SOIL DRAINAGE
Although the dense river populations still carry on some cultivation on adjacent slopes, they center their activities on the rich soils of the alluvial plains. Natural drainage is improved by partitioning the land into small sections by networks of ditches connected with the rivers and creeks. Clean-cut, generally six feet or more deep and four to six feet wide, the ditches are dug with slightly sloping sides, and the sides are plastered with mud to prevent caving. The ditches sometimes serve as sunken roads. Mud walls largely replace wooden fences when obstructions other than the ditches are necessary to exclude pigs from the crops. Diversion channels carry the waters of intermittent streams past the gardens; and barriers of timber and mud are erected in these and other ditches to prevent backflow to the drained lands when the rivers come down in flood. Swampy areas are drained by well planned, complicated systems of larger ditches, sometimes wide enough to be called canals. It was the broad, water-filled ditches of these reclamation works that attracted particular attention, and speculation as to their function, during the reconnaissance flights over the valley.

USE OF FERTILIZERS
The use of green manures has been mentioned. Resources in animal fertilizers are also exploited to some extent. In general pig-keeping practice, the animals are allowed to roam at large during the day and pick up what food they can find in abandoned gardens and in the grass and brush on fallow fields. In densely populated areas, where there is little unused land close to the villages, the pigs are sometimes kept in paddocks supplied with water and shelter sheds and are fed by hand. For safety at night they are herded into pens within the villages. In due course the enriched soil of the pig paddocks is returned to cultivation and the village night pens are planted with sugar cane, sweet potatoes, and especially, bananas.

Perhaps the most extraordinary feature of this highly developed agriculture is the method by which continuity of yield is obtained on the valley bottom lands. That drainage is not the prime purpose of many of the ditches, cut at immense cost of labour, is apparent from their close spacing and their situation: in many places where waterlogging of the crop-root zone could not occur, except occasionally from rain. They are made, instead, to get at the rich black swamp deposits and virgin alluvial materials of subsurface levels, which, when spread over the impoverished topsoil, bring a new lease of life to the land. In some cases, perhaps, the materials thus mined are dug into the ground. But the procedure, as observed, is first to cover the ground with a mattress of cut grass, then to heap the excavated materials on this in a bed 12 to 15 inches thick . . .


NETWORKS OF EXCHANGE AND TRADE: DOCUMENTS A10 TO A15

As our knowledge of extensive and complex exchange networks like the hiri of the Motu people, the kula centred on the Trobriand Islands and the moka or te cycle of the Western Highlands has unfolded, a new sense of the drama, adventure and spectacle associated with this important aspect of the peoples' lives has emerged. Each of these networks extends over lengthy land or sea routes. Together they involve the production and the movement of pots and sago, necklaces and armlets, pigs and pearlshell through complex and ancient trade links. People speaking different languages and having different histories are bound together by the partnership and relationships developed, and each system has its own mythology, history and ritual of great antiquity and artistry. But the hiri (A 10), the kula (A 11), and the moka (A 12) are the most publicized and well-documented of these exchange activities. Woven into other regions which together cover the whole length and breadth of mainland New Guinea and the surrounding island clusters, are myriad trading networks which mirror in themselves some of the spectacle and drama of these great cycles. Such activities have given the lie to what was a quite commonly held view that the lives of stone age people lacked any dynamism or colour. This view based on inadequate evidence and fostered by unimaginative and prejudiced people is now perhaps dead. A glaring instance of this was the judgment passed by the Lutheran missionary, Rev. Georg Bamler. Though he was an ethnographic observer, an accomplished linguist and one of the pioneer missionaries in the Siaisi region of New Guinea, in 1928 he misread the significance of the dances associated with Siaisi economics and ritual life:

'Natives who waste their time, their property and their food in unrestrained dancing will not be able to do enough work even to find tax money for the Government; and while they remain slaves to wild unrestrained dancing it will be impossible to elevate them in morals, economic conditions, or culture to a higher level.'

Understanding of the vigour, extent and variety of exchange and trading activities also gives some balance and proportion to the image of New Guinea as a land of myriad small-scale societies consisting of racially diverse groups, speaking a multiplicity of incomprehensible tongues and living in age-old isolation, cut off from neighbouring communities by deep-seated antagonism and an almost impassable terrain. This impression of multiplicity and diversity of cultures, people and languages has, as we shall see, some basis in scientific evidence. However, it needs to be balanced and tested against the ancient and enduring reality of exchange and trading webs binding some groups together by ever-changing mutual obligations and providing real situations for the possibility of mutual understanding, and perhaps sometimes even providing an historical base for regional co-operation in joint enterprise. Indeed, it seems that in the case of systems in the Vitiaz Strait region the diversity of cultures noted so constantly by Europeans actually formed the basis of this complex network:

'Local cultural and ecological diversity and intertribal trade based on local differences are not confined to Melanesia, but the degree to which local diversity is turned to account and intensified by means of large-scale trading systems seems to be a distinctively Melanesian development."

There is some similarity between this inquiry and the previous one on land tenure. The contacts which Europeans first made were quite often because of their needs for supplies. They also believed in making peace between themselves and the local villagers through bartering trade goods for the commodities which they required. The trading between the European mariners and the New Guineans was often keen, sometimes friendly, sometimes tense, fraught with the possibility of misunderstanding on both sides and ending in violence and bloodshed. Nearly always, however, goods flowed between the two groups. Captain John Moresby's account of trading between himself and the inhabitants of a Moresby Island village in April 1873 is typical of the more civilised encounters:

'...we turned our faces towards the "Basilisk"; landing on the way, that these eastern natives might know something of us, at a large village at the head of a fine deep bay. We were few in number, and its inhabitants might easily have attacked us had they been so disposed; but they received us with the greatest cordiality ... and our men strolled about feeling quite at home, taking care of course not to separate from each other, and to be pleasant with the natives. Mr Mourilyan and I were taken by the villagers to a fine mountain stream, with deep pools, that contained fine fresh water fish some of which were a pound in weight. They also let us have a large supply of yams, cocoa-nuts, and a pig for our trade. A strong favourable breeze brought us back to the ship at Carrie Island in the evening, where I found that all was well, and that so extensive a trade had been opened up with the natives that several tons of yams had been bought for hoop-iron—a grand supply of farinaceous food. During our absence the ship had been visited by some trading canoes of large size which came from the east—we suppose from some of the Louisiade group. The natives appeared to fear these newcomers, and hid away till they were gone, making signs to us on their return, that they were bad men.'

Once Europeans started more permanent contact with New Guineans, in some instances they repeated what they had done with land—they used their developing knowledge of trading networks to their own advantage. One of the major reasons given by Rev. W. G. Lawes in the debate as to whether Port Moresby would become the headquarters for L. M. S. activities on mainland New Guinea was that it was the centre of a number of trading networks linking its inhabitants with people in the Gulf region to the west and with many different communities along the south-east coast.

Some evidence of the wide range of goods and trading associations involved in relations between the Motu and Koita is provided by a recent linguistic study. Lawes apparently hoped that the gospel would travel along trade routes as had occurred previously in the history of Christianity. His expectation was based on some first-hand observation of the operation of these local networks. For instance he described in his Journal on 15 January 1876 the visit to Hanuabada of a Keapara trading expedition or vili from the east coast. They exchanged armshells, which they had obtained from Aroma, for sago, brought by the Motu from the Papuan Gulf in their hiri. Another pioneer missionary, Rev. Johann Flierl, leader of the Neuendettelsau Lutheran Mission in the Finschhafen region, argued a similar case for the establishment of a strategically placed mission station on Tami Island to the south-west of Finschhafen. Of the Tami Islanders he wrote in his memoirs:

'They were, as it were, the Phoenicians of all the coast as far as the Huon Gulf to the west and as far as the Siassi Islands and the large island of Rook to the north.

Being born traders, friendly, polite and adaptable they frequently came to Finschhafen to sell their carved work to white people, and also came to see us missionaries at Simbang. They invited us to their islands and when they noticed

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3 See below Part IV, 'New Guinea in a Wider World'
4 T. G. Harding, op. cit., p. 238
5 J. Moresby, New Guinea and Polyansia, pp. 196-7
7 T. E. Dutton, 'Linguistic Clues to Koiarian Pre-History', Second Waigani Seminar, The History of Melanesia, p. 373
that we liked it, there, they asked us to build a house like the one in Simbang and come to stay.

We knew well enough that their friendliness was business policy. That was natural and not really objectionable. We pursued a missionary policy in the enterprise; we believed that if these people could be won for the Gospel, they would as traders in a large region, carry it to many other tribes. ... 8

In his acute observation this missionary not only makes explicit his intention of spreading the Gospel along this trade route, he also shows the way in which Europeans were being incorporated as a new source of prestige into this vigorous trading community. Evidence from the Highlands shows the ways in which European goods were drawn into existing exchange arrangements. For instance in May 1934 Michael Leahy met a Mount Hagen native with a metal spoon hanging on his chest in place of the usual marine shell ornament9 and the Archbold expedition in 1938 discovered five or six steel axeheads among the Baimal valley people.10 This theme of the ways in which Europeans, their goods and wealth have been woven into existing trade networks has yet to be explored from the point of view of the local network and its local participants. One anthropologist, K.O.L. Burridge, writing of the Tangu people and Manam Island people in 1952, gives some trenchant insights into the clash of values involved in the attempted adaptation of indigenous exchange systems to alien economics.

'White men ... so it would seem to Tangu, make their own laws which Tangu have to obey, give their own orders, pay what wages they choose, and imprison when they feel like it. Not only do white men appear to be all-powerful and immune, they are scarcely impressed by what Tangu have to offer. They cannot be pleased, importuned, or even corrupted directly. Both in Tangu and in Manam accepting the gift is to accept the man; and repayment of the gift is of paramount importance.

Tangu and Manam islanders accept European goods and ideas but they are unable to accept men who have brought them because these same men will not allow themselves to be accepted except exclusively on their own terms. When Kanakas try to repay the gifts of goods and ideas they are either patronised or laughed at. In general white men are neither accessible to, nor appreciative of, native ideas ... 11

The European evidence of these enterprises has revealed many significant aspects which would all need to be incorporated into a thorough historical analysis of this important and multifarious segment of the material framework of the peoples' lives. Before considering some of these it seems necessary to employ the skills of the economic anthropologists and distinguish two broad categories in these activities: ceremonial or gift exchange and trade or barter. Herskovits, for instance, distinguishes between the values involved in ceremonial or gift exchanges and those attached to goods flowing in trade or barter.

'In brief, the values involved in non-economic forms of exchange are prestige values, while trade is concerned primarily with the transfer of goods whose principal value derives from their utility in meeting the demands of everyday existence.' 12

He agrees with both Malinowski and Mauss that gift-giving can shade imperceptibly into trade within the same society. Malinowski stressed this in his study of 'tribal economics' in the Trobriand Islands. 13 Marcel Mauss in his creative study of the 'gift' stressed the point that 'confusion of personalities and things is precisely the mark of exchange contracts.' 14

Laura Thompson Tueting writing in 1935 about 'native trade in southeast New Guinea' distinguished eleven trade provinces in Melanesia, seven of which incorporated areas of New Guinea. In her analysis of one of these provinces ('southeast New Guinea, including the territory of the Papu-Melanesians and the Papuans with whom they trade'), she discovered a whole range of activities associated with the passage of goods and made distinctions between these activities mainly on the basis of the goods involved and their purpose in the lives of the groups conducting the activity.15 Thus, despite the variety of activities, values, situations and goods involved, and despite the shades of meaning covered, it seems possible on various grounds, to distinguish between exchange and trade. This distinction becomes valid because of its usefulness and its reflection of the reality of the situation. In the final analysis, the economic historian would need to test the validity and usefulness of the broad distinction sketched here against the evidence available for the particular network he was studying.

In the pre-European era there are five aspects about exchange and trade which emerge quite dramatically from a survey of the body of published evidence available. They are: the distances covered and territories embraced by these networks; the types of inter-group relationships embraced by these networks; the significance of markets; the place of


12 M. J. Herskovits, Economic Anthropology: A Study in Comparative Economics, New York, 1932, p. 181. A more recent analysis is to be found in C. S. Belshaw, Traditional Exchange and Modern Markets, New Jersey, 1965

13 B. Malinowski, Argonauts of the Western Pacific, pp. 176 ff


15 L. T. Tueting, Native Trade in Southeast New Guinea, Honolulu, 1935, pp. 35-8
indigenous currency and concepts of wealth; and feasts as occasions for exchange, trade and cementing alliances.

The first and most dramatic aspect is without doubt the great distances covered by the participants and their goods. Nautical calculations would reveal many miles of seafaring involved in such enterprises as the hiri and kula as well as in the trading and exchange voyages of the communities taking part in the Vitiaz Strait region of the islands and coastline of northeast New Guinea. Hence Europeans have used labels like ‘Argonauts’ and ‘Phoenicians’ to epitomise the achievements of some of these navigators. A glimpse of the hazards associated with one segment of the north coast network comes from Baron Maclay’s description of a trip in a local canoe from Bilibili Island to Sio in 1877.16 Nissan Island could also have been a centre for inter-island trade between the Bismarck Archipelago and the Solomon Islands.17 To cover these distances by sea much experience and daring, as well as technological skill in canoe making, was required. Malinowski has left a description of this canoe-making technology in the Trobriand Islands.18

W.G. Lawes also gives a glimpse of canoe manufacture in Kerepunu which was a centre for the construction and distribution of these vessels along the south coast.

‘There is a village of Hula (Hood Point) natives here, they are the fishers, they make no plantations but catch fish which they barter with the Kerepunu for vegetables and fruit. We came out on to the beach and there we found a regular canoe making yard. One canoe nearly finished must have been an enormous tree, it measured 48 feet long by 10 round and for the making of it only stone hatchets had been used. My respect for the stone period was considerably increased when I saw the stone hatchets at work. They are infinitely better tools than the common iron hatchets generally used for barter...’.19

The great rivers were also involved in this enterprise. S.W. Reed points out that:

‘The Sepik River is one of the main trade routes into the interior for the transmission of marine shell. Trade is from village to village so that each shell passes through many hands before reaching the deep interior...’.20

As Reed’s observation shows, lengthy trade routes covered not only sea and waterways but also land and the mountains of the interior. Government officers in Papua, for instance, found iron axes and pieces of brass in the 1920’s among the people of the Samberigi Valley.21

Reference has already been made to the moka cycle covering great distances in the Highland region. The presence of highly valued marine shells in this cycle and in most Highland communities also attests to the existence of lengthy trading links between mountains and coast, and archaeological evidence also suggests that these links are of great antiquity (see A 12 and Map).

Riesenberg’s collation of evidence about the spread of tobacco and the habit of smoking, while it cannot be accepted with any finality, points to the possibility that this commodity and trait may have passed through New Guinea from west to east along extensive and inter-related trading paths.22

The second theme is a counterpart of the first. It concerns the patterns of relationships that have been built up within and between groups through trading and exchange links. Harding has recorded a fine example from a Sio informant of the ways in which trade friendships were initiated there.

‘One day when I was still a little boy, a group of Timbes, carrying hulums of food, came to Sio. I don’t think they had ever come here before. They sat down on the beach opposite the island. I saw one woman with an enormous bag of sweet potatoes. I went up to her and took her by the arm. When we got across to the village, a Sio woman tried to take her away from me. I said I wanted to take the bush woman to my mother’s house. She was a good woman and let us go. We ate the potatoes and my mother gave her pot. She became one of our friends. One day I saw this bushman walking along the road. I could tell from the way he acted that he didn’t have any friends here. I took him by the hand and led him to my house. We have been good friends ever since...’.23

Throughout coastal and island New Guinea there are many such instances of a pattern of interdependence between beach and bush groups based on the products they traded with each other. An important instance of this was the network centred on canoes among the Kiwai people and neighbouring groups (A 13).

