the crucial point.\textsuperscript{18} Manus people were (and are) generally characterised as eminently selfconfident and certainly did not need to be taught 'a sure belief in themselves'. Nor did (and do) they have more than a common and healthy aversion against monotonous work.\textsuperscript{19} What they did discard was the idea that work as such would bring progress (in this the commissioners were right). They assumed that effort would bear fruit only in combination with the right kind of knowledge. Therefore they had such a insatiable thirst for education. In other words, the core of what the commissioners stamped as 'cult thinking' was exactly this belief in the efficacy of European knowledge.

Thanks to strong motivation the introduction of education in Manus was extremely successful. In 1953 it was still reported that the general standard of education was low throughout the district as it was hard to find "natives suitable to be trained as Native Medical Assistants" (AR 1952-53:119). In the 1959-60 annual report we read that "education in the Manus district has reached a very high standard" (page 29). Interestingly, there was almost no bias towards the education of boys: "The District is unique in that the enrolments of boys and girls are almost the same" (ibid.)\textsuperscript{20}. School attendance was exemplary. In 1956 100\% attendance was reported for Saluan (AR 1955-56:15)\textsuperscript{21}; in 1964 the figure was 98.16\% for the whole district (AR 1963-64:12). Parents were highly motivated to send their children

\textsuperscript{18} This attitude was of course not restricted to these two men. O'Malley, the successor of Hicks, expressed almost identical views stressing that "the biggest problem of all is the one of getting the people to realise that improvement to their standard of living can only be obtained by their acceptance of the principle that nothing is gained without continuous personal effort in all spheres of human activity". In the post-war cults people had tried to achieve this goal "by the following of semi-religious mystic practices". He concluded that "The increase of educational facilities and the introduction of the cooperative societies, as well as the formation of the Local Government Councils, have overcome this trend but there is probably little doubt that much work remains to be done to completely eradicate this type of philosophy from the unsophisticated mind" (AR 1958-59:20).

\textsuperscript{19} The only exception to this general attitude appears to be found in industrialised societies (compare Romein 1971).

\textsuperscript{20} In administration schools the distribution was 46.4\% girls and 53.6\% boys; in mission schools it was 43.7\% girls to 56.3\% boys. A possible explanation is offered by Carrier and Carrier (1989:89): if a young woman succeeded in obtaining a well-paid job she would send remittances home just as young men did (see below); moreover, as an educated woman she was in a better position to marry a successful migrant who would then send money to his parents-in-law.

\textsuperscript{21} The Baluan school was originally very successful and "received very favourable comments from the United Nations Visiting Mission and is a credit to the officer in charge. At the Manus District Show held last September Baluan school won prizes for the best display hand writing and art work" (AR 1958-59:24). Of course this success also reflects the enthusiasm of the local people.
to school and were organised into Parents and Citizens Associations from 1968 onwards. At that time the teacher/pupil ratio had reached the unusually favourable figure of 1:25 in administration schools (AR 1968-69:17). In 1972 there were 50 schools under the Education Ordinance and 10 permitted Seventh Day Adventist ones in a district of only about 23000 people (AR 1971-72:16). Manus was indeed very well serviced.22

The successful expansion of the education system in Manus had an important impact on the economy of the district. It produced a large contingent of well-educated people who were able to find white collar jobs throughout the territory. Some of the wages of these migrant workers found their way back to the district and became an important part of the cash income of villagers. That Manus people were very much aware of this aspect of the efficacy of European knowledge is reported as early as 1959 (AR 1958-59:22). The following year it is stated that:

Parents in the district are particularly keen to have their children educated. They realise that the cash crop potential is extremely limited and that a suitable education is the only avenue available to those who wish to improve their way of living (AR 1959-60:29).

The hope of obtaining a well-paid white collar job may explain why vocational schools were never really popular on Manus. People much preferred to send their children on to high schools (AR 1971-72:17). Manus students were very successful in securing places at institutions of tertiary education, namely national high schools, teacher colleges and universities: according to Weeks' study they had the highest per capita enrolment in these institutions from 1971 to 1977.23

At the time of my fieldwork in the late 80s I found that the same attitude towards education prevailed: it was seen as the key to obtaining a higher standard of living. During a break-up party of the Saluan Community School several speakers expressed this very clearly. A man from Mouk said that they depended on their children for money more than anyone else because they did not have land. The local member of the Provincial Lapan Assembly used a metaphor:

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22 See also Carrier and Carrier (1989:174), who mention that Manus had the best primary school provision of any PNG province in 1982, and Zollinger (1982:xii), who ranks Manus first in both primary and high school places per capita.

Every child you have is a piece of gold. Therefore you have to give them time and proper care. [...] Within Manus education is the primary resource. Manus High School is the best in PNG. This year 23 students will go to a national high school and this exceeds all the high schools in PNG. [...] Our children are a great resource; a resource is a source of money which enters the province. Every year the children provide one million kina or more flowing into the province.

On the point of education the opinions of the village elder and the provincial member concurred: a good education for a child was seen as an investment made with strong expectations of future returns for the whole family but especially for the parents.24 It may be concluded that the traditional Manus concern with the efficacy of knowledge had been translated successfully into contemporary economic realities and that this adaptation had presumably reinforced their habitual epistemological stance.

The economy

To curb the political energy of the Paliau Movement the colonial government had introduced a native village council in Saluan. The Administration also had other means to deal with native dissatisfaction and unrest which were manifest throughout the Territory following the end of the Pacific War. Snowden (n.d.:187) shows that the introduction of an official co-operative movement was not the result of a carefully thought out government plan. Rather it was a pragmatic reaction to indigenous developments in an attempt to direct these into manageable forms. The Department of District Services and Native Affairs was largely concerned with law and order issues and saw the co-operatives as a means of controlling so called ‘cargo cults’: "judicious introduction of co-operatives to an unsettled area is the best antidote to manifestations of cargo cult" (quoted in ibid: 188). A second aim of the co-operative movement was to increase native production of cash crops and to draw villagers into

24 Carrier and Carrier (1989:185) observed the same attitude on Ponam: "Not only did parents expect children to get work and send money home, in most cases they saw the money they spent on education as an economic investment."
the cash economy, including those who refused to work on expatriate plantations (ibid: 186, 193).

In 1951 the Administration began to promote a 'copra co-operative movement' throughout the country (ibid: 193). The Manus annual report for 1950-51 informs us that a co-operative officer was appointed to the district (page 128). The first Native Society was formed on the north coast "in support of the Council Movement" (AR 1952-53:112). The next year four societies were already operating and the district commissioner felt confident enough to claim that:

In the last twelve months the Co-operatives have become an established part of the economic life of the natives and native economic development plans all centre around co-operative societies (AR 1953-54:231).

Establishment of co-operatives was not restricted to the area involved in the Paliau Movement. Generally the new institutions were greeted with enthusiasm. Schwartz (1967:37) suggests that the disappointed expectations of cargo cult episodes were in part transferred to the co-operatives and the council. Co-operative officers were wary of too much 'enthusiasm' as this was indicative of the 'cargo cult' mentality they had set out to combat (see Snowden n.d.:192). In the 1957-58 annual report we read that co-operatives had been "the focus of excessive enthusiasm" during the first three years of their operation, but this zeal was wearing down quickly (page 17-18). There was certainly also rational appreciation of the advantages of co-ops. Paliau saw them as a way to keep cash in indigenous hands (see Schwartz 1967:37) and this perfectly suited his own plans for reform and emancipation from European society.25 Moreover, the concept of co-operative development accorded with the new social models of the Paliau Movement. An immediate material advantage was that the co-operatives offered higher prices – at least initially – for copra and shell than did other buyers (AR 1953-54:232).

The success of the co-operative movement was not long-lived. The high point of development was probably reached around 1958 when 12 producer-consumer societies were registered. The main product was copra but shell was also important at that time. In the co-op stores villagers could buy a variety of consumer goods at

25 The money contributed by people to the 'Paliau fund' in the early phase of the Movement was used to pay council taxes and to buy co-operative shares. As a strategy to break the boycott of the Western economy by Paliau and his followers the introduction of co-operatives was clearly successful.
reasonable prices. The twelve societies were organised as members of the Manus Native Societies’ Association Ltd which acted as the central marketing body. In 1958 the Association was able to buy a motor vessel which was named Sunam.26 Generally the societies were trading at satisfactory profit margins. A success was the acquisition of Mbuke plantation by the Mbuke society in 1961 (AR 1961-62:2).27 However, around the same time there were already signs of decline: one society was forced to close its store due to lack of capital. From 1964 onwards the decline was conspicuous and every subsequent annual report contains comments such as "the co-operative movement is going through a trying period" (AR 1964-65:9); "discontent over non-payment of rebates" (AR 1965-66:8), "3 co-ops into liquidation", "membership dropped" (AR 1967-68:6,7). In spite of temporary improvements of trade figures in 1967 and 1969 the decline was unequivocal and led to the demise of the co-operative movement.

The main reason for the downturn suggested in the annual reports was increasing competition from individual traders and trading groups. The co-ops had served the function of providing practical instruction in business methods and some villagers were willing to try it on their own. The increase of licensed trade stores is a good indication of the growing competition for co-operative stores: in 1959 there were only seven licensed businesses; in 1962 there were 19 but they were small and the bulk of trading was conducted by society stores; in 1969, however, the number of licensed local stores had jumped to 222 and in 1971 it had reached 295.28 Equally, selling of native produce was increasingly done outside the co-operative organisation. Individuals and groups were able to sell directly to the Copra Marketing Board by taking out their own copra number. The 1964-65 annual report (page 9) informs us that copra producers were making increasing use of this possibility. In 1968 there were already 204 CMB numbers and in 1971 this had increased to 325.

Individual producers were attracted by the higher prices they could obtain by trading directly with CMB although they also incurred higher transport costs. Schwartz (1967:39) suggests that prestige was an important factor. It was

26 Manus spelled back to front.
27 See also Crocombe (1965).
28 All figures are derived from the annual reports for the years concerned.
considered prestigious to have one's own CMB number "and anything that becomes a component of status will grow in Manus" (ibid.). Moreover, Schwartz argues that direct marketing better fitted the social atomism and individualism characteristic of the area. People felt more secure in small, homogenous production groups than in the larger co-op structures (ibid: 40).

The co-operatives were set to lose the competition. Their turnover decreased substantially as the most productive members started to market their produce directly with CMB. The societies were also weakened by problems such as inefficient leadership and losses through thefts and bad debts. Members became dissatisfied as rebates were often not paid out because they were needed to boost the depleted capital of a society. The Baluan co-operative store, like the others, was not restocked anymore from 1974. Four years later the work of the society was officially terminated.29 In 1986 a liquidator had been appointed to sell the remaining assets of the Manus Co-operative Association and to pay out to members what was left of their shares.

Co-operatives had been introduced as a pragmatic policy measure and the government was not ideologically committed to the ideas behind this kind of organisation (see Snowden n.d.:188). Quinn (n.d) shows that general policy ideas went in a different direction. After the Second World War the Administration had first emphasised "the development of communal cash cropping on supposedly 'communal' land" and in this scheme co-operatives clearly had a place (ibid: 176). However, opinion turned against this plan when government officers were confronted with indigenous land disputes, failing leadership and flagging interest in the new basis of economic co-operation. Policy aims were reoriented towards the encouragement of individual family farming and this new approach was firmly established by 1956 (ibid.). The rationale was that effective cash cropping required individualisation of land ownership through the conversion of customary tenure; only then would the land provide a secure base for credit (ibid: 177). To facilitate this process a comprehensive package of land laws was adopted by the Territory in 1962 and 1963 (ibid: 179).30

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29 Information from the president of the Baluan Co-operative Society, Ngat Timothy.

30 These were: the Land Titles Commission Ordinance 1962, the Land (Tenure Conversion) Ordinance 1963 and the Land Registration (Communally Owned Land) Ordinance 1962.
The annual reports for Manus District reflect the new policy of the Administration from 1963-64 onwards. The general opinion is that the enterprising individual is hindered by 'group antipathy' (AR 1963-63:9). In the 1964-65 report the development of customary land is described:

Wider use of customary land is now being made throughout the district with the planting of cash tree crops. However, the people have not broken completely away from the old communal planting of gardens etc. and so most economic development in the agricultural field is done by a group, usually the extended family. This communal development has, as in other districts, hindered progress and every endeavour is being made to have the people make individual plantings (AR 1964-65:15).

It is interesting to note how 'economic development' is portrayed here as hindering 'progress'. The author appears blindly to reproduce the ideological stance taken by the Administration. The following year the same author, L. O'Malley, writes (AR 1965-66:13)

'However, most of the planting is done on a communal basis, including gardens. This of course is breaking down slowly and gradually individuals are taking over and working their own cash crops.'

A year later O'Malley reports that even in some government resettlement areas the people are working on a communal basis. He remains, however, confident: "I believe the time will come when we will have individual farmers working their own plots" (AR 1966-67:11). The same belief is expressed by other district commissioners in 1969 and 1970 although they do not appear to have anymore basis for this belief than a few individuals working plantation blocks leased from the government.

The main problem these men saw in 'communal' development of the land was the high incidence of land disputes (AR 1965-66:13; 1969-70:13). This was of course a very real problem: Manus land tenure was (and is) a complex matter and people may have primary and secondary claims to land on the basis of different principles. If someone planted cash crop trees, the land was permanently claimed for this purpose and therefore such action would normally activate claims of all people interested. The land laws of 1962-63 had provided for the establishment of Demarcation Committees but it took several years before the process of instituting
them actually started (Quinn n.d.:179,181). The committees had to consist of local people who were knowledgeable in traditional matters.31 In Manus committees were appointed in 1967 and following years (PR 1967-68:9; PR 68-69:13). The committees heard numerous disputes and contributed to their settlement (AR 1968-69:12). They completely failed, however, to achieve the aim they were created for: the individualisation of land titles.32 The optimism of the district commissioners was misplaced. In the late 80s traditional patterns of land tenure were strongly in place and there was no sign of individualisation of ownership. Disputes were still numerous and were always conducted between descent groups not individuals.

It should be noted, however, that the opposition between individual versus communal ownership grossly simplifies and even obscures the social reality of Manus land tenure. When the district commissioners spoke of communal land use, they had mostly descent groups in mind. Although Manus tenure33 is structured around patrilineal descent groups, it also gives ample scope to individual action and initiative. People may activate claims by doing the 'work' – that is carrying out the exchanges – for a lineage which owns property they want to use. Land may also be given temporarily or permanently in return for services or on the occasion of a marriage. Through such transactions in the past, ownership of land is sometimes unclear or disputable and the active individual is at an advantage in securing rights to such areas. Especially if there are no direct male descendants of a lineage there is ample opportunity for manipulation among claimants with secondary rights.

31 Government officers appear to have had very little knowledge of traditional tenure; in AR (1969-70:13) we read for example: "The traditional system of matrilineal and patrilineal inheritance still operate. No changes appear to have taken place."

32 The demarcation committees failed to achieve this aim in most areas in PNG but appear to have been successful in some (Quinn n.d.:181). In Manus the Local Government Council had adopted a Land Use Record Rule with a similar aim to the demarcation committees (AR 1969-70:10). Owing to the lack of 'machinery' this rule was not implemented and had therefore no real effect (PR 1971-72:8; AR 1970-71:11).

33 Although there are local variations, the principles of land tenure appear to be relatively uniform in Manus. I have researched land (and sea) tenure not only in Baluan but also in the villages surrounding Seeadler Harbour (Otto 1989:39-41). In addition I carried out rather superficial surveys in Pak and Rambutoy. Ponam people appear to have some different tenurial emphases (Carrier and Carrier 1989:48-50) but this may be explained by the fact that they have a limited area which they use mainly for housing as well as by the particular history of the island. Ponam sea tenure, which has been extensively investigated by the Carriers (J. Carrier 1981, 1982, 1987b and Carrier and Carrier 1983, 1989:103-113), is very similar to what I discovered about the sea tenure of other fishing societies such as Pitiluh and Loniu (see Otto 1989:42-48).
In the early Paliau Movement lineage and clan titles to land were suspended or suppressed. Paliau and his followers considered that land and sea should be freely available to those who wanted to use it irrespective of clan membership. If anything the term ‘communal use’ is more applicable to this period. However, traditional ownership rights, though not enforced, were certainly not forgotten. In 1961 the resident patrol officer of Baluan reported that a leading Lipan villager had approached him with the request to write down that Mouk people were living on his land. He had no objection to them staying there but he wanted his ownership rights recorded to avoid litigation in the future (letter to district officer 10-10-1961). Around the same time the Mouk people were increasingly uncomfortable in their Baluan settlement. With 540 inhabitants their village was extremely crowded. Moreover, they felt frustrated in their economic development as they were not allowed to plant coconut trees. Lipan villagers had willingly granted land for gardening – in which the Mouk people were not very interested – but they refused to approve the planting of trees. This is understandable since, according to Baluan custom, it would have given the Mouk people a permanent claim to the produce of the trees and would in the long run have established their claims to the land.

Looking for alternatives the Mouk people found one in Langendrowa plantation which had been bought by the government in order to lease it to indigenous block holders. Of 21 blocks the Mouk acquired 16 which were leased to ‘family groups’ not lineages. In 1964 and 1965 more than half of the population of Mouk on Baluan moved to the new settlement on Rambutyo. The new village was called Mouklen which derived from Mouk and Lenkau. The latter was the name of an existing village on Langendrowa Island where descendants lived from the original inhabitants of the

34 The Lipan villager stated that Paliau had invited the Mouk and Polot people to live on Lipan land in 1947 without reference to individual landowners concerned.

35 Lipan had 288 inhabitants then and the rest of Baluan 516.

36 Interestingly this ‘break-away’ group also left the Paliau Church. The Mouk remaining on Baluan stayed within this Church.
plantation area who had lost their land at the beginning of the century. These descendants also applied and received four blocks in lease.

The fascinating thing about this resettlement project is that the Mouk people opted for 'communal' exploitation of their plantation. In annual and patrol reports we read that they were very successful in doing this. Through their combined effort they were able to generate capital quickly and to buy necessary equipment such as a motorvessel, a tractor and a trailer (PR 68-69:17). It is evident that they rationally appreciated the advantages of pooling their work and money. After all the individual blocks had been cleared communally and the first major investments had been made, they continued to spend about half of their time on the communal enterprise in order to meet their debt repayments. The rest of the time was for individual work and profit. When I visited the settlement in 1987 this system was still in operation. I was struck by the modern appearance of the village: iron plate houses stood in neat rows; the main road bisected a number of side roads at right angles. In the morning people would leave their houses around the same time to go to their work. How different this was from the seeming anarchy of the village I was living in!

The example of Langendrowa shows that individualisation and modern development did not necessarily go hand in hand in the way the district commissioners assumed. Although the Mouk people received individual lease-hold titles they opted for communal exploitation as this was the most efficient way to capitalise their enterprise. On Baluan, on the other hand, traditional land tenure was reinforced by local developments in the 1960s and 1970s (see next chapter). This did not prevent individuals from maximising their rights and access to land, and some families were able to capitalise their enterprise under their own steam. In spite of rigid traditional ownership rules some were able to realise the dream of the district commissioners: they exploited their plantations on a family group basis. Mouklen had a completely different point of departure: resettled through a government

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37 The name of the group who owned this area is Seye. Their descendants now live with the people of Lenkau who speak the same language and who have allowed them to use Lenkau land for making their gardens.

38 One block was retained by the Administration as the site for a primary school.

39 The Lenkau lease holders did not participate in this. They preferred individual exploitation and did not co-operate amongst themselves.

scheme, the villagers had individual land holdings, but they made their transition to modernity through co-operative enterprise. The story of development is full of contradictions. Moreover, it suggests that local circumstances conditioned local outcomes to a large extent and quite independently of government policies and intervention.

The greatest change in post-war Manus economy did not result from co-operative or individual cash cropping. It was brought about by large-scale labour migration. At first, though, the trend was clearly against migration. In the years following the Second World War it became obvious that Manus people had lost interest in indentured labour. Annual report writers commented on the unpopularity of indenture (AR 1948-49:173) and the low availability of native labour (AR 1951-52:211) which necessitated the import of workers from other areas, especially Sepik, Madang and Morobe (AR 1952-53:135). These observations are firmly supported by the statistics published in the annual reports on the administration of the Territory (Commonwealth of Australia 1947 and following years). Detailed labour statistics specifying the district of birth are available only from 1947 to 1953 and then for 1966-67, 1967-68 and 1969-70 (see table 3). For the period 1947-53 I calculated that Manus labourers amounted on average to only 2.9% of the total population. This is indeed much lower than the pre-war average of 6.76%. Most of these post-war workers were employed on a casual basis because they refused to accept indenture, or 'agreement labour' as it was called from 1951 onwards. The statistics also show that most Manus labourers remained in their own district, an average of 82.28% for the 1947-1953 period.

It was part of the Paliau Movement’s program to resist working for Europeans (see chapter 5), but the figures indicate that interest in wage labour was low throughout the district. The ideas of Paliau and his followers were widespread and outside the movement area, too, people resented being exploited and underpaid by

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41 Because the size of the leases was legally fixed there was less scope for individual manipulation than in a traditional context.

42 Decolonisation had not brought about a decolonisation of economic policy: in the late 80s the Manus Provincial Government was promoting large scale cacao plantations worked by introduced labour. It still saw customary tenure as the big stumbling block to progress and wanted to reduce the traditional land owners to part shareholders in a business rationally managed by outsiders.

43 In 1948 there were still 88 Manus men under indenture, in 1949 only 5, in 1950 12, in 1951 14, in 1952 40 and in 1953 14.

A. Percentages based on data from annual reports to the United Nations on the Administration of the Territory of New Guinea (Commonwealth of Australia 1947-1974)

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B. Percentages based on data from Manus District annual reports

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Explanation of columns:

I. Manus labourers as a percentage of the total population.
II. Manus labourers as a percentage of the adult population.
III. Male Manus labourers as a percentage of the number of male adults.
IV. Female Manus labourers as a percentage of the number of female adults.
V. Manus labourers working in Manus as a percentage of the total number of Manus labourers.
Notes:

a. As there are no population figures available for this year, I have used those of the last count, namely of 1941 (Commonwealth of Australia 1948).

b. Because the Territory annual report does not give population figures, I have used those of the Manus District annual report (AR 1948-49).

c. Population figures used are probably too high thus lowering the percentage (see table 3).

d. In 1964 exactly the same figures are repeated which I therefore have omitted. However, the 1963-1964 annual report specifies the data according to census division and this shows that percentages in the Baluan-Bunai census division are considerably lower than in the rest of Manus (except for the Western Islands). The figures for Baluan-Bunai are respectively: 10.84, 19.27, 26.63, 10.85 (these are all lower than the Manus average whereas those for Lorengau-Sau and Sau-Bipi districts are considerably higher).


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</tbody>
</table>
Notes:

a. All data for this table, except for 1980, are derived from the annual reports to the United Nations on the administration of the Territory of New Guinea (Commonwealth of Australia 1947-1974). These data are mostly identical with data supplied in the District annual reports (AR), but I do not have a complete set of the latter. From remarks in some District annual reports it is clear that the reliability of the data is not very high.

b. It is not exactly clear what age category is referred to by 'children'. In 1962 and 1963 a note specifies the category as 'up to and including the age of 13'. However, in the Manus District annual reports of 1969 to 1972 the category is specified as 'under 16'. In practice this does not make much difference as in many cases the age given is based on an estimate by the patrol officer.

c. The sudden jump in this figure as compared to the previous year can be explained by the inclusion of a number of people marked as absentees in the district report (but not specified to sex).

d. No revised census figures for 1964 available.

e. The figures for 1967 and 1968 are almost certainly too high. The 1967 figure is mentioned in the 1967 Manus District report but without the usual specification. In 1968 no census was conducted according to the District report but a figure for the council area is given which indicates that the estimate for the whole District is too high.

f. For this year no Manus District report is available so I cannot explain the drop in the number of children.

g. These figures are derived from the 1980 national census (National Statistical Office 1985) and refer to the total citizen population. The 'children' category includes the age of 14 and lower. Numbers for citizens born in the District (and living there) are somewhat lower, namely 23690 (total population), of which 11087 are children. The booklet does not contain figures for Manus born citizens living elsewhere. An indication of the number of migrants can be found in the Provincial Data System (National Statistical Office 1982a), which is the continuation of the village book census on which the other data in this table are based: total population of Manus in 1979 was 27151, of which 8823 were absent from the village.
Europeans. In addition there was no shortage of cash in the post-war period as considerable war damage payments were made by the government. Another important reason for the lack of interest in labour migration was that local developments required the work and co-operation of villagers, including the young men. The village council and co-operative societies had to be organised and these institutions engaged in extensive building programs employing local men. Moreover, many villagers were encouraged to plant their own cash crop trees. If money was needed people took on casual work or accepted plantation work on a group contract basis. This allowed them the freedom to work when they chose, instead of being commanded by an overseer.

