

Chapter Six

Timika: The Emergence of a Mining Community

INTRODUCTION

This chapter marks a change in the political, geographic and temporal focus of the thesis. Previous chapters dealt with Kamoro interactions with foreigners, which began in far West Mimika and gradually moved eastward. I have described how since the middle of the nineteenth century, the Mimika Coast came increasingly under Dutch influence, with direct administration from 1926 to 1961 interrupted only by a brief Japanese occupation. This chapter and the following deal almost exclusively with East Mimika after the departure of the Dutch administration in 1962.¹ Almost synonymous with the arrival of the Indonesian administration in what they initially called West Irian is the arrival of the PT Freeport Indonesia Mining Company. This chapter situates Freeport's arrival in the context of Kamoro socio-political circumstances of the 1960s and 1970s. In contrast to the last chapter, which addressed the most well documented period in Mimika history, this chapter covers what is perhaps the least-well-documented period of Mimika history in the twentieth century. As a result, my own

¹ East Mimika consisted of all villages between Keakwa in the West and Inauga on the Otokwa River in the East.

informants' recollections of the time of Freeport's arrival and that of the Indonesian administration supplement the scant source materials.

In particular, this chapter outlines the emergence of the contemporary lowland "town" of Timika as a direct result of activities related to Freeport's operations. Timika has become well known as the lowland town associated with Freeport and perhaps more specifically military, political and human rights battles between the highland Amungme and the Indonesian State and Freeport. Lesser known are Kamoro perspectives on the foundations of Timika, an area which now attracts around half of the 15,000 strong Kamoro community. It highlights the potential role of *amoko-kwere* within Kamoro communities' decisions to participate in the Freeport project and migrate to the Freeport Project Area. It explains how Freeport's interactions with these "foreign" Kamoro (and Amungme) communities (e.g. those from outside of the Freeport Project of Area) triggered a series of "development" activities that would, with some consistency, undermine the rights and resources of Kamoro (and Amungme) communities indigenous to the Freeport Project Area. The misconceptions, deceptions and reciprocal inequities that built upon one another in the development of the Freeport Project and the establishment of Timika are remarkably parallel to the kinds of violations of *aopao* that drive the *amoko-kwere*. I begin with an investigation of the derivation and meaning of the name Timika, before I position this chain of events with a brief revisit of Mimika in 1960, the year of Natalis Nokoryao's *imakatiri*, his solemn prediction discussed in the last chapter (pp.180-187).

TIMAKOWA, TIMIKA, TUMUKA

In contemporary discussions, the name Timika has become an icon of inequity, human rights abuses, and environmental destruction and is inextricably linked to Freeport and the Amungme. There has been strikingly little attention given to the fact that the word itself is neither fabricated nor from the Amungme language. It seems ironic that one of the key words linked to Amungme struggles is indeed a

Kamoro word. This section investigates the source of the word and the community from which it originated, the Nimy people of the coastal village of Timika, presently known as Timika Pantai, literally beach or coastal Timika.

Although the British Ornithological Union expedition documented contacts with Nimy people in 1910, the word describing the region more generally, Timakowa dates to at least the nineteenth century. In these accounts, the region of Timakowa was described by local informants as the territory to the east of the Kipia (also known as Kapia) and Mimika regions on the south-west coast of New Guinea (see Chapter Three). The region appears to have been centred on the coastal village that Wollaston called Nimé and, based on his observations, the settlement seems to have been the central location of a specific sphere of trade and cultural influence incorporating what is presently the central Mimika area. An Allied Intelligence Report for the south-west coast of New Guinea dated 16 April 1943, clarified that although the name of the village and the river along which the settlement is situated are shown on the maps as Timoeka (Timuka), the locally preferred geographic name was Timika (AGS 1943:12).

The informant for the intelligence report, Father Tillemans, indicated that the Kamoro have multiple ways of attaching names to places. Generally, there appear to be at least three different ways the Kamoro do this; all are equally common so that in one conversation the same place may be referred to with three different names. One way that the Kamoro name a place is by a specific geographic place name. Sometimes these place names are linked to ancestral “owners” of that area, though I have often found that there is either no native exegesis for the place names or they have been forgotten. This appears to be the most fixed and enduring variety of toponym as it seems to remain attached to a location regardless of who lives there. Another common naming practice is to call a location by the name of the people who are living there or in that region. For instance, Ipayá refers to a place where the people of Amar, Ipiri, and Yaraya people live. A related naming practice is attaching a group’s “tribal” name to a location. For example, the Timika people are known collectively as Nimy, the name that Wollaston recorded for their settlement. Other places are labeled by

their physical characteristics. For instance, Koperapoka is derived from the words *kopera*, meaning nipah palm and *apoka*, which most generally translates as existing. Thus, *koperapoka* means “place where there are nipah palms.” One such name can refer to different locations depending on the speaker’s origin and the place where he is speaking.

Ironically, although the words Timakowa, Timuka, and Timika sound quite similar, they have distinct and unrelated origins. When I asked Kamoro informants from Timika (Pantai) about the word Timakowa, they responded that it generally referred to a large region of eastern Mimika. I briefly discussed the word with Sabinus and Piet, both from Timika (Pantai) who were at the time living in the Timika Township. As we looked at a photocopy of a Dutch map together they explained:

- S: In actuality, the word *Timakowa* is two words: (K) *Timako arowa*.
- TH: Meaning “there are crocodiles”?²
- S: Yes. Nimy people, the people of Timika Pantai, are *Timako-we*, crocodile people.
- TH: So Timakowa means the place where there are people from Timika Pantai.
- S: More correctly the territory of Timika Pantai people.
- PN: There was a relationship with the kingdoms (*kerajaan*) [e.g. Moluccan trading networks, TH]. Before the *kompenni* [e.g. Dutch administration, TH] *Major Nimy* was boss of Timakowa.³
- S: You’ve seen *Karapaos* and other *adat* situations. They usually begin with an (K) *mbake pukaro* or *adat* leader welcoming visiting communities. He will sing the names of each of the tribes [e.g. other Kamoro villages, TH] present. He’ll say “*Timako-a, Wania-we-a, Aika-we-a*” and so forth [these are the “tribal

² *Timako*, or crocodile, is an explicit reference to a particular *otepe*, powers over natural and supernatural phenomena See Chapter Two for a discussion of *otepe*.

³ Although none of my Kamoro informants spoke English, they frequently borrowed English words related to Freeport’s operations. Some of the English words and phrases I frequently heard included: “boss,” “boss *besar* (big boss),” “community” (e.g. Freeport’s Community Affairs Department), and “borrow pit” as well as a host of place names such as “Portsite” and various places along the Freeport access road according to their Mile marker (Indonesia uses the metric system, but Freeport and their contractors, both American-based, used miles during the construction phases).

names” of Timika Pantai, Keakwa and Tipuka, which Sabinus chanted as an *mbake pukaro* would, TH].

Thus, the “-a” suffix shortened from “*arowa*” which indicates physical presence, combined with these words meant those representatives from these various communities were in attendance. It follows that Timakowa or Timako-a indicated the presence and/or influence of the Nimy/Timika people within a certain region. I then asked about Timuka and Timika. According to Piet and Sabinus, there has been some confusion, at least on the part of European cartographers, due to the fact that a man named Timukaru moved from an interior *dusun* called Kawao to the coast where he became the (I) *kepala dusun* of the new location (e.g. He was the community leader over a specific resource area).⁴ Common to Kamoro naming practice, a shortened version of his name Timuka (spelled Timoeka by the Dutch with the same pronunciation) was used locally to describe the area. In turn, the shortened version of his name was inscribed on maps during the Dutch colonial era as the name of this settlement.

My informants from this settlement further explained that the geographic name Timika has yet a separate unrelated explanation from Timuka. It is derived from the Kamoro words *Tirimiria imikamo*, literally meaning “the place where we collect the water made milky by the residue of sago working.”⁵ According to them, the two-word expression *Tirimiria imikamo*, or Timika, is the appropriate name describing the physical characteristics of the geographic region. The similarity of the name of the early inhabitant, Timuka and Timika is according to them, coincidental. The contemporary “town” of Timika, developed along completely different lines which did not take into account any of the indigenous naming strategies as I shall outline later in this chapter.

⁴ *Dusun* is an Indonesian word that literally means “grove or orchard.” In Papua it is frequently used to describe a semi-nomadic group’s sago areas. *Kepala Dusun* is an Indonesian government administrative title. Both words and their relationship to indigenous Kamoro social organisation will be discussed in Chapter Seven.

⁵ Indonesian: *Tempat dimana kami mencari air kabur yang mengandung sahat sago*. Two years later, the same informant provided the following etymological breakdown of Timika. “*Tim*” means hazy, blurred, clouded (I: *kabur*) and “*-ika*” means always (I: *selalu*).