Sometimes within these networks of interdependence one group exploited the other, as the Kerepunu canoe-makers did the immigrant Hula fishermen;24 or could lord it over the other as did the haughty

18 T. G. Harding, op. cit., p. 197 note 10
20 R. Malinowski, Argonauts of the Western Pacific, pp. 103-45
21 W. G. Lawes, Journal, Kerepunu 5 April 1876, pp. 37-8, Mitchell Library MS A 387
22 S. W. Reed, The Making of Modern New Guinea, p. 47 note 105
25 T. G. Harding, op. cit., p. 202
Wogeo islanders over their mainland partners.28 A study of these patterns could also throw some light upon the nature of war and peace-making in those areas of New Guinea where exchanges have about them a ritual of fierce antagonism and rivalry between groups. Richard Parkinson has left a vivid record of such an occasion.

'... the beach dwellers are nearly everywhere still on a war footing with the mountain tribes. If these mountain people come down to the beach, it is always in sufficient numbers to guard against attack. This principle is carried so far that when they enter into negotiations for barter, the exchange of goods is always accompanied by a display of force on both sides. In the year 1902, I witnessed such an event in Bougainville. The natives met six kilometres south of Keaop (Cape l'Averdie) to trade their produce; the mountain people usually bring taro and exchange it for fish. The Keaop natives, mostly women, with their loads of fresh and baked fish, came partly in canoes, and partly on foot along the beach. Armed men formed a kind of advance guard. Shortly after, the hill natives appeared; the armed men first, followed by the women with their burdens. The groups camped about five hundred metres apart, and started to chant a loud song. During this a detachment of men came forward from each camp; an old man strode out from each detachment holding a bamboo full of water; following them came a dozen or so armed warriors. As they approached, the old men stepped up to each other and exchanged a few words, and flung the water in the containers in all directions. The escorts then came up and exchanged and chewed betel. The women then commenced to sing again, this time only for a short while. That finished, the women came forward with their loads of taro and retired again. The Keaop women then performed their part and laid their fish beside the heaps of taro, and then stood aside while two old men saw to the exchange, probably to see that nobody was cheated. The business over, the Keaop women fetched the taro, and the mountain women the fish. A short song then followed, and the women departed with the produce they had bought. The men conversed for a while, and then followed the women.26

Throughout human history it would seem that in many societies the market place has been a nodal point not only of gossip and rumour but for the transmission and exchange of ideas and aspects of culture beyond the produce involved. The role of the market place in New Guinea history has yet to be investigated, though the changing social and economic patterns in Rabaul market have already been studied by one economist.27 W. G. Lawes has recorded something of the vigorous bustle of the Hood Bay fish market in 1880:

'Bartering is the women's department, and well they know how to drive a bargain. I went to a regular fish market at Hood Bay where I was the only man present. The noise of the women, haggling and disputing, was varied occasionally with language more forcible than elegant, but of the character which has made Billingsgate proverbial. Most of the fish bartered in this coast village could be again exchanged with the inland people for vegetables and fruit...'

LAWES' counterpart in New Britain, Rev. Benjamin Danks, noted in 1888 how the markets he had seen in operation in the Gazelle Peninsula were used not only for the exchange of goods and shell money but that they were a channel by which 'articles of European manufacture were being disseminated from the coast into the hinterland.29 An observation like this suggests the need for an inquiry into the role of markets as points through which Western culture may have spread into New Guinea. A. C. Hadden's remark that 'probably in no part of British New Guinea are markets so numerous as in the Mekeo district',30 and S. Kooijman's study of the tobacco market in the Star Mountains31 indicate that a study of these economic institutions might reveal a further perspective on inter-group relations.

The fourth and fifth aspects, though separated for the purposes of analysis and understanding, are often intimately intertwined in the value system and economic life of New Guineans. Like all other aspects considered so far they would need to be taken into account for an adequate economic history of New Guinea. The acquisition of wealth as signified in the possession of such valuables as shell money and its display on occasions when reciprocal exchanges take place were both activities of high importance in traditional society. There is a growing body of evidence to support this view. K. E. Read's finding that the 'Gahuku are materialists, concerned to the point of exhaustion with the acquisition of wealth and its distribution in a never-ending series of competitive exchanges32 suggests a system of values for these Highland people similar to that of the Lesu people of New Ireland who hurl abuse at lazy men with no wealth to their name in the following terms:

'Umār atsaga ānup numka tsera: you are not good; you have no currency. Umār atsaga ānup numka bul: you are no good, you have no pig.'33

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29 R. Parkinson, Dreising Jahre in der Südpol, trans. N. C. Barry, pp. 422-3
31 H. I. Hogbin, 'Land Tenure in Wogeo', H. I. Hogbin and P. Lawrence, op. cit., p. 34
A study of the value system embodied in the operation of such indigenous currencies as tambu among the Tolai, amfat among the Tanga islanders, ndap, and nkō on Rossel island and mére among the Kapauku and of the motivation for feasting in their traditional setting would give the economic and social historian a sound base on which to assess the impact of the technological revolution brought by the Europeans. To hear New Guineans speak their minds on this would give the historian the clues by which he could then harvest and interpret men's ideas about the meaning of this economic change. Two such fragments of raw material, one on abula shell money and pigs in Buin (A 14) and the other on an Arel feast in Tanga (A 15) show some of the possibilities for understanding past and present.

The problems of applying Western economic standards to the interpretation of such evidence are incisively expressed by Leopold Pospisil. To his view exchange feasts seemed wastefully extravagant. In stating his perplexity to one of his Kapauku informants he drew out the following pertinent comments:

'The complex of events which we call here "jauw, a big feast", starts as an idea in the mind of an important and wealthy man. "I have a couple of sows with litters of pigs now. I think I should have a pig feast when they are grown," said Ijaaj Ekajewajokaipouga of Agii to the writer one evening.

"Why do you have to have a pig feast? Pig feasts cause a lot of trouble, expense and worry. Why don't you just sell the pigs or the meat and collect the money?" the writer asked.

"If I just sell I would get lots of money but people would not think too much of me. They wish to dance and sing. They wish to meet other people. My parallel cousins and the men of my village told me just the other day, 'It has been a long time since we have had a pig feast in Agii. You are a towonoi, you should do something about it so that the other people will see that we do better than they!' So I must have a feast."'

A10 Captain Barton's Description of the 1906 Hiri

This extract from the description by Captain F. R. Barton, one-time Administrator of British New Guinea, of the background preparation and one of the voyages associated with the 1906 hiri is one of the clearest first-hand reports of this important aspect of Motu economic enterprise. Barton was well qualified in terms of experience to understand Motu life, since he had served in Port Moresby as Secretary to the Administrator from March 1899 to Feb. 1902, as Resident Magistrate for the Central Division from February 1902 until he became Administrator in June 1904. He held this position until relieved of office in April 1907. As a result of his interest in Motu life he co-operated with Seligman in his study The Melanesians of British New Guinea, as well as publishing some of his own studies. It is difficult to determine the antiquity of the hiri. However, Barton suggests 'the fact that the Motu and the various Gulf tribes visited by them make use of a common trading dialect which is in some measure distinct from the very widely divergent languages of either, justifies the conclusion that the custom has existed for a very considerable period.' The existence of a legend in which Edai Siabo of Boera village is supposed to have been taught under the sea by an eel (daguala) both how to make a lakaot and the major customs and rituals surrounding the hiri, seems to suggest an institution of some antiquity. Some present day Motuans hold a tradition that Edai Siabo came from the west and was a Malay (see N. D. Oram, 'Taurama—Oral Sources for a Study of Recent Motuan Prehistory', Journal of the Papua and New Guinea Society, 1969, Vol. 2 (2), p. 82). Early first-hand descriptions of some aspects of the hiri include the following: J. Chalmers, Pioneering in New Guinea, 1887, pp. 1-69 (describes the 1883 voyage); A. E. Pratt, Two Years Among New Guinea Cannibals, 1906, pp. 72-3; H. H. Romilly, Letters From the Western Pacific and Mashonaland, 1878-1891, 1893, pp. 257-8 mentions briefly the 1885 hiri; and O. C. Stone, A Few Months in New Guinea, 1880, pp. 101-2. More recently M. C. Groves, 'Motu Pottery', Journal Polynes. Soc., 1960, Vol. 69, pp. 3-22, uses evidence from voyages between 1954 and 1959 and his investigations in Manu Manu and Boera to show the continuity of the trade into recent times. This study also contains the fullest account of the manufacture of pots which has been the Motuan basis for this enterprise.
CUSTOMS AND PROCEDURE BEFORE THE VOYAGE

During the early part of the S. E. season, that is in April or May, certain of the leading men in the different villages will each secretly make up his mind to organize the equipment of a lakatoi to go west in the following autumn. Such a man communicates his intention to his wife, and about the same time he ceases to cohabit. This man is known as the badiutana, the correct translation of which is probably 'the man who originates' or 'the causing man'. Soon after he has formed his resolution he speaks to another man of the village, who need not necessarily belong to his idulu, and if the latter agrees it is arranged that he shall go as doritauna (a satisfactorily translation of this term is not deducible; it may mean 'top man'). He, too, thenceforth ceases to cohabit. These two men may therefore be termed: 'the man at the root', and 'the man at the top'.

Upon a certain pre-arranged day the baditauna descends from his house and sits upon the ground in front of it. A small boy, his son or nephew, then hands to him a baubau (bamboo pipe), tobacco, and a leaf in which to roll the tobacco before placing it in the pipe. He is presently joined by the doritauna and the pair smoke together. After a while, two men who have arranged to go as 'mast-captains', and two as 'sail-captains', saunter up to the pair, and the one mast-captain and the one sail-captain who have elected to go under the baditauna sit beside him, and the other two men sit by the doritauna. The baubau is passed round and they all smoke and talk. Then the respective crews of the two chief men gather at the spot, and allot themselves in the same manner. Nominally it would seem that these men have not been previously selected, but apparently it is always by pre-arrangement that they come forward. The whole party is therefore divided into two separate commands, and it does not appear that the one takes actual priority of the other. From this time forth until the S. E. season has passed its climax, the 'mast-captains' and 'sail-captains' and the crews follow their usual avocations.

About the month of August the badiutana and doritauna call upon those who have agreed to go as crew to begin the demadema, i.e. the overhauling and caulking of the large dugouts known as asi, of which the lakatoi is composed. The baditauna and doritauna now become especially helaga. Husband and wife keep apart as much as possible. They sleep in the same house but on opposite sides of it. Should the husband be on the house platform, his wife cannot leave the house, as there is commonly but one mode of entrance and exit to the house. In speaking of his wife he calls her hanulato (maidens), and the wife speaking of her husband calls him baubau (youth). They have no direct conversation or dealings with each other. If he wishes to communicate with her he does so through a third person who is usually a relative of one of them. Both refrain from washing themselves, and he from combing his hair. The wife's position indeed becomes very much like that of a widow.

The demadema operation being completed, it is followed by that known as lailat. This consists of floating the caulked asi, and lashing them together, and constructing the platform or deck. The badiutana and doritauna now each choose their udha. The udha is generally the man's son or raimu, and should properly be a boy who has not reached puberty. In the event of a man being childless he can appoint a full-grown man to be his udha, the latter, however, is subject to the same restrictions as an ordinary udha. These withth become helaga, and are carried by four men to a canoe, and are paddled out to the lakatoi, great care being taken to prevent the feet of the udha coming in contact with salt water. Each carries a new mat and his master's raina (netted bag); the latter containing a diniga (bone fork), bedi (coconut shell spoon), tobacco, etc. The udha is dressed in a new sihi (perineal band). Having been put on board the lakatoi, he spreads the mat beneath a shelter constructed amidship, and hangs the raina above it. The mats of the badiutana and doritauna are spread end to end, and invariably on the darima (outtrigger) side of the lakatoi. Thenceforth the badiutana and doritauna and their two udha sleep aboard the lakatoi, the latter never leaving it, except for one day when the pots are being stove. The udha is visited at the usual times by their wives, or sisters-in-law, in a particular form of pot called tekei, and when ready it is taken out to the lakatoi by a boy and handed to the udha. Neither the woman who cooks the food nor the eaters thereof may touch it with their fingers; it must always be handled or conveyed to the mouth by a diniga. The udha eats first, and when he has satisfied himself he passes the kibo, the pot in which the food is served, to his baditauna or doritauna as the case may be, who then eats his portion. Should any food remain over, it may not be eaten by any person save the udha and the baditauna or doritauna.

Certain foods are taboo to these men and boys, and the udha may not drink water, but only coconut milk. The forbidden foodstuffs are uta (sago), buatut (corncob), ara (a plantain), hatakaru, malao, lebeta (three kinds of yam), and the following fish: paraparo, balala, mami, duedae, tabak, tagama, haruhuru (distinct from paraparo), noha, napo, managi, bebe.

When the asi have been lashed together to form the lakatoi a ceremony of charming takes place at night. A lakatoi sorcerer burs a root taken from a certain wild plant together with bits of cassowary claw and gorfish snout in an atago (potsherd). With the smoke which rises therefrom he fumigates the gunwale of that asi upon which the mats of the doritauna and badiutana are spread. This process is said to bring good luck and to give the lakatoi superior sailing powers. In addition—to doubly ensure this result—the sorcerer ties up parcels of the green leaves from the same wild plant, inside dry banana leaves, and fixes them inside the square holes in the gunwales of the asi, through which the lashings of the deck cross beams pass.

The next operation is the stepping of the masts. These are made from the trunks of a kind of tree growing near high-water mark in Port Moresby harbour: they are apparently a kind of mangrove, without aerial roots, and with small leaves. The tops of the masts have a natural crook which takes the place of a block, the halyards passing over and being guided by the crook. The tree of which the mast is made is taken out with the larger roots attached, and these are cut off to a convenient length and strongly lashed to the deck cross beams thus giving the required stability.

Meanwhile the 'crabclaw' shaped sails are made in the village by the 'sail captains'. They are made of plaited mats sewn together, and attached on either side to long tapering mangrove poles. While under construction the sails are carefully measured to ensure that the two horns of each are of an equal length.

A lakatoi is invariably moored or anchored from the end of the vessel belonging to the doritauna. The anchor is a large stone encased in a network of heavy lashings, and the cable is composed of lengths of rattan knotted together. Anchors are regarded as being in the highest degree helaga. Should it be found necessary to anchor during voyage, owing to unfavourable wind or other causes, the cable is watched continually by three men, one sitting on either side of it,
and one in the centre with his hands on the cable. These men should be varawara (relations by blood or iduke) or the doritauna. The anchor being helaga nobody is allowed to step across the cable when the anchor is down.

The lakatoi are named according to the iduke to which the baditauna and doritauna thereof belong—each iduke having its own assigned lakatoi name. There are but three lakatoi names, viz.: Bogebada, Oalabada and Kavaubada, except in the case of the village of Vabukori which does not make use of the above names and uses instead the following, Vaigabada, Moumbada and Buabada.

If the baditauna and doritauna belong to iduke having different lakatoi names, half the vessel is called by the one name, and the other half by the other name. A lakatoi recently went to the Namau district of which the baditauna was Guba Oala of the Tubumaga iduke, while the doritauna named Sere Maku belonged to the Kvaradubuna iduke; the former’s half of the vessel was called Oalabada, the latter’s half Bogebada. The lakatoi are decorated with the specific iduke toana (clan badges) called pepe belonging to the iduke of their captains. These pepe are of large size; ... Pepe are only used on the biri though after the expedition is over the baditauna and doritauna remove them from the lakatoi and hang them from their ridge poles in front of their houses.

