# MISCONCEPTIONS

The South Pacific has been a laboratory for social anthropologists for the best of a century. Theoreticians have come and gone, but the field still yields rich data and as ever raises questions on the whence and the how of islands societies. Complex intellectual factors stemming from our own western culture, some of which are still stuck onto shreds of the former colonial domination, have acted, in all sorts of unconscious ways, as a brake on better and sounder knowledge.

On the other hand, island societies have never been exactly sure of what could be safely entrusted in the hands of anthropological research. They have tended to resist its inquisitive curiosity. The islanders have kindly answered what questions were put to them, but not those which were not asked from them. Some relevant questions have been long to come out in an environment dominated by the *a priori* and politically motivated pronouncements of Emile Durckheim on society and religion[1], permeating British Social Anthropology through the writings of R. Radcliffe-Brown.

On the other side what some non anthropologists have written still stands today : James Morrison on Tahiti, Thomas Williams on Fiji, William Mariner on Tonga, not to speak of the Hawaian authors who have furnished us with the only existing base for learned dissertations on what were their society and culture : David Malo, John Papa I'i, Samuel Kamakau[2]. A most useful early account of New Caledonia is by the Rarotongan *London Missionary Society* teacher Ta'unga[3]. The recently published writings by Bwesou Eurijisi (during the years 1908-1920) contain the most detailed accounts about essential aspects of the Kanak culture of New Caledonia. In page after page of his *Notes ethnologiques néo-calédoniennes*, Maurice Leenhardt has simply reproduced Bwesou's written text.

Checking in the field the information published by W. H. Rivers[4], who for years roamed around Melanesia on the ss. *Southern Cross*, working with the Anglican *Melanesian Mission* people owning the ship, shows that a lot of what these

missionaries knew was useful. Rivers could expand on it, starting from his genealogical method. If one can easily still add to it details of varying importance, Rivers's information remains astonishingly sound — his interpretations being altogether another matter.

The way publications are received by the specialist public has something to do with what information is chosen to fit in the pre-conceptions of the moment and used to further theoretical research. Margaret Mead's third husband, Gregory Bateson[5] came up with very interesting data establishing the link between land tenure claims and myths among the mid-dle Sepik valley Iatmul in Northern New Guinea. Nobody took the bait at the time. Douglas Oliver[6] made the same demonstration in 1949 for the Siuai of Bougainville without ringing any more echoes. Adolphus Elkin[7] had shown the same link between territorial claims and sacred sites among the aborigines of Northern South Australia already in 1931. Anthropologists did not know how to tackle land tenure.

There are some good reasons to try and take stock[8]. I have been working in and out of the field since 1947, accumulating data, checking and eventually throwing away invalid information and theory to try and gain sounder knowledge, finding each year that there was so much more to learn. I will attempt here to point to a few more or less untrodden paths or blind alleys. Many of the examples given will be taken from Vanuatu and New Caledonia, in as much as they seem unknown to the vast majority of non French authors and are more or less always absent from the stock taking papers published in English. One of them referred to New Caledona as a tribal society and left it at that, content with making use of the very concept presiding to the judgment made on Kanak by the colonial system defining in legal terms the tribe as the land owning unit. The governor whose signature was on the order-in-council expressing this judgment had no idea of what could be such a tribe. All he knew was that primitive people were meant to have tribes, and that conficating land from a tribe was an easier way than doing it piecemeal from any number of individual landowners.

*Everywhere a numbers game*

In the present privileged field of anthropological action, the New Guinea Highlands societies are endlessly recomposing themselves under the continuous aggressive assault of the internal massive migrations going from west to east and following the valleys downwards, displacing enfeebled lineages, sending them to find a new place to live and obliging them to band with others and reinterpret

their composite culture traits so as to reformulate a new coherent social whole[9]. When did this process begin is unknown, except that it could have had something to do with the introduction of the sweet potatoe in Indonesia by the Portuguese, its adoption by the West New Guinea mountain people, and the fact that *kumala* agriculture, more resistant to cold, only needing a slight readaptation from the neolithic taro cultivation techniques, allowed for greater numbers of people and tended thus to create, valley after valley, a situation of population explosion, and a need to spill over into the next river system[10].

The social consequences of demographic change have been underestimated in many ways[11]. Norma McArthur was thinking before her untimely death that the impact of depopulation, as described earlier by missionaries, traders, administrators and such anthropologists as W. H. Rivers[12] and A. B. Deacon[13], had been exaggerated.

The fact is that former doomed societies are still in existence, although some have been over the last century in a rather sorry state. Rivers's contention was that islanders were prone to a kind of cultural despair in the dominant presence of white men's culture and because of this stopped having children. This judgment is born in many genealogies where one notes, at the successive generation levels before and around the turn of the century, a great number of couples devoid of children, or with a very small number of them, some presumably adopted. The Rivers' published genealogies[14] are good material and do witness to that situation. They can be easily checked upon and added to in the field, as much for all the lateral lines he was little interested in as for adding the more recent generations.

The explanation is medical. Anthropologist have not usually had the training to look into this side of things. Pacific islanders rarely contracted syphilis, because having had yaws in their childhood gave them the benefit of a little known cross immunity with this dreaded disease. Syphilis and yaws both have as their cause more or less the same traeponema, presumably prehistoric and having its origin in Asia, at a time neither the Pacific nor the Americas had yet been settled by man. It is worth noting that syphilis transmitted by the mother in the womb to the child takes on the appearance of yaws in the adult, causing nasty open scars on the feet and the face.

The lasting scourge introduced has been gonorhoea, against which the Pacific islanders produced no antibodies. Gonorrhoea created metritis in women, with the result they would bear no children. This permanent factor has been ignored by most authors[15], who carefully list the series of different epidemics, because of their dramatic and immediate effect, but do not seem to understand this sim-

plest of factors, maybe through a form of victorianism dragging on, partly because of the constant confusion between gonorrhea and syphilis, and between yaws and leprosis due to the appearance of individuals having their faces badly scarred in both cases. Male medical doctors of the time, and even more recent ones, have tended to underestimate the influence of gonorrhoea, their years of war service having made them rather indifferent to what nearly seemed to be a male privilege, not worrying unduly about its influence in women until female doctors started to come into the picture.

The pre-war successful, but little known today, work of the Rockefeller Foundation[16] in treating yaws with mercury salts injections (the Salvarsan of the German firm Bayer), and the post-war World Health Organization campaigns, sticking at the end of the fifties the buttocks of every individual around at two years interval with penicillin in oil[17], have stopped the impact of gonorrhoea in the first stage — population decrease levelled off in the thirties — and eradicated it at the same time as yaws in the second stage — villages started swarming with children after 1960. There would have been little or no general move towards independance in the area without this general population upsurge, thus provoked by technical decisions made *outside the area* and for no political reason whatever. Colonial governments just went along with a clear conscience and no idea of what the results would be.

The 19 th century reality had seen an *unequal* progress of depopulation, as shown by neighbouring islands having different modern demographic histories, for instance Aneityum, which remained at the level of 2 to 300 inhabitants over a century — the girls being clear-skinned were very much sought for by the crews of passing ships, who reinfected them with gonorhoea at each stop — and the neighbouring island of Tanna, which kept a strong and culturally resisting population of many thousands[18]. The only differing factor between both situations — the same kind hearted but medically uncompetent presbyterian missionaries[19] practising the same illiberal policies, the same type of traders going after the same sandal wood, beiche-de-mer, coconut oil and later coprah — as we have already seen, is the fact that the Tannese men have been pigheaded in keeping to their daily evening intake of the green root beverage made of chewed *nekaïa* (kava : *Piper methisticum*).

The potential medical value of *kava* on the urinary tract and as a potential protection against gonorrhoea in men has never been researched. It could explain the relative demographic solidity of groups which have managed to keep to kava, and particularly to the use of the green root, far from missionaries's eyes : i. e. the Shepherd's islands and the Big Nambas in Vanuatu, the Fiji islands, versus

the catastrophic demographic decrease in places like Tahiti and the Marquesas islands, where too many sailors, American, British and French and too many soldiers, French, were present for too long a time, etc, and where the use of kava was abandoned very quickly under the pressure of the L. M. S.[20] .

This unequality in demographic matters meant that the cultural adaptation to the advent of the white man was made in very different circumstances according to place and date. The conscious feelings of the people, who felt themselves doomed or not — the *fa'a Samoa* sailed through more or less undisturbed[21] — thus coloured any social and intellectual relation built with even well-meaning Europeans.

Mechanical factors played into the situation. Under a certain number of inhabitants, let us say under two hundred people, it was to all practical purposes unthinkable that a former demographically *large* culture could survive easily[22], for the very simple reason there were not enough people left to transmit and remember all there was to know[23]. The best example of such an unhappy state of anthropological affairs was Easter Island[24] in Polynesia after the Peruvian raiders incursions, and the very strong cases of depopulation on Epi in central Vanuatu, south-eastern Espiritu Santo in the northern district, Vanua Lava and Gaua in the Banks islands, Vanikoro[25] in the Santa Cruz group. Southeastern Santo had a history of an epidemic of smallpox wilfully engineered by Queensland recruiters apparently planning to later take over and settle empty lands with ease, etc.

In a reverse way, the demographic upsurge of the late fifties and the sixties explains how island's societies could breathe life all over again, in Melanesia, into so many facets of their culture which had been thought irretrievably lost. This new healthy demography has created the background for political problems around and after independance.

*Models*

Few anthropologists have delved in the details of their field's demography, in the same way as few have been trained to come back with a complete genealogical coverage of the whole of one island, or a complete map of land tenure, plot by plot. Our aim has been usually to extricate the generalities and illustrate the workings of the rules which we thought were governing the different cultures and societies. Following Radcliffe-Brown and later Levi-Strauss, anthropologists have often been zealously seeking models[26]. Such things do exist, and islanders can be as brilliant in their expression of them as our best students, having even

created some quite satisfying mathematical models[27]. The unhappy fact is that they spend at least as much time evading the consequences of their theoretical models than following their component rules.

I was at a loss to understand, after having been explained marriage rules in North Malekula, not to be able to see any real marriage. One year later, I was at last told that the people had decided to stop all marriage preparations while I was present, because each of them would have been conducted contrary to the rules given me, for the very simple reason that the marriageable girl according to these rules was never present : I had found around 140 males to each 100 females in the area[28]. I learnt on that day that asking general questions could be a bad methodological mistake.

An early British magistrate[29] in Fiji, having conducted the very first marriage census in the Tailevu province of Viti Levu, never cited in English Anthropology textbooks, found that Fijians married the available girl, then called her by the kinship term meaning cross-cousin and manipulated her genealogy so that she could fit in the prescribed system. Was that in fact the real rule or an adaptation to heavy population decrease, of which Fiji has although not been the worst known example ? Nobody has answered that question[30].

Some colonial administrations only got into mischief when insisting that chieftainships be transmitted from father to son, where the tradition was to put in the chair, one after the other, all the male siblings of a senior chief before choosing among the available sons the one who seemed to fit better the role. Immediately after the departure of the last missionary, the inheritance from mother's brother to sister's son of titles governing social status and land tenure in Efate and the islands around was reinstated. Presbyterian missionaries had insisted that this tradition was sinful, but had only checked what happened to the principal titles, those encompassing a whole district, unknowingly leaving matrilinearity to survive at the village level. They had imagined they were dealing with chiefs, not with a generalized system of titles.

The workings of other institutions have been influenced in parallel ways by a fluctuating population, as shown both ways by the organizational problems of the *matai* system in Samoa, the system of titles linked to land-tenure and social control in central Vanuatu[31], the survival of the traditional social structure in a New Caledonia continuously raked with rebellions and bloodied by military repressions[32].

Did models ever work in the area ? The question seems irrelevant. Models are a form of expression of a certain reality. As long as there will be islanders to

outlive their own complex strategies, partly through relating to foundation myths and others, models will be part of anthropology, if not the complete answer they have thought it was. The model of the cross-cousin marriage is useful, even where this type of marriage has not been practised, or little, for some time. Local peculiarities such as the cross-cousin marriage being a privilege of rank, once in a generation, in the Hienghène and Temala chiefly lines of New Caledonia, all other people marrying at will, can be an adaptation to the 19th century demographic situation, or the result of the chiefly privilege of carrying the burden of the model. It could equally be the result of the sister exchange marriage, which is really the most favoured rule, being practised between the very same lineages over two generations. Polygamous marriages between chieftaniships help to create such situations.

The celebrated model of the Kariera system was not the result of field work as we believe it should be done[33], and the reality of the existence as such of the Kariera is not without doubt[34]. But it is a beautiful model, which can be used for theoretical discussions, knowing that Radcliffe-Brown did imagine it on the basis of the flimsiest evidence. The early conclusion one can get from comparing notes with this model in mind, is that it never seems to work anywhere. The four section marriage system has evidently quite another function than the exchange of brides between the same two patrilines. Levi-Strauss has shown that the cross-cousin marriage can be, at the start, the *mechanical result of sister-exchange repeated one generation after another between the same lineages*. In pragmatic terms, sister exchange seems much more generalized in the area than cross-cousin marriage, but cross-cousin theoretical marriage allows to build from it a kinship system which encompasses Western Polynesia and a great part of Eastern Melanesia (up to Epi in the north)[35]. Kinship systems do not, but real alliances do, stem through sister exchange marriages, so often expressed as the better balanced form of marriage according to the Pacific islanders.

The theoretical cross-cousin marriage in New Caledonia, checked in the field through the available genealogies, and through a detailed census made in 1920 by Maurice Leenhardt of the Houaïlou valley, shows : a) that themarriage is with a classificatory MB Da, not the real one ; b) that the marriage with the FS So is as favoured as the preceding one, and c) that a number of other marriages are observed as well : with FFB Da, FMB Da Da, FFFS So Da Da, the two last ones being oblique marriages differing from those encountered on Ambrym (MFS Da ; FS Da Da, MB Da Da ; S So Da, S Da Da, MB Da Da Da, MS Da Da Da).

To contend with one example of what should not be done as regards models, some time ago Irving Goldman offered a reconstructed model — i. e. not based on direct field work data — of the Polynesian societies[36]. This model was flawed from the start :

"The model has been constructed by the usual method of comparing and evaluating widespread and generalized features against narrowly distributed and specialized features, and relating these to what we know about the functional characteristics of Polynesian social organization."

This was in effect nothing but the building of an implicit *Kulturkreise*. Contrary to Goldman's method, all variants should have been taken into account, and not only those which fit the author's preconceived ideas. The selection of certain Polynesian societies only and not others cannot be accepted as having any scientific value. There is no such possible criteria. Why Ontong Java, only recently peopled by Polynesian speakers — the former inhabitants are the so called Lau island builders of north Malaita — where Micronesian influences are evident ? Why Manu'a and not Tonga, which presents one of the two principal models of Polynesian social organization ? Why the Maori and not Hawai'i ?

The presentation of the same Polynesian societies according to types is no better[37]. Types are a very archaic way of classifying societies. The concept of type has no possible scientific validity in anthropology, and classification is not the elegant way out of problems it has been thought to be by Emile Durkheim. Instead of being «simple», primitive or archaic, the islands societies are extraordinarily complex and flexible. They never fit in any of the proposed types. There is always a sufficient and statistically significant number of individuals acting in the opposite way to what they are meant to do. The first European observer in a «pristine» Polynesian culture, Mariner in Tonga, noted he was confronted with a society in a complete state of flux, although what he saw would be today an anthropologist's dream land.

Goldman's resulting model is nevertheless in itself interesting, and could have been proposed by Goldman without its artificial pretence to logic :

«Thus, we visualise a founding family, settled in an area, expanding by branching into a group of related families forming an enlarged descent group. The descent group, in turn, enlarges by branching until a group of related descent group forms a tribe. The tribe fills out a demarcated ecological or politically bounded zone. The head of the tribe is the senior male of the senior descent line, and the head of the descent line is the senior male of the senior family. Seniority of descent defines social status, along with political, economic and religious leadership. Genealogical links as well as the concentration of the principal sources of leadership along the lines of male primogeniture imparts virtually an organic unity to the tribe. . . The descent line. . .normally lacks

exogamy and strict sex linearity. It is neither patrilineage nor matrilineage but a "Status lineage", in that it traces descent along status lines. . . two modes of variations in linearity of descent and in the genealogical unity of descent groups — are, in fact, related. . . both interact with the more dynamic aspect of Polynesian social structure, the system of social status.»

One would like to add to this model, if it be one, the variations in the choice of descent lines to accomodate matrilinearity and / or bi-linearity, and the importance of the first born child, be it a girl, as regards the automatic access to superiority of rank. Then the model would become valid for most of the Pacific islands, for the very reason that although Goldman had only Polynesian societies in mind, most Melanesian better known coastal societies, and even others, could fit in such a generalisation.

Douglas Oliver gave us thirty years ago a paper at a meeting of the *Society of Oceanists* in Paris, showing that the core type of social organization was the more or less the same as well in Melanesia as in Polynesia. I heartily agree. Islanders have all come from the same source in Asia's later prehistory fifty thousand years ago. The Austronesian migration is partly a linguistic fiction. Nobody has managed to fit the so called Papuan languages into a coherent, strongly interrelated and structured whole. The factors of differentiation inside societies of the same level have not been seriously examined. The way linguistic evolution can accelerate in some cases, or insist in exploring a blind alley in others, is still open to question.

The greater capacity of bulk carrying of canoes along the coasts explains easily the maritime areas' greater dynamism in cultural change. People equipped with high sea going canoes could do things where others were handicapped by the simpler obligation of backpacking singly or in pairs. What was pushed on the side or abandoned at Christianisation were the very public and spectacular institutions and collective behaviour, differing at times wildly from place to place (i. e. the so called *Ari'oi* society in Tahiti, the grade taking hierarchy in north-central and north Vanuatu, etc), and imagined mostly by coastal peoples inside their exchange networks and prestige rivalries. Pacific islands societies have shown they could do without and still culturally survive. When I say coastal, I mean those coasts not directly open to the high seas, protected by an outer reef, and where populations live as well on the first range of hills on the larger islands as on the small islands off the coast, which they can have conveniently enlarged or even built from scrap.

Models do function at times, maybe at a more sophisticated level than was thought. I have been able to prove, on the basis of a system of named titles controlling land tenure and social status extending from Efate to South-East Epi

in Central Vanuatu, that the system was known to every single adult member of the population, in such a way that the information drawn from each island, each village, and each family, was found to be logically coherent all over the area. The computer analysis of the mass of data obtained has been one of the very first attempted in anthropology[38]. The fact that any partial amount of data, obtained from anyone of a more than three thousand or so informants, fitted in the whole without showing any logical fault, anywhere, has important theoretical consequences which should have pleased orthodox social anthropologists.

The notion of model in social sciences has two origins. The first one is from mathematics and statistics : it does not fit easily with the qualitative data field anthropologists obtain in the field. The second is an old story, beginning with Wundt's *Gestalt Psychologie*, which has had such a profound effect on the western world that it has been the basis of modern changes in the methods of learning to read and write, unhappily much for the worse. The thinking and the demonstration were sound, but the applications thereof were completely divorced from reality. I observed in the academic field that the students revolution was made by kids who were neither proficient in reading nor in writing in their own language.

Then came the school of thought of prince Trubetzkoy's *Structural Linguistics* in Prague. Contrary to «structure» according to Radcliffe-Brown, which was well nigh physically invisible, the structural presentation of phonemes appeared to us, on the outset of the world war, as *the model* of scientific thinking. Every thing seemed clear and satisfactory, the concept of an «empty slot» inside permanently incomplete structures allowing for constant adaptation and change, the pressure for the slot being filled in creating at the same time a new void at another level. We thus had diachronic and synchronic analysis working in a complementary fashion, which is important in view of the constant accusation that structuralism is a-historical.

The consequences were far reaching. The phoneme as such was conceived as having no physical existence, one hearing in everyday life only the individual «realizations» of the theoretical phonemic structure, which was then a model, but a permanently fluctuating one, built from the physical reality and always capable of relating to its ever changing aspects. The way the structure was made evident was through selecting significant oppositions between sounds, choosing only those oppositions which were relevant because change in one term brought about a change of meaning.

The best translation of these principles in anthropological terms has been

by Claude Lévi-Strauss. He adapted the tenets of structural linguistics :

a) by searching for units of social meaning which could be pared according to significant opposition (his unit of kinship or his mytheme have not been as sucessful as hoped for) ;

b) by showing that all one had, in terms of myths, rites or institutions were *variants*, which were each as scientifically interesting and as authentic as the other ;

c) by showing that all variants were organized inside what he called *transformation systems*, all variants inside what was in effect a coherent linguistic and / or cultural area being in all the conceivable shades of logical change, even going to opposite poles or completely inverted.

This disposes elegantly of the instances which had so much annoyed the Greek grammarians of Alexandria two thousand years ago that they imagined a sort of complementary opposition between rules and exceptions, the latter having as function, according to them, to confirm the validity of the former.

Radcliffe-Brown's indifference to factual exceptions to kinship and marriage rules — which were not even to be mentioned — was a modern version of the Alexandria grammarians standpoint. For mordern structuralists, there can be no laws accepting exceptions. If there are, it is because the expression of the law is flawed. It must then be rephrased in such a way that all known exceptions are taken into account. If new exceptions arise, the same process should be repeated, *ad vitam aeternam*; which is how physical and biological sciences advance towards a better knowledge of the universe.

This meant also, but has it been really understood, that a model should be built on the basis of the data[39], and not at the start, in a kind of vacuum, in what was widely believed to be a theoretical discourse, but was so very often unfounded on fact. The workings of the proposed model can be checked through the confrontation with new data, and its phrasing changed accordingly each time it does not fit with it.

Models are thus a kind of meta-language and not in themselves the expression of laws. But they may be a step in getting to the stage of demonstrating the existence of a law and then become one of its illustrations. A model expresses in a compressed form what in real life tends to fit inside a system. If the data cannot be organized according to a system, overt and named, or implicit and unna-

med, the building of a model is not feasible. According to the late father of French structural linguistics André Martinet, structure and model are different. The structure is latent and must be brought into the open, the model is built as a pedagogical and analytical tool.

One consequence of these principles is that the smallest detail in the field data must always be a composite fact. There is no basic data. Each time individuals play inside a situation, the field worker only sees and hears the expression not of a continuum, but of a complexity. There are at least two sets of versions describing any situation, the one of each actor and the one of each onlooker. Evidence given is alway ambiguous in multiple ways. Police in the field and magistrates know this, or should. No witness ever tells the same story. Anthropologists understand this who have learnt to deal simultaneously with different levels of information and meaning.

All formalized aspects of social and cultural life fit inside specialized systems (language, kinship, rites controlling the natural environment, rites justifying at every turn the social relations the sum of which constitutes the social and political overt structure, myths in their link with the apportioning of land, myths in relation with the views about the universe, exchange of goods and artifacts).

