

THE ETHNOGRAPHIC HISTORY OF KURTI PEOPLE ON  
MANUS ISLAND, PAPUA NEW GUINEA, TO 1919

by

ALBERT JOHN KULUAH

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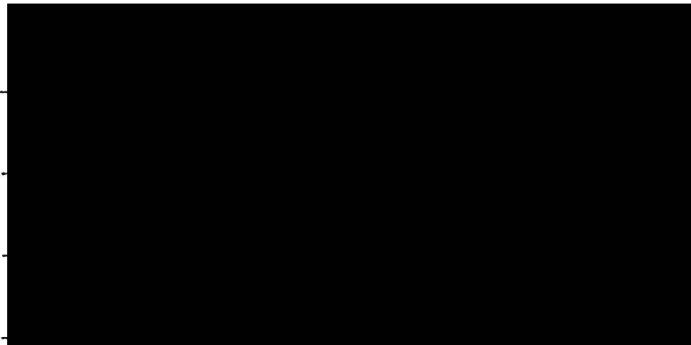


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Supervisor: Dr. J. Boutilier  
Dr. S. W. Jackman

ABSTRACT

Apart from the numerous anthropological accounts, there has been no history written about the original inhabitants of Papua New Guinea. Whatever history has been written about them has been considered entirely in the light of European colonialism. So much so that during the ninety-one years of colonial rule the tendency was to play down or to outright deny the people's past history. Recently there has been a growing search into the writing of local traditional history and this thesis is part of the growing process.

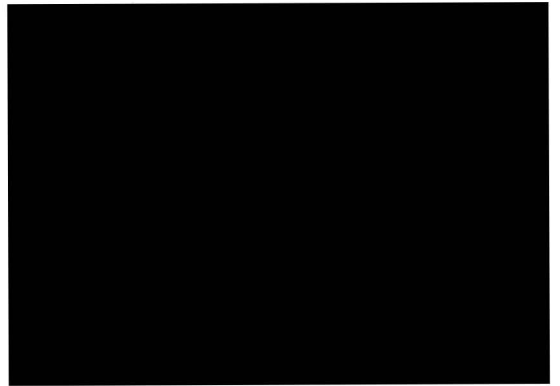
The following work is divided into three parts. The first part focuses on the environment in which the Kurti people live. This results from the obvious fact that a people's history and culture is to a large extent geographically and environmentally bounded and determined. The type of environment in which they find themselves enclosed demands adaptation and formulates the pattern of their socio-political and economic life.

Part two concentrates on their tradition of origin, migration and warfare. The account of how they came to be is centered on a man called PAT and a woman called ELUH KALUU. Their marriage resulted in six sons who became the ancestors of the six original KURTI clans. The groups migrated to seek more space as they increased in numbers and this led them into confrontation with other groups of people sharing or occupying the same environment.

Part three examines the coming of the Europeans and their

intrusion into the Kurti society towards the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth. This intrusion led to hostile feelings between the groups culminating in the imposition of and adjustment to the colonial rule.

To state briefly, this study is the result of the growing search into the past history prior to the European intrusion. It is a history common to every group of people in Papua New Guinea; a tradition on which they stand and from which they draw their strength and courage in the wind of change.



FOREWORD

I wish to acknowledge the assistance I have received in collecting the materials for and in writing this thesis. My informants Kohun Kaleweh, Popon, Popen Moi, Buka NDrakali, Tikirik Netndram, Sireh Inta, Kire'ei Tombui, Pasar NDrohuu, Pohoyap, Tukele, Andrai NDre'ek, NDret Pahun, Nuhwon Kourih, Sawa Kuweh, Pelit Wayah, Perihyap Sapah, Perei Lewen, Engei Kap, Taliu NDrelok, Melyen Nohou, Ewih Nohou, and Engei Muyen, gave up much of their time, with patience and willingness for interviews. To them I am deeply grateful.

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## INTRODUCTION

This thesis is about the Kurti people of Manus Island, whose language I speak, of whose society I am a member by right of birth, and among whom I have conducted my fieldwork.<sup>1</sup> Experts in various fields of social science and the humanities have conducted fieldwork and published accounts of other Melanesian groups. Margaret Mead, Reo Fortune and Theodore Schwartz have published articles and books on cultural transformation, on religion and on the Paliu Movement in Manus.<sup>2</sup> But while their work may be fairly comprehensive with respect to one language group on Manus, it is not indicative of all of them. Moreover I question whether their works have accomplished much more than the written accounts set down by explorers, settlers, planters, missionaries, and government officials, who viewed the islanders through colonial eyes. These written accounts are expressions of dynamic changes which have occurred in the life pattern of the people but fail to reveal history through the eyes of the people.

To the best of my knowledge, no research has been done on the Kurti people, their society, or the changes that have affected them since the European contact. The main body of this thesis rests on materials that I collected during my fieldwork, consisting primarily of tape recordings of oral tradition and notes on ceremonial activities and environmental factors. The composition of this thesis is a challenge and a duty, since I will be the first person to describe my people's culture, society and history in a language which they do not understand and in which I do not profess to be fluent.

In 1967 when I was a student at Chanel College, in New Britain, one of my history lecturers stated that history existed only in the independent nations and that in the case of the Papua New Guineans they possessed no history of their own, or if they did it was only within the realm of European contact and colonialism. I took the statement as truth and tried to convince myself that people in what is now called Papua New Guinea have no history as such except what has been made by the Europeans in their own environment. This attitude developed into an interest in the subject of the 'effects of European contact' on the Kurti people and thus led me to have informal talks and conversations with some of them before they died. My aim was to obtain their impressions and ideas about the impact of European intrusion on our society. I can still clearly remember my aunt, Eluh Meyek, saying to me, "Yes, the Europeans brought many good things but they should not get our land from us because without land we would be like little children with no parents to feed them; and they should not get all you youngsters out of the village, for if all of you leave nobody is going to carry on our tradition and customs and nobody will bury us when we die."<sup>3</sup>

In 1973 I was a student at the University of Papua New Guinea. In our course on the 'History of Papua New Guinea' I pointed out to our lecturer that the name of the course was a misnomer. It should be called the 'History of Colonial Activities in Papua New Guinea,' rather than 'History of Papua New Guinea' because there was nothing on or about the indigenous people.<sup>4</sup> The lecturer replied to my complaint saying that unless I could provide enough materials to cater for a course on the history of the local people, the content of the present course would

remain the same. This was the challenge that led me to conduct field-work among my own people.

I soon abandoned the idea that history is the property of independent nations alone and came to believe that history does exist in other societies which are not independent only according to European political and legal standards. In her account of the Manus people, Margaret Mead writes: "It is the story of a people without history, without any theory of how they came to be . . ." <sup>5</sup> Yet from what I know, the Manus people proper, like the Kurti and other language groups on Manus Island, have their traditions about where they came from and how they came to be where they are today. <sup>6</sup>

My own conviction is that "history is where people are." At a history seminar held at Simon Fraser University, I heard a speaker say: "History today is not only restricted to reporting and recording about government, political and diplomatic activities, but has also embraced the 'total human experience.'" <sup>7</sup> It is my contention that societies without written records do have a history; a history embodied in their traditions, culture and experiences, and not circumscribed by written words; indeed the very existence of any people throughout time and place declares a consistency and a continuity which is history.

History is to a people as a root is to a tree. It provides life, a consciousness of themselves and a source of strength, courage, and energy. Consequently a people without history is dead and loses its direction like a reed blown by the wind. The Kurti people as well as other Melanesian groups have long been denied a history of their own; the history which is embodied in their struggle for survival on the

island world and which has been involved in the formulation of their culture. Hence, it could be said that the struggle for survival leading to the formulation of cultural practices is history in itself, though unrecorded, since it has taken place in time and space.

For the Kurti people their history is a composite expression of their interaction with their physical environment; their symbolic and mystical comprehension of that environment; and finally, their ability to comprehend within this cultural spectrum the attitudes, values, and technological demands brought by European contact. The Kurti and their neighbours on Manus Island in western Melanesia have been isolated for centuries from the people of Papua New Guinea nearby. This isolation was an accident of geography. In order to fully appreciate Kurti culture and history, it is necessary to understand the physical nature and fragmentation of the island world in which they live.

## PART I: ENVIRONMENT AND PEOPLE

Chapter 1: Geographical Situation, Physical Features and Climate

Manus is the biggest island in the Admiralty Group of the Bismarck Archipelago, but the smallest island-province in the newly independent nation-state of Papua New Guinea.<sup>1</sup> Manus lies between 141 degrees west longitude, 149 degrees east longitude and 2 degrees south latitude.<sup>2</sup> Two hundred fifty-eight kilometers west of Lavongai Island in the province of New Ireland and roughly three hundred twenty-two kilometers to the south is the mainland of New Guinea.<sup>3</sup> To the north, the boundary of Manus is the equator, while to the south the boundary is formed by the administrative boundaries of West New Britain, Madang and the provinces of East and West Sepik.<sup>4</sup> Its western and eastern boundaries are longitudes 141 and 149 degrees.<sup>5</sup> The maritime province of Manus consists of about 160 islands including the Western Islands Group.<sup>6</sup> The total area of the province is approximately 128,000 square kilometers, but the land area is only 12,870 square kilometers.<sup>7</sup>

Manus is about eighty-one to ninety-seven kilometers long and 32.2 to 48.3 kilometers wide at its widest point.<sup>8</sup> It is a young island, geologically; born in comparatively recent times as a result of a gigantic wrinkling of the earth's crust which buckled the bed rocks of ancient oceans and piled them up forming a central range, running from west to east, of which the highest peak is Mount Dremsel at 718.58 meters with many others over 3,280 meters above sea level.<sup>9</sup>

Perhaps two thirds of the total area of Manus is taken up by hills, covered with luxuriant jungle, and separated by valleys through

which rivers and creeks flow down to the sea. Among the island's many streams, the Worei and the Yirii are most notable. Both originate in the central range; the former flowing southward and the latter northward, providing alluvial plains which are used for gardening. Due to riverine erosion sharp slopes have been created and the island lacks a continuous coastal plain.<sup>10</sup> Patches of swamp on the littoral, only a few meters above sea level, are dominated by mangroves but there are also areas of beautiful white and brown sand beach.

The island of Manus may be divided into five physical regions: the south-west peninsula, the western uplands, the central valley, the eastern uplands and the eastern lowlands.<sup>11</sup> The Worei river runs along the central valley and the Yirii river flows down through the western uplands.<sup>12</sup> The highest mountain peaks on the island are situated on the boundary between the western uplands and the central valley.<sup>13</sup>

Off the eastern end of Manus is the Los Negros Island, separated from the main island by a narrow channel, Loniu Passage, but linked to the mainland by a steel bridge. The eastern lowlands continue on to Los Negros Island in the form of a plain about five kilometers wide with ridges rising to about 45.75 meters above sea level.<sup>14</sup> The crescent shaped island of Los Negros curves northwest encircling the magnificent Seeadler Harbour.<sup>15</sup>

The Kurti people inhabit part of the western uplands, the central valley and the eastern uplands on the northern-central part of Manus Island.<sup>16</sup> The Kurti land along the coast extends, east to west, from Kereng Point to NDritilii Point, a distance of about sixteen

kilometers, and extends inland to about nineteen kilometers, making a total land area of 311 square kilometers.<sup>17</sup>

The area is rugged, hilly, and deeply dissected by valleys through which rivers wind their way to the sea coast. The main rivers in the area are, from east to west, Hurngeu, Lowo, Kohmaran, Yahol and NDrehndrelei.<sup>18</sup> These rivers have their sources up in the central valley and the eastern uplands.<sup>19</sup> Connected with many tributaries they drain much soil on to the lower narrow plains on the coast and into the sea. Between these major streams there are many smaller ones which contribute to much soil erosion during rainy season.

The highest peaks in the area are Puhlii, Morir, Tomol, Pawih and Putpuu; they are over 305 meters above sea level in the western and eastern uplands.<sup>20</sup> Other smaller peaks are Puhtoh, Nakii, NDruturuu, NDrekeu, Pamurou, Petluhul and Porowii, all range within the vicinity of 274.5 meters above sea level.<sup>21</sup> Except for the central valley along the banks of Worei river, there is little flat land. The whole area is covered with dense jungle except for patches of secondary growth where there has been some cultivation. Rivers and creeks make the coastline uneven with patches of mangrove swamp and occasional white and brown sand beach.

Manus lies near the equator and this means that at sea level its climate is hot, but the equatorial heat is tempered by the heavy rainfall and high humidity borne by the prevailing winds from the northwest monsoon. This wind pattern begins in November and continues until March when it is followed by the southeast trade wind from May to October, with doldrums in the intervals.<sup>22</sup> Manus has a regular annual

rainfall of about 381 centimeters.<sup>23</sup>

At all seasons the temperature varies little between day and night although, of course, it falls with altitude. In coastal areas the temperature seldom rises above ninety degrees or drops below seventy degrees, and the humidity hovers around seventy per cent at sea level. Hot and humid conditions are usual during the day but the nights are comparatively cool.<sup>24</sup>

Regular rainfall sustains the verdant vegetation of Manus. Tropical forests occur up to midmountain levels and on parts of the lowlands. Sago palms grow thickly in the marshy and semi-marshy coastal and inland plains. Coconut palms dominate the dry coastal areas. The flat littoral areas, especially on the north, east, south-east and south, are dominated by mangrove swamps and nippa palms. On the western end of Manus there is a moss forest with patches of alpine vegetation.<sup>25</sup>

## Chapter 2: Natural Resources, Subsistence Activities and Trading

Nature endowed Manus with a substantial range of resources needed to sustain life. Many of these resources are also present in other parts of Melanesia and the Pacific world. The island has a luxuriant tropical rain forest and is heavily timbered.<sup>1</sup> This timber is utilized for house building, the carving of wooden food bowls, and the construction of canoes.<sup>2</sup> Pottery is made from clay. Although the Kurti possess the white clay used for making pottery, they were not the pottery making group.<sup>3</sup> This industry was monopolized in pre-European contact times by the people of the islands of Ahus, on the north coast, and MBuke on the south.<sup>4</sup>

The staple food crops of the Manus people are sago, taro, sweet potatoes, singapore, yams, and mammi yams, coconuts and bananas.<sup>5</sup> These vary in distribution, while coconut palms, either naturally germinated or cultivated, are common to all islands. Sago palms flourish in abundance in the marshy and semi-marshy lowland areas. As the staple food crops vary in distribution so also is their importance. To the Kurti people sago and taro are the staple food crops while the other crops are cultivated as supplementary. Taro grows everywhere in the Kurti area and sago palms flourish in abundance in marshy and semi-marshy lowland areas particularly at Liap, NDritambat and Souh.<sup>6</sup>

While sago remains the basic food for all the Manus people, emphasis on other food crops differ. Taro is heavily cultivated in parts of the central valley and the entire eastern uplands and lowlands, while singapore is grown in abundance in the southwest peninsula and the western uplands.<sup>7</sup> This results in the emphasis

placed upon singapore than taro by the inhabitants of western Manus. The inhabitants of the larger volcanic islands such as Rambutjo, Lou, and Baluan, where sago palms grow in limited numbers, cultivate taro, yams, sweet potatoes and bananas. On the elevated coral islands of Bipi and Pak emphasis is placed on cultivation of sweet potatoes and on some low atolls, such as Wuwulu Island in the Western Islands Group, taro is grown in man-made swamps.<sup>8</sup>

These staple food crops, mainly carbohydrate in content, are balanced by protein derived from land and marine animals and birds, and vitamins from fruits and vegetables. The most commonly hunted animals are wild pigs, possums or cuscus and bandicuts. Domesticated pigs are usually reared for important social functions.<sup>9</sup> Fish of all kinds are caught, and marine plants and animals such as crabs, shell fish, green sea weeds and sea anemone. Tropical fruits and vegetables of all types, cultivated and non-cultivated, are abundant. In this bountiful setting hunger is the result of laziness and a person who goes hungry blames neither nature nor anybody else for his plight.<sup>10</sup>

Subsistence agriculture generally involves the cultivation of staple good crops. Sago palms take the least effort to cultivate. The palms are planted in marshy or semi-marshy areas because an abundance of water is required for their growth. Occasionally the surrounding bush is cleared since sago palms, like many other plants, need plenty of light to ensure their healthy growth. As they grow the palms produce new suckers and in time the entire environment becomes their breeding ground.

While sago cultivation takes the least effort, sago making is

an arduous task but ensures quick returns. The process of making sago is a perfect example of the division of labour according to sex in a traditional society like that of the Kurti. The man's work involves the selection, felling and trimming of the sago tree. After this he must break the hard skin with an axe, separate the skin from the soft kernel and beat the soft kernel into a powder with his bow (ndrangkei) fitted with a ring of bamboo or metal (moro'ou) at one end. The woman's complementary tasks involve collecting the sago powder and to rinse them with water to get the flour. The flour, mixed with water, goes into the container, but precipitates, being heavier than water. The water trickles down the sides of the container as more and more is used for rinsing. When all the powder is rinsed, some time is allowed for the flour to precipitate and then the water is let out through a little opening made in the side of the container, leaving the sago flour to be collected in baskets and hung up to dry.<sup>11</sup> Sago flour is cooked in many ways. It is fried, baked, made into pancakes sprinkled with coconut oil, fried and boiled, and made into a large number of delicacies. It is eaten with coconut oil, desiccated coconuts, and other protein foods.

The usage of sago palm is not only limited to the extraction of its flour for food. The whole tree is useful. Whatever is left from its powder, after the extraction of the flour, produces a variety of mushrooms. Its leaves and palms are used for houses, its strong hard skin is used for floors in dwellings, its fronds are used for brooms and its top is used for breeding beetles which produce edible larvae (ehet).

Coconuts are as important as sago. While it may not be treated as a staple food crop by the people on Manus, where sago is plentiful, coconut is certainly the staple food crop on the coral atolls, especially, in the Western Islands Group.<sup>12</sup> Between these two extremes, however, coconut occupies an important place in the lives of the Kurti people as well as all the other Manus Islanders. The cultivation of coconuts is similar to that of sago palms.<sup>13</sup> It is planted at random mainly for domestic consumption and for traditional ceremonial activities.

Practically everything about the coconut palm is useful. The trunk is chopped up into sizeable lengths and used as posts for houses, fences, and bridges; people on coral atolls split up the trunk into strips for harpoons used in turtle hunting; palms are used for firewood, green leaves are woven into baskets and mats and dried brown leaves are used for lighting fires. The fronds are used for making brooms, the young shoots are cut at their tips to let out the juice for making 'toddy' drinks. Its water is a refreshing drink, green and dried nuts are eaten, dried shells are used for firewood, husks are spun into ropes, the dried flesh is used for lamps and the oil extracted from desiccated nuts is used for domestic consumption as well as acting as a valuable item of trade.

Next in importance, if not equal to sago and coconut, is taro, the cultivation of which goes on all the year round. Taro horticulture, although with minor differences, is described by Ian Hogbin among the Wogeo Islanders, Peter Lawrence among the Garia people and, Bronislaw Malinowski among the Trobriand Islanders.<sup>14</sup> Cultivation demands energy

and patience; energy to clear up forests for new gardens and patience to wait for at least six to eight months before the taro harvest. Selection of a good garden site requires some preliminary knowledge of the type of soil and its estimated productive capacity, the kind of forest (shrubs, plants, and trees) and the types of taro plants that may grow well there. In the Kurti area the initial task of brushing up the undergrowth is generally done by the women while the men come in later to chop down the trees, or if need be, trim off the branches. This division of labour according to sex, with respect to garden making, also exists among other groups of people on Manus, and among the Wogeo, the Garia and the Tangu peoples with the exception of the Trobriand Islanders where men and women collaborate at the initial stage.<sup>15</sup>

The making of taro gardens in Manus differs from what I have seen in other parts of Papua New Guinea, for example, New Ireland, East and West Britain, Wewak, Madang, Morobe and in the Port Moresby area where garden sites are cleared, burnt, and cleaned before the taros are planted in the bare soil. This method of taro cultivation is noted elsewhere among the Wogeo, the Garia, the Tangu and the Trobriand peoples.<sup>16</sup> In Manus, as a general rule, garden sites are not burnt, but the branches and leaves are trimmed as evenly as possible after the initial brushing. When everything is ready for planting, the women bring bundles of taro tops and shoots, banana suckers, yam tops and other green vegetable cuttings for planting.

In Manus, as elsewhere, the only tool used in planting is the digging stick.<sup>17</sup> When planting taro, the women force the stick into

the ground for about 20.32 or 22.86 centimeters and work it from side to side before withdrawing it. Then they drop the shoot into the hole and tamp down the earth around it with either the stick or their feet. The holes for banana suckers are driven deeper, usually about 30.48 to 38.1 centimeters. In exposed places banana stems are often tied up to a stake to prevent wind damage. Bananas are planted among the taros, normally about 3.05 meters apart but they are not necessarily kept in straight lines.

Occasional and sometimes regular weeding, usually done by the women, is necessary while the crops are growing. As a rule taros seem to be harvested first while bananas may take longer. Unless there is a major social occasion, the harvesting of taro is not done at one time, but rather at regular intervals to meet the needs of the family. It is occasionally necessary to cover the ripening bunches with leaves or bags so that birds and bats cannot attack the fruit. Taro tops are replanted in new garden sites, leaves are cooked and eaten as vegetables and peelings are used for feeding pigs or as fertilizer.

Sweet potatoes and yams are also important in the Manus diet.<sup>18</sup> Sweet potato gardens, unlike those for taro, are cleared and burnt before the debris is removed. The method of cultivation of these two crops is common throughout Papua New Guinea, at least, from what I know and have seen in other areas besides Manus. The soil is broken, mounds are made in which the sweet potato vines are inserted, and the gardens are weeded constantly by the women, until the crop is ready to be harvested.

In practically every garden, whether of taros or sweet

potatoes, one will find patches of crops like yams, tapioca, singapore, bananas, pineapples, pawpaws, sugar canes, corn, pumpkins, beans, cucumber, water melons, ibica and other green vegetables. These are placed in convenient positions without any regular plan and may be found in any part of the garden where it is considered that they will do well. Because the heavy annual rainfall on Manus causes extensive soil erosion, sweet potato gardens are usually found in level or semi-level land areas.

The reason why taro garden making on Manus is different from that in other areas of Papua New Guinea is unknown. However, one can only assume that it results from the people's knowledge of their environment. The soil on Manus is largely of the red-clay type and it dries easily when exposed to the sun. Long practical experience has taught the people that when leaves and branches are left on the surface of taro gardens they prevent soil erosion during the rainy season, keep the soil from drying up during the dry season, add humus to the soil and retain much needed water for the taro crop.

Mixed farming and shifting cultivation are two well documented characteristics of the Melanesian agricultural system.<sup>19</sup> For purposes of analysis, the phenomenon of mixed farming can be considered from two perspectives; the cultivation of mixed crops and the rituals attached to cultivation. We have seen that among the Kurti people on Manus, as elsewhere, gardens are of mixed nature. Different kinds of crops are planted together on the same plot, although some may take predominance over others, for example taros and sweet potatoes. In some areas on Manus, as in the volcanic islands of Rambutjo, Lou and Baluan, yams and

mammi yams are cultivated in separate gardens. However, even these are not entirely dominated by the principal crops at the expense of other crops like bananas, sugar cane, and pawpaws.

The exact reasons for this practice of mixed farming are not known, but one can assume that in this way the land is utilized totally, the danger of crop failure and attacks by insects are minimized, and different crops restore nutrients to the soil. Moreover, more time is available for other social and individual activities, such as, hunting, fishing, constructing canoes, house-building, visiting friends and relatives in other villages, or simply passing the time off in leisure. Flourishing gardens of mixed crops possess greater aesthetic beauty for passer-bys and enhance the social prestige of the garden owner. All these practices and attitudes seem to be more gratifying to the people than the creation and maintenance of different gardens for different crops.

Any discussions on the traditional life in Melanesia cannot afford to overlook the importance of agricultural rituals, for in garden making as well as in other activities ritual is always resorted to.<sup>20</sup> These rituals blend human labour with spiritual power, making agricultural practices coherent activities. Agricultural labour falls into three stages for the Kurti people; clearing undergrowth, felling trees and planting. However, in gardening there is little distinction between physical labour and the ritual associated with it. They are seen as complementary to one another.

The ritual formula among the Kurti people is simple in content. The gardener utters a brief invocation to his ancestors to

protect him against accidents that may befall him and to the bush spirits to watch over his garden and ensure its productivity. These utterances may involve throwing some small amount of food into the forest in the belief that the spirits would eat the offering. Having performed this simple ritual the gardener then proceeds to clear his new garden site. No ritual is performed when the time comes to plant, although, most gardeners prefer to plant their crops early in the morning, before laying their hands on anything else, because they believe that this will protect their crops from the ravages of insects.

It is not known for certain how long the system of shifting cultivation has been in practice by the Kurti on Manus and in other parts of Melanesia. The system was either introduced by the islanders, during their migration to the Pacific, or more likely, was developed in the course of time as their knowledge of their environment increased. Golson points out that horticulture, based initially on taro cultigens, has been in existence in the Central Highlands of New Guinea for upwards of 10,000 years.<sup>21</sup>

The value of shifting cultivation cannot be sought outside the people's own experience by which they have come to know that second plantings are not profitable and that it is better to abandon plots after a single harvest. Owing to the heavy tropical rainfall weeds grow up quickly and the people have come to realize that any attempt to cultivate a second crop on the same plot would be doomed because of weeds. The soil on Manus is of a red-clay type which quickly loses its nutrients after the first planting and so must be left to lie fallow. Moreover, the Kurti people equate land to the human body which can only

carry so much weight at a time. Thus overuse of the land in terms of replanting is like overloading the human body, an analogy which symbolizes the people's deep feeling for their soil.

The fertile humus covering the wide expanse of red clay lends itself to an intensive cultivation of useful plants which include, not only the staple food crops of sago and taro and supplementary crops of coconut palms, sweet potatoes, yams, and bananas, but also fruit trees and vegetables of various kinds. Fruit trees are seldom grown in gardens. They are, by custom, grown at random in and around the settlement sites, either old or new. There are also fruit trees that grow plentifully in the forest and their fruit is collected in abundance at certain times of the year. The most common cultivated fruit trees are breadfruit, mangoes, malayan apples, oranges, lemons, pumoloes, guava, nas, sakou, mehyeu, morndro, mondrol, puroi, lilip, yiou, ninat, ndrinei and sa'en'on. In addition, there are those that grow naturally in the forest such as ndrau, pakan, onglou and ngalngal.<sup>22</sup>

A wide variety of vegetables are cultivated such as, pumpkins, water melons, cucumbers, beans, soya beans, corn, pineapples, peanuts, sugar cane, pitpit and ibica. Those that grow naturally in the forests and swampy areas are the ndraweyap, panorok, leksu, nineh, oso'ot, pe'er, mburtuh, ndrongkarahat, and ndronarmai.<sup>23</sup>

Trade, without undermining its other dimensions and aspects, is essentially a form of subsistence activity. In the island world of the Manus people it is a means of survival for those living on smaller islands where staple food crops cannot be cultivated and for those

engaged in cultivation on the main island it is a medium through which excess food is exchanged or bartered for other supplementary items. There has not been any systematic study conducted on the traditional trade system in Manus apart from a short description by Margaret Mead.<sup>24</sup> The subject has been studied and described in great detail with respect to other areas of Papua New Guinea: Malinowski studied the Kula system in Eastern Papua (now Eastern Province of Papua New Guinea); C. G. Seligman and F. E. Williams analyzed the Hiri system between the Motuans of the Port Moresby area and the Koita of the Purari delta (now Central, Gulf and Western Provinces); T. G. Harding worked on the Vitiaz system which links several hundred communities located on opposite sides of the Vitiaz Strait, a passage about 321.8 kilometers long and 48.27 to 64.36 kilometers wide dividing the northeastern mainland of New Guinea from the Bismarck Archipelago; and A. Strathern wrote about the ceremonial exchanges known as the Moka system in the Western Highland Province.<sup>25</sup> These major trade systems with many other smaller ones enabled the flow of valuable goods from one area to another and linked up the entire New Guinea coast, islands and the highlands.

Whether the Manus people were linked to these huge trade networks, particularly the Vitiaz system which linked the various local communities on New Britain and New Ireland, is hard to say; for one thing Manus is geographically removed. However, the Manus people had their own trade networks through which food and durable items of value changed hands and passed from one area to another. Trade units are based not only on geography but also on long established ties of intermarriage, clan relationships and friendships.

For the sake of general classification, Manus trade networks falls within four geographical regions: the islands and the villages on the north coast mainland, the islands and the villages on the west coast mainland, the east and southeast islands and the mainland villages, and the southwest islands and the mainland villages. Within this overall network trade links numerous communities on the mainland with those on the islands and sustains a regional economy.

Within this regional sphere, trading activities are reduced to what may be termed 'trade units'; that is, one island exercises a monopoly on trade with one or two mainland villages. Other islands, wishing to trade outside their units, can do so only after permission has been granted. On the northcoast of Manus, for example, the island of Andra claims a monopoly over the mainland villages of Souh and Mundrau. The island of Ahus claims a monopoly over the mainland villages of Liap, Lowa, Lobahan and Powat, and the island of Ponam claims a monopoly over the villages of Mundrupulon and Tulu. For the people of Andra to trade with either Mundrupulon or Tulu they must have permission from Ponam. However, there are some exceptions to the rule. For instance, the mainland village of NDritambat trades with both Ahus and Andra islands, having concluded trade treaties with each island. In addition, trade is carried on with them on different week days in order to avoid conflict. Another exception is that the mainlanders are not bounded by these trade monopolies and are at liberty to trade in any units they please.

Food forms the basic item of exchange at local trade units. Trading takes place twice a week, normally on Wednesday and Saturday

between the hours of nine and twelve but in some areas it takes place only once a week. On the morning of the market the islanders sail down to the mainland in their canoes bringing with them smoked or fresh fish and other marine edibles. These items are exchanged for sago, taros, sweet potatoes, yams, bananas, betelnuts, pepper leaves and other vegetables brought by the mainlanders. Each unit has its trading centre where platforms are erected on which items of exchange are placed.

It is evident that the exchange of vegetable foodstuffs for marine products (the foundation of much of local trading) derives from environmentally determined differences in production. Overseas trading or interregional trading, on the other hand, depends far more on the distribution of technical skills and established exchange patterns than on environmental variations including the distribution of natural resources. For example, the mainland people do not lack the red clay from which pots and earthenware items are made nor, perhaps the skills required to produce them. However, they prefer to enter into exchange the clay pots made by the people of Ahus island on the north coast and MBuke island on the south coast.<sup>26</sup>

Generally, the interregional trade is guided by a desire to import specific goods and the exchanges are more often indirect. For instance, a man from Pak island, to the east of Manus, wishing to construct a canoe for himself but lacking a proper log, informs his trade friend from Andra island (north of Manus) who in turn asks his trade friend on the mainland either from Souh or from NDritambat to supply him with a large tree trunk. In time the hollowed log is

prepared and sent to the trade friend in Andra who in turn sends it to his trade friend at Pak. Whatever goods, for example, pigs, turtles or dog's teeth given in exchange for the log ultimately end up with the third partner on the mainland. Other durable items of value that pass from one region to another generally follow the same pattern.<sup>27</sup>

Chapter 3: The Kurti Concept of Themselves, Their  
Society and Their Environment

The Kurti people conceive of themselves as the product of evolution in time and space. They conceive of themselves as originating from a couple, a woman, who was known originally as Kalulwoi Kesak, who long ago left Mount Kesak on the south coast of Manus and moved to Pat Mundrupureu, an area which is situated about the centre of the island, and a man, Pat, who lived at Pat Mundrupureu. When they married her name was changed to Eluh Kaluu.<sup>1</sup>

The marriage of Pat and Eluh Kaluu was blessed with six sons who were the ancestors of the six clans of the Kurti people.<sup>2</sup> The significance of this tradition is that every Kurti person can trace his or her genealogy back to one of the ancestral sons and ultimately to Pat. Thus the tradition serves to unify, consolidate and create a consciousness within the Kurti people that they are one people. It also strengthens inter-relationships within clans as well as cooperation and collaboration. This is vividly illustrated by the fact that when customary activities are held almost all members of the clans come to participate.<sup>3</sup> Furthermore this tradition creates in the minds of the Kurti people a sense of their common history.

The Kurti people conceive of their society as not only composed of those living but also of the dead members.<sup>4</sup> To them all living men are influenced by those who went before. The chain of influence is almost infinite in its extension through the past. In addition, every Kurti is a product of the wider culture created before

his birth by past generations and communicated to him by his community and society as well as by his immediate family. The ancestral spirits are more than merely memories of the dead and more than a generalized tradition which the living acquired from their predecessors. Instead, the deceased enter history once again. Among the Kurti people the dead are seen to participate in ceremonial activities particularly when they are staged in their honour. They even participate in the distribution and the eating of food; that is, the essence of food.

It is important to note that the spirits of the dead only contact those among the living to whom they were related, those who have some kind of intimacy with remaining members of their kin, or with those places or affairs of significance to a particular family and its relatives. Another point worth mentioning here is that in traditional Kurti society, and to a large extent this is still the case today, people are named after their dead ancestors. The sole purpose of this observance is to give concrete expression to the ties between the living and the dead. In so doing the dead will be remembered. Furthermore, the common belief is that the dead will protect their name sake and impart to them those qualities for which they were famous. Hence, it is the influence of the dead in their role as relatives which persists among the living. However, not all ancestors will be remembered or renamed by the living members. Only the famous will be recalled. Those who are not remembered in some way will be lost from living memories. Many are acknowledged only as part of a host of revered, but individually unknown ancestors.<sup>5</sup> In general, then, only the named spirits of the recently departed or exceptionally important

dead continue to influence the living.

The Kurti people have no definite doctrine of after life. Their general conception, apart from those ideas derived from missionary influence, is that life after death is a state of rest where individuals forget the hardships of life. The spirit of the dead members who appear to the living do so only briefly in the form of blueflies, fireflies, butterflies, beetles, or frogs.<sup>6</sup> But these creatures are never recognized as the embodiment of ancestors. The children who are named after dead ancestors are never seen as reincarnations of their ancestors but rather as independent individuals. Their names only serve to maintain kinship, family or historic ties with the dead and with the past.

When such insects enter the houses of the relatives of the dead, they are respected and greeted. In some cases pieces of food and tobacco are given or placed near the insects in the belief that they are the embodiment of dead relatives. This may appear like transmigration, but it should not be taken as such for two reasons. Firstly, the Kurti people have no theory or belief about transmigration and secondly, the belief that the spirits of the dead take the form of insects is only a temporary phenomenon. In fact, while the spirits of the dead appear to their living relatives in the form of these insects, they are not seen as insects themselves.

Generally speaking, the ancestral spirits do not harm living relatives. However, they make them sick sometimes. This happens if the ancestral spirits are displeased by some of the things that the living relatives do; such things as failure to meet obligations to

members of the family and quarrelling about land and property. If, for instance, two members of the same family quarrel over something and after that one of them falls ill, this is seen as punishment by ancestral spirits. When that happens all members of the family come together, usually around the sick person, each one tells what he or she feels about the matter, and then the leader enumerates all the ancestors by name, if possible, and pleads with them to remove the sickness.

All sicknesses and deaths in the Kurti society are thought to be the result of magic and the displeasure of ghosts and spirits. If magic is found to be the cause of sickness and death a counter magic is used to cure the sickness or to revenge the death by either killing the magician or any of his relatives. In the case of ghosts and spirits the exorcists are called to perform the ritual murder to avenge the dead man's spirit, as in the case of Sinel which will be described later in this section. If the death of a relative is said to have been caused by the spirit of a recent dead relative or of an ancestor, there is nothing done about it. The living members accept it as a warning that they should be in good terms with one another to avoid further drastic action from their dead members.

The central goal of life for the Kurti people is expressed by the term "huyen" which literally means "good." But to the Kurti it means not only being good, as referred to persons, but possessing longevity, health and freedom from misfortune in the fullest sense of life. It means being good not only in terms of material possessions but also in terms of moral and spiritual dispositions such as fulfilling

one's obligations towards the living and the dead. This well-being cannot be achieved without the effective help of human and non-human agents coupled with one's own personal efforts. The help of non-human agents, such as the ghosts of ancestors, is particularly important. Such assistance is considered vital especially in the context of food distribution during ceremonial festivities in order to avoid complaints, dissatisfaction and anger from the participants as well as from the ancestral spirits. Moreover, the Kurti are always anxious to avail themselves of such help in order to avoid annoying the dead and thereby inviting punishment in the form of pain or sickness. Thus we see that it was as essential for the Kurti to maintain approved standards of personal and social conduct as it was to obtain power from the ancestors because by the very nature of things, one's own conduct, as well as that of other persons was always a potential threat to the achievement of "huyen."

The relationships of persons with their ancestors are not always considered to be gifts. Rather, obligations must be met before such relationships are established, and once established the obligations must always be maintained. The principle, of course, implied the process of reciprocity. In Kurti society, both worlds, the natural and the supernatural, are combined together as one world through the process of reciprocity. By this process the supernatural powers can be manipulated by the living.

A point of importance which should not be overlooked here is one closely associated with the Kurti people's concept of life. Life, to them, is conceived as a unity of fulfillment. And this unity of

fulfillment consists in keeping both the natural and supernatural world together in harmony. This is both success and life for the Kurti.

The Kurti people do not have a purely secular view of their society. To them it is a unity, a unity of the natural and supernatural. To sustain this unity, persons must enjoy a good relationship with those who are dead and those who are living. Life for the Kurti revolves around this concept of unity, and its fulfillment. What happens in the natural world is considered as the joint work of men living in the natural world with those in the supernatural.

The idea of the world is as old as civilization because people everywhere have felt compelled by the conditions of their existence to try to understand their environment, both natural and supernatural, and to articulate their relationship with the cosmos. In this struggle to rationalize their existence they adopt various explanations as aids to understanding. Prior to contact with Europeans and the spread of their knowledge of science and technology the Kurti people attempted to explain the origin of things around them by employing legends and myths. This is not uncommon in traditional societies. Rather than consider in detail the nature of legends and myths currently entertained by Kurti society, my intention is to examine their functions.

Among a host of legends and myths employed to explain natural happenings as well as claims to property there is one which is well known to practically all of the Kurti people, and which combines both functions. This myth is known as the "Myth of Lapam Puhlii and Lapan NDritilii." Briefly, this myth states that Lapam Puhlii, residing on

his mountain top, looked down one fine day towards the sea, and on the beach of a jutting point he saw Lapan NDritilii sewing his fishing net, with his hands going up and down. Lapam Puhlii thought that the fisherman must be calling him. So he set out the following morning and journeyed to Lapan NDritilii's house. He stayed there two days. Then a strange thing happened. After every meal Lapam Puhlii would ask Lapan NDritilii for some fresh water to drink. Lapan NDritilii pointed at the sea water and told him to drink it. He drank it and felt it was salty. Meanwhile Lapan NDritilii went out secretly by his back door into a patch of bush where he had hidden a pot of fresh water. This went on several times. On the morning of the second day Lapan NDritilii told Lapam Puhlii to stay home while he went fishing. While he was on the reef he had a strange feeling that something unfortunate had happened at his home. He hurried back and made for his pot of fresh water. It was gone.

While Lapan NDritilii was away fishing, Lapam Puhlii said to himself, "this man must have been tricking me. Everytime after a meal he told me to drink sea water, but he would not go himself, and he must have some water somewhere to drink." So he searched in the undergrowth and came upon the pot of fresh water. He said to himself: "this is it." He stooped down and drank to his heart's content. Then said to himself: "Since Lapan NDritilii has fooled me into drinking sea water all of this time, I will steal his pot of water." He lifted it up and walked away to his abode on the mountain top. When Lapan NDritilii arrived at the spot, his pot of water was gone. "What am I to do to get my pot of water back from this man?" He thought for a while and

said: "Ah! I will get a piglet and run after him." So he did. He ran after him as fast as he could and caught up with Lapam Puhlii while he was ascending the final approach to the mountain top. He said to him: "My friend I want my pot of water back and you can have this piglet in exchange." Lapam Puhlii said, "No, you tricked me, I drank sea water several times, and I am not going to give your pot of water back to you." Lapan NDritilii held the piglet in one hand and reached out for the water pot with the other. Lapam Puhlii held on to one side of the pot and Lapan NDritilii held on to the other. They pulled together, and the pot broke and the water flowed down the side of the mountain. To their surprise the piglet squealed and ran off into the bush.

I have tried to abbreviate this myth by which the Kurti people not only explain but lay claim to several things. On the spot where the pot of water was alleged to be there is a spring of clear, cool water. This is said to be some of the water that fell to the ground when Lapam Puhlii lifted the pot. On the mountain top there is a small, round pool of water. This is said to be the water which spilt when the pot broke. On the northern and southern side of Mount Puhlii are the sources of the two biggest rivers on Manus, the Yirii and the Worei. Their sources are explained in terms of the water which trickled down the mountain side. Around this pool of water are fragments of the broken water jug. The piglet which ran off into the bush became the ancestor of the jungle pigs in this area. Moreover, this legend is said to explain why most Kurti people hunt for wild pigs in that area, at the expense of other tribal groups. Down on the

coast, Lapan NDritilii's fishing net became the forerunner of the fishing nets which people made later, and the Kurti people claim the fishing net as their property. Kurti lands extend along the coast in an east to west direction from Point Kereng to Point NDritilii and inland, in a southerly direction to Mount Puhlii.

At most times people of all societies live in two environments, the natural and the supernatural. The distinction between these two worlds is sometimes sharp, sometimes vague, and frequently the two worlds seem to merge. For the atheist, there are no gods, for the pantheist, all nature is supernatural. The Kurti people, like all Melanesians, are in between these two extremes. To them the supernatural world is teeming with spirits, disembodied magical forces and ghosts. Toward them, supernatural beings may be indifferent, spiteful, intimate, wantonly malevolent, supportive, supervisory, distant, transcendent or immanent. Toward the supernatural the Kurti may be scornful, friendly, fearful, awe-struck, manipulative, indifferent, submissive, reverent, joyful, aggressive, or loving. The two worlds of nature and supernature confront the Kurti with innumerable mysteries.

The Kurti people identify a number of entities which may be labelled supernatural and have institutionalized means for dealing with some of them which may be described under the heading of ritual. A stranger among the Kurti people can observe the rituals and learn of the entities without much difficulty. What he may learn from observation and conversation concerns generally the form of rituals and their immediate aim, or the names of entities and their major attributes.

The Kurti people believe in nature spirits, which have different names and dwell in different habitats, in trees, rocks, rivers, forests, and mountains. They are not necessarily bad or harmful spirits though some of them appear to be at times. Let us look at each group of spirits.

Pihndrul usually dwell in big tall trees. These are considered to be female deities because their activities are restricted only to women. At sunset, between five and six o'clock, they are said to be actively looking down on pregnant women and women with new born babies. During this hour pregnant women and women with new born babies attempt to minimize their exposure as much as possible. If they happen to be walking back home from their gardens and pass through a grove of big trees at this hour, they must cover their babies in case Pihndrul might harm them. Pregnant women must cover their bellies in case they give birth to dead babies an outcome which would be seen as the direct result of exposure to Pihndrul. There is no ritual attached to these beliefs. Fear of Pihndrul only causes women to be careful about themselves and their new born babies.

As a rule, nature spirits do not harm people who live in the particular area where the spirits reside; they only harm strangers or people who live in the area but are not well known to the spirits. This is the case with Nundrolap. This group of spirits dwells in trees usually on the beach or on a jutting point. They also dwell at the mouths of rivers. Generally they are harmless spirits, and are not considered to be deadly. If a stranger or a person they do not know very well passes through or by their dwelling place, they blindfold

him spiritually and set him upon a different route which very often leads nowhere. Sometimes they make the strangers walk to and fro along the same path without realizing what they are doing, while at other times they make them walk around in a circle following the same path. This trickery may go on for a few hours or even a day. If such a thing happens, the landowner, usually the person who is well known to these spirits, goes out and calls the spirits to stop annoying the stranger. The ritual attached to these spirits is simply a call to them in the form of a placation or a scolding comment.

Much like the Nundrolap is the group known as Tambalamueh. This term means the head of a dog and signifies that these spirits act like dogs. They are said to dwell in a particular forest area and go about in groups. They bark like dogs and do everything that dogs do. They do exactly the same sort of thing that the Nundrolap do to strangers who happen to come across them in the jungle. They blindfold the strangers spiritually and either lead them to an entirely different route or make them lose their way. This may go on for a few hours or even a day. Strangers may even spend the night in the bush, unless somebody who knows these spirits goes out and calls out to the Tambalamueh to stop. However, if no one familiar with these spirits is around, the spirits themselves will direct the strangers back to their original route after a while. The ritual connected with these spirits is like the previous one, a call of placation. Sometimes a little food is used, either sago, taro, or anything at all, which is thrown into the bush after the placation has been made. If there is no food used then the forest owner will tell them to eat whatever they can find in

the forest, mainly fruits and other edible leaves and plants.

Another group of natural spirits which dwell in mountains, rivers and caves are known as Mandra'alok. As their name implies, they are looked upon as the "guardian of the place." They do no harm, but they are said to become angry with humans if their habitats are disturbed. People revere them and their assistance is sought after when people go hunting for possums or pigs or go fishing in the rivers. They are said to make available within easy reach the hunted animals and fish. In either case, the leader of the group, usually a person who has some links or traditional rights to the hunting and fishing area, invokes the guardian spirits and asks them to make his group's adventure a successful one. The invocation ritual is rather simple. The leader obtains a bundle of leaves which by traditional right belongs to his clan or family. With this bundle in his right hand, he waves the leaves, hits them back and forth on the surrounding plants, and invokes the guardian spirits, saying: "those of you who are here, looking after this place, know who I am." At this stage he mentions his name and his father's and his clan's or family's name; "I come to hunt (or fish); make the hunted animals available and within easy reach. Thank you to all." After the invocation the hunting party goes to hunt or to fish.

The Sinel, another group of natural spirits, which literally means devils, or evil spirits are said to live in caves, trees, rivers and natural tunnels or ditches. These are the most harmful supernatural beings. They cause sickness and death. Humans must take certain precautions in the areas where these Sinel are said to dwell.

First, not to pass through those areas at certain times of the day, particularly in the early evening between six and eight o'clock, in the late evening between eight and ten or during the whole night. Secondly, if people do pass through these areas during the day they should not have eaten any meat or fish which has a strong smell, or if they have they should wash their hands thoroughly so that the Sinel will not smell them. Thirdly, people should not have sexual intercourse in and around these areas. The ritual attached to these cases is rather complicated. If a person falls ill after passing through these ghostly places, an exorcist must be summoned. The exorcist is a person who has power to drive out devils or evil spirits. Exorcists can be either men or women. The ritual can go on for some days. First of all, the exorcist questions the sick person as to exactly what he or she did. After gathering all of the necessary information the exorcist prepares to use various articles owned by the victim. This preparation must be done in secret. The exorcist then uses a special pot of lime, while rubbing the sick person's hands together. This ceremony is usually performed in the evening.

The exorcist visits the sick person before he or she retires for the night, chews some ginger and breathes on the victim. This being done, the exorcist goes off to bed. No one is allowed to enter the sick person's room. Sometimes during the night the exorcist gets up and commands the evil spirits to restore the sick person's health by departing from their body. The next morning the exorcist rises before everyone else, sprinkles some lime on both sides and the back of the sick person's head and then breathes on the victim. After this the

exorcist pulls out a special rope and ties a number of knots according to the number of evil spirits in the area where the sick person was contaminated. The tying of knots symbolizes the strangling of the evil spirits. In the evening the exorcist goes to the area, thought to be inhabited by the Sinel, collects a bundle of sweet smelling leaves, ties them up with the knotted rope, sprinkles lime on the leaves and then waves the bundle around, saying to the evil spirits: "Now, since that I have strangled you to death, this place or area is free for humans to pass through." Then the exorcist goes back to the sick person to see if he or she is well. The ritual may be performed several times until the victim recovers.

Another group of spirits which are believed to inflict harm on humans are called Yowah or Mulou. These spirits have no fixed habitat but roam all over the place and are said to be active when there is a shower of rain in broad sunlight. When such a rain shower occurs people believe that these spirits are abroad on the road. Consequently, people do not walk around in case they encounter these spirits. If a person walks along the path when such a shower occurs he or she must hide to let the spirits pass by. They are said to cause severe headaches, fever and stomach aches. There is no ritual for these forms of sickness except retirement to bed.

Akin to Yowah or Mulou is another group of spirits called Ngam. These are very harmful and they are usually associated with a person, who in reality is what we call a magician. He keeps these spirits in his house and they accompany him wherever he goes. There is communication between him and the spirits. These spirits cause

sickness and death. A sickness caused by these spirits cannot be cured by anyone except the magician himself. The ritual performed followed the same pattern as the others. The magician chews a bit of ginger, breathes on the sick person, waves some sweet smelling leaves over him and commands the spirits to withdraw from the victim and not to make the person sick again.

The Pelit are associated with families and clans. They are considered to be guardian spirits. They protect families and clans and their interests. However, they may cause sickness. This happens when two or more members of a family or a clan quarrel over a wrong. If after their quarrel one of them falls sick it is said that their own Pelit, the guardian spirit, made the person sick as a punishment. Sometimes, sickness may be visited upon some relative other than those involved in the quarrel. This is because of the communal nature of society where any relative may be punished for the crime of the whole. The type of ritual performed for this is simple and straight-forward. All members of the family come together and each one confesses what he or she has in mind or feels about the matter. After their general confession, those who were involved in the quarrel put a certain amount of dog's teeth, shells, and nowadays, money together in the name of their family Pelit and the leader of the family petitions the spirit to remove the sickness from the unfortunate victim. The items collected are kept in custody by the leader of the group and used in traditional exchange on behalf of the family.

#### Chapter 4: The Kurti People, Their Language and Customs

The Kurti people are one of the several culturally similar communities settled on the central part of the northern coast of Manus Island.<sup>1</sup> To the east, the Kurti land boundary runs with that of the Lowa people, to the southeast with that of the Puyong people, to the south with that of the Lohii and the Pohwai peoples and to the west with that of the Kukohoi people.<sup>2</sup> To the north, their maritime boundary is coterminous with that of the Andra and Ahus Islanders.<sup>3</sup>

The Manus people traditionally classify themselves into three basic groups, the Mwanus, the Usiai and the Matankor.<sup>4</sup> The Kurti people are an Usiai group who speak the Kurti language.<sup>5</sup> The term Kurti has five different meanings. It means, first of all, the language which the people speak. Secondly, it means and it stands for the people themselves.<sup>6</sup> Thirdly, it means "here" referring to something found, seen or placed in a particular spot. In this context it also means something being given to somebody; an act of giving in a particular moment in time. Fourthly, it means "this" or "this is," referring to the nature of a thing or something. In the context of a speech or a conversation it stands for the logic of the statement asserted. Also it refers to the truth emphasized in the statement. Finally, it refers to the land area on which the people live. However, this final reference is not commonly used; the argument being that the area of land inhabited by the Kurti people is not necessarily part of the people as the language is. For instance, if another group of people were to conquer the inhabited land area it would be called after

the victorious language group.

Customary activities are still important to the Kurti people, although the force of modern change has altered some of the traditional forms and practices. These customs derive their importance from the fact that they revitalize and strengthen social relationships involving individuals and groups. In addition to the tradition of common ancestry, the corpus of traditional customs and practices forms the basis of social solidarity.<sup>7</sup> The remarkable thing about customary activities in Kurti society is that they draw close and distant relatives together. In this way they come to know one another and to learn how they are related, whether patrilineally or matrilineally. Relatives may come from inside or outside Kurti society. This linkage is made possible through marriages as well as other ancestral ties. The latter, in the form of traditional friends, come mostly as invited guests and only within the context of certain customary feasts.<sup>8</sup> They are also invited for political and economic reasons; mainly in order to extend the influence and prestige of the person who is offering the feast as well as to place the guests in a state of indebtedness to their host. These socio-economic debts may remain outstanding for long periods until such time as the creditor wishes them repaid.

As a rule, customary practices are performed at certain important events in human life, such as birth, marriage and death, and in order to regulate human behaviour. Other events, in relation to these, are initiation ceremonies and festivities held for personal prestige. As for the regulation of behaviour in Kurti society, customary activities begin when children reach the age of puberty and

are considered ready for the initiation ceremonies. Rituals also regulate the behaviour of the persons who organize major festivities and the behaviour of the living towards the dead. As far as I know, there were no initiation ceremonies, particularly with reference to male children in Kurti society at the time of puberty. In times past there were initiation ceremonies, known collectively as Nou, for pubescent female children. These ceremonies occur in various stages until marriage. Newly born babies are welcomed into the world by ceremonies known collectively as N'Dre'eng, Kaleweh, literally, the "dung of ashes"; but commonly known as the cleaning of the ashes in the fireplace.<sup>9</sup>

The birth of a new baby is an important phenomenon, in the Kurti society, not only for the maternal and paternal families but also for the entire community. The custom of N'Dre'eng Kaleweh is associated particularly with the birth of a couples' first child.<sup>10</sup> Tradition dictates that immediately after giving birth to her first child the young mother does not show herself or walk around publicly. There follows a period of one to two months, known as Lon Elei, which means quite literally "inside the umbrella"; during this period the mother stays in the house tending the baby. Their section of the hut is closed in by a wall or elei, an umbrella partition made from pandanus leaves. No one is allowed to see them, except women, usually the young woman's mother or other female relatives. The mother comes out only at certain times during the day, usually early morning and late evening, and only for sanitary purposes. After Lon Elei, all the woman's female relatives come to her house with food and gifts which

are given to the family in the name of the new born child. In turn, the man's relatives give food and gifts.<sup>11</sup> After these presentations, the woman's mother, or some other female relative, cleans out the fireplace, disposes of the excess ashes and makes a new fire, while the other women prepare the food needed to be cooked. During this time the mother and child have a bath, their enclosure is pulled down and a new bed is prepared for them. The child is laid on the bed, with the mother sitting beside it, and the food is made ready to be served. Prior to the distribution, however, the woman's mother picks up the child, fondles it in her loving arms and says "all these pots of food are yours and in your name I shall distribute them to the people present." The food is then distributed; first to the mother of the child, second to the father and then to everyone else.

After this simple ceremony of NDre'eng Kaleweh the young mother with her baby is allowed to show herself and to walk about in public. This ceremony is normally performed only for a new, first born, child, but it can be performed later, when the mother gives birth to other babies, though this depends on the couple's preference. After this ceremony, if a male child has been involved, the father reveals his name, derived, usually, from one of his living or dead male ancestors.<sup>12</sup> If the father is not anxious to name the child then the privilege goes to the woman's mother. If it is a female child the woman's mother may call it after herself or after any of her other female relatives or after any of the father's female relatives. The naming of the child is an important and exciting moment because by that act the child is made a member of the family and also of the community.

The NDre'eng Kaleweh ceremony signifies a number of important things; first the cleansing of the new mother and the child, second, the declaring of the woman's vital role in society as the propagator and perpetuator of mankind. Third, the welcoming of the new born child into the nuclear family, the extended family and the entire community. The child is recognized by his relatives and by the community as the offspring of legitimate wedlock and its upbringing is not only the parent's responsibility but also the responsibility of the relatives and the entire community.

The ceremonies, collectively known as Nou, concern only girls approaching marriageable age.<sup>13</sup> Traditional custom does not necessarily specify the marriageable age for girls; it leaves the matter to the girls' mothers who usually determine it by the development of breasts and the onset of menstruation. Other secondary but important factors are the acquiring of knowledge from older women about women's various activities such as making baskets, working in the gardens, preparing sago, cooking and caring for babies, and developing of proper conduct in the form of consideration for others, generosity and obedience. In fact, the secondary factors can be summed up in two words; knowledge and character.