NATALIS NOKORYAO'S *IMAKATIRI*

The Herald

On May twenty-second 1960, the same year that Natalis Nokoryao had predicted that a large boat carrying influential goods would arrive in Timika, an aircraft flew low over a Kamoro settlement along the right bank of the Minajerwi River. My informants refer to this village as Koperapoka Lama (Old Koperapoka), Nawaripi Lama (Old Nawaripi) or Tirimami.⁶ The former name describes the physical characteristics of the location, and literally means, “place where there are nipah palms.” Nawaripi is an acronym referring to the two complementary kampongs/hamlets, who resided at that location, Neikeripi and Waoneripi. And Tirimami is the name of the location itself.

At least a dozen Nawaripi men from the settlement watched the plane from their canoes, while other villagers scrambled about in the settlement. Some ran to the edge of the river to get a better look while others fled toward the jungle out of fear. Disappearing from sight, the plane landed on the Inabuka River, just to the East. From there the plane's passengers travelled by diesel launch to Omauga, a village on the banks of the Mawati River. Following negotiations with Yeremias Yoka, the *Kepala Kampong* of Omauga, the Omaugans agreed to construct a twenty feet by fifty feet structure in exchange for a 100-pound bag of rice. This building served as the base camp for the joint Freeport Sulphur-East Borneo Company (OBM) expedition to the Carstensz Mountains (Wilson 1981:210).

The expedition planned to follow a track used by the Omaugans before the Second World War to collect damar resin (and prior to that in 1912 by the second Wollaston expedition), to reach the Ertsberg deposit recorded by J.J. Dozy in 1936. In an effort to facilitate access to the well-populated (and recently contacted) Amungme settlements in the Tsinga Valley, the Catholic Mission had

⁶ In the dialect of the Nawaripi people, the “k” sound is replaced with a glottal stop. Thus, Koperapoka is pronounced “*Operapo'a*”.

recently re-opened this track which reached the interior via Tematama, an Omaugan damar-collection location (Coenen 1956b; Mampioper 1961). The expedition enlisted the assistance of Moses Kilangin, an Indonesian-speaking Amungme Catholic teacher, to mediate relationships between the expedition and the indigenous populations they would encounter (Wilson 1981:31-32).⁷

On the morning of May 30, 1960, the Omauga community loaded a fleet of fifty-foot dugout canoes and a diesel launch with the expedition's supplies. By just after eight in the morning the team of forty-four rowers in fourteen canoes set out on the arduous task of transporting the expedition and their supplies upstream (ibid: 37-38). On the third day the group had finally reached a point where canoe travel was no longer possible; here they unloaded the canoes and began the difficult overland hike to the lowland Amungme settlement of Belakmakema.⁸ Here Moses had little difficulty recruiting willing porters from among the Amungme.⁹ Eventually, with the assistance of Amungme porters and guides, the

⁷ In exchange for the six-month "loan" of Moses, the expedition paid the mission US\$300 and agreed to donate all surplus supplies to the Catholic Mission at Kokonao (Wilson 1981:32). With the exception of "an expensive watch" purchased in Biak by Forbes Wilson, the Freeport leader of the expedition, Moses was not compensated directly for his services at that time (ibid). Later (in the late 1990s) in recognition of his services to PT Freeport Indonesia over the years, Moses Kilangin was given a house in Timika Indah.

⁸ According to Cook, Wa Valley Amungme who had migrated to Belakmakama in 1960 did not remain in the location long. Frustrated by heat and disease, they returned to their highland homes (Cook 1988:25). Along with Paulus Salingki Solme, Moses also played a central role in leading the Amungme communities of the Noemba and Tsinga Valleys to resettle to the lowlands for purposes of establishing a rubber plantation. By 1959, the Dutch Administration had brokered a deal between the Nafaripi (Eastern Sempan lowlanders) and the Amungme (represented by Moses and Paulus) that purchased Nafaripi land with axes, knives, tobacco, spades, clothing and soap for the Amungme resettlement and plantation project (Cook 1988:28). By 1960, about half of the Amungme population of the Noemba and Tsinga Valleys had chosen to relocate to the lowland settlement and on the eve of the Freeport-OBM expedition were preparing to begin their move.

⁹ Moses chose no lowland Omaugans as porters for the journey to the interior. Perhaps he was privileging his Amungme kinsmen, while at the same time levying symbolic capital and prestige as a leader and by his ability to bring income to the community (see Cook 1988:47 for Amungme perceptions of Moses). Notably, as a child Kilangin had followed an Amungme trading expedition to the Nawaripi settlements where he was adopted by Cornelis Leftew, a Kei Islander teaching at Waoneripi (UABS 1998a:24). He also lived among Kamoro communities for quite some time during his training in Kokonao, and perhaps he knew that the lowlanders were of little assistance as porters beyond the areas where canoe travel was practicable; this had been the experience of every explorer to the region. Whatever the case, and I suspect each of the possibilities may have played into his reasoning, Jan Ruygrok, the representative of the East Borneo Company seemed to pick up on Moses' recruitment biases; he personally enlisted ten of the Omaugan rowers. As it

Freeport-OBM reached the Ertsberg.¹⁰ Their geological assessment of the Ertsberg outcrop reconfirmed their intention to progress further with the development of the mine. Though political circumstances prevented Freeport's immediate return to the area, the relationships that they established with the Amungme and the Omaugans would definitely influence future engagements with their host communities. At the same time, by preparing the way for an eventual return, the expedition symbolically heralded the realisation of Nokoryao's *imakatiri*, even if the Timikans had yet to realise it.

The Realisation

The overthrow of President Sukarno and Suharto's rise to the presidency in the aftermath of the 1965 coup paved the way for foreign investment in Indonesia.¹¹ Just two months after Suharto was sworn in as President of the Republic of Indonesia in March 1967, a sixty-foot boat arrived at the coastal village of Timika, just as Nokoryao had explained. Over the next three months, the boat returned three times. Its cargo, including diesel generators, a bulldozer, a truck, a host of unassembled materials, among them a port-a-camp and helicopters, would prove incredibly influential for the future of the region; Natalis Nokoryao's *imakatiri* was beginning to be realised (Wilson 1981:164-165; Mealey 1996:86-

turned out, Moses' decisions, for whatever reasons, proved correct. Before the end of the second day of overland hiking, all of the Omawkans had deserted the expedition and returned to the coast (Wilson 1981:52).

¹⁰ In an account written in 1992, Beanal remarks that there was a disagreement between the Freeport-OBM survey group and the Amungme community over lack of payment to the porters (1992:4).

¹¹ In an article that examines the role of the United States in the coup which brought Suharto to power, Scott (1985) provides the following insight: "The actions of some U.S. corporations, moreover, made it clear that by early 1965 they expected a significant boost to the U.S. standing in Indonesia. For example, a recently declassified [CIA] cable reveals that Freeport Sulphur had by April 1965 reached a preliminary "arrangement" with Indonesian officials for what would become a \$500 million investment in West Papua copper. This gives the lie to the public claim that the company did not initiate negotiations with Indonesians (the inevitable Ibnu Sutowo) until February 1966" (1985:257). This is particularly significant because the coup that brought Suharto to power and opened up Indonesia to foreign investment took place on October 1, 1965.

87).¹² Considering that the 1961 population figures for East Mimika reported only one European out of a population of 5724, the arrival of twenty Europeans on board the boat was likely a significant and unprecedented event for the villagers of Timika and Keakwa.

Upon arrival, the newcomers immediately bulldozed the heavy vegetation along the shore to make a place for their pre-fabricated base-camp buildings and began grading the disputed airfield linking Timika with neighbouring Keakwa (Wilson 1981:166; Mealey 1996:87). Crowds of villagers looked on as the foreigners assembled the portable camp buildings, heavy equipment and helicopters from the boxes carried by the boat.¹³ The speed with which all of these items were landed, unloaded, and assembled must have been an impressive sight. Even during the post-War Dutch period, physical development of this level and at this pace was unheard of, underscoring just how influential the appearance of Freeport and their contractors and their ability to rapidly “create” these large things may have been.

Over the next two years, the Timika and Keakwa villagers witnessed the arrival of a steady stream of Western foreigners. Unlike those who had arrived initially, the newcomers were spending less time in Timika; using its airfield and port as a point of entry before heading off by boat toward the East. In addition to being accompanied and sometimes followed by Timika and Keakwa villagers, while in transit, the foreigners also passed several coastal settlements, attracting a

¹² The vessel was a decommissioned Allied “Landing Craft Tank” or LTC, named *Turtle*, owned and operated by Ted Fitzgerald, a freelance contractor. He shuttled equipment to Timika from Darwin (Wilson 1981:165; Mealey 1996:86).