An ornament ... consisting of a framework of cane on which are mounted the shells of the large white cowrie (Ovulum ovum) fits over the top of each mast.

... All being now ready competitive trial sailings are made by the several Port Moresby lakatoi, backwards and forwards across the harbour, the air resounding with the metallic clink of the sde being beaten aboard, and the voices of those singing. During these short runs to and fro, heaves of young girls collect on the projecting platform (called maramara) of that end of the vessel which for the time being is the bow-end, and dance there with great vigour, the springy nature of the platform adding largely to their lively movements. The after-end platform is occupied by the steersmen, of whom there are five or six, yielding heavy steering oars. The vessel does not go about in the usual manner but merely reverses ends, and then the steersmen and the girls change places. The baditauna and doritauna do not take part in this celebration, nor do the ‘sail captains’ who remain afloat in their houses. The lakatoi for the time being are manned by the young men belonging to the iduke which has constructed each lakatoi, but the ‘mast captains’ also take part in the festival.

Everything having been found satisfactory, the vessels are taken back to their moorings, and they are shortly afterwards loaded with their cargoes of pots. Those which are the property of the baditauna and doritauna are placed in the kalaga, a square cradle fixed to the deck amidship; the rest are packed carefully in dry banana leaves in the shelters called rumaruma at each end of the lakatoi, and inside the asi.

As the lakatoi is poled out of harbour, care is taken that the end which belongs to the baditauna becomes the bow, and this end remains the bow until the Gulf is reached. On the return journey the end belonging to the doritauna becomes the bow, and remains so for the whole voyage unless a head breeze springs up when the opposite extremity becomes the forward end of the lakatoi. Although lakatoi may anchor at night, if there is no chance of trouble with the people off whose coast they are, yet with a perfectly favourable breeze they usually sail all night.

It is difficult to ascertain by questioning, to what extent the baditauna and doritauna exercise the duties of commanders during the voyage. It is probable that they interfere scarcely at all with the ordinary navigation of the vessel, but that in positions of difficulty they take charge and give their orders, which are obeyed. The two udia are confined to their shelter beside the kalaga, and only leave it to obey nature’s behests. Their two masters move about the vessel as it pleases them. Only they and the udia have access to the shelter alongside the kalaga, with the exception of two cooks who have, one each, been chosen for the voyage by the baditauna and doritauna. Cooks, to be orthodox, must be unmarried youths, and the cooking operations are conducted with the same restrictions in handling food as applied to the women who cooked the food before departure.

Importance is attached to the necessity for the vaina hung above the udia being free from motion. If the vessel rocks and sets the vaina swinging, they are steadied by guy strings. During the voyage the same articles of food are taboo to the ‘captains’ as before starting, but no food taboos are imposed upon the crew.

The actual conduct of the biri will be best understood by the following short account of the voyage of the lakatoi Kevaubada going to Kaimare in 1906.

The first night from home the lakatoi anchored at Meabad, the crew collected firewood and erected pis, i.e. rails at either end of the craft, used as fulcra by the man or men using the big steering oars. The lakatoi left next morning at daylight and went outside Yule Island.

Passing Yule Island the older men put bananas and yams at the foot of either mast; this food is cooked and eaten on the same day by the crew, but the baditauna, doritauna and their udia do not partake thereof. This operation is known as truatauna hangmo, truatauna being the name of the space between the mast. The lakatoi was off Bailala by the evening and the next morning sighted Kaimare. The lakatoi entered the creek through its westerly opening without awaiting permission and was accompanied up the creek by a large escort of Kaimare canoes. The lakatoi anchored between the Kaimare villages....

... The Kaimare men came aboard the lakatoi and much embracing took place. The baditauna and doritauna presented toia and other valuable ornaments and also their respective lots of pots to two Kaimare notables and these were put into the canoes. The two notables went ashore and killed a pig or dog which was eaten on the lakatoi by everybody including baditauna, doritauna and their udia. The Kaimare men also ate some when given to them by the lakatoi crew, but the pig was definitely the property of the Motu. The lakatoi was then converted into a house, a spar was tied between the two masts as ridge pole, and a roof thatch of biri put on.

Negotiations then took place for obtaining asi (anybody on the lakatoi can obtain an asi by giving an armshell to a Kaimare man). The Kaimare men went into the bush and came back with measurements (circumference) of the trees for asi, these being satisfactory, the trees were felled by the Kaimare and floated to the lakatoi where the Motu shaped them into asi. Every night the Kaimare women and girls sang, but their men took no part in this; nor did they dance; the singing went on all night. The women and girls sitting in a group and beating drums and singing. When the asi were finished they were taken by the visitors a short distance from the shore and wood was cut and houses built for the Motu on piles in the river. The lakatoi was taken to pieces, and an enlarged lakatoi reconstructed. When completed the Kaimare men, women and children went into
the bush to make sago; all went so that their village was deserted by all but the old men and women. During this time the Motu ate sago which was brought and sold to them by the people of Koriki and Vaimuru, who received in return pots and beads which had been retained by the Motu for this purpose. After about one month the Kaimare folk returned with the sago, and during this time of waiting the Motu did nothing. When the sago was prepared it was brought back to the village and each Motu on hearing that his share of sago had arrived went ashore, placed it aboard a dug-out, and took it to the lakatoi. The Kaimare women cooked food in the village and the Motu people went ashore and ate it.

The lakatoi did not anchor on the way home (no lakatoi does). Off Jokea the baditauna and doritauna put some sago and areca nuts in the irutabuna and called everybody to come and eat. No sexual intercourse ever takes place between the Motu and women or girls of the Gulf villages they visit...

**LAKATOI CARGOES AND CREW**

The average size of the fleet for several years past has been twenty lakatoi. The villages which equip lakatoi are as follows:

Hanuabada, Elevara, Tanabada (Port Moresby), Borebada, Boera, Lealea, Manumanu, Tatana, Vabukori, Pari.

All of these villages make pots with the exception of Vabukori, whose people buy their supply from other villages, giving in exchange strings of agesa. A string of agesa buys about 12 pots (uro). Tatana until recently was also forced to obtain its pots from Port Moresby and although the women are gradually acquiring the craft, the bulk of the pots taken west by Tatana lakatoi are still bought with agesa made by these people.

The average number of men who go in a lakatoi is 29. In 1885 four lakatoi left Port Moresby each carrying an average number of 1628 pots. In 1903 the Kwaradubuna idubu (idibana and laurina) equipped a lakatoi, named Bogebada, consisting of 4 asi. The total number of pots carried in this lakatoi was 1294, giving an average therefore of 324 pots per asi. Assuring that 20 lakatoi sailed that year, and that each was composed of 4 asi, the total number of pots taken was 25,920. In addition to the pots the Kwaradubuna lakatoi took in that year 57 toia, 2 mairi, and 8 tautau, besides a certain quantity of trade tobacco and other imported articles. This vessel on her return voyage consisted of 10 asi, and her cargo of sago would therefore have been about 25 tons.

Dr Lawes informed me that in 1884 the largest lakatoi consisting of 14 asi returned with 34 tons, and two others with 30 tons each.

Before the white men came to British New Guinea, stone adze blades were taken to the Gulf as articles of trade. The Motu got them from the Koiari who are said to have got them from further inland, and these from somebody else, but nobody here knows where they came from originally. The value of a large stone adze was equal to the value of a large toia. The Motu people have an amusing tradition of the origin of stone adzes. They say that only certain men among the tribe from whence they came were able to procure the adze blades. The way they procured them was by wading in the streams with a hand-net like a bushman's fishing-net. The stone adzes, ready made, swam like fish, and they caught them in their nets. The Motu say that they have heard that it was easy to know an helage stone adze catcher, because his legs were always covered with scars inflicted by the stone adzes when these were trying to evade the net.


![A11 Some Aspects of the Kula Ring, 1914-18](https://example.com/a11.jpg)

The evidence which is incorporated into this extract from a report published in 1920 by Bronislaw Malinowski, was gathered during three field expeditions by him to the Trobriand Islands and other neighbouring areas of South-Eastern Papua. These expeditions took place from August 1914 to March 1915, from May 1915 to May 1916 and from October 1917 to October 1918. In all, this preliminary report is the product of six years' work in Papua and Australia from 1914 through to 1920. Of his field work conditions Malinowski wrote in 1921: 'I did my work entirely alone, living for the greater part of the time right in the villages. I therefore had constantly the daily life of the natives before my eyes, while accidental dramatic occurrences, deaths, quarrels, village brawls, public and ceremonial events, could not escape my notice.' He also dispensed with the use of interpreters since 'during that time I naturally acquired a thorough knowledge of the language.' This description is therefore a product of personal observation by Malinowski and the evidence of informants welded together by the anthropologist's personal reflection over six years. An adequate understanding of this complex and ancient trading and exchange network covering a wide area of islands and sea (Pl. 1) as it operated in this period can only be gained from a close study of Malinowski's work and that of others who followed him. This briefer preliminary report is used rather than an edited version of the Kula narrative contained in *Argonauts of the Western Pacific*, Chapters 4 to 21, so that some sense of the cycle as a whole can be gained. Malinowski's description of the Kula is in terms of its traditional operations before European economics had made any impact. By con-

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1 B. Malinowski, *Argonauts of the Western Pacific*, 1922, pp. xvi-xvii

2 B. Malinowski, *ibid.*
The Kula Ring

Plate 1: The Kula region in south-eastern Papua
Adapted by E. Ford from B. Malinowski, Argonauts of the Western Pacific, etc., London, 1922

It is interesting to note that Rev. W. E. Bromilow, who served in Dobu as a Methodist missionary for two periods, 1891-1908 and 1920-24, though he had been a member of the Kula ring in his first term, withdrew in the second because by that stage it had 'rapidly deteriorated into little more than a mere ordinary trading concern'. (See W. E. Bromilow, Twenty Years Among Primitive Papuans, 1929, p. 264.)


The distant and perilous trading expeditions of the South Sea islanders are a well-known feature of their tribal life. All these trading systems are based upon the exchange of indispensable or highly useful utilities, such as pottery, sago, canoes, dried fish and yams, the food being sometimes imported into islands or districts which are too small or too infertile to be self-supporting. The trading system, however, which will be described in this paper, differs in this and many other respects from the usual Oceanic forms of exchange. It is based primarily upon the circulation of two articles of high value, but of no real use,—these are armshells made of the Conus millicomatus, and necklets of red shell-discs, both intended for ornaments, but hardly ever used, even for this purpose. These two articles travel... on a circular route which covers many miles and extends over many islands. On this circuit, the necklaces travel in the direction of the clock hands and the armshells in the opposite direction. Both articles never stop for any length of time in the hands of any owner; they constantly move, constantly meeting and being exchanged.

This trading system, the Kula, embraces, with its ramifications, not only the islands off the East End of New Guinea, but also the Louisiades, Woodlark Island, the Loughlands, the Trobriand Archipelago and the d'Entrecasteaux Group. It touches the continent of New Guinea and extends its indirect influence over several outlying districts, such as Sud-Est Island, Rossel Island, and stretches of the northern and southern coast of the mainland.

A glance at the map will show the enormous geographical extent of the trading system, and the statement may here be anticipated that the Kula looms paramount in the tribal life of all the peoples, who participate in it. These peoples belong to that branch of the Papuo-Melanesians whom Dr
Seligman calls the Massim... Some of them, living on big islands, have a very highly-developed agriculture, and they harvest each year a crop amply sufficient for their needs and with a good deal to spare. Such are the natives of Woodlark Island, of the Trobriands, of the d'Entrecasteaux Group. Others, again, who live on very small islands, like the volcanic Amphlett Rocks, Wari (Teste Island), Tube-tube (Engineer Group), and some of the Marshall Bennett Islands, are not self-supporting as far as food goes. They are, on the other hand, specialised in certain industries, notably pottery and canoe-building, and they are monopolists in intermediary trade. Thus it is evident that exchange of goods had to obtain between them. The important point about it, however, is that with them and notably according to their own ideas, the exchange of utilities is a subsidiary trade, carried on as an incident in the Kula.

The Kula has been called above 'a form of trade.' The usual a priori notion of savage trade would be that of an exchange of indispensable, or, at least, useful things, done under pressure of need by direct barter, or casual give and take of presents, without much ceremony and regulation. Such a conception would almost reverse all the essential features of the Kula. Thus, first, the objects of exchange—the armshells and strings of shell-discs—are not 'utilities' in any sense of the word; as said above, they are hardly ever used as ornaments, for which purpose they could serve. Nevertheless, they are extremely highly valued; nowadays a native will give up to £20 for a good article, and in olden days their value was an equivalent of this sum, if we take as a common measure such utilities as basketfuls of yams, pigs and other such commodities. Secondly, the exchange, far from being casual or surreptitious, is carried on according to very definite and very complex rules. Thus it cannot be performed between members of these tribes taken at random. A firm and lifelong relationship is always established between any participant in the Kula, and a number of other men, some of whom belong to his own community, and others to oversea communities. Such men call one another karaya'u ('partner', as we shall designate them), and they are under mutual obligations to trade with each other, to offer protection, hospitality and assistance whenever needed.

Let us imagine that we look at the whole system from one definite point, choosing the large village of Sinaketa in the Trobriand Islands. An old chief in that village would have, say, some hundred partners southwards, and about as many again to the north and east, while a young commoner would have only a few on both sides. It must be remembered that not all men in a village take part in the Kula, and some villages are out of it altogether.

Now another definite rule is that the armshells must always be traded to the south, and the necklets of shell-b series to the north. The word 'traded' is, of course, only a rough approximation. Let us suppose that I, a Sinaketa man, am in possession of a pair of big armshells. An oversea expedition from Dobu in the d'Entrecasteaux Archipelago, arrives at my village. Blowing a conch shell, I take my armshell pair and I offer it to my overseas partner, with some such words, 'This is a voga (initial gift)—in due time, thou returnest to me a big soula (necklace) for it!' Next year, when I visit my partner's village, he either is in possession of an equivalent necklace, and this he gives to me as yotile (restoration gift), or he has not a necklace good enough to repay my last gift. In this case he will give me a smaller necklace—avowedly not equivalent to my gift—and will give it to me as basi (intermediary gift). This means that the main gift has to be repaid on a future occasion and the basi is given in token of good faith—but it, in turn, must be repaid by me in the meantime by a gift of small armshells. The final gift, which will be given to me to clinch the whole transaction, would be then called kudu (equivalent gift) in contrast to basi.

This does not exhaust the subtleties and distinctions of Kula gifts. If I, an inhabitant of Sinaketa, happen to be in possession of a pair of armshells more than usually good, the fame of it spreads. It must be noted that each one of the first-class armshells and necklaces has a personal name and a history of its own, and as they all circulate around the big ring of the Kula, they are all well known, and their appearance in a given district always creates a sensation. Now all my partners—whether from overseas or from within the district—compete for the honour of receiving this particular article of mine, and those who are specially keen try to obtain it by giving me pokala (offerings) and kaributu (solicited gifts). The former (pokala) consists, as a rule, of pigs, especially fine bananas and yams or taro; the latter (kaributu) are of greater value: the valuable 'ceremonial' axe blades (called bekun) or lime-spoons of whale's bone are given. There are further complications as to the repayment of these solicitory gifts, into which we cannot enter here, and the termini technici of the transactions are by no means exhausted by the words so far given.

