EXCHANGE SPHERES AMONG THE CHAMBRI PEOPLE OF PAPUA NEW GUINEA

by

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A dissertation submitted to the Graduate Faculty in Anthropology in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, The City University of New York

1977

This manuscript has been read and accepted for the Graduate Faculty in Anthropology in satisfaction of the dissertation requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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date

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ABSTRACT

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The field research for this dissertation was done among the Chambri people of the East Sepik District of Papua New Guinea. The Chambri are a lowland tribe of sedentary hunters-gatherers subsisting on a diet of fish and sago.

In this study I analyze the operation and inter-relations between three spheres of exchange in which the Chambri participate. The first, the affinal exchange sphere, is usually limited to a single village and never extends beyond the three Chambri villages. Wife-taking clans give valuables in exchange for the foodstuffs provided by their wife-givers during ceremonies celebrated for their sisters' sons. Unrelated clans frequently assist clans that are unable to meet their affinal obligations. Patron-client relations are thereby established between these clans resulting in status-differentials within the village. The second sphere involves the exchange of fish for sago at barter markets. Chambri women exchange fish they have caught for sago produced by women from the Sepik Hills. In the third sphere Chambri men ex-

change stone tools, mosquito-bags and ceremonial valuables with men from neighboring fish-supplying and sago-producing villages in return for items of comparable value.

Actors in these spheres are related either symmetrically or asymmetrically. In the first sphere wife-takers are subordinate to wife-givers, while large clans competing for patronage of clans unable to meet their affinal debts perceive each other as equals. In the second sphere sago-producers are subordinate to fish-suppliers. In the third sphere the participants are evenly matched. Since competition is inimical to the ritualized interaction of unequals at the market, positive feedback resulting from the competition of equals within the first sphere of exchange cannot affect the operation of the second. Competitors for prestige within the affinal exchange sphere, however, frequently press their trading partners within the third, reciprocal exchange sphere when they need valuables or foodstuffs to meet affinal obligations or assist others to do so. Hence, competition for power within the affinal exchange sphere can easily be transformed into competition for the items of reciprocal exchange.

The practice of pressing reciprocal trading partners resembles the competitive equal exchanges of the Highlands of New Guinea. One individual gives a number of goods to his trading partner who reciprocates with more goods, forcing the first donor to give even more goods. In the Sepik, however, this process has built-in limitations.

The Chambri cannot inflate their exchange-rates beyond the point at which their exchange partners from fish-supplying villages are forced to press for larger reciprocal transactions from their exchange partners from sago-producing villages. Trading partners from sago-producing villages cannot be forced into competitive reciprocal exchange for such exchanges would destroy the marketing system upon which the fish-suppliers depend for sustenance by re-defining the sago-producers as equal competitors. Hence, the incipient equal exchange system of the Chambri is limited by the existence of the asymmetrically-defined marketing system.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Many people contributed to the completion of this project. Among those who deserve special mention are Drs. Robert Glasse and Jane Schneider, who read and criticized the first draft of this thesis; Dr. Murray Chapman, who taught me to do field work and to properly compile my data; Drs. Andrew Strathern and Louise Morauta, who were both encouraging and hospitable; and, especially, Dr. Mervyn Meggitt, who insisted that I do my best.

I am also indebted to my friends and fellow students for their advice and encouragement. In particular I wish to thank Ann and Dan Bradburd, Beverly Brock, Walter French, Virginia Guilford, Judy Herbstein, Tom Moylan and Jane Nadel. Special thanks I send to Krystyna Starker whose understanding and appreciation of Melanesia was and is an inspiration to me.

Of course I thank the people of the Middle Sepik, especially the Chambri people. To Matias Yambumpe, Andrew Yorondu, Patrick Yarapat, Michael Kubusa, Wapiyeri, Francis and Scola Wusuai, David Wapi and Michael Kambon, I owe special thanks. And to Godfried Kolly and Joseph Kambukwat, my brothers and research assistants, my debt is beyond repayment.

I also wish to thank my Wewak hosts, Brenda and Mick Cantwell and Sharon Gould and Lee Tibbits, for making my re-supplying trips something to look forward to.

Finally, I wish to thank my family, Frederica and

Max Goldsmith, my mother and father, encouraged me throughout my field work and assisted me in the preparation of my dissertation, my mother by typing it and my father by proofreading it. Kenneth Gewertz, my husband, while suffering mosquitos with me, provided invaluable intellectual and emotional support. And Alexis Gewertz, my daughter, taught me that participant-observation could be fun.

My research was supported by the East-West Center Population Institute, the National Geographic Society and the Graduate School of the City University of New York.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF TABLES
(cont'd.)

Pages

LIST OF MAPS AND FIGURES

Pages

MAPS

FIGURES

FIGURES (cont'd.) Pages

INTRODUCTION

Our perceptions of what exists adhere tenaciously to our expectations of what should exist. Nowhere is this tendency more apparent than in the study of society where the subject matter is the very ambience of human life. Because socio-cultural adaptations vary widely according to multitudinous and possibly indeterminable factors, it is not unlikely that a model derived from one society will be inapplicable to another. Yet, since the goal of social science is to generate models of general applicability, we can establish relevance only by applying available models to different ethnographic milieus. At least initially these attempts may resemble the process of trying to fit square pegs into round holes.

In studying the nature of trade and exchange as they are practiced by the Chambri, a lowland people of Papua New Guinea's East Sepik District, the only pegs available to me were the feedback models of trade and ceremonial exchange generated through studies of New Guinea Highland societies (Harding, 1967; Hughes, 1971; Strathern, 1971; Meggitt, 1974). The inapplicability of these models to the sedentary hunters and gatherers that I studied is the justification for this inquiry.

The models which have come out of the ethnography of the highlands of Papua New Guinea explain trade and exchange with reference to the allocation of political power and the reallocation of people and specialized produce. The models

are invariably predicated upon homogeneous, agricultural subsistence economies in which population pressure, warfare and catastrophic climatic events are largely responsible for group imbalances (Rappaport, 1968; Meggitt, 1974),and upon a political organization in which power is achieved through successful manipulation of inter-group transactions (Meggitt, 1974:1; Strathern, 1971:1).

Strathern describes the process of group growth and dissolution among the Melpa in the following manner:

> Taking the feature of open-ness, we can construct models of feed back processes in the growth and decline of groups and the careers of big-men. Within groups expanding in size there are opportunities for new big-men to obtain followings, increase their power and create new group segments. At the same time other groups are declining, and their members eventually disperse or are swallowed up by more powerful hosts or neighbors. But competition between big-men, or the development for other reasons or internecine disputes splits the successful groups apart again, so that the group size returns to a previous level, and the positive feedback can begin again (1971).

Strathern is describing a feedback system in which peaceful expansion is generally achieved through the extension of a big-man's ceremonial exchange network. The economic cooperation necessary to engage in ceremonial exchange not only underwrites the ties of kinship and affinity which structure each social group, but is also an important coordinating mechanism for inter-group activities.

Determining if Highlands feedback models are specific to the homogeneous, agricultural subsistence economies that

generated them is one of my concerns in this thesis. It is a significant issue, particularly because of the importance of these models as alternatives to the kinship paradigm in which political and economic activity are imbedded within a matrix of familial obligations. Ever since 1962, when Barnes distinguished African societies from those of the New Guinea Highlands with respect to descent and filiation as mechanisms of recruitment to social groups, anthropologists have been seeking the modus operandi of New Guinea social organization apart from predetermined constructs. They discovered that cumulative patrifiliation as a rubric designating processes of unknown origin could not be substituted for the principle of descent. Credibility of social science rests upon a regularity in explanation and the ability to predict events. "Flux," therefore, cannot replace "nesting" as an explanation of action, and a new method of investigation must be applied to isolate the "structure" from the "flexibility" and identify the "organization" within the "flow."[1]

Systems theory was applied to the Highlands' data in the hopes of identifying clusters of units whch are dependent upon one another in a regular manner, and the Highlands models previously mentioned are the result of this applica-

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1 Watson, 1970, suggests that the Tairora social system organizes a flow of personnel in space and time. Langness, 1964, asserts that warfare among the Bena-Bena stimulates flexible alignments with strong groups. Nesting is a term used to describe the articulation of lower-level, biologically-based relationships within higher-level, biologically-based relationships whereby individuals related on each level coalesce on particular occasions.

tion (see Vayda, 1967). The structure provided by systems analysis allowed ethnographers to organize their material economically. Whereas descent models theoretically provided a comprehensive shorthand for the interpretation of human behavior, systems analysis allowed for the extension of organic functionalism into the realms of quantification and mechanical control. Rappaport, for example, in his discussion of ritual among the Maring of the Western Highlands, concerns himself with the homeostat which keeps the pig population within limits tolerable to the broader ecosystem (1968). However, it is this emphasis upon control, upon the maintenance of variables "within a range or ranges which defines the continued existence of the system" (Rappaport, 1968:4)[1] which gives his negative feedback model its monotonous insistence upon the tautology, "WHATEVER IS, IS RIGHT" (Pope, 1956:373).[2]

Before suggesting an alternative to the functionalism of adaptation which characterizes many negative feedback models, I wish to return to a discussion of the Sepik area and to an early proponent of cybernetic anthropology, Gregory

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1 I am aware that McArthur, 1975, demonstrated that Rappaport fails to provide an adequate cybernetic description of the Maring.

2 Alexander Pope in his Essay on Man describes the premises of many systems analysts when he writes:

> All nature is but art, unknown to thee;
> All chance, direction, which thou can'st not see;
> All discord, harmony, not understood;
> All partial evil, universal good:
> And, spite of pride, in erring reason's spite,
> One truth is clear, WHATEVER IS, IS RIGHT (1956:373).

Bateson.

While working among the Iatmul in the early 1930s, Bateson recognized the necessity of explaining ritualized interactional patterns in the behavior of men and women. Analyzing these patterns in Naven, he introduces the concepts of symmetrical and complementary schizmogenesis - processes through which an individual internalizes his culture's preferred tendencies. Schizmogenesis is "a process of differentiation in the norms of individual behavior resulting from the cumulative interaction between individuals" (Bateson, 1958: 175). But schizmogenesis, while differentiating norms, also promotes "progressive change, and the problem (becomes for Bateson) why this progressive change did not lead to the destruction of the culture as such" (ibid.: 289). Bateson avoids his dilemma by designating each individual Iatmul as a self-regulator. All individuals learn, through the schizmogenetic process, to introduce corrective change in their dealings with others.

Bateson's analysis of the naven ceremonies is illuminating because, although concerned with maintenance and control, its presuppositions avoid the functionalism of adaptation which traps some of the more recent proponents of systems theory. Rappaport's thesis, for example, can be simplified thus: what exists is adaptive and must be maintained. Bateson's data, quite to the contrary, cause him to inquire why what exists appears mal-adaptive and yet is maintained. It is in the possibility of mal-adaptation, or rather of

contradiction between elements within a system, that the alternative to the functionalism of adaptation lies.

Societies are not homogeneous wholes whose purpose is to maintain the larger eco-system of which they are components. Nor, I believe, do social institutions function to maintain the societies within which they operate. The post hoc ergo propter hoc fallacy of functionalist thinking can only be avoided by assuming the autonomy of systems within their environments. Such an assumption demands an explanation of social formations in terms of the temporary compatibility of their sub-systems, each ordered by its own laws of development.

Bateson, of course, while recognizing the incompatibility between complementary and symmetrical schizmogenesis, limited his multi-faceted analysis of the Iatmul to their naven ceremonies and therefore never identified the more basic contradiction of which both the male/female behavioral distinctions and the role-reversing naven ceremonies are expressions.

Forge, in "The Golden Fleece," comes closer to the real issue when he identifies Bateson's concepts of complementary and symmetrical interactions as basic to political and economic organization.

> Bateson's dualities and their expression in either equality searching symmetrical behavior or in inequality emphasizing complementary behavior, point directly at the two principles of exchange that form the majority of New Guinea social structures and dominate their workings (Forge, 1971: 539).

Forge believes that the exchange of classes of identical objects between equals is a basic mechanism in the political and economic organization of New Guinea societies. In a later article he elaborates upon the importance of symmetrical and complementary behavior and suggests a possible explanation of iai (fa mo bo so da) marriage in terms "of cosmology and concepts of the fundamental nature of men and women, together with the interrelationship between equal and unequal exchange" (1974: 193). Specifically Forge sees the tri-generational renewal of iai marriage as consistent with the Iatmul belief that women are the source of creativity while being simultaneously inferior to men. The highly charged relationship between mo bo and z so, as celebrated in the naven ceremonies, is the supreme expression of the unequal relationships transmitted through women. By the third generation the intensity of the inequality diminishes, only to be renewed through the ideology of iai marriage. Forge contrasts the Iatmul with the neighboring Abelam who prohibit affinal renewal while extending the kin-term for wife to the prohibited women, and he suggests that in both cultures attention is focused upon marriage as the source of the ambiguous category of competitive blood relations who are equal unequals.

Iai marriage is therefore the Iatmul attempt to keep clear categorial distinctions between the symmetrical and the asymmetrical, the inferior and the superior, the equal and the unequal. And, while agreeing with Forge that the re-

lationship between these dualities is important for an understanding of the Iatmul, I am disappointed that he finds mere metaphorical consistency to be potentially explanatory, with male/female cosmological distinction explaining an equally suprastructural marital preference. If there are ambiguities in the concepts of men and women, and if equal and unequal exchange are in need of reconciling, then the incompatibility of their functions must be more than just the result of their definitions as opposed modes of interaction. For Bateson their incompatibility is real, and therefore maladaptive. For Forge their incompatibility appears little more than an ideological inconsistency, a problem capable of several structural solutions.

I shall argue, using data collected from a third major Sepik culture, that the contradiction between equal and unequal interactional patterns is grounded within two opposed systems of exchange, an internal ceremonial exchange system and an external trading system, and that the sexual oppositions in Middle Sepik culture delimit the one system from the other.

My work will be divided into eight chapters. In the first I describe the Chambri people and place them within the Middle Sepik environment. The second chapter focuses upon Chambri social organization. The third and fourth are analyses of the affinal exchange system from economic and political perspectives, respectively. The fifth chapter returns to inter-tribal relations through a discussion of shamanism,

sorcery and warfare. The sixth is a description and analysis of the fish-for-sago marketing system. And the seventh chapter deals with social change. In my conclusion I contrast and compare the Chambri with Highland's cultures, returning to the question of the applicability of Highlands' negative feedback models to heterogeneous economies.

Since Mead worked among the Tchambuli in 1932 the area has seen many changes. A large, air-conditioned tourist yacht is docked about six hours away from the villages in which I spent most of my time. Tourists visit Chambri about twice a month. The Catholic Mission has operated there since 1947, and literacy among today's young adults is high; many attend vocational and high schools and a few are away at the University of Papua New Guinea. The traditional marketing system has been transformed since the sago-producing villages migrated to the shores of Chambri Lake in the mid-1960s. New, non-barter markets have grown up around mission stations and patrol posts to accommodate the dietary needs of civil servants and teachers. Women are occasionally allowed to see formerly tabooed objects and ceremonies. Traditional ceremonies are scheduled to accommodate migrant laborers who have their month of vacation in December, and male initiation now coincides with the Nativity. This work is therefore partially a reconstruction of traditonal behavior patterns, and I shall try to indicate throughout where word of mouth replaces direct observation.