The tendency to stay at home and to work only on a job contract or casual basis changed when young Manus men and women began to complete their education and had to look for ways to exploit their newly acquired knowledge. The post-war years had seen an enormous expansion of the schooling system and Manusians had been eager to seize the new opportunities. The first groups of school leavers were mostly trained as teachers because of a serious shortage in the education system. They were predominantly employed within the district just like newly trained clerks, storemen, nurses and medical orderlies. It did not take long, however, for supply to catch up with demand. The 1958-59 district annual report mentions that trained local people had no difficulty in finding jobs (AR 1958-59:16) but in the 1967-68 report we read:

Employment for skilled and semi-skilled artisans becomes available from time to time but the majority of the Manus people seek positions as teachers, clerks, nurses or other "white collar" jobs which carry higher salaries. As normally there are not many such jobs available within the district, the people continue to migrate to other districts seeking such employment (AR 1967-68:13).

It is difficult to determine exactly when this migration began because the statistical data available are inconsistent and very incomplete. One series of data derives from the district annual reports (see table 3). They are only available for a number of years and suggest a considerable increase of people 'absent at work' in

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44 See for example the report by Jones (Australian Archives, A 581/1, Y 840/1/1).
45 This kind of contract work in which a particular job was taken on was popular in the late 50s and 60s (AR 1958-59, 1961-62, 1967-68).
the mid 50s and a further important growth in the early 60s (for later years no figures are available). The numbers are much higher than would be expected on the basis of the data from the Territory annual reports. This may be explained by different ways of collecting information. The district figures are based on village censuses and count all the people who were mentioned as absent from the village for work. This does not mean that all these people actually had a job or were registered as having a job. I presume, for example, that the district figures include men who were working for the Local Government Council in other villages.

The Territory annual reports give counts of people who were registered as workers in different kinds of employment throughout the country. However, apart from the early 1950s, they do not provide information concerning district of birth except for three years in the late 1960s (see table 3). The figures for these years are lower than the district figures for the early 1960s but nevertheless document a dramatic growth in the number and proportion of wage labourers from Manus as compared to the early 1950s: from an average of 2.9% of the total population to an average of 7.21%. The majority of the labourers (62.06% on average over the three years) worked outside the district.

In the 1970s there is a further substantial increase of migrant workers. The district annual reports for 1970-71 (page 11) and 1971-72 (page 13) give as an estimate that 12% of the total population is employed outside the district. One author remarks: "the relatively high degree of education that is found within Manus [...] causes an unwillingness of the people to work at menial jobs"; to find proper employment they have to leave the district (AR:1970-71). Patrol officers touring the villages observe "a very high percentage of absenteeism, especially among young educated males" (PR 1971-72:8). They also report that (PR 1971-72:9):

It seems very usual for educated village members living away from the District to send money back to their remaining relatives. This accounts for the reasonable standards of commodity surplus in villages where there is no development and little economic production to give a cash income.

The most detailed information about absenteeism is available from the 'provincial data system' booklet (National Statistical Office 1982a) which provides

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46 This percentage is on the low side because the population figures used in the Territory annual report are based on an estimate and are almost certainly too high.
the village census data for the year 1979. For Manus as a whole absentees amount to 32.5% of the total population. Of course these absentees include not just workers but also non-employed spouses, children, other family members and students. Nevertheless, this is an impressive figure which becomes even more significant if we look at the 18-45 age category. In this group 51.66% of the men and 38.96% of the women are away from the village. This does not imply that all these people live outside the province. The national censuses of 1971 and 1980 give precise figures concerning provincial migration. They indicate a substantial increase of Manus migrants living elsewhere in Papua New Guinea: from 14.8% in 1971 (May and Skeldon 1977:10) to 18.7% in 1980 (Walsh 1983:79).

For the 1980s I have no data except my own census of Lipan village in 1986-87. To interpret this I will look at earlier data for the census division of which Lipan is a part. In the 1960s absenteeism from this division was somewhat lower than that of Manus District as a whole (AR 1962-63, PR 1968-69:17, PR 1969-70:9). One patrol officer suggested that people remained in the village to work on their own copra and cocoa plantations (PR 1968-69:17). Although it is true that this area contains many indigenously planted cash tree groves, it is difficult to establish whether this was the main reason for the difference; especially since in 1979 Balopa census division (Baluan, Lou and Pam) had the highest percentage (44.4%) of absentees in Manus. Of the men from 18 to 45 years 71% were absent from the village, of the women 54.5%. It should be noted, though, that this high percentage is the result of the extreme situation on Pam and Lou, where migrants as a group outnumbered residents.47 Baluan approached the Manus average with 33.4% of the population absent from the island. My own data from Lipan suggest that this proportion had

47 Pam consists of two very small islands which are largely planted with coconut trees leaving hardly enough space for gardens. Population pressure may explain the high absenteeism there. The same does not apply to Lou which is big and very fertile. The only explanation suggested to me was that young people wanted to escape from the strict regime of Seventh Day Adventism which was the only denomination on the island. This explanation did not come from Lou Islanders and unfortunately I did not have a chance to pursue this question on the island itself.
remained fairly constant in the 1980s: 35.6% of Lipan villagers lived elsewhere. Of the 18-45 age group 43% of the men and 48.8% of the women were absent.

The present situation

It is evident that such high levels of migration must have had a significant effect on local economies. In order to put this factor into context and to weigh its importance I will give a description of the economic resources in a modern Baluan village. In addition to my own data, which include a village census of Lipan and an economic survey of the other villages, I draw on information supplied by Zollinger (1982) and Carrier and Carrier (1989) for the purpose of comparison.

The most important resource for Baluan people, apart from their labour, is land. Subsistence gardening takes up most of the time spent by villagers on productive activities. With few exceptions people are able to feed themselves from their gardens in which they plant yams, taro, sweet potato, bananas, cassava and other vegetables. In addition most people have fruit and nut trees which provide an important supplement to the diet. Protein is mainly supplied by fish consumption and occasionally by pork and possum. It appears to me that protein intake is relatively low in some families as Baluan people spent relatively little time fishing or hunting. People with money augment and vary their diet with tinned fish and meat from the stores which also supply rice, sugar, biscuits, coffee and tea.

This description applies only to the Baluan people proper. The Mouk people, who settled on the island in the late 1940s, are predominantly fishers and have to

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48 In establishing the number of absentees I have counted all adult migrants but only the children of male migrants since these have a direct claim to Lipan land. If the children of female migrants were included the figure would be much higher, namely 45%.

49 Absolute numbers for male and female migrants in this age category were exactly the same, but more men were living in the village than women. This situation differs strikingly from observations of patrol officers around 1970 when there was a surplus of women in many villages.

50 Members of the SDA Church abstain from eating pork and possum as well as certain kinds of marine produce.
obtain their starch and vegetables through trade. The situation of these people is comparable to the inhabitants of Ponam whose main productive activity is also fishing (Carrier and Carrier 1989). Zollinger (1982:51) states that "all rural Manusians see subsistence food production as their main occupation, and produce a considerable value through this system." It is difficult to put a monetary value on subsistence production and estimates range from 1.5 million to 6 million kina per year (Zollinger 1982:15). Since land is the primary resource for most Baluan inhabitants, it is not surprising that land ownership is the focus of much agitated attention and contestation. All rights to land are still fully determined by customary rules and practices as there is no permanently alienated or freehold land on the island.

Surplus food is sold on the market. On Baluan some villages maintain a weekly market where small amounts of garden food and fish are sold for cash. Prices are considerably lower than in Lorengau town. Demand is much greater than supply and the market is mostly finished within 15 minutes. Women do all the selling and buying but some men act as overseers of the market place. Food is bought by people whose own gardens are not ripe for harvest but mostly by wage earners in the village such as teachers, magistrates, and community government members. People from Mouk also visit these markets buying garden produce and selling fish or coconut oil. Although the local markets are very popular, there is also some opposition as people feel embarrassed to trade with relatives. "If I need something I will go to my sisters or cousins and ask them to help me", I was often told when discussing these things. "It does not look good if I pay my relatives", someone would add.

Larger surpluses are produced, often in separate gardens, for two reasons. Garden food is an important component of ceremonial exchanges which mark many social occasions; these include traditional functions surrounding birth, marriage and death, but also church feasts and official openings of buildings. A

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51 Mouk people obtain most of their starch by bartering fish, turtle and coconut oil for sago in Loi, a market place on the south coast of Manus. They also visit Lorengau market where they sell and buy for money. With Baluan people there are mainly direct exchange relationships, but Mouk people do attend the small village markets to buy vegetables and fruits (see below).

52 Yams and mamis give special prestige because they are the traditional crops of Baluan and also because they require a great deal of work to grow. They are considered very tasty and are the preferred kind of food if the traditional aspect of an exchange has to be emphasised.
traditional marriage in particular requires large quantities of food which are given by the side of the bride to the side of the groom. These gifts are returned by the groom’s side in the form of a brideprice paid in cash. Through ceremonial exchanges with outsiders local people receive food they do not produce themselves, such as sago and large quantities of fish as well as trade store goods if one of the participants is a wage earner. Moreover, ceremonial exchanges also provide local people with cash which is earned outside the island. The reason for this is that exchanges are major occasions for migrant workers to send remittances home, which are subsequently redistributed to relatives according to the requirements of the ceremony (see chapter 7 and Carrier and Carrier 1989:201-227).

Apart from ceremonial exchanges people also grow food for the Lorengau market, where they get a good return for their products. The earnings from one visit normally range from K20 to K100. From this amount about K10 has to be deducted for transport costs. Some products in particular fetch good prices, especially yams which require much work and lychees which only have to be picked from the trees. The frequency of sales visits to Lorengau market varies greatly, from zero to seven times in one year. Active families may earn up to several hundreds of kina this way. Although men take part in important aspects of gardening and pick tree fruits, marketing is dominated by women. Men sometimes escort their womenfolk to town but they rarely take part in the business of selling their produce. Market gardening is not a very recent development on Baluan. Together with Lou the island is frequently mentioned in post-war annual and patrol reports as an important source of vegetables and fruits. Both islands are very fertile because of their volcanic origin. Before the Lorengau market attained its present importance most of the garden and tree products were sold to the naval defence force base in Lombrum.

Another source of cash income for villagers is their plantations of coconut and cacao trees. Although people had been trading coconuts with white traders since the late 19th century, more extended coconut groves were planted only after the Second World War under the stimulus of the local government council and the co-operative movement. As a rather rocky and hilly place Baluan had never attracted the kind of

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53 Not every marriage leads to traditional exchanges. This depends on the status, wealth and inclination of the families involved. SDA members officially oppose these exchanges but often become involved nevertheless.

land alienation that had occurred in flat islands and coastal areas better suited for large-scale copra production. All land had remained in indigenous hands and all plantations were planted by the inhabitants themselves. In the 1950s agricultural officers introduced cacao trees but initially these did not become popular on Saluan, unlike on Lou where the trees appeared to grow very well. With declining returns from copra and attractive prices for cacao Saluan people also began to plant more cacao trees, often between the coconuts, in the late 1970s and 1980s.

The extension of plantations has led to pressure on land available for gardens. This problem is amplified by the growth of the population which is substantial even if we take into account the considerable out-migration. Land shortage is most serious for the two villages with the smallest territories, namely Sone and Pungap. As most of their land is planted with coconut trees, people of these villages have to make their gardens in the territories of other places. Almost all Saluan people live on the north coast. Pressure on land is therefore greatest on that side of the island and people often have to go far uphill to find land that has lain fallow for sufficient time.

Overcrowding and land shortage led to a new settlement, Pumbanin, on the south coast of the island in the late 1960s (PR 1969-70:10). Some of the settlers told me that they were attracted by the excellent yield of gardens there and that they also wanted to avoid problems resulting from crowded village life such as conflicts and thefts. A patrol officer mentioned in 1972 that Baluan - just like Pam and Mbuke - did not have enough land to expand cash cropping "due to physical features, size and population trend" (PR 1971-72:8). As I am no geographical nor demographic expert, I cannot judge the accurateness of this assessment, but people on Baluan believe that there is space for expansion, especially on the eastern and southern part of the island.

55 The soil on Lou is very fertile and not so stony as on Baluan. I was informed that many people on Baluan refrained from planting cacao trees because they feared that the new crop would cause disease, especially leprosy.

56 To the present this has not led to serious problems. There are many family ties with people in other villages. More importantly Manuai village is indebted to Pungap and Parioi village is indebted to Sone; both Manuai and Parioi were inland villages which have settled on the land of Pungap and that of Sone respectively soon after the war (only a part of Manuai villagers moved to Pungap originally, a larger part went to Lipan to take part in the Paliau reforms; later most Manuai villagers left Lipan again and some began a new settlement on the south coast, namely Pumbanin).

57 The gardening method used is shifting cultivation. Normally an area of bush is cut to give several gardens which are worked by a family group. These gardens are planted for several years and then left to overgrow again. An often used order of planting crops is first yams and mamis or taro, then sweet potato, than cassava. Bananas and other fruits or vegetables are planted between these crops.
island. Problems of transport were the main impediment for development of this part, but a ring road, completed in 1988, has improved accessibility significantly.

Land planted with cash crop trees is subject to the same rules of tenure as garden land. Planting of trees gives usufructory right to their fruits but in general people are not allowed to plant trees on land that is not their own. Relatives of a plantation owner sometimes ask permission to harvest the crops and this request is normally granted. Most people who own plantations or have access to them through relatives do not harvest their crop on a regular basis. Work is determined by the need of money as well as by crop prices. During the larger part of my stay on Baluan copra prices were extremely low according to my informants. Many people did not bother to cut the undergrowth on their plantations nor to harvest their crop which was left to sprout or to rot. People reasoned that so little money was left after deducting costs that it was not worth the effort. Towards the end of 1987 prices had gone up a few kina per bag and most plantations were taken into production again.

Although the old co-operative societies had ceased to exist the idea of co-operation had not. To facilitate transport of their cash crops the people of Parioi had formed a business group of which all Parioi lineages were shareholders. The Parioi business group had acquired a tractor and a work boat. Initially the group appeared to run well and motivation to work on plantations appeared to be higher than elsewhere, even with low prices. However, when both tractor and boat had a breakdown it was difficult to raise the extra money necessary for repair. Lipan villagers, together with some people from Manuai and Mouk, had founded Limamo business group and were saving for a tractor when I was there. In 1989 they bought a tractor, aided by a government loan and contribution.

For most producers the only capital investment in their plantation was their contribution to a business group or the erection of a copra drier. A few local people, however, were capitalising their own businesses on a larger scale by buying high yielding hybrid crops and by investing in equipment. In the late 1960s a surveying patrol officer did not find any outstanding entrepreneurs in the area (PR 1968-

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58 As refusing a request to relatives is a delicate matter, the owner has to have a good excuse in the case of rejection, for example that he (sometimes she) is really in need of the money. If someone else makes the copra, the profit is for that person. The use of a plantation is not paid for, although it creates an indebtedness to the owner. The use of a copra drier normally entails a small cash payment and transport has to be hired.
In the late 1980s there was at least one person who appeared to earn this title by his efforts on Baluan alone. He had extensive plantations of coconut and cacao trees which he worked intensively. He had the only cacao fermentary on the island and processed other people's produce, thereby acting as a middle man. Moreover he had his own tractor, which was in excellent working condition all the time and earned him additional income by providing transport for others. Most impressively, he was ahead of his debt repayment schedule and was therefore able to think about further expansion. His success caused considerable envy and many people considered that he had appropriated land that was not really his (although he had won a land court case).

Apart from this land-based businessman there was another man who deserved to be described as an 'outstanding entrepreneur'. He had made a lot of money through a business outside the province and on his return had invested it in a boat which carried cargo around Manus. After a few years he decided there was not enough money in this business and sold the ship. He then retired and limited his enterprise to running a local trade store. He also had a generator which could be hired. He had not encountered the same level of opposition as the other entrepreneur, probably because he had conducted his business mostly outside the island and because he had a high traditional status.

In addition to the workboat owned by the Parioi business group there were two other small transport vessels operated by family groups. I do not know whether they were profitable, but since they provided an essential service they continued to run. In 1987 a Mouk business group, of which most villagers were a member, bought a somewhat larger vessel in order to start a transport enterprise. The ship had some accidents initially and it is doubtful whether they had achieved their goal of making a profit by 1988.

In every village there was at least one tradestore and a few people maintained petrol outlets on the island. I have not gathered detailed financial information on these enterprises but it appears to me that the high number of them made it very difficult to have a sufficient turnover justifying the high transportation costs. Two businesses were set up on a group ownership basis but the rest were managed by individual families. They were never full-time occupations as everyone had alternative means of income and food production. Although it is true that having a
'canteen' contributed to one's status (Schwartz 1967:41), it could also create tensions and envy, especially if a shop owner was not prepared to give large credits. People would say denigrating things like: "X is not able to help us anymore because he is a business man now." The problem of credit was the bottom line of every business and some went into decline because they were not able to restock.59

Although trade stores are a part of contemporary Baluan economy, they do not produce wealth but only contribute to its redistribution. To give an idea of the relative importance of cash cropping I rely on figures supplied by Zollinger (1982) and Turner (1990). It appears that Manus as a whole compares relatively poorly with the rest of Papua New Guinea. Zollinger (1982:xiii) gives figures for the per capita income generated by the sale of cash crops in 1971 and 1980. The national average in 1980 was K65 whereas Manus produced only K13.30 per capita which put it in 15th place. The income was derived almost exclusively from copra, namely 92%, which was the highest percentage in the country. All provinces had increased their per capita cash production since 1971 except for Manus which fell from K14 (the national average in 1971 was only K21.75). Figures provided by Turner (1990:73) concerning the agricultural income per head circa 1980, are slightly more positive for Manus: it averages K19.33 against K53.40 for the country as a whole; this puts Manus in 13th position. However, Manus still scores much lower than the other island provinces with the second lowest, New Ireland, having a p.c. income of K90.23.60


59 This was not always considered a problem because some trade stores were seen as temporary investments of money rather than as long-term profitable enterprises. Carrier and Carrier (1989:138-39) observed a similar attitude on Ponam where two of five trade stores were considered 'customary' rather than self-reproducing and profitable.

60 East New Britain has the highest figure at K144.53.

61 This includes Rambutyo, Pak, Tong and Nauna.

62 This consists of Baluan, Lou and Pam.
p.c. The figure of Balopa approaches and that of Rapatona even surpasses the national average mentioned by Zollinger. It may be concluded that cash crop production provides an important part of the cash income in the south-eastern islands in contrast to the rest of Manus.

The last form of cash income I will discuss are the remittances from migrant workers. There is little doubt that this was the most important source of money for the majority of Manus people. Villagers themselves were well aware of this. It emerged from my census and from public speeches such as the ones delivered at the school break-up party. During a New Year speech the provincial member appealed to the Baluan people working outside the province to send "more building materials for houses, more outboard motors, more speedboats, more generators, more tools, more contributions for buying a big ship". Most of these things on Baluan were indeed bought by migrant workers for their relatives on the island. In the same speech the member estimated that about K10,000 was remitted to Baluan each year.

The importance of remittances is confirmed by estimates concerning the province as a whole. Zollinger (1982:40) states that remittances amounted to more than 1.0 million kina and Carrier and Carrier (1989:168), quoting from another source, give a figure of 1.2 million kina for 1980. This is considerably more than the K417,600 Manus people earned by selling cash crops and fish (Zollinger 1982:41). Some places relied on money from outside to an extreme degree. Ponam residents, possessing few productive resources, spent about K25,000 in 1979 but earned only K5,000 (Carrier and Carrier 1989:167). One can assume that Baluan villagers received about the average amount of remittances per head — estimated by Carrier and Carrier at K46 in 1980 (ibid: 168) — since the island had an average percentage of absentees (see above), many of whom had good positions in the government sphere, in the education system and in private enterprise. If this is true, it means that the income from cash crops on Baluan was higher than that from remittances. Even

63 I do not discuss income from fishing, shell and bêche-de-mer diving, and artefact production. Fishing was mainly important for the Mauk people who sold part of their catch to the Fisheries Department and to hotels and schools in Lorengau (the larger part of their catch was used for own consumption and for bartering for sago). Trochus shell and bêche-de-mer collection were only occasional sources of income and artefact production was hardly developed.

64 In my own estimate this figure should be much higher, if not only money is considered but also the monetary value of commodities sent home.
If we take the inaccuracy of the figures into account, it appears that cash crop income was about equally high or even higher than the amount of money sent home by migrants. Although remittances were very important for maintaining a high standard of living on Baluan, the islanders did not depend as much on this source of income as other Manusians. The situation on Baluan, and on other south-eastern islands, was therefore atypical for Manus as a whole.

Nevertheless the absence of large numbers of workers had a considerable impact on the island economy. In the first place it contributed to what Zollinger (1982:29) has labelled a 'welfare society'. Remittances raised the standard of living to a much higher level than would otherwise be possible. They also made the islanders dependent on outside resources over which they had little control. Although the remittance system was still working well in the late 1980s, both Zollinger and the Carriers have argued on good grounds that it is unlikely to last. Another less favourable consequence of the sort of migration practised by Manusians was that the brightest and most enterprising people were absent from the province. This means that local possibilities for development were probably insufficiently exploited.

Young people who did not make it to a highly valued white collar career, the so-called 'drop-outs', sometimes felt condemned to a second-rate citizen status. Especially the better educated amongst them felt disillusioned and were quickly bored by life in the village, preferring instead to be parasitic on their more successful relatives in town. Their discontent also found expression in rascal activities in the

65 Because I used figures from the Provincial Data System (National Statistical Office 1982) to calculate the per capita cash crop income, I should use the same data to calculate a per capita remittance income for comparative purposes, although the number of Manus residents mentioned in the PDS is almost certainly too low: 18328 for 1979 as opposed to 23690 counted in the 1980 national census (National Statistical Office 1985). Using the PDS figure Manus residents received between K55 and K65 per head (if total remittances ranged from 1 to 1.2 million kina).

66 There is no space to elaborate on this. Reasons mentioned by Carrier and Carrier (1989:196-200) and Zollinger (1982:43) include: expected reduction of the size of the Public Service; the end of the employment boom of the 1960s and 70s which resulted from expansion and simultaneous localisation; greater competition from other provinces as a result of rising education standards and a policy of equal opportunity in the education system; higher costs of urban living thus less money left to send home; the possibility of permanent settlement of migrants away from Manus.
villages and in town. Many people complained about sinking standards of law and order in the villages, but it would be unfair to blame only the young people for this.67

Another social consequence of high migration levels were the changing relations between young and old. Because young people were away from the village, old people had much less control over them. Patrol and annual reports in the 1960s and early 70s frequently mention that old people resented their loss of influence, especially in arranging marriages (see for example AR 1964-65 and 1966-67). A second aspect of the same process was that old people feared to be left alone in old age with nobody to care for them (see for example PR 1971-72:9). On Baluan this fear was certainly an unpleasant concomitant of aging for a number of people. However, old people developed their own strategies of dealing with these problems and some of these I will examine in the next chapter.

Finally, like the pre-war labour migration, the post-war migration did not have only economic and social effects: it also had a strong ideological impact. On one hand, the highly trained migrants were aware of new ideological developments and introduced these ideas into the villages. On the other hand, the new economic inequalities resulting from migrant labour led to adaptations in village ideology and culture. These points will be developed in the following chapter.

The first wave of labour migration prior to the Second World War had enabled the objectification of indigenous culture. This led to a complete rejection of tradition in the Paliau reforms, followed by a period of local development towards modernity. Large-scale labour migration, starting in the 1960s, coincided with a gradual revaluation of tradition. What kind of relationship existed between these two developments?

67 Young people were also used by older people to carry out pay-back actions, for example destroying someone's garden.
A *gavman* meeting in Baluan.

In front are three members of the Balopa Community Government.

Invited guests at a feast of the Baluan Women's Club include government officials, *lapans*, church representatives and an anthropologist.
Kelu Salikioi
lapan of Poipoi
organised a
polpolot (ch. 7)

Peni Sokum,
a successful entrepreneur,
portrayed with
his wife and one of
his youngest children.
Chapter Seven

THE FORCE OF KASTAM

The abundance of social and economic data in the previous chapter may have taxed some readers' interest. However, this information provides a necessary background to an understanding of the cultural changes I am concerned with in the present chapter. As historical observers we may look at the past from different angles. The last chapter largely adopts the perspective of government officials who are interested in the development of the area they administer. This perspective is steeped in Western assumptions about social progress and its expression is determined by discursive conventions and common categories. Although I critically assessed government policies and also described indigenous perceptions and reactions to them, the structure of chapter 6 was determined by Western categories; I talked about the economy and the state, about education and religion; I discussed labour trends and the generation of cash income, changes in government structure and educational opportunities. Description of the past in these terms is important because it highlights significant aspects of the social process.