A fundamental problem comes up then : can we envisage that there be a «system of systems». The functionalist's idea that the cultural whole was too fragile not to go to shambles in front of the onslaught of the West has been found unsatisfying. Functionalism's mistake here may have meant that there is no system of systems. The concept of culture as a working whole plays in a way this role, but this is a proposition coming from us and not a concept brought about by a thorough examination of the data. We have the same idea as regards our own culture. Culture as such has no pragmatic existence. It is just a convenient label to bring together a great number of at times closely interlocked, at times autonomous items of social behaviour and their formalized expression of justification.

Island societies have survived and adapted, which means the systems were flexible enough, and never fixed as they have been described for so long. They had to be pretty autonomous[40] to thus resist to the forceful change imposed from the outside. According to our accumulated experience, culture, structure, systems, function, are tools of communications between individuals, as well as between corporate groups. They do not exist as such, so to speak, in a void. The man who owns the rites which control the sun, the rain or the thunder, acts for the benefit

of every inhabitant of an area where there would be no other person detaining an identical power.

This brings us to the concept of structure according to Claude Lévi-Strauss. For him, structure is implicit, at the level of the collective unconscious, and the job of the anthropologist is to bring it to light. Here, I beg the right to differ. I would call on the capacity of the islanders to furnish us with wonderfully abstract models (such as the one about oblique marriages drawn on the sand by the Balap people of West Ambrym for A. B. Deacon's benefit), most of which are in effect drawn into space, from village to village, from named land feature to other relevant place names, as people go to and fro according to the applicable kinship rules and to their status inside the conflicting and complementary aspects of social hierarchies and exchange systems (*cf*. the map by Malinowski of the village of Omarakana ; and equally the lesser known circular shape taken systematically by social relations between lineages inside the Wetr district in the island of Lifou[41], through already two centuries of successive decisions taken by the paramount chieftainship, each time there came by one of these locally uncontrollable quarrels in which it could interfere and arbiter).

Claude Lévi-Strauss has long specialized in the demonstration of his *structural analysis* of myth. The results were spectacular in the Amazon area, where the data is of unequal quality and dispersed over three or more centuries of collecting. Equally as regards the coast of British Columbia, where Lévi-Strauss pinpointed aspects[42] of the social role of the masks which had been ignored by all other authors, including Boas, showing accessorily that the information registered and published by anthropologists can contain at times undecoded implicit meaning. This shows that as long as the data is not reasonably complete, and published as much as feasible as such, that is taking into account as well the formalized social aspects as their pragmatic translation through residential and land tenure patterns, the structural analysis can be of a great help, by opening up implicit information. The structural system is provided openly by the data, if the latter's translation into space has been recorded in living detail, not in principle only as has been unhappily often the case.

What remains constantly valid of Lévi-Strauss's structuralist method is the existence of variants logically related to each other through relevant and complementary «oppositions», being inserted in a more general system where one can manipulate the formal aspect on one side of an opposition and get a change in content as a consequence. Inside the inte-rior sea defined by the north central islands of Vanuatu, the former New Hebrides, the dive towards the earth from

the top of a specially built tower, in Bunlap and the neighbouring villages of South Raga, was linked to the yam first fruits ritual. On the eastern coast of Malekula, at Onua point, the dive was from the top of a banyan tree and was inserted among the rites giving access to the higher level of the grade taking hierarchy[43].

Claude Levi-Strauss thus started a brilliant career in noting what should have been discovered earlier. His well made point[44] was that there is nowhere any authentic tradition, except for non scientific reasons, such as the traditional Christian difference between the so called authentic and the so called apocryph Gospels. Myths as well as institutions are only known by their local variants. Each of these present an identical value for research. The existence, but not the theoretical implications, of these variants, justifying each the original settlement of a local residential and / or kin group, had been extensively, albeit not as such, noted after 1930 by Radcliffe-Brown's students working in the area thanks to Rockefeller Foundation grants.

This view, with the strong appropriation by local groups based on kin or residence of the differing shades of behaviour or expression, explains a recurrent problem in Anthropology, when each published variant of a myth, or of the workings of an institution, will find determined local opposition, claiming that only their lineage's version is the right one and that their neighbour's one is wrong.

The scientific evidence points thus to the necessity of taking all variants into account, which means working in the field with every existing lineage, and checking parallel facts with all the neigbouring ones, and in each instance to find out what every person, adult men and women of all ages, and even children, has to say, *over a matter of years*. Time is essential. One individual who made a pretence of being ignorant one day can very well become a first class informant some years later, when he is at last considered as an adult in his own right, that is has married and has sired his first child.

Claude Levi-Strauss explains that all these variants, the theoretical number of which is indefinite, tend to coalesce in what he calls a «transformation system», which covers easily a whole linguistic area, or an area where a number of languages are more or less understood by all and showing a cultural coherence. Eastern Polynesia is by all means such a transformation system. But Eastern Melanesia, Fiji, Tonga and Samoa can fit easily in another one. In such a transformation system, small or wide, one will find all the possible logical oppositions, each variant having its opposite inverted example somewhere in the area. This can be very easily illustrated by Melanesian and West Polynesian examples[45],

some having been noted here earlier. Such a concept, which disavows the sole search for cultural parallels, accounts for the East Melanesian origin of the West Polynesian population. It allows one to fit in the picture more easily the so-called Polynesian outliers, which may speak today a Polynesian language — Tikopia probably spoke earlier a Melanesian language, and Leuangiua (Ontong Java) certainly — but are of very mixed cultural origin, as Melanesian and Micronesian as they are Polynesian ; the more one goes west, the more the Micronesian element becomes noticeable.

*Land tenure*

The length of time before social anthropology accepted that there be a link between social structure and land tenure could be explained by the lack of specialized training of anthropologists in the field. Land tenure means survey work. Few of us have learned even part of this trade[46]. Geographers do learn it as part of their's. When I was training young anthropologists, I was sending them to learn surveying techniques. Most of them tried to evade it.

Another reason might be more fundamental. Land tenure seen through western eyes has a legalistic dimension. The language is the one of ownership, as explained since the Roman times by generations of lawyers and as applied by as many generations of magistrates. When there have been problems about land tenure in the colonies, local administrations have always had recourse to people lacking anthropological training but learned in law[47] and administration[48]. Anthropologists were not available or not interested. On the part of those trained by Radcliffe-Brown, it could be easily understood. Malinowski's pupils should have been here more open-minded and could have expanded out of the bounds of the spatial model of the Kiriwina village. A honorable explanation would be that, in the colonial situation, matters of land were often looked into so as to take land away from the people, and hand it to individual settlers or to economic units belonging to the plantation system. Anthropologists were loth of getting caught in this unsavoury game.

Real life shows that Pacific island's societies and their component units are linked to land in every instance. Social anthropology has long recognized this fact through talking about «residential patterns». Nevertheless, none of Malinowski's pupils has taken easily to his attempt to adress the problem in *Coral gardens and their magic*. In the South Pacific, we have had to wait for the publication of a paper by Oliver on land tenure among the Siuai of Bougainville,

and another one by Goodenough and Murdock on land tenure on Truk to see the subject matter given at last greater recognition in our field[49]. Then we have had to wait again for a paper by Peter Lawrence, then for the series of three papers, the last first class, by the Fijian anthropologist Rusiate Nayacakalou and one by Marshall Sahlins, before the subject became somewhat more fashionable[50], partly under *de facto* pressure from geographers entering the fray[51]. Later came Ron Crocombe's work in the Cook Islands and the different wider studies he engineered from his castle in the *Institute of Pacific Studies* at the*University of the South Pacific* in Suva.

The consequences of mistaken directions have plagued older tentative attempts at dealing with the matter. Ownership was more or less consciously — anthropologists have often no legal background — thought to be of the European type, that is the fundamental right «to use and abuse land». This legal concept did not really fit in the picture, so authors often chose not to dwell at length on land tenure. The usual answer to the felt ambiguity of the situation has been that ownership of land was in every case deemed to be collective, as imagined at first by the French social theorists of last century[52] before the founders of Marxism took over the same theme.

The problem was then to determine which was the land owning group. It has always been possible to obtain the assistance of kind informants, who had reasons of their own to be helpful[53], so as to decide what social unit assumed control over what land. Collective ownership of land as a concept played a protective role against white man's meddling in the latter half of this century, and earlier in Fiji. This hypothetical link with society did not work so well that researchers could be satisfied with the results. Often they had to be contented with publishing a résumé, nothing in their training helping them to sift apparently contradictory statements[54] when they could not base their study on an exhaustive, plot by plot, land survey, which is the only satisfying method.

Any data citing land owning units is in contradiction with the everyday mechanics of land tenure itself[55]. Land is tilled by individuals[56] and the members of their nuclear family. They only band together with others if there is a very physical reason for doing things better in this way. No concept of collective ownership lies behind one man and his wife working for instance on a yam or taro plot. Collective use of land goes with collective investments made into the same land, in the case of the classical large garden surrounded by a strong fence against roaming wild pigs ; or in the one of the big Melanesian or Polynesian irrigated systems for taro cultivation, or the one of the complex drainage systems for the

cultivation of sweet potato into the high valley swamps of New Guinea.

Any quarrel over land always finds a preliminary conclusion into a public discussion, at the successive levels offered by residence and descent groups, which gives an appearence of collective ownership and collegiate control. If questions are asked for by the observer in those terms (ownership and control), answers are inevitably given in the same terms. If the quarrel is over a pig, discussions fit at exactly the same levels, without anybody implying that ownership or control of this or that pig is vested in any of the interlocking groups. The slightly wider scale of the discussion is there to prevent quarrels from getting sour. Any residential and (or) descent group will strive to prevent open rifts from provoking physical fights between its members. The control exercised is on the members, inasmuch as there is hope they can listen to reason, not on the object of the quarrel, be it women, riches, pigs, or land.

We have been carried away by our own implied cultural and philosophical tenets. The «land owning group» is a mythical western concept, superimposed on the Pacific islands reality, in the same way as was the genealogical model introduced by W. H. Rivers[57]. Pacific islanders manipulate their genealogies, but respond in fact well to the genealogical method. This does not mean they would claim it as their own. In the same way, they respond to the land owning group concept because it is convenient for them in the contact situation. They can talk back to the white man in the same terms (in terms he thinks he understands) and eventually thus insure that he stops interfering in the detail of their everyday lives.

When the people want to claim land back, such as in New Guinea, or New Caledonia, linking the claim to a residential group recognized by the past or pre-independance colonial system (earlier under the foreign concept of *tribe*, today often under the Scottish word *clan*) has been quite a practical proposition. In Vanuatu, they managed the same results by being contented to speak only of the village level. What they really wanted back in each case was the widest possible block grant of land, leaving them free to let their own social factors play inside without interference, neither by foreigners, be they experts in a field or another, nor by the governments, even that of the new independant countries[58].

The idea of land owning social units had already been questioned by some aspects of Deacons's data, who, in 1924-25, on south-western Malekula, recognized that territorial ownership did not exist as such, but what took its place was the ownership of the well worn path going through the land put in use[59]. I later found such a situation on Lifou, whereby the path going to gardens belonged to the owner of the said gardens and was his principal claim to ownership. Where

it is inconvenient, due to the ruggedness of the coral outcrops, to have as many paths as there are different domains, a single road exists, the limits of each landowner's territory being marked alongside, and only there[60].

With two wrong preconceived ideas, one about the unquestioned existence of ownership as such[61], the other one about ownership by social units[62], it took me ages to unravel the land tenure situations I was constantly confronted with. After thirty years it dawned on me, and was confirmed by the people themselves everywhere, that the real system they had never explained because they had never been asked the right question, was that *land accompanied social status and both came with the name given at birth*. Phrased in this way, this is no anthropological discovery and colleagues will tell me they have known it all along. Yes, but it had never been couched exactly in these words, and it is the practical workings of this principle which had evaded us.

I was at the time doing a genealogical coverage and land tenure survey of part of inland Lösi, on Lifou (Wedrumel, Kajany, Hmelek, Thuahaik), linking every individual with his legitimate (i. e. accepted by all) land tenure claims[63]. In one case I needed an explanation : a young man bearing a name which had nothing to do with the set of names belonging to his lineage of birth, and being possessed of a domain outside its territory as I knew it. I was told then what had evaded me for so many years, that negotiations preceded birth, and that the family meeting (both patrineal and matrilineal sides being represented) called for making the choice of the name could be enlarged to the representative(s) of another lineage offering to give one of the names it controlled to the new born child, handing him at the same time the social status and land tenure going with the said name.

Thus did I learn also the reason for my wife being called Pawe, taking over the name of an elderly high born lady called Pawe Wazizi, the last female representative of an extinct lineage, the lands of which had been taken over since her death by the Huliciya chieftainship which is in permanent prestige competition with the Wahnyamala chieftainship to which my wife belongs. The name given her was meant to allow one day for a claim on part of the Wazizi domains.

This strategic information did not come by through a stroke of anthropological genius, but by dealing with my Melanesian in-laws, who did not imagine that they could hide from me such simple facts of life[64].

This is one of the possible variants of a system we never thought of, or which got passed over as a form of adoption[65]. This link between the name[66] given at birth, social status and land tenure offers the people an extraordinary advantage. It creates a flexible situation, with the capacity of all sorts of adaptative traits. It

can fit as well unilinear as non unilinear descent schemes. That maybe why it has been so little noticed, except in the case of systems of titles, which have been looked at since the very beginnings of white contact. It has been thought for so long that titles were solely a Polynesian trait !

I cannot hide my pleasure in reading the recent study on Tanna by Lamont Lindstrom, *Knowmedge and Power in a South Päcific Society*, where he coolly describes the link between names at birth, land tenure and social status in the very terms expressed here. I had not been able to go that deep, at the time, in my understanding of the local scene. Bonnemaison missed the point through deciding, against my advice, to map only clan territories and not individual plots, one by one, as had been asked from him, and starting enquiring from each of them in succession. He thus got bogged down into asking much too general and unhappily mostly leading questions, which is the worst way of dealing with the problem. The information should be elicited on the spot, plot by plot, and each time from the right person having the right to the plot. Individuals in the field playing the role of being *the* knowledgeable persons are most dangerous.

Playing as always in most logical ways with their own cultural traits, the Samoans, but the people of South Central Vanuatu equally, if not already the Tongans and the East Fijians, extracted the birth name as an individualized concept, separating it from its living material support, social status and land tenure, and thus creating a parallel system organized by titles, inherited or acquired, whereby the access to land, and to social status, could be at least partly ascribed in a later stage in life, and could even be changed more than once, although in a minimal way once from birth to adult life.

As in the case of the different models of the Pacific way of assuming positions of authority, access to land by individual name, or title, can fit in a table of logical oppositions and complementary qualifications such as expressed here (this does not claim to be a model and the exemples given are only meant to be illustrative) :

— at birth (New Caledonia, Loyalty islands, South Vanuatu, North Malekula, Fiji, Eastern Polynesia) or later (South Central Vanuatu, Tonga, Samoa, Eastern Polynesia) ;

— once (New Caledonia, Loyalty islands, South Vanuatu, North Central Vanuatu) or more than once (South Central Vanuatu, Samoa, Tonga, Eastern Polynesia) ;

— acquired (Shepherd's islands, Samoa) or inherited (Tonga, Samoa, Fiji, Loyalty islands, Efate, Eastern Polynesia) ;

— by access to every member of the male population (Loyalty islands, New Caledonia,

Fiji, Tonga, South and Central Vanuatu) ;

— by access to a qualified section of the male (and female) population (Samoa);

— patrilinear and patrilocal (New Caledonia, Loyalty islands, South Vanuatu, Malekula, Fiji, Tonga, Samoa, Eastern Polynesia) or matrilinear and matrilocal (Efate, West Aoba, North Pentecost, Banks islands), in as much the reality is not made of extensive variations on a non unilear model ;

— differentiated according to the status of lineages (Loyalty islands, Fiji, Tonga, Samoa, Eastern Polynesia) ;

— with the assumption of a single dynastic title for specific lineages only (New Caledonia, Loyalty islands, Fiji, Tonga, Samoa, Eastern Polynesia) ;

— with the assumption of alternating dynastic titles for a small number of specific lineages (New Caledonia);

— with the assumption of alternating names plus a dynastic title in certain specific lineages only (Loyalty islands) ; etc.

My judgment today is that the concept of the land owning social unit is an unhappy child of Durckheim and Radcliffe-Brown, that there is no formal ownership of land anywhere in western terms, but systems regulating access to land for each individual in each generation, the land being handed back at death to the person bearing anew the same name or title, by choice or by inheritance, and not to any land owning social unit. This judgement, through the clear situation involved in areas bearing systems of titles to which the individual can have access according to specific rules, according to lineage and individual strategies, is validated in principle at least from Central Vanuatu to New Caledonia, the Loyalty islands, Western and Eastern Polynesia.

The function of every social unit involved is to control somewhat more closely as such only the locations having mythical implications for the whole of the group and wherein rites are practised (each «sacred» location has a «servant», «master», or «priest», who acts in the name of the group, and for its benefit). They define all together by their presence there a sort of global territory, but again not one in western terms, wherein the rites being enacted in the name of the group protect the individual's undisturbed control of his own land rights.

The choice of the word «maître» (master), by Maurice Leenhardt[67] was a great progress, in the same way as Levi-Strauss recently proposing the word «maison» (house), instead of the classic lineage or clan, can be considered as another good choice of words of practical use and little danger of messing up the discussion. The «master» is the one who controls specific locations by reason of

the name(s) he holds to, there being easily parallel namrs characterizing the same person, some of which can be the one of the principal location he holds to, or one or the other of those his ancestors held. It can be his residence, or a former residence of the people of his lineage. The only problem is that the vernacular word is translated literally by : *he who stands on* (the said place name) and that the word «master» extends this notion in a somewhat wider acception..

Two different systems dealing with land are thus at the same time superimposed and interlocked with one another, none of which is ownership in our western terms of reference.

Individual privileged access to land does not always mean that physical limits are placed around a plot, or a cluster of plots. Indications about where the land of someone starts are placed along the paths and the definition of what goes with whom is obtained through the list of place-names. Paths going through the land belong to the beneficiary of this land, unless it crosses more than one unit of land tenure, and no one can go through without having asked permission. Coast lines are shared between social groups as regards fishing rights, but individual coral outcrops belong to individual people, often quite far away from the coast. In the Shepherds islands, South Central Vanuatu, plots linked to an elective title are never contained in a single cluster, but systematically dispersed all over a district, an island, or even more than one island. This has the result of preventing any violent quarrels, or wars, from spilling over to land ownership and attempting to upset it.

The social role of the group involved, which can vary in scope and numbers in each case, is to make the decision about who comes next, new born baby or fully grown adult, only ever interfering later if the designated person relinquishes his rights through a lengthy change of residence. Everywhere a long time of absence means that individual rights are provisionnally at least put in abeyance. They can be taken over by the elder brother, or the lineage chief or headman, and their return negotiated for later. There have been thousands of such cases since the white man came in and induced islands peoples to settle inside his port-towns. The responsability of the lineage chief[68], or of a higher ranking individual, according to the level of the social status involved, is to organize the meeting where a decision will eventually be made, never to decide on his own. In the same way, higher placed chiefs — not village chiefs, as the villages in existence are usually missionary or administrative artificial creations[69] — can be called upon to arbiter in land matters, or to take over land in trust where a lineage has no male heir. These chiefs will decide, not upon the final destiny of such and such set of

yam and taro plots, or of virgin land, but upon the day of the meeting which will be called upon to finalize the matter[70].

The principal roles of a person assuming a status of authority is thus the right to convene the meeting where a decision can be taken, which is not the right to decide so many white men have imagined, often helped by the interested party, who knew the advantages which could be derived from being believed to be the sole man in charge[71]. In the formal vernacular translation of the decision taken, it is the person of the highest rank present who will usually be said to have made the decision. That is only a formal recognition of rank, adding greater prestige and weight to the decision. Such niceties of the formal language into which the islanders automatically fall when speaking of those subjects have not always been recognized, being too often taken at face value. The methodological problem is not what the «informant» says, but what he has been trying to say, much of it being implicit in conversations delving on those matters.

The other word, the use of which has had a detrimental effect on our views about land tenure is : tribute. This word, stemming from Rome and ancient Grece, if not Egypt or Persia, heralds a political system based on quasi taxes. There is no tribute given to anybody in the area, but gifts of agricultural produce, of fish, or of artifacts, from people classified as junior brothers, or being headmen of junior lines, to their elder brother or the representative of the senior line. These gifts call for two things :

— one, a countergift of lower value from the receiving end ;

— two, the obligation of the person at the receiving end of feeding the donor and hosting him at night if he lives far away or if so wishes.

The yams given by a man must never be handed back to him to eat. Others must be chosen. It is the responsability of special ceremonial job holders at the chief's court, and of the chief's legitimate first wife, first born daughter of high rank, to administer such a situation and see to it that no visitor ever goes hungry nor eats what he shouldn't be given.

The same can be said of turtles, of which so many authors have said they were reserved for the chief's table. In fact turtles once caught are brought inside the chief's courtyard, killed there, cooked and eaten by the chiefly family, its men and women servants, *and* the people who caught the turtle in the first place and brought it, and have full right to partake from its meat.

This formula can suffer some deviations. On Tanna, the turtle privilege, so

clear in Fiji or the Loyalty Islands, becomes a dual responsability between the man who has the privilege of killing and cooking the turtle and another one who comes at night, opens the oven, takes the turtle's head unto himself before closing the oven again, which means turtles are always put to the oven in the evening to be eaten only the next day.

Quarrels about turtles abound. One way of climbing the social scales is to deny the privilege of the turtle to a chief so as to take it for oneself, if one has ensured enough alliances not to succumb to the onslaught which will be the probable consequence of such an insult and claim to independence.

The importance of the role of names, personal names obtained at birth, successive names indicating successive ranks, place names defining land tenure, place names defining where the human society talks to the outer world, etc, is being more easily recognized today. Let us remember what Gregory Bateson tried to say on the matter and how little he was listened to at the time[72]. He was talking of secret names, the knowledge of which gave control over the land, which could be lost if the landowner got himself provoked in such a public fury that he would tell out the names in public, thus automatically losing his rights. The contest was between two men exchanging taunts and insults for that very reason, each being supported by his silent lineage. The transfer of the control of land to the orator who obtained the public revelation of the secret names of the same land was a personal business. He would immediately impose new secret names so as to insure that he kept his prize. In this case there is no landowning unit acting as such and no direct interference of the lineage in the verbal fight.

A reviewer in *Oceania*, one of the best and more readable anthropologicanl journals available world wide for so long, was asking one day why I was thus publishing such long lists of names for which he did not see any value. The aswer should be clear. Behind each name, in each generation, there is a man or woman alive, privileged with a social status and with access to land tenure options. One can easily check, at any given time, what is the present situation and who is the name holder. The lists of names are arranged in a relevant order which describes the organizational level in each society standing over the one offered by the kinship system. Any knowledgeable person can start from there and add to this information.