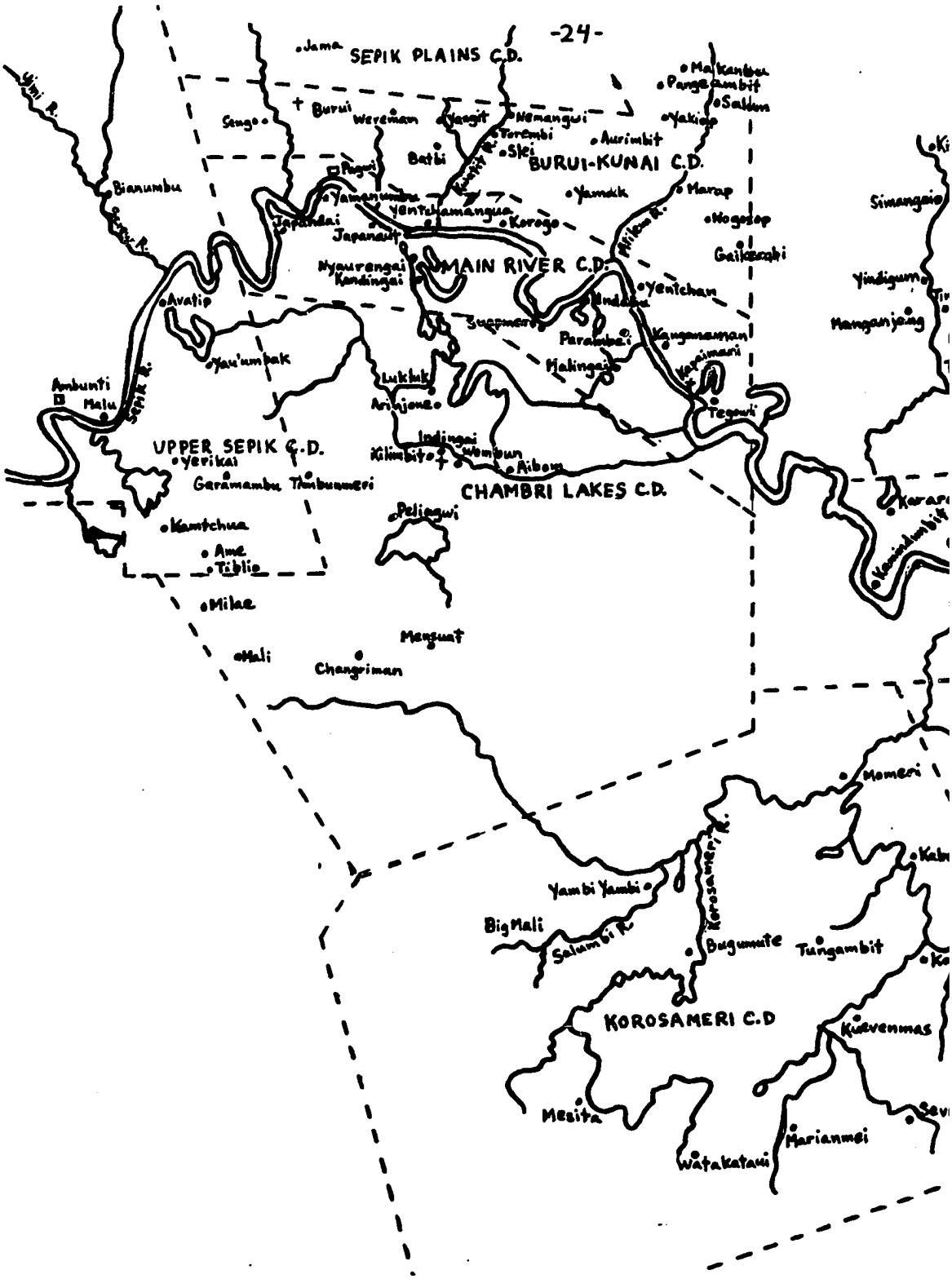
CHAPTER I

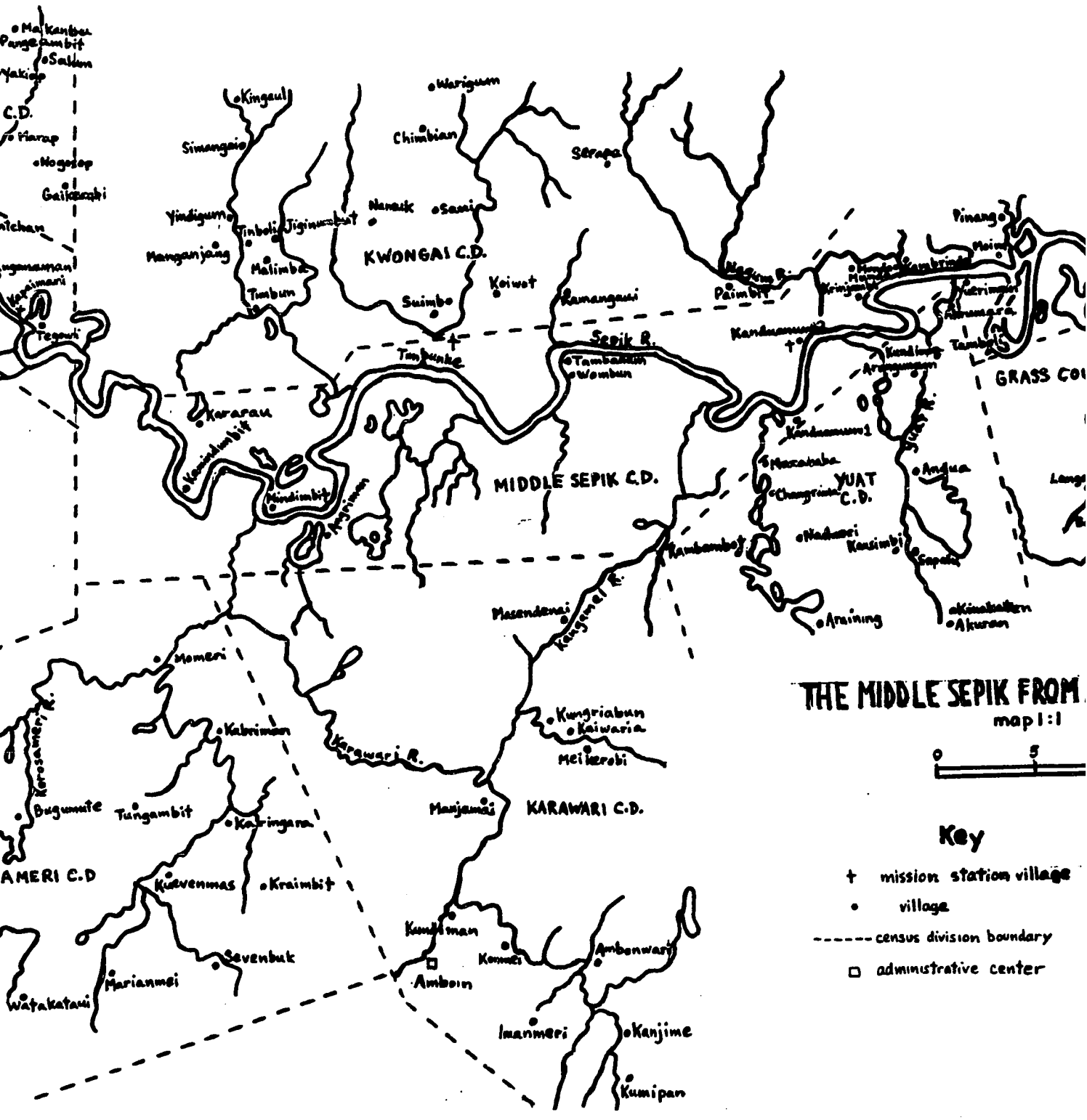
THE CHAMBRI OF THE MIDDLE SEPIK

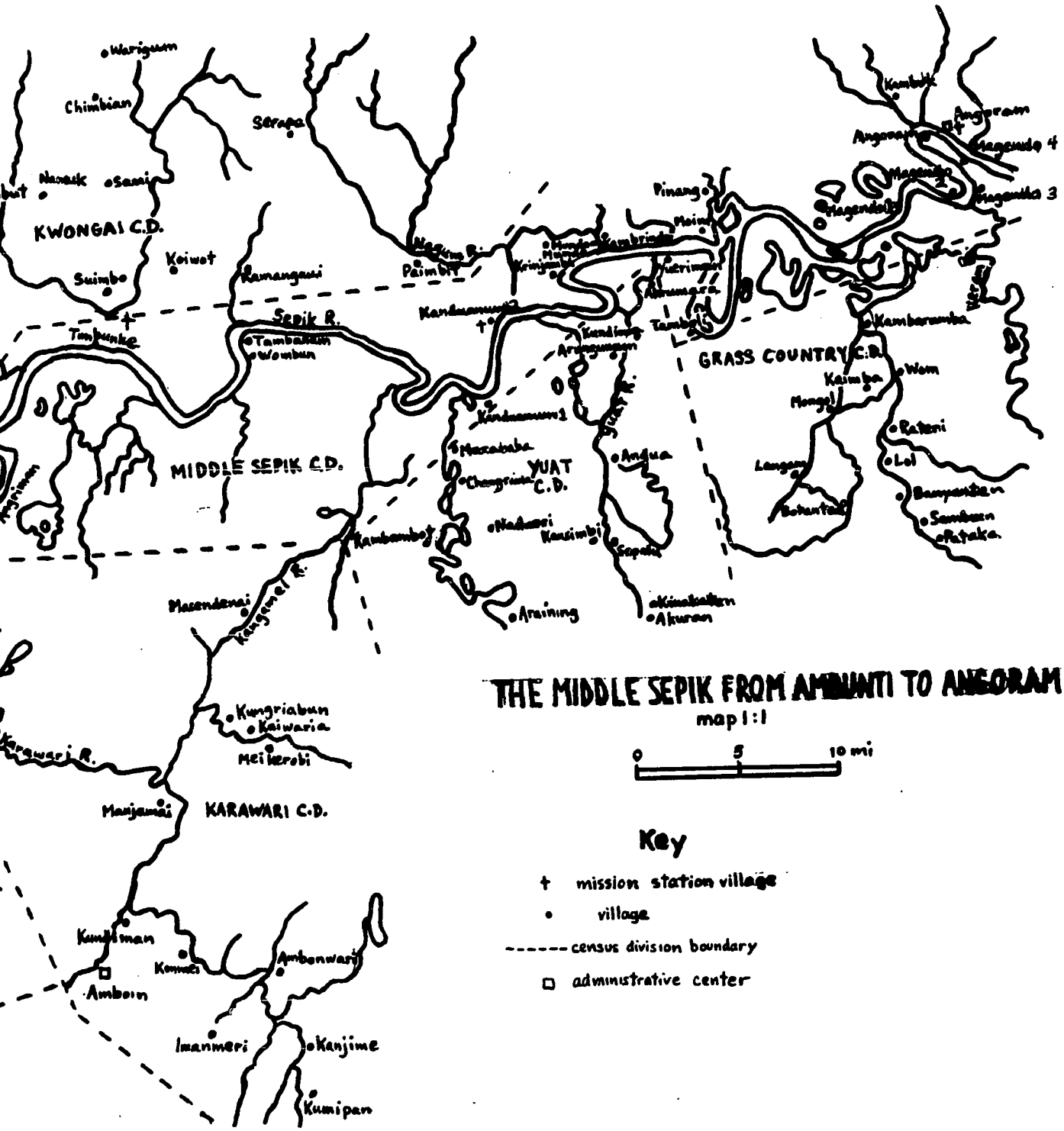
The Chambri people, numbering approximately 1,300 in 1974, live in the East Sepik District of Papua New Guinea. Their three villages, Indingai, Kilimbit and Wombun, are located south of the Sepik River at the base of Chambri mountain. Indingai, which translates as "middle place," is flanked by Kilimbit to the west and by Wombun to the east. The mountain emerges from the vast sheet of water which is Chambri Lake.

Although of impressive size during the rainy season, from January through March, Chambri Lake is nothing more than a flooded plain, ranging in depth from three to twenty feet. The plain, five to eighteen feet below the bank of the Sepik, is filled by the yearly overflowing of two Sepik tributaries, the Kumalio and Tangimat rivers. These originate in the Sepik Hills and change their course with the rising and falling of the Sepik. During the dry season the lake recedes, leaving mud flats which soon sprout a thick carpet of green. The Sepik Hills and Prince Alexander foothills, visible far in the distance to the west and the north, form a panoramic backdrop to the murky waters of the lake on which float water lilies, the nests of water birds and the matted vegetation that serves as a home for crocodiles.

Within the lake are sixteen island-mountains (see Map 1:1) which are the beginning of the Sepik Hills. The tallest, Garamambu, measures slightly over 1000 feet, whereas







THE MIDDLE SEPIK FROM AMBUNTI TO ANGORAM

map 1:1

0 5 10 mi

Key

† mission station village

• village

------ census division boundary

□ administrative center

Chambri rises only 500 above the lake. Seven of the lake's islands are inhabited. Some may be reached directly by the Kumalio and Tangimat rivers, and others through networks of natural or man-made channels which articulate with the larger waterways.

The Sepik is unquestionably a major river. The second largest river in Papua New Guinea, it flows for some 800 miles in an easterly direction from its source in the Central Range to the Bismark Sea on the north coast of New Guinea. In places the channel is 30 feet deep and 200 to 500 yards wide. Only the Sepik's middle reaches and their northern and southern flood plains are significant to this inquiry; and as we shall see, the villages of this region are linked by networks of trade and warfare.

Lake Chambri lies south of the Sepik. The area immediately north of the Sepik, the Middle Sepik Plains, comprises two distinct physiographic sections (Reiner and Robbins, 1964:20-44). Approximately one third of the area is a swampy flood plain some 50 miles long and 4 to 12 miles wide, which, during the wet season, is covered by as much as 12 feet of water. The northern two-thirds are a dry grassland plain that is between 150 and 450 feet above sea level and occupies about 1000 square miles. This upper plain joins the Prince Alexander and Toricelli foothills, where originate a number of south-flowing tributaries of the Sepik.

Geographers characterize the Middle Sepik and Chambri

Lake region as being of the wet tropical climatic type (Haantjens, et. al., 1972:15). Measurements at Ambunti indicate a mean annual rainfall of approximately 80 inches, with a 45% variability during the dry season, a mean annual temperature of approximately 81° F, and a mean annual relative humidity of approximately 90% (McAlpine, 1972:60-72).

Members of three distinct language families are of concern to my analysis. The first, Nor Pondo, consists of approximately 8,000 speakers of Chambri, Murik, Angoram, Tabriak and Yimas languages. The second, Ndu, the largest of the three, comprises about 58,000 speakers of Abelam, Boiken, Iatmul, Sawos, Manambu, Ngala and Yegolu. The third, Sepik Hills, incorporates fourteen languages spoken by approximately 6,500-7,000 people. Also of concern is the Yerkai language, which, although little studied by linguists, appears to differ from all neighboring language families. It is spoken at the villages of Garamambu and Yerkai by approximately 326 people (Wurm, 1971: 588-595, 637-639).

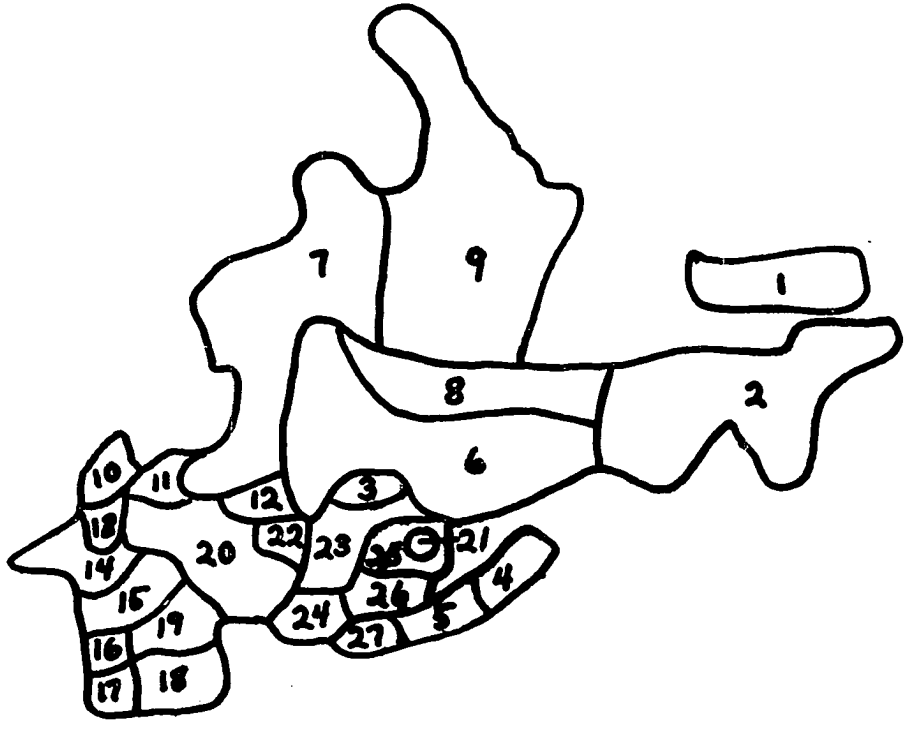
Map 1:2 shows the distribution of these language groups. Of particular interest is the geographical separation of Chambri from related languages to the east by a belt of Ndu and Sepik Hills speakers. Chambri and its related tongues are multiple-classifying languages with full concord. Laycock postulates a northern migration of Ndu speakers from the foothills at the headwaters of the Karawari and Korosameri Rivers (1965:195). His view is supported by Dye, et. al. (1969:153), who believe that the 10% to 15% rate of cog-

map 1:2

DISTRIBUTION OF EAST SEPIK LANGUAGE FAMILIES SIGNIFICANT TO THIS STUDY

Sources

Adapted from Laycock, 1965 and Dye, et. al., 1969.



0 20 40 60
miles

key

Nor Pondo Family
1. Murik
2. Angoram
3. Chambri
4. Tabriak
5. Yimas

Ndu Family
6. Iatmul
7. Manambu
8. Sawos
9. Boiken
10. Ngala
11. Yegolu

Yerikai Family
12. Yerikai

Sepik Hills Family
13. Bitara
14. Sanio
15. Setiali
16. Gabiano
17. Umairof
18. Hewa
19. Piame
20. Bahinemo
21. Kalingara
22. Mari
23. Bisis
24. Watakataui
25. Kabriman
26. Alamblak
27. Sumariup

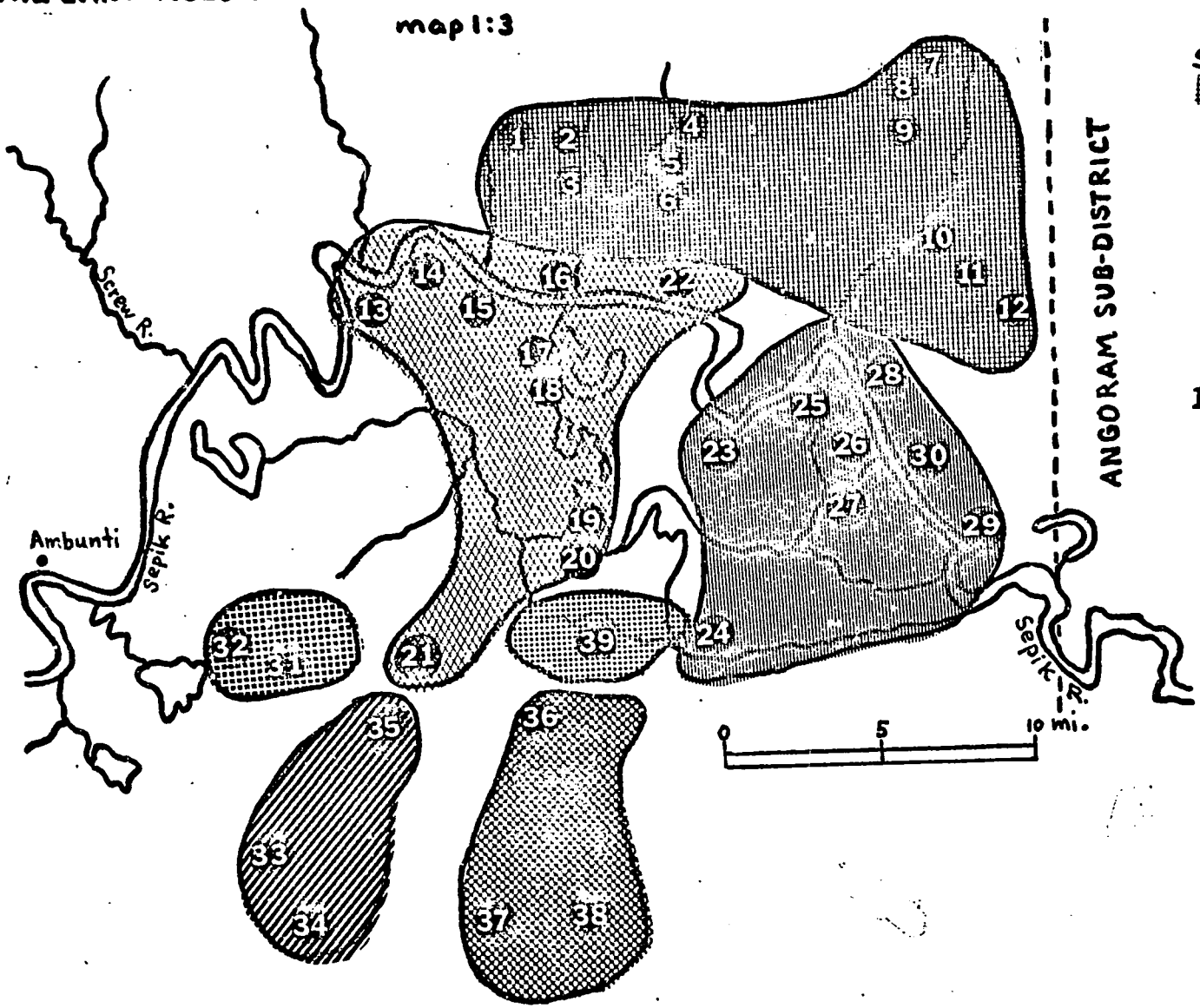
nation between the Ndu and the Sepik Hills languages spoken in the Korosameri-Karawari delta indicates a genetic relationship. Wurm concurs and suggests that, based upon significant lexostatistical interrelationships and considerable typological agreement, the Ndu and Sepik Hills language families should be placed within a single phylum (1971:594). The northern expansion of Ndu may well have cut Chambri off from the related multiple-classifying languages. Moreover, extensive adoption by the Chambri people of Iatmul culture indicates that the severance occurred long ago.

Map 1:3 places particular villages within the language and dialect groups discussed in this study. The Iatmul-speaking villages of the Middle Sepik are divided into two dialect groups, Nyaula and Parambei. Nyaula is spoken from Japandai through Korogo; Parambei from Suapmeri through Tegowi. With few exceptions the dialect division is sustained by proximity and allegiance. Sawos, spoken north of the Sepik River, has never been thoroughly studied and may, in fact, consist of dialects of Abelam, Boiken and Iatmul (Laycock, 1965:144). The Mali and Bisis speakers of the Sepik Hills understand each other's language, but most probably this is the result of the increased contact following their recent migration from the isolation of their mountain villages to the shores of Chambri Lake.

In 1964 all the villages shown on Map 1:3 became members of the Gaui Local Government Council. The Council represents the Sepik Plains, Burui-Kunai, Main River and Chambri

THE LANGUAGES SPOKEN AT PARTICULAR VILLAGES IN THE MIDDLE SEPIK

map 1:3



Sawos
1. Wereman
2. Yangit
3. Batbi
4. Nemangwi
5. Torembi
6 Slei
7. Makanbu
8. Pangeambit
9. Yakiap
10. Marap
11 Nogosop
12. Gaikerobi

Iatmul (Nyaula)
13. Japandai
14. Yamanumbu
15. Japanaut
16. Yentchamangua
17. Nyaurengai
18. Kandingai
19. Luk Luk
20. Arinjone
21. Timbunmari
22. Korogo

Iatmul (Parambei)
23 Suapmeri
24. Aibom
25. Indabu
26. Parambei
27. Malingai
28. Yentchan
29. Tegowi
30. Kanganaman

Yerkai
31. Garamambu
32. Yerkai

Mali
33. Milae
34. Mali
35. Kurapie

Bisis
36. Peliagwi
37. Changriman
38. Mensuat

Chambri
39 Chambri (Indingai, Kilimbit and Wombun)

Lakes Census Divisions. It meets once a month at the sub-district patrol post of Pagwi to administer tax money and various government allocations designated for locally significant projects.

Garamambu was originally a member of the Chambri Lakes Census Division within the Gaui Council, but in 1966 it was re-classified and now belongs to the Upper Sepik Census Division within the Ambunti Council. The re-classification reflected - however unwittingly - a slackening of relations between Garamambu and the Chambri villages that began in 1942.

Table 1:1 contains government-collected population statistics for the four Census Divisions within the Gaui Council, while Table 1:2 comprises a village by village breakdown of the figures collected for the Main River and Chambri Lakes Census Divisions. The government statistics can only be used for rough comparison, for their accuracy is highly questionable. A detailed census taken by the author on Nov. 5, 1974 at Indingai village indicated a population larger by 22% than the government statistics suggested. The results of this census are presented in Table 1:3.

Both the Sepik Plains and the Burui-Kunai areas have limited agricultural potential (Reiner and Robbins, 1964: 20-44). The shallow, sandy topsoil overlies impermeable clays. Subject to flooding and drought, it is leached of nutrients and is incapable of supporting the regrowth of shrubs. Vegetation consists primarily of a complex of grasses, drought-

Table 1:1

The Population Represented by the Gaui Local Government Council

Census Division	Number
Sepik Plains	2,045
Burui-Kunai	4,950
Main River	5,431
Chambri Lakes	2,743

Source: Official administration Village Directory for 1973

Table 1:2

Population of Main River and Chambri Lakes Villages
According to the 1973/74 Administration Census

Village	Number
Parambei	728
Malingai	401
Kanganaman	725
Yentchan	394
Indabu	280
Suapmeri	308
Tegowi	189
Nyaurengai	195
Kandingai	483
Korogo	814
Yamanambu	226
Yentchamangua	282
Japanaut	379
Japandai	216

Table 1:2, continued

Village	Number
Indingai	285
Wombun	429
Kilimbit	724
Timbunmeri	284
Mensuat	156
Aibom	662
Arinjone	101
Changriman	127
LukLuk	96
Mali	84
Milae	51
YambiYambi	148
TOTAL	8467
MEAN POPULATION	326
STANDARD DEVIATION	196.28

Table 1:3

De Jure Age and Sex Distribution of the population of Indingai Village in 1974

	Approximate Age (Years)							
	-1	1-4	5-9	10-14	15-19	20-44	45+	Total
Males	7	30	36	20	22	57	16	188
Females	8	29	21	25	16	59	19	177
Total	15	59	57	45	38	116	35	365

Source: Figures were collected by the author on November 5, 1974

tolerant Themeda australis, and drought-resistant Ischaemum barbatum. The grasses give way to lowland alluvium and lowland seasonal rain forest where the Sepik's northern tributaries cross the grassy plain. Few of these streams reach the Sepik directly; most debouch into deltas in the back swamps of the flood plain. Flood plain forest occurs most frequently in the Burui-Kunai area on the back-blocked lower tributaries, and it is here, either in pure groves, or mixed with other swamp-tolerant vegetation, that sago grows.

The Main River Division also has little agricultural potential (Haantjens, et. al., 1972:187), for it is an area of levees, meander scrolls and back swamps. The levees, upon which all the major Sepik River villages stand, vary in size but rarely exceed 150 yards in width. They are discontinuous, with a steep break to the Sepik River and a gentle slope down to the back plain swamp. Strips of levee forest, rarely wider than 150 feet, cross the flat swamp grassland wherever the meander scrolls have not penetrated. The entire plain is subject to annual innundation, often for a depth of 12 feet, although the levees supporting the villages are rarely under more than 4 feet of water.

Although the annual flooding restricts the agricultural potential both for subsistence and for commerce, the Sepik waters contain many fish. Members of the Department of Agriculture Stock and Fisheries estimate the weight of fish of legal size that could be caught for commercial sale to be approximately 50,000 tonnes a year (Thorpe, 1975: personal

communication). They hope that eventually a canned product produced for national consumption will replace the tinned mackeral imported from Japan at the cost of $4.1 million annually.[1] The most common fish is Tilapia mosambica, which is a recent arrival in Sepik waters. The fish escaped from experimental ponds at Maprik into the Screw River and from there spread rapidly into the Sepik River. By 1965 Tilapia were "abundant" throughout the area and now appear to outnumber other fish, such as catfish, mixed species of smaller size, trevally and sawshark. It may be that Tilapia have replaced the indigeneous species rather than have filled an empty niche (Thorpe, ibid.).