¹³ A former expatriate Freeport employee recollected the final assembly of the first helicopter at Timika. According to him: “The first PHI [Petroleum Helicopter, Inc., TH] helicopter was put together on the beach somewhere between Camp One and Kokonau [i.e. Timika, TH]. The whole village gathered around when it came time to crank the engine the first time. When the engine caught, the noise was tremendous and the locals scattered like crazy. There was a woman there who was nursing a small pig and a baby. She dropped the baby and took off with the pig. The only local person left in the space of seconds was the baby (interviewed by author March 1998). It is difficult to gauge the accuracy of the account, but certainly the event would have been startling for at least some of the community. Strangely, I did not record any Kamoro perspectives on the event.



Image 20: Final assembly of helicopter at Timika (Pantai) in 1967 before a group of Kamoro on-lookers (Photo by Del Flint, published in Mealey 1996:80).

following of curious Kamoro. They were travelling toward a place called Aika, a former settlement location for the Tipuka people and the site of a former NNGPM exploration base camp.¹⁴

Eventually, the foreigners' activities had shifted almost completely to Aika in support of the construction of Freeport's nearby port facility at Amamapare and the Timika airfield had fallen almost completely into disuse. Soon after, in 1971, several villagers from Keakwa and Timika followed one of the Westerners to the new location which had been unceremoniously dubbed Camp One or *Kamp Satu*, a name which seems to have supplanted the indigenous name, Aika, in local discourse.¹⁵ That westerner was John Currie who, in addition to being among the first expatriates to arrive at Timika, was also one of the few Westerners who could speak Indonesian.¹⁶

NAO NOKORO AND NAWAPINARO: STRATEGIC INVOCATION OF AMOKO-KWERE

By the time that Freeport and their contractor Bechtel Santa Fe-Pomeroy (hereafter referred to as Bechtel) had ceased using Timika as a base camp, *Kamp*

¹⁴ Though I have seen photographs of the NNGPM basecamp at Aika (published in Colijn 1937) and of people at a Aika (in the collection of the Tropenmuseum in Amsterdam), I am uncertain if a settlement existed at Aika prior to the arrival of the NNGPM or if there was one, whether or not it was semi-permanent or just a fishing location. It appears that at least by the 1940s, Aika was used as a settlement location.

¹⁵ Several Kamoro informants named John Currie as an early "boss" at the Portsite area. None, however, were able to describe his position within the company. Although I was unable to find Mr. Currie, one of his contemporary expatriate Freeport employees offered the following: "John Currie came here in about 1970 or earlier. He was Scottish and had fought with the British Army in Malaysia in the 1950 [campaign] against the communists. He then worked for lumber companies in Kalimantan and came here with FI [Freeport Indonesia] as Administrative Manager. He spoke fluent Indonesian and was married to a Malaysian lady. John was very good with the local people. He handled all local affairs in those days. I think he stayed until sometime in 1973" (Former Freeport employee interviewed by author, 10 February 1998).

¹⁶ The only other Western employee who worked in the area in the early 1970s that contemporary informants could name was George Stock. According to my Kamoro informants he was a Eurasian, born of a Dutch father and Javanese mother (fieldnotes, 28 February 1998). A former Freeport Employee who worked at Amamapare/Portsite in the early 1970s adds that Stock was the first Freeport Accounting Manager (Personal correspondence, March 1998). Kamoro informants also named other initial Freeport employees including the Javanese Camp Services Manager

Satu and Amamapare had already become the hubs of lowland construction activity. While my informants who were involved in the early years of construction at these locations unanimously admitted that the land surrounding Amamapare and *Kamp Satu* was and remains the property of Tipuka, they nonetheless saw no problem with either their or Freeport's usage of it. None of these initial (or present) workers were from Tipuka, and apparently there were few, if any, Tipukans involved in the project at all at that stage. The core of the early 1970s Kamoro workforce appears to have consisted of five men from two sets of allied settlements. They were from Atuka and Aika-Wapuka on the one hand (hereafter referred to as the Atuka group), and Timika on the other (hereafter referred to as the Timika group).¹⁷

The Atuka group had the most substantial semi-permanent settlements on the coast in the area between Timika and *Kamp Satu*, while the latter of course had watched and participated in activities surrounding the landing strip that linked their villages that initially attracted the foreigners. Liber Kapeyau from Atuka was among this initial cadre of Kamoro workers at Amamapare (also known as Portsite). According to his reckonings, the remainder of the core group of initial Kamoro workers included Herman Ukapoka (from Aika-Wapuka), Hilaris Natikatereyau and Urbanus Emeyau (from Timika), and Silvester Mopereyau (from Keakwa). The Atuka group moved in the early 1970s to an "island" popularly known as Karaka Island, to work for Freeport at the Portsite and *Kamp Satu* projects. At high tide, the "island" disappears, leaving only stilted houses standing above the water. The people from the Timika group on the other hand, initially chose to live at a place called Nawapinaro. For both groups, *amoko-kwere* played a role in their selection of a place to live outside of their territory.

Suardi, his Ambonese superintendent Robbie and a Japanese worker by the name of Kato (fieldnotes February-March 1998).

¹⁷ Although I separate them here, the groups are not mutually exclusive. Timika and Aika-Wapuka in particular have a history of marriages between them. This is evidenced by the fact that during a certain period, Timika (Pantai) was called Tiwaka, a conjugation of Timika and Aika-Wapuka.

When I was consulting to Freeport in 1998, Liber Kapeyau was living on Karaka Island adjacent, to Amamapare.¹⁸ Having moved there from Atuka in 1972, he was part of the initial Kamoro workforce to relocate to Karaka. When I asked Kapeyau who owned Karaka Island, he clearly and quickly responded “Tipuka.” However, when I asked him if he or the others were compensating Tipuka for the usage of the island, as may have been customary in other situations of resource usage, he commented:

The Tipukans call this place *Nao Nokoro*. They never come out here to challenge us because they are afraid of a giant whale that according to their stories [*amoko-kwere*] lives just on the other side of this island (Liber Kapeyau interviewed by author, 9 February 1998).

Although I am uncertain of the specifics of the “whale story” to which Kapeyau was referring, I have come across the words *nao* and *nokoro*.¹⁹ *Nao* is used to describe a cemetery, a gravesite, or in the context of having to do with wrongful death; it often carries the more specific connotation of being a place where murdered people are buried. For example, the name Kokonao is more properly *Kaoka-nao*, which means “the place where women were murdered/buried.” Drabbe’s dictionary defines *nao* as “under, in the shadow, or invisible” (1937:86), perhaps this implies that something of the murdered persons still remains, but is out of sight.

Although Coenen (1963:69) remarks that Nokoro is the name of an *amoko-we* associated with *Kaware*, neither he, Pouwer, nor Zegwaard present any *amoko-kwere* that explicitly mention him. During my fieldwork I observed a dance called *Nokoro* performed by Hiripao village in East Mimika. When I asked the *Kepala Suku Adat* (the “customary tribal chief”) of Hiripao about the story behind the dance he explained:

This dance is about the unfair/improper behaviour (*perlakuan tidak adil*) of two young girls toward their birth father, *Tuan Nokoro*. As a result, Nokoro left the two young girls. He used

¹⁸ More accurately, Karaka is adjacent to an area presently known as “Cargo Dock” which is part of the Portsite complex. Freeport’s facility for drying concentrate and loading it onto ships separates Cargo Dock from Amamapare.

¹⁹ In the Asmat narrative that corresponds to the Kamoro Mirokoteyao *amoko-kwere*, the hero constructs the feast buildings from the skin and the spine of a whale (see Biakai 1982).

a special short canoe and went from kampong to kampong asking the people to kill him, but the people responded to his requests instead by making a feast for him (Simon Natipia, 22 April 1998).

The use of the Indonesian word *Tuan* in here is significant. The only occasions when the word is regularly used by the Kamoro are when speaking to or about a respected Westerner or in the phrase *Tuan Tanah*. Although *Tuan Tanah* literally means “landlord,” for the Kamoro it is used as a translation for the Kamoro *Taparamako*, which refers to the ever-present “original owner” of an area, an *amoko-we*. This is certainly the context that Simon Natipia was invoking.²⁰

Widjojo recorded a similar brief version of the same narrative from Timika (Pantai) that his informants called Nokorota (1996:33-34). Both Widjojo and Natipia’s “Nokoro” narratives are strikingly similar to one that Pouwer relayed to me which explained that the father, in the version he heard called Kinako, is a widower whose two daughters continually offered him only inferior food, while they saved the better foods for themselves. When Kinako found out, he made a canoe out of ironwood, a kind of wood that doesn’t float. In this “heavy canoe,” Kinako travelled under the water to the underworld from where he tormented his daughters for shaming him (Pouwer interviewed by author 25 February 1999).

