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Socio-economic change and labour migration among the Southern
Kewa, S.H.P.

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1. The People

The present report is based on work (still in train) carried out mainly in the West Sugu area of Kagua District (S.H.P.), but ~~extending~~ also to Kagua station itself, as well as to plantations in the Western Highlands and Central Provinces. In the Sugu area work has concentrated on four adjacent groups: the Yala, the Perepe, the Kamarepa and the Koiari. More specifically, the researchers have lived with the Yala, a South Kewa speaking clan scattered in homesteads in both East and West Sugu, as well as in Erave. The largest conglomeration is a five settlement cluster in the West Sugu area marked "Iala" in the village Directory but bearing individual names locally: Poiale, Aka, Yakopaita, Pulimina, Agema. In the 1979 census the population of "Iala" was given as 248, 137 being adults and 39 of these being absent. Because of the nature of "oscillating" migration, however, and because the ages of absentees were not given, these figures are of little use to a study of migration, as will be discussed below.

Kewa ^{se}pakakers have been studied by a linguist and an anthropologist before: K.J. Franklin had left a dictionary and other materials, fruits of over ten years' study in Muli and Wabi; J.D. Leroy worked first in Koiari village just east of Erave, then in Iapi and Kuare west and east of Kagua respectively. He has written a voluminous thesis on exchange and reciprocity, as well as various articles. His distinction between the northern grasslands Kewa and southern forest Kewa will be employed here. Thus we shall refer to the group under study as the Southern Kewa, inhabiting the hilly and often infertile areas south of the Sugu river.

The south Kewa cultivate food gardens and coffee gardens. They are still largely self-sufficient in their diets, although they sometimes vary them with tradestore foods. Sexual division of labour still obtains, the women working in the food gardens and nursing ~~their~~ children while the men help in preparing gardens and fetch firewood. Men traditionally plant bananas, sugar cane, indigenous taro (ma) and yams. The last two, however, have been almost completely abandoned, the first in favour of the more prolific "taro Hong Kong" (which can be planted by anyone) and the second giving up its fertile nooks to coffee, which men and women look after jointly. Residence on marriage is virilocal, although parents sometimes live with married daughters, and children, for various reasons of convenience, often circulate.

The area is served by a court (Sumbura village court) with five elected magistrates, a clerk and two policemen. health and education facilities are at the moment a little unsatisfactory.

1.1. Health

There are two aidposts, each at an arduous 1½ hour's walk away (at Roga and Katiloma). Both are badly supplied and subject to closure without notice, so that people often return from one of these aid posts untreated. Sumbura sub-health centre was completed several months ago but has not been opened because (we were informed) staff housing is yet to be built. Work has not commenced on these buildings.

Inspite of this, people seem reasonably healthy on the whole. There is little malaria, and the worst casualties are when people accidentally cut themselves with axes, on sharp rocks, etc. Children sometimes get scabies, various sores, colds and ear infections. A very small sample (six young mothers) yielded the infant mortality rate of 3 in 10. Women still have their babies in the village, preferably on their knees and holding onto a post outside their house (erected by their husbands for this purpose), or when caught unawares, in the garden, and go to hospital only if there are complications.

1.2. EDUCATION.

There was formerly a primary school run by the Catholic mission on the present site of the Health Centre in Sumbura, but this has been closed down. The children must now attend the Community School in Katiloma, 1½ hour's walk away. The school charges a minimum fee of K2 per annum and requires one whole day's labour from one parent. Many parents use this as an excuse not to send their children to school, because they don't feel like performing a day's labour and do not find it convenient to pay the K2. Out of 30 school age children (seven to thirteen years old) in the village, 16 attended school. Other parents "hire" elderly relatives living near the school to perform the labour in their name (at the going rate of 50 toes a time).

The focal point of the research being village economics and the way it articulates with national and even international economics, especially as mediated by migrants and cashcropping, the three following topics will be separately discussed: exchange; local business; and migrant labour.