The villages located on the islands of Chambri Lake also exploit these fish. The many stretches of open water, ranging from 100 to 1200 yards in diameter, support herbaceous and aquatic vegetation, including the algae on which Tilapia feed. The areas in which Tilapia are found in greatest abundance are the narrow waterways which link the open waters. During the dry season, when the water level of Chambri Lake drops as much as five feet, the small waterways are choked with fish that rise to the surface to seek oxygen. Having reproduced in the wet season to fill a large volume of water, the fish now suffocate in the constricted dry-season streams.

Until recently, the Mali and Bisis rarely exploited

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1 During my stay in Papua New Guinea an American dollar was roughly equivalent to 72% of an Australian dollar.

the lake's fish resource. Formerly they lived on steep hills which range in height from 100 to 700 feet, and are formed of paleozoic or meszoic rock covered by sandy, friable or silty clay and clay loam, and by 1 or 2 inches of organic root mat (Haantjens, et.al., 1972: 236-237). Between the hills are valleys completely covered by sago palm vegetation. Since the early 1960s Sepik Hills speakers have been abandoning their nomadic life and settling in villages on the shores of Chambri Lake. They still gather sago, but now, having mastered the techniques of canoe production and use, they are also fishermen.

The ecological heterogeneity of the Middle Sepik area has stimulated a system of marketing in which villages exchange local products. Throughout the area, except perhaps among the most northern villages of the Sepik Plains, horticulture is unimportant. The Sawos, Sepik Hills and Yerkai speakers process sago [1] from their natural reserves, and they supplement the pigs, bandicoots and cassowaries they kill with fish

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1 Sago is a starch prepared from the pith of the palm tree, Metroxylum rumphii. The palm is felled by men who then peel back its bark and pulvarize its pith with large, blunt-headed adzes. Women take the pith and put it in a toddy palm bark trough that is set up on sticks close to a shallow pool or stream. The trough is tilted and a coconut-fiber screen is lashed onto its lower end. The trough's lower end is positioned above another large piece of toddy palm bark, warped into the shape of a large, shallow bowl and placed on the ground close to the stream or pool. Water is scooped up by the women with ladles made of coconut shell halves. They pour the water through the pith to wash away the starch. The starch-laden water flows through the trough into the shallow palm-bark bowl. The inedible sago fibers are filtered out by the coconut-fiber screen. After the starch settles the women pour off the water and place the block of starch into a basket where it dries out.

acquired from Sepik River and Chambri Lake villages. The Iatmul and Chambri, on the other hand, trade fish with the bush-dwellers for sago. In these villages women control the fishing, and they are also solely responsible for the marketing. Both women and men plant gardens during the dry season, but the immature crops are frequently destroyed by the rising waters of the lake and river. The yams, taro, sweet potatoes and pumpkin that are harvested are enjoyed, but the people consider them superfluous to the basic diet of fish and sago.

The Sepik River Iatmul acquire their sago from the Sawos. Traditionally, Sawos-Iatmul markets were held every three days. Now there are usually two markets a week, held on Wednesdays and Saturdays or on Tuesdays and Fridays. Chambri fish-for-sago barter markets were traditionally held every six days with the Sepik Hills people. Today, bartering has decreased in importance. The Chambri acquire most of their sago at a money market at Indingai village on Saturdays.

The Chambri monopolized the production of the stone tools and the mosquito bags used throughout the Middle Sepik region, and they acquired most of their shell money through the barter of these products. The men made the stone adzes, acquiring the necessary raw materials from six clan-owned quarries located on top of Chambri mountain. Proceeds from the stone tool exchanges were distributed during propitiatory ceremonies for ancestral spirits that inhabited the quarries. The women wove the mosquito bags, utilizing the

wild rushes which grow in abundance on Chambri Lake when the water recedes during the dry season. Proceeds from the barter of mosquito bags belonged exclusively to the producers, so that Chambri women were able to amass quantities of shell money. Aibom women also held a monopoly as the producers of clay pottery, but their storage jars and fry pans were generally exchanged for sago at the market.

As specialized producers, the Chambri led comparatively peaceful lives. As long as the bellicose Iatmul were concerned to protect this source of stone tools and mosquito bags, they did not raid the Chambri. But the situation changed after European products had been introduced throughout the area by German and Australian traders and government officers. In the early 1920s, a contingent of Parambei Iatmul attacked the Chambri and forced them to abandon their island. Kilimbit and Indingai villagers fled to Timbunmeri and later to Chamgriman, while those of Wombun moved to the Korosameri River close to Kabriman. Chambri was uninhabited for almost twenty years, until Australian administrators guaranteed peace and encouraged the inhabitants to return home.

The Chambri were aggressors in two large-scale wars, the first with the Peliagwi and the second with the Manabi of Timbunmeri Island. Both Peliagwi and Manabi appear to have been Sepik Hills speakers who abandoned their migratory life about 150 years ago to settle in permanent villages on Chambri Lake. They both fished and produced sago, and were thus able to remain completely independent of mar-

keting relationships. They attacked Chambri trading parties traveling to the Changriman and Garamambu markets; and, in retaliation, a contingent of Chambri, Nyaula and Garamambu decimated both communities during the last half of the 19th century (see Chapters 5 and 6, p. 173 and p. 213).

Traditionally, heads taken by Chambri in warfare were displayed on top of the spirit house of the killers. There are fifteen spirit houses (iraman) in the three Chambri villages, some owned jointly by two and others by up to six patriclans. Each patriclan also belongs to one of the two, theoretically exogamous, moieties, Nyaui-nimba and Nyemi-nimba. When a spirit house is owned by just two clans, the members of one should belong to Nyaui-nimba and sit in the western half of the house and the members of the other clan to Nyemi-nimba and sit in the eastern half.

Two other ceremonial patri-moieties structure Chambri society. The first, Pombiantimeri/Yambuntimeri, functions only during initiation ceremonies. The second, Ilasone/Pangasone, apparently functioned during warfare ceremonies involving the awakening of powerful ancestors who exist in the form of magic crocodiles. The Ilasone/Pangasone ceremonies have not been performed for fifty years, and the information I collected about them is contradictory and vague.

The spirit houses are located along the shore of Chambri mountain, and the member clans own strips of land extending from the shore line through the rocky, wooded mountain side to the mountain top. The women's houses (kurin) are built

on the mountain side up to 200 feet above shore level. Residence is viri-patrilocal, and, although each married man prefers to build a separate house for his wife (wives) and children, frequently a father and his married sons establish their families together in one large house.

Females are forbidden to enter or even approach spirit houses. Two roads run parallel to the shore line through the three villages and, when the women pass a spirit house, they must take the road furthest from the sacred ground. Men visit their wives at night for sexual intercourse, and they may return to the spirit house in the morning only after they have washed all female pollution from their bodies. A constant complaint of the older men is that their sons spend an inordinate amount of time with their wives in the women's houses instead of profiting from the discussions of their elders in the spirit houses.

Chambri kinship terminology is of the Omaha type, (using the criterion of MoBoDa=MoZ). Fortune reports a preference for MoBoDa marriage (1933:3), but my informants claimed sister exchange and FaZDa marriage as well (see Chapter 2, p.60).

The rate of intra-village marriage is high, surpassed only by that for intra-island marriages (see Table 2:1). Affinal exchange links clans together, and a MoBo's (wau) obligations to his ZSo (pəsaban) culminate in initiation ceremonies which take place over several months. A powerful Chambri has extensive affinal connections throughout the three villages, and will often buy "waushiip" from poorer

neighbors (see Chapter 4).

The affinal exchanges of each individual Chambri are interrelated and interdependent, and they can therefore justifiably be considered to comprise a system. Any affinal exchange limits the occurrence of others, for each necessitates the coordination of transactions and conjoining of scarce resources (see Chapter 4). Moreover, intra-island endogamy constrains the affinal exchange system by limiting the number of participants.

Chambri marketing can also be viewed as a system. Subsistence demands the exchange of fish-for-sago and hence inter-tribal dependence. And the continuous need of people for perishable sago, (necessitating at least one trip to a market each week,) imposes spatial limits upon the extension of the system. Women can only market with those villages located a few hours away, for an overnight trip would necessitate host/guest relations inimical to bush/water interaction (see Chapter 6, p.201), and would interfere with the women's ability to feed and care for their families. Intra-village political alignments further delimit the marketing spheres, and the rules which regulate the exchanges of fish-for-sago cannot be analyzed exclusively in economic terms (see Chapter 6).

Nevertheless, both the marketing and the affinal exchange systems do include economic relations. The former enters the economic domain because it entails the production, distribution and consumption of the staples, fish-for-sago.

The latter involves economic relations because it functions largely through the exchange and the use of material items. Moreover, the items used in affinal exchange are secured partly from the proceeds of the production and distribution of stone tools and mosquito bags.

The next three chapters analyze the Chambri affinal exchange system, while the sixth chapter examines the marketing system. These chapters emphasize the relationship between socio-political organization, ideology and economics in an attempt to determine the mutual limits of these three domains.

CHAPTER II

SOCIAL GROUPS

As we saw in the introductory chapter, ethnographers working in several New Guinea Highlands societies have discovered that individuals exercise considerable choice in joining social groups. This insight has led some to assert that descent models are extrinsic to an understanding of New Guinea social organization, that the latter is characterized by equal exchanges between entrepreneurial individuals. Indeed, a few ethnographers have stated that descent in the Highlands of New Guinea is merely a convenient metaphor used to confer a semblance of inevitability and permanence on achieved relationships. But to the Chambri the notion of descent is more than this. For them genealogical relationships, rather than merely rationalizing on-the-ground manipulations of people and property provide an idealized model against which these manipulations are judged. Repeatedly, in response to questions about the ownership of totemic names, and of ceremonial accoutrements, about rights to land and water and about membership in spirit houses, moieties and clans, my informants gave a double set of answers that related, first, to the way things actually were and, second, to the way they ought to be. It is true that an individual's awareness of genealogically defined descent relationships never seriously impedes his quest for prestige and power. Nevertheless, the fact that most adult Chambri carry with them mental models of both the actual and the ideal organizations of their soci-

ety indicates that both models are significant. Thus, in analyzing Chambri social organization, I shall describe both the idealized framework and the processes which produce discrepancies between the real and the ideal. Only through such a dual approach is it possible to understand the contexts in which individuals interact.

The Tribe

If a tribe is a segmental organization composed of "equivalent, unspecialized multi-family groups" (Sahlins, 1968:190), then the Chambri are a tribe. Although each segment - phratry, clan, patrilineage - has its particular history, the Chambri tribe is defined by the peoples' recognition of one apical ancestor, Emosue Apankei, the pigman who is thought to have emerged from the ground about nine generations ago. He is Chambri personified, and is believed to have been responsible for anchoring Chambri Island where it now stands and for creating the Chambri language. Although the Chambri do not call themselves "his people," non-Chambri groups frequently refer to them as "belonging to Emosue." He was the first Chambri, and once owned the island and its environs. The few Chambri who can trace their descent directly from him claim to be the true owners of the island, but it is generally agreed that, by ceding his estate to his immediate descendants, Emosue exchanged his dominance of Chambri as a whole for the reduced status of a clan founder.

The Phratries

The three Chambri phratries are the highest order genealogically based divisions that the people recognize. Each consists of two or more clans "that recognize a purely conventional bond of unilinear kinship" (Murdock, 1965: 47) as the descendants of each of the three sons of Emosue Apankei. Yambukei, the eldest son, reputedly left his paternal home on top of Chambri mountain to found Indingai Village on the shore below. Indingai is also called Yambukeiingai, which means "belonging to Yambukei." Wombun Village, or Walintimiingai, was settled by Walintimi, who is said to have left Indingai after arguing with his older brother over the ownership of a banana tree. Kilimbit Village, or Saungai, was ostensibly founded by Saun, the youngest of the three brothers, after he argued with Yambukei over a woman. The territory of the phratries, therefore, coincides with that of the villages. They are not, however, land owning groups.

Although there is no explicit rule of phratry endogamy, most marriages are made between phratry members (see Table 2:1). The affinal obligations that link the component clans reinforce each phratry confederacy. When a young woman from one phratry expresses interest in a man from another, her father is likely to call a meeting of his fellow phratry members. At the meeting he will bemoan his daugher's predilection and stimulate angry sympathy with statements such as "I thought that our men were the best. I must be wrong. My daughter wants a man from Wombun. Perhaps she knows

Table 2:1

The Frequency of Endogamous Marriage at Chambri in 1974

Origin of Spouse	Number of Marriage						
	Chambri Phratry				Sub- Non-Chambri	% of Endogamy	
	Yambukeiingai	Saungai	Walintimiingai	Total		By Phratry	All Chambri
Chambri Phratry:							
Yambukeiingai	64	11	6	81	7	73	92
Saungai	13	94	2	109	11	78	92
Walintimiingai	6	1	86	93	11	83	90
Totals	83	106	94	283	29	78	91

Source: Figures were collected by the author. They are calculated from the male perspective to avoid double-counting and include the marriages of migrant laborers.

best. Perhaps our men are rubbish-men, and big-men come from Wombun." The point of such a meeting is not to decide upon the woman's future mate. Her actual marriage partner will be determined by other means, which I will discuss later. But, by convening a meeting of his fellow phratry members and stimulating them with his oratory, a father demonstrates the scope of his influence within the phratry and, by implication the advantages of marriage with a member of his family. He emphasizes this desirability by temporarily consolidating his phratry co-members around his problem and around himself. They unite to meet the external threat of Wombun's superiority, and he is at the head of their union. The threat is, of course, a man of straw, created by the father's oratory, but since the imposition of the Pax Australia such manufactured issues are the only ones around which phratry members can coalesce.

The Patriclans

Chambri refer to a patriclan as "the people with the same totems." The term indicates the clan members' common ownership of numerous totemic names, most of which were adopted from the Iatmul long ago. In Iatmul the names are translated as, for example, "Leg-fishhook-man" or "North-bank-earth-tree" (Bateson, 1932: 410), but in Chambri the same names have no lexical meanings. To both peoples, however, the names refer to the ancestors who once held them, to the ancestral spirits and the magical powers invoked by their recitation and to the natural objects, territories and re-

sources owned and lived in by the ancestral spirits. Although patriclan members claim descent from their patriclan founder, it is the inheritance of totemic names and not the transmission of blood that links them together.

Chambri patriclans are named for their founders. Although three of the clans claim descent directly from the phratry founders, and are named accordingly, the other thirty-one clans are thought to have been founded by the sons of the phratry founders. Only occasionally is a biological connection asserted between a phratry founder and his sons. More frequently, the sons reputedly migrated to Chambri from non-Chambri villages. They were then adopted by one of the phratry founders and given land, water rights and totemic names by their new fathers.

A patriclan is a land-owning, residential and ceremonial group. Its men build continguous women's houses and generally abide in the one spirit house. Ideally, they own strips of land extending from the spirit house to the top of Chambri mountain. Clan territories are named and clearly demarcated, often by streams flowing from Chambri's summit. Together all the clan members assume the bride price and affinal debts incurred by a co-member, and together they receive the affinal prestations owed the clan. During all affinal transactions which mark marriage, birth, initiation and death, clan members celebrate the occasion with long recitatives of their totemic names. Frequently the chants also recount the travels of their clan's founder, incarnate

as a supernatural crocodile, swimming through clan-owned water and resting on clan-owned land. Their chanting often extends over several days and nights, with their affines recounting their own names as the clan members rest.

The figures in Table 2:2 indicate the range of clan population. One Chambri clan has two branches, each with the same name, occupying distinct localities within different villages. Both branches own their own land and totems, and they act independently with respect to affinal prestations. They have, therefore, been considered as separate groups in Table 2:2. The figures include all clan members who have not renounced their patrimony, whether or not they live on clan land. Approximately 200 individuals, not including married women and migrant laborers, belong to one clan and live with another, and 75 of these have moved from their natal villages. Rarely are ties completely severed with the original agnatic group. Few clansmen ever renounce their patrimonies. In fact, a successful migrant clansman maintains two sets of relationships by visiting his old clan periodically to assist in affinal prestations while convincing his new clan that his allegiance rests with it. Although his patrimony cannot be taken from him, it can be denied his children. A man must pay for the right to pass his family's names on to his children by contributing to his clan's affinal transactions; if he breaks all ties with his clan, he loses this right and must accept a token payment from his former agnates in return for his names. Several of

Table 2:2

The Size of Chambri Clans in 1974

	Indingai	Kilimbit	Wombun
No. of clans in village	13	9	12
Estimate population of clan members	368	472	468
Range of population per clan	10-61	27-79	23-77
Mean population per clan	28	52	39
Standard deviation	13.33	3.8	16.17

the migrant clansmen in my sample were in process of returning to clans which their fathers or grandfathers had abandoned. They wished to regain their patrimony by re-establishing ties with their true agnates.

Frequently migrants move from smaller, poorer clans to larger, richer ones. Wealth is measured exclusively in terms of a clan's ability to sponsor its members' affinal transactions; it has no relation to the amount of arable land available to the clan. The Chambri, it will be remembered, are not horticulturalists and are not subject to land shortages.

Generally a dispute precedes a man's decision to emigrate. Frequently he and his agnates quarrel over their failure to pay his bride price or to sponsor his son's initiation. But, regardless of the stimulus, he has been prepared to migrate for a considerable time because his move would not be possible unless the head-man of the adopting clan had already agreed to it.

A wealthy head-man, interested in expanding his power, might encourage the move. The immigrant would then become his middle-man, and through him the head-man could sponsor the affinal transactions of the migrant's agnates. The migrant, on the other hand, using the resources of his adopted clan, might hope to gain status within his natal clan and perhaps to return to assume the head-manship of his agnates. The Chambri designate such would be entrepreneurs as "mix-men" and are delighted when their power-plays fail.

The wealthy head-man, however, is respected even by the migrant's natal clan, the members of which often assuage their loss of a "brother" by recounting the number of men who migrated to their clan in the past.

Occasionally a migrant will move to a declining clan, generally to one whose elders have no adult male heirs. Often a son-in-law of the declining clan's head-man, the migrant is taught relevant clan lore and must promise to act as custodian of the clan's names, powers and resources until a suitable male heir matures. It is possible that an ageing head-man, fearing permanent usurpation of his position, prefers to select his least competent son-in-law to head his declining clan temporarily.

The natal clansmen of a migrant moving to a declining clan encourage him to move. Their agnate, knowledgeable in his adopted clan's lore, will bring its names, powers and resources temporarily under their control. Although it is understood that he will abdicate the head-manship of the host clan upon the maturity of an agnatically related heir, he and his sons, through their explicit knowledge of their adopted clan's names, will forever maintain quasi-agnatic status there. They can therefore act as middlemen in sponsoring affinal transactions without incurring the stigma of being mix-men.

The migration of individuals from one clan to another can only occur when the interests of the migrant intersect with those of the adopting head-man. The migrant desires to

achieve status and power, while the head-man wishes either to insure the continuity of his clan or to extend his sphere of influence. Invariably, the fulfillment of individual interests results in the host clan's assuming an unequal relationship with the migrant's clan. The wealthy head-man dominates the migrant's natal clan through his sponsorship of its affinal transactions, whereas the ageing head-man submits his secret names to his son-in-law to ensure his own group's survival. However, the unequal relationship between basically opposed clans that is created by migrant middle-men is highly unstable, rarely lasting more than a decade. And perhaps such migrations of self-interested individuals can best be understood as a prelude to major transformations in clan structure. I believe that these transformations, through a reorganization of clan segments, reestablish clan autonomy.

The Patrilineages

Most immediate changes in Chambri social groups occur at the patrilineage level; when the people recognize patrilineages as distinct groups, an outsider can be sure that there has been a recent transformation in clan structure or that one is imminent. There is no Chambri word to distinguish a patrilineage from a clan, and patrilineage members differentiate themselves from other men of their clan by claiming direct descent from their patrilineage founder and only indirect descent from the founder of their clan. They may assert, for example, that "we stay inside Sakware but

really come from Bukien."

Patrilineages are named for their founders who are rarely located more than four generations in the past. Never including more than four to five monogamous or polygynous husbands, a patrilineage comprises a maximum of fifteen to twenty-five living agnates. The genealogical connections among patrilineage members are reinforced by a father's endowing his children with the totemic names of his father and his father's sister. Within each clan, therefore, complexes of names are transmitted through the patrilineages.

Figure 2:1 illustrates the processes of fission, segmentation and accretion (see Meggitt, 1965: 54-84) as they occur among the Chambri. Clan A once included Patrilineages a and b. Both grew in size and split from A, achieving co-ordinate status in about 1850. Shortly thereafter, Clan a's head-man adopted the families of x and y, each reputedly from different non-Chambri villages. By about 1915 the descendants of x and y began differentiating themselves from each other and from a by recalling their original migrations. Eventually z, a member of Patrilineage y and a son-in-law of Clan b's head-man, was persuaded to migrate to Clan b which had lost several of its agnates in a fracas with Parambei. As Clan b's middle-man, z began contributing heavily to Patrilineage y's bride price and affinal payments, most of which were due to Clan b itself as y's affines. Increasingly in z's debt, by about 1925 Patrilineage y left

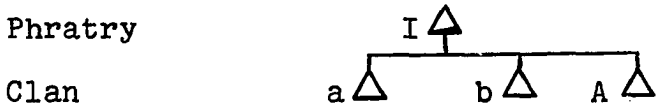
Figure 2:1

Changes in Chambri Social Groups

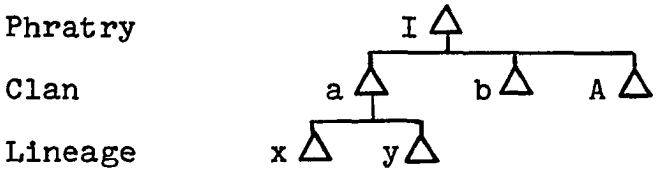
Stage 1:

Stage 2: segmentation

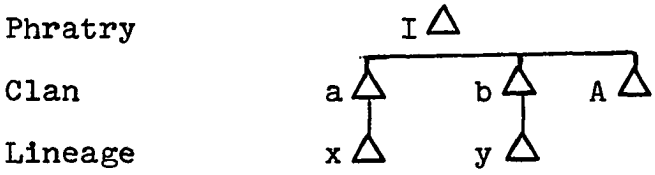
Stage 3: fission



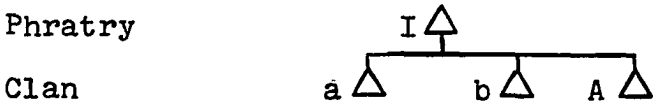
Stage 4: segmentation



Stage 5: accretion



Stage 6



Clan a and settled with z on Clan b's land. Neither the descendants of x nor y now distinguish themselves from their fellow clan members in a and b, and are unwilling to admit that they are not directly descended from their clan founders.

