DEVELOPMENT CONTEXT

Social Change

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CONTRADICTION, MEDIATION AND HEGEMONY IN PRE-CAPITALIST NEW guINEA: WARFARE, PRODUCTION AND SEXUAL ANTAGONISM IN THE EASTern HIGHLANDS

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INTRODUCTION: BEFORE AND AFTER THE SWEET POTATO - MODES OF PRODUCTION AND THEIR ARTICULATION IN THE EASTERN HIGHLANDS

The bulk of the Eastern Highlands Province comprises hills and small mountains more than 2,500 metres high, pocketed by alluvial valleys. These run almost at right angles to and eastwards from the large, well drained alluvial plains and fans of the Markham valley, which provide a corridor for the flow of peoples, ideas and products.

Following this path the main migration of prehistoric peoples into the highlands moved progressively from east to west and the well forested region supported a non agricultural people for thousands of years (Bulmer and Bulmer 1964).

Of the advent of horticulture, little is known except that, like the hunters and gatherers, it came along the Markham with taro-growing peoples who moved into the lower highlands valleys (below 1,600 metres), and by at least six thousand years ago intricate systems for the growing of crops had begun to develop along with permanent settlement (Sorensen and Kenmore 1974; Egloff and Egloff 1978). The appearance of agriculture was accompanied by dramatic changes, not only in the objects of labour (i.e. new crops), but in the means of labour, intensive horticulture depending on efficient tools for chopping, cutting and scraping, for bush clearing and garden fencing, and for the building of substantial dwellings. Some stone axe manufactures existed in the Eastern Highlands, notably at Kafeto, but it is likely that the bulk of the stone tools was traded in from the Western Highlands (Bulmer and Bulmer 1964).

The displacement of hunting and gathering by the new taro horticulture was slow and uneven. Food collection and hunting would have remained a significant aspect of the pre ipomean mode of production in certain areas long after it had ceased to be so important in others. In the dialectical and uneven process of merging and replacement, conservation and dissolution, the key political and ideological elements of the hunting and gathering mode were perhaps conserved in the horticultural. Male initiation and the men's house probably had their origins in the pre-horticultural period, their form remaining largely unchanged but directed perhaps toward a new object, the need to appropriate surplus product which could be traded so that the means by which the mode of production itself was reproduced could be obtained.
The introduction of the sweet potato into the highlands about four hundred years ago had the effect of carrying through, accelerating and consolidating the transition to horticulture. This is not to say that sweet potato was responsible for the introduction of horticulture; on the contrary, it is apparent that intensive cultivation in the highlands is at least five thousand years old. Sweet potato enabled higher levels of garden production and greater population above about 1,800 metres altitude, at which height taro does not grow well (Watson 1965; Bulmer 1973).

The 'core' areas of sweet potato cultivation in the Eastern Highlands seem to have been Gahuku, Bena Bena, Yagaria and Kamano in the north and northwest and the 'marginal' areas, Gadsup, Awa, South Fore and Auyana to the south and southeast (Sorenson and Kenmore 1974; Brown 1978). The marginal areas were slow to receive the sweet potato, perhaps because of physical barriers, or to accept it, perhaps because the dominance of the horticultural mode had not been established over the hunting and gathering mode. The people on the margins lived 'on the edge of the forest', between the 'retreating edge of the forest and the advancing edge of abandoned grasslands' (Sorenson 1976). Sorenson and Kenmore report that among the Awa and southermmost Tairora sweet potato had only begun to replace taro as the staple within one generation prior to contact; so too with the South Fore (Sorenson and Kenmore 1974; Sorenson 1972). The population densities in these areas were generally in the range of 25-75 people per square mile, rather less than the 50-125 people per square mile that characterized the core areas (Brown 1978).

Sweet potato, the archaeological evidence indicates, did not bring about a change in the means of labour but the effect of its introduction was nonetheless dramatic, not so much in displacing the existing mode of production but in intensifying its contradictions. The most immediate result of the adoption of sweet potato was to increase the human and pig populations, leading to a more rapid reduction of forest to grasslands, in turn increasing the demand for the provision of domestic protein and cultivated, rather than gathered, plants and vegetables (see Watson 1965).

That men's house and male initiation existed in areas of both fringe and centre, in both taro and sweet potato areas, perhaps suggests that its origin is in neither, but that it might derive from the earlier hunting and gathering mode. Expanding populations certainly put more pressure on land, leading to a change in the nature of warfare, away from struggles of individuals or very small groups towards pitched battles of considerable duration and intensity. On the margins, 'hostility was typically aimed against particular individuals or small groups of associates' (Sorenson 1976:40). This was not the case in the centres. The sweet potato users may have had a military advantage over those groups which were reluctant to adopt the new crop. In the struggle for space and security the size of the village was crucial, and for size and population concentration a crop of high yield in relation to effort and area would have been distinctly advantageous (Sorenson 1976; Watson 1965).

The village communities on the margins were characterized by 'low density, small hamlets, and frequent movements to collect varied food sources' (Brown 1970:32). Communities perhaps shifted every few years, with the resultant inability to maintain large pig herds which anyway are not fond of uncooked taro (Watson 1965).
CONTRADICTION, MEDIATION AND HEGEMONY

The presence or absence of 'structural looseness' in the highlands is a product of the process of articulation of a hunting and gathering mode of production with a horticultural one. The introduction of sweet potato helped swing the balance in favour of 'dissolution' and hunting and gathering declined in importance. The 'conservation' of elements of the pre horticultural mode and, in particular, the maintenance of the men's house as the key political entity and male supremacy as the dominant ideology, is surely connected with the increase in women's workload occasioned particularly by the sweet potato. Increasing human and pig populations required larger areas of food and fodder, the transportation of heavier backloads for longer distances up steeper slopes, and more time spent in keeping track of pigs, feeding them and caring for them.

In addition, the consolidation of the bigman as the centre of the men's house was intimately linked to the increasing importance of women's work. As Watson argues, a rising demand for female work would have led not only to increasing the intensity of work but also to an increasing competition for women. The supply of women would have fallen increasingly into the hands of those who controlled the largest quantity of pigs and bridewealth. Men became indebted to other men and bigmen became increasingly powerful. In turn, the 'pressure on ambitious men to marry additional women [might have become] keener ..., magnifying the economic differences between monogamous and polygynous men as the labour contribution of women [rose]' (Watson 1979:67).

In the core areas, the transition to horticulture, accelerated by the sweet potato revolution, intensified female subjugation and led to increasing economic and political inequalities among men. This provides the focus for this paper; I am concerned to explore a particular place, the Eastern Highlands, over a particular time, that period after the onset of the 'ipomean revolution' and prior to European intrusion, mindful of the fact the period is not distinct - for horticulture, sweet potato and the Europeans impacted in the region unevenly and with sometimes dissimilar effects.

This particular period in the history of the Eastern Highlands has been selected not so much for its own sake (absorbing and entertaining as it is) but to cast light on the present political and economic condition of the province. (A study on the articulation with the capitalist mode is nearing completion as this goes to press.) Thus, just as it is necessary to consider the mode of production prior to the sweet potato in order to understand this period fully, so it is necessary to understand this period in order to comprehend contemporary events. That the Eastern Highlands Province did not exist during the period of time that concerns this paper is, given the propensity of colonialists for drawing arbitrary lines on maps, of concern. Of course the Eastern Highlands Province did not constitute a political unit, and the studying of it (rather than, say, the highlands as a whole) is justifiable mainly (but not entirely) retrospectively. But in fact it has been common for ethnographers to draw distinctions between the eastern and the western highlands, between the east central and eastern language family areas and the rest. The Eastern Highlands Province encompasses those two language families and was in addition characterized by a high degree of social and economic homogeneity - in horticultural practices, residence patterns, warfare, polygyny, the nana cult, the men's house and the bigman institution. Elements of all
these were found throughout the highlands but (with very few exceptions) all were found together throughout the Eastern Highlands.

This paper relies upon evidence collected by a handful of anthropologists and medical researchers who were active in the Eastern Highlands in the 1940s, 1950s and the first years of the 1960s. The anthropologists in particular have almost precluded the development of a broader view, locked in as they were to a method which stressed small-scale study through participant observation and which insisted that kinship was the social structure. Since politics was a priori a function of kinship, it followed that the village (where people lived) was not where political action was, because the Eastern Highlanders who lived together were frequently not related by blood ties. Before the solution had been found as to what was the basic political unit, the search was on for the largest. Kin ties were of little help here either and the conclusion drawn by ethnographers was not that this approach to explaining political action was inadequate but that the 'fault' lay in reality itself. Highlands' societies were characterized by 'structural looseness'.

The same problem arose in attempting to explain political power within the village. Since the village was not central to the anthropological enterprise because it was not amenable to kin analyses, the men's house and the bigman institution, central to village politics but not determined by kin relations, were once again overlooked. Along with 'structurally loose' societies the anthropologists saw 'acephalous' societies - headless societies, a term suggesting again that something was lacking, that reality was at fault.

Nonetheless, it is now too late to obtain first hand knowledge of post-ipomean, pre-European life in the highlands. Instead, the task remains to confront the painstaking, detailed, hesitant, non-judgemental, and in its own terms (there is no other word for it) generally excellent descriptive work of the early ethnographers. The reworking of this literature is a task that demands serious attention, for no adequate understanding of the contemporary political economy of the province can be gained without it. Unless the preexisting institutions, forms of political action and economic exploitation - in short the contradictions - can be grasped in their dynamic totality, then any understanding of the present must remain inadequate. The Third World was created; global capitalism impacted on something. World capitalism came to a living, vibrant, changing social order, possessed of its own stresses, strains and motive forces. And it came unevenly, affecting different parts in different ways, over different periods of time, with dissimilar results.

THE VILLAGE IN THE EASTERN HIGHLANDS

Ethnographers of the highlands of Papua New Guinea have generally considered the descent group as the key political unit in the pre-contact period, but even within the economically and culturally homogenous area of the Eastern Highlands Province there arose considerable terminological confusion. What Read called a district unit and sometimes a sub-tribe, Berndt called a district, Salisbury a phratry, Newman a phratry, Watson a local-group, Glasse a clan-parish. Langness initially used the term tribe, but later changed his mind and referred to the same unit as a district.
Within these groups there apparently existed what Berndt calls a village or clan, what Read calls a local clan or village, and what Salisbury calls a clan or village and sometimes a clan-village. Within these again, existed a patrilineage (Berndt), a lineage/sub-clan containing polysegmentary lineages (Read), or wards containing lineages (Salisbury) (Langness 1968:181; R. Berndt 1964, Table 2).

Some Eastern Highland ethnographers seem able at least to agree to call a village a village, and this analysis makes it the basic unit, following the example of the first ethnographer in the Eastern Highlands, Fortune (1947a, 1947b), who unlike most of his successors considered the village 'independent and sovereign' and suggested that location was a principal determinant of economic and political activity. Salisbury (1962b) did likewise but combined the spatial metaphor with kinship terms, referring to the village as containing the significant social group, a patrilineal virilocal clan, which was normally the largest effective unit in Siane society and the main unit of warfare.

The village (hamlet, house-place, settlement) was situated on high ground or adjacent to some other physical feature which gave greater safety in time of war - a forest, stream or cane-swamp. The area occupied by the structures themselves was comparatively small and the 45-200 inhabitants worked in the surrounding gardens, which sometimes covered more than twenty acres, and in the nearby forest and grasslands (Chinnery 1934; Read 1954a, 1966; Salisbury 1962a, 1962b; Newman 1965).

The dwellings, from twelve to one hundred of them, were frequently surrounded by a stockade, a precaution made particularly necessary in the Eastern Highlands by the grassland stretches covering formerly cultivated slopes; the communities lacked the protection and seclusion of natural forest or large casuarina groves enjoyed by their neighbours to the west (Read 1952, 1954a, 1955; Sorenson and Gajdusek 1969; Chinnery 1934; Newman 1965; Brown 1978; Salisbury 1962b). The majority of the dwellings were shared by females, young males and pigs. In their midst and/or at both or either end of the village stood the men's house(s), the focal point in the village (Read 1954a, 1954b; Salisbury 1962b).

WARFARE

The location and fortification of the village was necessitated by constant warfare - a way of life for Eastern Highlanders at least since the ipomean revolution (and probably before it) and up to the establishment of 'Pax Australiana' (and occasionally following it). Male children were reared by the warriors and the warrior men and their pupils inhabited the men's house (Chinnery 1934; C. Berndt 1966; R. Berndt 1962). With enemies as close as fifteen or thirty minutes' walk away the task of the warrior was onerous, necessitating round-the-clock vigilance. From vantage points the men guarded the women at work in the gardens and kept watch over the village at night (Read 1954a, 1954b; R. Berndt 1954-55). With its strategic location within a village itself strategically located, the men's house was 'a nerve centre and clearing house for the affairs of a settlement' (Watson 1967:80), as well as being a citadel from which its occupants allocated guard duties and maintained the roster (Read 1954a; Watson 1967; R. Berndt 1962; Sorenson and Gajdusek 1969; Sorenson 1972; Salisbury 1962b).
In a situation of virtual hand to hand combat, the victor on the battlefield was the side with the numbers, with manpower and its effective mobilization more than any other factor determining the outcome (Watson 1965). Fortune (1947b:110) records a winning alliance outnumbering the losers by ten to one. Thus, although homicide by ambush was common and raids to assassinate particular individuals were frequent, pitched battles (which were often of considerable duration involving many casualties) determined the day. A particular fight might last for two or three days but the struggle might continue with very little respite for several weeks (Watson 1967; Fortune 1947a, 1947b). Ronald Berndt (1962:236-239, 263-265) records in detail several wars and from this record it is possible to derive some basic data. One struggle lasted for twenty-one days with twenty-two killed, another for about a month with the loss of about eighteen people. Over time, casualties could be heavy. In the Kogu area near Kainantu, containing five villages, about one third of the men were killed in warfare between about 1900 and 1950 (R. Berndt 1970:343). Mick Leahy commented in his diary in February 1934,

... the death rate in this area alone [the Bena Bena valley] from fighting is appalling and every day we are getting particulars of more deaths of people we knew when we were here before [three years previously]. We are also being continuously invited to go with a friendly mob and wipe off another crowd whom they are at war with, the rewards held out to us being plenty of pigs and marlys [women] (quoted in Langness 1968:14).

In the attempt to gain numerical superiority, the leaders of the men's houses entered alliances with other leading men, and groups of villages with other groups (Watson 1967). Such alliances were fragile; the norm was their breaking (Read 1954a; R. Berndt 1962) and bribery was commonplace (Fortune 1947b; R. Berndt 1954-55, 1962, 1970; Watson 1967; Glasse and Lindenbaum 1969).

With numerical strength the determining factor, and with military alliances unstable, numbers would have been more assured with recruitment and absorption (Watson 1967; R. Berndt 1964). Whence came the new recruits? Certainly mainly from villages laid waste. With no possibility of survival outside a village, and surrounded by foes and uncertain allies, the defeated warrior, his wives and children had no option but to take up residence in another's village. Frequently, but not always, the warrior would settle in the village of his wife's father or brother or in the village of a pig-exchange partner. But the refugee might seek help from a powerful man in the area, thus adding to the bigman's strength and reputation. The 'major political achievement' of the famous bigman and warrior, Matoto of Tairora, was 'the recruitment of a sizeable group of refugees' (Watson 1967:55). While the more usual occurrence was probably the recruitment of single families, the success of Matoto was not uncommon. Newman (1965) records the story of LuBiso, a bigman of the Gururumba of the upper Asaro valley, about twenty miles from Goroka. LuBiso was a warrior whose reputation was known not only in the Asaro valley but in neighbouring areas as well, such that families from Gende and even Chimbu came to settle with him. Not only did LuBiso succeed in attracting families but he succeeded in establishing an entire Chimbu village next to his own. The men had initially come down to fight as battle allies of LuBiso (for what
reason is unclear) but so impressed were they with him that they decided to stay.

It was Berndt's (1962:250) opinion that 'movements of displaced persons [took] place fairly frequently' and he records instances of refugees seeking refuge among those who had dispossessed them. Read (1952) records instances of the victorious calling on the vanquished to return. To what would they have returned? A small dispersed group, unable to return to its gardens and plundered of its main items of wealth, was very much dependent on the kindness of others. And, comments Berndt, this kindness had to be paid for. The fate of at least some of the conquered, some of the time, was absorption by the conquerors.

Numbers was the key to military success and the size of the village was increased by the absorption of those who were dispossessed through warfare. Nor was this absorption of refugees halfhearted. The Chimbu villagers who settled near LuBiso were quite 'foreign' in language, dress and some customs to the Gururumba, and yet at the time Newman was in the area two sons of a Chimbu immigrant were well on their way to becoming bigmen, and had even established their own men's house (Newman 1965).

Kinship terms were extended to all persons who lived in the village, regardless of their reasons for doing so, and the newcomers were no different from those of local descent in the rights and duties accorded them. 'Brotherhood' depended as much on alliance and friendship as kinship. If a warrior lived in the village and acted like a 'brother' he became one, and in no respect was he different from a 'real' brother (de Lepervanche 1967-68).

Descent was a means of conceptualizing residence (Glasse and Lindenbaum 1969). The attempts by anthropologists working in the province to explain political action by analyses of kinship, were misplaced. Political relationships often preceded kin relationships and were then cemented by fictive kin ties: 'politics play[ed] a prior role' (Watson 1967:70); 'the sources of integration [were] much more in the power structure than in the kinship structure' (Newman 1965:59). 'Structural looseness', 'genealogical shallowness', 'structural flexibility', so frequently commented on by highlands ethnographers, is explained not only by hunting and gathering remnants but also by the pattern of warfare which crucially determined, and was determined by, village size.

It was usual to present the migrant with generous gifts of pig, fowl and vegetables; gifts that in time would be reciprocated. It was usual also to provide the migrant with fertile land - the admission of outsiders necessitated it and land was used as an inducement to attract new recruits. Eastern Highlanders had a keen eye for numbers, on the ability of a village to survive. Read (1954a, 1966) records the acerbic comments of a tultul of the Gehamo, who scoffed at a neighbouring village pointing out that its numbers were so small that if fighting had not been proscribed it would have suffered complete annihilation or would have had to rely on the superior strength of a neighbouring village to survive.

Although in the absolute sense land was short in few areas in the Eastern Highlands, the province is the driest area in the highlands, receiving 200 to 250 cm of rain per year in most places compared with 250
to 300 in Chimbu, Western Highlands and Enga (Brown 1978). The margin between a successful crop and food shortage was a slim one, with the Korofeigui people of the Asaro valley forced to trade in salt and pigs to meet seasonal food shortages (Howlett cited in Brookfield 1964). Optimal conditions for the cultivation of sweet potato were rare and, in Brookfield's opinion (ibid.:38), the widespread occurrence of conditions that verged on the marginal placed a premium on the best land. The settlement of new recruits in the interests of military protection, strength-in-numbers, would have increased the need to acquire more land. In a province where drought was a problem and the best land at a premium, the acquisition of fertile land through conquest would have given further impetus to warfare.

PRODUCTION: SEXUAL DIVISION IN THE TECHNICAL RELATIONS OF PRODUCTION

The most visible social and economic feature of Eastern Highlands life in the 1950s was the sharp sexual division of labour (Langness 1974).

The most important crop was sweet potato, which provided 70 per cent or more of the diet of most highlanders (Langness 1974; Brown 1978:78). Reid and Gajdusek (1969:334-337) surveyed Moke Village in North Pore in 1957 prior to 'significant change in dietary and gardening practices'. They found that a woman provided 6.3 to 8.5 kg of sweet potato daily and 4.9 to 8.3 kg of other vegetables and fruit (piti, taro, corn, sugar cane, banana and greens) for the evening and morning meals. These estimates may have been conservative: at the time of the study 'most of the younger men' were in gaol for engaging in warfare. Salisbury (1962b) estimated that each adult consumed nearly 2 kg of sweet potato a day and about the same quantity by weight of other foods. In the twice-daily meals, more than 70 per cent of the calories were derived from sweet potatoes, the remainder coming from other vegetables and fruit. Only about 2 per cent came from meat. Similarly the majority of the protein intake came from vegetable sources: about 40 per cent from sweet potato, 20 per cent from leafy greens, 35 per cent from other edible plants, and less than 5 per cent from meat (Laut 1968:95).

The gardens in which the women worked varied not only in number but also in size, from about 0.3 to 0.6 acre. The intensity of labour in the highlands as a whole varied from about 165 woman-days to 200 woman-days per acre (Brown 1978). The yield also varied. Glasse (cited in Sorenson 1972:349) suggests yields of 5 to 21 tons per acre, and Salisbury (1962b) recorded 4.2 tons and considered 8 tons per acre high. Brown (1978:82-83) suggests that about 7 tons per acre was high, and concludes that there can be no doubt that permanent and intensive gardening require[d] much labor per acre of land, but that it also produce[d] more food for the area than extensive systems which use[d] more land and require[d] less preparation, weeding and other crop care .... This increased production, especially when population pressure [was] felt, justifie[d] the higher labor input. Further, it prompt[ed] permanent settlement, improvement of housing, trees and orchards, while
reducing convenient supplies of wild products and animals.

While intensive cultivation provided the bulk of the nutritional needs of the Eastern Highlanders, what small proportion came from animal protein was overwhelmingly provided by the labour of women. To women fell the task of pig husbandry. They took pride in the animals, named them, slept in the same house as them, fondled them when small. Sometimes a woman even allowed orphan piglets or those of large litters to share her breasts temporarily with her children (Vayda 1972; Sorenson and Gajdusek 1969). The importance of pigs in ceremonial nexus has been noted repeatedly by highlands ethnographers. What has been less appreciated has been their importance as a source of protein compared to hunting. Hunting of wild game by men was an extremely energy intensive form of protein acquisition. A recent experiment among the Siane Komonku indicated that 25.1 man-hours of effort were expended for each kilogram (bag weight) of possum, cuscus or rat obtained. More than five man-hours were expended for each kilogram (bag weight) of flying fox (Dwyer 1974).