2. EXCHANGE: Or How Wealth is Used, Or Consumed

All goods, with the exception of coffee and tradestore stock, are fed into the exchange system. Although the last two are not given in exchange, proceeds from them are. Thus it is impossible by looking at a person's actual material possessions at any point in time to know the extent of that person's wealth. This system of circulating wealth means that material wealth does not lie idle but goes where it is needed (with the proviso, however, that it can be afforded). We have always marvelled at the seemingly inexhaustible ability of people to raise money when it was needed: it is always possible to find another few kina. It must be realised, however, that what appears to us a large sum for a small group to raise actually includes the tapping of resources outside the group.

As wealth circulates in this way, it often seems never to be consumed at all; but since it is not hoarded (into bank accounts) or crystallised into any other sort of durable property, and credit has an upper limit (in living memory, and in the debtor's ability to make return), ways in which it is consumed must be discovered. People are, as mentioned above, largely self-subsistent; but the "extras" which they buy from tradestores make a hole in their pockets disproportionate to the one they fill up in their bellies, or to the contribution they make to their general well-being: dry biscuits, bubble gum, cokes, cigarettes,

and of course tinned fish and rice; trinkets and clothes; these are costly items.

Money is also consumed on fares, which are quite high; on card-playing, which is rife; on buying vehicles, which have short lives; on paying compensation, which is not infrequent; and on the occasion of pigkills.

These are expenditures in which material return, to varying degrees, cannot be expected. Compensation payments are the biggest drain, for they usually follow on car accidents in which a vehicle bought by the same group is rendered a wreck (if not past all repair, by the time the various compensations have been paid there is no money left to repair the vehicle, which is then systematically dismembered for parts). Brideprice in this area is paid once and for all (not staggered - hap pe - as elsewhere) and there is no partial return. But neither is it very high, as compared to other areas (in fact it is said that "men from Minj" and "ol Simbu" like Kagua wives because they are cheap and hard working).

2.1. The Pig Kill (Yawe)

One pig kill (in Aka) was observed in detail by the researchers (a second, in Yakopaita, is scheduled for early next year). The pig kill is an occasion when both exchange and consumption take place, and if developments leading up to it have not been followed closely it can be difficult to distinguish between these two. At the pig kill pork is consumed, pork is sold and bought, and pork is given away freely, discharging past debts. Although the pig killers may kill many pigs, they are not thought to be materially poorer for it; for it is said that their pork fetched money and kina shells. But somehow money is thought of differently from pigs, as if money couldn't buy pigs: our patron, for instance, is "heavy" because the pig stakes for his yawe will be few, but "money is nothing" (he wants to buy our car). Perhaps this has to do with the timing: money has to be received sufficiently in advance to buy them (these negotiations take place well before the pig kill). Or perhaps it has to do with a deep seated desire not to convert all one's assets into pigs. As will be hinted later, the process may be in the reverse direction.

In South Kewa the pig kill always involves at least another group, never being a totally intra-group affair. It cements, or at least holds up to public notice, the relationship between two or more important men from different clans who thus accumulate some prestige to their names as well as creating obligations towards themselves. The host pig killer defers abjectly to this important guest, while this guest invites all present to attend his own pig kill in the near future, bidding them not to forget his munificence on this occasion.

It is possible that pig kills are more frequent these days, and groups being more dispersed, the number of pigs killed at a single occasion is smaller. Before, we are told, the big man (amoali) would make the round of the pig stalls and if he thought them overfull would call for a pig kill.¹ Now, however, occasions demanding pig kills (baptisms, the opening of a church building, the permanent departure of anthropologists,....) crop up all the time, so that people often complain on these occasions (by way of apology

for the number of pigs killed) that they were not ready.

Like a bankrupt, a man about to kill pigs calls in all his assets. While he is working, picking coffee, making profits in the store, he distributes his money to many bankers. His pigs also he distributes, especially if his wife complains of having to take care of them. Now everything comes back to him for a brief moment, only to be redistributed as new alliances are forged and old ones strengthened. Some men even borrow money to add to the number of pigs they are killing. If they have not managed to attract sufficient money at the time of the pig kill, however, they may find themselves saddled with nasty debts afterwards.

The women, of course, look after the pigs, and so at the time of the pig kill it is the fruit of their labour that is silently appropriated for the prestige, consumption and material enrichment of the group, but especially of the men as pig killers and distributors of pork. Thus the pig kill is, in another way, the occasion when amid general tumult, fanfare and confusion, this appropriation is made violently and without acknowledgment. For the obligations created then are towards the man, and it is the man who receives payment for pork.