Young researchers with little anthropological field training have been tempted to gather information from a few informants alone, which I never do, and to claim afterwards that I had been mistaken on such and such point. *They* are mistaken in each case. I only pu-blish what I have been told in carefully controlled

circumstances. If other claims come to the surface, half a century later, the reasons of this should be ascertained. The more easy explanation is that the demography exploding, positions which weren't at the time have been filled anew, which is the way of reconstructing the society I have just described. Fifty years ago a lineage could be extinct. Today, it may have been reinstated, in some cases so as to further specific land claims, or for instance in New Caledonia to push the new concept of nickel ore mining claims by the Kanak. The represenative individual of the reconstructed lineage will not relish to recognize ever that he has been recently put in the place of an extinct line. He will talk as if this had never happened. As no one will easily offer in public the counter information, the observer can be easily misled. The earlier data and the new one are as relevant the one as the other. They each deal with a different historical background and should be compared and used to that purpose, not shown as good or bad, which is nonsense. The strategies of the interested people have been changing, and for that purpose they do not say the same thing[73].

A very young French lady anthropologist tried working some years ago in the Gaica district of Lifou. She got bogged down by the existing contradictions inside the village of Hapetra, where I had noted the greatest amount of potentially conflicting social statuses, each of the local lineages claiming that the others were wrong, and mostly that the Zeula paramount chieftainship was wrong in its particular claims. Curiously, when they participated in the marriage of Zeula's eldest son, of which I published a detailed account, and where I had been awaiting with curiosity to see what new details would come to the fore in their ceremonial behaviour, this behaviour was coherent with the paramount chief's claims and what they had said to me first in front of him. But their counterclaims went on nevertheless in private. This meant that they were permanently living in public sort of schizoid social roles, which at times islanders evidently seem either to relish, either to be unable to get away from.

Some of these contradictions were easy to explain through historical accidents — a first born paramount lineage had lost its supremacy and had been exiled on the coast at Peng, meekly moving inland at Hapetra when the chief Cope Zeula decided it should do so, but always grumbling about its present status. Others were of the type which could be expressed in private, but never would have been aired in public without provoking an uproar. Most were simply linked to the erroneous western views about hierarchies, by which each strives to show how he is *higher* than the other, instead of explaining in what way he is different but complementary. This happens every time an ignorant white man comes up with what is in fact a stupid question. And I have had my lot of them.

Recently the residual colonial administration imagined to build up a register of all land claims. Instead of starting where there would be the least tensions about land, they went straight to Hapetra because it was conveniently situated — they could go home for lunch. They too had to abandon. The land claims they were getting were all mixed and contradictory, all imaginable claims and counterclaims coming suddently to the fore, accompanied by all the dramatic posturing the islanders can put on offer then.

In some places, lands are lying around with nobody in charge, because of a quarrel about who should be there, the meetings convened on the matter having been unable to reach a consensus, or the responsible person of rank, for reasons of his own, having never convened the necessary meeting[74]. Others are left unused because of a curse having been put upon them, threatening anybody who tries to work the land, for instance of dying without fathering any male heir. Very formal blessings and curses, much more than black magic, the latter being a western introduced concept, are a still valid instruments of power or revenge in today's island societies. One cannot go to jail for a curse. In a curious kind of return to the Middle Ages, colonial set of laws have systematically published rules against witchcraft only. Blessings as well as curses dot the Ancient Testament in such a way that it would appear difficult to deem them unchristian. In local churches the spontaneous popular theology so often tends to prefer the Old Testament to the New.

What I wish to call, selecting part of the phrase from Levi-Strauss, «normative anthropology», that is describing things as they are meant to be and not as they really are in every day life, always changing from an instance to the other, and from place to place and time to time, is to me going methodologically backwards. Land tenure has been the bane of our profession. We have been too often satisfied with giving general rules about it. I cannot take the opportunity here to introduce a detailed discussion of all facts. In the same fashion, kinship cannot be described otherwise than what we usually do[75], through the hallowed kinship model introduced by British social anthgropology, but marriage must be analysed on the basis of all existing marriages and no more on the one of a statement about what is the prescribed or preferential marriage — which may be very little practised — or the one which, no other question having been asked, appears to be the logical support of the kinship system. The change from the traditional theoretical outlook to a more pragmatic view is one of the new factors in the writings of the new generation. Examples couched in the terms of normative anthropology

are easy to find since Radcliffe-Brown held his seminars in Sydney and introduced his students to this unhappy form of academic expression.

We must nevertheless acknowledge that Pacific islanders dearly love to give normative lectures to fieldworkers, who then have some justification, when they are still green, to fall in that trap. The reconstruction of an imaginary culture or society can thus well *in fine* be the islander's themselves. It should then be studied as such, and not considered as a revealed truth. I get anxious as the number of anthropologists choosing such a means of expression tends to become greater — even if the cost of publication explains partly this reaction. The vistas opened by computer techniques could be better explored[76]. When I experimented with them some years ago for data pertaining to the Central Vanuatu, with some success, I met with little echoes at the time. Which may have been the cost in lack of communication incurred by publishing in French.

With a declining population, although there have been ups and downs, catastrophic evolutions close to more resistant island societies, the provisional answer was to put on one head more than one name, more than one social status and multiple land tenure claims. In the presence of a bellligerent European settler or planter class, the use of Christian names allowed islanders to hide this particular adaptation process from inquisitive white eyes. Today, as kids have been born in numbers one after the other over the thirty last years, parents have gleefully given to their for so long unhoped for children all the names inherited from their former independant, and *white man's burden* free society, thus reviving one after the other claims on the land taken over by the planters and settlers. In most of the tens of cases where people told me, in Vanuatu[77] and New Caledonia, what their strategy was, using their new born children to create future pressure for the return of their former domain, they have effectively won their case, often enough with some help from me. It was the then unexpressed but acknowledged price for their talking freely.

Today we are heading straight towards a demography in the same numbers, in most islands, as it probably was when the white man came in the South Pacific two centuries ago. Cases of overpopulation are evident, some already rather bad. The land is too small for the numbers present, there is neither enough space nor time to let the land rest, and the yam tubers produced are smaller by the year. This was happening in Mere Lava before the island was partly destroyed by a volcanic explosion and had to be abandoned, and is happening now in the Poindimié and Cape Bayes «native reservations» in New Caledonia, and surely elsewhere. Jacques Barrau showed in 1956 that this was already the case in the

Oundjo Reservertaion on the Western coast of New Caledonia. In some extreme cases (the lower reaches of the Houaïlou valley in New Caledonia), handing back all the former lands can be quite insufficient to allow a group to survive and migration to the town becomes the only available solution. The surface soil is too oftent of little value, when it has not been deteriorated further by overgrazing or nickel ore pollution.

The reason for the recent introduction of universal suffrage in Western Samoa is enlightening : too many *matai* titles were being created, thus making fun of the age old land tenure system based on the power of *pule* held by the *matai* under the partly ceremonial control of a small number of *ali'i*. For a number of years, the Shepherds islands people have quietly resorted to making two land tenure titles out of one by adding to each a qualifying adjective. The Tongan constitution giving to each young couple enough land to build a house and plant its own food is slowly becoming also a dream of the past. The consequence is the age old answer of the islands' societies : to migrate, to Port Vila, Nouméa, Suva, Apia, Sydney and Auckland, meeting with some resistance on the part of the interested immigration authorities; Honolulu and Orange county in California are already on line. Paris may be next.

*Polynesia, Melanesia, big-man, chief*

The difference, if not a fondamental opposition, so long considered as being established between Polynesia and Melanesia, has created constant and useless problems in anthropological thinking about the area. Polynesia, Melanesia, Micronesia are in effect geographical concepts, and should not have been used as defining imaginary cultural barriers, except for the way variations in distance play havoc with social organization, even between related islands — there is more distance between the social system in Tonga and Samoa than between Eastern Fiji and the Loyalty Islands.

The only places, to my knowledge, where offerings are still made to *Mauitikitiki*, under his very name (*Mwatiktik* or *Moshtektek*), are Port Resolution in Tanna[78] — where a young yam tuber will be put under a rocky under water ledge by a diver, and where the god is said to live at the top of Mount Mèlèn — and Emae in the Shepherds islands[79] — where a white rooster will be left to rot, his feet securely tied, at the god's altar on a flat stone in a small secluded grove neveer touched by man's hand. Both of the priests entrusted with these rites live in a Melanesian village, speak a non Polynesian Austronesian language, and are

nominally Christians.

The myth of *Mauitikitiki* is as well structured in south central Vanuatu as in Eastern Polynesia, except that his fishing of islands is done by Maui swinging from a rope fastened at both ends to the horizontal branch of a banian tree and that his death is still to come. Other Polynesian heroes; such as *Karisipunga* and *Tafakisema* (the Maori *Karihi* and *Hema*), are known under these very same names, even accounting for the theme of the eldest brother climbing to the skies to bring back a heavenly wife, *Leisamoa*. But *Tangaloa* on the west coast of Tanna, at Waesisi, is only a sea snake, killed and buried, from the eyes of whom the first coconut tree sprouted.

The unhappily still much too widely accepted idea[80] that ranked societies are Polynesian[81], and that Melanesian societies are devoid of chiefs and only given to big-men[82], just means that the authors of this assertion have not read the literature dealing with Central and Eastern Melanesia, where different kinds of perfectly recognizable ranked societies have been shown in existence, from New Caledonia to the central Solomons (east Malaita and Little Mala). The variety of vernacular theoretical solutions offered is greater there than in Western Polynesia, with cultural echoes ringing both ways, the Tongan and East Fiji chieftainship system being closer to the Loyalty islands one, the Samoan *matai* system showing striking parallels with the system of elective titles still in working order in the Shepherds islands in South Central Vanuatu.

Reverend Codrington's scientific descendance, closely linked to the *Melanesian Mission* and the Anglican church, that of C. E. Fox, Walter G. Ivens and G. C. Wheeler[83], has been somewhat unpopular with institutionalized social anthropology. They seem to be rarely read and cited. It is a pity, as these authors have described as good as others chiefly systems in the Solomon islands. One should remember that Codrington had given us[84], for the Banks islands, the very first analysis of the meaning of such a well established but todat so often believed to be Polynesian concept as *mana*, (*men* in the Loyalty islands).

The first monographs published by the Bernice Pauahi Bishp Museum strove to show the importance to Polynesian place names. The list in a given island always comprises a proportion of names one can find elsewhere. This may have been a rather crude method of trying to build a historical link between the islands. But it did show that such a link existed. What was left aside then is that if one takes down lists of place names in Southeast Melanesia, one will find a proportion of them which are found also in Polynesia, less in New Caledonia proper, more in the Loyalty Islands, and in a striking way in Southern and Central Vanuatu. Here too, this establishes a link.

Annette Weiner, who has so brilliantly reinstated women as wielders of power in the Trobriands islands, appears to be in a quandary through wanting to renounce the concept of chiefs, *guyau*, chosen by Malinowski, because chiefs could only be Polynesian. She would like to use the word in fashion, *big man*, but these *guyau* obtain their rank at birth, they wear special festive ornaments on their body as marks of their rank, they are the only ones allowed to be polygamous and to practice the rites allowing for the control of the sun and of the rain. So in comes the word «hamlet manager», taken from Fortune's «village managers» on Dobu, but which seems to have been somewhat in use in the area inside European settler circles. *Guyau*, it appears, can or cannot be hamlet managers, that is being bestowed with the control on the land, and only if they are can they be polygamous, which suddenly looks more like the *matai* system in Samoa than like the big-men of latter years elsewhere.

One reason for the conceptual mess is that we are dealing with western notions : big-man, headman, leader, rank, chief[85], subjects, etc, none of which has any way of being scientifically established as the best possible approximation to any given situation[86]. One could speak of big-manship each time a Tahitian chief gave pigs to Captain Cook. All Pacific leaders deal in pigs, except in New Caledonia and the Loyalty islands[87] where there are no pig[s]. All benefit from inherited or acquired rank and wealth, so why not call them chiefs ? The real difference is in each vernacular concept, the way it is translated in the field and the one it is expressed in writing by the anthropologist. If the current fashion is bigmanship, big men will crop all over the place. Earlier, chiefs were all the craze. The role of intellectual fashion is a well established, but a little recognized, one.

Douglas Oliver had the good taste to choose instead of the pidgin word big-man the vernacular term *muumi*[88] for the Siuai of Bougainville. The word big-man was coined by non academic British citizens recruiting for the Queensland sugar-cane plantations in the middle of last century. Being unable to analyse the complex and widely differing social systems they were confronted with, they chose this word just because it was convenient and had no other meaning than a pidgin translation of headman. Quite an uncertain basis for the bizarre theoretical proposition of opposing Melanesian and Polynesian cultures !

History has some forgotten responsability here. The Western world entered the Pacific in strength through its eastern shores, England and France each holding naval bases on loan from the Chilean government, from which ports their men of war roamed the area. Polynesia was Christianised, settled and occupied first. Polynesian *London Missionary Society* teachers, but also Polynesian sailors,

soldiers and what amounted to petty civil servants or others holding unimportant tertiary jobs, were used for the occupation and colonization of Melanesia. Remember «Queen Emma» in Northeastern New Britain, King Malietoa of Samoa's niece, and her retinue of female and male Samoan kin, her numerous nieces she married away to easily manipulated German civil servants ! She was demonstrating what was rank in front of the Tolai people of New Britain, who fought a losing battle for their land against mercenary Bukans and Bougainvilleans wielding fire-arms and working for Emma Forsayth, before becoming members of the Armed Police of the German Empire[89].

The European powers needed a kind of ideological justification for the use of one set of Pacific islanders against all the others. It was offered squarely by the first authors dealing with the area. Polynesians could be considered as partly civilized, Melanesians were savages. The justification was there, in a racial value judgment which has perverted all the literature on the islands, from Stevenson to Jack London. Comparing the Polynesian and Fijian aristocracy to ancient celtic or scottish chieftains was considered justified. Melanesians could not be treated with such consideration. They were not given as having built «high» civilizations[90], and still are not, at least in the eyes of some[91] who forget conveniently thousands of pages written on Melanesian socio-political structures during the better part of a century. The very apt protest by Epeli Hau'ofa did not benefit of the same privilege[92] as Sahlin's badly researched paper, being incorporated in text-books and cited all over the place. We even have today a problem with Polynesian students, so as to prevent them from falling in this same ideological trap.

The whalers, who had no axe to grind, signed on great numbers of so called Polynesian sailors, but did not mind to recruit them in Eastern Melanesia. Men of war mostly, although not amways, kept to Polynesian sailors, as well as trading vessels based in Honolulu, Pape'ete, Apia or Auckland — there were long tales of woe at the hands of treacherous Melanesian crews, most perfectly untrue[93]. The Ouvea and Lifou islanders had, and still have, a good reputation among those ship masters who were not worrying unduly about the existence or not of a worth while social structure outside of Polynesia. The next door Maré people had built up for themselves a reputation of cruelty — shooting a white man was cruel, shooting a black man was self-defence — but they were the first ones to accept Christianity.

Being contacted later in the 19 th century, Melanesians had less time to adapt to the quarrelsome ways of Europeans, who had taken to walking around in boots, always armed to the teeth, shooting their way out of any situation before even trying to understand what was happening. Captain Paddon, whose private

rule was to trade honestly with the natives and not cheat them — in their view at least, which did not prevent him from selling them his wares at inflated prices — was found by Bishop Selwyn unarmed and calmly smoking his pipe on the Isle of Pines, where other captains working for Captain Towns, his arch rival, had been killed on the spot in revenge for attempts at much too evident unequal deals[94].

In Polynesia, sandal wood and other trade had been taken over by the principal *ariki*, whose interest was that peace be maintained, unless they felt they had been swindled. Their ambition being to be recognized as kings in their land, they acted accordingly and protected the growing European trade.

In Melanesia, white men had learned their lessons and blocked any missionary and chiefly attempt to build new christian kingdoms[95], which would have tended to impose moral strictures no roving trader ready to settle on an island really cared for. The result was that the existing social structures, often not so very different of the Polynesian ones at the time of first contact, were decried as being anarchic, devoid of worthwhile headmen or «chiefs», even up to now in surviving colonial circles. Dreaming of God's kingdom on earth and desparaging anything else, missionaries such as those of John G. Paton's lineage did not contradict.

A white metropolitan engineer, politically knowledgable and would be, although untrained, archeologist in New Caledonia, came out some years ago with the extraordinary idea that Lapita pots were too good to have been made by the Kanak[96]. His contention was then that these pots were the proof of the ancient presence of a white population, the only group privileged with a capacity to create, later murdered wholesale by the nasty Melanesians, which action justified *a posteriori* what excesses had been made during the colonial period. Some ideas that Lapita pots should be ascribed to a pre-Polynesian population[97], i.e. non Melanesian, have been suspiciously parallel to the same person's more recent although old hat hypothesis that all the Kanak chieftainships were of Polynesian origin, the same murderous Melanesian lineages having taken over just before contact[98].

There is no scientific proof whatever that the people whose women made the Lapita pots were different from the present population. The Lapita sites are essentially coastal only because inland sites have not been dug in significant numbers, being less easy of access and more costly to work on[99]. The concept of a coastal and small island population roving and trading in shellwares and ceramics should be discussed after having read Ivens's study on the *Island builders*

*of the South-Eastern Solomons*[100], showing how a new society can be built in a different background, changing much of its former culture because there was an obligation to adapt elsewhere  The apparent coherence of strictly coastal and lagoon people has more to do with their very specialized ecosystem than with any other factor. From place to place, they can claim descendance from specific immigrants, but how can one justify any attempt to link them systematically all together throughout Melanesia ? One should accept that all Pacific Islands have been peopled, one day, by immigrants, however far removed that day is. These people have had to adapt to diverse environments. The coasts being often less favourable to agriculture, large human groups have settled everywhere in the valleys and along the feet of the mountain ranges, moreoften speaking the same languages as the coastal people, when there are true coastal people, which is not always the case, all depends on the quality of the environmeent.

The much vaunted opposition between «bush» (inland) and «saltwater» (coastal) people[101] is more of a secondary and Christian factor, the coastal people having taken the *Lotu* earlier than the inland people in their mountain fastnesses, where they could more easily resist and stay heathen. Future coastal people were often inland groups living on the first range of hills, in well situated villages swept by the tradewinds, claiming each the ownership of a different coastal tract. Under missionary pressure, they came to settle closer to the shore, often in a much less advantageous and comfortable location. People living in offshore islands were refugees from war, immigrants from far away atolls destroyed by tidal waves or of smaller volcanic islands destroyed by stronger than usual earth tremors (the inhabitants of the Leuangiua (Ontong Java) atoll destroyed by a tidal wave settling on the coast of Malaïta, the Dip Point people of West Ambrym who had to flee in 1913 to the east coast of Malekula[102], the «owners» of the Lopevi live volcano similarly resettled on the same Malekulan eastern board, those of Mere Lava recently on southern Vanua Lava). Most coastal Christian villages have been made of all sorts of people seeking the protection of the missions, traditional land-owners often being outnumbered, thus creating wholesale a new type of social tensions inside the model Christian villages. In Espiritu Santo, even eastern coastal people went to settle at a days walk inland, so as to escape the presence of the murderous white men, after the introduction of small-pox killing four fiths of the population in the second half of the last century. The theoretically bad relations between the coastal Christian villages and the inland groups is the result of the Presbyterian mission establishing large coastal Christian groups. Both people speak the same languages and never really ceased to intermary.

The explanation of the rapidity of the transfer all round Melanesia of the Lapita technique is not that by a unique people coming from outside the area, but the simple fact that the potters were women, and that a significant portion of each generation of these women potters would marry afar, teaching their craft to their daughters and their son's wives. Some archeologists seem so annoyed about the idea that the potters be women, as they were on contact except in a very few specialized cases of priests making their own pots for the offering to the gods, praying over the steam of a small amount of cooked food, that they even query the idea, on the argument that no archaological data can prove or disprove it. My answer is that as no archeological data proves that the women organized a revolution to seize the pottery from the men, there is no reason to believe that they were not at the start the individuals responsible for the trade. Moreover the working of wet clay fits in the women's own symbolic systems, the men's occupations generally being considered as hot and dry and not wet and humid as are the women's.

A constant Melanesian institution is the well known specialization of local communities in producing and bartering everything, from the *kula* bracelets and necklaces to complete sailing canoes, wooden plates, headrests, polished stone blades, basalt oven stones, volcanic or freshwater silica sand for temper, shell money and any kind of pots and pans, etc. The complete list could be more than a page long[103]. Each of these local groups is as Melanesian as the other. They would never relish multiplying locally the number of communities holding the same privilege as themselves, but an offshoot in a far away island would not be ruled out as a danger to their primary economic function.

The clear cut, and given as logical, opposition between big-man and chief[104], is only between words coined by the white man a century before any serious research. Something better should be found. Facts might not be as clear cut as shown so often on paper. Polynesia is meant to have hereditary chiefs, Melanesia not. In fact, there are chiefs in both, if the concept is to be considered as a valid one.

Among the Maori and the Kanak of New Caledonia, one can show a number of instances where a so called chief has been pushed aside, because he was considered unfit for the job, one of his younger brothers taking his place[105], and the latter's descendants striving over the generations to deny the privileges of seniority to the former chiefly line. Other reasons such as misfortune at war, unbearable behaviour (i.e. sleeping with too many married women), famine accounted for by the idea that the outer world's favour had deserted the chief,

were cause to abandon him or have him murdered and replaced by the head of a junior line (i. e. the vagaries of the paramount chieftainship of the district of Wetr in Lifou and the Nejê and Neporo junior but chiefly lines in the coastal Houaïlou valley in New Caledonia proper).

In this way, the concept of a variable *mana* — the *tapu* protecting the chief tending to disappear at the same time as the *mana* diminishes — blurs the frontiers between the hereditary chief and the more or less elective «big man» or quasi *matai* institution.

Where there are so called big-men, they may tend to come from privileged families, in particular from those having wide land holdings and large pig herds. If the office of the big-man's is in fact hereditary, what is the difference with the one of the senior brother in a wobbly chiefly line, except in words ? In North Ambrym, Vanuatu, the young men of such privileged families must pay twice the price, in number of tusker pigs, so as to go upwards from grade to grade[106] in the local hierarchy, *mage*, which is another form of hereditary privilege in an institution which one could imagine has evolved from the classical big-man situation. Those who get to the top, and can claim to have paid for themselves more than once the grade of *mal*, are in fact the heads of the same families — they then have the sole right to an oval stone wall surrounding their house, their first wife being the only one to enter if her husband has bought for her the senior rank in the corresponding female hierarchy. They were called chiefs during all the last century and the better part of this one. They can fail too, for instance if they have lost their father's business acumen for farming out tusker pigs at the most favourable conditions. Andrew Strathern tells more or less the same story in his *The Rope of Moka*[107].

We have studies of big-men's role in pig killing ceremonies all over Melanesia and New Guinea, but no exhaustive surveys about who is a big-man over a wide area. The appearances of greater democracy ascribed to Melanesia versus Polynesia have little foundation in fact. Rank being the way of differentiating between men an women born in the same environment, be it *inherited* or *achieved*, one should recognize, in a way or another, that Melanesian societies are based on it[108], for the very reason that rank not being hereditary by obligation, as shown on Samoa where nobody would deny there is not here a ranked society, qualitative differences in social status between a higher and a lower social level can justifiably be termed rank, be they acquired or more or less hereditary, or both together. There is a curious hesitation to call rank what is obtained through trading in pigs, although Polynesian chiefs never hesitated to do so, later selling pigs to Captain James Cook and to so many other adventurous figures since.