Generally, when signs of maturation are noticed, young girls are brought together and are advised to go through the first stage of the Nou ceremonies. A special house is prepared with beds, cooking utensils, food, firewood, and water. At a set date young girls are decorated beautifully and accompanied to the house where they will stay in seclusion for thirty days. Mothers and older women visit them and

give them instructions on married life and all that that entails. Great emphasis is placed on maintaining a good relationship with their future husbands and inlaws. Those who still lack the art of weaving traditional baskets and mats are taught the appropriate skills at this time. The period of seclusion ends with great festivities in which large quantities of food are prepared and eaten. During this festival each girl is brought to a house, different from her parents', and when drums or slit-gongs are played all the young single men, with their beautiful decorations, are permitted to go around to each house where the girls are. Hugging, fondling and kissing are permitted but sexual intercourse is forbidden.

After this ceremony the young girls are free to walk around until the next date set for wooing, at which time the young men and women go out together in a group to work in the gardens, to make sago, or to go hunting in the mountains. At night each young man and girl sleep together, hugging, fondling and kissing one another. Sexual intercourse, however, is still forbidden. In the morning each girl pulls a bush rope, makes a loop and hands it to the young man with whom she has slept. This is a sign that the young girl wants the young man to hunt and catch her a possum.

They may spend days and weeks in the bush making sago, working in the gardens or hunting for possums on the mountain sides. During this time the young men show their manliness and exhibit their strength and pride in order to win the girl's admiration. The girls also exhibit their knowledge, character and strength for the same reason. When the time comes for them to return home each young man

walks with a girl. They are physically warm with one another on the way but do not enjoy sexual intercourse. When they arrive home the girls go back to their parents. During this testing time both the young men and women have been expected to display not only their strength and skills but their moral rectitude. This was demanded in order to impress upon them two important points. First, that genuine love goes beyond sexual activities, and second, that sex is sacred. The whole mystery of life is involved in sexuality. In sex is the noble duty of propagating the species. These are the strong traditional concepts and principles governing marriage and sex in Kurti society.

The second state of Nou ceremonies begins when a girl is in love with a certain young man. She expresses her desire to her parents and relatives, a desire which may have developed over a long period. The couple may have been in love with each other before, during and after the first stage of Nou. Occasionally they might have arranged to meet secretly and talk about their love. Their meetings would have been arranged by a go-between, who, as a rule, would be either a female relative of the young man or a male relative or cousin of the young girl. These clandestine rendezvous take place for some time before they are made known to the parents of both partners. When a public declaration has been made, a date is set by the young man to come to the girl's house to escort her to his parent's home.

Meanwhile in the young man's home a special bed called Petle is built on four strong posts, usually of a particular type of tree called Kukuu, trees known for their strength and endurance. This bed is constructed at a height of about 1.968 to 2.624 meters above the ground

depending on how high the house is. A fire is made under this bed and a ladder is built to enable the girl to climb up. When everything is ready, the girl is decorated and painted with traditional paint made from roots and the seeds of certain wild plants, which, when mixed together, give a yellowish-red colour. Then she mounts to her bed and is covered with traditional blankets made from the bark of breadfruit trees. She stays in her bed for upwards of thirty days, being attended to and leaving only for sanitary purposes. If she decides to stay in her bed for less than thirty days she may do so. On the first day that she goes to bed, a certain amount of food is cooked to celebrate her ascension. After that, small festivities, involving food preparation, are held every fifth day until the day she decides to come out of seclusion. This ceremony, although a part of Nou, is also called Lom Petle, meaning inside the bed. The young man is not allowed to see her at all during this period.

A major celebration is held on the day when she comes out of her seclusion. She washes herself and is decorated. Following this celebration she is not allowed to walk with her future husband but only with his relatives. After several days or even a week or two, depending on the parents and relatives of the young man, a special food is cooked, usually of taro and possum. Two dishes are prepared, one for the girl and the other for the young man. Then both come together, exchange dishes, hold their right hands tightly together and from that moment on are considered to be married. They can now walk, sleep and go out working together. In the eyes of their parents, relatives, and the entire community they are legally and properly married.

This simple ceremony of Lom Petle, which is the second stage of Nou, is full of meanings. The trees themselves, that is the four posts, are cut from the very strong type Kukuu tree. The strength and endurance of these posts signify the strength and endurance of the couple through life's difficulties and also the strength the community will derive through them and their children. The new bed signifies to the couple, but particularly to the woman, that they are entering into a new kind of life, the married life. The fire under the bed signifies the constant warmth of heart and love that they show to each other and particularly to every member of the community. The elevation of the bed stands for the high respect the society has for the woman and her value within the community as a preserver of mankind. The bed and seclusion signify that she is about to seclude herself, with respect to giving her body to one man, and that any children born will be the product of lawful wedlock. These meanings are so important that should either of them become adulterous great shame will be visited upon them.

The customary festival known as Nak Um (which literally means 'climbing house') occurs either immediately after marriage or about a year or two later, depending on the situation and the economic status of the husband; that is, how wealthy or how poor he and his relatives may be. The delayed ceremony usually takes place when a complaint comes from the wife's relatives that their daughter has been married for a long time and has a child while no proper bride price has been paid for bride's wealth distribution.<sup>14</sup> These relatives also claim that her sole function is working for her husband and his relatives.

When such a complaint is voiced, the husband and his relatives

start collecting their wealth in the form of dogs' teeth, shells, beads (nowadays minted and printed money is widely used), baskets, mats made from pandanus leaves, pigs and other food items. On the day of the bride's wealth distribution all of the husband's relatives go to the wife's parents and relatives who prepare food known as Kehuu. There the wealth is given to the wife's parents and relatives. Sometimes the festivity lasts for more than a day or two. This happens if the husband's relatives do not come in time to contribute their wealth together since, some of them may come from other villages which are one or two day's walk away. When everything is given the wife's parents take the items and distribute them to their relatives. If the husband is a wealthy man and has many relatives there will be more wealth given to his wife's parents and relatives. If he is not, what he has will suffice for the purpose.

Another festivity that takes place after marriage is known as Nowii. This is given by the wife and her relatives to the husband and his relatives. Again this may take place several years after the wedding. It comes about when the husband complains to his wife that she and her relatives have not paid him or his relatives wealth to make up for what they have done for her and her relatives. The wife then tells her parents and relatives about her husband's complaint and on an appointed date her parents and relatives come with wealth in the form of dogs' teeth, shells, beads, baskets, mats, or money as well as lappals, calicoes, pigs and food. The husband and his relatives prepare food as Kehuu for the wife's relatives, who give the husband and his relatives their wealth. The distribution of wealth to other

relatives is now in the hands of the husband and his parents.<sup>15</sup>

These festivities of Nak Um and Nowii are important because they forge strong social ties and establish taboos between the husband and wife's relatives. They are the basis of cooperation, collaboration and assistance between the two groups. Nothing can stand in their way and nothing can annihilate or dissolve these social ties and taboos. They also serve an important economic function in terms of encouraging production and a social function in terms of continuously redistributing wealth within Kurti society.

After Nak Um and Nowii another important activity is Musoh. It is put on by the husband as a rule either in honour of his wife or for his own personal prestige. Whatever the reason, it always serves to enhance the husband's prestige and social status. It is initiated by the husband during the process of accumulating strings of dogs' teeth, shells, beads, pigs and other items of wealth such as money. Strings of dogs' teeth, shells and beads are always stored in a basket called NDrop. When the husband reveals his intention to his wife, she then tells her relatives who harvest sago and other food crops and bring them to the husband who distributes them to his relatives. This contribution of sago and other food crops is called Kau. Sometime later the wife's relatives bring large quantities of taros to the husband who distributes them to his relatives. When the husband is engaged in such ceremonial activities hosted by one of his relatives his wife contributes her share of good and other items of wealth such as dogs' teeth, shells, beads (nowadays money), and pigs. The husband's involvement in these ceremonial activities may be direct or

indirect. In most cases they are indirect involvements because prior to his own Musoh he may be involved in other activities through his sister-in-law, uncle, cousin or any other relative. In this case, the wife, as custom dictates, should come to the aid of her husband.

The day of Musoh comes when the husband plants a series of sticks in a line on an open space, malal. He displays his wealth of dogs' teeth, shells and beads on these sticks. His relatives, both male and female, come to help and to display their wealth with his. While this is being done, the wife and her relatives prepare food for her husband and his relatives. Pigs are not isolated as items of wealth. They have an important place not only in Musoh but also in all other festivities. The husband must have a pig or two in the Musoh and all the relatives who can afford to purchase pigs elsewhere come along with them.

When all the wealth has been brought forth the husband distributes it to his wife's relatives. The process of distribution demands great skill on the husband's part or on the part of one of his closest kinsmen, such as his eldest brother, paternal uncle or maternal uncle. This is necessary in order to avoid quarrels and discontentment among the recipients, the wife's relatives. Any discontentment on the part of the wife's relatives may indicate the inadequacy of the person distributing the wealth. It may also destroy the husband's prestige and ruin his relationship with his in-laws who may not come to aid him in his future customary activities.

After the distribution of wealth, the wife's very close male relatives decorate themselves and one by one, as the slit-gongs are

played, run out from the men's house, with spears Putleu and their wealth in their hands to perform dances. As each one emerges he shouts aloud and gives a word of thanks to the husband and his relatives for their wealth. They dance forward and backwards, stopping to bring forth items of wealth which they have brought with them and saying, "those whose wealth that I have received in this distribution, here is mine to you."<sup>16</sup> The beat of the slit-gongs is known, appropriately enough, as NDrolong Kawa, meaning the beat of gratitude. The bride's brothers and sisters are given more wealth later on. This is done after the other guests have departed so as not to offend them.

The festivity of Musoh is held by the husband in honour of his wife if he considers her as a good, considerate, generous and hard working woman. In addition it is a sign of gratitude, on the husband's part, for the number of children she has borne him. Nevertheless, it is also held to enhance the social prestige of the husband and his relatives and with the idea of placing the wife's relatives always in debt to them.

The festival of Yo-on takes place when a new men's house, Um Kamal, is built in a round shape called Um NDrou, which literally means 'house moon'.<sup>17</sup> Usually, construction is initiated by a house leader, Kakah, and completed by the clan members.<sup>18</sup> It is built on the land belonging to the house, Um. Generally speaking, the house leader determines exactly where the house will be located as well as how big, how high and how strong it must be. The actual construction is preceded by the levelling of a patch of ground and the carrying out of the necessary measurements, especially the radius. Then holes are dug at

various points on the circumference, where posts will be placed, and a bigger hole is dug in the middle for the tall centre post.<sup>19</sup> The spaces between the posts, at various points on the circumference, are marked out for smaller sticks called NDrii, which serve as building ribs. When these preliminary preparations are completed, the first post to be cut and placed is the middle one, the height of which is normally equal to roughly one or one and a quarter radii or 4.58 to 6.1 meters. The middle post must be the trunk of a very strong tree with a diameter of 50.8 to 60.96 centimeters. It is cut, pulled to the site, decorated if necessary, and then placed in the hole. When this big upright is inserted into the hole a small celebration takes place called "kensun ndrui," meaning the celebration of the post.

The preparation and the erection of the middle post is the major part of the task. While the men are busy with construction, the women are busy cutting sago leaves and sewing them together, with special bush vines called "panai," on lengths of split bamboo about 1.525 meters long. When the frame of the house is completed and there are sufficient sago leaves ready to be attached, a day is set aside for this task. The time in between is given over to food collection and hunting. The appointed day comes and men begin to work early in the morning. Women also engage in cooking food and bringing it to the men at intervals, making sure that they do not go hungry. When the house is completed, a cousin of the owner hangs on the doorframe and sings while the slit-gongs are played. This ceremony goes on for awhile, and then the women bring the rest of the food for the final celebration. The distribution of food is usually done by the owner, or if not, by a

close relative of his. While people are eating, slit-gongs are played and people who wish to dance may do so to celebrate the new house. During this time the leader of the clan announces the day and date for a bigger celebration, the Yo-on, to which people and relatives from far and wide are invited. In fact the invitations are sent long before the completion of the house and the relatives get ready to come with pigs, taro, sago, possums, and coconut oil. Pigs are considered more as objects of ceremonial exchange in this context than as food items.

Well before the erection of the house, the house leader prepares himself by feeding one or more pigs, and making ready big gardens of taro as well as large amounts of sago. These items serve as the basis of his holding the ceremony of Yo-on. This is not to deny the importance of the newly erected house. When the day comes for the festival to be held, the relatives of the house leader such as brothers, sisters, daughters, sons, nephews, nieces, uncles, and aunts, both on the father's and mother's side, come with pigs and other food items. These items are given to the house leader. The festival is divided into two sections, known as Tokur and Losengin. The former term refers to the two or three days of preparation during which pigs and food are brought to the place of celebration. At this time slit-gongs, ndral, are played day and night to let people dance to their hearts content. Some food is set aside to feed the dancers, the visitors and guests. Pigs are usually brought on special beds known as pasuk and are carried to the festival ground normally in front of the newly built house. This bed or pasuk is made up of two big strong sticks on each side with little sticks across to hold them together

rather like a small ladder. On the front of these two lateral sticks hooks are attached made from branches or roots of trees. When nearing the festival site, a cousin of the house leader goes up to the bed and dances on it while it is carried with the pig by twenty or thirty people. Conch shells are blown, accompanied by songs, as the carriers approach the festival ground.

As the procession enters the festival area slit-gongs are played, conch shells, ndroh, are blown, and with a loud shout the carriers rush towards the newly built house, push the front of the pasuk, onto the upper part of the doorway and pull backwards to enable the hooks to catch onto the frame of the house. Having done so they pull and shake the house to test its strength and if possible to break it down. After that the bed with the pig is put down, slit-gongs are played, and the house leader dances near the pig in order to welcome and to thank those who reared it. This ritual is followed by the people dancing around the pig, a ceremony repeated for every pig that is brought to the site. When everything is in place the second phase of the Yo-on, the Losengin, or distribution and eating of food, begins. A special platform called perkuu, is built about 1.22 meters above the ground in front of the newly built house. The house leader ascends this platform to formally thank those who brought food items and particularly pigs to the ceremony. He thanks everyone in order and after each acknowledgement the slit-gongs are played and he dances to the rhythm on the platform. The ceremony of thanksgiving is followed immediately by the elaborate process of distribution. The leader proudly calls the dead relatives and prominent dead warriors to come

forward from their ghostly abodes to take their share of the food.<sup>20</sup> He also rebukes or scolds his relatives who may have come without pigs, saying "why did you not bring pigs for my father, mother, or sister?" He dances to the beat of the slit-gongs before he descends to distribute the food.

The distribution of food and pigs is followed by the preparation of the food, with each group cooking for itself. The main pig reared by the house leader is given either to his mother or his father as the case may be. Other pigs are distributed to each family in the house, clan, to visitors and to guests. The Yo-on festivity ends with this distribution, cooking and eating. After that the people resume their normal round of activities.

The significance of this ceremonial festivity is obvious. To begin with, the house itself symbolizes the unity of the house since it is the central point where the house members meet. The feast symbolizes the power and strength of the house leader. By this feast the house leader creates debts for other houses within his own clan and other clans and extends his personal, political and economic influence as well as that of his house over them.<sup>21</sup>

The festival of Lapan takes place after a leader of a house, with the cooperation and assistance of his kinsmen and house members, has produced a surplus of coconut oil, has reared a large number of pigs in fenced compounds, has worked large taro gardens, has made enough sago and has maintained a sufficient acreage of forest land that possums can be bred and hunted for feasts.

When all of these requirements have been fulfilled,

invitations are extended to important persons in other villages near and far, who come with lots of coconut oil, pigs, possums, taros, sago, and other items of wealth. People who come from the little islands nearby bring fish, either smoked or fresh, and live turtles.

A month or so prior to the celebration the leader tells his house members to erect a special platform, Keleu, about 1.22 meters above the ground and usually located in front of his group's "Um Kamal" or men's house. On this Keleu the leader will dance and distribute pigs and other food items on the day of the celebration which is called the Losengin. Slit-gongs are played and dances are held a week before the celebration.

The day of the celebration is a time of great pride and pomposity. The leader displays all his own wealth and that of his house in the form of strings of dogs' teeth, lehmueh, shells, sewul, and beads, mbuyap, which are strung up in lengths valued at, one hundred, two hundred, three hundred kina, and so forth.<sup>22</sup> Baskets made by the women are also on display. These baskets vary in size and are made from the bark of trees called poh. They are coloured and decorated with paints taken from special mangroves, called sasa, and from certain seeds. These items of wealth are usually hung up on ropes for display. In addition, there are contributions of coconut oil, taro and sago while the live pigs are kept inside fences. People from other clans and villages bring together their food items as well. When all is ready the leader, with all his decorations on, ascends the platform, keleu, slit-gongs are played and he dances briskly and proudly to the beat. He pauses briefly after his first dance and calls upon those

dead or alive who have been involved in warfare, either with or against him and his clan, to come forward as he is about to honour them through this festivity. This does not necessarily mean that his enemies should come forward. Rather it is a gesture of pride, power and gratitude.

The leader begins to dance for a second time, after which he calls to his house members to open the fences and bring out the pigs for distribution with the rest of the food. Those who came with coconut oil would, of course, have pigs in addition to their share of food. They receive special treatment because the feast is based on the production of coconut oil. Pigs are distributed to individuals according to the amount of coconut oil they have managed to bring to the feast. Items of wealth are not for distribution but for exhibit only. Some of the owner's pigs, usually the fatter ones, plus some of his pots of coconut oil are set aside for his wife and his female relatives. The rest of the pigs, plus pots of coconut oil, are distributed to his house members and the invited clans and villages. As he calls them, clan by clan or village by village, the representatives come forward and ascend the keleu, where they dance to the accompaniment of the slit-gongs. This sequence is followed until the food is distributed. Cooking and eating follow soon after.

The festival of Lapan was traditionally considered to be the most important feast that any man could put on. As a rule it is performed only once, but wealthy and renowned leaders have offered Lapan more than once. This festivity sums up the political and economic power of the leader and his house. The term Lapan also means the supreme being or the highest spirit.<sup>23</sup> Thus, the feast, besides

being the summation of the leader's and his house's politico-economic and social power, is also an honour to the highest spirit or spirits, who have helped the leader and his house be successful in their activities.

A short ceremony which is associated with death and burial is known as Pepei. This ceremony takes place straight after the internment. It involves the gathering of gifts such as clothing, food, money, shells, dogs' teeth by the relatives of the dead person. These gifts are distributed to all those who have taken part in the mourning, the digging of the grave, and the preparing of the body for burial.<sup>24</sup>

The Merei ceremony takes place following a person's death. Five days after the burial, the cousin of the dead person obtains a leaf and a stick and with a group of men goes out into the bush to hunt for possums. When they arrive at the hunting ground the dead person's cousin throws the stick into a tree and says, "if you are here on your tree make this stick that I am throwing into a possum." Then they begin to hunt. The act of throwing a stick and the plea made after it does not mean that the dead person is requested to turn the stick into a possum. What it actually means is that the dead person is requested to help the hunting group catch as many possums as possible as well as make them easier to catch. During the afternoon the hunting party returns home with their catch. The women cook them and distribute them equally between men and women. This small celebration, five days after burial, is called Lo Lim, which literally means inside the fifth day. The same sort of activity is held after the tenth day, Lo Sungeh, meaning inside the tenth day and after the twentieth day, Lo Rungeh,

meaning inside the twentieth day.

A big celebration is held on the thirtieth day, Lon Tulngeh, inside the thirtieth day; prior to which time items of food have been collected by the women, and possums and wild pigs (if there are no domesticated pigs available) are killed. The night before the day of the celebration special beats are played on the slit-gongs by men in the men's house. These beats are slow and heavy, a tempo which is called Porko. The women divide themselves into two groups. One group will devote their time in singing sad songs and mourning, NDrileng, while the other group does the cooking during the night. At intervals, food will be brought to all participants in the mourning activity. This goes on till dawn with short intervals of rest. If there are domesticated pigs available they are slaughtered in the morning. Some of the meat is cooked, distributed and eaten with cooked taros and sago. The uncooked meat is distributed to all those who took part in the mourning celebration, as well as the close relatives of the dead who were not able to attend the Merei.<sup>25</sup>

The festivity of Merei, however, does not end after thirty days. The dead person's relatives keep on counting the number of days including the thirty days until they reach one thousand days. After these one thousand days the biggest festivity is held known as Lohopou, meaning inside one thousandth day.<sup>26</sup> One hundred days after burial, close relatives of the dead person begin to feed pigs: That is pigs are reared during the nine hundred days before the Lohopou ceremony. Also during this period a very close relative of the dead person, for example, a parent, brother, sister, uncle, aunt, or cousin may decide

to go without a certain kind of food such as taro, sago, sweet potato, or abstain from smoking, drinking coffee or tea, taking sugar in coffee or tea, eating possum, fish or pigs, or doing without the comfort that personal cleanliness provides.<sup>27</sup> As a rule, the living relative denies himself or herself that feature of life that the dead person was fond of. The reasoning behind this is to promote an easier mourning for the living relatives. About three or four days before the ceremony of Lohopou, relatives, particularly female, come with pigs and other food items. During these few days slit-gongs are played and dances are held.<sup>28</sup> On the day of the celebration women relatives of the dead person wash, dress, and decorate themselves in their best traditional attire including strings of dogs' teeth, shells, and beads. Then they appear publicly to signify that the long period of mourning is over.<sup>29</sup> Food items are distributed with live pigs to all of the dead person's close relatives as well as to other important guests. The distribution of food and pigs is usually performed by the closest male relative of the dead person and brings the ceremony to an end.<sup>30</sup>

It is rather difficult to draw a demarcation line between the world of the recent dead and the world of the ancestors. The Kurti people, however, do not draw such a line nor do they have any clear, logical, distinction between the world of the recent dead and the world of their ancestors in terms of temporal recession. However, while my comments may seem to suggest otherwise, the Kurti people do recognize such a phenomenon of temporal recession. This conceptualization is illustrated by the fact that after the one thousandth day celebration the soul of the dead recedes into the past and lives in the ancestral

world. Yet, this temporal recession does not subtract from the fact that a dead person's soul is seen to live within the community and particularly within the bounds of the departed's living family. Indeed, the soul or ghost is still seen as part of that family. It can be invoked by the living members, and, in some cases, it can be said to be seen by the family and its presence felt by them.<sup>31</sup>

Customary activities govern the entire life of an individual in the Kurti society, from birth through adolescence, marriage, and adult life to death. Hence, a new born child is welcomed by the rituals of NDre'eng Kaleweh or Lomperewit. These occasions serve to cement relations between the child's various kinsmen and typically demand exchanges of wealth as well as feasting. The bestowal of a name marks the child's acceptance into his clan and society. In this act of acceptance the family, clan and society assume responsibility for the child's upbringing.

Adolescence is marked by the various stages of the Nou ceremony, in the case of girls. Boys, in the Kurti society, do not go through any ritual ceremony at all. The Nou ceremony represents the most important event in the lives of young women. It signifies their transition from girlhood to womanhood; education for their marital and social responsibilities; and their introduction into the various aspects of life. In other words, like the welcoming rituals of NDre'eng Kaleweh or Lomperewit the Nou ceremony welcomes adolescent girls into the state of womanhood. In a wider social context, the anticipated marriages consolidate the relationship between parents of both partners and the clans of which they are members.

The festivals of Nak-Um, Nowii and Musoh are very much associated with marriage. The festival of Nak-Um, on the husband's part, involves the giving of bride price or bride's wealth distribution. In this activity the husband's entire clan demonstrates its wealth to the wife's group. The wife, in turn, repays her husband and his clan by the festival of Nowii in which all her clan members come to equalize wealth that has been distributed to them. These two festivals, Nak-Um and Nowii, may be seen superficially as mere shows of wealth from both sides, wealth given on a reciprocal basis. However, an important principle underlies these wealth exchanges. Through these festivals, the marriage is socially and legally sanctioned and the members of the two clans are united in cooperation. Children born of this union will be recognized as products of lawful wedlock.

The latter festival, Musoh, is initiated by the husband for two basic reasons: first, as a further token of appreciation of his wife, who has been faithful to him in bringing up children and in being generous towards her in-laws; and second, to enhance his social prestige and status. In initiating this festival, he involves the members of his clan, who may also see it as a way to increase the prestige of their clan member and the clan itself. In so doing, they place the wife's clan members in a state of indebtedness.

The festivals of Yo'on and Lapan, like Musoh, are held in later life, and are initiated by individual members of the clan, especially those who can afford to do so. As a rule, these festivities are associated with the building of a men's house, in case of Yo'on, and the raising of pigs and the production of coconut oil surpluses, in

the case of Lapan. The distribution of wealth items by the initiator places the recipients in states of debt. In so doing the initiator enhances his status and increases the political influence and economic power in his own clan.<sup>32</sup>

The ceremonies of Pepei and Merei are associated with death and burial. The former, Pepei, takes place immediately after burial, involving the collection and distribution of small amounts of wealth by the relatives of the deceased to those who took part in the mourning and burial. As already mentioned, the ceremony of Merei has various stages, five days, ten days, twenty days and thirty days; and a final stage after one thousand days for those who can afford to do so. Basically, the ceremony of Merei links the dead with the living although the ghost of the deceased is said to recede in an ancestral world. In a sense, it is a final homage given to the dead by the living members of the clan.

Chapter 5: Social Structure, Political and Economic Life

The Kurti language group consists of eight clans, (hokor); Souh, NDritambat, Liap, Pundru, Wamandra, Mundrupureu, Patlok and Mundrau; and these clans are made up of sub-clans (hokou) which in turn comprise houses (um).<sup>1</sup>

The Souh clan is made up of Kup, NDrokoron and Tolau sub-clans. The Kup sub-clan comprises Nakii, Putpuu and So'oh houses. The NDrokoron sub-clan consists of the following houses: Lisii, Loso'ou, Mo, Mundralau, Mundriyai and Pusu.<sup>2</sup> The Tolau sub-clan consists of the houses of Linas, Liyiu, Lombureu, Mondrohorngoh, NDrahngau, Papat and Pohlowo.

The NDritambat clan consists of Lonu'ur, NDritian and Pahndrampat sub-clans. The Lonu'ur sub-clan comprises the houses of MBuesolop, MBunei and NDrongusun. The NDritian sub-clan is made up of NDruturuu, Tasih, Telngeruh and Pa'eu houses. The sub-clan of Pahndrampat comprises Pahndrampat, Sombat and Wahau.

The Liap clan comprises Musinen, Patlok and Sengin NDrukul sub-clans.<sup>3</sup> The houses of Porowondrei, Pondrahyih and Waper constitute the sub-clan of Musinen. The houses of Longou, Pulndran and Puhwon make up the sub-clan of Patlok. The houses of NDrulou, NDrongkuu and Penkelii form the sub-clan of Sengin NDrukul.

The Pundru clan consists of Nangei, Net So'on, Pupoh and NDrinei sub-clans. The houses of Solndruu and Tundrei constitute the Nangei sub-clan. The Net So'on sub-clan comprises the houses of Polose'i and Kepon. The Pupoh sub-clan contains the houses of NDrulei

and Lingkure'eu. The houses of Weyen and NDrohnu'um make up the sub-clan of NDrinei.

The Wamandra clan comprises the sub-clans of Anampuu, Kenai and Lepoehe. The Anampuu sub-clan consists of the houses of Keli'it, Pipai and Kourih. The Kenai sub-clan comprises the houses of Kehou, Puwii and Puhii. The Lepoehe sub-clan is made up of the houses of Poeseheh, Puehe and Kuno'oi.

The Mundrupureu clan is made up of the sub-clans of Kiyoh and Net NDrohnu'um and each consists of three houses: Kiyoh comprises Pulmandra, Pulndrit and Hunuu; and Net NDrohnu'um consists of Lin Nas, Koleng and Net Nekuh.

The Patlok clan consists of the sub-clans of Melyeh, Pahtuwel and Luu. The Melyeh sub-clan comprises the houses of Pukuu and NDranon. The Pahtuwel sub-clan comprises the houses of NDrawii and NDraposso. The Luu sub-clan consists of Pat Ma'au and Pahyut.

The Mundrau clan consists of the sub-clans of Pahal, MBusu and Manen. The Pahal sub-clan consists of the houses of Meres, Linkersim and Kaperu. The MBusu sub-clan comprises the houses of NDresowai, Nohwan and NDronohou. The Manen sub-clan contains the houses of Pisilo, NDrohmah and NDrondrempahe.

According to the census and statistics of May 18, 1972, the Kurti numbered 2,098.<sup>4</sup> The population of each Kurti clan is as follows: Souh-534, NDritambat-393, Liap-375, Pundru-127, Wamandra-192, Mundrupureu-73, Patlok-252 and Mundrau-152. The bulk of the Kurti people today live in five main villages: Souh at NDrurei and Lemoei, NDritambat at Lomurok, Liap at NDrapakou (Petsehit) and Pundru,

Wamandra, Mundrupureu, Patlok and Mundrau at Kari. Distances between these villages vary from two to ten kilometers.<sup>5</sup>

The low population figure of the five inland clans is due to the fact that some of them left their villages to settle with the Souh, NDritambat and Liap on the coast. This occurred between 1949 and 1960 when the three coastal clans came directly involved with the Paliau Movement.<sup>6</sup> Some members of the Mundrau and Patlok clans came to settle with the Souh but later, due to conflict between them, most of the Patlok and some of Mundrau went back inland to their original settlement sites.<sup>7</sup> Some members of the Mundrupureu, Wamandra and Pundru clans settled with NDritambat and Liap. In 1957, however, the remaining members of the five inland clans came together for medical, educational, and administrative, and mission purposes, forming a single village called Kari, after the river near which the new village is situated. Nevertheless, the different clans continued to occupy different parts of the village and to return to their former village sites and clan lands for gardening and for growing of cash crops.<sup>8</sup>

Politics and economics are tags used to describe certain human behaviour in a society. Strictly speaking when this behaviour is concerned or aimed at persuading and influencing the individuals in the society it is said to be political; economics concerns itself with the distribution of goods and resources to individuals and groups in the society. In real life, however, these concepts are inseparable. Both have to be considered in almost every case of decision making. Just as they are inseparable in the modern societies, so they were in traditional Melanesian societies, though in the latter both modes of

behaviour were seen and considered as one, as is illustrated by the problem of leadership.

In Kurti society houses, um, are the basic units of operation. From these houses individuals emerge to acquire leadership, kakah. These houses consist of groups of families, and as a rule they are families of brothers and parallel cousins who have the same ancestor, the founder of the house. Kurti society is patrilineal which means that house membership is determined by the patrilineal descent. Leadership in Kurti society is not hereditary but an acquired status. Because of its nature, acquired leadership has to be kept and prolonged by the person who has acquired it.

Kurti society is egalitarian. This is not to say that there are no leaders, that everyone is equal, and that everyone does what he or she feels and likes; rather, that, in the realm of leadership, most adult males have an equal opportunity to acquire power. The conception of leadership in the Kurti society is one of service and in the process of rendering service to the community individuals gain respect and consolidate their power. In the social context, the services rendered by a leader involve caring for widows, orphans and illegitimate children as well as protecting their rights to property. He puts on feasts regularly to enhance his social status and extends his hospitality towards travellers whether they are known or unknown to him.<sup>9</sup>

Marriage is exogamous in the Kurti society. This naturally helps to unite the various houses, sub-clans and clans together and strengthens their relationships between one another. These relationships demand respect in their behaviour towards one another and a

network of cooperation in social and ceremonial activities.<sup>10</sup> As stated earlier, house membership follows patrilineal line, and female members of the house upon marriage do not lose their membership. As a matter of fact a married woman has dual membership, one of her father's line and the other of her husband's line. This being the case, she may, at the death of her husband, either go back to her patrilineage group or reside in her husband's lineage. Her children exercise freedom of movement and habitation between the two houses or lineages.

Leaders in the Kurti society are not particularly noticeable in the course of daily affairs. They are in their late thirties or forties but not much older. Their dress is not distinctive except, perhaps on certain ceremonial occasions when they appear in less resplendent costume than the other men. They wear no badge of office nor do they carry any symbol of authority and their place of residence is not distinctive. The contexts in which they become noticeable are the settlement of disputes, the exchange and distribution of food, particularly at big feasts, the performance of certain kinds of ritual, and in the discussion of matters affecting the whole group. If disputes become sufficiently involved that they embrace several patrilineage groups, the leaders of the units concerned will attempt to arrange a meeting at which most of the members of both groups are present. They do not conduct these meetings in any formal sense nor do they sit as arbiters or judges. Rather, they stay in the background while the disputants in the case speak to the points involved. Occasionally the leaders will step forward to emphasize a point, clarify an issue, or voice a strong stance. If the issue seems to be reaching an impasse,

they frequently resort to long, rambling speeches full of historical illusions, generalities about their own or their group's past achievements, and references to the strength of their group. They are also the men who speak for their group, expressing a consensus formally or informally derived, in instances where the forceful statement of a position rather than appeal to precedent or rule often wins an argument.

The Kurti people engage in food and wealth exchanges at various levels of complexity, but if anything more than an exchange between two individuals is involved, leaders can be seen playing important parts in various phases of the exchange. In large exchanges, as between tribes, clans, sub-clans or houses, they are often the ones who are instrumental in initiating and organizing the exchange, while in smaller exchanges they oversee the distribution and make set speeches on behalf of the group they represent. The part they play in rituals is much the same. They are not ritual specialists nor are they important figures in all the various types of ritual, but in certain types, involving the general well being of the patrilineage, they act as organizers and initiators. Finally, in such matters as whether or not the village should be moved, where it should be moved, or whether or not a raid should be carried out against an enemy group, the leaders are instrumental in formulating opinion and planning action.

It seems inappropriate to describe the role of a leader in terms of rights and duties. The role is not associated with an office or administrative position, and it is clear that a leader is not simply fulfilling obligations when he makes speeches or initiates rituals. Furthermore, the role is not one primarily defined in terms of its

relationship to some other role indicating that its content is much more diffuse and general than in roles patterning a specific relationship. Leaders are generally men of prestige and renown; men whose names are known and whose persons unite political and economic power.

The characteristics essential to becoming a person of prestige include physical strength, demonstrated ability as a warrior, headship of a lineage, oratorical skill, success in manipulating the rather complex system of economic exchange, ability to determine and express group consensus, and a forcefulness or assertiveness of character exceeding that of most men. Men with these characteristics, and especially those who actively engage in establishing relationships outside the patrilineage that involve them in economic exchange, gain prestige and become known as kakah. The English equivalent is 'leaders'. The power concentrated in this role derives from their ability to attract followers outside the circle of their own immediate kinsmen and the general respect accorded to them on the basis of their abilities. Related to this is the fact that the role is not peculiar to any one level of social integration. Rather, the sphere of a leader's influence is dependent on the degree of his prestige and it may be limited to several villages, his own village, or his own lineage. It should be emphasized, however, that the sphere of one man's influence is never very large in Kurti society because there are no institutionalized means for extending it much beyond the sib or unilateral descent group.

In the Kurti society, individuals can marry or advance their position in the game of prestige, only by amassing large quantities of

wealth, especially dogs' teeth and shell valuables and by presenting them ceremonially to other people.<sup>11</sup> Yet as an individual tries to accumulate his capital for such a presentation, he is called upon constantly to give away the valuables that he is saving to help finance a feast or a marriage or pay a fine on behalf of a relative. Having spent months acquiring two or three strings of dogs' teeth and shell, he may be obliged, by the complex system of reciprocity, to give them away to help someone else acquire prestige or get married.

We may ask why individuals do this. The answer appears to lie in the moral obligations of kinship. While this reason is valid, a closer examination reveals two other crucial considerations. First, to get married or give a feast large enough to bring prestige, a man has to mobilize more valuables at one time than he would normally be able to accumulate in a decade. Great numbers of his kinsmen must contribute to this mobilization just as he has contributed to reciprocate his help. Others are seeking to obligate him so that he will help them at some future time. Second, by helping kinsmen one is in fact investing. A man who saved his capital rather than investing it would not only lose prestige by being stingy, he would be unable to amass enough valuables to acquire prestige through feasting. The trick is to come out ahead and only an energetic individual, skilled at financial and social manipulation, can acquire great prestige as a feast-giving kakah (leader).

Land tenure is an item of vital importance intricately associated with economic, political and social life of the Kurti as well as other Melanesian peoples.<sup>12</sup> To the Kurti people land is life.

It involves certain mysteries that sustain life and is a part of their very being. It is not merely a commodity that can be bought and sold but a vital part of their cosmology.

I do not doubt that, not only in the Kurti area but also everywhere in Melanesia, administrative misunderstandings about land have been one of the chief causes, if not the main cause, of dissatisfaction with colonial rule. Areas of supreme importance in terms of indigenous subsistence were appropriated and given to white settlers. But even where the authorities acted with the best intentions and went no farther than attempting to bring purely indigenous transactions within the scope of newly-imposed European legal processes, the system of land tenure was usually misunderstood.<sup>13</sup>

One major source of trouble has been the colonial administration's crude antithesis between individualism and communism. The former philosophy forms the basis of land policies imposed by colonial authorities; while the latter is the basis of Melanesian land tenure, as well as a target for accusations made by the administration. Melanesians have been accused of being too communistic with regard to land ownership. But Melanesians are no more communistic in their own way, than the colonial administration representing European legal systems concerning land.<sup>14</sup>

Communal ownership of land does not only exist in areas like the Kurti on Manus, but also in European societies as well. While individual ownership is supposed to be the basis of European legal culture concerning land, members of the community as a whole, acting through their officially appointed representatives, have some

considerable say in the way that land is used; for instance, observance of numerous regulations regarding building, submission of plans to local governing bodies for approval, and adherence to zoning laws.<sup>15</sup>

The society, furthermore, exercises rights over agricultural land. Plants declared by ordinance to be poisonous must be removed under penalty of a heavy fine. Crops falling below a certain standard may not be sold for export. In some countries farmers are compelled to destroy a portion of their harvest so that the price may not drop. An owner is forced in the interests of the society to surrender his or her land for road, railway or airport construction. While it may be argued that the individual owner is compensated for loss on such occasions, it is also true that the extent of compensation is determined by the community and not by the owner himself or herself. Even land leases, land sales and land inheritance are regulated by laws laid down and approved by the whole society. On the basis of a comparative analysis it would appear that even in western or European societies the phenomenon of communal ownership exists.<sup>16</sup>

The Kurti system of land tenure, as elsewhere in Melanesia, is extremely complex, and my purpose is not to analyze this complexity, but to indicate that land tenure is probably the principal part of Kurti culture since all other aspects of culture rest on it. Land tenure in the Kurti society is a point at which the realms of material and non-material culture merge. Furthermore, land tenure has been and still is the central topic in most court cases.<sup>17</sup> The complexity of the land tenure system in Kurti, as elsewhere, arises from the types of rights involved and the geographical distribution of the holdings. The

former consideration involves the dichotomy between individual and communal rights.

To the best of my knowledge, it is the patrilineage (house) that possesses the right of ownership, by which it regulates, transfers, leases and sales and settles disputes that arise between its members. Individual members derive rights from their house to cultivate, hunt and fish and use whatever is grown on the land. Under no circumstances are individuals allowed to dispose of any part of the land unless they are authorized by the patrilineage. However, they have permanent rights over what they have grown on the land; and these rights are inviolable.

Kurti society is patrilineal and property is allocated to members along patrilineal lines. This, of course, does not mean that women are denied property. In fact, women, who are members of the patrilineage group, have as much right to land and the things grown on it as men, even if they have married into other groups. Children are entitled to cultivate, hunt and fish on their mothers' property. However, children born of female members have only the right to use but not the right to own. A current development, that I have observed among the Kurti people, is that offspring of female members of a particular family group are given the right to use their mothers' property only until the third generation. After that the right is taken away from them. But if some of the first generation children decide to take up residency and membership in their mothers' line, they are considered as full members of the patrilineage and hence have the right to full use of the land. The reason for this new development is

unknown, but I suspect that it has arisen from the peoples' desire to keep land only in the hands of those who are genealogically and directly descended from the male line or patrilineage. This development has made land cases simpler since only a few people have a say in litigation, while others sit and listen or clarify unclear points.<sup>18</sup>

The foregoing description may present a rather inflexible picture of the relationship between the two types of land rights, the right of ownership and the right of use. However, a closer look at these relationships will reveal that some degree of flexibility exists. Within the patrilineage a member exercises personal rights over certain areas of land. A man may enjoy these on three kinds of land: his patrilineage strips, bearing his own patrilineage name, which he inherits from his father; strips of his mother's patrilineage land, which he has acquired from his mother's brother; and strips which his father, father's father and father's father's father acquired from their respective mothers' brothers, and which he inherits together with patrilineage strips.<sup>19</sup>

Every male has personal rights on some of his patrilineage land strips. He inherits these rights from his father. An only son will receive rights to all his father's patrilineage strips and the food-bearing trees planted on them. Where there are two or more sons, a father usually divides his holdings and trees equally between them before his death, the share of any son too young to plant being held in trust by the eldest. However, in most cases the division of holdings and fruit bearing trees is purely nominal. Everyone uses the property and what an individual member does is within the knowledge of the

others.<sup>20</sup>

If and when a father divides his holdings he avoids, as far as possible, the trace of primogeniture because this will lead to jealousy between his sons and even lead to quarrels. For the father's role in the patrilineage is not only to propagate but, more importantly, to keep his offspring together in order to ensure the strength and prestige of his clan. Before the division of holdings is made the father must know the type of children he has. If they are peaceable then he may venture to divide his lands among them. However, this may not always be the case, for a father knowing his sons to be belligerent, may still divide his holdings in the hope that the allocation of land would settle future troubles between his sons.<sup>21</sup>

In the case of a division the father makes certain that the eldest son's share does not exceed those of the others. Should there be any sign of inequality in terms of land products, those who receive less are given rights to trees on the others' property. Each son has full rights to plant, lease, lend, and hunt his own strips, take food from the trees and fish from the streams. If one of the sons wishes to use a strip or collect some food from the trees on one side of his brothers' plots, he seeks prior permission, though this is a mere formality. In most cases they may go ahead before letting their own brothers know.<sup>22</sup>

In some instances the division of holdings is not carried out at all and the property is left available for use by every member of the family. Occasionally, when a father dies intestate, his sons may not subdivide his holdings immediately, and on rare occasions the

subdivision may be postponed for a further generation. In such cases, the true brothers or parallel cousins, constituting virtually the whole patrilineage, exercise joint rights over the land and trees planted on it. However, any trees planted subsequently on one of the corporately held strips by any one of the brothers or parallel cousins is his private property and will be inherited by his sons alone.<sup>23</sup>

So far we have focused on members within a patrilineage who have male offspring. Female members of a patrilineage normally do not possess or inherit any personal rights to land, although they have the right, whether single or married, to use land. But as a customary rule the married female members are expected to use their husbands' land, unless they are in a dire need. In cases where a male member of the patrilineage, with rights to certain land strips, goes through life without male offspring, he does one of four things: bequeath his rights over the property to the entire patrilineage, to one of his brothers' sons, to his daughter or daughters, or to one of his sister's sons.<sup>24</sup>

In the first case, he may bequeath his rights over the property to his patrilineage. This is clear from the fact that the patrilineage has guardianship over the entire property and individual members possess the right to cultivate, plant, hunt, fish and lease only within the context and agreement of the patrilineage as a whole. The idea of leasing here should be understood to refer exclusively to the leasing of one's rights to land use and not the right of ownership, which rests within the patrilineage and not the individual, to somebody else, usually a kinsmen, either within or outside the patrilineage.

Secondly, he may bequeath his rights to one of his brothers' sons. This is, of course, like the first case, a matter of formality. For every member of the patrilineage knows that he is going to use the land anyway. However, in so doing he does enforce a certain degree of legality, by virtue of the fact that he restricts the use of land and whatever is grown on it to one member of the patrilineage alone. Others may do so only with the prior consent of the new owner.

Thirdly, he may bequeath his rights to his daughter or daughters, as the case may be. In this case the daughter or daughters, when married still have the right to use the land and to control what is grown on it. They may even come to settle on it with their husbands and their grown children will have unlimited rights over the property. This right is granted after taking three factors into consideration: first, consultation with and agreement by the patrilineage, that such an action will be beneficial to the patrilineal clan, especially if it is in need of man power; second, that at marriage the full bride price is paid for; and third that the character of the daughter or daughters and their behaviour during their single life towards their parents is proper. Selfish daughters would never be given rights because they might cause trouble with their relatives later and might even try to lay claim to other's property.

Finally, he may bequeath his rights to his sister's son. This is done following consultation with other members of the patrilineage and also depending on the character of his nephew. Unlike the third arrangement, the right to land is restricted to the son. Other relatives, cross and parallel cousins on his father's side,

cannot lay claim to land through him. The acquired rights remain with the sister's son. They are inherited by his sons, or in some cases his true brothers and their sons, according to the same rules as for patrilineage strips.

The house or patrilineage acts as a guardian of the land. Hence, personal rights can be exercised only within its context. Personal rights are limited to actual use and patrilineal inheritance and do not give the individual person absolute freedom of action on his strips. If and when a member of the patrilineage wishes to transfer his personal land rights outside his direct line of succession, that is to his nephews, nieces, relatives, inlaws, or kinsmen, he must consult his patrilineage for its permission. The advantages and disadvantages of his action will be debated and an answer given accordingly. Likewise he may appeal to his patrilineage to settle any disputes in connection with his personal rights.

As we have seen the relationship between the two types of rights, personal and communal, are well defined and it may seem that the individual members have no power with respect to free disposal or the transference of their property. However, within these seemingly tight regulations, there are certain exceptions, one of which I have already mentioned, namely, the transfer of personal rights, outside the direct line of succession, to a person's true sister's son. This is a common exception to the rule and is usually done without any direct consultation with the patrilineage.

There are two basic reasons behind this exception to the rule. First, the patrilineage as a group trusts its own members and

respects each individual's rights. Should this trust in a member be violated, the community will expel him temporarily. He may go elsewhere to live, and then, having repented, rejoin the community. This practice is commonly adopted, not only with regard to land matters, land and things connected with land, but with regard to such issues as breaking and entering or seduction of a member's wife or daughter. The culprit is told to leave until such time as he repents. Secondly, the transfer of personal rights to a sister's son is not objected to by the members of the patrilineage because of the closeness of the relationship involved. However, any dealings with other relatives beyond this category must be done in consultation with the members of the patrilineage.

Another important aspect of land tenure is the geographical distribution of holdings. It is very rare that patrilineage strips of land are joined together closely. Reasons for this are varied, and I do not intend to explore them all here. Suffice to say that, in view of what has been discussed, the transfer of personal rights contributes to the geographical distribution of holdings. For instance, a member of patrilineage A transfers his rights to his sister's son who is a member of the patrilineage B. The son obviously has rights over two separate pieces of land, one in patrilineage A, which he obtained through his uncle (his mother's brother) and the other in patrilineage B, through his father. This is, of course, a rather simple illustration of the distribution of holdings.

It should be clear that the land tenure system among the Kurti is a complex phenomenon. Its complexity derives from its dual

role of uniting material and non-material elements of culture. In terms of the material aspect of culture, land and all that grows on it is put to use. In other words, land may be considered as an object of culture. In terms of the non-material aspect, land creates rules and customs that govern its use and strengthen human relations.

## PART II: TRADITIONAL HISTORY

Chapter 6: Tradition of Origin and Migration

Almost every society has its tradition of movement. Humans by nature move from one place to another for various reasons, food, land, exploration, war, or perhaps simply for curiosity sake. And in so doing they create a corpus of tradition which explains or substantiates their migrations. The Kurti people have such a tradition of movement which is known to almost every man and woman, and which forms the basis of their history in the not too distant past.

The movement of the Kurti people from the south coast of Manus to the centre of the island appears, on the basis of oral history, a study of early settlement sites, and an analysis of the area's geography conducted during my field work, to have originated in two different areas. One group moved from Mount Kesak, a few kilometers inland on the south west of Manus. The other came from the south east, moved inland up the Worei river and settled at Pat Mundrupureu.<sup>1</sup>

During my field work I journeyed down this river and observed the traditional settlement sites with all of the foundations for houses and the fire places. The bank of the Worei river is flat with rich alluvial gardening soil. Whether or not the people settled on the banks and took to agricultural activity is hard to say. But from my own study of the area it seems that the people were primarily hunters and gatherers. This is confirmed to a degree by three factors. Firstly, my informants, Kohun and Nuhwon, stated that it was difficult

to settle permanently because there were other groups of people who were pressing the Kurti from behind in the search for more land.<sup>2</sup> So the Kurti group had to move in order to lay claim to land of their own. Secondly, that the Kurti had to move in order to avoid conflicts with the groups following them and, thirdly, that the domestication of crops took place later when people finally settled at Pat Mundrupureu.

According to tradition the other groups of people following the Kurti group were Ere, Ele, Kele, Lele, Nali and Nane. Tradition states that with the exception of the other groups the Nane group left a site called NDruktoi and marched westward.<sup>3</sup> In so doing it came across other groups of people, the NDramun, Ndrandrau, Peripak, Leyem and Saleu. The Nane group joined with these groups and they settled around Mount NDrापue, about forty kilometers west of NDruktoi. From NDrापue they gradually wended their way to the north coast.<sup>4</sup> The Ele group, according to tradition, also left NDruktoi and headed northward following the NDrangot and Maraman rivers.<sup>5</sup> The Kele, Ere, Lele and Nali groups did not push on further west.<sup>6</sup> The Kurti group settled at Pat Mundrupureu.

Tradition states that the other Kurti group, which had departed from Mount Kesak, was headed by a woman called Kalulwoi Kesak.<sup>7</sup> On their northeastward march they found the group at Pat Mundrupureu and settled with them. In the course of time the Kurti people around Pat Mundrupureu increased in numbers and then split into six groups, thereby inaugurating another wave of migration from Pat Mundrupureu to various points on the north coast of Manus.<sup>8</sup>

From information gathered during my field work I learned that

after her arrival at Pat Mundrupureu from Mount Kesak, Kalulwoi Kesak married Pat. As a result of this union, as we have seen, her name was changed to Eluh Kaluu. Their marriage was blessed with six children, Mot Pat, Korohom Pat, NDrau Pat, Yaya Pat, Murok Pat and Pureu Pat, who later became the ancestors of each clan comprising the Kurti tribe as it is known today.<sup>9</sup>

In the Kurti language the word Pat means stone, and Mundrupureu is the name of a place. Hence, Pat Mundrupureu means the stone of Mundrupureu. However, when the Kurti people speak of Pat Mundrupureu they do not mean it literally. Instead they think of the term as one enshrined with a high degree of historical sacredness. Moreover, when they talk about Mundrupureu they do not think of it as an ordinary place, but rather as a particular place, a mountain full of stones and rocks where their ancestors lived before migrating to the coast. In this context, therefore, Pat Mundrupureu is highly respected as 'the' place of origin of the Kurti people.

Besides being an ordinary matter, Pat (stone) is also seen as a symbol of power, strength, immobility and durability, the foundation on which everything is built. Hence, the account of their origin is centred on Pat, with Pat at the beginning and at the end of Kurti genesis. It is important to note here that when the Kurti people trace their genealogies back to Pat, they seem to personify Pat. The local term for it is Pat NDramat, which means stone man. This allusion was made quite clearly by all of my informants and suggests that Pat was either a man or a number of persons, man in the collective sense. Furthermore, it is a custom among the Kurti to give a name to

individuals or groups of people after some object or objects which are common to the area where they live. For example, the people of the NDritambat clan are so called because they inhabit an area full of stones, and NDritambat means, in the local vernacular, under, or more precisely, 'beside the stone.' All of my informants alluded to the fact that Pat was the name of a group. This suggests that the marriage of Pat and Kalulwoi Kesak should not be understood in terms of two individuals. Also it must not be understood in a biological sense. Rather it must be understood in terms of a group marriage, that is the assimilation or union of the Kurti group, which was led by the woman, Kalulwoi Kesak, with the group at Pat Mundrupureu.

The name change of Kalulwoi Kesak to Eluh Kaluu also throws some light on Kurti origins. All of my informants agreed on two basic points. In the Kurti traditional method, the first born girl is always named Eluh. In this case they said she was not the daughter of any known person. They explained that the name Eluh was given to her as a title and as a sign of respect at the time of joining with the earlier group at Pat Mundrupureu. The tag Kaluu, following her proper name, also needs clarification. At the foot of Pat Mundrupureu is a pool of water, known as Wo Kaluu, meaning the water of Kaluu, and the term Kaluu means origin. Hence, it is known as the pool of origin. Whatever its mythical character may be, one thing is quite certain that the Kurti people often call it Pat Kaluu, that is, the stone of Kaluu, or the stone of origin. Hence, the name Kaluu as my informants stated, was a further sign of total assimilation of Kalulwoi Kesak's band by the people of Pat Mundrupureu.

Another significant point is that the six children's names end with Pat. It is evident that, in accordance with the NDritambat example cited earlier, their names all ended with Pat to correspond with the kind of environment in which they lived. The six children who were said to have been born to Eluh Kaluu should not necessarily be considered real children. In all probability they were six different groups living together on or around Pat Mundrupureu. Later each group began to migrate towards the coast or elsewhere. But except for the three clans, Souh, NDritambat and Liap, who migrated to the coast, the other three, Mundrau, Patlok and Mundrupureu stayed around the vicinity of Pat Mundrupureu. Later, two other clans, Wamandra and Pandru, were formed and stayed inland with the other three.<sup>10</sup>

The following examples illustrate the way in which the Kurti people trace their relationship, either as individuals or groups, back to Pat. One of my informants, Tikirik Netndram, a man about sixty-six years old, provided the first example. He traced his lineage through the clan of Mundrupureu, his father's clan.

1. Tikirik Netndram
2. Netndram Kapau
3. Kapau Liwen
4. Liwen NDriikii
5. NDriikii Sere
6. Sere Puleu
7. Puleu Kouli
8. Kouli Liyiu
9. Liyiu Pureu

10. Pureu Pat

11. Pat

Tikirik Netndram provided another example which revealed his relationship with his mother's clan, the clan of NDritambat.

1. Tikirik Netndram
2. Asah So'on
3. So'on Sinel
4. Sinel Kase
5. Kase Putou
6. Putou Panis
7. Panis Porou
8. Porou Kimpat
9. Kimpat Korohon
10. Korohom Pat
11. Pat

Third example was provided by my informant Popen Moi, a member of the clan of Liap descended from Yaya Pat. Popen Moi is a man about fifty years old. The lineage begins with his eldest and first born son Pisou Popen.

1. Pisou Popen
2. Popen Moi
3. Moi Pisou
4. Pisou Watah
5. Watah Lowo
6. Lowo NDrokang
7. NDrokang Lulu

8. Lulu Kapon
9. Kapon Tei
10. Tei Yaya
11. Yaya Pat
12. Pat

A fourth example came from my informant Nuhwon Waruu, a man about fifty eight years old, of the clan of Wamandram, an associated clan with Mundrupureu.

1. Nuhwon Waruu
2. Waruu Menei
3. Menei Kuno'oi
4. Kuno'oi Nuhwon
5. Nuhwon Kourih
6. Kourih Anampuu
7. Pipai Keli'it
8. Keli'it Telmbuu
9. Telmbuu Telmbureu
10. Telmbureu Pat
11. Pat

A fifth example came from my informant Kelo Menei, a man of about fifty four, of the clan of Wamandra, an associated clan with Mundrupureu.

1. Kelo Menei
2. Lal Menei
3. Menei Kuno'oi
4. Kuno'oi Nuhwon

5. Nuhwon Kourih
6. Kourih Anampuu
7. Pipai Keli'it
8. Keli'it Telmbuu
9. Telmbuu Telmbureu
10. Telmbureu Pat
11. Pat

A sixth and final example was provided by my informant Perei Lewen a woman of about fifty, of the clan of NDritambat.