But this is sufficient to make clear that the Kula involves a complicated system of gifts and countersigns, in which the social side (partnership), as well as the rules of give and take, are definitely established and regulated by custom. It must also be emphasized that all these natives, and more especially the Trobrianders, have both a word for, and a clear idea of, barter (gimwasi), and that they are fully aware of the differences between the transactions at the Kula and common barter. The Kula involves the elements of trust and of a sort of commercial honour, as the equivalence between gift and countersign cannot be strictly enforced. As in many other native transactions, the main corrective force is supplied by the deeply engrained idea that liberality is the most important and the most honourable virtue, whereas meanness brings shame and obloquy upon the miser. This, of course, does not completely exclude many squabbles, deep resentments and even feuds over real or imaginary grievances in the Kula exchange.

As said already, the armshells and shell-strings always travel in their own respective directions on the ring, and they are never, under any circumstances, traded back in the wrong direction. Also they never stop. It seems almost incredible at first, but it is the fact, nevertheless, that no one ever keeps any of the Kula valuables for any length of time. Indeed, in the whole of the Trobriands there are perhaps only one or two specially fine armshells and shell necklaces permanently owned as heirlooms, and these are set apart as a special class, and are once and for all out of the Kula. 'Ownership', therefore, in Kula is quite a special economic relation. A man who is in the Kula never keeps any article for longer than, say, a year or two. Even this exposes him to the reproach of being niggardly, and certain districts have the bad reputation of being 'slow' and 'hard' in the Kula. On the other hand, each man has an enormous number of articles passing through his hands during his lifetime, of which he enjoys a temporary possession, and which he keeps in trust for a time. This possession hardly ever makes him use the articles, and he remains under the obligation soon again to hand them on to one of his partners.
The Kula Ring

But the temporary ownership allows him to draw a great deal of renown, to exhibit his article, to tell how he obtained it and to plan whom he is to give it and. And all this forms one of the favourite subjects of tribal conversation and gossip, in which the feasts and the glory in Kula of chiefs or commoners are constantly discussed and rediscussed.

But the tradition of the Kula is not limited to the recounting of recent or historical exploits. There is a rich mythology of the Kula, in which stories are told about far-off times when mythical ancestors sailed on distant and daring expeditions. Owing to their magical knowledge—how they came to it no one knows distinctly—they were able to escape dangers, to conquer their enemies, to surmount obstacles, and by their feats they established many a precedent which is now closely followed by tribal custom. But their importance for their descendants lies mainly in the fact that they handed on their magic, and this made the Kula possible for the following generation.

The belief in the efficiency of magic dominates the Kula, as it does over so many other tribal activities of the natives. Magical rites must be performed over the sea-going canoe, when it is built, in order to make it swift, steady and safe; also magic is done over a canoe to make it lucky in the Kula. Another system of magical rites is done in order to avert the dangers of sailing. The third system of magic connected with overseas expeditions is the muaaia or the Kula magic proper. This system consists in numerous rites and spells, all of which act directly on the mind (anuulu) of one’s partner and make him soft, somewhat unsteady in mind, and eager to give Kula gifts.

In order to form a better idea of how the magic is woven into the many practical activities incidental to the Kula, it will be necessary to give a concrete outline of a trading expedition, and thus to supplement the set of rules and features enumerated above somewhat in abstracto. It will be best again to adopt a definite starting-point in our geographical orientation and to imagine ourselves again in Sinaketa, one of the main industrial and trading centres of the Trobriand.

Glancing at the map we see a number of circles, each of which represents a certain sociological unit which we shall call a Kula community. A Kula community consists of a village or a number of villages, who go out together on big overseas expeditions and who act as a body in the Kula transactions—perform their magic in common, have common leaders, and have the same outer and inner social sphere, within which they exchange their valuables. The Kula consists, therefore, first of the small, inner trade within a Kula community or contiguous communities, and secondly of the big overseas expeditions in which the annual exchange of articles takes place between two communities, divided by sea. In the first, there is a chronic, permanent trickling of articles from one village to another, and even within the village. In the second a whole lot of valuables, amounting to over a thousand articles at a time, are exchanged in one enormous transaction, or, more correctly in very so many transactions taking place immediately.

I will describe the normal and typical course of such a big overseas expedition as it takes place between the Kula community of Sinaketa with its surrounding villages and the Amphlett Group and Dobu districts to the south. Such an expedition would take place about once a year, but only every second or third year would it be carried out on a really big scale. On such occasions big preparations take place. First of all the large seagoing canoes must be made ready. As a rule a few new ones have to be built to replace those worn out and unseaworthy, and then those in good order have to be overhauled and redecorated. The building of a canoe ... is a big tribal affair. A series of magical rites have to be performed by a specialist or specialists, who are versed in the art of constructing and carving—the magic being considered indispensable to both arts. The magical rites aim successively at the expulsion of a wood spirit (tokaay) from the tree to be felled; at the imparting of stability, swiftness and good luck to the canoe; and at the countering of evil influence cast on the canoe by direct sorcery or by the unwitting breaking of taboos. The rites—some performed in a simple manner by a magician alone, some ceremonially with the attendance of the whole community—are carried out in a series, associated with the various activities, inaugurating some, accompanying others. The magic is always interwoven with the technical operations and is to the native mind absolutely indispensable to the successful accomplishment of the task. Another important feature of canoe-building is the communal labour, which is always used at certain stages and for certain tasks, as for sail-making, the piecing together and lashing, caulking and painting of the canoe. The owner of the canoe has to pay for the work by gifts of saviga (valuables) and distribution of food, and the expert magician-constructor directs the work.

The building and overhauling of canoes lasts for about six months, for it is done slowly in the intervals of other work. As the expeditions take place usually in February—April, the canoe work begins some time in August or September. When all the canoes are ready, there is a big gathering from the whole district, and the canoes are launched ceremonially, and races and general festivities take place. Some days later all the canoes start on a preliminary trip to the neighbouring districts, that is, in the case of Sinaketa, to the northern half of the island, to Kirinina proper. There is a custom, called kabigidoya, of ceremonially presenting a canoe, and the owner receives gifts, which form part of the subsidiary trade, to be used on the big expedition. More subsidiary trade is obtained by barter (gmaauli), especially from the manufacturing districts on the north shore of the lagoon. Wooden combs, fibre armlets, baskets, mussel shells and other articles, abundant here and rare in the Amphletts and in Dobu, are thus acquired in great quantities. On this preliminary trip the Sinaketans also obtain a number of armshells from Kirinina by inland Kula, and with their wealth thus replenished return to Sinaketa.

A period of taboos and initial magic now obtains as the immediate preliminary to main departure. The owner of each canoe is subject to the most stringent restrictions—mainly referring to sexual relations—and he also performs all the magic. On an evening he goes into a garden and uttering a spell he plucks a spray of aromatic mint, which he brings home. Then he prepares some coconut oil, anoints the mint with it, and, putting some oil and the mint into a vessel, he medicates it all with another spell. The vessel—in olden days a contrivance of roasted and thus toughened banana leaves, now a small glass bottle—is then attached to the prow of the canoe. This magic aims at the softening of Dobuan’s mind, so that he may be unable to resist any appeal made to his generosity. This aim is explicitly stated by all natives, and an analysis of the magical spells reveals it also as their leading idea. But the magic is full of mythological allusions, of side ideas and of references to animals and birds, and it contains interesting metaphorical circumlocutions of the aims to be attained.
Other spells, all expressing more or less the same ideas, are used in the magical rites performed over a special bundle of valuables and goods, called tilava, which is placed in the centre of the canoe and must not be opened before the arrival in Dobu; also in the rite over the coconut leaves lining the canoe. Again, in the rite over the provisions of food taken on the journey, the main aim is to make it last long.

After the rites are finished and the expedition is ready, many people from the neighbouring villages assemble, the delighting chiefs ensuring that their wives and warn all the neighbouring male villagers to keep off Sinaketa, and prognosticate a speedy arrival with much vagyu'a (valuables). They are assured that they can depart in safety as no one will visit their village surreptitiously. Indeed, during their absence, the village should be kept tabooed, and if a man is found loitering about the place, especially at night, he is likely to be punished (by sorcery, as a rule) on the chief's return.

The fleet now sails south; but the first stage of the journey is short, as the natives halt on a sandbank some ten miles off Sinaketa, where they have a ceremonial distribution of food, which imposes an obligation on the wagelu (members of the crews) towards the toliwaga (owners of canoes) to carry out the expedition even in the face of contrary winds and bad weather. Next morning several rites are performed over the canoes to undo all evil magic and to make them swift and steady.

The open sea now lies before the fleet with the high, distant peaks of the d'Entrecasteaux mountains floating above the haze. In very clear weather the nearer Amphletts can be seen—small steep rocks, scattered over the horizon, misty, but more material against the faint blue of the distant land. These far-off views must have inspired generation after generation of Kirilinian sailors with zest for adventure, wonder and desire to see the much-praised marvels of foreign lands, with awe and with superstitious fear. Mixed with it all—associated in the native mind with the allurement of the distant koya (mountains)—there was the ambition to return with plenty of vagyu'a. In myths, in traditional legends, in real stories and in songs, Kula expeditions were and are described and praised and there is a definite complex of Kula tradition and mythology, governed perhaps by two dominating emotions: the desire to obtain the vagyu'a and the dread of the dangers to be encountered.

These latter are real enough, as the wind in the N. W. season, when the expeditions take place, is changeable, and violent squalls obtain, and the sea is full of reefs and sand-banks. But the natives have added to that from their store of myth-making imagination, and have surrounded the real dangers with a fabric of imaginary perils and modes of escape. There exist for them big, live stones, lying in wait for a canoe—they jump up when they see one, and smash it to pieces and destroy the sailors. There is a giant octopus, which will take hold of a canoe and never let it go, unless a sacrifice is made of a small boy, adorned and anointed, who is thrown overboard to the kieita (octopus). There may come a big rain, which smashes and submerges the canoe.

But the greatest danger comes from flying witches, who, whenever they hear that a canoe is sailing—and they possess the capacity of hearing it at enormous distances—assemble and wait till the men are in the water, and then fall on them. There is a deep belief that shipwreck in itself would not be fatal—the men would float ashore, carried by the débris of the canoe—unless the flying witches were to attack them. A whole cycle of beliefs centres round this main idea, and there is a system of rites which are always practised in shipwreck, and which, if carried out properly, would ensure safety to those shipwrecked.

One part of this magic is directed towards the flying witches; it blinds and bewilders them and they cannot attack the men in the waves. Another part is chanted by the tolisowaga (master of the canoe) whilst he and his companions are drifting, suspended on the float of the outrigger, and it attracts a giant fish (iraeaka). This beneficent animal arrives and pulls the float and the dinghy to the beach. This is not the end; the shipwrecked party have to go through a series of ceremonies intended to make them immune from the flying witches, and only after that may they return to their village. This interesting account of a potential shipwreck and the magical rites referring to it I have obtained from several sets of independent informants. There are also a few definite traditions about actual salvage from death by drowning through the carrying out of the magic.

The normal expedition, however, sails in one day with good following wind, or in several days if the wind is weak or shifting, and arrives at its first stage, in the Amphletts. Some exchange is done here, as well as on the further two intermediate halts in Tewara and Sanarao, and the concomitant magic has to be performed here. There are also several mythologically famed spots in these islands: some rocks from which magic originated—how, the myths do not relate distinctly—and other rocks, formerly human beings, who traveled to their present sites from very far, and to whom the natives offer pokala (offerings in order to have a propitious Kula). The island of Gumasi in the Amphletts, that of Tewara, and places on Ferguson Island, are important mythological centres.

But the main aim of the expedition is the district of Dobu, more especially the north-east corner of Ferguson Island, where on the flat and fertile foreshore, among groves of coconut, betel palms, mangoes and bread-fruit trees, there stretch for miles the populous settlements of Tautauna, Bwayowa, Deidei and Begasi.

Before approaching them, the whole fleet stops on a beach called Sarubuyuna, not far away from the two rocks, Atu'a ine and Aturumoa, which are the most important, perhaps, of the rocks to whom pokala offering is given. Here the final magic is performed. All the wagelu (members of the crew) go ashore and collect leaves for magic. Spells are pronounced over them by the members of each canoe and everyone washes with sea-water and dries his skin with the medicated leaves. Then spells are uttered over coconut oil, red paint and aromatic herbs—and the natives anoint and adorn themselves, the magic making them beautiful and irresistible. A spell is uttered into the mouth of a conchshell and the canoes get under way. The last distance, a few miles only, is traversed by paddling; and powerful spells are uttered by several men in each canoe, who recite them simultaneously, and the medicated conchshell is blown. These spells have to 'shake the mountain'—that is, to produce a deep agitation in the minds of the Dobuans, and impress them with the arrival of the newcomers. One more important rite is uttered to prevent the Dobuans from becoming fierce and angry and to suppress any attempt at attacking the visitors.

Finally the party arrive, and it is the custom for the Dobuans to meet them with soulava (shell-disc necklaces) in their hands. The conchshells are blown and the necklaces are ceremonially offered by the Dobuans to the newcomers. Then the party go ashore, every man going to the house of
his main partner. There the visitors receive gifts of food, and they again give some of their minor trade as part (visitors' gifts) to the Dobuans. Then, during a several days' stay, many more soulaus are given to the visitors. Often it is necessary for a Kiriwinian to woo his partner by gifts, solicitations and magical rites, transparently performed, if the latter possesses a specially good and desirable article. All the transactions are carried out according to the rules set forth above.

Side by side with the Kula, the subsidiary trade goes on, the visitors acquiring a great number of articles of minor value, but of great utility, some of them un procurable in Kiriwinia, as, for instance, rattan, fibre belts, cassowary feathers, certain kinds of spear wood, obsidian, red ochre and many other articles. This subsidiary trade is carried on by means of gifts and counter gifts with one's own partners; by means of barter (gimeaul) with other people; whereas certain articles are procured directly. Among the latter, the most important is the Spondylius shell, fished by Sinaketsas in the lagoon of Sanaraoa, again under the observance of many taboos, and with the aid of magic, private and collective, simple and ceremonial. The shell called kaloma is, on their return home, worked out into the red shell-discs, which serve for making the soulaus necklaces.

All the transactions in Dobu concluded, the party receive their parting gifts (tale) and sail back, doing the spondylius fishing just mentioned in Sanaraoa, trading for pots with the Amphletts, and receiving additional Kula gifts and tale (parting gifts) in all the places, where they go ashore on their return journey.

In due time, after a year or so, the Dobuans will make their return expedition to Sinaketa, with exactly the same ceremonial, magic and sociology. On this expedition they will receive some armshells in exchange for the necklets previously given, and others, as advance gifts towards the next Kula transaction.

The Kula trade consists of a series of such periodical overseas expeditions, which link together the various island groups, and annually bring over big quantities of sagoa and of subsidiary trade from one district to another. The trade is used and used up, but the sagoa—the armshells and necklets—go round and round the ring.


A12 A Missionary Reports on the Te Exchange Cycle among the Enga People of Wabag, c. 1950

The detailed account of the workings of part of a Te Exchange which appears below was recorded by a young Catholic missionary, Rev. G. A. M. Bus, S. V. D., nearly three years after he opened the Wabag mission station in the Western Highlands in 1947 (Pl. 2). Sustained contact with the administration had begun with the establishment of a patrol post four years earlier in 1943. The exchange cycle which Bus has recorded and in which he took part seems to have occurred over an extended period from late in 1949 through 1950. Although he has given an account of one episode as it affected one particular community in the cycle, he also conveys an impression of the wider complex network of which this was one aspect. Already the Te was showing the influence of sustained, though brief, European contact. There is no evidence available at this stage for assessing the antiquity of this institution. Pigs and pearlshells, the main commodities exchanged, have been shown from archaeological remains to have been in the Highlands for many centuries—c. 3000 B.C. for the former and c. 4000 B.C. for the latter.