But other aspects do not appear in the picture, because they are simply not seen or because they do not fit conventional developmental categories. In vain I searched government reports for indications of the revival of traditional practices that I knew had taken place. Obviously this item did not appear on the list of topics patrol officers had to report on. The general assumption of the Administration was that tradition was slowly dying out. Government reports mention traditional customs occasionally but only to emphasise their inevitable demise. Local attempts at restoring tradition are not reported.\(^1\) Perhaps these efforts were seen as idle or even

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\(^1\) The only exception is a report by Henry Tapo, a Manus trainee of the Local Government Training Centre in East New Britain. During his holidays he accompanied a district officer collecting council tax in the southeastern islands of Manus. In his report (PR 1967-68:9) he mentioned a traditional transaction during which people "spoke in grand tongues". Anxious about the resurgence of cult behaviour in Rambutyo, headquarters in Port Moresby were alarmed by this phrase. They enquired about its meaning and Tapo explained that he meant "that a dialect understood properly only by some old men was used" (letter 27 March 1968, attached to patrol report).
as embarrassing reversals on the road to modernity. Nevertheless these local developments represented a trend to cultural change which was as real and as important in shaping contemporary village life as the developments the government officers were concerned with. In this chapter I investigate these cultural changes and their articulation with the political, social and economic developments described in chapter 6.

Polpolot, or the renaissance of tradition

In the post-war years Paliau and his followers set out on a revolutionary course. They pursued dramatic reorganisations of indigenous society not only to improve the local standard of living but also to end their subordination to white people. As the latter had not willingly shared their wealth and knowledge, it was up to the indigenous people to improve their own lot. This quest for emancipation unavoidably led to confrontations with the colonial powers. In the ensuing political conjuncture strategies were developed which entailed reformulations of original programs. This process of situational adaptation of explicit policies and implicit premises is evident both in the Paliau Movement and in the actions of government and missions (see chapters 5 and 6).

The Movement's revolutionary program was thus contained and modified by its confrontation with outside forces. There was, however, another and much less discernible force Paliau and his followers had to contend with: the force of habit. Clearly this is a force of a different kind, but its impact on the process of cultural change should not be underestimated.

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2 Sahlins (1981) and (1985) develops a conceptual framework for the analysis of this kind of revaluation of ‘cultural schemes’. He introduces the phrase ‘structure of the conjuncture’ which refers to “the practical realization of the cultural categories in a specific historical context, as expressed in the interested action of the historic agents, including the microsociology of their interaction” (1985:xiv). Sahlins explains that the interaction of a particular structure of the conjuncture puts conventional meanings at risk both ‘objectively’ (referring to circumstances) and ‘subjectively’ (referring to people’s interests). Mosko (n.d.) modifies Sahlins' terminology and applies it in an illuminating way to the material of the Yali Movement in Madang Province. See also Otto (1986) and Thomas (1989a) for a critical review of Sahlins' theoretical framework.
In chapter 5 I pointed to some cultural continuities which underlay the revolutionary changes pursued by the Paliau Movement. These continuities involved basic attitudes towards knowledge and efficacy, towards rhetorical practice and status enhancement, towards leadership and innovation. These attitudes were not objectified by the participants in the Movement; they did not become issues to be discussed and reflected upon; instead they influenced people's perceptions, actions and programs without them being aware of it. Following Bourdieu I call these basic habitual attitudes 'habitus'. The components of habitus just mentioned did not interfere with Paliau's revolution. Rather they were a substratum which provided meaning and motivation to the social reformations. There were, however, other habitual attitudes which became an obstacle to the changes sought by Paliau and his followers. These components of habitus were a strong but invisible force which obstructed the implementation of Paliau's ideas.

The Paliau Movement has to be understood in the context of colonial history. Confrontation with Western society and with other indigenous societies, especially during contract labour, led to the objectification of particular aspects of indigenous culture as 'the way of the ancestors'. These aspects were put in relief through comparison with Western practices. Indigenous reformers formulated their programs in view of these objectified aspects of native life. Paliau, whose program was the most comprehensive among the Manus reformers, clearly created his vision of a new indigenous culture as a consistent antithesis to the 'way of the ancestors' (see chapter 5). The 'new way' was thus the result of the oppositional transformation of objectified aspects of the traditional culture. The comparison of Western and indigenous cultures provided the frame of reference for this act of cultural revaluation.

In the 'new way' certain key elements of the old culture became discredited, especially those pertaining to the kinship-exchange system. Lapan feasts and other ceremonial exchanges were officially abolished since they were seen as inhibiting progress. The traditional practice of specialised production and trade was also under

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3 These objectified features of traditional life could be either positively or negatively valued. In post-war Manus a negative attitude towards tradition prevailed, especially in the area of the Paliau Movement but also elsewhere. For examples of positive valuations of the own tradition in the face of colonial intrusion see Jolly (1982) concerning Vanuatu and Keesing (1982c) concerning the Solomon Islands.
attack. Precisely these key cultural elements had effected the integration of Manus societies in the past (see chapters 2 and 3). They were replaced by new forms of integration through political and religious organisation. The new social order was clearly based on different principles of sociality. Kin solidarity had to be suppressed in favour of loyalty to the larger political and religious unit; individual differentiation and entrepreneurial activities had to give way to conformity and group consensus; descent group ownership of resources and production monopolies had to be suspended in favour of communal use. These changes clearly affected basic social attitudes. As Schwartz (1962:367) has put it: "[...] the Movement also demanded a reorganization of Manus personality." It was not sufficient to change the cultural institutions. For the Paliau revolution to be successful parts of people's habitus had also to be revolutionised. Only then would the new institutions become endowed with a degree of permanency.

Arguably, changing people's habitus is the most difficult aspect of social reform. People will only act against certain aspects of their personality if they are highly motivated. It appears that Paliau was initially able to generate a high level of enthusiasm and commitment. There were, of course, periods of drift when desired changes did not materialise as soon as expected (see Schwartz 1962:226-228). But there is no doubt that life in the Movement's villages was a radical departure from the past. This is testified by outside observers, anthropologists as well as government officials, and by participants. The latter often commented to me on the high level of consensus and cooperation during the early years of the Movement, something they found sadly lacking in the present. However, they also informed me that the abolition of ceremonial exchanges was never complete. The large feasts and public exchanges had all gone, but in the privacy of their own homes some people continued to fulfil their customary obligations towards their kinsfolk. Much of this was low-key and hidden from the leaders as it was against official ideology. But it is significant that even during the most radical stages of the Paliau revolution parts of the rejected tradition were too resilient to be completely eradicated.

It appears that particularly the ceremonies surrounding a person's death were resistant to abolition. This is not surprising in view of the power spirits were thought to have over the well-being of the living. Nevertheless, the first ten years of the

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4 These new principles of sociality are detailed in chapter 5.
Palaau revolution remained remarkably free of public performances of traditional practices. This may well be taken as an indication of the strong motivation for social change the Movement had generated. Aspects of habitus connected with rejected traditions remained largely submerged and found expression only in clandestine activities. This situation changed, however, at the end of the 1950s. Some leaders of traditional status began to organise public ceremonies in open defiance of orthodoxy. Their activities were no longer clandestine but clearly heterodox, because they challenged the dominant ideology. Paradoxically, these first public ceremonies were not really traditional. Though based on old kin categories and traditional exchange patterns they in fact presented an innovation. These new ‘traditional’ practices therefore illustrate the general process that has been labelled ‘the invention of tradition’.⁵

The first man to organise the new ceremony was Ninou Solok of the Sauka clan, probably in the year 1958. After the demise of the leading lineage (Umtan Sameal) he had the traditional right to claim the leadership of this large and powerful clan. I was told that he decided to make a big feast after he was hit by a falling branch from a nut tree. He wanted to establish his name and uphold that of the Saukas before he died. The ceremony was called polpolot – at least retrospectively – after the name of a certain type of traditional song, which was performed frequently during the event.

Kelu Salikioi of the Poipoi clan was the second man to make a polpolot, presumably in 1960 or soon after. I reproduce part of one of his descriptions of this event.

It was in the time of the Council and the kiap was still on Baluan. I made a big garden, kuyu⁶ close to koleyep. All the people of Poipoi made gardens. When the food was ripe, it

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⁵ See Hobsbawm and Ranger (1983) and Keesing and Tonkinson (1982). The invention of tradition is but a specific case of the more general process of ‘the invention of culture’ (Wagner 1981), the distinctive feature being whether the innovations are represented as in fact traditional (reproducing the past). Because the process of reinventing tradition has been so politicised in the Pacific, the term invention has been loaded with negative connotations such as spuriousness and inauthenticity, which obscure the study of the cultural processes involved. Cf. Handler and Linnekin (1984), Linnekin (1990 and n.d.) and Jolly (n.d.).

⁶ All large gardens used for feasts are named on Baluan. Koleyep is the name of a hole in the ground, which still shows some volcanic activity. The hole is located up the mountain in Manuai territory not far from the rim of the crater.
was carried to the front of my house: only yams. Then we invited the narumpein\(^7\), Membup Ng\(i\) Se, Kanau and others. First we had captured Membup and tied him with a rope. His family had to pay a ransom to get him back. This was a joke which you can do only with your\(^8\) p\(wa\). The narumpein received all the garden food and took it to their homes. After some time they came back with a gift of money, lipamui (dogs’ teeth) and sapul (shell beads).\(^9\) They gave me $1000. Of this money I gave $500 to the family of Alup (the speaker’s wife) who helped me with food and $500 to Peni Sokum and his family, who also contributed a lot of food. Peni is my narumwen.\(^10\) The other men of Poipoi, Ngat Pangkop and Awai Salampang,\(^11\) gave their food to their own narumpein. They also received money.

Some time after Kelu’s feast, Kisokau Aiwai of the Munukut clan organised a similar event. People who attended these occasions as children vividly remember the beating of the drums, the singing, the colours, the grass skirts and the abundance of food. Although the ceremonies as such were new, they made use of traditional models. The basic principle was the opposition between narumwen and narumpein, the descendants of the man and the descendants of the woman. The terms pertain to the offspring of a brother-sister pair. The descendants of the brother continue the patrilineage, whereas the descendants of the sister belong to a different descent group. The two groups remain, however, in close relationship to each other and their bond is reconfirmed during ceremonial exchanges.\(^12\) The relation is often referred to as one between cross-cousins (petpwai) although, depending on the

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\(^7\) Narumpein indicates the descendants of women of the lineage who married out. The term stands in opposition to narumwen: the descendants of the men of the patrilineage (see below).

\(^8\) Cross-cousins. This kind of joking is only possible with cross-cousins of the second or higher generation.

\(^9\) Lipamui and sapul were the traditional forms of ‘money’ in Manus. Admired for their beauty and figuring in many ceremonial exchanges, they could also be used to pay for isolated goods and services. As a result of the cargo cult they had all but disappeared on Baluan.

\(^10\) Narumwen means the descendants of the man. If Kelu says that Peni is his narumwen, than Kelu is narumpein to Peni.

\(^11\) These men represent different lineages.

\(^12\) The two groups have different rights and obligations. The narumpein have secondary rights to the land of the narumwen and have power over the latter’s fertility and success in feasting. The narumwen will receive traditional valuables at the death of one narumpein, as members of the latter’s group have the obligation to pay to the side of their ‘mother’. The relationship is complicated and varies according to the type of ceremony.
gender of the parents, members of both parties may in fact address each other as brother and sister.

Kelu described how he redistributed the money he received from his narumpein. Half of it he gave to his in-laws (polam) and the other half to his narumwen, to whom he stood as narumpein himself. These two groups had helped him produce the garden food. Their assistance was not coincidental but followed traditional models of cooperation and obligation. What was new then about the polpolot ceremony? The most important innovation was that it was not connected to any of the occasions which had engendered ceremonial exchanges in the past. It was not related to a birth, a marriage or a death. Nor was it organised in honour of a deceased lapan, such as the big lapan feasts described in chapter 2. A polpolot served to enhance the status of the organiser, and although that was also the ultimate reason for a lapan feast, a conspicuous difference was that the man who led a lapan ceremony did not receive a direct return for his gifts. Although the polpolot was based on existing kin categories and on traditional models of reciprocal obligations, the details of its performance differed considerably from all the other exchanges practised in the past. Moreover, the use of large amounts of Western money was also an innovation, necessitated no doubt by the scarcity of dogs’ teeth and shell money resulting from the cultist destruction a decade previously.

When I enquired about the rationale for the introduction of the polpolot, the main reason given was ‘to show the family’. The organisers wanted to reconfirm kin ties which had been suppressed by the Paliau Movement. They wanted to strengthen the bonds with their traditionally closest allies. For old people the ceremonial exchanges were the reactivation of kin relations; for young people they were an introduction to them. The second reason for the polpolot ceremonies was the reassertion of traditional leadership. The lapans had been eclipsed by the new political and religious leaders who emerged under the Paliau regime. In the late 1950s some men wanted to establish their name again according to traditional patterns.

All three polpolot organisers had claims to lapan status. Although Ninou Solok did not belong to the lineage who traditionally supplied the lapan of the Sauka clan, he was, as the leader of the junior lineage, in a position to claim overall leadership since the senior lineage did not have a man able to assume this role. Solok’s
initiative to make a polpolot may well be understood as a reinforcement of his claim to overall leadership of the Sauka. A similar argument can be made regarding Kelu and Kisokau. The former confirmed his traditional position within the Poipoi sub-clan and even achieved acknowledgement of his leadership in traditional matters within the Manuai clan as a whole, although there were traditionally higher placed lapans than he. Those lapans, however, did not engage in traditional ceremonies. Kisokau also confirmed his hereditary status as lapan of the Munukut clan against a competitor. At the same time he reestablished his clan's claim to prestige since they had not organised a major feast for some generations.

It should be clear from my short description that the three polpolot organisers staked their claims to traditional leadership primarily against possible competitors for the same status. They did not openly challenge the political and religious leaders, but rather created a different field of action. By doing this, however, they confronted the hegemony of the new order. They were the first to openly assert the legitimacy of traditional kin ties and to claim venues for the exertion of traditional leadership roles. The dissatisfaction which many had felt with the new social models of the Movement became translated into action. People wanted 'to show' their families again. The three leaders created a way to give public expression to these social attitudes. In short, they invented culture.

The polpolot was a new institution based on traditional models of sociality. It appealed to pre-existing sentiments or habitus, which the Movement clearly had failed to eradicate. Its institution shows that culture creation is not only a reaction to outside forces. The force of habit also has to be taken into account to understand the cultural changes of the Paliau revolution and its aftermath. Whereas Paliau's cultural inventions included the rejection of tradition, the polpolot is an example of the invention of tradition. There is no doubt that the ceremony was presented as following the ways of the ancestors. This idea was so strongly presented that even quite knowledgeable informants often did not realise that the polpolot was in fact an innovation. They would say: "This kind of work [meaning exchange] was done by Baluan people from time immemorial."

However, the polpolot was not an old form of exchange 'work'. Nor did it have a long life as an institution because it was soon superseded by exchanges which followed more closely the ceremonies of the past, albeit with sundry alterations. The
polpolot was, nevertheless, the first tradition-like ceremony after the Paliau revolution. It provided a space in which traditional leaders could again assume authority and status. It therefore marks the beginning of the modern institutional domain of kastam.

The process I have described was not restricted to Baluan. From the work of Schwartz it is evident that similar developments took place on the south coast of Manus, an area which had also been strongly involved in the Paliau Movement. Schwartz (1962:316) reports the occurrence of a tradition-like activity as early as 1953. It was called pilei and was an exchange "in which cross-cousins challenged one another to match the goods (mostly European) that one could give against the money the other could pay". In Schwartz (1976b) some other examples of the reemergence of tradition are given.

At first, there was embarrassment about these exchanges, which defied the attempts of Paliau, who had targeted them for extinction as dissipative of wealth and energy. But by 1963, they were being celebrated with 'native' costumes and a revival of the older style dancing and drumming - without the traditional phallic exposure but with great hilarity over the gestures that once accompanied it (Schwartz 1976b:225).

Schwartz describes in particular one ceremony which was called 'mother's teeth'. At least superficially it bears some resemblance to the polpolot on Baluan. Although the latter exchange did not emphasise that the money gift was for the work of the mother in raising her children, it was implied in the narumwen–narumpein opposition. The polpolot may be closer to the Titan pilei, except that traditional food was given, not European goods. It is beyond doubt that people were aware of the developments in other places and that there was a diffusion of ideas in the region. Nevertheless it appears that the reinventions of tradition varied locally, thereby perpetuating the cultural diversity of the past.

The institution of the polpolot ceremony was the start of an explicit revaluation of tradition on Baluan. Initially this new appreciation of the past was a heterodox position. Only a minority engaged in the neo-traditional activities of which most political and religious leaders disapproved. Gradually the new practice gained momentum as it appealed to social dispositions which people had internalised in their early youth. When the motivation for the Paliau reforms declined, the attraction of older social models increased. The polpolot was a large ceremony and therefore
a clear public statement of the new attitude. It was superseded by a gradual revival of traditional exchanges at the occasion of birth, marriage and death of kinsfolk.\textsuperscript{13} At first these ceremonies were still enacted with restraint as there was much opposition. But their importance, frequency and scale grew steadily. The 1960s witnessed the gradual emergence of a traditional sphere in village life. The genesis of this sphere was determined by forces internal to Baluan and other Manus societies. However, towards the end of the 1960s the process of revaluation became reinforced by developments which were outside the influence of local communities.

\textbf{Kastam reinforced}

The local renaissance of tradition in Baluan was not an isolated process. It became articulated with developments of a larger scale. In this section I discuss three such developments which had a direct strengthening effect on the local revaluation process. Two are in the field of government policy and the other is the emergence of a discourse of tradition at the national level. All three developments need more research in order to be properly described. I only mention them here to demonstrate the interrelatedness of local cultural changes and wider political and ideological phenomena. Economic changes also had a strong, but more indirect, influence on the local culture. This will be further explored in the next section.

Government policy measures unintentionally encouraged the development of a traditionalist discourse concerning the most important form of property on Baluan: land. In order to explain the paradox involved I have to say something about the general attitude of the colonial administration towards custom. Sack (1987 and 1990) has shown that colonial legal policy in Papua and New Guinea can be characterised as a ‘two spheres’ approach. The dominant opinion was that the indigenous population should remain governed by custom as far as necessary and

\textsuperscript{13} As mentioned above these exchanges, though ‘traditional’, were not identical to the exchanges in the past, a conspicuous difference being the use of money instead of dogs’ teeth. Carrier and Carrier (1987) give a detailed account of changes in ‘traditional’ exchanges in Ponam from the 1920s onwards, thereby demonstrating that ‘tradition’ is always in flux even if the process of invention is less radical than in Baluan (after the Paliau Movement’s rejection of tradition).
possible until they were sufficiently advanced to be completely absorbed into the introduced legal system. The sphere of custom was to be preserved not for its intrinsic value but only to prevent the undesirable, disruptive effects of its sudden destruction. The aim was gradually to replace the sphere of custom by the sphere of law, and not to accomplish some kind of synthesis of the two spheres (Sack 1990:256-259).14

The land laws of 1962 and 1963 were in keeping with this general policy. Their aim was to facilitate the conversion of customary land tenure into individual ownership (see chapter 6). In other words, they were adopted to effect the transformation of custom into law.15 The land laws provided for the institution of Demarcation Committees, which were staffed by indigenous people with knowledge of local customs. The idea was that the detailed knowledge these people had of widely varying local customs would contribute to the solution of disputes and would thus lead to the unequivocal establishment of land titles. In Manus these committees were introduced in 1967 and Joseph Molealeng of Parioi village in Baluan became the first chairman of the committee for the south-eastern islands. He described to me the reason for the institution of the new committees as he saw it.

In 1967 it was for the first time that Papua New Guineans held this kind of work. Previously only white men carried out this work of hearing land courts and all other types of dispute. Then the government considered the following: "The talk about land is difficult, because we white people cannot know about the genealogies and customs of the black people. It is better that we return this work to people of the same skin (colour), to the people of the place who have knowledge of land boundaries, of genealogies, and of the different customs concerning the transfer of land. This work should be carried out by the people themselves." In this time they appointed me and I became the chairman of this work.

14 See also Aleck (n.d.) for an excellent discussion of the complications and the implications of the law-custom dichotomy.

15 Sack (1990:262-263) makes a similar argument concerning the 'Native Customs (Recognition) Act' which "was enacted in 1963 after a difficult passage through the Legislative Council" (Law Reform Commission 1977:56). The act allowed that custom was taken into account in criminal and civil cases (including land ownership disputes) under certain conditions. Sack argues that custom was not recognised as a law in its own right, but that certain customs were allowed to be considered in a legal discourse under specific limitations and at the discretion of the court. Thus it reinforced the 'two spheres' approach. I would add that concerning land ownership the act 'legalised' certain customs, thus extending the sphere of law by incorporating selected items of the sphere of custom.
One of the consequences of the indigenisation of the land mediation process was that patrol officers were denied the bits of information about local custom they had acquired in the past. One officer, reporting on a land case in Baluan brought before the Land Demarcation Committee under the chairmanship of Joseph Molealeng (PR 1967-68:9), concluded: "This land case lasted the whole day, the patrol got little out of the meeting because the speakers spoke in local tongue." Thus simply by using local languages the Demarcation Committees reinforced the existence of the two spheres.

The same reinforcement resulted even more strongly from the actual work the committees were set up to do. Although they may have contributed to the settlement of disputes, they did not achieve their main aim of individualising land ownership. Instead the work of the committees led to an invigorated interest in traditional principles of land ownership. The Paliau Movement had succeeded in suspending traditional tenure and in suppressing land disputes only during a limited period. Gradually people sought to reconfirm their titles, often without actually enforcing them. The Demarcation Committees gave new legitimacy to traditional claims and, according to oral accounts, this led to a dramatic increase in disputes. This, then, was the paradoxical effect of the government policy. Although the committees were instituted to extend the sphere of law, they did more than that. They also reinforced the sphere of custom by encouraging an interest in traditional claims. It should be noted though, that the reinforced tradition was also a transformed tradition. Whereas in the past land disputes were frequently settled by warfare, now knowledge of genealogies and land transfers became the crucial means by which to win a dispute. Land mediation by the Demarcation Committees gave rise to a specific discourse of tradition.16

A second and perhaps equally unexpected ally in the revaluation of tradition movement was the Education Department. The first to suggest this to me was Molat Aumbou of Lipan in Baluan. Talking about his life history, he mentioned that he returned to Baluan to become headmaster of the primary school in 1968. He replaced an expatriate teacher and became the first local headmaster of that school.

16 Of course land mediation by patrol officers had also involved the reference to traditional principles of ownership. This kind of customary discourse was, however, limited by the lack of knowledge of government officers. My informants agree that knowledge of 'stories' became really important only after the institution of Demarcation Committees. I will return to this point in the next section.
Upon his return he began to invite knowledgeable village people to the school to instruct the children in traditional handcraft, drumming and singing. He organised this during the hours reserved for expressive arts and cultural activities. He said that he wanted to inform the children about traditional as well as Western ways. Inside the classroom he taught Western music and outside the classroom village elders gave instruction in traditional arts.

Sister Theodore, a Catholic nun who worked for many years as a teacher in Manus, informed me that the same thing happened all over Manus. It was in fact a new policy of the Education Department to encourage teachers to invite village people to the school during the two hours a week reserved for cultural activities. The reason was to prevent children from being completely "severed from their homes". Sr Theodore dated this change of policy to the early 1970s.

The change in attitude towards indigenous customs is clearly reflected in the chapters on education of the official government reports to the United Nations (Commonwealth of Australia 1947-74). Prior to 1969-70 the general objectives of educational policy were: i) the political, economic, social and educational advancement of the peoples of the Territory; ii) a blending of cultures; iii) the voluntary acceptance of Christianity by the indigenous people in the absence of any indigenous body of religious faith founded on teaching or ritual.

It is the second objective that is of interest here. The term 'blending of cultures' was coined by the government anthropologist F.E. Williams in an essay written in 1935 (see Young 1990 and McKinnon 1972:345). It referred to the preservation of valuable elements of indigenous cultures, the eradication of those elements incompatible with modern society, and the enrichment of the blend of indigenous features with elements of Western culture including Christianity. This policy aim is reminiscent of the 'two spheres' approach in legal matters, but it differs from the latter in proposing a certain degree of integration. It is clear, however, that this integration or 'blend' is not a genuine synthesis of two ways of life, as one sphere is considered dominant and normative. Parts of the 'sphere of traditional society' may be maintained only if they are compatible with and can be incorporated into the 'sphere of modern society'. The government reports (Commonwealth of Australia

17 It would be interesting to do a comprehensive analysis of documents produced by the Education Department but this is outside the scope of this thesis.
1947 and following years) make it clear that the parts of traditional society that should be preserved are "the more valuable elements of indigenous art". It is hard to tell from the reports how much effort went into the realisation of this goal.