In the Aka pig kill two women killed pigs. They were both old widows.

Although one hears of horrible gorging and **disgorging** in the past, in our experience the pig kill is not a wasteful affair. It is certainly no potlatch; the pork is distributed, it gets eaten or sold but not thrown away. Neither do people make themselves ill with over eating. It seems, on the whole a pretty well run business.

2.2. Women and Exchange

Under this rubric of exchange are included daily, non-ceremonial exchanges as well as concentrated scores discharged at the time of the pig kill. The women express little interest in the pig kill except to say that, for them, the sooner the better, for they are tired of looking after a flock of pigs and are always keen to kill them. So whatever pressure women may exert it is almost invariably for hastening on pig kills. How successful they are in their endeavours it is difficult to say, although we must assume that men will take any threats that the pigs will be neglected seriously. The Aka pig kill was actually brought forward, but there were other complications involved. Also, the men always cover themselves by giving the date for the pig kill in veiled or symbolic speech (siapi) so that subsequent alterations can only be suspected at.

Whatever their part in the pig kill, in general exchanges women stand their ground firmly, operating as individuals and treated as such (although naturally using their affinal links). A wife's property certainly does not merge with her husband's, and he does not normally presume to judge the adequacy of a return made to her let alone to accept it himself as his due. The following two examples illustrate these points.

- A. Rimbu's wife, Lari, had given K20 to Rimbu's married sister. Some time later Rimbu was invited by this married sister to receive a gift that they had for him. He went, but returned empty-

handed. He was offered some feathers for himself that he didn't much like, and a small piglet, still a suckling. He was not sure if Lari would accept such a very small pig for the K20 she had given before, and said the women should meet and decide it between themselves.

- B. Lapame has been married to Walaiya for four years, but never keeps any of her goods or money in his (i.e. their) house, keeping it instead in the house of a clan brother of his in the adjoining settlement. Walaiya says he never complained about this because she was a good worker. Anyway, he adds, they were her things to do with as she liked. At the time of the pig kill, however, when he did not give a small pig to her brother as she expected, she left him, although she has sent word that she is prepared to be woo'd back with gifts.

B also illustrated that, although women may express little interest and scarcely participate in formal decisions concerning the pig kill (although of course they help in the preparations), they are very sensitive to a slight when pigs are killed. The sight of women attacking their husbands for not giving them what they consider their due is not uncommon. On these occasions the husband simply runs for it, not wishing to attract any attention to the issue.

Another observation made concerning financial exchanges, and which merits closer scrutiny, is the frequency with which women act as moneylenders. The amounts are trifling, but the practice is nevertheless suggestive. Women have less expenses than men: they do not drink or smoke (although little of the former is done by the men also), they do not travel much, and they do not play cards.² So the young married women who earn money from selling coffee often provide small loans to men, usually for the purpose of playing cards. On many occasions when the researchers tried to ascertain how a certain amount of money came into a woman's possessions the woman would say "it is a loan just returned to me".

3. Local business

The most important cash earning activity for the village people is coffee growing. At present an assistant is employed to keep a record of the revenues received from coffee. The assistant has also counted the trees in the 5 settlement village (which amount to 13,741) and is at the same time engaged in keeping track of food marketing earnings. Of the middlemen who come to buy coffee at the Sumbura market (and then sell it to Hagen Kofi) two are from the area under study. Their line of business being highly competitive and insecure, they are somewhat reluctant to discuss their profits. When they do disclose to us prices paid to them by Hagen Kofi it is with the understanding that we should keep the information to ourselves. As the prices are usually announced on the radio this disclosure does not amount to much. What is interesting to find out is the profit margin - i.e. the difference between how much they buy for and how much they sell for. On a single day, between Sumbura and Kagua, we have come across buying prices ranging from 40 to 55 toea a pound. Tradestore profits are also difficult to ascertain, especially as accounts are not normally kept and household consumption often interferes with the

stock.