Though the sites from which these remains came are located in the Eastern Highlands the presence of pearlshell may suggest ancient trading links with the coastal regions. While this archaeological evidence gives no clues to the history of the Te, it would have possibly provided the background trade in commodities necessary for the exchange cycle. Others have studied its operation elsewhere (see, e.g., A. P. Elkin, 'Delayed Exchange in Wabag Sub-District, Central Highlands of New Guinea', Oceania, 1953, Vol. 23, pp. 177-201; and M. J. Meggitt, 'The Enga of the New Guinea Highlands ...', Oceania, 1958, Vol. 28, pp. 286-98). Among other neighbouring groups, particularly around the Mount Hagen area, the cycle goes by the name of Moka. Vicedom and Tischner, who studied it first among the Mbowamb people in 1938, have recorded a myth which suggests that Moka feasts were part of life in the legendary past (see G. F. Vicedom and H. Tischner, Die Mbowamb, Vol. 2, pp. 33-8). They made an extensive study of many aspects of this cycle (Vol. 1, trans. F. E. Rheinstein and E. Klestadt, pp. 796-840). For more recent studies of the political and economic aspects, see R. N. H. Bulmer, 'Political Aspects of the Moka Ceremonial Exchange System Among the Kyaka

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THE SYSTEM EXPLAINED

... This is the place to explain in detail the system of the exchange. Chief Tuwink of the hamlet Pawkare gives a shell to Pjasjo of Tijibus. Pjasjo agrees to send him a pig on the occasion of the Te, and adds a stake to his row at his meeting ground. Pjasjo does not keep the shell, but passes it on to Pjuk of Kopenabar. Pjuk promises a pig and adds a stake to his line. Pjuk sends the shell on to Kiriljo of Milkinne. Kiriljo sends it on to Kopio of Aremand. Each of them will return a pig to the man from whom he immediately received the shell, and add another stake to his row. Thus, one item may travel a long way. Chief Tuwink keeps in contact with the first man, Pjasjo; Pjasjo keeps in touch with the next, and so on. They all know where the shell has gone, and when the exchange comes down the line, each knows whether a pig is coming or not. One has to keep in mind that all the gifts are going in one direction, that the pigs are coming down along the same route, but in the opposite direction.

When the festival takes place in Aremand, Kopio's place, he will have a pig ready to give to Kiriljo. He ties it to a stake, and after the show presents it to Kiriljo. The latter takes the pig to his house, and when his hamlet has the Te he ties the pig to a stake and gives it to Pjuk. Pjuk takes it home and waits for the Te to take place at Kopenabar. From there it goes to Pjasjo of Tijibus, and when Tijibus has the Te, Pjasjo ties the pig to one of his stakes and gives it to Tuwink. Tuwink probably owes a pig to some other man down the line for a present received earlier, and he will tie the pig to a stake and give it away again.

It can easily be imagined that the condition of the pig does not benefit from being exchanged every few days. It receives little food from the temporary owner, because he is not particularly interested, and since he may have more pigs than usual to look after during the Te, he often does not have enough food for all of them. It often happens that a pig dies along the route. If it dies near the final stage of its journey, the ultimate recipient is called and he may take the meat. But should it die farther up the line, the chain is broken and the men down the line will not get their pig, unless the man in whose possession the pig dies can supply another that is still unpledged. If not, the others will have a hard time getting the shell or other present back.

It is amazing how a man with a line of over a hundred stakes is ever able to remember all the presents he has given out, and all the people to whom these have been passed on, and to figure out along what route the pigs will come. Many negotiations, talk, conferences, and contacts are necessary to keep up with this business. I think these preparatory talks are the most important part of the Te. The show on the day of the display and exchange is rather disappointing. But the real work of organization is done before that.

The organization of a festival in which a vast area with well over 50,000 natives participates, is not a minor business. Every detail must be talked over. Natives from one part of the area have to know what the others think. First of all, they must agree on the time when the Te will be held. If natives of a certain section judge that they do not have
enough pigs, they will demand that the Te be put off for a while. These meetings at which the natives get together and talk are organized from time to time by one or the other clan. A youth singing may be held, with the singing taking second place, while the talk about the Te is the real purpose for which the older people come together. I remember one youth singing (something like an initiation singing) held near my station, where the youths grew impatient and angry because the old folks paid no attention to their singing but kept on talking and talking. Another occasion for bringing people together is a great meal. During the dry months, men and boys often go on a long hunt in the bush. They usually manage to catch a large number of marsupials. Word is sent out that there will be a meeting soon. People come in from all directions. While the food is being cooked the men talk and discuss the Te. It is the old people who do the talking. I have never found a real chief, someone representing a group or clan, whose decision stands. But I have observed that old men do the talking and the rest accept whatever is decided upon by them. Men of great wealth, even if not yet old, can wield much influence, but they remain second in authority.

What with all this talking, it took a long time for the Te to get on its way. Time and again rumours had it that they had started at Kore, but it was always denied again. To show the excitement and tension among the natives, let me add that I tried to get a house built at one place in March, 1949. They could not do it, they said, because the Te was near at hand and they did not wish to be hampered by being engaged in work for a white man. It was not until December, however, that the Te started to move, and it was July, 1950, before it was finally held at that place.

ROUTE OF THE TE

Finally, after months of preparation and interminable talks, the Te was actually started. I have already pointed out that it follows a certain route. It starts in the district known as Kore, which lies at the eastern edge of the Enga area, where the latter adjoins the region on the eastern side of the Hagen Range. As a matter of fact, the natives of Kore speak a dialect that differs from the Enga language (or Tchaga dialect, as Dr Capell calls it). From Kore the festival goes to Welye and neighbourhood in Minjamp valley. This is still more or less among the spurs of the Hagen Range. Then it is held in Tchaga, the valley directly south of the Lai valley and parallel with it. From Tchaga it goes to the part of the Lai valley known as Laiab. It is here that I have my station and it is from here that I made my observations. The Idokon, one of the clans in the Laiab, occupy approximately the central point of the route. After Idokon held its Te, it was rather difficult to follow the route, because it branched out in several directions: one towards the east and northeast, and one towards the west, up the Lai valley to the district called Mai, which is near Wabag. From Kopon the route follows two directions: one goes all the way round the northern extremity of the Hagen Range, where the language border with the Mogei tribe is located, somewhere near Rokakas (Mikmakian and Djukakam); the other crosses into the Sau valley. Passing up the Sau River, and crossing the intervening range, it catches up with the westerly route in the Ambum valley, near Wabag. Continuing westward, the route passes just beyond the government station at Wabag, and takes in the lower Ambum valley. It is remarkable that the Te goes as far as the language border in the east, but in the west does not even come near the border. It is very likely that the Te originally came from the tribes east of the Hagen Range, where a similar festival is known under the name Moka. Our interpreters even use this word Moka when interpreting the word Te to us.

PROXIMATE PREPARATIONS

(a) Meeting Places Respected

The meeting ground has been cleared and the stakes placed as described earlier. The last few weeks before the Te is to be held at a certain ground, the latter must be respected. There must be no loud talking, no yelling and shouting, and no playing upon it. At Pumakos I have a school right at the meeting ground, and the boys are accustomed to play football in one corner of it. But when the time of the Te came near, the older people forbade all playing and all noise, and finally took the football away from the boys when the latter did not obey. The whole Te struck me as very quiet, almost solemn, as compared with other native feasts. People move around noiselessly and speak in a low voice. Even with thousands of natives gathered, all that can be heard is an indistinguishable murmur. The Te was still in the Tchaga area when my nearest neighbours asked me not to ring the bell at the station for the next five days.

(b) Personal Preparation

I was told that old Janda and his sons were acting like recluses in preparation for their Te. It had now come into their sphere of interest, as it was being held by a clan from which they expected some pigs. To make sure that everything would develop as they wished and turn out successful, they had to observe certain restrictions. Janda, the old man, and about half a dozen of his sons and sons-in-law retired to the old man’s house and stayed there for five days. During these days they were not allowed to speak to anybody else. Amongst themselves they could speak quietly, and especially the old man took the opportunity to instruct his sons about the old traditions handed down by their forefathers regarding the Te. They also observed certain food restrictions. The sweet potato *motha* or *aima*) which is their ‘daily bread’ in everyday life and nearly their only food (everything else is regarded as ‘sweets’) was not eaten. Bananas, corn and sugar can be taken, but when not much of such food is available, as in the case of Janda and his sons, they have to go hungry.

During the five days they thoroughly clean the yard in front of the house, and with sticks and twigs make a square on the ground. They then sit around the square and watch a little spot inside it. If a small insect, e.g. an ant (though any other insect will do), enters the square it counts for one pig that they will receive during the Te. A red insect indicates a reddish or light-coloured pig; a black insect promises a black pig. If they find a small piece of bright white sand in the square, they know they will receive a shell during the Te. While looking for such objects, they keep a magic formula in mind. The old man, who is one of my best friends here, could not be persuaded to tell me that formula, for fear the spirits would punish him if he did so.

Before they leave the house the men dress for the Te. They do not paint their faces in gay colours, nor do they use their colourful feathers as on other feasts. Their hair is made up as usual and thoroughly blackened; faces are painted black with a mixture of sot and pig fat. Even old Janda had blackened his white beard. A few simple feathers may be put in the hair, and silvery gray leaves are pinned in front of their wig. When they again appear in public, they
still maintain silence, and are not permitted to speak until they arrive at the meeting ground where they are to see their first Te. It is strange to see half a dozen men walking around without saying a word. They made an exception for me. Out of respect they spoke to me, but not more than was strictly necessary and in as few words as possible. Old Janda told me where he was going, but in so doing he tried to keep his mouth closed and his teeth clenched together. The food restrictions were still in force, and were to continue for a few more days.

It was a bit sad to meet Janda a few days later, and to learn that he had not received a single pig from that first clan, whereas he had expected several.

(c) The Day Preceding the Te

One or two days before the exchange is to take place, people of the clan gather at the meeting ground or somewhere near it. They bring together their pearl shells (mamaku) which they count. They then discuss to whom the shells will be given on the following day. This is not easily decided, and much talking may have to be done, especially if some prospective recipient is present and he realizes that he is not going where he thinks he ought to. After they make up their minds to whom they will give the shells, the latter are nicely arranged in a netbag. These bags when opened out flat on the ground have an oval shape with two long loose ends. A layer of grass is spread out in the bag, and on top of this the shells are displayed. By tying the upper side of the bag to a stick, and pinning the under side to it at various places, the shells are held securely in place, and the whole shell-filled bag forms a sort of shield. All the shells are framed in red clay and are painted a reddish colour. The paint is imported from Papua, southwest of here. How it is prepared people here could not tell me.

Later in the day, the men who will display and hand-out pigs the following day, line up all their pigs near their respective houses. For this purpose each has a row of sticks (ki) ready, close to his house. These stakes are a bit longer than the ones on the meeting ground, and instead of being pointed at the top are cut off at a sharp angle. Rich men have very many, of course, sometimes 150 or more. One great chief must have had about 300, as far as I could estimate. People who expect to receive a pig from a certain man next day gather round his house. When all the pigs are lined up, the owner points out the pig, or pigs as the case may be, which he intends to give to each one. Many of the waiting people are disappointed when the pig shown them is not as large as they expected, or when they find they are not to get a pig at all. Quarrels and scoldings are not unusual. By dint of much talking one may succeed in being offered a better pig. Or, one may demand back the present previously given. The owner of the pig will feel hurt and ashamed, though, and often there is no possibility of getting back the gift, because it has already gone to somebody else.

**THE DAY OF THE TE**

When the great day finally comes, large crowds gather at the meeting ground. In some places the crowd numbers from two to three thousand people, at a conservative estimate. Some of the larger clans may even have the Te at different places at the same time, but in this case the parade with the shells is held only at one central ground.

The people behave very quietly. There is an almost solemn atmosphere among them. About ten o'clock the first pigs are brought in and tied to the stakes. The owners of the pigs are assisted by their wives and by the men who will later receive them. One chief after the other brings in his pigs. There is plenty of action and movement, but the quiet atmosphere still prevails. The big chiefs (kamunk) appear in festive dress. Gay feathers wave from their heads, the colours shining brightly in the sun. Their bodies gleam with pig fat or plant oil, which is smeared profusely all over the skin. A large tan shell rests on the chest, a pawuink shell on the forehead, and an axe hangs from the girdle. One boy was dressed as a chief, and took the place of his father who was too old. Each of the chiefs kills a pig at his own house while dressing in the morning. The idea behind it is apparently to make the spirits favourable towards the chief, so that his show may be a real success. The ropes, which are tied to one of the forelegs of each pig, are fastened to the stakes in a special way. They are wrapped a few times around the stake right near the ground, then spiral upward to the top where a knot is tied. This enables the man or woman to loosen the rope easily if the pig gets entangled in it, or starts a fight with a neighbouring pig. The rope is kept short, leaving the pig free movement within a radius of about a yard. Grey clay was rubbed into the backs of many of the pigs, giving them a silvery sheen. It is intended for decoration, but at the same time it serves as a slight protection against the heat of the sun.

As soon as all the pigs seem to be in, the enumeration starts. A chief, accompanied by some man who is very good at figuring, walks along his row of pigs counting them aloud. I noticed that on this occasion they counted by twos, two! four! six! etc. The counter touches every second pig or stake with his stick as he called the number. The chief follows him and keeps track of the count on his fingers. When they come to the end of the row, it takes a while before the two agree on the correct number. The chief further informs the counter about the number of pearl shells he will hand out, and the number of pigs he has sent out previous to the Te, for some reason or another. Then the counter announces in a loud voice how many pigs this chief has, and how many shells. The chief stands near his first pig and gives a boasting speech. He brags about his pigs, and shames, even insults his enemies and rivals. ‘You so and so, come near and see my pigs. You said I had none. But here are as many pigs as big as any in the world. Oh, where these pigs would buy you a wife, and I have a whole row of them. They are my own breed. You are just a poor devil. From whom did I get them? Did you give me any?’

After a speech like this he kicks or hits his first pig, jumps up, and brandishing his axe and sputtering inarticulately he runs down along his line. If the row is very long he will stop somewhere in the middle, turn around and jump so that he faces all the people and then go on again. Two or more such stops may be made, depending on how long the row is. At the end he jumps up a few times and starts handling out the pigs. The recipients come forward to take their pigs away, often taking the stake too, and tie them up again somewhere nearby. If they do not expect to receive more pigs that same day, and have a long way to go, they will leave at once. I heard that at some places a little hut or shack was constructed at the end of the row of the greatest chief. When he arrived at the end of his row, the shack was burned, to show everybody how long this row really was. In the meantime, other chiefs are counting, making speeches and handing out pigs. There is much commotion and excitement now. Sometimes little riots start, when people try to pull a pig away from a man, who, in their eyes, should not have received a pig at all, or at least not
this pig, or who has failed in his duty to give them a pig. It is very seldom that these riots grow serious. On one occasion I saw them put aside their knives and axes to start a fist fight. A mob of more than fifty people were gathered around one big pig. When they finally tired and decided to end the quarrel, the pig was dead! It just had not been able to stand that kind of treatment. One of the contending parties carried it home. The old people dislike these fights and throw mud and sand at the quarrellers in order to get them away from the meeting ground.