In the 1969-70 and later reports the general objectives were formulated somewhat differently. The first aim had survived intact but the third aim had disappeared. Objective ii) was rephrased as: "an understanding and an appreciation of traditional indigenous culture and the cultures of other societies and the growth of a distinctive national cultural identity appropriate to the present." This implied a much more positive attitude towards tradition as a total way of life.\(^\text{18}\) The reason for this revaluation appears to be a concern that individuals became cut off from their social roots.\(^\text{19}\) An additional consideration was obviously that many school children would not be able to pursue further studies and would have to stay in the village.\(^\text{20}\) Therefore the school assumed the new role of preparing children for village life: "Learning situations have been chosen which will help children to live in their own villages" (Commonwealth 1974:192).\(^\text{21}\) A "much greater emphasis [was] placed on cultural activities in many centres" (ibid.). In Baluan the consequences of this policy were evident. Children who went to school in the 1970s had a much greater knowledge of things like traditional drumming and dancing than their elder siblings and their parents who grew up in the late 1940s, 1950s and 1960s.

A third development which had a positive impact on the local revaluation process was the emergence of tradition as an issue in the political and intellectual debates at the national level.\(^\text{22}\) At least some people in the village were aware of

\(^{18}\) The aim also expresses the need for the creation of a national identity, thereby reflecting the political developments of the time (see below).

\(^{19}\) Under 'Primary Education Policy' (Commonwealth of Australia 1971:181) this is formulated as follows: "Change as an ever present factor creates many difficulties for the individual. To avoid these difficulties it is important that the cultural heritage of the community be preserved by close attention being given to the social customs, the traditions, beliefs, art, music and dancing of the communities to ensure that the school has an organic link with the world of the children."

\(^{20}\) In the 1971-72 report (Commonwealth of Australia 1973:218) we read for example: "The objective is to turn out students possessing literacy and numeracy skills that they will retain, an understanding and appreciation of traditional Papua New Guinea culture and realistic aspirations". (my emphasis)

\(^{21}\) This is a remarkable inversion indeed. Introduced as a means to prepare the indigenous people for modern society, the school now has to help them to appreciate their traditional way of life.

\(^{22}\) Similar developments occurred throughout the Pacific; cf. Babadzan (1988) and Keesing (1982 and 1989). Differences between national and local discourses have also been observed for other places; see for example Lindstrom (1982) and Thomas (1989b).
this connection as became evident when I questioned a close associate of Paliau about the radical change of attitude which had occurred in Baluan in recent times. He thought that Paliau had become influenced by the ideas of Michael Somare and that he had consequently changed his own stance in the matter. To explore the likelihood of this kind of ideological diffusion I first sketch some national developments.23

It appears that traditional principles and attitudes became increasingly a matter of discussion in the second House of Assembly (1968-1972).24 The issue came up in relation to specific problems or conflicts, especially land matters. Concrete examples were the debate on royalties from the Bougainville copper mine;25 the acquisition of land to extend the main runway in Rabaul; the conflicts concerning land titles in urban Port Moresby and Lae. Another area in which the matter of tradition arose was criminal law. An example of this was the sorcery bill, moved by Pangu Pati's Paul Lapun, which allowed for the prosecution of malicious sorcery. Tony Voutas remembered that the issue of a Papua New Guinean way of doing things was discussed during Pangu Pati meetings. The Papua New Guinean way should be informed by traditional values and principles without, however, being rigidly bound by them. This point of view was strongly supported by Albert Maori Kiki, Michael Somare, Paul Lapun and others. Paliau was at best a fringe member of Pangu, being in the first place fiercely independent, but he took part in many meetings from the foundation of the party in June 1967 (Voutas, personal communication; see also Somare 1975:50-51).

23 As far as I am aware the emergence of a national traditionalist discourse in Papua New Guinea has not yet been systematically researched. Lindstrom (n.d.) gives an interesting and valuable overview of the contemporary discourse and its ambiguities but he does not detail its origin. The following discussion is based on some discursive reading and personal communication. Therefore I have to disclaim any comprehensiveness in my preliminary presentation of this subject.

24 This information is based on personal communication from Tony Voutas who was a member of the House of Assembly from August 1966 to March 1972. He was one of three expatriate founding members of the Pangu Pati. He remarked that the issue of traditional rights had also occurred in the first House of Assembly (1964-1968) concerning a bill banning the hunting of birds of paradise and crocodiles. The bill, which was introduced by the Administration under pressure from Western conservationists, had to be amended allowing village people to hunt these animals by traditional methods.

25 The agenda was tabled by Paul Lapun and concerned traditional concepts of land ownership. According to Voutas, Paliau Maloat spoke in favour of recognising traditional rights.
In an official Pangu Pati policy statement of 1972 tradition was certainly not the central issue. Key policy points were self-government and economic progress. However, in the argumentation for self-government the idea of a distinct Papua New Guinean way was developed:

When Papua Niuginians are running the government, they will understand our problems. While Australia is running our government, it is trying to solve our problems in an Australian fashion. This is not always good for our people. But when Papua Niuginians are our leaders, they will develop our country in a Papua Niuginian fashion.

An awareness of the value of indigenous traditions was clearly emerging at that time, but it had not evolved into a predominant political program. Some people were more articulate in their search for a Papua New Guinean way than others. Somare and Kiki, for example, adopted the tailored *laplap* as an expression of a distinct cultural identity. There was also a growing concern with the preservation of the material tokens of traditional cultures. The question of the sources of inspiration for this growing awareness can only be touched upon here. Enlightened expatriate lecturers and advisers certainly had an influence. African leaders and authors such as Nyerere of Tanzania presumably served as models. Perhaps the

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28 Somare became chairman of the board of trustees of the National Museum in 1969 and this stimulated his interest in the matter (Somare 1975:30).

29 Ulli Beier, for example, taught literature and creative writing at UPNG and stimulated indigenous authors to develop their own style. In the History Department Hank Nelson and others encouraged students to record the oral traditions of their villages (many of which were published in the journal *Oral History*). Nigel Oram informed me that with few exceptions the students initially did not have a strong awareness of the value of local traditions. Nelson (1972: 182ff.) mentions that more outspoken students had become "agressively nationalist" since 1968. He refers to American black literature, the histories of new states and the New Left as the main sources of inspiration for these students (ibid: 184). The revaluation of tradition does not appear to have been a feature of this early nationalism; at least it is not mentioned. Nelson (ibid: 187) speculates, however, that the developing Papua New Guinean nationalism will be characterised by (among other things) "an emphasis on contemporary Niuginian culture. While pride may be taken in the remnants of a culture now packaged for tourists, it will not be presented as the living culture."

30 Voutas suggested this to me and there are indications of it in Somare's autobiography, for example where he talks about the name Pangu (Somare 1975:51) and when he describes his trip to Africa as a member of the Select Committee on Constitutional Development: "On this trip I was the only Pangu
strongest impact came from local political movements in which traditional values became accentuated such as the Mataungan Association in East New Britain, and, later, the Kabisawali Movement in the Trobriands. Because the political conflict was more direct, ideological positions became more polarised than at the national level.

In the years before Independence the movement towards the incorporation of traditional values into the political debate appeared to have gained momentum. This is evident from the work of the multi-party Constitutional Planning Committee under the chairmanship of Fr John Momis of the Pangu Pati. The Committee formulated five national goals which were included in the Constitution. The first goal concerned ‘Integral human development’. In the explanation to this goal the following point is made:

These conditions can only be brought about when the running of the country is in the hands of Papua New Guineans who cherish a genuine respect for the traditions of our country, and our people; who can distinguish those features of the peoples’ traditions that should be retained from those that should be allowed to lapse; and who know how to discern what is good in what other nations and peoples have to offer to Papua New Guineans (Constitutional Planning Committee 1974:2/4).

This paragraph is particularly interesting in that it clearly shows that tradition is not uncritically adopted: there are good and not so good customs. Nor is tradition considered as the only guide for conduct Papua New Guineans should employ.

31 See Somare (1975: 111ff. and 126ff.), where he discusses the traditionalist aspects of these movements and his attitude towards them. See further Grosart (1982) and Leach (1982) for descriptions of the two movements. In his conclusion to the edited volume in which these two contributions appeared, Ron May remarks that all movements described "are essentially modernizing in their outlook" but that "most have also emphasized traditional values and some, such as Kabisawali and Komge Oro, actively seek to maintain traditional social and cultural forms" (May 1982:423; see also pages 13-15 and 444). Compare also Nelson (1972:214-222) and Griffin, Nelson and Firth (1979:154-159 and 202-205) for the political context.

32 Momis was the deputy chairman and de facto chairman because Somare, who was ex officio chairman as the Chief Minister, was too busy to fulfill this task. John Kaputin, of the Mataungan Association, was one of the articulate members of the committee (see Griffin, Nelson and Firth 1979:217-222) and Bernard Narokobi was the only indigenous member of a team of four permanent consultants (Constitutional Planning Committee 1974:iii).

33 I am grateful to Nigel Oram for bringing this point to my attention.
Although a respect for tradition is postulated as the starting point, the emphasis is on open-mindedness and a syncretic attitude towards development.

The fifth and last national goal is called 'Papua New Guinea ways'. The Committee formulated this goal as: "Development should take place primarily through the use of Papua New Guinean forms of social, political and economic organization" (Constitutional Planning Committee 1974:24). The goal is further explicited in four points which stress: 'Papua New Guinean forms of participation, consultation and consensus' (1), small-scale economic development (2), appreciation of cultural diversity (3), traditional villages and communities remaining as viable units of Papua New Guinea (4). This goal not only provides the most explicit statement of the value of traditional ways, but it also attempts to give this rather vague (because general) concept some concreteness. In the final text of the Constitution accepted by the National Parliament the importance of tradition was also stressed in the first lines of the 'Preamble'.

After Independence the theme of tradition and of a distinct 'Papua New Guinean way' was further explored and developed by indigenous authors. In his autobiography, which appeared on Independence Day, Somare emphasises the continuity he feels with the traditions of his ancestors.

When looking for solutions to our problems I will continue to rely on the tradition of Sana that I was born into, brought up in, and initiated into. The modern nation state faces us with problems my grandfather never dreamed about; but the wisdom of Sana is just as relevant today as it was in his own time (Somare 1975:148).

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34 In the explanatory discussion of the fifth goal the same question is addressed in different words: "Our ways emphasize egalitarianism and commitment to the community. They recognize the individual as a member of his community. We place great stress on our obligations to our extended families. We share our wealth. We view life in an undivided total picture. These ways of thinking and acting should be encouraged, even in the face of the great emphasis of Western thinking on artificial differentiation between things spiritual or sacred and things physical or profane" (Constitutional Planning Committee 1974:24).

35 "We, the people of Papua New Guinea, united in one nation; pay homage to the memory of our ancestors - the source of our strength and origin of our combined heritage; acknowledge the worthy customs and traditional wisdoms of our people - which have come down to us from generation to generation; pledge ourselves to guard and pass on to those who come after us our noble traditions and the Christian principles that are ours now." Technically 'custom' was made part of the 'underlying law' (Schedule 2 of the Constitution).
Bernard Narokobi wrote a series of articles in the *Post-Courier* under the title 'The Melanesian voice'.\(^{36}\) He included West Papua, The Solomon Islands, New Hebrides, New Caledonia and Fiji in his search for a separate cultural identity, 'the Melanesian Way', of which he became one of the staunchest propagators. The Institute of Papua New Guinea Studies, founded to "encourage Papua and New Guineans to rediscover and absorb their own cultures", published a magazine, *Gigibori*, in which radical authors like John Kasaiwalovo could articulate and disseminate their ideas.\(^{37}\) And of course there were many other outlets, for example the National Broadcasting Commission.\(^{38}\) In the second half of the 1970s a discourse of tradition was firmly established at the national level and young intellectuals could not help being exposed to it. Before returning to the local scene I have to emphasise that tradition never became a paramount value. The concept of a Melanesian way remained a contested one.\(^{39}\)

What can be said about the spread of these ideas to Manus and Saluan in particular? There is no doubt that Paliau's stance towards tradition had changed by 1972, when he was not re-elected into the National Parliament. Not only had he spoken in support of traditional land rights during his second term in the House of Assembly, but he had also favoured the revival of traditional art forms.\(^{40}\) Schwartz (1976b:225) saw Paliau performing a traditional dance himself:

To my amazement (thinking back on earlier rigidities), Paliau staged such a dance in 1973 in which he, wearing the dog's teeth ornaments of a traditional 'Big Man', was the featured dancer.

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\(^{36}\) A selection of articles written between 1976-1977 was published in 'The Melanesian Way' (Narokobi 1980).

\(^{37}\) In the introduction to the first issue Somare clearly links the revaluation of tradition to the creation of a national identity: "With this new magazine the Institute is hoping to create a broadly based interest in the value of our traditional life. The magazine wants to help us, not only to know more about our past, but also to recognize the many common elements that exist in the traditions of Papua New Guinea. For all the indefinite variety of forms and styles, we believe that we share some very fundamental, basic attitudes to life that will enable us to make a modern nation state with a distinct identity and culture of our own" (*Gigibori* 1 (1):iii).

\(^{38}\) See Beier (1980) for an anthology of writings from this period.

\(^{39}\) See for example Narokobi (1980: 247-277) and Lindstrom (n.d.) Many Papua New Guineans adopted the compromising stance expressed by the Constitutional Planning Committee: some customs are good, others ought to be abolished.

\(^{40}\) In the minutes of a Manus Local Government Council meeting on 12 September 1972 we can read that councillor Paliau Maloat moved a resolution to acquire some *garamuts* (slitgongs) for the Council.
We can only speculate about the reasons for Paliau's change of attitude, as he himself denies any discontinuity. It is unlikely that he was not influenced by the meetings of the Pangu Pati in which he took part so often. A staunch supporter of self-government, he probably also warmed towards Pangu's ideological justification of it: Papua New Guineans would do things in a Papua New Guinean way. It is equally likely that Paliau's change of mind was motivated by the political developments in Manus. Although he had opposed the re-emergence of traditional exchanges, he had failed to check this process. Moreover, the years 1972-73 proved a turning point in his political career. Not only did he lose his seat in the national election, but in 1973 he was also ousted as chairman and member of the Area Authority (see chapter 6). He remained a councillor for his constituency, but he did not play a leading role in provincial politics. It may well be, then, that Paliau embraced tradition in an attempt to resuscitate his dwindling political support. Having lost his position as a modern political leader and innovator, he was presumably looking for other sources of authority and political power.

When, in 1974, an official committee was reviewing the electoral boundaries in order to reduce the number of electorates to 15 in preparation for a provincial government, Paliau Maloat sent them a letter. He argued that Lou should remain a separate electorate and should not be joined with Baluan and Pam. The reason for this was that Lou people were all members of the Seventh Day Adventist Church and therefore opposed to tradition. Paliau claimed that three churches on Baluan – the Christian Native Church, the Catholic Church and the Bahai – did not pose any problems.

The work of these three churches is all right. They cooperate in customary work and in all kinds of work to promote the unity within the village.

SDA members, however, refused to join in this 'wok blong tubuna na ol kaen wok bung insaet long pies' (work of the ancestors and all kinds of gatherings within...

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41 It was called the Manus Electoral Boundaries Distribution Team.

42 This is the Paliau Church.

43 Free translation of: Em ol dispela 3pela lotu ya wok blong ol i oraet. Ol i sape wok bung wantaim long wok blong tubuna na ol kaen wok blong unity insaet long pies.
the village). Therefore it would cause problems if Lou were united with Baluan and Pam in one electorate.44 Significantly 'traditional work' is related to the idea of promoting the unity of the village. It should be remembered that the early Paliau Movement rejected tradition precisely because it divided the community. This remarkably inversion of values started with the justification of the polpolot. Whereas the latter was primarily concerned with the unity of the larger family, Paliau now extends this function of 'customary work' to the community as a whole. The terms involved also deserve attention. Paliau uses only the phrase wok blong tubuna to refer to traditional (or traditionalist) practices. The word kastam is completely absent in the letter. This suggests that this word had not gained currency at that time.45

In 1978 the situation was different. That year saw the revitalisation of the Paliau Movement under a new name: Makasol. Makasol is a contraction of Manus Kastam Kansol. The Tok Pisin word for tradition thus featured even in the name of the Movement. The impetus for the formation of Makasol came from some young, well-educated Manus men who had left their prestigious jobs in Port Moresby to assume political roles in their home province. Two initial leaders were Paliau Lukas, who was the first Papua New Guinean to be National Housing Commissioner, and Peter Kuwoh, a captain in the PNG Defence Force. These young men had absorbed the political discussions of the national capital and come home bristling with new ideas. Raised in the Paliau Movement they turned to this group again for a political platform. Paliau was sympathetic to their plans and remained the acknowledged leader of the Movement, though it is clear that much of the ideological developments were initiated by his new lieutenants.

One of the main features of the revived Movement was that tradition was extensively employed as a political symbol. Makasol claimed to be faithful to the way of the ancestors whereas the groups they opposed were not. As Makasol was both a political and a religious movement, it rejected the sitting government as well as the

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44 Paliau mentions that there are also SDA members on Baluan and Pam, but then neglects them in his argument. He further explains that SDA members mock at mipela man blong 1946 (we people from 1946) by using the word 'cargo cult'.

45 The same conclusion may be drawn from Mihalic (1971), the most extensive dictionary of Tok Pisin. The entry 'kastam' receives only the gloss of 'customs office, customs shed' (ibid: 107). It would be interesting to investigate the etymology of the word in other places in Melanesia and to look for regional borrowing and influence. Kastom is listed in a Bislama dictionary of 1977 with the meaning 'tradition, traditional ways, custom' (Lindstrom 1982:317) indicating its currency at the time. In older dictionaries (1956-57 and 1913) the word is absent.
missions as Western and anti-tradition. Makasol's explicitly stated aim was to take over the government and to oust the other churches. In appropriating kastam as their way of doing things, Makasol had to stretch the meaning of this concept. The local government council system, for example, was presented as following the ancestral traditions. Understandably, the inversion of the value of tradition led to problems in the representation of the Movement's history. I will explore this theme in the next chapter and I will also show that Makasol's overwhelming concern was not with tradition but with religion. Here it suffices to observe that Makasol adroitly exploited the general change in attitude towards tradition for political gain. In doing so it fostered this change of attitude and contributed to the diffusion of the word kastam.

The three developments described thus far — administrative policies towards land and education and the emergence of a national discourse of tradition — all had a direct effect on the local cultural revaluation process. A fourth development had perhaps the most far-reaching impact on this process, albeit in a more indirect way. I refer to the social and economic changes described in the previous chapter which resulted in the creation of two types of Baluan people: residents and migrant workers. In the interaction between these two groups tradition became a crucial factor conditioning a flow of wealth from town to the village. I examine this relationship in the next section.

The history of the sphere of tradition can be roughly characterised by decades. The 1930s and 1940s saw the objectification of 'the way of the ancestors' and its complete rejection in the Paliau Movement. In the next decade a sphere of tradition officially did not exist except in its negation and suppression. Some exchanges continued to be performed secretly. In the 1960s the restoration of tradition began with the introduction of the polpolot, which was still a heterodox activity. The 1970s witnessed a continual growth of the traditional sphere which became reinforced by national developments. Finally, in the 1980s, traditional practices flourished and the terms kastam and kastamwok became the accepted terms to describe them. Tradition remained contested ground, however, and its area had to be continually defined and defended against that of gavman and lotu.
Life, land and remittances

The emergence of the sphere of kastam coincided with a substantial growth in the number of Manus people who were in paid employment outside their home area (see chapter 6). Therefore the question arises whether there was any relation between these two developments. In what follows I will suggest that the increase of migrant labour created circumstances which had a positive impact on the revaluation process. This relationship between the modern economy and an invigorated tradition has already been documented and analysed by Carrier and Carrier (1989) for another Manus society. The evidence from Baluan fully supports their central thesis that there was a kind of symbiosis between residents and migrants with both groups providing goods, symbolic or material, necessary for the existence of the other (ibid: 224-225). My description will only differ from that of the Carriers in some details and emphases, mainly due to differences between the Ponam and the Baluan situations.

The economic changes described in the previous chapter led to the differentiation of Baluan people into two groups. Those who had successfully completed higher forms of education were generally able to secure salaried positions in the urban economy, whereas the others stayed in or returned to the village. The well-trained migrants mostly enjoyed good incomes and their relative wealth was coveted by the people on the island. The growing economic inequality was counterbalanced, however, by mechanisms which encouraged the transfer of part of the migrants' wealth back to the village. Urban Baluan people maintained strong bonds with their home island and frequently sent remittances to their kinsfolk. Their contributions did not stem only from generosity and kin loyalty. The villagers had control over things that were essential to the lives of the migrants.

In spite of more than 50 years of missionary influence in Baluan, many traditional beliefs concerning illness and misfortune had survived until the time of fieldwork. In many respects modern Baluan religiosity was a syncretic mixture of traditional and Christian principles and practices. Modern education had complemented rather than replaced traditional explanations for disease. When someone fell ill or incurred adversity of some other kind, the whole range of possibilities was scrutinised. In addition to and often prior to having recourse to physical explanations, the likelihood of causes of a different kind had to be
examined. Had there been a conflict within the family that had not been resolved? Had the sick person or someone else failed to honour a request from parents or patrilineal kin, especially father's sisters and brothers? Had an offended kinsperson resorted to cursing (teten)?

All these things were considered as possible causes of illness but also of other kind of misfortune such as failure in school or in a job. In order to cure the illness or to remove the cause of the misfortune, it was imperative to have a meeting of the family in which grievances were uttered and in which gifts were exchanged to secure a new harmony. The fear of sanctions from dissatisfied kinspeople was very real, even among the best educated. Schwartz (1976b:228-29) gives a telling example of the same belief in a Titan society. A well-positioned Manusian in Port Moresby told him that his "buttocks [were] afraid", because his father had cursed him. "As a result, the son had failed an examination and missed a job opportunity" (ibid: 228). For this reason migrants found it difficult to reject a request for money or for gifts, especially if it came from close relatives.

If the family problems were not solved in time, this could have grave consequences. During the time of fieldwork, several deaths on Baluan were believed to have resulted from unwillingness or tardiness to restore proper relations. In this context people would often say: "Our kastam is not good". The serious cases were deplored, but simultaneously also used as examples to stress the seriousness of the matter. If people died outside Baluan, the possibility of a family-related cause was examined. However, this option was mostly rejected and the explanation often shifted to sorcery or other forms of murder committed by jealous colleagues in town. Not only was this alternative quite plausible, but it also relieved the family of otherwise unavoidable internal stress. The responsibility of having caused the death of a kinsperson always weighed heavily upon a family and also led to the fear of further deaths, as the spirit of the deceased could come back to take another life in revenge.

46 See chapter 4 for a short discussion of traditional religion and ideas about illness.

47 On Baluan I was told that the practice of cursing and the fear of being cursed was greater among the Mouk than among the Baluan speaking people. Of course this is difficult to measure, but my own feeling was also that the issue was even more urgent among Mouk people than it was among the other inhabitants of the island. Interestingly, Carrier and Carrier (1989) do not mention this particular reason for sending remittances, but they refer to certain exchanges which had to be performed in order to cure illnesses caused by ghosts (ibid: 222-223).
The overwhelming majority of migrant workers expected to return to the village after resignation or retirement.\textsuperscript{48} Many of them lived in houses provided by their employers and would thus lose their accommodation along with their jobs. In the absence of a pension migrants could not sustain their standard of living in town, whereas they were often able to build a good house in the village from their savings.\textsuperscript{49} Apart from economic reasons, migrants often mentioned the insecurity of life in town in contrast to the relative peace of village life as a strong motivation to go home. In addition, many felt a strong sentimental attachment to their native island, of which they were very proud, and they could, therefore, not envisage living anywhere else in old age. Sometimes migrants did not return to their own villages. This was particularly so in the case of people who had spouses from other places. The normal pattern in Manus was that a woman followed her husband to his native village, but there were a few exceptions.\textsuperscript{50}

The economic and emotional need to return to the village made migrants more acutely dependent on their relatives at home than would have been the case if they had the realistic option of staying away. This point was eloquently expressed by a village elder from Lipan, Ngi Kondai, when we discussed a ceremonial exchange that was taking place. His son had a managerial position with Burns Philip in Port Moresby. Referring to his son and some other highly-trained Saluan men, Kondai remarked that their knowledge of \textit{kastam} was not more advanced than that of a grade six primary school student. They still had to learn a great deal. His son had questioned the value of \textit{kastam}. Kondai's answer was:

\begin{quote}
If you want to stay in Port Moresby or Australia, all right, you are lucky. But if you come back, you are wrong. My \textit{kastam} provides me with the name of every piece of land in the area that belongs to me. In addition it gives me the names of all my relatives, who can help me if I need them. Moreover, it also gives me the names of the people who may try to claim my land and it provides me with the reasons why I have more right than they have. If you
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{48} Very few people indeed appeared to reach retirement age, as most workers resigned or were retrenched earlier.

\textsuperscript{49} Compare Carrier and Carrier (1989:192): "More importantly, most migrants were neither rich enough nor poor enough to live in town after retirement".