Although there is evidence of the domestication of pigs in the highlands between 5,000 and 6,000 BP (Bulmer 1973), the introduction of sweet potato in the area about 400 BP made possible an increase in the size of the pig herds (Sorenson 1972; Watson 1979). Much of the sweet potato crop - nearly two thirds in some places - was used for fodder. The acceptance of the sweet potato as both a staple food and a fodder unquestionably increased women's work, in cultivating larger areas, transporting heavier backloads of tubers, and in watching, feeding and caring for pigs (Watson 1979).

In the forms of production summarized above - cultivation, pig husbandry, and hunting and gathering - the contributions of the two sexes are unequal in terms of subsistence derived as well as input of labour time. This is doubtless because of the male warrior role which was vital in a society in which 'warfare was an accepted feature of social living' (R. Berndt 1964:183). The warrior role, the hunting of men, merged with the task of hunting for food but the bulk of the food was produced through the labour of women. As Read (1954b:866) commented, on women fell 'a disproportionate share of both the drudgery and the heavy work'.

In addition to direct forms of production of goods, there were other kinds of labour activity which entailed the transformation of a product into another more usable or more desirable form. These secondary forms of production included craft manufacture, food preparation and trade (O'Laughlin 1974). There was a substantial sexual division of labour, not only in the production, but also in the transformation of products. Men were responsible by and large for the construction and maintenance of bridges, and houses which needed rebuilding every three or four years. Women were responsible for the never ending task of transforming the inner fibres of vines, shrubs, bark fibres and roots into cord, which was then fashioned into netted hats, aprons, skirts, lashings, pig-tethering ropes, belts, armbands, and most importantly, string bags in which all produce was transported. Mats were also made from pandanus leaves plaited into rectangles and used for rain capes and bedding. And women obtained and maintained the bamboo cylinders which were used as cooking utensils,
containers and carriers for water, oil and other fluids (Read 1966; Brown 1978).

Although the sexual division was pronounced in these activities, it was even more so in the manufacture of salt. Some villages which had access to rich forest land and plentiful firewood undertook the production of salt made by the burning of reed or cane and the extraction of water soluble salts from the ash. Salt-making secrets were carefully guarded and certain aspects of the production process were restricted to a few men only (Sorenson and Gajdusek 1969).

The trading of the salt was in the hands of men, as was trading in general. Sometimes barter was man to man, and involved hazardous travels through hostile territory. Sometimes it took the form of group exchanges but always it was invested with political importance, not the least of which would have been military - an attempt either to win potential allies or at least to ensure a possible 'safehouse' in the event of a military setback.

The sexual division of labour was as strictly defined in the process of the transformation of products as it was in simple production. Production was the sphere of women and their life of hard work marked them physically. A woman returning from a garden might have carried a load of 25 kg or more (Salisbury 1962b) which caused 'hollows in her back, large enough to contain [two] fists ... the stigmata of her lifetime of carrying' (Read 1966:40). In most aspects of Eastern Highlands production the sexual division of labour was culturally, not biologically, determined. With the exception perhaps of the felling of larger trees and warfare, there was little a man did that a woman could not have done. Or to put the matter the other way, men most certainly could have performed the tasks that women did, but did not. Furthermore, in the transformation of products strength was not an issue, and yet the sexual division of labour manifested an even greater rigidity there than in simple production. Women were not allowed even to look upon the site of salt production. The economic subordination of women to men was not technologically determined, and in order to explore male dominance it is necessary to turn from technology to the organization of production.

SEXUAL ANTAGONISM AND THE MEANS OF PRODUCTION: THE CONTROL OF LAND AND THE MEANS OF LABOUR

Jural rights to the use of land for cultivation were obtained through residence in the village. Although no individual had rights to special consideration in the allocation of land, certain areas were associated with particular patrilineages. The older men in the lineage at their retirement allocated the land to their sons, at their sons' marriage. In effect, this sometimes meant that the advantage lay with the eldest son, since his age cohort was the first to obtain wives and thus require land. All Eastern Highlanders were in theory able to claim land in the village of their father. In practice, men who left the area for a prolonged period or took up residence in another village often forfeited their right to land unless they were strong enough to assert it. The control of land was far more directly related to residence and power than it was to kinship.
This was even more clearly the case with women. Langness, who in 1964 reported that women retained land rights in their father's village, wrote five years later (Langness 1969:55):

Although it has been widely reported for the New Guinea highlands that women retain rights in their natal groups after marriage ... it has never been made clear just what this means .... I would suggest that such statements are often misleading in the extreme, they imply a significance to descent group membership which does not in some cases exist, and they give an erroneous impression as to the position of female agnates.

The lack of real female control of land was expressed through the rules of exogamy and virilocal residence: at marriage women left the village of their father and joined that of their husband. Theoretically, women remained members of their father's village even after marriage, thus maintaining their right to land; but with a rule of virilocal residence they were seldom in a position to claim that right. Women had right of usufruct over land, dwellings or patches of forest, but not right of disposal. This rested with men. Men exercised the ultimate control over land and the usable products on it (Newman 1965).

The absence of individual rights of ownership of land was often confused by ethnographers with the presence of egalitarian rules of property assignment. But the real relations of production in the Eastern Highlands were marked by asymmetry of age and, more essentially, sex. This inequality of access was present not only in the key object of labour - land - but also with relation to the main means of labour.

Cutting, scraping and butchering implements when made of bamboo were simple to obtain and manufacture. Sharp pointed tools were made of the long leg bones of cassowaries, pigs and other animals, and needles were made of other bones. Tools made from animal bones assumed only the existence of the means to catch them and all villages had the ability to make these, if not up to a standard that the men might have preferred. Asymmetrical relations to the means of labour were noticeable in the access to and/or control of three key tools: digging sticks, bows and arrows, and axes or adzes.

Digging sticks, by far the easiest tools to obtain, came in a variety of sizes but all were fire-hardened or shaped tree limbs, and in this respect were dependent upon the existence of the axe. Although most intimately associated with women's work, they were not exclusively so; men also cultivated a narrow range of crops which required planting and some care. Bows were made of hardwood and arrow heads were attached to the reed shaft by binding and gum. Favoured materials - black palm and gum - when absent or in short supply were obtained through trade. Access to weapons was strictly forbidden to women and it was considered among the Gururumba at least a punishable offence for a woman to touch a man's bow. Like weapons of war and the hunt, the axe was the preserve of men. As far as is known, the only axe or adze-head manufacture in the Eastern Highlands existed in Kafetu on the Asaro river. Every man needed a work axe, which he carried with him most of the time and used daily (Newman 1965; Brown
1978). For most villages, this meant that the vital axes could only be obtained through exchange. Production in the Eastern Highlands required a limited stock of tools, but the most basic tool, that which was used in the preparation of others, could on the most part be obtained only by trade.

ECONOMIC SURPLUS AND THE REPRODUCTION OF THE CONDITIONS OF PRODUCTION

A mode of production contains not only a set of productive processes, but also the conditions of its reproduction. The mode of production prevalent in the Eastern Highlands, once it had reached a stage in its articulation with the hunting and gathering mode in which horticultural production was dominant, required as a condition of its continued existence an ability to produce a reasonably regular surplus. A surplus was essential because the climate made settled agriculture something of a risk in some parts of the province; because the most basic tool in the Eastern Highlander's kit bag, the axe or adze, generally had to be obtained by trade; and because, apart from natural increase, labour, in the shape of new recruits tempted by gifts or women obtained through bride price, could be replenished only through the production of surplus.

Surplus in its most basic form was surplus of sweet potato provided primarily through the labour of women and transformed into a more durable form by feeding a substantial portion of it to pigs. As Sorenson (1972) has pointed out, only villages having an output in excess of their needs could raise pigs. Pigs were repositories of an otherwise unpreservable surplus (Vayda 1972). Sweet potatoes, produced with female labour, were not as valuable and could not be exchanged. They obtained exchange value in their transformation into live protein; but in this very transformation they moved out of the control of women and into the hands of men. While the care of the animals resided with women their disposal rested unquestionably with men.

The key political problems confronting a village in the Eastern Highlands were twofold. On the one hand, to survive the predacity of its neighbours it required strong fortifications, an alert and capable force of warriors and a reliable system of alliances. On the other, the regular production of an agricultural surplus was necessary for its physical survival. To obtain axes and wives, tradeable products were required and the two key exchange goods produced in the natural economy were women and pigs. Women were explicitly recognized as sources of valuables. The vagina was 'the road along which pigs and shells came'. But the distribution of women was related directly to external issues and problems of a military nature, and was not always under the control of the village polity. The regular production of a surplus was the key internal political problem. As Langness (1974:205) has observed, 'To survive in the New Guinea Highlands, and especially to survive well - to have many large gardens and many pigs - it [was] necessary to control the labour and, indeed, the actual bodies of women. They must do what [was] required of them - and when it [was] required'.
THE SOCIAL RELATIONS OF PRODUCTION - SEXUAL ANTAGONISM

The existence of the men's house undoubtedly sharpened sexual antagonism but men also had military reasons for avoiding women. In theory, an Eastern Highland man or woman's 'first responsibility and duty [was] to the war making unit, the paternal village' (R. Berndt 1954-55:51). Wives, coming as they did from outside the village, came also from and owed their loyalties to enemies or potential enemies. In this respect the sharpest feature of Eastern Highlands social relations, sexual antagonism, was reinforced by military necessity (Langness 1974; R. Berndt 1954-55).

The marital relationship was characterized by distrust and antipathy, with the husband approaching the wife (and not vice versa) principally for sex (R. Berndt 1954-55). Women were, in Langness' (1974:201) words, 'second-class citizens' and Berndt claimed that a husband had complete right of disposal over his wife. But women's awareness of their own powerlessness did not necessarily imply acquiescence. An encounter by Read (1966:50) neatly encapsulates the prevailing quality of husband-wife relationships:

She replied in the slightly injured, querulous voice I had heard so often that I began to expect it as a woman's natural form of expression. The tone barely recognised a man's right to command and thus asserted a woman's own will even while complying with his demands.

But the resources that women controlled were few, and their capacity to manipulate them was thoroughly circumscribed by the dominant male ideology and male physical power.

Perhaps the only real recourse women had was to leave their husbands entirely. Among the Gururumba, the first wife of 63 per cent of the men and the second wife of 40 per cent deserted their husbands (Newman 1965:26). Among the Bena Bena, Langness (1969:45) estimated that between 35 and 50 per cent of new brides attempted to escape at least once. Such high instability reflected not only the antagonistic nature of male-female relations but also the tensions between neighbouring villages.

If a woman and man enjoyed a relationship of trust or sympathy it was probably only within the sister-brother bond (R. Berndt 1954-55). In such a case it would have been assumed (by other men) that the married sister was passing on information to her brother or father of activities in her husband's village. Conversely, while a man did not entrust his wife with details concerning village welfare or raiding plans he expected his sister to provide such details from her husband's village. Control of information did not provide women with much leverage, for each wife was a sister and each sister a wife. The woman who traded information to a brother was also the woman who betrayed her husband. For the men, the situation was one of balance - each man's sister was another's wife. For the woman, the situation was one of powerlessness and isolation, for power was located in the village in which she lived and worked, not in her village of origin.
SEXUAL ANTAGONISM AND THE REPRODUCTION OF LABOUR

Sexuality may have provided women with some small leverage, but fertility control perhaps provided women with a greater degree of power. The number of men a village contained was a source of strength and pride; Read (1966, 1954a) records Helekaupu of the Ozahadzua near Goroka boasting that they were stronger than others because their men outnumbered their women. The retention and absorption of new settlers, crucial as it was to the very existence of the polity, was fraught with danger. Sometimes even the kinship framework proved insufficient to contain new members of the village community and there were instances of refugees turning on their erstwhile hosts, often in response to bribes by enemies of the host group. The only sure method of recruiting a larger and more effective fighting force was through natural increase and the intensive socialization of male offspring.

To obtain control over the fertility of women and the early relationship between mothers and sons, men tried to make it impossible for women to practice contraceptive techniques or abortion or to have undue influence over their sons (Langness 1974). Not only was it the case that men believed that women had the ability to prevent conception and/or cause abortion (Read 1954a, 1966), but there is evidence that women did in fact possess pharmacological remedies to obtain these effects (Langness 1974; Read 1954a, 1954b). In childless marriages the woman was always blamed, for a man was not considered fully a man until his wife had borne a child and it was considered impossible for men to be sterile (Read 1954a, 1954b; Langness 1974). That fertility control was practised by women is evident by the low fertility rate. Although some had as many as six children, the average among the Gahuku-Gama was only two (Read 1954a). (Elsewhere, Read (1954b) suggests that average family size including husband and wife was just over three.) The attempt by women to retain control of their fertility, even in the face of severe sanctions, may have been an attempt to balance the demands of the mothering role with the heavy duties placed upon them as the primary producers and processors of food. It may also be seen as an attempt by women to retain some power in a situation where they were powerless.

The social relations in the post-ipomean and pre-European Eastern Highlands required for their reproduction an education which taught the child to become a warrior and at the same time instilled in him the virtues of male pride, male superiority, male solidarity, and antagonism to females. With women's allegiance to their fathers and brothers, with women's unreliability and guile, how would it be possible for a man to have trusted his son? Breast milk was an important part of the child's diet for three or four years, and the care of young children was women's work, demeaning to a man and contrary to the aggressive virtues required in a warrior. Women, of biological and social necessity, undertook the first years of child socialization. This was a potential danger to male hegemony.

To counter this threat, male children were 'forcibly' removed from their mothers and the company of other females on at least four different occasions. On the first two experiences of separation, at ages five to six and seven to nine, the male children were taken away from the community and physically marked (Langness 1974). As time passed the children were
increasingly warned of the dangers of association with females: their skins would be no good; they would contract sores; they would become ill; they would be weak; they would die as young men; they would become 'rubbishmen' rather than 'men with a name' \( \text{ibid.} \). For a boy, the achievement of manhood and superiority was a process fraught with danger, the novice learning that his safety and survival depended on having as little as possible to do with women (Read 1954a). This was expressed by the physical removal of the young man at puberty to the men's house which remained the centre of his daily life ever after.

The reproduction of labour involves not only biological reproduction but also the socialization of individuals into their productive roles. Given that labour was the scarcest factor of production, those who controlled its reproduction could be expected to possess some power. This was not the case, and here rests a central contradiction of the system. Women had the primary responsibility for both biological reproduction and the socialization of children, but control over those reproductive rights was vested entirely in men (O'Laughlin 1974).

The 'extreme tension, even antagonism', the 'inherent antagonism', characteristic of male-female relations, was rooted in the village political economy, in the struggle for control of the factors of production and reproduction (Read 1954b; R. Berndt 1965). Land, labour, and fertility, the means of production and reproduction, gave rise to a set of fiercely antagonistic social relations within and between villages. The sharpness of these contradictions within the village in the form of male-female antagonism, and between groups of villagers in the form of warfare, has been noted by all ethnographers of the province. Given the intensity of these internal and external strains, what prevented the collapse and/or transformation of these formations? What mediated the contradictions?

MEDIATION AND CONTROL

Instances of spontaneous action by women against an infringement of their rights by men are rare in the literature on the Eastern Highlands. Shirley Glasse (1964) records what appears to have been an institution among the Wanitabe of South Fore, which involved a mass walkout by the women of the village if one of their numbers was affronted by a male. Men too walked out \( \text{en bloc} \) if shamed by a wife. Read (1966) also records an incident at Gohajaka when women \( \text{en masse} \) physically attempted to prevent a brideprice settlement.

In order to produce a system of social relations that either contained, or was grounded in, contradiction the society mediated these contradictions within politico-juridicial superstructures and/or ideological representations (O'Laughlin 1974).

More regular ritual mass-action by women centred around those times when male control of their productive and reproductive effort was most obvious. When a young woman left her village to take up residence with her new husband, ritualized forms of female aggression occurred. So too when pigs were taken out of female control and set for a pig exchange and when
young men left the care of women and passed through the final stage of initiation into the world of male adulthood.

When pigs were taken out of women's control, when young men became adults, when a young woman became a wife, these were times when the role of women as reproducers was clear, as was the fact that they could not control how that role was to be enacted or to what end. Read (1966:196) comments that these were rituals of opposition, graphically symbolizing the cleavage between the sexes. They belonged to 'that broader category of custom in which the subjects of a sacred king engage in ritual rebellion - a licence granted on one day of the year - abusing and insulting an office beyond the reach of normal criticism'.

Such ritual releases illustrated the strength of female opposition, yet were only possible within an ideology that strongly expressed and reflected male hegemony. The male and female roles and the power relations involved in them were reinforced as part of daily living through moral exhortation, and parables such as those recorded by Read (1955), which are similar to parables found among the Kamano, Usuruwa and Jate (R. Berndt 1962). Education within the men's house was even more direct and was based on a series of positive and negative admonitions. On the one hand the young man was instructed to be strong, to be ready to fight and kill. He was to listen to his elders, help his father and his father's line, and attend to his wife's garden and the maintenance of the stockade. He was not to commit adultery and as far as possible was to avoid any association with women (R. Berndt 1962).

For more general consumption, among the Kamano, Usuruwa and Jate such moral precepts were incorporated in a series of parables (kinthera) which were 'part of the texture of living' and 'mirror[ed] everyday life' (C. Berndt 1966:270). Catherine Berndt (1966) recorded 536 of these tales, which dealt mainly with the problems of living in a hostile or potentially hostile environment and with relations between men and women, and drew attention to moral issues or laid down moral rules.

The admonitions to women were more casual in the telling. Usually shortly before marriage a young woman was directly instructed by other women in what she had to do. She was told three main things: stay with your husband; do as you are told; avoid sexual relations with other men (R. Berndt 1962). Newman (1965:91-92) recorded a speech on an evening of instruction to a girl prior to marriage; it was delivered by the women of her village in the seclusion of a woman's house away from male ears:

When you get to [place name] there will be many things to do. You will be told to work in the garden, to weed, to plant, to bring firewood. You must look after the pigs and bring water when you are told. You will carry heavy loads, and if they are too heavy to carry you just make two trips. You cannot ask someone else to carry part of it for you. You will give food from your garden to your husband's father and his brothers when they call out for it. When you have pigs you will give these also, even if you have suckled them at your breast ...
The security of the system of male socialization, male supremacy and female submission rested ultimately on the exercise of physical force. The beating of women was an accepted part of life. Read (1966:188) records a meeting of the Nagamidzuha:

As he concluded a woman's voice from the sidelines shouted an angry criticism of men who had no feeling for their daughters .... Kimitohe turned in fury toward the source of the interruption. He had a long cane in his hand, and in one stride he reached the woman and lashed her bare shoulders repeatedly, telling her to keep her place while men were talking. Mutterings of dissent and resentment among the other women were quickly silenced as he wheeled to face them with the cane ready to descend.

More usually, men disciplined their wives; it was the 'right of husbands to beat their wives' (Read 1966:69) although as the example above suggested, it was not unusual for any male to beat any woman of his village if she behaved in a manner that he found sufficiently aggravating. Informants of Langness (1969) agreed with each other that of thirty Korofeigian males that Langness named, eighteen were known to beat their wives often, and twelve were said never to have beaten their wives.

Besides non formalized and apparently not usual beatings, women were subjected to formalized physical violence, which combined elements of terror with that of theatre. A young woman of the Gahuku-Gama who was unfortunate enough to be approached by the man to whom she was betrothed, violated the taboos requiring strict avoidance. This was considered an affrontery to the man's agemates who sometimes retaliated by urging that she be returned to her parents or by killing her (Read 1954a, 1954b, 1966). A woman suspected of adultery had sticks thrust into her vagina, or stripped of her clothing was tied to a post while men threw dirt and urinated on her (Read 1954a, 1955). Among the Bena Bena a defiant wife was punished with serial intercourse by the husband and other men of his group (Langness 1974). Read (1954a:23) records that a common punishment for less serious offences involved beating across the breasts and shoulders. The man selected to carry out the punishment perform[ed] a dance while he belabour[ed] as many as six woman in one go'.

Formalized physical coercion is the ultimate response of dominant groups always and everywhere to direct or indirect challenge of the basic social relations by those whom they control. Adultery, particularly with a man from outside the village, and the refusal to work were actions which struck at the heart of a social system which depended for its continued existence on the close control of women in the processes of production and reproduction. The power necessary for this control was located in the men's house.

THE MEN'S HOUSE

As well as being crucial for the military protection of the village the men's house was an information centre, a decision-making centre, ritual centre, and a school house (Newman 1965). It 'formed, in effect, a
"corporation" whose "estate" included land, sacred symbols, and women' (Read 1966:181). In the men's house male superiority and solidarity on the one hand, and the subordinate dependence of women on the other, found its most formalized expression.

So strong were male bonds of solidarity within the men's house that even an adulterous husband was not expelled (although the wife was punished). Berndt (1962) suggests that among men who shared a men's house adultery was even condoned but is sure that at least it did not have serious repercussions for the men. Langness (1974:194) recorded several cases occurring within the Nupasafa of Bena and noted 'although this kind of adultery [was] morally condemned, it cause[d] little overt hostility between clansmen or between fathers and sons'.

The training the young men received emphasized the ideal of male solidarity and the essential opposition of men and women. Their duties were primarily concerned with serving their elders in the men's house. Among the Bena Bena and Gahuku-Gama, boys initiated to the men's house together formed a group known collectively as 'agemates' and their common submission to and dependence on their elders led to the development of close bonds between them (Langness 1969, 1974; Read 1955). A similar relationship, although not one formed exclusively within a specific men's house, existed among the Kamano, Jate, Usurufa and Fore in what Berndt (1954-55:50) called the male nenafu bond.

The agemate and nenafu bonds often overrode (other) kinship bonds and the relationship was probably even closer than that between brothers, who were supposed 'to stand as one' within the village. A deep under-current of hostility and fear underlay the fraternal relationship, however, because brothers were in direct competition for control over specific means of production and reproduction. A father invariably left the larger gardens to his eldest son when he attained social adulthood and on the father's death his remaining possessions were divided according to age. In addition, the elder brother usually had the right in taking a wife to disregard any previous attachment formed by a younger brother (ibid.).