It is too early to compute average earnings from coffee, especially while the flush is on and probably more coffee is being sold than in the rest of the year. It does appear, though, that since whatever is earned is over and above subsistence,³ and since the migrant workers in plantations spend almost all their earnings on food, the villagers must be better off. They could be better off still if more labour were available in the village instead of going off to the plantations. Sometimes, villagers say, as much coffee rots on the ground as is picked.

Women, since they are the gardeners, market their vegetables and keep the proceeds. These are trifling amounts, ranging from nothing to 40 or 50 toea a time (markets are held twice a week). Sometimes men may prepare pancakes or provide cigarettes for a wife or kinswoman to sell, in which case she gets only a cut. Women are also entitled to the proceeds from coffee they have picked, although sometimes their husbands may take the money (or any other savings) from them by force (not usually stealth). One woman half-filled two rice bags with coffee and sold them for K14 each. When she gave the proceeds from one of these to her husband he was pleased as punch. She didn't have to give the money to him, he explained, since it was only her labour that went into earning it. In the case of absentees this also held: any member of the absentee's family who bothered to pick the coffee kept the proceeds, the owner not even expecting a rental for his ground and past labour in planting.

Established villagers often say there is money to be made in the village if only the young men would stick around long enough to find out. In the following sections we examine the situation of the migrants at their place of migration as well as on their return to the village, in an attempt to get at the reason for migration and to determine what, if any, benefits accrue to the village as a result of it.

4. Migrant labour

4.1 Figures and types

As mentioned above, census-type statistics on absenteeism have limited usefulness for determining the scale of migration. We disregarded these figures altogether, collecting instead individual histories which provided information of absence over time. Again, this information is still to be properly computed. At this stage it can be said, however, that hardly any man under the age of 35 has not had at least one period of migration, while youths and adolescents are conspicuously absent from the village. It is convenient to classify migrants into three types.

- i. Those who are permanently away, hardly returning even for feasts or deaths;
- ii. those who have had a few periods of migration in their early youth, but are now settled in the village and hardly leave it; and
- iii. those who keep going away for short periods from time to time.

There are prima facie historical explanations for the patterns of migration established. The very first migrants went mainly to the copra and cocoa plantations in Rabaul, East New Britain, because the Highlands Labour Scheme recruited them for these plantations originally, and they continued going because new migrants like to go where they have kinsmen. But most who came back did not like to repeat the experience (hard work, long hours, little pay), and the next wave of migration (at the turn of the decade) was to tea and coffee plantations in the Western Highlands. Again they moved in groups. Migration to these plantations was more casual, since migrants could make their own way there and return home when they were tired of the work. (Under previous conditions, a contract had to be signed for two years, and the bulk of the wages was paid to the migrants in their place of origin after expiration of the contract). More recently, a third wave has been to rubber plantations in the Port Moresby area. Most migrants interviewed there had arrived in 1978, and expected their contracts to be completed soon.

Category (i) above comprises early migrants, who have not returned; category (ii) comprises the majority of men between the ages of 30 and 40; while category (iii) contains two sub-groups. One is a group of very young men who are not married or in any way established at home, with educational qualifications ranging from nil to Standard 5. Five years' schooling offers no material or career benefits for these young men who work side by side with their illiterate brothers for the same wages. The second is a group of young married men who like to travel about from time to time, especially when problems arise at home, such as when they have had a quarrel with someone, usually their wives. These slightly older men travel about from plantation to plantation supported by working kinsmen who finally pay their fares home.

There is a fourth category, that of very young adolescents. In their case it is as yet too early to establish a pattern. There are also the hordes of children now growing up in the plantations, soon to become adolescents. These children, it should be noted, are not sent to school at all, for their parents say they are afraid to let them walk all the way in a strange place, and they are not provided with a bus service as higher-bracket workers are (we were told, in the case of one clerk, that his children would not suffer from these disadvantages. We have not established, however, that such a service exists. Probably what was meant was that arrangements would be made for these higher income bracket workers).

4.2

The Plantations

The following plantations were visited. In the Western Highlands, Kudjip Tea Estate and Factory, South Wahgi D.C.; Bunumwo Tea Estate and Wahgi Mek Coffee plantation, North Wahgi. In the Port Moresby area, Lolorua and Doa Rubber plantations were visited. Apart from observation and general discussions, more detailed interviews were conducted with 18 men, and at Kudjip only also with Management. The Agricultural Officer in Mt. Hagen was also consulted.