\textsuperscript{50} Sometimes men feared the sanctions mentioned above because they had neglected their relatives. They would rather give up their right to part of the patrilineal heritage than expose themselves more directly to the wrath of their kin and ancestors.
come back without this knowledge, you will have land but you do not know where it is. If people claim it, you cannot defend yourself. If you come back, you will have relatives, but you do not know who you can ask for help.

Concluding his argument, Kondai said that his son had contributed K1000 towards the bride price for another son's wife. He asked me how many fortnights his son would have to work to earn that amount of money. Proudly he told me that he had challenged his son, saying he could raise the same amount in one day. The next day he had called all his relatives on the island and had even slightly outmatched the K1000 supplied by his wealthy son.

When migrants returned to their home villages, they depended on their relatives for information and help. For a start they had to build a house and make gardens. Therefore they ought to be well-informed of their land rights and of possible land disputes. Further, they needed help in constructing a house: not only manpower – like any other resident – but also technical assistance since many migrants had worked in white-collar jobs. Their knowledge of gardening and fishing was often defective, at least initially. Of these forms of knowledge which migrants lacked, that of land rights was indubitably the most crucial as technical knowledge could be acquired relatively easily. Information concerning land, however, was difficult to obtain even from close relatives, because conflicts of interest were likely to arise.

To claim and defend land rights extensive knowledge was required not only of land names and boundaries but also of genealogies and the history of the land. On Baluan and elsewhere in Manus the general rule was that land remained in the control of a patrilineage. Land could change hands, however, for various reasons connected with marriage, mortuary feasts and warfare. Claims to received land often had to be renewed by taking part in the ceremonial exchanges of the original owners. Knowledge of these ceremonies performed in the past was therefore also necessary. Baluan people informed me that the importance of this kind of knowledge had greatly increased in the 1960s, especially after the introduction of Land Demarcation Committees. In the past people had known only the stories relating to

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51 The principles of land inheritance and land transfer appear to have been rather uniform in Manus. In Otto (1989:40-41), I list the main principles I learned which apply equally to Baluan and to the villages around Seeadler Harbour.

52 This was especially the case if the land was obtained through a woman, whether mother or wife.
their parents’ lineages, as there was no context in which these stories had to be communicated to outsiders. The introduction of land mediation had encouraged people to actively collect information which could be used to best their adversaries. This had apparently developed into a flourishing trade complete with knowledge brokers. People who had spent a lot of time with their parents before the latter passed away obviously had an advantage, as had people in official positions such as land mediators. The overwhelming importance of land made the knowledge business one with very high stakes.

An informant who was lucky to have a rather large undisputed area of land, told me that he did not know his genealogy further back than his greatgrandfather.

In the past there were not many stories on Baluan. People knew only their own land and from whom they had obtained it. They thought it would stay that way. Now there are many false stories used by people to appropriate land that is not really theirs. Baluan is full of lies. People with many children appear to have many lies. They try to get land back that has been given a long time ago. People with few children do not have many stories.

The same theme I heard over and over again. Generally people were not loath to mention names of those they considered liars. There was a remarkable consistency in the names that were provided: people who talked a lot during land sessions were prone to be on the unofficial blacklist. However, this did not seem to affect their influence.

The emergence of a traditionalist discourse concerning land rights was conditioned by two other developments. Pacification had ended or at least limited the option of using force in the settlement of land disputes. Moreover, it had enabled the division of land property: the practice of giving away little pieces of land apparently developed only in colonial times. The second conditioning factor was the creation of an institutional arena in which traditional knowledge could be employed in making and defending claims. Although patrol officers had heard land cases, the

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53 A Manus land mediator even showed me a list of names he had sent to the land magistrate to warn him about people whose evidence could not be trusted.

54 In Otto (n.d.) I have called this the genealogical discourse.
new traditionalist discourse only really burgeoned when local people with detailed knowledge of local customs began to act as mediators.

Young people in the village were very much aware of the importance of genealogical knowledge and tried to assemble an overall picture of information pertinent to their land by combining bits and pieces obtained from every source they had access to. Migrants were equally aware of the significance of the matter, but they had simply much less time to garner the data they needed. Not only did it take a long time to learn all the names and stories, but knowledgeable old people were not in the business of giving this information away freely. They expected to be respected and to be looked after diligently. Although a growing number of migrants visited home not only with gifts but also with notebooks, they were still at a disadvantage compared with their resident siblings and cousins. The latter were almost continuously in the presence of their elders and therefore had a much greater chance of learning the necessary details. Not infrequently, old people were dissatisfied with the gifts they received from their relatives in town and withheld important information from them until they changed their behaviour. This was the ultimate power of the older generation over the young, resident as well as migrant: if they felt inadequately cared for, old people would simply take their knowledge with them into the grave.

For all the reasons mentioned, there was a steady stream of remittances flowing to the island. Migrant workers would seldom visit their relatives empty-handed. Some migrants told me that the pressure to take along plentiful gifts was forcing them to avoid going home too often. When they were at work, migrants were certainly not safe from requests. Sometimes residents would travel all the way to their working kinsfolk in order to emphasise a special need. In other cases telephone or mail correspondence sufficed to solicit postal money orders, which were then often announced through radio broadcast in the daily toksave (announcement) program. Requests for money or goods would arise from the needs of the residents: someone was sick; another was planning to build a house; a third had to pay school fees; etc. Envy and competition between families was exploited to put pressure on migrants: "if they have an outboard motor we must have one too."

55 For example, the son of the informant quoted above had more genealogical knowledge than his father. More and more young people used exercise books to record the information they obtained.
Probably the most effective way to extract money from migrants was to organise a major ceremonial exchange, particularly a bride price payment. This kind of ceremony was carefully planned in advance and often conducted during the holidays of migrant workers so that they would be able to participate in person. The death of a close relative was another compelling reason for migrants to go home in order to attend the funeral. Immediately after burying the dead body a large distribution of money and cloth \((pailou)\) had to take place and migrants were expected to contribute substantially according to their income. In both cases, bride price payment as well as mortuary distribution, the closest kinspeople did not profit directly from the money given, but they benefitted from the symbolic capital accrued. Bride prices were part of a series of exchanges and a high amount given or expected would generate large countergifts. Pailou distributions did not have immediate material returns, but they confirmed property rights as well as kin loyalty, which could be translated into requests for help. Moreover, both kinds of ceremonies, but especially bride price payments, were competitive and contributed to the status of a lineage and its leader.

It was extremely hazardous for kinspeople not to contribute to such exchanges. The sanctions against abstention were formidable and included loss of status, weakening of land rights and risk of illness. Participation, on the other hand, increased people's status and social credit and reinforced their land rights. If

56 The burial was delayed as long as possible to allow migrant kinspeople time to travel to Baluan. Most were able to arrange a flight quickly and arrive in time, at least if the weather permitted speedboats to go out.

57 In this respect Baluan exchange practice differed from that on Ponam. Carrier and Carrier (1989:203) emphasise that Ponam exchange was in general not competitive. The few exceptions concerned exchanges with people from other places in Manus. In Baluan competition extended to exchanges within the village, although the line is more difficult to draw than in Ponam as almost always kinsfolk from other villages were involved. It is true, though, that competitiveness was not as central and assertive as in the cultures Carrier and Carrier contrast Ponam with (Young 1971, Strathern 1971, Gregory 1980). Nevertheless competition played an important role in the organisation of ceremonial exchanges and in the effort to collect as high an amount as possible. The total sum of a bride price (and to lesser extent of a pailou distribution) was very important and was frequently compared with the achievements of others. Primarily, the amount was contrasted with those at similar occasions within the village and on the island. Comparison with other places was less prominent as there appeared to be considerable differences between groups. The highest confirmed bride price among Baluan speaking people was about K10,000, whereas a few men in the Titan speaking group to which Mouk, Tilianu and Mouklan belonged, had reached double that amount. Although competitiveness was important in such cases, it should not be exaggerated. Of more direct importance was that a distribution was fair and that no one who had a right to a share was forgotten or slighted. This was therefore similar to what happened on Ponam (Carrier and Carrier 1989:205-206).
migrants wanted to return home and live there in local esteem after retirement, they really did not have a choice.

Returning to the central thesis posed by Carrier and Carrier (1989), it may be concluded that there was indeed a symbiosis between Baluan migrants and residents. Both parties controlled specific knowledge and resources which the other needed. Migrants were generally highly educated. Their Western style knowledge gave them access to paid employment in the modern economy. Their income was an important resource, which was needed by residents for school fees, building materials and capital goods like outboard motors and speedboats. Moreover, migrants sometimes paid for special medical treatment of their relatives. Residents, on the other hand, largely controlled the sphere of local and traditional knowledge. Therefore they were in command of matters pertaining to land, the most important resource on the island. In addition residents had a great influence on the health and success of migrants due to the persistence of traditional beliefs concerning family relations and spirits. Finally residents had to support migrants when they returned, both through labour and practical information.

Both parties were well aware of this relationship. Migrants sometimes complained about the pressure which was exercised upon them by the ongoing exchanges in their home villages. They pointed out that they were unable to save money to start a business or to build a house. Some migrants therefore regretted the emergence and continuing strength of kastam in the villages. Others were more positive and saw it as the preservation of valuable elements of their own culture which would otherwise be lost. They attributed some of the contemporary social problems in the villages to modern developments and referred to the unity of traditional village life which could be preserved by kastamwok (ceremonial exchanges) and the authority of lapans.

Residents were also divided in their assessment of tradition. Although, as a group, they had an interest in kastam, not everyone had an equal interest. In the next section I explore some of the oppositions within the village which led to different valuations of kastam. One fundamental division has already been mentioned, namely that between old and young. Clearly, old people with considerable knowledge of the past had the strongest interest in tradition and they were generally
its strongest supporters.\textsuperscript{58} This applied equally to men and women. Although only men could lead ceremonial exchanges and make public speeches, women were at least as eager participants as men. Moreover, old people of either sex could have extensive knowledge of tradition and land rights and thus be much sought-after sources of information. Younger people were more diverse in their opinions. Some believed that kastam could never disappear as it belonged to the land. Many were critical of some of the exchanges which they wanted abolished or changed. A number of young people were clearly aware of the powerful interest of the older generation, like the son of one of the kastam champions.

Does puron (ceremonial exchanges) help a newly married couple?\textsuperscript{59} It is only a burden and a lot of work. However, it is hard to change because the old people and big men like it. It is their way of making money.

The son did not reject all kinds of exchanges and found that the traditional way of life was generally preferable to the modern way. He thought, however, that change could not be halted. He commented perceptively that the increasing need for money had affected the exchange of gifts.

Kastam, blsnils and leadership

In the previous sections I have examined how kastam emerged as a separate institutional sphere and how this was connected with interests like traditional leadership, land rights, political struggle and the growing dependency of villagers on cash from migrant workers. In the 1980s kastam was clearly established as a legitimate field of action and discourse, but it certainly had no hegemonic dimensions. It had its proper place only alongside gavman and lotu. The protagonists of the traditional sphere generally did not claim any priority of their

\textsuperscript{58} There were a number of exceptions, mainly for religious reasons.

\textsuperscript{59} Many young people did not like the traditional marriage exchanges as the married couple did not receive anything.
practices over those belonging to the other spheres. Kondai, the *kastam* leader whom I quoted in the previous section, even stated explicitly that those parts of *kastam* that were in conflict with the government or the church had to go. This opinion was widespread: *kastam* is good if it does not interfere with *gavman* or *lotu* (cf. Tonkinson 1981). In practice, however, this was not always so clear-cut and there were many occasions where a conflict did occur.\(^{60}\)

Not all old people were equally in favour of traditional exchanges. Of course, not all of them had the same interests. One man who had enough land but not a high traditional status said:

I am not a man who likes to organise *kastam*. It is to fool people, to get something for nothing.

Then he modified this, saying that *kastam* covered a lot of different things: some were good, others were too difficult. Among staunch supporters critical voices could be heard about the half-hearted way tradition had been reintroduced. Nalel Lungol, daughter of a pre-war *lapan* and *luluai* of Lipan, remarked:

They have not done a good job. Like a tree they have cut: only part they have taken and the rest has been left to rot.

Another *lapan*, Paliou of the same clan, explained why this was the case: \(^ {61}\)

We are only men 'in between'. My generation, we have seen only part of the tradition.

In spite of all these qualifications *kastam* was a vigorous field of activities, which was possibly expanding even further during my stay on Baluan. This expansion was brought about simply by the organisation of ceremonial exchanges as this would force, or at least challenge, others to participate. For example, if someone had received part of the *kanaluwai pein* (food given by the bride’s side to the groom’s

\(^{60}\) In chapter 1 I give some examples of this.

\(^{61}\) Paliou was presumably in his late 50s. Of course there were older people than he who had seen more of the tradition. Paliou was, however, respected for his knowledge of genealogies and tradition in general.
side), this would create the obligation to contribute to the bride price (mossap) later. Certainly, not all elderly men had paid bride prices for their sons’ wives. But during new ceremonies they were challenged to fulfill their traditional obligations or lose face. Kastam leaders, though in competition with each other, had a common interest. By extending the field of tradition they also extended their own authority. Therefore they mostly supported each others’ projects - in quasi collusion. The stakes were real enough: land, status, and, increasingly, political authority.

The issue of political authority, like that of land rights, directly concerns the articulation of the domains of kastam and gavman. During the time of my fieldwork there were some interesting developments in the articulation of these two domains which I will briefly describe in order to demonstrate the ongoing process of cultural definition.

Following national developments the Manus Provincial Government had instituted a Cultural Council, consisting of five area representatives. In 1986 the Council developed the plan that villagers should formulate a ‘rule of culture’. The idea was to avoid endless disputes occurring on occasions when traditional ceremonies, dances, or artefacts were used in non-traditional contexts. The rule should specify, for example, who possessed the right to decide on the use and export of a sinal (dancing pole). The plan was greeted with enthusiasm on Baluan. A meeting quickly agreed that it was necessary to carry out a second proposal of the Cultural Council first: the nomination of the leading lapans of every village. The reasoning was that only these lapans had the right to specify cultural rules.

It may be argued that the proposal of the Cultural Council was a clear attempt of a gavman institution to incorporate part of the kastam sphere for its own purposes. Although this was probably the case, the proposal also had quite different consequences. It initiated a series of meetings in the various villages to determine who were the traditional leaders. These meetings reactivated the interest in traditional leadership and its functions. This in turn led to appeals for a greater

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62 The Council was assisted by a cultural officer, who was originally attached to the Department of Education, subdivision of non-formal education. In March 1987, however, this officer was transferred to Commerce as part of a move by the Provincial Government to better exploit the resources of the province. Culture was considered one of those resources as it should serve to attract tourist money.

63 These meetings were considered very important because some lapans attempted to assert their leadership over certain lineages and consequently their claims to certain land areas.
involvement of *lapans* in political decision making. One suggestion was that there should be two kinds of village meetings. One would be restricted to *lapans* who would act as a ‘House of Lords’. The other would be for all villagers. Although this proposal was accepted by a general meeting, it was never carried out.

Other people went even further. They related the increase of law-and-order problems to the end of *lapan* rule in Baluan. In the German and early Australian time it had still been all right because the government offices of *luluai* and *tultul* went to the traditional leaders. However, the system of elections introduced by the Local Government Council had changed this. Pokut Narumbuai put it this way:

> We have governed our place wrongly for 42 years because the leadership did not go to the traditional leaders. We did not govern according to *kastam*. All countries follow their own *kastam*. We must do the same.

The solution suggested in some of these meetings was that only people with *lapan* status should be eligible for government offices. It seems very unlikely to me that this proposal will ever be officially adopted, but the principle of *lapan* authority may be accommodated in some other way. This had in fact already happened in another field of *lapan* influence: that of conflict mediation.

On Baluan it had become an accepted practice that people could bring their disputes to the *lapans* instead of going to the village court. It was essentially a choice of the parties involved which depended in part on the seriousness of the conflict and the relationship between the antagonists. This practice of mediation by *lapans* had developed independently of government interference although some local *gavman* representatives confessed to be in favour of it.

During my fieldwork *lapans* received official recognition for their authority in the field of customary law. In anticipation of new legislation concerning village courts, the Provincial Government had decided that village court magistrates should be

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64 This term was actually used. The proposal is reminiscent of post-colonial codifications of hierarchy in other places, for example Bougainville (councils of chiefs) and Vanuatu (National Advisory Council of Chiefs; M. Jolly personal communication).

65 It runs squarely against one of the fundamental convictions of Baluan people that a leader should always prove himself. Moreover, claims to lapanship are often contested and it would be impossible to establish a clear ranking of people.
elected by the *lapans* of a village. This replaced the existing practice in Manus that all villagers could participate in the election of their magistrate. The rationale was that *lapans* would be able to judge who had sufficient knowledge of customary law, which was considered essential for the adjudication process of a village court.\(^66\) When the new system of election was first introduced to Lipan village, many young people were caught unawares and walked away after airing their anger. The new procedure had not been explained to them, but had simply been presented as the new rule. Although young people could not vote, they were eligible for the office.

People with claims to *lapan* status generally approved of the new developments and appreciated the official recognition of their position. The initiatives of the government to incorporate some of their activities had in fact boosted their authority. Most *lapans* did not mind becoming part of the government. What they worried about was that they should be paid for their services just like community government members and *komitis*. The latter sometimes agreed with this claim but stated that there was simply no money for it.

The articulation of the domains of *kastam* and *lotu* was also developing. The most interesting feature here was that the different denominations varied in their stance towards tradition. In fact they used this issue to accentuate their differences. In the next chapter I will discuss Makasol, a religious as much as a political movement. It had adopted *kastam* as a prime propaganda symbol but in so doing had to stretch its meaning. Catholic and SDA Churches did not differ in their opinion about what constituted *kastam*, but they contrasted starkly in their appreciation of it. The Catholic Church had increasingly embraced parts of the tradition as a valuable cultural legacy and encouraged the incorporation of traditional elements in liturgy and other religious practices. Although it was clear that certain customs were considered wrong, the focus was more on continuity than on discontinuity.\(^67\)

The SDA Church, on the other hand, made a sharp distinction between *kastam*, which was only human law, and God's law, which was written in the Bible and had to be obeyed to the letter. As a result most traditional exchanges were rejected as mere 'idle sacrifice' and thus sinful. The SDA Church actively opposed these

\(^{66}\) Customary law was by constitution an integral part of the underlying law and was especially relevant for the cases a village court could deal with.

\(^{67}\) Compare Jolly (1982:346 and 1989) who makes a similar observation regarding the Catholic Church in South Pentecost.
ceremonial exchanges and penalised people who took part in them, the so-called back-sliders. Nevertheless, most SDA members could not avoid becoming involved in some way or other since they had kin who did not belong to the SDA Church or who had accepted the stigma of being a back-slider. Faithful members followed a sometimes delicate course of honouring family obligations while steering clear of sinful participation in kastam. They regretted the flourishing of exchange practices in neighbouring villages. They would sneer that those people liked kastam so much because it was their way of making some money.

This introduces the last opposition within village life I will explore. How did the contrast between traditional exchanges and modern ways of making money affect villagers' attitudes towards kastam? This question is related to the different meanings of the Tok Pisin word bisnis. Interestingly this term could be applied to both sides of the dichotomy.

Bisnis could refer to someone’s kin and affinal relations, in short to all the people with whom one had customary reciprocal obligations. In this sense people conducted ceremonial exchanges with their bisnis. As an extension of this meaning bisnis could also refer to the exchanges themselves. In that case the word would often have connotations which in fact derived from the Western concept of business as a profitable enterprise. Ceremonial exchanges were indeed seen by many people as a good way to obtain cash. People often strategically planned the exchanges they participated in and how much they gave in particular situations. Many used exercise books to keep account of what they had given and received.

The symbiotic relationship between residents and migrants described in the previous section could – with some license – be considered as a kastam for cash trade. Without doubt the sphere of kastam had important economic implications. Ceremonial exchanges effected a redistribution of wealth from town to the village.

68 The use of bisnis in this or other meanings pertaining to the kinship-descent system is widespread in Papua New Guinea. Mihalic (1971:72) gives as second meaning: clan, tribe (the first is ‘business, trade’). In New Hanover, bisnis included cognate kinsfolk and affines who were not clan members. Cf. Foster (n.d.) for the meaning of bisnis in Tanga where it is clearly opposed to kastam (see chapter 1).

69 Considerations included, for example, who was in charge of the distribution of the counter gift and the nature of that person’s kin obligations. If the initiator of an exchange was not a close relative, there was a great deal of freedom to participate or not. If someone was interested there was always a way in which the contribution could be genealogically motivated.
and also within the village itself. In addition, kastam in the form of festivals, shows and performances was increasingly perceived as another way of earning money. This was explicitly stated by the organisers of such events and the government was urged to supply prize money and other subsidies. The ultimate aim was to attract tourist money and in this project gavman and kastam leaders happily concurred.

Apart from its connection with traditional practices, bisnis was also used to refer to Western-style businesses like trade stores, transport enterprises and cash crop plantations. This kind of business practice was economically important on Baluan and generated an income for the islanders (see chapter 6). The principles on which the success of modern bisnis depended differed substantially from those of customary bisnis. This resulted in frequent conflicts of interest. People who tried to run a business were only too well aware of this problem. A young enterprising Lipan man complained to me how difficult it was for him to manage even a simple petrol outlet.

If you have a business, people know that you have money. Therefore they often ask you to help them with some money for kastamwok.

He found it impossible to refuse such requests from close relatives, who also sometimes used his petrol without paying for it. Not surprisingly the young man was not keen on kastam.

An older man from Manuai had been more successful in limiting his involvement in kastam. He told me:

I am not happy with kastamwok. Bride price payments, I do not take part in them. The way of the deceased, pailou, I do not take part in it. I do not like it. Because I see that I use money which goes without result. When you are working for your bisnis, people do not come to help the bisnis. They only help something in which food is involved. But to help

70 In general, and calculated over a series of exchanges, people with little money but with a lot of traditional knowledge and/or garden products were able to gain cash from ceremonial exchanges. Even people with little input in the exchange system could benefit, as it was almost impossible to exclude certain categories of kin in the redistributions. Compare also Carrier and Carrier (1989:220).

71 He refers to exchanges and feasts.
bisnis which can grow and to help Baluan as a whole, they do not like that. Therefore I am not happy to participate in all these things.

Obviously, his complaint was that a contribution to a ceremonial exchange could not be exchanged for help with his business. On another occasion he said:

*Kastam* is to fool people. A man acts as if he has a lot of money, but it is not really his. It belongs to others. *Kastam* is for people who want to get money from others without having to work hard for it. It is the cause of many problems.

In his rejection of ceremonial exchanges he was supported by his religious ideas as he was a member of the SDA Church. Nevertheless, even this successful businessman did not abstain completely from traditional exchanges and he contributed selectively to the projects of people who were his allies.

In spite of the presence of obvious interests, Western-style *bisnis* had not developed into a separate and legitimate institutional domain like those of *gavman*, *lotu* and *kastam*. There was no cluster of institutions and meanings which everyone would recognise as 'something belonging to *bisnis*' or 'the ways of *bisnis*'. *Bisnis* was an ambiguous term which could refer both to traditional exchanges and to modern economic enterprises. The opposition between these two kinds of practices had not (yet) resulted in a clear semantic division, for example by reserving *bisnis* for one kind of practice or by adding an adjective to distinguish between the two.

People who wanted to follow the logic of modern business development were kept in check by the requirements of the *kastam* sphere. If they tried to negate this, they encountered strong opposition and risked being publicly vilified. They were also in danger of more direct attacks like sorcery or the destruction of property.

A man who had been successful as a modern entrepreneur in the village did not derive any prestige or authority from his business achievements. If he had status on the basis of other criteria, for example if he was a *lapan*, then his wealth was certainly an asset which he could use strategically to increase his influence. However, business activities as such could not gain kudos. The lack of acknowledgement of business 'leaders' can be illustrated by the practice of organising feasts. If a *lapan* prepared a large ceremony, he would never forget to
invite representatives from *gavman* and *lotu* who would get a share of the distribution. Equally, if a *gavman* leader or a *lotu* leader organised a feast, they would make sure that representatives of the other two spheres were present. But I never witnessed anyone being invited or introduced on the basis of *bisnis* accomplishments. I did observe, however, another interesting development. On one occasion a successful businessman made a party to celebrate the completion of his bank loan repayments. Although the feast was relatively modest, the public nature of the celebration could be seen as an attempt to claim legitimacy for his business practices. Some leaders from other domains were invited and did attend.

The question arises why *bisnis* Western style had not developed into a separate institutional sphere. I suggest two possible explanations. Firstly, business enterprise had become associated in part with another sphere, that of *gavman*. The great post-war push to indigenous development of cash crop plantations came from the co-operative movement initiated by the government (see chapter 6). Local economic development remained an important concern of the Administration, colonial as well as independent. This resulted for example in government extension officers advising local people on agricultural innovation and also in cheap loans and subsidies for successful local enterprises. A recent example of government involvement in economic development was the acquisition of a tractor by a business group based in Lipan, Manuai and Mouk. The initiator and president of the business group was Membup Paril, the community government member for Lipan. The money with which the tractor was finally purchased consisted of three parts: contributions by individual share holders, a considerable 'top-up' from community government funds, and a government backed loan.