Given the necessity of reconstructing the changes in social groups from ethno-historical data, it is difficult to verify such propositions with statistics. I am convinced, however, that two complex variables affect the processes of change within Chambri groups. The first is demographic, involving population changes, both natural and as the result of warfare. A group's position in the social hierarchy is determined, in large measure, by the size of the group's membership. The fission of Patrilineages a and b from Clan A, for example, would not have occurred if the patrilineages had not achieved the size of clans. Nor would Patrilineages x and y have segmented from Clan a if their memberships had not grown in size. And finally, it is likely that the accretion of Patrilineage y to Clan b transformed overpopulated a and underpopulated b into two viable clans.

The second variable affecting changes within Chambri social groups is the ability of the group to accumulate scarce resources and coordinate their exchange during affinal transactions. The two variables are not completely separable, however, for the size of a group partially determines the quantity of resources available to it for extra-domestic exchange. The coordinate Patrilineages a and

b, for example, could not have replaced Clan A if their naturally increasing populations had not been able to amass sufficient commodities and thus assume independent roles in affinal prestations. Nor would Clan B have been able so effortlessly to increase its population if it had not been able to pay to itself Patrilineage y's affinal debts, thereby procuring y's allegiance.

These examples of changes within Chambri social groups should make it clear that these groups are highly flexible. The Melanesian Pidgin word used to describe a person's allegiance to one or another of these groups is "bisnis." A man is said to belong to a clan because he is the business of the clan. A patrilineage wishing to transfer its allegiance can simply move its business elsewhere, as indeed did most of the adopted clan founders who chose Chambri above their natal villages. And an individual wishing to increase his status has the option of making a business deal with the power seeking head-man of a wealthy clan.

Marriage, Initiation and the Moieties

All Chambri clans are potentially politically equal except those which are currently linked by marriage.

> In egalitarian New Guinea society it is only the men who are equal in the sense of being at least potentially the same or equal. Women are different... the differences are those of complementarity; men and women are interdependent but are in no sense the same or symmetrical and cannot be identical. From the point of view of the equal men, women are a source of inequality, in fact they are in some senses the only source of inequality... Basically men related to

> each other through women cannot be equal to each other and they cannot therefore carry on equal exchange. Relations between men through women can, of course, only be created through marriage, and marriage in New Guinea is everywhere the start of a relationship of unequal exchange (Forge, 1972a: 536).

Although Highlands' ethnographers have reported that marriage ties there are often used as the foundation for equal exchange (see Strathern, 1971: 156-167), the situation is more complicated among the Chambri where clans and their leaders indirectly compete with other clans and their leaders through their separate affinal prestations. The symmetrical exchange of comparable items rarely occurs among Chambri. When it does, the size of the gifts does little to increase the prestige of their donors, for return gifts must never exceed initiatory gifts. Prestige for both the clan and its leader is achieved primarily through a leader's ability to pay his affines (i.e. his wife's kin) large bride prices, to over-compensate his brothers-in-law for their contribution of foodstuffs during rites of passage celebrated for his sons, and to assist non-related clan members to do the same. His sisters' husbands, in turn, attempt to match the affinal payments he has made to his wife's brothers, and so the system ramifies, each clan indirectly competing with all others. Frequently, particularly during initiation ceremonies when several sisters' sons from unrelated clans are scarified together, the separate affinal reimbursements to mothers' brothers are displayed side by side. Australian

currency was the appropriate form of payment when I was in the field, and "money trees" were made by individually attaching often hundreds of low denomination bills to small sticks which were then thrust into the fibrous spine of a sago palm frond. The money trees were all placed close to the spirit house in which the scarification was taking place, and interested by-standers could assess the relative "strengths" of the participant clans by counting the number of branches on each tree. Marriage, therefore, not only initiates a relationship of unequal exchange, but also provides the field on which the game of prestige is played out.

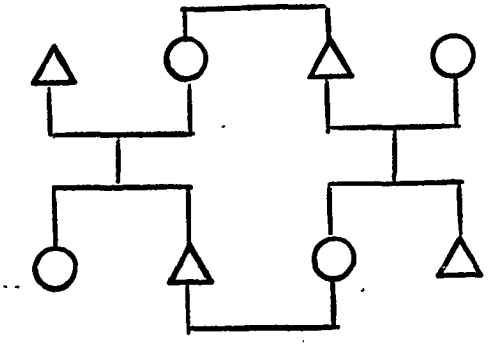
The Chambri believe, contradictorily, that a man should marry into his mother's clan and that a girl should return in marriage to her mother's clan in repayment for her mother (see Figure 2:2). In no case is marriage with either the biological mother's brother's daughter or father's sister's daughter permitted or practiced, for it is believed that, if a man marries a girl who shares his blood, their children will not survive. Ideally, if a man belongs to the totemic patri-moiety Nyaui-nimba (sun people), his wife should come from the Nyemi-nimba group (moon or mother people). Although nearly 60% of the people marry into the opposite moiety, only 30% find a mate in their mother's clan, while only 2% marry a member of their father's sister's husband's clan.

The Chambri describe the clan from which a man takes a wife, regardless of whether he has obeyed the marriage rules, as his and his clan's "birua," a Melanesian Pidgin

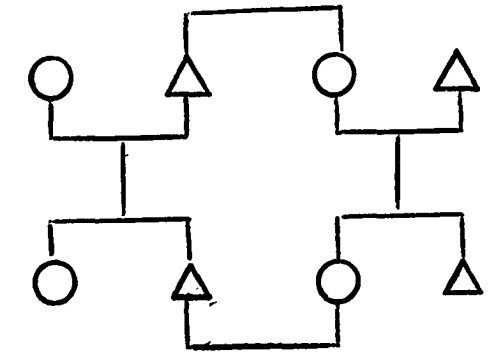
Figure 2:2

The Contradiction Between
MoBoDa and FaZDa Marriage

A Man Should Marry Into His Mother's Clan



A Girl Should Return In Marriage To Her Mother's Clan



word which means enemy, opponent, or warfare. The point of humbling the affinal enemy with generous gifts is largely a matter of demonstrating one's prowess to other equal and unrelated clans. By failing to distinguish itself in affinal prestations a group or individual may incur the epithet of "rubbish-man" or "rubbish-clan." The only surer route to such degradation is to fail to take a head in warfare. And it would be as much a strategic mistake for an ordinary man to marry a woman from a large, wealthy clan as it would be for his kinsmen to attack a large, powerful village. Unusually wealthy and populous clans find it difficult to acquire wives, and the highest incidence of intra-clan marriage occurs within the wealthiest clans, often between two patrilineages that are on the point of achieving separate clan status.

The unequal exchange relationship between affines extends for only one descending generation, if it is not renewed through cross-cousin marriage. Mother's brothers donate food during ceremonies celebrated for their sister's sons. The ceremonies take place at various "critical" times in a male's life cycle, at his birth, first haircut, initiation, marriage, death, and at any other time the participant clans wish to celebrate - when he builds a new house, for example, or when he acquires a new canoe. Because the supply of money and valuables is always more limited than the supply of foodstuffs, the wife-givers are in an advantageous position, and they occasionally attempt to force

their affines into making an exchange by insisting that a ceremony be held for their sister's son. While considerable prestige can accrue to the wife-receivers who successfully over-compensate their affines, those who cannot amass enough valuables to make an adequate exchange are humiliated and compelled to receive the sponsorship and aid of an unrelated clan (see Chapter 3).

The largest affinal exchanges are made after initiation ceremonies, when the newly initiated man's mother's brother receives money and valuables from his affines in return for the clothes, food, spears and lime gourds he has contributed during the ceremonies. In this case, however, the relationship between wife-receivers and wife-givers is expressed in terms of another Chambri patri-moiety structure, that of Pombiantimeri/Yambuntimeri. It is said that "Pombiantimeri is paying Yambuntimeri for eating their son's backs" or vice versa. Generally, when initiates belong to Yambuntimeri, adept Pombiantimeri scarify their backs, and a mother's brother should belong to the former if his sister's son belongs to the latter. The moiety relationship also functions after scarification, when the initiates are mockingly taught about warfare and other adult male responsibilities by all the members of the opposite moiety.

Although the Pombiantimeri/Yambuntimeri groups are not defined as totemic, 77% of all Yambuntimeri also belong to Nyaui-nimba, while 81% of all Pombiantimeri belong to Nyemi-nimba. The Chambri assert that all Nyaui-nimba should be

Yambuntimeri and all Nymei-nimba should be Pombiantimeri, and they explain the discrepancies with stories of past initiations when there were too few participant Yambuntimeri or Pombiantimeri and members of one group "moved over" to balance the other. They also distinguish functionally between the two moieties, saying that "Nyaui-nimba and Nyemi-nimba belong to names and marriage, while Yambuntimeri and Pombiantimeri belong to initiation." But although they explain that certain clan-owned totemic names belong to Nyaui-nimba while others are Nyemi-nimba, and that members of Nyaui-nimba and Nyemi-nimba respectively belong to Yambuntimeri and Pombiantimeri, they readily admit that clans belonging to one moiety group can own names belonging to the other, and that the memberships of the two moieties need not necessarily correspond.

The Factors Impelling Change in Social Groups

In the Highlands of New Guinea, the demand for arable land has been identified as a factor impelling changes in the composition of local descent groups (Meggitt, 1965: 81-83). But among the non-agricultural Iatmul and Chambri "community size (is not) limited by physical environment ... It is clear that the factor which limits the size of villages is the weakness of their internal cohesion ... The larger villages are continually on the point of fission, and ... their fissions... invariably follow the lines of the patrilineal groups" (Bateson, 1958: 96-97). Bateson believes that patrilineal linkages are stronger than the affinal,

"the latter presenting as it were a plane of weakness in the community" (ibid.: 97). I believe the opposite to be true, namely that affinal links are stronger than the patrilineal, in that the unequal relationships between affines, with wife-takers indebted to wife-givers, are generally immune from the aggressive competitiveness which characterizes the relationship between equals. As Forge points out:

> ....to be equal and stay equal is an extremely onerous task requiring continual vigilence and effort. Keeping up with the Joneses may be hard work, but keeping up with all other adult males of a community is incomparably harder (1972a: 533-534).

When all men are equal competitors, there must be prizes at stake, and three have already been mentioned, namely wealth, status and control. There must also be winners and losers - individuals and groups that become "more equal" than those with whom they are competing - and I have shown how it is possible to manipulate resources to gain power over others. But, if a group were to become permanently "more equal" than all others, the assertion that it is an equal competitor would become a fiction, and hierarchical control would replace egalitarian competition as the organizing principle of the society. Highlands' ethnographers have demonstrated that group expansion there is limited by a big-man's ability to fulfill the economic obligations he has to his followers. Specifically they have suggested that group leaders either become "over-extractive" by diverting their followers' resources outside the community (Sahlins, 1963), or that they

become short of land when indigent non-agnates move in with the successful group (Meggitt, 1967). Neither of these two suggestions apply to Chambri leaders, who repay their followers with the goods which flow back to them in return for those which they gave out, and who are not dependent upon arable land for survival. Why then, it may be asked, do changes in clan structure regularly occur without the impetus of land shortage, and, more generally, why has hierarchical control not replaced egalitarian competition as the organizing principle of the Chambri?

Hierarchical societies or chiefdoms are predicated upon specialized production of commodities that are redistributed by powerful chiefs through extensive descent or local groups, and "most chiefdoms seem to have risen where important regional exchange and a consequent increase in local specialization came about because ecological differentiation was combined with considerable sedentariness" (Service, 1962: 146). The descent groups are dependent upon one another and upon the chief because none of them has access to all the necessary resource zones. But, if all the descent groups had access to the same resource zone, then the ties between descent groups would probably not be maintained (see Schwartz, 1964:91). All Chambri and Iatmul clans not only have access to the same resource zones but are also limited by the same lack of sources of sago. Hence, if the Middle Sepik communities had evolved into a hierarchic society, the polity would have necessarily included both the

water and the bush-peoples. Externalized trading relationships would have become internalized redistributive networks, and the specialized produce of the Chambri and Aibom would have been accumulated and redisbursed through these networks.

Obviously, redistribution has not replaced reciprocity within the Middle Sepik, and the bush- and water-peoples have not become integrated under the aegis of a chief. Instead we find large, relatively autonomous villages with elaborate social and ceremonial organizations marketing on almost a one to one basis in order to acquire all the produce they need. As I shall demonstrate in Chapter 6, it is the very existence of the marketing system, which structurally and symbolically alienates the water-people from the bush-people, that has inhibited the development of redistributive networks within the Middle Sepik. Because hierarchical control cannot replace egalitarian competition as the organizing principle, head-men cannot expand their dominions indefinitely. And when egalitarian competition reigns supreme, disproportionately "more" or "less equal" segments cannot adequately play in the game of acquiring prestige. Disproportionate segments are redefined as non-egalitarian and hence defined out of the game, which goes on among the "equals." Changes in Chambri social groups, each tending to equalize the size and power of clans, might therefore reflect this imposed egalitarian specification.

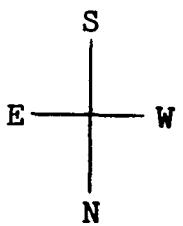
Conclusions

If the Chambri were to construct an idealized plan of their three villages, it would resemble Figure 2:3. Each clan would own land, water rights and a series of names. Its names would mark it as belonging to a particular moiety, and its land would articulate with a spirit house in which its ceremonial accoutrements would be kept. All clans would be approximately the same size, differentiated exclusively through their name sets (see Forge, 1972: 531). However, given the reality of demographic imbalances and of clan fission, the ideal correspondence among names, land and moiety membership is nowhere found. When a patrilineage splits from a clan, it generally carries with it its own group of totemic names. These names tend to be transmitted within it because of the custom of calling children after their grandfathers. Bateson, who writes of the correspondence between clan fissions and the divisions in name series among the Iatmul (1932: 412), fails to mention that name bifurcation invariably corresponds to land bifurcation. The ownership of land and water rights is inextricably bound to the ownership of the names which designate them. And when an expanding patrilineage can secure possession of relevant totemic names, its ownership of homonymous land and water is secured as well. Changes in social groups, therefore, do more than reorganize the ownership of totemic names and the memberships of moieties. They also cause divisions within clan territories such that a clan's land, while ideally a

Figure 2:3

Idealized Map of Chambri

tribe:	Tchamburiingai																														
phratries:	Walintimiingai										Yambukeiingai										Saungai										
clans:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	
spirit houses:	MY	SP	MY	SP	MY	SP	MY	SP	MY	SP	MY	SP	MY	SP	MY	SP	MY	SP	MY	SP	MY	SP	MY	SP	MY	SP	MY	SP	MY	SP	
totemic names:	a	A	a^1	A^1	a^2	A^2	a^3	A^3	a^4	A^4	a^5	A^5	a^6	A^6	a^7	A^7	a^8	A^8	a^9	A^9	a^v	A^v	a^w	A^w	a^x	A^x	a^y	A^y	a^z	A^z	
	b	B	b^1	B^1	b^2	B^2	b^3	B^3	b^4	B^4	b^5	B^5	b^6	B^6	b^7	B^7	b^8	B^8	b^9	B^9	b^v	B^v	b^w	B^w	b^x	B^x	b^y	B^y	b^z	B^z	
	c	C	c^1	C^1	c^2	C^2	c^3	C^3	c^4	C^4	c^5	C^5	c^6	C^6	c^7	C^7	c^8	C^8	c^9	C^9	c^v	C^v	c^w	C^w	c^x	C^x	c^y	C^y	c^z	C^z	
	d	D	d^1	D^1	d^2	D^2	d^3	D^3	d^4	D^4	d^5	D^5	d^6	D^6	d^7	D^7	d^8	D^8	d^9	D^9	d^v	D^v	d^w	D^w	d^x	D^x	d^y	D^y	d^z	D^z	



KEY:

----	Spirit house boundary
M	Nyemi-nimba moiety (Moon people)
S	Nyaui-nimba moiety (Sun people)
Y	Yambuntimeri moiety
P	Pombiantimeri moiety
____	Clan boundary

continuous strip extending from shore to mountain top, in reality consists of non-contiguous blocks dispersed throughout the village.

All Chambri know that the actual structures of their villages do not correspond to their ideal plan. Most can specify the areas of non-correspondence, and nobody is disturbed by the discrepancies. Quarrels, inter-clan migrations and fissions, with concommitant name and land bifurcations, are taken to explain the discrepancies, and invariably an enterprising individual, concerned with increasing his status, is behind the scenes manipulating events.

Thus, it becomes clear why the idealized village plan must be perpetuated, even though the on-the-ground manipulations of each generation of Chambri render it increasingly incongruous. The model of correct and orderly, genealogically-based relationships serves as a measure of the success or failure of individuals and groups in their struggle for power and prestige. It provides a backdrop which gives shape and meaning to the history of the tribe as well as adding perspective to events of the present. With our own scientific passion for adjusting paradigms to facts, we might be tempted to interpret this perpetual discrepancy in Chambri social organization between what is and what should be as an index of the Chambri's "irrational" willingness to save a treasured model by blurring their specification of actuality. But such an interpretation would be erroneous. Rather, it is the degree to which the ideal remains distinct from the real

that enhances its value for the Chambri as a gauge for judging the success or failure of social performance.

CHAPTER III

AFFINAL EXCHANGE: THE ECONOMIC BACKGROUND

In the last chapter I suggested that, among the Chambri, prestige is achieved through affinal exchange. Potentially equal individuals and groups indirectly compete through their unequal affinal exchange relationships. A head-man is successful if he can pay his affines large bride-prices, overcompensate his brothers-in-law for their contribution of foodstuffs during rites of passage celebrated for his sons and assist non-related clans to do the same. Although wife-givers dominate wife-takers by initiating ceremonies in which their affines must give them valuables, it is the status of the wife-takers that rises with each successful compensation. The wife-givers, in turn, may use their newly acquired valuables to compensate their wives' brothers, and so the system goes, each clan indirectly competing with all others.

The status and power which are achieved through affinal exchange do not alter the affinal relationship, for wife-givers hold a de facto dominance over their brothers-in-law. This dominance is, of course, institutionalized by asymmetrical affinal exchange, and can only be altered through the breaking of marriage ties. This is not to imply that all leaders are controlled by their wives' brothers, but rather that their power operates on a higher level and is irrelevant within the affinal relationship. Wives' brothers will

always receive valuables from their sisters' husbands' clans in return for the foodstuffs they have provided, regardless of the power and status of their sisters' husbands. And powerful sisters' husbands will always avoid asserting their prowess when interacting with their wives' brothers. Affines do not compete because they are already involved in relations of dominance and subordination, and it is the stability of affinal inequality that makes the affinal exchange relationship the perfect, non-repercussive arena for extravagant display.

There is, of course, a great difference between asserting prowess and controlling the destiny of others. But once again it is the affinal exchange system, with its penalty of clan extinction if the wife-takers become undesirable marriage partners by failing to compensate their affines, which provides a footing for power-hungry individuals to gain control of their less successful neighbors. Rather than fail to compensate its affines, a weak clan will accept the assistance of an unrelated group to acquire sufficient valuables to make an affinal exchange. And it is by assisting unrelated clans to meet their affinal debts that individuals achieve power over others.

In this chapter I examine affinal exchange in detail. Before discussing specific examples of the relationships between individuals and groups which are established through affinal prestations, it is necessary to understand the economic milieu in which the exchanges are made. This chapter, therefore, also explains the acquisition of exchange items,

both traditionally and now, while the next chapter will deal with the manipulation of these items within the exchange ceremonies.

The Items Donated by Mothers' Brothers Clans

Mothers' brothers and their clans provide the food that is consumed at feasts which occur in either their affines' spirit house or in the largest of their affines' women's houses. Feasting always precedes the giving of valuables which are designated as payment for the food contributed. Feast food differs from everyday fare chiefly in that it includes meat. Pork and poultry are nearly always present, but occasionally they are supplemented with beef or goat. Ideally, an extravagant feast should involve the roasting of from three to five large pigs, or a young cow, a goat and a pig, plus five to ten chickens, ducks and wild water-birds. When available, especially favored feast foods are cassowary eggs, fresh-water oysters, crustaceans and eels. The meat is accompanied by a mound of sago pancakes folded like omelets. More and more frequently, however, store-bought rice is substituted for sago; two or three cups of cooked rice per person are considered an adequate portion. At poorer feasts, a pig or two are cut up, boiled with sweet potatoes, yams and native greens and served as soup. The favorite green is the young leaves of Gnetum gnemon, ("tulip"), a member of the coffee family, Mantchan, a sweet bread made with coconut milk, sago flour and grated coconut meat, wrapped in banana leaves and baked in an open fire, is also a

traditional feast food. Although no feast is adequate without a pig, the presence of at least some store-bought European goods is becoming mandatory. Spiced ham loaf, tinned mackerel and sweet and dry biscuits are preferred. Moreover, store-bought packaged cigarettes are rapidly replacing the native grown tobacco which formerly was always distributed along with betel nut, prior to the consumption of all food at feasts. The favorite beverages are coffee, tea and beer. Brewed in buckets with great quantities of sugar, coffee and tea are distributed to everyone, whereas beer is consumed only by men.

In addition to foodstuffs, mothers' brothers also provide their sisters' sons with items of clothing and decorative accessories. Traditionally, these included a genital covering made of a bat's skin or of woven reeds, bamboo and wooden spears and incised lime gourds. Today, store-bought shorts, singlets and underclothes have replaced the traditional genital covering, although lime gourds and spears are still given. The gifts, which are placed in a woven straw bag made by the mother's brother's daughter, generally include, in addition to clothes, store-bought soap, handkerchiefs, hair oil and razor blades.