4.3. Reasons For Migration Given By Migrants

It is not easy to elicit motives from migrants. Most will say that they "just came", because the opportunity was there or because a wantok was coming, and what was there to do back home anyway? If probed with actual suggestions they are quick to espouse these. Often migrants will say they "just came" but then proceed to give reasons why they stayed on. Usually, these are pecuniary but may be social and emotional too, as for instance the death of a person close to one. As independent reasons were also given neglect by relatives of orphaned migrants; quarrels over coffee or pigs; reluctance of relatives to get wife for migrant; general ennui with village; desire to earn money for specific purpose (to start business, pay brideprice etc.). Often we seemed to be dealing with no specific push or pull factors at all, but with almost the total absence of even lukewarm motives in any direction.

Leaving aside what hopes migrants may have entertained when embarking on migration, we turn now to the realities they met with at the plantations.

4.4. Actual Situation On Plantations.

Labourers in the Western Highlands plantations are housed in pitpit and kunai bachelor or family units. The latter they usually build themselves, and they get passed from wantok to wantok. No deductions (for accommodation etc.) are made for casual labourers, and at Kudjip they are provided with rations (rice and sweet potatoes). Some have small gardens, but most are loth to devote time to cultivating land which may be claimed back at any time without compensation by the company. Clerks, carpenters and mechanics are provided with timber and concrete houses. At Wahgi Mek and Lolorua quarters are often long, desolate corrugated-iron houses divided into bare rooms.

At Lolorua and Doa no rations are provided and no gardens cultivated. While in the Wahgi plantations migrants have a choice of a number of tradestores, at Doa and Lolorua there was only one tradestore run by the company. No facilities for recreation or entertainment exist within the plantation complex, and in the Port Moresby area especial such facilities are almost totally inaccessible. Neither are there churches or schools in the compounds.

The situation of migrants at Lolorua and Doa is in many respects different from that of migrants in the Western Highlands. Migrants in the former plantations are more cut off from the village, since they never visit and never receive visits, owing to the distance and expense of covering it. All the migrants interviewed were unmarried, in contrast to most in the Wahgi area. While the latter often break their employment for a while and return home to obtain a wife, or if they already have one send for her in the second or third year of their absence, this course is not open to migrants in the Moresby area. In addition, we found that many migrants had broken contracts for one reason or another and did not expect to have their fares home paid. They could not raise the money from their own resources so often just stayed on as pasindia (see below).

Lolorua had just been made the testing ground for a new type of plantation-wide organisation. Elections were held for the following posts: 1 village magistrate, 2 clerks and 5 constables. It is the first time such elections have been held with the plantation workforce as the electorate, for positions having jurisdiction within the plantation only. A South Kewa of Perepe clan was elected village magistrate, while a Yala was voted clerk.

4.41. Workforce, Wages and Hours.

There is no minimum wage for pluckers, or, at Doa and Lolorua, latex cutters. For tea, 3.5 toea per kilo plucked is paid. For rubber, 8 toea for every 4-inch cup collected. At Kudjip the Senior Assistant Manager (S.A.M.) provided us with figures of kilogrammes of tea picked by a group of 52 on 2 random days, and the wages of those 52 at the end of that fortnight. A total of 26,715 kilos was plucked by this team that fortnight, and wages ranged between 75 toea and K36.40, with an average of K21.30. Averages, of course, are misleading, especially in this case when so many "ghost" workers are behind those with the fatter pay packets. Both the S.A.M. and workers told us that it was adult men only that usually had "names" (i.e. their names appeared on the payroll). But each paterfamilias had at least a wife, some children and other dependants, maybe sisters or young nephews, ~~X~~ see below any minimum age for employment, and said he would not interfere if he saw even very young children working. This was the affair of the parents.