I have also heard *nokoro* used in association with ritual items and dances related to *Kaware*, the feast associated with men’s secrets.²¹ In Hiripao, a specific ceremonial canoe was associated with a *nokoro* dance. I was told that this canoe was called a *nokoro-ku* (literally a *nokoro* canoe) or a *nokoro-kao* (literally shell, covering or rind of *nokoro*). As the story suggests, the canoe was usually short; it was made of four flat sides lashed together; as was the case with the ironwood canoe in Pouwer’s account, it quite obviously could not float. A different style of

²⁰ From her recent fieldwork, Diana Glazebrook informed me that the Muyu, other lowland Papuans indigenous to West New Guinea, use the term *tuan tanah* in a similar manner (personal communication). Ballard adds that the neighbouring highland Amungme also similarly use the term (personal communication).

²¹ The leaking of *Kaware* secrets to women during a *Kaware* Feast at Tipuka around 1900 caused a major war, which radically altered power relationships in East Mimika (see Chapter Three).

nokoro-kaō is also commonly documented as an attribute of the *Kaware* feast. The examples that I saw in museum collections were flat boards with relief carvings of various animals. I saw similar reproductions in the field, though their contemporary function (if any) is unclear. Kooijman's extensive research on Kamoro material culture led him to believe that there was an explicit relationship between *nokorokao* and *amoko-kwere* (Kooijman 1984:77).

The precise connection between *Nao Nokoro* the place and the reference to the whale in the *amoko-kwere* remains unclear to me. I discussed Kapeyau's explanation with Jan Pouwer. The only explanation that he could offer was that in the areas on either side of Mimika (e.g. west of Etna Bay and in the north-western Asmat area) some versions of the Mirokoteyao narrative (see Chapter One) hold that the monster is actually a sperm whale (Pouwer in press). Although I am unable to delineate a precise connection between *Nao Nokoro* and the particular narrative, the fact remains that Kapeyau and the other Kamoro who formed the core of that initial workforce exploited a Tipukan weakness grounded in an *amoko-kwere*. This is perhaps an indication of how Kamoro may in fact employ *amoko-kwere* as a socio-political device to manipulate and reformulate relationships not only with outsiders but also with other Kamoro communities as a means to legitimate activities that might otherwise be deemed improper.

While the Atuka group was living at *Nao Nokoro*/Karaka Island, the Timika group appears to have invoked an *amoko-kwere* to rationalise their initial choice of encampment location elsewhere within the Freeport Project Area. When I asked a thirty-five year old informant about his village's relationship to the Amamapare area, he responded with an *amoko-kwere*:

Long ago the ancestors of Nimy-Timuka initially lived on the Aikwa Otomona River at Mile Two [the Freeport access road is marked in terms of miles from the where the road begins at Portsite, TH], a place called Nawapinaro. However, there were two young leaders [who had arrived from the East, TH] who wore "container" masks²², *mamokoro* that scared the [Nimy-Timuka, TH] people so that they moved their settlement outside of the Aikwa River area to the coast. The place that they moved to was called *Ndautiri*, which means the place

²² Using the words *sarung topeng*, he implied that the mask "contained" spirits.

where the Asmat murdered a boy [presumably a Kamoro, TH] on the beach.²³ As a result, the place was called *Ndautiri*. In actuality, these people were descendants of Nimy-Nawaripi when they all lived at Mile Two, [and later at] Camp Two on the Timika Road [and] at Pad Eleven where they lived alongside the river.²⁴ However, they [the Nimy] left the Nawaripi people...After the incident involving the two young leaders [e.g. the attack], they [the Nimy, TH] were uncertain as to whether or not they would depart from the Nimy Kampong at Nawapinaro...However, after the murder of two people²⁵, the Nawaripi forced the Nimy to settle elsewhere. Thus, the Nimy people moved to the place first called Timuka and subsequently called Nimy or Timika...(Fieldnotes 22 March 1996).

The location, known both as Nawapinaro and Mile Two, is said to have been where the ancestors of Timika had lived prior to the invasion of the Nawaripi communities from the East during the Utakae War (See Chapter One). When I asked the informant if this meant that Timika could rightfully use the area, he claimed that because his ancestors had planted sago and coconut trees at Nawapinaro, Timikans had rights of access to what they had planted. He went on to say that they could take their time harvesting the trees, implying that indeed the Timikans could live at Nawapinaro.²⁶ Apparently, however, Nawapinaro

²³ *Ndautiri* is literally the words *Ndau*, the Timika dialect version of *Nao* and *tiri*, which usually refers to sand or beach. Thus, the word *Ndautiri* likely referred to a beach location where someone was murdered. Nothing in the word inherently links the name to the Asmat.

²⁴ Here the informant described his ancestors as Nimy-Nawaripi, making an explicit connection between his ancestors and those of the Nawaripi who were the attacking party arriving from the east. Pad Eleven has consistently been acknowledged to be within the territory of the Tipuka communities, not Nawaripi. This claim did not appear to be contested by the Nawaripi Communities during my research.

²⁵ Presumably here he means the murder of two Nimy people as part of a revenge attack on all of the Utakae people. However, all of these movements were set into motion when the Utakae people murdered the mother's brother of the two young Nawaripi warriors who led the attack. He was murdered as revenge (*aopao*) for thefts from Utakae gardens perpetrated by the two Nawaripi warriors. The two young warriors had deceived their home community (Nawaripi) by not telling them the reason behind their uncle's murder, which triggered an errant counter attack, which caused the Utakae War.

²⁶ While coconut trees are commonly planted by individuals and usually remain the planter's property, I never encountered Kamoro actually planting sago. Clearing weeds and other plants from around the base of the tree marked ownership of individual sago trees. In Pouwer's thesis, he notes explicitly that his informants felt that their connection with Naowapinare via the *amoko-kwere* was not grounds for rights to the land (1955:94-95). Perhaps because there was no immediate political or economic value associated with the location, his informants had no reason to rationalise access. With regards to coconut trees, Nawaripi informants explained to me that as the result of intermarriage between a Nawaripi woman and a man from Omauga, the Nawaripi own coconut trees along a part of the coast that belongs to the Omauga people. According to

proved unsuitable as it was infested with mosquitos, forcing the Timika group to join the workers from the Atuka gorup on Karaka Island/*Nao Nokoro*.

While the workers from the Atuka and Timika groups used *amoko-kwere* to legitimate their squatting on Tipuka land, according to Kapeyau Freeport Management was more pro-active in its concern with land ownership. After asking his Kamoro labourers who had traditional rights to the area, John Currie requested permission from Pelipus Ateriapoka from Tipuka, to open up camps at Amamapare and *Kamp Satu*. According to Kapeyau, permission was granted. Currie also compensated several “Tipukans” for coconut trees felled by the company at *Kamp Satu*.²⁷

INVESTIGATING THE FIRST FORMAL KAMORO COMPENSATION CLAIM

Despite John Currie’s sincere attempt to make reparations with the impacted Tipukans, some Kamoro lodged an official compensation claim. Already by late December 1970, Kamoro representatives had presented Freeport management at Amamapare and Jayapura and the Provincial Government in Jayapura with a compensation claim on behalf of the Tipuka community for damages caused by camp and road clearings and construction.

While Tipukans themselves may have initiated some form of protest, the investigative report suggests that the compensation letter itself was actually penned by Kamoro from outside of Freeport’s Project Area. Although some of the claims demonstrated a complete lack of familiarity with the areas in question, others seemed particularly relevant. Based on his report, the representative of the Indonesian Provincial Government investigating the claim on behalf of the Directorate of West Irian Agrarian Affairs, Muljono, appears to have conducted a

them, both sides acknowledge that the tree and its fruits belong to the Nawaripi, but the land remains the property of Omauga (fieldnotes, March 1997).

²⁷ Of the men known to have received compensation, a government report listed four names: Iventius Natipea, Otto Barapun, Robus Tepaja, and Kojus Simons. Only the first of these names strikes me as obviously Kamoro. It is unclear whether the others were in fact Kamoro or people from other areas such as the Kei Islands or Ambon. This likely was the beginning of one of Freeport’s ongoing problems of determining the “correct” people to compensate.

fairly comprehensive review of the case. As an indication of Freeport's commitment, the Vice President of PT Freeport Indonesia, Ali Budiardjo, made a special trip to the project area, which by then was known internally to Freeport employees as "Jobsite," to assist in the investigation and resolution of the problem. Muljono also indicated that from the contents of a letter from Freeport to the Chairman of the Department of Mines in Jakarta and Budiardjo's presence, he believed that "Freeport was seriously ready to settle the case" (ibid:3).