1. Perei Lewen
2. Lewen Loruh
3. Loruh NDrakaheu
4. NDrakaheu Muii
5. Muii Natsa
6. Natsa Ko'ou
7. Ko'ou Ando
8. Ando Mot
9. Mot Wahau
10. Wahau Korohon
11. Korohom Pat
12. Pat

The genealogical lists may be inaccurate, because such things were not written down, but were transmitted orally from one generation to the next, normally, from father to son. Another factor of importance is the age between one generation and the next. Most of my informants were in their mid-fifties or sixties, and, in each case their

genealogies ran back about ten to twelve generations. If we take one generation as being twenty-five years and multiply that by twelve we arrive at a figure of three hundred years, or if we take one generation as being thirty years and multiply that by twelve we obtain a figure of three hundred and sixty years. These figures give us some approximate date for the "origin" of the present Kurti people in the time period between 1500 and 1600 A.D.

A point worth mentioning is the naming system. As already stated, every first born girl is called Eluh, and then after that her father's name, for instance, Eluh Kehou, means the first daughter of Kehou. Since the Kurti society is primarily a patrilineal society individuals trace their genealogies through their father's line. A male child is not always called after his father, but in tracing his genealogy he mentions his name and then his father's name, his father's and his father's father's name and so forth, as is illustrated by the previous genealogical lists.

The story of Pat and Eluh Kaluu is a legitimate attempt by the Kurti people to explain their past history in a direct, single and unitary form. This idea of a common origin forms the basis of their unity and cooperation, although each clan lives in a different area, or in a separate village. On this unifying foundation rests their entire structure of social relationships, beliefs, traditional and customary activities and economic transactions. The tracing of genealogical lists exemplifies their vision of themselves as originating from a common stalk. On this historical unity rests their power, strength and their claim to land and property.

Human migration cannot be described without some emphasis on the causes such as over-population, insufficient land for gardening, hunting and gathering food, warfare, feuds within the group, and the quest for new land for the sake of change. The migration of the Kurti people from Pat Mundrupureu can be seen in terms of all of the reasons enumerated above except for warfare and feuding, because in those days, as my informants asserted, there was no sign of warfare within the Kurti group. The only warfare occurred later when the Kurti were moving towards the north coast. In early times my informants stated, marriages between brothers and sisters, cousins and other relatives were common. This practice was justified as necessary for the survival of the group. This practice was in use long before migration and warfare. Today, however, it is regarded as an incest which is both morally wrong and intolerable.

The names of the six children of Pat and Eluh Kaluu are remembered in order of their birth and the same order is maintained in the migration narrative. The narrative relates that Mot Pat, the eldest son, was the first to leave Pat Mundrupureu. Others followed him, branching off in different directions. Tradition holds that these six sons were the ancestors of the first six clans of the Kurti tribe. Mot Pot was the ancestor of the present Souh clan; Korohom Pat, of present NDritambat clan; NDrau Pat, of present Mundrau clan; Yaya Pat, of present Liap clan; Murok Pat, of present Patlok clan; and Pureu Pat of present Mundrupureu clan.<sup>11</sup>

The Souh clan, the descendants of Mot Pat, consists of three sub-clans, Kup, NDrokoron and Tolau. Tradition states that the Souh

clan headed for the coast in the northwesterly direction. On leaving Pat Mundrupureu the clan descended to the Ti'ii and NDrukul rivers. From there the three sub-clans branched off in different directions though in close proximity to one another.

The NDrokoron sub-clan ascended to NCondroseheh and following a ridge headed for Porowii. From there it made its way towards the coast settling at Emuelengin, Emuem Mene'ei, Papuyem, NDrano, Puhwol, Emuendret, Emuen Au, Pulndrarou, and Kereng Orwon.<sup>12</sup>

The Kup and Tolau sub-clans ascended to Mounts Nakii and Putpoo. According to tradition the Tolau sub-clan left the Kup group while it was still lingering behind. The Tolau sub-clan left Putpoo and headed first for Puhtoh before moving on to major settlement sites at Poendrayang, Pomel, NDrongkanau, Patndraput, NDro'uk and Patndrii.<sup>13</sup>

The Kup sub-clan lingered around Nakii and Putpoo for some time after the other two sub-clans had left. Then it descended to a lower altitude and made a settlement at Pamurou. From there it moved further down and settled temporarily on the banks of the river Kandreri; then up the hill to NDrendengkourih, Pundrupoo and finally to NDropsol.<sup>14</sup> The Kup sub-clan did not make any further move toward the sea coast; one of the reasons being the other two sub-clans, who migrated earlier, had laid claim to the areas on the littoral. However, the Kup sub-clan maintained its contact with the other two, NDrokoron and Tolau, while remaining at NDropsol about six kilometers inland.

The NDritambat clan, the descendants of Korohom Pat, consists of three sub-clans, Lonu'ur, NDritian and Pahndrampat. Tradition says

that the NDritambat clan, descending from Pat Mundrupureu, headed north east towards the coast and made its first settlement at Lokalau.<sup>15</sup> From there the three sub-clans separated but kept fairly close to one another.

The Lonu'ur sub-clan left Lokalau and settled temporarily at Leng Lonu'ur, a flat valley (Leng) which was called after the sub-clan and still known to this day as such. From Leng Lonu'ur, the sub-clan made its way down and settled at Malal MBunei; then it moved down to Emuem Penuu and on to Pahyap. This progress led it to settle at Papuyem and Kasu'u Ror. Leaving these two sites the Lonu'ur sub-clan came to settle with the NDritian sub-clan at Limbulten and Kikiu, only to move on later to the coast and make settlements at the sites of Tampandreh, Tempetur and NDrosarah.<sup>16</sup>

The NDritian sub-clan, on leaving Lokalau, headed for the coast towards Pawih and NDruturuu where it made a temporary settlement. Then it moved on to Puyehei, a ride forming a natural dwelling site overlooking the Puyehei river. Later it made a series of moves, settling first at Matnah, Elpureu, Matsalan and Puli'iu, then at NDrakolu, NGondron Orwok, Pulmayam, Malpunou, Pononos, Puhlii and Tamal, and eventually near the coast at Pat Tang Kalah, NDrombuei, Limbulten, Kikiu, Wasuh and Ling Kukuu. At Limbutten and Kikiu the NDritian sub-clan was joined by the Lonu'ur group for some time.<sup>17</sup>

The Pahndrampat sub-clan, like the other two left Lokalau and headed for Pat Pihin and Pat Kamal, a mountain ridge overlooking the Lowo River.<sup>18</sup> On its way to the coast the group settled at Sombat. From there it moved onto Malal NDrai, and then further down to

Lomendrun, where the sub-clan split into two groups, known as the two Wahau groups. The causes of this split, as provided by two of my informants, Sireh and Perei, were nothing else than population growth and controversy over land ownership. In addition, the groups were anxious to lay claim to as much land as possible. After the split, one group, of which my informant Sireh is a descendant, left Lomendrun and made its settlement at Emuem Pelngit. The other group, of which my informant Perei Lewen is descended, went off and settled at the following sites: Pohlomul, Tawandrai, Lin Epkuei, Parampei and Penpei. Later, however, the two groups rejoined and settled at a site called NDrahndram, and from there they moved to Patna, a site on a ridge overlooking the bay of Le'ei.<sup>19</sup>

The Mundrau clan, the descendants of NDrau Pat, consists of three sub-clans, Manen, MBusu and Pahal. In comparison with the clans and sub-clans of Souh and NDritambat, the Mundrau clan and its sub-clans did not have far to travel. The clan, on leaving Pat Mundrupureu, headed westward and made a temporary settlement at Param MBusu. From there the three sub-clans dispersed and settled in different areas fairly close to one another. The Pahal sub-clan made its way southwards and settled at Puhnuu and Patlahah. The Manen sub-clan headed westwards, settling at NDro'al and later at Pukemene and NDrondrempuron. The MBusu sub-clan remained for sometime at Param MBusu. The settlement received its name from the MBusu sub-clan because it was the biggest of the three. From Param MBusu the sub-clan moved to Mara Worei thus laying claim to most of the land around the upper Worei river.<sup>20</sup>

The Liap clan, the descendants of Yaya Pat, consisted

originally of one group called the Musinen.<sup>21</sup> Tradition maintains that the Musinen, on leaving Pat Mundrupureu, journeyed eastward and settled along the banks of a river which in due course came to be called the Musinen river. From there the group headed northward and established the following settlements, Waper, NDrulou, Pondrahyih, Porowuni and Porowondrei.<sup>22</sup>

The Patlok clan, the descendants of Murok Pat, consists of three sub-clans, Luu, Melyeh and Pahtuwel. Migration traditions and site examination suggest that the Patlok clan did not venture very far from Pat Mundrupureu. The Luu sub-clan settled at Pat Ma'au and Pahyut; the Melyeh group settled at Pukuu and NDranon. These settlement sites are not too far apart.<sup>23</sup> The shortest and longest distances from Pat Mundrupureu would be roughly four hundred meters and four kilometers respectively.

The Mundrupureu clan, the descendants of Pureu Pat, comprises two sub-clans, Kiyoh and Net NDrohnu'um. Like the Patlok, the Mundrupureu clan did not have far to migrate. The former sub-clan, Kiyoh, settled at Hunuu, while the latter settled at Pulndrit and Pulmandra.<sup>24</sup> Distances between these sites are from a few hundred meters to one and a half kilometers in relation to Pat Mundrupureu. So the Patlok and Mundrupureu have gardens and clan lands side by side.

Both Patlok and Mundrupureu clans remained near Pat Mundrupureu and claim whatever property was left around it, because territory elsewhere was already claimed by other migratory groups. However, of the two clans, Mundrupureu remained the closest to Pat Mundrupureu. Tradition states that after all the other sons had left, Pureu Pat was

going to leave, but in looking back he saw a trail of smoke rising from Pat Mundrupureu, the smoke of Pat and Eluh Kaluu. He turned back and decided to remain in order to guard their place of origin.

What I have described so far are the names of the six sons of Pat and Eluh Kaluu, the ancestors of the six original Kurti clans, their migration and settlement sites. However, as stated earlier, the present Kurti people group themselves into eight different clans. This is because in the course of time two other clans, Wamandra and Pundru, were formed from two of the earlier clans. The Wamandra clan, originating from Mundrupureu, Patlok and Tulu clans, consists of three sub-clans, Anampuu, Kenai and Lepoehe.<sup>25</sup> The Anampuu group settled at Emuesemi, Sawoi and Kesiepuu; the Kenai group settled at NDrosungoh, NDrohngur and Metoh; and the Lepoehe group settled at NGondronolot, lne'engke'eseu and Puhwii.<sup>26</sup> Distances between these settlement sites vary from a few hundred meters to a few kilometers.

The Pundru clan, originating from the NDritambat clan and Puyong clan of the Kele language group, consists of four sub-clans, Nangei, NDrinei, So'on and Pupoh.<sup>27</sup> The Nangei group occupied Kuh Solndruu and Sal Tundrei; the NDrinei group occupied Tondrih Weyen and Pat NDrohnum; the So'on group occupied Polose'i and Kepon and the Pupoh group occupied NDrondrule'ei and Ling Kure'eu.<sup>28</sup> Distances between these settlement sites vary from a few hundred meters to a few kilometers.

The formation of the additional clans, Wamandra and Pundru, occurred after the migration of the other clans. Traditions relating to the origin of Wamandra clan centre around Kenai Poeseh, a member

of another tribe called Tulu, of the Nane language group, who settled at NDruktoi, a site ten kilometers southeast of Pat Mundrupureu. In the course of time the Tulu tribe moved away from NDruktoi. Their movement took them westward and on their way they confronted other groups of people, the NDramun, NDrandrau, Petyeh, Peripak, Leyem and Saleu. The process of subjugation and assimilation continued until the Tulu tribe reached Mount NDrappoe about forty to fifty kilometers west of NDruktoi. They settled there but subsequently moved down to the north coast where they live today.<sup>29</sup>

Kenai Poesehéh refused to join in the westward movement of his people and stayed back at NDruktoi. His contact with two clans of the Kurti tribe, Patlok and Mundrau, led him to marry No'ondrukú of Patlok and Eluh MBoenos of Mundrau. The former gave birth to a son whom he named Oroí Kenai. The latter was barren. Oroí Kenai grew up, married and had two sons, Pei Oroí and Kuweh Oroí who later became heads of two groups in the Wamandra clan.

Kenai Poesehéh was visited by Anampuu Pipai a man from the Mundrupureu clan. Anampuu Pipai was descended through Pipai Kourih, Kourih Liyiu, Liyiu Telmbuu, Telmbuu Pureu, and Pureu Pat, who was the sixth son of Pat and Eluh Kaluu, the founders of the Mundrupureu clan. During his visit Anampuu Pipai was persuaded by Kenai Poesehéh to stay with him and to work the huge tracts of land that had been left to him. Anampuu Pipai and his wife settled with Kenai Poesehéh and their children became known as the Wamandra clan. The names of Kenai Poesehéh and Anampuu Pipai are still remembered today and two sub-clans within the Wamandra clan are named after them, the Kenai and the Anampuu.

The origin of Pundru clan is similar to that of the Wamandra. Tradition maintains that Pukeitikireu, an old man from the NDritambat clan, died at Mundrungohou where the present Kari village is located. His sons Lolou Pukei and Rurou Pukei were away at NDrongusun, another settlement.<sup>30</sup> On hearing of their father's death they made haste to Mundrungohou where they discovered that the people had already departed leaving their father's body in a basket, hanging on a post in front of a hut.<sup>31</sup> They wept bitterly and then, filled with anger that the people had left without attending to their father's funeral, they decided to go their separate ways.

Rurou Pukei decided to go back to his people while Lolou Pukei decided to go elsewhere. He headed southward following the Worei river and at a place called Marangkepon he climbed up a fruit tree, to eat the fruit.<sup>32</sup> The skins of the fruit fell into the river and floated down stream where they were seen by men of the Puyong clan of the Kele language group, who were out looking for people taking fruit from their property.<sup>33</sup> When they reached the fruit tree, NDrohansewii, one of the men, looked up and saw Lolou Pukei. They signalled him to descend but Lolou Pukei was frightened and thought that if he did they would kill him. So he sat on the branch of the fruit tree quietly and full of fear. Their signals had no effect. Finally, to show that they had no intention of harming him, NDrohansewii climbed up the tree with some betel nuts, lime and pepper leaves for Lolou Pukei to chew.<sup>34</sup> After that they descended and Lolou Pukei, after explaining to them who he was, where he came from and what had happened, was taken home by them.

As a sign of friendship and good will the Puyong people gave him a wife. As custom dictates, he was also given land for gardens and other assets in the form of sago and fruit trees. A site, known as Pele'eu, was chosen for him, which today forms the natural boundary between the Kele tribe and the Kurti tribe. In time Lolou Pukei and his wife had a son. They called him Pundru Sikei, the ancestor of the present Pundru clan within the Kurti tribe. Pundru Sikei had a son, Wiyah Pundru who had four sons, So'on Wiyah, NDrinei Wiyah, Pupoh Wiyah and Nangei Wiyah the founders of the four sub-clans within the Pundru clan.<sup>35</sup>

Chapter 7: Tradition of Warfare I

The previous chapter concentrated on the migration and settlement patterns of the various Kurti clans from Pat Mundrupureu. Notable among them were the clans of Souh and NDritambat. The Liap clan entered the picture later when they were invited by the NDritambat to fight the MBupi.<sup>1</sup> Traditional warfare, according to tradition occurred in two stages, first during the migration of the various clans, particularly the Souh, NDritambat, and later the Liap, to the north coast; and second after the major migration movements. The first stage of traditional warfare saw the Kurti clans fighting against other groups. The second stage saw the Kurti clans fighting against other groups as well as among themselves. One of the effects of this second stage of traditional warfare was the depopulation of some Kurti clans, especially the Souh. Both stages of traditional warfare were caused by several factors but the most obvious one of them all was the competition for land.<sup>2</sup> It was during the second stage of traditional warfare that Europeans set foot on Manus. It was partly through peace treaties and partly through the introduction and use of such European weapons as rifles that warfare came to an end. In the following section we shall look at the first stage of traditional warfare, that associated with the migration of the Souh and NDritambat to the north coast of Manus.

Tradition states that en route to the coast the Souh group was confronted with the Kundren and the Pusu, while the NDritambat group was confronted with the Kundren and the MBupi. The Souh and NDritambat fought incessant battles with these opponents and agreed to

join forces against the Kundren. This confrontation resulted in the annihilation, expulsion or assimilation of Kundren, MBupi and Pusu by the Souh and NDritambat and later Liap who now occupy their former enemies' lands.

The Kundren, MBupi and Pusu had inhabited the entire coastal area for some time before the entry of the Kurti clans. It is hard to say when the three groups of people migrated to the coast and for how long they had been there before the influx of the Kurti groups. There are no extant records of genealogies relating to the three earlier groups and none of the clansmen is alive today. However, if we make calculations, based on information by my informants it seems that the settlement of the coastal area by the Kundren, MBupi and Pusu could have taken place about the time the Kurti groups were coming inland from the south coast of Manus and settling at Pat Mundrupureu, around 1500 to 1600 A.D. How long the groups inhabited the coast is not known either, but it is likely to have been about half a century, just time enough for the Kurti groups to reach the north coast.

The politics of coalition warfare were based on the assumption that after defeating the Kundren, the Souh and NDritambat would gain a foothold on the coast and then direct their energies against the MBupi and the Pusu. This strategy was agreed upon and executed with great success. The Kundren were hemmed in and forced to surrender.<sup>3</sup> Oron So'on, a Kundren warrior and a war leader, negotiated a peace settlement with the Souh and NDritambat. Two warriors and war leaders, NDriwah Kenii of Souh and Muroh Kuop of NDritambat agreed to meet Oron So'on on the banks of the river Lowo and discuss the peace terms.<sup>4</sup>

Oron So'on was concerned with the survival of the remaining Kundren and underwrote his plea that they should be spared, by offering to part with their land. These terms were agreed to by the other two leaders. Then they decided that the official peace ceremony should be held on Mount Puhtoh which formed the natural dividing line between their territories. A time was set and they ascended Mount Puhtoh where a traditional peace was heralded by the breaking of spears and the marking of the site with a stone, topped by a mound of clay and surrounded by small sweet smelling plants. At the conclusion of this ceremony the land was divided, the Souh claiming the territory westward from the river Lowo to Lehluu bay and the NDritambat occupying the land eastward from the river Lowo to NDrehet Wasuh.

The acts associated with the peace making were very meaningful. The breaking of spears, as an expression of peace, is common throughout Melanesia as is the marking of the treaty site with a stone which symbolizes the lasting strength of the treaty. The small mound of clay placed on the stone symbolized the transfer of land from the Kundren to the Souh and NDritambat. The small plants located around the stone served to remind people that this particular stone was important. The stone on Mount Puhtoh can be seen to this day; and it is kept as a historic monument. There are remnants of the Kundren group in the Souh clan, and, in fact the Kundren group forms one of the biggest elements in the Tolau sub-clan of the Souh clan.

As soon as the problem with the Kundren was resolved the two clans decided to make separate attacks on the Pusu, to the west, and MBupi, to the east. However, once again they realized their limitations

in terms of military might and so requested assistance from other Kurti clans. The Mundrau clan sent a reinforcement, led by the warrior, Warii Ruurou, to assist the Souh clan against the Pusu. The combined forces then fought and overwhelmed the Pusu. Some members of the Pusu group made their way westward and mingled with the Kukohoi, a group known today as the Mundrupulon, who speak a language different from the Kurti.<sup>5</sup>

Other members of the Pusu group, under the war leader Poepoek, sued for peace. It was concluded in the same way as that between the Kundren, Souh and NDritambat, the ceremony taking place on Mount Petluhul between the Souh, Pusu and Mundrau. Peopoek pleaded that his group should be given a little land. His request was granted and his people were allotted a sizeable block of land running from the river NDrehndrelei westward to Popar Bay.<sup>6</sup> For their part the Souh acquired land from the river NDrehndrelei eastward to Lehluu Bay plus the previous Kundren territory extending further east to Lowo River. The Mundrau requested no favours but, as a sign of gratitude, they were given some land, in particular, the inland area around Pukemene. How long ago these struggles and land divisions took place is not known, although it seems likely that they took place in the seventeenth century.

A request for military assistance, made by the NDritambat group, was answered by the Liap clan. This request contained the promise of MBupi land if the Liap and other inland Kurti clans would take up arms against the MBupi. Under the leadership of the famous warrior, NDrol Te'ei, the Liap clan fought on behalf of NDritambat. To

some extent this was the beginning of the migration of the Liap clan to the coast, a matter which I will discuss in the next chapter.

## Chapter 8: Migration of the Musinen to the North Coast

There are several points which need to be made before examining the military and migration experience of the Musinen. The present Liap clan consists of three sub-clans, Musinen, Sengin NDrukul and Patlok. Originally what is now known as the Liap clan comprised only one group, the Musinen, who, as tradition maintains, left Pat Mundrupureu and journeyed eastward, settling along the banks of a river which in due course came to be called the Musinen River. From there the group headed northward and established settlements at Waper, NDrulou, Pondrahyih, Porowuni and Porowondrei. Distances between these settlements range from a few hundred meters to a few kilometers.

The other two sub-clans, Sengin NDrukul and Patlok, were the result of a later development. They were formed from members of the Patlok, Mundrupureu, Wamandra and Pundru clans who helped to fight with the Musinen and NDritambat against the MBupi, and who later decided to come back and settle on the coast with the Musinen. As the name indicates, the Patlok sub-clan within the present Liap clan was made up of some members of the Patlok clan. The sub-clan Sengin NDrukul requires a brief explanation. The Kurti people on the coast, that is, the Souh, NDritambat and Liap usually refer to those inland as NDrukul meaning the inlanders. With the exclusion of Patlok in this case, the Sengin NDrukul sub-clan consists of members of the other inland clans. The term Sengin means flesh, but in this case it means real or true. Hence, Sengin NDrukul means, the real or true inlander. It separates the Patlok from the other clans.

The original name of the group was Musinen. Exactly why and

how the group came to be called Liap is not clearly known. But, according to my informants, Kohun, Popen and Popon, the group came to be called Liap when they finally defeated MBupi and came to settle along the banks of a small river known as the Liap.<sup>1</sup>

The migration of the Liap clan to the coast can be considered as part of the general migration process and the result of warfare. At the time when they received the invitation from NDritambat, the clan was already in the process of moving. It had already left Porowondrei to settle at Marangkembule but was hesitant to move further because of lack of man power to combat the MBupi and also the feeling that they might venture into the NDritambat territory without being requested to do so.

Oral history relates that some Liap women went to the coast to barter with the people from the adjacent islands of Andra and Ahus. This exchange system existed between the NDritambat and the neighbouring islanders and was held twice a week on different days, usually on Wednesday and Saturday, at a barter site at Waper on Patyap point. The Souh and Mundrau bartered with the Andra people. The mainlanders came with taro, sago, betel-nut, pepper leaves and green vegetables while the islanders brought fish and marine edibles.

The track which the Liap women took to the coast passed through some NDritambat settlement sites. It happened that one morning as they were passing through a village on their way to the coast a man started counting them, in a loud tone, not as persons but as vaginas. The women heard him counting them in this gross manner, but did not pay any notice.<sup>2</sup>

On their way home the man counted them again in the same fashion. This time the Liap women, feeling insulted and annoyed, scolded him in front of every one. Meanwhile another man, who felt sorry for them, came to their aid by shaming the offender. In addition, he sent an invitation to the Liap clan to come down from the bush and settle on the coast so that such things would not happen again. He included in his invitation a request for assistance against the MBupi, who outnumbered the NDritambat group, and a promise to the Liap clan that land would be theirs if they drove the MBupi out.

This invitation was sent to NDrol Te'ei, a well known and powerful war leader of the Liap. When he heard of what had happened to the Liap women and of the request for assistance he gathered a few friends together to discuss plans for battle. In the course of their conversation they received a message from Pahlou Kakau, a warrior in the Patlok clan, who was already on his way with reinforcements to fight the MBupi. Pahlou Kakau wanted NDrol Te'ei to help him by bringing warriors so that with NDritambat in the west, Pahlou Kakau and his band in the south and NDrol Te'ei with his men in the east, the MBupi would be almost surrounded. This latest request spurred NDrol Te'ei to action. He saw in this campaign an opportunity to fulfill his long cherished dream of warfare and a chance to exercise his leadership in battle. But he knew that he could not fight alone. He needed the support of his fellow warriors, Ahai, Pohtii, Kereh, MBua Kondroi, and Pahun Mandra. Discussion on the plan and the long term benefits of this war did not take long. Being of the same calibre, the other warriors agreed to assist him.

His next move was to obtain the backing of the clan leaders, who, according to custom, had to be consulted in matters of vital importance. He called a meeting of all the leaders and all the able bodied fighting men and there NDrol Te'ei outlined his military plans and the benefits of war. These long term benefits included possession of MBupi land, possession of the sea coast, and established barter with the people of the adjacent island of Ahus. He argued that warfare was the only solution to the problem of clan honour, which had been called into question when their women were insulted.

The leaders agreed with him in principle; but they could not allow the entire clan to engage in warfare because of the limited number of young and able-bodied fighting men. However, they proposed that he negotiate with the other four clans, Patlok, Mundrupureu, Wamandra and Pundru, to secure their assistance. NDrol Te'ei accepted this proposal; but before he could send for the leaders of these clans custom dictated that offerings of food should be made. He called on the women to collect taro and bring them together at Penkelii settlement. This being done, he called on the men to hunt for wild pigs, possums and other wild animals and bring them to be cooked with the taros.

When everything was ready, NDrol Te'ei asked Kepuui Warii to rap out on the slit-gong the beats appropriate to each clan. On hearing their special drum beats, each clan made haste for Penkelii. Food was brought out and distributed to each clan there in an open space, and while the guests were eating NDrol Te'ei took a bunch of betel-nuts, stood in the middle of the group, and gave a speech of

welcome. Then he proceeded to explain why he and his clan had called them to Penkelii. At the conclusion of his speech, he said that if the leaders and members of each clan agreed with his plan the cluster of betel-nuts would be cut into smaller bunches to be distributed to them. If, however, they disagreed they should not hesitate to express their opinions.

As custom dictates, each clan leader, after some brief discussion with their clansmen, stood up and expressed his clan's willingness to join forces with NDrol Te'ei and his clan, and asked him to inform them when and where they should meet to launch their attacks on the MBupi. This being done the bunch of betel-nuts was divided and distributed, and the clans returned to their settlements.

NDrol Te'ei felt elated. Half of his battle had been won; the battle of persuasion and negotiation for support. But there was still another thing to be done. He knew very little about the MBupi settlement sites, fortifications and numbers of fighting men, apart from the information gathered from the NDritambat and Pahlou Kakau. He decided to conduct a reconnaissance of MBupi land before the attacks were launched. He called for several fighting men from the Liap clan to accompany him for this task. They carried out their patrol with caution, hiding in the jungle by day and studying the MBupi fortifications by night. The whole survey lasted several weeks; and at the end of that time they were satisfied that the MBupi land was worth fighting for.

Preparations for war began straight away. NDrol Te'ei sent messages to the other four clans to be ready for the final call. He

sent messages to NDritambat and Pahlou Kakau that he was to launch an attack on the eastern flank of MBupi territory. When the day came all the fighting men of the four clans assembled at Penkelii. After some preliminary warnings and exhortations, they set off towards MBupi. The NDritambat moved from the west side while Pahlou Kakau and his men advanced from the south. Word of the impending attack had reached the MBupi who were prepared to meet their three opponents. But before NDrol Te'ei attacked MBupi, he sent a messenger, Kuop Kepeh, to NDritambat to find out whether they were ready, in case the MBupi outnumbered his band. However, an unfortunate thing happened. When Kuop Kepeh approached one of the NDritambat camps. he was mistaken for a MBupi spy and shot with a spear. It was dusk and in the half light the sentry could not see him clearly. When he fell to the ground he gave a loud cry in Kurti and the people ran over to see who it was. They realized that it was Kuop Kepeh and began to nurse him back to health.

Meanwhile NDrol Te'ei and his men waited impatiently for their messenger to return. Two days later they learned what had happened to Kuop Kepeh, and NDrol Te'ei, realizing that he could wait no longer, decided to launch an attack on the MBupi. However, the MBupi retaliated in full force, and forced NDrol Te'ei back. As the wounded had to be evacuated he sent most of his men home while he and a few others stayed back to study the movements of the MBupi people and to await the attacks by the NDritambat and Pahlou Kakau.

A few days later the NDritambat clan launched an attack along the coast against the MBupi while Pahlou Kakau attacked from the inland. NDrol Te'ei and his men joined with Pahlou Kakau. They drove

the MBupi eastward where NDrol Te'ei and his army should have been waiting to cut them off. This second confrontation resulted in severe losses for the MBupi. NDrol Te'ei sent a messenger to his village to tell his followers to return and finish off the remaining MBupi. This third confrontation resulted in the total defeat of the MBupi with the killing of men, women, and children, since traditional warfare made no distinction between combatants and non-combatants. Either all were enemies or none.

Having won the war, the Liap group prepared to move to the coast. Members of the other four clans, who had fought with the Liap, were also invited to move to the coast if they wished. When the Liap moved to the coast they settled first at Puhwon, and then at Longou and Puhndran. They followed the river Awar from Puhndran and settled at Lamas and Lonelyeh. Then from Lonelyeh they moved down following river Samer to Sakuru and finally reached the coast at Kali. At present the Liap clan lives at Petsehit Point.<sup>3</sup>

It is evident that the main reason for the Liap clan's migration was the acquisition of land. The narrative suggests that initially the Liap clan was reluctant to move despite invitations from the NDritambat and from Pahlou Kakau. If any credit is to be given it must go to NDrol Te'ei, who was able to persuade the leaders of the Liap clan as well as those of the other four clans to endorse his plan. However, it should not be overlooked that all of the Kurti people were in a state of movement at the time. Hence, the migration of the Liap clan while it took place later, was still part of the overall migration process.

## Chapter 9: Tradition of Warfare II

Warfare is a phenomenon inherent in every human society. It can be defined as conflicts between individuals, groups, communities, societies and nations, and these conflicts are, in turn, caused by factors such as land issues, revenge for past actions and deeds, intrusion into prohibited territory and break down of diplomatic relations. For centuries these factors have caused conflicts between nations and still are today.

The traditional Kurti society was no exception. According to tradition the Kurti people were involved in two periods of warfare. The first period was part of the migration of the Kurti people from Pat Mundrupureu, in the centre of the island, to the north coast of Manus, and involved the three Kurti clans, Souh, NDritambat, and Liap over and against three earlier groups of people, the MBupi, Kundren and Pusu on the coast. The movement of the Kurti groups took place sometime between 1500 and 1600 A.D. or perhaps even later. The first stage of warfare ended when the three Kurti clans defeated their enemies and occupied their land. How long this war was waged, it is not known; but it may have lasted twenty or thirty years.

Oral tradition states that after their enemies were defeated there was a long period of peace lasting for one hundred to two hundred years, during which the Kurti groups worked out their respective land boundaries. Marriages between clans were common and these served to establish stronger clan relationships. But somehow or another the long period of peace came to an end and war broke out about 1850 or 1860.

The second stage of traditional or pre-European contact warfare among the Kurti people came about when the Kurti, having defeated their enemies, began to fight among themselves as well as with other groups of people on Manus. Earlier on we saw that during the period of migration to the coast the Souh clan confronted the Kundren and Pusu. The remaining Kundren were absorbed totally into the Souh clan. The Pusu, however, were not. After their defeat some decided to remain with the Souh and were absorbed into the clan. Others, who left, joined the Kukohoi, and as time passed their descendants reasserted their claim on their land taken by the Souh. With the support of the Kukohoi they launched several attacks on the Souh. During one of these attacks, which took place at NGersupoet, a man from the Mundrau clan was shot dead. Apparently, he had taken sides with the Kukohoi, his mother's people, against the Souh. His body was sent back to Mundrau, his father's clan, to receive proper burial. This incident led to suspicion that the Mundrau clan was not maintaining their good relations with the Souh. On the other hand, the Mundrau became indignant towards the Souh.

Even though tension was developing between the two Mundrau and Souh, formal hostilities did not commence for sometime. This was partly because prominent leaders of both clans attempted to play down the seriousness of the incidents and to uphold the good relationship existing between the clans, and, partly, because the Mundrau clan was drawn into the war against Kukohoi. The reason for this was also a dispute over land.

The Puyuu River flows from the north east interior to the

northwest coast where the Kukohoi settlement of Saha is currently located. In the interior a section of the river is called Nemen where the Mundrau hunt for possums and maintain it as their property. This area was used more as a hunting ground than for gardening because it is some distance away from any of the Mundrau settlements, except Pukemene. The Kukohoi considered Nemen as part of their land and felt that the Mundrau should keep away from it. The Mundrau, on the other hand, considered it as part of the settlement made between the Souh and Pusu, when, in the presence of the remaining Pusu group, the Mundrau were allotted this territory inland from Pukemene.

With the combined forces of Mundrau, Souh, and the other Kurti clans the Kukohoi were defeated. The defeat of Kukohoi, however, was also due to two factors. Firstly, within the Kukohoi group, reluctance to engage in hostilities was expressed by the clans of Kahek and Non, who stated that the conflict originated with the Pusu descendants who had joined the Lehwa clan and that they would not join in since they had already sided with them against the Souh and were weary of fighting. Secondly, they were involved in a similar case with the Tulu to the west. With the defeat of Kukohoi the Kurti group, represented by Souh and Mundrau, determined their land boundaries to the west at NDritilii Point on the coast and Nemen to the inland, and both boundaries are still held to the present day.

Oral tradition is frequently unprecise and sometimes when two events occur at the same time they are recalled as happening one after the other in a sort of logical pattern of events. This distortion of events is quite common in Kurti recollections, particularly when the

narrative relates to such matters as warfare. Oral tradition does not make clear the exact order of events, but it would seem that hardly did the Mundrau and Souh come to settle their dispute over land boundaries with the Kukohoi, when war was declared between the Mundrau and Pohwai over the issue of a land boundary to the south. The other four inland clans, Patlok, Mundrupureu, Wamandra and Pundru, fought on the side of Mundrau against Pohwai.<sup>1</sup> Except for the other three clans, the Wamandra clan was as much involved as the Mundrau because its southern land boundary fronts on that of the Mundrau and the Pohwai.

In the course of this war, the Pohwai had driven out the Mundrau and had taken some of their land and settlement sites at NDro'is, Pusumolon and Polowayek. Their next objective was the Mundrau settlement site at Patlahah to the north. The capture of Patlahah was to be under the leadership of Kalai Lepoehe, one of the leading Pohwai warriors. To the Pohwai, the capture of Patlahah meant access to the upper Worei River with its huge hunting areas and its fertile gardening soil while to the Mundrau the loss of Patlahah was viewed as a catastrophic blow.

News of the Pohwai's impending attack leaked out and the Mundrau, under the direction of Oroï Sakei, dug a big trench (lewes), about one hundred and fifty meters long, six meters wide and seven meters deep, on the northern side of their settlement.<sup>2</sup> While the digging was in process, guards (lulo'ou) were sent to bring back information on the enemies activities and whereabouts.

When the ditch was deep enough, small sticks, about seven to eight meters long, were collected and placed at a distance of about

thirty centimeters from one another across the mouth of the trench; then leaves of certain plants called so'on and peseu were collected, placed on the sticks, and soil was spread on the leaves sufficient to camouflage the trench. This trench was dug on the side of the hill behind the huts so that it could not be seen and avoided easily by the enemies. Oroi Sakei's plan was to attract their enemies into the settlement and then run them towards the hill into the trench.

This was a perfect scheme but it was undone by nature. A few days after the completion of the trench a heavy rain occurred which filled up the trench and left it wide open. With their pitfall destroyed, the Mundrau had to depend on manpower. Fortunately for them, the other inland clans were on their side and in the subsequent skirmishes the Pohwai gave up the idea of capturing Patlahah. The turning point came, when, in one of the open battles, the Pohwai were driven out of Polowayek and Kalai Lepoehe, one of their leading warriors, was shot in his right ankle. He stumbled and fell and Oroi Sakei, seeing him wounded, killed him. Defeated, the Pohwai made haste to leave Pusumolon and NDro'is and head south. Their departure of course, did not mean that the war was over. Skirmishing continued until both sides agreed to settle their dispute in a peaceful manner.<sup>3</sup>

About the same time as the war between the Mundrau and the Pohwai was going on, issues over land boundaries also brought another two Kurti clans, the Wamandra and Pundru, against the Puyong people to the south east. The Wamandra clan, as indicated earlier, was also as much involved with the Pohwai as the Mundrau. Fighting with the Wamandra and Pundru were the Patlok, Mundrupureu, NDritambat and Liap

clans. Leading warriors against Puyong were NDrakali of Wamandra and NDrapak of Pundru.<sup>4</sup> With the reinforcement of other clans they were able to defeat Puyong, and the Pundru legitimized their claim over certain areas of land around Kepon River while the Wamandra laid claim to the entire Nurol River.<sup>5</sup>

On the basis of oral tradition, since there are no other sources available, it seems obvious that after settling their disputes over land boundaries with the Kukohoi to the west, the Pohwai to the south and Puyong to the south east, the Kurti became caught up in civil strife. Among other things, conflicts over land issues became one of the main points of tension.

According to tradition, Ka'or So'on of the Manen sub-clan in the Mundrau clan, during the war with Pohwai, went on a reconnaissance, lulo'ou, and arrived at Mount Kesak which he claimed for his sub-clan. Sometime later some warriors of Pahal sub-clan went on a reconnaissance in the same direction. They also claimed Mount Kesak on behalf of their sub-clan. When Ka'or So'on heard about their claim he issued a threat that any member of the Pahal sub-clan going to Kesak, would be a dead man. Nemue Yuhon of Pahal countered by saying that if Ka'or So'on killed a member of the Pahal sub-clan he would kill a member of Manen sub-clan in return.<sup>6</sup>

Threats and counter-threats were issued by both sides, and finally, as traditional military custom dictates, an arrangement was made for both sub-clans to meet in an open space, ndrohu heso, place of spear throwing for an open combat.<sup>7</sup> When the slit-gong sounded for them to begin, two men from the Kup sub-clan of the Souh clan,

Marampo'et and Kapemanampuu appeared. The former joined the Pahal sub-clan and the latter joined the Manen sub-clan. In the course of combat Marampo'et shot Kapemanampuu on his leg.<sup>8</sup> He fell to the ground and was carried out of the battle field. This episode ended the open combat, but not the intention to seek revenge. Kapemanampuu died a day later from excessive bleeding.

Tukele Lahlan of Manen and Kongah Ko'ou of Pahal planned to go on a spy tour, lulo'ou, outside of the Kurti area to kill someone and send the "dead body" to Souh in revenge for the death of Kapemanampuu.<sup>9</sup> Ka'or So'on of Manen, however, disagreed with the plan advanced by Tukele and Kongah, and stated that they should kill someone from the Pahal sub-clan in payment for the death of Kapemanampuu. Secretly, Ka'or So'on suggested to Kupis and Nekuh to carry out the latter plan, to which both men agreed and waited for an appropriate chance.

Kongah Ko'ou worked a huge garden of taro at a place called Nohet, and it was customary for women to accompany the wife of the garden owner to harvest the crop, especially if the harvest was intended for some celebration. With this purpose in view, all the Pahal women, headed by Asah Kehou, wife of Kongah Ko'ou, went to Nohet to collect taros and bring them home. At the instigation of Ka'or So'on, Kupis and Nekuh followed the Pahal women and hid themselves behind some big trees along the side of the track. As the women were heading home it rained heavily and they took out their leaf umbrellas.<sup>10</sup> As custom dictated the wife of the garden owner took her place at the head of the party. When Kupis and Nekuh saw the women coming they

walked up to them and Kupis, knowing Asah Kehou was at the head of the party, lifted up her umbrella and clubbed her to death with a single blow. Mixed with fear and grief the rest of the women fled to tell the Pahal men of what had happened. A party of men was dispatched to bring home Asah Kehou's body. It was placed on a bed in the men's house for women and men to mourn over before the burial.

Immediately after the burial of Asah Kehou, the men of the Pahal sub-clan took up arms against the Manen and open warfare began. Both sub-clans proved equal in manpower and military strength. The wounded from both sides were quickly removed from the battle field. Exhausted, both groups returned to their respective settlements; but the Pahal, angry because they did not kill anyone from Manen, went to the bush and destroyed all the sago palms and taro gardens belonging to the Manen. News of this destruction reached Souh and those who had relatives among the Manen invited them to Souh so that they would not go hungry.

The defeat of Pohwai did not mean that the war between Pohwai and Mundrau was over. Spying reconnaissances were still carried out on both sides. Late one afternoon, Kapuu of Patlok, Piko, Kihndrisii and Ka'or So'on of Mundrau decided to go on a spying reconnaissance heading southward towards the Pohwai. When evening came upon them they separated, in accordance with custom, and took different tracks while keeping very close to one another. This method was often employed by small war parties in order to avoid being attacked as a group and shot dead to a man.

While they were separated, Kihndrisii strayed ahead and then,

realizing that he had lost contact with his companions, he made his way back towards them. As he did so, two of the three men, Kapuu and Piko, failing to see him clearly in the gloom, opened fire. Kihndrisii was hit and gave a cry in Kurti, "yoh nino," meaning my mother. The three men rushed to his side only to see him dying. They looked at one another and without a word each man took a different track home.

A full explanation was proffered the following morning to Kihndrisii's relatives and some men were sent to fetch his body. Kapuu, feeling guilty for what he had done to a member of his mother's clan, vowed not to go to his father's clan settlement at Pahyut until he had killed someone in revenge.

A quarrel arose between Piko and Ka'or So'on at Mundrau because of the killing of Kihndrisii. Ka'or So'on accused Piko of killing Kihndrisii cold-bloodedly and stated that if he was a brave man he should kill someone in revenge. Customarily this was a shameful thing to say to a warrior and for Piko it was unbearable. He had to make a choice between going to Pohwai to kill someone there or to seek revenge in one of the Kurti clans. The case of a Mundrau man shot dead at the battle between Souh and Kukohoi was still on his mind. Also being a member of the Pahal sub-clan he resented the fact that the Souh were protecting some Manen members from hunger. He had to kill someone immediately to restore his honour. To go to Pohwai, he deliberated, was too far, too risky and perilous; by contrast Souh would be quick and easy, and he would not be suspected as an enemy, since Souh and Mundrau were still on good terms.

Early next morning, before anyone was up and about, Piko took

his spear and made his way towards the Souh settlements at Emuendret, Lingke'es, Punei and Lopoholindrou. On his arrival at Emuendret he saw some little children playing at the mouth of the road, waiting for their parents who had gone out in the early morning to fetch some food from their gardens for the afternoon celebration of a new men's house, um kamal. He could not see any older people around. He walked up to the children and asked each one of them their parents' names. One of the children, on being asked, answered: "My mother is Erihim Puleu and my father is Pel Pulou." He said to himself, "this is it." He plunged his spear into the boy's neck and chest several times until the boy died. The other children ran off in fear to tell their parents of the tragedy. No one could determine who the killer was since the children did not know Piko's name. Pel Pulou and his fellow warriors took their spears and ran along the track in the hope of discovering the killer, but they were late. Piko had already gone.

The afternoon celebration was postponed for several days until the burial and the period of mourning were over. The identity of the killer, however, was not known for sometime until the people heard the sound of a slit-gong at Mundrau giving forth the familiar beat designating death and victory. Shortly thereafter, Pel Pulou came to learn through his relatives that Piko was the murderer. The motive behind Piko's killing of Pel Pulou's son needs some explanation. Pel Pulou was a famous warrior in the NDrokoron sub-clan, and in order for Piko to restore his reputation as a warrior, in accordance with traditional military norms, he had to kill some famous warrior or a member of his family.

As previously stated, tension between the Mundrau and Souh clans was increasing gradually. The factors leading to the breakdown of relations between the two clans were the death of a man from Mundrau while fighting against the Souh on the side of the Kukohoi (a death seen as a breach of trust); and the killing of Pel Pulou's son by Piko. This last episode undermined the diplomatic relations between the two groups and brought both clans to the verge of war.

The Souh retaliated by killing a man from Mundrau and in revenge the Mundrau, backed up by Patlok headed by Kapuu, advanced upon the NDrokoron, one of the sub-clans of the Souh, who were at the following settlements: Emuendret, Lingke'es, Punei and Lopoholindrou. The NDrokoron sub-clan was overcome by the Mundrau and Patlok and, leaving their former settlements, settled at the following sites: NDrano, Emuelengin, NDrasa, Poendrelei, Patisket and Lolu.<sup>11</sup>

Defeated, the NDrokoron sub-clan pleaded for peace, penuu. Eluh Purii, a woman from Mundrau, married to a man from the NDrokoron sub-clan, was urged by her son, Kalai Limuu, to go to Mundrau and sue for peace. This she did and about mid-day the NDrokoron heard the sound of a slit-gong at Mundrau tapping out a beat signifying treaty and peace. The NDrokoron replied to the beat and thus both groups were once again at peace.

Conflicts over land issues arose not only between the various Kurti clans and other groups of people but also between the Kurti clans, for instance, between the NDritambat and the Liap and the NDritambat and the Souh. The former struggle was confined to the Liap and NDritambat alone. The latter conflict pitted practically all the

Kurti clans against the Souh.

As far as the other clans were concerned there were no known conflicts over land boundaries which resulted in formal and organized warfare between clans. This was particularly so of the inland clans, including the Mundrau. But this does not mean that there were no quarrels among individuals concerning the ownership of land.

The defeat of the MBupi was followed by the settlement of the Liap on the coast between Kereng and Andru points. The NDritambat occupied part of Kundren land from Lowo River to NDrehet Wasuh and part of MBupi land from NDrehet Wasuh to Hurngeu River.<sup>12</sup>

Conflict arose when the NDritambat realized that the Liap occupied some of the areas good for gardening purposes and large sago palm plantations. The NDritambat wanted the boundary to be extended beyond the Hurngeu River eastward to the Esiou River. If this had happened the Liap would have been left with a coastline less than three kilometers long. The Liap reacted by stating that they did not want the boundary to be changed, that it was unfair for the NDritambat to do so, since they had invited the Liap to come down and help them fight against the MBupi, and that if NDritambat insisted they would go to war and determine the boundary in this way. The issue dragged on and finally both clans became involved in war resulting in the Liap defeating the NDritambat and settling the boundary on the Hurngeu River. This boundary is still existing at present.

The land boundary between the Souh and the NDritambat clans lies on Mount Puhtoh and became a bone of contention between the clans in later years.<sup>13</sup> The Souh clan wanted the boundary to be removed in

order to make the Lowo River the new boundary, since it forms a natural demarcation line between Mount Puhtoh and Pat Pihin and Pat Kamal. The former boundary, set on Mount Puhtoh, gave the NDritambat most of the land on the west side of the Lowo River. The Tolau sub-clan of the Souh clan argued that more of what was formerly Kundren land should have been given to them since they were the ones who sustained the longest battle with the Kundren; and that the boundary line set on Mount Puhtoh was a premature action and should be removed. The Pahndrampat sub-clan of the NDritambat clan retaliated by saying that the boundary should not be removed and that the Tolau group should be contented with the land it possessed on the sea-coast extending as far as the mouth of the Lowo River. However, the Tolau sub-clan felt that the Pahndrampat sub-clan had the better side of Lowo River including some of the good gardening land and hunting sites.

The controversy over the land boundary dragged on for some time. The Pahndrampat sub-clan under the leadership of the warrior, Kowon Nohou maintained that if the Tolau sub-clan wanted to change the boundary they could not do so save by war. In defiance, some members of the Tolau sub-clan went hunting for pigs and possums in Pahndrampat territory and even attempted to clear some parts of the forest for gardening purposes. The Pahndrampat sub-clan retaliated by declaring war on the Tolau group who, in turn, retaliated, under the leadership of NDrohoo Pehlii, a warrior. Thus, hostilities were inaugurated.

The other two Souh sub-clans, Kup and NDrokoron, naturally came to the aid of Tolau sub-clan, under the leadership of Kero Kehou of Kup and Pel Pulou of NDrokoron. Likewise, the other two sub-clans

of NDritambat, Lonu'ur and NDritian mobilized their men in support of Pahndrampat; headed by NDrosou Mahyan, whose mother from Pahndrampat sub-clan and father from Lonu'ur, and Pihngop Wayen of NDritian.

The other Kurti clans kept aloof and regarded the affair as only between the NDritambat and Souh clans. However, as the conflict dragged on the other clans became involved as well. Oral history states that Keh Lowa of Wamandra clan went to NDritambat to visit his sister, Pihndrul Sawoi, who was married to a man from NDritambat, and to inform her and his inlaws about the traditional feast of Lapan which his clan was about to host, and to secure some coconut oil from them for the feast. On the evening of the day of his arrival to NDritambat, he learnt from his inlaws that the next morning the NDritambat were going to have a pitched battle with the Souh at the mouth of the Lowo River. Keh Lowa, being a warrior himself, decided to join his inlaws to fight against the Souh.

As arranged, the two opponent clans met at the mouth of Lowa River and the battle began. The NDritambat pushed back the Souh who retreated along the beach to the Korou River about two hundred meters from Lowo River. Some of the Souh kept retreating, following the beach while others decided to hide in the bush and to strike at the NDritambat from the rear. Some of the NDritambat pursued the Souh along the shore, and others stood back to see if the Souh would strike back at them. Among those of NDritambat who went in pursuit of the Souh, was Keh Lowa, who was shot through with a spear. As he fell dead on the sand, some of the Souh ran from their hiding places and dumped him in the Korou River with the intention of recovering his body after the battle.

The Souh group reached point Patlahah, about two kilometers from Lowo River, and having regained their courage they counter attacked the NDritambat. With the help of those hiding in the bush the Souh drove the NDritambat back to the Lowo River. There the NDritambat realized that Keh Lowa was missing. Fortunately some of them saw him being dumped in the Korou River. The NDritambat could not let the Souh take away the body of their inlaw and visitor, so, breaking a line gourd, Kowon Nohou and his men charged the Souh and recovered Keh Lowa's corpse.<sup>14</sup>

The recovery of the body ended the battle and the NDritambat retired, full of grief. A messenger was dispatched immediately to Wamandra to inform Keh Lowa's relatives of his death. A full explanation was necessary because the NDritambat did not want to be held responsible for his death nor did they wish any conflict with the Wamandra and other inland clans. In doing so, the blame was shifted to the Souh and the consequences of this incident will be seen presently.

Tradition does not state when this war between the clans of NDritambat and Souh began, how long it lasted or when it ended, for oral history lays emphasis on narrative rather than on specific times or dates. But by the process of approximation, it seems likely to have taken place towards the end of the nineteenth century.

The news of Keh Lowa's death was a blow to the Wamandra clan as he was one of the clan's leading warriors and also he was responsible for the impending festival of Lapan. But the news was even more shattering to his family. His two brothers, Lawai and NDrakali, rapped on the slit-gong playing a sad beat for the dead. Some men were sent

to NDritambat to bring his body back to Wamandra. A period of mourning was observed during which men and women wept bitterly; and after that Lawai commanded that he was not to be buried, lest he could not see his face, but he was to be placed on a bed, Kuwah, suspended by ropes from the ceiling of the house.<sup>15</sup> As a sign of deep sorrow, Lawai painted himself with charcoal and went naked, spending all his time guarding his brother's dead body. He vowed that the corpse would not be buried, until someone from Souh, had been killed in revenge. Failing this, he would kill someone from the NDritambat clan that had caused his brother's death.

The more Lawai thought of his dead brother the stronger his feeling of revenge became. Then one day he met a relative, Kapuu, a warrior from the Patlok clan. Kapuu's father came from the Patlok clan, and his mother from the Mundrau clan. Lawai discussed his plan to revenge with Kapuu. An opportunity presented itself when two men, one of whom was Saleu Nohou, of the Kup sub-clan of the Souh clan, accompanied some relatives of theirs from Mundrau to Nemen to hunt for possums. News of this hunting party reached Lawai who informed Kapuu that this was an appropriate chance. Kapuu agreed to accompany Lawai on one condition that they kill only the two men from Souh and nobody else.

Kapuu stated that the best time to attack and kill would be at night when everyone was fast asleep, and in order to do that they would have to leave for Nemen River sometime in the late afternoon. When they approached the camp site, Kapuu told Lawai not to accompany him into the hunting camp but to wait on the road ready to run away

after the attack. Kapuu spotted his two victims, sleeping back to back near the fire place. He crept up slowly and quietly and ran them through with his spears before fleeing.

With their plan successfully executed, Kapuu and Lawai raced home and on reaching the Patlok settlement site at Pahyut, Kapuu hammered out a beat on the slit-gong signifying death and victory, a sign of a fulfilled revenge. In this way the people came to know that Kapuu and Lawai had already killed someone to revenge the death of Lawai's brother. Lawai announced publicly at Wamandra that he had killed two men from Souh whose bodies remained in the bush and that he had brought their souls with him. He then commanded the removal of his dead brother's bones and their proper burial.

My informants, Kohun and Buka NDrakali stated that there were two basic reasons why Lawai could not act on his own to revenge his brother's death.<sup>16</sup> Firstly, according to custom, revenge for dead relatives must be executed either by inlaws or cross cousins. In this case Kapuu was Lawai's cross cousin. Therefore, confronted with Lawai's persuasion and the customary norm, Kapuu had no alternative but to accept the responsibility. However, this customary norm was not always obligatory and cross cousins, in the final analysis, had the right to refuse to undertake such actions. Kapuu was the leading warrior in the Patlok clan, and Lawai, knowing him well, naturally sought his assistance. Kapuu also used this opportunity to revenge the death of Kihndrisii who was shot by him and Piko during their reconnaissance tour as mentioned earlier. Secondly, my informants stated that Lawai, in comparison to his brother, Keh Lowa, was not a warrior by traditional

standards. He was not given to fighting and was ill-prepared to kill someone in revenge. Physically, Lawai was not a strong and attractive man like Keh Lowa his dead brother. Realizing his weakness and lack of courage, Lawai needed someone who possessed a warlike nature to carry out the task, and so he naturally turned to Kapuu as a warrior and as custom dictated. Kapuu had the right to refuse the challenge, but according to my informants, he felt deeply sorry for his cousin Lawai and hence decided to carry out the revenge killing as requested.

Sometime after the burial of Keh Lowa's bones, another traditional festival of Lapan was scheduled to be held at Mundrupureu, hosted by Kiak Puleu, a Mundrupureu warrior.<sup>17</sup> At this festival representatives of all the Kurti clans attended as custom required. During one of the formal gatherings, at which the leaders of different clans delivered their speeches in praise of the hosting clan, a complaint was raised by a leader of the Souh clan stating that the conflict between the NDritambat and Souh was their own affair and that he could not see the reason why his two clansmen were killed by Kapuu and Lawai. His complaint was apparently received by thorny hearts, since the war leaders of the four of the five inland clans, NDrapak of Pundru, NDrakali of Wamandra, Kiak Puleu of Mundrupureu and Kapuu Mewun of Patlok, replied that if the Souh clan was concerned about the death of its men, they should settle the matter by war.

The threat of war was imminent. The war leaders of the four inland clans held a secret meeting at Pamundruh, a settlement at Wamandra, where they decided to attack any representatives of the NDritambat and the Souh clans who came to attend the festival of Musoh

scheduled to be hosted by NDrakei NDrau of Patlok clan, at Pahyut. Some how or other information about this secret meeting leaked out to the NDritambat and so none of them came to attend the feast. The Souh clan, however, was uninformed. Those who had relatives in the Patlok clan came with food items including coconut oil. While in Patlok they were informed of the impending danger and were warned not to show themselves openly in public. During one of the formal gatherings, Kapuu spotted Kahmele Layou of the Kup sub-clan of the Souh clan.<sup>18</sup> Kapuu walked up to Kahmele Layou quietly and slew him with the blade of a spear.