This "ghost" workforce explains the conflicting figures given by the S.A.M. at Kudjip. The total labour force in both factory and estate stood at 671 in the books at the time of the interview (January 1980); the true labour force, however, was estimated at nearer 1,330. Around April, when the flush begins to climb down, this work force is cut by more than a third. According to the S.A.M. there is a migratory band of Chimbos which obligingly turns up in August and never stays beyond May, for reasons best known to itself.

Since this is piece work hours put in may be decided by the individual worker. Some pressure to put in more hours is, however, exerted by the bosboi who, apart from his basic, also gets 10% of the aggregate earnings of the team under him.

4.42. The Pasindia

Alongside the "ghost" workforce there are also the pasindia, non-working guests. These may be visitors from the village, or, more often, men in between jobs. Terms as pasindia can be very long indeed. We have come across cases of men who have lived with relatives in plantations for upward of two years, occupying themselves with playing cards. One such man claimed the management welcomed his presence as an unofficial watchman of workers' residences.

X insert: "... whose pickings would go into his basket. The S.A.M. was not aware of"

But more usual (and numerous) are the cases of men who have quarrelled with the boss and got themselves sacked, or were laid off. When workers are laid off by one plantation, they may not look for work on another for various reasons. First, because they are not used to taking such positive action; when they were originally employed they were quite likely woo'd, and picked up by a company bus. Secondly, because the rest of their line are at this plantation. Thirdly, it may be just one or two men laid off, and for safety reasons they move about in larger groups. Fourthly, because it's off season and it may not be easy to find work, so they prefer to wait a few weeks when there will be work at this plantation.

Thus a situation is created whereby the labour is always present, not paid for and supported by relatives when laid off and ready to be taken up again when needed. At the time of interviewing many men were unemployed, although expecting to have work soon; and most interviewees had had periods of unemployment during their stay. At some plantations we were told that management tolerated these "parasites" for a maximum of two weeks, after which time they had to present themselves for work. That is, of course, if there is work. This may well be a myth started by the more regularly employed to discourage prolonged visits from the village, for on the whole management did not appear actively to discourage these

pasindia. On the contrary, the plantation situation breeds and encourages them, so that the presently employed subsidise prospective labourers until they are needed.

4.43. Workers' Rights

The migrants are not aware that they may have any rights, beyond the fact that if they pick one kilo of tea (or whatever the item may be) they should expect to be paid 3.5 toea. As casual labourers they may be dismissed at any time. As a workforce, they have no solidarity or organisation and can easily be put upon, put down or put off. On the plantations visited there were clusters of workers from the same area that kept themselves to themselves. Loyalties operated in the following way. If there were trouble between a Yala and a Perepe, the Yala would go to their clan brother's aid; if there were trouble between a Kagua and a Mendi, both the Yala and Perepe would go to the Kagua's aid; but if there were trouble between a Mendi and a Chimbu, all the Southern Highlanders would flock to the Mendi's aid. They are not ignorant of official boundaries.

We know of two cases of strikes, both with negative results. One seems to have been brought about by a naturalised Papua New Guinean who set up an association for the welfare and development of Southern Highlands workers and toured the Moresby area plantations for electoral support (and financial backing for his campaign, it might be added). In return he advised the migrants to strike for better pay, which they promptly did (they explained that since he was white they assumed he had some understanding of the management, which is also white). After three days' loss of pay they went back. The second strike, in December last year, was by workers at Warawau Tea Estate in the Western Highlands, for a similar duration and with similar results.

One card carrying member of this association apparently benefited from belonging to it: he said that through its intervention the company that originally contracted him was persuaded to pay his fares back.

4.44. Use of Earnings

Very few migrants have any savings at all. Expensive food, periods of unemployment and unemployed relatives to support would clearly make saving difficult. All the migrants interviewed and others generally involved in discussions said that most of their money went on food. This was truer at Doa and Lolorua, where only one trade store existed and no food rations were provided. The situation of these men is further exacerbated by the fact that if they break their contracts, or stay on after their completion, the company will not pay their repatriation fares.

Apart from eating and treating relatives, some men played cards, smoked, or drunk a little. Thus they accounted for their earnings. Others said that perhaps it was possible to save a little, but you had to be very strong and firm. Certainly the sort of men who would hoard their money were not kindly spoken of.