There was the same hesitation, for so long, to apply in Melanesia concepts considered as adequate to the Polynesian situation.

The ways of going about acquiring a greater rank than the one obtained at birth does not even delineate the difference, as we know today of a great number of instances whereby a Polynesian man or woman, first born in a chiefly line, strove to acquire greater *mana*, for himself and his lineage[109], or failed and fell from grace, even being in danger of becoming a slave in someone else's kitchen and thus stay *noa* until an eventual speedy death preferred to such dishonor.

The «hypergamous» marriage, described first for Tonga by William Mariner[110], has pleased many theoreticians. Marrying a first born daughter in a much higher ranked family allowed one's children the benefit of the privilege of *fahu*, one aspect of which meant they upranked their maternal oncle, is a hallowed way of achieving higher rank. The man, with his future wife's consent, thus creates a new lineage which is many ranks over the one acquired by him at birth. Even if no other island society considers, in the Tongan way, that every single man or woman is descended from the earlier titular head of the country, in this case the *Tui Tonga*, many practise hypergamous marriages in much the same way, although not always with the logical consequences shown in the right of *fahu*.

My Lifou wife's mother's brother's father, mother's brother and his eldest son, as well as her mother and mother's sister, represent three successive generations where the parent's will has been thwarted, and girls have married in hypergamous marriages, that is with a man of lower rank (the concept of hypergamy being male orientated). Such marriages seem no better accepted than the reverse, but exist nevertheless, the influence of Christianity not being evident at this level. This is no specific Pacific islands institution, hypergamous marriages being still frequent in continental Europe in banking and industrial circles. It even happens in Academia.

The willful behaviour noted in so many locations on the part of high ranking first-born girls[111] explains this, but has for long been little noted by generations of anthropologists persuaded that the right of decision was always vested in the man, and that a woman, even of high birth, if she was senior to her brother, would always let him make decisions in her stead and in her name[112]. There are famous cases to the contrary, not only the one of Queen Pomaré of Tahiti and of Queen Salote of Tonga, of Salamasina the female leader of the Samoan struggle for independance from Tonga, of female *sau* or *lavelua* here and there (Wallis island), but quite a number of Maori high born women, as the *ariki nui* Te Puea,

and her niece Te Ata today, who held firmly the power in their own right. I have seen any number of times men cringe in front of the expressed will of an *isola*, first born daughter of a paramount lineage in Lifou. High ranking ladies in the Pacific islands have nothing in common with the description of female slaves of their men popularized by the missionary literature[113]. Anybody having met with the late first-born sister of the Samoan Head of State, or with Adi Lady Lala in Fiji, can understand.

A number of Papuan and New Guinea political stalwarts have been persuaded to write and publich their biographies. All were born in coastal or inland villages, far from what was western civilization in Papua New Guinea at the time. Each talks of his mother in glowing terms, and what he says of how decisions were discussed between his parents does not corroborate Godelier's view on the way the Baruya males build their domination over their women[114]. This latter idea seems to me to be a simplified ersatz version of an earlier marxism since thrown to the winds. The Australian film *First Contact* has brought out in full detail how these same Anga women knew how to resist their men's desire to put their half-caste children to death.

The ambiguous links between both sexes in New Guinea could be assessed in a different light, as Jan van Baal has shown[115] among the Marind-Anim in the way women accompanied their men and acted in their raids on the West Papuan coastal or inland villages. This particular case may be ascribed to the Marind-Anim's falling demography earlier then other groups through the introduction of gonorrhoea by Indonesian political exiles and armed police brought into the area by the Dutch. They could not steal children systematically close to their borders because of the relatively strong Dutch military presence around Merauke, so they organized expeditions to far away Papua, where they were known under the name of Tugeri and their raids terrorized the locals, until the day where these raids became one of the official reasons for imposing British Protectorate on the land.

One of the first conquests of anthropology has been to show the way labour and social functions could be shared in a competitive and complementary way between men and women. Why forget this principle in favour of adopting anew the old missionary accusations about male domination over women ? Male sexual violence exists, but it could be linked, at least in New Guinea, with the fear of women's genitals by the young men, which is a consequence of their education by the older male generation, eager to prevent sexual permissivness between young people. It can be understood also as a counterpoint to strong female

willpower and assertivness in all sexual matters.

*Mana* can be restored through migration. There are classical examples of this in Maoridom. But this possibility works all over the islands. A loss of face means an obligation to migrate, usually where one already knows the local people and can claim one's place on the basis of genealogical links or marriage alliances however far removed. The loss of face can be the result of the local women making fun of you, state of things all well born island men dread. This puts greater power than has been assessed on the regular meetings of women. Quarrels about land, or women, mostly about married women, can oblige the loser to decide to migrate. Quarrels between sisters-in-law, when the wife of the elder brother acts in too authoritarian a manner, may push the younger brother to go and settle elsewhere, often among his wife's kin, which puts him somewhat under his wife's people, and his wife's thumb. This still happens all the time and explains many migrations to the town, which can then be more easily in a way be felt less of a drastic cut.

Such small scale migrations should have been recognized for their theoretical importance. They have happened continuously for centuries, and have thus had at all times a statistical impact. Contrary to the idea that Melanesians are loth to accept strangers, preferring to put them to the pot, islanders have been all the time fitting newcomers in the local scene, which has had to change each time if only slightly because of this. The society at large thus was, and is, in a continuing process of change at both ends, accomodating at the same time departures and arrivals. Origin myths have often shown this quite clearly[116] in principle, and every day life still bears out the point..

*Hierarchies*

It is a common belief that Polynesian societies have adopted a hierarchical model. Hocart showed us though how a Fijian hierarchy could in effect be a complex working system, with people established in all sorts of positions whereby their allegiance to the titular head was defined in all sorts of unheard of ways, which could be interpreted as being as many sets of conditions for the functioning of the link, conditions out of which the relation could wane and disappear. The principal link is the one between so-called chiefs and «talking chiefs», which at least in Samoa suspiciously looks like a dual chieftainship. In a brilliant paper[117],

Christina Tiren shows how this duality works in the minds and the behaviour of the members of the Fijian society.

On the island of Lifou there is even a so-called chiefly language, *qene Miny*, as opposed to *qene Drehu*, the language of everyday life. *Qene Miny* is talked when adressing the chief, but equally the father, or the eldest brother after the fathers death or when he acts in his father's place. So it is not the chiefly language, chiefs making use of it only when they are not yet installed, when talking to their father. Once they are chiefs they will only use it when talking to a chief of higher rank, of which there few around, termed *angajoxu*, the plural of *joxu* being used then. In this ceremonial and very formal language, chiefs are termed *joxu* and their wives *isola*. If one studies the language in detail, we have seen earlier that it appears then that *joxu* and *isola* only mean respectively man and woman, as opposed to *trahmany* and *föe*, in the common talk. *Joxu* and *isola* are none then but simple descriptive, if fundamental, terms in the ceremonial way of address. They should not be translated chief and chieftainess. They are nevertheless all the time, for a matter of convenience. Convenient translations cannot be held to be scientifically valid concepts for the analysis of society and culture. The constant logical ambiguity of the vocabulary we make use of in anthropology creates a parallel constant problem.

I did show — but who reads data published in French ? — some twenty years ago, as regards the workings of the Melanesian society in Ouvéa, that the chief, here called *than*, did not exist out the presence of the members of his «court», that is those men who held in this court a privilege to be exercised between the limits marked by the monumental barrier of whole trunks partly dug in the sandy soil, and only there. These members of the chiefly court were : the *hingat in than*, builders of houses and canoes, also close advisers having the privilege of physically beating the chief for his eventual misconduct ; the *hnyimen than*, the chief's mouthpiece, standing and talking on his own in the way his forefathers had taught him to act, without any specific instructions from the chief ; the *tang tangen than*, who keeps the chief's treasures at the latter's will (some have later sold the chief's treasures to roving white men) ; the *ahnyaba*, the only person who can sleep with the chief (the chief's legitimate wife cannot) in the *hnyeule*, the hut containing the chief's yam provisions, and the only one who can eat the fruits of the banana tree at the foot of which the chief has been relieving himself at night ; the *obotrkong*, the «sacred basket», the man who concludes the discussions at the end of the day in the chief's meeting house and voices the decision arrived at by consensus, or the disagreement (the chief talks in a low voice during the meeting and cannot impose his views easily on those who are

present). All these dignitaries constitute, between themselves, the only visible structure of the chieftainship and as such dominate their titular head as much as to the contrary. Any privileged person wanting to assert his autonomy will be careful not be present, but will delegate in his place the head of a junior lineage. Such a delegation can even become permanent. This formal structure closely parallels, although not exactly, the one described earlier as regards the nearby island of Lifu.

Chieftainships are thus surrounded by lineages the titular heads of which are striving to stay as independant as they can, one way being to formalize the relation with the chief in a yearly offering, *tang sahac*, brought when they decide to and made of what they wish to give, so as never to be caught in the throng of closely related lineages, the *je ditr* (mostly the chieftainship's junior lineages, the offspring of the chief's father's father's brothers, his father's brothers or his sons and their children, those lineages comprising eventually immigrants accepted in their midst) who collectively, on tbne appointed day, bring in the *fat*, the first fruits of the yam crop with which to fill in the *hnyeule*.

Father Dubois has described for Maré a society where the older lineages controlling land had been victims of a wholesale holocaust : «le massacre des *élétok*». Trouble is that the descendants of these extinct lineages can be found living quietly at some distance from their former residence, under other assumed names, having evidently lost their former status and control over land and with it the right to the names which justified it.

Another aspect of these very flexible hierarchies is that they go two by two. No chieftainship is self contained and can be isolated for description or analysis. No chief exists without being in competition with another one, usually the same one over some centuries at least. For such competition, he needs help. A number of chiefly lineages have a supportive lineage close by, without which their power is bereft of any real ways of exercising it. All decisions must be taken first and foremost with the man at the head of this parallel line, whose status is close to the one of the theoretical paramountcy. It is a shared power which does not give out its name, formal reverence given to the chief barely hiding the fact that the latter is powerless without the agreement of the former. Ever close to the Hnaisilin (Naisseline) family of Gwahma in Maré, Warawi si Pure si Thuahmijoc serei Wadua, *acania doku*, is the one to whom everyone dealing with the chief must adress himself, the chief's name never being said in public. If there is no agreement between the two, the land will not be quiet, as happened when, at the turn of the century, the Naisselines were obliged to accept the presence of a

French pastor nominated by the French authorities and the Warawi of the time led the nearly complete congregation in revolt against the for them illegitimate white imissionary thrust upon them.

When the competition is not established inside the chieftainship as in the Gwahma case, the techniques of going about must be handled with care. Rival chiefs can live next door to one another. It has not been possible to prevent the different Christian churches from profiting by these differences, nor to prevent the colonial authorities to play a divisive game with such rivalries each time they learnt about them. Sometimes, they strove to create rivalries where there weren't any.

The Bahitr chiefs live close to the Imwene chiefly line in north Ouvéa. The Bahitr became Catholic and enlisted on their side the Marist Fathers, waging war once more against the now mostly Protestant south, this time with firearms, but also against Imwene, who had become Protestant so as not to fall under Bahitr's domination, as well as Oüa of Ohnyot who was with his people a direct offshoot of the Wetr district in nearby Lifou. The many religious wars were won by the better armed Catholic side. Imwene and Oüa had to flee to Fayawe in 1863, the seat of the Qenegei chieftainsip, then Qenegei and Imwene had to flee together to New Caledonia for some years. They were brought back to Ouvéa by the French marines taking possession in 1865. Imwene had to become Catholic to protect his peace. All the dependants of his lineage remained stoutly Protestant and went on to build a village and an LMS church into the bush, on former farmland ; they called Gosana this place which was known before as *hnyebuba*, that is «in the yam fields». This rivalriy has never abated and has been carried over the furthergenerations[118].

In Fayawe, where the bulk of the Melanesian language, *Qen Iai*, speaking people of the island live, the paramount chiefs are two, Qenegei and Draume. Draume's line claims to be older in the place than the Qenegei's, who are immigrants from New Caledonia, where they were makers of shell money on the west coast, at Fwajaè, in the south of the Voh district. Draume never accepted the taking over of the paramountcy by Qenegei and has remained stoutly independent. They have been fighting each other ever since, that is well over four hundred years[119]. They live at less than two hundred yards from each other. Draume is considered in Lifou as an offshoot from the principal land owning lineage around Drueulu, in the Gaica district, that is Wacako. But he will not accept the tradition of being an offshoot from Wacako, claiming that the true situation is in the reverse, so as to be able to go on playing at calling Qenegei a foreigner on Ouvéa.

Earlier, the conversion to Christianity of the Wetr district in Lifou was led by the principal *atresi*, Upinu Waleweny, who had prophesied that a new faith and light would come from the east; which prophecy the LMS conveniently ascribed to representing her coming. The Ukeinesö lineage of paramount chiefs, as called before the last chiefly murder (or Sihaze since the replacement of the murdered chief by a man chosen, it is said, in the Aju lineage of Nimaha in Ouvéa) called then for French Marist Fathers to come so as to keep some of its independence in front of the growing power gained by the LMS missionaries favouring the Bula chiefly line of the Lösi district and the Waehnya chiefs, the latter their next door neighbours in their Xepenehe residence on the northern coast of Wetr. In the same way too, the *isola,* mother of the young Zeula chief in the Gaica district, hailing from the Xetriwaan chiefly line of Touaourou in New Caledonia, brought catholicism to one fraction of her son's chiefly court, so as to allow him to keep also some independence from the pressures coming from the Lösi district and its paramount chief Bula.

My wife's mother's brother was Noeja Wahnyamala, the principal chief of the Lifou village of Kejany in the Lösi district. His lineage had been in competition, over generations past, with the Hulicia line coming from the Wedrumel village in Gaica, where the Wahnyamala boast a good third of their traditional dependants. Noeja had been imprisoned before the war after having refused to let his young men go and work on the roads for the government and a Hulicia had been put as village chief in his stead. Some years ago, old man Hlonu, the *ten adro*, «master of the land», that is head of the senior lineage in the Huliciya side of the village, became very cross because the young Hulicia chief had given permission directly to the people of the nearby village of Hmelek to go and cut wood for house building in the forest of Hnahnè, thus bypassing Hlonu. The old man went to see Noeja Wahnyamala and told him : «Hulicia has betrayed me. I am coming now on your side, so that the Wahnyamala will have definitively won the day.»

Noeja Wahnyamala thanked ceremoniously Hlonu *qatr*, but spent the greater part of the next year trying to bring the two back together, even preaching in church, as a deacon, on the subject of Christian reconciliation. I understood then, and only then, that *rivalries were to be fed, not suppressed*, and that they were at the core of the workings of the social order. Only our western naïveté brings us to try and ask the people to forget their quarrels. They cannot do without them. In so many such cases, essential information comes from observing real behaviour, not from asking questions on problems of principle. I quite accept the

idea that, certainly in quarrelsome Samoa, other earlier authors have made the same observations. The problem is, the idea does not sem to have held.

It took me forty years to complete a survey of all positions, functions and privileges in the Melanesian society of New Caledonia proper, village by village, lineage by lineage, the data being always the one the persons owning it would want to give, and which I checked upon over the years, through interviews and observation of the behaviour of all interested parties. Chieftainships have here a knack of always changing shapes. Not one is exactly similar to another. They come in all sizes, large, medium, small. If one thinks of a possible logical variant of the model expressed in general terms, one will find it in some corner, plus all those unheard of, nicely mixing contradictory principles to the people's satisfaction.

These chiefs are all competing between themselves so as to each cut out the greater amount of feasible autonomy for himself. The apparent links of domination are often enough, in fact, astute ways of keeping to one self, for example as a kind of living frontier looking towards a direction in space, establishing links with at least both sides, playing one competing paramount chief against another. Or through a ceremonial function conveniently translated in some reality only once a year.

As in the Loyalty islands, social and political unity is not the aim. No one exists without one or two rivals, each being the reason the others can stand on their own. Some chiefs hold the right to a court inside a wide walled enclosure, and reign over dignitaries following more or less the same role model generally valid in the Loyalty islands (such as in Canala in New Caledonia proper). Some look like holding to a fraction of power only inasmuch as they belong to a system of horizontal relations whereby they exist through a certain capacity of mobilizing the support of others, dispersed over a wide area, the great part of their apparent local dependants being by all means independent as long as they keep courteous relations with them. There is nothing more difficult than to obtain from a Melanesian of New Caledonia that he follows anybody's bidding. Nevertheless, all positions are inherited at the start, the flexibility of the system allowing for changes in status through prowess in war or political acumen. Ambitions have been thwarted by the French conquest, which favoured some against others.

One well established institution is a web of formalized relations between lineages claiming the same often far off place of origin. If one goes there, one is easily explained that this oldest of multiple roots in the soil is only apparent. For example Mount Souma, overlooking the valleys of Poya in the west and of

Houaïlou in the east, which is the inland entry to the subterranean abode of the dead, is claimed as their place of origin by the Paici speaking people, at least for a larger part of them. That is only a symbol. Their real origin stems from further south through the Bourail valley on the west coast and the Kwawa valley on the east coast. At the bottom of the latter valley, the local myth explains that the chieftainship there is identical with the one on the island of Muli in the Ouvéa lagoon. Then from Muli, if we go there, we will be sent back to New Caledonia by another version of the myth and another route.

There are more or less three webs of relationships recognized all over the group, covering the Loyalty islands as well as New Caledonia. The goings and comings have been so numerous over the thousands of years of these people's presence, that each web is found to be in itself extraordinarily complex. One practical rule is rather simple. If a specific place of origin is claimed for, this means in effect that relations work both ways between the two given points in space. This is most clear between the north of Ouvéa and the Wetr district in Lifou. In both places identical lineages carrying closely identical names claim the other side of the channel as their place of origin. New Caledonians tend to be more coherent in their presentation of such things, but the way traditional routes going from A to B show a direction (there can be more than one route) is only a literary device allowing to recall the story. Men and women continuously ply these routes both ways, which is *the* important point.

One way of checking on this is through sifting all events of colonial history — I have been a witness to those of the last half of this century. For instance, who has become Catholic or Protestant, and for what reason, i. e. in opposition to whom ? Where did the LMS and the French Protestant mission recruit their helpers, pastors (*nata*, *hnamiatr*, *nahibat*) and deacons (*dikona*) ? Who were the privileged candidates for teaching or pastoral work, and why? Since a show of democratic elections has become a local habit, the supporters of the different candidates can be looked for, as well as the non public arguments being used out of the presence of European witnesses or politicians, even if belonging to the same political side.

The name of one of the two principal webs of relationships appeared forty years ago on the voting papers of an Ouvea candidate, Fleury Asafa Namanon Trongadjo, without any European official noticing it. I did, having worked for months on end with him , his grandfather and his elder brother, and never been given the name Trongadjo as being theirs. This started me on the road of mapping slowly, but precisely, all relationships of this type. The result is so intermingled and detailed that it has become unreadable, except for the Melanesians them-

selves. But it is an excellent guide to interpret what happens, even the most gruesome events such as the 1989 massacre in the northern Ouvéa cave. Both names Namanon and Trongadjo are keys to these relations. Trongadjo points to its equivalent Trongazo in the Wetr district, which is the name the paramount chief's ancestors bore. Namanon points to a number of places on the east coast of New Caledonia where it is found in chiefly genealogies or as the name of a parallel line inside a cheifly lineage. Anybody having the name Namano, or Namanon (*Namanô*), or the one of Xetriwaan, Ketiwan, Ketiware, somewhere in his inheritance, will claim the same origin as all the others.

One question mark hanging over the Loyalty islands and New Caledonia is what happened with the oldest inhabitants, those which are thought to maintain the more ancient links with the outerworld and whose blessing is said to be needed by all later migrants. Such a theoretical model, taken from Maurice Leenhardt, has been recently used by the modern Melanesian political leaders to explain how they could solve the logical contradiction between their official claim of Kanak independance and keeping in the country the successive immigrants from the colonial past.

The model proposed by Maurice Leenhardt was the dual role played by chiefs who were really eldest sons of the senior line, *orokau,* and the so called masters of the land, *kavu neva*, who controlled the interface between the land of the living and that shared by the gods and the dead.

The trouble is that the *kavu neva* can be at the same time *orokau*, in their own right, in their own lineage or own cluster of lineages. So the dual function disappears in a way each time it is found on a single head. A number of chiefs are not *kavu neva* and another number have no *kavu neva* sitting next to them, because they have carefully sent them packing on their way — the expansionist *paaci* chiefs had a habit of throwing off the older inhabitants so as to stay between themselves and not keep around people who maintained traditional solidarty links with potential foes. *Neva* means the landscape, that is a territorial concept in as much as it exists, but does not designate the soil used for planting yam or taro. Master of the «soil» (*maître de la terre*) is a wrong translation. These *kavu neva* have little to do with land tenure although this is often claimed as their privilege. There are all sorts of *kavu* around and among them, the *kavu mëu*, the «master of the yam», who decides upon the day when the first fruits of the yam crop will be eaten by men — women and children will eat them a month later — is easily the most revered and thus the most powerful, if power is the word which fits the situation. The «masters of sun and rain», *kavu karè ma kwa*, play at least as im-

portant a role. In conversation all are referred to in a general way as *kavu*, without specifying their real function, as all persons present are meant to be acquainted with the situation.

In Maré, as we have seen, the oldest lineages, the *èlètok*, have been put aside and obliged to change names so as to loose as a logical consequence their former control over the land. In Lifou, the *ten adro* are the intermediaries with the outer world, the near total number of priests dealing with the innumerable number of *haze* are taken from their ranks. They thus cannot enter any chiefly court as being considered too dangerous because of their strong *men* (*mana*) received from the *haze* invisible community. In the district of Wetr they are called *alalu,* always being found two by two, and linked to a small number of special officers, the *atresi*, who are meant to be their chiefs but are really their go-betweens, having no invividual power on any *haze* except through and at the pleasure of these people. In Ouvea, the oldest inhabitants are called *üay*, the list of whom is prone to discussion, if not quarrels, nobody agreeing on exactly the same list. Some of them are seen gracing every chief's court. Nobody agrees on recognizing for them a definite function. They are there because they should be, but do not hold to any special powers or privilege as such. They have in a way been brought to a kind of insignificance.

The result is that the old idea of a dual opposition between the older and immigrant families which has been the basis of ethno-historical assumptions since the beginnning of last century appears today as being quite unsatisfactory. The real problem, one of the most difficult to solve, is the one of the potential ethno-historical foundations of surviving social structures, which had evolved over centuries or more before the the white man's advent, but were taken into the turmoil created by Christianisation and the imposition of colonial rule. The constant existence of formalized opposite camps, which are delineated by field work and the observation of the behaviour and movements of Melanesian people over the last half of a century, added to what archives allow us to fathom of the same, check easily with all registered historical oppositions and rivalries and can be even used to good effect to analyse current behaviour by a number of people holding at the same time modern and traditional office, their real status being usually unbeknown to European politicians and officials. But even so called traditional rivalries — what is tradition ? — can be more complex that what has been usually written about them.