With the murder of Kahmele Layou, the other Souh people, who were hiding in their relative's houses left for home immediately. Another Souh man, NDrapak Nohou, confused with the situation, lingered around the festival ground and thus became a target of an attack delivered by So'on Siwai of Patlok.<sup>19</sup> Fortunately, Siwai's shot was not fatal and NDrapak Nohou managed to escape. Tradition states that except for Kahmele Layou who died on the spot and was buried by his inlaws at Pahyut, the rest of the Souh people escaped to tell the tale of these tragic events to those who remained at home.

Following the outrage, the Souh clan knew that war was certain and began to mobilize its able-bodied fighting men in preparation for the impending attack by the four inland clans. Moreover, the conflict with NDritambat was still not resolved. The four inland clans, Patlok, Mundrupureu, Wamandra and Pundru, with some support from the Mundrau and Liap clans, advanced gradually upon the Souh clan.<sup>20</sup> Their first target was the Kup sub-clan since their settlements were

directly in the way of the advancing foes. For a while the Kup sub-clan offered some resistance but as time wore on they were overwhelmed by the combined forces of the four inland clans and deserted their settlements to join the NDrokoron and Tolau sub-clans. With the flight of the Kup sub-clan, the four inland clans took control of Kup territory and made temporary settlements there.

The four inland clans were not satisfied with Kup. They argued that Kup territory lacked food resources and that the NDrokoron territory had an abundant supply of sago which could sustain the Souh population. They intended to drive out the Souh completely. The Tolau sub-clan, weakened by its long conflict with NDritambat, in terms of man-power, offered resistance, but was quickly overrun by its foes. The Kup and Tolau sub-clans then sought refuge with the NDrokoron sub-clan and the three settled at NDrano, Papuyem and Puhwol. With their base at Kup, the four inland clans launched occasional attacks on Souh. The final blow on Souh was at NDrano when most of the men, women and children were killed and their houses burnt down. Tradition states that if it were not for Kolik Kor, a warrior from the Pundru clan, none of the Souh would have remained alive.<sup>21</sup> It so happened that the four inland clans completely surrounded NDrano and there was no way for any Souh to escape. As they were being slaughtered, Kolik cried out aloud: "Enough, do not kill any more of them. Let some of them go for it is not proper to wipe out everyone of them. After all, we speak only one language." Those who managed to escape and those who were spared, went further down the sea coast and settled at Lo'ou, a hill overlooking the Yahol Bay. With the Souh driven out, the four inland clans settled

throughout the entire territory. The Mundrupureu occupied Kup and Tolau territory, the Wamandra occupied NDrano, the Pundru occupied Puhwol and Patlok occupied Papuyem, all three settlements being in the NDrokoron territory.

The four inland clans, Patlok, Mundrupureu, Wamandra and Pundru are collectively known as NDrukul. They are called such for two main reasons: firstly, the term NDrukul connotes the idea of being inland, and secondly, they are situated east of NDrukul River. The Mundrau clan is also an inland clan but is not classified as NDrukul. It is situated west of the NDrukul River. But there is also a much deeper reason besides its purely geographical position, why Mundrau is not classified as NDrukul.

Traditionally, the Mundrau and Souh clans had identified themselves under two terms, NDrau and NDruhou. The traditional name for Souh is Patndruhou. Literally, both terms NDrau and NDruhou are names of two types of trees which are very closely related species.<sup>22</sup> However, the application of the terms by the two clans signifies a very intimate and close relationship between them. This intimate relationship is cemented by regular inter-marriages between them. This is not to deny their relationship with the other Kurti clans. For Kurti society is an exogamous society, and intermarriages between clans and sub-clans were very common phenomena before, after and even during the traditional warfare, and still is at present. With the tide of events, however, the intimate relationship between Mundrau and Souh deteriorated.

According to the sequence of events provided by tradition

this war was the last example of traditional warfare and occurred sometime between 1900 and 1914. This is testified by the fact that at an open battle, which took place at a site called NDrondre, Pe'eu Koyuu, a warrior from the Tolau sub-clan, was shot dead. His son Pahlou Koyuu, still a teenager, wept bitterly for his dead father.<sup>23</sup> He could not revenge the death of his father by fighting, for he was still too young to fight; instead he decided to leave home to seek employment as a house servant, for Mr. Komine, a Japanese who owned a coconut plantation on Pitilu island.<sup>24</sup> There Pahlou Koyuu informed Mr. Komine of the tragedy and begged him for help to drive the NDrukul inland. Mr. Komine informed Mr. Sweinzin, the German official stationed at Lorengau, who despatched ten men, two of whom were Hayeu of Andra Island and Kisili of Mouk on Baluan Island, each armed with a rifle and bullets to help the Souh who by this time were helpless and banded together at Lo'ou.<sup>25</sup>

A small patrol boat deposited ten policemen plus some of Mr. Komine's labourers, who were also armed with rifles, at NDromunun point, and returned to Lorengau. The men were accompanied by the Souh up the ridge to the settlement at Lo'ou. On the following day the men, headed by Kisili, were led by the Souh up the River Ohul and made for the Souh settlements of NDrano, Papuyem and Puhwol which were occupied by the NDrukul. During this police action three NDrukul women were shot but the rest, seeing the deadly effect of the European rifles, managed to escape. The three dead women were Eluh NDrih, wife of NDrakali of Wamandra, Mukom Pehlii, wife of Panau Kalon of Liap, and Sawa Nuhwon, wife of Sim Simah of Mundrau.<sup>26</sup>

Next day the policemen with Mr. Komine's labourers were led inland by the Souh up the track at NDromalmal in the Tolau territory and attacked the other NDrukul group (the Mundrupureu) occupying the Kup settlement at NDropsol. The superiority of European weapons was demonstrated here again. As the NDrukul prepared to attack the advancing group, one of the policemen fired a shot and hit Tamues on his right thigh. He fell wounded but did not die. The NDrukul, seeing what had happened to Tamues, decided not to attack. Instead, they encouraged Tamues to get to his feet, and, limping from his wound, he managed to escape with the rest.

The use of rifles in this phase of traditional warfare drove the NDrukul group (Patlok, Wamandra and Pundru) plus the Mundrau out of the Souh settlements at NDrano, Emuelengin, Papuyem and Puhwol, and the other NDrukul group (Mundrupureu) out of NDropsol.<sup>27</sup> They went back to their respective settlements inland and dared not launch further attacks on the Souh.<sup>28</sup>

Having driven the NDrukul and the Mundrau out of Souh territory and assured themselves that the inland clans would never attack the Souh again the policemen left with Mr. Komine's labourers for Lorengau and Pitilu. The Souh, however, still harboured feelings of revenge against the inland clans, especially the Mundrau because they took the side of the NDrukul against the Souh. When they were driven out, the NDrukul left the Souh territory entirely, but the Mundrau lingered near NDrondrempuron, a Mundrau settlement just within the boundary of Mundrau and Souh. The proximity of this settlement was a threat which the Souh could not tolerate and so a further request was

made to Mr. Komine for assistance. In turn Mr. Komine secured permission from Mr. Sweinzin, and two administration policemen, Hayeu and Kisili, were sent with some of Mr. Komine's labourers to help the Souh attack the Mundrau.

Meanwhile the Mundrau were engaged in a customary bride's wealth distribution at NDrondrempuron. This was on the occasion of the marriage of Ewih Nohou of Souh to NDre'ewik Lan, a man from Mundrau. The attack was planned for the dark hours of the night, and the relatives of the bride were informed secretly to leave the settlement after dusk in order to prevent them from being killed by mistake. Unaware of the impending attack the Mundrau went on with the food exchange ceremony. The attack was launched according to plan. The first victims were Kandeu Melek, his wife and two children. Confused by the sound of rifles some of the Mundrau took to flight but others retaliated at the expense of the Souh. The riflemen could not see clearly in the dark and decided to retreat. As they did so they were pursued by some of the Mundrau warriors. Kuluah NDrohpakun of Mundrau grabbed Lepai So'on of Souh, and calling out to the other Mundrau warriors, killed him on the spot. The rest of the Souh with Hayeu, Kisili and Mr. Komine's labourers ran for their lives. Meanwhile in the settlement some of the Souh warriors managed to get into the Mundrau settlement huts and dispersed the Mundrau. It happened that some of the Souh warriors entered the hut where Ewih Nohou, the bride, was hiding.<sup>29</sup> In the confusion she was stabbed in the back with a knife. Fortunately the blow was not fatal and after the incident she was nursed with medicinal herbs until the wound was healed.

After the attack on the Mundrau at NDrondrempuron, Mr. Sweinzin, issued an order for the capture of the leading warriors of the inland clans including those of Mundrau. About twenty policemen and about the same number of Mr. Komine's labourers were armed with rifles, and together with Mr. Sweinzin, they left Lorengau on a patrol boat for Kali Bay where the temporary prison camp was.

Mr. Sweinzin remained at Kali while the policemen plus the labourers were placed under the leadership of Kisili and Hayeu and made their way inland. Several days later they returned to Kali with some of the warriors among whom were Kapuu of Patlok, Pahun Nohou of Mundrupureu, NDramtatur of Wamandra, Kalai Lelamat of Pundru and NDrohuu Tikisu of Mundrau.<sup>30</sup> On their arrival, Mr. Sweinzin had them chained in twos, with their hands and legs manacled together, and put them in jail. The previous intention of conducting a court case was abandoned on the grounds that these men were warriors and therefore criminals and by the virtue of their crimes were automatically guilty. They were subject to flogging, whipping and meager rations. At the most they were given only one substantial meal a day at supper time. Life was unbearable for the captives. Any sign or movement that suggested the likelihood of escape meant interrogation followed by whipping. The number of whips depended on the whim of the interrogator. Because these punishments were below their traditional dignity, some of the warriors asked to be shot rather than to suffer acts of humiliation.

News of the capture and imprisonment of NDrukul and Mundrau warriors spread all over the island, and attracted people from nearby villages who came to see the prisoners. The German official allowed

the flogging of captives to be held in public as a demonstration of the power of colonial law and order and as a lesson to the people that if they were to engage in traditional warfare again, similar punishments would be metted out to them.

The villagers eagerness to see the captives was based partly on the permission granted by the German authorities and partly on curiosity to see the NDrukul warriors, who were very much feared for their savagery, in captivity. They were generally regarded as brutal and ruthless warmongers. The condition the prisoners were in was horrible. Even those who formerly feared and hated the NDrukul were moved to compassion after seeing their deplorable condition.

But however compassionate the relatives and friends of the captives were, they felt powerless to do anything to help the prisoners to escape. An opportunity, however, soon presented itself. Nilehen, a man from Ahus Island, went to see the prisoners and decided to help them to escape. The prison camp at Kali was built about sixty meters away from the beach and consisted of one big house built from bush materials and surrounded by a wooden wall at least two hundred and forty three centimeters high. Nilehen provided the prisoners with coconut shells and digging sticks under the pretence that they would use them to build a fire to keep them warm at night. In his conversation with the prisoners Nilehen advised them to use the coconut shells and digging sticks to dig holes under the wooden fence, for the sand was soft, and to escape. The prisoners waited for an appropriate time. It rained heavily one dark night and the guards, thinking that the prisoners were safe, decided to remain off duty. The captives quickly

dug holes under the fence and escaped in twos with chains on their hands and legs. On their way they used stones to smash the locks on their chains. When the locks gave way, they undid the chains, threw the locks into the bush, divided the chains between them, and made their way to their respective settlements.

Early next morning, when the guards came to check the prisoners, they found the inmates had gone. Mr. Sweinzin was notified immediately and quickly ordered another search for the escapees. The latter, however, knew that a search would be conducted for them and most of them took off into the bush. The search was only partially unsuccessful. The search party returned to Kali after a few days with only three of the escapees, Kalai Lelamat of Pundru, Pahun Nohou of Mundrupureu, and NDrohoo Tikisu of Mundrau. These three were severely whipped, kept under strict surveillance, and later transported to the prison camp at Rabaul on New Britain Island. After two years of imprisonment they were brought back to Manus but by that time the practice of traditional warfare had been brought to an end. Colonial law and order had been established in its place.

It is worth examining the motives behind Nilehen's participation in the escape of the NDrukul prisoners. Broadly speaking his motives were humanitarian and economic. The condition of the captives were inhuman. In addition to chains, flogging and low rations, they were forced to rise at four in the morning to undertake drill. A number of them contracted severe cases of colds from wearing of wet calicoes even when going to bed at night. One would wonder today if this was part of the establishment of law and order and of the so

called "civilizing process of the primitives." If this was the case then these few men were "civilized." In such circumstances even one's enemies, would feel a certain degree of compassion. Nilehen's cooperative role should be seen in this light.

His second motive arose from his trading ties with the Liap as well as the NDrukul, especially the clans of Pundru, Wamandra and Mundrupureu. It was Nilehen's father, Parewuh, who negotiated with the Liap and NDrukul for the establishment of traditional trade between them. As custom dictated, at his death, his son would continue to respect this trade relationship. Nilehen considered that the life of his people on the island depended on the Liap and NDrukul on the mainland and so he considered it his duty to help them to escape.

Another important aspect of pacification is the role played by the local people in conjunction with the colonial officials in the process of establishing law and order. The employment of local people in the process of pacification was seen by the colonial officials as a credit to them, that is to the people for being willing to carry out the job of pacifying themselves and of helping to establish law and order. This was, of course, only the positive aspect of the process as perceived by the colonial authorities.

The unseen negative aspect of the process of pacification was that in arming the indigenes for such purposes the colonial officials were giving them a free rein to satisfy their thirst for revenge on other people. This was particularly clear in Manus where traditional warfare was prevalent and the world was divided sharply into friends and enemies, even if the latter were innocent children.

The pacification of Manus clearly illustrates this second aspect. The relative isolation of the NDrukul in their inland settlements made contact with Europeans almost impossible. The people who were recruited by the German officials as "German Police Boys" and by Mr. Komine as labourers were mostly the coastal people who regarded the inland NDrukul as their enemies and given the opportunity of using firearms and of enjoying the backing of the colonial power, they did not hesitate to demonstrate their inner feelings of revenge on the NDrukul.

This is one of the fine moral issues that often resulted from culture contact. It may be discussed in either positive or negative aspects and the position that one takes depends very much on one's point of view. But whatever view one may take one must remember that out of such conflicting situations, is born what people may term "good and beneficial."<sup>31</sup>

Chapter 10: Comments on Migration and Warfare

In chapter six I stated that the present Kurti tribe migrated inland from the south coast of Manus towards Pat Mundrupureu; and on the basis of oral history, my study of the early settlement sites and an analysis of the geography of the area, this migration appears to have originated in two different areas. According to an oral tradition there existed a woman named Kalulwoi Kesak, who lived around Mount Kesak some ten kilometers inland from the south west coast of Manus. She migrated north eastward to Pat Mundrupureu where she was married to a man named Pat. As a result of this marriage her name was changed to Eluh Kaluu.<sup>1</sup> They had six sons who became the ancestors of the six original Kurti clans.<sup>2</sup>

The oral evidence about Eluh Kaluu is subject to some discussion. It is quite possible that the present Kurti tribe migrated in groups into the inland area where they are alleged to have originated, that is, Pat Mundrupureu. Why Eluh Kaluu is said to have migrated to Pat Mundrupureu from Mount Kesak is uncertain. It seems very unlikely that she travelled by herself, and, in all probability, she could have been a member of a group, or a leader for that matter, heading towards Pat Mundrupureu from Mount Kesak. Perhaps her group was subject to pressure from some stronger groups and so were forced to move or perhaps her group was looking for food at a time of a famine or drought in the area around Mount Kesak.

The marriage of Kalulwoi Kesak (Eluh Kaluu) to Pat at Pat Mundrupureu signifies the union of the two Kurti groups. It could be

that the group led by Kalulwoi Kesak (Eluh Kaluu) was a smaller group, and as such was easily incorporated into the bigger group of Pat, and the idea of marriage then was applied to signify this union. Another interpretation is that this marriage of Pat and Eluh Kaluu was a principle by which the Kurti people attempt to explain their own origin, and to consolidate their right to their land territory.

The other Kurti group came up the Worei River from the south east coast of Manus. This fact is based on my study of the early settlement sites and an analysis of the geography of the area.<sup>3</sup> Pat Mundrupureu is situated less than two kilometers north of the Worei River as it flows down to the south east coast from its source in the central range to the west. All of the early settlement sites of the Kurti people are situated on the banks of Worei River and its tributaries. It is clear that the Worei River served as a migration route to the inland. It could be that other tribes of people occupied the coast so that the Kurti group had no option but to move inland until they came to settle at Pat Mundrupureu. On the other hand, the Kurti group could have settled first on the coast but either finding it unsuitable or finding the influx of other groups of people, like the Kele, Lele, Ere and the Nali, uncomfortable, migrated inland in search of suitable gardening land and laid claim to uninhabited territories. The influx of various language groups could have driven the Kurti group further inland, although this theory should be investigated by further fieldwork.

Another piece of physical evidence is that the land boundary of the Kurti people extends southward to within fifteen or twenty

kilometers from the coast, mainly around Mount Kesak and the Worei River area. This land could have been claimed by the Kurti people when migrating inland and later substantiated by warfare. Interestingly, as late as 1968, there was a major land dispute between the five Kurti inland clans and the Pohwai people on the south west coast of Manus. The land area under dispute was around the vicinity of Mount Kesak. The Kurti clans appealed to their right of ownership of the land by the tradition of Kalulwoi Kesak (Eluh Kaluu) and by later warfare against the Pohwai.

The migration of the six original clans led two of the clans directly into confrontation with three other groups of people, the MBupi, Kundren, and Pusu, as described in chapter seven. It also led to the participation of the Musinen (Liap) group as well as members of other inland clans in an effort to help the NDritambat and ended in the migration of the Musinen group to the coast, as described in chapter eight. Having established themselves in their respective areas the various Kurti clans waged war on other groups of people, the Kukohoi, Pohwai and Kele; one of the principal reasons being the settlement of land boundaries. And as described in chapter nine, their involvement with other groups of people plus the settlement of land boundaries within their own territory led to warfare among themselves.

The pattern of migration of the Kurti clans from Pat Mundrupureu to the coast and to other parts of the inland area within the vicinity of Pat Mundrupureu assumed four general characteristics:

First, on leaving their place of origin, the clans did not migrate as a whole but as sub-clans. They migrated independently but

kept close to one another. Depending on the amount of space available to them, distances between the sub-clans of each clan varied. Those who covered the shortest distance in relation to Pat Mundrupureu, for instance, Patlok and Mundrupureu, settled their sub-clans as little as a few hundred meters apart. Those who covered the longest distance, for example, Souh and NDritambat, settled their sub-clans upwards of several kilometers apart. Mundrau and Liap fell in between. The Liap clan originally consisted of one group, the Musinen; the other two sub-clans, Sengin NDrukul and Patlok were of later development. They joined the Musinen to settle on the coast after the battle against the MBupi was over.

Second, migration was an uneven process. The movements of sub-clans occurred neither at the same time nor at the same speed. The sub-clans of Souh and NDritambat provide us with examples. Oral history maintains that of the three Souh sub-clans, Kup, NDrokoron and Tolau, the NDrokoron sub-clan was the first to move from its settlement at NGondroseheh, which it established after leaving Pat Mundrupureu. The other two sub-clans remained behind for some time. Then leaving Kup behind, the Tolau group moved from Putpuu towards the coast settling at Puhtoh, and finally made its way to the coast. In the course of time Kup left its settlement at Nakii and descended to a lower altitude at Pamurou and finally ended up at NDropsol. NDritian, Lonu'ur and Pahndrampat, the three sub-clans of NDritambat, followed a similar pattern to that of the Souh. From Lokalau, after leaving Pat Mundrupureu, the Pahndrampat were the first to move; the NDritian followed soon after, and finally the Lonu'ur. Movement from one

settlement site to another took time. An abundance of food close to the settlements enabled longer settlement periods. In the course of movement the sub-clans encountered enemies; encounters which frequently hindered movement or resulted in warfare.

Third, during migration fission occurred within the sub-clans and smaller groups were formed. Fission occurred as a result of petty quarrelling, land disputes, and the natural growth of groups. These small groups either moved and settled separately, while keeping within close proximity of one another, or moved and settled together. Tradition maintains that at Porowii settlement, for example, the NDrokoron sub-clan began to break into smaller groups, Lisii, Loso'ou, Mo, Mundralau, and Mundriyai.<sup>4</sup> Fission occurred as groups moved to different areas to lay claim to land. The first to break away was the Loso'ou group which kept to the west of the others. Leaving Porowii the group settled at the following sites: Pahlou, Pahndran, NDrondrui, NDrondu, NDrapurui, and Kendrin. These sites are located on or near a cluster of white rocky hill tops and, in time, the group came to be known as Loso'ou, meaning inside the white rocks.<sup>5</sup> Leaving those settlements the group moved and settled at Emuendret, Linke'es, Punei and Lopoholindrou. During the period of warfare between the Mundrau and the Souh the group moved further down to NDrano, Emuelengin, NDrasa, Poendrelei, Patisket, and Lolu.<sup>6</sup> The Mundralau group headed eastward towards Kup and Tolau and settled at Emuem Mene'ei, Emuen Au, Kereng Orwon, Pulndrarou, and Pamot.<sup>7</sup> The other three groups, Lisii, Mo and Mundriyai, carved out the space between Loso'ou and Mundralau, and finally settled together at Puhwol, Papuyem, Pupalah, and Pamelang.<sup>8</sup>

At the time of European contact the groups were still in these settlements. With the introduction of the Luluai, or district head man, system by the Germans the five NDrokoron groups moved closer to the coast at Nuhpalawok and still later moved to NDromunun Point on the coast.

According to tradition fission within the NDritian sub-clan of the NDritambat occurred at the Pawih settlement. The first to break and move away was the NDrutururu group. Its name derived from a hill a few hundred meters east of Pawih called NDrutururu on which the group made its settlement. Although separate it stayed close by two other groups, the Tasih and Telngeruh. A quarrel arose over a firewood in the NDrutururu group. Tradition maintains that a man brought himself some firewood and left it in front of his hut. When another man went over and took the sticks, the owner complained and both started quarrelling. Their quarrel attracted other members who took sides and a fight broke out. The losing side, that of the firewood owner, departed and Pa'eu Lan, a man from the group of Tasih, invited them to join up with him. In time the group came to be known as the Pa'eu group after the leader Pa'eu Lan. With the birth of this group the NDritian sub-clan came to consist of four houses (um), NDrutururu, Tasih, Telngeruh and Pa'eu.

Fourth, within the general pattern of migration of the various Kurti clans there were frequently cases of the formation of new clans or fusion with existing clans. The formation of the two additional clans, Wamandra and Pundru, and of the two sub-clans, Sengin NDrukul and Patlok joining with the Musinen to form the Liap clan are examples

of this.<sup>9</sup> I have also described the role of NDrol Te'ei in manipulating his kinsmen clan leaders, and neighbouring clansmen to wage war on MBupi.<sup>10</sup> The following account of his father, Te'ei Takos, provides an example of individuals who migrated and joined with existing clans.

Te'ei Takos was originally from the Souh clan, but more specifically from the sub-clan of NDrokoron and a member of the Loso'ou house. Tradition holds that some of his people threw pig dung at his house. He was angry but the people kept on ridiculing him. This action was too much for him to bear so he decided to leave his people and go elsewhere. He headed eastward and arrived at NDrulou, one of the Liap settlements. When he approached the settlement he plucked up some green ferns or sepei and a piece of split bamboo. These two items indicated that if the people killed him he would be cut into pieces with the bamboo blade and boiled with the bundle of greenery. In other words, those items were symbols of his surrender, and the fact that his survival depended on the goodwill of the Liap people. He walked straight towards the door of a house and threw the ferns and bamboo down in front of the door. The owner of the house, a man named Karahau Silih, came out and to his surprise he recognized his old acquaintance Te'ei Takos. "Te'ei Takos," he said, "where did you come from?" Te'ei Takos explained what had happened to him. With a smile Karahau Silih picked up the vegetables and the bamboo and threw them away. "Come have no fear," he said to Te'ei Takos, "for you are among friends." After some time Te'ei Takos married Engei Lulu, a Liap woman from the settlement of Porowondrei. Three children were born to this marriage, two sons, Kehis Te'ei and NDrol Te'ei, and a daughter, Pissal

Te'ei.

Another factor, more external than internal, effected the traditional formation of clan and sub-clan structures. After its march from Nakii, the Kup sub-clan finally settled at NDropsol. Because the other two sub-clans, NDrokoron and Tolau, had already laid claim to the coastline, the Kup sub-clan did not venture any further. It remained inland and with the coming of the Europeans no further movement was attempted. Instead, the Kup were given a separate Luluai, in the person of Pasoroh Lekeu, and came to be regarded as a separate clan, the ninth clan within the Kurti tribe. The creation of Kup, formerly one of the Souh sub-clans, into a separate political entity is a clear indication of the effect of colonial activities on traditional society.

Migration and warfare are two inseparable phenomena in human history. If it is true that migration is caused by warfare it is also true that warfare is caused by migration. Earlier, I stated that the migration of the Kurti people into the interior, to Pat Mundrupureu, occurred from two different areas. One group headed by Kalulwoi Kesak (Eluh Kaluu) came from Mount Kesak in the south west of Manus. The other group came up the Worei River in the south east of Manus.

The meeting of the two Kurti groups at Pat Mundrupureu in time led to over population and so the next wave of migration began, between 1500 and 1600. In the course of this migration two clans, Souh and NDritambat, and later Liap came into confrontation with three groups of people, the MBupi, Kundren and Pusu, who inhabited the coastal area earlier. Their migration to the coast was slow and uneven, due to confrontation with the three earlier groups and due to

the natural process of fission within the clans.

Having established themselves in their respective territories, the Kurti people began to wage war against other groups to determine, among other things, their land boundaries. These groups of people were, the Kukohoi to the west, the Pohwai to the south and the Puyong to the south east. The determination of land boundaries also led to warfare between the Souh and NDritambat, and NDritambat and Liap. The war between NDritambat and Souh, plus other incidences led to warfare among the Kurti people themselves, culminating in the defeat of Souh between 1900 and 1912. This warfare helped to accelerate the process of migration and the establishment of further settlements, particularly in the case of the Souh. An example of this is that the Loso'ou group, prior to the war with Mundrau, settled at Emuendret, Linke'es, Punei and Lopoholindrou. However, during the war with Mundrau the group moved closer to the coast at NDrano, Emuelengin, NDrasa, Poendrelei, Patisket and Lolu. Later still, during the war with the combined inland clans the three Souh sub-clans settled together at Lo'ou, a ridge on the sea coast.

The coming of the Europeans led to the termination of tribal warfare and the shifting of people to new settlements for administrative purposes; purposes which could be considered the final factor in the process of migration. At present the Kurti people live in four main villages: the Souh at NDrurei and Lemoei, the NDritambat at Lomurok, Liap at Petsehit (NDrapakou) and the five inland clans at Kari, on the bank of Kari River, a tributary of Worei River.

With the exception of the five inland clans, land boundary

disputes only occurred between Souh and NDritambat and NDritambat and Liap. The former led to the death of Keh Lowa whose revenge, plus other episodes, resulted in warfare between the Souh and the five inland groups. Conflict between Pahal and Manen, the two sub-clans of Mundrau resulted in a struggle over the ownership of Mount Kesak. Apart from these incidences, warfare among the Kurti people never resulted from petty quarrels, the abduction of women, the destruction of property or the application of magic. Most of these cases would have resulted in quarrels between individuals followed by some kind of compensation while magic would have been met by counter magic.

Warfare among the Kurti people assumed three basic characteristics. Firstly that of the open battle in which the opposing groups met at an agreed spot at an appointed time, the winners being those who drove their opponents from the battle field. The losing side returned to their settlements, mourned for their dead, attended to the injured and the wounded, and prepared for the next confrontation. Secondly, activities by a group of three to five men (but never bigger than five), who undertook a reconnaissance (lulo'ou) with the intention of killing someone in revenge for the loss of one of their own members. Thirdly, that of an individual. Like the group, an individual goes out (lulo'ou) to other areas to kill someone to fulfill a revenge or to fulfill a challenge. If the group or the individual has been successful, slit-gongs are beaten to indicate death and victory. At the end of open battle slit-gongs are also rapped by both groups to signify victory or defeat; the defeated side playing their slit-gongs slowly and sorrowfully the whole night to mourn their defeat and particularly their dead. For

the victorious, the slit-gong beats are fast and joyous.

Cannibalism was part of warfare among the Kurti people. However, its practice was governed by established rules. During an open battle the dead and wounded of both sides, if captured, would be taken to the settlements. Before anything else was done, the relatives, if any, were called forth to identify the bodies and after identification take them away. The dead were either given proper burials or their relatives on the opposing side were notified to come and take them away. The wounded were taken care of and sent off with an escort until they reached their own territory.

In some cases those who happened to know the dead or wounded acted as relatives. My father and his brother Kuli, for example, were on the reef catching fish one early morning. A canoe from Ahus Island came by and spears were hurled at them. My father, being the bigger and more agile of the two boys, managed to escape. My uncle, Kuli was captured and brought to Ahus Island. There he was asked who his father was, and he replied, "Emuei Oron." From among the crowd a man exclaimed, "I know his father. Bring him to me." Instead of being sent back home Kuli was adopted. He grew up and married Piselwe'en, a woman from Ahus Island. When the German administration was established on Manus, Kuli joined the Police Force. He had four children and this is how I come to have relatives on Ahus Island. Only in rare cases were captured or wounded persons eaten. Two of these cases were utter hatred for the opposing group and establishment of group prestige as great warriors accompanied by ritual motive. Apart from these cases cannibalism for the sake of protein was out of the question.

The traditional weapons of warfare used by the Kurti people were spears, stone axes, and knives made from the hard skin of sago palm. With contact, European-made tools, axes and knives replaced traditional ones. Spears were of two kinds. One which was called 'putleu' was made by lashing an obsidian blade to one end of a small stick, and caulked over the cord with a paraminium gum. The normal length of this type of spear was about two meters. The other type of spear called 'podt' was made from the hard skin of the betel-nut palm (pamei), hence it was sometimes referred to as 'podt pamei'. It was sharpened to a point at one end, and was about the same length as the former type. Both types of spears were used in open battle and hurled at long range. The Kurti people did not use bows and arrows or shields. For some reason or another these were not thought of. At an open battle warriors depended on their great physical agility and skill to avoid spears thrown at them. These physical skills had to be acquired during the period of practice. Emphasis during practice was placed on accurate shooting, running, and the art of avoiding spears. Those who had not mastered these skills were usually advised not to participate in open battle, as it would be fatal for them. Or if they did go they were advised to stand at the rear where there was less chance that they would be hit. Axes and knives were used for close combat. These same weapons were used by individuals or groups when going out to spy (lulo'ou) on other areas.

One other item which may be considered a weapon was the use of lime (ah). It was known as Ah NDramat meaning Lime Man or the Living Lime because of its human-like role as guide, indicator and

protector of warriors. Before the warring party went forth it had to approach a man, or a woman, for that matter, who possessed this lime to determine whether it was safe for the party to enter battle or not. Very often war leaders possessed this 'living lime' as well. The possessor or the war leader took some lime, placed it on a spatula, and pressed it gently against his or her nostrils. If the lime made him or her sneeze it indicated danger. Should the party, in defiance of this omen, proceed it would face a great defeat.

On the other hand, if the ritual performer did not sneeze it indicated victory for the party. The use of this lime also acted as a guide for those engaged in individual or group spying. This lime played two important roles in traditional warfare. It acted like a compass indicating the safe direction for individuals or groups of spies to go to carry out their reconnaissance satisfactorily, while, in the case of open battle, it indicated either defeat or victory. Due to the termination of traditional warfare the use of lime in this way was abandoned. However, during the Second World War it was used to track down stray Japanese soldiers hiding in the bush. In the present Kurti society very few people still use lime though it does aid hunters and fishermen.

European contact had two effects on Kurti warfare. Firstly, contact redirected hostilities against Europeans. Secondly, European retaliation in the form of punitive expeditions and the use of European weapons led to the eradication of warfare and the establishment of law and order.

The politics of warfare, in the light of the Kurti traditional

history, had two dimensions. The first dimension involved the persuasion and planning preparatory to battles against other enemy groups. The classic example of NDrol Te'ei who persuaded his people to side with him against MBupi is a case in point.<sup>11</sup> The same style of politics used by Tela Kuyan, Lal Menei and Manen Kereng, in persuading NDrakali Kihndreng to take revenge, resulted in the murder of Mr. Reis.<sup>12</sup> The second dimension involved the organization, planning and establishment of peace treaties (penuu).

The contraction of peace treaties was based on three important points: firstly, by the mere fact of man-power depletion on one or both sides. The cases of the Kundren against the Souh and NDritambat, and the Pusu against the Souh and Mundrau were examples of this.<sup>13</sup> Both groups, realizing their shortage of man-power, sued for peace; secondly, through marriage links between the fighting groups. Marriages among the Kurti clans were common before, during and after the period of traditional warfare. In this regard women played an important role by interceding, persuading and negotiating for peace between the fighting groups; and thirdly, through ancestral links between warring parties. Ancestral links were often traced through individuals or groups. In this case the Kurti people, were and are linked together by their common ancestral parents Pat and Eluh Kaluu at Pat Mundrupureu. This was a ground on which they frequently established peace among themselves. In the case of other groups of people peace was established either through marriage or ancestral links or both. Ancestral links were traced by and through individuals or family groups in a particular Kurti clan. I shall cite some examples of this

presently.

Peace treaties, as a rule, were generally performed on a site, agreed upon by both groups, near their land borders.<sup>14</sup> In essence, peace treaties involved the breaking of spears and the marking of the site with stones surrounded by small plants. Both signs were symbolical; the breaking of spears symbolized the termination of fighting and stone symbolized the nature of the peace treaty as firm and lasting.<sup>15</sup> Women negotiating for peace had two options. Through the women warriors could arrange to meet somewhere in between their settlements to conclude the usual peace ceremonies; or both groups could remain in their settlements and listen for the appropriate beats of slit-gongs, known as 'ndrolom penuu' or beats for peace, designating peace from whichever group the women had come from or gone to. The account of Eluh Purii was an example of this.<sup>16</sup> Eluh Purii was the daughter of Purii Sawan, a member of the Pahal sub-clan of Mundrau. She was married to Limuu NDre'ek a member of the Loso'ou house in the NDrokoron sub-clan of Souh. In the course of battle between the NDrokoron sub-clan and the Mundrau, the former were defeated. Kalai Limuu, the son of Limuu NDre'ek and Eluh Purii, requested his mother to negotiate the peace. Accordingly she made her way to Mundrau to her father, Purii Sawan, and pleaded for peace. Her father granted her plea and requested that the Mundrau be at peace with NDrokoron. Slit-gongs were sounded and replied to by the NDrokoron. In this manner peace was established.

The peace treaty concluded between the Pohwai and the five Kurti inland clans came about when the Pohwai lost more and more

fighting men, either through open battles or spying parties, at the hands of the Kurti clans. Not only did the Pohwai lose fighting men but also women and children since traditional warfare made no distinction between combatants and non-combatants in much the same as a western warfare fails to do.

The Pohwai had two links with some of the Kurti clans, particularly with Wamandra, by which they could negotiate a peace. There was a man at Pohwai named So'uu Lepoehe. According to tradition, So'uu Lepoehe and Kuweh Lepoehe were two sons of Lepoehe Nuhwon, the founder of the Lepoehe sub-clan within the Wamandra clan.<sup>17</sup> So'uu Lepoehe, for some reason or another, left Wamandra to settle at Pohwai, where he raised a large family. There was also a woman from Wamandra, named Epep Somue, who was married to a man from Pohwai and had raised a big family.

Armed with these marital and ancestral links, the Pohwai leaders sent their request for peace to NDrakali Kilndreng and his father-in-law, Kuluah Pei. Along with the request they sent thirty sticks to remind NDrakali Kihndreng and Kuluah Pei that they wanted the peace treaty to be concluded within thirty days. NDrakali Kihndreng and Kuluah Pei accepted the request and accordingly informed the other clans of the coming peace treaty with the Pohwai. As each day passed a stick was thrown away and on the day before the last stick was cast aside the two groups made their way to a site called Tjiriwa, at the source of Tenih River which flows south to Pohwai, where the peace ceremony was to be held. This site formed the land boundary of Pohwai and Wamandra. On the thirtieth day, both groups decorated themselves

in their war paint and appeared on the ceremonial ground. The Wamandra clan took the lead and sat in a circle on the cleared site. The Pohwai people appeared, sang, and danced around the Wamandra clan and then sat down. The leader, NDrakali Kihndreng, gave a signal and the Wamandra group began to sing and dance (joined by the four Kurti clans, Mundrau, Patlok, Mundrupureu and Pundru) around the Pohwai. After the dances, speeches were delivered by the appropriate leaders, spears were put together to be broken and stones were placed on the spot to conclude the peace treaty. Both sides brought out food to be exchanged, and after eating, members of both sides said good bye to one another with the satisfaction that a genuine peace treaty had been concluded.

The peace treaty concluded between the Puyong and the five inland Kurti clans followed the same pattern as that concluded with the Pohwai. However, in the case of the Puyong traditional and marriage links were emphasized rather than the depletion of fighting men. Lolou Pukei served as the main traditional link.<sup>18</sup> Equally important were the marriage links, since inter-marriage between the Puyong and the inland Kurti clans, particularly Pundru and Wamandra, was common. Indeed, it was stated that there were more Puyong in Pundru and Wamandra than Pundru and Wamandra themselves and vice versa. Given the nature of the relationship between them it was obvious that warfare would not last long.

In time, Kustai, Miyur and Pahun Kupue, the three war leaders of Puyong, sent a request for peace to Kolik Kor and NDrapak Nohou of Pundru, NDrakali Kihndreng of Wamandra, and Kiak Puleu of Mundrupureu. The request was readily accepted and the clans were informed

accordingly. The peace ceremony was to be held at Marang Kepon, a site forming a natural boundary between the Pundru and the Puyong. On the appointed day members of the five inland Kurti clans met the Puyong group at the site, and peace making ceremonies were performed.

In comparing the two traditional methods of concluding peace, one with the breaking of spears and the marking of site with stones, and the other with the appropriate beat of the slit-gongs, there are some important differences. The method which involved the breaking of weapons was more concrete and lasting. Violation of such treaties was considered a serious breach of trust and confidence.

The other method of concluding peace by means of slit-gong beats was rather more fluid and temporary by virtue of the lack of concrete symbolism. Because of its nominal nature it was often subject to violation. In the case of the Mundrau and the Souh, it was later violated when the Mundrau sided with the other inland clans in launching attacks on the Souh who were totally defeated. The salvation of the Souh was a matter of circumstance. Traditional methods of peace making were obviously slow and European weapons came in to drive the enemy off.

In the light of Kurti traditional history the war with the Souh, marked a final phase in traditional warfare. Talk of a peace treaty had begun. Kiak Puleu of Mundrupureu and Kapuu Mewun of Patlok were to deal with Kup, NDrakali Kihndreng of Wamandra, Kolik Kor of Pundru and Nemue Yuhen and Ka'or So'on of Mundrau were to conclude peace with the NDrokoron and the Tolau. Time and events, however, robbed them of their opportunity.

Traditional warfare among the Kurti people had two major effects. The total number of people killed is not known, apart from those whose names are still remembered by relatives. But what is known is the fact that the death of a significant number of warriors caused depopulation in every Kurti clan, and consequently in the Kurti region as a whole. In addition to warfare other natural causes, such as epidemics, a high mortality rate among infants, and a low birth rate in some clans affected the population growth. Traditional warfare has been at an end for more than seventy years. During this period the Kurti population has increased at least slowly.<sup>19</sup> The Second World War had some effects on the Kurti population. In practically every clan individuals were shot by the Japanese because they showed unwillingness to cooperate with them. Cooperation involved giving food and accommodation and acting as carriers.

In addition to depopulation, traditional warfare caused hatred and ill-feeling among the older generations of the Kurti clans. These feelings have not always been apparent but at times they have come to the surface. The younger generations, although told about past warfare, do not let that heritage bother them. To them warfare has become a thing of the past, worth knowing only as a kind of traditional local history.

Among the older generations of the Souh clan, some members still harbour hostility towards the members of the inland clans. In late 1949 a man named Gabriel Tondrih began a Social Re-Organization Movement at Souh. The three Souh sub-clans, Kup, NDrokoron and Tolau came together and cleared a new settlement site at NDrurei Point.<sup>20</sup> In

the mid-1950's practically all the members of the Mundrau clan including some of the Patlok came down to settle with the Souh on the coast. They settled at NDruhail Point about one kilometer east of NDrurei Point, and were allowed to use the land for subsistence purposes. Some of them even took to cultivating small coconut plantations. Everything seemed to go well at the beginning. However, in 1963 a conflict arose over the election of NDrihin NDrano from Mundrau as a Councillor for the combined Souh-Mundrau area. An open quarrel followed. A group of men from Souh, headed by NDroke'en Kimou, a former Luluai from the 1940's and early 1950's, argued that the Councillor should be a man from Souh and not from any other clan. They reminded the Souh people that to elect a man from Mundrau as their Councillor was like letting the Mundrau kill and eat them for a second time. Apparently, the Mundrau clan had been involved with the other four inland clans in rounding up and killing Souh people at NDrano settlement during the final phase of traditional warfare between 1900 and 1912. This quarrel resulted in a division within the Souh people themselves, and in the expulsion of the Mundrau from NDruhail Point. Some of the Mundrau went back to their clan territory, inland, and others, with some members of the Tolau and Kup sub-clans, moved to a new settlement at Lemoei which is the Tolau sub-clan territory. The members of the entire NDrokoron sub-clan plus some of the Tolau and Kup remained at NDrurei Point.

Ill-feelings between the clans were still being expressed as late as 1973. In April of that year we formed a Kurti Association in Port Moresby and subsequently developed branches in other centres.

Socio-economic improvement and political union of the Kurti people under one Councillor were our two basic aims. I was elected as the Vice-President of the Association with the task of informing the Kurti people back on Manus. I was at home on Manus between June and July, 1973, recording traditions of migration and warfare from members of the older generation, and, while doing my fieldwork, I took the chance to tell the Kurti people about the newly formed Association. I was interrupted while in the course of my talk at NDritambat and Kari. Several male members of these two clans spoke in an angry tone, stating that if I wanted to establish such an Association it should only involve the Souh people and not the whole Kurti region. In the past, they said, I would have been killed and eaten. At Kari, I was reminded by a man named Kapuu Wayen of Mundrupureu that if it had not been for Kolik Kor the five inland clans would have wiped out the Souh people entirely. This attitude divided the villagers into those for and those against the Association. No allusion was made at Liap and Souh to ill-feelings caused by traditional warfare; however, feelings of reluctance, perhaps for some other reason, were shown. My second attempt at NDritambat caused a stir and I was asked to leave the gathering by one of my father's relatives, who stated that I would have been killed in olden days unless he was around.

Over the Christmas holiday (1973) I and five Kurti university students travelled throughout the whole Kurti area spending three days in each of the four villages, explaining in detail the basic aims of the newly formed Association, firstly to the house leaders, secondly to the men, and finally to the entire village community. While the idea

of the Association and its aims appealed to the young, the older generations countered by saying that it was impossible to unite the Kurti people under one Councillor and that they would never work together as long as they cherished ill-feelings as a consequence of traditional warfare. In the past, they said, their fathers fought, killed, and ate one another and these memories are still with them. We knew we were undertaking a difficult task but at the same time we pressed on and established the Kurti Association, with the realization that just as it takes time to repopulate, so also it takes time for such ill-feelings to disappear completely.

## PART III: CONTACT HISTORY

Chapter 11: The Coming of Europeans

It is not known when and how Manus Island was first discovered and settled by the ancestors of the present Manusians but this absence of date does not deny their right of first discovery. In terms of European discovery, Manus was said to have been first sighted and named, Urais la Grande, in 1528 by the Spaniard, Alvaro de Saavedra, in his ship the Florida bound for Mexico from Tidore. The winds were unkind to Saavedra and forced him back to Tidore after he left Manus Island and passed the Marianas and Mindanao.

Leaving Tidore in May of 1529, Saavedra is said to have followed his earlier route as far as Manus, then set a north-easterly course to 31°N. latitude. As he left what is supposed to be Manus today on his second attempt for Mexico, via the Marianas, the Carolines and the Marshall Islands, Saavedra fell ill and died.<sup>1</sup>

Alvaro de Saavedra opened the way for other Spanish explorers to the Admiralty Islands, and the evidence of Spanish "discovery" is clearly indicated by the Spanish names of some of the islands, Los Negros, Los Reyes, Horno, Jesu Maria (Rambutjo), San Miguel (lambutin), and San Rafael (Tong).<sup>2</sup>

The degree of impact which the Spanish made on the Manusians remains to be ascertained but one would suspect that if the Spanish had stayed for sometime they would have traded some minor articles with the people in return for food and water and that these articles might have survived to the present day.

Some eighty-seven years after Saavedra's death, namely in 1616, history attributed the honour of sighting Manus Island to the Dutchmen William Schouten and Jacob le Maire, thus placing Saavedra and his Spanish confreres in a state of "historical uncertainty" about the sighting of Manus.<sup>3</sup> After Schouten and le Maire had departed the inhabitants of Manus faded again into the realm of the unknown so far as the European world was concerned.

In 1767, exactly one hundred and fifty one years later, another visitor called at Manus. This time it was the English explorer, Philip Carteret.<sup>4</sup> It was Carteret who named the group of Islands the 'Admiralty Islands' of which Manus was the biggest. It is reported that Carteret's crew was "forced to fight off the hostile natives." Given the time, situation, and lack of understanding between the two groups, hostility was perhaps inevitable; hostility arising more out of fear and natural self-protection than out of mere savagery as frequently suggested. If nature had reversed its course and placed Carteret's crew on the shores of the Admiralty Islands, and the Admiralty Islanders aboard Carteret's ship the Europeans might very well have taken up their arms against the intruders.

In 1791, twenty-four years after Carteret, John Hunter, a Scotsman, coasted the island.<sup>5</sup> A year later, in 1792, Manus Island welcomed her final eighteenth century visitor, d'Entrecasteau.<sup>6</sup>

The history of European contact with Manus from 1528 to 1792, is a history made up of short periods of contact and long periods of absence. It is a contact history involving Manusians and three European nationalities, Spanish, Dutch and English. Because of the

nature of contact its full impact cannot be ascertained.

Attitudes on both sides were certainly different. To the Europeans the indigenous people were wild, savage, hostile and warlike. Hence the visitors had to be on their guard against hostile attack. If, and when, necessary firearms were resorted to. To the indigenous people Europeans were strange creatures, hostile and savage and who appeared in vast craft, lacking women, muttering strange sounds and making great noises with their arms, and against whom they had to protect themselves. Perhaps it is fair to say that most of the skirmishes which occurred during the contact period were the result of misunderstanding and ignorance on both sides and were against the desires of both sides.

In contrast to previous centuries, in which contacts were fleeting, nineteenth century contacts were longer and more intensified. No official records relating to foreign settlers on Manus in the beginning of the nineteenth century have been published. Or may be there were no foreigners on Manus at the beginning of last century. However, it is likely that the Admiralty Islands were visited by whalers, blackbirders and traders in the nineteenth century.<sup>7</sup>

At the close of the eighteenth century and throughout the nineteenth century many ships made passage through New Guinea waters. One of them, the East India Company ship, Friendship, passed by Manus on 18 June, 1800 and the following brief report made on that occasion, states: "At 2 P.M. a number of natives came off from one of the Admiralty Islands from whom we got many trifles and they were friendly. At 7 P.M. we passed to leeward of a dangerous reef of rocks. We were

alarmed by the roaring of the breakers. Lat. 2° 50' S. Long. 146° 35' E."<sup>8</sup>

Sustained European contact with the Manusians in the first half of the nineteenth century was due, among other things, to two major factors. The first was the establishment of a sailing route from Port Jackson to Bengal via St. George's Channel. Manus was on the way and more than one ship could have called at her shores.<sup>9</sup> The second was the movement of whaling ships into New Guinea and Manus waters. By 1839 there were Europeans settling on some of the Western Pacific Islands, including Manus, as the following account relates:

There are upwards of thirty men now on Ascension and two on Nuttei, and by accounts derived from several of them, there are European and American Seamen at present domiciled on the Admiralty Islands north of New Guinea, on New Ireland, New Georgia, on Pleasant Island, Ocean Island, on some of the Kingsmill Group, on Navigator's Island, on the Fiji Islands and many of the Friendly Islands...

The account above continues:

The majority of Europeans scattered about the Islands is undoubtedly composed of seamen who have deserted from or been wrecked in whalers, but there are others who have left small trading vessels chiefly connected with New South Wales or the Sandwich Islands employed in collecting tortoise shell 'beche-de-mer' etc. and no small portion of their numbers is composed of runaway convicts from penal settlements. It appears their occupation is divided between collecting tortoise shell and breeding stock for the supply of whalers or others that may call for refreshment.<sup>10</sup>

In comparison with New Britain, New Ireland, Buka and Bougainville Islands, whose contacts with Europeans were long and sustained throughout the nineteenth century, Manus was relatively unvisited. Apart from a report of unnamed European and American Seamen taking domicile, probably for only a brief time on the island, no one

knows what was happening on the island in the period from 1839 to 1875. Then in the latter year, Manus Island welcomed a group of visitors, three of whom were Sir George Nares, commander of the ship Challenger, Sir Charles Thomson a scientist, and H. M. Moseley a naturalist. Their ship anchored between the islands of Harengan and Noru at the north west end of Manus; a harbour known today as Nares Harbour. Moseley had the honour of having a point on the mainland of Manus called after him, Moseley Point.<sup>11</sup> The object of their visit was to conduct formal navigational and scientific studies of the island under Thomson's leadership. Moseley conducted a detailed study of the inhabitants with respect to pigmentation, physical features, expression of emotions and population distribution.<sup>12</sup>

The history of European contact with the Manusians, cannot be treated in isolation from what was happening in other parts of New Guinea and the Pacific Islands. During the second half of the eighteenth century British and American whalers were operating in the Pacific; the British as early as 1776 and Americans by 1792.<sup>13</sup> Whaling operations were active in the New Guinea waters, particularly around the north west coast of the New Guinea mainland, northeast coast of New Ireland and Bougainville, and the waters of Eastern Papua, in the first half of the nineteenth century, especially in the 1840's.<sup>14</sup> In the 1850's, however, whaling operations in the Pacific reached their peak. Ships of all sizes roamed the Pacific making Hawaii and northern New Zealand their bases of operation.<sup>15</sup> Islands near the whaling areas as well as on convenient whaling routes were subject to the effects of whalers whose ships needed refitting and replenishment and whose crews

needed relaxation.

There do not appear to be any documents which suggest that whalers used Manus Island as one of their landing areas. However, the lack of records does not necessarily discount the possibility that whalers visited Manus; for the proximity of Manus to two whaling areas in New Guinea waters, that of the northwest coast of New Guinea mainland and northeast coast of New Ireland, could have warranted the possibility.<sup>16</sup> Likewise, contacts between whalers and Manusians could have occurred if Manus islanders shipped aboard whaling vessels, though again there are no evidences of this. But there were New Guinea Islanders who were forced to serve as crewmen on whaling ships. Parkinson, for example, reports that Bougainville men were forced to serve as crewmen on whaling ships and that the blood thirsty reputation of the Bougainville Islanders resulted from this practice.<sup>17</sup>

The European exploitation of Pacific resources was not limited to whaling operations. While whalers were busy at sea traders became involved in the islands collecting, faraging, buying and receiving such prized commodities as beche-de-mer, coconut oil, pearl-shells, trochus-shells and sandalwood which were shipped to Chinese, European and North American markets.<sup>18</sup> The discovery and use of some of these marine and land resources predated the whaling operations. Practically all Pacific Islanders used beche-de-mer and coconut oil for food and for local trading. In the early nineteenth century, however, beche-de-mer became an important item of trade between the South Pacific and China. Europeans sold beche-de-mer to the Chinese in exchange for coffee, tea, silk and other materials which were in turn sold at

domestic markets. Hunting, gathering and trading of these raw materials reached a peak on some islands, for instance, Fiji, Samoa, New Caledonia, New Hebrides, Solomon Islands, Bougainville, New Ireland, and New Britain. There are no references to Manus, although this does not discount the possibility that traders may have come looking for these raw materials on Manus Island.

European exploitation of natural resources needed labour. The demand for labour was first met by employing the local islanders. Two cases in point were the exploitation of beche-de-mer in Fiji and sandalwood in the New Hebrides, New Caledonia and the Loyalty Islands.<sup>19</sup> In the course of time these resources were depleted and only the labour was available. In European eyes the availability of cheap labour had to be utilized to its full extent, if not at home then elsewhere. From 1860 onwards the economic activity in the Pacific took on a new character with the development of cotton and sugar cane industries in Queensland, Fiji, and Hawaii. The cultivation of these crops required large quantities of cheap labour and European entrepreneurs turned their eyes to the Pacific Islanders, thereby beginning a new phase in Pacific economic history, the Labour Trade.<sup>20</sup>

A detailed treatment of the labour trade is beyond the scope of this paper and so I shall restrict myself to a few general comments. The main recruiting areas in Melanesia were the New Hebrides, Solomon Islands, the Islands of Eastern Papua, New Ireland and New Britain. From 1860 onwards, thousands of islanders were recruited for Fiji and Queensland. Between 1863 and 1904 over 60,000 islanders were transported to Queensland probably about 20,000 went to Fiji between 1864 and 1911.<sup>21</sup>

New Caledonia recruited labourers earlier in the 1850's and continued longer than any other area, coming third in terms of the number of indentured labourers introduced, followed by Samoa.<sup>22</sup> Some New Hebrideans were also recruited in the 1880's to work on sugar plantations in Hawaii.<sup>23</sup>

Methods of recruiting differed from one area to another, ranging from pure kidnapping, shooting, wilfull murder, the destruction of islanders' villages upon refusal to engage, and a large number engaged willingly. In some recruiting areas, for example, along the north east coast of New Ireland, the effects of the labour trade were disastrous as it caused depopulation and the disruption of traditional patterns of life. The European attitude towards the recruitment of Melanesians varied according to the kinds of people involved. In attempting to justify their motives and actions, most resorted to a moralistic type of reasoning, as one experienced recruiter and writer, W. T. Wawn, noted:

By taking these men away from their island, and from a life of sloth, brutality, and cannibalism, they are improved intellectually, as well as physically, through contact with Europeans. It is said that they pick up the white men's vices. So they may, but a returned island labourer would look with contempt and aversion on the average Aneiteum native, with his thin veneer of Christianity.

To further justify his own position he went on to state:

To change an islander into a decent citizen of the world, he must be forced to work for his living after his dancing and fighting have been stopped. If he is allowed to remain idle, he becomes a very much worse subject—morally and physically, Christian or pagan—than the raw savage.<sup>24</sup>

For some reason or another Manus Island was not included in the recruiting areas and there is no record of Manusians having engaged

in the labour trade.<sup>25</sup> This probably explains why the impact of Europeans on Manus Islanders during the period 1860 to 1890 was as slight as it was. The only mention of Manus Islanders recruited as labourers was in the 1890's when the Germans in New Britain engaged Manusians for service in Samoa and perhaps on the coast of New Guinea.