Male solidarity forged in the men's house was the principal and dominant ideological force exercised in the struggle for retention of land in intervillage warfare, and in intravillage life in the control of fertility, socialization and labour. Male hegemony, sometimes reinforced with kinship ties, was also broader than them and at times more durable. It was articulated above all in the cult of the sacred flutes (Read 1954a, 1954b), the nama cult found among virtually all the Eastern Highlands language groups - the Siane, Gururumba, Kafe, Yavi-Yufa, Yagaria, Gimi, Labogai, Fore, Kamano and Bena Bena (Langness 1974). The nama flutes, the supreme symbol of male hegemony and male unity, were central in a secret male cult involving the validation of beliefs about male superiority, violent male initiation rites, the total exclusion of uninitiated males and of women under threat of death, and ritual feasting on pork (Read 1954a, 1955; R. Berndt 1962; Newman 1965; Langness 1974). Male initiation at puberty covered a period of weeks, a period of extreme anxiety, danger and physical pain, culminating in the revelation of the flutes to the initiates and the explaining of their secrets. Not only through the feasting on pork
was the theme of appropriation raised through the ritual, but the flutes were regarded as initially the property of women and the women made direct donations of food to the *nana* (C. Berndt 1966; Langness 1974).

Most of the ceremonies that took place in the men's house were 'directly or indirectly concerned with demonstrating and securing the dominance of men' (Read 1954b:866). Male dominance and solidarity, while secure enough, was constantly tested in that the majority of quarrels and fights in the village were directly provoked by cases of adultery, elopement and abduction (R. Berndt 1962). Men were in a position to give and enforce orders to women without necessarily specifying reasons and it was this aspect of the male-female relationship which was specifically dealt with and validated in mythology (R. Berndt 1965). The flute tune, usually the property of the men's house, stood for the 'continuity of [the] group and the inviolate character of its bonds and associated attitudes, internal harmony, mutual support, and solidarity before the world at large' (Read 1966:118). And yet the *nana* cult was an expression of male control not only over labour and reproduction, but also over land, for the possession of a particular tune was like having a deed and through it a man validated his claim. When a warrior made a gift of his flute tune to another from a different village (a rare occurrence), it meant that he had offered rights of residence (Langness 1974).

The men's house was not only linked to production as the mediator of contradictions arising from it, although that and its role in warfare were its key significance, it was also involved actively in production as a working unit. The men who lived in the men's house worked together to rebuild it every three or four years and often made up a work team and jointly cleared and fenced the village's gardens (Brown 1978; Salisbury 1962b).

The men's house was the most important political institution in the Eastern Highlands; through it were resolved the two key political problems that confronted the village: survival in warfare and survival in the reproduction of the means and social relations of production. The men's house brought together those with effective military, economic and political power in the village and kept them apart from those whose surplus they controlled. It embodied power, separation and solidarity by its very existence; as well it housed the symbols of that power, the flutes, and was the locus of the enactment and transmission of male rituals. The *nana* cult, centred on initiation and preparation of boys for warfare, was also the supreme expression and justification of men's solidarity and unity and their control of fertility, land, and labour, the means of production and reproduction.

**BIGMEN**

While men stood in a relationship of superiority to women, it was not the case that relationships between them were of equality. Within the men's house only men who were of age could expect to have influence. 'Coming of age' in the Eastern Highlands involved social and economic correlates as well as physical ones (which, as has been demonstrated above, were themselves fraught with uncertainty). Coming of age demanded military and matrimonial success. A youth was not a man until he had married (Read
And he was not able to marry until he had passed through initiation and betrothal, had made salt (in some areas) and had killed in battle (R. Berndt 1954-55). Even marriage, killing, and the making of salt were insufficient in themselves. Only those free of debt could have expected to wield any influence at a political gathering, and initiation and marriage ceremonies involved the incursion of debts. A man was not fully recognized as an adult until he had repaid the contributions which fellow clansmen had made. After his marriage the man's energies were almost entirely devoted to 'the interminable attempt', 'the pressing need to break even' (Read 1959, 1966).

Wealth in the Eastern Highlands comprised fowls, shells, arrows, waistbands, axes, feathers, armbands, and, principally and most importantly, pigs. The control of land was necessary but not sufficient to establish a name. Similarly garden surplus, dependent on the control of land beyond subsistence requirements, was insufficient to establish a name and yet was a precondition of it (R. Berndt 1954-55). Sweet potato surplus became wealth only in its consumption by pigs, and pigs were the main item of exchange in the acquisition of other goods, either instruments of production (axes) or stores of value (shells). In this crucial sense Salisbury's (1962b) emphasis on demand/exchange and his delineation of four separate 'demand circuits' is inadequate and misleading. What was overlooked was the production and reproduction of goods through labour and the transformation of products from one 'category of goods' into another. This reconsideration is crucial, particularly in relating what Salisbury regards as the separate spheres of 'subsistence' and gima (pigs and shells). Without 'subsistence' production there was no gima, for it was the sweet potato surplus which allowed the pig herds to exist. The feeding of the surplus to the animals conserved it, removed it from the ownership of women and transformed a product produced simply for consumption into a product produced primarily for exchange.

The production and reproduction of surplus product, in the form of sweet potato or pigs, was crucially dependent on the labour of women. The control of women's productive ability was a crucial factor in obtaining and demonstrating bigman status. Except perhaps among the Siane, bigmen were always polygynous, their polygyny being both a cause and symbol of their wealth and power (Watson 1967). Watson (1967:81) says of the bigman Matoto of Tairora, that 'the economics of his position ... were centrally focused upon the large number of women he had as wives, and whose production he could consequently command'. Matoto had sixteen or more wives; LuBiso of the Gururumba had twelve (Watson 1967; Newman 1965). Less powerful bigmen had three or four. The proportion of polygynous males varied directly with the size of the pig herds and the density of the population. Among the South Pore about 3 per cent of the men born before 1939 had more than one wife; among the more populous Gururumba the proportion stood at 10 per cent; and among the Bena Bena 25 to 30 per cent (calculated from R.M. Glaesse 1969 Table 3; Newman 1965; Langness 1969). A long series of payments was set into effect by marriage. Obtaining the wealth to maintain the obligations for several marriages was a considerable achievement (Watson 1967), suggesting that once a man became non monogamous he could become increasingly polygynous.
The bigmen not only had control over more of the village's female labour but also directed the work of the males of the village and the men's house in clearing tasks, in rebuilding the men's house, and (among the Siane at least) in building the houses of their wives (Salisbury 1962b).

The wealth of a village's bigmen and its security were intimately related, wealth and warfare standing in a complementary relationship. A village survived if it increased the number of its inhabitants and/or was able to enter political alliances with other villages. In both instances the bigmen played a key role. Such decisions were taken in the men's house and the bigmen had a powerful influence on the decision. Berndt (1962) argues that although alliances between villages were important, reliance upon the strength of the village itself, and on the bigman in particular, was even more important. When a campaign was to begin and how long it lasted depended a great deal upon the attitude of the bigman of the village. As the careers of Matoto and LuBiso illustrate, there can be no doubt of the importance of the bigman in increasing the size of the polity, for the bigmen were precisely those who attracted supporters and maintained a following. Part of earning a name was attracting adherents (Read 1959). It was the bigman's control over wealth, and specifically pigs (Salisbury 1965:54), which enabled the essentially dependent personal relationships to be developed and cemented. A bigman 'bound people to him economically'. Because his economic resources were greater than anyone else's, he was able to use them to support the exchange activities of others. When one man repaid the support given the wealth could be used to support someone else. Men became tied to the bigman by debt, by dependence on him as a controller of resources (Newman 1965).

The attraction of new residents was dependent upon the availability of land. Because the bigman was able to use more, through the labour of his wives, he had more to give. A bigman among the eastern Gahuku-Gama was able to 'buy' rights to land in return for pigs and shell valuables (Read 1954a). In addition, allies were frequently purchased for payments of pigs and valuables, as were the services of assassins. The extent to which outsiders could be induced to kill an influential enemy leader, the extent to which men from other villages could be persuaded to join the battle on the right side, or at least remain neutral, were a function of the wealth that the bigmen possessed.

The economic and political power of the bigman was also reflected at the level of morality. Bigmen were marked by the ability to 'rise above the rights of those they offended', to 'override legitimate procedure' (R. Berndt 1962:176). Makis of Susuroka's second wife was a member of his 'clan', a 'sister'; he married her in flagrant breach of customary morality. Guma, his third wife, came from a village allied to an enemy - Makis professed unconcern and disinterest (Read 1966). Matoto of Tairoa 'frequently saw a woman to whom he felt attracted at the moment and without a word would motion the others, often including her husband, to continue on their way. Then he would take her into the grass to enjoy her sexually. These demands of Matoto evoked no challenge' (Watson 1967:77). Watson (ibid.:78) suggests that the violation of other men's rights, the offence against morality and the disregard of convention, established Matoto's immunity to the restrictions that bound ordinary men. Politically and economically the centre of the men's house, the bigman made it clear
through his flouting of morality that he did not need what it taught, that he was stronger than it.

Much has been made in the anthropological literature of the reciprocal and redistributive nature of gift exchanges. The assumption has been that because the exchanges were reciprocal they were ipso facto redistributive. As Watson (ibid.:101) has commented, 'it is clear that reciprocity in the form of giving and receiving goods offer[ed] little embarrassment to ambitious individuals in concentrating power in their hands'. The recipient of contributions to initiation, marriage or funeral payments was placed under an obligation to the donor. The gifts had to be repaid, and until they were the debtor had to 'act circumspectly' towards his creditor, or risk ridicule (Read 1959:428, 429).

By binding men to himself the bigman increased the possibilities of political alliance if the debtor came from outside the village, or attracted men and their families to the village, or strengthened cohesion within the village itself. In addition, the standing of the village in the large pig exchanges depended on the wealth of the village's bigmen. Among the Bena Bena the exchanges were held (ideally) in connection with male initiations and were not only organized by bigmen but were carried out between individual men (Langness 1974). The killing and distribution of a large number of pigs led to the creation of temporary imbalances, favours owed, debts incurred, political alliances made or reinforced.

The political weight of a ceremony such as the idea nama of the Gahuku-Gama depended on the number of pigs available to be slaughtered. This in turn was a function of two other related conditions, the size and security of the community. The bigmen who organized a successful exchange were not only making or maintaining political alliances but were also making a clear military point. What was exchanged was always displayed; display revealed the village's capacity to be productive (Newman 1965), which in turn depended upon its ability to be secure in a world of enemies. The display of wealth was a statement of the village's military strength; so too was the military capacity of the village dependent on its wealth and at the centre of both stood the men's house and the institution of the bigman.
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URBANIZATION AND INEQUALITY IN MELANESIA

John Connell and Richard Curtain

But they have had a taste of the technology system. They have drunk water out of a tap, ridden in a P.M.V., used electric light, bought lolly-water and other things in a store, attended a second-rate picture theatre somewhere, probably bought a new set of clothes, drunk in a tavern, played billiards, listened to a string band, stood outside a big store and looked at all the unreachable cargo in the display counters, acquired a cigarette lighter ... So, when they go back to the village, it is not the same as when they left it (Rokare 1972:30).

Early studies on urbanization in Melanesia, particularly in Papua New Guinea, stressed the importance of towns as centres of economic development and social change. Thus, for Papua New Guinea, Marion Ward wrote that 'towns are the crucibles of nationhood' (1970:58) and R.G. Ward argued that 'urbanization should be facilitated and encouraged' (1971:81), whilst, from Fijian experience, Watters argued that 'rather than regard rural-urban migration as a deleterious process that is steadily undermining the cultural vitality of the villages and threatening their very existence, we should see it as a major characteristic of the process of modernization and seize upon it as a stimulus towards industrial expansion in the cities' (1969:191). In the Papua New Guinea context Conroy (1973) disputed these arguments; questions were also raised about future housing shortages, the erosion of traditional life, and increasing inequalities between urban and rural areas (cf. Oram 1976). For one small part of the Third World the debate over whether cities are cancers or catalysts (cf. McGee 1971) had become localized. The sort of debate which has been carried on in Papua New Guinea (cf. May 1977), however, does not seem to have taken place elsewhere in Melanesia.

This paper attempts to reexamine these and related issues in a wider Melanesian context. Among the distinctive characteristics of the independent countries of Melanesia (Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu and Fiji), are their small size of population, their internal fragmentation due to extensive linguistic and cultural variations (all are multiple-island countries where secessionist threats have been significant), and their relatively short experience of monetary exchange economics (cf. Fisk 1976). These characteristics suggest that the experience of urbanization and inequality in Melanesia will be different from elsewhere in the Third World.
This paper stresses the issue of inequality over other aspects of development in the belief that inequality is one of the more neglected yet more crucial issues in development. Seers earlier drew attention to inequality as being one of the three key issues in development, alongside poverty and unemployment (Seers 1977). Inequality is an issue which is amenable to state intervention and it is one which is crucial to the emergence of Melanesian nations in areas of hitherto 'nationless nationalism'.

URBANIZATION IN HISTORY

The most distinctive characteristic of urbanization in Melanesia is its recency. There is no evidence of urban development in pre-colonial times, despite evidence of both state formation in the Fijian islands (Brookfield with Hart 1971:240), and possibly elsewhere, and extensive trading networks including the Lapita trade and, in recent times, the well-documented kula ring of the Trobiand islands and the 'stone-age trade' of the New Guinea highlands (Hughes 1977). Even the most extensive trading links apparently did not produce significant 'central places' and the recognition of central places in traditional Melanesian societies (Callen 1976; Allen this volume) is both tenuous and suggestive of only the lowest order of specialization. Effectively there were no significant functional specializations beyond village level. In contrast there is archaeological evidence from both Polynesia and Micronesia of some precontact urban inflorescences (e.g. Bellwood 1978:209-292).

Related to this lack of pre-contact urbanization was the absence of a traditional state, as existed for example in West Africa and Southeast Asia. There was instead a proliferation of tenuously linked small-scale societies. Hence there was fragmented resistance to colonial changes and minimal insulation against its impact. There were no pre-colonial institutions of regional significance that might counteract post-contact urbanization, whilst the pre-contact economy has been fundamentally transformed. Consequently, although there is a significant residential segregation based on race and ethnicity within Melanesian cities there is no 'dual city' like those that exist elsewhere in the Third World. Urban history in Melanesia is colonial history.

A second general characteristic of Melanesian urbanization is that until quite recently all Melanesian towns have been located on the coast and have functioned as trading and administrative centres. The capital cities in all four countries remain on the coast whilst the capitals have changed coastal locations in at least three Melanesian countries - Papua New Guinea (from Rabaul to Lae, in New Guinea before administrative unification, and then to Port Moresby), Fiji (Levuka to Suva) and the Solomon Islands (Tulagi to Honiara). In the prewar era goldmining towns were established inland - Wau and Bulolo in Papua New Guinea and Vatukoula in Fiji - but it was not until the postwar years that less narrowly specialized inland towns emerged (in the central highlands of New Guinea). The coastal location of towns emphasized the dominance of external trade links, with the towns themselves being poorly integrated into the nearby regions. This was even true of Fiji where the Colonial Sugar Refining Company, through the distribution of its workforce, was the 'main force behind the evolution of Fiji's secondary urban centres' (Britton 1980).
The earliest townships in Melanesia, the beach communities of the nineteenth century and the administrative centres of the twentieth century, were expatriate creations and expatriate centres. They were whitemen's (and sometimes whitewomen's) towns. There were however some differences in spatial form. In Papua there were the town and house styles of northern Australia; indeed the colony itself was a northwards extension of Australia - at its extreme, Samarai was a by-product of the decline of the Queensland mining town Cooktown, houses being literally transplanted from Cooktown to Samarai (Nelson 1980). By contrast New Guinea was part of the German empire between 1889 and 1914 and colonial housing was substantial, palatial, and in an imperial tradition. The ending of the German era resulted in the dominance of Australian forms and the parallels between the cities and suburbs of Queensland and the towns of New Guinea became more rather than less apparent.

As R.G. Ward has noted in referring to the general pattern of urbanization in the Pacific:

The urban area frequently developed a dual form. A segment was laid out for expatriates, on a regular grid of land holdings and streets, with buildings little different from those of the metropolitan country. In many respects the development of the expatriate segment was a faithful model of the pattern of urban areas in the Western world though industry was usually lacking .... The nearby indigenous villages coexisted uneasily alongside the expatriate town .... The dualism which thus developed was paralleled in administrative policy towards urban areas. The town was administered by expatriates, for expatriates, and according to expatriate models. Public health, public order and the maintenance of so-called 'standards' required, it was thought, an element of insulation from the indigenous population (R.G. Ward 1973:366-367).

These standards may have become more important with the arrival of a significant number of European women (cf. Rowley 1965; Ralston 1977; Inglis 1974). Different measures were devised by the colonial authorities to ensure the continuity of what Griffin, Nelson and Pirth (1979;55) describe as 'urban apartheid', a division that was much more rigid than the more casual race relations of rural areas. These measures included controls over residential development, curfews, and other measures to maintain the colour bar. Such distinctions were emphasized in different ways throughout Melanesia by regulations over native dress, restricted access to some 'public' buildings (including, of course, hotels) and so on (Wolfers 1975; Mamak 1978).

In these circumstances the ideology of an elite urban life style readily became established. The ideology was emphasized by Papua New Guinea administration regulations still in force in the early 1970s, such as that which stated, 'a "foreign Native" [i.e. someone away from his "tribal area"] who does not give a good account of his means of support to the satisfaction of a Court when called upon to do so, may be ordered by the Court to return to his tribal area' (cited by R.G. Ward 1973:368). As well, until the mid 1960s Fijians and Solomon Islanders required
administration permission to leave their villages (John Nation, personal communication 1980 and Chapman 1969). Thus the colonial towns were largely places where Europeans could work, live and enjoy the social amenities but where Melanesians had only a tenuous connection via their workplace; '... the towns were toeholds of an alien society at the same time as they were bases for alien control' (Brookfield with Hart 1971:390).

The early history of urbanization in Melanesia indicated the rationale of 'urban apartheid'; the objectives of early planners and their achievements in removing Chinese and Melanesians to their allocated areas of residence in Rabaul, which was not atypical, have been well described (Varpiam and Jackson 1976). In Suva there was local opposition to attempts to establish a white township but the town was established and was thought of as 'white man's land' (Mamak 1978:24). An Indian section and, rather later, a Fijian section followed. A European Reservation ordinance was proposed in 1912 which sought to ensure residential segregation (cf. Mamak 1978); although this never became policy, a combination of ordinances enabled its practical establishment. Throughout Melanesia the practice of segregation was directed as firmly against Asians as it was against Melanesians. Consequently racial segregation was firmly established in Melanesian towns, giving them a tripartite form, and this segregation was maintained in practice if not in legislation into the 1970s. Nowhere was this more apparent than in the relatively small town of Honiara where postwar urban development was almost entirely under government control:

... there is very sharp segregation. On the flat land by the shore are the port, commercial centre, government offices and other institutional and functional buildings. Further east are a closely built Chinatown and a separate "village" for the Fijian community, then beyond that the main labour barracks, some industry and other institutions, and a shanty settlement euphemistically termed "Fishing Village". In recent years some "low-cost" housing for Melanesians has been built in valleys running inland. Almost the only Europeans living on the flat are single staff, who occupy apartments, and the High Commissioner, who has more palatial quarters: most others live in widely dispersed houses scattered over the pleasant and relatively cool hills behind the town. This contrast between "white highlands" and "black lowlands" - only now beginning to become blurred - is particularly stark, but Honiara is not unrepresentative of post-war towns, or of suburbs in larger towns [of Melanesia] until very recent years (Brookfield with Hart 1971:397).

At the same time there were in Port Moresby three quite distinct areas of white occupancy: Tuaguba Hill in the old town, Boroko/Korobosea laid out in the late 1950s, and Gordons Estate laid out in the 1960s (Jackson 1976). Segregation was generally incomplete since all large government houses, until 1968, were provided with domestics' quarters.
The coastal colonial towns of Melanesia rapidly and readily became identified as centres of elite, colonial affluence but places, nonetheless, where there were opportunities for employment, though minimal opportunities for access to urban housing and urban society. The towns, whilst simultaneously offering some forms of economic development, established and regularized an ordered and intransigent inequality.

CONTEMPORARY TOWNS AND CITIES

Urban primacy

A general feature of Third World urbanization has been the rapidity of urban growth, a function of both rural-urban migration and natural increase. In Melanesia, where urbanization is recent, migration has continued to make the most substantial contribution to urban population growth. Although the urban proportion of the total population is substantial only in Fiji, that proportion is generally increasing (Table 1) though there has been a significant recent decline in the urban growth rate in Papua New Guinea (Skeldon 1980a) and indications that the same sort of decline is occurring elsewhere in Melanesia. Thus although urbanization has been extremely rapid it has nowhere reached the level of the now-rich countries.

In each of the four Melanesian countries under discussion, the population size of the capital is at least double that of the next largest urban area. Honiara and Vila in the Solomons and Vanuatu respectively are primate urban centres with populations three to five times the size of other urban areas. In Fiji, Greater Suva, is four times the size of the next largest urban area, Lautoka. The position of Port Moresby as a primate city is less clear. Jackson (1975b) has demonstrated on the basis of the 1971 Census figures that the rank-size order of Papua New Guinea's towns was close to that of a tiered hierarchy, with Port Moresby only twice the size of Lae and Lae only twice the size of the third-order towns. But Jackson cautions that this does not reflect an underlying pattern of evolved urban functions as a rank-size order represents in a western setting. It is much more the result of the imposition of colonial administrative and economic exigencies. Skeldon (1980a:275) has claimed recently that despite the growth of medium-size towns, Port Moresby is still growing relatively rapidly and its primacy above the other towns is becoming established. However, the 1980 Census indicates that Lae, with a population of 61,682, has grown at almost exactly the same rate as Port Moresby. So despite the claim that Lae '... is the undisputed national centre of coastal shipping, of road transport and of telecommunications as well as being Papua New Guinea's only real manufacturing centre and only true regional centre' (Jackson 1979a:9), Port Moresby has retained its dominance.