The Big Nambas of North Malekula are ruled by dual chieftainships which play a competitive game alternating war and the offering of hundreds of pigs tied

to wooden stakes along an alley of stone monoliths, the *mweleun* giving the feast to his arch rival acquiring at the same time a degree in the local grade taking hierarchy which is here specially reserved for these chiefs. His men will bring in their pigs to be ceremonially clubbed by their *mweleun*, but they cannot compete for grades reserved for him. They can, at the same time, compete for a shorter list reserved for commoners.

The two rival *mweleun* say they stem from two fruits, each having fallen on one side of the stately roots of the *nakatambol* tree. The two kids born from the fruits survive by sucking the trunk's nodes. When they are older they walk out in the open. Each finds out then about the existence of the other and that they were both born from the same mother, the *nakatambol* tree. They stay at first around it. The people already living on the land discover them and put them in the position of each being the chief in a specific location a few miles from one another, these former inhabitants not dividing themselves between the two, as is the habit elsewhere in the islands, but staying apart from each of the two new chiefs, as very special servants to both of them at the same time.

The result is quite unusual and a tribute to the logical capacities in social experimentation of island people. Wars, marriage, food and pig offerings are alternating between the two chiefly lines, the lineages classified as their junior lines being those who rear the pigs and hand them on to their respective chiefs to be clubbed ; these junior lines will receive their pigs and food back when their particular chief will be on the receiving end instead of the giving side. Chiefs and their men drink kava (from the dry root) in the evening, in the Fijian way, clapping cupped hands in the same way as each man dips in his turn his face in the kava bowl and takes a long sip. If more than one chief or honoured guest is present, one or the other of a man of the host lineage will have to drink between each so that no men of rank are ever brought to drink in direct succession.

The former masters of the land, the *nëmbalian,* do not participate, living in villages apart from those carrying the men who support one or the other of the dual *mweleun*. They rear pigs for their own consumption only. But if there is a war and one side is the vanquished one, its chief will have to offer a human victim so as to make peace with his rival. The *nëmbalian* did not participate in the war, but they are here to give one of their numbers to either one of the two warring chiefs, as a victim to be killed, hung by the legs to the eyes of a standing carved wooden drum, while the men of the victorious chief sing the chants and dance the dance dealing with the killing of man. Or such is the theory.

The truth is that the victim is left alive, but obliged to change identity : he is given a new name, a new lineage and a new wife, and must cut all links with his former kin and family. The chants are sung nevertheless and the dance is put

on. The *nëmbalian* say they are threatened with extinction if they do not offer a such victim at least once in each generation. They have other functions, being the surgeons of the local real circumcision, rare in the islands, one of the few areas in Vanuatu with north Raga where it is practised. They are also the carvers of wooden drums, the makers of clubs and bamboo spears fitted with a wooden human head, the sculptors of the tree fern finial carvings for the men's houses, the *amèl*. If a young chief is in a hurry to take over from his father, or from his elder brother, they will eventually furnish the murderers who will swiftly despatch the old man at night. *Nëmbalian* deal in cutting wood and flesh, and they pay for it in blood and flesh they lose in any case, but that in theory only. White men thus think there are real victims, to be clubbed, cooked and eaten. Melanesians identify the changing of names with death, and sing accordingly about a deed which never happened — in our logical terms. We take at face value what is a kind of poetic device, but with a very precise social consequence : the sudden appearance of a new junior line.

The *nawotalam* in the Shepherds' islands (from southeast Epi to Mataso, this area comprising the larger islands of Tongoa, Tongariki and Emae) is at the top of a hierarchy made of a number of lineags the head of which one of the existing titles organized in one of many series. Some titles are just names giving access to a land tenure, some carry specific functions directed towards the *nawotalam*.

No such chief goes without his *atavi*. This man carries with him the duty of protecting his chief from any danger stemming from the outer world. When the chief is inaugurated on the *marae* (a *marae* is at the same time the square where the dances are held and men drink kava in the evening ; it is also where each title holder participating in the *marae* has the benefit of a stone seat on the sides of the square) the specific stone for the enthronement being too powerful to touch for the *nawotalam*, he will put his right foot on a piece of hard gaiac wood slanting from the stone to the ground, the *atavi* only being allowed to put his own foot on the stone. In compensation for this power, the *atavi* will be buried alive, after having been clubbed, so as his corpse to become the *nawotamam*'s head-rest ; on each side and at his feet, the chief will have one of his wives, buried alive after having been drugged with kava. Excavations by José Garanger in the whole area[120] have proved this point beyond any doubt. Reverend Milnes's journal describes one of the very last instances[121]. In this very precise case, there is a proven ritual murder, but no cannibalism whatesover.

The *takalakal* is the mouth-piece of the *nawotalam* — in eastern Melane-

sia as well as in Polynesia, no man of rank would go without his orator. Getting up and delivering a speech in public is the mark of rank for the man on behalf of whom the speach is given. Only in some parts of New Caledonia proper does the chief speak aloud on his own in public.

The *manuvasa*, *munuay* or *munue* is the man who talks on behalf of the chief to the outer world, prays to the god, *nasumwaur*, which protects the residence group, all things which the *atavi* cannot do. He also is the one who will have visions about the fate of the *nawotalam* and about the local community. The *namataisau* is the carpenter for building the sea going canoes ; he also carves the the woodend dishes, the clubs and the standing wooden drums. The *takoari* is the warrior, who will take the lead in war ; he will also be the one to despatch, by clubbing him from behind, any *nakainanga* (one of the men who support the chief because they hold titles secondary to and linked with his own) condemned to die because he has committed a crime or an unforgettable sin ; he will also deal with the wives and the chief's *atavi* in the case of the latter's death.

The other aspect of the system is that such titles are not inherited, but attributed to a young man if and when he is felt to be in tune with the responsabilities going with it. *Marae* are not lineages, but residence groups. One lives where he should according to the title he has received. Titles can change according to different stages in life. One can go up in rank, in the same island or in another. There are specific titles for elderly people who want to live a quieter life and benefit of a smaller land tenure. One does not inherit his father's title, but will be offered, at different stages in life, a title at the moment devoid of holder, which can or cannot be his father's or his father's father's. Genealogies recited become pseudo genealogies, each being in fact a succession of men holding the same rank and title.

As in all the area, subordinate title holders will give their *nawotalam* the first fruits of the yam crop, adding a pig or two : this is called the *nasaotonga*. It is regularly given inside the *marae*, but at longer intervals between *nawotalam* of unequal rank. The members of a local residence system of titles are linked to other more exalted ones, and through their chiefs to other *nawotalam*, in the same island or in another one. The value and power of a ranking title is linked also to the regular exercise of obligations, which means pigs that travel in canoes from one *marae* to another, a significant fraction of the formal recognition of higher rank playing between different islands.

Titles thus belong to systems of interlocking formal two level hierarchies which appear to be rather stable, in as much as you find from place to place the same titles huddling together, but almost never inside the same hierarchical suc-

cession. One title is linked here to the chiefly function, but not there where the exalted rank will be attributed to another name.

Another inter-island link is the one of the origin stories telling how the members of a canoe called by a given name have come from the south, some of them as far as Eromanga — for a place of origin further from this southerly island the people speak of Mauri as being the name of the country they came from. Each canoe had a captain and a helmsman, both named by their title, and is the prefiguration of a *marae*, complete with *atavi*, *takalakal*, *manuvasa* and *takoari*. The links from the first title holder having been in the very same canoe which left people, that is other title holders, at each stop, is much wider than the links stemming from the hierarchy of *nasaotonga* obligations.

This system of rank covers the whole area from Efate south to Epi. In the southern half of the region, that is Efate and the adjoining islands, the succession to titles is matrilineal. In the northern half, it is by collective choice of each holder by the meeting of actual title holders linked with it, the *nawotalam* in charge and his immediate higher ranking chief.

This difference by inheritance rule is linked to the tradition of the cataclysmic volcanic outburst which, six hundred years ago, did destroy the former large island called Kuwae, and left the few present remnants marking the existence of a caldera, i.e. Tongoa, Ewose, Buninga, and Tongariki, the other part of which is under the sea between Tongoa and Epi and is still active. One cannot nevertheless really link this elective system entirely to the process of rebuilding the population on islands where the former inhabitants had been all killed by heavy projections of burning hot pumice stone, because the islands of Emae, Makura and Mataso to the immediate south are part of the system and had not been destroyed then.

A complete survey of the two systems has been carried out, island by island, village by village and title by title, most of the information being obtained through public meetings so as to prevent informants being temptesd to peddle only their own wares and their own vision of the system. This means thousands of small detailed informations, thousands of names confirmed and their accompanying data completed through individual interviews. This whole sum of information was processed by computer. This has showed that there was no logical fault anywhere in the mass of data obtained. All knew enough of the global system to fit their partial knowledge of it, that is the details constituting their own local variant, in such a way that it did not contradict any of all the other variants. This is a rare result in social anthropology and would in a way have satisfied Radcliffe-Brown, except for the fundamental fact that this system is much more

sophisticated than any of those he had on offer.

Nevertheless, this is not a fixed system. One can add to, or destract from it. New titles are created at will in adding a qualifying morpheme to the original title, or even by agreement between the interested parties without even going to this trouble. A title can be shared between two individuals by simple verbal agreement, without formalizing the deal, maybe according to the idea that the situation might change at the next generation.

The crux of the matter is land. A title gives access to land. Non title holders, and there are very few, have to work on their father's or their elder brother's land. Moreover, the land holding going with a title does never come in a coherent single piece, but in many ones, dispersed over an island — in convenient locations then so as to have access to drier soil good for yams or sweet potatoes, more humid soil good for taro, locations protected from the wind for banana, sugarcane and kava shoots — this may even come by in more than one island.

The Mataso minute terraces climbing up the mountain slopes are each shared between more than one tiitle holder. The result of this dispersion of land tenure is that landholdings are mixed in such a way that interpersonal or inter-*marae* fighting, because of pigs, women or a quarrel between different claimants to a title does not spill over to land. One cannot take over another man's land in any way, even if he has been murdered. Only the taking over of titles is allowed for by the culture in the sequence indicated and the decision can never be an individual one only.

Tanna in the south of Vanuatu is the sole southern island from which we have good information, as it has kept much of its former population density[122] on the gentle slopes rising to the central plateau — the depopulated parts, where information is more dificult to come by through the physical disappearance of so many lineages are the so called White Grass area, Loanbakël point in the north and the Kwamera district in the south. I have published a complete survey of all social ranks, privileges and functions onto the whole island, survey which has been completely left aside by some recent authors although it had been organized by residence groups so as to be of convenient use. Nobody claims to have done better, the habit of what I call prescriptive anthropology having distracted from using this data.

A young woman recently claimed that there was no knowledge left of traditional names[123] in the Waesisi district in south-eastern Tanna. They were all there in my work on Tanna, which she probably never had a look at, ten solid pages listing traditional names, privileges and functions.

Making use of the concept of *big-man* for the analysis of Tannese data does not conform to the logic of the social structure. There is nothing similar to a *big-man* out of the fact that people exchange huge amounts of pigs in the *nekowiar* ceremonies. Except in traditional New Zealand and New Caledonia, devoid of pigs, all Pacific islanders exchange large amounts of pigs, kill them in quite a formal way, and so to speak throw them at a named competitor who will have to reciprocate and manage to do at least slightly better. On Tanna, competitors are not only men of rank, but only certain ones, called *yèrëmërë*, who have the capacity to organize and the traditional power to head a group of lineages living around a dancing square — there are more than one kava drinking square, *yimwayim*, to one dancing square. The members of these call on others with which they have links so that the throng on either side, in each *nekowiar*, is never exactly the same, and the leader of the host group never the same man either, the idea being that, for the well being of all the island, such responsabilities must turn around, on another dancing square each time, all dancing squares being formelly linked to others through parallel named routes, so that the fiction that the two sides at any each time represent the whole island be maintained.

Tanna is a society of carefully preserved rank organized in such a way that few people outrank any others, formal privileges and functions being strongly adhered to and transmitted patrilineally. There are those who have the privilege of carrying a small white plume, *mëruk*, *nuwamëneng*, stuck in the hair ; those who have the right to a short or a high vertical contraption, *küeria*, made of long fibres taken from the back of the central ridge of the coconut palm and covered with white feathers, so high and heavy that it must be carried on the right shoulder instead of the head and be supported, so as not to fall down, by hooked sticks held by each the traditional supporting men of the ranking person ; those who hold the privilege of seing any turtle caught come their way and be cooked by them ; those whose function is to come at night, opening the oven before closing it again, and eat on the sly the head of the cooked turtle, everybody knowing the next morning that they have thus exercised their own specific privilege ; those who cook the special hairless black pigs, *poka këpwië*, killed at a *nekowiar*, which means they will be eaten at their residence by all concerned ; those who plant, care for and are the only ones to distribute the *nekaüä topunga*, the special kava plant whose stem has been partly covered with soil so as to allow it to concentrate also some of the drug ; those who are said to be cannibals, but in fact have links to a number of similar lineages and exchange with them dead corpses they never ever eat because they are, on arrival in each location, sent further on to another such lineage, which proceeds in the same way, sending the corpse further, and

so on and so on, until the bearers cannot stand to go further, and the corpse is unceremoniously buried ; those who are brought the first fruits of the yam crop (often enough *yèrëmërë* and bearers of long *këria*).

Lesser ranked dignitariess are those who are the surgeons of the incision of the foreskin in boys ; those who possess specific traditional medecines ; those who are the masters of the rites allowing for, in a given area, the success of the crops, or of fishing, so as there be an ample supply for the satisfaction of the people's needs. Every one of these men owns a stone, more often stones — although they often talk as if there was only one — which are washed once a year in a wooden dish carved in the shape of a canoe hull, *niko*, *nengoo*, in water, or at times with coconut milk. These stones have to do with yams, taro, banana, sugarcane, breadfruit, kava, fishing for fish generally, for specific fishes or for turtle. The possessors of stones allowing for the control of rain, sun, storm, thunder, are the most revered among these so-called magicians, who could be better described as priests calling on the dead and the gods to give satisfaction to the food needs of everyone around.

One single man, on the plateau, has the privilege and responsability of ensuring that all the Tannese will relish the feeling that their bellies are full all the year round. Disastrous dry years, without any rain at all, have been experienced in this tropical climate where often enough it rains once a day, in the afternoon. In a special room of his house he hangs onto the wall a large pandanus basket carrying inside a number of smaller baskets, each containing a symbol (a twig or a leaf) of a different vegetable food. Each year, on a specific day, all old baskets must be burned and replaced by new ones made by his wife, so as to ensure the global well being of the people all round the island. This priest is the only one to hold this particular privilege and to function for the benefit of the whole of the island (cf. A. B. Deacon and the concept of «full bellies» in Seniang, South West Malekula)..

All holders of what may be called fertility stones know each other, by specialty, and coordinate their ritual acts in time one with another. They start with a particular rite each year in the northwest of Tanna, for instance for bananas, send a message to the next holder of banana stones in a southeasterly direction so that in the course of a few weeks the whole round of the island is completed, crop by crop. Many of the proud possessors of fertility stones hold other privileges at the same time, but there is no apparent rule to that. Traditional diseases are linked also to stones, the washing of which is added to the use of medicinal plants so as to obtain the cure.

One fourth at least of the men around the island thus hold one or another

of those privileges and proudly assume its possession as a sign of rank. In such a formalized society, who can talk of *bigmanship*, when one always knows who has, and who hasn't, the right to be a leader in the exchange of pigs, because he has inherited of such a right.

A very special institution on Tanna is linked to the existence of two non matrimonial moities, named *Numrukwen* and *Koyometa* [124]. These moities were meant to govern peace and war. Which was evidently not an easy thing, *Numrukwen* and *Koyometa* being interspaced and none of each sharing between themselves large tracts of land. This means that if war happened between both, it was in fact only between a group of *Numrukwen* and another one made of *Koiometa* people, with each what allies they could muster from their own camp, but not the whole lot of *Numrukwen* and *Koyometa* on each side each time, which would have made half of the island.

War being made of surprise raids and the burning down of houses, the vanquished group had to flee on the other side of the island and negociate later to be allowed to come back. Then came into the picture a special dignitary, called *yani niko* or *yani nèngoo*, each having his own messenger, the function of this «master of the canoe», the canoe being the symbol of the polity represented by each so called dignitary and covering a number of lineages. The negociation allowed the vanquished to settle back on yheir own land, which thus should never be taken over by any enemy for more than the space of one generation.

The *yani niko*, «holder of the canoe», linked to his *yimwayim* and to one dancing place only, holding sway over more than one residence group, is what is most like a traditional chief in Western eyes. He is nevertheless for us a very queer person, who can betray his own people and secretly negociate for war to come upon them if he feels they do not pay due respect to him because they have been enjoying peace for too long. After having seen them chased away, he can then change tack and become again, as were his forefathers, the saviour of his own people who cannot negociate their return out of his active presence. Parallel manipulative strategies have been long noted by Maurice Leenhardt for New Caledonia, in particular explaining the details of the 1917 uprising.

Moiety structure might not be the right name for this institution. The reason is that there is a third group[125], called *Kowut Kasua*, which is meant to stay out of the fights between the two others — out of the *nekowiar* period where *Numrukwen* and *Koiometa* take over each then the function of ceremonial moieties.

At the time of independance, I was called in onto the Yanamwakël kava square by Rengyao, the *yani nèngoo*, whom I had some years before registered

as *Kowut Kasua*. He asked me to drink kava with him, then he pointed to two stone protruding from the volcanic soil, saying he had had a dream about where were the lost *Numrukwen* and *Koyometa* stones said to have been entrusted to the *Kowut Kasua* people and lost through Christianisation. He had dug them out on the precise spot of his dream. Here they were. At this very time he was telling me that the choice of the *Kowut Kasua* all over the island was for the independence of Vanuatu, but that choice was about peace in the present time and not a promise for the future — some months later, the *Kowut Kasua* will switch sides and the *Vanua aku pati* will lose the next provincial elections, in the same way as the so called francophone moderate parties (UPM) will lose the majority in Tanna in November 1995.

This instance can introduce a criticism of a partly faulty recent analysis of the institution by Ron Brunton (*The Abandoned Narcotic*, 1989). The error stems from having asked a leading question about the status of *Kowut Kasua* versus the more often mentioned *Koyometa* and *Numrukwen* moieties, which function is wider than the military role it is credited with by this author. There is no record of general conflict bertween all *Koyometa* and all *Numrukwen* lineages, but only between the *Koyometa* and the *Numrukwen* of such and such place, with some allies or lack of sufficient allies on both sides.

I never asked anybody in general who were these *Kowut Kasua*. I asked for in each *yimwayim* (a group of lineages sharing the same kava drinking square) who were they and waited for the answer which came spontaneously as to who were *Numrukwen*, *Koyometa* or *Kowut Kasua*. — I never asked straight if they were the one or the other. Then I used oral tradition to discover the function of these institutions, and only then did I try and asked somewhat more pointed questions always linked to a particular case, specific people, and never to the institution in general, knowing that such leading questions were only a source of embarassment for everybody. The answers then have no scientific validity because the question has been couched stricly in western words.

Brunton cannot easily apprehend a non matrimonial moiety system. I had registerd the existence of already two in New Caledonia, dual systems shoving in fact the interplay of three factors. So he tried another tack in linking *Kowut Kasua* to specific people adopting specific tactics. *Numrukwen* and *Koyometa* are shown as absolutes, *Kowut Kasua* as a relative and flexible factor. This goes with a will of determining who are on top, *yèrëmërë* or *yani niko*, not seeing that the hierarchical pyramidal model is a western construct and does not belong to the islands. Melanesians accept easily the idea of different social institutions working at different levels without feeling any sense of contradiction. The perceived

potential dangers of contradictions is one of the white man's stronger held concepts. Pacific islands love them and are constantly making of them dangerously efficient tools of the prestige competition.

On Tanna, *yèrëmërë* are the actors of the *nekowiar* food and pig killing exchange feasts. *Yani niko* deal in war and peace and play a determinant role at the onset of both.. Asking if one is higher than the other does not make much sense. If the *yèrëmërê* were on top, their numbers would be smaller than the *yani niko*.'s Which is not the case. The *yèrëmërë* are numerous, the *yani niko* are few. They take over responsibility for areas where there are always more than one *yèrëmërë* involved on each side. But this can happen only once in a generation. The *yèrëmërë* come to the fore at the occasion of each *nekowiar*, that is once every few years or less. The two cannot be linked in any hierarchical way. *Yèrëmërë* are related to one *yimwayim*, where one will find usually more than one *yèrëmërë* at a time. *Yani niko* work for more than one *yimwayim*, thus encompassing a much wider territorry than the so-called «chiefs», which concept is no more suitable than the one of «big man» to explain the Tannese situation. The *yani niko* who represented *Kowut kasua* groups had evidently more importance than others, as shown by Rengyao's behavior., influence and carefully drawn balancing act. Instead of being a somewhat disorganized society with too many conflicting claims to prestige and power, the Tannese society is one of the more complex ones, made of interacting systems which are as much complementary as they are in competition, with each other. Some of them organize coherence and peaceful relations, others rivalry and competitive adverserial collective behavior.

One of the methodological problems I did not envisage at the time of my field work on the island is that the traditional society the Tannese built anew when they left Christianity, many for good, lacks its former flexibility. They gave, for their own benefit as well as a kind of ideological strike against white dominion, a global public display coming straight from their remembered past in the last century, but in this way they saw then their reconquered culture as if it was motionless. Brand new interpretations presented as local myths and hundreds of visions in the evening, at kava time, or prophetic dreams in the dead of the night, tend to reinstate some movement in the picture[126]. Tanna is on the move always, although the Tannese will stoutly deny it at every turn.

*Networks*

The brilliant demonstration of the existence of the «*kula* ring» raised one

question : was it unique ? Malinowski never said so, but many readers have skipped important side aspects of his monograph so as to keep to the one beautiful circular model. The real reason for the circularity of the *kula* ring is that there is no land available in the Coral Sea where the exchange could go on in an easterly and northeasterly direction. But it does fizzle out towards the north, the northwest, the southwest and the southeast, following ancient exchange routes and sending offshoots inland at every opportunity. The Germans mapped part of this system beautifully west of Madang, between the coast, the hills and the Sepik valley[127]. F. E. Williams and Ian Hogbin documentated the situation for the in between area.

Another circular model exists between New Caledonia anf the Loyalty islands, to which Maurice Leenhardt gave the name of the «white and green cycle». In principle, it is circular. Shell objets are made on the west coast of New Caledonia, traded to the east coast and shipped to Ouvea, from there to Lifou and from Lifou to Mare. The hafted disk like polished greenstone blade, called «hache-ostensoir» (*gi o kono*, i.e. club in the color of life, in the Houaïlou valley language ; *sio*, in the one of the island of Lifou), is cut and polished on the small Ouen island, off the southwestern coast of New Caledonia, hafted and decorated in the Isle of Pines, and traded from there to Maré, then to Lifou and Ouvea, until it is found again in the northeast coast of New Caledonia. In fact the model is just a model, exchange routes going in all directions according to age old pairings between chiefly and commoner lineages, from valley to valley or island to island.