The history of European imperialism in the Pacific can be seen in terms of the flag following commerce and the cross.<sup>26</sup> The intensification of German economic interests in New Guinea reached its height when, after a considerable period of political and diplomatic negotiation with Britain, the Germans hoisted their flag at Matupit (New Britain) on November 3, 1884, at the Duke of York Islands on November 4, at Madang on November 12, and at Finschhafen on November 27.<sup>27</sup>

It is beyond doubt that the inhabitants of New Guinea had no idea what the ceremony of flag raising was all about nor did they know what it meant for them in the long term. It was the first time they had seen a piece of colourful European calico left on a pole to wave to and fro in the breeze. But whatever their attitudes they were caught up inescapably in the arms of European colonialism.

If it was not altogether true, in the case of German New Guinea, that the flag followed trade, it was very much the case that trade followed the flag; for having established the Protectorate, the German Government delegated control over its administration to a chartered company, the New Guinea Company based in Berlin.<sup>28</sup> In the late nineteenth century political and economic imperialism went hand in hand. Theoretically they were separated but in practice they were

virtually identical. A number of colonial possessions and protectorates in the late nineteenth century were ruled by chartered companies, a notable example being the administration of Rhodesia by Cecil Rhodes' British South Africa Company.<sup>29</sup>

The logic of Chartered Company rule as adopted by Britain and Germany was obvious. To them Chartered Companies meant imperialism on the cheap. The Companies concerned were to enjoy monopolistic or semi monopolistic positions in their respective territories in return for which they were to provide a modicum of administrative control. The New Guinea Company was formed in Berlin in May, 1884, and in May of the following year it received a charter through an Imperial letter of Protection by the German Government.<sup>30</sup> Under the Imperial Charter the Company was given control over the so-called 'unoccupied land,' and the sole right to sell and to buy land from local land owners. On the other hand, the Company had to pay for the administration of the Protectorate. However, the Company proved unable to discharge its dual responsibilities and was temporarily relieved of its administrative burden between 1889 and 1893. Finally, in 1899, the Imperial Government assumed full administrative control over the Protectorate.<sup>31</sup>

Initially, Germany's annexation of New Guinea was based purely on economic grounds. The territory was to be exploited for its resources to benefit home industries. But trade had to follow the flag after 1899 and the Imperial Government separated commerce from government, leaving the commercial activities in the Company's hands.

The task of administering the Protectorate fell to Dr. Albert Hahl, who came to the colony in 1896 as an Imperial Judge. During his

three years in office he endeavoured to study the local people, their customs and political institutions around Blanche Bay, New Britain. His first experiment with local administration was the introduction of Luluais or Kukurais, referred to by the Germans as chiefs. This head-man system was inaugurated near Ralum, in New Britain, when three chiefs were appointed in August, 1896. Their appointments can be taken as the first sign of local government in New Guinea, where local people, in a supposedly democratic manner, elect one of their clan leaders as their Luluai responsible to the Imperial authorities. This system of Luluai was later used throughout the Protectorate.<sup>32</sup>

Von Bennigsen was the Governor of the Protectorate from 1899 to 1901. Dr. Albert Hahl held the office of Deputy Governor of German New Guinea, and in 1902 he was appointed by the Imperial Government as the Protectorate's Governor, an office he held until 1914.<sup>33</sup> As soon as the administration of the colony was taken over from the Company, Dr. Albert Hahl, a man of foresight, saw that the future of the colony depended on the full participation of local people as labourers in the plantation economy. But concentration on the economy was not enough. He argued that if Germany were to make good her claim to New Guinea as a German territory she had to extend her administrative apparatus to other areas of the colony. Hahl reasoned that the root of labour problems which was one of the causes of the Company's failure, was the lack of sustained administration influence and power. The Company had failed because it had tried to maintain an imperial presence without the expense of rule. Hahl maintained that the local people would be turned into useful labourers only through effective and widespread

administrative control rather than by occasional punitive expeditions.

With his seat of Government established at Herbertshohe (Kokopo, New Britain), and later removed to Rabaul in 1909, Hahl determined to establish the German administration throughout the Protectorate. His first concern was to protect the people of New Ireland and Bougainville who had been haunted by unruly recruiters during the previous decades. Franz Boluminski, was appointed to set up an administrative headquarters at Kavieng on New Ireland in 1900, and he continued Hahl's system by appointing Luluais. After New Ireland Hahl turned his attention to Bougainville. Within a short time three government stations were established, at Namatanai (Central New Ireland) in 1904, at Kieta on Bougainville in 1905, and at Simpsonhafen (Rabaul) in New Britain in 1905. In order to tap the labour resources of the New Guinea mainland, Hahl established government stations at Aitape, in 1906, at Morobe, in 1909, at Angoram in 1913, and at Lae in 1914. On Manus, the government station was established at Lorengau in 1911.<sup>34</sup>

A look at the so-called 'German New Guinea Empire' reveals two points clearly. To begin with, one can see that the process of establishing the colonial administration throughout the Protectorate in the period 1899-1914 was uneven. Several factors contributed to that unevenness. We have already seen that both the administration and economic exploitation of the colony was entrusted to the New Guinea Company originally. The Company, however, concentrated more on economic exploitation than administration. This neglect of administration was largely due to a lack of manpower.

The imperial administration of the colony, under Governor

Von Bennigsen from 1899 to 1901 and under Governor Albert Hahl from 1902 to 1914, was faced with many of the same difficulties that had plagued the Company. The colony was an enormous distance from the Mother Country, and transportation within the colony was extremely limited. Moreover, the Germans were worried about the activities of the labour recruiters in the islands neighbouring New Guinea. It was deemed necessary to extend control over these islands in order to control foreign recruiters and make the labour resources there more readily available to the Germans. With New Britain, New Ireland, Buka and Bougainville under formal control, Hahl's attention swung to the undeveloped investment and labour potential of Kaiser Wilhelmsland (New Guinea mainland) and the Admiralty Islands (Manus).

Early European visitors to Manus Island were struck by the intelligence, independent character, and physical robustness of the people. They proved quick to learn the white man's ways and quick too to reject them, for quarrels which ended in bloodshed were frequent between the Manus Islanders and Europeans during the early days of colonization.<sup>35</sup>

The Forsayth, E. E. & Co. concern was the first to establish a trader in the group, in 1881, and Hersheim and other private traders followed in the 1880's.<sup>36</sup> However, whites were not accepted. More precisely, their presence was exploited for the arms and ammunition they brought, and the islanders specialized in cutting out European schooners close inshore and massacring the crews in order to obtain the weapons aboard. Those who obtained firearms imposed a reign of terror over other indigenous groups, often extorting trade as a livelihood.

The victims in their turn, desperate to retaliate or at least to possess a deterrent, took to acquiring arms by the same method of preying on Europeans.<sup>37</sup>

In the decade or so before 1900, six Europeans were murdered on or near Manus. One of these outrages occurred in 1878 when a three-masted schooner Eliza was attacked at Louf in the Hermit Islands, west of Manus. All of the crew members including the captain's wife were murdered. The vessel was pillaged and burned.<sup>38</sup> In retaliation, a German punitive expedition was despatched to the Hermit Islands but it did less harm than the disease which the police party introduced. Over the next twenty years dysentery decimated the population.<sup>39</sup>

In 1893, the Forsayth E. E. & Company's station at St. Gabriel (Pak Island), Manus, was destroyed by the islanders. Two white traders and three indigenes were killed.<sup>40</sup> The incident caused the Germans to retaliate. Under Boluminski, a punitive expedition was despatched to Pak. Whatever punishment they meted out is not known. A year later, in 1894, the HERNSEIM's station on Jesu Maria (Rambutjo), Manus, was destroyed by the islanders and a white trader was killed.<sup>41</sup> In 1899 alone the Germans carried out three punitive expeditions to Manus to punish attacks on whites.<sup>42</sup> Outrages had occurred at Komuli, Manus, where HERNSEIM's store was burned and a white trader, Maetze, and three indigenous labourers were murdered, and at Papitalai on Los Negros Island, east of Manus, where a Forsayth E. E. & Company's schooner, Nukumanu, was seized. On that occasion, Captain Dathe, Steersman Johannsen and eight indigenous crewmen were murdered. A boat from the Forsayth schooner, Nuguria, was also attacked and Bullock, a

surveyor, was severely wounded.<sup>43</sup> In 1901 a Hertsheims' trader, Carlsbourn, and several of his indigenous workers were killed at MBuke Island.<sup>44</sup> In 1903, a European diver, Howard, and three indigenous workers were murdered on Manus.<sup>45</sup>

When the German Imperial Authorities established the protectorate, the question as to whether the Admiralties should be included depended on their economic potential and Berlin's treasury policy. At that time only two German and three Scandinavian traders resided in the islands and there was every likelihood that they would soon be murdered or driven out. Hahl, for his part, was confident that two officers and fifty police could pacify the group in three years if a permanent station were established, but the absence of ready investment capital for the area, the negligible number of labour recruits being procured and the wildness of the inhabitants dissuaded the Germans from extending direct rule there in the beginning.<sup>46</sup>

For much of the ensuing period, the administration sought merely to contain unrest by occasional repression, a policy which proved more and more inadequate with the passage of time. The first visit by the new Governor, von Bennigsen, in July, 1899, set the pattern. Although he made friendly contact with the people of Great Mok Island, force had to be used against the inhabitants of St. Patrick (Baluan Island) for repeated attacks on Europeans.

Within three months of his departure, another three white traders and several New Guineans had been killed, when a schooner was plundered. Subsequent reprisals for these acts resulted in the deaths of forty-six islanders from Manus and Mok-Mandrian but failed to stop

the predatory raids staged by these groups on Europeans and on local tribes.<sup>47</sup> There was a major expedition to the Admiralties at least every eighteen months until 1911 to punish the people for some misdemeanour; another three Europeans were killed during that period, besides several Chinese and Malay traders and their Melanesian assistants. Continued naval bombardments, police-raids, and the destruction of property had no lasting effect. When a warship appeared, a cunning system of signal fires warned of its approach and guilty villagers immediately ferried themselves and their valuables to safer places.

In the early days Hahl tried stationing troops in the group temporarily but the plan did not work. The more belligerent local groups, like the Mok-Mandrian, the Rabal, Perri, Pittisee and Pak peoples in the east of the islands, banded together to attack tribes which betrayed friendly feelings towards the Germans. They killed one hundred local people in a single raid on Ponam Island, north of Manus. If the centre of European trading, Komuli, were not damaged while troops were present, trade itself was severely hindered by the terrorization of friendly tribes in the vicinity.<sup>48</sup>

The Admiralty Islander's facility for organization, originality and sophisticated resistance is reflected most strikingly in the confrontation between the German administration and Po Minis, a 'big man' among the Papitalai people, on Los Negros Island. Po Minis was the son of a leader of his people and in the early days of European contact was one of the few who recruited for Herbertshohe (Kokopo, New Britain) as a labourer. There he became acquainted with the Catholic mission, offered himself as a convert and was educated before becoming

a catechist.<sup>49</sup> Later he was returned to the Admiralties where he began evangelization in Papitalai, built two schools, and set out to educate his village. But in the early 1900's his group was attacked by its traditionally hostile neighbours who came in search of cannibal flesh, and Po Minis felt compelled to lead his people in a retaliatory raid to deter future attacks. From that point on, he found himself in conflict with the European establishment, accused by traders and naval commanders of organizing and leading raids on schooners, and of practising cannibalism himself.<sup>50</sup> In 1904 he was ordered to go to Herbertshohe (Kokopo) to have his case examined but refused and retired into the interior. Finally captured by a police party, he was tried and exiled by Hahl to Kavieng (New Ireland) for ten years. At this point the Catholic mission intervened, for Po Minis' alleged activities were being blamed on its proselytizing policies. Bishop Coupe used his contacts within the German Centre Party to have the case re-opened and after a new investigation it was discovered that his trial had been conducted in a highly irregular fashion and that no concrete proof of his crimes existed.<sup>51</sup> Po Minis was released after only a year and returned to the Admiralties in October, 1906 where he became a valuable spokesman for his group, in clashes with other Admiralty Islanders, and an important contact for visiting Europeans.<sup>52</sup>

The increasing disorder in the Admiralties and the need to compensate for the exhaustion of traditional recruiting grounds hastened the extension of direct rule. Indeed the first Luluais were appointed in 1909, two years before a permanent government station was erected at Seeadlerhafen, on Manus Island. The turning point, at least

in the eastern outer islands, probably came after 1905; at the end of that year the Pak Island people took the administration's law into their own hands and killed three Buka labourers who had murdered the German trader, Schlehan, because the Pak people feared that the Germans would blame them for the murder and retaliate.<sup>53</sup> It is significant that two of the first government chiefs were appointed there in 1909 and that the inhabitants were soon selling their weapons to Chinese traders. The number of firearms thought to be in the group dwindled from a high of eighty in 1904 to four in 1910.<sup>54</sup> By mid-1911 European enterprises had already taken a firm grip. Hemsheim owned over 2,400 acres in the group and had nearly 1,200 acres under cultivation. There was also a boat building business and a pearling industry operating. Hahl's original predictions about the time necessary to pacify the group, at least on the coasts, was roughly accurate: the fiercest fighting was over by 1914 and the number of labour recruits jumped from seventeen in 1905 to 823 in 1913.<sup>55</sup> However, the number of recruits may not necessarily indicate the degree of pacification. It could be argued that islanders would recruit to escape unsettled conditions.

Interest in developing the plantation economy on Manus in the early 1900's was not confined entirely to German Companies. The Japanese shared an interest in the economy, but, by and large, this interest was confined to one man, Isokide Komine, a Japanese national who came to settle in New Guinea, more or less accidentally.<sup>56</sup> He made his first visit to Herbertshohe (Kokopo) early in 1902 on his schooner, Zabra. At Herbertshohe, he reported to Hahl that he was a pearler

en route to Japan from the Torres Straits and that he was stopping in the protectorate because he had run out of food and water. Having no money, he asked Hahl for employment. Hahl chartered his ship and Komine remained in New Guinea. Komine sold his ship to the Government in August, 1907 for 8,000 DM which he remitted to Japan. In 1909, on a trip to Manus, he was attacked by some Manusians and only his great agility saved his life.<sup>57</sup> In August, 1911, the Government leased him 500 acres of agricultural land on Manus for a period of thirty years. This was the beginning of Japanese migration to Manus. By 1914 there were about twenty Japanese at Komine's plantations and stores at Pitilu Island, Kali, NDromalmal, Langendrowa and Momote, working as tradesman and overseers.

The next group of foreigners who had an interest in Manus were the Missionaries. The first missionaries to arrive on Manus in 1911, when the government control was formerly established, were Fathers Kleintitschen, Urtz and Claarwater. They established a mission station at Papitalai. This was natural as Po Minis had already laid some foundation there for them to build on. However, the process of conversion to Christianity was difficult. For some time the missionaries laboured without success. From Papitalai, the missionaries sought further points of contact and in about 1912 established another mission station at Powat, and in the following year the Bundralis mission station was established. Both of these mission stations were on the north coast of Manus. At Bundralis, Fathers Urtz and Claarwater welcomed the company of Father Charles Borchardt, while Father Kunzler came to stay with Father Kleintitschen at Papitalai.<sup>58</sup> Two other

mission stations were established in the 1920's at Patu on the south coast and at Bipi Island to the west of Manus. All in all the initial phase of the missionary work was difficult and it was not until the 1920's that the missionaries witnessed some progress in terms of conversion.

Not only did the missionaries come to convert the heathen but also to establish coconut plantations mainly at Papitalai and Bundralis. These plantations were established to help finance the cost of missionary work as the local villagers (later Christians) were not in a position to support the mission. The coconut plantation at Bundralis was begun and overseen by a Mr. Reis, who later started his own plantation at Saha about 2.415 kilometers east of Bundralis.<sup>59</sup>

The Admiralty Islands were captured by Australians in 1914 as part of German New Guinea and came under the League of Nations mandate administered by Australia. When the war rudely shattered the colonial enterprise in New Guinea, the Germans had reached a critical stage in the development of their protectorate. A colonial frontier had been established, albeit a slender and irregular one.

The history of German New Guinea between 1884 and 1921 can at best be seen in three parts: from 1884 to 1899 the colony was ruled by a Chartered Company, the New Guinea Company; from 1899 to 1914 the colony was administered by Governors on behalf of the German Imperial Government; and from September, 1914 to April, 1921 the colony came under the Australian Military Rule as a result of the First World War. The case of New Guinea clearly illustrates the fact that the colonizing process involved three groups of people, the 'colonized,' the colonizers,

and a fresh wave of colonizers who drove the earlier rulers out.<sup>60</sup>

The Australians encountered very little resistance from the Germans in New Guinea and within a few days the colony changed hands. Manus was taken over in October, 1914 without any resistance on the part of the handful of German traders, officials and missionaries resident there. The transfer of power meant hardly anything to the Manusians. All white men were considered to be the same despite their nationality, and the distinction between the Germans and the English, as they were usually referred to later, was hardly known in October, 1914.

Almost immediately after taking over German New Guinea, the Australians, faced with the same kinds of problems that the Germans had faced previously, criticized the latter for not having done enough in terms of pacification and for their method of administration. These criticisms, however, were only smoke screens designed to disguise the Australians' inability to handle the rather confused situation in German New Guinea after the war. The Australians placed the colony under Military Rule until May, 1921 when it was placed under a civilian rule.<sup>61</sup>

But the irony was that even though the Australians criticized the Germans for not having done enough, yet from 1914 onwards the Australians doggedly implemented the administrative system that the Germans had already established. The decades old Luluai system was continued up to the 1950's and in some areas of New Guinea even up to 1960 when it was replaced by the Council System. German plantations were taken over and given to Australian ex-soldiers and settlers as war

tribute. Whether it was a lack of innovation on the part of the Australians or whether they could not devise a new administrative system, particularly at the village level, is hard to say. But one thing is certain that the Germans had laid political, administrative and economic foundation upon which the Australians later built.

Chapter 12: The Kurti Society from 1884-1919

Whether any members of the Kurti group were recruited by the Germans as labourers to New Britain and to the mainland of New Guinea between 1884 and 1900 is uncertain. It is clear that between 1884 and 1900 European contact with the Admiralty Islands was restricted to the eastern part of Manus and to outlying islands to the east and south east. The main island of Manus, was scarcely touched because of the danger of hostile tribes, who were still very much involved in traditional warfare.

The German official, Sweinzin, was given the responsibility of setting up a government station on Manus.<sup>1</sup> His first settlement was at Kali Bay in the Kurti land area owned by the Liap clan. After a few months the station was shifted to Lorengau. Its removal was decided upon because Kali Bay was considered too small and full of low lying coral reefs and the land area was considered unsuitable for the development of a town. It was at Kali Bay that some of the warriors of the Kurti inland clans had been imprisoned.<sup>2</sup>

A few Kurti men were recruited by the Germans between 1900 and 1914 to work at Rabaul. They were Lewuh Pehlîi, Mayah You, NDrepei Pukai, and Poendreu Kesumoen of the Souh clan; Inta Nah, Kap Lori and Lewen Loruh of the NDritambat clan; and Mu'uh Muii, Moi Pisou and MBua Kondroi of the Liap clan.<sup>3</sup> Many others were employed as labourers in Manus particularly by Mr. Komine on his plantations at Pitilu Island and NDromalmal.<sup>4</sup> All those who went to Rabaul returned after completing their three-year period of contract except Lewuh Pehlîi, who was

recruited from Rabaul for service in Samoa with some other Manus people, two of whom I met in 1968. They were Saliu of NDranou village inland east of Manus and Pohak of Kukou village about 4.827 kilometers west of Souh.<sup>5</sup>

Those Kurti members who returned from Rabaul sometime before the Australian occupation in 1914, served as points of contact and as agents for European law and order. The first Luluais appointed in the Kurti coastal area were Yihin Puhtii for the Liap clan, Keleheu Nau for the NDritambat clan and Pahlou Koyuu for the two sub-clans of Souh, NDrokoron and Tolau.<sup>6</sup> At about the same time Pasoroh Lekeu was appointed Luluai for the Kup sub-clan. Kup is a sub-clan of Souh; but because it had its own appointed Luluai it was considered a separate political unit, and consequently a separate clan.<sup>7</sup>

Mr. Komine's interest in the plantation economy on Manus led him to establish a base of operation at Pitilu Island. This choice was a natural one as the Pitilu people were sufficiently peaceful by 1910 that they offered little danger to foreign settlers and planters. It was still considered dangerous for planters and settlers on the mainland coast because of the constant threat from the inland tribes. From his base at Pitilu, Mr. Komine sought to establish coconut plantations on the mainland. One of these was at NDromalmal, a strip of land extending about 3.218 kilometers inland and 1.609 kilometers along the coast, belonging to the Lombureu house within the Tolau sub-clan of the Souh clan. Mr. Komine purchased NDromalmal in 1912. The payment consisted of several boxes of matches, sticks of tobacco, knives, axes, rolls of blankets, and calicos. These articles were given to Paniu

NDrowoh who was the leader, Kakah, of the Lombureu house, and were distributed to each member of the group.

Land purchases such as the one carried out by Mr. Komine were very common throughout New Guinea during the early period of European settlement. The indigenous people accepted the articles and were told to make some kind of mark on a paper in order to satisfy European or foreign buyers that the purchase was legal. The land owners, ignorant of the European law, complied, believing that they were permitting the buyers to use the land but not to own it; the foreigners, on the other hand, ignorant of the indigenous land tenure system, thought they had secured full rights of ownership with respect to land.

The purchase of NDromalmal was negotiated between Pahlou Koyuu and Mr. Komine. A few years before Pahlou Koyuu had left the home of his father, Pe'eu Koyuu, who had been killed during warfare at NDrondre between the Souh and the inland Kurti clans. Pahlou Koyuu sought employment with Mr. Komine at Pitilu Island and requested him to help the Souh drive out the inland clans who had occupied the Souh territory.<sup>8</sup> Having assisted the Souh, Mr. Komine made a request of Pahlou Koyuu for some land for a coconut plantation. Pahlou Koyuu had no other option but to agree. According to custom he had to show his gratitude to Mr. Komine in some concrete manner.

Pahlou Koyuu was a member of the house of NDrahngau, closely related to Lombureu.<sup>9</sup> As the NDrahngau house did not possess any land suitable for plantations, Pahlou Koyuu approached Paniu NDrowoh and asked if he could let Mr. Komine establish his plantation at NDromalmal. After some lengthy negotiations, Paniu NDrowoh agreed and Pahlou Koyuu

returned to Pitilu to inform Mr. Komine about the deal.<sup>10</sup> This episode may give the impression that the landowners parted with their land freely. But this was not the case. Customarily when such things as land are given to some person in return for a deed performed, the same rule applies to land tenure. The donor only grants the right to use but not the right to own. The landowner still retains his right of ownership. In the case of NDromalmal, Panu NDrowoh and his group accepted Mr. Komine's articles not as payments but as gifts and only granted him the right to use the land but not to own it. Here again western law conflicts with the traditional land tenure system.

Having acquired NDromalmal, Mr. Komine sought to recruit labourers and the initial labour force, required to clear up the forest and to build the labour lines, was provided by the Souh people. Men and women were employed. They were divided into four groups, two of men and two of women. Two groups, one of men and one of women, engaged in clearing the forest. Mr. Komine provided the working tools, axes, bush knives and grass knives, sarebs. In clearing the forest the women's task was to clear the shrubs and undergrowth. The men came in after them to chop down the trees, trim them, and put them in piles. Trees and sticks that were good for building houses were brought to the building sites, others were placed in heaps to be used for firewood when dried.

The other groups, one of men and one of women, were required to build four labour houses out of bush materials. The women collected sago leaves, deboned them, and sewed them together on bamboo strips. The men put up the frames. There was also another house to be built

for the overseer, a Japanese employed by Mr. Komine.<sup>11</sup>

The initial phase of work was not systematized as the villagers had to walk for some distance to the plantation site. Work began at eight in the morning and ended at six in the evening for six days a week. At the end of each day each worker received a stick of tobacco. Non smokers brought tobacco home for their relatives. At the end of the week each worker received three sticks of tobacco, two tins of meat, two tins of fish, a plate of rice, bright coloured beads for the women and fish hooks and fishing lines for the men.

This arrangement did not last long. Perhaps impatient at the rate of progress, Mr. Komine decided to systematize the labour force. Women were not to be employed. The four houses were allotted to workers who had to stay on the plantation site. They had to provide a week's food supply to help supplement their meagre ration of rice. Work began at four in the morning and continued to eight at night, from Monday to Saturday and Sunday, if considered necessary (which it almost invariably was). The daily ration of tobacco was discontinued and tobacco was given only at the end of the week. Labourers were divided into three groups, one for clearing the forest, one for planting coconuts, and one for digging ditches to drain off excess water. Labourers were recruited from the other two coastal clans, NDritambat and Liap. By 1914 most of what had been tropical forest had been transformed into coconut plantations. During the Australian Military occupation of Manus the NDromalmal plantation was not expropriated immediately from Mr. Komine, and no new labour policy was introduced until 1915. From that year onwards, labourers were properly indentured,

had to sign a contract for three years, and had to receive a monthly wage of twenty shillings plus two cakes of soap, four sticks of tobacco, two tins of meat, two tins of fish, three cups of rice, two yards of calico and other trinkets.<sup>12</sup>

From the standpoint of their location the three Kurti clans on the coast, the Souh, NDritambat, and Liap experienced outside contact earlier than the other five inland clans, Pundru, Wamandra, Mundrupureu, Patlok and Mundrau. The Australian Military garrison at Lorengau continued the policy of pacifying the local inhabitants and by mid-1917 the five inland clans were more or less under the control and the first Luluais were appointed; Kolik Kor for Pundru, Tela Kuyan for Wamandra, Pahun Nohou for Mundrupureu, Tinah Menei for Patlok and Kongah Purii for the Mundrau.<sup>13</sup>

Administrative control of the five Kurti inland clans made labour recruitment possible. Most of the able bodied young men were recruited between 1915 and 1920 to plantations at NDromalmal and Saha for a three year term. The recruitment of labourers for these plantations was not always done by the plantation owners. In some cases men sought employment of their own accord. Others were persuaded to sign up for employment by their friends or relatives who were already employed on one of these plantations. The administration and mission both employed labourers and the introduction of head tax by the administration forced men to leave their villages to seek labour. As warfare came to an end the Kurti men found village life unexciting. Some left home because of customary pressure put on them to meet certain obligations. Others sought employment to satisfy their

curiosity. Finally desire to acquire European-made tools and other articles induced villagers to seek employment on plantations. So between 1914 and 1920 the traditional life of the Kurti people, although basically the same, began to change; a change that was outside their past experience and beyond their control. Traditionally, they had been economically independent, relying on their own resources; now they were increasingly obliged to sell their lives to others.

For the first time the Kurti people came to experience the effect of systematic labour. Flogging and whipping were common. Those who were absent or failed to do what they were told to do were punished, like Kimou Pohak and Kesum Kose of Souh and NDramei Kuluah of Wamandra.<sup>14</sup> Other punishments consisted of standing up all night without sleep, going without meals for one day, (there being only one meal a day between six and eight at night), and going without a month's pay of twenty shillings and rations. Kesum Kose and NDramei Kuluah later contracted pneumonia and died.<sup>15</sup>

Flogging and whipping were in use not only at NDromalmal but also at Saha. The number of labourers flogged by Mr. Reis at Saha between 1914 and 1919 is not known but out of the many who suffered seven were labourers from the Kurti inland area. They were, Poerok Nau of Wamandra, Silih Sawa of Mundrupureu, Lelai Mandra of Pundru, So'on Sakei and Tindrih Pole of Patlok and Poheu Wiyah and Waliu Kondroi of Mundrau.<sup>16</sup> Although the Kurti inland clans had already been brought under administrative control in 1917 such humiliating treatment led very easily to schemes of retaliation. Thus the Kurti peoples' experiences in plantation work from 1914 to 1919 were of two different

kinds; one of experiencing the outside world and one of suffering.

In considering the effects of plantation work on the lives of the Kurti people I would like to mention the European impact on the Kurti ecosystem. With European-made tools, they were able to clear tracts of forest land with greater ease than they had been able to before, and were able to make bigger and bigger taro gardens. While tools made garden clearing easier, their reckless use led to the destruction of forest areas which took decades to recover. The impact of over clearing on animal life was also great, particularly with respect to possums. As the forest was chopped down, possums sought habitations elsewhere and moved further and further away from the settlement areas.

Two things that the Kurti people learned from working on European plantations were methods of planting coconuts and the utilization of coconuts for commercial purposes. In later years coconut plantations were developed by individuals, families and groups and copra is the main cash commodity now in the Kurti area. In addition, attempts have been made to introduce other cash crops such as coffee, cocoa, and rubber in some coastal and inland areas.

The Luluai system has been one of the most important political tools of colonial control. In most cases colonial administrative officials were totally oblivious or purely ignorant of the effects of this system on the traditional life of the people. The Germans and Australians appear to have been largely indifferent so long as these appointed Luluais carried out their orders. Detailed studies on the Luluai system and its effects on the people of New Guinea during the

colonial days have been treated elsewhere.<sup>17</sup>

In this section I shall discuss the effects of the system on the Kurti society between 1914 and 1919. Like all other Melanesian societies, Kurti society is composed of clans, sub-clans, and houses. Each house has its own leader, Kakah, and leadership is not one of heritage but of acquisition. It is therefore improper to suggest that houses are political units because leadership in these houses is not of a ruling variety but of a management variety. A Kakah maintains his power and prestige through skillful management of wealth. In cases of dispute over property or over a breach of communal behaviour between members of the same house or houses, leaders do not preside over them as judges. They play the role of listeners of the complainants and intervene only if and when their advice is requested by the contesting parties. At the conclusion of the case it is the community that passes judgement and not the Kakah.

The function of the Luluais in the early phase of the colonial period could best be defined as "carriers of orders." They lacked both administrative and legal authority. In the eyes of the colonial officials they were simply "signs of government," a government, which, to the people, was not born from within but from without. The Luluais were men from within and were well aware of the fact that within their own society men were ruled, not in the strict sense of the term, but were managed by those who had acquired leadership. This realization placed the Luluais in a conflicting position. In the villages, power, not of ruling men, but of managing their actions, rested with the Kakah. It is difficult to say whether the Luluais in those days had any power

at all. The only time when they were seen to be active and to exercise power was when colonial officials were around. At other times they faded into the background of Kurti society. In early days the villagers could not really be controlled through the agency of part-time officials who were full-time villagers. It is true that they became accountable occasionally to the full-time colonial officers; but they were accountable to their fellow villagers every day, and their interests were generally with them. In this conflicting situation the Luluais were vulnerable to both parties, the colonial administration and their own people. The former scolded them and inflicted corporal punishments when they failed to execute orders, and the latter refused to obey them on account of their infringement of traditional power structure.

Given the nature of power and the structure of the Kurti society conflicts arose with respect to the position of the Luluais; the recognized jurisdiction of Luluais did not necessarily coincide with the area of their traditional authority, even where prominent men had been appointed, nor was traditional authority necessarily relevant to the new tasks. These conflicts can be best analyzed on three different planes.

Firstly, the Luluais came into direct conflict with the house leaders, who resented the Luluais as infringing upon their traditional rights and pattern of leadership and managed to persuade their house members not to obey the Luluais' orders. Consequently the Luluais, being members of the community, had to bow to the power of the house leaders. In so doing they played down the importance of their new

role. Other house leaders saw the power of the Luluais limited to their respective houses and not all of them. This was because they thought of the power of the Luluais in terms of the nature of traditional power in their society where men were not ruled as such but skillfully managed.

Secondly, the Luluais came into direct conflict with the sub-clans. The Luluais were members of sub-clans, and as such their power was seen as limited exclusively to the sub-clans to which they belonged. This led to united action by the leaders of houses within the sub-clans to thwart the efforts of Luluais to execute their orders. Thirdly, and ironically, there was competition for the position of Luluai as each sub-clan wanted the Luluai to be appointed from among their own sub-clan, and if this did not happen they saw their rights being infringed by the sub-clan whose member had been appointed a Luluai.

All three situations were prevalent in the Kurti society. Obviously in a society where there was absence of a centralized government, and men were not ruled as such, the introduction of a system involving administrative centralization would take sometime before its value was appreciated. But mere appreciation was not enough. The newly introduced system had to be adapted and modified. The degree of its efficiency could be judged by the extent of its adaptation and modification, as well as operation in and reception by local culture.

About 1914 Pahlou Koyuu was appointed the first Luluai for the two Souh sub-clans: NDrokoron and Tolau. Kup, the other Souh

sub-clan, had its own appointed Luluai, Pasoroh Lekeu. Pahlou Koyuu was a member of the house of NDrahngau, one of the houses comprising the Tolau sub-clan. By traditional standards Pahlou Koyuu was not a prominent leader, but because he had been working for Mr. Komine and had the ability to relate to colonial officials he was appointed a Luluai. Although he enjoyed the support of the colonial officials, he was in conflict with the leaders of other houses in the sub-clan.<sup>18</sup>

Conflict arose within the Tolau sub-clan over two issues, the building of the officials' house, haus kiap, and Pahlou Koyuu's jurisdiction over the entire sub-clan which was very much resented by the leaders of the other houses. Of these two issues the more important one was that of jurisdiction. In the context of traditional politics the leaders of the other houses saw Pahlou Koyuu's jurisdiction limited to his own house of NDrahngau. They saw his claim to jurisdiction over the entire sub-clan as against traditional political norms and an infringement on their power and leadership. The issue of jurisdiction delayed the building of the officials' house, but finally it was decided that the house was to be erected on Pahlou Koyuu's property at NDro'uk. This followed the traditional pattern of leaders of houses building their men's houses on their own property to symbolize their sphere of jurisdiction. With the decision to build the officials' house on Pahlou Koyuu's own property, the leaders of other houses, at least temporarily, felt satisfied that his jurisdiction, was limited to his own house of NDrahngau. However, the leaders of other houses, to further their protest against the jurisdiction of Pahlou Koyuu persuaded their members not to help in building the officials'

house and this led to a further delay.

While this conflict was affecting the Tolau sub-clan, the NDrokoron sub-clan took up arms.<sup>19</sup> The NDrokoron opposed the idea of Pahlou Koyuu extending his jurisdiction over them. Since Pahlou Koyuu was a Tolau his jurisdiction, they argued, should only extend to the Tolau excluding the NDrokoron. They resisted the idea that a man from Tolau should exercise jurisdiction over them. This they saw was against the traditional political norm and an infringement on their autonomous leadership. However, they wanted to have their own Luluai, a man appointed from among them. Moreover, they wanted to be separate like the Kup sub-clan and not to be amalgamated with the Tolau.

The debate over the extended jurisdiction of Pahlou Koyuu delayed the building of the officials' house as well as the construction of a proper road linking the two sub-clans. In such a situation Pahlou Koyuu could not have but felt helpless to exercise his authority. Feeling helpless, Pahlou Koyuu approached the administration officials at Lorengau. At his request, several policemen were dispatched to Souh, rounded up the people from both sub-clans and told them to build the officials' house in one week. These policemen were told to stay at Souh until the house and the road were completed.

If these two projects were accomplished by a show of force, the other two issues, that of jurisdiction and the contest for power were left to be solved by the passage of time. The NDrokoron still resented the fact that they were under a Luluai from Tolau. Again and again they requested the administration officials to have some one from among them appointed their Luluai. Their requests seem to have fallen

on deaf ears. In protest, they refused to maintain their part of the road. In time, however, the problem was partly resolved. The NDrokoron were told to erect a second officials' house in their area which they later called Nuhpalawok.<sup>20</sup> A Tultul, second in rank to a Luluai, was appointed in the person of Kimou Pohak. To further reduce conflict, the offices of Luluai and Tultul were to be rotated between the two sub-clans.

Although Kup had its own appointed Luluai and was consequently regarded as a separate political unit, it is still today a part of the Souh clan. The sub-clan of Kup consists of three houses.<sup>21</sup> Pasoroh Lekeu was the first appointed Luluai and Waweh Koriu was appointed Tultul. At the death of Pasoroh Lekeu in the 1940's, Waweh Koriu took over the responsibility of Luluai and Laye Nohou took over the position of Tultul. There was not much resistance offered by the Kup sub-clan and the administration order of building a road to connect with Tolau was easily carried out. With the dissolution of the Luluai system in the 1950's, Kup, NDrokoron and Tolau, the three sub-clans of the Souh clan, came to live together at NDrurei-Lemoei, and, in combination with NDritambat and Liap, the sub-clans form one Council Ward under Councillor, Kerep Panu.<sup>22</sup>

Similar conflicts arose in the other Kurti clans, particularly, with respect to the extended jurisdiction of Luluais over other sub-clans. The NDritambat clan consists of three sub-clans which in turn consist of a series of houses.<sup>23</sup> All these houses had their respective leaders. Thus the appointment of Keleheu Nau as Luluai with his jurisdiction over the whole NDritambat clan became the point of

resentment. Keleheu Nau was a prominent figure in the Pa'eu house; however, this did not justify, in the eyes of the other leaders, his jurisdiction over them.

The situation at NDritambat was very much like that at Souh. The creation of a Luluai was considered a challenge to traditional political autonomy, and the various house leaders sought to prevent their house members from becoming involved in the construction of a new road between NDritambat and Souh, as ordered by the administrative officials at Lorengau. As the new road was to pass through the land area of the Pahndrampat sub-clan, the three house leaders persuaded their members to put up signs consisting of sticks mounted with clay, the traditional taboo symbol on land, the violation of which would be followed by serious consequences for the offender.

Unlike Pahlou Koyuu at Souh, Keleheu Nau, the Luluai of NDritambat, did not request help with respect to road building, but decided to solve the problem in his own way. Being accustomed to traditional politics, he saw his newly acquired jurisdiction as the key issue. He approached the administration officials at Lorengau and requested the appointment of Kap Lori, of the house of NDrongusun in the Lonu'ur sub-clan, and Kes Waper of the house of Pahndrampat in the Pahndrampat sub-clan, as Tultuls. His request was granted and NDritambat came to have one Luluai and two Tultuls with the positions rotating between the sub-clans. With this done, the construction of the new road proceeded as Kes Waper managed to persuade the leaders of the two houses in his sub-clan to allow the right of way to pass through their property.

The situation at Liap was very much the same as in NDritambat and Souh. The Liap clan comprises three sub-clans each consisting of three houses.<sup>24</sup> The appointment of Yihin Puhtii, of the house of Pondrahyih, as Luluai with his jurisdiction over the other houses was very much disliked and resented by the other leaders. In comparison to Keleheu Nau of NDritambat and Pahlou Koyuu of Souh, Yihin Puhtii was a wealthy and a well known person. By traditional political standards, however, his wealth and fame did not validate his new appointment as Luluai. But in spite of their dislike and resentment, the other leaders, unlike those of NDritambat and Souh, did nothing in terms of organized effort against Yihin Puhtii. This apparent lack of resistance on the part of the Liap house leaders towards Yihin Puhtii, according to Popon, Popen and Kohun, three of my Liap informants, was due to four factors: there was no order given to Yihin Puhtii by the colonial officials at Lorengau for the people of Liap to build a road between Liap and NDritambat as both settlements are very close to each other and good sand beach formed a natural road, therefore there appeared no necessity for the Liap leaders to organize themselves in opposition to Yihin Puhtii's jurisdiction over them; most of the house leaders were close relatives of Yihin Puhtii, and, although his authority was resented, customary norms of respect for close relatives, obliged them to give him some support; Yihin Puhtii was also believed to possess certain magical powers, which were very much feared; and lastly, the leaders had come to know that any sign of resistance would invite repression by the colonial officials. They had seen enough of punitive expeditions, that they did not wish them to happen again.

In accordance with the precedent set at NDritambat and Souh two other leaders were appointed Tultuls, Kendreu Menei, of the house of Longou, in the Patlok sub-clan; and Menei Watah, of the house of Penkelii, in the sub-clan of Sengin NDrukul. The offices of Luluai and Tultul were to rotate between the sub-clans.

The same pattern of struggle is seen in the five Kurti inland clans; resentment against the jurisdiction of the Luluais, organized efforts against them, and the appointment of Tultuls which can be seen as sharing of the Luluais' power.

The effect of the introduction of the Luluai and Tultul system on the five Kurti inland clans, Pundru, Wamandra, Mundrupureu, Patlok, and Mundrau, was no different from that on the three coastal clans, Souh, NDritambat, and Liap. However, there were differences between the Luluais and Tultuls of the coastal clans and the inland clans. The coastal Luluais and Tultuls were men who had been exposed to European contact for some time prior to their appointment, and who sought assistance from the colonial officials when difficulties arose. The cases of Pahlou Koyuu of Souh and Keleheu Nau of NDritambat illustrate this tendency. The Luluais of the inland clans, on the other hand, were traditional leaders who had little if any experience with Europeans, and their appointment as Luluais meant hardly anything to them. Hence, when disputes arose they naturally took the side of their people.

The Pundru clan consists of four sub-clans, each consists of two houses.<sup>25</sup> The appointed Luluai for the Pundru clan was Kolik Kor, of the house of Solndruu in the Nangei sub-clan; and the appointed

Tultuls were, Puko'on NDrau of the house of Polose'i in the Net So'on sub-clan, Kuwou NDrakei of NDrulei in the sub-clan of Pupoh; and Waliu Kesuwi, of the house of Weyen, in the sub-clan of NDrinei.

The Wamandra clan comprises three sub-clans, each comprises three houses.<sup>26</sup> The appointed Luluai of the Wamandra clan was Tela Kuyan, of the house of Kehou, in the Kenai sub-clan. The appointed Tultuls were, Sana Pei of the house of Kourih in the Anampuu sub-clan, and Wamoi Yohang of the house of Kuno'oi in the Lepoehe sub-clan.

The Mundrupureu clan is made up of two sub-clans, and each consists of three houses.<sup>27</sup> Pahun Nohou, of the house of Pulmandra in the Kiyoh sub-clan, was appointed Luluai of the Mundrupureu clan; and Kule'en Luman, of the house of Lin Nas in the Netndrohnu'um sub-clan, was appointed Tultul.

The Patlok clan consists of three sub-clans with two houses each.<sup>28</sup> The appointed Luluai of the Patlok clan was Tinah Menei of the house of Pahyut in the sub-clan of Luu; and the appointed Tultuls were Pawih Neu of the house of NDraposso in the sub-clan of Pahtuwel, and Pekah Pohpiu of the house of NDranon in the Melyeh sub-clan.

The Mundrau clan consists of three sub-clans, each comprising three houses.<sup>29</sup> The appointed Luluai for the Mundrau clan was Kongah Purii, of the house of Lingkersim in the Pahal sub-clan; and the appointed Tultuls were, NGisei Ses of the house of Nohwan, and Kure'eu Puhnuu of the house of NDrohmah.

When the Australian Military Expedition took over Manus in October, 1914, a military garrison was stationed at Lorengau to continue the program of pacification which the Germans had begun. By

mid-1917, the Kurti inland clans had been brought largely under control and the first Luluais had been appointed. These Luluais were traditional leaders, and their appointment was designed to promote law and order. The Luluais were told to round up their people, to build a road following the main ridge down to Souh, and then to shift their settlements to the road side in order to make future patrols easier.

The Luluais, being men of their own community, were unwilling to antagonise the house leaders who opposed them and the project was left undone. In the late 1918, a military official, accompanied by several policemen, visited the inland Kurti clans on the suspicion that fighting had been taking place. In fact, the villagers were preparing for a feast of Lapan hosted by Kiak Puleu, a war leader of Mundrupureu. I was informed by NDret Pahun, Melyen Nohou, Pohoyap, Sawa Kuweh, Nuhwon Kourih, Taliu NDrelok, and Kohun Kaleweh, that one of the purposes of this feast was to honour the arrival of Europeans and the introduction of the Pidgin language to the area. Accordingly, most of the people, including the Luluais were out in the bush working sago, harvesting and collecting taro, and hunting for possums and wild pigs.

The official and his police force took the track inland from NDromalmal plantation at Souh. On their arrival at Hunuu a Mundrupureu settlement they found the people excited about the coming event. They asked for the Luluais, and as none of them was around, a messenger was sent to look for them. On his way, the messenger came upon Wamoi Yohang a Tultul from Wamandra. Wamoi Yohang made haste to the settlement to meet the official who asked where the Luluais and the rest of the people were. Before he could reply, the official, angry and

impatient, slapped him on the face and kicked him on the thigh. Wamoi Yohang fell to the ground and the official delivered several more blows to his thighs. The kicks must have been terrible because Wamoi Yohang cried out like a child.<sup>30</sup> When the episode was over the Luluais arrived and the official asked why the people had not begun work on the road. The Luluais were caught on the horns of a dilemma. If they put the blame on their people they knew they would be turned against, but if they said something else they knew it would be an outright lie and that the official would not believe them. The only thing for them to do was to keep their mouths shut and let the official rave on. Further orders were issued and after this patrol a band of policemen was stationed at Pahal for a period of two months to make sure the Luluais forced their people to build the road.

Rather than pacifying the people the incident involving Wamoi Yohang only served to humiliate them and aggravate the situation. The people could have retaliated in a moment, but because the bulk of the men were out in the bush and the policemen were heavily armed it was prudent not to. The people expected their appointed leaders to be respected but the very ones who appointed them displayed little respect for them. The incident led to hatred and bitterness towards the officials; led to a new outlook and cooperation on the people's part towards and with their appointed leaders; and finally became one of the causes of the murder of Mr. Reis a year later, in 1919.

Power is achieved by a member of a house through his expert knowledge and management of wealth; both his own and that belonging to his house members. Good leadership and skillful management of wealth

keep members of a house together in unity. It is therefore proper to conceive the house system as an 'economic-political unit', a unit kept together more through economic than political action. Members of a house are also kept together by their ancestral or blood ties.

In the last mentioned context the nature of power in the Kurti society is that of the expert manipulation of wealth. Like leadership, power in the Kurti society is fluid. Its fluidity makes its distribution more flexible. Power is distributed throughout the houses so that one house does not come to manage the affairs of other houses. This distribution of power makes each house autonomous. In each house power is available to each member upon the successful manipulation of wealth.

In retrospect, between 1914 and 1920, the Kurti people came to experience two basic effects of European contact: firstly, they began to taste organised labour by working for others; and secondly, they lost their economic-political autonomy. They were forced into a state of colonial dependence. The fluidity and decentralization of power which they had enjoyed came to an end and power was vested in the hands of puppet men, the Luluais, who acted as conduits for colonial power.

Chapter 13: The Murder of Mr. Reis, April, 1919

Mr. Reis was a German planter who went to Manus in 1913 to act as overseer of Bundralis Catholic Mission plantation on the north coast of Manus. When the plantation was fully operational, Mr. Reis decided to work a plantation of his own at Saha about 2.4135 kilometers east of Bundralis.<sup>1</sup>

His death was an illustration of the whole contact process. European accounts of murder cases during the contact period in New Guinea were often one sided. This was understandable because their ignorance of the culture and psychology of the indigenes led them to think of the islanders as warlike savages who killed for the sake of killing. In adopting this perspective the Europeans played down their own ruthless or neglectful treatment of the people whom they considered uncivilized, they forget that their acts frequently led to retaliatory measures by the indigenous people. The Reis episode and the hanging of the four Kurti men accused of murder serves as a turning point where tradition yields to the forces of contact in Kurti society and in the societies of Manus as a whole.<sup>2</sup>

The account of the murder of Mr. Reis is well known among the Kurti people, and transmitted from one generation to another orally. Some members of the older generation expressed signs of regret in my conversation with them that such a thing happened at all. In asking them why they felt badly about an incident that occurred over half the century ago they replied that it was like a blot against the Kurti that might never be forgotten. However, they said to me that today's

outlook is different and that they can now talk about it even if they can never reverse what happened.

Earlier I stated that between 1900 and 1911 traditional warfare among the Kurti people reached a stage where the five inland Kurti clans united against the Souh clan, drove them out, and settled on their territory. Defeated, the Souh people flocked together at Lo'ou settlement. At that point they sought help and Mr. Komine, through the agency of Pahlou Koyuu, responded by notifying the officials at Lorengau. Subsequently a few policemen and some of Mr. Komine's labourers, armed with rifles, were despatched to help the Souh people. The first attack was launched at the settlement of NDranoh where three women became victims, Eluh NDrih, Mukom Pehlil and Sawa Muhwon.<sup>3</sup> The second attack was launched at the Kup settlement of NDropsol during which Tamues, a warrior of Mundrupureu, was shot in the thigh but managed to escape.<sup>4</sup> These casualties were remembered by the Kurti and by the law of pay back they had to be revenged.

Most Kurti men were employed as labourers at NDromalmal and Saha plantations between 1914 and 1919. Labour conditions were hard and corporal punishment was employed in the belief that it would cure the islanders of their imagined laziness. Unused to such a regimented life and such demanding working conditions many workers contracted colds or pneumonia. At NDromalmal plantation NDramei Kuluah contracted pneumonia and died. NDramei Kuluah was a son of Kuluah Pei and his wife Eluh Kihndreng, sister of NDrakali Kihndreng.<sup>5</sup> The death of NDramei Kuluah plus the severe punishments imposed on the Kurti labourers, particularly those of the inland clans, generated a sense

of vengeance.

Mourning for NDramei Kuluah was hardly over when NDrakali Kihndreng received news of the death of his other nephew Lokit NDrakuu. It so happened that Lokit NDrakuu and his wife Pekarah Nanuu of Pundru quarrelled in the bush while they were making sago at Liap. In the course of their quarrel Pekarah Nanuu alluded to Lokit NDrakuu's suspected love affair with another woman and stated that she would bring the matter to public notice. Mindful of his reputation, Lokit NDrakuu picked up his axe and delivered a blow on his wife's head. She died, and he, realizing what he had done, ran home, to announce that he had killed his wife. He was brought to Lorengau and as an act of public warning he was executed by firing squad. This punishment was just according to the law, but in the eyes of the people the summary execution was a source of horror and annoyance deserving revenge.

The effects of contact between cultures are varied but one aspect which is perhaps given less emphasis than it should is the erosion of human dignity. In all human societies there is a respect for leaders. Thus even though they were resented, the appointed Luluais and Tultuls were respected and looked up to by their clan members. This respect was due to the fact that most of the early Kurti appointed as Luluais and Tultuls were traditional leaders in one way or another.

If the appointed leaders deserved respect from their own people it was also expected that those who appointed them would respect them as well. Ill treatment and signs of disrespect from colonial official towards appointed leaders often led to disallusionment on the

part of the people and to the erosion of their own dignity. A state of psychological inferiority developed encapsulated in the 'master-servant' relationship. Sometimes it resulted in direct or passive refusal to cooperate with the colonial officials when patrolling, while at other times it led to retaliation involving injury and loss of life.

One of the well remembered cases in the Kurti group was that of the ill treatment of Wamoi Yohang of Wamandra. This episode placed the people in a state of ambivalence. It was said to me that if Wamoi Yohang had not been an appointed leader the people would not have been affected to the extent that they were; but because he was an appointed official, a Tultul, who deserved respect in the eyes of his people, the incident generated ill feeling towards the Europeans. The incident was considered an open and public act of humiliation. The leaders of the houses began to scheme for a revenge. To the people at that time all Europeans (or to put it more precisely, all those with white skins) were the same regardless of their occupations or nationalities, and therefore it was a matter of indifference which one was murdered to even the score. That it was Mr. Reis was a matter of selection based largely on convenience and geographical proximity though it was true that Mr. Reis was considered a notorious character by the Kurti.

In the early 1919 feelings of resentment towards Europeans on Manus were increasing. Among the members of the inland Kurti clans, NDrakali Kihndreng and some of his clansmen, as warriors and leaders in their own right, could not accept defeat or ill treatment without retaliating. NDrakali Kihndreng deliberated to kill some Europeans in return for the loss of his wife and his two nephews, but who, when,

where and how, he was not yet sure. His in-law Kuluah Pei, as custom dictated, stripped naked and painted himself with charcoal as a sign of mourning for his dead son NDramei Kuluah. According to tradition this mourning period would end after someone had been killed in retribution. Meanwhile Tela Kuyan, the Luluai of Wamandra, with Lal Menei, Semel Menei, and Manen Kereng approached Kuluah Pei to inform him of their scheme to get NDrakali Kihndreng to act quickly. Kuluah Pei agreed and asked them to tell NDrakali Kihndreng, his in-law, who, he believed, would welcome the idea. For a while NDrakali Kihndreng was reluctant to fall in with the group. He wanted to take revenge but was fearful of its outcome. However, Tela Kuyan approached NDrakali Kihndreng again and persuaded him not to let the incidences go by without revenge being taken. Finally, NDrakali Kihndreng consented. Having secured his consent a gathering was arranged in the men's house that evening after the round of daily work. NDrakali Kihndreng's absence, however, was quickly noticed and Tela Kuyan and Manen Kereng went off to fetch him at his settlement of Sawoi. There, after some persuasion, NDrakali Kihndreng agreed to come with them and discussion was commenced on revenge plot. Lal Menei, being the host, took a bowl of mashed taros, pel, with a bunch of betel-nuts, pamei, and, as custom dictated, placed them in the middle of the house and presented them to Kuluah Pei saying: "Kuluah Pei, you have stripped yourself naked, painted yourself with charcoal, and have been in a state of mourning for the death of your son for so long. Here is your bowl of mashed taros with the bunch of betel-nuts. Speak! Tell us your mind! What do you want us to do? Where do you want us to wage war? Who do you want us to kill, a

whiteman or a local man to revenge the death of your son?" Kuluah Pei stood up and spoke: "Thank you Lal Menei. If I am still as young as before, I will take spears in my hands, jump, run, fight in battles and kill a man. Now I am old and heavy. I cannot jump, run, throw spears and fight on the battle fields anymore. If I eat this food now, I will only be eating it in vain." He surveyed the men and when his eyes fell on NDrakali Kihndreng, he said: "NDrakali, my in-law; I married your sister. If you are a brave man, come and take this bowl of mashed taros and eat it. Food for battle." NDrakali Kihndreng deliberated for a while and then stood up, moved to the side of his in-law, thanked him, and accepted the bowl of mashed taros.

At this point NDrakali Kihndreng had no option. It was a challenge to his manliness and valor. Obviously, the scheme had been well planned by Lal Menei, Tela Kuyan, the Luluai, and Manen Kereng. NDrakali Kihndreng was convinced to take part because his wife had been killed at Souh, his two nephews, one of whom was the son of Kuluah Pei his brother-in-law, had died and he had to maintain his role as a great warrior. Even though he showed signs of reluctance one factor was sufficient to involve him in the scheme, the challenge given him by his in-law. According to custom refusal to accept a challenge from an in-law was socially unacceptable, and was a sign of weakness and cowardice. It was no doubt his concern for his social reputation which led him to accept the challenge even if it might cost him his life.

After accepting the challenge, NDrakali Kihndreng asked his brother-in-law what he wanted him to do. The latter replied that it was up to him to decide the course of action. With this NDrakali

Kihndreng took the matter into his own hands. He ordered the rest of the food to be brought out and distributed with betel-nuts to the men, and asked them to discuss what European they were to kill. Some suggested a European at Lorengau. NDrakali Kihndreng disagreed, stating that Lorengau was too far, too open, and too dangerous; the policemen would certainly see them and suspecting their appearance would fire at them. Furthermore, none of them knew the layout of the town well enough. With Lorengau out of the question, they had only three options available to them! The Japanese overseer at NDromalmal plantation at Souh, Mr. Reis at Saha plantation, and Father Charles Borchardt at Bundralis mission station.<sup>6</sup>

Of these three, they had to choose one. Some suggested the Japanese overseer employed by Mr. Komine, at NDromalmal plantation. NDrakali Kihndreng deliberated over the suggestion for a while but reckoned that the Japanese overseer was too small to offer any resistance if he were attacked. Others suggested Father Charles Borchardt. NDrakali Kihndreng felt that Father C. Borchardt would make a good victim except that he was a special kind of a person who prayed to God and was like a father to them. This elimination process left them with Mr. Reis, about whom NDrakali Kihndreng said, "we must kill that Seman (German) who so notoriously punishes and kicks our people with his big thick boots."