The Melanesian capital cities are their countries principal political centres. And it remains to be seen whether the increasingly significant regional politics of Papua New Guinea and the Solomons can reverse this apparent trend to primacy (cf. Skeldon 1980a:276). As well, the capital city is the centre of intellectual, cultural and, to a lesser extent, economic influence. The universities and other tertiary educational institutions tend to be located there (although there has been decentral-
Table 1

Urban population and largest towns in Melanesia*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Urban Population</th>
<th>% of total Population</th>
<th>Rate of Increase per Annum</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Papua New Guinea</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>394,486 (1980)</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>10.8 (1966-71)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[Port Moresby - 122,761 (1980)]</td>
<td></td>
<td>4.0 (1971-80)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solomon Islands</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13,947 (1970)</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2.4 (1970-76)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25,656 (1981)</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>6.0 (1976-81)¹</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[Honiara – 21,334 (1981)]</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vanuatu</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12,369 (1967)</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>2.1 (1967-79)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16,663 (1972)</td>
<td>19</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22,151 (1979)</td>
<td>20</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[Vila – 14,801 (1979)]</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fiji</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>147,685 (1966)</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>4.5 (1956-66)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>203,313 (1976)</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>3.2 (1966-76)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Caledonia (French Dependency)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34,990 (1963)</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>6.7 (1956-63)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80,901 (1976)</td>
<td></td>
<td>2.8 (1963-76)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[Noumea – 57,000 (1970)]</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Irian Jaya (part of Indonesia)</td>
<td></td>
<td>n.a.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>54,000 (1961)</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[Jayapura – about 100,000 (1980)]</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Torres Strait (part of Australia)</td>
<td></td>
<td>n.a.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>about 2,300 (1971)</td>
<td>44</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[Thursday Island – about 2,300 (1971)]</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* This table is concerned only with urbanization within Melanesia; there are Melanesians in most of the towns and cities of New Zealand, Australia and even Indonesia. There are variable classifications of what constitutes a town in Melanesia (cf. Brookfield with Hart 1971:387-388). Thus unincorporated townships are included in the Solomon Islands but excluded in Fiji whilst in Papua New Guinea an area must be 'urban in character and with a population of 500 or more per square mile', which therefore excludes large villages, like Tubesereia near Port Moresby which has a population of perhaps 3,000.

¹Growth rate 1976-1981 for Honiara only.

ization in Papua New Guinea from Port Moresby to Lae and Goroka) and there is often a resultant 'internal brain drain' as students move to and stay for employment in the capital (Connell 1980; Weinard and Ward 1979). Much of the tertiary sectors of the national economies are in the capital cities and public sector bureaucracies dominate their employment structures. Thus the 'formal' and 'informal' sectors of the capital offer greater employment opportunities (including greater opportunities for crime) and a more lively social life (cinemas, restaurants, night clubs, organized sport) than are usually available in provincial towns.

Urban primacy is accentuated by the entrepôt functions of the primate city, whose location has been determined by colonial administrations for their convenience rather than as a central place for an emergent nation. It has been suggested that 'in a country of fledgling unity such as Papua New Guinea it may be that primacy and the concentration of services and administration in one centre is the pragmatic road to development, if by that we mean holding the country together as an economic and social and political unity' (Skeldon 1980a:276). This proposition, in itself, is debatable; certainly the tendency towards greater primacy makes political decentralization extremely difficult.

Migration: dual dependence with and without urbanization

Apart from traders, whalers and missionaries, for many Melanesians the earliest contact with the colonial economy was through 'blackbirding': the forcible, but eventually peaceful, transportation of migrant workers, especially from Vanuatu and the Solomon Islands, to the plantations of Fiji, Samoa and Queensland (e.g. Corris 1973). It was an inauspicious start. In the twentieth century in Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu, this gave way to more ordered migration movements within each colony's boundaries. In the case of German New Guinea, the colonists quickly rejected the more demanding plantation crops of rubber, coffee, cocoa and tobacco in favour of the coconut because the latter was particularly suited to cultivation by an unskilled and irregular labour force (Brookfield 1972). As villagers living close to the plantations soon found other means of acquiring cash the search for other sources of labour began.

This demand was mostly satisfied in Papua New Guinea, the Solomons and Vanuatu by the establishment of a specific set of regulations dealing with the recruitment, employment and repatriation of labourers from an expanding labour frontier. The migrant labour system operated within a broader colonial context to limit severely the growth of a permanent proletariat. A number of Chinese, Vietnamese and in the case of Fiji, Indians was also introduced as contract labourers. Many of these labour migrants eventually remained, with their families, in Melanesia.

The migrant labourer and his family were forced to cultivate a 'dual dependence' (Burawoy 1976) on both the home village and the wage economy. This came about because, on the one hand, alternative sources of cash income were restricted and wage labour was presented as the only means of earning money. But at the same time, the migrant labourer's dependence on the wage economy could only be temporary. Bachelor wages, the provision of single men's quarters, compulsory repatriation after a maximum period of employment, restriction of occupational mobility and the denial of
political rights, including the rights to organize and strike, made it necessary for the worker and his family to maintain a long term dependence on the rural village economy.

These sets of regulations controlling the employment and mobility of wage labour against the background of a colonial society based on a colour bar and denial of citizen rights profoundly affected the conditions under which the indigenous urban workforce was employed and accommodated (Curtain 1980b; Bellam 1970; Bedford 1973). The necessity to maintain a dual dependence meant that most urban employees in the colonial era in Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu were young men, unaccompanied by wives.

It is clear that the unbalanced age and sex structure of the indigenous community [of Honiara], and in particular the absence of family life for many townsmen with all that this implies, is largely due to the wages paid and the housing provided (Bellam 1970:92).

The urban male to female sex ratios, even towards the end of colonial rule, reflect this. In Port Moresby in 1966 the ratio was 185 males per 100 females; in Honiara in 1970 it was 206 to 100 and in Vila in 1972, 137 to 100.

Even with the change to so-called 'casual' labour (employment by verbal agreement) after the Second World War in Papua New Guinea, the conditions of employment were such that workers were still forced to maintain a long term dependence on their home economy. The master-servant contract relationship in law made it illegal, until the early 1960s, for workers to organize among themselves to press for more secure terms of employment, better pay and conditions. 'Casual' workers who had been employed for less than six months could be dismissed without notice. Low bachelor wages were paid to all but a few public servants until 1972, mainly because the newly formed unions under tight government control were largely ineffective.

Rowley, speaking about Papua New Guinea in 1958, saw the existing arrangements as only encouraging a high turnover of an urban unskilled labour force:

... there is no action which the emergent wage earner may take to improve his lot except to add to the instability by repeated trials by different employers and to add to the labour shortage by returning in discouragement to his village (Rowley 1958:542).

In addition, the majority of employers provided single men's quarters only. The accommodation situation facing Papua New Guinean urban employees in Rabaul in the mid 1960s is described by Polansky (1966:45-46):

Since employers are legally required to provide accommodation for their workers, there has been some reluctance to employ married men. When an employee marries he has the choice of leaving his wife in her village, staying with relatives who have a house (in
most cases already overcrowded) or of building a
dwelling for himself in one of the shanty towns ... 
insufficient accommodation for married Papuans and New 
Guineans is the greatest social problem with which 
Rabaul has to cope.

Chapman (1969), Bellam (1970), Bedford (1973) and Bonnemaison (1977) 
describe a similar situation for Honiara and Vila respectively in the 
1960s.

The legacy of this legal requirement of employers to provide 
accommodation for their urban employees remains today. In 1977 in Port 
Moresby and Lae respectively some 69 per cent and 56 per cent of all 
private dwellings were owned by the government or private employers (Papua 

The continuing high degree of controlled or 'directed' migration 
(which refers to the posting of government and private sector employees to 
particular areas) in Melanesia means that employees, particularly the 
better paid, are heavily dependent on employers for accommodation (which is 
now mainly married quarters) and are provided with fares for regular return 
visits home. For example, over 30 per cent of migrants in Port Moresby 
were 'directed' migrants (Papua New Guinea Bureau of Statistics 1980:40). 
The conditions of employment, including the provision of accommodation, are 
largely the result of similar terms being provided to expatriate employees. 
Thus for many urban employees today, except in the case of Suva (see 
below), the towns remain merely centres of employment with little security 
of tenure over accommodation. The conditions of employment, including the 
regular return fares to the home village, reinforce a strong cultural 
attachment to the rural village economy. Bedford's (1973:117) conclusion 
about the indigenous population of Vila in the late 1960s is still largely 
true for the majority of the contemporary urban populations of Papua New 
Guinea, the Solomons and Vanuatu:

To talk of a "committed urban proletariat" is, as yet, 
misleading. In evaluating commitment to urban 
residence the importance of the village as a source of 
income and social security must not be overlooked, even 
for those in skilled or semi-skilled employment in 
town. New Hebridean urban migrants are not a wage-
dependent proletariat yet; they have vested interests 
in property and security in rural areas.

The Fijian situation was very different. A migrant labour system was 
not set up to regulate the movement of villagers to the plantation and 
mining enclaves. Sir Arthur Gordon interpreted the Deed of Cession in 1874 
to mean British responsibility for the conservation of Fijian society at 
all costs. To this end, he placed a strict prohibition on outmigration 
from the villages, especially to work on plantations (Gillion 1977). In 
contrast to colonial New Guinea where head tax was to be paid in cash and 
hence was used as an inducement to wage labour, Fijian villagers were asked 
to pay their tax in produce only.
Gordon turned to Indian indentured workers as an alternative source of low cost labour. Under the terms of the indenture the Indians were required to work for their importing employer for five years; for a further five years they could work for another employer or for themselves. Thereafter they were entitled to choose between a free return passage to India or remaining as permanent settlers. Family migration was encouraged and to this end a minimum proportion of forty women to every hundred men was insisted on by the colonial authorities (Gillion 1977). The scheme ended in 1920 after a total of 62,837 people had emigrated to Fiji in this way.

The colonial state’s prohibition of Fijian labour on plantations meant that the precapitalist economy was not used to subsidize a temporarily absent migrant labour force. The state imported indentured labour and hence assumed responsibility for the full costs of reproduction of the labour force. Acceptance of these costs for the Indian population allowed both a settled and permanent proletariat and a petty bourgeoisie to establish themselves in Suva from the early 1920s (Mamak 1978).

Indian labourers employed by the Public Works Department in Suva went on strike in 1920. Their major complaint was the high cost of living (Gillion 1977). By the early 1930s the Indian population in Suva had begun to agitate for a system of a common electors' roll and equal representation in local government elections (Mamak 1978) - thus showing signs of having become an established urban population.

Although Fijian labour was used in the early days of Suva, and settlements were established to accommodate migrants from various provinces, the colonial administration from early in this century imposed an absentee tax on all Fijians who were absent from their villages (Mamak 1978). The tax was not lifted until 1966 but in practice it was not imposed beyond the early 1950s. This limitation on rural–urban migration for the Fijian population has been seen as partly responsible for restricting their general socio-economic advancement.

This policy also afforded success only to a small group of Suva-based Indian Fijian elites and and constituted an important source of class division among these sections (Mamak and Ali 1979:64).

Urban commitment?

Migration to urban areas grew in Papua New Guinea from the mid 1960s as job opportunities expanded greatly. More recently, high levels of unemployment among the unskilled have encouraged short term circulation to urban areas for those with little or no formal education but the demand for more highly educated job applicants continues to encourage high levels of urban migration and residence among those with secondary education and above.

Nevertheless many urban employers, significantly the more prestigious (including the Public Service and Bougainville Copper Limited) provide biannual return fares to the home district for their workers. This practice must emphasize the rural origins of urban migrants and their
responsibilities in the rural sector and may well therefore tend to discourage any tendencies towards permanent urban residence.

Other characteristics tend to discourage permanent urban residence. First, there are few social security or welfare systems which provide for urban living when an individual is unemployed or has retired. Secondly, many urban workers are in 'tied' accommodation, where the accommodation is associated with the job. In 1973-74 about 26 per cent of urban households in the major towns of Papua New Guinea were in tied accommodation, and about 25 per cent in rented (see p.9). Thirdly, many migrants live in squatter settlements where their occupation of land is without formal tenure (hence temporary tenure may be rescinded). For example, in Port Moresby in 1977 less than 30 per cent of the residents of migrant settlements owned the land on which their houses were constructed (Papua New Guinea Bureau of Statistics 1980:16). A similar situation is evident from Kengava's (1979) study of Choiseul migrants in Honiara, where their rights to land are 'limited and temporary'. Fourthly, until recently urban wages were minimal and were typically calculated to support only a single man, on the assumption that his family remained in the rural area (Curtain 1980b). Before 1972 urban wages in Papua New Guinea were paid on this basis; in that year the assessed needs of a married couple were accepted as the basis of a new minimum wage in Port Moresby. In 1974 the Urban Minimum Wages Board recommended that the minimum wage should be based on the living cost of a family comprising man, wife and a child (Lepani 1974). At this time urban minimum wages in Honiara (of $8.28, without accommodation) were still calculated according to the requirements of a single man (Frazer 1976). Fifthly, the heterogeneity of urban life (incorporating migrants from a variety of traditionally opposed language groups and regions) contributes to some degree of insecurity, especially where unemployment, violence and crime also occur. This tends to be less true of Fiji where urbanization has also been longer established.

On the other hand, several factors, including the decline in creation of new urban job opportunities and low turnover in employment, tend to encourage a stabilized urban workforce. First, urban conditions have improved substantially as urban wages and the provision of married accommodation have increased, social activities have diversified and governments have encouraged home ownership for some elite workers (cf. Skeldon 1980a). Secondly, in a number of rural areas cash-earning opportunities have declined thus encouraging long term outmigration (especially as cash cropping and land alienation have 'frozen' some areas of land), for example in some densely populated areas of Papua New Guinea including parts of the East Sepik, Gulf, Central, Simbu and East New Britain Provinces (Garnaut, Wright and Curtain 1977), in some of the smaller islands of the Solomon Islands, including Sikaiana (Teutao 1979), Anuta, Tikopia and parts of some larger islands, and also in many of the eastern islands of Fiji. Sevele (1979) has also noted the substantial rural-urban income differential for Fiji, The Solomons and Papua New Guinea. Thirdly, migration has resulted in intermarriage across racial and ethnic groupings. The partners of such marriages often have fewer opportunities in rural areas (depending on the structure of land tenure), experience some social problems in the home area of either partner (as ties become divergent and conflicting) and produce children with very few ties (and no emotional ties) to rural areas. Thus in the Bougainville (North Solomons) towns half of all households containing Siwais were intermarried
(Connell 1981). A quarter of the children born in the large towns of Port Moresby, Lae and Rabaul have never visited their 'home villages' (Garnaut, Wright and Curtain 1977). In Fiji, even though urban unemployment has increased in the urban areas, migration from the eastern islands has also increased. It has been argued that this is essentially because agriculture there and elsewhere in the Pacific has been losing status and prestige (Bedford 1979).

Migration continues to provide the bulk of urban population increases in Papua New Guinea though in Fiji natural increase is more important (Chandra 1980). Increasingly migration is of families rather than single males, whilst independent female migration is becoming important in some areas although its impact is unclear (Connell 1980); female and family migration to the urban areas is assisting in balancing sex ratios in most towns, including Port Moresby where the masculinity ratio (males per hundred females) fell from 185 to 139 between 1966 and 1977. Similar changes were recorded much earlier in Fijian urban areas where the sex ratio is now very evenly balanced (Census of Fiji 1979). It is only in the mining towns that the sex ratios remain extremely lopsided. Hence natural increase in Melanesia as elsewhere (Preston 1979) is becoming more important as a determinant of urban population increases.

The most obvious category of permanent urban residents are the inhabitants of villages now incorporated into urban areas, such as Hanuabada in Port Moresby. Secondly, there are migrants and their children from some of the poorer rural areas, for example the seemingly permanent urban residents from parts of the East Sepik Province (Curtain 1980a) and from the Gulf Province (cf. Morauta and Hasu 1979) in Papua New Guinea. Thirdly, there is a number of bureaucrats and other elite workers who have skills that are inappropriate in rural areas and social expectations beyond the capacity of rural areas, who may well remain in town and are being encouraged to do so. In Fiji, where there have been urban centres and a tradition of rural-urban migration for a much longer period of time, permanent urban residence is more readily identifiable (e.g. Bedford 1979), although return migration remains important (Chandra 1980).

There is now a differentiation between those permanent urban residents who are usually relatively poor (including some urban villagers and the migrants from poor rural areas) and the bureaucrats and others who are relatively well off. It is only this latter group who are relatively mobile and in Melanesia as elsewhere (Gutkind 1974) it is the least mobile migrants who tend to be the least successful. They lack capital for travel, cannot distribute money and gifts in the rural areas and must retain their precarious urban commitment. Thus unemployed men in Papua New Guinea are less likely to send home gifts or cash (Garnaut, Wright and Curtain 1977). The pattern of migration consequently has implications for the growth of an urban dispossessed group (Morauta 1979; Curtain 1980a).

Urban ecology and housing

In most Melanesian towns, other than 'company towns' like Arawa and Panguna, there are clear expressions of ecological segregation following earlier racial segregation. This has been examined in some detail for Port Moresby and Lae where there is an inverse relationship between ethnic group size and segregation (Jackson 1976). Unplanned settlements are primarily
based on ethnic groupings; for example, 'most of the smaller no covenant settlements (there are over forty in Port Moresby alone) consist of people from one particular area or even one particular village. The large ones are usually internally divided on quite clear lines into separate village groups' (Jackson 1976:63). Such small groups often function in many ways as 'urban villages', albeit with significant economic ties to the urban area, and tend to reinforce rural-urban ties rather than assist in the establishment of social ties to the wider community. Even in many employment situations migrants from the same area work together (cf. Oram 1976; Rew 1970).

New migrants to the city are generally housed and fed by their kinsfolk (for example see Strathern 1975 on Hageners in Port Moresby), at least initially, and may also be assisted in the search for jobs (Rew 1974) to the extent that employment in many firms and stores is controlled by workers from particular areas. This assistance necessarily places the new migrant in a dependency relationship with his kin. Thus Ryan (1968) notes how Toaripipl migrants in Port Moresby shared housing, food, money and services because of obligations incurred as a result of kinship ties and help given and received in the past. Inevitably, then, kinship is expressed in residential patterns, patterns that are emphasized by historic political/administrative controls, restricting individuals of particular races to particular areas, and economic controls, which limit residential choices especially of new migrants.

Although kinship ties are likely to develop eventually into formal and informal associations, which cut across traditional affiliations, this may not affect residential locations and associations may well coexist, or be superimposed upon, traditional ethnic ties (cf. Oeser 1969). This is particularly true of both church groups and sports associations though throughout Melanesian towns there are regional associations that encourage group identification and rural ties (as described for Papua New Guinea by Skeldon 1980b). Generally townshold are recognizing ethnicity in geographically wider terms; thus migrants in Port Moresby may be clansmen or villagers in one context, Hageners in another and highlanders in yet another. Similarly in Queensland towns migrants from the Torres Strait often, and increasingly, identify themselves as Torres Strait islanders rather than Badu or Saibai islanders (cf. Cromwell 1980). Evidence from a number of other places in Melanesia, for example for Gilbertese in the town of Gizo in the Solomon Islands (Knudson 1977) and for Kapauku in Nabire in Irian Jaya (Pospisil 1978), indicates that there is a gradual decline in ethnicity marked, for example, by a greater degree of intermarriage between ethnic groups, though there is little evidence of the formation of cultural associations or other kinds of ties.

Contacts at workplaces are likely to result in friendships and allegiances outside kinship groups. This is particularly true for the better educated, as shown, for example, among the Hula in Port Moresby (Oram 1968), Chimbus in Port Moresby (Whiteman 1973), some migrants from Buka in Bougainville towns (Bedford and Mamak 1976) and both Fijians and Indians in Suva (Mamak 1978). In the case of Buka migrants, they are conspicuously more involved in town council activities and in associations, including trade unions. The establishment of trade unions might be expected to foster intergroup relations since trade unions both cut across ethnic boundaries and directly encourage solidarity across such boundaries.
The early unions in Papua New Guinea, such as the Lae Workers' Association and the Madang Workers' Association, were largely ineffective because of high rates of circular migration, rigid control by the Department of Labour, and discouragement by employers (Lucas 1972; Stevenson 1968). By contrast, in Fiji unions were established earlier and were more effective in achieving gains for the workforce (Mamak 1978) because of the more stable urban population. Townsend suggests that in the two largest cities of Papua New Guinea a sense of disadvantage may cut across ethnic and regional origins; thus 'signs of a fusion of class and ethnic consciousness are to be found amongst the Gulf and Goilala people in Port Moresby and the Chimbu in Lae' (1980:24) yet he does not indicate how this is expressed.

Table 2

Racial composition of Melanesian capitals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Port Moresby</th>
<th>Suva</th>
<th>Honiara</th>
<th>Vila</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Melanesian</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>European</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indo-Fijian</td>
<td></td>
<td>47</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Actual population</td>
<td>76,507</td>
<td>63,628</td>
<td>11,191</td>
<td>12,541</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: Census of Fiji 1979; Solomon Islands 1976; Bonnemaison 1977; Papua New Guinea Census 1971.

The extent to which residential segregation is suggestive of other kinds of inequality is far from clear; the evidence is scant. Investment in service provision in the unplanned settlements is of a limited extent. Street surfacing and lighting is often restricted to elite areas, as is the provision of water and electricity. In Port Moresby at least, adequacy of water supply and toilet facilities in 1977 was significantly different in four distinct residential categories; for example 24 per cent of households in unplanned settlements had an adequate water supply compared with 95 per cent in formal housing areas (Papua New Guinea Bureau of Statistics 1980). This disproportionate investment is also matched in the provision of public urban facilities, such as health centres and hospitals (Curtain and Ziga 1978).

Despite the relatively low density development of urban areas in a number of places there is an acute shortage of land for housing; land shortage is so acute in Rabaul that other sites for the town have been considered (To Mutnaram 1979) and in Port Moresby traditional ownership of land within the city boundary has prevented its use for urban development and made service provision in adjoining areas more expensive. This is also the case for Suva, which is developing an urban sprawl. Land shortage is
also marked for other Fijian urban areas such as Nadi, Lautoka and Sigatoka (S. Chandra, personal communication 1980). Both of these factors tend to exacerbate spatial inequalities.