This example also shows that up to the time of fieldwork business enterprises were organised on a group basis. These ventures often failed to make a profit,\(^72\) but they contributed to an alternative view of business development. Co-operation and the sharing of resources was stressed as opposed to individual effort and competition. The business-like aspects were moved outside the group, as it were, and therefore out of sight.

The second explanation for the failure of *bisnis* to establish itself as a legitimate field of action is simply that the interests such a domain would serve were not

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\(^{72}\) A few were successful, at least for a limited period. See the example of Mouklen described in ch.6.
powerful enough. The number of people who saw modern business as their primary occupation was very small. It is not surprising, therefore, that they were unable to impose their preferred definition of reality on the rest of Baluan. In the previous chapter I have shown that cash crop production probably accounted for about the same amount of cash income as remittances from urban wage earners. However, the majority of copra and cacao producers did not manage their plantations in a business-like way. Most people had only small groves with little or no capital investment. More importantly, they collected their produce only if they needed money and if they considered the price sufficiently high to warrant the effort. Their profits were generally low, because transport and production costs were high for the small amounts produced.

Subsistence agriculture was the main component of the Baluan economy. It was well articulated with traditional kin obligations and ceremonial exchanges in which food played a crucial part. Remittances were a highly visible and essential part of the cash income of Baluan residents. The intricate and interested relation between remittances and kastam has been investigated in the previous section. Finally, cash crop production was an equally essential source of income, but only a minority of producers operated their plantations according to an economic logic of investment, profit and expansion. A similar point can be made concerning the trade stores and transport enterprises (see chapter 6). It may be argued, therefore, that for most Baluan residents kastam accorded better with their interests than bisnis Western-style.

This is not to say, however, that the situation will necessarily remain that way. As Zollinger (1982:43) and Carrier and Carrier (1989:196-220) have argued, the relative importance of remittances could well decrease in the near future. That would give a further economic incentive to local business development. During my fieldwork there were signs that bisnis may be gaining some ground. I have mentioned the businessman's party. I should add that a growing number of young people expressed interest in economic development and dissatisfaction with certain customary practices and obligations. Moreover, the SDA Church had a more positive attitude towards bisnis than the other denominations and was actually expanding into Catholic strongholds. Let me end this chapter with the prediction of one of the main political leaders of Baluan, Molat Aumbou. After he had stated that
*kastam* and *bisnis* were contradictory in some respects, he gave the following answer to my question as to which of the two would prevail:

It looks as if *bisnis* will win. The reason is that all the big men who have a strong belief in *kastam*, all these men are dying out. Therefore it appears that *bisnis* will win.
The Paliau Movement aimed at creating a new society. In so doing it created a new type of history. In this chapter I first look at the features of this type of history and then examine how Makasol preserves and adapts the ideological legacy of the Movement. Next, I investigate the present-day representations of the Movement and its achievements. These representations are clearly influenced by the revaluation of tradition explored in the previous chapter.

The Long Story of God

The Long Story of God, summarised in chapter 5, played a vital role in the early stages of the Movement. Paliau’s followers learnt it by heart and retold it countless times. Its message reached many villagers and guided their thoughts. It was also written down by a few villagers who had gained some literacy through mission training or government work. Clearly, the Long Story differs from other historical narratives presented in this thesis: stories about lapans, about resistance against the government, about the arrival of the lotu, about labour contracts. What is distinctive about the Long Story?

In the first place it is a divine history. It narrates God’s creation of the world and His intervention in human history. This differs completely from the lotu stories which deal with the transmission of cultural elements by human beings. Within traditional Manus culture the Long Story could be compared with some of the myths collected by Fr Meyer (1907-1909), namely those concerned with the origin of things (see chapter 5). It is not clear, however, what social function these myths had at the time
they were collected.\(^1\) According to Mead (1975\cite{1956}:61-62) they were of little importance in Pere around 1928. In contemporary Baluan this kind of origin myth is not known, although a variety of mythical stories are told.\(^2\) The function of the Long Story in the Paliau Movement is best comparable with that of the Bible in other Christian Churches. The Story is Paliau's reformulation of parts of the biblical narrative to suit his own purpose and message. It recounts the historical causes of the present condition of indigenous people and explains the possibility of redemption. In the form of a historical narrative it develops the basic tenets of the Movement's religious system.

A second contrast to other historical narratives concerns the group of people which is addressed by the Long Story. Whereas other histories are connected with particular groups such as lineages, villages or church organisations, or with particular categories of people such as ex-labourers, the Long Story speaks to all Manus people. It even includes in its message all New Guineans, who are depicted as deprived relative to the white people.

The Long Story does not simply identify the indigenous peoples as one group, it also formulates their claim to equality with the white race. It presents history as changeable, thanks to God's pity for the natives, and it has, therefore, a clear political message. The aim of the story is to motivate people to social and political change, not just to religious observance. It provides a charter for a new society, characterised by emancipation from white domination as well as by religious salvation. This is the third contrast to the other historical narratives. The Long Story formulates, as it were, the constitution for a new era.\(^3\)

\(^1\) They were recorded not in Manus but in Rakunai, East New Britain Province, through a young Manus informant. For this reason the reliability of the information may be questioned despite Fr Meyers defence against criticism (Meyer 1912:501). The informant, Po Minis, learnt to write and later sent Fr Meyer more myths from his homeland. He had collected stories from different areas; this suggests that they were not a restricted form of knowledge.

\(^2\) They often deal with the origin of specific things such as the water holes on Baluan, or explain the end of something, for example the demise of taro or the disappearance of an island. A widespread and well-known story is the one about the Mapou, a race of small people who built the stone walls on Baluan. They finished at night the work a human being had started during day. The catch was, however, that they also finished the complete crop when a person began to harvest. Therefore they were chased away, although it is possible that some Mapou still live on the island. The inland clans in particular possess a lot of stories about mythical animals and natural objects such as stones. Apparently most people do not believe these stories to be true and tell them for entertainment.

\(^3\) It forms thus a clear example of what Carrier (1987a) has called 'constitutional history'. Interestingly, he did not find an example of this kind of history on Ponam in Manus.
The feeling that a new period of history had begun was expressed in various ways. People within the Movement displayed a preoccupation with remembering and recording the dates of significant events. This practice was distinctly different from the pre-movement way of structuring the time by using the important events themselves as points of reference. The innovation was that these events were provided with a time tag, a date, which made it possible in principle to compare the chronology of events in parallel histories. The concern with dates has persisted within the Movement to the present. Dates are even included in daily prayers. It is possible that the use of dates performs a rhetorical function rather than expressing genuine concern with chronology. Although some people appear to be quite meticulous in their application of dates, for many it is more important to give a date, any date, than to be sure whether this date is correct. In view of the indigenous epistemology it may be argued that attaching a date to an event may make this event more real to the listeners: it is as if the narrator invokes the authority of another witness.

In the early stages of the Movement recounting of the Long Story was surrounded by great circumspection and secrecy. Concealment of the newly revealed knowledge was directed first and foremost at government officials and missionaries. This is understandable as it was thought that these people had withheld their knowledge from the indigenous population in the first place. It appears that the secrecy pertained especially to the religious aspects of the new ideology. An important Mouk leader told me about the content of the early meetings:

We talked only about Jesus when the kiaps were away. They came to steal our talk. When they were present, we only discussed government matters. As soon as the kiaps and the police had left the good talk would start.

Schwartz (1962:258) mentions that Paliau was reluctant to discuss with him the religious aspects of his Movement and his life. Ted Schwartz and his wife Lenora

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4 On Baluan people do not organise their lives according to a seasonal calendar. The climate is strikingly uniform throughout the year except for a greater chance of dry periods in the season of the south-east wind than in the season of the north-west wind. I was told that in the past people took this seasonality into account when making their yam gardens. More important for structuring the time, however, were small events like birth ceremonies and big events like the large lapan feasts. The events themselves were the result of contingent happenings and human planning.
were accepted as insiders to the Movement only after they had been kept completely uninformed of a revival of cult ideology for eight months (ibid: 292). A trip to Baluan proved a turning point, when Paliau announced that he had informed them (although he had been quite selective according to Schwartz). During their stay on the island the house they were staying in was guarded by villagers, after a mysterious white man had been seen bathing in the sea. The villagers feared that the Australian government was trying to kill the Schwartzes since they had become insiders to the Movement (ibid: 294).

Secrecy was not only used to deceive white people, it was also deployed as a means to attract the attention of indigenous people, at least in the beginning of the Movement (Schwartz 1962:390). This is a good example of the politics of knowledge and representation. Something that is good and true is not expected to be given away freely. If someone is trying to hide knowledge, then it is likely to be of value. This use of secrecy as a form of propaganda requires that the act of concealment be conspicuous. The Mouk people, who acted as messengers of the Movement, were instructed by Paliau not to give away any information but instead to refer people to Baluan where they could see things for themselves. Secrecy thus acquired the quality of performance. Schwartz (ibid.) comments on the relation between secrecy and the need of an audience which he observed everywhere among the Manus.

This helped to facilitate our work as anthropologists. We played the needed role of audience. It was necessary that things concealed from us be also revealed to us so that we might be audience to them and to the act of concealment as well.

My own experiences confirm Schwartz’s observations. It appears that an audience is always needed if an action is to be of significance. I suggest that this is related to the basic epistemological stance of Manus people. What someone experiences is real to that person but not necessarily so to others. Therefore witnesses are crucial. Observers convey a sense of reality to what happens because a report of the event will be more readily accepted by others as more than just a ‘story’.
Makasol history

From about 1978 the Paliau Movement was revived through the efforts of a number of young and well-educated Manus men. Paliau, whose official political career was in decline, remained the centre of his revitalised Movement. Although he was credited with the origin of all knowledge, it is clear that his young lieutenants made an important contribution to the form and probably also to the content of the new teachings. Around 1982 a white booklet appeared with the title "Kalopeu; Manus Kastam Kansol; Stori". Kalopeu is the name of a shell, the Chambered Nautilus, which plays a role in the new imagery. Manus Kastam Kansol, usually shortened to Makasol, is the name given to the revived movement. The booklet contains the Makasol version of the biblical stories of creation, fall and Jesus' appearance on earth. Paliau is the official source of the Stori but its unofficial and unmentioned author is Peter Kuwoh, an ex-army captain. About a year after the white booklet was produced, a green booklet appeared which was an adapted reprint of Paliau's contribution to the 1970 Waigani seminar. The rewriting was done by Peter's younger brother, Lukas Kuwoh. The green booklet has an English and a Tok Pisin text, whereas the white booklet is written in Tok Pisin only. In combination the two booklets may be seen as the modern version of the Long Story of God. There are some interesting differences and similarities.6

The Makasol Stori is a fine example of an emerging Papua New Guinean literature in Tok Pisin and as such deserves elaborate analysis. Here I only deal with a few aspects relevant to my general argument which invite comparison with the Long Story of God. At first sight there are many differences. God is called Wing, Jesus has the name Wang and the Holy Spirit is Wong.7 Details of the narrative

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5 The Kalopeu is said to move only forwards, it does not retreat. It is not afraid of its enemies and it does not hide itself. Therefore it serves as an example for the Makasol who have to act likewise: they have to go straight to their goal also in the face of danger and opposition. The Kalopeu is not only fearless, it is never angry. It does not have teeth like a shark and is completely harmless. Therefore, it is the Makasol's symbol for 'freedom'. The drawing on the white booklet shows two Kalopeus attached to each other: a male and a female. This symbolises the co-operation between man and woman who have to move forward together.

6 The modern ideology of the Makasol needs a much more elaborate description and analysis than is possible here. My first attempt to define this ideology is published in Dutch (Otto 1987).

7 Wong is a word from the Baluan language signifying 'I', 'myself' and 'me'. Wang is a neologism, just as Wing. The latter is said to derive from the Tok Pisin word 'win' which means: wind.
have changed, many new names and events are added. The Makasol story is very polished and its logical structure clear and transparent. It appears, however, that the basic narrative structure has remained the same as in the Long Story. Wing's (God's) creation of heaven and earth introduced a period of unlimited bliss for angels and human beings. There was no hunger or toil, no aging, illness or death. This state of bliss was called freedom. It ended when the king of the angels, Lait San, committed the sin of disobedience to Wing's order: *em i no harim tok*. Lait San became Satan and was expelled from heaven. Wandering on earth and driven by jealousy, he induced Eve and Adam to have sexual intercourse, pretending that they would thereby become equal to Wing. At the moment of their violation of Wing's law, Satan entered the bodies of Adam and Eve. Since that time the earth is a place of hardship and wrong doing, where illness, death, struggle and deception prevail. People speak different languages and all the things that once were freely available have disappeared into the ground.  

Wang Jesus, already appointed as the government (*gavman*) of heaven, had succeeded Lait San as the king after the latter's expulsion. He received Wing's approval to go to earth and instruct the people in the true knowledge of Wing. This is what Jesus taught. Every person consists of a holy spirit, Wong, and of flesh (*mit*). Wong belongs to heaven and flesh belongs to the earth. Wong has the power to cure human beings. To show this Jesus healed many men and women and even resurrected some from death. He also demonstrated that Wong possesses power over natural phenomena: Wong can stop the rain, calm the sea, give orders to animals, make food plentiful and do many other good things. However, the people of the earth, led by their kings, governments and missionaries, did not believe in Wong's power. They were misled by Satan who was present in their heads and whose strength could not be overcome by Jesus. In order to prove that his message was true Jesus decided to die and to return from death after three days. Here the Stori ends. 

It will be clear that save (knowledge) and *harim tok* (to listen to the talk and to obey) are central concepts of this story just as of the Long Story of God. To follow Wong, that is, to listen to the true knowledge of Wing, will lead to immediate effects

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8 This sentence is a free translation of "Tok peles i buruk, ologeta samting antap long graun i hait aninit long graun na ino mo kamap" (page 6). It shows that cargo beliefs have survived into the Makasol ideology.
on earth, namely a return to the condition of freedom enjoyed by Adam and Eve. The explanation for the absence of this good knowledge is strikingly different in the Makasol Stori. The knowledge is not blocked by an outside force such as the white people's government, but is instead obstructed by an inside force, namely Satan. History is apparently reduced to a struggle between good and evil angels without and within human beings. People can, however, decide to disregard Satan and to listen only to Wong. This will resolve all present problems and return humankind to the state before the fall of Adam and Eve.

To prove that this is more than just a story the Makasol refer to the events of 1946 and following years. The white booklet begins with a statement about this recent historical period:

1946-1953 all things such as wind, rain and sea together with all food and edible animals obeyed the words of our fathers and mothers.9

In other words, during this period the state of bliss had returned. The Makasol is now trying to bring the people of the world back to this knowledge which was lost again after 1953.

On 15 April 1978 Makasol Stori started to bring together all the people of Manus Province, Papua New Guinea and the World to go ahead with the true story of Wing, the Lapan and Ancestor of us white people, brown people and black people.10

Two important conclusions emerge from this summary. In the first place it is evident that the political message of the Long Story of God has been left out of the Makasol Stori. The latter reduces the problems of contemporary Manus to a purely religious affair with a purely religious solution: if people listen to Wong everything will be all right. In the second place the Makasol Stori does not address the Manus and

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9 “1946-1953 ologeta samting olosem win, ren, solowara, wantaim ologeta kaikai na abus i harim tok bolong ol papa na mama bolong mipela” (unmarked page before table of contents).

10 “Long 15 de long mun April 1978 Makasol Stori i kirap long bungim ologeta pipol long Manus Provins, Papua New Guinea na World long go het long trupela stori bolong Wing Lapan Tumbuna bolong mipela wetpela man na wetpela meri, braun man na braun meri na bilakpela man na bilakpela meri” (unmarked page before table of contents).
other indigenous Papua New Guineans only. It includes in its audience all people of
the world whether they are white, brown or black. The inequality and the opposition
between white and black, which was the core of the political message of the Long
Story, has disappeared completely from the Makasol version.

The political achievements of the Paliau Movement are represented in the
green booklet. This performs the function of a political history whereas the white
booklet contains the divine history and religious charter of the Movement. The
contents of the green booklet are derived from the published collection of papers
delivered at the Fourth Waigani Seminar, held in Port Moresby in May 1970 (Ward
1970). It includes an autobiography of Paliau Maloat and four letters or circulars
concerning aspects of the Movement. In his autobiography Paliau relates his
childhood, his work experience, how he started his Movement and the establishment
of a Local Government Council.

A conspicuous difference between the 1970 publication and the Makasol reprint
is that the latter puts back Paliau's date of birth 14 years (to 1893). This is not a
mistake as most of the other dates have been changed too. Another intentional
adaptation is the rewriting of Paliau's speech on the occasion of the opening of the
first meeting house in Baluan. All the terms and names that do not fit contemporary
Makasol usage have been changed into the current ones: 'God' is replaced by
'Wing', 'prayer' by 'report', etc. The same applies to the letter, dated 26 January
1946, which concerns the religious aspects of the Movement. The rewriting is
considerable, with the 'Baluan Christian Native Church' being turned into the
anachronism of a 1946 start of the 'Makasol Study Group'.

Important is the way in which Paliau's role in the political development of Papua
New Guinea is depicted. In his autobiography we read (the two versions are
identical here):

In 1947 Governor Murray brought me to Port Moresby to discuss my work in Manus District.
After the discussions Governor Murray granted me a carte blanche to continue my work. I
advised Governor Murray to establish a local government council at Hanuabada in Port
Moresby, a council in Rabaul in the New Britain District and a council at Baluan Island in the
Manus District. The Australian Governor then told me, "If you do your work properly and
your local government council is a success then we'll give you a free hand but if you foul
things up then we will take over from you and run the local government council our way” (Ward 1970:151).

Paliau continues to claim that the local government council run by him was a success and that it led to the establishment of the Legislative Council. This in turn founded the House of Assembly, of which he was a member at the time. He concludes by saying that he looks forward to political independence for Papua New Guinea.

The claim of agency in the process of political development is stated even more strongly in a letter dated 16 January 1946 (should be 1970):

On the 10th day of November 1946 Mr Paliau Maloat M.H.A. started to lead all the people of the Manus District on the road to attaining independent statehood for the Manus District. This has been his aim from 1946 to the present year 1970. [...] It hasn’t been the European or the government or the mission who has led us on this road towards internal democratic government. We ourselves, the people of the Manus State, have been doing this on our own initiative. For this reason and from our own experience we are convinced that this should be the goal for the whole country of Papua New Guinea.

The political content of the green booklet is further developed in a large number of leaflets which were distributed regularly and which formed the third component of official Makasol ideology. The leaflets contain prayers, songs, religious tenets echoing and elaborating on the Stori, political messages, open letters, reports of meetings, etc. They form a burgeoning religious and political literature and offer an important opportunity to investigate the effect of print on ideological communication. One leaflet, which had a very wide distribution, summarises the political and social achievements of the Movement in five points. I quote from the English version:

11 I have not been able to look systematically into the impact of printed leaflets, but I intend to make a thorough comparison of all the leaflets I collected with the oral accounts recorded. It could be expected that the leaflets lead to standardisation which is also suggested by an example further in the text. However, the continual innovation of Makasol ideology, as demonstrated in the leaflets, worked against standardisation.
The leaflets do not only represent the Movement's past achievements; they are predominantly concerned with contemporary religious and political issues. The green booklet is based on a text from 1970, when Paliau was still at the zenith of his official political career as the only Manus representative in the House of Assembly. In the second half of the 1980s the situation was completely different. Independence for Papua New Guinea was, of course, not an issue anymore. The Makasol was an opposition party within Manus Province with two of its active members elected into the 15 member Provincial Assembly. They severely criticised the sitting government and blamed it for emerging problems of law and order. A newly introduced system of third level government, the community government, was also fiercely attacked. The Makasol party identified with the old local government council system which had been abolished and replaced by that of community government. The similarity in sound between community and communist was exploited by Makasol to revile the new form of government. Importantly Makasol claimed that their own form of government was in accordance with Manus tradition whereas the community government was not. This was expressed in the name Makasol itself: Manus Kastam Kansol. Other cosmetic changes served to convey the same message, for example the addition of Lapan Pilapan to the name Local Government Council. A pilapan is a female lapan.

 Tradition was also invoked in the denunciation of the other churches. Just like the early Paliau Movement, the Makasol was both a political pressure group and a
religious organisation with each component reinforcing the other. In religious context the name Makasol was sometimes explained as standing for Manus Kastam Sol, with sol referring to 'souls' or spiritual beings, namely the angels and holy spirits. It is Makasol's stated aim to oust the other churches from Manus. In one leaflet it is formulated as follows.

The Makasol Study Group said that all the churches in Manus are not from Manus and do not follow the traditional customs of Manus and should leave immediately. All these churches come to make business in the name of God and secondly God is only a man's title.

The Makasol Study Group said there already exist a church or indigenous religion in Manus and that is the Makasol Study Group. This church is the real church of angel Adam and holy spirit Eve who are our ancestors and this church the Makasol Study Group follows the traditional customs of Manus.

The message contained in the leaflets was explained, reiterated and expanded in speeches by Paliau and other Makasol leaders. These public addresses may be considered as the fourth component of official Makasol ideology. The oppositional character of this ideology is succinctly summarised in the phrase 'faking gavman, faking misin, ol i giaman' (fucking government, fucking mission, they are liars). Paliau and others used this phrase to refer to the past as well as to the present, thereby implying that the Movement's objective had not changed. The political situation was, however, substantially different. During the early Paliau Movement government and mission represented white domination. But the Makasol group opposed an indigenous, democratically elected majority government. Concerning the churches it could be argued that they still represented an outside intervention,

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12 Within Makasol the two functions were, just as in the past, separated with political and religious leaders performing different though sometimes overlapping tasks.

13 This is the name of the religious branch of the Makasol.

14 The second part of the sentence refers to the Makasol claim that God's real name is Wing. The first part implies an opposition between loto and business. In Makasol theory the proper way to affluence is purely religious, namely to live rightly according Wong's advice. An evil government will follow the way of money and business, but this will only lead to strife and misery.
because they were not fully indigenised. However, Makasol not only opposed government and missions but even the institutions it claimed to have introduced to Manus: schools, hospitals, banks, women and youth groups, etc. The reason for the denunciation was the same; these institutions did not follow (any longer) the true government of Wing but were inspired by Satan. They would lead to division instead of returning humankind to the freedom of Adam and Eve.

Makasol presented itself as the only viable solution for today's problems. In this solution politics and religion had to be blended. To illustrate this I quote from a speech made on 22 April 1987 by Kisokau Pochopon, Makasol president and ex-surveyor general. He started by pointing out that he had received two kinds of education: the university of reading and writing, and the university of the Paliau Movement. The latter form of education cannot be found in a book. It concerns the knowledge of the spiritual beings who created the earth. Through Paliau Maloat human beings may have access to this knowledge, which teaches:

There is one good government, namely that of Adam and Eve in the early days. The rule of this government was: human beings must not grow old or become sick, they must not die or be hungry and they must not toil. There shall always be freedom. Our present government does not have this kind of government or rule. Therefore I move that we want to go back to this government of Adam and Eve: we want to live for ever and ever. This is possible because Adam and Eve did not die.

In this way the purportedly timeless and universal religious message was used to mobilise support against the ruling government. Makasol ideology was rather thin in practical policy issues. Its central point, though, was that State and Church should become one organisation with the church component setting the tone as it provides for the spirit, whereas the state only looks after the flesh. In other words Makasol strove for a theocracy with Paliau, the mediator between spirit world and earth, at the top.

The role of kastam in this constellation is extremely ambivalent. Makasol claims to follow kastam but in practice is opposed to most traditional exchanges. There

15 There were considerable differences between the Churches in the degree of indigenisation.
16 For a more elaborate description of the oppositional character of Makasol ideology see Otto (1987).
appears to be good *kastam* and bad *kastam*. Good *kastam* makes people free: thus we return to the first axiom, the freedom of Adam and Eve. The same ambivalence applies to the *lapans*. Makasol claims to follow the lead of the traditional leaders (and their law, which is *kastam*). The prime model of *lapan* is Wing and the knowledge of *lapans* is with the spiritual beings. Therefore only Paliau really knows who the *lapas* are. This is quite a different story from succession by the eldest son.

In my view it is apparent that Makasol embraced *kastam* because its leaders sensed the propaganda value of this symbol. They tried to exploit the contemporary ideological fashion which attributed an intrinsic positive value to tradition. In practice the principle of *kastam* led to numerous contradictions in the doctrine which could only be mended in ambivalent ways. The incorporation of *kastam* is clearly a recent development as the concept is strikingly absent in the 1970 text (see chapter 7). The symbol was mainly used in a negative way, namely to denounce the present government and the other churches as being contrary to *kastam*. Makasol did not succeed in giving the symbol a positive content, but simply stated that the council system followed traditional Manus ways. I was not a little surprised when I first heard a radio announcement by Paliau Maloat saying that the ways of the ancestors (*pasin tumbuna*) would solve the present youth problems. Apparently the old man had completed a 180 degree swing from his earlier convictions. In actual fact Makasol ideas about the *pasin tumbuna* differed very little from its religious message: (good) *kastam* was the way of Adam and Eve.