Thus, although often reasons given for migration had a pecuniary tinge, yet it was found that migrants did not make money. Why, then, were periods of migration prolonged? The following discussion of how the village received and reintegrated the migrant could go towards answering this question.

4.5. INTEGRATION OF RETURNED MIGRANTS.

The options open to returned migrants are not many, especially if they are not established married men with substantial coffee gardens. They have no means whatsoever of raising cash except possibly by gambling (in which pursuit we always hear of people losing, never winning). Helping in somebody else's coffee garden is a very slow way to earn cash, for remuneration cannot be expected before the coffee picked is washed, dried and sold, which may take several weeks. On top of this their due may be defrayed in food provisions; for a returned migrant, having no garden of his own, and if he is single having no wife to work in it, must depend on other women for his food. These women, and their husbands and brothers, then gain a right over part of his labour.

To establish themselves in any way in the village migrants need an initial outlay. Tradestores and coffee buying are out of their reach, for the capital investment is too great. The fortunes of one returned migrant are set out below. He is particularly dispossessed, but his case is not unusual: we found many migrants in plantations giving as reason for their migration neglect suffered at the hands of kinspeople, especially brothers.

Rika has had no education at all. He may be about 22-24 years old. His father, the last of the acknowledged big-men of the Yala, died when he was young, entrusting him to the care of his eldest brother Roga, already married and established at that time. Rika started his peregrinations almost

ten years ago because "there was no money in the village". He wanted money to start a tradestore, pay brideprice (he is not married), buy sows. Coffee had been introduced into the village, but was still young. Rika found that all his earnings in the plantations went on food, clothes and presents for visiting clan borthers. Now he is back in the village and wants to grow coffee. He managed to acquire 1,000 seedlings and contrived a nursery near his house. The bushes are now almost of a size to be transplanted into a garden, but the garden is not ready to receive them. The clearing and preparing of the garden is too much work for one man, and since nobody is volunteering help he has been attempting to get work to raise the money to hire labour. First he set up a basketball pitch, with the idea of charging players a fee. However, there was trouble, so he dismantled it again. Then he made the rounds of vehicle owners in the villages and in Kagua and Erave in an attempt to get temporary work as a driver. He returned frustrated and blamed his brother bitterly for his neglect of him. At about the same time Roga's wife had a dream in which her husband's and Rika's parents came to her and accusing her and Roga of betraying their charge and neglecting Rika, proceeded to arraign them in open court. She woke up screaming, and Roga fell very ill. Rika scornfully rejected the pastor's plea to "pray for him". Roga is now recovered, but will still do nothing for his young charge materially. Rika is preparing to return to Hagen to earn the money to start his coffee garden. He says that it is true that money is not to be made in casual wage labour, but it is possible to save some if one is singleminded enough. While in the village there are no cash earning opportunities at all for those who do not have coffee, or some other business.

Another returned migrant who had some schooling in pidgin is employed by the researchers in a limited capacity. His stay in the village is held by a very thin thread; when this is broken, it is likely he will return again to where he can earn some cash, even though it will be immediately consumed.

Villagers often grumble that their young men are always going off. But when they do return they do little to help them establish themselves and acquire a desire to stay on. Possibly they do not have the resources themselves to help them in a meaningful way. Or possibly they want them to stay, but in a position a little subservient to their own so that they can put claims on their labour.

Finally, another theme to be discussed in connection with returned migrants is whether the village stands to benefit at all from migration.

5.

DOES THE HOMECOMMUNITY GAIN FROM THE MIGRATION OF ITS MEMBERS?

From the data presented so far the answer to this question must be in the negative. The migrants do not as a rule send part of their earnings home, and money given to visiting kinsmen could hardly be said to subsidize the village, barely defraying expenses the trip itself created. Neither do migrants bring any particular

skills back with them which are useful in the village. Some men may have learned to drive but that is not normally thanks to the plantation, neither is there a demand for drivers in the village, as Rika's case shows. Cutting latex is not useful in the village, neither is picking tea. Coffee, it may be said, is more relevant, although the way it is cared for in the plantation is different from the way it is cared for in the village, where the same crop is produced on a family small-holding basis (4). In any case, the division of labour ensures that workers do not know all the operations of a particular work process. In short, the plantation is not a vocational school; it does^{not} train people, it extracts their labour and taps skills they already have. Two young men thought it was quite useful that at Kudjip they had learned to make tea boxes; but they were trained carpenters before coming to the plantation.