Ecological variations within towns are in part determined by and in part reflected in the availability and provision of housing. Within the towns and cities there are enormous variations in residential standards according to the race of the occupant; for example in Port Moresby, from the K200,000 homes of Tuaguba Hill, through low-cost National Housing Commission buildings to the flimsy plywood constructions of shantytowns whose 'marginal' housing reflects their status: illegal or barely tolerated and hence insecure. Yet even between the shantytowns there are enormous differences. The provision of finance for housing is a political issue and funds are scarce; some shantytowns are populated by groups who are believed to be 'trouble makers' and their claims on finance for residential improvement, through service schemes and social amenity provision, are less likely to be met. In Port Moresby settlements with service provision are much more likely to be those of migrants from the Papuan coast.

National housing policies appear nowhere to have been able to cater adequately to the needs of the urban poor (granted there are arguments against this form of provision in any case). They have, in practice, tended to discriminate in favour of middle and upper income groups (as Stretton (1979) has shown for Papua New Guinea). In Suva the Housing Authority has attempted to lease better quality land at above development costs to the relatively wealthy and use the revenue to provide housing at cost for those purchasing its houses and at below cost for sitting tenants who 'need' to be removed to enable more intensive development and for those occupying rental flats. Because of numerous problems (including regulations demanding high standards and high costs) some 80 per cent of housing applicants could not afford the cheapest houses (Walsh 1979b). Simultaneously there were substantial social problems at Raiwaqa, the oldest and largest Housing Authority estate, because of unsuitable housing and poverty. Inappropriate and inadequate housing has been offered to tenants and no housing has been provided for the majority of the urban poor (Walsh 1979b). In Vanuatu the provision of low-cost housing was frustrated by the peculiarities of the colony's legal restrictions and by the early 1970s almost nothing had been achieved (Bedford 1973). It would seem that housing authorities give preference to those best able to pay. In Fiji, racial balance in the allocation of housing is also an important factor for the Housing Authority to take into account.

Moreover To Mutnaram, writing in 1979, recorded that there were in Papua New Guinea over 5,000 applicants waiting for National Housing Commission houses and this represented only a fraction of the real demand (To Mutnaram 1979:2). And this was despite the fact that only four out of ten Papua New Guineans living in towns could afford to rent the cheapest house constructed by the Housing Commission (Norwood 1977; Jackson 1978). In Fiji much the same is true. At the end of 1976 some 8,207 households, 22 per cent of the total number of urban households in Fiji, were on the waiting list of the Housing Authority (Chandra 1979). There is also a critical housing shortage in Honiara (Diana Howlett, personal communication 1980). Access to the limited amounts of national housing stock is necessarily restricted and, however straightforward and egalitarian
application procedures may appear in theory, in practice access to housing is unequal and an elite is established. This may be an elite comprising those who can speak English or it may be an elite which happens to have 
wantoks in the Housing Commission. Whichever it is, it renders meaningless the idea of queueing for access to housing (Bryant 1977). But even though formal housing is occupied by an elite the National Housing Commission has problems of rent arrears (Aldrich and Greenshields 1979).

Even access to squatter settlements may be controlled. Thus in Honiara any person wishing to live in a squatter settlement must apply for a temporary occupation licence. An applicant for a licence, valid only for twelve months, must be employed before he can be given permission to construct a house (Kama 1979). In Suva most urban land is nationally owned and Indian squatters believe themselves to be less secure than Fijians; until recently those on private land could be evicted without compensation (Walsh 1979a). In these kinds of situations residential insecurity is obvious.

Despite the general acceptance of 'site and service' schemes for squatter settlements in Papua New Guinea (where the government surveys blocks, grants leaseholds and provides minimal services such as running water), there is little evidence of such schemes in Fiji. There the gradual removal of squatter settlements from central city locations, in the guise of rationalizing land use, has been viewed as no more than an attempt to organize 'urban space as an instrument for the perpetuation of class and other sectional interests' (Walsh 1979c:9). Inevitably this rationalization is at the expense of the urban poor who are decentralized away from inner city employment opportunities, especially in the informal sector, and are denied decentralized employment. In Suva squatters constitute one fifth of the labour force and make a significant contribution both to the city's food supply and to the production of tourist artefacts (Walsh 1979c).

'Site and service' schemes, however, are not without their critics. McGee (1977) and Burgess (1977, 1978) argue that such programmes merely ameliorate the conditions in existing squatter settlements and institutionalize poverty. Although it helps the poor this is without any major threat to the affluent so that the structural inequalities in society cannot be removed by such schemes. The practical implications of this kind of approach, which demand nationalization of all housing (and the 'upgrading' of most), have been criticized in Papua New Guinea by Oram (1976, 1979). Oram (1979) argues that it is doubtful if any poor country could, under any political system, achieve a degree of equality of incomes or affluence which would enable it to dispense with policies towards informal housing.

The arguments for and against the sale of high-cost housing in Papua New Guinea, especially in Port Moresby, have been debated (Curtain and Blaxter 1978). It can be argued that where the owner has a committed stake in the maintenance of property values he or she will have a greater sense of environmental and community awareness. It has therefore been recommended that the concept of home ownership should be promoted by stressing the concept of a house as a transferrable commodity (Aldrich and Greenshields 1979; Stretton 1979). Whether this would generate permanent
housing inequalities through the creation of landlords and/or contribute to the stability of an urban workforce is difficult to determine.

Throughout the housing sector there are inequalities both in access to housing (owned or rented) and land for construction (legal or illegal), and in the availability of services within the different parts of the housing sector. Moreover the provision of urban housing for some workers can be viewed as a form of urban bias. Melanesian governments provide some form of housing (usually at a subsidized rental) to public servants and some employers provide the same amenities in the private sector. (This, of course, does not occur for those outside formal employment in urban or rural areas.) All expenditure on urban housing and service provision (especially when there is no expenditure on rural housing) constitutes a subsidy to the urban sector. Recently it has been argued (by two town planners in Port Moresby) that 'urban administrators cannot expect the Government to continue to subsidize the capital costs of urban development, or facets thereof, when such extreme disparities exist in the comparative physical and economic welfare of the rural dweller versus the urban dweller. This view is held by the Department of Finance and the National Planning Office' (Aldrich and Greenshields 1979:6).

The urban economy

Large cities, and especially capital cities, have obvious advantages for industrial and commercial development: the size and diversity of the labour force (which, in Melanesia, is particularly limited in terms of available skills), the existence of a large market, and access to local politicians and other decision makers. The resulting industrial concentration is further emphasized in the Third World by the fact that many industrial innovations originate overseas whilst many industries and commercial establishments are branches of overseas corporations and are therefore located in the capital cities for ease of access to the metropolitan headquarters. All this is demonstrably true of Melanesia.

This kind of location strategy, where industrial and commercial development is generated and sponsored by metropolitan interests, has resulted in the metropolitan orientation of a number of significant linkages, such as trade flows (and therefore transport links), airline routes, telecommunications links, tourist flows, and so on (cf. Britton 1980). These integrate Melanesian economies with the metropolis rather than with each other and may benefit metropolitan economies rather than domestic or Melanesian regional economies. The external orientation of the Melanesian economies, dependent as they are on the export of only partially processed natural resources, alongside a transport system that is designed to assist these movements rather than encourage national integration, inevitably has resulted in the external orientation of the towns and cities of Melanesia.

The urban economy of the Third World is typically tripartite: an administrative and service sector (which is characteristic of all towns, was the principal reason for the establishment of many Melanesian towns, and is often almost the only real contemporary economic function of the smaller towns), a 'western', business-centred manufacturing sector, and the 'bazaar economy' of traditional shopping and service industries which merges into the 'informal' sector. Alongside the transition from colonial
towns to Melanesian cities (cf. Oram 1976) has gone the diversification of the urban economy. Nevertheless the lack of traditional urbanization means that there is no 'bazaar economy' in Melanesian towns and, perhaps surprisingly, an almost complete lack of an 'informal sector' however defined. This is especially so in Papua New Guinea (Conroy 1973; Truc 1979) although there are some workers involved in such activities as window cleaning, shoe polishing, lawn cutting, bottle collecting, wood carving and prostitution. (See Jackson 1976, Williamson 1977 and Mark 1976 on Port Moresby and Oliver 1975 on Suva.) In part this is due to restrictive legislation (Fitzpatrick and Blaxter 1975) and in part to a relatively low consumer demand for services, but it may also be due to the relative affluence of the rural subsistence sector which can support many rural poor (Conroy 1973; Williamson 1977). It may also be that a number of 'informal' sector activities (for example, sandal and shoe manufacture and repair) demand skills that Melanesians have not yet acquired.

The most significant feature of the urban male workforce in all Melanesian towns is the high proportion of those with full time wage employment. In Port Moresby and Lae in 1977 some 79 per cent and 74 per cent respectively of all males aged 15 years and over had full time work. In Fiji, the 1976 census showed that 74 per cent of males 15 years and over were 'economically active' in the urban areas. Vila in 1972 had 71 per cent of its males 15 years and over in wage employment (and if short term visitors are excluded this proportion rises to 82 per cent). A similarly high proportion of males in wage employment seems likely for Honiara. Conversely the proportion of males who were recorded as actively seeking work is quite small. Among males 10 years and over in Port Moresby in 1977, 8 per cent wanted more work and had looked for it within the past month. This figure is the same as the proportion of males 15-44 years involuntarily unemployed, identified in 1973-74. The 1976 Fijian census recorded that 8 per cent of urban males 15 years and over were 'unemployed' (Census of Fiji 1979, Vol. 3:21).

The employment rate for women is the reverse of that for men. In Port Moresby and Lae in 1977 only 22 per cent and 17 per cent respectively of the female population aged 15 years and over were in wage employment. The level of urban female employment in Fiji was 21 per cent. Moreover the proportions wanting work and actively seeking jobs were low: 3 per cent in Port Moresby and 5 per cent in Fijian urban areas. Thus there has been a transition from a socio-economic system in which women had considerable control over the means of production, to a situation in which in the urban areas they are often dependent on their husbands for survival, creating a new and uncertain role for them (Kidd 1978; Dalton 1979:92-93).

Recent years have seen a declining rate of urban job creation in most of the cities of the Third World; again Melanesia is no exception. This decline has been documented adequately only in Papua New Guinea (Truc 1979; Howlett 1980). A shortage of development capital has slowed the creation of new industrial employment opportunities. After the establishment of some basic import-substitution industries (especially for foodstuffs) there has been little expansion; domestic markets are small and extremely fragmented in these island nations, export markets are protected, and domestic urban wage levels are too high, compared with Southeast Asian countries, to attract multinational manufacturing industries. Secondly, bureaucracies have not grown at the same speed as in the post independence
years. These trends might have been expected to have resulted in the expansion of the 'informal sector' especially as towns, and therefore markets, have continued to grow; but this has not generally occurred.

Despite the declining rate of urban job creation the evidence of high levels of male participation in full time wage employment in the urban areas, alongside the small numbers recorded as actively seeking work, indicates that there has not been greater urban unemployment, at least in Papua New Guinea (Garnaut 1979:10; Curtain 1979).

It is possible to assess the broad characteristics of formal employment in some of the major towns of Melanesia (Table 3). Three of the urban areas shown in Table 3 are capitals with a large proportion (over 30 per cent) employed in government and semi-government bureaucracies. Lae, as the only non capital, has a proportionately larger manufacturing and commercial sector, in part reflecting its populous highlands hinterland. The urban areas of Melanesia remain essentially service centres.

Table 3

Formal urban employment in Melanesian cities
(per cent of total employment)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
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<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturing</td>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>13.0</td>
<td>9.4</td>
<td>10.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building and</td>
<td>11.2</td>
<td>10.9</td>
<td>7.3</td>
<td>8.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>construction</td>
<td>10.8</td>
<td>13.6</td>
<td>12.1</td>
<td>8.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finance</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>4.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial and business services</td>
<td>34.8</td>
<td>43.1</td>
<td>22.8</td>
<td>16.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public authority</td>
<td>31.6</td>
<td>15.5</td>
<td>43.1</td>
<td>32.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>18.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: Port Moresby and Lae: Papua New Guinea Bureau of Statistics 1980
Honiara: Solomon Islands Yearbook 1979
Fiji: Census of Fiji 1979

The official classifications have been adjusted slightly to give greater comparability; this may affect the fifth and sixth categories. We have been unable to obtain comparable information on Vila although it is clear that urban employment structures are broadly similar (cf. Bonnemaison 1977:16).

Declining job opportunities in urban areas necessarily emphasize the differences between those with jobs and those without jobs and thus emphasize increasing urban inequalities. Even in some of the more affluent urban areas of Melanesia there may be a reverse flow of remittances to the towns; this has been recorded in such diverse areas as Arawa and Panguna in the North Solomons, for Rotumans in Suva and in the East Sepik (Connell 1980). Urban unemployment is often subsidized by the rural areas.
Moreover the ability to send remittances is, in part, a function of success in the city; those with better paid urban jobs tend to remit more, ensuring that they retain an economic and social position in the rural area. Thus it is possible to conclude, as in Papua New Guinea, that the flow of remittances 'may have had the perverse effect of maintaining village options best for people who were well off in town' (Garnaut, Wright and Curtain 1977:73).

Urban unemployment varies significantly between different racial and ethnic groups within Melanesian towns; thus there are great differences between the Chimbu and the Hula in Port Moresby and more generally between highlanders and coastal people (e.g. Levine and Levine 1979). This kind of variation in urban unemployment may well emphasize existing inequalities in rural income (cf. Garnaut, Wright and Curtain 1977:182). With reference to Port Moresby it has been argued that unemployment levels in shantytowns are generally higher than in other parts of the urban area (Norwood 1979:79); however Jackson (1978) argues that this is by no means general, even within Papua New Guinea. That there is some correlation between recent migration and joblessness is more readily apparent. A further correlation between urban crime levels and recent migration is one that is frequently suggested (e.g. Potterton 1979) but which lacks convincing evidence. Available surveys show no evidence of a correlation (e.g. Sition 1977; Papua New Guinea National Planning Office 1977). Nonetheless the belief that there is such a correlation has led recently to proposals to close the major towns in Papua New Guinea to those who are not employed. In August 1979 this was an issue in Port Moresby and in Rabaul; in Rabaul a provincial government committee was preparing a list of East Sepik's who wanted to return to their province or who should be sent home (cf. Denoon 1979). Earlier, in 1977 and 1978, squatters had been repatriated from the North Solomons to the Southern and Eastern Highlands and Chimbu (Talyaga and Olela 1978). As Denoon (1979:1) has observed, 'The attraction of closed towns is very obvious .... With one bound we rid ourselves of poverty, ignorance and disease; modern towns shed their nasty reminders of underdevelopment .... Closed towns are the millenial dream of the property-owning, rate-paying middle class'.

Income differentials are reflected in consumption patterns. Perhaps the most critical index of this is nutrition; a variety of evidence suggests that urban nutrition is often inferior to rural nutrition, following the replacement of traditional foodstuffs by imported foods (Parkinson 1977; cf. Thaman 1979). Imported foods have contributed both to a decline in urban nutritional standards and to the decline of the traditional agricultural system; an urban-based nutritional shift has had important implications throughout the Melanesian economies (Bathgate 1978; McGee 1975; Ward and Proctor 1980).

The extent of a proletariat

Conditions that favour the emergence of an urban proletariat include improved urban wages, security of employment (or welfare/social security), urban home ownership or security of tenure, and the activities of unions in support of urban workers; they also include changes in the rural economy such as growing stratification, the individualization of land ownership, and the resultant emergence of landless villagers. Despite high wage levels in Melanesian towns, relative to many Third World urban centres
urban standards of living do not compare favourably with standards of living in rural areas, hence the tendency towards long term participation in the urban wage economy has not been marked, even in Fiji (e.g. Nair 1980). Consequently the emergence of a proletariat (wage workers without significant ties to the rural/traditional economy) has been restricted (Curtain 1980a; Bedford and Mamak 1976).

Unions are not particularly important in Melanesia. Where they exist they tend to be associated with either the small but slowly growing proletariat or the bureaucracy. The exception to this is in Fiji where the trade union movement is both rural and urban as well as multiracial; the workplace 'promotes the development of crosscutting ties between members of different sections with similar socio-economic status' (Mamak 1978:175) and these ties are strongest at the bottom and the top of the socio-economic hierarchy with the emergence of shared elite and working class consciousness, especially in relation to political parties. Urban unskilled wage labourers are not as well organized and have little bargaining power although they do have more power than either workers in the informal sector or rural agricultural workers.

In African cities there are clear indications of the emerging significance of class relations, and not only for the more privileged, articulate and easily organized classes. One indication of this is the variety of associations created and sustained by ordinary people to protect specific economic interests; these include the obvious case of trade unions, the landlords' and traders' associations of the petty bourgeoisie, the trade associations of the artisans and market traders, the usually ephemeral associations of job seekers, and even clubs and associations catering for such elements of the lumpenproletariat as beggars and prostitutes (cf. Sandbrook 1977). In Melanesian cities these elements are almost entirely absent. Similarly the emergence of a class terminology, even among people whose traditional vocabularies lack such terms, is apparent in parts of Africa (ibid.) but is scarcely in Melanesia. Only the Pidgin terms pastinda, from Papua New Guinea, and liu, from the Solomon Islands, with their connotations of 'urban - yet rootless - unemployed' fill this kind of gap.

The close ties that are maintained with rural home areas by many long term urban residents are well known and have been discussed in detail elsewhere (e.g. Curtain 1980a, 1980b; Kengava 1979; Bedford 1973). These ties, it is argued, are not merely of sentimental value but stem from the migrants' intentions to return eventually to the home village because of the bleak prospects for access to housing, security of urban land tenure, and meagre, if any, pension payments or health benefits after retirement from wage employment. This is not, however, to suggest that a permanent proletariat is not developing. High levels of unemployment among migrants from the poorest areas of the country suggest evidence of a group which remains in the urban areas despite low informal sector income (Curtain 1980b; Morauta 1979).

A recent study of a group of four hundred rural-born Fijians in Suva has shown marked differences between indigenous Fijians and Indo-Fijians in their commitment to permanent urban residence (Nair 1980). Two thirds of the Indo-Fijians interviewed claimed they would remain permanently in Suva while less than a third of the Fijian migrants surveyed said they would do
so despite the greater number (three quarters) of Fijians sampled who had spent more than half their working lives in Suva. This difference between the two groups was also shown in the fact that only 30 per cent of migrant Fijian heads of household owned a house in Suva while a further 29 per cent owned houses in both Suva and their home village; in contrast, 61 per cent of Indo-Fijian household heads owned their houses in Suva and only 13 per cent owned houses in both Suva and in the rural area. Also, compared with Indo-Fijians of rural origin, more Fijians visited their rural place of origin, remitted money and contributed to rural projects. The key factor in explaining the differences is that ownership of rural land is open only to the Fijian migrants.

For Fijians in particular, urban centres are regarded as locations of employment and modern amenities, and rural communities primarily as locations that offer opportunities for a better social and cultural life and the chance of a peaceful retirement .... It is conceivable that fewer Indo-Fijians would reside for long periods in the city and more would wish to return to rural settlements if land were available for cash cropping, since many indicated this was the reason they went to Suva (Nair 1980:75, 77-78).

The original relationship between the people and the land, established by the colonial authorities over one hundred years ago, remains an important factor influencing the very different degree of commitment to permanent urban residence. Many Fijians remain linked closely to the rural peasant economy while many Indo-Fijians see little or no alternative to becoming part of a permanent urban proletariat. Thus the Indo-Fijians of Suva exhibit some similarities with the poorest migrants in Port Moresby; yet the extent to which either of these two groups can genuinely be considered as a proletariat remains small. Although there are also indications of class conflict, notably in the strikes of organized workers, it seems more appropriate to use the terms 'social differentiation' or 'stratification' rather than 'class formation' in Melanesian towns until there is stronger evidence of the emergence of class identification rather than ethnic affiliation, especially as mobilized through rural linkages.

In practical terms the significance of the continuing strength of ethnicity is that the urban poor are not yet in a situation where they can cooperate to defend their interests. The fact that most urban migrants remain in a situation of dual dependence indicates that the emergence of an urban proletariat has not yet occurred. Thus, in Vila, the capital of Vanuatu, Bedford (1973:117) noted how, despite some stability of residence in the town, most migrants saw the village as an alternative source of income and a source of social security so that 'to talk of a "committed urban proletariat" is, as yet, misleading'.

Urban bias?

The existence of towns, which necessarily extract food and manpower from the rural areas, implies some kinds of urban-rural differentiation and inequalities in favour of the urban concentrations. But how such inequalities are articulated remains a complex question.
The existence of spatial inequalities at regional level in Papua New Guinea has been discussed in a number of recent papers (Treadgold 1978; Jackson 1979b; Berry and Jackson 1978; Lester 1979) and in an earlier paper by Wilson (1975). Because of the unavailability of recent data at district (rather than province) level, 'the powerful strand of rural-urban inequality highlighted by Kent Wilson is necessarily blurred' (Berry and Jackson 1978:127) in subsequent papers. Berry and Jackson concluded that although progress has been made towards equality in the provision of services, there was no apparent progress towards the equalization of incomes which were, in any case, highly unequal (1978:128-129). They analysed the impact of government expenditure in four principal forms—the capital works programme, the rural improvement programme (cf. Jackson 1975a), Development Bank lending, and the new allocations of the National Public Expenditure Plan—showing that none of these significantly favoured the poorer provinces (Berry and Jackson 1978) and hence that, on the basis of existing policy, inequalities were unlikely to diminish in the future. At the local level inequalities are maintained and exacerbated by the local, regional and urban bias of government policy. Thus in Morobe Province, Lae is particularly favoured in the allocation of capital works expenditure and Development Bank loans and the Huon area (which contains Lae) for rural improvement programme expenditure (Polume 1978). Casual empiricism suggests that this is also true in other provinces, and perhaps true outside Papua New Guinea.

To counteract these 'normal processes' of centralization both Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands have placed a strong emphasis on decentralization. The third of Papua New Guinea's Eight Aims is concerned with decentralization of decision making, via provincial governments and ultimately community (or village) governments. Obviously decentralization is a crucial issue in development given contemporary concerns with redistribution, independence and self-reliance (cf. Seers 1977). It is recognized, for example in the Solomon Islands National Plan:

No commercial activity has been deliberately located away from Honiara so far, except for those which could not be located in Honiara anyway such as logging, fisheries and cattle farming. There is a widespread assumption that all manufacturing and processing activities will take place in Honiara; continuance of this trend would run against the governments' overall objectives. It is clear that deliberate government policy, backed by public funds will be needed if decentralisation of economic activity, and a wider sharing of its effects, is to be a real feature of development during this plan (Solomon Islands 1975, Vol. 1:19).