One of the principal structural factors in Melanesia is the simple fact, little noticed because of the method of choosing monographs as *the* anthropological media of expression, that exchange cycles tend to go from island to island and never stop, there being always a next island seen from the shores or the mountain tops of the preceding one. This may explain why one never finds such centralized institutions as the parallel titles of the *Tui Tonga* and the *Tui Ha'a Takalaua,* later the *Tui Kanokupolu* (reminiscent of the Japanese *mikado* and *shogun* system), but another model found all round the area at a less exalted level, where power is always shared in fact between heads of lineages, each holding special privileges. The representatives of such lineages come together in what looks like a chiefly court, where their behaviour is as much to hold onto what is in fact an autonomous status as to show allegiance to the so called chief, who lacks in effect most powers vested in him by the white man's imagination[128]. Nevertheless, Melanesian chieftainships can hold their own in front of Polynesian ones : Bula, tle

paramount chief of Lösi in Lifou holds sway over around 8.000 people.

Thus the exchange cycles tend never to be unique, but take on the appearance of networks covering the whole of the Melanesian arc of islands, being more than one and easily three working in parallels — the third party is at least made of neighbour groups non participating in each of the competitive and complementary exchange cycles — and taking different aspects from place to place, such as these non marriage governing moieties[129] which are found in North New Caledonia (the *Ohot ma Hwaap*[130], a third party being the *Gwalaap* fishermen's lineages off the western coast, the very ones which carried from south to north the war messages during the 1878 insurgency[131]), Tanna in south Vanuatu (the *Numrukwen* and *Koyometa*, the third party being the so called *Kowut Kasua* dispersed all round Tanna[132]). Here and there, a number of such varying dual systems, named or unnamed, cover a good part of Melanesia where they were found by W. H. Rivers[133]. This formerly very popular institution with social anthropologists gets little attention today, which does not prevent it from being still in working order in most areas[134].

One of the principal variations of these systems is that they will follow marriage routes here and be independant of them there. The interisland links they build is an old and valid concept, shown early by different authors — Miklucho-Maclay[135], Ian Hogbin for the northeastern coast of New Guinea, Ludwig von Biro and later German and British authors for the exchange routes between the Huon Gulf, Tami island and the southwestern end of New Britain through the Siassi islands, etc.

Some very evident relations have physically disappeared through the prohibition of long range interisland canoe travels in the middle of last century by the British, French and German navies, first under the mistaken Christian missions recommendation that too many young male lives were being lost at sea in that way. This fitted within the new colonial frontiers which were in the process of being established. The result has been the extinction of the ancient relations between New Caledonia and the Loyalty Islands on one hand and Vanuatu on the other — relations which fanned formerly from Aneityum to Epi, respectively known under the names of Kiamu and Taas in the Loyalty islands — and between North Vanuatu and the Santa Cruz islands, except happily through going once a year aboard the SS *Southern Cross*[136].

Nevertheless, Tikopian canoes never ceased to come, following a well-known route with a stop at the small rocky island of Vatganay and a change of direction from there to the south-west so as to try and get in the middle of the arc of islands stretching from the Torrès islands to the Banks islands and Maewo.

Relations between Bougainville and the Western Solomon islands are today constantly creating problems between their respective post-independance governments.

Some of these former relations are shrouded today in a mythical cloud, to wit the marriage link between Lifou and Aneityum, translated in the story of the *angete Kiamu* lineage in the village of Jozip, on the southeastern coast of Lifou, claiming that they went formerly to the top of the cliff, held hands, shut their eyes and found themselves transported among their kinsmen in Kiamu, that is Aneityum[137]. The Tannese accept all more or less a myth having the different foods stepping out of the crater of the Yasur volcano under the shape of different stones, but the yams going further, out of the island, taking to the sea on Tanna's west coast. The Maré people claim their yams came from Kiamu and settled first on the island's eastern coast off the present village of Penelo. Pre contact relations between New Caledonia and the Loyalty Islands on one side and Vanuatu on the other, have taken over a mythical form from the single fact that they were outlawed by the white masters. Myth is partly here a way of saying in a non aggressive way things which have come with the white man and have influenced in an adverse way the cultural state of the islands.

This is no novel situation. All effective interdistrict or interisland marriage relations benefit from a mythical justification. These are not the only type of mythical link in existence. Another one is made of the routes followed by the ancestors, starting from a point A to finish in D, after stops in B and C and further on. Surveying whole islands on this particular point brings in at first glance what looks like tree shaped figures, which can be mapped[138], once taken into account the journeys of linked secondary lineages. Checking systematically in the field, island by island, village by village, family by family, over fourty years, adding figure to figure, brings in a new theme, the one of lineages crossing language frontiers, changing names and bringing in the picture multiple offshoots with parallel histories. One then encounters the return voyages and the linking together of the tree shaped figures of the start, situation which can only be described as building up «networks», the exact number of which poses a new problem. New Caledonian data tends to show a situation whereby two or maybe threee parallel networks are in working order in the greater part of the island, each having offshoots in the Loyalty islands.

Colonial history, wholesale massacre of insurgents and their families or of completely innocent village people, the sending of whole groups in far away exile north (the Belep islands) or south (the Isle of Pines) after the 1878 insurgency, have rendered the situation south of Canala more difficult to analyse, as

collective memory dwindles or is artfully concealed for different reasons (classically linked to potential claims on settler occupied land, today to claims on nickel ore deposits when and where the land has been handed back).

Marriage and non-marriage links between New Caledonia and the Loyalty islands remain in force, to wit the hundreds of declarations establishing a claimed identity between lineages at both ends, with such precision that archeology in strategically placed sites would come in helpful to establish some real chronological points of reference in the so often mythical presentation of events. Today, any one claiming such a mythical link, and adding some genealogical evidence to better his description of who he is, will get a warm reception, will be fed, clothed, housed, and obtain a wife if he decides to settle at the other end of the route he is exploring.

The specific characteristics of the Loyalty island people not having lost any of their lands, solidly keeping to their prestige competition strategies, and thus giving information according to what can help or hinders those, does not allow an easily obtained overall and definitive view. It took me twenty years to check and countercheck my wife's kin traditional interisland links on her father's side, while on her mothers's side information was flowing freely, maybe at times too freely.

Marriages between their members, adoptions from one lineage to another, and new chiefly strategies stemming from Christianisation — some chiefs looking to the role models offered by King David and King Solomon — have tended to blur some limits, as well as the new population pressure, plus the newer still pressure today of European financial interests seeking to acquire in new ways land with tourism potential — a function of land forgotten during the land grabbing of the end of last century — and have created the tendency to hesitate to admit to being descended from a stranger having come from outside and having been accepted through marriage or eventually through one of the so numerous collective decisions to attribute chiefly rank to a newcomer.

In New Caledonia proper, the inhabitants of villages such as Kunue (Lecoulnoué) on the coast of the Hienghène valley, who had been described in 1868 by Jules Garnier[139] as speaking a Polynesian language, refuse today to acknowledge the fact and claim to being linked to traditional landowner names in the valley or along the coast, although there is no contradiction in terms between the two sets of data : the problem is political and modern. In the Loyalty Islands, Maurice Leenhardt[140] already noted in 1938 that myths dealing with chiefly lineages claiming to have arisen from a hole in the ground or an underground cave really meant an outside origin. In effect, some of the origins of paramount chiefs

or others in the islands are shrouded in an official mystery, this only meaning there is a clear taboo on saying aloud what everybody knows.

One of these origins is known as *Xetriwaan*, by the name of the people who are said to have tried to conquer Lifou before the discovery of the island by white men, but being strongly opposed, had to be content to settle in two interrelated chieftainships, formerly in Long (today Tringetring), in the land of Wetr ; Inangoj and Wasany, in the land of Lösi, the latter being the seat of the more senior Xetriwaan lineage[141]. These *Xetriwaan Inangoj* have an offshoot in Touaourou in New Caledonia and on the Isle of Pines, where Father Lambert tells the story of the conquest of the island by *Ketiware*[142].

These two webs or rival lineages have grown, on one side around the lineages which claim, in the Loyalty Islands, to be called by the name of *Xetriwaan* or are referred to for more ancient times by names known as being linked to the former, such as the *Trongajo* of Wasaüjeü, Iai, Ouvéa ; the *Sihaze* of the Wetr district on Lifou ; the *Hnaisilin* of Gwahma on Maré ; the *Ketiware* of the Isle of Pines ; or, in New Caledonia proper, the set of names linked to the principal lineages known under the parallel and interlocked names of *Nebay* (Ponérihouen valley), *Pibè* (from La Foa, Kouaoua, Houaïlou and Néavin valleys, also Poindimié), *Naacuwè* to Pwebey and Pwey (originating from the Ponérihouen valley to north Touho), *Cidopwaan* (Koné, North Touho and the Tipije valley), *Wabealo* (Koné) linked to the Bwewa Mii (Houaïlou valley), *Wêkumè* (Monéo), *Bwaghea* (Canala), *Tijt* or *Tijin* (Hienghène, Voh, Temala and Fwatenawe valleys, comprising Pukepay of 1917 and 1984 fame, and also Pouébo and Poum), *Pwaola* (Poindimié), *Baleowan* (Tipije). Lineages belonging to this web tend to claim, direct or indirect (through a parallel line) ownership of the ritual controlling the sun and the rain, a bit in the same way as the Trobriands Islands *göyau* chiefs, which poses lots of unanswered questions. A very interesting visit to Yaté and Touaourou by *Paola*, the chief of Bayes in Poindimié, recorded by the Rarotongan missionary *Ta'unga*[143] some years before the French took over, confirms that these people could sail down the east coast of New Caledonia and be welcomed where local chiefs hailed from the same source as they, and still do.

The opposite web is made of the following principal lineages in the north of New Caledonia, *PwaRi* (Tchamba valley), *Nabumè* (Koné), *Pwacili* (from Koné to the Belep Islands, including *Teê Belep*) and *Bwaxat* (lower Hienghène valley, Koumac and Balade), plus the very organized *Galahi—Gara Atê* set up of non chief-ly lineages which is linked with Lifou, extends over the *paaci* and *cèmuhi* language areas and is said to be at the root of the *Bwaxat* chieftainships (they claim direct descent from *Teê Kanake*, the eldest son of *Bumè*, the principal *paaci* cultural hero, the opposite web claiming only descendance from *Bwae Bealo*, the second of *Teê Kanake*'s two sons ). This parallel and antagonistic web of relationships is linked in the Loyalty islands to the *Bahitr* in North Ouvea, to the *Jeula* of Heo Island, to the *Qenegei* of Fayawe, Iai, in Ouvéa and the district of Wetr, Lifou, and the *Bula* of Lösi in Lifou. In New Caledonia proper, these chiefs tend to control weather through the direct or indirect control of thunder. The *Bahitr* claim that one of their first-born girls was married to the Sun ; *Teê Belep*'s ancestor is meant to have married *Kaavo Denaar*'s eldest daughter, *Kavo Denaar* being the female impersonation of the same sun.

This specific web of relationships appears not to take into account, in its own genealogies, at least in the chiefly ones, the model of the cross-cousins marriage given by Maurice Leenhardt as characteristic of New Caledonia proper. The favoured marriages, statistically, are outside the kin calculated in a restricted sense. But those inside the kin which are given in a genealogy such as the one of the Bwaghea Hwêsü chiefs of Canala, on the east coast include marriage with the FFFS Da Da, FFB Da, FFF So So DA, FS Da, and none with the MB Da. The competing web of relationsship would favour the marriage with the cross-sousin in as much as it does present a certain number of instances, although mostly with a classificatory cross cousin, but does not refrain, in nearly the same numbers,, from marriages with the FS Da, real or classificatory.

These lineages represent a coherent network in functioning order, which has played a constant role in the colonial times. They have in their majority accepted Christianity under its protestant form — the Catholics among them are in the Isle of Pines, Touaourou and Inangoj, for circumstancial reasons — and furnished the present independant evangelical church of L.M.S. origin with most of its pastors. They then for a long time tried to supply the greater part of the petty officers of the colonial civil service before going over *en masse* to join the pro-independance movement with the visible aim of controlling it.

The global origin of these *Xetriwaan* people is unclear. No confirmation has come from Tonga that they could have hailed from there at any time in the past as I first imagined. A North New Zealand Maori oral tradition[144] tells of canoes going northeast and coming back much later, saying they had found an island with a cannibal and warring people fighting with stones, others fighting with spears. The only groups around fighting with stones are the sling shooting Kanak of New Caledonia and Ouvea in the Loyalty Islands, and the people of Eromanga in South Vanuatu. The latter fight with large and heavy curved flaked volcanic stones, held by hand and thrown with force at close quarters so as to strike the enemy's breast-bone. The rest of Vanuatu people sport bows and arrows and not spears, so important in New Caledonia and the Loyalty islands.

It happens that Eromanga, as we have seen, is the local place of origin of an internal migration movement going north through Efate and the Shepherd's Islands up to Epi, and claiming their roots were in *Mauri*.[145]. Until we can deal with some archeological data, and dates, along this larger route, we cannot decide if this hypothesis may be the right one or if the *Xetriwaan* network is a much more complex institution built over the times, the first interpretation being evidently the more romantic and soul satisfying one. The South and Central Vanuatu

slow northwards movement has been confirmed in its different stages inside Vanuatu by the results of José Garanger's archeological investigations[146]. As always, our knowledge is thus made of partial answers and new questions.

Vanuatu could equally show in great detail how systems of exchange relations, comprising mariage exchange relationships, interlock constantly from one island to another by all sorts of different ways, dual moiety systems being non matrimonial in the south, matrimonial in the north, connecting through the Torrès islands and Mota Lava in the Banks group with the eastern Solomons.

These indications tend to demonstrate that the fundamental trait of Melanesian societies is neither the imaginary democratic trend it has been handed with, nor the famous *big man*, but these horizontal systems striving to cover all available space and which could explain, by their adversarial effect to the proliferation and growing of social hierarchies, the complete lack of a trend towards any form of centralized and unique government. Any person in a position of authrority sees its potential ambitions thwarted by another one included in the age old game of the prestigue competition. This explains why people of high rank have taken so easily to Christianity, which was for them *the* way of being projected into a real position of paramountcy, instead of groping towards it by all sorts of indirect means. These people became overnight enthusiastic readers of the Books of the Judges and of the Kings in the Ancient Testament. Adding to this the similarly enthusiastic gun running practised by all early European traders, and you have the mix which explains the creation of Christian Kingdoms ; but also the constant trend of authentic or non authentic parmount chiefs striving towards a recongnition of their equally paramount rights on all land in their districts.

*Notes*

[1] Durckheim was, politically, the most powerful high level civil servant of his time. He controlled, for the better part of half a century, the setting up of all teacher's training colleges, the content of the teaching, from primary schools to universities, and the nomination of good, lay minded, non religious and fully «republican»
teachers at all levels. His views about sociology were meant as an ideological substitute to the former dominant catholic teachings as well as a bulwark against emerging marxism.

[2] Kamakau, S., 1911, *Ancient Hawaian Beliefs and Ceremonies*, Hawaian Annals, Honolulu, published separately by the Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum, Honolulu ; Malo, D., 1903, *Molelo Hawai'i, Hawaian Antiquities*, Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum, Honolulu ; and : I'i, John Papa, 1959, *Fragments of Hawai'an History*, translated by Mary Pukui, Bernice Pauahi Bishop Mu-

seum, Honolulu.

[3] Crocombe, Ron and Marjorie, 1968.

[4] Rivers W. H., *History of the Melanesian Society*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1914.

[5] Bateson, Gregory, *Naven. A survey of the problems suggested by a composite picture of the culture of a New Guinea tribe,* Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1936. Lamont Lindstrom, in an illuminating paper : «Doctor, lawyer, wise man, priest, big-men and knowledge in Melanesia», *Man* NS vol. 19, 291-309, although applying the modish concept of *big-man* to Tanna, where it doesn't really fit, shows that the basis of the competition for prestige and power is more knowledge than exchange of goods, or at least as much. I do agree on this score. There is a very up to the point discussion of this precise point in *Naven*, Bateson showing that power stemming from knowledge obliges the memorization of tens of thousands of names with each its very precise meaning, dealing in myth as well as in land tenure. This has been known for a long time as well from Melanesia as from Polynesia (*cf*. the content of the teachings of the Maori *tohunga ariki*), but never exactly expressed in those words, which explains why it has escaped professional attention when all the first observers tended to have noted parallel situations. Lindstrom does not refer to Bateson in his paper.

[6] Oliver, Douglas, «Land tenure in North-East Siuai, Southern Bougainville», *Peabody Museum Papers*, vol. 29 n° 4, Cambridge, Mass. 1949.

[7] Elkin, Adolphus P., «The social organization of South Australian Tribes», *Oceania*, vol. 2, Sydney 1931.

[8] To take stock is dealing with ideas and concepts. It does not mean citing everybody around and handing good and bad marks. It can mean bringing back to the fore some more or less forgotten papers or authors who do not merit their present obscurity and leaving aside modern ones who do not really deal usefully with the subject matter.

[9] Maurice Godelier for the recent history of the people who call themselves today the Baruya : *La production des grands hommes*, Fayard 1982. I dwell here partly on the experience of Dr Carleton Gajdusek, Nobel prize of medecine, who has roamed on foot, *unarmed*, nearly all the mountains and valleys of both New Guineas, and his successive published J*ournals*.

[10] Thanks to the late Governor, later Professor, Jan van Baal, I have visited West New Guinea, and the Baliem valley, before the Indonesian takeover, and was in Wamena a passive witness to nightly murders by an incoming group from the west trying to dislodge an established lineage blocking it's way. The ethnographic film «Dead birds» retraces a similar situation coming to a crux.

[11] *Cf*. for a rare instance of an anthropological study of local demography : Hooper, Anthony and Huntsman, Judith, «A Demographic History of the Tokelau Islands», J*ournal of the Polynesian Society*, vol. 82, Wellington 1973.

[12] Rivers, W. H., *Essays in the depopulation of Melanesia,* Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1922 ; and : Lambert, S. M., *The depopulation of Pacific Races*, Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum special publications n° 23, Honolulu 1934..

[13] Deacon, A. B., *Malekula, A vanishing people in the New Hebrides,* edited by Camilla Wedgwood, Routledge, London 1834.

[14] Guiart, J., «La régulation matrimoniale dans les îles Banks orientales», *in* : Jean Poirier ed., *L'Autre et l'Ailleurs*, *Hommage à Roger Bastide*, Paris 1974.

[15] McArthur, Norma, *Island population of the Pacific*, Australian National University, Canberra 1967 ; and : Rallu, Jean-Louis, *Les populations océaniennes aux XIX ème et XX ème siècles*, Paris 1990. *Cf*. for a medical and demographical study of the role of gonorrhoea introduced from

military garrisons : Rethel-Laurentin, Anne, *Un pays à la dérive, Une société en régression démographique, les Nzakara de l'est Centre-africain*, Jean-Pierre Delarge, Paris 1979 ; and : *Infécondité en Afrique Noire, Maladies et conséquences sociales*, Masson, Paris 1974.

[16] Lambert, R., *A doctor in Paradise*, Dent, London 1941.

[17] In Tahiti, the medical service was under orders to stick penicillin in oil in every human being around, without any explanation offered, after the decision had been taken of opening Tahiti to American tourists and of building the international airport in Fa'a. American tourists were not to be risk being infected by rampant gonorroea or syphilis. A somewhat humorous aspect is that the WHO campaigns were centered on the eradication of yaws. The one of gonorrhoea was a by product nobody would officially speak of. Yaws was an exotic disease which could attract funds nobody would apparently have granted for the eradication of gonorrhoea.

[18] Guiart, J., *Un siècle et demi de contacts culturels à Tanna, Nouvelles-Hébrrides*, Publications de la Société des Océanistes n° 7, Paris 1956. I have had the opportunity, over the years, of making population censuses in Malekula, Tanna, Espiritu Santo, and checking the official census in the Banks islands and in the Central district n° I, from Efate to Epi, in Vanuatu. In the meantime, I have done field work on Aneityum and a number of other small dispersed islands of which I can talk at leaxt as a part-witness to their modern evolution.

[19] Miller, R. S., 1975 ; and Paton, John G., 1889. All missionaries at the time were medically incompetent and could only look in despair at the Melanesian population withering on the vine. Missionary doctors and nurses were introduced much later on with good results, the day a better knowledge of tropical medecine became available. The slow acquisition of antibodies through intermarriage with white people helped.

[20] Brunton, Ron, 1990, *The Abandoned Narcotic : Kava and Cultural Instability in Melanesia*, Cambridge University Press.

[21] *Cf*. for Samoa : Holmes, Lowell H., «Ta'u. Stability and Change in a Samoan village», *Journal of the Polynesian Society* vol. 66, Wellington 1957 ; and, same author, *Saman Village*, Holt, Rinehart and Winston, New York 1974 ; which are studies of modern Samoa.

[22] This convenient value judgment has some drawbacks. I could describe a functioning society on an island of fifty inhabitants (Koniène on the west coast of New Caledonia). But to reduce a former populous island to a few inhabitants in the matter of a few years, there are so many deaths of elderly people and able bodied men and women that the tradition of the then vanished lineages cannot possibly survive. Christianisation offered then a ready structure which allowed residual people to wait for better times. The knowledge about the past will have become hazy even if a healthy dynamism comes back at last to the demography.

[23] Humphreys, C. O., *The Southern New Hebrides. An ethnological record*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1926. as regards Aniwa and Futuna. *Cf*. also for these islands : Capell, *Anthropology and linguistics of Futuna-Aniwa, New Hebrides,* Oceania linguistic monographs, n° 5, Sydney 1958 *;* and : Guiart, J., «The social anthropology of Aniwa», *Oceania*, vol.32, Sydney 1962.

[24] Easter island, in the same way as Tahiti — where the population was close to disappearing after the typhus epidemic at the close of the war of 1914-18 — are examples of a thriving Polynesian culture where the knowledge of the past has been reduced to very little, although the language survived. By comparison, the Maori have kept a much better knowledge of their former institutions, although four fifth have partly lost the use of their language.

[25] In Vanikoro gonorrhoea could have been introduced early by La Pérouse's sailors, and would thus account for a more drastic depopulation than happened in the northern islands of the Santa

Cruz group.

[26] *Cf*. for a general discussion of the different viewpoints in the philosophical background of anthropology : Seaton, Lee S. and Watson-Gegeo, Karen Ann, «Meta-Anthropology. The Elementary Forms of Ethnological Thought», *in* : *Adaptation and Symbolism*. *Essays on Social Organization*, edited by K. A. Watson-Gegeo and S. Lee Seaton, East-West Center, The Hawai'i University Press, Honolulu 1978.