It is interesting to compare the practices of representation within Makasol and the early Paliau Movement. The frequent reference to dates was continued. Many leaflets were dated or contained dates in the text. Every prayer session started with the phrase: today, the ... day of the month ..., 19... Secrecy, however, was abandoned as a means to attract people's interest. Instead an active campaign of propaganda was waged. Makasol meetings were often held in public places in Lorengau town and their idiosyncratic songs and prayers would attract the attention of passers-by. Makasol sometimes organised protest marches to vent their anti-

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17 In a letter, addressed to the Prime Minister and dated 7-10-1988, we read for example: "Sir, Lokol Kapman Kansol i gutpela Sistem blong Kapman, bikos i bihainim Kastam tumbuna, i gat Lo or Act na 14 Ruis blong em weh i wok yet long ologeta hap long PNG tede. Ol wetman ino bringim i kam." (Sir, the Local Government Council is a good system of government because it follows the ways of the ancestors, it has its laws or acts and 14 rules which are still effective everywhere in PNG today. The white people did not introduce it.)
government feelings and once they occupied government buildings with the stated aim of establishing a new government. Visitors to Manus were often approached with an invitation to attend a meeting. Anthropologists in particular served as a welcome audience and were used to demonstrate Paliau's international fame.18 If people from various countries knew him and came to Manus to visit him, he must be important. Invited guests were strategically placed in front of the gathering close to Paliau and were sometimes asked to answer questions. They always received the request to spread the news of Paliau's message for the world.

The main strategy to maintain the interest of devotees and to attract new followers was a continual innovation of Makasol ideology. New ideas and images were presented by Paliau during meetings. After this they often found their way into printed leaflets, but this did not always happen. I surmise that the appeal of new ideas was first tested out, as some innovations were dropped again. The importance of this kind of variation becomes clear if we realise that Makasol was still a predominantly oral culture despite the use of print. The central tenets of the ideology were repeated so often during daily gatherings that followers knew exactly what was going to be said and were able to correct the speaker if he made a mistake.

Although the innovations were referred to as *nupela save* (new knowledge) or as *nupela toktok* (new talk), they were not considered inventions. It was thought that Paliau had all his knowledge from the time of his birth, but that he was only now revealing the last bits of it. Although he had disclosed many things during the beginning of his Movement, he had not been able to give the final truth as a result of white domination. In the second half of the 1980s he was presenting the final knowledge (*las save*). In 1984 he proclaimed himself the last prophet of the world. He revealed that the earth had entered a crucial period of seven years, which he compared with the seven years of king Prao (the pharaoh of Egypt). It was vital for everyone to join Makasol because it presented the true knowledge of Wang Jesus. At the end of 1990 something would happen, but what exactly had not been disclosed by Paliau at the time I left Manus in 1988. Oblique references ranged from global disaster to the establishment of Jesus' reign on earth. The people who

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18 When I was in Manus a Swedish anthropologist, Alex Wanek, was also conducting research on Makasol and a few times we found ourselves attending the same function.
followed Paliau’s word (*harim tok*) would instantly enter the state freedom and thus be protected from adversity. This is a clear example of millenarianism.

**Representations by villagers**

So far I have dealt with the ‘official’ ideology of Makasol and Paliau Movement. By this I mean the spoken and written views presented by its leaders. In the following I focus on representations by villagers who did not belong to the ideological leadership of Makasol. These people may be loosely divided in three categories: those who believed in Paliau’s religious message, those who supported only his political ideas, and those who opposed Makasol.

Believers often emphasised in their stories that Paliau’s knowledge was true. They did this by pointing to the beneficial effect of applying Paliau’s religious doctrine. As an example I quote from a story told by Lungat Polou, who as a young man became Paliau’s *pesman* in Ndriol. In his old age he was without religious or political role while his fellow villagers’ support for Makasol was in decline. In the following passage he explains why people left the Catholic Church and joined the Paliau Movement after the end of the Second World War.19

We went to the *lotu*, but it appeared that death and sickness did not take a break; they continued to plague and to kill us. When we followed the *lotu* and went to Papitalai, we lost many people on the journey. [...] Paliau was not a Christian, he was a heathen. He went to the police. The war came and he found these thoughts [*tingting*]. Afterwards he came back and started the meeting. He said: all right, *lotu*, we have been following *lotu*, but death has not ended. Let us go to this side first and make a movement. We all heard this and wanted to check his thoughts. It appeared that Paliau had obtained the inside meaning of the Catholic church. This Catholic church and the Evangelical church, they are like secret talk (*tok bokis*), they use images (*tok piksa*). They did not explain well all the good ways of Jesus which would make us all right. Paliau now showed us these things well. As a result

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19 Recorded in Pundro village on 7/8/87. Pundro is a new settlement from Ndriol village, which was the first village of the south-eastern islands to accept Catholicism (see chapter 4).
we left the Catholic Church and we all followed Paliau. Why? All the things that kill people, Paliau removed all these things. [...] We checked this and death slowed down, sickness slowed down. We experienced this and we all left the Catholic church. We saw that it went all right and that it became true.

The emphasis on efficacy as a criterion for truth is strikingly explicit in this passage. The way of the lotu was tried out first. When it did not work as expected, people were ready to test Paliau’s alternative. This produced the desired effects and therefore everyone followed Paliau.

The efficacy of Paliau’s New Way did not concern matters of health and sickness only; nature cooperated with human intention just as it did in the time of Adam and Eve. The wind always came from the right direction and catches of fish were plentiful. Life was truly easy and almost effortless. I heard this kind of story mainly in Mouk village, which was Paliau’s religious stronghold on Baluan. Their representation concurs with the official Makasol version about a period of bliss. Surprisingly, those Mouk people who broke away from the Movement and settled on Rambutyo still adhered to this representation, although they had returned to the Catholic Church. Their explanation for the end of this state of bliss was that Paliau himself had acted contrary to his own rules: he married the wife of another man.

In Mouk on Baluan I was given quite a different explanation for the demise of this period of bliss and plenty. It was presented as a gradual decline caused by the ‘work of money’ which began with the establishment of the local government council. The preoccupation with money slowly drove out the thoughts of real freedom. This was in line with official Makasol theory, which posed an opposition between wealth achieved through the way of money and real abundance emanating from the right state of mind. The former was the work of Satan and did not represent real freedom as was demonstrated by ongoing struggle, deception and warfare. Paliau once told me that this was the situation in the West. Factories were able to get many things out of the ground, but this was not the proper way to do it. Warfare would continue, because people adhered to the ways of Satan. It should be noted that this is a

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20 To my question what these things were, Lungat explained that wrong thoughts were the cause of illness and death. Jesus did not like thoughts of anger, hate, adultery, fight, etc. and caused sickness and death as a kind of retaliation. If people listen (harim tok) together, meet together and work together, Jesus will help them and make their lives easy.
radical transformation of the views which prevailed during the beginning of the Movement. Then it was believed that amassing money was essential to achieve the desired progress and the emancipation from white domination. In Makasol theory this was inverted: money is the work of Satan and the wealth of white people is of the wrong kind.21

Part of the experience of the early Movement was the 'Noise',22 which led to the destruction of property and food. For believers this was a period of intense faith when many things were expected to materialise. Because the signs of ships, cars and aeroplanes were seen it was not difficult to throw away all things except the clothes one was wearing.

We really saw it and we really heard it. There was a light above Mouk which could be seen from the mainland.

The disposal of possessions was especially radical in Mouk but the people of Lipan, Sane and Manuai also took part in the Noise. Mouk people denied that Paliau was involved in the destruction of property. He was not in Mouk at the time and later came to scold them. The loss of all their goods led to a temporary shock in the village and people were angry with those who started it. It was believed that some kind of mistake had been made and that for this reason the desired goods had failed to arrive. However, the period of general bliss continued thanks to Paliau's leadership. For true believers the Noise was a short period during which an even more complete fulfilment could have been achieved. The opportunity was missed because the thoughts of people were not perfectly straight at the time.

On Baluan itself the SDA villages of Parioi and Perelik had kept apart from the Paliau Movement and were not drawn into the frenzy of the Noise. In their version of history the events were clear indication that Paliau was a false prophet. In the other Baluan villages attitudes towards the Noise were more ambiguous. For most

21 This point of view was not shared by all Makasol adherents. In discussions with Makasol members from different places in Manus, it became clear to me that a number of them still believed that white people had an easy life thanks to their special knowledge which they refused to share with black people.

22 The word 'Noise' refers to the shaking, the excited talk and the destruction of goods which characterised this 'cargo cult' episode.
villagers it was certainly not a popular subject to be discussed spontaneously. If asked about it, people tried to distance themselves from the events by talking about 'them' or they would speak in a matter-of-fact way: we did this, we thought that, but nothing happened. A few people who had not been involved took pleasure in describing the events in great detail. It appears that Paliau himself took part in the cargo cult outbreak in Lipan. It began when news about the tumult in Mouk was received. People started to shake and sweat profusely. Emotions were whipped up with the phrase *sutim bilip* (project your faith) and *sutim tingting i go antap* (send your thoughts on high). When things did not materialise reasons were sought and found. Not everyone had participated and many had kept some things hidden or had given them to their friends in other villages. After the unavoidable hangover, life returned to normal.

Evaluation of the results of the Noise varied widely. A number of people strongly regretted the loss of traditional valuables and were looking for ways to replace them. One man made the apt observation that only those who had a lot of wealth in the past lamented the destruction of their property. Others did not care much and enjoyed the improvements to their lives achieved by the Movement. The Noise had contributed to a new equality by removing the traditional insignia of distinction.

Most people who lived in villages affected by the Movement agreed that the early years of change were generally a very good time. It was a period of peaceful coexistence between different ethnic groups, of unequalled cooperation and sharing, of new achievements and progress. This view was equally held by believers and by those who had never belonged to the Paliau Church. Only staunch opponents were reluctant to ascribe the positive changes to the Paliau Movement and would point to independent developments elsewhere.

Paliau's leadership played a central role in representations of the Movement. As the instigator, organiser and source of knowledge, to a large extent Paliau was the Movement. This identification of leader and social movement led to problems with the introduction of the local government council system in areas which were opposed to Paliau. People were afraid that accepting the council would mean accepting Paliau's leadership and his religious doctrine. It is not surprising that a leader of Paliau's stature gave rise to images of superhuman power.
For his followers Paliau's person assumed divine dimensions. Many people were able to give examples of Paliau's healing power which had benefitted themselves or others. Paliau was also able to cure himself. A well-known story concerned the attack on Paliau by the former husband of Paliau's second wife. This happened in 1953. The following version is told by Kisokau Aiwai from Lipan.

Kela was one of four Mouk men who were struck by the Noise and became ill. Kela hit Paliau on his head with an axe. Paliau fell down. Kela cut his side and then the other side. I hurried to get the policeman of the council. Paliau was unconscious. He could not speak. Two canoes brought him to Lorengau to the hospital. On the way first one wound in his side closed, then the other. Finally also the wound in his head healed. When they arrived at the military hospital in Lombrum, Paliau was all right. He demanded that the doctors opened his wounds to see whether there was blood left behind. The doctors of Lombrum said they could not do this. The wounds had closed already.

Paliau fully supported this kind of story about him. He may, in fact, have been the origin of this particular one, as he once gave me a very detailed version. The quoted story is not complete. From Lombrum Paliau went to Lorengau hospital, but there again the doctors refused to open his wounds in order to take the blood away. They were very surprised that his injuries had healed within one day. Paliau showed me his scars more than once. He claimed that his asthma problems were caused by the blood that had been left inside the wounds after they had closed.

Once I was present at a small gathering of Makasol followers. We were waiting to move to the place of a big meeting. An old man had arrived and he was exhorting the group to follow Paliau's words. Then Paliau stood up and said that he had given back eyesight to this man who had been blind before. He asked the man whether this was true. The old man confirmed that this had happened. Then Paliau asked the people present whether it was true. Everyone agreed.

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23 The case is well documented by the Administration.

24 A memo for the Government Secretary from the Acting Director of the Department of District Services and Native Affairs, dated 17 July 1963, puts it this way: "Paliau was attacked by a Mouk native named Kela in March. Kela suffered an illness in 1946, about the time of the outbreak of cargo cult, as a result of which he became mentally deranged. His wife left him and lived for some time with Paliau whom she eventually married."
There were also stories relating Paliau's power over natural phenomena. Paliau was said to be able to stop the rain. One of his educated young leaders told me that he had witnessed this himself. Paliau had also produced miraculous catches of fish. Once he had been seen to walk over water. One person who had witnessed this was still alive, I was told.

Many people commented on Paliau's superior knowledge. He would often know things about people's past before they had told him. He could read people's mind and therefore he was the sole authority able to appoint good leaders. That he could see the future was demonstrated by the fact that his predictions had come true: he had prophesied independence, changes of government, and many other things.

It should not surprise us that Paliau was sometimes compared with Jesus. I witnessed this several times during Makasol meetings. A man would stand up and proclaim loudly that people were not heeding Paliau's advice, just as in the past the people of Israel had ignored Jesus' message. In official Makasol theory Paliau was a mortal human who had access to the world of spirits. He was appointed by Jesus as the last prophet of the world and represented Wing's knowledge on earth. In many stories, however, there was a clear tendency to compare Paliau's life with that of Jesus although this was not necessarily spelled out. Just like Jesus, Paliau cured the sick, gave sight to the blind and could walk over water. This belief developed its own logic, leading to expectations about Paliau's death. During the first days of 1987 there was a rumour that Paliau would pass away on Friday 9 January at three o'clock.25 Apparently Paliau himself had announced his death saying that a 'noise' would occur and that he would be killed by his own followers at the set time. There were speculations about his resurrection from death within three days. These speculations were denied by Makasol leaders. According to one leaflet a large meeting of Makasol adherents voted in favour of the motion that Paliau Maloat should not die. Therefore Paliau refrained from putting himself to death. This example shows how Paliau's life became modelled on the life of his mythical hero.26

25 Unfortunately I was on Baluan at the time and had to reconstruct the events on the basis of oral reports and one printed leaflet.

26 Young (1983a) analyses brilliantly how certain myths informed the lives of Kalauna leaders on Goodenough Island. In Manus another example is found on Rambutyo. Wapei, the young prophet who started the cargo cult, told his brothers to kill him so that he could 'pay with his death'. One of his brothers, Muli, later started his own cult in which the same theme played a major role. In the late 60s he announced that after his death he would come back with the cargo within three days.
The re-enactment of mythical themes involved a kind of complicity on the part of Paliau and his followers. It was a drama in which they were both actors and audience.

Even Paliau’s opponents believed that he had special powers and many people feared him for that reason. It was generally assumed that Paliau’s words were extremely powerful and could direct people’s thoughts. Though feared he was certainly not revered by everyone. Some people pointed to his relatively modest descent and called him a trickster. Others said that he used loose sexual morals to attract followers. Some educated young men, who were able to appreciate Paliau’s political achievements, gave me some rational explanations for the way he had attained his enormous power. They said, for example, that Paliau was the first person on Baluan to have a radio. As a result he was able to forecast the weather or to predict the arrival of a kiap. In addition to his use of tricks they also believed that Paliau had a special talent for influencing people. To friends and foes alike Paliau was a formidable figure and the history of Manus cannot be described without giving him his due place.

**Political emancipation and kastam**

The message that speaks overwhelmingly from accounts by true believers and political supporters is that Paliau emancipated the indigenous people from Western domination and that he showed them a way to regain their dignity and self-respect. Here are some short quotes from different people conveying the same message.

First our women wore only grass skirts and Baluan was an unimportant place. Thanks to Paliau we started to wear European clothes, and an aidpost and many other things came to Baluan.28

27 I have found no evidence to suggest that morals were looser within the Movement than outside it except perhaps in the very beginning. Even then sexual morals would be better characterised as different than as loose (for example the rule that you should not be angry about adultery if your wife was properly paid by her lover). Enforcement of ethical rules was always strong with illness as punishment for any wrong-doing.

28 A Paliau supporter belonging to the SDA Church.
The meaning of the council was: you can stand on your own legs and you are not under the government anymore. [...] Paliau said: away with government and mission, I can build up my own place.29

The things Paliau told us were: fucking gavman, fucking mission. Now we stand on our own legs, on our own ground and we will go forward in the freedom of Jesus.30

The following story summarises Paliau’s political achievements in an eloquent way. Because it contains a number of important points I have translated the narrative in its totality. The story-teller was without strong church allegiance but he had a vested interest in kastam. He was the leader of the traditional dance group.

All right, I am Pokowei Paril. I am from Lipan village on Baluan Island. I am 55 years of age. Now I want to tell the story of the Paliau Maloat31 Movement. During the Second World War Paliau Maloat stayed in Rabaul. In 1946 he sent some letters to the luluais of Baluan. He wrote the following: ‘This letter of mine is directed to you, all the luluais of Baluan. I want you to build a large meeting house. I will come home soon.’ The luluais saw his letter and waited for him to come. In 1946, in June, he arrived in Baluan and he invited all the luluais and asked them to build a meeting house. They made a big house, 10 param (10 fathoms or 18 metres) long. They built it on the little area where now the Catholic Church stands: Saponparunbuai.

They made this house and the big men of Baluan together with Paliau Maloat would hold meetings in it. Paliau spoke as follows: ‘If you listen to my words, we will become our own boss and Australia has to go back to its proper place. You should not be afraid. I, Paliau Maloat, I am not afraid.’ Then they consented to his talk. He told the men to remove all the government rest houses (house kiap). Previously, the kiaps used to make patrols to Baluan and they used to sleep in these houses. Paliau Maloat was the one who destroyed these buildings.

He spoke emphatically to all the people of Baluan in the following way: ‘If you listen to my words and if you follow me, then you will become human beings. Then you will become

29 A Paliau supporter belonging to the Catholic Church.
30 A Paliau supporter and member of his church.
31 The use of Paliau’s father’s name, Maloat, in the phrase Paliau Maloat Movement is idiosyncratic.
masters of your own place; then you will be doctors yourselves; you will be your own government; you will be teachers yourselves; then you will become your own policemen; if you follow my words. You must not spoil your money. You should put your money together. You must not spend your money in the stores of the Chinese. If you listen to my words, you will be the government in your own place.'

All people then followed him and heeded his advice. He [collected and] locked up money of the Baluan people. He locked away 10,770 kina. The kilaps from Australia used to come to take this money but he did not like this. He did not give it to them. In 1946 he kept this money under his guard. He told all the Baluan people to build their houses in a row, to build them on poles, to make floors in them, not to sleep on the ground anymore. All the Baluan people followed his advice. They constructed their houses on poles, they made floors in them, they built them in rows.

The people were doing these things. All the time they [the government] brought him [Paliau] to court. They locked him up in prison. He used to speak strongly to the people of Baluan. ‘You must not be afraid. I, Paliau Maloat, I am not afraid. I do not fear the kilaps; I do not fear the government. If they want to kill me, that is all right. However, I want you to listen to my talk. You must not go to work for the Australians anymore. You must not go to work for the Chinese anymore. You should rule your own place.’

All the people obeyed his words. They stood together. Government officials used to come and take people to prison. But Paliau told them not to be afraid. ‘The government is not able to defeat me. I will defeat them.’ They went to prison but they did not slacken. They still followed the words of Paliau Maloat. There were 11000 people of Manus who listened to Paliau Maloat, who gathered around him, who made his words become powerful.

Then, one kiap from Australia, his name was Mr Pienbek32, came to Paliau Maloat and took this money from his house. He took this money away and they divided this money. One part they allocated to the school, to pay for the school and it went to education. One part went to the co-operative society, to make a store. One part went to the hospital (aid-post) to obtain medicine. One part went to the government to start the Local Government Council. This money was divided in four parts. One part went to the Local Government Council; one part went to education; one part went to PHD33; one part went to the co-operative society.

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32 This is D.M. Fienberg, who later changed his name to Fenbury (see Fenbury 1978:52).
33 This is the Provincial Health Department.
These sums of money started the work that is present in Papua New Guinea today. Schooling in Manus first commenced in Baluan in 1951. Baluan was the first place to have a school in Manus in 1951 thanks to this money which Paliau Maloat had locked away in his house. Concerning aid-posts, Baluan received an aid-post first. Afterwards all the carpenters on Baluan went around to every place in Manus electorate to make all the aid-posts. Concerning the co-operative society, Baluan was the first place to obtain the co-operative society. Thereafter all the places of Manus received it. Concerning the Local Government Council, Baluan obtained the LGC first in 1950. Paliau Maloat himself was president of the LGC, which was called Baluan Council, in 1950.

After a short time, from 1950 to 1957, representatives of the United Nations came to see the Baluan Local Government Council which was established. They spoke in this way: 'How is it possible that Baluan was able to obtain the LGC? In the societies of white people it generally takes one hundred years for a country to acquire a council. But inside Papua New Guinea, in Manus they received a LGC in less than 10 years.' These men from the United Nations arrived on Baluan to see Paliau Maloat. When they had returned, the government of PNG, governor Cleland came to Baluan. He came to see the work that was started by the Paliau Maloat Movement in Baluan. When gavman Cleland went back, after a short while his deputy came again to have a look.

Paliau Maloat set up one show on Baluan Island. Formerly, Papua New Guinea did not have shows. It was Paliau Maloat himself who commenced the show within the Baluan LGC. And at present all the regions of Papua New Guinea organise shows. Previously they did not have shows. The Australian government did not make shows either. Only Paliau Maloat staged a show on Baluan Island in the time of the Baluan LGC.

We come to the present time now. The movement of Paliau Maloat established the Parliament House in Papua New Guinea. Now, the provincial government has been introduced in Papua New Guinea thanks to the movement of Paliau Maloat. Nowadays all people in Papua New Guinea are able to receive big awards from the British Empire. Some receive MB, some receive OBE34, some receive CBE. Paliau Maloat himself opened this possibility, he opened Papua New Guinea for receiving OB. Now all people of Papua New Guinea follow this and at present they receive these distinctions: MB, OB, CB. It was Paliau Maloat who started all these things in Papua New Guinea.

34 The speaker refers to the British honours MBE and OBE.
First I follow the narrative in commenting on a number of issues contained in this story and then I make some more general observations.

In the first paragraph two powerful symbols of the new order are introduced: Paliau’s letter and the erection of a meeting house. These symbols are included in most versions of the start of the movement indicating that they are important to the indigenous representation of what happened. Paliau did not send his message by way of mouth; he wrote a letter. This demonstrates that he had mastered the method of communication used by white people. The letter thus symbolises the newly gained equality of indigenous people. The meeting house represents a new unity. Significantly, Baluan did not have men’s houses or other types of communal buildings. Every head of a family had his own house in which also some dependants could live.35 The first type of communal house introduced to Baluan was the church. Paliau’s meeting house superseded the function of the church by symbolising a new, indigenously founded, ideological and political unity. It was no accident that the meeting house for the local government council was erected on the former place of the Catholic Church in the centre of Lipan village.36

In the story Paliau uses several times the phrase: “if you listen to my words”. This is the crucial condition for achieving the stated goals: harim tok. The same message is contained in the Long Story of God37 and also in the Makasol story. It was central to the Movement’s philosophy: Paliau was the source of true revelation; to follow his knowledge would produce the desired effects.

Paliau’s message was anti-government. In Pokowei’s version he incited the people to destroy government rest houses. This appears historically incorrect. On Baluan these rest houses were not destroyed, but none was built in the newly established joint village of Lipan-Mouk, which formed the core of the Movement. To become one’s own boss must have appealed strongly to Baluan people and to Manus people in general. There was intense competition for leadership and at the same time a deeply felt reluctance to accept someone else’s authority. Leadership

35 The traditional Baluan house consisted of two parts. The front part (lui sēk) was for the men and for visitors, the rear part (um sēk) was for women and children. In front of the lui sēk was a yard (kululu) for public gatherings.

36 The church was moved to the place where Paliau’s first meeting house was built, just outside the village.

37 See chapter 5.
was only considered legitimate if the leader could continuously provide for the needs of his followers. The unchanging and unchallenged domination by white mastas was anathema to Baluan character. To be a boi was humiliating to many men. This static inequality without legitimacy was deeply resented. That is the meaning of Paliau's dictum: "if you listen to my words you will become human beings."

Paliau also urged his followers not to be afraid (paragraph 2 and 5). This refers to a very real fear of the white man's power, especially his means of violence. Old men told me of the fear they felt when dealing with white people. Punishments were considered severe and sometimes arbitrary. If you did not obey quickly, you were kicked with a boot. This fear is a strong indication of the importance of coercion in pre-war relations of domination. Although persuasion was certainly applied in a number of ways, it was outweighed — at least in the experience of many indigenous people — by coercion.