Muljono investigated the environment independently and he discussed the issue with Kamoro at *Kamp Satu*, Tipuka village, and in the sub-district seat at Kokonao where he tried to gather the original signatories to the letter. He noted those claims that appeared to have been true, which centred mostly around Bechtel/Freeport's felling of hardwoods between Camp Eleven and Camp Twenty-two that were used for temporary bridge construction and the clearing of sago trees for road construction. At Tipuka, Muljono managed to interview several of the 169 villagers, including the "village chief" Alo Nataiku, regarding the claims.²⁸ Alo described his displeasure with the Freeport Project to Muljono, citing the loss of sago trees for road construction as Tipuka's principal (financial) grievance (Muljono 1971:5). Another grievance documented by Muljono was that Freeport had covered up a (former) cemetery at *Kamp Satu* with felled trees (ibid). As compensation for both, the Tipukans sought one "landing ship" [diesel launch?] and one "sawing machine" [chainsaw or sawmill?]. Ultimately, Muljono resolved that appropriate "recognition" for the claim was two outboard motors and one "sawing machine," nearly what the community had requested. What his letter does not mention, however, is whether or not the government agreed with his assessment and whether Freeport eventually did pay the compensation.

Beyond the land and resource compensation claims, the letter also included questions about access to medical support and day-labour wages. While a doctor's records at Portside demonstrated that indeed indigenous people were being treated, the issue of wages and employment did arise in Muljono's

²⁸ This is the same Alo Nataiku (Wania) discussed in Chapter Two who continued to challenge Freeport for compensation until his death in 1998.

meetings in Kokonao where a man described as the “promoter” for East Mimika, A. Mamejao, complained about Freeport’s hiring practices (for regular employees, not casual labourers):

Freeport...hired Irianese labours [sic (labourers)] and drivers from the north coast while Freeport’s location is in the Kokonao district. (North Coast Irianese = ones who originates [sic] from Biak and Djajapura [sic]) [rather than hiring local people, TH] (A. Mamejao in Muljono 1971:8).²⁹

Even after the compensation investigation, there were still no indications that Tipukans were actually working for the project. Other Kamoro served as labourers unloading and transporting equipment and supplies between *Kamp Satu* and Amamapare and they assisted in the construction of the port facility. Asked by Bechtel to gather more labourers, Kapeyau and his colleagues initiated an indigenous hiring scheme that sowed the seeds for increasingly complex internal Kamoro socio-political problems. For these men, kin and allied relations took precedence for their recruitment practices over appeasing the contemporary inhabitants of the area. As a result, Kamoro from outside of the area increasingly gained employment and other opportunities within the Freeport Project Area. None of the approximately seventy men that the Timika and Atuka groups had recruited were from the settlements acknowledged as having direct rights of access and ownership over the land and resources within the Freeport Project Area.

BEYOND THE KAMORO...

In addition to the coastal infrastructure projects, one of the other major lowland activities within Freeport’s Project Area centred on the construction of an access road from Amamapare toward the highland mine area and the clearing of a new

²⁹ The reason for this was likely not conscious prejudice on the part of Freeport and/or Bechtel against Kamoro employees, but that all regular employees needed to be hired through a manpower company. The closest manpower company, PT Buma Kumawa, was based in Biak; therefore all workers had to go through testing and registration in Biak, regardless of point of origin. This set a

airfield. While the people from the coastal settlements were eager to work with Freeport and Bechtel on the coast, they proved less willing to work deeper into Tipuka's territory. As a result, Freeport and Bechtel recruited highland Amungme from the resettlement project at Akimuga (who had originated from the Noemba Valley) with whom the preliminary Freeport-OBM expedition had previously worked, to assist with the heavy labour.³⁰

During the initial years of the arduous task of carving a road out of the swampy lowlands, Amungme labourers who were predominantly from the Noemba Valley had already migrated to the project (Cook 1988:28). According to Moses Kilangin, already by 1970, 250 Amungme were employed working either at "Camp Two" or at "Mile 50" in the foothills (in Mealey 1996:322). Following the arrival of another wave of Noemba Valley/Akimuga Amungme migrants, the Amungme established a more permanent settlement in the lowlands adjacent to the airfield that they had recently carved out of the jungle (ibid). Freeport contribution of an access road seemed to make the Amungme settlement official.

Constructed to accommodate larger, conventional aircraft, this strip was completed in 1971 after which the Timika-Keakwa airfield was completely

pattern for Papuans from the Biak and Sentani areas to obtain work with Freeport and their contractors.

³⁰ Planned and begun in the 1950s under the Dutch administration, the resettlement project was continued under the Indonesian administration. At the time of the 1960 Freeport-OBM expedition, Amungme had already been preparing to migrate to the Akimuga resettlement project (UABS 1998a:28). Between 1960 and 1964 Amungme moved to Akimuga by way of Belakmakema and Putsinara at the base of the mountains. At its height, as many as 3000 Amungme lived in the Akimuga project. About two-thirds of them had originated from the Noemba Valley and the other third from the Tsinga Valley. It is also quite possible that Amungme cosmology and expectations linked to millennial *Hai* movements may have played a role in their willingness to live and accept work in the lowlands. Ballard et al. note that Amungme of the Tsinga and Noema areas grew impatient during the planning stages of the Akimuga resettlement. As a result, they began to migrate to the lowlands by themselves (UABS 1998a:26). They also document that the Amungme and the Damal received Christianity framed by their understandings of *hai* (ibid). Cosmologically, the Amungme interpret the entire landscape from their highland valleys to the coast as anthropomorphically overlaid with representations of an ancestral female spirit (Hafild in Beanal 1997:xx-xxi). The same report also documents *Hai* movements around the same time period in 1956 (Maingun *Hai*) and 1966-67 (Ndapu Ndiame *Hai*) and 1969 (UABS 1998a:20, 113).

abandoned by Freeport.³¹ By the end of 1972, the entire access road was finished, as was all of the major construction necessary for the mine to begin production. In December, the first 10,000 tons of concentrate were shipped from Amamapare to a Japanese smelter (Mealey 1996:322).

Meanwhile, the permanent Amungme settlement marked a new period of “foreigners” living in the lowlands. It is difficult to pinpoint precisely which Kamoro communities considered the area around the newly constructed airport to fall within their territories. Its location just west of the Aikwa River and near the headwaters of the Wania and Kauga Rivers places it potentially within the access rights areas of the Nawaripi, Tipuka, Hiripao, and Kaugapu communities. None of these communities appear to have been involved in the foundational stages of the port and road-building projects. According to Cook, the Amungme, in particular those from the Tsinga and Wa Valleys, already believed that this area was their land, which would ultimately lead to internal Amungme conflict between the Tsinga and Wa Amungme on the one hand and the Noemba Amungme on the other (Cook 1988:42).

To commemorate the beginning of production at the Freeport facility, President Suharto arrived in early 1973. During his visit to the recently completed highland town site area near the mine, he christened the highland town site “Tembagapura,” Indonesian for Copper City. On that same occasion, he also re-named the province from West Irian to Irian Jaya, Victorious Irian. Freeport, Tembagapura, and Irian Jaya were from that point forward united as direct outcomes of the Suharto regime and more broadly as solidly part of the Indonesian Nation.

That same year also saw the establishment of a formal government presence inside of the Freeport Project Area and the arrival of some of the first non-Papuan

³¹ Bomb-craters in the Timika-Keakwa airfield filled with water at high tide were a daily testament to the heavy bombing the airfield had suffered from allied aircraft during World War II (Wilson 1981:166). The airfield was so prone to flooding that usage was restricted to aquatic aircraft. Thus, Freeport specially purchased an aquatic PBV airplane formerly owned by Howard Hughes to shuttle supplies from Darwin to the coastal Timika airstrip (ibid:166-167).

Indonesians to spontaneously migrate to the Freeport project.³² Planning a sub-district (*kecamatan*) base along the Wania River approximately seventeen kilometres south of the new airport, it appears that the new local officials, inspired by President Suharto, began their responsibilities by inscribing the landscape with “appropriate” names. The Amungme settlement adjacent to the “Timika” airfield, which had locally become known as *Kwamki*, an *Amungkal* (the Amungme language) word meaning “bird of paradise,” was officially rechristened *Harapan*, Indonesian for “Hope.” For the newly established regional governmental office location along the Wania River, the government opted for a local flare with the Indonesianisation of the Wania cultural hero Mapurpiu; naming the new sub-district capital Mapuru-Jaya, victorious Mapuru.

Despite numerous potential social and political implications of these new names, arguably no name would have more symbolic significance to the social and political future than the one used for the new airfield. Unknown to the Timika villagers, Freeport and Bechtel named the airport after the only other landing strip in the region; they called this new airfield “Timika.”