The Acquisition by Mothers' Brothers' Clans of Affinal Exchange Items

If a clan cannot conjoin sufficient foodstuffs to initiate an affinal feast, it can either buy the necessary goods from another clan, accept the assistance of an unrelated clan, or call upon a trading partner in another village to repay

a debt established at some earlier time. The first option is comparatively new because it necessitates possession of a cash fund, and it will be discussed in the section dealing with business, migrant labor and the acquisition of money. The second option entails inter-village manipulation and group realignment and will be discussed toward the end of this chapter. The last option, involving the transformation of perishable products into obligations on the part of others (see Schwartz,1964:79), was once utilized far more than it is today. It is still important, however, and frequently, when an individual is in need of several pigs or extra sago in order to initiate affinal exchange, he will ask his trading partner to donate the items.

Throughout the Middle Sepik, trading partnerships are the most "reciprocal" of all interactions. When speaking Neo-Melanesian, for example, the partners call each other "poroman," "a curious word meaning a partner or pair to any object, e.g. of a pair of pigs' tusks, one is a poroman to the other" (Bateson, 1932:266). Trading partners generally address each other in one of their native languages. In all cases when I observed the interaction of Chambri with their trading partners from the Sepik Hills, Chambri was used. Invariably each man applied the term casik (older brother) to the other, thereby implying a relationship of mutual obligation without dependence. Clearly, if yemen (younger brother) had been the reply to casik, the reciprocity of equals would have been undermined by the cultur-

ally accepted dependence of younger upon older brothers. As one of my informants put it:

> It is no good if I help my younger brother too much, for he would be shamed and then we would fight and I would look at his blood and cry.

Trading partners frequently exchange their surplus on a delayed basis. Generally the gifts consist of local produce, fish, yams, sago, betel nut, tobacco and various meats. Shell and feather valuables were also given in the past, the former traveling up the Sepik River from the coast, or through the Arapesh, Abelom and Sawos bush. Most Iatmul were completely dependent upon their trading partners to introduce new supplies of the valuable shells into their affinal exchange system. Trading partnerships facilitated the conversion of perishable foodstuffs into durable wealth items.

Trading partnerships imply a variety of responsibilities. For example, partners are obliged to provide each other with safe conduct. Should war break out between their villages, they must act as mediators and, if necessary, as protectors of their partners and their partners' clan comembers. Occasionally, however, intra-village obligations demand the betrayal of inter-village trading partners. Such was the case when Kanda of Indingai arranged the death of Kwaremanki of Garamambu.

> Kwaremanki worried over the Garamambu killed by Chambri. He decided to retaliate by killing those Chambri who came to market with Mali and Changriman, and so he built a small grass island and he and his kinsmen hid under it. When the Chambri canoe manned by Memunwan, Kapunkame and Tsilan

> tried to pass over the island, it got stuck. As the Chambri were trying to free it, Kwaremanki and his men surprised and killed them all. Other Chambri saw the attack, but did not pursue Kwaremanki into the bush for they were afraid of the sago ancestors, Maiyun and Abandimi, who would asphixiate them all if any blood spilled on their sago.
>
> Now the Chambri worried over their dead, particularly those belonging to the clan, Minginor. They wanted to attack Garamambu, but Kwaremanki's trading partner, Kanda, decided instead to call his friend to Chambri. He made the magic of the "balus" which caused Kwaremanki to long for his friend, and when he came to Chambri to see Kanda, Kanda told him: "Tomorrow you will die, but today I will make magic which will allow you to die like a man."
>
> All the young men of Chambri wanted to kill Kwaremanki to earn the right to wear black paint, and they all tried to spear him. He stood firm and called them "little boys." Kalak speared him in the liver. Elundimi speared him in the eye. Blood covered his body but still he stood firm. Kabansebe finally killed him, but only because Kwaremanki decided to repay Kanda by allowing himself to be killed.

The implication of the story is that, as his last reciprocal exchange, Kwaremanki gave his life in return for Kanda's gift of magic strength. Kanda, credited with Kwaremanki's death, undeniably gained status within Chambri, but only by maintaining a reciprocal relationship with his trading partner. And to generalize from this example, the point of the zero-sum trading partnerships is to establish obligations and credit that can be utilized in intra-village strategies where winner takes all.[1]

The Valuables Donated by Sisters' Sons' Clans

Traditionally, three major kinds of shell valuables

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1 For a fuller discussion of trading partnerships see Chapter 6, p.195 and Conclusion, p.270).

were given to mothers' brothers in return for the foodstuffs they provided at affinal exchange ceremonies. These were Talimbun, a green snail shell (Turbo marmoratus); Lin, a bracelet or necklace that can consist of a variety of shells, including conus and cowrie, which are pierced in the middle and strung together with hemp; and Kina, the gold-lip pearl shell (Pinctata margaritifera.) Talimbun were the most prized of the shell valuables. They were handed to mothers' brothers' sisters during the last of the initiation ceremonies. The women used them as ladles to rinse white mud from the initiates' bodies before presenting them with the new clothes and decorative accessories they were to wear and use as adult males within their respective spirit houses. Talimbun, along with the other two shell valuables, were also given at other affinal exchange ceremonies, but the mode of exchange varied from ceremony to ceremony. At marriage, for example, the bride was decorated with the bride-price valuables, while at birth and death ceremonies the valuables were displayed on a straw mat inside a woman's house. Because Australian currency is the dominant item employed in affinal exchange today, it is difficult to reconstruct accurately the worth of the different types of shell valuables. The figures presented in Table 3:1 are the best approximation I can make.

Along with shell valuables, cassowary feathers, opossum skins, bird of paradise and parrot plumes, spears, bamboo knives and stone tools were frequently given to mothers'

Table 3:1

Traditional Exchange Rates of Foodstuffs for Shell Valuables

Shell Type	Amount of Shells	Exchange Items	No. of Items Exchanged
Talimbun	1	Sago	1 large cube
	1	Tobacco	5 small bundles
	1	Cassowary eggs	3
	1	Fresh-water shrimps	1 basket
	1	Mussles	1 basket
	1	Eels	2
	5	Pigs	1 medium sized
	10	Pigs	1 large sized
Lin	1 rope	Wild-fowl eggs	1
	1 rope	Tobacco	2 small bundles
Kina	1	Tobacco	2 small bundles
	2	Pigs	1 small sized
	2	Cassowary eggs	3

brothers by their sisters' sons. I could gather no accurate information concerning the affinal exchange rates of these items.[1]

The figures in Tables 3:2-3:4 are examples of the monetary affinal exchanges I witnessed in the field. The first followed Wapiyeri's decoration of the magical ancestral stones, Koromeri and Wumbrianmeri, which had become visible in the Kumalio River as the waters receded during the dry season. The purpose of the decoration was to ask that the ancestors "go to sleep" and not bother the Chambri people. Wapiyeri "owned" the stones, for they were his ancestors, and he held the power to insure their peaceful retirement. He initiated a small feast after decorating the stones with colorful leaves, and his sister's husband's clan reciprocated with the money recorded in Table 3:2.

The items listed in Table 3:3 were exchanged shortly after a migrant laborer, stationed at the West Sepik town of Nuku, returned to Chambri after an absence of two years. It was decided that his young son, aged 3½, must have his hair cut. The Chambri believe that a child's first hair belongs to its mother. This maternal hair must be removed so as to insure his development as a strong member of his father's clan, just as, later on, the maternal blood is eliminated in the skin-cutting ceremony. Those who engaged in

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1 None of the feather decorations used in affinal exchange were found on Chambri proper, but were bartered from the Sepik Hills' villages for stone tools. The exchange rates collected from my informants are more indicative of bartering values than they are of affinal exchange rates.

Table 3:2

Affinal Exchange at the Ancestral Stone Decoration, October 10, 1974

Items donated by wife-givers		Money reciprocated by wife-takers	
Item	Cost ($)[1]	In repayment to	Amount
28 coconuts	.94	Wapiyeri	20.00
48 small tins of mackerel	7.20		
14 bunches of betel nut	1.40		
5 lbs. of rice	.50		
TOTAL	10.04	TOTAL	20.00

1 Unless otherwise noted, all money is Australian currency. At that time $ A 1.00 = $ U.S. 1.50.

Table 3:3

Affinal Exchange at the Haircutting,
December 12, 1974

Items donated by wife-givers		Money reciprocated by wife-takers	
Item	Cost ($)	In repayment to	Amount
Pig	70.00	The haircutter	40.00
Rice	2.50	The food providers	20.00
Flour	.60	The beer providers	10.00
Biscuits	.90	The pig providers	100.00
Cheese "Twisties"	.45	The mother's brothers	10.00
Soda	.20		
Sugar	.80		
Tinned mackerel	2.20		
Chocolate drink	.70		
Margarine	.50		
Carton beer	6.25		
2 shirts	2.30		
2 trousers	2.60		
1 towel	.80		
3 pck. cigarettes	1.35		
2 bars soap	.50		
2 pck. razor blades	.50		
3 bottles hair grease	1.50		
1 comb	.10		
1 tin talcum powder	.35		
TOTAL	95.10	TOTAL	180.00

Table 3:4

The Affinal Exchanges at Three Wombun Initiations, December 30, 1974

Items donated by wife-givers		Money reciprocated by wife-takers	
Item	Cost ($)	In repayment to	Amount
3 pigs	150.00	Initiate A's affines	
6 bowls of rice	5.00	Individual a	15.00
3 bowls of yam, fish, tulip soup	.50	Individual b	4.00
30 coconuts	1.00	Individual c	4.00
50 mantchan breads	.50	Individual d	15.00
50 sago pancakes	.20	Individual e	30.00
3 lime gourds	0	Individual f	20.00
3 spears	0		
3 bars soap	.75	Initiate B's affines	
3 tins talcum powder	1.05	Individual a	130.00
3 combs	.30	Initiate C's affines	
3 shirts	3.45	Individual a	40.00
3 bermuda shorts	1.80	Individual b	20.00
		Individual c	10.00
		Individual d	5.00
		Individual e	5.00
TOTAL	164.55	TOTAL	298.00

the exchange of foodstuffs for money were neither real nor classificatory members of either the mother's brother's or sister's husband's clans, and I shall discuss this fact further on in the next chapter when I deal with the socio-political implications of ceremonial exchange.

The affinal prestations recorded in Table 3:4 took place during initiation ceremonies at Wombun village. The money was displayed on money trees, as described in Chapter 2, p.60 and the feasting occurred inside the largest of Wombun's spirit houses. The wife-givers and their non-related assistants each prepared separate donations of feast food and distributed them exclusively to those designated as their sisters' sons' clansmen, all of whom were assembled in the spirit house. After everyone was temporarily satiated, the remaining food was carried to each initiate's father's house, where the feasting continued throughout the night.

The Chambri people consider affinal prestations to be the true business of clans. In fact, while I was administering a migration survey sponsored by the Australian National University in cooperation with the New Guinea Research Unit, I was frequently informed that migrant laborers work in order to earn sufficient capital to begin their own businesses. It was only half way through the survey that I realized that by beginning "new businesses" my informants did not mean rice farming, trade-store ownership or cattle herding, but instead were referring to the affinal payments

they could initiate with the labor earnings. To generalize from family histories, it seems Chambri believe that for a clan to achieve success one or two young clan members must find work away from the village. Ideally, these migrant laborers should send most of their earnings home for their elders to invest in an outboard motor and establish a taxi service, transporting fellow villagers to various markets on the Sepik River. Their revenues from the taxi service, plus their continued receipt of their sons' earnings, could then be invested in affinal transactions to increase their elders' status and control within the village. Migrant labor and non-traditional financial undertakings are viewed, therefore, as means to achieve intra-village political control.

Nowadays, the foodstuffs contributed by sisters' husbands' clans are valued monetarily. A pig, depending upon size, costs from thirty to ninety dollars, a large block of sago from fifty cents to one dollar, a small tin of mackerel costs fifteen cents and a large tin costs thirty, rice sells from ten to twenty cents per pound, sweet potatoes and yams are bought at ten cents for three to six tubers and coconuts, when purchased, cost ten cents for three. It is believed that the sisters' husbands' clan should at least double its money investment in affinal transactions, and, as the figures in Tables 3:2-3:4 indicate, it almost nearly does so. My more sophisticated informants, while purchasing the food for an affinal feast, likened their expenditures to putting money in a bank that guaranteed a 200% return.

The Acquisition of Affinal Exchange Items by Sister's Sons Clans

Prior to the arrival of Europeans at the turn of the century, shell and feather valuables were acquired through the barter of stone tools, woven mosquito bags, as well as through reciprocal trading partnerships. The latter has been discussed in some detail and I now describe the stone tool and mosquito bag "industries" before treating modern means of acquiring money.

The Stone Tool Trade

The Chambri men produced the stone tools (wanank) used throughout the East Sepik District. Both the production and distribution processes were male dominated activities, with buyers journeying to their trading partners, affines, or friends to purchase the adzes necessary for canoe building, sago processing, house construction and sacred carving.

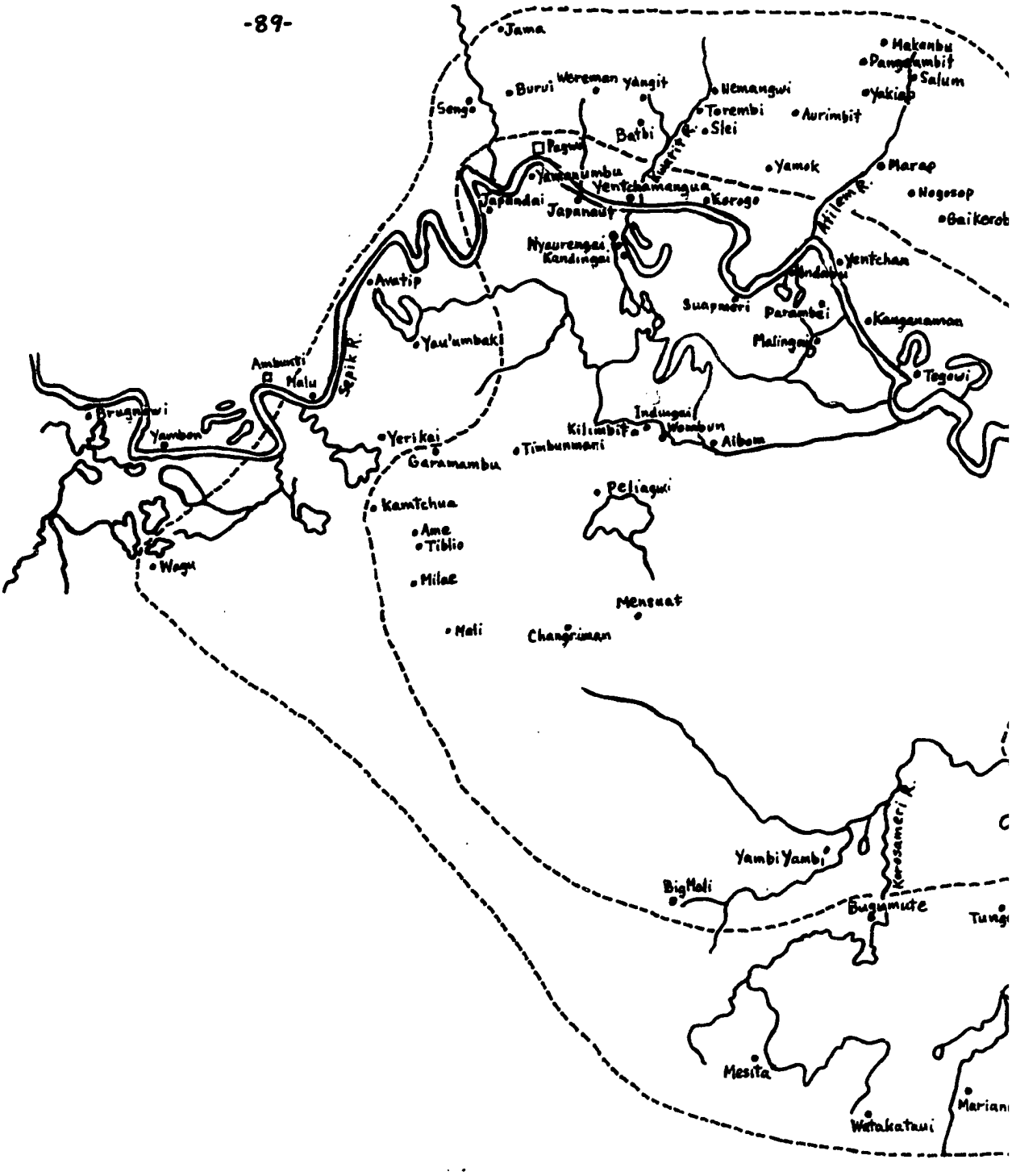
The Chambri operated six quarries. Each was thought to be inhabited by a particular ancestor, and each was supervised by one of that ancestor's descendants. When a new supply of stone was to be gathered, those concerned sacrificed a pig or some chickens to this ancestor, thereby warning him that he would be visited on the following day. They then climbed Chambri mountain, lit a fire and spent that night close to the quarry. At daybreak they gathered loose chunks of stone which had separated from the main boulder or "ancestor's house." If no chunks had fallen, they chipped away at the boulder until they had collected enough, and then returned down the mountain to their spirit houses to

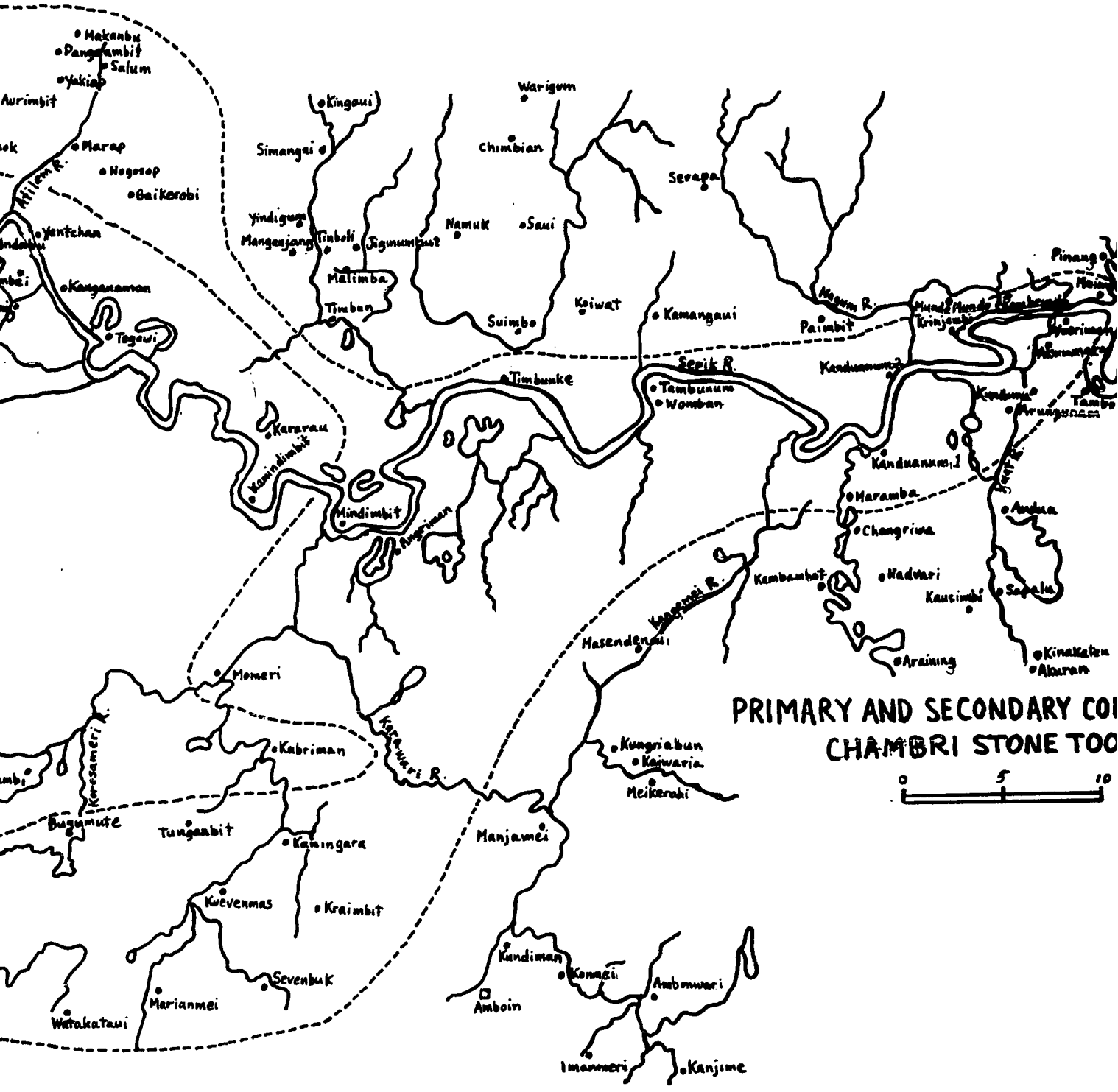
prepare the stone.