Similarly Papua New Guinea's National Public Expenditure Plan (1979-82) emphasized the earlier Eight Aims by stressing that the main objectives were 'rural development and particularly development of the less developed areas of the country' (National Public Expenditure Plan 1979-1982:3) which was implicitly directed to the reduction of inequalities.
The Solomon Islands National Development Plan (1975-79) stressed the necessity for decentralization and a more even development, including:

... handing over greatly increased resources and responsibility to local Councils and by them to Area Committees ... incentives and direction of most new investments to planned new locations; and disincentives and controls on the growth of Honiara ... levelling up the countrywide coverage of government services; giving greater weight to the employment aspects of decentralisation in industry and services (Solomon Islands 1975, Vol. 2:2).

The extent to which these plans can be translated from rhetoric to reality remains unclear yet Berry and Jackson's (1978) conclusions suggest that, at least in Papua New Guinea, little is now being achieved, and the experience of other Third World countries with the decentralization of development is not encouraging. Fiji's Seventh Development Plan (1976-80) emphasized a continued redistribution in favour of the outer islands, but the extent of such redistribution cannot easily be quantified (UNESCO/UNFPA 1977:323, our italics). By contrast the Vanuatu five year 'development plan' of 1971 allocated 16 per cent of development expenditure to the 'outer islands', 6 per cent to projects in rural areas of the two main islands, Efate and Espiritu Santo, and no less than 59 per cent to projects in and around the two towns, which have only 20 per cent of the population compared with 69 per cent in the outer islands (Brookfield 1975:67). All indications are that attempts at decentralization are distorted by regional and urban biases.

The distribution of services such as education, health and housing is to some extent divorced from the operation of the market economy; their distribution is almost entirely controlled by government intervention. Where the operation of the market economy is significant and where profits are involved, government appears to be even less willing to attempt, and less capable of achieving, a more equitable distribution of growth and development. This is apparent in the continued existence of regional inequalities which can also be differentiated, if less clearly, between urban and rural areas. Thus, in Papua New Guinea at least, the Department of Business Development has tended to favour urban businesses whilst even the Village Economic Development Fund, designed to counteract urban bias, allows significant urban shareholdings in rural enterprises (Amarshi, Good and Mortimer 1979). Increasingly the distribution of resources from the Papua New Guinea Development Bank has favoured urban over rural areas (Connell 1979).

The urban bias in the distribution of services is readily apparent where data are available. As elsewhere in the Third World (Sharpston 1972; Lipton 1977), the distribution of medical services is particularly biased. Thus in Papua New Guinea, between 1973/74 and 1976/77 expenditure on hospitals and urban health services increased at about twice the rate of increase in expenditure on rural health services, despite the existence of a National Health Plan in which the opposite intention was claimed (MacPherson 1979:16). In Fiji in 1975 the Central Division, which contained Suva and Nausori, had half the doctors and dentists in the country, giving a ratio of one doctor to 1,674 people and one dentist to
12,504, compared with the national averages of one to 2,590 and one to 20,531 respectively (Fiji Central Planning Office 1975:192). There are no available data on comparative health standards in urban and rural areas in Melanesia, other than the observation that infant mortality in Papua New Guinea is significantly higher in rural areas (Papua New Guinea 1974:27), to indicate whether this particular basic need is best met in town or country and consequently where, on the basis of equity and efficiency, subsequent expenditure should be directed. However the present distribution is generally considered to be a problem to the extent that national plans have emphasized alternative distributions favouring rural areas. Post colonial governments have been unable to rectify distributions and distribution systems established in colonial times; as Jackson phrases it (1979b:175), 'the ideology of decentralisation is mismatched with the practice of spatial concentration'. The same is almost certainly true of education and other components of social welfare provision.

That some resources must be distributed unevenly is inevitable. Expenditure on housing provision (either for public servants and some workers, or via site and service schemes) throughout Melanesia is almost entirely urban-based; assistance with housing and the provision of water supplies is almost nonexistent in rural areas (outside Fiji) and the latter especially are not always readily available in village situations. This bias in distribution may be inescapable (although it can be compensated for) but it may also represent an indirect inducement to further rural-urban migration.

It is thus widely established that, as in Papua New Guinea, 'urban areas have received a disproportionate share of the national wealth and any guidelines that are drawn up for future urbanisation must deal with a need to reduce expenditure per head on urban dwellers' (Papua New Guinea National Planning Office 1977:12); it is less well established that 'not all urban dwellers benefited from the expenditure' (ibid.). Overall public sector expenditure is heavily concentrated in urban areas yet two groups particularly have received a disproportionate share of government expenditure: expatriates, in both the public and private sectors, and national public servants who, following expatriate 'models', have been able to secure government housing at heavily subsidized rentals. Unequal access to housing is matched, and emphasized, by uneven access to transport services and other social and commercial amenities.

There are significant rural-urban income differentials in Melanesia but the continued importance of the subsistence economy (alongside some urban unemployment and informal sector employment) makes it virtually impossible to quantify such variations. Interregional differences must also be taken into account. Thus, although it is argued that in Fiji there are substantial and increasing urban-rural income differences (Ody 1973) it is doubtful whether available data exist to prove such an assertion. In a recent review of the evidence of income inequalities in Fiji it is said that rural incomes were substantially lower than urban incomes and that between 1953 and 1970 average urban incomes grew more than six times faster than average rural incomes (Chandra 1979:25-26). In Fiji this poses a particular problem in that a change in the rural-urban income differential 'tends to increase the income differential between Fijians and the other ethnic groups' (Ward 1973:365). For the Solomon Islands, on the other hand, it has been noted that in the early 1970s falling real wages and
rising copra prices meant that the urban-rural income differential, although continuing to favour the urban sector, was declining (Solomon Islands 1975, Vol. 1:25); however the trend in favour of the rural sector may not be general or longlasting.

That there are significant cost of living differences between urban and rural areas is apparent. At least in Papua New Guinea, this is recognized in formal wage differentials between these areas. Thus the minimum wage for rural labourers is K11.93 per week, that for urban labourers K28.20 per week; there are also differences between the larger 'Level One' towns and the smaller 'Level Two' towns, based on anticipated differences in living costs between these towns. How incomes correspond with relative costs of living, and the role of unions in maintaining income differentials, remain unknown.

One factor that keeps urban costs of living high is the limited availability of locally produced food in urban markets (cf. Fisk 1978). Urban gardening opportunities are few and even where locally produced food is available prices are high (occasionally higher than imported processed and/or frozen commodities). Consequently pressures to limit the importing of foodstuffs have been resisted, especially in Papua New Guinea, because of the fear of a rapid increase in food costs.

There have been pressures to control the prices of commodities sold in urban markets. In Lae in 1978 city councillors forced down by 50 per cent the price of some basic commodities brought in by rural producers (Townsend 1980). The effectiveness of the few market forces that operate against urban bias may therefore be restricted. Similarly some rural development policies, notably the establishment of cattle ranching in Papua New Guinea (Connell 1979), are designed in large part to provide urban markets with cheaper food rather than to provide higher prices for rural producers. The issue of food prices tends to cut across conventionally defined classes to give a unity of interest to the whole of the urban population (cf. Lipton 1977). In this context at least the terms of trade between urban and rural products are deliberately biased.

There appears to have been no general study of the terms of trade between urban and rural sectors in Melanesia. However Townsend has shown how, for parts of the central highlands of Papua New Guinea where coffee is virtually the only cash crop, even at a time of very rapidly rising coffee prices the consumer price index (CPI) kept pace with this increase (Townsend 1977). In the subsequent period, despite further coffee price increases, it is probable that the CPI has accelerated faster than coffee prices, especially since there have been further increases in oil prices and hence the cost of imported commodities in rural areas. The nature of the problem is indicated in Papua New Guinea where national policy has subsidized prices of petrol (and kerosene) at outlying urban centres so that they have been no more than 20 toea per gallon above Port Moresby and Lae prices (Seiler 1976). Provincial urban centres were thus paying more for petrol whilst rural supplies were even more expensive. Seiler (ibid.) argues that this subsidy has contributed to economic decentralization. If the CPI could be differentiated for urban and rural areas it is probable that the rural CPI would be rising faster than the urban CPI. This is certainly the case in the eastern islands of Fiji where prices are 10 to 40 per cent higher than in Suva for goods which are necessities or 'only
intermediate luxuries' whilst the rate of inflation has been greater in the outer islands than in Suva (UNESCO/UNFPA 1977:276-281).

The extent to which intangible components of 'development', such as self-respect and power (cf. Seers 1977), are also maldistributed is unclear. Urban life styles are undeniably different from those in rural areas; the potential for social interaction is much greater (even if, in practice, unrealized) and social activities are less restricted by the relative rigidity of rural social structure and traditional authority. Cities, relative to the countryside, are places of change and excitement. Real relative advantages of the urban culture are everywhere enhanced by the formal educational system and the radio (cf. Peet 1979) which emphasize the use of English and the consumption of the imported commodities that are primarily available for purchase in the cities. In cultural terms too there is an urban and international bias.

In this kind of context it is therefore possible to detect various elements of urban bias in Melanesian national development, although the mechanisms through which the bias is established and maintained are not always adequately elaborated. At a time when Honiara was still small, Bellam (1970:93) noted 'the generally parasitic, both directly and indirectly, effect of Honiara on the rest of the protectorate'; such attitudes to Melanesian urban centres may now be elaborated into more formal statements. However urban poverty exists amidst rural affluence and rural societies remain stratified, often becoming increasingly so. There are certainly mechanisms through which urban elites exploit the rural poor but in Melanesia, as elsewhere in the Third World, they are not the only mechanisms in operation. The existence of provincial governments in Papua New Guinea and the Solomons represents a challenge to regional if not urban bias as these governments tend to emphasize the traditional and ethnic characteristics of their region (while also providing employment) in opposition to the dominance of the core.

CONCLUSION

Melanesian urbanization undeniably follows a Third World pattern. The visible characteristics that typify dependent urbanization — the tendency towards primate cities, the lack of a continuum in a functional urban hierarchy, the failure (because it remains peripheral to the bulk of the population), to develop an integrated urban network, the visual if not functional 'dual city', and so on — are marked throughout Melanesia. However the external factor of dependency alone cannot explain the process of urbanization, which must also be related to the dynamics of the internal processes of capitalist development (including demographic change and migration) in the various countries, and specifically to the nature of the colonial/post-colonial state. The Melanesian town has gone through a period of colonial bureaucratic domination to one of commercial capitalist domination yet the third stage in Castells' sequence (Castells 1977), the city defined by imperialist industrial-financial domination, is nowhere realized; indeed it may never be realized here.

The institutional response (or lack of response) to urbanization has also been similar to that in other parts of the Third World. Despite the almost universal concern for managing urbanization alongside a focus on rural development, there have been few attempts in Melanesia to constrain
urban development. The economic options available to Melanesian governments include increasing expenditure on rural development, changes in the rural-urban terms of trade, and wage and housing policies. Social options include control of the natural increase in population and 'appropriate education'. Political options include 'migration passes' and repatriation. It is perhaps significant that despite some economic policy orientation towards rural development, expenditure in urban areas is quite disproportionate to urban population sizes. It is only the exceptionally crude 'last resort' repatriation of some highland Papua New Guineans from the coastal towns of the North Solomons that suggests some measure of determination to stem urbanization. Yet without rural incentives such draconian political measures are of limited utility and merely create dissent.

What is perhaps surprising is that policy formation directed to lessen urban bias has not been successful in conditions where most politicians have extremely strong rural economic ties (especially in Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands), where an alienated urban-born elite is not yet apparent, where migrants are at least as conservative and poorly organized as elsewhere in the Third World and where there is little international business pressure for a supply of cheap labour. Nor are there the implicit anti-agricultural biases of the import substitution policies that exist elsewhere (cf. Beier et al. 1976:387-388). Nevertheless, the evidence suggests that the various spatial dimensions of inequality are likely to increase rather than diminish. However while ethnicity prevails over class, unions are weak and localized, and there is a declining rate of urban employment creation, urban wages are unlikely to rise quickly.

In Melanesia, as in the west, the town-country relationship is quite central to the transition to capitalism. The separation of production and consumption that has followed rural-urban exchange was the cause of a 'revolution' whereby the self-sufficiency of the rural economy was undermined by urban and international consumption patterns (cf. Merrington 1975). Crudely, there has been a division of labour that has assigned intellectual work to the towns and manual work to the country; 'the greatest division of material and mental labour is the separation of town and country' (Marx and Engels 1947 trans.:43). Thus the growing urban centres of Melanesia act as nodes for the appropriation of rural surplus: 'dependent urbanism arises in situations where the urban form exists as a channel for the extraction of quantities of surplus from a rural and resource hinterland for purposes of shipment to the major metropolitan centres' (Harvey 1973:232). It is therefore untrue that urban centres operate only for their own benefit or that they are able to control the spatial redistribution of the surplus within the nation; although towns and the cities have a role in exploiting the countryside they are no more than a part of an international urban hierarchy within the international capitalist economy. This approach to Melanesian urbanization then

... involves the notion that powerful corporate and national interests, representing capitalist society at its most advanced, established outposts in the principal cities of Third World countries for three interrelated purposes: to extract a sizeable surplus from the dependent economy, in the form of primary products, through principally a process of 'unequal
exchange'; to expand the market for goods and services produced in the home countries of advanced monopoly capitalism; and to ensure stability of an indigenous political system that will resist encroachment by ideologies and social movements that threaten to undermine the basic institutions of the capitalistic system' (Friedmann and Wulff 1974:13).

Spatial inequalities are inevitable yet the spatial inequalities that exist in Melanesia suggest 'a distinct, functional and maintained pattern of spatial inequality [that] is inherent in a capitalist mode of production' (Britton 1980:2) and that this system is global.

The urban legacy of colonialism has proved to be an inadequate basis for achieving the objective of economic development and national (or regional) integration in Melanesia because it has provided for the development of an entrenched, structured inequality. Independence resulted in a radical change in the racial composition of those with political power, but little impact on the mechanisms that maintained a small group's dominance - patterns of government expenditure, the freedom of foreign companies to locate in the towns, and a narrow stratum of expenditure by a high-income elite superimposed on a base of limited mass consumption. The open economies of the new Pacific nations and the attractions of the Pacific area, for strategic reasons, primary resource extraction (including fishing) and tourism, make the growth of externally oriented cities even more likely in the future. Existing inequalities may worsen.

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NOTES

1 This paper generally excludes New Caledonia (principally because of its maintained colonial status, but also because of its unique urbanization characteristics, especially its minority Melanesian population), Irian Jaya and Torres Strait (since both are only part of a much larger country and their history and contemporary experience is quite different, and since neither author has had an opportunity to visit these two areas). The availability of data and personal experience has resulted in a bias towards Papua New Guinea in this analysis. This bias is not merely arbitrary. The urban population of Papua New Guinea represents well over 50 per cent of the total urban population of independent Melanesia. The amount of published research on urban areas reflects this distribution of the urban populations.
Consequently as late as the 1970s attempts were made to establish an articulated network of central places in the central highlands of New Guinea to serve as the basis for an administrative and marketing system (Ward et al. 1974); there have also been movements of old administrative centres to more appropriate regional centres, such as Sohano to Kieta and Samarai to Aotau (Ward 1968).

Migrant Labour Systems were formally instituted to enable control by the colonial state over the movement of labour in German New Guinea from 1888, the British Colony of Papua from 1888, the British Solomon Islands Protectorate from 1897, and in the New Hebrides from 1906. For further details of the operation of the Migrant Labour Systems in Papua New Guinea see Curtain 1980b:38-120; for the Solomons, see Hogbin 1939:245-298; for Vanuatu, see Bedford 1973:30-43.

But wage employees in Fiji contribute to a retirement fund called the National Provident Fund. Similarly, for permanent officers of the Papua New Guinea Public Service there are two schemes, with some 30,000 members in 1978.

Or, as Levine (1979:1) phrases it, in conceptualizing ethnicity, there has been 'a movement away from a rigid internally oriented and reified cultural determinism towards a realization that ethnicity is a dynamic multifunctional sociocultural factor best understood as a facet of concrete social action'.

Recent work in Lae by Marion Ward leads her to conclude that the proportion of males not in full time employment is much higher than the 26 per cent suggested by the 1977 figures (Marion Ward, personal communication 1980).

The extent of retail price maintenance is not known; however there have been pressures on market vendors elsewhere to reduce prices, as in the case of North Solomons markets in the late 1970s and in Honiara (cf. Bathgate 1978).

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URBANIZATION AND INEQUALITY IN MELANESIA


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Dependency theory emerged in a Latin American context towards the end of the 1960s. Much of the early work was carried out by local scholars, but subsequent theoretical reformulations and refinements, especially via a Marxist perspective, have been undertaken largely in the northern hemisphere. Perhaps the only reference to Melanesia in early literature relating to modernization and dependency is Aron's statement, in opposition to Rostow's concept of the traditional, that all past societies are put into this single category, whether they be the archaic communities of New Guinea, the Negro tribes of Africa or the old civilisations of India and China. But the only feature they have in common is that they are neither modern nor industrialised (Aron 1967:30).

Thus the societies of New Guinea were seen as 'polartypes' of non-development - places, therefore, where dependency theory would be least likely to apply directly and immediately. At that time Papua New Guinea remained a colony, as did many of the other Pacific nations, and until the 1970s there was little indication of an early end to colonial status. In this colonial context Australian scholarship was relatively remote from radical influences; dependency theory has only recently been applied to Melanesia and specifically Papua New Guinea.1

It was however readily apparent that 'development' was constrained by external power systems. This is a primary determinant of the fact that development takes place at all, of the structure of existing development and of the direction taken by development schemes. Much of the 'drive' for development and almost all that is coherent in the process derive from the external authority, from the representatives or imitators of its culture (Stanner 1951:2-3).

Two decades later the situation was beginning to be seen in a new light by academic commentators, although popular perceptions were sometimes different. For some Europeans, within Papua New Guinea, the area was no more than
a human sink where ten thousand years or more of independence had left a miserable sprinkling of people battling against disease, cannibalism and fearsome Mother Nature they could not tame (New Guinea Bulletin 1971, cited by Sharp 1972:43).

The first major work reevaluating the consensus on development in Papua New Guinea was that of Rowley, whose influential study The New Guinea Villager (1965) - a title which disguised the breadth of analysis and vision - was the forerunner of a series of more radical critiques of development and colonial policies in Papua New Guinea. The latter includes Rowlett (1969), Brookfield (1972), Sharp (1972), Thompson (1973), Waiko, (1973) and Zable (1973); at the same time Ogan (1972, 1973) used 'dependency' in a more political-psychological context in relation to the Nasioli of the North Solomons. Yet few of these studies, other than some articles in the journal New Guinea, received much circulation or comment.

Of the writers who had begun to consider the possibilities of what had yet to be called the 'dependency paradigm', Thompson, Brookfield and Zable all found theoretical formulations from elsewhere of some value. Brookfield (1972:176) refers to Furtado and others but suggests that it is not improbable that the literature on post-colonial issues which Melanesians will find most stimulating will include such works as those of Nkruah, Dumont and Frank, all of which strongly criticise development through externally-controlled capitalism, and maintain that underdevelopment is a creation of capitalism.

Zable, in a surprisingly little-known paper, considered the relevance of Marxist analysis, including Lenin's theory of imperialism and unequal exchange, but fell short of attempting to apply any of this in a Melanesian context, merely expressing concern with all models in the social sciences. His conclusion, that 'the categories of analysis were beginning to take over and assume a life of their own, the people with whom I began were disappearing' (1973:430), might serve as an early epitaph for much that was to follow.

As in Latin America the new paradigm suggested radical, if not revolutionary, changes in Papua New Guinea and, minimally, a rapid transition to political independence (cf. Cooper 1966). Few radical policies had been formulated within Papua New Guinea, but rather by Australian academics; hence the link between theory and practice, beyond the level of pressure for independence, was almost absent with the significant exception of some Bougainvillean students in the late 1960s (cf. Griffin, Nelson and Firth 1979:152). Meanwhile development policy, as formally set out, was changing almost as rapidly as academic reevaluation. In December 1972 the chief minister, Michael Somare, announced a set of eight aims (The Eight Point Plan) based on the principles of equality, self-reliance and rural improvement. These were given support by the Faber Report (Overseas Development Group 1973; see also Hart 1974) which argued for much greater local control of the economy, especially through a reduction in dependence on foreign aid and foreign capital investment. Simultaneously some academics were beginning to consider the possibilities
of 'socialist' objectives as reflected in the experience of Tanzania (Clunies-Ross 1973) or with an Asian orientation. In theory and in practice the start of the 1970s witnessed the emergence of a critical phase in the history of economic development in Papua New Guinea.