No time is wasted. One after the other counts his pigs and proceeds as described earlier. It was funny to hear one old man warning that they must hurry because it was getting dark. It was only eleven a.m. at the time.

When all the pigs have been handed out and the stakes removed, the last part of the ceremony can take place. This is the parade with the pearl shells followed by their distribution.

The parade starts at a house some distance away. At the head of the procession are a few cassowaries, which men manage by a rope around their necks ... The number of the birds depends on how many could be obtained. I have seen fourteen birds at one parade, and two at another. Next follow the men who carry the net bags with the pearl shells. The bags hang from a stick laid across the men’s shoulders, so that they cover the backs of the carriers ... As explained above, each bag forms a large shield, the shiny side of the shells facing the spectators. Some heavy bags are carried by two men. The chiefs in their gaily coloured headdress follow the carriers, and behind them more men and boys join the parade to assist in the singing ... The melody of the song is not particular to this occasion; I have heard the same at other festivals. Here is a sample of the words as used in many places, with only slight alterations made where the names of the clans require such.

_Cai, Mapea cai, Tupau meok ke lenero pu ..._
Translated: pearl shells of Mapea, you must go and ask pigs from Tupau. (Mapea is the locality where the Yokwenti clan lives, and Tupau is the home of the Lunkibin.)

_Cai Mapea cai, kip iak aru pirine pu ..._
Translated: pearl shells of Mapea, you must go and disappear everywhere.

Cassowaries and their guards rush forward about ten yards, then halt and wait. The carriers catch up with them, turn about and face the direction from whence they came, thus showing the shells to the people waiting at the meeting ground. The singing chiefs and men walk very slowly in a rhythmical pace. When they reach the carriers the parade moves on again, and slowly, very slowly, the procession approaches the meeting ground. If the weather is good and it is not too late, they parade once or twice around the meeting ground. I liked this part of the show best.

When they have done enough singing the group dissolves, and immediately the cassowaries are distributed. The net bags are laid on the ground, undone and opened, and the distribution of shells takes place.

Each chief stands near his own bag. If he is a really rich man, all the pearl shells in the bag are his own. But if he does not have enough to fill a bag, other people share it with him. His men take out the shells and hand them to him. He stands up, holds the shell before his face, and calls out the name of the recipient, repeating it several times. He calls only the name: 'Jandaman Janda ... Jandaman Janda!' As soon as someone hears his name called, he jumps to his feet, and brandishing his axe and sputtering loudly he rushes up to the chief who holds the shell. With a leap he stops short directly in front of the chief, or (as I occasionally saw) circles around the chief a few times. He then accepts the shell and walks quietly back to where his people are seated. One after another is called in quick succession. Often the same man is recalled to receive more shells. He receives them one at a time, each time returning to his place and rushing forward again. The chief remembers to whom he has given each shell, though his men often help his memory a bit. After the shells are gone, some ceremonial axes and other decorations are given out. Sometimes the chiefs even hand out the decorations they are actually wearing.

The presents are distributed in rapid succession. But even so, when there are fourteen bags, each holding some sixteen or more shells, it takes quite a long time. I understand that the shells are usually given to men who have previously handed them out. Shells are not given in return for axes, and seldom in return for pigs. When everything has been handed out, the show is over. Without further ceremony, everybody leaves the place and returns home.

**CONCLUSION**

This is the end of the festival at that particular meeting ground. In the course of the next day or so the whole ceremony takes place at another meeting ground, but people who have already celebrated the festival on their own grounds take little or no interest in what happens at the places next in line. It is finished for them, and they return to their daily work in the gardens, which have been neglected for the past few months.

After a while, however, there will be more ceremonies. After the _Te_ has been held throughout the whole area, all but a few of the exchanged pigs will be killed. Pieces of pork will be coming back along the same route the pigs followed. I cannot yet supply details about this final part of the _Te_ because this lies in the future.

Many questions remain to be answered.

It is certain that the _Te_ festival is an ancient custom. Since the coming and settling down of the white man in 1943, however, the _Te_ has been extended, and this in two ways. First, areas which had never before participated, did so this time. Clans west of Wabag take part now, whereas formerly the _Te_ did not even go as far west as Wabag. Secondly, more people now display and exchange pigs. Formerly only big men could put on the show, but now many others can afford it. More pigs and more shells are also being handled. It means that riches have increased in the area. The peace established by the government control enables everybody to go any place he wishes and see the festival, a thing which was formerly impossible. The friendly exchange of pigs and shells did not mean the end of warfare or enmity. Enemies could not go into each other's territories. If they were expecting pigs from the enemy's area, they sent intermediaries to get them. People who had friends in the other clan or who had married into that clan would be sent as agents.

What is the original meaning of the whole _Te_? Frankly, I don't know. Perhaps religious, though religion does not seem to enter into it now. Was it a form of trade? Is the route always the same? I mean, does it always start at the same place, and do the pigs always go in the same direction, or will the whole ceremony travel in the opposite direction next time? The route can be different. Next time, the gifts will probably go down to Kspon (Mikimakian and Djujakam), and the return route will start over there. I have reason to believe that on the _Te_ previous to the one described in this article, the whole exchange went in the
opposite direction: gifts going from east to west, pigs and shells going from west to east. In all cases the Idokon clan occupies a key position. When they have the Te again more light may be shed on these points. The festival seems to be held about every four or five years. But even on this point my informants did not agree. Some said this was the first Te since the first permanent Administrative Officer arrived in the area (1943) while others said it was the second.

Regarding the next Te, I heard that many natives were rather disgusted this time because too many people did not fulfill their obligations, and the suggestion was made to boycott the next Te. But I feel sure that the festival is so much a part of their native economy, and so much liked by the majority, especially the kamak, that the Te will be held again. We may be able to complete the picture after that.


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A13 Canoe Trade and Barter among the Kiwai People, 1910-12

Between April 1910 and April 1912 the Finnish scholar Gunnar Landtman lived among and studied a number of communities in the Kiwai region of Western Papua. He undertook this work under the direction of A. C. Haddon of Cambridge University, who had led the anthropological expedition from that University into the Torres Strait Islands area in 1898. The results of the field work were not published until 1927, partly because the trunk containing his field notes was mislaid temporarily through shipwreck and partly because of his meticulous editing. Evidence for this aspect of Kiwai economic activities, like his other evidence, was gained from Landtman's personal observations and more particularly from the accounts he collected from people who took part in these events. The medium of communication used was either the Kiwai language or a form of pidgin English developed as a *lingua franca* through pearl fishing in the Torres Strait and on plantations in the Eastern and Central Divisions of Papua. Parts of this region had been in contact with the London Missionary Society from the 1870's and with the Administration of British New Guinea from the 1880’s.

In the same period the explorers Luigi D'Albertis and John Strachan had contacted some groups. Landtman recorded some oral traditions from Mawatta about some of these early contacts. He was of the opinion that by the time he came among them many aspects of Kiwai life and culture had changed or disappeared. Hence the value of this quite detailed account of a significant aspect of their economic activities linking them directly and indirectly through trade and barter with surrounding communities. Other accounts of the canoe trade can be found in W. N. Beaver, *Unexplored New Guinea*, London, 1920, pp. 164-5, and A. H. Jiear, 'Addendum to Annual Report of Resident Magistrate, Western Division, 1904-5', *British New Guinea Annual Report for 1905*, pp. 69-71.

Since olden times an extensive trade has been carried on between different parts of the Kiwai region, as well as between these and the islands of Torres Strait. Different districts yield rather different kinds of produce, and, in addition, a certain distribution of labour exists as regards the articles manufactured by different tribes. The bushmen in the interior supply feathers of birds of paradise, cassowaries, parrots, etc., objects made of cassowary bones, bows, arrows, garden produce, *gámoda*; the Kiwai islanders: canoes, sago, garden produce, bows, arrows, mats, belts, women's grass peticoats, feathers; the Mawata people: coconuts, certain shells, fish, dugong and turtle meat, objects made of cassowary and dugong bones, etc.; the Torres Strait islanders: stone axes, stone clubs, harpoons, all kinds of shell, dugong and turtle produce, etc.

The most important articles of barter are the canoes. The canoe trade extended in ancient times from the extreme eastern border of the Kiwai country right down to the Torres Strait islands, maintained by aid of a varying number of intermediate stations. There was no direct communication along the whole extent of the canoe route, and some of the tribes engaged in the traffic did not even regard each other as friends. From each village the people used to travel a certain distance only in either direction to leave word with friends that a canoe was needed or to forward one that had been brought to them. If, for instance, the Mabuiag people wanted a canoe, they went to Saibai to inform some friends in that island, and, when occasion offered, a Saibai man took the message to Mawata, or notified the people there through somebody else. In the same way the tidings were forwarded from Mawata to Katatai, and, if no spare canoe was to be had in any of these places, the news went to Parama, Kiwai and Waboda. Even from as far as Dibiri did canoes in ancient times find their way to Torres Strait. The making of canoes seems to have been carried on more or less constantly in the Fly region.

While canoes in great numbers made their way along the coast in a westerly direction, all kinds of native merchandise
Canoe Trade and Barter among the Kiwi

kept on travelling in the opposite direction in payment for them. The various middlemen in the intermediate stations generally kept some of the articles received by them and substituted others. Formerly, the whole payment for a canoe was not given to the seller all at once, but in instalments. On the delivery of the canoe he received the main portion of the payment, and on every subsequent visit to the seller’s village, or on other suitable occasions, the purchaser added further contributions as long as the canoe remained good for use. This seems to have been looked upon as a continued acknowledgement of the good services rendered by the vessel. When at last the canoe broke up, the owner sent the seller an armshell or a string of dogs’ teeth (which highly valued ornaments seem to have been conventionally regarded as the last instalment in paying for a canoe), and, to emphasize the significance of this gift, he attached a small piece of the broken craft to it. If the purchaser died while the canoe was still serviceable, his son or heir continued the payment as long as the craft existed. These remittances were sent by the holder of the canoe to the builder through the various middlemen, who, in this case also, kept certain of the gifts, replacing them with others. Although the intermediaries seem in a degree to have looked to their own advantage, strict honesty was on the whole maintained in these transactions according to established rules. In certain cases it was quite natural that the middlemen should keep for themselves certain articles received by them, especially if these were of no use to the people living farther away along the route. This was, among other things, the case with harpoons, which constituted one of the principal articles delivered by the Torres Strait islanders; these were much sought after in the Mawata district, but not used at all in Kiwi. If a canoe got wrecked or was destroyed in some other way shortly after its purchase, the owner sent in the ordinary final payment, together with a piece of the ruined vessel, as mentioned above, but no further instalment after that.

Custom requires every seller of a canoe to provide it with food to be used on the journey. It is regarded as a shame to him if the voyagers in the canoe have to ask for food from friends on their way. Even if a man sells or otherwise hands over a canoe to someone in his own village, he supplies it with provisions; these seem also, in a way, to bring luck to the canoe and to the new owner. Other presents, too, generally accompany the selling of a canoe. Some provisions are also invariably forwarded with the payment for a canoe, and on the receipt of the same, the seller sends return gifts to the purchaser. Of all these travelling presents, the middlemen retain their usual portion, adding fresh gifts instead. Not to give away their own luck together with presents of any of the above descriptions, the people in a village will take back a few of their own garden things before these are sent off (for instance, one banana, one taro, one coconut), using a bush-fowl’s foot in doing so; these retained fruit or roots are then burnt to ashes, which will be distributed among the people, who bury them in their gardens.

On the whole we find that in the canoe traffic, as in any other form of barter, there is no clearly marked difference between actual commerce and the exchange of friendly presents.

In certain cases this trade bears a collective character, inasmuch as the canoe is often owned jointly by a group of people, who all contribute to the payment for it, and are subsequently entitled to use the craft.

At times traffic between two tribes was stopped through war having broken out. This seems to have happened par-
ticularly between Kiwi and Waboda. Naturally all further instalments on the payment for canoes previously received were withheld, to be continued, however, as soon as peace had been restored. So great was the interest attached by both parties to the trade that, according to my informants, it put a marked restraint on hostile excesses that might preclude the possibility of peace. In such cases, therefore, trade contributed to mitigate war and to restore peaceful relations. Nowadays the canoe traffic has greatly decreased and very few of the craft are sent any longer to Torres Strait.

**USAGES CONNECTED WITH TRADING**

It seems doubtful to what extent actual commerce by barter occurred in former times, if at all, just as even nowadays, in the case of close friends, things change owners exclusively in the form of mutual presents. In more recent times, however, barter has become much more pronounced, and is accompanied by certain customs. Thus, after a man has intimated his wish to procure some valuable thing belonging to somebody else, he one day goes to the owner and hands him a piece of pai (the easily breakable leaf-stalk of a sago palm) without saying anything. The owner splits the pai into small sticks of varying length, indicating the number of specimens of the articles desired by him. The sticks are taken away by the purchaser, fastened into small bundles according to length, the lot being tied round with a string. In other cases the small tallies (piu) are stuck into a piece of pai. Assisted by his kin, the purchaser collects the requisite number of articles and then takes them to the seller, putting down one tally-stick on the top of each of the articles. If the seller is satisfied, he signifies his assent by picking up the tally-sticks and throwing them away, keeping the objects offered him. Hardly any words are exchanged during these transactions. If the seller’s meaning has not been made clear, or the payment, for some other reason, does not seem to him sufficient, his wife or somebody else asks the purchaser to take his contributions back; it does not seem to be regarded as good form for the owner to do so himself.

The transfer of some particularly valuable thing, like an armshell or a long string of dogs’ teeth, generally takes place in secret, the object being wrapped up in leaves or given under cover of darkness. The reason for this is not clear; it may be due to some superstitious notion or possibly to the fact that the holder is not properly allowed to dispose of the article in question, such things being generally owned by a group of people together.

Nowadays it is common that travellers to another place are given certain things by friends to take with them for the purpose of bartering, notice being given what articles are expected in return.

A certain manifestation of the ‘silent trade’ is known, although practised only when making friends after a war. When desiring to cease hostilities, one party puts down provisions at some cross roads or other place where the opponents are sure to find them, and then withdraws. The enemy take the things, put down others instead, to notify their friendly disposition, and hide in the neighbourhood. On returning to the place the truce-proposers find that their suggestion has been favourably accepted, their former enemies make their presence known, and peace is concluded.

Richard Thurnwald (1869-1954), the Viennese anthropologist, was invited by the Australian National Research Council in 1932 to visit Bougainville in order to make a survey of the changes which had taken place since he did fieldwork there for the Berlin Ethnographic Museum in 1908 and 1909. The result was a study lasting ten months during 1933 and 1934 and concerned with the impact of Western culture on local society, economics and literature. He has left a graphic record of 'the transition of a savage society from almost complete integrity to growing disintegration of the old order' in the course of twenty-five years.¹ In this period the social and economic distinctions between mumira (chiefs) and kiterre (commoners) had been blurred and the powers of the former severely limited by the Mandate Administration. Because of his knowledge of the Buin language and his experience in the region as well as his earlier European training in law, anthropology and archaeology, he was well suited to analyse the process of change in the area. His overall interpretation, although challenged in a rather superficial way by Hogbin,² provided an important model for the study of the first decades of culture contact in Buin, drawing on those mission and government records and oral traditions which still remain. It would be against this broader pattern that the following extracts from his 1934 report on pigs and currency as part of the changing economic system could be assessed. Other early accounts of the significance of shell money in the traditional economics of New Guinea include the following: W. E. Armstrong, *Rossell Island: An Ethnological Study*, Chs. 5 and 6; F. L. S. Bell, 'The Social Significance of Amfat among the Tanga of New Ireland', *J. Polynes. Soc.*, 1935, Vol. 44, pp. 97-111; B. Danks, 'On the Shell Money of New Britain', *J. Anthropol. Inst.*, 1888, Vol. 17, pp. 305-17; and R. Parkinson, *Dreissig Jahre in Der Südsee* (trans. N. C. Barry), pp. 84-94, 283-5.