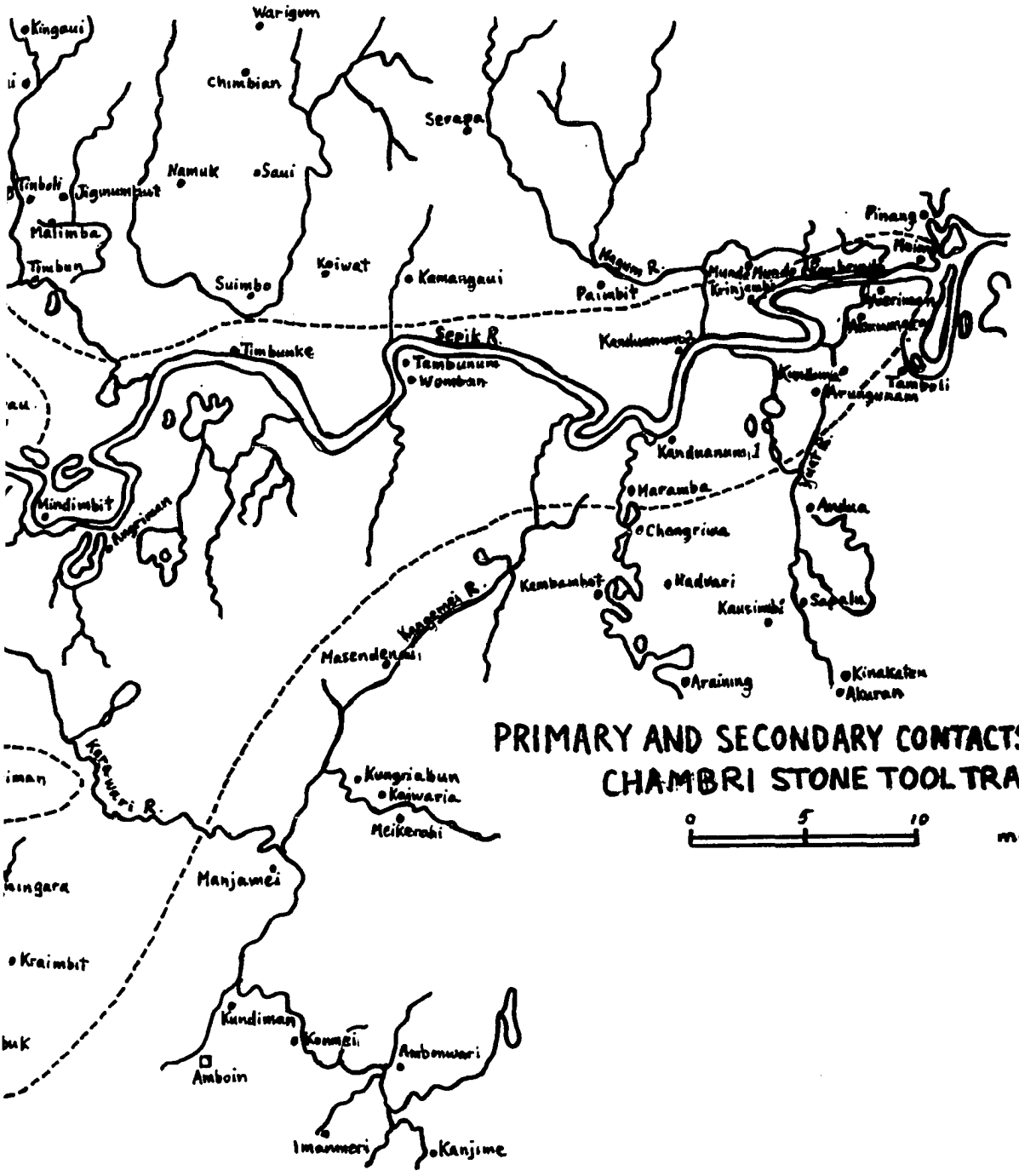
The processing involved shaping and polishing the stone with a harder variety of rock, found not at the quarry but close to the streams that ran down from the mountain. Often those who had inherited access to the quarry were without a source of this harder stone, and they acquired it in exchange for the quarried variety. But whether directly, or through trade, or through agnatic or affinal connections, every Chambri male had access to the stone resource and could produce the "stone iron" destined for barter with the bush and river villages.

The Chambri acted as a central distribution agency; their "stone iron" network extended through primary, secondary and tertiary contacts from the Murik Lakes to Ambunti, and encompassed the villages throughout the southern drainage systems (see Map 3:1). Their stone adzes were made in four sizes. The largest was designed for felling tree, the next for building canoes and houses, the third for sago processing and the smallest for carving sacred wooden objects. Purchasers also acquired polishing stones, with which they re-sharpened the Chambri-made "stone-iron," reducing the frequency of replacement of tools to once every two to five years.

Although occasionally a Chambri accommodated a trading partner by carrying a "stone-iron" to exchange at a market, he preferred to dispose of the tools within the spirit-house. The stone, after all, was a sacred object, which was demystified through its exchange. Sacrifices, designed to pacify







PRIMARY AND SECONDARY CONTACTS WITHIN THE CHAMBRI STONE TOOL TRADE

0 5 10

map 3:1

the ancestral stone dwellers, followed the exchange of each tool, at which times the "uncheban" were assured that the tools had fetched a good return. The presence of the fifteen spirit-houses in the three Chambri villages, in contrast to the two or three in similar sized Sepik River villages, may reflect the compartmentalization of "stone-iron" transactions. Each man desired a ceremonial location in which to carry out his own business.

Each individual man made "stone-iron" transactions on his own behalf. He met his obligations to the quarry custodian by furnishing food at the ceremonies which preceded the stone gathering and followed "stone-iron" exchanges. Of course, the transactor's affines were invited to the ceremonies, and they were forced, as at all ceremonies, to reciprocate with shell valuables for the food provided by their wives' brothers. Thus, not only did a Chambri man acquire shell valuables through his disposal of "stone-iron," (see Table 3:5), but he also forced his affines into ceremonial transactions through his production and distribution of the stone resource.

The Mosquito Bag Trade

Chambri women produced the cylindrical, ten to fifteen foot long mosquito bags (aranɔk) of plaited sago-shoots or bast, that were used throughout the Middle Sepik. Before the European introduction of cotton and nylon mosquito netting, these bags were the people's only protection from the ferocious mosquitoes which infest the area, particularly

Table 3:5

Traditional Exchange Rates of Stone Tools for Shell Valuables

Size of Adze	Exchange Rate
Largest	6 kina, 6 talimbun and 3 lin, or 2 kina and 10 talimbun
Second largest	2 kina, 5 talimbun and 3 lin
Third largest	2 kina, 3 talimbun and 1 lin
Smallest	1 kina, 1 talimbun and 1 lin

during the transitional periods from wet to dry season and from dry to wet. The stagnant pools of water that collect along the shore are breeding areas for various species of mosquitoes, including the malaria-carrying Anopheles faranti. Malcolm Philpott, while administering an economic survey throughout the East Sepik District in 1971-72, described the mosquito situation as "just barely endurable - even in the daytime" (1972:128), and I found it necessary to remain under my mosquito net for as long as two weeks at a stretch during these times of seasonal change.

Mosquito bags were no longer in use when I was in the area, but Mead, who witnessed their distribution, describes the process thus:

> The people of the Middle Sepik purchase these mosquito bags, in fact they are so much in demand that purchasers take option on them long before they are finished. And the women control the proceeds in kinas and talibun. It is true that they permit the men to do the ... trading (in) mosquito bags. The men make a gala occasion of these shopping trips; when a man has the final negotiations for one of his wives' mosquito bags in hand, he goes off resplendent in feathers and shell ornaments to spend a delightful few days over the transaction... But only with his wife's approval can he spend the talibun and kina and the strings of conus rings that he brings back from his holiday. He has wheedled a good price from the purchaser; he has still to wheedle the items of the price from his wife (1963:254).

Chambri women, therefore, were producers of a commodity that brought "more kina and talibun into circulation, and it (was) by the presence of kina and talibun that the ceremonial life (i.e. affinal exchange) (was) kept moving, each ceremony necessitating the expenditure of food and valuables" (ibid.:266).

As far as I can determine, of all the women from Avatip to Timbunke, only Chambri women, through their manufacture of mosquito bags, could acquire shell valuables to invest in extra-domestic exchanges. And, although the mosquito-bag trading network was less extensive than the "stone-iron" network, (see Map 3:2), its revenues, amounting to as much as five talimbun and five large kina per bag, came in more frequently, for mosquito-bags rarely lasted for more than a year.

Modern Means of Earning Money

Philpott, in his socio-economic survey of Sepik riverine settlements, writes that among the Chambri: "Artifacts are considered to be a major industry - the people have evolved a distinctive style much in favor with the tourists. Fishing of lesser importance" (1972:251). My observations of Chambri economic activity confirm Philpott's opinion, for, as Tables 3:6 and 3:7 indicate, the total revenues earned through artifact sales surpass those earned through fish sales.

Artifacts, including carved masks and spears, plaited baskets and bead and seed ornaments, are sold in three different contexts. The first, and most common, is at artifact markets set up for tourists visiting Chambri. They arrive at Chambri once or twice a month in motor-boats, stay for a few hours and then return to the air-conditioned, fully equipped tourist ship, Mareeba, docked at Pagwi. Before leaving, the tour-guides inform the Chambri of when the next group of tourists will arrive, and ask them to arrange the market along

PRIMARY CONTACTS WITHIN CHAMBRI MOSQUITO BAG TRADE

map 3:2

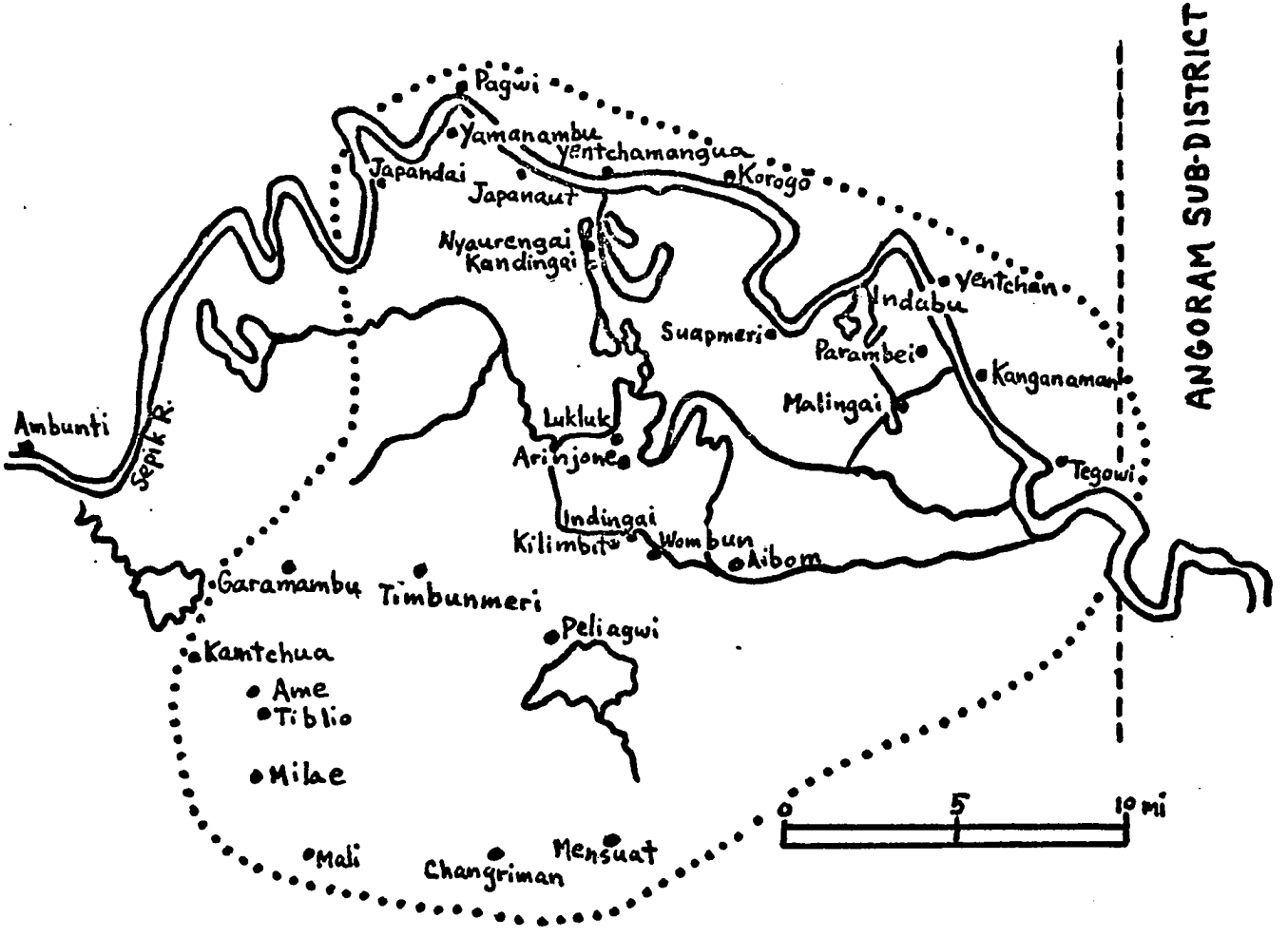


Table 3:6

The 1974 Earnings of the Artifact Sellers of Indingai Village[1]

Number of artifact sellers	83
Amount of money earned from artifact sales	$ 2066.00
Range of money earned per person	$ 2.00 - $ 228.00
Mean amount of money earned	$ 25.00
Standard deviation	22.42

1 The data in Tables 3:6, 3:7 and 3: 9 were collected from the 108 non-migrant Chambri males and females, above the age of 15, who were present while I was administering an economic survey early in 1975.

Table 3:7

The 1974 Earnings of the Fish Sellers of Indingai Village

Number of fish sellers	53
Amount of money earned from fish sales	$ 1263.00
Range of money earned per person	$ 3.00 - $ 100.00
Mean amount of money earned	$ 29.00
Standard deviation	19.09

with a performance of traditional songs and dances. Troupes from the three Chambri villages take turns in entertaining the tourists and each is paid approximately $35.00 for performing these "sing-sings." The money is divided among all the performers, including anyone who lent shell and feather decorations to the performers. Each individual usually receives only about 50 cents for his efforts. The artifact market, on the other hand, is much more lucrative, for the tourists are interested in taking home souvenirs from each village they visit. Carved masks sell for between $2.00 to $15.00, spears for about $10.00, baskets for $3.00 and the ornaments vary from $.50 to $2.00.

The second occasion for the sale of artifacts occurs when European entrepreneurs, including some missionaries, visit to buy large quantities of carvings for shipment to Australia and the U.S., or to replenish their stocks in the artifact stores they operate in Papua New Guinea towns. The entrepreneurs usually refuse to offer more than $2.00 per carving. In this way, they manage to acquire not only small carvings ordinarily valued at this amount, but also larger masks, worth $5.00 and $10.00 each, from craftsmen anxious to make a sale. An artifact dealer may spend as much as $500.00 in one afternoon, purchasing carvings that will return him ten times that amount on the urban tourist market.

Finally, some individual Chambri journey to Wewak to sell carvings to hotel guests and to the white residents. Twenty-six Indingai men went to Wewak during 1974 in order

to sell carvings. They lived at Kreer camp, a squatter settlement inhabited by long-term migrants. Each night they went to one of the hotels to display their carvings for the tourists' inspection, or they sold them door to door in the expatriate residential neighborhood. Hotel managers do not discourage the artifact sellers, for their guests enjoy the "primitive display." The highest price for carvings can be obtained in the towns, but the cost of transportation and food often completely consumes all profits. The figures in Table 3:6, therefore, indicate gross earnings; net earnings, minus the transportation and food expenditures of the travellers, are approximately $600.00 less.[1]

The fish resources of Chambri Lake bring a considerable income to the women who catch, smoke and sell the fish. Most of their sales are made at markets at Pagwi, Maprik and Wewak, where villagers from the Wosera, Dreikikir, Maprik, Yangoru and Wewak-But Sub-Districts purchase the produce at about $.10 per fish.

Seventy-four women went to Pagwi, Maprik, or Wewak in 1974 to sell fish, staying with relatives and friends for periods ranging from one week to more than eight months. As for the artifact sellers, the costs of transportation and food consumed a portion of their profits, although probably considerably less than for the carvers, because journeys to Pagwi and Maprik are not costly and women do not partake of

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1 To trip by motorized canoe and truck from Chambri to Wewak and back costs each artifact seller between $14.00 and $18.00. Food while in town can cost from between $.50 to $5.00 per day.

European luxuries, such as beer and tinned meat, as frequently as do men.[1]

In November, 1973, the government of Papua New Guinea, concerned to stimulate self-sufficiency in food production, initiated a fisheries project to supply protein-lacking inland villages with Sepik and Chambri fish (see Philpott, 1974:38-40). The project had operated actively for only four months, when the freezer boat belonging to the Department of Agriculture, Stock and Fisheries broke down. Twenty-five Indingai, (eighteen women and seven men,[2]) sold 392 lbs. of smoked fish to the government during this four month period, earning approximately $24.00 in all. Even assuming that the volume of fish sales to the government might triple as the people became familiar with its fisheries project, the Indingai people would earn about $250 in a year, compared with the $1,248.00 they earned through private sales. (This latter figure represents total fish revenues for 1974 less the $15.00 earned through government sales during the 2½ months of 1974 that the fisheries project was operating - see Table 3:7). Of course, the $500 or so that

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1 To go from Chambri to Pagwi and back costs each fish seller between $4.00 and $8.00, while the round trip from Chambri to Maprik costs between $6.00 and $10.00. Most fish sellers consume their own produce, supplemented with market-bought tubers, while on selling trips, rarely spending more than $.30 per day.

2 In all seven cases where men sold fish to the government, their wives caught and smoked the produce.

is spent for transportation and food while selling fish at the market would reduce the profit margin of private to public sales to perhaps $500; even so, it does not seem likely that government buying would divert Indingai from selling at the markets. Moreover, market trips are not undertaken simply as money-making ventures. They are thoroughly enjoyed by the women who return to their village refreshed and full of gossip about the long-term Chambri migrants they have visited. It is unlikely, therefore, that trips to distant markets will cease, even if the vendors make no profit at all.

Indingai women also earn a small income through the sale of produce at Indingai market (see Table 3:8).[1] Among the items they sell are betel nut, lime, plaited carrying baskets, mussels, tortoises, eels, water lily seed-pods and wild fruits.

Another village based industry that occasionally brings in money is the sale of crocodile skins. However, this formerly lucrative industry is in a decline. The crocodile population has been depleted by overkilling in the past, a minimum size requirement is enforced by the government, and there is a native-imposed taboo against slaughtering large specimens believed to contain spirits of ancestors. During 1974 only two Indingai men sold crocodile skins to a Papua New Guinean entrepreneur from Kamanambit village, receiving

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1 Seasonality does not appear to determine the range of incomes for a particular market day, and I am unable to provide an adequate explanation for the apparent income differentials.

Table 3:8

The Earnings of Indingai Women at the Indingai Native Market from March, 1974 through February, 1975

Date	No. of Sellers	Range of Earnings ($)	Total Earnings ($)
March 30, 1974	6	.30 - 8.70	22.20
April 13, 1974	10	.10 - .80	3.00
May 11, 1974	8	.20 - .50	4.80
June 10, 1974	12	.20 - 1.20	6.00
July 19, 1974	10	.20 - 1.50	5.00
August 17, 1974	10	.30 - 2.70	16.00
September 14, 1974	14	.30 - 1.50	11.20
October 12, 1974	11	.30 - 1.60	8.80
November 11, 1974	7	.20 - 3.00	8.40
December 21, 1974	5	.30 - 2.00	6.50
January 15, 1975	7	.30 - 1.20	7.20
February 15, 1975	8	.10 - 1.20	3.50
		TOTAL	102.60
		MEAN	8.55
		ESTIMATED STANDARD DEVIATION	4.955
		APPROXIMATE AMOUNT EARNED PER YEAR	445.00[1]

1 Figure derived by multiplying the twelve week arithmetic mean by fifty-two and rounding off to the nearest dollar.

$86.00 for one skin and $45.00 for the other.

Ten Indingai men and women earned $710.00 from the sale of livestock in 1974 - $575.00 for the sale of pigs, $120.00 for a bull and $15.00 for chickens. Except for the bull, which was sold to Kanganaman villagers, the livestock was bought by fellow Chambri involved in affinal exchange ceremonies.

Finally, 75 Indingai received monetary gifts from relatives who were migrant laborers, either mailed to them at irregular intervals, or brought home by the migrants during their Christmas vacations (see Table 3:9).

It should also be mentioned that, although the two Indingai owners of outboard motors were absent while I administered the economic survey, one as a teacher at a nearby mission school and the other on a short vacation in Wewak, they earned approximately $200.00 in 1974 by transporting Chambri villagers to Pagwi and other Middle Sepik villages. This $200.00 is their gross return, for each had to pay for repairs to his motor. Their expenditures amounted to over $50.00 apiece. A third Indingai - a government employee stationed at Pagwi - purchased an outboard motor in mid-1974 (see p.109) and earned approximately $150.00 in hiring fees. But the earnings only partially paid for the motor and, when it broke down late in 1974, its owner had no funds for repairs.

Of course, the $7,800 earned by Indingai in 1974 through the sale of artifacts, fish, crocodile skins, live-

Table 3:9

The Monetary Gifts Received by Indingai from Migrant Laborers during 1974

Number of individuals receiving monetary gifts	75
Total amount of money received	$ 2315.00
Range of monetary gifts received per person	$ 2.00 - $ 400.00
Mean value of gifts received per person	$ 31.00
Standard deviation	62.03

stock, produce, and through gifts from migrant laborers, outboard motor hiring and singing performances, was not all disbursed on affinal exchange. The data presented in Table 3:10 through 3:12 specify the major expenditures of Indingai during a comparable time period of one year.

Sago is purchased both at the Indingai market and at other native bush markets. My data were collected retrospectively on Fridays by myself and research assistants, asking the head of each household how much money his family had spent on sago during the week. I also hired a research assistant at Peliagwi, the village most frequently visited by Indingai to buy sago, to record the sales his co-villagers made to Indingai. The data he collected correspond with those I collected from Indingai purchasers, and I therefore believe the figures of Table 3:9 to be accurate.

The money spent at St. Mary's Mission store bought various household items, such as mosquito nets, bush, kitchen and carving knives, straw mats, foam-rubber mattresses, blankets, frying pans, sauce pans, kerosene lamps, folding chairs, pressure stoves, clocks and radios; food, such as rice, flour, salt, biscuits, bread, tinned mackerel, duck and beef, milk powder, sugar, chocolate drink powder, candy, soda and peanuts; clothes, such as trousers, skirts, shorts, underwear, singlets and "laplaps" (a yard of material wrapped around the body and fastened at the waist); fuel (kerosene and petrol); and miscellaneous items, such as cigaretts, tobacco, matches, lighters, flints, writing tablets, stamps, pens,

Table 3:10

The Amount of Money Spent on Sago by Thirty-Five Households from July, 1974 through February, 1975[1]

Month	Expenditure range per household ($)	Total Expenditure ($)
July	.50 - 7.00	61.70
August	1.00 - 9.50	89.20
September	1.00 - 8.30	78.80
October	1.00 -10.00	71.50
November	.30 - 6.20	64.71
December	0 - 6.00	56.30
January	1.00 -12.20	89.10
February	.50 - 6.00	79.20
	TOTAL	877.20
	MEAN	73.10
	STANDARD DEVIATION	11.61
	APPROXIMATE YEARLY EXPENDITURE	1619.00[2]

1 The figures presented in Tables 3:10 - 3:12 must be taken as estimates of the amount of money that would be spent if all adult Indingai were living in their village throughout the year. Because of the phenomenon of circular migration, with artifact and fish sellers leaving their village for up to eight months, the number of purchasers of sago, trade goods and market produce varies from week to week. It is therefore impossible for me to correlate absolutely Indingai earnings with Indingai expenditures, for many of the 108 non-migrants in my economic survey had been absent from their village while the sago, trade store and market studies were in progress, and many of the 84 individuals, migrants early in 1975, had been living in Indingai for long periods during 1974.