Their next problems were how to kill him, who would do the killing, and when it would be carried out. A plan was devised in a matter of minutes. They were to bring two men as new recruits. On their arrival Tela Kuyan, being the Luluai, would approach Mr. Reis and

ask him to employ them as labourers. While the German was in the process of writing their names down NDrakali Kihndreng would come up from behind and deliver a blow to his head with his axe. With this plan agreed upon they proceeded to pick two men as decoys. Sitting quietly among them was a young man by the name of Londron Tapak Sapau who had previously been employed by Mr. Reis at Saha. He volunteered, saying that Mr. Reis knew him and would readily accept him as a labourer. Another young man had to be chosen. Looking around them they noticed Poerok Nau whose left hand was paralysed. They selected him, just for show, and Poerok Nau agreed to go with them. Obviously, NDrakali Kihndreng had to do the killing, by virtue of his acceptance of the challenge. However, in case he was overpowered by Mr. Reis, Putleu Marandrulkul and Semel Menei were to come to his rescue. Tela Kuyan, being the Luluai, was not to take part in the actual killing, but only to present the new recruits.

The plan had been worked out but the men decided not to carry it out on the next day as there was to be a feast of Merei hosted by Sana Pei, Menei Kupue, Piluu Pis, and Te'ei Koka in honour of Pahun Nohou, the Luluai of Mundrupureu, who had died in the process of hunting for possums. The men decided to attend this ceremonial activity and to utilize the opportunity to inform other members of the Wamandra clan, who had not attended the gathering, as well as members of the other clans, Pundru, Mundrupureu, Patlok, and Mundrau of their plan. The Merei was held the next afternoon. Throughout the night the men played the mourning beat on their slit-gongs. In the morning of the third day all the able-bodied men took their weapons and headed for

Saha plantation. At Pukemene, a Mundrau clan settlement, NDrakali Kihndreng told them that the best time to attack would be in the morning when the labourers were away working. The men decided to spend the night in the bush between Pukemene and Saha plantation.

The next morning the men waited till all the workers were out and then proceeded quietly towards Mr. Reis' house situated on a small hill. According to their plan the rest of the men were to stay behind the house so that Mr. Reis would not see them with their weapons and hence suspect their motive. On reaching the house, Tela Kuyan, the Luluai, taking Londron Tapak Sapau and Poerok Nau with him, greeted Mr. Reis and explained that he had brought two men to be employed as labourers. Mr. Reis told them to go in. Meanwhile NDrakali Kihndreng was behind the door. Mr. Reis took out his book, sat down and asked their names. As he began writing them down NDrakali Kihndreng stepped in quietly and swiftly pulled his axe out of his string bag and delivered a blow to Mr. Reis' head. Stunned, Mr. Reis grabbed the assassin wrestled him, and was about to kill him when Putleu Marandrulkul and Semel Menei entered and delivered blows which finished Mr. Reis.

The rest of the men came in to pillage the house. In the confusion, Mr. Reis' domestic servant fled for his life. Labourers, working close by, ran to the house but stood their distance when threatened by NDrakali Kihndreng and his men. Satisfied with their booty, the party left. There were ten rifles hidden in a corner covered with a big canvas and some bags. Somehow or another the looting party did not see them. After the men had gone Mr. Reis'

domestic servant came in, placed a small piece of his brain in a coconut shell and ran to Father Borchardt to inform him of the murder. Father C. Borchardt set sail in his canoe immediately for Lorengau to inform the administration of the planter's death. Policemen were equipped and despatched inland to apprehend the murderers.<sup>7</sup>

NDrakali Kihndreng and his men had now done what they had planned. At Pahal, before reaching Wamandra, the men played the slit-gongs, pounding the beat proper to the Wamandra clan, the beat designating the death of a whiteman, known as NDrolo Yap, and finally, the beat designating war, known as NDrolom Pahun. The purpose of these slit-gong beats was to let the entire Kurti inland area know that the Wamandra clan, in the person of NDrakali Kihndreng and others, had taken revenge on the Europeans by killing one of their number and that they were now in a state of war. With the exception of the Souh, NDritambat, and Liap the entire Kurti inland area was stunned. What the villagers feared most was the nature of justice to be meted out to them. They knew that policemen would soon visit their area and within two days the sound of rifles was heard at Pulmandra, Mundrupureu clan settlement.

Being at the centre of the inland area, Pahal became the main point of the police operation. At the onset each of the murderers took to hiding in the bush. The villagers' fear of punishment subsided somewhat when they saw that the expeditionary force hunting strictly for the murderers, but then the police resorted to the old practice of demolishing the entire villages. Tela Kuyan, the Luluai, did not go very far from his settlement and so was the first to be captured and brought to Lorengau. Semel Menei, whose wife came from the NDritambat

clan, both took refuge at Waper, a NDritambat settlement on the coast at her suggestion. At first the NDritambat people thought that it was safe to keep Semel Menei with them. Later, in fear of the consequences they brought him to NDromalmal plantation where he was put in a boat bound for Lorengau.

The other two murderers, Putleu Marandrulkul and NDrakali Kihndreng went far into the bush and the search party had some difficulty in locating them.<sup>8</sup> In addition, the men of the various clans did not cooperate with the search party. A request was made to the chief District Officer at Lorengau for assistance to make the villagers help. The answer to this request was an order to remove the women of every inland clan to Lorengau as prisoners so that the men would be forced to help the members of the search party, a policy which proved very effective.<sup>9</sup> All the women were told to gather at Pulmandra settlement. From there they were marched via Pahal to NDromalmal plantation on the coast where boats and canoes transported them to Lorengau. They were put in a general labour camp classified as prisoners. Since there was no law prohibiting frequent visits by males, policemen and administrative officials, turned the labour camp into a brothel. Four of the women were taken as wives by the administrative officials.<sup>10</sup> News of the treatment of their women at Lorengau angered the men. However, they felt that it was pointless to retaliate further. The only solution was to cooperate with the search party and capture the two murderers as quickly as possible.

With the help of the villagers the search party captured Putleu Marandrulkul within two days. He was forced to reveal the

location of NDrakali Kihndreng. His refusal to comply would have meant death to his wife and children. In fear he told the police that the best time to capture NDrakali Kihndreng was at night when he was asleep. But, he said, being a warrior, he slept with his weapons beside him and would certainly kill someone if attacked. Putleu Marandrulkul advised the villagers and policemen that when they approached his hiding area they should surround it quietly and wait for him to go to his hut, talk to him and sit with him until he went to sleep, whereupon he could remove NDrakali's axe, bush knife, and spears. Having advised them Putleu Marandrulkul led them to NDrakali Kihndreng's hiding place. They approached the hiding area in the afternoon and Putleu Marandrulkul advised them to stay at a fair distance while he went to investigate. When he arrived NDrakali Kihndreng was away. His two wives, Pelit Wayah and Pokei Kaheu, told him that NDrakali Kihndreng had gone to Pohwai on the south coast of Manus to get some sago and coconut oil and that he would be back in the evening. Putleu Marandrulkul went back to inform the villagers and the policemen and advised them to surround the hiding spot quietly as soon as it gets dark. This was done and Putleu Marandrulkul went back to find NDrakali Kihndreng had already returned. Putleu Marandrulkul and NDrakali Kihndreng sat and talked while the two women cooked some food. NDrakali Kihndreng, tired of his long journey, dozed off and Putleu Marandrulkul waited until he was fast asleep. Then he quickly removed his weapons, came out of the hut, and made a signal with a burning wood in a circular form. As soon as he made the signal the search party rushed upon NDrakali Kihndreng. He woke up but found his weapons gone.

The men grabbed him, put him on the ground, beat his face and body, kicked him, tied his hands together with split cane, made a loop of cane around his waist, to which two long canes were tied, one in front and the other at the back, so that he would not try to escape. Then they dragged him through the night until they reached Pahal where the administrative official was waiting for them.<sup>11</sup> The canes were cut off at Pahal and replaced by hand cuffs and chains on his legs. In the morning the prisoner was marched off with Putleu Marandrulkul to NDromalmal plantation where a canoe from Andra Island was waiting to sail them to Lorengau.

NDrakali Kihndreng and Putleu Marandrulkul were placed under heavy security with the other two captives, Tela Kuyan and Semel Menei. As soon as NDrakali Kihndreng and Putleu Marandrulkul arrived at Lorengau, the women prisoners, including those who were supposedly married to administrative officials, were released and returned to their villages. Only the wives of the four captives were kept at Lorengau as temporary prisoners awaiting a final decision with respect to their husbands. The period of time between the murder and the last capture was about six weeks. It would have been longer if the women had not been taken to Lorengau.

From Lorengau the four captives NDrakali Kihndreng, Semel Menei, Putleu Marandrulkul and Tela Kuyan, boarded a ship to Rabaul where their trial was to be held.<sup>12</sup> What happened in the court room is not known as official records are unavailable. But one thing is certain that NDrakali Kihndreng, Semel Menei, and Putleu Marandrulkul were found guilty and were sentenced to death by hanging. Tela Kuyan

was found not guilty. However, he insisted that he wanted to die with the other three men because he had had as much of a hand in the murder as they had had. This was obvious. It was Tela Kuyan who had persuaded NDrakali Kihndreng to undertake the scheme. After several months in Rabaul the four men returned under guard to Manus in the early 1920 to be hanged in their own area. It was decided to hold the executions at Kali Bay at Liap on the coast and a grave was dug. However, the gallows were shifted later to Pahal in their own environment. A grave was dug with a platform built over it and the four loops were prepared.<sup>13</sup> Tela Kuyan was asked to reconsider his decision but he gave the same answer.

In order to demonstrate the power of the government and to instil fear into the hearts of the Kurti people and the Manus islanders as a whole, people from all over Manus were told to come and witness the hanging. When everything was ready the four men were transported from Lorengau to NDromalmal plantation at Souh and then marched to Pahal. On the following day the four prisoners were led on to the platform, loops were placed around their necks, final farewells were given, and the boards removed from under their feet. They struggled, dangling in mid-air, and died.<sup>14</sup> A speech was made to warn people that such crimes would result in similar punishment in the future. The gallows stood before a great crowd; a reminder to the people that the ancient law of 'an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth' was practised by all man, even those professing themselves civilized. It was, indeed, civilization's 'pay back' to the Kurti.

#### Chapter 14: Epilogue: What Happened After 1919

In retrospect the period between 1900 and 1919 was a period of reaction against European intrusion into the traditional Kurti society. The intensification of European activities demonstrated by the use of firearms in traditional warfare, the investment and centralization of administrative power in the hands of the appointed Luluais and Tultuls on the village level as opposed to the traditional decentralization of political power structure, and the ill-treatment of plantation labourers at Saha and NDromalmal aggravated the situation culminating in the assassination of Mr. Reis in April, 1919.

The gallows at Pahal early in 1920 ended the reactionary period, and opened a new chapter in the Kurti history; a new period of adjustment to the imposition of colonial rule. It was a turning point, not of defeat, but of compromise and cooperation. The Kurti people from then on experienced more and more the impact of Europeans on their society, and their history was interconnected with the rest of what is now the new nation of Papua New Guinea of which they are part.

A complete account of what has happened to the Kurti people and their society since 1920 exceeds the scope of this chapter, and requires a further detailed fieldwork. My concern here is to present briefly only the highlights in order to give some general idea about the kind of changes that have affected the Kurti people.

The history of economic, political and cultural pressures on the Kurti people dates back to the pre-1920 period. Confronted with these pressures, particularly economic, the Kurti had but themselves to

offer to the outsiders. Between 1920 and 1942 a goodly number of young Kurti men were employed as labourers on plantations on Manus and New Britain, especially around the Rabaul and Kokopo area.<sup>1</sup> Some sought jobs as domestic servants to Australians, and others worked as crewmen on mission, administration and company boats. Still others found employment as policemen to assist the patrol officers in their task of pacification on the New Guinea mainland.

It is interesting to explore the reasons why most Kurti men left their villages to seek employment with European entrepreneurs. European accounts on such matters often stress the fact that people left their villages mainly because they wanted to acquire European trade goods which could only be purchased with Australian money. While accepting this as a genuine fact let us also have a look on the other side of the coin. The uprooting of men from their villages as labourers was in keeping with the common belief held by colonial figures in administration, business and missions that the indigenous people should pay for the blessings and benefits of European civilization which was freely brought to them. One of the dimensions of this belief was that the local people should be forced to become wage labourers and consumers of European manufactured goods. In the eyes of these agents of British civilization, warriors and the so called 'past timers' must learn to be workers; workers, of course, for the colonial masters.

According to the belief held by the exponents of popular pseudo - Darwinism the employment of indigenous people was accepted as a necessary process of evolution through which the native 'race' might survive in severe competition with the superior European 'race'. The

argument that the local people should either work in their villages to make copra for sale or go out to work for wages suited the expatriate business mentality. A common imperial assumption was that a colony must pay for its administration. On this basis, until development of resources produced the necessary revenue, there could be no security for expenditure on services in health, education and justice. This assumption conditioned the colonial administration to accept arguments about the educational value of going out to work, of engaging in trade, and giving up village lands for use of Europeans.<sup>2</sup>

The introduction of 'head-tax' by the colonial administration was certainly one of the most effective means to force people out of their villages to seek employment elsewhere.<sup>3</sup> Failure to pay their annual tax of ten shillings (one dollar) which was hard to obtain at that time meant imprisonment. To avoid this fate most Kurti men left their villages to seek jobs as labourers. As the latter their taxes were usually met by their employers. Those who remained in their villages either paid their taxes with the money sent to them by their relatives working as labourers or went to jail for a period ranging from two to six weeks.

Caught in this wheel of economic transformation the Kurti had no escape. Effects of labour migration was drastic. The outflow of young men from their villages naturally meant less or hardly any in the villages to carry out administration's orders in maintaining the public road system which linked the villages together and in building new houses for the visiting patrol officers. It also led to the disruption of the normal pattern of village life and activities relating to feasts

and ceremonial exchanges. The labourers who returned home with their acquired knowledge and new outlook on life would become indifferent to traditional and customary norms of behaviour and often challenged the power and authority of the traditional leaders who previously they were not reluctant to obey.<sup>4</sup>

Irrespective of the methods by which colonial administration brought economic pressures to bear, it was the fact of contact with the money economy itself which initiated profound changes. The workers who returned brought cash and trade goods with them. It was a custom that labourers were not paid their full wages while at work but at the expiration of their term of contract part of their deferred wages was given to them. Among other reasons for this practice of deferred payment, the primary one was to stimulate others back in the villages to go to work. Long absences from home and the feeling of independence from any social obligations often led to the break down of family and kinship ties. In this stage of transition European money has replaced traditional currencies of dogs' teeth and shells, and is gradually eroding tradition.

No changes in the administrative system of Luluai established by the Germans were made by the Australians during and after the Australian Naval and Military Occupation. In fact the system was further introduced into areas which had not come under the administrative control. In the Kurti area the system was imposed on the five inland clans in mid 1917. As the impact of Australian administration became stronger and stronger after 1920 the traditional political system based on house leaders gradually became disintegrated.

When the power of the traditional house leaders was taken over by the new and appointed leaders, they gradually receded into the background. The Luluais in the changing situation were to stand as individuals between two groups of people, the administration and the villagers. Their most pressing duties were to satisfy their fellow-villagers, while the administrative officers who visited the villages were anxious to satisfy the headquarters. This vulnerable position of Luluais often left them in a state of tension. The administrative officers upon visiting often looked for a show of obedience and the Luluais had to operate within the framework of obedience to line the village for the visit and to have everything spick and span for the occasion. The Luluais were the keepers of Village Books in which census figures were entered by the administrative officers. They were often the first people to be reprimanded if previous orders about health laws and road maintenance were disregarded.

Apart from being mere carriers of orders and Village Bookkeepers, the Luluais exercised some power as village magistrates in the event of disputes between individuals and groups. However, with the disintegration of traditional democratic method of resolving conflicts the Luluais, operating as individuals, and in more cases than one, felt incompetent to pass judgements, preferred to hand over the cases in disputes to the patrol officers. If, and when, they did pass judgments the Luluais often became targets of accusations by the losing groups. The judgments passed by the patrol officers were often accepted though they might not be the appropriate solutions to the problems.

To the colonial administrative officers whose society was

based on hierarchical power structure, the Luluai system operated perfectly well. The long term effect of this system, however, presented another problem. The disintegration of traditional power structure and the loss of decision making on the village level forced the villagers into a state of political dependency. It made them accept the idea that they were incapable of making decisions and resolving conflicts on their own, and that decision making and conflict resolutions should always be done by the administration. To combat this state of mind, and to force the villagers to feel that at least they were capable of making decisions on the village level the traditional leadership system was reintroduced in 1971, and its success and failure still remain to be seen.

Mission and missionaries played an important role in the transformation of Kurti society. Initially, conversion to Christianity was slow but by 1930 Catholic Missionaries at Bundralis station were making some headway.<sup>5</sup> A small school and clinic were established and a number of young boys and girls were attending the school run by the nuns. These boys and girls were taught how to read and write in Pidgin English plus a little German, and basic arithmetic. However, teaching of catechism remained the core of the school's curriculum. Boys who did well in school later became catechists and were sent out to the villages to teach the people the new faith.

World events at that time did not allow further progress in the Kurti area and in Papua New Guinea as a whole. In 1942 the Japanese landed on Manus. The administrative personnel at Lorengau were quickly evacuated. School boys and girls at Bundralis mission station were

told to go back to their villages. The missionaries - Father Urtz, Father Claarwater, Father Borchardt - plus the nuns were taken on board by the Japanese and were beheaded on the way between Manus and Rabaul. The villagers were helpless and were at the mercy of the Japanese. In the Kurti area people left their villages and sought refuge in the forest. This left the villages open for pillage by the Japanese soldiers. Domesticated pigs, chickens and coconuts became the targets. In some Kurti villages people were rounded up and were told to help the Japanese as carriers. In the village of Kup the Japanese lined up the people and told them to either obey or be shot. In this state of helplessness the people, for the sake of their own lives, obeyed the Japanese.

If anything at all could be still remembered about the Japanese, it was their cruelty to the people. Petty theft, lying and disobedience meant flogging and whipping. Men who were caught committing such acts were stretched over the box, their hands and legs tied together and were severely flogged or whipped. In the Kurti area there are accounts of men, who, after having been whipped and flogged were tied to posts and left over night. Other punishments involved marching to and fro with hands outstretched and tied to a piece of wood, put in chains without food for two to three days, forced to strip naked and performed sexual acts for the amusements of the soldiers, and forced to drink a bucket of water until one goes literally out of breath.

In this sort of cruel situation, it was natural that when the Americans landed on Manus in 1943 the people quickly gave them assistance. In the Kurti area the people helped the Americans as carriers

and led them to the inland villages which the Japanese had occupied. For example in the village of Kup the Americans, with the help of the people, surrounded the Japanese who were hiding there and in the early morning at about five when the Japanese were still sound asleep the place was captured. The people told the Americans exactly what houses the Japanese soldiers occupied and hand grenades were then thrown in. Similar attacks were made in the other inland villages.

Besides physical suffering war had some profound psychological effects. An account is still told to this day that in the Kurti village of Pundru a Japanese officer was captured alive by the Americans. Instead of keeping him as a prisoner of war the Americans decided to shoot him in an open space in the presence of the people. Before he was shot at, Kolik Kor, a one time warrior and an appointed Luluai, shouted out aloud to the Americans: "Stop! Take him away somewhere else and shoot him. Do not kill him in my village, in front of me and my people. You white men came and told us not to fight and kill. Yet now you are doing the very same thing that you forbade us to do right in our eyes." An American officer asked what Kolik Kor was saying. Someone interpreted his words to the American officer who supposed to have understood the concern and feelings of the people, took the Japanese officer outside the village and shot him. This simple account, among many, clearly shows the degree of confusion in the minds of the people who not so long ago were punished for fighting and killing and yet the very ones who punished them for doing such things were involved in the same thing. Perhaps one would argue that Americans and Japanese were not Germans and Australians who told the people not to fight and

kill and also that the situation was different. It cannot be doubted that people at that time could tell the difference between Americans and Japanese by their physical features and their military uniforms, and also the difference between Germans and Australians. Unquestionably they knew also that the situation was different - it was war, but what they could not understand and were confused by was the double standard demonstrated by white men and why, in all the world, this double standard was demonstrated in their own eyes and in their own environment.

War came, was fought, was won and was over, but it left behind it a shattered and devastating situation in all aspects - political, economic, social, cultural, moral and religious. All these were to be renewed in the period of reconstruction from August 1945 onwards. Towards the end of 1946 Paliau began his Social Re-organization Movement in South Manus. In 1949 similar movement began in the Kurti area led by Tondrih at Souh, Miyur at NDritambat, and Pake at Liap, in the north coast of Manus. This movement led to an influx of people from the five Kurti inland villages to the coast between 1950 and 1960. In general the movement had two dimensions, as a social re-organization and as a revival of the traditional ancestral worship. In honour of the ancestors crosses were made and placed in every cemetery and mountain tops. Great emphasis was placed on purity of heart and mind and to achieve this all magical objects or objects used in performing magic and sorcery were collected, burnt or thrown out into the blue sea. In its aspects of social re-organization houses were built in lines and taxes were collected into a common pool.

Reactions from the administration and mission were shown differently. To utilize the situation the former quickly introduced two things: firstly, the Council system in 1950, and secondly, the Co'operative system in 1953. In short, the movement had now become a political and economic reconstruction on the village level. The old Luluai system was replaced with Council and the head-tax was replaced with the Council tax. In dealing with the situation the mission assumed that the religious aspect of the movement was entirely against Christian belief and thus the Kurti villages involved were barred from receiving sacraments. A reaction against which led some of the Kurti people to join the so called 'Paliau religion,' and many still are adherents.

Not all the Kurti clans accepted the Council system when it was introduced in 1950. The five inland clans, Pundru, Wamandra, Mundrupureu, Patlok and Mundrau, remained aloof; only Souh, NDritambat and Liap participated. Naturally the leaders of the 1949 movement became the Councillors, Tondrih for Souh, Miyur for NDritambat, and Pake for Liap. On the other hand, the introduction of the Co'operative Society in 1953 based at Souh, and is known as the 'KURTI NATIVE SOCIETY' included all the Kurti clans. Not only that but it also included other language groups or other groups of people, the Andra, Ahus, Ponam, Mundrupulon and Tulu.

Both the Council and the Co'operative systems, naturally, were imposed from outside. The original aim of the Council was to be an institution by which and through which people were to receive some kind of political education. However, as the years passed the primary

aim of the Council has become a secondary aim and the Council seems to be more concentrating on collecting taxes from people than educating them politically. From my observation, one of the reasons for this change of function is that the elected Councillors are villagers who knew nothing or very little about western type politics. Therefore, how can they give to people what they themselves do not have?

The Co'operative system was introduced as a channel to utilize the money collected by the people; and also with the idea that Melanesians are by their culture communal. Initially, it was received with great enthusiasm. However, its downfall was not too far from its success. To my knowledge its initial success was due to its being a novelty and also it was managed by an expatriate named Browne from 1953 to about 1958, but as it passed into the hands of villagers it proved too complicated an operation. The inclusion of other language groups became also one of the causes of its downfall, because the Melanesian system of communal life was misunderstood and applied far too wide. At present the Co'operative continue to exist for some people only in name and to others it is a house which contains only a few sticks of tobacco.

Between 1957 and 1960, the other Kurti inland clans joined the Council system and Kuluah Pei was elected their Councillor. In 1969 Souh and NDritambat joined together under one Councillor, Pangih. While in 1971 Liap joined in with Souh and NDritambat under one Councillor, Kerep Paniu. Three years later the ward system was introduced in Manus, and the Kurti area forms one Council Ward hopefully under one Councillor. The story, having gone full cycle, Manus and the Kurti people once again are masters of their own destiny.

## FOOTNOTES

Introduction

<sup>1</sup>In June-July, 1973, September, 1973, November, 1973-February, 1974, June-July, 1974, February, 1975, and June-July, 1975.

<sup>2</sup>Originally, Manus (a transliteration of the proper term Mwanus), was the name of the sea dwelling group of people on the south coast of Manus studied by Margaret Mead and Reo Fortune. The name, Manus, was later transposed or adopted to mean the entire island as well as the different groups living on it.

On the study of Manus proper, see Margaret Mead, Growing Up In New Guinea, New York, William Morrow and Company 1930; New Lives For Old: Cultural Transformation--Manus 1928-1953, New York, William Morrow and Company 1956; and R. F. Fortune, 'Manus Religion' Oceania, Vol. 2, September, 1931-June 1932, pp. 74-108, and Manus Religion, Lincoln, Nebraska, U.N. Press, 1935.

For articles on Paliau Movement see T. Schwartz, 'The Paliau Movement in the Admiralty Islands, 1946-1954; in Anthropological Papers of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. 49 (2), 1962, pp. 239-241; M. Mead, New Lives For Old: Cultural Transformation--Manus, 1928-1953, New York, William Morrow and Company, 1956, pp. 165-183; A. J. F. Kobben, 'Prophetic Movements as an Expression of Social Protest', in Internationales Archiv Fur Ethnographie, Vol. 49, 1960, pp. 117-164; L. P. Mair, 'Independent Religious Movements in Three Continents', in Comparative Studies in Society and History, Vol. 1, 1958, pp. 113-136; and J. L. Whittaker et al, Documents and Readings in New Guinea History, Queensland, Jacaranda Press Pty. Ltd., 1975, pp. 23-26; and E. K. Fisk, New Guinea on the Threshold, Canberra, A.N.U. Press, 1966, pp. 159-160, 260.

<sup>3</sup>My conversation with Eluh Meyek in December, 1967. She died in March, 1968.

<sup>4</sup>Similar ideas could be found in E. Jefferson Murphy, History of African Civilization, New York, Dell Publishing Co., Inc., 1975, esp. introduction p. xvii-xviii.

<sup>5</sup>M. Mead, New Lives For Old: Cultural Transformation--Manus 1928-1953, New York, William Morrow and Company, Inc., 1975 ed., p. 21.

<sup>6</sup>My interview with Cholai, the Councillor of Lengendrowa and Poliap, the Councillor of MBuke after Council Meeting held at the Manus Local Government Council Centre at Lorengau, September, 1973, and again with Poliap and others during the Christmas gathering of the Paliau followers at MBunai, December, 1973.

<sup>7</sup>Seminar on "Historians and the use of Archives" held in Simon Fraser University, October, 4-5, 1976.

## Chapter 1

<sup>1</sup>The Admiralty Islands were named by Philip Carteret in 1767 in honor of the British Admiralty. Cf. Encyclopedia of Papua New Guinea, Vol. 2 p. 697 and J. L. Whittaker et al., Documents and Readings in New Guinea History, Brisbane, Jacaranda Press, Pty. Ltd., 1975, p. 242. The Bismarck Archipelago was named after the German Prince Otto von Bismarck. See B. Jinks et al., Readings in New Guinea History, Sydney, Angus and Robertson, Pty. Ltd., 1973, p. 156. Papua New Guinea received its full political independence from Australia on September 16, 1975. See, Constitution of the Independent State of Papua New Guinea, Port Moresby, PNG Government Printer, 1975, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup>Encyclopedia of Papua New Guinea, Vol. 2, p. 695. Also see map 1.

<sup>3</sup>Daniel Hawthorne, Islands of the Pacific, New York, G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1943, p. 155. Also see map 1.

<sup>4</sup>Encyclopedia of Papua New Guinea, Vol. 2, p. 695. Also see map 1.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., p. 695. Also see map 1.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., p. 695. Also see map 1 and 2.

<sup>7</sup>Papua New Guinea Handbook, Sydney, Pacific Publications, Pty. Ltd., 8th ed., 1976, p. 243.

<sup>8</sup>Authorities on the geography of Papua New Guinea give different dimensions for Manus Island. The details above are based on: Encyclopedia of Papua New Guinea, Vol. 2, p. 695; Fairfield Osborn, The Pacific World, New York, W. W. Norton and Company, Inc., 1944, p. 119; Daniel Hawthorne, Islands of the Pacific, New York, G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1943, p. 155; and Papua New Guinea Handbook, Sydney, Pacific Publications, Pty. Ltd., 7th ed., 1974, p. 291, and 8th ed., 1976, p. 243.

<sup>9</sup>Encyclopedia of Papua New Guinea, Vol. 2, p. 695; and Papua New Guinea Handbook, Sydney, Pacific Publications, Pty. Ltd., 7th ed., 1974, p. 291. Mount Dremsel is known by the Kurti people as Mount Kesak, one of the migration points on the south coast of Manus described in chapter 6.

<sup>10</sup>Encyclopedia of Papua New Guinea, Vol. 2, p. 695.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid., p. 695.

<sup>12</sup>See map 3.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid.

<sup>14</sup>Encyclopedia of Papua New Guinea, Vol. 2, p. 695. Also see map 3.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid.

<sup>16</sup>See map 3.

<sup>17</sup>See maps 3 and 4.

<sup>18</sup>See map 4.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid.

<sup>21</sup>Ibid.

<sup>22</sup>Encyclopedia of Papua New Guinea, Vol. 2, p. 695.

<sup>23</sup>Ibid., p. 697. Also Ian Geoffrey Ord, Atlas of the South West Pacific, Brisbane, Jacaranda Press, Pty., Ltd., 1968, p. 5; and Papua New Guinea Handbook, Sydney, Pacific Publications, Pty., Ltd., 7th ed., 1974, p. 291 and 8th ed. 1976, p. 243.

<sup>24</sup>Encyclopedia of Papua New Guinea, Vol. 2, p. 697.

<sup>25</sup>Ibid., p. 697; also Ian Geoffrey Ord, Atlas of the South West Pacific, Brisbane, Jacaranda Press, Pty., Ltd., 1968, p. 5.

## Chapter 2

<sup>1</sup>Encyclopedia of Papua New Guinea, Vol. 2, p. 296; Ian Geoffrey Ord, Atlas of the South West Pacific, Brisbane, Jacaranda Press, 1968, p. 5; Papua New Guinea Handbook, Sydney, Pacific Publications, Pty., Ltd., 7th ed., 1974, p. 291, and 8th ed., 1976, p. 243.

<sup>2</sup>Margaret Mead, Growing Up in New Guinea, New York, William Morrow and Company, 1975 ed., p. 296-297. The use of metal dishes has put an end to the wooden bowl industry, while canoes are still being made and used as the only means of inter-island transportation. The Manus people construct two basic types of canoes, which are called perirohou and lahet in the Kurti vernacular. Both are made of dug-out logs and fitted with outrigger. The latter is built up with extra boards on both sides, thereby affording a greater volume. In general, the former type is used for short distance travel while the latter for long distances. Sails are used on both types of canoes; the latter uses three sails at a minimum and four at a maximum. Since 1970 onwards the use of outboard motor engines fitted on the sides of canoes have gradually replaced sails, and even affected the construction of canoes themselves.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid. The white clay used for pottery making by the Ahus Islanders is obtained from a site inland of Kereng Point in the Liap territory. See maps 3 and 4. The introduction of metal pots and the issues over land rights and ownership in the late 1950's and early 1960's put an end to pottery making in Manus.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., For location of the islands, see map 2.

<sup>5</sup>Encyclopedia of Papua New Guinea, Vol. 2, p. 697.

<sup>6</sup>See map 4.

<sup>7</sup>Taro is cultivated by inland and coastal villages on the eastern part of the island while the coastal villages to the west rely heavily on singapore. According to a legend, taro began in the east but stopped somehow or another in its movement westward. This tale is supported by the hypothesis that taro cannot be cultivated by the villagers in the west because of the presence of certain kinds of beetles of the rhinoceros family which destroy the young shoots. Whether or not these stories can be accepted in the absence of a scientific proof is not particularly important. The fact remains that the cultivation of taro is a basic occupation of the eastern inland and coastal villages. The presence of taro and its cultivation, restricted as it is to the eastern region, may give us some idea of the way in which different groups of people migrated to Manus. It may very well suggest that the inland and coastal peoples to the east were the first taro cultivators who came to Manus, but the issue of migration is a complex one which needs to be investigated by lengthy fieldwork.

<sup>8</sup>Encyclopedia of Papua New Guinea, Vol. 2, p. 695.

<sup>9</sup>These social functions are described in chapter 4 under customs.

<sup>10</sup>The Kurti people view hunger not as the result of poverty but of laziness. The bulk of the present day population of the Kurti, although linked to modern metropolitan economies, depend for their subsistence upon tillage, hunting, fishing and collection of forest products.

<sup>11</sup>The technology of extracting sago flour from sago palms differs from one area to another throughout Manus and Papua New Guinea at least from what I have seen and heard in my travels in Manus and in some parts of Papua New Guinea where sago palms are grown in abundance, for example, the East Sepik Province and the Gulf Province (see map 1). What I have described is what is done by the Kurti people on Manus Island.

<sup>12</sup>Encyclopedia of Papua New Guinea, Vol. 2, p. 697.

<sup>13</sup>The systematic cultivation and processing of coconuts for copra was introduced during the 1890's and early 1900's by the Germans. Coconut is still the basic cash crop for the Kurti people.

<sup>14</sup>For detail, see Ian Hogbin and Peter Lawrence, Studies in New Guinea Land Tenure, Sydney, Sydney University Press, 1967, pp. 47-50 and 93-99; and Bronislaw Malinowski, Coral Gardens and their Magic, London, George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1935, pp. 52-55 and 290-295.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid., see Hogbin and Lawrence (1967), pp. 60 and 98, and pp. 290-316. Also see Kenelm Burridge, Tangu Traditions, Oxford, OUP, 1969, pp. 36-59, esp. p. 44.

<sup>16</sup>For detailed information on garden making among the Wogeo and Garia peoples, see Ian Hogbin and Peter Lawrence, Studies in New Guinea, Sydney, SUP, 1967, on "Tillage and Collection in Wogeo" pp. 47-90, esp. p. 60, and on "Land Tenure Among the Garia," pp. 93-116, esp. p. 98; among the Tangu people see Kenelm Burridge, Tangu Traditions, Oxford, OUP, 1969, pp. 36-59, esp. p. 45; and among the Trobriand Islanders, see Bronislaw Malinowski, Coral Gardens and their Magic, London, George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1935, pp. 52-83, esp. p. 57 and pp. 84-109, esp. p. 87.

<sup>17</sup>A stout pole about two meters long sharpened and sometimes fire hardened at one end to a point.

<sup>18</sup>Sweet potatoes, and yams are regarded by the Kurti people as supplementary food crops, not staple.

<sup>19</sup> Some detailed references to this can be found in Ian Hogbin and Peter Lawrence, Studies in New Guinea Land Tenure, Sydney, SUP, 1967, pp. 58-64 and 95-99; Gerard Ward, Man in the Pacific Islands, Oxford, OUP, 1972, pp. 38-39; Kenelm Burridge, Tangu Traditions, Oxford, OUP, 1969, pp. 40-47; and Bronislaw Malinowski, Coral Gardens and their Magic, London, George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1935, pp. 57-60.

<sup>20</sup> For detailed readings on the application of rituals in garden making, see Ian Hogbin and Peter Lawrence, Studies in New Guinea Land Tenure, Sydney, SUP, 1967, pp. 95-100; and Bronislaw Malinowski, Coral Gardens and their Magic, Vol. 1 and 2, London, George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1935, esp. Vol. 1, pp. 290-316. For a fuller analysis of ritual beliefs and practices see Peter Lawrence, "Cargo Cult and Religious Beliefs among the Garia," International Archives of Ethnography, Vol. 47, No. 1, 1954, and Road Belong Cargo, Manchester University Press, 1964, pp. 25-26 and 28-33.

<sup>21</sup> Jack Golson, "The Remarkable History of Indo-Pacific Man: Missing Chapters from Every World Prehistory," ANU, Search, Vol. 3, No. 1-2, January-February, 1972, p. 15, and Archaeology and Agricultural History in the New Guinea Highlands, Canberra, ANU, 1974.

<sup>22</sup> The scientific or European names of these fruit trees are not known. The above list is based on the Kurti vernacular. A detailed description of these fruit trees is unnecessary, as the sole purpose of enumerating them is to give some kind of general idea of what and how many different kinds of fruit trees grown on the island and their uses to the people.

<sup>23</sup> The above list is based on the Kurti vernacular, to give some general idea of the types of vegetables useful to the people.

<sup>24</sup> See Margaret Mead, Growing Up in New Guinea, New York, William Morrow and Company, 1975 ed., pp. 295-298.

<sup>25</sup> For detail, see Bronislaw Malinowski, Argonauts of the Western Pacific, London, Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd., 1922; C. G. Seligman, The Melanesians of British New Guinea, Cambridge, CUP, 1910; F. E. Williams, 'Trading Voyages from the Gulf of Papua,' Oceania, Vol. 3, September, 1932-June, 1933, pp. 140-166; Encyclopedia of Papua New Guinea, Vol. 1, pp. 523-527; T. G. Harding, Voyages of the Vitiaz Strait, Seattle, UWP, 1967; and A. Strathern, The Rope of Moka, Cambridge, CUP, 1971.

<sup>26</sup> See Margaret Mead, Growing Up in New Guinea, New York, William Morrow and Company, 1975 ed., p. 296.

<sup>27</sup> With contact money is now used although some food items are still bartered for.

### Chapter 3

<sup>1</sup>This tradition will be treated at length in Chapter 6. For location of Mount Kesak and Pat Mundrupureu, see maps 3 and 4.

<sup>2</sup>See p. 83. Also Table 1.

<sup>3</sup>Customary activities are described in the next chapter.

<sup>4</sup>Dead members include ancestors and recent dead relatives.

<sup>5</sup>The festival of Lapan (see pp. 54-57) is hosted, among other purposes, in honour of the dead ancestors.

<sup>6</sup>It is believed that the spirits of the dead appear to living relatives to announce certain messages such as the arrival of an unexpected relative, the death of a relative or some accident that may happen or has happened to a relative. The spirits of the dead appear to the living either during the day or night in the form of insects. Their appearance is greeted with a bit of food, a lighted cigarette or rolled tobacco placed in front of them with the belief that they would consume the essence. They are personified with the following questions: Who are you? Where do you come from? What is it you want? and What news do you bring? Obviously no answers are given and such appearance leaves the living relatives to wait and see what would happen. The spirits of the dead are also said to be seen in dreams and in the forms of humans. Similar attitudes and beliefs are also described among the Wogeos and the Trobriand Islanders, in Ian Hogbin, The Island of Menstruating Men, London, Chandler Publishing Company, 1970, pp. 55-57; Bronislaw Malinowski, Magic, Science and Religion, New York, Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1954, pp. 160-190.

## Chapter 4

<sup>1</sup>See map 3. How and why the Kurti came to occupy this land area will be treated in Chapters 6, 7 and 8.

<sup>2</sup>See map 3.

<sup>3</sup>See maps 2 and 3.

<sup>4</sup>The Mwanus, among whom Margaret Mead (1928-1953), Reo Fortune (1935) and Theodore Schwartz (1954) worked, are essentially a group of sea-going people who devote most of their time to fishing, travelling on their huge outrigger canoes, fitted with three or four sails, and trading. They inhabit some of the south coast of the main island and the adjacent islands of which the larger ones are MBuke, Lou, Baluan, and Rambutjo (see map 2). They are heavily populated. It is from this group of people that Manus derives its name.

Originally the Usiai are those who inhabited the inland area on Manus. The term, however, has been extended and its meaning now includes those who live in the coastal villages. Both the inland and the coastal people are primarily agriculturalists though the coastal people take to fishing as well. The word Usiai is sometimes used in a derogatory sense to suggest that the coastal and inland peoples lack knowledge of swimming and of sailing canoes.

The word Matankor, taken literally, means the "eye of the place;" matan means "eye" and kor means "place", since the surrounding islands are considered as the eyes of the main island. In its original sense, Matankor included not only those who lived on the islands but also those who were coastal peoples. This term, however, has come to apply only to those living on the surrounding islands. The Matankor, like the Mwanus, are basically canoe sailors, travellers and traders.

Although the Manus people's traditional classification of themselves is, to some extent, still being used, the differences have tended to disappear. Both the coastal and the inland peoples today have come to learn the art of making and sailing of canoes. This has put them on a common footing with the Mwanus and the Matankor and has broken down the latter's traditional status.

Two factors may account for the traditional classification of the Manus people into three groups. First, as we have seen, the classification was based on geographical location; the islanders, Matankor, the inlanders, Usiai, and the Mwanus, who inhabited some of the southern mainland coast and the islands. While this division may be valid in a general sense, a closer examination reveals exceptions. On the south coast, the term Matankor applies only to the people living in coastal villages and the Usiai are those living inland. The Matankor are both agriculturalists and fishermen and form a link between the Mwanus and Usiai. In the north coast the term Matankor has come to mean only those people inhabiting the off shore islands and Usiai includes both the coastal and inland inhabitants. This change in context may very well have come about because the islanders, when using the term Usiai,

do not only refer to the people, but also to the entire mainland itself.

Differences between the Manus people of the Admiralty Group and the Western Islanders are quite evident (see maps 1 and 2). The former are ethnologically classed as Melanesian, while the latter are Micronesian, related to the people of the Caroline and the Marshall Islands north of the Equator.

For references to the classification of Manus people, see Margaret Mead, Growing Up in New Guinea, 1975 ed., pp. 293-301, Encyclopedia of Papua New Guinea, Vol. 2, p. 698.

<sup>5</sup>The Kurti language is one of at least eighteen different languages spoken on Manus: Baribeu, Diyoh, Ele, Elu, Ere, Kali, Kara, Kele, Koro, Lei, Lele, Nali, Nane, Tehik, Tein, Titan, and Waroh. Whether some of these languages may be considered to be dialects is a matter for professional linguists. My concern here is less with analyzing each language on Manus than to look at them in terms of their geographical relationship and group classification. Whatever I say here is based on my own observation and understanding of Manus linguistic situation.

The Ele, Elu, Ere, Kara, Kele, Kurti, Lele, Nali and some of Koro inhabit the eastern mainland. The Tein and some of Koro inhabit the Los Negros Island. The Tehik inhabit the islands east of Los Negros Island. The Diyoh, Lei and Waroh occupy the coral islands off the north coast. The Nane group inhabit parts of the northwest and southwest coasts. The Baribeu group occupy some of the northwest coast and the adjacent islands. The Kali group occupy the west coast and the adjacent islands. The Titan group inhabit some of the southern mainland coast and the volcanic islands.

Although these languages may be considered different they can be generally understood, and indeed close relationships exist between some of them, for instance, Kurti, Kele, Elu, and Ere; Kara and Koro; Ele, Lele and Nali, Tein and Tehik; Baribeu and Kali. Titan is generally related to Nali and Koro and is understood all over the south coast as far as Loniu village on Los Negros Island. In comparison to the other languages, Titan, sometimes referred to as Mwanus Titan, seems to be the largest and most homogenous group. The terms Matankor and Usiai were used by the Mwanus to describe not only the various groups, other than the Mwanus themselves, but also the languages they speak. To the north and east of Manus, the Diyoh, Waroh, Lei, Koro, Tein, and Tehik, use the word Usiai not only to mean the mainland people, but also their somewhat related languages; for example, the Diyoh say nenen usia, meaning the Usiai languages.

<sup>6</sup>The same principle applies to the other language group on Manus, although they may be called after the islands or the villages they come from.

<sup>7</sup>Tradition of common ancestry will be treated in Chapter 6.

<sup>8</sup>Especially the festivals of Yo'on and Lapan, pp. 50-57.

<sup>9</sup>Also known as Lomperewit which literally means 'inside of the stones of the fire place'.

<sup>10</sup>The first born child to a couple is called NDrihou. In relation to children born after it, it is called Tolun (elder) and the others are called Tosien. The last child of a couple is called Net Nemur.

<sup>11</sup>These gifts consist of newly made baskets, mats, strings of dogs' teeth and shell money, domestic utensils and nowadays money is involved.

<sup>12</sup>The naming of a child takes place when the woman's mother picks up the child in her arms, and before the distribution and eating of the food.

<sup>13</sup>The term Nou defies any strict definition. However, it generally means a period of decoration and seclusion with reference to young women.

<sup>14</sup>Bride price or bride's wealth distribution fulfills two functions. First, in its social function it brings the relatives of the newly wedded couples together; and second, in this social function it acts as a legal sanction. The marriage is not only a matter of the two involved but of the whole community. Thus in the event of marital problems, divorce not only effects the couple involved, but also has a direct impact on the community. Therefore, before divorce is allotted to a particular couple the community has to give permission which in most cases is rarely given. But if one of the partners involved insists upon divorce, he or she has to pay up all that has been provided to him or her by his or her relatives. This fear of paying up so much prevents a high divorce rate among the Kurti people in particular, and the Manus society in general.

<sup>15</sup>Sometimes the festivals of Nowii and Nak Um take place simultaneously. The parents and relatives of the newly wedded couple exchange wealth, after which food is cooked, exchanged, distributed and eaten to celebrate the occasion.

<sup>16</sup>The exchange of wealth in this festivity is called Sawii, meaning, gift to gift, which may not necessarily be equal in amount.

<sup>17</sup>The building of a men's house is only one of the typical cases leading to the Yo'on festival. It may be held after the leader has fed several pigs, made several gardens of taro, in honour of dead ancestors or purely for his own economic and social status.

<sup>18</sup>Kakah (house leaders) will be discussed in the next chapter.

<sup>19</sup>The centre post is known as NDruu or NDruwen NDrokornu'um, symbolizing common ancestry and unity of the group.

<sup>20</sup>The belief here is not only to take their share of the food but also to help the distributor to distribute wisely and equally, as much as possible, to all participants in order to avoid ill-feelings and anger from both the living and the dead.

<sup>21</sup>One of the signs of a good and successful leadership is to always try to keep members of other units in debt.

<sup>22</sup>One Kina (K1) in Papua New Guinea currency is approximately one dollar Australian (\$A1): K1 PNG = \$A1.

<sup>23</sup>With the introduction of Christianity the term Lapan has been Christianized to mean God.

<sup>24</sup>On December 14, 1972 I officiated the ceremony of distribution of articles after my mother's burial.

<sup>25</sup>In November, 1973, I participated in the Merei ceremony given in honour of Rahak, a woman who died at Kari village a month before.

<sup>26</sup>Strictly speaking the festivity takes place after one thousand days. However, it may be held before that depending on the productivity and the economic and social status of the dead person's relatives.

<sup>27</sup>The process of abstaining from eating some kind of food or from some personal comfort in honour of the dead is called Luhuu.

<sup>28</sup>The period of three or four days before the ceremony of Lohopou is called Tokur which means 'preparation'.

<sup>29</sup>The long period of mourning, Mutuu, sometimes ends a day before the festival.

<sup>30</sup>The distribution of food items and pigs, Losengin, meaning inside the meat or flesh, is either performed by the brother, parallel or cross cousins of the dead person.

<sup>31</sup>See my description on ancestral spirits in Chapter 3.

<sup>32</sup>Further aspects of leaders acquisition of political and economic power will be treated in the next chapter.

## Chapter 5

<sup>1</sup>The term hokor can be used to mean the entire Kurti group, in the sense of a tribe, or to mean each clan. Hokor and hokou are frequently used interchangeably depending on the circumstance. Although strictly defined, hokou and um are also used interchangeably. For quick reference to social structure see Tables 1-9.

<sup>2</sup>The Pusu house in the NDrokoron sub-clan is a remnant of a group of people who were conquered by the Kurti. This episode is described in Chapter 7.

<sup>3</sup>The event leading to the addition of Patlok and Sengin NDrukul sub-clans in the present Liap clan is treated in Chapter 8.

<sup>4</sup>Government Bureau of Census and Statistics, Lorengau, Manus, May 18, 1972.

<sup>5</sup>See map 4.

<sup>6</sup>See T. Schwartz, 'The Paliau Movement in the Admiralty Islands, 1946-1954' in Anthropological Papers of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. 49 (2), 1962, pp. 239-241; and Margaret Mead, New Lives For Old: Cultural Transformation-Manus, 1928-1953, New York, William Morrow and Company, Inc., 1975 ed., pp. 165-183. In the Kurti area the movement was led by Gabriel Tondrih of Souh, Miyur Pihwas of NDritambat and Pake Warah of Liap, in the late 1949. In 1950 the Paliau Movement led to the establishment of the Council system in Manus.

<sup>7</sup>The conflict arose over the issues of land, education and religion.

<sup>8</sup>In 1968 coffee and rubber were introduced to the Kurti inland area. They are grown on a cooperative basis.

<sup>9</sup>See festivals of Musoh, Yo'on and Lapan, pp. 48-57.

<sup>10</sup>See pp. 39-62.

<sup>11</sup>For festivals directed to such purposes see pp. 46-50.

<sup>12</sup>Land tenure is a vast subject demanding a separate treatment. Here, however, I have tried to describe it briefly in its relation to the political and economic organization in the Kurti society.

<sup>13</sup>Ian Hogbin and Peter Lawrence, Studies in New Guinea Land Tenure, Sydney, SUP, 1967, p. 3. It is estimated that between 1884 and 1914, 702,000 acres of land were alienated from the local land owners by the Germans in New Guinea. During the Australian occupation these acres of land were expropriated and given to Australian planters and settlers.

See C. D. Rowley, The Australians in German New Guinea, 1914-1921, Melbourne, Melbourne Uni. Press, 1958, pp. 53-54.

<sup>14</sup>Hogbin and Lawrence, 1967, p. 3.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid., p. 3.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid., p. 3.

<sup>17</sup>Land issues in the Kurti area is still very prevalent today. Since the early 1960's there have been court cases held either at Lorengau or in the villages but, to the best of my knowledge, there have not been any definite resolutions on these cases.

<sup>18</sup>During my fieldwork I attended several of these land cases held in three of the Kurti villages. In June-July, 1973, while I was at Liap, four land cases were held, during which the Councillor, Kerep Paniu, after listening to the contestants and at the advice of the house leaders, pronounced that Soni, Menei, Kuweh and Kupue were not to use the land which they were supposed to have been entitled to through their great-great-grandmothers.

In December, 1973, three other cases were held, one at Kari and two at Souh. The Kari case ended with Ko'ou Kisiyuu who was told by the Councillor, Kuluah Pei, with the advice of the leaders, not to use the land in question. At Souh, NDramei Kiyohou with his two brothers, Paleu and Tokiak, and Ehet Nahol, were told by Kerep Paniu, the Councillor, with the advice of the leaders, to keep off the land in question.

Whether this new development provides a good solution for land issues and problems in the Kurti area, remains to be seen.

<sup>19</sup>An example of this is that of Tayan Pawih and his brother, Selsel Pawih, of the Patlok clan. Both have strips of land inherited from their father, Pawih Neu, at Patlok. At the same time they have strips of land in the Kup sub-clan of the Souh clan inherited from their mother's brother, Lomundriu. In the Wamandra clan the two brothers have strips of land which their great-great-grandfather, NDrasasih, acquired from his mother's brother, Turehe.

<sup>20</sup>The case of Kereng Kiyohou of Souh, among many, serves as an example here. Prior to his death in 1958 he divided his holdings among his six sons, Kele'eh, Ne'en, Menei, Tombui, NDramoi and Hakai. In January, 1974, Kele'eh, the eldest, informed me that since his last two brothers were too young, their father entrusted their property to his care. However, he said, we all use the property anyway.

<sup>21</sup>In November, 1973, while I was at Kari, a quarrel over land broke out between three brothers, Piko, Pamundru, and Ekis. As usual, the matter was brought to the notice of the Councillor, Kuluah Pei, and at the hearing Piko, the eldest, stated that Pamundru violated the right of their younger brother, Ekis, by using part of his land strip to plant his young rubber trees. A complaint from Ekis resulted in a

violent temper by Pamundru. Piko sided with Ekis. I gathered from their mother, Naron Melek, that their father, Wa'il Mueh, prior to his death sometimes in the early 1950's, decided to divide his property among his three sons to avoid future conflict. However, she said, his plan did not solve what he intended.

<sup>22</sup>This situation varies from one family group to another, depending on the type of individuals constituting the group. As stated elsewhere, individual rights to property, at most times, are purely nominal. In the present situation the property of a brother who is working somewhere else is used by those who remain in the village.

<sup>23</sup>My maternal uncle, Poheu Wiyah, of the Mundrau clan, provides this example. He died without dividing his property among his sons, Waliu, Pohou, Engei and Nawoi, who have not divided their father's property among themselves. Reasons being, as Waliu said to me, that they do not consider it wise to divide up their father's property, to use the land on a co-operative basis for cash crops, coffee and rubber, and that any present land division would result in their children and grandchildren each possessing less and less strips of land. He said application of European land law would lead naturally in future to some people left without land.

<sup>24</sup>Two cases serve as examples here. Pahun Mandra and Sapat Paniu, both of the Souh clan, died without male children but left behind them a daughter each, Eluh Pahun and Naron Sapat who inherited their respective father's property.

people often named individuals or groups of individuals after the place where they come from, or after some objects plentiful in their area of habitation.

<sup>8</sup>Of the six groups, Souh and NDritambat and later Liap migrated to the coast.

<sup>9</sup>The names of these six children are given in order of their birth. They were the first six ancestors of the six original Kurti clans. Later, two other clans were formed making a total of eight, as we saw in the section on social structure. The full account of the formation of the two other clans will be dealt with elsewhere in this section. Later still, the Kurti people referred to themselves as consisting of nine clans. This ninth clan was a colonial creation as we shall see later.

<sup>10</sup>The formation of the Wamandra and Pundru clans will be described later in the chapter.

<sup>11</sup>See Table 1.

<sup>12</sup>These are only the major settlement sites of the NDrokoron sub-clan. See map 5 (1).

<sup>13</sup>See map 5 (1).

<sup>14</sup>Ibid.

<sup>15</sup>See map 5 (2).

<sup>16</sup>Ibid.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid.

<sup>18</sup>Pat Pihin and Pat Kamal, means "Stone Woman and Stone Man." They were given such names because of their appearances as man and woman standing together when seen from the sea coast. They are rock formations about two hundred meters high on the side of the mountain ridge overlooking the Lowo River.

<sup>19</sup>See map 5 (2).

<sup>20</sup>See map 5 (3).

<sup>21</sup>The Liap clan at present consists of three sub-clans, Musinen (the original group), Patlok and Sengin NDrukul. The account of the Musinen (liap) to the north coast and the inclusion of the two new sub-clans will be provided in Chapter 8.

<sup>22</sup>See map 5 (4).

<sup>23</sup>See map 5 (5).

<sup>24</sup>See map 5 (6).

<sup>25</sup>See Table 1.

<sup>26</sup>See map 5 (7).

<sup>27</sup>See Table 1.

<sup>28</sup>See map 5 (8).

<sup>29</sup>The descendants of the groups of people who were subjugated and assimilated by the Tulu tribe are still mixed with the Tulu people, and have come to identify themselves as members of Tulu tribe. For location of Mount NDrápoe and Tulu, see map 3.

<sup>30</sup>NDrongusun, one of the minor settlement sites of the Lonuur sub-clan of the NDritambat clan. It is part of the Leng Lonuur settlement.

<sup>31</sup>Traditionally dead bodies were either buried or hung up in a basket to rot. In this case people leave the site to escape the smell. This type of basket is called NDrop and is woven from the bark of the poh tree.

<sup>32</sup>This fruit tree is known as NDrau in vernacular. They grow big and tall and bear fruit once every two years. Their fruit is similar to plums except that it has a hard skin which is easily broken.

<sup>33</sup>The Puyong people speak Kele language similar to Kurti.

<sup>34</sup>One of the traditional methods of peace making.

<sup>35</sup>See Table 1.

Chapter 7

<sup>1</sup>The account of the migration of Liap to the coast will be detailed in the next chapter. The concentration here will be entirely on the Souh and NDritambat with occasional references to the other clans.