[27] Deacon, A. Bernard, «The regulation of marriage in Ambrym, New Hebrides», *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Society of Great Britain and Ireland,* vol. 57, London 1927 ; see also : Guiart, J., «Système de parenté et organisation matrimoniale à Ambrym», *Journal de la Société des Océanistes* vol. 12, Paris 1956 ; and : Guilbaud, Georges & Lévi-Strauss, Claude, «Système parental et matrimonial au Nord-Ambrym» *J. S. O*. vol. 26, Paris 1970. This last paper by a mathematician has been long to come out, some years after a brilliant demonstration ; because the author never rewrote it, it had to be puvblished *verbatim* from seminar notes.

[28] Guiart, 1952. The recent demographic trend has allowed the sex ratio to come round and become normal.

[29] Thomson, Basil, *The Fijians*. *A study in the decay of custom*, Heinemann, London 1908.

[30] Lawrence, Peter, "The Ethnographic Revolution", *Oceania* vol. XLV, Sydney 1975 ; for a moving testimony about the way "unbelievers" bearing testimony to the existence of non unilinear descent groups in New Guinea were put to shame.

[31] Guiart, J., *et alii*, *Système des titres aux Nouvlles-Hébrides du Centre, d'Efate à Epi*, Institut d'Ethnologie, Paris 1973.

[32] Guiart, 1992 (new and very much revised edition) ; Bensa, Alban and Rivierre, Jean-Claude, *Les chemins de l'alliance*. *L'organisation sociale et ses représentations en Nouvelle-Calédonie*, SELAF, Paris 1982 ; and : Saussol, 1979.

[33] White, Isobel, «Mrs Bates and Mr Brown. An examination of Rodney Needham's allegations», *Oceania* vol. LI, Sydney 1981.

[34] Personnal communication from Professor A. P. Elkin, who voiced doubts about the physical reality of the Kariera as such and chose another group among which he had done field work, the Karadjeri, as an example of the four section marriage system, for the purpose of his demonstration in his constantly reprinted and revised book *The Australian Aborigine*. *How to understand them*, Sydney, first published.1938 and constantly revised.

[35] Except for the Nenema of north-west New Caledonia, who marry the MB Da Da (which marriage is optional in Touho and Canala), the Efate and close by islands where marriage is outside the kin, and the instances of «oblique» marriages on Ambrym, Raga, Maewo and the Banks islands.

[36] Goldman, Irving, «Variations in Polynesian social organization», *Journal of the Polynesian Society* vol. 66, Auckland 1957.

[37] The notion of types is unworkable among the multiple and differing human societies. The ambition of the Paris sociological school under Durckheim to classify all social facts was utopian. No human society can fit in a type without leaving aside much of what makes it tick, unless one conceives of a type applied to each case. Classifications can be useful only if they are not taken too seriously, and as an educational tool, not an analytical one.

[38] Guiart, J. *et alii*, 1973. The computer analysis was the work of the specialized laboratory of the *Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique*, under Jean-Paul Gardin, using Euratom computer time, under the aegis of Professor Claude Lévi-Strauss at whose seminar the data had been presented and discussed.

[39] According to André Martinet, cf. Martinet, A., "Structure and language", *Yale French Studies* vol 36-37, Yale 1967 (?)
[40] *Cf*. the French unhappily reductionist concept of culture as being the content of what is taught at secondary and tertiary level plus what arouses interest, year after year, in all the artistic and intellectual circles in Päris.
[41] Guiart, 1992, for a model in constant flux, becoming with the years more and more complex.
[42] Lévi-Strauss, Claude, *La voie des masques*, *Les sentiers de la création,* Albert Skira, Genève 1975.
[43] Personal field work, 1951.
[44] Lévi-Strauss, Claude, *Anthropologie structurale*, Plon, Paris 1966, and : *Du miel aux cendres*, Plon, Paris 1972.
[45] Damon, Frederick, *From Muyuw to the Trobriands*, University of Arizona Press, Tucson 1990, for an interesting translation of the concept of «transformation» as applied to the northern half of the «kula ring».
[46] I learned surveying work, in the mountains around Lyons, my home town, during the war years with one of my elder brothers studying for engineering at the Ecole Polytechnique, and by practising the art in my student time in the hills around Paris with the late Lucien Bernot. Because of the complete lack of maps, I have had to survey villages, paths, and cultivated plots for years, until the time came of systematic coverage of the islands by aerial photographs and the publishing of accurate maps by the Institut Géographique National. One of my greatest professional satisfactions was when I found that my map of the mountain villages of Espiritu Santo was rather in agreement with the new and modern map published by I. G. N. . The aerial photographic coverage done by the U. S. Air Force during the war was unavailable then. Most of it was made of slanting views.
[47] For a perceptive assessment, by a law specialist, of the description of a land tenure system written by an anthropologist (i.e.. Hogbin, Ian, «Wogeo Land Tenure in New Guinea"« *Oceania*, vol. 10, Sydney 1939-40 ; and : *id*., «Land Tenure in Wogeo», *Studies in New Guinea Land Tenure*, by Peter Lawrence and Ian Hogbin, Sydney University Press 1967), cf. Sack, Peter G., «Mythology and Land Tenure in Wogeo», *Oceania* vol. 46, Sydney 1975.
[48] Cf. the late Allan, Colin H. (Sir), *Customary Land Tenure in the British Solomon Islands Protectorate*, *Report of the Special Lands Commission*, Western Pacific High Commission, Honiara 1957 (mimeographed) and : Crocombe, Ronald, *Land tenure in the Cook islands*, Oxford University Press, Melbourne 1984 ; and : *Land in Solomon Islands*, Institute of Pacific Studies — Ministry of Agriculture and Lands, Solomon Islands, Suva 1979.
[49] Oliver, Douglas «Land tenure in north-east Siuai, Southern Bougainville», *op. cit.* ; and : Goodenough, Ward H., and Murdock, George Peter, «Social Organization of Truk», *South Western Journal of Anthropology* vol. 3, Pittsburgh 1947 ; Murdock, G. P., «Changing emphases in social structure» *S.outhWestern Journal of Anthropology* vol. 11, Pittsburgh 1955.
[50] *Cf*. amongst other publications : Lawrence, Peter, *Land tenure among the Garia : the traditional system of a New Guinea people*, Australian National University, Canberra 1955 ; Nayacakalou, Rusiate, «Land tenure and social organization in Tonga», *Journal of the Polynesian Society* vol. 68, Wellington 1959 ; «Land tenure and social organization in Western Samoa», *J.P.S*. vol. 69, Wellington 1960 ; «Fiji : Manipulating the system» *in* : *Land Tenure in the Pacific*, ed. by Ron Crocombe, Oxford University Press, Melbourne 1971 ; Sahlins, Marshall, «Land use and extended family in Moala», *American Anthropologist* vol. 59, Washington 1957 ; Panoff, Michel, «Land tenure among the Maenge of New Britain", *Oceania* vol.40, Sydney 1970 ; Ogan, Eugene,

«Nasioi land tenure : an extended case study», *Oceania* vol. 42, Sydeny 1971 ; and : Crocombe, Ronald, edited by, *Land tenure in the Pacific*, Melbourne 1971 ; Lunsgaarde, Henry, edited by, *Land tenure in Oceania*, The University Press of Hawai'i, Honolulu 1974 ; Rutz, Henry J., «Fijian land tenure and agricultural growth», *Oceania* vol. 49, Sydney 1978 ; Van Trease, Howard, *The Politics of Land in Vanuatu, From colony to independence*, Institute of Pacific Studies, Suva 1987 ; « La Terre et le Pacifique», 1992, *Etudes Rurales* vol. 127-128, Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales, Paris.

[51] Brookfield, Harold C., and Brown, Paula, *Struggle for land : agriculture and group territories among the Chimbu of the New Guinea Highlands*, Oxford University Press, Melbourne 1963 ; & : *La Terre, Actes du VI ème colloque CORAIL, Nouméa, 27, 28 et 29 octobre 1995*, edited by Bernard Capecci, Nouméa 1994.

[52] Socialist theory applied in the field gave queer results. The gazetting by Governor Guillain, a disciple of the social theoretician Saint-Simon, of an *Order in Counncil* (January 22 nd 1868) declaring the ownership of land in New Caledonia vested in the tribe and controlled by the paramount chief, was the legal basis to justify collective punishment — i. e. confiscation of land — each time a European settler claimed having been mistreated by a Kanak. The extant of the limits of the «tribe» (*i. e*. the people living inside a Reservation) was determined by the colonial authorities and the paramount chief (the so called «grand-chef») was chosen by the Governor, often for the very simple reason that he spoke better French than other better claimants (*cf*. the «Bouquet» paramount chieftainship in Bourail).

[53] The very first converts to Christianity could have had an axe to grind as regards land tenure matters. The *London Missionary Society* has been the first Christian organization to judge that land matters should be freezed in the exact state found at the date of the real beginnings of conversion to Christianity. This has played havoc with the land tenure situation all round Western Polynesia and later Tonga and Fiji, not to speak of Southern Vanuatu.

[54] Some of the best papers are marred by the surviving notion of the land owning social unit, and by the sole resort to administrative files, checked in the field, dealing with land quarrels, as the only possible short-cut if one has not been trained in surveying work, and thus lacks the capacity to deal with the land tenure system plot by plot. *Cf*. for Fiji : Chapelle, Tony, «Customary land tenure in Fiji. Old truths and middle aged myths», *Journal of the Polynesian Society* vol. 87, Auckland 1978 ; and : «The conflict of the traditional and the traditionalised. An analysis of Fijian land tenure», *J. P. S*., *idem* ; for Tonga : Marcus, George E., «Succession disputes and the position of the nobility in modern Tonga», *Oceania* vol 46, Sydney 1977 — Briersack, Aletta, «Under the *toa* Tree, the Genealogy of the Tongan Chiefs» in : J. Sikalaa editor, *Culture and History of the Pacific*, Transactions of the Finland Anthropological Society, Helsinki 1990 — «Blood and Garland, Duality in Tongan History», in : P. Herda, J. Tirrell & N. Gunson : *Tongan Culture and History*, Australian National University Press, Canberra 1990 — «Kava'mau and the Tonga Chiefs», *J. P. S*. vol. 100, Auckland 1991, & : Helu, Fatu, «Identity and Change in Tongan Society since European Contact», *Journal de la Société des Océanistes* vol. 97, Par»s 1993 ; for Samoa : Tiffany, Walter W., «Land disputes in Western Samoa», *Oceania* vol. L, Sydney 1980 ; "High court influences on land tenure patterns in American Samoa"« *Oceania* vol. 49, Sydney 1977 ; «Applicability of Western judicial concepts to Polynesian land disputes : High court use of the adverse possession principle in American Samoa», *Oceania* vol. 55, Sydney 1981.

[55] I deal here with rights, which concept gives a good approximation of the reality, which it looses when it is segmented in primary, secondary, subsidiary, etc, rights on the basis of observations

made from a western viewpoint, *cf*. the pragmatic and excellent discussion of Fijian land tenure by Rutz, *op*. *cit*. 1978, who shows how wrong in fact are the official notions about communal ownership of land, written into the 1905 *Native Lands Ordinance*.

[56] Chapelle, 1978, p. 73 ss.

[57] Epling, P. J., «Lay perception of kinship : a Samoan case study"« *Oceania* vol. 37, Sydney 1967 : and : Guiart, J., «Généalogies équivoques en Nouvelle-Calédonie», *Langues et Techniques, Nature et Société*, t. 2, Klincksiek, Paris 1972.

[58] Guiart, Jean, «Un problème foncier exemplaire en Nouvelle-Calédonie : La vallée de Tchamba», *Le Monde Non Chrétien* NS, Paris juillet-décembre 1960.

[59] Deacon, 1934.. I checked on the spot Deacon's data, as put together in the admirable work done by Camilla Wedgwood, and that with Deacon's principal informant Amarantus in the fall of 1950..

[60] Guiart, 1992 : the chapter on Lifou.

[61] Piddington, Ralph, «A note on Karadjeri local organization», *Oceania* vol. 41, Sydney 1971, who queries the value of the western concept of ownership as applied in the Australian field.

[62] Eugene Ogan, *op*. *cit*., is one of the rare authors not writing in terms of specific land owning group and offering, in the matrilineal situation of the Siuai of Bougainville, a more flexible approach.

[63] «Right of» or «claims to» direct use, according to the definition by Ron Crocombe, «An approach to the analysis of land tenure systems», *in* : Lundsgaarde, H., ed. by, *Land tenure in Oceania*, *op*. *cit*.. In our view, corroborating Crocombe's conclusions, there are no systems of land tenure as such, but systems of rank and of control of the environment, which take land tenure into account. Subsidiary rights may be added. Residual rights are peculiarly important, as they can be resurrected even after many generations passed. The introduction of cash crops has brought inevitably great changes, except as regards the coconut tree, which can be worked for coprah at the same time as yams or sweet patatoes are planted underneath, or can be the result of the very general principle, introduced in the anthropological literature by Codrington, that the ownership of the land and the one of the trees on the same land can differ, cf. *Land tenure in the Pacific*, ed. by Ron Crocombe, Oxford University Press, Melbourne1971.

[64] It is interesting to note how Lindstrom, 1985, came to the same conclusion about the link between name giving, land and social status, proposing more or less the same view, including the concept of changing names by collective fiat (I have been talking of name stealing, the first observer of it being Gregory Bateson among the Iatmul), of which my 1952, published in 1956, complete survey of names and social statuses on Tanna gave a good half of the clues needed.

[65] *Cf*. the answer received by Ian Hogbin in Wogeo about the reason for adoptions : «because of the name and the land» : Hogbin, I., «Adoption in Wogeo», *Journal of the Polynesian Society* vol. 44, Wellington 1935-36, cited by A. L. Epstein, «Adoption among the Tolai», *Journal de la Société des Océanistes* vol. 99-2, Paris 1994, p. 153.

[66] *Cf*. for the beginnings of an anthropology of names, in which the pioneer author would be Gregory Bateson: Leenhardt, M., 1930 ; Goodenough, Ward H., «Personal Names and Modes of Address in Two Oceanic Societies», in : Melford Spiro editor, *Content and Meaning in Cultural Anthropology*, Free Press, New York 1965 ; Rodman, William L. and Margaret, «Rethinking Kustom : on the politics of place names in Vanuatu», *Oceania* vol 55, Sydney 1985 ; Lindstrom, Lamont, «Personal names and social reproduction on Tanna, Vanuatu», *Journal of the Polynesian Society* vol 94, Auckland 1985 ; Kurschel, Rolf, «Cultural Reflexions in Bellonese Names», *J. P. S*. vol. 97, Auckland 1988 ; Turner, James, «Some reflexion on the signification of names in

Matailobau, Fiji», *J. P. S.* vol. 100, Auckland 1991 ;
[67] Leenhardt, Maurice, *Documents néo-calédoniens*, Institut d'Ethnologie, Paris 1932.
[68] The use of the word chief here is pragmatic. Common use over two centuries does not mean that the concept is either accurate nor scientifically useful. Concepts introduced by us since are no better.
[69] The problem here is that these villages are now of long standing and that their inhabitants at the same time act, according to circummstance, as *bona fide* members of this village or as belonging to the former competitive units, but tend to talk to the white man in terms of the latter's creation, the present day village.
[70] The principle, often quoted, in particular by Bonnemaison, that ownership starts with the very first person clearing virgin land, is a rather queer one in most places, taking into account the 5 to 30.000 years of man's residence in the islands of Melanesia. In much of the Pacific, there hasn't been any useful virgin land to clear for ages, except what has become secondary growth in heavily depopulated areas.
[71] *Cf*. for instances of manipulation of European officialdom by Melanesians intent on benefitting from the logical implications of western belief in collective ownership of land by Kanak : Guiart, J., «Une dérive de la coutume ?», *Etudes Mélanésiennes* vol. *29*, Nouméa 1992-1994.
[72] Bateson, 1936.
[73] Pillon, Patrick, 1992, «Listes déclamatoires et principes d'organisation sociale dans la vallée de la Kouaoua (Nouvelle-Calédonie)», *Journal de la Société des Océanistes* vol. 94, Paris : Guiart, J., 1992, «A propos de la vallée de Kouaoua», *J. S. O*. vol. 95, Paris ; & : Pillon, P., 1993, «Kouaoua et la méthode de Jean Guiart en Anthropologie», *J. S. O*. vol. 96, Paris.
[74] *Cf*. the case of the village of Jozip, in Lifou, where the chiefly line kept for generations on end the coastal area planted in coconuts, so as to make coprah for its own benefit, through the simple device of never convening the meetings which could deal witth its reattribution at times when a lineage was extinct or being represented by females only. The population explosion has obliged recently to do just this, convening the long awaited meeting, and transform the former coconut groves in village plots for house building.
[75] Componential analysis has been a failure, being nothing else than an unwieldy transcription system, saying in a complicated way what Rivers had shown us how to write down in a precise and concise fashion.
[76] The at times violent reaction of the people to what is published by anthropologists might oblige to seek another way of sharing information professionally than making it available to the general public in printed form.
[77] Guiart, J., *et alii*, 1973.
[78] Humphreys, 1926 ; and : Guiart, 1956. Katherine Luomala, in her monograph on *Maui*, did cite in a general way those instances, but without reaching the obvious conclusions, cf. *Maui-of-a-thousand tricks, his Oceanic and European bibliographers*, Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum bull. n° 198, Honolmulu 1949.
[79] Guiart, J., *Les religions de l'Océanie*, Presses Universitaires de France, Paris 1987.
[80] I have been told that this problem does not exist any more in anthropology. Maybe, but I have younger French colleagues who have been popularizing the idea in their courses, and the evidence is that archeologists have not yet all heeded the good word. Papers and books expanding on this point are still on the reading lists for students without any indication of caution. More or less unconsciously, they then believe in Polynesian superiority. Roger Green once wrote a paper on the techniques of navigation in Oceania, forgetting all about the Papuan multi-hulled *lakatoi*. *Cf*.

Thomas, Nicholas, «The force of ethnology, Origins and signification of the Melanesia / Polynesia division», *Current Anthropology* vol. 30, Chicago 1989, accompanied by a not very conclusive discussion, where the valid geographical concepts are confused with the contested anthropological ones. Author and discussants unhappily want to ignore, in the case of Fiji and the strongly differing east and central Viti Levu society, the constant role of the Bauan inspired Lands Commission in building a make believe unitary system of social organization, governing land tenure, and covering the whole group. Melanesia has little to do with what is here in a way politically inspired ignorance.

[81] Polynesian islands have been the object of numerous studies, trying to reconstruct how their societies functioned before contact. Many do not benefit of a sufficient basis for really justifying the attempt. Burrows on Wallis island and Futuna is useful, but his description is made through a set of answers to a list of questions ; this is no well rounded analysis of the inner workings of the society. One cannot understand how social institutions work on such a basis. The descriptions of Polynesian societies by Peter H. Buck are in the same way useful although not always better. Reanalysing the Hawaian society by referring to translations of texts, in their greater part concerned with the Kamehameha view of how the Hawaian people should act, is not easily justifiable. A few novel insights might be obtained through a careful study of the vernacular texts, but not otherwise, and the lack of useful material would hinder research after a time. A better proposition would be the translation and analysis of the thousands of pages written in Maori language, lying around New Zealand, and confronting them with the thousands of pages, published or unpublished, dealing with Maori personal or collective behaviour. But this is today a job for Maori scholars, no Pakeha having yet dreamed of even trying. The attempts by Sahlins and Valerio Valeri to reinterpret Hawaian society are untenable, being only built of chains of value judgments, and not on a careful analysis of the original information in the Hawaian language, so many translations having added misplaced romantic shades to the reality, if only in the choice of words. The scientific rule has always been to go back to the authentic information, in the authentic language. What is valid for ancient Egypt is valid for Hawai'i. The only authenticity around is the one of the earlier vernacular documentats.

[82] *Cf*. Marshall Sahlin's celebrated paper : «Poor Man, Rich Man, Big Man, Chief. Political types in Melanesia and Polynesia», *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, vol. 5, 1963. The fashion created by the publication of this paper explains why we are reading recent attempts to see *big-men* in Southern Vanuatu and on Tanna, just because people are exchanging and killing pigs, which they do in any case all over the South Pacific. In this instance the ceremonial pig killing, called *nekowiar,* is organized in the name of residential groups, and not in the one of the two competing individuals who are going to play the principal role ; the next *nekowiar* will have another two people playing the same role, and not exactly the same regrouping of lineages on either side, although with maybe quite a number in common. *Cf*. also : McDowell, Nancy, 1990, «Competitive Equality in Melanesia : An Exploratory Essay», *Journal of the Polynesian Society* vol. 90, Auckland, for the demonstration of the existence of (in anthropological circles) an egaliterian Utopia in Melanesia, and : Brunton, Ron, 1989.

[83] Fox 1924 ; Ivens, Walter 1927 ; and : Wheeler, 1926.

[84] Codrington, 1891.

[85] Walter, Michaël A., «Succession in East Fiji : institutional disjunction as a source of political dynamism in an ascription orientated society», *Oceania* vol 44, Sydney 1974 ; and : «An examination of the hierarchical notions in Fijian society : a test case for the applicability of the term chief», *Oceania* vol. 49, Sydney 1978 ; which say for Fiji what I have been explaining, in French,

and for this reason little read, for the Loyalty islands, New Caledonia and Central Vanuatu since thirty years at least. *Cf*. also Otto, Ton, 1994, op. cit..

[86] To the question asked from three Kanak students at the *Université du Pacifique* in Nouméa, of which were the concepts they had difficulty in understanding, the answer was : clan, tribe, reservation, lineage, genealogy, chief and subjects.

[87] Certain Lifou lineages (the *Angete Kiamu* of the recent christian village of Jozip) married on Aneityum, but apparently they kept to themselves their knowledge of having seen pigs and in any case did not bring them back.

[88] Oliver, Douglas, «Economics and the uses of pigs in Siuai, Southern Bougainville», *Papers of the Peabody Museum*, vol. 29 n° 3, Cambridge, Mass. 1949.

[89] The violent actions by these armed Buka and Bougainville men have left into much of the former German New Guinea a wish for pay-back which has translated recently in the identical violent actions by the Papua-New Guinea army in Bougainville and Buka.

[90] The quite unscientific concept of «high civilizations» has been applied to the city states built by a fraction of the American Indians, through opposing in theory the early urbanized Indians to the foraging or swidden agriculture groups.

[91] Sahlins, Marshall, *Social stratification in Polynesia*, University of Washington Press, Seattle 1958, where the idea of a direct relation between higher stratified societies and high volcanic islands is contrary to the results of modern soil science, which shows that the best available soils are on raised coral islands, such as the Loyalty islands, Makatea, Tongatapu (what is more stratified than the traditional society on which ruled in parallel and complementary ways the Tui Tonga and the Tui Kanokupolu ?), Aniwa (Vanuatu), but equally a number of large Melanesian islands part of which is raised coral (up to 2.000 feet) such as in North Tanna, Efate, North Malekula, East Espiritu Santo, as long as a karstic evolution did not take over as it did in the New Guinea limestone barren plateaus.

[92] Hau'ofa, Epeli, «Anthropology and Pacific Islanders», *Oceania* vol. 45 , Sydney 1975 ; and : Ogan, Eugene, «Decolonizing Anthropology», *Meanjin Quaterly*, Spring 1975.