In 1960, Natalis Nokoryao had announced his *imakatiri* that a boat would arrive at Timika with important goods. He also said that Nateimi, a Timika ancestor, would quickly spread the goods throughout Mimika, and ultimately be very influential. Within the course of five years, the bulldozers, men and equipment that arrived via boat in Timika starting in 1967 had indeed been influential. By 1972 a road linked the newly-constructed port facility at Amamapare with the interior mine-site above 4000 metres, symbolically opening up a link between the region and the larger outside world. The conduit of

³² According to Cook, the initial non-Papuan migrants were from the Kei Islands and from Sulawesi (1988:87). The nature of her information suggests a perspective gleaned almost entirely from Amungme informants. Given the intensive interactions between the Kamoro and outsiders and the involvement the Dutch administration and the Catholic Church in the region, Kei Islanders certainly pre-dated the arrival of Freeport in what later became their Project Area. Also, mentioned previously in this chapter, hundreds of “Indonesians” already lived in Mimika in 1961. The final government report notes the presence of Chinese Merchants in various settlements, including ones well inside of the Freeport Project Area at Waoneripi where Gan Hen Jan had a house and a store and in Tipuka where Tan Goan Tjoan was in the process of constructing a store (Mampioer 1961:19).

information and access to the region was Timika. Under the circumstances, it appears that Natalis Nokoryao's *imakatiri* had indeed been realised, though for whose benefit remained unclear.

The January 1974 Agreement

Notwithstanding the activities of Kamoro communities on the coast, and their potential rights of access to the areas within the Freeport Project Area, the factors most influential in the development of the area surrounding the "Timika" airfield are most closely related to the activities of the Amungme and the Free Papua separatist movement, the *Organisasi Papua Merdeka* (or OPM). As these activities ultimately impacted relationships between Freeport, the Government and all of the local communities and shaped the modern "Timika" town, they are worth reviewing. Since 1967, Freeport had met with opposition from those Amungme communities living in the Wa Valley beneath the Ertsberg deposit (Wilson 1981:168-169).³³ Though initial protests were quelled thanks to the assistance of Moses Kilangin (*ibid*), Amungme resentment of the mining operations continued (see Pogolamun 1984). On the eve of the mine's opening in 1972, Amungme and other highlands employees working at the Ertsberg camp had their employment terminated and their housing destroyed (UABS 1998a:113). As Amungme protests continued, the military increasingly stepped in to put them down (*ibid*). By 1973, Freeport had sought the assistance of a John Ellenberger, a missionary among the Damal who was fluent in the Amungkal/Damal language (Wilson 1981:217), to help quell Amungme protests at a Tsinga Valley exploration camp.

In 1974 Freeport, the Indonesian government, and Amungme community representatives moved to settle the disputes through negotiation. These

³³ According to Ballard, Amungme reactions to the mine and its Indonesian employees resulted in the deaths of up to a total of eight people during two separate incidents in 1968 and 1973. It is unclear if the deaths were Amungme or other non-Papuan Indonesian employees or both, but the incidents highlight a tension between the Amungme (and more generally Papuan workers) and the non-Papuan Indonesian employees of Freeport (UABS 1998a:29).

negotiations culminated in the now infamous “January 1974 Agreement,” signed by representatives of all three parties. In it the company agreed to build a limited number of schools, clinics, houses, and market facilities in the Wa Valley and Tsinga Valleys as well as at Kwamki. They also agreed to provide employment opportunities for the local population, and government facilities at these locations. In exchange, the Amungme recognised/agreed to: (a) allow mining at Ertsberg, Tenggogoma (in Tsinga), and other locations including Tembapapura in accordance with the earlier agreement between the Indonesian Government and Freeport and that (b) local people would not enter the work and accommodation areas at Tembapapura. It was also stipulated that the security of the project would be upheld in accordance with a provincial law established on 1 April 1973 and carried out by the “Special Police Post at the Freeport Indonesia Project.”

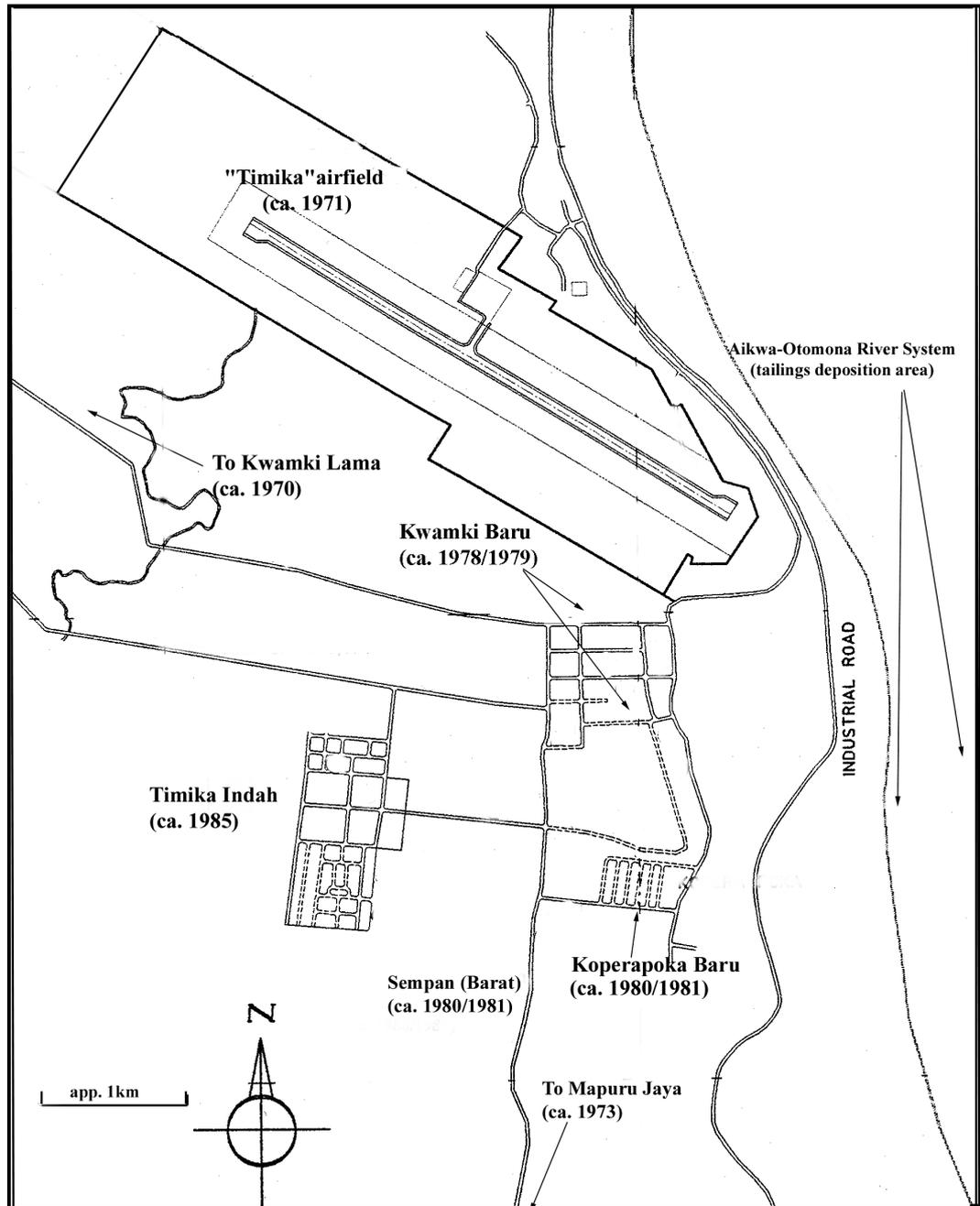
Attachments to the agreement clarified the boundaries of the Freeport Project Area. In addition to the Ertsberg and Tenggogoma sites, the agreement outlined the inclusion of the area around the mill (*pabrik penggilingan*) and Tembapapura town, including the upstream portion of the valley, all areas cleared for the length of the road, the area around the Timika airfield, and the areas surrounding the facilities of Pad Eleven and Portsite (Amamapare). The agreement and all attachments were signed with fingerprints on behalf of the Amungme by Tuarek Narkime (Wa), Naimun Narkime (Wa), Arek Beanal (Tsinga), Pitarogome Beanal (Tsinga), and Paulas Magal (Wa).³⁴ Tom Beanal, an Amungme representative of the Indonesian government during the agreement later wrote of how he had also spoken persuasively to the community about the benefits of the company working in the area (Beanal 1992:7). Ironically, Beanal, who subsequently served as head of the Tembapapura government post for eight months after the signing of the document, received no copy of the January Agreement and was unaware of its formal contents (*ibid*).