PLATE 3: To Tomkin, a man of New Britain and his wealth in shell money, 1883
*Methodist Church of Australia: Department of Overseas Missions Papers*, Mitchell Library, MSS. Ch. O.M. 125
from such investigations, although some features of exchange began to puzzle me...

**BARTER**

Barter is instituted by expanding the circle of reciprocal relations to other groups with which friendship has been established. Therefore 'commercio' is always a symbol of good will.

Let us first observe some ... features of Buin economic life. After a short stay you hear of feasts being held here or there, and of pigs bought for these occasions with the usual 'shell money', *abuta*. It is counted in fathoms (*lagarot*)i, one fathom being equal to the length from the tip of the middle finger of one hand to that of the other hand over the chest. A pig may be considered to be worth 10, 20, etc. fathoms up to 100. Prices of 12, 25, 37, etc. fathoms are not paid, but always round units of tens. The feast may be connected with providing sacrifices for a dead person; for services rendered in garden work; for paying an ally for his assistance in battle; for doctoring diseases; for magical devices, remedies or incantations; it may terminate a minor dispute or seal the peace after a serious conflict; or it may be the public expression of an alliance (*unu*) concluded or affirmed between two chiefs. When a girl is married, gifts of pigs and *abuta* are exchanged constantly between the bride's and the bridgroom's families. After the birth of a baby all the stages of growth are marked by feasts for which pigs are killed. Through these feasts the child is brought into contact with the world, with the supernatural powers and with his community. In the life of the Buin people there is no incident which cannot serve as an occasion for feasting upon pigs and pudding.

At first glance it seems that a man's own pigs may be used for his feasts. It will be noticed however, that the owner of numerous pigs tells you how much currency he paid for a pig offered at a feast. In fact, at one time a fat pig or an old boar is needed (on which the ghosts of ancestors, the *oliga*, may ride); at another time a small animal will do, worth 20 or 30 fathoms, but it may be that the giver of the feast has not got an animal of just the right value in his own stock. Often certain pigs are earmarked for a feast to be held one or more years hence. Moreover, the natives will tell you that a man is loath to kill and eat his own pig, to which the family have become attached, 'he all the same brother'. He would be 'sorry' for his pig, and its ghost might cause him mischief. It is different with another man's pig.

The consequence of such sentiments, however, might be a simple exchange of pigs such as is practised by the hill tribes of Nagavisi (a neighbouring people speaking a language related to that of Buin). In Buin the process of exchange is complicated by the intervention of the 'Shell money'.

Closer observation reveals that the interests of the men centre around three foci: women, pigs and 'money'. All affairs revolve around these 'objects of value'. But one other factor may complicate the interplay between them: this is the ever-present dread of being 'poisoned', injured by sorcery, at the hands of an enemy. In the old times this fear led to actual murder.

Reviewing briefly what has been written above, we can distinguish three kinds of 'economics' running side by side: (1) the husbandry within the family, in which the part played by women in the garden, in the house and in the feeding of the pig predominates; (2) the inter-individual and inter-familial help among the near relatives and among the members of a settlement united under a chief; (3) the inter-communal relations manifested by barter between individuals belonging to different communities or strata of society...

**CURRENCY**

Payments are distinguished by special terms, according to the position of the persons concerned and the occasion on which they are made. The reward of a bondsman by his chief is called *namoko*. It is considered an act of liberality for which there is no obligation. Any gift of friendship is described by the same name. A surplus payment over the price agreed is also called *namoko*. *Totokai* is the excess payment of a *kitere* to his *mumira* for ensuring his good will and his willingness to credit him with *abuta* on another occasion. *Dakai* designates a payment for reconciliation or reparation between men of equal position. The price to be paid for a pig sold for a feast is the *adavike*. A drum signal is interpreted as saying this word. *Currency* is also paid for weregild, 100 fathoms for a *kitere*, 200 for a *mumira*. Injuries are settled by minor sums, and *abuta* is paid also in cases of adultery. In the latter cases actual fighting or sham fights often precede the payment. The rain maker, doctor-magician (*mekai*), sorcerer and dealer in special 'poisons' (*mara*) and medicines are recompensed with 10, 20 or 40 fathoms of *abuta* according to circumstances. Often pigs are required in addition for particular magic. The pursuit of these 'liberal vocations' makes the accumulation of objects of value possible, and it is facilitated by modern conditions which add sticks of trade tobacco, calico and coins (shillings) to the wealth of these practitioners.

In the old times stone blades for axes, spears, arrows, bows, arm-rings of tridacna were sometimes traded for *abuta*. Even today pots, arm-bands (*chaba*), fishing nets, knitted bags (*bukat*), plaited bags (*tane*), specially painted hats, strings of native tobacco, bamboo cases for lime, baskets, combs with feathers, and modern products such as iron blades, knives, calico, etc., are bought and sold for currency. There are no markets. A bargain over pots, for example, is agreed upon at a feast held by the chiefs, and after some weeks the potters appear with their wares at the hall (*abacio*) of the chief who arranged for their purchase. His men are informed, and come from their hamlets to buy the pots for their wives. The prices of the pots are fixed according to size (I observed four sizes). Pots from different places, however, differ in quality. Other objects are traded at casual meetings, the price being often paid later, though some token is given in advance. All these bargains are carried on between individuals.

One fathom *abuta* is usually valued at one shilling. The various kinds of shell money differ, however, in worth. The 'women's money', *hum* or *tombu*, is twice the value of *abuta*. One fathom of *minice* (red *onu*), small polished discs obtained from Alu or Roviana, is worth 20 fathoms of *abuta* (*g1*); white *onu* is equated to only 10 fathoms of *abuta*. *Abuta* is arranged in bundles of 10 fathom lengths, which are arranged in six strings with one quarter of a string overhanging, and terminated with a small shell of an inland snail. This embodies a curious combination of the decimal system with a sexagesimal system, as evinced in the terms for the numbers in their language. Ten bunches of *abuta*, i.e. one hundred pigs, are packed in a netted bag and deposited in the sleeping house; on this bag the ghosts of the ancestors (*oliga*) are supposed to take up their abode.

The currency seems to have been originally used as a token acknowledging the receipt of a pig (in the same way as are boar tusks in New Guinea or dog's teeth in Manus,
tridacna rings in Choiseul, etc.). It may be that the *abuta* has replaced *onu* or *mimici*. At any rate it was worked (by women) in Alu and Mono from sea shells, and traded at an early time into Buin. The fact that the *mumira* claim all the *abuta* is a further indication of their origin from the Shortland Islands. The demand for these tokens probably dates back to the beginnings of the contact between the ‘aborigines’ of Buin and the Alu-Mono tribe, a contact which was marked, as in later days, by the barter of pigs, sago, taro, nuts, etc., growing in the swampy region of the hinterland of the coast. The raping of women and children, perhaps, inaugurated the contact. Buin slaves have spread all over the Shortland Islands, and have contributed to a blending of that population. Returning mothers and their offspring brought the necklaces home, as they did all sorts of other things, up to the modern times. The Buin people considered the Alu-Mono natives to be superior to them, and consequently accepted their valuations, just as they do with regard to European wares. The *abuta* manufactured in Alu represented a crude imitation of the good *onu* and *mimici*, just as the European pottery arm-rings, which have been sold successfully to the natives, counterfeit the tridacna arm-shells. The returning serfs probably brought the *abuta* home with pride. Eventually the *abuta* was set aside to serve only as a token or currency, just as were the money knives of old China, and arrow-heads, etc. in Africa. The form had been preserved from which the symbol of value had developed, but its practical purpose as a necklace had been lost. It is worth noting that in the speech made by the chief at the *onu* festival a promise is expressly made to return the *abuta* received individually, and to care for its preservation up to that moment. At marriages in Borobere an exchange of an equal number of bunches of *abuta* takes place. These facts prove that the strings of *abuta* are still regarded as individual family valuables. But the importation of masses of these strings of shell necklaces reduced their individuality and emphasised their function as currency. Since for a decade or so the communications with the Shortland Islands have been discontinued in order to check the export of labourers from Buin to the British Solomon Islands, the supplies of *abuta* have become stationary. They have indeed been reduced, owing to the practice of cremating some *abuta* with the corpse of the owner. The manufacture of *abuta* on a small island off the Buin coast scarcely makes up for the losses thus incurred. *Tombu* and *mimici*, some of which are also cremated, are rising in value.

**BANKING AND PROFITING**

The use of these necklaces as currency made further developments possible along this line. While serving the individual purposes of exchange *abuta* is also accumulated by important *mumira* families in the interest of their community to form a fund which can be drawn upon in cases of emergency as, for instance, when allies must be won, indemnities paid for men killed among the allies or among his own people, or peace settled with the enemy. Special treasure houses are built concealed in the virgin forest. These *rubobo* or *duni* are respected in minor fights, but in bitter warfare it happens that they are attacked and burnt down.

In addition to this, the chief is himself the principal owner of private *abuta*. This involves him in lending and crediting transactions with his subjects. Moreover, he is the only man who carries on 'foreign' business beyond his community. Both these conditions are apt to increase his power if he is a clever man. His *kitere* may approach him for money or pigs with which to buy a wife for himself or his son, either within the community or from abroad. If a girl is given in marriage the chief shares in the return gift. The chief helps a man with *abuta* or pig for funeral feasts or for any other purpose.

For this reason the men are prone to give something additional, a *totokai*, when they settle their debts. They are sure to be in need of new loans from the chief. A bondsman may pay 10, 20, 30 or even 50 fathoms of *abuta* when he returns 100 lent to him perhaps three years previously. They are ready to recom pense their chief by services such as feeding a pig either for no return or for a purely nominal one (*kori*), or by presenting him with a pig which has been fattened inside an enclosure (*kameke-oni*). But a *totokai* is paid also between *mumira*, and recom pensed by *mamoko*, the one anxious to flatter the other's self esteem. In this merry-go-round of payments each one strives to display his glory and increase his renown. But a clever man never fails to take advantage of the situation. The *minei* and *barepi* gained influence by an intelligent use of these exchanges. Some *mumira*, however, like Gibeau-Maugoci, by spreading terror restricted the amount they paid for pigs to merely formal sums; he gave 10 fathoms for a pig worth 100 fathoms, and that even to other *mumira* *tutoburu*.

Although it would be wrong to exaggerate this profit making and the rationalistic side of bargaining, it should be noted that it existed even in the pre-European epoch. It has, of course, been strengthened by modern contact. One chief of minei descent who has worked with the whites for some length of time explained carefully his hopes of the profit he could make by juggling *abuta* and pigs with dexterity. Another one refused to continue the ceremonial exchanges on the occasion of a marriage because they were too expensive from an economic point of view.

The constant transference of pigs and tokens discloses commercial leanings. Although the tokens contain 'intrinsic' value to a certain degree, their importance is derived from their ability to be converted into pigs, pigs being the fundamental element of a feast, and a feast standing for a man's social position. We may, then, fairly speak of a pig standard of currency...

**CONCLUSION**

Summing up, it may be said that these communities of Buin consist of an agricultural population, which also engages in some hunting, fishing and collecting. The natives are an essentially sedentary people, although dwellings were sometimes moved as a result of warfare and personal quarrels. The communities are kept together by feudal chiefs, each of whom is the representative senior of his family in the district. As pointed out above, there are various layers of the economic system. The social stratification relies on an ethnic patriarchialism that, however, is more and more blurred by the importance of material objects of value. In this way individual wealth allied to democratic tendencies is disintegrating the old order. This process had begun before the advent of the Europeans, but is being accelerated by modern tendencies.

Exchange is not indispensable in this society for mere sustenance. The chief motives for exchange are the desire for the luxuries of life, for expensive feasts, and for self-glorification. The process of converting one kind of object of value into another, of pigs into *abuta*, and vice versa, upon the basis of reciprocity is a means of intensifying and adding complexity to the social texture of the community and the intercommunal life...

A15  Rivalry and Exchange at an Arel Sigit Feast at Tenkueni Village,
Tanga Island, September-October 1933

The background and context of the fieldwork conducted by F. L. S. Bell in Tanga have been discussed above (see A preface). This feast is portrayed as a central occasion in which interclan rivalry is expressed in a ritualised fashion and as an opportunity for a vigorous exchange in wealth between representatives of these groups. Bell maintains that for a Tangan 'wealth is any form of property, corporeal or incorporeal, which contributes to his individual enjoyment of life or to his social position as a member of a particular local or kinship group.' He does not indicate whether there had been a waxing or a waning of feasts as a result of German 'pacification' twenty years previously. If there were any parallel between the Tanga and the Siane of the Eastern Highlands, then feasting would have increased as a consequence of the enforced decline in warfare. Two men, Kiapsel and Baul from Boeeng Island, did however import a secret society Sokopana from Namatanai in New Ireland to Tanga some time after 1913. This was flourishing in 1933, and included feasting in its ceremonial. (See F. L. S. Bell, 'Sokopana: A Melanesian Secret Society', J. Roy. Anthrop. Inst., 1935, Vol. 65, pp. 311-41.) It is also apparent from Bell's account that Buktom of Tenkueni relied on the reciprocal exchanges of this and other feasts for the maintenance of his position as a leader within his community. In this he was like many other leaders in traditional society. Similar descriptions of feasts in the 1930's among island and coastal communities in New Guinea include the following: H. I. Hogbin, 'Tillage and Collection: A New Guinea Economy', Oceania, 1938-9, Vol. 9, pp. 127-51, 286-325; P. M. Kaberry, 'The Abelam Tribe, Sepik District, New Guinea: A Preliminary Report', Oceania, 1941, Vol. 11, pp. 233-58, 345-67; and H. Powdermaker, 'Feasts in New Ireland: The Social Functions of Eating', American Anthropologist, 1932, Vol. 34, pp. 236-47.

... The celebrations began on the morning of the 30th September, 1933, and continued until the 11th October. During these twelve days the settlement at Tenkueni was the focus of all social life in the group. Appropriately enough, the arel opened by a party arriving with four pigs as presents for Buktom. The owners formally presented them to the chieftain, who acknowledged them and then ordered them to be placed in a special shelter shed near by. Later the same morning six more pigs were carried into the settlement. However, only two of these were acknowledged by Buktom, the other four having been pigs which he had farmed out and had now called in for use at the arel. About mid-day a large plank canoe (mon), filled to the gunwale with men and pigs, arrived off the village and was suitably met by Buktom and his brother clansmen. Eight large pigs were unloaded and carried with much pomp through the surf and laid out for all to admire in the centre of the dancing area. As soon as the leader of the party had formally presented them to Buktom, they were removed to the shelter of the pig house, there to await their fate along with the other ten.

No sooner had the excitement of the arrival of the mon died down, when a loud shouting was heard and Sumsuma, a chieftain from a rival clan, arrogantly strode up to Buktom as he waited beside the log gong and announced in a loud voice that he was returning with interest the pig which the former had presented to him at the funeral celebrations of his paternal uncle some months back. At the conclusion of this ceremony Buktom gave orders to open up the ovens and carve up the six pigs which had been cooking since early morning. To the dancing parties which had provided his guests with entertainment he formally presented two of these pigs along with a young live sow. It was explained to me that all the pigs presented during the day were return presents by men to whom Buktom had given pigs over the last few months.