<sup>2</sup>Even among the Kurti people today land is still the bone of contention.

<sup>3</sup>According to oral tradition, the surrender followed a fierce battle in which sixty Kundren were killed. This included men, women and children. It occurred at Mokon on the side of Lowo River. See map 4.

<sup>4</sup>NDriwah Kenii came from the Tolau sub-clan of the Souh clan and Muroh Kuop came from the Pahndrampat sub-clan of the NDritambat clan. The two sub-clans' migration routes led them directly into Kundren land area. See maps 4, 5 (1) and 5 (2).

<sup>5</sup>Nane language spoken by Mundrupulon, Tulu and Pohwai.

<sup>6</sup>See map 4.

## Chapter 8

<sup>1</sup>Popon, an old man of about sixty-five. Both Popen and Popon are members of the Musinen sub-clan. I talked to them in June 28, 1973, at NDrapakou. From them I recorded the migration story of the Musinen to the coast and the details of the settlements sites.

For Kohun, see footnote 2, Chapter 6.

For Popen, see genealogy, p. 86.

<sup>2</sup>In the Kurti counting system different words stand for animate and inanimate objects. This is a general rule. However, some animates, according to the counting system, are classified as inanimates. For instance, homou, rumuu, tulmuu, and so forth, refer to humans, animals, and fish, though some animals and fish are classified as inanimates. On the other hand, sih, ruweh, toloh, and so on, refer to inanimate objects, including some parts of human body. Thus the vagina, although a part of the human body, falls within the inanimate category.

<sup>3</sup>See maps 4 and 5 (4).

## Chapter 9

<sup>1</sup>Prominent war leaders of the Mundrau clan were: Oroï Sakei and Purii Sawan both of the Pahal sub-clan, Sukei Kurur of Manen sub-clan, and Purum Wangei of the MBusu sub-clan.

<sup>2</sup>At the present time the trench (lewes) is almost filled in some parts with soil from the sides which has fallen in, and by shrubs and trees on and around it. As I did not bring any proper measuring device with me, I used a long bush rope and later measured the rope with a ruler. Both ends of the rope were used to measure the depth and width of the trench.

Exactly when this trench was dug, how long it took and the number of men involved in digging it, my informant, Pohoyap, (a man of about sixty, of Mundrau clan) could not tell me. The tools used for digging this trench were digging sticks and coconut shells, baskets were used for removing soil. I talked to Pohoyap in his hut at Lemoei, on July 6, 1973, a week before he died.

<sup>3</sup>The peace treaty concluded after this war is described in chapter 10.

<sup>4</sup>In 1919 NDrakali and his three partners, Semel Menei, Putleu Marandrulkul and Tela Kuyan, killed Mr. Reis, a German planter on Saha plantation, treated in chapter 13.

<sup>5</sup>The peace treaty concluded after this war is described in chapter 10.

<sup>6</sup>My informants, Pohoyap (see footnote 2) and Tukele stated separately that this conflict occurred just after the defeat of the Pohwai. They could not specify any exact time when this conflict occurred, but suggested independently that it lasted for a couple of weeks and quickly came to be solved.

My informant, Tukele, is a man of about fifty-six. His mother, Ewih Nohou (see footnote 11) was a member of the Loso'ou house (um) in the NDrokoron sub-clan of the Souh clan, and his father, NDre'ewik Lan (long since dead) belonged to the Manen sub-clan of the Mundrau clan. I talked to him in his house at NDrurei Point (see map 4) on Monday December 31, 1973.

<sup>7</sup>This is one of the traditional methods of solving conflicts. An open space (ndrohu heso, place of spear throwing) is reserved for such purposes. In an open combat such as this, both groups go to the open space; one group at one end and one at the other. At the sound of a slit-gong both groups begin to hurl spears to and fro. Unlike the other type of open warfare which took place at various locations, this was a controlled type; and the controlling instrument was the slit-gong. The man on the slit-gong controlled the combat by rapping out appropriate beats to begin, to rest and to end the combat. If there were wounded men on the battle field, he rapped out the beat to rest,

to allow the wounded to be carried or escorted from the field. Then the beat to begin again was rapped up and the battle continued. In this particular method of solving conflict, the winning side was the side that successfully brought death upon a member of the other group. At this point the combat was ended by a beat on the slit-gong signifying death and both groups dispersed. The dead person was brought home and after a period of mourning, was buried. The losing side may or may not retaliate, and the winning side may seek compensation by going elsewhere to kill someone.

This open space was also used for military training. Young boys were accompanied by men to this area and were taught how to throw spears, and how to avoid spears thrown at them. In traditional warfare emphasis was placed on how to throw spears accurately at the vital parts of the body and on how to skillfully avoid being shot by the enemy. Great physical agility was required by the aspirants. Running and shooting as well as distance and angular shooting were also important parts of the exercise and training. In the course of their training and as part of it, the aspirants would at times accompany the warriors to fight against other groups of people if there was a battle in progress.

<sup>8</sup> Tradition does not specify which leg it was. It only states that Marampo'et shot Kapemanampuu in his leg with a spear called podt, made from the hard skin of betel-nut tree.

When I asked why Marampo'et and Kapemanampuu joined in the combat which both should not have been involved in at all, my informants, Tukele, Pohoyap and Ewih Nohou, stated independently that first and foremost they were warriors and as such they could not resist the urge to join in. However, they suspected that their participation must have had something to do with their relationship with both sub-clans and this was evident from the fact that they, on their arrival, immediately took sides, Marampo'et to Pahal and Kapemanampuu to Manen.

<sup>9</sup> Tukele of Manen and Kongah of Pahal were very close relatives. After the combat both planned to seek compensation for the death of Kapemanampuu by going on a spy tour (lulo'ou) somewhere else outside of the Kurti area. They feared that if compensation was not claimed, the two sub-clans would not only violate the traditional customary practices of making compensation but also the Kup sub-clan (of the Souh clan) would seek vengeance against them even though explanation of the case was clear. The idea here was not literally to send the dead body in payment but after killing someone, the news of the killing would be sent to Kup.

<sup>10</sup> These umbrellas (elei) are made of pandanus leaves of various lengths and sizes. They cover the entire head and upper part of the body.

<sup>11</sup> According to my informant, Ewih Nohou, a great-grandmother, about eighty-eight years old, the war between the Mundrau and the Souh sub-clan, NDrokoron, was of short duration. She could not specify the exact length of time, but suggested that it probably lasted no longer

than a year. I talked to Ewih Nohou in her daughter's house at NDrurei Point on July 5, 1973. From her I recorded the narrative of warfare between the Mundrau and the Souh, and between the Souh and the five inland Kurti clans.

My informant, Pohoyap, (see footnote 2) also independently stated that the length of time for this war was about a year.

The NDrokoron sub-clan consists of six houses (um): Lisii, Loso'ou, Mo, Mundralau, Mundriyai and Pusu (the remnants of the Pusu tribe). Pel Pulou, whose son was killed by Piko, belonged to the Loso'ou house, who occupied the settlement sites of Emuendret, Lingke'es, Punei and Lopoholindrou. (See map 5 (1)).

Both Ewih Nohou and Pohoyap stated that the whole Souh clan was involved, and that the initiative for peace came from the badly defeated Loso'ou house. They considered it proper before more lives were lost. Both informants affirmed that the peace treaty made after this war was hardly observed for the Mundrau, with the other four inland clans, launched attacks on the Souh, an episode to be described immediately in this chapter.

<sup>12</sup>See maps 4 and 5 (1).

<sup>13</sup>See p. 101 and map 4.

<sup>14</sup>According to custom, the breaking of a lime gourd in battle is a sign of courage, a sign of showing one's strength to fight to the death. In other circumstances, as in building of a clan's house or the offering of a feast, it signifies the solidarity and cooperation of the members of the group. In this case it shows the strength of a group as opposed to others.

<sup>15</sup>In traditional Kurti society dead bodies of famous individuals were not buried, but kept in a relative's house to rot away. Usually, the bed (kuwah) was hung up on ropes and surrounded with coconut leaves. The dead body was placed on the bed and covered with mats (eiei) made from pandanus leaves. When the flesh had rotted away, the bones were collected and either buried or kept in a safe place, perhaps to be used for magical purposes.

<sup>16</sup>Buka NDrakali, a man of about fifty eight, comes from the Wamandra clan. He is one of the three sons of NDrakali, a famous warrior in the Wamandra clan. NDrakali lead a group of people from the Kurti inland clans who murdered Mr. Reis, a German planter on Saha plantation on the northcoast of Manus in 1919. This episode will be treated in Chapter 13. I talked to Buka NDrakali in his house at Tangkepe on June 30, 1973.

About Kohun, see footnote 2, Chapter 6.

<sup>17</sup>Kohun estimated that the length of time elapsed between the killing of the two Souh men and burial of Keh Lowa's bones and the hosting of the festival of Lapan at Mundrupureu by Kiak Puleu, could have been about two to three years.

<sup>18</sup> Kahmele Layou married Nawis Neu, sister of NDrakei NDrau who was hosting the feast, Musoh. According to custom he had to accompany his wife to the feast and present whatever wealth he had to his brother-in-law to enhance his in-law's social prestige.

<sup>19</sup> NDrapak Nohou, was the father of Ewih Nohou one of my informants (see footnote 11).

<sup>20</sup> Initially the Mundrau clan remained neutral. It is situated inland but aligned itself less with the other four clans, than with the Souh. However, individuals in the ranks of the Mundrau fought on the side of the other four clans against the Souh. Hence, the good relationship between the Mundrau and the Souh deteriorated.

<sup>21</sup> Kolik Kor later became the appointed Luluai of the Pundru clan. See Chapter 12, p. 200. Kolik Kor died in 1960.

<sup>22</sup> Red and White torn trees.

<sup>23</sup> Pahlou Koyuu, on his return from employment with Mr. Komine, was a full grown man and married my mother, Olou Tako'on, from the Mundrau clan. From this marriage my half-brother Linus Kelehehei was born. Pahlou Koyuu died a few years later, leaving my mother and my half-brother Linus Kelehehei behind him. My mother then married my father, Pohou Nohou, who was also a widower with three children, one boy and two girls. Out of the second marriage of my father and mother six children were born of whom I am the last. Out of the six children, a boy and a girl died, leaving four alive, three boys and a girl.

<sup>24</sup> In August, 1911 Isokide Komine was granted a lease of 500 acres of agricultural land on Manus by the German Governor, Albert Hahl, and by 1914 Komine had established coconut plantations and trade stores at Pitilu island (east), Kali (west), NDromalmal (north), Langendrowa (south, on Rambutjo Island), and Momote (east, on Los Negros Island). Altogether Komine had about twenty other Japanese with him. For further information see Peter Biskup, "Foreign Coloured Labour in German New Guinea," in The Journal of Pacific History, Vol. 5, 1970, p. 103.

<sup>25</sup> My informants, Kohun, Tukele and Pohoyap stated that Mr. Sweinzin was the German official stationed at Lorengau between 1900 and 1914. His first station was established at Kali Bay some twenty kilometers west of Lorengau. Later the Kali Bay station was abandoned in favour of Lorengau because the bay was found to be full of reefs and big rolling waves which made it unsafe for ships to anchor. Only the small prison camp with a police detachment remained at Kali Bay but was removed to Lorengau later.

Hayeu and Kisili were two of the many Manus people recruited by the Germans and were known as "German Police Boys." They were sent with eight others armed with a rifle each and bullets to help the Souh drive the NDrukul inland. In 1960 I saw Kisili who came to visit the Souh people. I can still picture him, an old man with broad shoulders, tall and muscular.

<sup>26</sup>This event became as one of the causes of the killing of Mr. Reis a German planter at Saha plantation in 1919 by the NDrukul group headed by NDrakali. The NDrukul saw the use of firearms as an act of intrusion by the Europeans into traditional warfare; and their reaction against this intrusion resulted in the death of Mr. Reis. This episode and its ramifications will be discussed in Chapter 13.

<sup>27</sup>These settlements are all in the territory of the NDrokoron sub-clan of the Souh clan. As mentioned above, the NDropsol settlement is in the territory of the Kup sub-clan. None of the settlements of the Tolau sub-clan was occupied. They were closer to the sea coast and the NDrukul considered them as already within their area of occupation since all the remaining Tolau and Kup joined the NDrokoron at the Lo'ou settlement.

<sup>28</sup>The role of traditional peace treaties and the use of fire arms in this phase of traditional warfare will be discussed in the next chapter.

<sup>29</sup>When I talked to her she showed me the healed scar on her back, on her right side parallel with her back bone just below her shoulder blade. From my observation the scar was about sixteen to eighteen centimeters long. (About her and her son Tukele, see footnotes 6 and 11).

<sup>30</sup>Pahun Nohou was later appointed Luluai for Mundrupureu. (See p. 201).

<sup>31</sup>I owe this insight into the role of local people in assisting colonial officials throughout Papua New Guinea in the process of pacification and the establishment of law and order, to Professor Charles D. Rowley, who was Professor of Political Studies at the University of Papua New Guinea, and with whom I had a number of discussions prior to my fieldwork.

<sup>26</sup>This event became as one of the causes of the killing of Mr. Reis a German planter at Saha plantation in 1919 by the NDrukul group headed by NDrakali. The NDrukul saw the use of firearms as an act of intrusion by the Europeans into traditional warfare; and their reaction against this intrusion resulted in the death of Mr. Reis. This episode and its ramifications will be discussed in Chapter 13.

<sup>27</sup>These settlements are all in the territory of the NDrokoron sub-clan of the Souh clan. As mentioned above, the NDropsol settlement is in the territory of the Kup sub-clan. None of the settlements of the Tolau sub-clan was occupied. They were closer to the sea coast and the NDrukul considered them as already within their area of occupation since all the remaining Tolau and Kup joined the NDrokoron at the Lo'ou settlement.

<sup>28</sup>The role of traditional peace treaties and the use of fire arms in this phase of traditional warfare will be discussed in the next chapter.

<sup>29</sup>When I talked to her she showed me the healed scar on her back, on her right side parallel with her back bone just below her shoulder blade. From my observation the scar was about sixteen to eighteen centimeters long. (About her and her son Tukele, see footnotes 6 and 11).

<sup>30</sup>Pahun Nohou was later appointed Luluai for Mundrupureu. (See p. 201).

<sup>31</sup>I owe this insight into the role of local people in assisting colonial officials throughout Papua New Guinea in the process of pacification and the establishment of law and order, to Professor Charles D. Rowley, who was Professor of Political Studies at the University of Papua New Guinea, and with whom I had a number of discussions prior to my fieldwork.

## Chapter 6

<sup>1</sup>From Pat Mundrupureu the second wave of migration to the north coast took place. For the Kurti people, Pat Mundrupureu serves as their point of origin.

<sup>2</sup>Kohun, a man of about sixty, is a member of the clan of Mundrupureu, and by occupation, a subsistence farmer. I spent two days with him, June 27-28, 1973, in his house at Andru Point (see map 4). From him I recorded the complete account of the Kurti tradition of origin, migration, causes of traditional warfare, effects of European intrusion on the Kurti society, especially, in relation to the establishment of the German administration on the village level, the murder of Mr. Reis, a German planter by NDrakali and his three other friends, the search, capture and the hanging of the murderers by Australian Military Officials in early 1920, and the present relationship between each Kurti village.

Nuhwon, a man of about fifty nine, comes from the Wamandra clan, and is primarily a subsistence farmer. From him I recorded accounts of migration, warfare and noted down some genealogies of the Wamandra clan. Our interview took place on Monday, November 12, 1973, at 8:30 p.m. and lasted till 2 p.m. in the men's house at Parampenuu, part of the present Kari village occupied by the Wamandra clan.

Since dates of birth were not always recorded in the Kurti society, as elsewhere in Melanesia, I worked them out roughly on the basis of particular events, for example, World Wars I and II. I asked them how old or big they were during one of those two events. They would answer by referring to a child in the village. Then I enquired from the child's parents and consulted the medical birth records in order to calculate the child's age. This method is rough and inaccurate but I found no other way more precise to determine my informants' ages.

<sup>3</sup>NDruktoi is about ten kilometers southeast of Pat Mundrupureu (see maps 3 and 4). This Nane group is known today as Tulu. The language, Nane, is also spoken by two other groups, Kukohoi (Mundrupulon), east of Tulu and Pohwai, on the south coast of Manus (see map 3).

<sup>4</sup>As outside contact intensified, especially with the establishment of the German administration in 1911 and the coming of the Australians in 1914, these six groups merged under the common name of Tulu. Similar things happened to other groups on Manus, including the Kurti.

<sup>5</sup>The Ele group is known today as Lowa.

<sup>6</sup>The present Kele group consists of Puyong, Kawa and Tingou; the Ere group comprises Lohii, Londru, Mataworei and NDrakitou; and the Nali group consists of Lahan and Nohang.

<sup>7</sup>Notice the name. She is called after the mountain where she and her group are alleged to have come from. Later we shall see that the

## Chapter 11

<sup>1</sup>J. L. Whittaker, J. F. Hookey, N. G. Gash, and R. J. Lacey, Documents and Readings in New Guinea History: Prehistory to 1889, Queensland, Jacaranda Press, Pty., Ltd., 1975, p. 184.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 183; Daniel Hawthorne, Islands of the Pacific, New York, G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1943, p. 155; and Papua New Guinea Handbook, Sydney, Pacific Publications, Pty., Ltd., 7th ed., 1974, p. 293.

<sup>3</sup>Encyclopedia of Papua New Guinea, Vol. 2, p. 697.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 697; and Whittaker et al., 1975, p. 242.

<sup>5</sup>Whittaker et al., 1975, pp. 289-290.

<sup>6</sup>Encyclopedia of Papua New Guinea, Vol. 2, p. 697.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid., p. 697, and Whittaker et al., 1975, pp. 320-327.

<sup>8</sup>Whittaker et al., 1975, pp. 322-323.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid., p. 323.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid., p. 327.

<sup>11</sup>See maps 2 and 3.

<sup>12</sup>Whittaker et al., 1975, pp. 235-236; also Encyclopedia of Papua New Guinea, Vol. 2, p. 697. For detail reading, see H. N. Moseley, "On the Inhabitants of the Admiralty Islands," Journal of Royal Anthropological Institute, London, 1877, Vol. 6, p. 379 et seq.

<sup>13</sup>R. G. Ward, Man in the Pacific Islands, Oxford, OUP, 1972, p. 35. Other references related to whaling operations in the Pacific can be found in: C. H. Grattan, The Southwest Pacific to 1900, Michigan, University of Michigan Press, 1963, pp. 193-195, and The Southwest Pacific Since 1900, Michigan, Michigan University Press, 1963, p. 595 et seq.; J. I. Brookes, International Rivalry in the Pacific Islands 1800-1875, Berkeley, California, University of California Press, 1941, pp. 10-40; W. P. Morrell, Britain in the Pacific Islands, Oxford, OUP, 1960, pp. 29, 57, 66, 75-76, 112, 168, 240, 266-267, 269, 281, and 286; H. Brookfield, The Pacific in Transition, London, Edward Arnold (Publishers) Ltd., 1973, p. 241; J. W. Davidson and D. Scarr, Pacific Islands Portraits, Canberra, ANU Press, 1970, pp. 6, 13, 81, 132, and 204; and P. Corris, Passage, Port and Plantation, Melbourne, Melbourne University Press, 1973, pp. 7-8, 12, and 32.

<sup>14</sup>Whittaker et al., 1975, pp. 317-327; P. Corris, "Blackbirding in New Guinea Waters, 1883-1884," in The Journal of Pacific History, Vol. 3, 1968, p. 86; and Encyclopedia of Papua New Guinea, Vol. 2, p. 697.

15 Ward, Man in the Pacific Islands, 1972, p. 36.

16 Encyclopedia of Papua New Guinea, Vol. 2, p. 697; also see map of whaling grounds in New Guinea waters in J. L. Whittaker et al., 1975, p. 317.

17 Whittaker et al., 1975, p. 321.

18 G. Ward, Man in the Pacific Islands, 1972, pp. 21-118; C. H. Grattan, The Southwest Pacific to 1900, 1963, pp. 188-196; J. I. Brookes, International Rivalry in the Pacific Islands, 1941, pp. 10-40, 173; W. P. Morrell, Britain in the Pacific Islands, 1960, pp. 25-38, 41-42, 58-61, 66-68, 89-103, 141, 171, 189-193, 210, 241, 263, 316, 331, 410 and 418; H. Brookfield, The Pacific in Transition, 1973, pp. 195, 233-241; Whittaker et al., 1975, pp. 176, 316-319, 386-387, 391 and 396; D. Shineberg, They Came For Sandalwood, Victoria, Melbourne University Press, 1967, pp. 145-162; and "The Sandalwood Trade in Melanesian Economics: 1841-1865," Journal of Pacific History, Vol. 1, 1966, pp. 129-146; H. E. Maude, Of Islands and Men, Oxford, OUP., 1968, pp. 233-283; J. W. Davidson and D. Scarr, Pacific Islands Portraits, Canberra, ANU Press, 1970, pp. 6, 10-19, 20-27, 41-44, 78-81, 98, 101-102, 107, 117, 132, 141, 180, 204-207, 211-218, 225-226, 228-229, 248-249, 275, and 293; and E. W. Docker, The Blackbirders, Sydney, Angus and Robertson Ltd., 1970, pp. 8-9, 26, 28, 34, and 43.

19 For detailed studies of bêche-de-mer and sandalwood trades in the Pacific, read R. G. Ward, Man in the Pacific Islands, 1972, pp. 91-118; D. Shineberg, They Came For Sandalwood: A Study of the sandalwood trade in the South-West Pacific 1830-1865, Victoria, Melbourne University Press, 1967; and "The Sandalwood trade in Melanesian economics, 1841-1865," in The Journal of Pacific History, Vol. 1, 1966, pp. 129-146; W. P. Morrell, Britain in the Pacific Islands, Oxford, OUP, 1960, pp. 89-100; and H. E. Maude, Of Islands and Men, Oxford, OUP, 1968, pp. 343-371; and D. Shineberg, The Trading Voyages Of Andrew Cheyne 1841-1844, Honolulu, University of Hawaii Press, 1971, pp. 194-199, and 234.

20 For detailed studies of the Labour Trade in the Pacific, read R. G. Ward, Man in the Pacific Islands, 1972, pp. 124-142; E. W. Docker, The Blackbirders: The Recruiting of South Seas Labour for Queensland 1863-1907, Sydney, Angus and Robertson, 1970; W. T. Wawn, The South Sea Islanders and the Queensland Labour Trade: A Record of Voyages and Experiences in the Western Pacific, from 1875 to 1891, London, Swan Sonnenschein and Co., 1893; O. W. Parnaby, Britain And The Labour Trade In The Southwest Pacific, Durham, N. C., Duke University Press, 1964; G. Palmer, Kidnapping in the South Seas, Edinburgh, Edmonston and Douglas, 1871; A. H. Markham, The Cruise of the "Rosario," London, Dawsons of Pall Mall, 1970; P. Corris, Passage, Port and Plantation: A History of Solomon Islands Labour Migration 1870-1914, Melbourne, Melbourne University Press, 1973; D. Scarr, Fragments of Empire, Canberra, ANU Press, 1967; C. H. Grattan, The Southwest Pacific to 1900,

Michigan, University of Michigan Press, 1963, pp. 407-470; B. Jinks et al., Readings in New Guinea History, Sydney, Angus and Robertson (Publishers) Pty., Ltd., 1973, pp. 14-19; W. P. Morrell, Britain in the Pacific Islands, Oxford, OUP, 1960, pp. 171-186; J. W. Davidson and D. Scarr, Pacific Islands Portraits, Canberra, ANU Press, 1970, pp. 225-251; D. Scarr, "Recruits and recruiters: A portrait of the Pacific Islands Labour Trade," in The Journal of Pacific History, Vol. 2, 1967, pp. 5-24; P. Corris, "'Blackbirding' in New Guinea Waters, 1883-1884," in The Journal of Pacific History, Vol. 3, 1968, pp. 85-105; and the "Pacific Island Labour Migrants in Queensland," in The Journal of Pacific History, Vol. 5, 1970, pp. 43-64; P. Biskup, "Foreign Coloured Labour in German New Guinea: a study in economic development," in The Journal of Pacific History, Vol. 5, 1970, pp. 85-107; and all articles on the Labour Trade in The Journal of Pacific History, Vol. 11, 1-2, 1976.

<sup>21</sup>Parnaby, Britain And The Labour Trade In The Southwest Pacific, 1964, p. 203.

<sup>22</sup>Scarr, Fragments of Empire, 1967, p. 138.

<sup>23</sup>J. A. Bennet, "Immigration, 'blackbirding,' labour recruiting? The Hawaiian experience 1885-1887," in The Journal of Pacific History, Vol. 1, 1976, p. 8 et seq.

<sup>24</sup>Wawn, The South Sea Islanders, 1893, p. 313.

<sup>25</sup>For a map showing the main recruiting routes, see E. W. Docker, The Blackbirders, 1970, p. 3.

<sup>26</sup>A detail study of German imperialism in the Pacific leading to the annexation of New Guinea exceeds the scope of this paper and I shall only make a brief mention of it. Some information on German annexation of New Guinea can be found in J. L. Whittaker et al., Documents and Readings in New Guinea History, 1975, pp. 435-509; B. Jinks et al., Readings in New Guinea History, 1973, pp. 154-201; P. Biskup et al., A Short History of New Guinea, Sydney, Angus and Robertson Ltd., 1968, pp. 41-56; L. P. Mair, Australia in New Guinea, Victoria, Melbourne University Press, 2nd ed., 1970, pp. 10-11; A. G. Price, The Challenge of New Guinea, Sydney, Angus and Robertson Ltd., 1965, pp. 66-68, 76-82; C. D. Rowley, The Australians in German New Guinea, Melbourne, Melbourne University Press, 1958; L. S. Amery, The German Colonial Claim, Edinburgh, Edinburgh University Press, 1939, pp. 50, 58, 60, 64, 78, 80, 86, 89-90, 118, 148, 160, 167, 187.

<sup>27</sup>For further background information on the German annexation of New Guinea, see P. Lawrence, Road Belong Cargo, Manchester, Manchester University Press, 1964, p. 35 et seq.; Whittaker et al., 1975, pp. 446-493; W. P. Morrell, Britain in the Pacific Islands, 1960, pp. 238-268; and C. H. Grattan, The Southwest Pacific to 1900, 1963, pp. 489-498.

<sup>28</sup>W. O. Henderson, Studies in German Colonial History, London, Frank Cass and Co., Ltd., 1962, p. 11 et seq.; Whittaker et al., 1975, p. 466; and B. Jinks et al., 1973, p. 157.

<sup>29</sup>H. Jenkyns, British Rule and Jurisdiction beyond the Seas, Oxford, OUP, 1902, pp. 172-173. For Germany, see Henderson, Studies in German Colonial History, 1962, pp. 11-30.

<sup>30</sup>B. Jinks et al., Readings in New Guinea History, 1973, pp. 154-157; and Whittaker et al., Documents and Readings in New Guinea History, 1975, pp. 472-474.

<sup>31</sup>For further information on the activities of the New Guinea Company see, O. W. Henderson, Studies in German Colonial History, London, 1962, pp. 21-23; A.L.C. Bullock, Germany's Colonial Demands, Westport, Greenwood Press, 1975, pp. 215-219; P. Hastings, New Guinea: Problems and Prospects, Melbourne, Melbourne University Press, 1969, pp. 67-71; J. L. Whittaker et al., Documents and Readings in New Guinea History, 1975, pp. 466-473; B. Jinks et al., Readings in New Guinea History, 1973, pp. 157-159 and 165-167; G. Souter, New Guinea: The Last Unknown, Sydney, Angus and Robertson, 1964, pp. 70-88; P. Lawrence, Road Belong Cargo, Manchester, Manchester University Press, 1964, pp. 36-37; and P. W. van der Veur, Search for New Guinea's Boundaries, Canberra, ANU Press, 1966, pp. 16-20.

<sup>32</sup>For further details of the Luluai system see, P. Biskup, "Dr. Albert Hahl-Sketch of a German Colonial Official," Australian Journal of Politics and History, Vol. 14, December, 1968, pp. 342-357; B. Jinks et al., Readings in New Guinea History, 1973, pp. 186-194; J. L. Whittaker et al., Documents and Readings in New Guinea History, 1975, pp. 86-88; C. D. Rowley, 'Native Officials and Magistrates of German New Guinea, 1897-1921,' South Pacific, Vol. 7, 1954, pp. 772-781, and Australians in German New Guinea, 1914-1921, 1958, pp. 213-232; B. Danks, 'On the Shell Money of New Britain,' Journal of Anthropological Institute, Vol. 17, 1888, pp. 305-317; R. F. Salisbury, 'Despotism and Australian Administration in the New Guinea Highlands,' American Anthropologist, Vol. 66, pp. 235-237; R. F. Salisbury et al., 'Politics and Shell Money Finance in New Britain,' Political Anthropology, pp. 113-128, and R. Parkinson, Dreissig Jahre in der Sudsee (trans. N. C. Barry), pp. 62-66, 121-124.

<sup>33</sup>J. L. Whittaker et al., Documents and Readings in New Guinea History, 1975, pp. 30 and 86.

<sup>34</sup>S. Firth, "The Transformation of the Labour Trade in German New Guinea, 1899-1914," in The Journal of Pacific History, Vol. 11 (1-2), 1976, p. 55, and B. Jinks et al., Readings in New Guinea History, 1973, p. 199.

<sup>35</sup>Encyclopedia of Papua New Guinea, Vol. 2, p. 697. BA/MA, 630: Militarpolitische Bericht SMS Condor 12 April, 1904.

- <sup>36</sup>Neverman, Admiralitats Inseln, pp. 7-9.
- <sup>37</sup>Report by Wostrack, enclosed in Hahl to AAKA 26 July, 1901 RKA 2989: 42.
- <sup>38</sup>R. W. Robson, Queen Emma, Sydney, Pacific Publications, 1965, p. 231.
- <sup>39</sup>Encyclopedia of Papua New Guinea, Vol. 2, p. 697.
- <sup>40</sup>Robson, 1965, p. 232.
- <sup>41</sup>Ibid.
- <sup>42</sup>Compare list of New Guinean acts of violence before 1899 in Werner, 'Geschichte des deutschen Kolonialgebietes;' also Nevermann, Admiralitats Inseln, pp. 9-12.
- <sup>43</sup>Robson, 1965, p. 233.
- <sup>44</sup>Ibid.
- <sup>45</sup>Ibid.
- <sup>46</sup>Hahl to AAKA 26 July, 1901 RKA 2989: 37-38; Staatsarchiv Bremen, Deutsche Sudsee Phosphat Papers, Vol. 1: Hahl to AAKA 8 February, 1907, in Hahl to Wiegand 16 April, 1908; Deutsches Kolonialblatt, 1900, p. 212.
- <sup>47</sup>von Bennigsen to AAKA 8 August, 1899 and 24 September, 1899 RKA2987:109-121, 131-140;  
von Bennigsen to AAKA 26 February, 1900 RKA2987:149-50;  
von Bennigsen to AAKA 14 April, 1900 RKA2988:25-26.
- <sup>48</sup>von Bennigsen to AAKA 24 August, 1900 RKA2988:149-50; Wostrack report in Hahl to AAKA 26 July, 1901 RKA 2989:39-49; Karlowa to Hahl 10 March, 1906 RKA 2992:22.
- <sup>49</sup>The Missionaries of the Sacred Heart (MSC) came to New Britain in 1882. For further readings on Missions in Papua New Guinea see, B. Jinks et al., Readings in New Guinea History, 1973, pp. 168-172; J. L. Whittaker et al., Documents and Readings in New Guinea History, 1975, pp. 331-385, 409-431; Peter J. Hempenstall, "The reception of European missions in the German Pacific empire: the New Guinea experience," The Journal of Pacific History, Vol. 10, (1-2), 1975, pp. 46-64; G. Souter, New Guinea: The Last Unknown, Sydney, Angus and Robertson, 1963, pp. 23, 75, 113, 120, 128-131, 185, 202-205; P. Biskup et al., A Short History of New Guinea, Sydney, Angus and Robertson, 1968, pp. 28-40; C. D. Rowley, The New Guinea Villager, Melbourne, F. W. Cheshire Pty. Ltd., 1965, pp. 128-159; G. Price, The Challenge of New Guinea, Sydney, Angus and Robertson, 1965, pp. 39-42, 90, 154-155; L. P. Mair, Australia in New Guinea, 2nd ed., 1970, pp. 38-39, 78, 100, 131, 219-227, 233.

<sup>50</sup> Die Katholischen Missionen, 1907/08, Nr. 3, p. 69; Hahl to AAKA, June, 1904, RKA2990:155.

<sup>51</sup> RKA to Hahl 5 October, 1908 RKA2993:25-26; Hahl to RKA 21 April, 1908 RKA2993:19-20; BA/MA, 630: Militarpolitische Bericht SMS Condor 12 April, 1904.

<sup>52</sup> 'Bericht des Bezirksamtmann Herbertshohe uber eine Reise nach den Admiralitats Inseln,' 25 December, 1907 in RKA2992:238-242; Klug to Hahl 11 July, 1909 RKA2993:154; Nevermann, Admiralitats Inseln, p. 14. An account of Po Minis' activities on Manus in the early 1900's is outlined in The Journal of Pacific History, Vol. 10, (1-2), 1975, pp. 58-59.

<sup>53</sup> Annual Reports 1905/06, p. 109; Hahl to Kdr. SMS Cormoran 22 September, 1909 in RKA2993:201.

<sup>54</sup> Hahl to Kdr SMS Condor 12 March, 1904 in RKA2990:76-77; Amtsblatt Neuguinea, 15 March, 1910, pp. 49-50; Klug to Hahl 11 July, 1909 RKA2993:155.

<sup>55</sup> S. Firth, 'German Recruitment,' p. 172; BA/MA, Vol. 51: Militarpolitische Bericht SMS Cormoran 31 August, 1911.

<sup>56</sup> CAO, CP 661/15, folder 4.

<sup>57</sup> German New Guinea, Annual Report, 1909-1910, p. 5. For a detailed account of Komine and the other Asians employed in German New Guinea see, Peter Biskup, "Foreign Coloured Labour in German New Guinea," The Journal of Pacific History, Vol. 5, 1970, pp. 85-107, also Stewart Firth, "The Transformation of the Labour Trade in German New Guinea, 1899-1914," The Journal of Pacific History, Vol. 11 (1-2), 1976, pp. 51-65.

<sup>58</sup> B. Jinks et al., Readings in New Guinea History, 1973, p. 242; and Katolik Nius, Catholic Press Vunapope, Kokopo, No. 4, April, 1967, pp. 52-54.

<sup>59</sup> Katolik Nius, No. 4, April, 1967, pp. 52-54. In 1919 Mr. Reis was murdered in his house on his plantation at Saha, by some warriors of the Kurti inland groups. This episode will form the basis of Chapter 13.

<sup>60</sup> B. Jinks et al., Readings in New Guinea History, 1973, p. 202. For further readings on the Australian occupation of German New Guinea, see C. Rowley, The Australians in German New Guinea 1914-1921, Melbourne, Melbourne University Press, 1958; B. Jinks et al., Readings in New Guinea History, 1973, pp. 202-444; L. P. Mair, Australia in New Guinea, 2nd. ed., 1970; and P. Biskup et al., A Short History of New Guinea, 1968, pp. 86-179.

<sup>61</sup>For further readings on the Australian Military Rule in German New Guinea from 1914 to 1921 see B. Jinks et al., Readings in New Guinea History, 1973, pp. 202-229; L. P. Mair, Australia in New Guinea, 2nd. ed., 1970, pp. 13-16; C. D. Rowley, The Australians in German New Guinea, 1914-1921, 1958, pp. 1-45; P. Biskup et al., A Short History of New Guinea, 1968, pp. 86-93; G. Price, The Challenge of New Guinea, 1965, pp. 76-90.

## Chapter 12

<sup>1</sup>According to my informants, Kohun, Kuwah, Kire'ei, and Popon, Mr. Sweinzin was the German official who set up administrative settlement on Manus. The first site of settlement was at Kali Bay in the Kurti land area about twenty kilometers west of Lorengau, the present provincial headquarters, established in 1911.

<sup>2</sup>See pp. 135-137.

<sup>3</sup>These were told to me by Pohak in December, 1967. From my rough estimation he was between seventy and eighty years old. He said he was recruited when he was still a fairly young boy and grew up in his years as a labourer in Rabaul and Samoa. This information was also confirmed by Kuwah Kohai, a man between seventy and eighty years old, from the Souh clan. He was in his teens during the German administration and worked as a housekeeper at Lorengau. In the 1920's and 1940's he was recruited to Wau and Bulolo goldfields. On his return to Manus after the Second World War, he married my first born half-sister, Menyen. Kuwah Kohai died in August, 1969.

<sup>4</sup>P. Biskup, 'Foreign Coloured Labour in German New Guinea,' The Journal of Pacific History, Vol. 5, 1970, p. 103.

<sup>5</sup>I talked with Pohak during Christmas of 1967. He died in January, 1968. I can still remember him as an old man, slim, and dark with white hair. From Pohak I learned that Lewuh Pehlii, my patrilineal grand uncle, died in Samoa. I did not have a chance to talk with Saliiau who I met at the market place at Lorengau just as I was boarding the bus for Momote airport to Rabaul on January 1st, 1968.

<sup>6</sup>Pahlou Koyuu (see p. 132) was not recruited to Rabaul. At the end of his term of labour with Mr. Komine at Pitilu Island he returned home and was appointed the first Luluai for the two Souh sub-clans, NDrokoron and Tolau.

<sup>7</sup>See pp. 63, 90.

<sup>8</sup>See p. 132 et seq.

<sup>9</sup>Both houses originated from KUU their common ancestor.

<sup>10</sup>This account of Pahlou Koyuu's connection with Mr. Komine in the purchase of the NDromalmal plantation is well known particularly by the older members of the Souh clan. It is recounted again and again by the older people to the younger generations. It was recounted to me in 1967, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1974 and 1975, first by my mother, Olou Tako'on, who died on December 13, 1972, and by my brother John NDrohoo; also by the following Souh people, to name but a few: Kerep Paniau, one of the sons of Paniau NDrowoh and the only son alive today, who is about

fifty-six years old, and is presently the Councillor for the combined Souh-NDritambat-Liap Council Ward; NDramei Sayek a man of about sixty; and NDroke'en Kimou a man of about fifty-nine, a one time Luluai in the 1940's and 1950's and Councillor for the Souh in the 1960's.

Between 1968 and 1972 the Souh people appealed to the Land Titles Commission to have the plantation given to them for a community project and to make copra to support the Cooperative Society established in 1953. Their appeals were rejected each time and as a result they gave up supporting the Cooperative Society based in Souh. Since 1972 the Cooperative has been dying slowly. In 1972 the Land Titles Commission divided the plantation into blocks and leased them out for 99 years to individuals, most of them Kurti from various clans, upon successful application. The policy behind this move was to establish individual ownership, where owners would hire workers to develop their blocks. This plan has failed because individual owners could not hire workers, and even those who did for some time lost their labour force because some owners became stingy about money and failed to pay their labourers their just due. Since their appeals were in vain, various family groups began to work their own coconut plantations and sell their copra to the Copra Marketing Board (C.M.B.) which gives them a better price than if they sell to the Cooperative Society.

<sup>11</sup>His name is forgotten but he is described as being of a medium height, with a puny physical appearance. There was a joke that he was obeyed more out of pity than out of fear.

<sup>12</sup>Official records are unavailable, due to destruction by the Japanese during World War II, but older members of the Kurti group still remember such payments made in the early days of plantation labour. I obtained this information during my fieldwork from 1973-1975 from the following people: NDret Pahun, Nuhwon Kourih, Pohoyap, Popon, Sawa Kuweh, Lalam, Kohun, Tikirik and Kire'ei, NDramei Sayek and NDroke'en Kimou.

<sup>13</sup>Practically all the appointed Luluais of the inland clans were traditional leaders in one way or another. Their appointment was a measure intended to redirect their energy from warfare to implementing peace, law and order.

<sup>14</sup>Kimou Pohak was the father of NDroke'en Kimou who in the 1940's and 1950's was the Luluai for the Souh and in the 1960's became a Councillor. According to NDroke'en's estimation this incident occurred about 1918. Kesum Kose was the eldest brother of Tapo and Ka'or who are still alive, and this information was told to me in June, 1973 by them and NDroke'en.

<sup>15</sup>The death of NDramei Kuluah became one of the causes of the murder of Mr. Reis in 1919. NDramei Kuluah was a nephew of NDrakali Kihndreng a warrior from the Wamandra clan, who led the group to kill Mr. Reis. This information was provided by Pelit Wayah, one of the two wives of NDrakali. Pelit Wayah is a great-grandmother who was about 86

years old at the time of my interview with her in June, 1973.

<sup>16</sup>The narrative concerning the flogging of these men was told to me by NDret Pahun. Poheu Wiyah was my maternal uncle.

<sup>17</sup>C. D. Rowley, The Australians in German New Guinea, 1914-1921, Melbourne, Melbourne University Press, 1958, pp. 16-17, 34-45, 167, 187, 194, 210-232; and The New Guinea Villager, Melbourne, F. W. Cheshire Pty., Ltd., 1965, pp. 63-89; L. P. Mair, Australia in New Guinea, Victoria, Melbourne University Press, 2nd. ed., 1970, pp. 65-87, 103, 194; B. Jinks et al., Readings in New Guinea History, Sydney, Angus and Robertson (Publishers) Pty., Ltd., 1973, pp. 186-188, 256-259; P. Hastings, New Guinea: Problems and Prospects, Melbourne, F. W. Cheshire Publishing Pty., Ltd., 1969, pp. 71, 132; K. Burrige, Mambu, New York, Harper and Row, Publishers, 1970, pp. 73-80; P. Biskup et al., A Short History of New Guinea, Sydney, Angus and Robertson Ltd., 1968, pp. 47-48, 96; P. Lawrence, Road Belong Cargo, Manchester, Manchester University Press, 1964, pp. 43-44, 47-49, 82, 96-97, 107-109, 119, 122, 142, 144-145, 150, 153, 156, 160, 198, 201, 211, 217-218, 221, 228-229, 251; K. Burrige, Tangu Traditions, Oxford, OUP, 1969, pp. 24-27; and E. K. Fisk, New Guinea on the Threshold, Canberra, ANU Press, 1966, pp. 4, 13, 157, 190, 261.

<sup>18</sup>For list of houses (um) in the Tolau sub-clan, see Table 2.

<sup>19</sup>See Table 2.

<sup>20</sup>The name was derived from the Pidgin word meaning "New Work". It was named such after the erection of the officials' house. The NDrokoron sub-clan moved there from their previous separate settlements.

<sup>21</sup>See Table 2.

<sup>22</sup>Kerep Paniu, son of Paniu NDrowoh the leader (kakah) of the Lombureu house.

<sup>23</sup>See Table 3.

<sup>24</sup>See Table 4.

<sup>25</sup>See Table 5.

<sup>26</sup>See Table 6.

<sup>27</sup>See Table 7.

<sup>28</sup>See Table 8.

<sup>29</sup>See Table 9.

<sup>30</sup>This information was given to me by the following informants who witnessed the incident, Pelit, Kohun, NDret Pahun, Melyen Nohou, Engei Muyen, and Peris Wamoi son of Wamoi Yohang.

### Chapter 13

<sup>1</sup>Katolik Nius, Vunapope, Catholic Mission Press, No. 4, 1967, pp. 52-54.

<sup>2</sup>Unfortunately, this particular event has been denied pages in the history books written by Europeans about European contact in New Guinea. Lack of documented materials on this subject confines me to materials collected during my 1973-1975 fieldwork. In the preceding pages I shall present the causes and the traditional politics that led to the murder of Mr. Reis and its consequences that were witnessed and experienced by some of my Kurti informants. The men who actually killed Mr. Reis were, NDrakali Kihndreng, Putleu Marandrulkul and Semel Menei. Tela Kuyan participated in the planning of the event, but since he was the Luluai, he refrained from taking part in the actual killing. As we shall see later in the chapter, Tela Kuyan, although was found not guilty, insisted to be hung with the other three men. Very brief references to these men and Mr. Reis are cited in 'Manus Island Gallows,' in the Pacific Islands Monthly, Vol. 40(B), October 1969, p. 38; and Katolik Nius, No. 4, 1967, pp. 52-54.

Pelit Wayah was one of the two wives of NDrakali Kihndreng; the other wife was Pokei Kaheu, dead some years ago, came from Puyong, a group of people who speak the Kele language akin to Kurti. My interview with Pelit took place on July 3, 1973. From her I recorded a complete account of the causes of the murder as well as the capture and finally the hanging of the four men at Pahal in early 1920.

Buka NDrakali (mother, Pelit Wayah) and MBusihii NDrakali (mother, Pokei Kaheu) are two sons of NDrakali Kihndreng. Buka is the older of the two sons by about a year. From my calculations in July 3, 1973, I would estimate that Buka was then about 58 and MBusihii about 57 years old. During their period of hiding in the bush they were carried around by their mothers. From them I recorded some background information about their father's life, planning of the murder and the hanging at Pahal. These were probably told to them by their mothers and relatives.

Other informants were Engei Muyen, about 85, of the Mundrau clan, wife of Putleu Marandrulkul one of the four men. She supplied me with information about her husband's war activities, removal of women to Lorengau during the police search, condition of women at Lorengau and the hanging of the four men at Pahal. Kari Semel, about sixty, son of Semel Menei one of the four men. From him I recorded some accounts of his father's war activities, initial planning prior to the murder, and the hanging at Pahal. Kohun Kaleweh from whom I recorded a full account of the incident. Other informants who witnessed the hanging at Pahal were NDret Pahun, Pohoyap, Ewih Nohou, and Melyen Nohou and Taliu NDrelok. During the police search, women were brought to Lorengau, put under custody, used by men for sexual pleasure, and some were taken as wives. Melyen Nohou was taken as a wife by a Police Master.

<sup>3</sup>According to Pelit Wayah, Eluh NDrih of Puyong was the first wife of NDrakali Kihndreng. Upon her death NDrakali Kihndreng married Pokei Kaheu. Mukom Pehlil, wife of Panau Kalon of Liap, and Sawa Nuhwon, wife of Sim Simah of Mundrau.

<sup>4</sup>Tamues did not die but the wounds made him invalid. Tamues had two wives Kapat NDrihin of the sub-clan of Pahal in the Mundrau clan, and Pelit Wayah of the Wamandra clan. The two women quarrelled over a taro garden and their quarrel led to a fight in which Pelit Wayah was the victor. Ayii Okok, mother of Kohun Kaleweh, separated the two women. After the fight Tamues favoured Kapat NDrihin and divorced Pelit Wayah who later married NDrakali Kihndreng.

<sup>5</sup>Later I shall describe how NDrakali Kihndreng accepted the challenge to revenge his nephew's death; a challenge given him by his brother-in-law Kuluah Pei. Customarily, refusal to accept a challenge from an in-law was seen as humiliating, degrading and unmanly, a sign of weakness and cowardice.

<sup>6</sup>Katolik Nius, No. 4, April 1967, p. 52; and Pacific Islands Monthly, Vol. 40(B), October 1969, p. 38.

<sup>7</sup>Katolik Nius, p. 53; and Pacific Islands Monthly, p. 38.

<sup>8</sup>NDrakali Kihndreng was accompanied by his two wives, Pelit Wayah and Pokei Kaheu and their children Putleu NDrakali (dead some years ago), Buka NDrakali, MBusihii NDrakali and Kumuli NDrakali.

<sup>9</sup>Katolik Nius, p. 53.

<sup>10</sup>The narrative concerning the condition of women at Lorengau was related by my informant Melyen Nohou who was taken as a wife by a Police Master. The other three women were Nowoh Pahlen, as wife of an Administrative Clerk, Ewih Lawai, as wife of a Doctor, and Asah Kupue, as wife of an Administrative District Officer (A.D.O.). With the exception of Melyen Nohou, whom I talked to and from whom I recorded the account of the removal of women from their villages and their condition at Lorengau, the other three women have been dead for some years. My conversation with Melyen Nohou took place at NDritambat on Tuesday, December 4, 1973.

<sup>11</sup>Weepingly, Pelit Wayah described the event to me and said that the men who captured her husband acted as though he was a pig. On their way to Pahal during the night they shouted and sang happily as if they had made a good hunt. Throughout, she walked beside him and saw men kicking him when he fell down. During the rush, she said, she and Pokei Kaheu were raped by the men. Fortunately for her she was rescued by Kule'en Luman, Tultul of the Mundrupureu clan, who took her in his custody. There was no one to protect Pokei Kaheu and she became an object of sexual pleasure throughout the night.

<sup>12</sup>Katolik Nius, p. 53; and Pacific Islands Monthly, p. 38.

<sup>13</sup>From my calculations, as I stood beside it, filled up and overgrown with kunai grass and shrubs, the grave is about four meters long, three meters wide and two and a half meters deep.

<sup>14</sup>Pelit Wayah described the event as full of sorrow and tears for relatives and loved ones but cheers and clappings for enemies. But for all, "FEAR." She said it rained the night before and the grave was filled with water. The bodies floated in the grave covered with coconut leaves and clay which had been shovelled in.

## Chapter 14

<sup>1</sup>Plantations on Manus to which Kurti men were employed, were NDromalmal, Saha, Bundralis Catholic Mission, Sopolau, Pitilu, Salasea, Momote and Salamei. They were owned by Germans and after 1914 were taken over by Australian planters and companies.

<sup>2</sup>C. D. Rowley, The Australians in German New Guinea 1914-1921, Melbourne, Melbourne University Press, 1958, pp. 87-98, and The New Guinea Villager, Melbourne, F. W. Cheshire, Pty., Ltd., 1965, pp. 115-122.

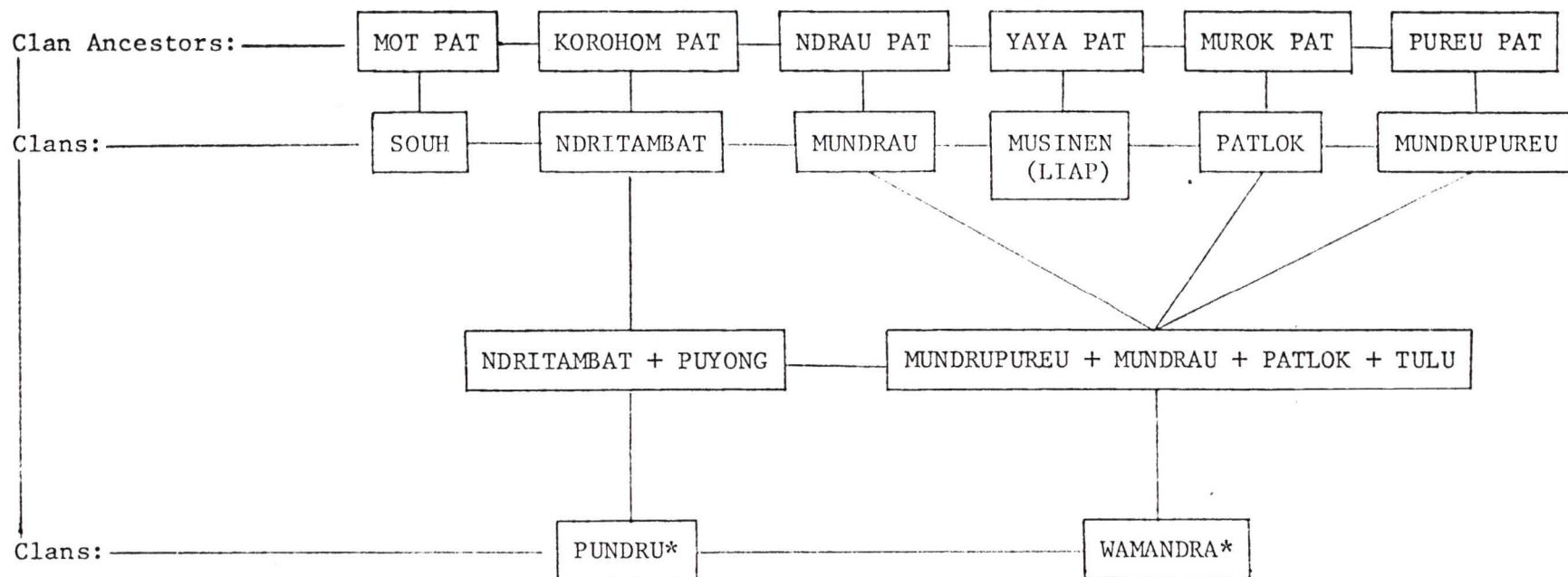
<sup>3</sup>Rowley, The New Guinea Villager, 1965, pp. 87-88.

<sup>4</sup>This attitude contributed to the break down of traditional power, leadership and authority throughout Melanesia. An example in the Solomons is cited in P. Corris, Passage, Port and Plantation, Melbourne, Melbourne University Press, 1973, p. 125.

<sup>5</sup>Encyclopedia of Papua New Guinea, Vol. 2, p. 697.

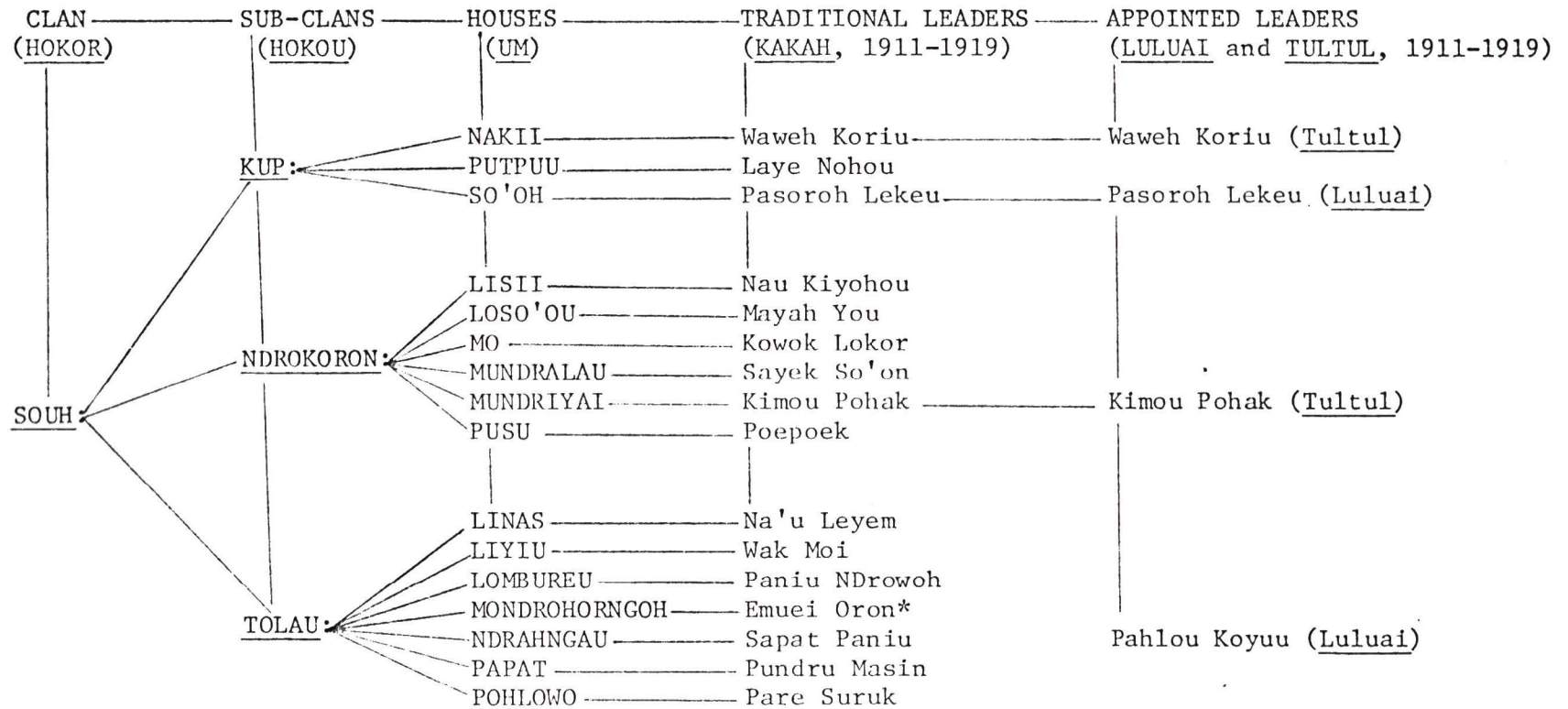
Table 1

Tribe: KURTI  
 Place of Origin: PAT MUNDRUPUREU  
 Tribal Ancestors: PAT + ELUIH KALUU



\*For the formation of PUNDRU and WAMANDRA clans, see pp. 95-98.