³⁴ A sixth Amungme signatory’s name, Kawal Beanal, appeared on the documents despite the fact that he was not listed as a constituent of the Amungme representative party set out on the first page of the agreement. Amungme informants consistently point out that although they signed the 1974 Agreement, they did so under duress due to military and government pressure.

One of the most significant aspects of this agreement, from the perspective of the Kamoro, is that not one Kamoro representative was included in any part of it. Freeport was granted access rights to the entire Project Area, from the coast to the mountains, by Amungme representatives. While I will not debate the issue of whether the Amungme had been fairly compensated or apprised of the legal details of their “agreement,” one fact remains glaringly important for the Kamoro: they were not even mentioned in the agreement. This agreement appears to be indicative of future interactions between Freeport and their “host” communities that would consistently favour engagement with the more politically active and aggressive Amungme over the Kamoro. This of course does not mean that the Amungme felt satisfied with their relationships to both the Indonesian government and to Freeport. Indeed, their displeasure with events following the 1974 agreement highlighted and exacerbated relationships among all of the groups interacting on the ground. These post 1974 actions are what ultimately gave shape to the resettlement projects that became “Timika.”

THE AFTERMATH OF THE AGREEMENT: THE VILLAGES OF TIMIKA

Although Freeport appears to have honoured the material aspects of its agreement with the Amungme by constructing schools, clinics, churches and government offices in Wa and Tsinga in the highlands, and Kwamki in the lowlands, the Amungme continued to feel radically disadvantaged by the presence of the company. Their formal complaints to Freeport and the government regarding land encroachment, hiring biases, radically differing treatment of other-island Indonesians among other issues, received no suitable responses (Berita Oikoumene May 1981 as cited in Budiardjo and Liong 1988:35). While the Freeport project at the time may have been relatively small in terms of economic value, compared to for example the Bougainville copper mine at the time, it was certainly perceived as a symbol of the inequities that existed between the Indonesian State and the Papuan people. Amungme displeasure with the inequities coincided with the activities of the Free Papua Movement (the



Map 8: Sketch of initial core Timika settlements.

Organisasi Papua Merdeka, or OPM). As a result, in June 1977, the OPM organised a series of attacks, which originated in the Amungme lowland resettlement project at Akimuga. Initially the separatists attacked the Akimuga police post; elsewhere, in Ilaga, they blocked the airfield with wooden stakes. Military retaliation for these acts forced the OPM to flee into the jungle, only to re-emerge for a more symbolic act of sabotage. In July, the OPM saboteurs severed the Freeport Pipeline that transports copper and gold slurry down to Amamapare. They also attacked other parts of Freeport's infrastructure, destroying bridges and setting fire to oil storage facilities. A schoolteacher from Akimuga estimated that twenty-five percent of the entire Amungme ethnic group participated in the two attacks. Attitudes of the few Amungme with whom I interacted in Timika suggest that his estimate was conservative.

Army reprisals for the sabotage of Freeport property were severe. Two OV-10 Bronco bombers based at the Timika airfield strafed Akimuga and Ilaga; Wa, the Amungme settlement closest to Tembagapura was mortared, and much of Kwamki was leveled (Tapol 1983:40). Buildings constructed by Freeport as part of their compliance with the 1974 Agreement were either leveled or occupied by the Indonesian military (Budiardjo and Liong 1988:35). In the aftermath of the attacks, many Amungme and members of the OPM fled to the interior jungles to avoid further retribution by the Indonesian military.

Planning for the three villages that make up the contemporary "town" of Timika was an immediate outgrowth of the 1977 attacks. Beginning in 1978 Freeport and the provincial government began to plan the resettlement of 350 families from the Wa Valley (and others who had fled from Kwamki) to a lowland area south of the airfield (Budiardjo and Liong 1988:35, Wilson 1981:221). By late 1979, the plan had resulted in the resettlement of fifty Amungme families from Akimuga to a newly opened lowland settlement known as *Kwamki Baru* (New Kwamki).³⁵ Though many Amungme were reluctant to

³⁵ The first Kwamki, which later became known as Kwamki Lama, had apparently been razed by the Indonesian military in the aftermath of the events of 1977.

relocate due to the warmer climate and less fertile soil of Kwamki Baru, relocations continued.³⁶

The other two villages that form the core of the contemporary Timika “town” were also formed in direct response to OPM activity. An OPM track linked Akimuga to the lowland parts of the Freeport Project Area via the Sempan villages of Inauga, Omauga, and Otakwa and via the Kamoro settlements at Koperapoka. Cook (1988:29) reports that the lowlanders in these communities “had no choice in the matter [of their resettlement]” and that they were moved for security reasons because the government suspected that OPM activities centred in these villages. This is by no means an indication that the lowlanders were part of or sympathetic with the OPM. My informants from these locations described to me less than cordial relationships with the mostly highlander-OPM people with whom they came into contact (theft of resources and threats of violence for failure to join were the main complaints). As a result, representatives from the Sempan settlements of Omauga, Inauga, and Otakwa and from the Kamoro village at Koperapoka ultimately requested relocation.³⁷

During 1977, the Nawaripi Kamoro living at Koperapoka (also known as Tirimami) were initially bothered by OPM activists enroute from Akimuga to the Freeport Project. Showing no desire to cooperate with the OPM, and thus draw military reprisals, the Nawaripi fled to Uamiua, a coastal fishing location better known by its Indonesian name *Pasir Hitam* (literally Black Sand). The Nawaripi remained at *Pasir Hitam* until 1981 when, according to my informants, their village head made a formal request to the local government for resettlement to a location where his community could access social and economic development

³⁶ The ultimate forces that played into Amungme relocation are more complex. According to Cook, Freeport officials made clear in 1980 that they were opposed to any forced relocation of the Amungme in the Wa Valley and they felt that the best possibilities for the Amungme in the future would be gained through education. Indonesian government officials agreed, but they refused to provide schooling in the Wa Valley. Thus, if they wanted an education, the Amungme had to relocate either to the lowland resettlements near the Timika airfield or other villages with schools (Cook 1988:85).

³⁷ Elsewhere in the same thesis, Cook describes that villagers in both lowland locations had in fact requested relocation because they did not want any association with the OPM (1988:29, 86).

opportunities (e.g. schooling and access to the emerging Freeport-related market). Under a cooperative program with the Indonesian military called ABRI *Masuk Desa* (often abbreviated AMD, the phrase literally means the Indonesian Armed Forces enter the village) a new settlement was established south of Kwamki Baru and with the name Koperapoka Baru, New Koperapoka.³⁸

For the Nawaripi, this was the first of many ill-conceived resettlement schemes. First of all, it appears that only the Waoneripi kampong was relocated (e.g. the Neyeripi kampong was not included). Second, with no training the Waoneripi were not capable of obtaining work at the new site. To feed themselves, and to gather sago and fish to sell at the market, they left Koperapoka Baru for extended periods of time. Ultimately their extended absences cost them most of the village when in 1984 or 1985 their village head, Leo Mamiri, sold the majority of their houses to spontaneous migrants primarily from outside of Irian Jaya.³⁹ In response, some of the Nawaripi set up temporary buildings adjacent to Koperapoka Baru while the majority returned to *Pasir Hitam* (for a similar account of these events see Rahangiar 1993:28-29).

The story from the perspective of the Western Sempan is similar. Their stay in the area close to the airfield was even more short-lived than that of the Nawaripi, as explained by the “chief” of Otakwa Nikolaus Irahewa:

They [the Otakwa people] went to Timika in 1980 with the Inawkans [sic Inaugans] and the Omawkans [sic Omaugans] and settled in a village called Sempan [Barat]. The three groups experienced many difficulties. They had to walk a long way in order to go to Mapero [sic Mapuru] Jaya, a small town, paddling their canoes to Pad Eleven. Many starved in Timika because they could not find sago or fish. Their sago lands and rivers were too far away. To gather sago from another tribe’s land is not part of their [our] custom. And the other tribe[s] would be furious with them. In 1982, they were moved back to their original homeland by the local commander of the army when starvation resulted. They were moved because of concern from Father Kees van Dijk, who lived in the area at the time (Nikolaus Irahewa as cited in Manembu 1991:16-17).

Rahangiar also confirms that the village head of Koperapoka requested government assistance to relocate (1993:23).

³⁸ This is a reflection of the official social/political role of the Indonesian armed forces to assist in the social and physical development of the country. In Indonesian, this is commonly known as “*dwifungsi*” or dual function.

³⁹ According to Cook, the outsiders were primarily from Sulawesi (1988:xvi).