In conclusion, then, it would not seem to be the case that migrants bring knowledge, skills or cash back with them which they did not have before (5). Thus migrant labour can hardly be said to benefit the village, materially or otherwise. Conversely, the village may be subsidising the plantation by bearing and nurturing labourers, receiving them back when the plantation has finished with them and supporting them until they are next needed.

A yet unexplored area is that of possible hardships suffered by the women as a result of male absenteeism, and consequent neglect of food gardens. No systematic work has been carried out on food-crop production beyond noting remarks by women that the soil is dry and sweet potato yield poor. Some work in this area is expected to be undertaken in the following months (but see notes 3 and 4).

6. RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Which way, then, for rural *développement*? In discussions with villagers and migrants the desire was expressed to attract investment in the Province. If they had "kamban" in the SHP, they say, their young men would not have to go to Hagen, or further afield. They see the establishment of plantations as offering labour opportunities, and developing their land. In these remarks they do not acknowledge the fact, of which they must be aware, that in the Provinces where they do have many kamban the bulk of the labour is recruited from outside the Province. Neither is outmigration by young people from these areas thereby halted. At the same time, the sentiments expressed are shared by many modernisation theorists who confute "development" with foreign investment and assume that the establishment of plantations will by itself bolster peasant smallholding. Thus many development projects concern themselves almost solely with quantitative changes, notably technological improvements, labour-intensive projects, increased production and cash returns, the development of roads and markets on a spatially ever widening scale.

Our focus, on the other hand, is to monitor at grassroots level the qualitative aspects of these changes, these subtle but radical shifts in social organisation which are often camouflaged by cultural continuities as reflected in traditional forms of interaction, but of which planned development must take cognisance. Such are, for instance, changes in authority relations, in rights of ownership, of appropriation and allocation of produce, in dependence

and debt-credit (exchange) relations. In these can be seen the emergence of new patterns of social inequality, of individual and group antagonisms, and even of violence, as a new value system increasingly comes to dominate the old.

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NOTES:

1. Older men also say that pig kills always took place after a victory in war.
2. No generalisation is attempted here beyond the small group we are studying. Traditionally women did not smoke in this area, and the men say that they found it offensive when they saw women smoking from bamboo pipes in Erave. Some young women (especially unmarried ones) have now started to smoke cigarettes, and 1-2 have been known to drink a little beer. This is however unusual, although it may well be a trend.
3. There is a way, of course, in which whatever is earned is not "over and above subsistence". Cash has come to pervade village economics, and although food is not as a rule bought, sometimes services prerequisite to food production are hired for money: as, for instance, the labour of a man to clear a garden for planting when the woman's own husband is too busy elsewhere to do it himself. In addition, we found that during periods when coffee pickings were good and brought in sufficient cash, food would be bought from the market or trade-store and women would not harvest from the gardens. Thus a large slab of the time spent in gardens in the old days is now spent on coffee, and as less staples are produced more tradestore goods are bought, as well as garden produce from older women who may work less with coffee (and often have fewer pigs to feed). These inextricable connections, to be analysed in detail at a later stage of the research, already reveal the nebulousness of the misleading concept of "subsistence", especially as contrasted to the "cash sector". They also offer some commentary on the much discussed problem of "maximisation" in these societies. If money is made selling coffee, food is bought and gardens may not be visited, which suggests that cash earnings do not lead to capital accumulation or improved living conditions.
4. Even a superficial glance at the layout of local coffee gardens will reveal the differences with plantation coffee. Trees are planted haphazardly and too close together; they are allowed to grow bushy and are hardly ever weeded or pruned. Some are so high that growers use ladders to pick the cherries.
5. It has been pointed out to us that in other areas working on plantations did offer some initial training for labourers, after which they would return home and start their own coffee, copra etc. However, in this area, possibly because of the more recent history of labour migration, this does not seem to have been the case. The DPI introduced coffee into the area in the early 60s, before migration had really got under way.