2 Figure derived by multiplying the eight month arithmetic mean by twelve and rounding off to the nearest dollar.

Table 3:11

The Amount of Money Spent by Indingai at St. Mary's Mission Trade Store during One Week of Each Month from June, 1974 through November, 1974[1]

Week	No. of purchasers	Expenditure range ($)	Total expenditure ($)
June 16-23	90	.10 - 15.58	65.13
July 15-21	107	.10 - 5.00	86.90
August 21-28	52	.10 - 10.00	42.20
September 23-29	75	.10 - 16.80	62.84
October 21-27	91	.10 - 19.50	50.32
November 18-24	105	.10 - 2.55	39.27
		TOTAL	346.66
		MEAN	57.78
		STANDARD DEVIATION	16.17
		APPROXIMATE YEARLY EXPENDITURE	3005.00[2]

1 The figures do not include my expenditures, the expenditures of the mission teachers and employees, or those of my research assistants.

2 Figure derived by multiplying the six week arithmetic mean by fifty-two and rounding off to the nearest dollar.

Table 3:12

The Amount of Money Spent by Indingai at the Indingai Native Market during One Market Day of Each Month From March, 1974 through February, 1975[1]

Date	No. of buyers	Expenditure range ($)	Total Expenditure ($)
March 30, 1974	17	.10 - 2.00	9.80
April 13, 1974	12	.10 - .80	5.37
May 11, 1974	14	.10 - .50	3.76
June 10, 1974	23	.10 - 1.00	6.50
July 9, 1974	14	.10 - 1.10	7.70
August 17, 1974	18	.10 - 2.30	10.01
September 14, 1974	14	.10 - 2.50	11.20
October 12, 1974	11	.10 - 3.20	8.14
November 16, 1974	12	.10 - 1.00	7.54
December 21, 1974	11	.10 - .50	5.40
January 25, 1975	14	.10 - 1.50	8.64
February 15, 1975	13	.10 - 1.50	9.87
		TOTAL	93.93
		MEAN	7.83
		STANDARD DEVIATION	2.148
		APPROXIMATE YEARLY EXPENDITURE	407.00[2]

1 The figures do not include the sago purchases that were made at the Indingai native market, nor do they include my purchases, the purchases of mission employees and those of my research assistants.

2 Figure derived by multiplying the twelve week arithmetic mean by fifty-two and rounding off to the nearest dollar.

fish hooks, fishing line, fish nets, beads, dyes, hair coloring and religious song books. I collected my data by stationing a research assistant close to the store with instructions to record the amount of each expenditure, the items purchased, the name of the purchaser and the village in which he lived. The people were most co-operative for they wished to discover how much money the store made. The priest who operated the store was not cooperative, presumably because he wished his revenues to remain a secret.

The Indingai native market brought villagers from Indingai, Kilimbit, Wombun, Aibom, Peliagwi, Changriman, Arinjone, Lukluk, and occasionally from Kandingai, Suapmeri and Indabu to purchase each other's surplus produce. Both I and a research assistant recorded the number of sellers present from each village and attempted, with varying success, to ascertain the amounts of money they earned at the market. These data were then supplemented by asking Indingai how much they had spent and what they had bought. Betel nut, betel pepper catkin, sweet potatoes, yams, taro, coconuts, native tobacco and Aibom pottery were regularly purchased. During the dry season, watermelon and pumpkin were favored items.

Most large purchases made by Chambri entail the conjoining of clan resources. Such purchases might be of a large canoe, a shotgun, or an outboard motor. Thus, in 1974 one long-term migrant laborer purchased a second-hand outboard motor for $350.00 He was financially assisted by

his clan leader, whose youngest son was one of the two outboard motor operators already mentioned (see p. 102). As this laborer was a government employee stationed at Pagwi, he expected that his taxi-service would always be available to villagers returning from selling trips in Maprik and Wewak. However, the motor broke down shortly after it was purchased, and the laborer had not saved enough to pay for the repairs. The clan leader refused further assistance until his initial investment had been returned, and as I left the field the outboard motor owner was seeking help from unrelated clans.

Among the miscellaneous items which are purchased from other natives are bird of paradise plumes, the skins of tree kangaroos and cassowaries, cured wood (such as iron wood) for carvings, string bags, pigs and poultry. I estimate that Indingai villagers spent approximately $175.00 on such items in 1974. The string bags were bought from the Sawos speakers at Sepik River markets, the wood and the fur and feather valuables were purchased primarily from the Garamambu and Milae during marketing expeditions to their villages and the pigs and poultry were bought from other Chambri.

Indingai spent approximately $200.00 on beer. Purchased at Pagwi, Kamanambit, or Parambei, a carton of beer costs between $6.00 and $9.00 and one man may consume half a carton in an evening.

Finally, in 1974 Indingai villagers owed approximately $982.00 for council, church and school-committee taxes, and for primary and secondary school fees. Only a portion of

the money was paid, however, for the schools, particularly at the secondary level, are very lenient about collecting their fees, and the school committee taxes are considered to be an unnecessary burden by most villagers. Moreover, as the President of the Gaui Local Government Council comes from Indingai, he rarely uses his prerogative to incarcerate tax defaulters. I estimate, therefore, that about $500.00 was spent by Indingai for taxes and fees in 1974, while another $30.00 was repaid to the World Development Bank which had lent a group of Indingai villagers $1,000.00 in 1971 to purchase 10 head of cattle.

The figures in Table 3:13, which summarize the revenues and expenditures of Indingai villagers during a one year period, indicate that a mere $314.00 remain as net savings. This is not to imply that each adult Indingai possesses only $2.00 or so to invest in affinal exchanges. Some people work harder than others to acquire money, whereas others spend less of their money. And most affinal transactions utilize the money accumulated by various individuals over several years. Moreover, not all of their money is used directly in affinal transactions. A small amount is invested in savings banks and thus set aside for future transactions.

Figure 3:1 depicts the cyclical nature of Indingai expenditures and reveals how the affinal exchange node balances as feedback on the "commerce" clot. A substantial portion of Indingai expenditures go to acquire the goods necessary to initiate affinal transactions, and thereby force sisters' husbands to reciprocate with money. The obligation

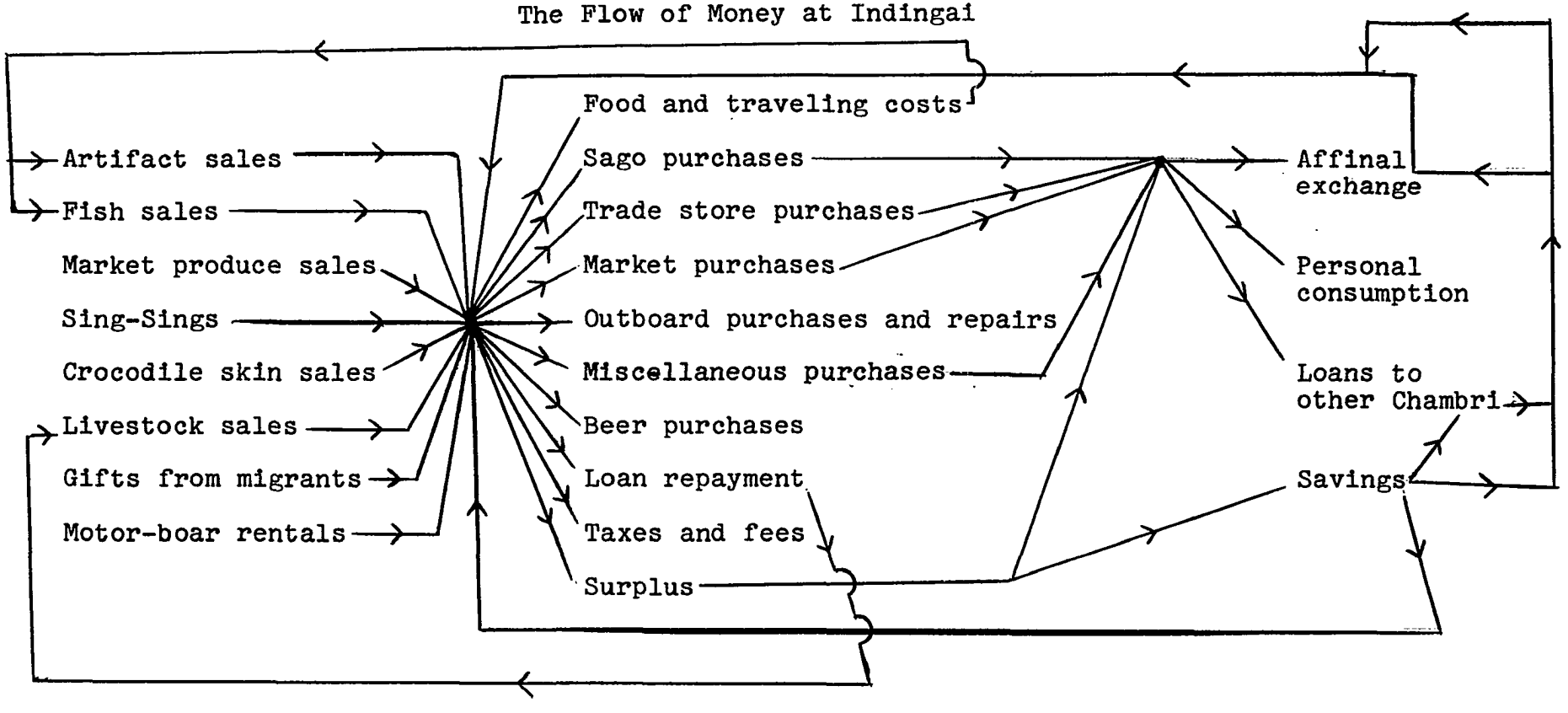
Table 3:13

Summary of Indingai Expenditures and Revenues for a One Year Period

Revenues		Expenditures	
Item	Amount ($)	Item	Amount ($)
Artifact sales	2066.00	Food and transportation costs	1100.00
Fish sales	1263.00	Sago expenditures	1619.00
Crocodile skin sales	131.00	Trade store expenditures	3005.00
Market produce sales	445.00	Market expenditures	407.00
Sing-Sings	420.00	Outboard motor purchases and repairs	450.00
Livestock sales	810.00	Miscellaneous purchases	175.00
Gifts from migrants	2315.00	Beer purchases	200.00
Motor-boat rentals	350.00	Loan repayment	30.00
		Taxes and fees	500.00
TOTAL	7800.00	TOTAL	7486.00

Figure 3:1

The Flow of Money at Indingai



to celebrate publically the acquisition of any capital good makes it impossible for an individual to by-pass completely the demands of affinal transactions. Moreover, if he has borrowed money in order to acquire the capital good, the loan establishes new obligations which generally commit his future surpluses to his sponsor's affinal transactions. In this sense, a Chambri clan consists of those individuals who have the greatest number of obligations to one another, vis-à-vis their payment of affinal debts, and changes in clan membership occur when individuals establish new obligations to previously unrelated groups.

In the next chapter, affinal exchange will be analyzed from a socio-political standpoint, and we shall see how financial success articulates with political power through the manipulation of surplus money within inter-group relations.

CHAPTER IV

THE POLITICS OF AFFINAL EXCHANGE; CHAMBRI AS A CLIENT MARKET

We have seen that the operation of the Chambri affinal exchange system, which once involved the asymmetrical exchange of foodstuffs for shell and feather valuables, now necessitates the acquisition of money. In order to accumulate sufficient resources to initiate an affinal exchange, mothers' brothers' clans must supplement the foodstuffs acquired through traditional means with goods bought at trade stores and from other natives. Sisters' husbands' clans reciprocate these prestations with money. And all Chambri acquire money through the sale of artifacts and produce, through the acquisition and use of capital goods such as outboard motors and through gifts from migrant laborers who work in towns.

Although many anthropologists have emphasized the tenacity with which Papuans and New Guineans have maintained traditional customs in the face of significant technological and structural changes wrought by the coming of Europeans, most agree that the movement from stone to steel, from subsistence to sale and from limited currency to universal money has created contradictions within traditional socio-political systems that must result in new modes of organization. Epstein, for example, working among the Matupi at a time when the people still employed two distinct forms of currency - Aus-

tralian money for European-type transactions with employers and store owners, and shell money for initiation and bride-wealth transactions - found that political authority and wealth were no longer concurrent in the hands of the older big-men (1971: 361). The big-men had, in the past, been those to whom many other people were "beholden" (ibid.: 368). But the affluence of young migrant laborers, as measured in cash, had created a "power vacuum" (ibid.) by allowing the younger men to satisfy "personal and private" (ibid.) desires without the assistance of their elders. Without extensive networks of indebtedness upon which the authority of big-men had formerly been based, their influence now extended only over individuals within their own local matrilineages. The contradictions within Matupi society appear , therefore, to have resulted from the inability of the political system to accommodate the capacity of its younger members to spend money for personal ends without establishing social obligations. Although all ceremonial transactions were still made with shell currency, the younger men had "developed aspirations which (could) no longer be satisfied within a traditional politico-economic framework" (ibid.), and they had begun to look towards national rather than to community politics as a means of acquiring power. Epstein claims that "many young Matupi would perhaps be happy to see the end of shell money, but insofar as they continue to pursue certain traditional activities (i.e. for the payment of bride wealth and for proper obsequies of kinsmen) and remain linked by

ties of interdependence with other Tolai groups who insist upon the use of tambu, the need for shell money persists" (ibid.: 364).

Epstein's analysis of Matupi socio-economic organization is illuminating because he demonstrates that Australian currency and shell money had different social values. The use of the former allowed individuals to fulfill personal and private desires without establishing social indebtedness, whereas the use of the latter established the social and ritual obligations upon which Matupi power relations were traditionally based. It is crucial to recognize, however, that the "contradictions built into the structure of modern Matupit" (ibid.) were not the product of the introduction of Australian currency per se, but rather resulted from an inability to incorporate the newly emerging, autonomous wage-earning population with the accepted relations of dominance and subordination. The introduction of currency into Matupi social organization threatened the system's existence because no functional identity between shell currency and Australian money had been established, and not simply because an all-purpose currency necessarily destroys kin-based social relations.

Nonetheless, there are in the anthropological literature examples of the destructive effect of the introduction of universal currencies upon traditional social organizations. Bohannan, for example, demonstrates that, as European money penetrated the three distinct spheres of the Tiv multi-centric economy and became exchangeable for subsistence goods, pres-

tige goods and women, individuals found it "easy to sell subsistence goods for money to buy prestige articles and women, thereby aggrandizing (them)-selves at a rapid rate" (1967: 134-135). Tiv society was profoundly changed because "the introduction of general-purpose money and the concomitant spread of the market (had) divorced debt from kinship and status and (had) created the notion of debt in the subsistence sphere divorced from the activities of kinsmen and neighbors" (ibid.: 135). And Godelier, in his brief discussion of Salisbury's Siane material, predicts that, if the principle of "non-convertibility" (1972: 298) had not been applied to European money when it arrived among the Siane, the regulation of "access to women within a clan and (the balancing of) the circulation of women among clans" (ibid.) would have ceased to operate, much as it did among the Tiv.

Even so, among both the Tiv and Siane, the significant cause of changes in traditional social organization is the establishment of new, incompatible social relations - the aggrandizement of previously powerless individuals, the access to women by previously low status men, the divorce of indebtedness from kinship obligations and the incurring of debts to Europeans in the subsistence sphere. The adoption of money facilitates the establishment of these new social relations; it is the carrier so to speak. But, if there had been functional identity between the European and the indigenous currencies, then the effects of introducing a univer-

sal currency would have been negligible.

Among the Chambri I could discover no devastating effects arising directly from the introduction of European currency. The abandoning of shell currency for European money was gradual and paralleled a decline in the commodity production of mosquito bags and stone tools. Europeans introduced steel tools and mosquito netting along with their currency, thereby destroying the two indigeneous Chambri industries that were the major source of their shell valuables. The "stone-iron" industry became completely anachronistic, and by 1932 the Chambri were forced to buy their canoes for shell valuables and cash from the Iatmul, "as the Sepik natives obtained the iron canoe-making tools much earlier and in larger amounts than the Tchambuli" (Mead, 1963: 243). In consequence the artifact trade and migrant labor were established by Chambri as the means of earning the new valuable shillings. Whereas power-seeking individuals had formerly manipulated their shell earnings to gain control over unrelated clans, the coming of the European cash and commodities allowed these same individuals similarly to manipulate the new valuables, which they now earned in a different manner. The Chambri were never horticulturalists, and the subsistence sphere has been unaffected by the European intrusion. Although fish and sago are sold, the abundance of these resources has not created debt in the subsistence sphere apart from obligations to kin and trading partners. Emigrant laborers do not lose their land rights through default, for

land ownership is insignificant for survival. On their return they can easily reestablish themselves within Chambri political networks, provided they have the financial resources and the will to do so. And, given the present ongoing nature of Chambri political manipulations, their choice at the moment is limited to staying within the village and to conforming to clan obligations, or to leaving the village permanently. Few have chosen the latter.

I am not implying that the coming of the Europeans had no effects upon the Chambri. The data presented in Chapter 3 demonstrate the extent to which the Chambri have become bound to the world economy through their reliance upon imported European produce and through their dependence upon entrepreneurial missionaries and artifact dealers. I wish to suggest, however, that the socio-political organization of the Chambri tribe, which now consists of relationships established through the exchange of foodstuffs for money, is functionally identical with the traditional organization which involved the acquisition and distribution of shell valuables.

Each married male Chambri is potentially indebted as a wife-taker to many clans - his mother's, his wives', his sons' wives', his brothers' mothers', their wives' and their sons' wives. Since the majority of affinal prestations occur during rites of passage celebrated for particular individuals, it is rare for a man's affinal obligations to extend beyond his first ascending and first descending generations of affines. And even when he is engaged in a celebra-

tion of ancestors, a man's affinal prestations invariably come from the husbands of his mother, sisters and daughters. It is unknown (partially because of the practice of mother's brother's daughter's marriage) for every adult male clan member to have taken a wife from a different clan, and generally speaking a clan's affinal obligations as wife-takers involve it with one, two and occasionally with three other clans. More important than mother's brother's daughter's marriage, however, is the fact that the burden of initiating an affinal exchange falls upon the wife-givers. Only the more powerful and wealthy among them will have sufficient resources to initiate a large affinal feast. And many wife-giving clans in fact forfeit the affinal recompense due them, for they are unable to accumulate sufficient resources to sponsor an exchange. Forfeiture is not possible among wife-takers, however. And we have seen that wealthy individuals gain control over their less fortunate neighbors by assisting them to meet their affinal debts.

A word or two about the dynamics of assistance is necessary at this point, and perhaps the best illustrative device would be to portray a simplified, hypothetical affinal ceremony through which to examine the range of a wife-taker's options. Quite frequently, among the Chambri, birthdays,[1] particularly the fifth, are occasions for affinal prestations. Let us assume that on a young boy's fifth birthday,

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1 The celebration of birthdays is a post-European practice for the Chambri had no calendars in the past.

his maternal grandfather, a powerful and wealthy individual, decides to hold a party for him and accordingly kills a pig, buys tinned mackerel and meat and has his wives, daughters and daughters-in-law cook large quantities of rice and sago. It is understood that the burden of affinal recompense falls upon the father of the birthday boy, who, unfortunately, being a young and foolish man, has gambled away half of his money during an illegal card game and spent the rest on beer. He must accumulate about $140.00 to recompense his father-in-law sufficiently and, although he can count upon his mother's contributing a few dollars, must seek additional help.

His first and most preferred option would be to solicit the necessary cash from his co-clan members. It is, after all, their "bisnis" to assist one another in meeting affinal payments. However, the young man's father died the year before, his eldest paternal uncle is senile and poor, and his father's youngest brother and family have left for Wewak to sell carvings to the tourists. His own three brothers can only contribute $15.00, for they too unsuccessfully participated in the illegal card game, and of his four sisters, two say they have no money while the other two contribute $2.00 a piece. He now, through his mother's, brothers' and sisters' help, has $22.00.

His next option is to demand assistance from his sisters' husbands. The birthday boy's father and his clan have already been paid their bride prices but, during their brother-in-law's house-opening ceremony, they were unable to sponsor

the affinal feast and defaulted to their eldest sister's husband's brother's wife's brother, who sponsored the feast and thus received the bulk of the affinal recompense. Although it is possible for his brothers' wives' clans to offer assistance, the birthday boy's father cannot ask it of them for he is indebted to them as wife-taker, and they fail to offer it.

His last and most onerous option is to seek assistance from an unrelated clan. He would probably ask it of his sister's husband's brother's wife's brother, who had already offered and given assistance during the previous house-opening ceremony.

The distinction between asking for and offering assistance is an important one. An individual or clan can offer assistance without committing either the donors or the recipients to future exchanges. The sister's husband's brother's wife's brother had been fully recompensed during the house opening ceremony by his brother-in-law's clan. However, his earlier offer of assistance established a potential dyadic relationship between himself and his sister's husband's brother's wife's clan which could be activated in the future. By asking for help, the birthday boy's father activated the relationship and obligated himself to his sponsor. He became his sponsor's client, and was, in turn, expected to participate in his sponsor's transactions in valuables.

Generally speaking, large and successful expanding clans

offer assistance, whereas small and poor declining clans ask for it. Some clans, however, are neither expanding nor declining. And it is among these stable clans that we find the highest incidence of mother's brother's daughter's marriage. Fortune, who described mother's brother's daughter's marriage among the Tchamburi, writes that:

> The most interesting social consquence of this system is that it is impossible for a man to marry a woman without his creating a lien in perpetuity upon the male line she comes from in favor of his male descendants. The women who are sisters of a male line are in entail, so to speak, to a vis-à-vis male line (1933:3).