The scrutiny, criticism and refinement of dependency theory that went on elsewhere (cf. Connell forthcoming) had little impact upon academic studies of Melanesia until the last couple of years. This is remarkable, given both the extraordinary increase in academic interest in Papua New Guinea and the ready recognition that the country shared - even personified - the characteristics suggested in general terms by Lall (1975). For example: first, income distribution is skewed and getting worse (cf. Connell and Curtain, this volume). Secondly, the consumption patterns of the elite in Papua New Guinea are influenced by those in Australia, especially perhaps in terms of the consumption of alcohol (Conroy 1980). Thirdly, the technology utilized for industrialization is unadapted from the centre (this is especially true of Bougainville Copper Limited (BCL) and, to a lesser extent, of other transnational corporations (TNCS) in Papua New Guinea). Fourthly, there is a strong foreign presence in the shape of transnational corporations, foreign aid, foreign loans and trade with the centre. This is apparent in the dominant role of BLC, the probable significance of Ok Tedi, and the existence of a number of Japanese, United States and Korean TNCS involved in fishing, construction and forestry. Moreover the contribution of Australian (and other) aid provides an extremely high proportion of the national budget, a situation that has interested and concerned many (e.g. Berry 1977; Conroy 1980). Trade is primarily with the major industrial nations, to the extent that in 1975 Japan and Australia supplied 64 per cent of imports and purchased 40 per cent of exports (Donaldson 1980a:77). These trends amplify Lall's point that 'there is no indigenous technological advance of economic significance'. Fifthly, foreign influence is apparent in cultural, educational, legal and political spheres; the role of English as the principal means of communication amongst Papua New Guinean elites reflects the maintained dominance of Australian educational, legal and political institutions. Lall's final indicator, that the 'ruling elites ... perceive an identity of interest, at some level, with the economic interests of the rich capitalist countries' and that there are 'some internal forces which make for an increasingly capitalist mode of production and for a long-term integration with the world capitalist system' (1975:801), is reflected in one account of political change in Papua New Guinea up till the end of 1978:

The economy remains aid and trade dependent. State power is in the hands of a political and administrative elite, or in class terms, shared by a loose alliance of an educated petty bourgeoisie and a rich peasantry. The rhetoric of redistribution is still current but the essentially accommodative political and governmental style ultimately works in the interest of those with the most economic and political clout. Internal crises are managed in ad hoc fashion, the key to their resolution being political expediency and the dispensation of patronage (Hegarty 1979a:110).
By 1980 there was, not surprisingly, little evidence that this had changed significantly. Elite conflict is over access to spoils and patronage, rather than over ideology (despite some evidence of polarization in the debate over the leadership code); the bureaucracy is divided in the same way by the search for political and economic patrons; cultural nationalism is not a cohesive force, and problems of management of the 'dependent economy' have increased (Hegarty 1980). Despite the egalitarian aims entrenched in the main ideological statements of the government, the post colonial state has pursued policies that are fundamentally similar to those of the colonial administration, remaining characterized by a heavy reliance on private enterprise and virtually unimpeded free trade, with the more productive sectors of the economy, which are privately owned and dominated by foreign capital (Berry 1978), giving Papua New Guinea an unusually open economy with all its attendant problems (Lam 1979). Undoubtedly Papua New Guinea exemplifies the characteristic, and to some extent measurable, features of dependence.

In a more superficial manner the variety of characteristics that are often seen as indicative of Third World economies and societies, but are even less amenable to measurement and comparison than those described by Lall, have also been apparent in Papua New Guinea: corruption (see Standish 1980b), an apparent decline in law and order (cf. Strathern 1979), conflict between government and judiciary, shantytowns and urban crime waves (although not necessarily correlated), the threat of secession movements, elitist students, and so on. By contrast there have been a strong currency and a low inflation rate, with a reserve stock that cushions the economy against drops in commodity prices (although not against drops in revenue from BCL), a peaceful and orderly change of government early in 1980, and a policy of political cooperation with neighbouring Pacific states so that, even with its problems, some would argue that it is 'by Third World standards, a model of government efficiency and probity' (Standish 1980a:94). But all this is highly subjective and open to debate and dispute.

By 1980 too the concept of dependence, and its related terminology, had become parts of the reality, or at least the rhetoric, of Melanesian politics. Thus in 1978 Father Momis, the minister for decentralisation, in the debate over the leadership code, argued that the country's economic and political structure was characterized by foreign monopoly and influence; he later extended this critique to recognize 'the beginnings of a comprador class which provides a convenient bridgehead for the continued onslaught of foreign capital' (Momis 1979) and consequently argued that a new leadership code was necessary to demonstrate that the government identified with the local people, was responsive to them, was restrained in advancing its own interests, was not satiated with power, and was not subject to foreign influence. However, at much the same time, Tambahay Okuk, then the opposition leader, was both criticizing the government for being 'socialist' and 'Marxist', and outlining a policy of state assistance to national capitalists, joint ventures between foreign capital and the state, and the establishment of a manufacturing base (cf. Hegarty 1979a:106-107). At the end of 1978 an underlying theme of politics in Papua New Guinea was a concern for the country's post colonial economy and politics (and the leadership code, with its explicit criticism of elitism and of the emerging comprador class, was the most obvious manifestation of this), but by contrast, the opposition was effectively arguing 'that the creation of a
state-assisted bourgeoisie had been restrained by the government's emphasis on "redistribution" and that the capitalist road to "development" had been obstructed by a restrictive investment policy' (Hegarty 1979a:109-110). These divergent attitudes revolved around various assessments of the impact of economic change.

THE EMERGENCE OF CAPITALISM

The expansion of capitalism within Papua New Guinea has been considered in some detail in a number of places (notably Amarsi, Good and Mortimer 1979 and Griffin, Nelson and Firth 1979; see also Jonas 1979; Gregory 1979). Although the details and significance of particular events and particular historical periods remain open to discussion and all are of significance in the establishment of the contemporary political economy of Papua New Guinea, only some themes can be considered here.

Merchant capital initially entered Papua New Guinea in the nineteenth century in two significant forms: through the operations of metropolitan trading companies and through the recruitment of labourers for plantations outside Papua New Guinea. Formal colonization of New Guinea followed the expansion of German trading and settlement interests and was followed by British annexation of Papua. Plantation capital required cheap labour power to generate profits; indentured labour was recruited in conditions 'really rather like slavery' (Fitzpatrick 1978) and it is now generally accepted that the village economy subsidized the wages of plantation workers (Belshaw 1957:244; Rowley 1965:110) to the extent that even subsequent rural-urban migration streams may be seen as occurring in situations of 'dual dependence' that were far from unique to Melanesia (Curtain 1980a), a reflection of the fact that 'unlimited supplies of labour' did not exist (Gregory 1979:391) and that merchant capital did not seek to transform productive relations but attached itself to existing social and economic relations. Plantation capital began to face a crisis towards the end of the 1960s, a crisis which coincided with the labour frontier having moved inland until, by the early 1970s, the supply of cheap labour was exhausted; plantation capital was expatriated and a process of transfer to national ownership began (Gregory 1979). Government regulation of population movement in the colonial period, through tax enforcement, labour laws and the opening and closing of recruitment areas (even in German times), laid the basis for an elaborate and potentially powerful state (Barnett 1979:777; Curtain 1980b). The argument that the expanding world capitalist economy first articulated with the peripheral economies by creating a class of merchant capitalists who organized the transfer of commodities from poor countries to rich countries but did not themselves engage in or organize the production process (Kay 1975; Amin 1976; Rey 1973), has limited validity in Melanesia where settlers took on those functions.

Mining capital entered Papua in the 1880s. There were two early waves of mining capital in the country (Nelson 1976) and a third wave, the most intensive, began with the establishment of BCL and is currently extending to the mainland. In each wave profit was expatriated directly or through the distribution of excess profits to shareholders as dividend payments (cf. Gregory 1980:103). The entry of plantation and mining capital, aided
and abetted by the state, thus transformed labour power into a temporary commodity (Gregory 1979:401).

A critical phase in the transformation of the national economy of Papua New Guinea was the emergence of primary commodity production for export on smallholdings. Again the state played an active part through the disincentive to stability of taxes and the incentive of advice, some pressure and infrastructure improvements. The particular significance of this transformation was in the extent of economic differentiation within villages and local regions that initially followed different planting rates (and access to land) and subsequently resulted from the consolidation of some smallholders as businessmen.

The final and most significant phase of the expansion of capitalism into Papua New Guinea was the entry of corporate monopoly capital exemplified in the relatively recent and rapid establishment and consolidation of TNCs, and especially BCL. If BCL is by far the most important TNC in the country it is certainly not the only one; the largest building in central Port Moresby is a part of the Travelodge world hotel chain; foreigners have substantial shares in Air Niugini and large sectors of natural resource exploitation are foreign owned. Foreign ownership is particularly evident in the relatively new and rapidly expanding fishing and forestry industries (Jonas 1979; De'Ath 1979), where Japanese interests are involved, but it is also evident in the cement industry, where there are South Korean interests, part of the construction industry, and much of the agricultural industry, including cash crop plantations, some cattle ranches and the emerging sugar and tobacco industries of the Markham valley. With the exception of the road haulage industry it remains difficult to find significant elements of the economy that are wholly national-owned. The extent of foreign ownership up to independence has been partially documented in two separate monographs (Utrecht 1977; Donaldson and Turner 1978) that have drawn attention to the substantial Australian control in all sectors of the economy, the interlocking directorates within the major Australian companies, the nature of incentives offered to foreign companies, the role of the Papua New Guinea Investment Corporation and especially the continued significance of the principal merchant trading companies.

The consolidation of the TNCs has produced a wealth of critical comments, directed less to the impact of the TNCs on national disintegration and more to the emergence of a comprador bourgeoisie, including those directly employed by TNCs, public servants involved in their activities, a range of businessmen who service their activities, and the opportunities that this allows for possible corruption (Zorn 1976). Thus, for example, Utrecht argues that the Investment Corporation is an instrument of the TNCs in that it creates a 'social class of corporate compradors' and subjects the interest of nationals to that of the TNCs (1977:44). The extent to which criticisms of this kind are valid, and at what level, cannot be resolved in a summary statement, especially given the extent to which emotion (see, for example, Hannett 1975) plays a part in this evaluation and where a single TNC plays such a critical economic role. Thus before independence in 1975 there was almost no manufacturing or service industry wholly, or even partly, owned by nationals and the centre-piece of the economy was a single TNC (BCL), with whom the government had negotiated a revised financial relationship, resulting in a situation
of 'negotiated dependency' (cf. Lubeck 1977). Subsequently the state has been the main initiator and financier of development, including agricultural development; hence access to and control over the resources of the state take on a particular significance in Papua New Guinea. If TNCs play a more extensive role in shaping the nature of policy formation within the state, they may contribute increased resources to enable other state policies to be put into practice.

PRE-COLONIAL ECONOMIES AND SOCIETIES

Although dependency has been considered in general terms by numerous writers, and although there has now been a number of studies of class formation, peasants and, to a lesser extent, the nature of the colonial and post-colonial state and the role of TNCs in Papua New Guinea, there have been relatively (and surprisingly) few attempts to understand the operation of pre-capitalist, or non-capitalist, economies before the intrusion of capitalist forces (but see Donaldson 1981). Of course this is not easy; as Gregory notes 'almost nothing is known about the pre-colonial societies of PNG for the simple reason that, except for Miklouho-Maclay, no anthropologist has ever studied one' (1980:108; see Connell forthcoming). This does not excuse the fact that such societies are largely viewed as a homogeneous group of politically simple, socially undifferentiated and economically self-sufficient units' (Boyd 1980:3) which were essentially stable and static. However 'warfare, trade and marriage meant external relationships of hostility and alliance, relations of antagonism and dependence, the opposite of isolation and self-sufficiency' (Dalton 1978:150) so that 'a subsistence economy must not be confused with a self-sufficient economy' (Boyd 1980:5). The extensive trade exchanges, over long distances, in Melanesia are well known (e.g. Hughes 1977) and have existed over long time periods (Connell 1979:107-108). A failure to understand historical changes in such societies, or stratification within them, serves only to set the advent of colonialism and/or capitalism as a single starting point for the historical analysis of development.

The principal approach to pre-colonial societies - emphasizing the existence of 'incipient social classes' and 'exploitative relationships' - has been criticized as reductionism: an attempt to transform non-capitalist societies into 'pre capitalist societies' which distorts the essence of small scale societies and ignores the diversity that exists among such systems (Boyd 1980:3). Given the variety of pre-colonial societies in Melanesia there are obviously grounds for this criticism. By contrast, the use of the label 'pre-capitalist' in Melanesia has been criticized because activities in pre-colonial societies may have been the product of capitalist development (Gregory 1980:108). There is therefore no consensus over the use of the term 'pre-capitalist' in a Melanesian context.

Boyd notes that a 'criticism of dependency analysis is the emphasis on the similarity of response by non-capitalist societies to the intrusion of capitalist forces' and especially 'the assumption that external capitalist forces determine the nature of changes that occur in village economies on their incorporation into the capitalist world system' (1980:3, my italics). The considerable lack of uniformity of response within Melanesia has been a feature of change that has puzzled and fascinated scholars for decades;
Melanesian villagers are certainly far from passive respondents. There is, for example, an important debate over the extent to which Melanesian societies were 'pre-adapted' to change in that the aggressive and competitive style of traditional leaders provided the basic model for contemporary businessmen (see Finney 1973) and consequently enabled what Good called 'significant inbuilt inequalities' (Amarshi, Good and Mortimer 1979:103) to be transferred almost intact into the contemporary era. Alternatively new leaders emerged who were more competent to manipulate business and political affairs in a wider arena and who eroded the 'traditional' authority of the bigmen. It is apparent that both trends occurred throughout Melanesia.

A second example of this diversity must suffice. The significance of maintained lineage ownership of land and the maintenance of production for gift exchange suggested to Gregory that the category 'natural economy' is inappropriate and that, following Mauss, a more appropriate concept is that of 'gift economy', where gift exchange establishes relations of domination in lineage/clan based societies, and hence between relatively egalitarian social groups (Gregory 1979:404-405). However the extent to which there has been a genuine efflorescence of gift exchange, and particularly the extent to which this has resulted in either maintained or increased production for gift exchange, must remain debateable. Gregory uses the analogy of Shan and Kachin 'trade' in Burma, where Kachin 'trade', involving mainly goods of no ordinary economic value (cf. Leach 1954) becomes his model for gift exchange; yet he does not comment on the existence of both 'Kachin-like' and 'Shan-like' systems in the highlands and the limited existence of 'Kachin-like' systems in parts of the lowlands of Papua New Guinea. Once again generalizations on Melanesian trading systems, and hence on the ubiquity and significance of the 'gift economy' as a Melanesian version of the 'natural economy', are impossible.

More detailed analyses of early post-colonial societies have at least largely clarified two deeprooted misconceptions. The first of these is that there was a static, traditional, unchanging society. However, that change has always occurred is not yet generally recognized; thus Brown, commenting on recent (and substantial) changes in Simbu believed she was observing 'the beginnings of social stratification, as well as diversification and specialisation' (1979:247). The significance of the pre-colonial transition to sweet potato production in large parts of highland, and also coastal, Melanesia is a clear example of this kind of historical change (cf. Good 1980; see also Lacey 1977). The second misconception is that pre-colonial society was egalitarian and communal. Whilst there was a certain communalism and even relative equality in pre-colonial societies, there was nevertheless inequality in circumstances where individuals had little opportunity for migration. The communalism that did exist was often closely linked with authoritarianism, and pre-colonial societies in Melanesia may have been rather closer to the model described by Dening (1980) for the Marquesas: 'integrated it is true, but largely by sorcery and human sacrifice; filled with fear and with an ordinary violence to one another which seems extraordinary' - and this in Polynesia, the land of the 'noble savage'. One suspects that the contemporary visible effects of disruption have assisted in the romanticization and generation of utopias in the historic Pacific (see for example Valentine 1979:98-99). What Cliffe (1970) has described in the
Tanzanian context as 'the myth of traditional cooperation' is hard to dispel.

Many Melanesian societies, but certainly not all, seem to have been characterized historically by 'bigman' forms of leadership and political organization and it is in these societies that the transformation of the pre-colonial economy is of particular interest because of the apparent continuity of a number of structural aspects of 'bigman' economic organization. The supposed general characteristics of these are well known, although any example presents some discrepancies from the stereotype. Areas where bigmen exist or existed have no permanently viable political units, lack centralized authority and no concept of office. The leaders, the bigmen, usually achieve authority through personal ability rather than inheritance, descent or supernatural sanction; leadership is therefore achieved, and maintained in competition rather than ascribed. Increasingly the discrepancies from the model are seen to be more general. For example, hereditary leadership in Melanesia is much more widespread than hitherto imagined (Standish 1978; Grant 1980) while some Melanesian societies are stratified (Good 1980). The extent to which the inheritance of power and prestige is allied to the inheritance of wealth is less clear. Certainly Fitzpatrick produces convincing evidence that, at least in contemporary times, little inheritance of wealth has been possible (1979:26-27).

The leadership of bigmen was usually temporary and their importance as individuals not easily differentiated from their role as group representatives or leaders. Often, as in Enga, all men share the same ideals of renown and wealth (Feil 1978:228) so that 'bigness is a matter of degree in a society where every man gives some feasts ... and many descent groups have no clear cut big-man' (Keesing 1976:354). Thus the model of power and prestige, especially as formulated by Sahlins (1963), is based on the examples of leaders like Soni in Siwai (Oliver 1955) whose power was quite atypical and based on despotism rather than democracy; as a result the economic importance of bigmen has been overemphasized at the expense of the lineage (or other) group in whose ambit they operated. Yet however transient and however open to competition is the bigman's leadership there are always some who have become successful long term leaders, achieving significant status and income differences which may enable some degree of inheritance.

The materialist basis of a number of Melanesian societies in the immediate post-colonial era (which thus suggests its pre-colonial extent) has been widely observed (Connell 1979:109-110) and is typified in Read's account of the Gahuku, who are described as materialists to the point of exhaustion with the acquisition of wealth and its distribution in a never-ending series of competitive exchanges. They lose interest in ideas and measure the good life in terms of worldly success, bestowing prestige on those who have acquitted themselves conspicuously in the pursuit of riches (1965:60).
Subsequently much analysis has been directed to the nature of acquisition and distribution of property and wealth in such societies. Bigmen had to be able to make the transition from production to finance systems and to obtain more land and labour than others; how individuals gained wider support is rarely clear, but there is much evidence of despotic behaviour, exploitation and violence (Standish 1978; Connell 1979). In the present context two general conclusions can be drawn from bigmen societies: first, that, as Keesing (1976:353) argues for the Kwaio of Malaita, 'a big man in a descent group is a more successful capitalist than his fellows - the visible capital being string shell beads and pigs and the invisible capital being prestige', if only in the sense that his material wealth is greater; secondly, that the extent of the unequal relationship between bigmen and their followers, which may be inherited, has suggested that 'models of economic activity derived from class analyses of capitalist societies might not be inappropriate' (Strathern 1975:354; cf. Good 1980) although perhaps a model of feudalism might now be considered more appropriate. Both these conclusions remain open to considerable debate.

In the context of lineage-based, segmentary societies, like those of Melanesia, Meillassoux characterized a mode of production as 'cultivation of the soil, self-subsistence, the use of very short term production techniques and of human energy as the main source of power' (1964:89). Yet this refers only to the technical forces of production and not the social relations of production. Elsewhere I have argued that in bigmen societies the bigmen established the social relations of production, that is, 'the set of social relations which determine the internal rationality of the economy, the specific use to be made of the means of production and the distribution of total social labour time and product' (Friedman 1975:162, cited by Connell 1979:116). Apart from land, Melanesian lineage-based societies own property but only as moveable prestige goods which are disposed of through distributive feasts as part of a cycle of conversion of surplus into prestige. Land does not enter this circulation sphere and therefore cannot be accumulated like other goods. Because of the variety of lineage organization within Melanesia, the segmentation of lineages, and the structure, fission and fusion of local groups, it is impossible to go as far as Friedman in tracing the logic linking surplus production with genealogical proximity to the gods and hence the conversion of bigman status into chieftaincy. Nevertheless, further analysis in this context may help to explain both the emergence and consolidation of leaders and the variation between hereditary and non hereditary leadership in Melanesia. It seems clear that, as in Kachin, the tendency towards the hierarchicalization of society is a result of the use of 'surplus' by lineage leaders (bigmen) to transform and routinize their position and that this transformation is frustrated by the limited productivity of the agricultural system (even in the presence of some trade) from which this surplus is extracted. There are therefore clear limits to political expansion that preclude state formation and through which bigmen invariably die poor.

At this stage few of the social and economic relations of production in Melanesian societies have been elaborated in such a way that it is possible to compare the similarities between Melanesian formations and those of other societies; this remains a possible future task that might further elucidate the historic basis for the generation of inequality
within Papua New Guinea. Economic growth in the pre-colonial societies of Melanesia may have been ubiquitously slow, suggesting that some combination of communication constraints, low population densities and technological limitations may have been generally responsible. The ability to dominate trade (cf. Connell forthcoming) may have been crucial.

Necessarily, this form of analysis of pre-colonial modes of production is merely tentative; the extent to which there were classes in pre-colonial times, the transience of classes, the role of leaders (as individuals or group leaders) are all issues of contention and, at the very least, substantial regional variation. What is perhaps most disappointing here is that Godelier, who has worked on Marxist theories relating to economic anthropology and with the Baruya of the Eastern Highlands relatively soon after colonial contact, has chosen to write so little about their pre-colonial mode of production and the impact of capitalism on this mode (see Godelier 1972, 1977). There seem to be two principal reasons for this: one is that amongst the Baruya religion and magic played an extremely important role, beyond that which existing theories supposed; the second is that circulation and exchange (especially of and with 'salt-money') also played an important role, especially in a context where subsistence requirements could be produced relatively easily. The significance of ideology and exchange amongst the Baruya, which Godelier's field work demonstrated, resulted in his own increased emphasis on these issues; for example he suggests the hypothesis that

relations of domination and exploitation, to have arisen and reproduced themselves durably in formerly classless societies, ... must have presented themselves as an exchange, and as an exchange of services (1978:767).

These reconsiderations have also resulted in his suggestion that it is 'an abuse of words to speak of classes and the State in hierarchic, precapitalist, ancient or exotic societies' (1978:768). Despite the emergence of an extraordinary volume of anthropological writings on Papua New Guinea some debates have scarcely begun.

PEASANTS, CLASSES AND CAPITALIST TRANSFORMATION

There is however generality in the processes of capitalist transformation in poor countries. Thus within Melanesia there has been, first, the role of taxation in providing wage labour in the early part of the twentieth century; secondly, the destruction of intertribal warfare; thirdly, the 'ideological invasion' of evangelical religious conversion, and, fourthly, the gradual introduction of commercial relationships stimulated by the trading of manufactured commodities (cf. Bradby 1975) accompanied by settler colonialism. All of these have been significant in altering pre-colonial social relations of production in situations where resistance had to be broken down by a combination of violence and ideological coercion (since the pre-colonial formations were nowhere passive or formless). Marx argued that 'one of the prerequisites of wage labour and one of the historic conditions of capital is free labour and the exchange of free labour against money' (1964 trans.:67). Thus a social formation which maintained social relations of production (and gave
usufructuary rights to land) could not be expected to result in capitalism until those social relations were destroyed (and until there was a separation of producer from means of production). The pre-capitalist modes are therefore conserved (cf. Rey 1973:82-87) and their reproduction is guaranteed through their being articulated into the cycle of accumulation of the dominant capitalist mode; they are however changed to fit into this new capitalist accumulation cycle. Thus petty commodity production is transformed as wage labour grows in the economy (cf. Kahn 1974) and forms of local production, other than that of cash crops, are destroyed. It is in this kind of context that the emergence of a peasantry and the formation of classes have been more readily recognized. It is only relatively recently that the concept of a peasantry has had much utility in Melanesia. The history of the emergence of the term has been discussed elsewhere (Connell 1979); since then the literature on the possibility of a peasantry in Papua New Guinea has expanded substantially (e.g. Good 1980; Fitzpatrick 1979; Howlett 1980; Amarsi, Good and Mortimer 1979).