Table 2



\* Emuei Oron was my grandfather, hence I belong to the house of Mondrohorngoh.

Table 3

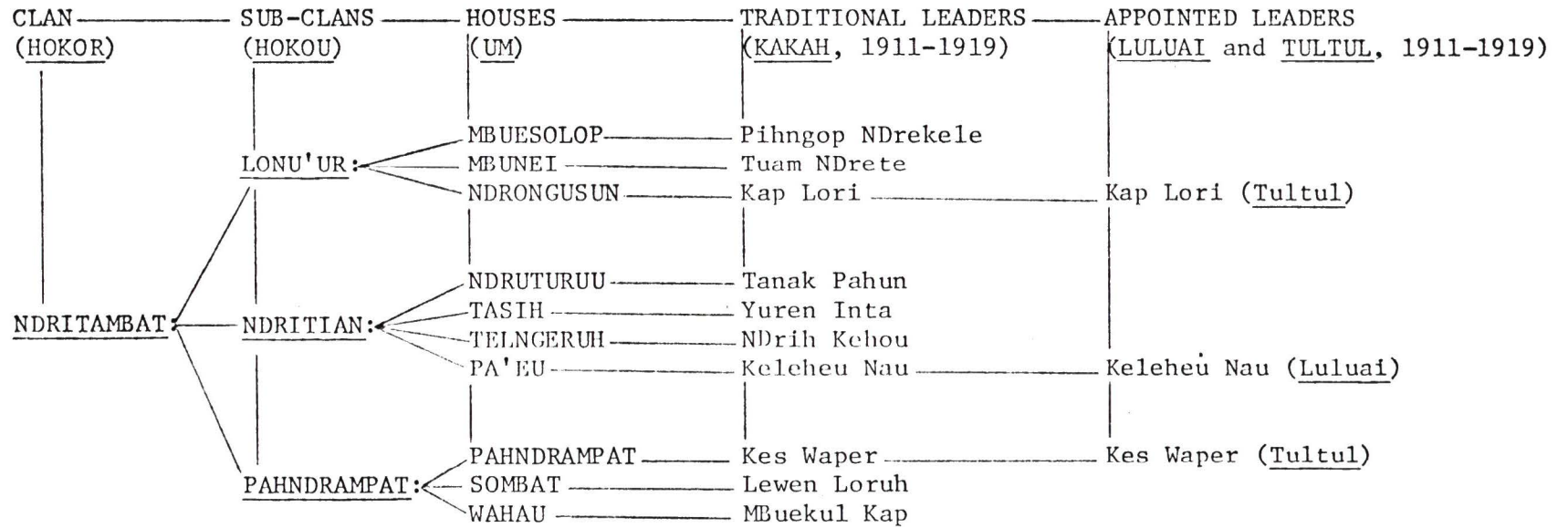


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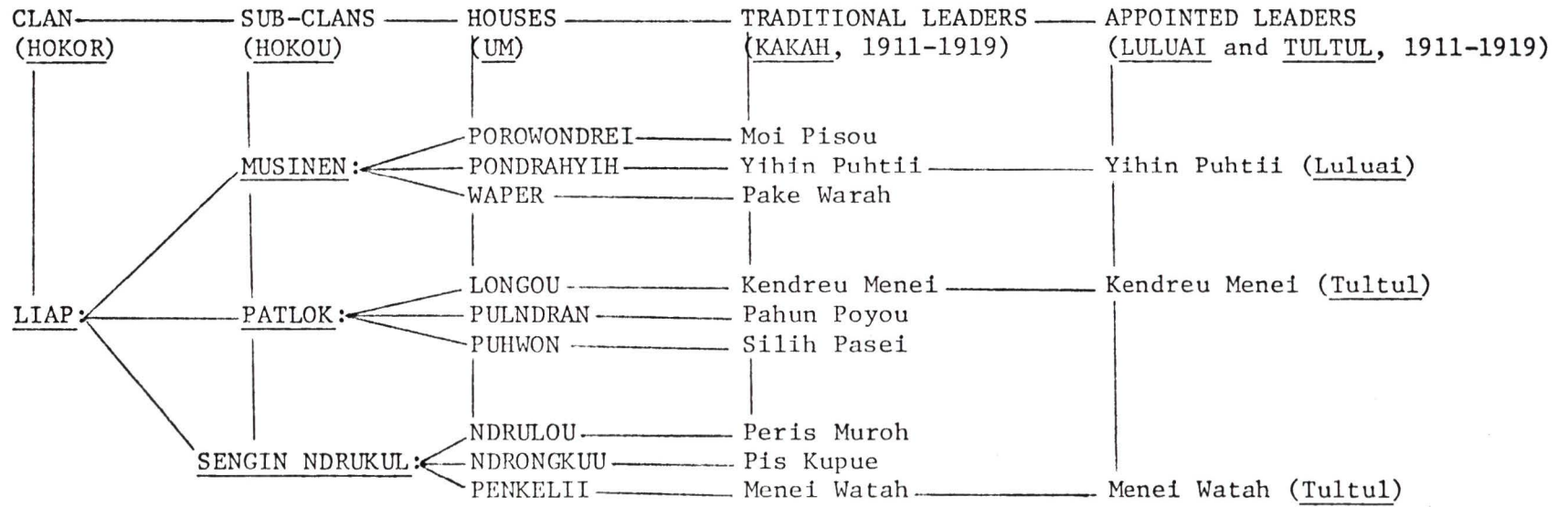


Table 5

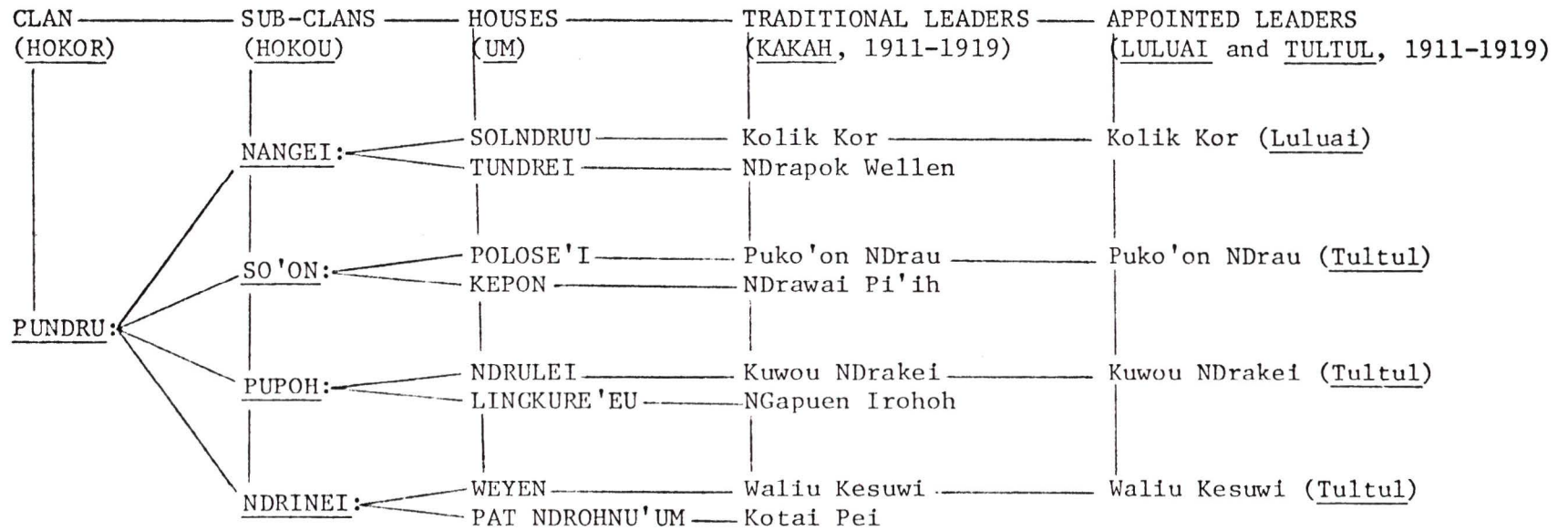


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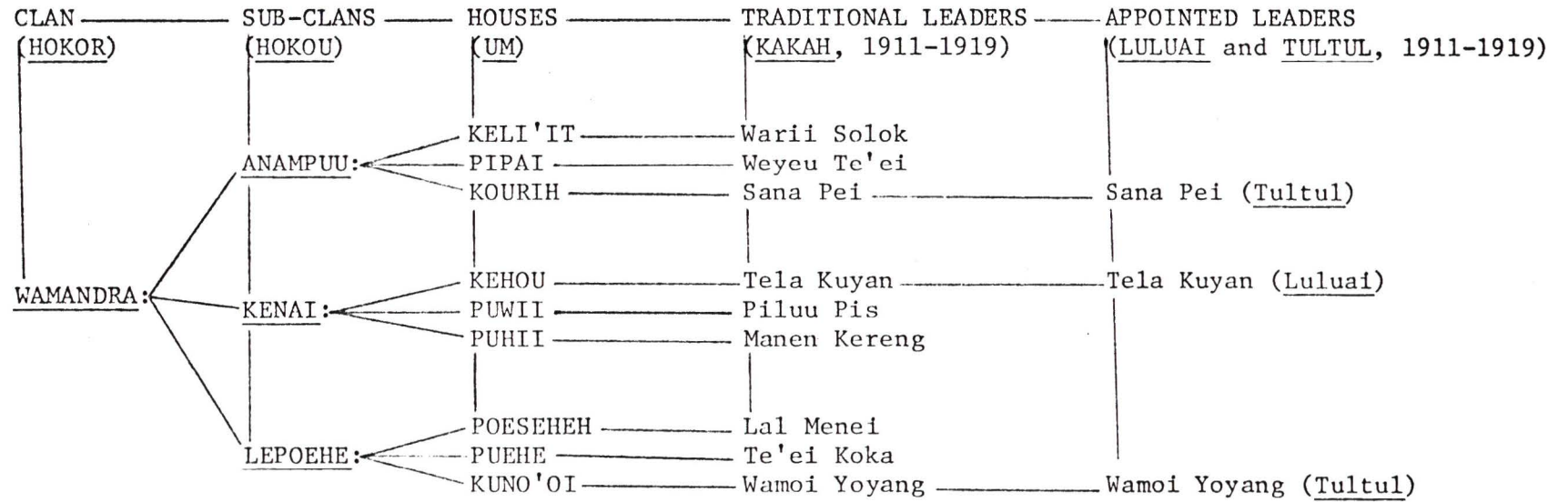


Table 7

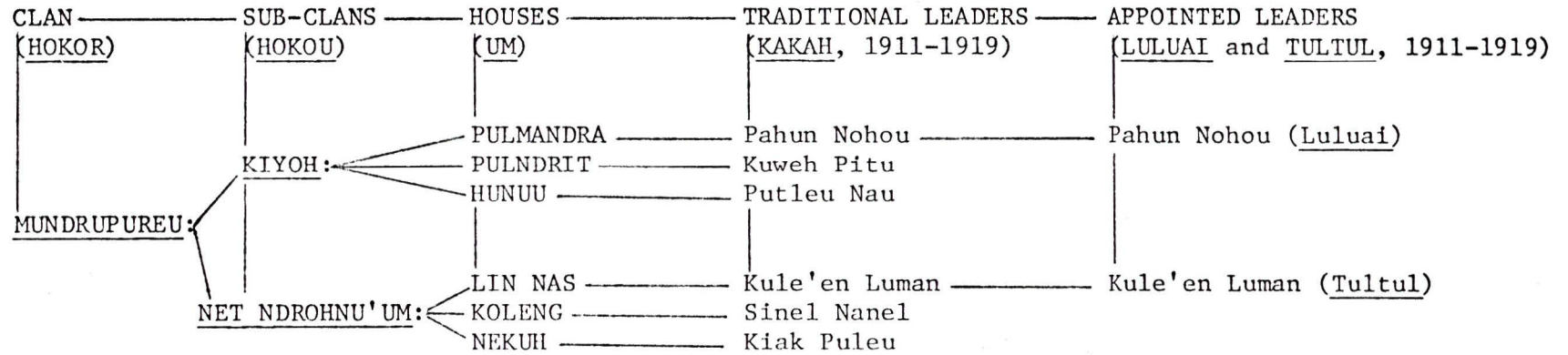


Table 8

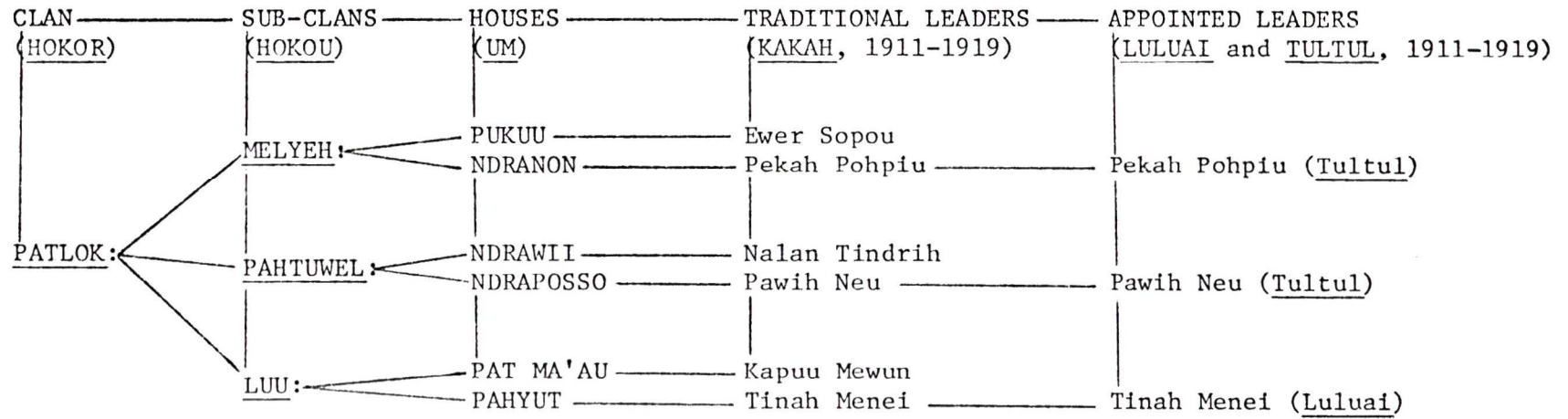
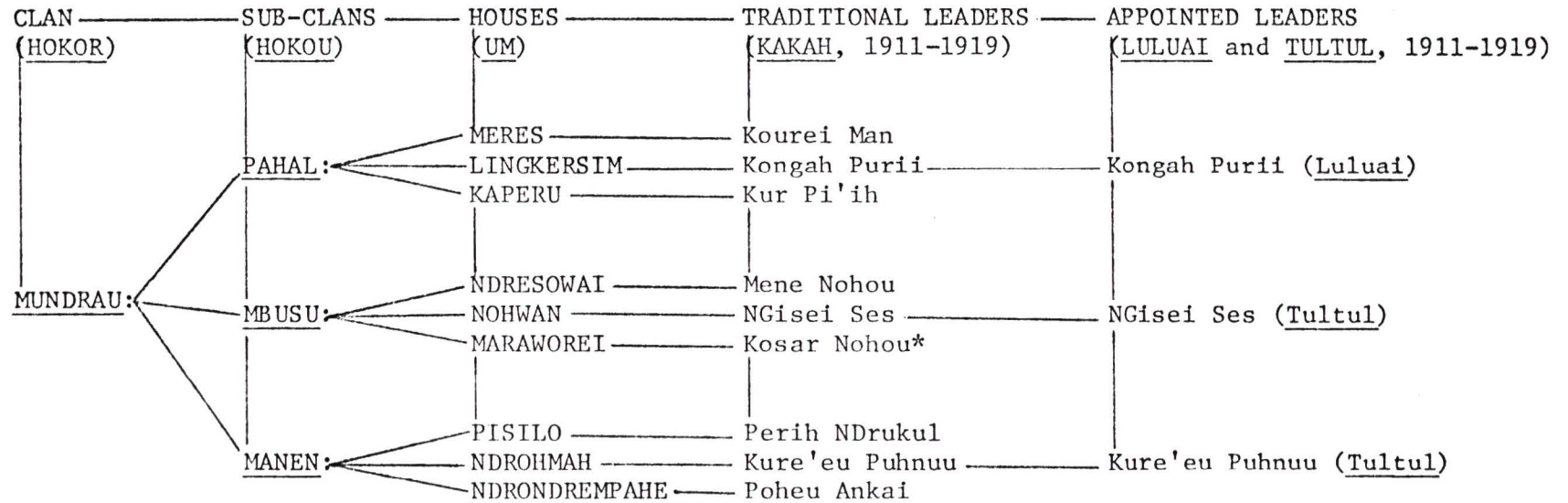


Table 9



\* Kosar Nohou was my maternal grandfather and according to custom I am also a member of my mother's clan.

Map 1

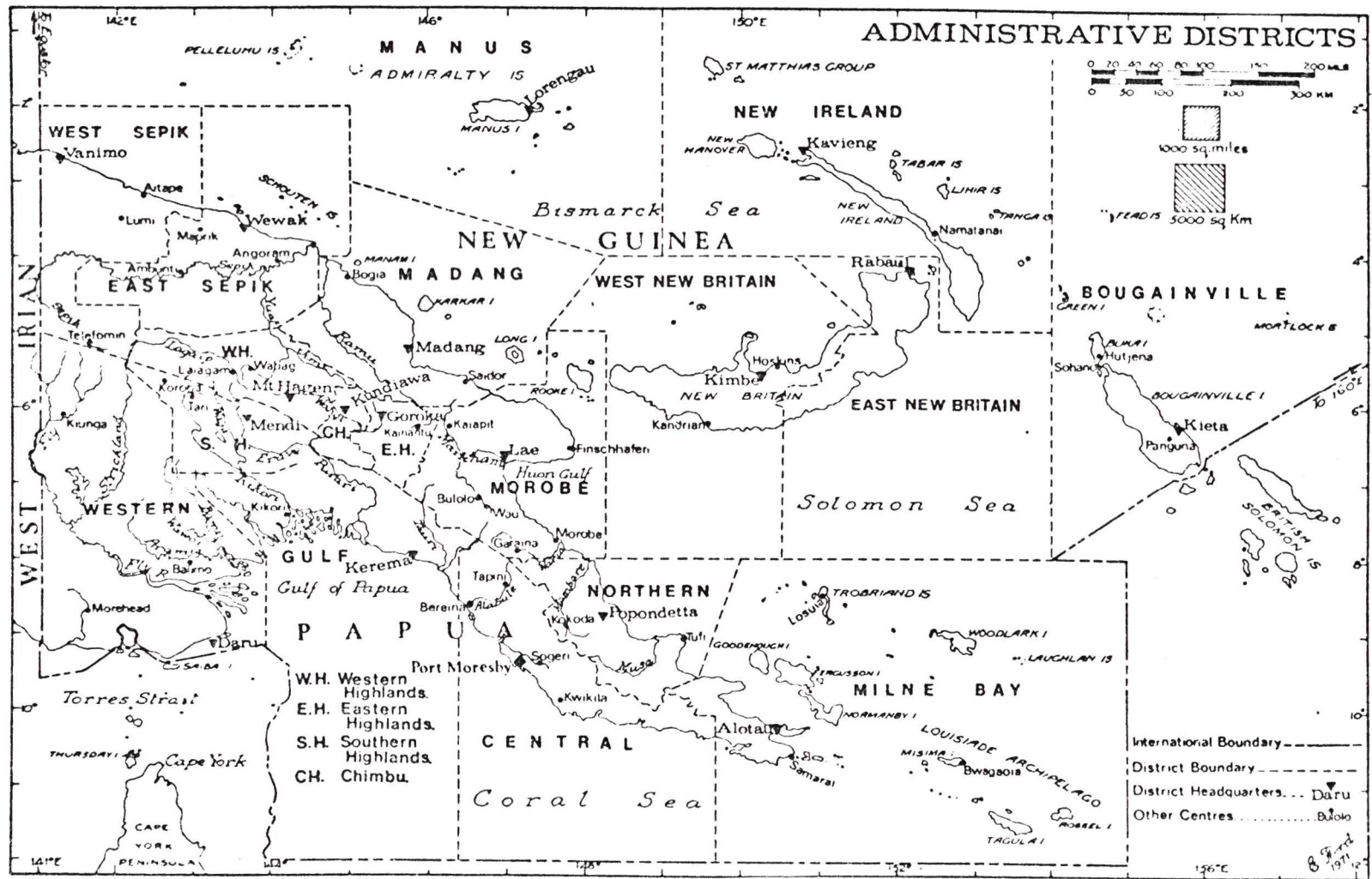
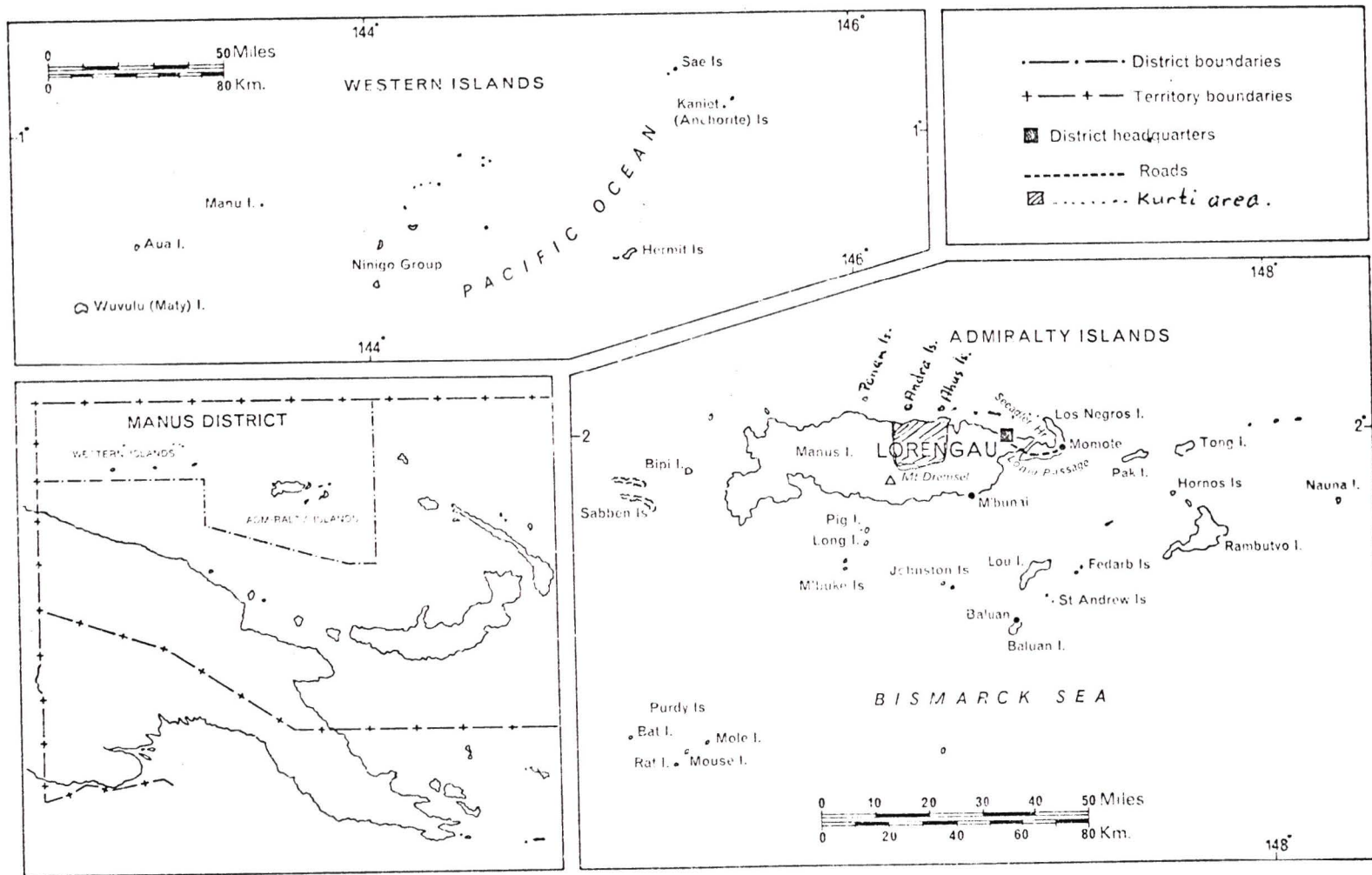
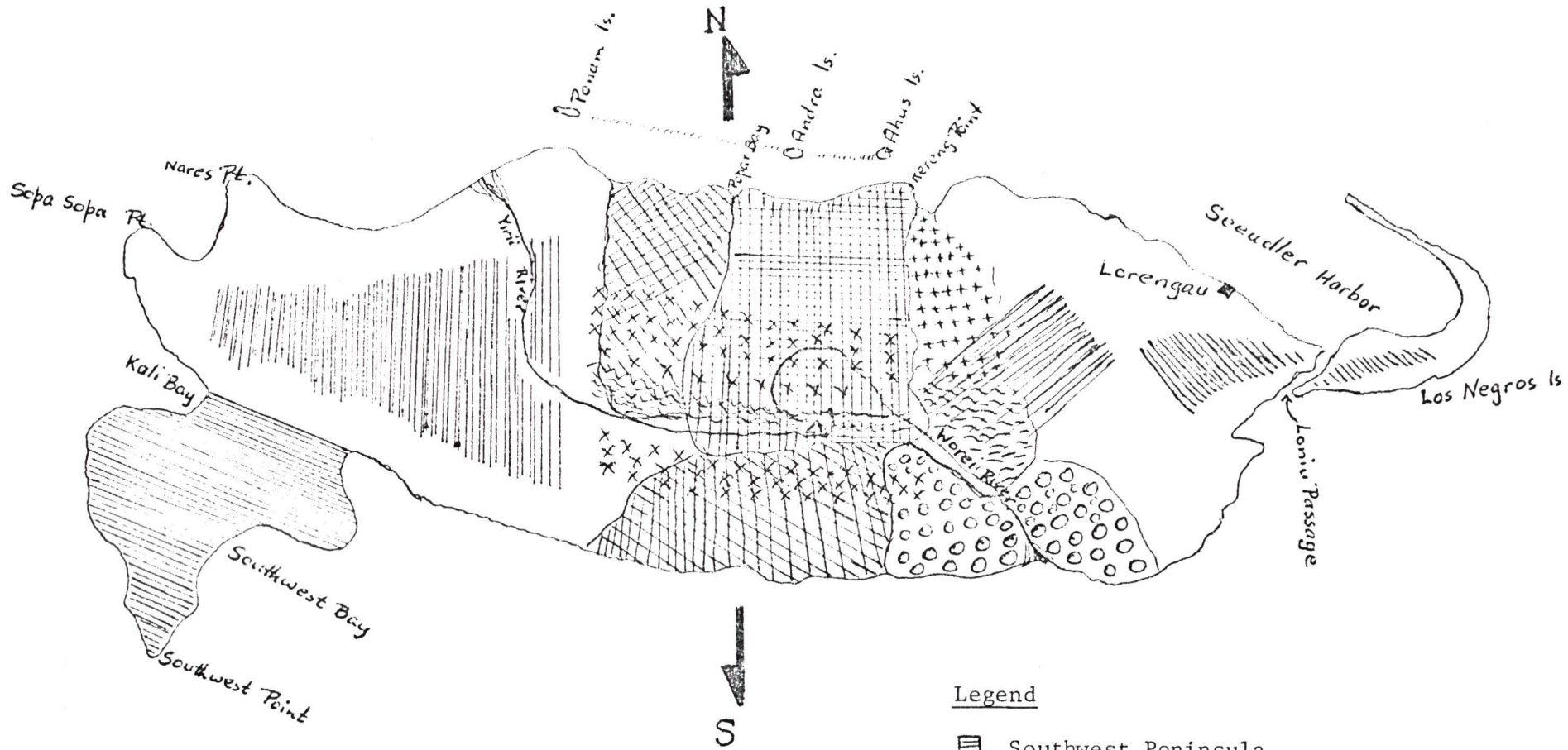


Fig. 1 General political map of Papua New Guinea

Map 2















Manus District.



SKETCH MAP OF MANUS ISLAND

Legend

-  Southwest Peninsula
-  Western Uplands
-  Central Valley
-  Central Range
-  Eastern Uplands
-  Eastern Lowlands
-  Kukohoi Land Area
-  Kurti Land Area
-  Lowa Land Area
-  Puyong Land Area
-  Lohii Land Area
-  Pohwai Land Area





N

Map 5(2)

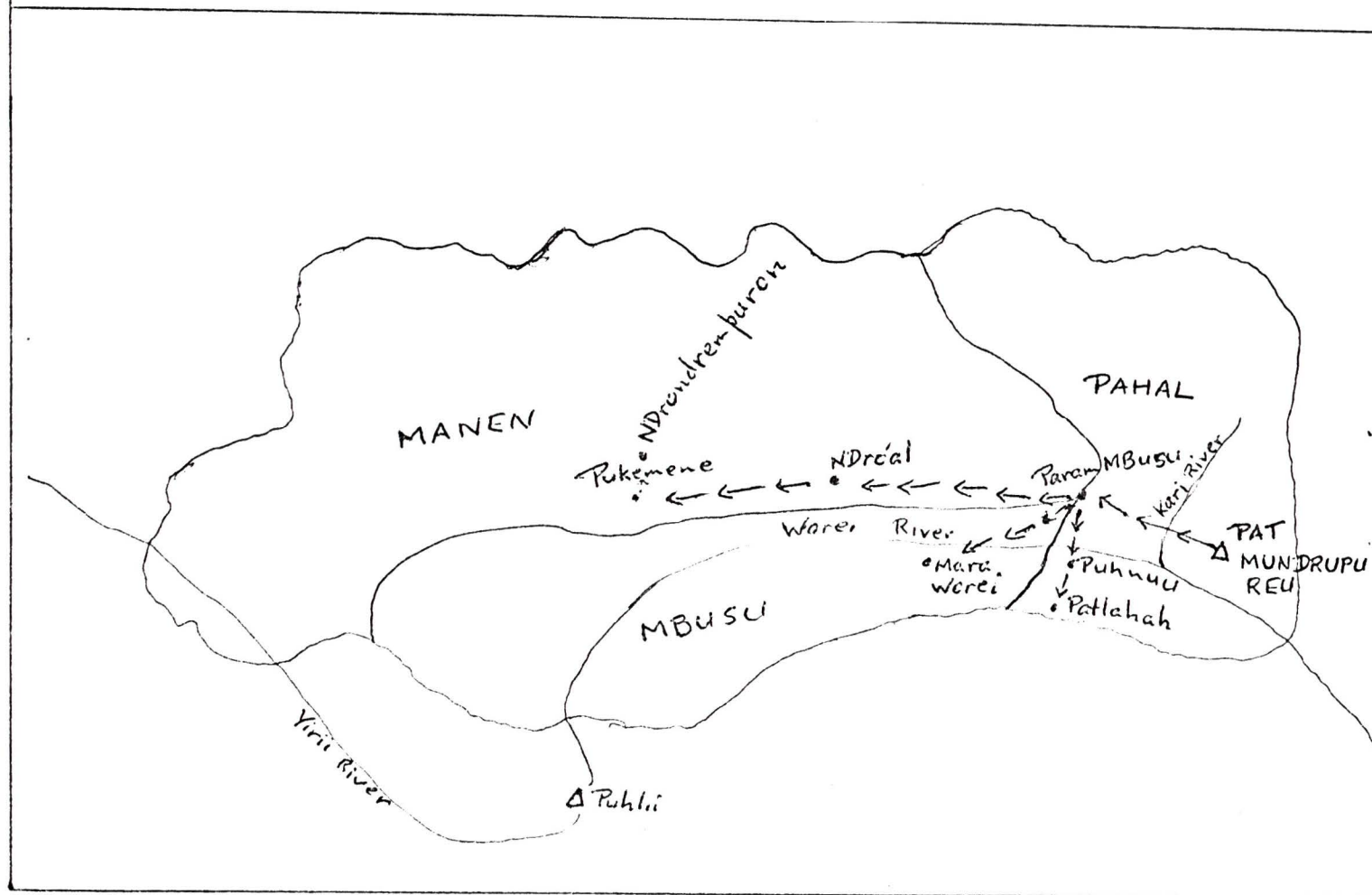
SKETCH MAP OF NDRITAMBAT CLAN  
(Showing migration routes and settlement sites.)



N

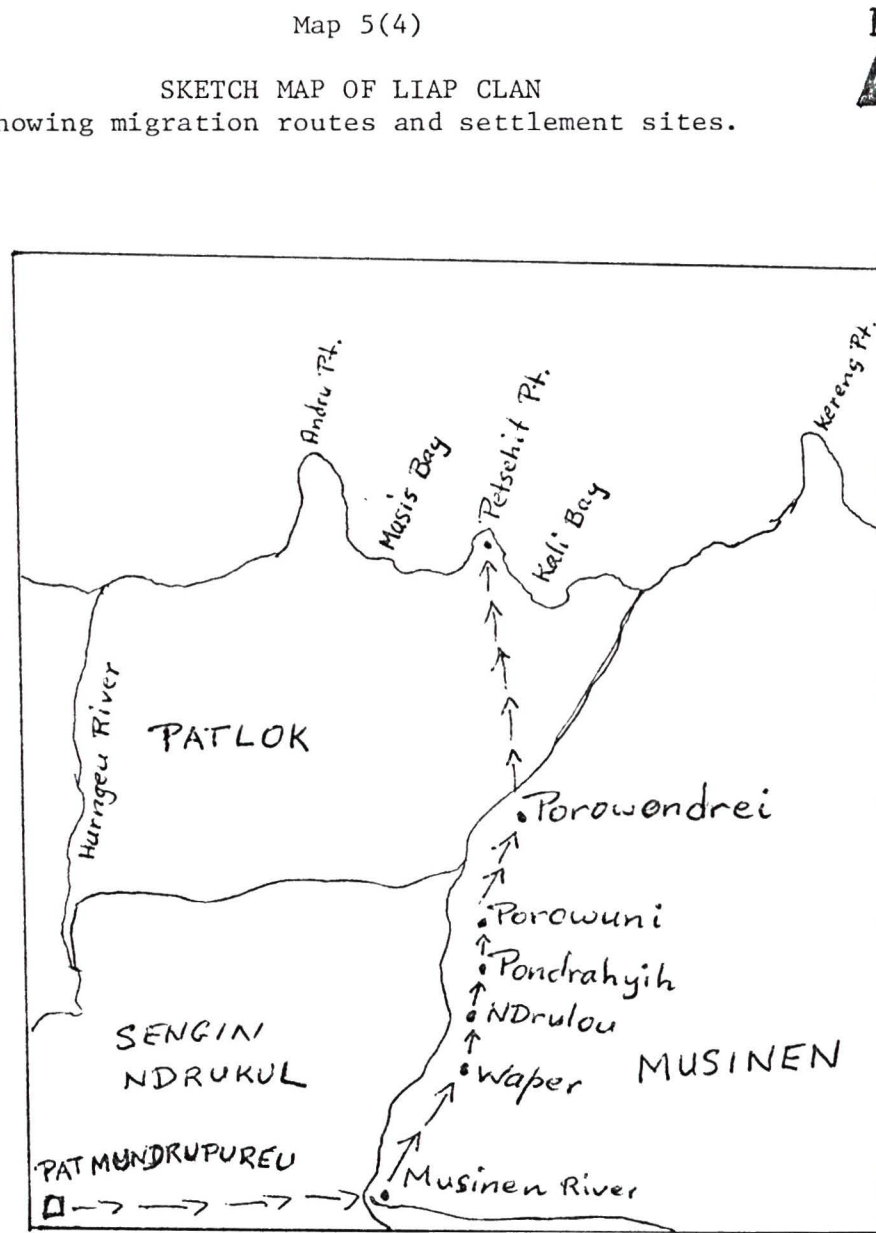
Map 5(3)

SKETCH MAP OF MUNDRAU CLAN  
Showing migration routes and settlement sites.



Map 5(4)

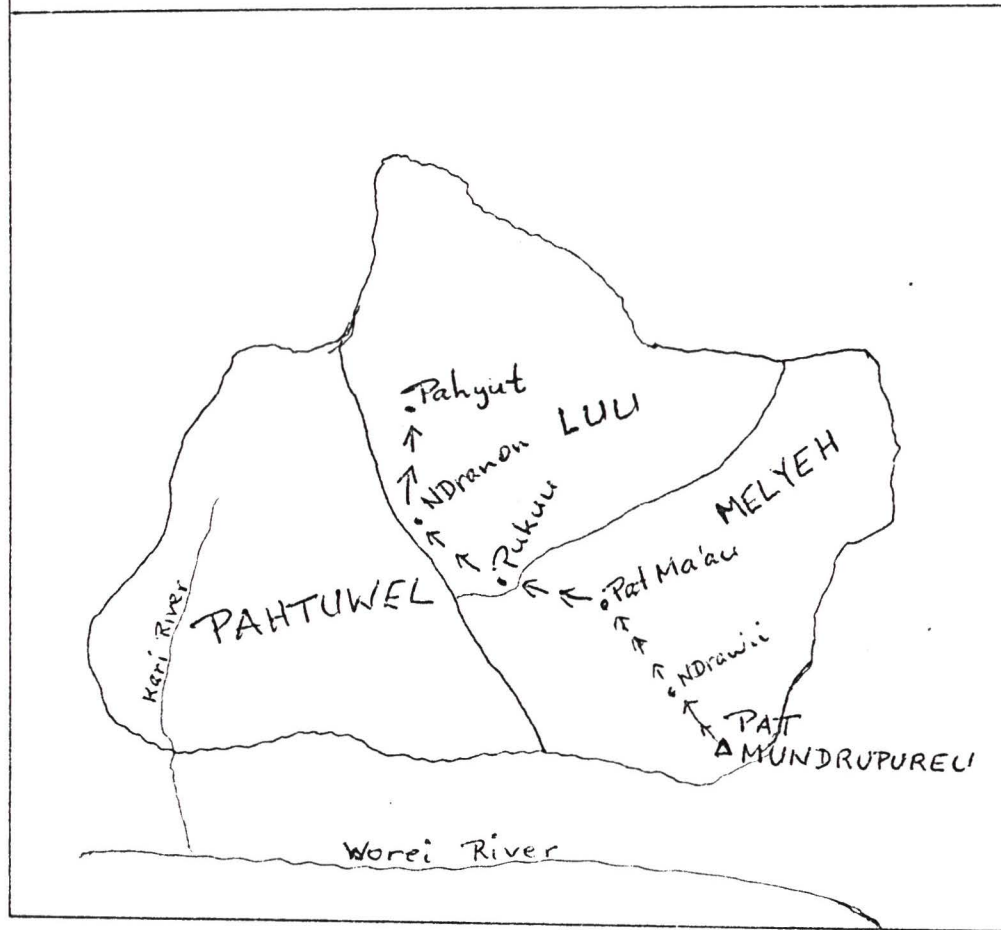
SKETCH MAP OF LIAP CLAN  
Showing migration routes and settlement sites.



N

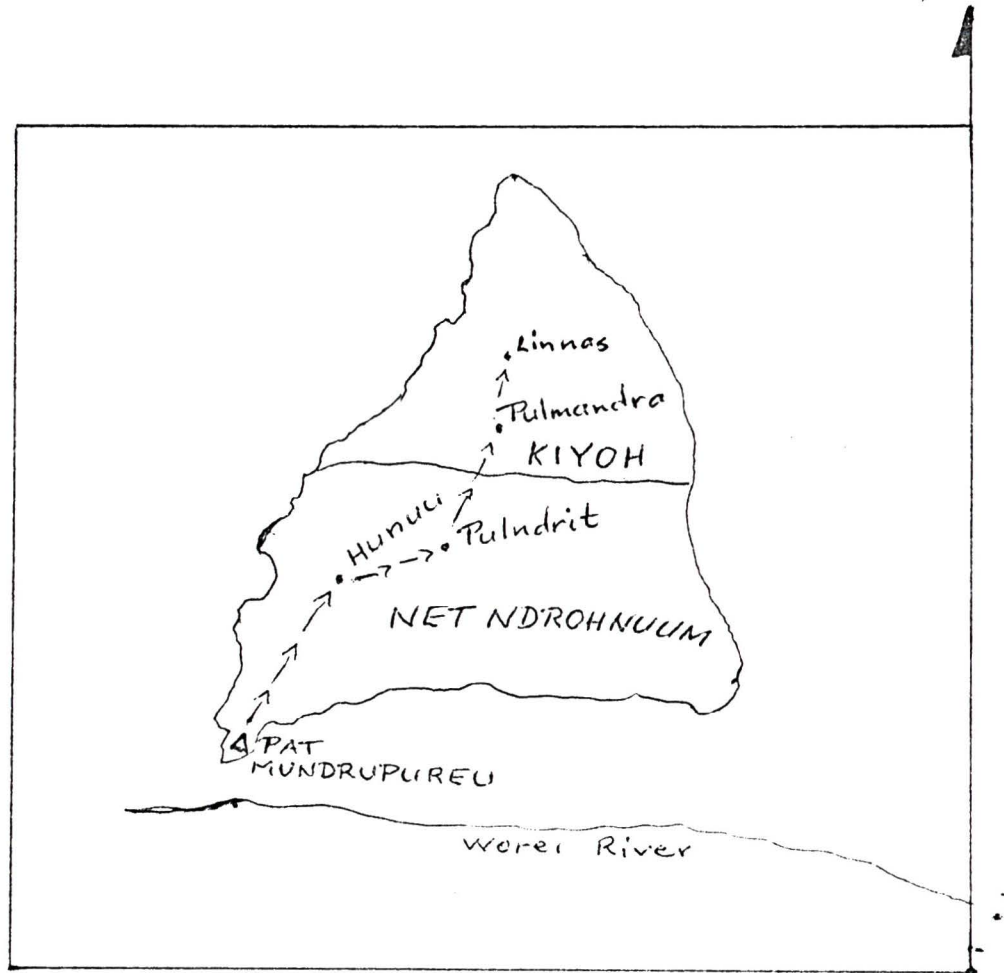
Map 5(5)

SKETCH MAP OF PATLOK CLAN  
Showing migration routes and settlement sites.



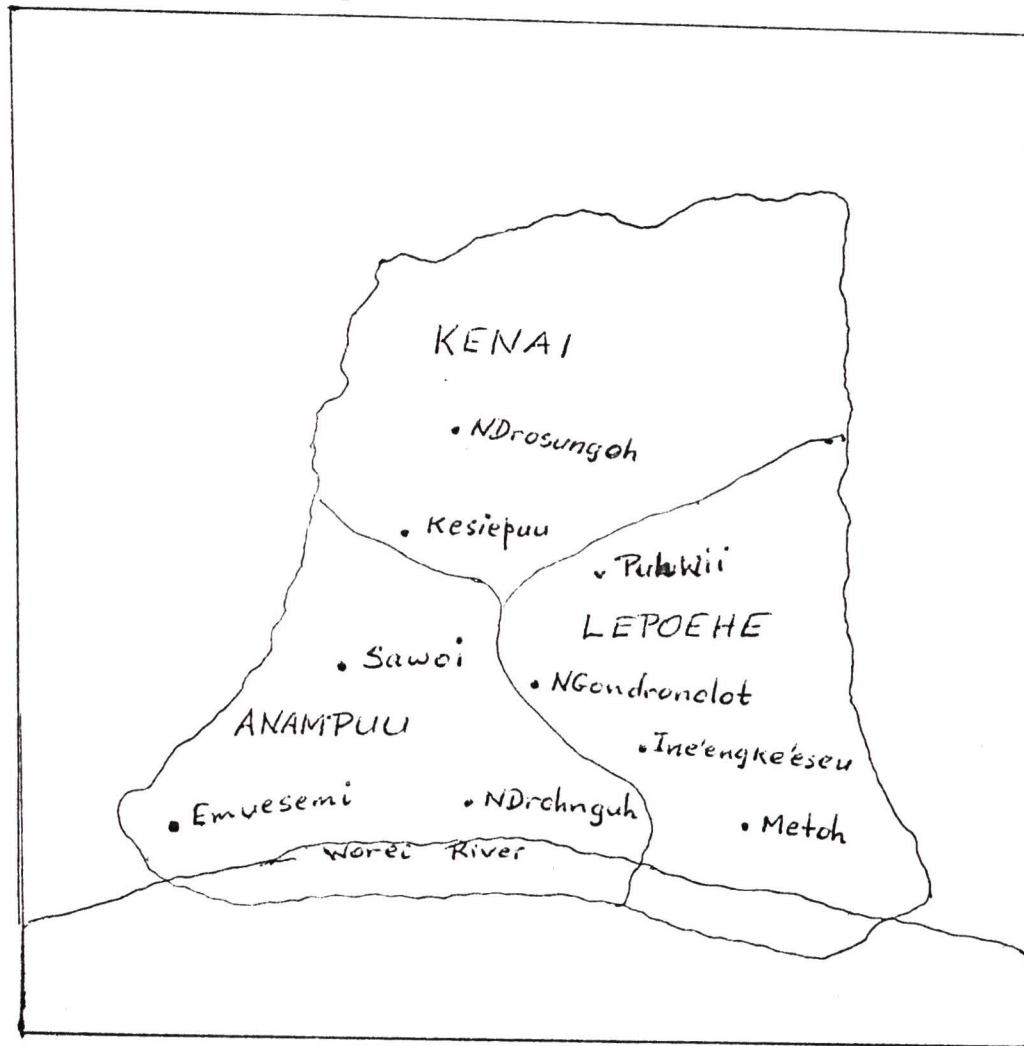
Map 5(6)

SKETCH MAP OF MUNDRUPUREU CLAN  
Showing migration routes and settlement sites. N



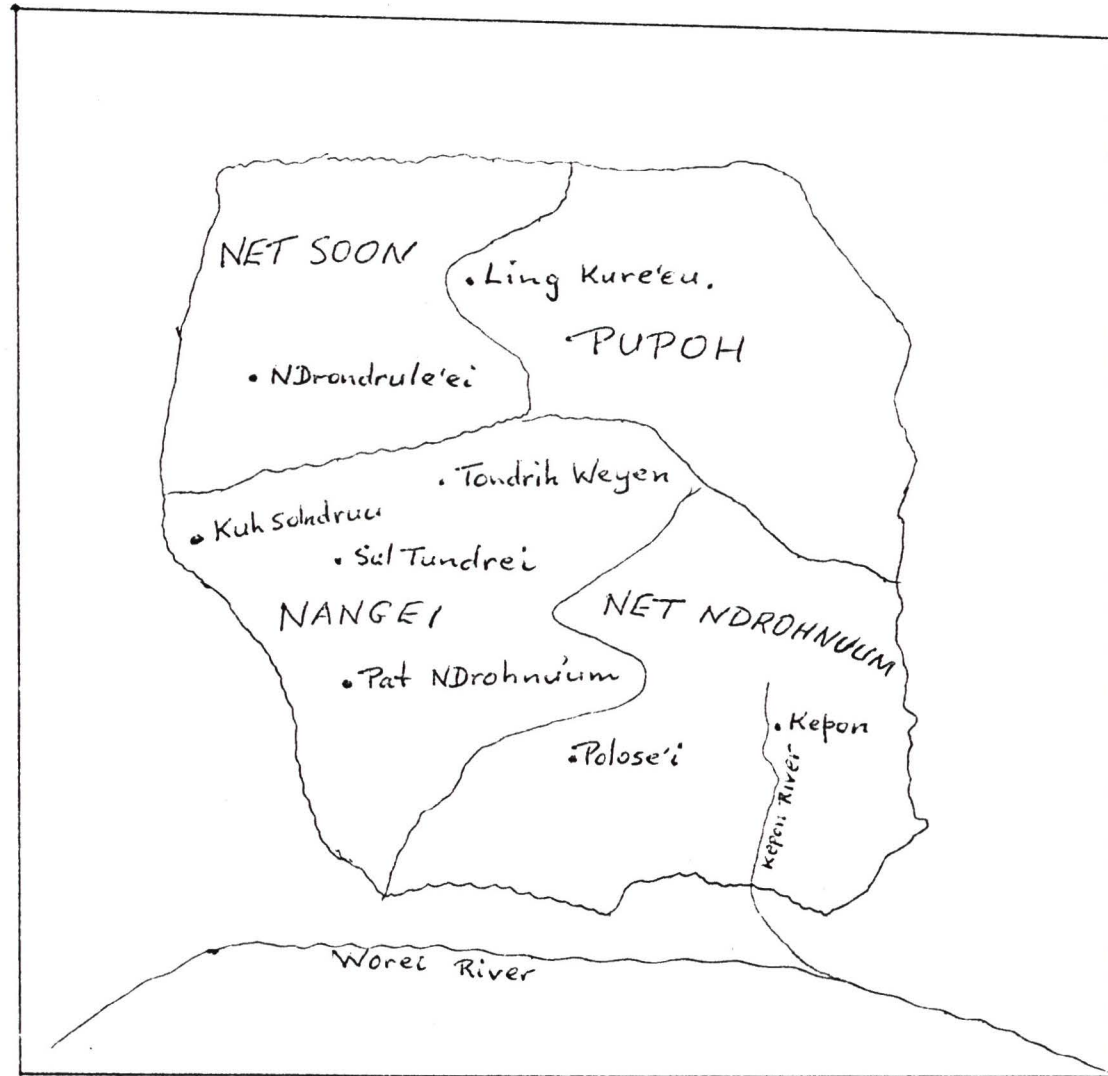


Map 5(7)  
SKETCH MAP OF WAMANDRA CLAN  
Showing settlement sites.



Map 5(8)

SKETCH MAP OF PUNDRU CLAN  
Showing settlement sites.



## BIBLIOGRAPHY

## I. PRIMARY SOURCES

Tape recordings and Fieldnotes made from June, 1973, to July, 1975.

## a) Tapes:

| <u>Tape Numbers</u> | <u>Informants</u> | <u>Contents</u>  |
|---------------------|-------------------|--|
| 1-2                 | Kohun Kaleweh     | Tradition of Origin, Migration, Warfare, and the European intrusion into the Kurti society and its effects on the traditional Kurti social, economic and political system. The events leading to the murder of Mr. Reis and the hanging of the murderers at Pahal in early 1920. |
| 3                   | Tikirik Netndram  | Tradition of Origin and Migration.   |
| 4                   | Kire'ei Tombui    | Migration narrative of the NDritian sub-clan of the NDritambat clan, formation of groups within the sub-clan, their migration routes and settlement sites.   |
| 5                   | Pelit Wayah       | The story of her husband, NDrakali, after killing Mr. Reis, his hiding, capture, and his execution at Pahal.   |
| 6                   | Buka NDrakali     | Narrative of his father's war activities leading to the murder of Mr. Reis, and the traditional method of peace treaties.  |
| 7                   | Engei Kap         | Migration narrative of the Lonu'ur sub-clan of the NDritambat clan, formation of groups within the sub-clan, their migration routes and settlement sites.  |

| <u>Tape Numbers</u> | <u>Informants</u>   | <u>Contents</u>   |
|---------------------|---|---|
| 7                   | Sireh Inta and<br>Perei Lewen                                   | Migration narrative of the Pahndrampat sub-clan of the NDritambat clan, formation of groups within the sub-clan, their migration routes and settlement sites.   |
| 8                   | Pohoyap<br><br>Pasar NDrohoo                                    | Tradition of Origin, Migration, and Warfare.<br><br>Narrative of warfare between the Pahndrampat sub-clan of the NDritambat clan and the Tolau sub-clan of the Souh clan, which in time came to involve other Kurti clans and sub-clans.  |
| 9                   | Ewih Nohou, Tukele<br>and Andrai NDre'ek                        | Migration narrative of the NDrokoron sub-clan of the Souh clan, formation of groups within the sub-clan, and warfare between the Mundrau and the Souh clans, in spite of the strong traditional links between them.   |
| 10                  | NDret Pahun<br><br>Popon<br><br>Nuhwon Kourih<br><br>Sawa Kuweh | Tradition of Migration of the Mundrau and Patlok clans, formation of sub-clans and groups within the two clans, and warfare between the Souh and the other inland Kurti clans.<br><br>Narrative of Warfare and Migration of the Liap clan to the coast, and the settlement sites.<br><br>Narrative of the formation of the Pundru and Wamandra clans, formation of groups within the two clans and their settlement sites.<br><br>An account of the formation of groups within the Mundrupureu clan and their settlement sites. |
| 11                  | Perihyap Sapah  | Some myths and legends concerning the origin of things, e.g. rocks, rivers and caves.   |

| <u>Tape Numbers</u> | <u>Informants</u> | <u>Contents</u>  |
|---------------------|-------------------|--|
| 12                  | Taliu NDrelok     | Complete account of traditional customs and ceremonies that govern the life of an individual from birth to death in the Kurti society. |
|                     | Melyen Nohou      | Some account of traditional customs and ceremonies, and the narrative of women in prison as a consequence of the murder of Mr. Reis.   |

b) Fieldnotes:

Fieldnotes comprising Genealogies and Social Structure.

1. Genealogies of individuals, groups, sub-clans and clans were provided by Kohun Kaleweh, Popon, Popen, Moi, Tikirik Netndram, Nuhwon Kourih, Tukele, Andrai NDre'ek, Perei Lewen, Engei Kap, Sireh Inta, Pohoyap and Ewih Nohou. All genealogies, whether of individuals or groups within the Kurti society point to their original ancestor, Pat. Hence, Pat stands at the beginning and at the end of the Kurti genesis.
2. The Kurti social structure was provided by the same informants above. Like the genealogies, the entire Kurti society is divided into clans, sub-clans and groups of houses linked to one another through marriage and ancestral ties with Pat at the top as the original ancestor.

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1972.

VITA

Surname: KULUAH Given Names: ALBERT JOHN

Place of Birth: SOUH, MANUS ISLAND Date of Birth: FEBRUARY 2, 1946

Educational Institutions Attended, with Dates of Entering and Leaving:

CHANEL COLLEGE, ULAPIA, RABAU 1962 to 1967

HOLY SPIRIT REGIONAL SEMINARY, BOMANA, PORT MORESBY 1969 to 1972

UNIVERSITY OF PAPUA NEW GUINEA, WAIGANI, PORT MORESBY 1973 to 1974

UNIVERSITY OF VICTORIA, B.C., Canada. 1975 to 1977

Degrees, Diplomas, Etc., Awarded, with Dates and Names of Institutions:

New South Wales Leaving Certificate 1967 Chanel College

B.A. 1974 University of Papua New

Guinea

Honors and Awards:

University of Papua New Guinea Teaching Fellowship, 1975

Canadian Commonwealth Scholarship and Fellowship Plan, 1975-1977

Publications:

'My Interview with Athanasius Aoa,' ORAL HISTORY, Vol. 1, No. 1,

History Department, University of Papua New Guinea, 1973.

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Albert John Kuluah

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