Thus, although one could argue any number of historical moments for the founding of “Timika town,” the most immediate impetus for its establishment was a response to the activities of the OPM in 1977. By 1982, the three villages that form the core of what is now referred to as the “Timika town” were established as resettlement locations for Kamoro and Amungme communities. With assistance from Freeport, the government established two schools, two churches, a public meeting building, a clinic, test farms and model homes (Cook 1988:86). Eventually Dani and Damal migrants, Freeport and the Indonesian government assisted in the resettlement of the first Kwamki, now known as Kwamki Lama (Old Kwamki).

With all of the resettlements, land ownership issues remained unclear. The only reference to a land release for the immediate areas was in a 1984 Indonesian government planning report in which the *Camat*, the sub-district head, wrote:

All of the area planned for the city [Timika] is national land that has been released by the Amung-me and Mapuru tribes (Kadarisman 1984 in Cook 1988:88).

Strikingly, the *Camat* seemed to be engaging *amoko-kwere* when he referred to the “Mapuru tribes”. Presumably he meant communities primarily along the Wania River for whom Mapuru is the central *amoko-we* and *taparamako*. Cook then reports that the *Kapao-we*, the people from the Kamoro village of Kaugapu, were acknowledged by the government as having ownership over the “Timika” area and the rights to accept compensation on behalf of the “Mapuru tribes”. She explains however the “leader” of the *Kapao-we* was only involved in releasing the land in 1985, a year after the *Camat* claimed the land release had already been effected:

In 1985...Johannes Java [sic, Jawa or Yawa], leader of the Kapawei [sic, *Kapao-we*] was for the first time being flown to Jakarta to sign the papers and see the big city. The Amung-me, having caught word of this, were very angry at having been ignored in the process. Deikme [an Amungme] and his followers swore that they would meet the returning flight and shoot Johannes Java [sic] with bows and arrows when he stepped off the plane (Cook 1988:88).

Though this confrontation never occurred, it was evident that land around the Timika airfield was contested. Having arrived from the East with raiding

Nawaripi communities, then having walked overland to the Kauga River (hence the tribal name “*Kapao-we*” which literally means people from the interior), widely known migration histories held that the *Kapao-we* were among the latest of the Kamoro groups to arrive along the Wania River. The communities of Hiripao, Tipuka, and Nawaripi appear to have had equally valid claims to the area near the airfield. Having arrived in an area that appeared to be unimproved and uninhabited, either as part of the initial labour-force for Freeport and Bechtel or as the result of Freeport and government relocations, the Amungme clearly felt that they too had a legitimate claim to the land near the airfield.

...and then came the trans(local)migrants

With the assistance of multi-lateral international funding, the Indonesian government began sending transmigrants from overpopulated regions in western Indonesia to the Timika area during the mid-1980s. They opened the first transmigration settlement, *Satuan Pemukiman Satu*, more commonly referred to by its acronym SP1, in 1985 (see Rahangiar 1993). Numerous reports have highlighted the broad social, political, environmental and economic impacts, and implications, of the Indonesian Government’s multi-laterally funded transmigration program. Socio-politically, the most common focus is on the so-called *Javanisasi* or Javanisation of the region. While I do not contest these broader socio-political impacts, I point out briefly that they tend to obscure the more localised impacts. For Kamoro indigenous to the Freeport Project Area, one of the most significant impacts is not the arrival of western Indonesian transmigrants, but the participation in transmigration projects by Kamoro from outside of Freeport’s Project Area as local transmigrants or *translocals*. It also appears that spontaneous migrants to the Freeport Project Area, both from within and from outside of Papua, have had a far more significant impact on the daily lives of the Kamoro than have the transmigrants. Around the same time that SP1 was being opened up, another wave of Kamoro spontaneous migrants from Timika Pantai and Kokonao settled on Karaka Island.

While detailed information regarding *translocal* Kamoro migrants has yet to be comprehensively compiled the available information points to the expansion of Kamoro from the two “allied groups” from Timika and Keakwa discussed earlier in this chapter. By the late 1980s, with Freeport’s announcement of the Grasberg deposit, which contains the largest gold reserve and third-largest copper reserve of any mine in the world (Mealey 1996:136), the Indonesian government stepped up its transmigration program and the volume of spontaneous migrants increased dramatically. Though a thorough settlement history has yet to be compiled and is beyond the scope of this thesis, I do discuss some of the Kamoro communities in the next chapter.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

In 1960, Natalis Nokoryao’s *imakatiri* anticipated Freeport’s arrival at the coastal Timika airfield. Whether or not the community viewed their appearance in 1967 as a realisation of that *imakatiri*, it is not surprising that villagers from Timika followed the project when it shifted its focus to the *Port Site* and *Kamp Satu* areas. The fact that the company had entered the region through their village may have been significant enough to provide a rationale for the move of a number of workers into other territories; or at least it made the risk of confrontation with the other villages one worth taking. In either case, the movement of the Timika and Atuka groups to the Portsite area set a precedent for Kamoro communities to migrate to the Freeport Project Area. Both the Timika and Atuka groups used *amoko-kwere* to legitimate their presence inside the Freeport Project Area. They initiated processes that would ultimately serve to undermine the rights and resources of the two Kamoro communities most directly impacted by Freeport, the Tipuka and the Nawaripi. While the process started out gradually, the actions of the Timika and Atuka groups snowballed. Eventually, as I will address in the next chapter, these groups also participated in transmigration projects as *translocals*, strengthening their position in the greater “Timika” area. Though it is difficult to say with certainty, we can speculate that the Timika (Pantai)

community may have considered the spread of wealth in the region to be a direct result of Nokoryao's *imakatiri*, which may have served as a charter for their rights to benefits from the Freeport Project. The renaming of the airfield Timika may in fact have served as a symbolic validation of that community's expansion.

The arrival of Amungme communities both as spontaneous migrants and as labourers for the Freeport-Bechtel road and airfield project adds another level of complexity to the situation. With Freeport assistance, Amungme communities from Akimuga, who had originated from the Noemba and Tsinga Valleys, established permanent settlements near the airstrip. For them, this legitimated their right of access to the area. While Amungme informants insist that there were no Kamoro living near the airfield area in the early 1970s, my Kamoro informants state that this was certainly not an indication of a lack of usage or ownership of the area. Kamoro have described the arrival of the Amungme in the lowlands surrounding the airfield as a blatant and careless encroachment on their land and resources.

From the Amungme perspective on their migrations to the lowlands and on land issues there I find conflicting arguments. For some Amungme, migrations to the lowlands may have been interpreted as having to do with millennial *hai* movements. For others, the entire area from the mountains to the coast was viewed symbolically as an ancestral mother, which again would suggest their rights of access to the land. Internal political engagement between Amungme from the Noemba Valley Amungme and those from the Wa Valley also appears to have figured into moves to the lowlands. Cook suggests Wa and Tsinga Valley Amungme viewed the migration of Noemba Valley Amungme to the "Timika" area as a direct confrontation and violation of their land.

Finally, the resettlements in the aftermath of 1977 Amungme activities added another political overtone to the establishment of Timika. From the perspective of Kamoro (and Sempan) communities, resettlement was viewed both as a development activity and as a way to protect their communities from the OPM. For Amungme communities, resettlement in Kwamki Baru seems to have resulted in at least the perception of being placed under the constant surveillance

of the Indonesian Government and the military. In the aftermath of the relocation to Kwamki Baru, with the assistance of Freeport, the Government transformed Kwamki Lama into a new resettlement project primarily for Dani people with whom the Amungme have an antagonistic, if not adversarial, relationship.

From the start of the development of the Freeport Project, both the mining company and the Indonesian Government inadvertently assisted some communities in violating the territorial boundaries of other communities. For the Kamoro the process began from the East and the West. In the East, Freeport employed Western Sempan communities for assistance on their initial expedition. I view it as incredibly symbolic that in Freeport's account of the expedition (Wilson 1981), the author explicitly describes flying over the Nawaripi communities on the way. Indeed, the Nawaripi would be "flown over" by numerous communities seeking access to the Freeport Project Area in the coming years. From the West, perhaps bolstered by Nokoryao's *imakatiri*, communities from Keakwa, Timika, Aika-Wapuka, and Atuka rationalised their own impositions on Tipuka's territory via *amoko-kwere*. Beyond these communities, first Amungme, then Dani, then transmigrants and local migrants began arriving in the region, each making claims to the greater Timika area. Most generally then, Timika was founded upon various Papuan communities rationalising access to benefits from Freeport in any way possible. These migrations however, proved only the small-scale beginning of much larger socio-political developments in "Timika." As Freeport gradually increased its production, it attracted an increasingly steady stream of spontaneous migrants, Papuan and non-Papuan, to the area. At the same time, the government began to implement its scheme of transmigration projects in the greater Timika area. As the next chapter addresses, Freeport's increased production and the arrival of spontaneous and official transmigrants multiplied the social, political, and economic complexities upon which the Timika town was formed.