The establishment of cash cropping has both failed to sustain the development of productive forces, in part because of its peripheral integration into the world economy (cf. Howlett 1973), and has encouraged and contributed to the consolidation of social and economic differentiation throughout the country. Thus 'it is the disruption of ... complementary relations of interdependence between village societies and the establishment of exploitative relations of dependence with international capitalism that characterise an integral phase of the process of dependency' (Boyd 1980:5). Where self-sufficiency and the diversity that can resist hazard are destroyed, time becomes scarce and village settlements become dispersed and less cohesive. Despite the important linkages between metropolitan markets and rural folk, exemplified in Mitchell's observation of the Nagovisi of Bougainville, that 'the Chicago Board of Trade located not 500 miles from where I am writing is a larger factor in their lives and world, some 12,000 miles away, than it is in mine' (Mitchell 1976:148; see also Mitchell 1980; Townsend 1980), and the unequal exchanges inherent in this relationship, even those who have commented on these trends remain able to comment on Papua New Guinea's 'highly dualistic society' (Berry 1978:101) or to observe that 'PNG remains a dualistic economy with no immediately foreseeable prospect of integrating its modern and traditional sectors' (Griffin, Nelson and Firth 1979:265). Yet it is certainly unreal to speak of a dualistic society or economy in Papua New Guinea; even the most inaccessible rural areas are inextricably a part of the national and international economy.

The emergence of 'big peasants', a rural elite that has gained control (rather than ownership) of significant resources and monopolized access to government services (Howlett 1980:196) has been widely documented, especially in the Eastern Highlands (Gerritsen 1975; Donaldson and Good 1978; Amarsi, Good and Mortimer 1979) but virtually throughout Melanesia (cf. Connell 1979:122). Inequality within and between rural areas is now entrenched and seems to be increasing (Howlett 1980:196) at least at a regional scale (cf. Connell and Curtain, this volume; Connell 1979:122-123), whilst locally this is being emphasized by the operation of certain government agencies, as in Simbu (cf. Howlett, Hide and Young 1976:249-250) and elsewhere (Connell and Curtain, this volume). Thus elites have emerged, and in situations of limited and increasingly scarce resources their control over resources may deny access to others.
Land-short, and possibly landless, groups are now emerging; some of these may be employed by the elite. The growing significance of rural wage labour has been recognized in a number of areas (Connell 1979:123-126; Howlett 1980:199-201). In some places pressure has grown for individual ownership and inheritance of land and there have been individual purchases of land in some rural areas (Connell 1979:125) yet the process of transformation of land into a commodity has barely begun (Gregory 1979:403, 1980:109-110). Because of these trends Good argues that 'the rich peasants and the rural bourgeoisie' (or the 'petty bourgeoisie') as a class have collaborated in the establishment of cash cropping (Amarshi, Good and Mortimer 1979:118) and may even be regarded as a particular kind of comprador bourgeoisie (cf. Townsend 1977:422). There is a general consensus that social and economic inequalities are emerging on a scale and to an extent that was not apparent in pre-colonial or early post-colonial societies and, moreover, and much more subject to debate, that some of those groups who have benefited most from the establishment of commodity production are collaborating to maintain and expand their interests. The extent to which such groups exist and are reproduced as classes can be considered in more detail, although again many questions are still unanswered; thus Fitzpatrick (1979) notes how he is unable to resolve the issues of whether there is a peasantry and whether a peasantry is a homogeneous class (or a class at all), and therefore cannot explore the implications of differentiation within the 'peasantry' for class alliances and especially for links between the peasantry and the proletariat.

The debate over class formation in Papua New Guinea is now substantial, although most would probably agree with Berry that

Class formation is still in an extremely embryonic state. Capitalism is still relatively new on the scene in Papua New Guinea and is yet to fundamentally transform traditional social relations. Therefore while it has undoubtedly provided the means whereby a privileged expatriate and national elite have been able to monopolise the benefits of development, it has not yet developed on a scale to give rise to opposing social forces (1978:102; see also Townsend 1980:3).

Although Keesing has suggested that 'the gulf between [bigmen] and the ordinary men widens so that incipient class systems begin to appear' (1976:354), and others provide occasional indications that class action has gone beyond the formative phase (e.g. Townsend 1980:3; Valentine 1979:97), for some, recognition of class is almost a knee jerk reaction. Thus Barnett speaks of a 'small urban working class' and 'urban classes', the (single?) other class apparently being state employees, and also of a 'rural business class involved in trade, cash-crop production and transport' (1979:771), whilst the members of the House of Assembly 'form the basis of a rural entrepreneurial class' (1979:781). Donaldson and Good however have characterized class formation in terms of large (or rich) peasantries, small rural and urban working classes and most recently the production of a small educated petty bourgeoisie (1978:1). Yet, despite Good's assertions (Amarshi, Good and Mortimer 1979:118-119), there is no evidence of class action outside the towns and little within them.
Good and Fitzpatrick note that 'the formation of the working class in Papua New Guinea is at present at a preliminary and indeed critical stage' (Amarshi, Good and Mortimer 1979:123) because of the lack of a national labour market, the absence of a total dependence on wage labour, the fragmentation of workplaces and communication links and the particular form of foreign investment. Trade unions are of limited significance, and are most evident in the Public Service Association and the Bougainville Mining Workers Union, where workers are relatively privileged and affluent (see also Plowman 1979). If the proletariat is defined in Marxist terms, of both its freedom from traditional or feudal obligations and its 'freedom' from possession of the means of production, then it is clearly unimportant throughout Melanesia; there are few individuals who are either free from traditional obligations or without some 'ownership' of the means of production (especially land).

None of this is to say that peasantry, classes and proletariats are not emerging in Melanesia, or that they can be easily defined and demarcated elsewhere, but an analysis that gives them prominence, relative to ideology, ethnicity (and other elements of the superstructure) is incorrect for contemporary Melanesia. Good himself notes that 'precapitalist tendencies are so strong that class and even party politics are relatively embryonic' (Amarshi, Good and Mortimer 1979:114). It is these 'precapitalist tendencies' that remain the key to understanding changes in the rural areas; moreover tribalism cannot be relegated only to the sphere of ideology (or, even, 'false consciousness') since to do so would be to lose sight of its specific foundation in material activities. Regional differences (including separatist movements), ethnic and linguistic cleavages and the absence of any sense of nationhood among most Melanesians are one dimension of the lack of internal integration. A second dimension is that just as Papua New Guinea is poorly integrated internally, some parts of the country are closely integrated with the metropoli of advanced capitalism. Where classes or proletariats appear to be emerging they tend to be highly localized, and classes do not exist at the national level.

These provisos have not prevented classes from being recognized even in the most improbable situations and the alliances, or hypothesized alliances, between them examined to assess the elite stranglehold over the functions of the state. Thus Gerritsen (personal communication 1980) has suggested that the big peasants, the salariat (the 'bureaucratic bourgeoisie' or the 'administrative petty bourgeoisie' (Gordon 1979)) and the working class are three parts of a privileged elite and are closely linked. The assumption of linked interests between big peasants and the bureaucratic bourgeoisie is more common (e.g. Amarshi, Good and Mortimer 1979). Nevertheless the bourgeoisie is divided, has no political power and minimal unity; the establishment of provincial governments has tended to further divide this bourgeoisie, through decentralizing power, which has also blunted emerging rural-urban inequalities. Thus links between the classes, that are themselves at best in the process of formation, are tenuous and of limited efficacy in containing power; hence the extreme fragmentation and limited class solidarity of the French peasantry, that led Marx to characterize them as 'a sack of potatoes', is replicated more strongly in Papua New Guinea (especially where peasants are fighting each other); this is reflected in Howlett's comment that Papua New Guinea peasants may prove to be no more than a 'sack of sweet potatoes' (Howlett
1980:208). What Polly Hill (1968) has termed the 'myth of the amorphous peasantry' is not entirely mythical in Melanesia. Opposition to colonization itself was common and has been recorded in numerous places in Papua New Guinea and elsewhere in the Pacific (Connell forthcoming). Yet oppositions of various kinds have not resulted in the crystallization of classes or the consolidation of political movements in wider rural areas.

It is apparent that economic growth has occurred in Papua New Guinea, especially following the establishment of BCL, even to the extent that the notion was current in Port Moresby, at least in 1976, that in the not too distant future Papua New Guinea would be 'one of the richest countries in the world' (Australian 16 September 1976, cited by Sundhaussen 1977:309). This is a form of 'dependent development', under the domination of monopoly capitalists, but it is limited in its extent, especially in its ability to transform production relations. It is fostered by the alliance of the state and foreign capitalists (without the participation of local capitalists, who are conspicuously absent) which, despite the lack of mass participation, may, by its provision of revenue, be in the interests of most of the population. It is in this context that the questions raised by Amarshi, Good and Mortimer, and others, are almost identical to the questions raised by Leys (especially 1975) and others on development elsewhere. Can a commercial capitalism, dependent on state protection and foreign capital, transform itself, or be transformed despite itself, into a dynamic productive capitalism? Can Papua New Guinea continue to finance from primary exports (where production increases have been small), the imports on which society increasingly depends? If not, can the increasing power of the state, and especially of the bureaucratic bourgeoisie, be protected in the face of inflation, shortages and a decrease in opportunities, without increasing coercion? (cf. Williams 1978:220). More might be added and, as always, time and further analysis may enable these questions to be answered while simultaneously raising further questions. What is clear is that the historical circumstances of development in Papua New Guinea are quite distinct and, although the questions may be similar, the answers must be different.

CONCLUSION: UNITY OR DIVERSITY?

The emergence of radical perspectives on economic development in Papua New Guinea was, in a sense, crystallized in the publication of Amarshi, Good and Mortimer's Development and Dependency (1979). It is in the responses to this book, rather than in the book itself, however that the divergence of responses to development in Melanesia is best revealed. Thus Gregory, arguing from an essentially neo-Marxist position, finds the book essentially lightweight, without originality and necessitating further theoretical refinement throughout. He even suggests that 'the only original idea in this book is the invention of the term "ultra-periphery"' which does no more than put Papua New Guinea in a class of its own (Gregory 1980:101). Donaldson also notes 'that it provides a fresh beginning and a new direction. For Marxists in Melanesia it will provide a starting point, somewhere to begin' (1980b:30). The authors themselves similarly claim that it is 'an introduction to the political economy of Papua New Guinea' (Amarshi, Good and Mortimer 1979:xiili). By contrast, in so far as more liberal reviewers have reached firm conclusions about the significance of the book it is certainly not as a starting point. Hastings is relatively
enthusiastic: '... it is full of stimulating ideas and observations' and unique as a Marxist analysis (1980:18). Lunn sees it almost entirely in terms of its relationship to Somare's political style to the extent that, although he appears to accept the possibility that their conclusions may be accurate, hope for the future rests in the rise of a prime minister who is opposed to corruption and has Australian support (1980:14). Gunther too sees it in similar vein, to be tested against its explanation of the fall of Somare and the rise of Chan; however he is weary of terms like 'petty bourgeoisie' and 'proletariat', disputes any significant peasantry and claims that the authors are out of touch with the social scene in Papua New Guinea: 'They follow a Marxist line. Socialism as they know it cannot succeed in a country where people can say land was the only thing worth "living, working, fighting for"' (Gunther 1980:61). So for these liberal reviewers the book is idiosyncratic, although much of it 'cannot be contradicted' (ibid.), perhaps irrelevant but, above all, it does not contribute to policy formation and hence is harmless.

For Garnaut criticism is of an altogether different order. This is then 'an important bad book (but) ... it should be taken seriously because of the continuing influence of these ideas in Papua New Guinea and Australian universities' (1980:1). Garnaut sets out to examine the degree of success of Papua New Guinea in achieving its national aims (in opposition to the claim of Amarshi, Good and Mortimer that it has been unsuccessful), establishes part of the case, and consequently argues that even in a small country national policies need not be subservient to the wishes of foreign interests and that a country can win for itself considerable freedom to implement national policies (1980:14). His conclusion is at considerable variance to those of Amarshi, Good and Mortimer:

... the neo-Marxist model offers no alternative to close contact with the international economy for a small, poor developing country: a substantial part of the resources for broad-based development must necessarily come from abroad ... 'dependency theory' ... in Papua New Guinea ... has encouraged students to be cynical about Papua New Guinea politics .... The best Papua New Guinea leaders have been denied some of the political support that they might otherwise have received in their attempts to establish a national economy in difficult conditions (Garnaut 1980:18).

Thus Garnaut seeks a renewed emphasis on, and a practical commitment to, the current directions of Papua New Guinean development policy. Yet in his own discussion of the eight aims he recognizes some of their failures and limitations (1980:5-8) without suggesting possible alternative reformist strategies. Underlying this analysis, and to which Garnaut surprisingly makes only passing reference, is the extent to which Amarshi, Good and Mortimer are providing a critique that offers any opportunity for a redirection of policy that would better incorporate the current national aims or other viable objectives.

Garnaut argues that there is no inevitability that governments in poor countries be either weak or corrupt and that the extent of power which can be exerted by the Papua New Guinea government, where elite ideologies and
values are changing rapidly, must be an open question. The areas in which the government is powerful are primarily in the areas of 'foreign relations' that Garnaut emphasizes, notably control over transnational corporations (especially via renegotiation of the Bougainville Copper agreement in which Garnaut was an important figure) and even Pacific diplomacy; but internally, for example in balancing regional policies and rural development, consistent operation of power is less apparent. Hinchliffe goes so far as to argue, with reference to conflict between decentralization and the reduction of interprovincial inequalities, that 'the government appears to have regarded its position as being so weak that national unity could only be preserved at the price of maintaining provincial inequalities' (Hinchliffe 1980:838). Indeed there is something of a consensus about the fragility of the political system, resulting from the absence of mobilized popular support, and hence the increasing tendency to rely on expediency and patronage as means of conflict resolution (Hegarty 1979b). Yet however powerful the government was and is and however consistent were its development policies it is clear that there can be no consensus between Garnaut and Gregory; in attitudes to one book on one small country there is a world of difference.

What is significant, yet unsurprising, about Marxist analyses is their invariable conclusion that further analysis of yet another nexus of relations or further precision is necessary. Gregory's paper is typical of this genre in that he concludes: 'The task now is to understand the complex interrelationship between commodity and gift, class and state and church' (1979:405). Why is this necessary? Gregory does no more than leave the reader to assume that this must be to better understand the emergence of commodity production in Papua New Guinea. Marx's dictum of changing the world, as much as understanding it, is not in evidence. Moreover the differences between most forms of academic inquiry and practical politics can be even more revealing. Good notes the existence of an 'Uncle Tom Cobbley collection of resident but transient expatriates; it rarely if ever functioned for national ends [but had] an increasingly explicit pro-capitalist outlook' (1979:346). By contrast a Financial Review correspondent in Port Moresby at the same time recorded a rather different view: 'The country is run by long-haired expatriate pseudo-academic public servants who under the guise of humanitarianism are experimenting with their own particular brand of development to the detriment of the PNG populace, who just want a good measure of capitalism and materialism' (Ryan 1978:15). Similarly, and most recently, the minister for foreign affairs, Noel Levi, has strongly opposed what he called the 'selfish experiments' by expatriate 'experts' in the country who were 'testing their theories for developing countries' at Third World expense before moving on (MacKillop 1980:34). Whatever else is achieved by the neo-Marxist paradigm, exemplified in Papua New Guinea by Development and Dependency, it is not a contribution to the refinement of development practice. Attempts by small countries like those of Melanesia to devise a strategy of development separate and distinct from the evolutionary strategies of the west, whether these were based on liberal or 'Marxist' philosophies, have had little chance of success because of the limited development of the forces of production, the high dependence on metropolitan centres and their distinctive socio-economic and cultural heritage. Obviously 'catching-up' is impossible; hence the only result that can be achieved is an imitation of the superficial (and negative) in western culture and an economy that must increasingly be one of 'negotiated
dependency'; moreover the choice between rapid capital accumulation with associated inequalities and relative social justice was one that was not experienced in the west in the form and to the extent that it is now expressed in the Third World.

Any effective solution to problems of development in Melanesia cannot be sought in the existing structures of western countries, but must place a high priority on the political and economic autonomy of the majority of Melanesians and be related to an analysis of the specific forms of underdevelopment occurring within Melanesia.

Yet the few conclusions that suggest viable strategies other than more extensive capitalism or all-embracing socialism suffer from retreats into idealism (cf. Mouzelis 1978:153-154). Thus Pettman (1977:278) comments on the Solomon Islands:

Perhaps between skewed development at the hands of transnational forces beyong its capacity to contain, and a revolution with all that entails (unlikely), is a self-reliant control strategy that can avoid the worst problems and all the visible deficiencies that emerge from the development process today. There are precedents but they cannot be uncritically applied.

Whatever these elusive precedents may entail for a Solomon Islands' strategy at least his next and final sentence is realistic: 'And anyway there is probably no such thing as development without pain' (ibid.). As Berry notes: 'the problems faced by contemporary Papua New Guinea cannot be resolved in the context of traditional social relations of production' since an 'increasing proportion of economic activity is based on large scale enterprises using advanced technology' so that appeals to a supposedly traditional 'Melanesian way' produce merely confusion: 'half of the people who use the term believe traditional Melanesian society to be capitalist, while the other half believe it to be socialist. In fact it was neither' (1977:159). The failure of any political leaders to develop a coherent political ideology or even a significant commitment to nationalism (cf. Sundhaussen 1977) has produced 'a confused nationalism with many conflicting strands' (Barnett 1979:781), a situation in which any firm control on the direction of the economy or polity is impossible.

In terms of practical politics, debates will continue around the necessity for a greater self-reliance ('progressing with the past' or 'transformation through tradition'), stressing different elements of economic and cultural nationalism, balanced against and competing with a better form of dependency (through better commodity prices, more stringent control over TNCs and so on). But the probability of a socialist transformation or cultural revivalism (as in Iran) appear most unlikely to transfer the ideology of development into a different arena.' In this context dependency theory and its successors are likely to remain a form of academic titillation rather than a contribution to the debate over development. Perhaps what is even more obvious is that despite the increasing interest in Marxist analyses of peripheral capitalism the internecine disputes, even (or perhaps especially) over extremely detailed and restricted issues that are often esoteric and obscurantist to others, suggest that for the foreseeable future there can be no Marxist consensu
on theory let alone practice. The paradox is that the ever-increasing refinement of intellectual tools, which is partly demonstrated in the writings of the French Marxist anthropological school, is likely to produce analyses that are more likely to satisfy the searching demands of those who criticize the neo-dependency school for inaccuracy, as opposed to its sweeping generalizations, but at the same time is certain to withdraw even further, especially in Melanesia, from practical problems. The gap between 'high theory' and empirical studies of development will continue to increase so that although, in a general sense, Amarshi, Good and Mortimer have provided a new critique which will be disputed, disowned and disproved, in whole or in part, its generalizations can only result in factions in both theory and practice.

At a time when paradigms are in ferment, Marxist theory has many analysts (and hence interpretations, especially in less developed countries); those who have related theory to concrete situations of dependency, such as that of Melanesia, are far fewer. Here too the emergence of paradigms in development studies seems to have followed a situation in which intellectual breakthroughs have generated new, or resuscitated old, paradigms so that after a very short period of time these new paradigms are criticized for an inadequate command of or respect for the facts in the primary context to which they have been applied and/or for their inadequacy for reapplication elsewhere (hence the criticisms of the mechanistic, reductionistic nature of such paradigms). That generalizations are therefore impossible and that a particular form of practice cannot be generally acceptable are equally inescapable. Where development strategies and choices rest not only upon technical considerations but upon moral judgements and where any strategy leads towards an empirically uncertain future, conclusive comments on the applicability of particular paradigms in a Melanesian context are quite impossible.

NOTES

1 This is a revised and much shortened version of the paper presented to the Melanesian Seminar in December 1980. The original paper has been rewritten and published separately (Connell forthcoming). I am indebted to Richard Curtain, Ron May and others for comments on the early version. Almost all debate over dependency and related themes in Melanesia has been concentrated in Papua New Guinea, principally because of the large number of academics who have worked there in the past decade. Studies made in other parts of the Pacific are examined in Connell (forthcoming).

2 In similar vein Jonas has commented (1979:130) that the existing structure of the timber industry (where Japanese ownership and investment is considerable) was facilitated and encouraged by the colonial government and the World Bank (IBRD) so that since its introduction the industry has been 'operated and controlled by a foreign bourgeoisie' before and after independence.
For example, amongst the Abelam Gorlin (1977) found that ownership of wealth was correlated with body size. The poor are poorly fed and therefore more likely to get tinea; the disease rate is highest amongst women in peak child-bearing years when nutritional stresses are highest. Largest clans have low rates of tinea as do families of large pig owners. Males with tinea find it harder to get wives, partly due to discrimination against such men for plantation work by Europeans. Plantation workers have wealth and can get wives more easily and their wives are unlikely to have tinea, so that it is not reproduced in their children. There are, therefore, massive links between infectious disease and social differentiation or class formation that have been accentuated by contact. The same kinds of conclusions have also been observed by Lindenbaum (1979:136).

A number of scholars has noted that in many parts of the Pacific (cf. Hamnett 1979; Connell 1980) communities have achieved a degree of independence from which they do not wish to retreat, nor indeed is this always possible without a loss of security. For these places at least an independent future, however negotiated, has minimal meaning or value. The consciousness dimension is reflected in the plea of Bernard Narokobi, former director of the Office of Village Development in Papua New Guinea, 'to decolonise our minds' (Narokobi 1977:6). Narokobi's own subsequent disillusion with the probability of achieving this reflects the problems involved.

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