[93] The Melanesians were no more treacherous than for a long time the Tongans to European sailing vessels, and the European traders, *cf*. the careeers of Charley Savage in Fiji, of Bully Hayes in Samoa and Ross Lewin in Vanuatu.

[94] Tucker, H. W. *Memoir of the Life and Episcopate of George Augustus Selwyn*, D.D., 2 vol., London 1875 ; and : (Church of England), 1899 ; and : Shineberg, 1967.

[95] Leenhardt, Raymond, 1957, and : Howe, K. R., 1977.

[96] Brou, Bernard, *Préhistoire et Société traditionnelle en Nouvelle-Calédonie*, Publications de la Société d'Etudes Historiques de Nouvelle-Calédonie, Nouméa 1970.

[97] Bellwood, Peter, *Man's conquest of the Pacific*, Collins, Auckland 1978 ; & : Irwin, Geoffrey, 1981, «How Lapita lost its pots : the question of continuity in the colonisation of Polynesia», *Journal of the Polynesian Society* vol. 90, Auckland.

[98] This viewpoint has surfaced again in : Sands, Christophe, 1994, *Archéologie en Nouvelle-Calédonie. Etat des recherches du début des années 1990 et perspectives d'avenir*, ADCK, Nouméa, & 1995, «*Le Temps d'Avant», la préhistoire de la Nouvelle-Calédonie*, L'Harmattan, Paris. The assumption that Roy Mata on Efate was a Polynesian chief has no foundation whatsoever, but is more easily linked to the availability of funds from the local right wing gavernment of the Southern Province of New Caledonia, the members of which are inwardly persuaded that speaking of Kanak culture is morally wrong. There cannot be a culture but European : Kanak were just savages when the French came into the country, the proof being that their only civilized institution,

chieftainship, was Polynesian and not Kanak.

[99] Garanger, José, «Le Peuplement de l'Océanie Insulaire», *L'Anthropologie* vol. 91, Paris 1987 ; and : Allen, Jim & White, Peter, 1989, «The Lapita Homeland : some new data and an interpretation», *Journal of the Polynesian Society* vol. 98, Auckland.

[100] Ivens, 1930.

[101] Bonnemaison, Joël, 1986.

[102] Lamb, Robert, *Saints and Savages : the story of five years in the New Hebrides,* Blackwood, Edinburgh 1905.

[103] The bibliography is too important to give here, and a good part of it well known, starting with Seligman and Malinowski on the Papuan Gulf (the *hiri*) and the Trobriands islands (the *kula*), Fortune on Dobu (the *kula*), Armstrong on Rossel island, Hogbin on the North-East coast of New Guinea, Biro and Bodrogi on the Huon Gulf, and going to such recent publications as Annette Weiner on the Trobriands and Frederick Damon on Muyuw. *Cf*. Damon, Frederick and Roy Wagner, ed., *Death rituals and life in the kula ring*, Northern Illinois University Press, Dekalb 1989. Everybody since Malinowski has had to deal with ceremonial exchange of specific artifacts. *Cf*. for the recent adapation to the market of the «sland builders» of Malaïta's production : Connell, John, «The Bougainville connection : changes in the economic context of shell money production in Malaïta», *Oceania* vol. XLVIII, Sydney 1977. This English language specialized literature has consistently ignored the information published by Maurice Leenhardt on shell money in New Caledonia

[104] Douglas, Bronwen, «Rank, power , authority : a reassessment of traditional leadership in South Pacific societies», *The Journal of Pacific History* vol. 14, Canberra 1978 ; where the same arguments given hereunder have been presented with talent, with a special accent on leadership in New Guinea.

[105] The better documentated instances are the Nejê, and the Neporo chiefs on the coast of the Houaïlou valley. *Cf*. Guiart, 1963 (3) & 1992. The colonial authorities have at times tried to make use of this contradiction, such as in the case of the opposite and complementary roles of the Bwakhat (chiefly) and the Mweau ( cadet) lines in the lower Hienghène valley. *Cf*. Saussol, 1978.

[106] In Vanuatu, I have been the last fieldworker to observe traditional — and not reconstructed — grade taking hierarchies (*namanggi, nimangki, mage, sukpwe*) still in working order. The relevant people have been Christianised at a fast pace since, and what ceremonies have been observed have been reconstructions after a period of becoming *school* people of varying duration. To answer my purpose here, I have no reason to refer to hypothetical reconstructions by recent authors who unhappily came too late in the field, or to Melanesian reconstruction of their past ceremonies, which is usually interesting although insufficient. I myself published Bonnemaison on the Central Aoban grade taking hierarchy, as it filled a gap in our knowledge, but disagree entirely with his recent tentative analysis, based more on a kind of poetic imagination than on fact (*cf*. Bonnemaison, 1986). Cf. for the grade taking hierarchy : Codrington, 1891 ; Deacon, 1934 ; Layard, John, *Stone men of Malekula, Vao*, Chatto and Windus, London 1942 ; and : Tattevin, E., *Sur les bords de la mer sauvage. Notes ethnologiques sur la tribu des Ponorwol (île Pentecôte, Nouvelles-Hébrides)*, Revue d'Histoire des Missions, vol. 3, Paris 1928-27, and of the same author ; *Une tribu tombée de la lune*, Emmanuel Vitte, Lyon 1938 ; and the more recent : Jolly, Margaret, «Soaring hawks and grounded personns ; the politics of rank and gender in North Vanuatu», in : *Big Men and Great Men, Personnifications of power in Melanesia*, edited by Maurice Godelier and Marilyn Strathern, Cambridge University Press and Maison des Sciences de l'Homme, Paris &, London 1991. As a matter of principle, I do not recognize psycho-analytic themes as a valid

scientific tool for analysing social institutions and behaviour, the more so in the Pacific Islands societies. Layard's compulsion towards this type of interpretation was deeply personal and had to do with his enormous difficulties in readapting to the English scene after his return from North Malekula. The more modern attempt by Michaël Allen cannot be acccepted on the same grounds. There is no such thing as a collective psyche, which is just an easy caption used to put over unexplained facts. Mixing kinship seen in an abtract way and psycho-analytical concepts has no possible validity : these are two conceptual worlds with no links between them. Litterary concepts are wonderful résumés of complex events, they tend to obscure the issue when used in other circumstance. The opposition between a kind of lay grade hierarchy privileging exchange and one which is more linked to the relations of the candidates and their introducers to the outerworld is a much better question to ask. I would say that each instance, and I have known tens of them in full swing, has something of both tendencies. Claiming that they are separate in space is no better than restating the old and inaccurate division of Vanuatu between patrilineal and matrilineal areas. Each local social universe has worked its own synthesis on how to apply both descent rules. Putting them in a hypothetical historical relation is worse. There is no way to prove or disprove this assertion. Vanuatu, which was, as we know now, archeologically and historically linked to the Santa Cruz islands in the north and particularly to Tikopia, shares in the lucid observations by Raymond Firth, introducing us to a more flexible approach of kinship.

[107] *Cf. The rope of Moka. Big-men and ceremonial exchange in Mount Hagen, New Guinea*, Cambridge University Press, London 1971. The bibliography of big-manship has become too extensive to be cited. The details of the institution, from place to place, are none of my concern here, where I am interested in the artificial opposition between two European originated concepts as applied to the Pacific reality and constantly said to be at the opposite poles of island social organization. *Cf.* for a critical analysis, based on a study of the Yali movement in the Madang district of Northern New Guinea, of Sahlins' thesis on bigmen and chiefs : Mosko, Marks, 1992, «Other messages, other missions, Sahlins among the Melanesians», *Oceania* vol. 63, Sydney.

[108] If the concept of rank is to be used, it cannot be only conceived as an obligation to be hereditary, which would be validating a cultural transfer from eighteenth century Europe to the Pacific islands.

[109] Gunson, Neil, «The *hau* concept of leadership in Western Polynesia», J*ournal of Pacific History* vol. XIV, Canberra 1978.

[110] William Mariner's analysis of the Tongan society is written unwittingly in the guise of what has much later been called a model. He is evidently repeating what he had been taught and had experienced during his four year's residence, mostly on Ha'apai and Lifuka. Gifford on Tonga has said the same things somewhat less effectively. The imposition of a Royal constitution changing land tenure and creating in effect the basis of another social structure has played such a role in moulding the Tongan modern society that it does not seem really feasible to reconstruct what the ancient Tongan society could have been. The best approximation of it still remains Willam Mariner's description, in many ways the more useful, although there have been interesting attempts towards renewing our knowledge, *cf.* Rogers, Garth, «The father's sister is black. A consideration of female rank and powers in Tonga», *Journal of the Polynesian Society* vol. 86, Auckland 1977 ; Kaeppler, Adrienne, «Rank in Tonga», *Ethnology* vol. 10, Philadelphia 1971 ; Korn, Shulamit R. Dektor, «Tongan kin groups. The nobles and the common view», *J. P. S.* vol. 83, Auckland 1974 ; and : Sayes, Shelley Ann, 1982.

[111] Wheeler, 1926. A look at Polynesian tradition in New Zealand, and elsewhere would furnish a crop of such instances of strong willed first-born girls. *Cf.* Mahuika, Api, «Leadership, inherited

and achieved», *Te Ao Hurihuri, The world moves on, Aspects of Maoritanga*, ed. by Michaël King, Methuen, Auckland 1977 ; Rogers, Garth, «The Father's sister is black», A consideration of female rank and power in Tonga, *J. P. S*., op. cit.

[112] On the trend to minimize the political role of women, *cf*. Hume, Lynne, «Making Lengwaus : a Women's Pigkilling ritual on Maewo (Aurora), Vanuatu», *Oceania* vol. 55, Sydney 1985 ; Gailey, Christine Ward, «State, Class and Conversion in Commodity Production : Gender and Changing Values in the Tonga islands» and : Weiner, Annette, «Dominant Kings and forgotten Queens. A review article on Sahlins and Valeri», *Oceania* vol. 58; Sydney 1987 ; James, K. E., «The female presence in Heavenly places. Myth and Sovereignty in Tonga», *Oceania* vol. 61, Sydeny 1991 :

[113] Lederman, R., 1985, *What Gifts engender, Social Relations and Politics in Mendi, Highland Papua—New-Guinea*, Cambridge University Press; and : Nihill, Michaël, 1981, «Money and Moka, Men, Women and Change in Anganen Mortuary Exchnge», *Journal of the Polynesian Society* vol. 100, Auckland.

[114] Godelier, 1982.

[115] Van Baal, Jan, *Dema. Description and analysis of Marind-Anim culture (South New Guinea)*, Martinus Nijhoff, The Hague 1966.

[116] The readers of *Oceania* should know this, where so many origin, or as they are called today, foundation myths, have been published since the beginnings of the journal.

[117] «All things go in pairs, or the shark will bite : the antithetical structure of Fijian chiefship», *Oceania* vol. 64, Sydney, March 1994. *Cf*. also : Otto, Ton, 1994, «Feasting and Fighting, Rank and Power in pre-colonial Baluan», *History and Anthropology* vol. 7-(1-4), Harwood Academic Publishers.

[118] Howe, K. R., 1977, gives an account lacking in precision in some details, as he builds it from both Catholic and Protestant missionaries correspondence of the times. The missionary acounts, as well as the official archives, can be flawed in many ways and not give the necessary attention to the details we are interested in today. Experience shows that local oral tradition is in one part extremely precise, in another tends to build a symbolic picture and so blends together events separated by a number of years. The result of the Ouvéa religious wars has not been as clear cut as Howe thought. The *Qenegei* chieftainship has been regained quietly by the protestant majority side, Waisselot's line (Waisselot is only the name of a man), that is *Haüiny*, has been restricted to one half of the village of Honyoü, but the quarrel between *Qenegei* and *Draume*, of which Howe does not say anything, has been going on endlessly unto now. History based upon the missionary's archives only takes us inside the limits of what these good people understood. *Cf*. also : Leenhardt, R., 1957.

[119] The earlier idea that the migration of Polynesians from Wallis island (Uvea) and the one of *Qenegei* from New Caledonia were relatively recent must be abandonned in favour of many centuries long links between the areas cited and Ouvéa. The Polynesian speaking present inhabitants of Rennell in the South Solomon islands claim to have come from Uvea ngango (lalo), that is Ouvéa, which would brings back the date by quite many generations.

[120] Garanger, José, *Archéologie des Nouvelles-Hébrides. Contribution à la connaissance des îles du Centre*, ORSTOM & Publications de la Société des Océanistes n° 30, Paris 1972.

[121] Don, A., *Peter Milne (1834-1924), Missionary to Nguna, New Hebrides*, Foreign Mission Committee, Dunedin 1927.

[122] In opposition to the desastrous demography on Eromanga and Aneityum, fuelled by constant re-introduction there of gonorrhoea. The strong-headed Tannese kava drinkers escaped from this

tragedy.

[123] Cited by Lindstrom, 1985.

[124] Lynch, John and Fakamuria, Kenneth, «Borrowed moieties, Borrowed names, Sociolinguistic contact between Tanna and Futuna-Aniwa, Vanuatu», *Pacific Studies* vol. 17, March 1994, Honolulu. I do not agree with the idea that institutions in Melanesian speaking islands can be borrowed from Polynesian islands, even if nearby. The implication is in a form of cultural superiority which Polynesia would have, which idea lacks scientific basis. The borrowing is usually from the demographically stronger society to the smaller one. The Polynesian outliers are usually quite small. The number of cultural traits borrowed from Tanna into Aniwa and Futuna may be quite important, if only done for the practical purpose of dealing with Tannese because of their constant marriage links with them. The Polynesian outliers in Ouvéa, Ivira and Emae show strong Melanesian borrowing, evidently through marriage also. Most cultural traits in Western Polynesia have their origin in eastern Melanesia, having evolved in parallel and slightly different ways in both places over the last two to three thousand years. Polynesian groups are more numerous than those officially accounted for inside these Eastern Melanesian societies. A number having lost all specificity can be found in Maré, Lifou and New Caledonia proper (among them Samoans, Rarotongans and Uveans), all claiming their place of origin, but having lost their language, some only in the course of the last century. Same situation of Samoans on Tongoa, Vanuatu.

Parallel to the two non marriage political and ceremonial moieties in northern New Caledonia, called *Ohot* and H*waap*, lives a third group, made out of the fishermen's groups settled along the west coast of the island. They refuse to be registered as one or the other and call themselves *Gwalaap*. Only the principal chief-ly lineage must marry in the other group, at least once in each generation, all members of other lineages choosing their spouses as they wish. Local peculiarities such as the cross-cousin marriage being only a privilege of rank, once in a generation, in the Hienghène to Pouébo chiefly lines of New Caledonia, all other people marrying at will, can be an adaptation to the 19th century demographic situation, or the result of the chiefly privilege of carrying the burden of the model, *exchange of sisters endlessly repeated creating automatically cross-cousin marriages*. Intermarrying at chiefly level had a consequence : chiefs could not fight their in-laws in the field but had to look for some conveniently non allied by marriage victims ; their wives would be a source of useful information, thus preventing dangerous potential forays on the part of their own lineage. Such chiefs tended to stay alive in time of war.

[125] A good part of the information presented by Joël Bonnemaison is of this type. *Cf*. Bonnemaison, 1986 and 1987. This researcher is a geographer lacking any training whatsoever in anthropology. He shows no capacity of being critical towards his own information and an unhappy trend to disavow any data coming from the Tannese who have been supporting the independance movement. Those who made a nice looking pretence of being in favour of French rule maintained were good informants, the others being classified as acculturated and not to be trusted. There is a lot of unconscious manipulation in his published data, which can only come useful as such and through a process of detailed critical analysis (a parallel is Wirz data on the Marind-Anim, which has had to be carefully reassessed by Jan van Baal).

[126] Tiesler, Frank, «Die intertribalen Beziehungen an der Nordküste Neuguineas im Gebiet der Kleinen Schouten-Inseln», *Abhanlungen und Berichte des Staatlichen Museum für Völkerkunde Dresden*, bd. 30-31, Dresden 1969-70 ; and for the trade between Huon Bay and Tami island and New Britain through the Siassi islands, *cf*. Dark, Philip, *Kilenge Life and Art. A look at a New Guinea people*, Academy Editions, London 1974 ; Harding T. G., *Voyagers of the Vitiaz Strait. A Study of a New Guinea Trade System*, Seattle 1967 ; Friedman, M. P., *The Social and*

*Political Organization of the Siassi Islands*, Ann Arbor 1967 ; Bodrogi, Tibor, *Art in Nort-East New Guinea*, Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Budapest 1961 ; id., «Style Provinces and trading Areas in North and Nort-East New Guine», and : Dark, Philip, «The Art of the people of Western New Britain and their neighbours», *in* : *Exploring the Visual arts of Oceania*, edited by Sydney Mead, Honolulu 1978 ; and : Ter Keurs, Peter, Some remarks on seafaring, «Trade and Canoe construction of the Siassi of Mandok island (Papua-New Guinea)», *Baessler-Archiv* bd XXXVII, Berlin 1989 ; and : *id*., «Tami art and the Siassi trade network (Papua-New Guinea), An enquiry into the relationship between trade and the developement of art styles», in : *.The language of things, Studies in Ethnocommunication, in honour of Professor Adrian G. Gerbrands*, Rijksmuseum voor Volkenkunde, Leiden 1990..

[127] For the sake of the argument as it stands here, citing the extensive bibliography on the subject is unnecessary. The examples given from New Caledonia has been chosen because they appear to be ignored by all authors dealing with this theme. The notion that exchange systems never stop along the Melanesian coasts stems from the writings of Mikluho Maclay, Ludwig von Biro, W. H. Rivers, Ian Hogbin, Philip Dark, Sydney Mead, Deborah Waite, and my own field work from Aneytium to the Banks islands.

[128] Dual systems have sprouted all over the Pacific after Rivers had found them in so many places in Melanesia. The argument here doest not consist to offer a synthesis of all the known cases, but to try and explain, from instances too often ignored by English speaking authors, that the dualism implied in the moiety concept is fragile, for the very simple reason that a third party is always present, those who do not participate, but will marry into both sides, which factor has been neglected in all theoretical discussions.

[129] Leenhardt, Maurice, *Notes d'ethnologie néo-calédonienne*, Paris 1930, and : Guiart, Jean, *Mythologie du masque en Nouvelle-Calédonie*, Publications de la Société des Océanistes n° 18, Paris 1987.

[130] Guiart, Jean, «La société traditionnelle des vallées de Bourail, côte ouest de la Nouvelle-Calédonie», J*ournal de la Société des Océanistes*, n° 78, Paris 1984. These coastal groups incurred the special hate and wrath of the settler group, which obliged the colonial administration to take over their extensive holdings and regroup them in the worst posible spots along the western coast of the island. They were the more westernized in apparence and among the most mistreated because of their playing their traditional role of go-betweens inside each of the principal Kanak insurgent inland areas.

[131] I am up to now the only author having systematically worked in the whole of Tanna and made a complete survey of all the variations of the Tannese social institutions and of who were each's representative at the time. This allows me to propose a few generalizations on my own, having worked with the John Frum leaders in the rather difficult situation of the post war years, obtaining from the Condominium authorities the release of all their leaders, thus holding the promise them I had made to them that I would attempt to help them out of their too long exile. Brunton, Lindstrom and Bonnemaison have each studied a small section only of the island. I have been misquoted by Brunton, who apparently has difficulties with French, and has been working on the sole basis of his own material. Bonnemaison in general doess not quote me at all, considering that his material only bears any validity. He has built on his own a kind of epic poem about Tanna, on the basis of a few very imaginative informants who gave him exactly what he wanted, chosen for their apparent support for a completely unofficial, and quite illegal attempt at the time, by a score of French officials and traders trying to provoke the secession of the island so as to bring about a political link with the Loyalty Islands. I have not really read yet anything written

by Linstrom which I would be moved to contradict, nor which might seem to invalidate anything I have published.

[132] Guiart, 1992, chap. 1 : «Les vallées de Houaïlou» ; and : Damon, F., *From Muyuw to the Trobriands*, op.cit.

[133] Tattevin, 1927-28, for South Pentecost, and for the Banks islands : Vienne, Bernard, *Gens de Motlav, idéologie et pratique sociale en Mélanésie*; Publications de la Société des Océanistes n° 42, Paris 1984 ; Guiart, 1974, and Rivers, 1914.

[134] Mikluho-Maclay, *Travels to New Guinea, Diaries, Letters, Documents*, edited by Daniil Tumarkin, Progress, Moscow 1982.

[135] New routes have been used by Melanesians going on board sailing ships, which have played important roles in the process of adaptation to the new situation by island societies, for instance the ships linked to the Catholic *Marist Mission*. The *London Missionary Society* ships were plying the route between Eastern Polynesia, Western Polynesia and Eastern Melanesia. The yearly trips of the *Melanesian Mission* ship *Southern Cross*, and later the ships belonging to the *Seventh Day Adventist Missions*, constantly on the move, have been instruments of change all round. The trade shipping routes through Sydney and Auckland have played a real although more haphazard role. The Papuan Army shooting across the Bougainville Strait follows the model of the French navy imposing for a century and more a kind of blockade of New Caledonia, so that fire arms could not reach the as yet uncontrolled Kanak groups.

[136] Hadfield, 1920, and : Guiart, 1992.

[137] Bensa, Alban, «The Gara Atê lineage», map 18, *in* : ORSTOM *Atlas de la Nouvelle- Calédonie*, Paris 1981, and Guiart, 1992, p. 203-4, tables 13 and 14. In Bensa & Rivierre 1994, the discussion is based on the sole indications given by one side of the prestige competition evolved in the interior of Koné, New Caledonia. The analysis of a foundation myth given me by Firmin Dogo Gorouna as a manipulation in favour of his lineage's ambitions is wrong, inasmuch as all foundation myths tend to say and do the same things in favour of the people owning each myth; The authors have conveniently forgotten the ambitions of the informant behind their discussion, Antoine Goromwido, whom they forget to mention.

[138] Garnier, Jules, *La Nouvelle Calédonie (côte orientale)*, Plon, Paris 1871.

[139] Leenhardt, 1947.

[140] Each *Xetriwaan* chief is privileged, directly or indirectly, with the power to control the sun and the rain, in the same way as Trobriand islands chiefs who curiously claim as their ancestors two mythical sisters, in the same way as the Lifou island Lösi *angahaetra* and*angete Lösi* chieftainships.

[141] Lambert, R., *Moeurs et coutumes des Néocalédoniens*, Saint-Louis 1900, and : Guiart, 1963, the chapter on the Isle of Pines.

[142] The father of Jean-Marie Tjibaou, the murdered leader, was one of the chiefs known under the name of Ty, as well as his brother Louis, also killed on December 1984, who was the then reigning chief.

[143] Crocombe, Ronald G. and Marjorie, 1968.

[144] Best, Elsdon, «The Maori as a deep sea voyager, *Journal of the Polynesian Society*, vol. 33 New Plymouth 1924 ; and : *Polynesian voyagers*, Dominion Museum monographs n° 5, Auckland 1975 (re-issued).

[145] Guiart, J. *et alii*, 1973.

[146] Garanger, 1972.