Buktom and a number of fellow clansmen spent the following day chasing seven pigs of his own which had been frightened by the squeals coming from the pigs tied up at Tenkueni and had gone bush. He eventually captured six and added them to the other nineteen then on show in the special shelter.

On the 2nd October a chieftain named Kospui, from the western end of the island, brought along four pigs as presents. He told me that they were return gifts made by four men from his district who had received pigs' heads at former ceremonies conducted by Buktom. During the formal presentation, Kospui loudly announced the names of the four owners whilst Buktom silently checked off in his mental account book four more credits. One could almost see his mind at work, trying to remember four people to whom he owed pigs and who would be satisfied with these four as a gift in exchange.

This man Buktom must have a hundred pigs owing to him and must owe almost as many himself. It is one of the amazing features of this culture that none of these many transactions is ever forgotten. Of course, a person who shows any signs of unwillingness to meet his obligations is reminded in no uncertain terms about his outstanding debt. Again, one must not forget that this matter of debts and credits in terms of pigs occupies hours of argument and discussion for many weeks prior to the holding of such an event as an arel sigit. A more concrete reminder of one’s debts are the lower jaw bones of the pigs’ heads which have been presented to one and which are carefully displayed along the jagged projections (gnis n’bua, lit. teeth/of/ the house) protecting the entrance to one’s house.

Later that afternoon a party which could be heard approaching a mile away arrived just outside with three large pigs. Apparently two of these were return presents, since

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1 F. L. S. Bell, 'The Place of Food in the Social Life of the Tanga', Oceania, 1947, Vol. 17, p. 139
2 R. F. Salisbury, From Stone to Steel, pp. 205-13
Buktom, in acknowledging receipt of them, made a gift to the leader of the party of one small pig and accepted payment in the form of three fathoms of shell currency for a second pig. Just prior to sunset, another pig was brought in amidst much shouting and singing and excited laughter, thus bringing the total for the three days to thirty-three pigs, of which ten belonged to Buktom and the remainder comprised pigs which were owing to him.

Early the following morning Nepor of Tefa arrived with his party and a consignment of twenty-one large pigs. These were not carried right into Tenkuien but were accommodated at Kaínidim just to the west. They were gifts made. Buktom by Nepor in return for those presented to the latter by the former at a dafal held almost a year previously on the island of Tefa...

...On the morning of the 4th October I took up my position at Tenkuien in order to watch the movements of the chief actor Buktom. The log gong was continually sounding out the pokos signal which reminded all within hearing that the time had arrived to bring in their pig. These were punctuated by sif mbo signals from both Sassa and Ambaba. These are pig-counting signals by means of which the sex and number and size of each pig are announced. As soon as this signal was made all the men in the bia at Tenkuien dropped what they were doing and made for either Sassa or Ambaba to inspect the newly arrived pigs. These men must have seen thousands of pigs during their life, yet, as soon as the sif mbo signal was made, up they got and off they went to look at the latest arrivals.

Buktom strode about the dancing ground looking up at the huge food container which was almost ready to receive its last basket of coconuts and its last decorative streamer. He then called a youth over and handed him, quite unobtrusively and without ceremony, a bunch of wild ginger (lae) and told him to attach it to the highest branch of the tree around which the food container had been built. On asking Solfinmat, one of Buktom's brothers, why the ginger root had been so attached, he informed me that his brother had impregnated the lae with a conditional curse. This would bring sickness to any man causing trouble at the arel, especially any man who harboured angry thoughts or expressed dissatisfaction with Buktom's handling of the pig exchanges. In response to my comment on the unobtrusive way in which the baleful bunch of lae was fixed in position, I was informed that magic docs not need to be advertised to be effective.

By 11 a.m. the Tasik-Filamat clansmen had assembled fifty-six pigs at Ambaba. Their leaders, Sumsuma (Filamat), Kepgas (Filamat), Lilit (Filamat) and Kiaplus (Tasik) had presented these pigs to Kapuk, a Filamat chieftain whom they had selected to represent them at the ceremonial presentation to be held later. With Kapuk at its head and the four clan sub-section leaders immediately behind him, a procession of singing and shouting men and women then began to converge on Tenkuien. On arrival at the eastern boundary of the settlement, Buktom met his rivals with that javelin-shaking, heel-stamping, mock-angry manner characteristic of all formal welcomes. He was answered in like fashion by Kapuk who cried out: 'Ha! We bring too many pigs! Fun Fasamo will die under the weight of them!' Each one of the fifty-six pigs was then separately and formally presented to Buktom by Kapuk. He announced the donor in each case, and, as the man's name was spoken, Sumsuma, in an extremely loud voice, called out: 'Ah!' He repeated this expression as each pig was picked up and laid in an enclosure at the eastern end of the village.

No sooner had the Tasik-Filamat pigs been moved to their special enclosure, when a great shouting was heard from the western end of the village. The Tuninan-Fasambo people had chosen Nepor of Tefa to represent them, and he was just approaching Tenkuien with about twenty large pigs as his share of the Fasambo pool. Buktom met him at the boundary to Tenkuien, welcomed him, formally received the pigs and then ordered them to be taken to an enclosure at the western end of the village.

Three large canoes were then sighted approaching Bioing. However, Buktom ordered the ovens to be opened and the cooked food to be distributed. He gave the heads of three pigs to Nepor, Matakut and Beokine. About an hour after dinner the canoes grounded opposite Tenkuien and the chieftain Tambau came ashore followed by the crews and their gift pigs numbering twenty-two fine specimens. The same procedure of welcoming the guests, of silently accepting their presents and their boastful words and then ordering their pigs to be taken to the western shelter was followed. It may be useful to take note of the words used by Buktom in welcoming Tambau and his three canoe loads of pigs. Buktom called out 'Fun Fasamo is full up with pigs! (repeated) I like pigs! (repeated) I am dying under the weight of all these pigs! (repeated). To which Tambau replied: 'I chew you up, as the victor eats his victim.' (repeated).

A brief summary of the pigs presented so far shows that the Pen-Tuninan-Fasambo people rallied around Buktom, their fellow clansman, to the extent of seventy-five pigs, whilst the Filamat-Tasik party contributed fifty-seven. In addition to these figures, we must remember that Buktom had to use at least ten of the aforementioned seventy-five for cooking and another three or four as presents to dance masters who gave performances over the last few days, thus leaving himself with a very small surplus of five or six pigs over the number brought by Kapuk. He found himself in a very embarrassing position, because the arel was scheduled to run for several days and it appeared that either he would not be able to make immediate return presents to all those who had brought pigs and still have a big feast or he would be able to make adequate return gifts but be unable to provide sufficient pigs to feed his guests.

The following day saw a somewhat changed situation. Buktom's close friend and 'brother' Kospui came to the rescue with a present of thirty well-matured pigs which he had been reserving for an important series of rites which he planned to celebrate at the conclusion of the next planting season. Rather than see his friend and fellow clansman placed in a humiliating position by the malicious behaviour of the Tasik-Filamat people, he ran the risk of having to postpone his own rites.

When Buktom heard that his friend was approaching Tenkuien, he ran to meet him with a number of other clansmen and called out: 'I like pig! I like pig! I like pig! Fun Fasambo is up! Fun Fasambo is up! Fun Fasambo is up!' To which Kospui replied by getting down on his knees and ordering all his companions to do likewise. He then said: 'Don't be afraid of me! Don't fear us! We bring you but a small number of pigs! We are, indeed, very unimportant members of our clan!'

The whole of this day was spent in inspecting the pigs with a view to approaching Buktom in order to effect an exchange. It was only possible for the members of one set of clans to select a suitable exchange pig from among those presented by the other set of clans, that is to say a Filamat man could not arrange an exchange with a Tasik man nor
could a Tuniman accept a pig brought by a Fasambo man. One cannot overemphasize the fact that of the two hundred pigs brought to Tenkuien, all were considered to be the property of Buktom. He had absolute rights over the disposal of each and everyone of them.

All those men who wished to take away a pig in exchange for one brought by them to this arel or to another ceremony in the immediate past, at which they had not received a return gift from Buktom, spent hours inspecting the pigs from which they could legally make their choice. As soon as a man had found a pig which appeared to him to be equivalent to the one he had brought, he squatted down beside it, and, if the donor of the pig were present, he received an exhaustive report on the virtues and vices of the animal. On the approach of Buktom, he rose to his feet and without any conversation passing between the two men, the master of ceremonies formally presented the pig to the man, either as a live gift or, if the nature of the exchange demanded it, as a cooked head. In the latter case, the pig was removed to a small compound near the ovens, into which it was destined to pass early the next morning. In the case where the pig was presented as a live gift, the new owner lost little time in gathering it up and making off to his settlement attended by his many friends and relatives.

By mid-afternoon Buktom had disposed of all the pigs he could afford without leaving himself short of oven pigs. I counted ten large pigs with a good deal of time on their snouts, which indicated that they were to be cooked on the morrow, and I knew that he had promised from six other neighbouring villages of a similar number of cooked pigs. On seeing how few pigs remained for to-morrow’s feast, some of the Filamat-Tasik crowd began to pass disparaging remarks about Buktom, his clan and his general handling of the arel. Sumsumisa, a Filamat chieftain, hoping to humiliate Buktom, sent runners to his village with instructions to bring back one of the largest pigs given him that day by Buktom. On the arrival of the pig, he formally presented it to Buktom and told him to cook it. The latter merely turned his back on Sumsumisa and immediately ordered one of the ten pigs which remained to be brought to him. He there and then presented it to Sumsumisa. In the words of the Tanga, he ‘killed the gift pig’ (pa: ket bo) with another gift pig. Among these people a man’s ability to retain his prestige is concomitant with his ability to pa: ket bo.

An old enemy, by name Kaisuk, then offered one of his pigs as an oven pig. Buktom angrily replied: ‘Take your pig away. I don’t need your help!’ A bystander told me that many years ago Kaisuk’s brother who had married Buktom’s sister, so ill-treated his wife that she took her own life. Buktom demanded compensation and was paid two pigs by Kaisuk on behalf of his brother. Buktom cooked these pigs and, in order that it might never be said that he had enlarged his flock of pigs at the expense of his sister’s life, he took every opportunity to present bo ijar (i.e., gift pigs which do not require to be reciprocated) to Kaisuk. It is a virtue among these people to heap coals of fire upon their enemies if by so doing they add to their own prestige.

At the end of the day, Sumsumisa was still complaining to Buktom about the latter’s action in adding still another pig to the many which he had that day given to the Filamat-Tasik people. Solemnly he told me that they (jun Fasambo) had swamped their rivals with many large pigs, which the Filamat-Tasik crowd would not find it easy to return.

Friday the 6th October was devoted to performances by the many dance parties which accompanied the ka: itu tauf to the arel. As each dance master brought on his troupe of performers, he formally presented Buktom with a large basket of vegetables and nuts or a few small shell tokens. The latter made an immediate return present of either a small pig or a fathom or so of an-ai-o-mil. Without further ado the orchestra began to beat out the time and the dance commenced. About half-way through the dance it is customary for the host to equip himself with his ceremonial spear and club and walk in complete silence between the lines of dancers.

 Whilst a dance party brought by Kospui was performing, Buktom had his usual inspection and then strode around the dancing square, calling out these words, shaking his spear and glaring towards the Filamat-Tasik party as he spoke:

Ra: bet iau (repeated several times)
Fa: fa: ra: bek (repeated several times)

Let all this gossip be finished with!

On another occasion, when inspecting one of Sumsumisa’s dance parties in the company of Kospui, he turned to the former and in the presence of all assembled said: ‘Ra: bet iau? Why have you tangedle me up? Ahit sing bo! I did not ask you to bring me any pigs!’ In making these announcements Buktom let his rivals know that he was not ignorant of their plot to lower the prestige of jun Fasambo and jun Tuniman and, at the same time, acquainted his kinsfolk with the trend of events. In other words, they were to expect trouble in the near future.

A typical reaction to these announcements was that of Sulukorofo, a friend and fellow clansman of Buktom. On bringing up his dance party, he approached Buktom and called out: ‘A: ka morkum! (repeated) I have brought you gift pigs which you have not reciprocated! Work loose!* (repeated) Something has gone wrong!’ In using this phrase, Sulukorofo was not criticising Buktom but formally announcing that so far as he and his folk were concerned, Buktom need not make any immediate return gifts of pigs. Sulukorofo’s action was repeated by other chieftains of the Fasambo-Tuniman bloc and, as a consequence, brought much relief to the harried Buktom.

To mark the end of the arel, eighteen large pigs were cooked, carved up into portions and distributed to all present. Hundreds of pounds of vegetables and fruits and nuts were also cooked and distributed. Each guest then partook of a small portion of thoroughly cooked pork and vegetables. On finishing their modest meal, they stuffed their baskets with the food presented to them and made off to their home villages. On the following day, this food would be recooked and form the basis of a hundred local feasts, at which the doings at the arel would be talked over and discussed with those relatives who had not received invitations to attend. It was therefore important that the portion of pig (puk bo) distributed at such an arel should be fairly large. On the occasion of the arel at Tenkuien, the puk bo was small and Kapuk, in a subdued whisper, pointed this out to me and disdainfully compared it with that which had been distributed by Sumsumisa on the occasion of the celebration of the death of his mother’s brother.

For four days following the conclusion of the rites, a ceaseless traffic of men and boys carrying pigs to and from

*These are pidgin English words used by Sulukorofo so as to ensure that the most important person present, the ethnographer, fully understood the situation.
Tenkuien indicated that Buktom's fears of trouble had been realized. On making inquiries, I discovered that no sooner had many of the Tasik-Filamat people arrived back at their home villages with their gift pigs than they had been assailed by relatives who complained of their size and general poverty. The pigs were then brought back, and Buktom was asked to supply another pig in exchange for the one originally donated and, according to the complainants, more in accordance with the size and quality of the pig they had brought to the arel. Buktom refused to admit the justice of their complaints and, from the Tasik-Filamat point of view, added insult to injury by ordering his young men to go and fetch the pig originally presented to him by the complainants. When this pig arrived back at Tenkuien, it was returned to its original donor. I was told that this was rarely if ever done and was sure to breed bad blood not only between Buktom and the original donor but also between the latter and the man to whom Buktom had given the pig at the arel. Since this man was a member of Buktom's clan, he rarely objected to Buktom taking back his pig and, on an occasion such as this, he might even let the matter of an immediate return gift stand over for a while, i.e. until Buktom was able to make him a worthy return present.

Whilst investigating the adjustments which had to be made as a result of complaints by dissatisfied donors, I discovered that Buktom had accepted quite a number of shell tokens on the understanding that these gifts were to be reciprocated in the form of pigs, so that although the Tasik-Filamat clansmen brought only fifty-eight pigs in all to the arel, they had also brought quite a number of valuable shell discs, and Buktom probably owed them close to a hundred pigs.

As on previous occasions, Kospui came to his aid and gave him all the pigs he needed to 'kill the gift pigs' belonging to the Tasik-Filamat party and so the whole affair ended with the prestige of fun Pasambo and fun Tuniman unsullied: in fact, enhanced by their ability to meet such heavy and such unusual demands. For these demands were unusual, as was pointed out to me by Buktom himself when discussing this aspect of the affair with him a few days later. He explained to me that many of the demands made upon him during the arel by Tasik-Filamat people for return gifts of pigs were in respect of debts which he had contracted at ordinary funeral ceremonies and which were normally liquidated at similar ceremonies and not upon such special occasions as this arel sigit.

Source: F. L. S. Bell, 'The Place of Food in the Social Life of the Tanga', *Oceanica*, 1947, Vol. 18, pp. 50-8