In Pokowei's story much weight is given to the money Paliau collected. Accumulation of money is coupled with an economic boycott of foreigners: do not buy in Chinese shops, do not work for Australians. This is an accurate description of the ideas and practices in the early Movement. The large sum of money was thought to enable the indigenous people to buy their emancipation. Obviously, this idea has persisted: it was with their own money that Baluan people acquired a school, a co-operative society, an aid-post and their own government. The notion that money had bought these things was widespread and was also promoted by Makasol. The four things mentioned reflect the representation in a Makasol leaflet (see above). This is possibly an example of the kind of standardisation brought about by the use of print.

Next, Pokowei goes to some lengths to impress upon the listener that Baluan was the first place to receive all these new things. To claim kudos in such a way is reminiscent of the self-assertion and self-inflation of big men. On Baluan aspiring leaders would often claim credit for innovations. If Paliau himself were relating the things Pokowei mentions, he would say (as he often did): I have introduced education, hospitals, etc. In this case, however, Pokowei is not making the claim for one person but for Baluan as a whole. This sets Baluan apart from other Manus areas but at the same time unites the different parties within Baluan. Pokowei's story thus addresses a larger unit than other histories I have dealt with except for the Long Story of God and the Makasol Stori. To enlarge Baluan's glory it is compared
with the Western world through a visit by representatives of the United Nations. It thus receives international acknowledgement of its achievements. The final claim is that the Paliau Movement realised independence for Papua New Guinea as a whole. This also reflects Makasol representations.

It is interesting that Pokowei mentions the introduction of shows by Paliau. This is not a common theme in stories about the Movement, but it is of special interest to Pokowei, who is leader of the local dance group. Originally the shows concerned things like agricultural produce, non-traditional handicraft and choir singing. Later they became part of the general revaluation of tradition. The show I witnessed in 1987 contained all kind of performances but the focus was on kastam. In this way Pokowei credits Paliau with the reintroduction of kastam without explicitly saying so.

Pokowei ends his story by pointing to British honours. This, too, is not a standard part of the Movement's history. However, for Paliau's supporters it was an important recognition of their leader's prestige that he received the distinction of 'Officer of the civil division of the most excellent order of the British Empire' (OBE). This kind of honour was taken very seriously by Baluan people. If people had such a title, it was often mentioned in conjunction with their names during public functions. This practice may well be a modern version of the traditional custom of using titles to refer to lapans. These traditional titles were revived during the time of my fieldwork as part of a general revaluation of traditional leadership.

If we consider Pokowei's story in its totality, two issues appear conspicuously absent, namely Paliau's creation of a new church and his rejection of tradition. Pokowei's reluctance to talk about the religious achievements of the Paliau Movement may be understood as a way of avoiding church politics. Though a confessed Catholic he was not involved in church matters and he did not want to oppose Makasol, with whom he sympathised on political grounds. By focussing on Paliau's secular accomplishments he could avoid talking about the lotu. The Movement's political success was unequivocal in his view, because it was demonstrated by the end of white domination at independence. Paliau's religious reform, however, had not resulted in the removal of foreign missions and Makasol had become just one of several churches on Baluan. Like many other Lipan people

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38 He received this on 13 June 1970 with the citation: Former president Baluan Local Government Council; for services to local government.
Pokowei was a supporter of Paliau without subscribing to his religious ideas anymore. Paliau's Church was considered by them as 'something of the old man'.

Importantly, the denunciation of tradition in the early Movement is not mentioned at all. As kastam had become a positive value, its rejection was not something to be included in a narrative about the Movement's achievements. Pokowei himself was a strong supporter of the reintroduction of kastam. Therefore he obliquely referred to Paliau's approval of kastam by mentioning his introduction of shows. Another kastam champion, Ngat Kalou Solok, went much further. In his version of the Movement's history he represented the changes as completely in line with Baluan tradition. Paliau's achievements were visible as material progress and the introduction of schools:

But all the work he carried out, it was the same as the kastamwok before of our fathers. Whatever he wanted to do, he had to assemble all lapans and speak with them. If they thought it was in accordance with kastamwok, he would take it to the agenda of the meeting of Parliament. He did not take his own decisions, he had to ask the lapans. The lapans gave him power and advised him on the way of kastam. [...] I, Kalou Solok, I did not hear this story, I have seen it with my own eyes.

Very few people would be prepared to accomplish a similar juggling-trick by representing the early Paliau Movement as basically traditional. In general the subject was simply not mentioned in stories about the Movement. This collective amnesia was displayed only in spontaneous representations. If asked about the rejection of tradition, people were perfectly able to remember what had happened. It was, however, not something they wanted to be a part of their present-day image of the Movement.

For political supporters the changed attitude towards tradition was not a big issue. They could point to the fact, as Pokowei did, that Paliau himself had endorsed the developments. For true believers, however, it posed a genuine problem. They felt that there was a contradiction between taking active part in traditional exchanges, such as those at the occasion of marriage and death, and following Paliau's true religious message. They were not blinded by the fact that official

39 'Samting bilong lapur', also rendered as 'sap te numal' or 'nurunan tan Paliau' (see chapter 1).
Makasol ideology claimed to be in agreement with *kastam*. They knew very well that Makasol gave the concept a specific content which only partly coincided with its use in the village, where *kastam* referred in the first place to ceremonial exchanges. Officially, Paliau was still opposed to these exchanges as they stood in the way of achieving complete ‘freedom’. In practice the people of Mouk, Paliau’s staunchest religious followers on Baluan, had become heavily involved in competitive feast giving. Paliau’s own Mouk wife was an enthusiastic participant. This had led to a moral dilemma for the true believers. Although they were proud of their *kastam* achievements, they realised that they should not be doing it. Their real goal in life, freedom, was thus eluding them.

Representations of the Paliau Movement were of a great variety. Because it had been such a dominating force in Baluan and also Manus history, no one could afford not to have a version of its history. To conclude this chapter I attempt to give a summarising account of the different points of view from the perspective of the three contemporary spheres of Baluan society: *gavman, lotu* and *kastam*.

Greatest agreement existed regarding the sphere of *gavman*. Most accounts emphasised Paliau’s success in emancipating the indigenous people by giving them their own form of government. Paliau was represented as the man who rebuilt indigenous self-respect and who provided a sense of agency and self-determination. A few opponents would highlight the fact that the Local Government Council was established by the colonial government and not by Paliau.

The *lotu* sphere shows more diversity. Believers accentuated in their stories that Paliau was the source of true knowledge. They provided many examples of the efficacy of this knowledge in the past as well as in the present. Political supporters who were not believers would play down the importance of the Movement’s religious aspect. Paliau’s *lotu* was ‘his own thing’. Opponents pointed to the failure of the ‘Noise’. Interestingly, the strongest opponents were often themselves adherents of some form of millenarianism.

The sphere of *kastam* was conspicuous through its absence in representations. Many supporters, who were generally in favour of *kastam*, simply tried to ignore the
Movement's past rejection of tradition. Religiously motivated opponents, mostly SDA, were themselves largely opposed to *kastam* and would therefore not mention this point as it would go to their adversary's credit. For Makasol faithful, however, *kastam* posed a problem to their representations and a moral dilemma to their actions as it contradicted some central tenets of their belief.

Official Makasol ideology had appropriated *kastam* as a symbol to differentiate themselves from competing groups, namely the sitting government and the other churches. They had succeeded in this policy at least to a certain extent, as was demonstrated by my survey of Lipan village. The majority of people spontaneously phrased the distinction between Makasol and Community Government in terms of pro-*kastam* and anti-*kastam* attitudes. The early Paliau Movement had articulated its message in the form of a triple negation of *gavman*, *lotu*, and *pasin tumbuna* (tradition). Makasol continued or revitalised two of these negations, whereas the third, *kastam*, was inverted into a positive symbol. The negations of *gavman* and *lotu* only applied to the competing groups, just as in the past the Movement's negations had applied to white corruption of these two domains. Makasol claimed to encompass all three social spheres, although a clear order of priority may be inferred, namely first *lotu*, then *gavman*, then *kastam*. 
Silikara Buai of Munukut beating the garamut. Silikara is a strong supporter of kastam.

Molat Aumbou, Provincial Member for Balopa, gives a hand with the distribution of food during a traditional ceremony.
Molean Pokasau gives a speech during a *pailou* distribution.

Notebooks have become a common feature during *kastam* exchanges. Sanewai Kileap leads this ceremony.
CONCLUSION

In this thesis I have explored the recent historical development of Baluan culture. At the outset I stated that the sphere of cultural phenomena must not be regarded as a coherent unity. Instead, several domains of loosely interrelated institutions and idioms may be distinguished. After identifying the three dominant domains of contemporary Baluan society - gavman, lotu and kastam - I investigated the genesis of these domains in the colonial history of the island. Although the domains – as fields of meaning – are defined in contrast to each other, there exists no necessary logical or functional relation between them. The particular configuration of domains is the result of the island’s specific history, in which non-cultural factors play a major role.

Throughout the thesis I endeavoured to link cultural changes to other developments of a political, economic and demographic nature. In addition, I paid particular attention to the way in which individuals contributed to the social and cultural changes through their conceptual and practical innovations. Institutions and idioms from different domains may be in conflict with each other. The ongoing negotiation of meaning is an important aspect of Baluan politics. Institutional and semantic domains are intertwined with the interests of different social groups and their reinforcement and acceptance depends on the power of those groups. In this way I try to explain why bisnis has not (yet) developed into a separate institutional domain.

An important source for my reconstruction of the Baluan past was the oral tradition maintained by the islanders. I have tried to convey some of the richness and diversity of this tradition, while at the same time investigating its relation to the three cultural domains distinguished. There are many such connections and a number have been explicated in the thesis. The revival of kastam, for example, stimulated an interest in lapan stories which facilitated my reconstruction of the precolonial past (chapter 2). At the same time this revival resulted in significant distortions of certain aspects of the history of the Paliau Movement (chapter 8). It is, however, not my intention to repeat or summarise the conclusions of each chapter.
here. Instead I shall try to clarify the theoretical conceptions that have informed the presentation and analysis of data in this thesis.

Thus far I have largely omitted to define carefully the concepts I use, assuming that the reader would be able to infer the intended meanings from the context. I am suspicious of precise definitions at the beginning of a work, because they tend to present concepts in isolation. Moreover, few authors are completely consistent in their use of central concepts once they are defined. Instead of trying to define the concepts at the end of this work - post factum so to speak - I believe it will be more useful to relate them to each other. Since all meaning is relational I hope thus to illuminate the conceptual intentions of my discourse.

The phenomenon we call society is in fact a continuous flow of human activity. All the concepts we use to describe and understand this phenomenon are expressions of different ways of looking at this ongoing praxis. I began this thesis with a metaphor which likened anthropological descriptions to distorting mirrors, at least in the view of those who are described. Let me end the thesis with another physical metaphor which emphasises the value of the conceptual practice we call social science. Just as a prism refracts white light into light of different colours, so does the analytical mind separate the praxis of human beings into various aspects or dimensions. This separation helps us to realise the intricate nature of human activity and to understand its multifaceted complexity. In my description of Baluan social praxis I have endeavoured to distinguish three dimensions: the action of individuals; the role of cultural patterns; and the influence of 'circumstances'. Let me first explain these dimensions separately.

Individuals make their choices of action on the basis of interests they perceive. Many people have argued that these interests are culturally constituted. In this thesis I have followed Bourdieu (1977) in assuming that individuals internalise their cultural environment as *habitus*, which refers to basic dispositions - motivations, value orientations and conceptual operators.¹ These basic dispositions are

¹ Rather than trying to define *habitus* by what it is (as I naively do here), Bourdieu defines *habitus* by what it does: the reproduction of external conditions which are structured. These external conditions are not restricted to what I call 'cultural patterns' but also include my 'circumstances', at least in part. See for example the following definition (Bourdieu 1977:72): "The structures constitutive of a particular type of environment (e.g. the material conditions of existence characteristic of a class condition) produce *habitus*, systems of durable, transposable *dispositions*, structured structures predisposed to function as structuring structures, that is, as principles of the generation and structuring of practices and representations which can be objectively 'regulated' and 'regular' without in any way being the
‘transposable’ which means that they are effective across the boundaries of ‘universes of practice and discourse’ (ibid: 110). To use an example from this thesis: when the missions arrived, Manus people ‘transposed’ their dispositions concerning knowledge, efficacy and health to the new domain of concepts and practices offered by the *lotu*. Thus this domain assumed meaning for them – it became of interest. *Habitus* controls the generation of structured actions and representations by guiding individuals in their allocation of meaning and value to things.\(^2\) This process is unconscious: orchestrated without a conductor, as Bourdieu puts it. Therefore *habitus* basically refers to the execution of cultural patterns. Although the concept allows for conscious goals and strategies, these are generated on the basis of something people are not conscious of: *habitus* is, in other words, the cultural within the individual.

There is, however, more to individual action than that. I assume that individuals may develop a certain awareness of their cultural constraints. This is especially so if they gain experience of alternatives through contact with different cultures. This happened, for example, when young Manus men accepted labour contracts. The more imaginative among them were able to objectify aspects of their own culture in opposition to the ways of the colonial masters. Consequently they set new goals for their actions. Instead of simply reproducing their culture, they tried to change it. In my discussion of the Paliau Movement I showed that many aspects of indigenous society had come into relief through this comparison of cultures. Other aspects remained unconscious, however, some of which I identified as based on persisting *habitus* (attitudes towards knowledge, efficacy, etc.; see chapters 5 and 7).

The Paliau Movement also exemplifies another aspect of individual practice: creativity. By combining what he had learned in different cultures Paliau (and others) effectively created a new culture. The power of the human imagination is an important factor in cultural change. Of course the attempts by Paliau and his followers were constrained by many factors. In part, however, these factors came

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\(^2\) *Habitus* also refers to dispositions with cannot be reduced to meaning and value, for example bodily postures and orientations in space.
into being as a reaction to the revolutionary activities of the Paliau Movement. Although human creativity leads to new forms and new combinations, it appears to do so by following certain principles. In the case of Paliau I showed how his vision of a new culture was largely created as an oppositional transformation of the old one. Presumably, principles determining the functioning of the human mind are at work here.

The second dimension of social practice I want to distinguish may be called 'cultural patterns'. By this I mean the standardised patterns of thought and action available to a social group. Of course these patterns are the result of the practice of individuals, unconsciously 'externalising' their *habitus* by making strategic choices in the pursuit of culturally constituted interests. However, considered from the point of view of an individual — and from the point of view of an individual researcher for that matter — these patterns have an external 'objective' existence. An individual finds himself or herself in a particular cultural environment. Although a large part of this environment is internalised unconsciously, this does not apply to all aspects of culture. A person has to learn rules of conduct, objectified knowledge, etc. Some aspects of a cultural sphere may be felt as constraining, and, as I have argued, the likelihood of this increases if people have experience of cultural alternatives. Cultural constraint is especially evident in the case of deviant behaviour.

The 'objectivity' or 'externality' of cultural patterns ultimately lies in the cumulative effect of individual actions. Therefore these patterns 'carry weight' which exercises a force on individuals, not only through the mindless reproduction of *habitus* but also as external pressure to conform to the cultural environment. The externality of cultural patterns is reflected and reinforced by the way we talk about them as 'structures', 'systems', 'configurations' or 'patterns'. When anthropologists describe a culture, they generally give a summary of these objectified systems. Cultural change is often depicted as the structural transformation of one system into another.

We should, however, be careful not to reify cultural patterns. In spite of their 'objectivity' to the individual, they are essentially nothing more than the cumulative result of the actions of a group of people. This means that patterns are always in flux and never fixed or stable. If we describe them as systems, we do what human

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3 This includes language but is of course not restricted to it.
beings in all cultures do. People try to make sense of their cultural environment by structuring it. Human praxis is always meaningful and therefore implies the act of structuring. For this very reason cultural 'patterns' are structured both in the representations of the performers of a culture and in the description of an outside observer. By overemphasising the structuredness of cultural phenomena, however, we lose sight of the way these structures are generated. Therefore, we need not only a description and a theory of extant institutions, but also a description and a theory of institutionalisation (cf. Berger and Luckmann 1967).

In this thesis I have tried to look at cultural phenomena from the perspective of structure and from the perspective of process.4 I argued that contemporary Baluan culture is not structured as a coherent totality. Therefore the term 'culture' may be misleading and it is perhaps better to speak of a cultural sphere. Although this sphere does not constitute a unity, it is structured in another way – namely as domains of loosely interrelated institutions. The content of the domains and the relation between their constituent institutions is continually constructed in practice. Meaningful connections are sometimes lost but may be reconstituted. An example of this is the ordering of *lapan* titles by one informant as described in chapter 2. The binary oppositions constructed by this man clearly made sense but were not general knowledge. The structuring of culture is an ongoing process of signifying practice (sometimes creative and innovative) by individuals. The work of anthropologists is no exception to this.

The third dimension of social praxis I have called 'circumstances'. As the term suggests this is a kind of residual category. It refers to political, economic, demographic, technological, ecological and biological realities so far as these cannot be reduced to the cultural patterns of the group under consideration. Some factors in this category are self-evident, like the natural resources available to a group, its size and fertility, the level of its technology, etc. Other factors need some explanation. Price curves are partly the result of culturally informed choices by individuals but they also depend on many other variables (for example the weather in the case of cash crops). The effect of the world market on local communities may be substantial, but it cannot be considered as part of their cultural sphere. An example

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4 Ahsah Carrier (1987) set herself the same goal in her thesis about Ponam, and by focussing on systems of kinship and exchange she was able to analyse the complementarity of both perspectives in more detail than I have done in this thesis.
from this thesis is the large number of Manus people working outside the province. Although this situation is also the result of individual choices guided by culturally constituted interests, it cannot be reduced to that. The possibility of labour migration is created by the state of the national economy, which in turn depends on foreign economies.

As 'circumstances' I also regard the actions of external groups or organisations. By this I mean those groups which are culturally different but which interact with the groups I study. Of course the actions of these other groups are equally informed by cultural patterns, but to the groups studied these actions appear as external forces. Thus the measures taken by agents of the colonial state appear as circumstances from the point of view of Manus communities. An example is the adoption of new legislation concerning land ownership discussed in chapters 6 and 7. Finally I classify as circumstances those cultural patterns to which local communities are somehow linked but which are of a different scale or concentrated in different locations. The development of a nationalist ideology revaluing tradition, which took place in urban centres, is an example of this. It will be clear that what appears as circumstances partly depends on the position of the observer.

Circumstances may be considered as structured but their systemic character is not necessarily the effect of the meaningful activity of individuals. It may result from the operation of physical, biological, demographic or economic principles. In addition circumstances may be considered as contingent events. Again the perspective of the observer is at issue here. A particular drought may be regarded as a disastrous event from the point of view of economists trying to predict conjunctural developments, but from the point of view of climatologists studying long-term trends it may appear structural. When the Germans established a colonial state in New Guinea it was a political event of unique importance to the people of Manus. From the perspective of European expansion it was, however, a systemic development.

I assume that all human praxis may be viewed both from the perspective of structure and from the perspective of event. Another physical metaphor offers itself here. Physicists analysing light have two models at their disposal. Light may be represented as waves or it may be described as particles. The perspective which offers the best explanation depends on the position of the observer (or the nature of the experiment). In the same way circumstances may be described both as structure
and as event, just like human action (habitus and choice) and cultural patterns. All three dimensions of human practice should be understood as encompassing both aspects; they are 'systemic processes' (Thomas 1989a).

As mentioned above the three dimensions are only conceptually separated components of the same 'systemic process' which is human praxis. Without acting individuals there are no cultural patterns or circumstances (there are things but no circumstances). Conversely, individuals can act socially only with the help of cultural patterns and they necessarily do so in the context of circumstances of various kinds. In my description of Baluan social change I have analytically separated these dimensions in order to identify the locus and impact of particular changes. Let me summarise two processes described in this thesis to demonstrate how the dimensions may be used to illuminate the connectedness of various aspects of social change.

The need for contract labour was an economic circumstance to Manus communities in the pre-war period. Young men were attracted (or forced) to sign on for culturally constituted reasons. The unintended result of this was that they were able to objectify certain parts of their own culture in comparison with others. This conceptual activity of individuals had important consequences in the long term. Leaving out all the details — especially the war, another 'circumstance', and the relative increase of the status of young men — the new ideas led to a large-scale attempt by the Paliau Movement to alter cultural patterns. Underlying these changes and making them meaningful were persisting basic dispositions or habitus. The revolutionary activities of the Movement led to a reaction by the government and the missions. This changed the political circumstances of the Movement, which in turn reacted by an adaptation of its program of cultural change.

The second, equally simplified example, concerns schooling. After the war both government and missions intensified their efforts to educate the indigenous people. Considerations of combating 'cargo-cult mentality' and associated social disorder played an important role, while the missions also competed for members. For Manus villagers government schools and improved mission schools constituted a new institution which they took to with great eagerness. The reason for this may be found in their attitude towards knowledge acquisition, based on their habitus. The ultimate result of the success of formal schooling in Manus was a large percentage of
absentee-workers, since well-educated young people competed successfully for jobs outside the province. This in turn may be seen as one of the circumstances affecting the local revival of kastam.

Similar schemes of interrelated factors may be drawn for the other processes described in this thesis, like the introduction of gavman and lotu, or the renaissance of kastam. I will refrain from doing that here because this kind of summary unjustly reduces the complexity of the argument developed in the preceding chapters. I have only given these two examples to show how the tripartite division of social praxis has informed my description of Baluan social change.

It appears appropriate to end this thesis with some final remarks about a concept which has played such an important role in my argument: knowledge. It is useful to distinguish between two kinds of knowledge. Since all cultural phenomena involve meaning, people participating in the institutions of a social group have to know the concepts involved. This knowledge is a precondition for cultural performance but does not necessarily imply an awareness of cultural alternatives. It may therefore be related to Bourdieu’s (1977:164 ff.) concept of doxa, the taken-for-granted acceptance of a cultural environment. In addition to this implicit knowledge of a society, there is also a more explicit form of knowledge. People objectify parts of their society by discussing the usefulness or the meaning of certain institutions. This does imply the awareness of cultural alternatives. In Bourdieu’s terms this objectified form of knowledge belongs to the ‘universe of discourse’, in which argument reigns and which stands in opposition to the ‘universe of the undiscussed’ (doxa) (ibid: 168).

When Baluan people discuss their own society they distinguish three main ways of doing things — according to gavman, lotu and kastam. This objectified knowledge of their cultural environment is thus part of the universe of discourse on Baluan. The thesis I want to put forward here is that this kind of objectified knowledge is related to the actual development of a society. Baluan people make a distinction between these three ways because they are actually present in their cultural praxis. To postulate a relation between praxis and reflection is, of course, a classic premise of Marxist epistemology: "Es ist nicht das Bewusstsein der Menschen, das ihr Sein,
sondern umgekehrt ihr gesellschaftliches Sein, das ihr Bewusstsein bestimmt" (Marx 1972[1859]:9).

Marx formulated his epistemology in relation to the development of capitalism. He showed for example that the abstract concept of labour only appeared when productive activities of different kinds were actually made comparable, in social practice, by being expressed in wages (Marx 1974[1857-58]:25). The same argument can be made for the Western practice of sub-dividing societies into religious, political and economic spheres. The concept of an economy only emerged when a domain of economic practices and institutions had actually developed and was considered as something different from politics and religion (cf. Otto 1984). As modern social science is the product of Western society, its conceptual tools have to be viewed against the background of the historical development of this society. This applies to the concepts used in this thesis, including my division of social praxis into three dimensions. The concepts of the individual, of culture and of economic and political circumstances all have their own history, each of which is somehow connected with social developments in Western societies.

Marx claimed that there is an evolution of social forms from simple to more complex. Therefore he assumed that the concepts of Western capitalism, which he saw as the most developed form, could be used to describe and understand less complex forms (Marx 1974[1857-58]:25-26). I do not subscribe to this second premise of Marxist epistemology, which is often used in the study of non-Western societies. In my view there is no substantive ground for the conceptual reduction of Baluan culture, for example, to a previous stage of Western society. Although it is evident that Western forms have taken hold in Baluan society, this has led to a particular and unique Baluan blend.

By rejecting this second premise of Marx, however, I have put myself in an epistemological dilemma. I am left with two perspectives on Baluan society, one in Western terms and the other in Baluan terms. Both perspectives are grounded in the practices of two different societies and therefore have value in relation to these practices. Why should one perspective be favoured over the other? My only answer is to extend on the metaphor which I used in the introduction to this thesis. An anthropologist does not construct just one mirror, he or she works with two. By

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5 See also Fabian (1983) who discusses the 'denial of coevalness' implied in such constructions.
setting the reflections of these mirrors against each other, some of the specific distortions of each may be revealed. To be concrete: Baluan cultural reflection has helped me to combat the tendency present in anthropological discourse to reify the concept of culture.
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AR: Manus District Annual Reports (National Archives of Papua New Guinea)
DKB: Deutsches Kolonialblatt
HM: Hiltruper Monatshefte
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