Obviously, the advantages of maintaining a lien in perpetuity upon a wife-taking group, when this group cannot fulfil its affinal debts, are nil. It is therefore understandable why declining clans are no longer held as debtors in perpetuity and why expanding clans marry off their "sisters" to maximize the receipts of their liens. It is only among those clans which have sufficient but not excessive resources to meet their affinal obligations, in both the wife-giving and wife-taking directions, that perpetual liens are advantageously maintained. But even among these clans, the contingencies of group realignment enormously alter the rate of mother's brother's daughter's marriage from one generation to the next.

I have already discussed the contingencies of group realignment in Chapter 2 where I argued that a group's status in the social hierarchy is determined, in large measure, by the size of the group's membership and by its ability to ac-

cumulate scarce resources and to coordinate their exchange during affinal transactions. It should now be clear that a group's ability to amass scarce resources does not result exclusively from its economic initiative but also varies with the pressures placed upon it by wife-giving groups, and with the assistance given to it by distantly related and unrelated groups. Moreover, accepting assistance articulates with group realignment by creating new relationships of debt and control.

Each man generally receives numerous offers of assistance during his career as an affinal transactor. His father, paternal uncles and brothers have received similar offers which the original donors may extend to him. These offers are, in effect, invitations to form more permanent alliances. Many are never activated. Some offers are revoked when the recipient tries to activate them. And all are based upon the offerer's prediction that contingencies will make it possible and advantageous to gain control of the recipient and access to his network of symmetrical and asymmetrical relationships. The ease with which offers can be made and accepted, however, results in a continually shifting ground of temporary dependencies. And it is only the most adept manipulators who manage to transform temporary dependencies into permanent allegiances and into group realignments by forseeing all contingencies.

At this point I shall leave the theoretical realm to illustrate contingencies that may result in the formation

of temporary dependencies and permanent allegiances. By analyzing a bride price transaction, which occurred at Indingai on January 29, 1975, I shall demonstrate the complexity of the intra-and inter-clan relationships with which an adept manipulator must contend to achieve control of unrelated individuals and groups.

The Bride Price Exchange.

Figure 4:1 depicts the genealogical relationships among the individuals assisting M to pay for his wife. M had been married for just under eleven years before he officially paid for E. Her father, D, having few kin and no power, had been unable to exact payment from M, who took E, already pregnant, with him to Wewak where he worked, first for the Catholic Mission and then as a carver. By the time she was paid for, E had borne M four children and had been living in Indingai for almost two years without her husband. Husband and wife visited each other periodically, he returning to Indingai for vacations and she journeying to Wewak to sell fish. While at Indingai E did not stay in her father's house but lived with S and his family. She called S aso (older brother), for his clan had in the past accumulated sufficient resources to pay for E's brother's bride price and had also recompensed her newphew's acting wau (mother's brother) during a hair-cutting ceremony.

Soon after M was born, his father died and his mother, a Kilimbit woman, returned with M to her father's land. Although M never renounced his patrimony, he was given many

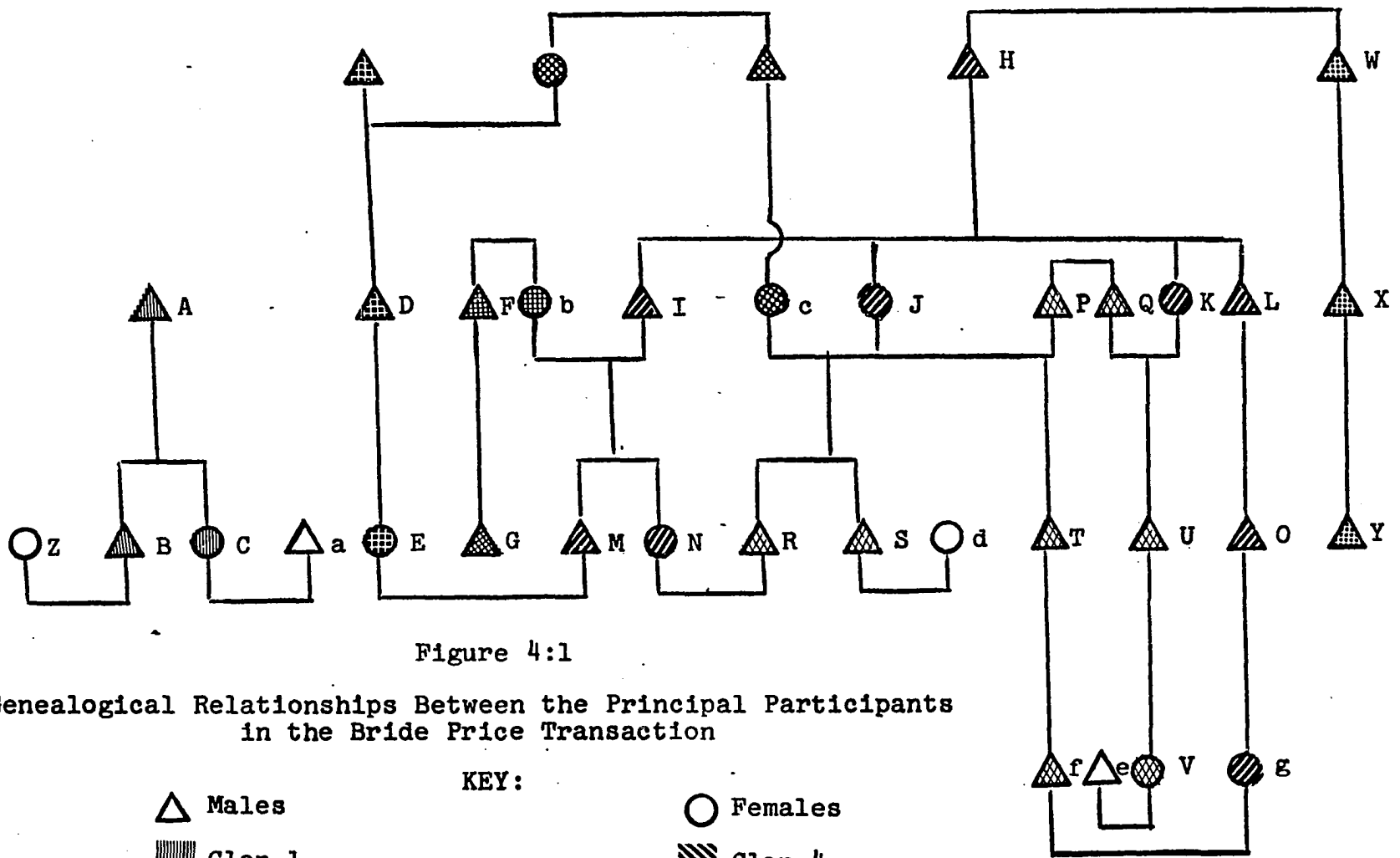


Figure 4:1

Genealogical Relationships Between the Principal Participants in the Bride Price Transaction

KEY:

△ Males	○ Females
Clan 1	Clan 4
Clan 2	Clan 5
Clan 3	Clan 6
	Clan 7

totemic names by his mother's clan. M's father's father's brother, W, had moved to Kilimbit a generation earlier, and his father's brother, L, had moved to Kilimbit as a newlywed to live on his wife's land. Thus, only M's paternal aunts, J and K, remained at Indingai as the wives of P and Q respectively,and their clan had effectively ceased to exist at Indingai. In 1970 L's son, O, had returned to Indingai to live on his wife's land, and M had returned about eight years earlier to work for the Catholic Mission as a catechist, but both men still considered themselves to belong to Kilimbit. G, M's mother's brother's son, had also migrated to Indingai to live with his wife's kinsmen, for his father-in-law had no male heirs.

The bride price payment was assembled in R's house on a plaited reed mat. Individual donors placed their contributions in three piles, one marked for D, one for G, as M's affine, and one for S, as representative of the clan that had helped D to meet his affinal debts in the past. No food was distributed, and D contributed nothing to the proceedings.

M gave $40.00 towards the payment, while O gave $1.00. G contributed $19.00. T contributed $2.00, S gave $5.00, and his wife, d, gave $1.00 and his mother, c, gave $2.00. One dollar was contributed by e. Two dollars came from Y, who had walked from Kilimbit to assist in the exchange. Y was accompanied by two friends, each of whom contributed $1.50, although they appear to have no genealogical relation-

ship to any of the participants. And, finally, Z and a gave $2.00 each, as Indingai married to Kilimbit migrants who had lived, before their marriages, with their mother's sister's son. Nine members of M's mother's clan had been expected to come from Kilimbit to contribute to the bride price. Their failure to appear angered M considerably.

M's clan had given four wives to S's clan within three generations, as Figure 4:1 demonstrates. S and T stated that they were assisting their affine M to pay his bride price because they were indebted to him as wife-takers. They did not contribute foodstuffs to the transaction, because they were not acting as the wife-giver's sponsor but as the wife-taker's affines. The money contributed by e is also understandable as his contribution to his wife-giving clan; while d said she was using her own resources to assist her husband.

M's clan had no corporate existence within Indingai. O, living with his wife's relatives, was heavily indebted to their clan. J, K and L were dead. And Y had become the leader of Kilimbit clan which his grandfather joined two generations ago. By coming to M's bride price transaction as an individual accompanied by friends rather than as a representative of his clan accompanied by his clansmen, Y acknowledged his symmetrical relationship to M without committing his clan to offering future assistance. M and N remained the only active representatives of their clan, and were obviously in a weak position. Moreover, S, R and T had become E's "older brothers" - M's wife-givers - through

their prior assistance of D. By assisting M they discharged their debt to him as wife-takers, solidified their control of D and his progeny and transformed the dominance of M as wife-giver into indebtedness as wife-taker. If M's mothers's people had come to support him, perhaps the transformation would not have occurred. Their failure to help left M completely vulnerable, with only other displaced Kilimbit willing to assist him, and with his mother's brother's son, G, forcing a recompense as wife-giver by donating the money he knew would be returned to him.

In summarizing the major social effect of this bride price transaction we find that:

S's clan

1) solidified D's dependency upon it;
2) reversed its position as indebted wife-takers from M to dominant wife-givers;
3) made a 200% profit on its $9.00 investment by receiving $27.00 as D's sponsor.

M

1) maintained his personal independence by contributing half of the bride price payment;
2) lost his position as wife-giver to S's clan and hence all opportunity to receive recompense from them in the future;
3) became indebted as wife-taker from S's clan, which will probably force him to take assistance from an unrelated clan to meet his future affinal debts.

G

1) displayed his wealth by contributing $19.00 to M's bride price payment;

2) forced M to repay his contribution, making almost a 32% profit.

Y and O

1) maintained their dyadic relationships to M without obligating their clans to assist M in future affinal prestations.

F's clan

1) failed to assist M, thereby repudiating its relationship to him and freeing itself from all future obligations.

Z and a

1) coalesced, on behalf of their mates, around a displaced Kilimbit, thereby establishing dyadic relationships between M and themselves.

D

1) became further indebted to S's clan;

2) earned $28.00 as E's father.

M's newly established debt as wife-taker from S's clan via D's clan is of a different nature from D's debt to S's clan. Where the former is an ongoing asymmetrical obligation that expresses an unequal relationship, the latter is simply a matter of clientage. M as S's affine is unequal and obligated to reciprocate. D as S's equal was a failure and forced to seek assistance. Both debts entail control over people. But whereas the former allows for the manipu-

lation of their unequal obligations by both related groups, the latter implies that independence has been lost through faulty manipulation. We have seen how S's clan, acting as M's affine, could simultaneously reverse its wife-taking obligation to become M's wife-givers while solidifying D's dependence upon it. S did not however become M's patron, for M did not lose his own independence. He still has the opportunity of meeting his affinal debts, whereas D, on the other hand, has failed to do so. The brilliance of S's clan's manipulation of the situation is clearly that, by gaining D as a client, it also redefined M as a wife-taker. And although wife-takers can gain considerable status through generous affinal recompense, it is the wife-givers who initiate exchanges. It is likely that M will have to seek assistance in the future to meet his obligations, and probably he will become as dependent as D. But, although S's clan may provoke his dependence, it will not become his patron. My prediction is that M will seek assistance from a. As the head of a moderately powerful and wealthy clan, a voluntarily established a dyadic relationship between M and himself, using his wife's Kilimbit heritage as rationalization. M may well ask a's assistance to meet future affinal debts. It is of course possible for a to refuse, but, he would gain much prestige by successfully recompensing S through M. Moreover, from S's perspective, a's clan would be the perfect wife-taker, for its recompense would be generous.

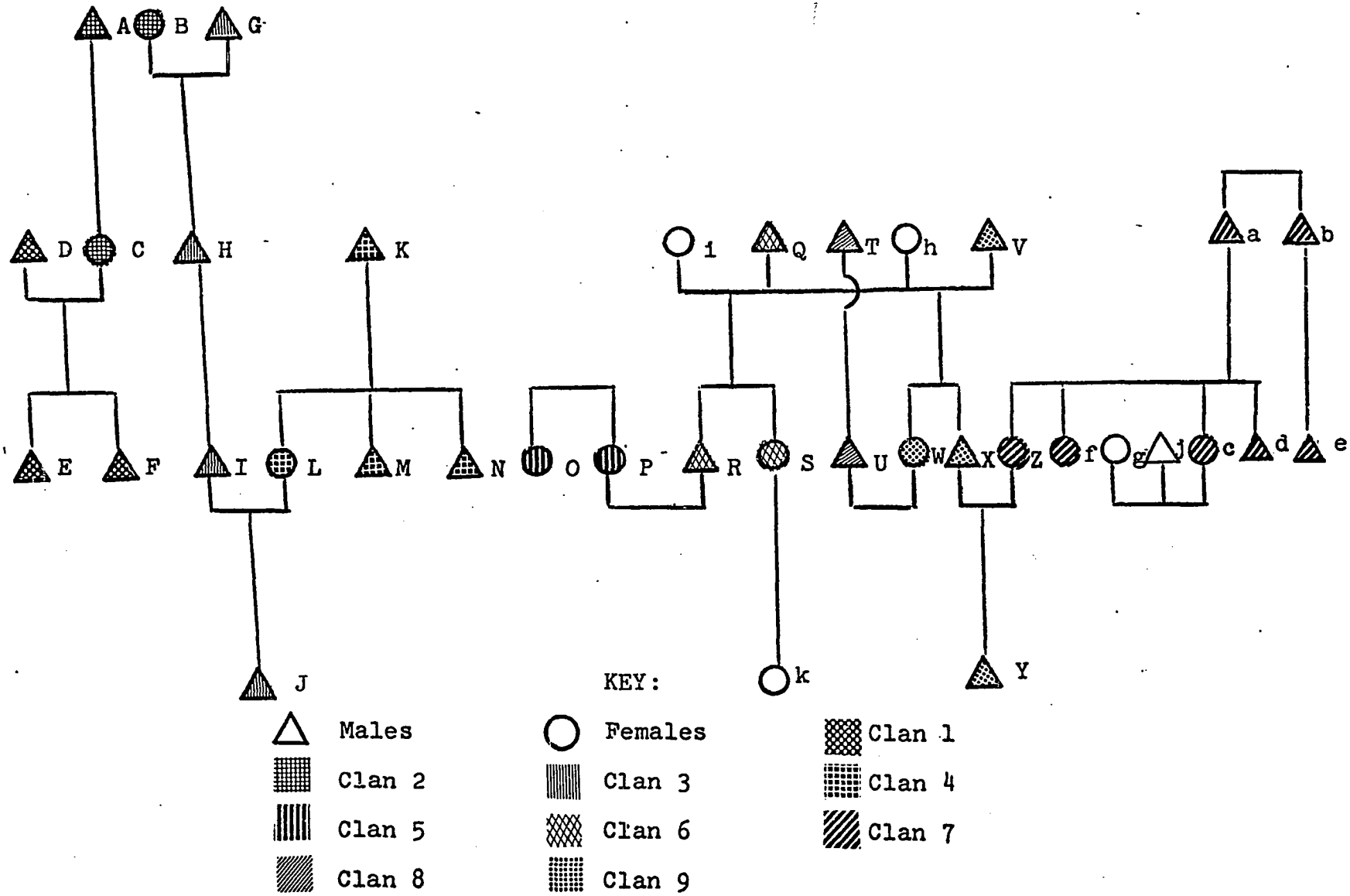
The bride price transaction was the least extensive

transaction that occurred at Chambri while I was a resident. Even so, it illustrates the extreme complexity of personal and corporate relationships there. The ease with which offers of assistance can be made and accepted results in numerous dyadic relationships. Any individual or clan is a member of many potential pairs, some of which are established generations before they are activated to the advantage of one or both partners. Very occasionally these relationships shift, through time, from patron/client to client/patron as individuals assist one another to meet their affinal debts. More frequently, however, the direction of assistance is maintained from transaction to transaction, from generation to generation, until the clients are either incorporated within their patron's clan, or until they terminate the relationship by re-achieving their autonomy through discharging their obligation. Generally, however, to re-achieve autonomy necessitates activating another dyadic relationship, thereby shifting dependence from one patron to another.

The next exchange I discuss illustrates the process of re-achieving autonomy by shifting dependence. It was stimulated by the arrival of a migrant laborer and his family from the West Sepik town of Nuku, and has already been briefly mentioned in Chapter 3 (see page 81). The complexity of the relationships among the participants in the exchange is extreme, and Figure 4:2 which depicts their genealogical connections, does not in itself provide an ade-

Figure 4:2

Genealogical Relationships Between the Principal Participants in the Haircutting Ceremony



quate explanation of their involvements. I therefore ask my readers to bear with me through a rather lengthy description of their interrelationships.

The Haircutting Exchange.

Individuals I, L and J, the emigrant family, returned to Indingai on December 20, 1974. I was told shortly after their arrival that, during their vacation, J's wau (mother's brother) would cut his hair and hold a feast, thereby "finishing" the hair which had come with him from his mother's womb.[1] I later learned that Y was to be the barber and that X was to pay for the feast. Knowing that X was not J's biological wau, I inquired how it happened that X had become J's haircutting sponsor. I learned that V, X's father, had paid K's bride-price. This made L, M and N "his (V's) children," the siblings of W and X. X was therefore J's wau, and he could sponsor the feast and receive monetary recompense from I's clan for the foodstuffs he provided. I later learned that X did not have sufficient resources to mount the feast, and that M and N had defaulted for the same reason. By defaulting, X terminated his patronage of K; and L, M and N no longer call him asi (father). J's hair was to be cut by e, and the feast would

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1 The Chambri believe that a young man will not grow into a strong member of his father's clan unless the weakening influences of his mother are eliminated. They hold that unless his hair is cut and, later, his back is scarified so that his blood will flow, he will think of his mother and cry rather than fight during warfare.

be paid for by his clan brother, d. It was considered acceptable for d to assist X, because X's wife, Z, was d's sister. This meant that foodstuffs would be appropriately moving through wife-givers to wife-takers. Everyone agreed, however, that U should have assisted X, because he had married X's sister and was therefore indebted to him. U had neither the resources nor the desire to assist X, and he was described as a loser and a rubbish-man by all concerned.

Interestingly, d was not to be recompensed by I and his father, H, but by E, a man called aso (older brother) by I. It seems that I's wife had been largely paid for by D, who had assisted H to accumulate sufficient valuables. H was also designated a rubbish-man, for twice now he had been forced to take assistance from D's clan. H was disowned by his son, I, who along with his family spent his vacation in the house of E.

The ceremony took place early on the morning of December 24, 1974. J's hair was cut by e, who also presented him with the clothes, decorative accessories and foodstuffs listed in Table 3:3. Food was distributed by the wives and daughters of E and his brother, who had received it from the wives of d and X. While the food was being distributed, I learned that only $39.00 had been contributed to the purchase of the pig by d and his clan. Thirty dollars had come from d himself, and $9.00 from his sister, f. Two dollars were given by g, d's sister's co-wife. Fourteen

dollars had come from R and $2.00 from S, both of whom had resented d's assistance of X. They asserted that X was their "business" because his mother, h, had married their father, Q, after V's death. X was therefore their brother, a member of their clan, whether he recognized them or not. One dollar had been contributed by k, S's daughter. Two dollars had come from O, R's wife's sister. And $10.00 had been given by F, E's brother. The remaining foodstuffs, clothes and ornaments had been purchased by e without anyone's assistance.

While everyone was eating, and directly after a carton of beer had been distributed to the principal participants, a plaited reed mat was positioned in the center of E's house, and F announced that the "bekims" (recompenses) were to begin. It was decided that the donations would be arranged in three piles, one belonging to the "scissors" (haircutter), one to the pig purchasers and one to the "family" (wife-givers). Forty-two individuals rose from their cross-legged eating positions on the floor of E's house to contribute money. Five placed money in all three piles, while the rest gave to one or another. Table 4:1 shows the clan affiliations of those individuals who contributed to the hair-cutting compensations. Individual contributions ranged from $.30 to $25.00, with more than half of the $180.00 collected placed upon the pig purchasers' pile. It was decided by individuals d, E and R, who had established themselves as the masters of ceremony, so to

Table 4:1

The Relationship of Individuals who Paid Wife-Taking Recompense to the Participant Clans in the Hair-Cutting Ceremony

	The scissors pile	The pig purchaser's pile	The family pile
Wife-takers from:			
d's clan	9	1	1
H's clan	1	1	0
E's clan	0	1	0
K's clan	0	0	2
Members of:			
d's clan	1	2	1
H's clan	1	4	0
E's clan	0	4	0
K's clan	0	2	4
X's clan	0	1	2
R's clan	0	1	1
No genealogical relationship:	3	3	1
TOTAL:	15	20	12

speak, that the "scalim" (division) was unfair, and they redistributed the piles as indicated in Table 3:3. The $70.00 belonging to the haircutter, food providers and beer providers was given to d as representative to his clan. Individuals M and N received $5.00 each as the true mother's brothers. And the $100.00 belonging to the pig providers was given to d and R to redistribute among their own clanspeople.

In summarizing the major effect of the hair-cutting ceremony we find that:

E's clan

1) reinforced its control of H's clan;
2) established an asymmetrical wife-taking relationship to d and R's clans through its assisting of H's clan.

H's clan

1) confirmed its dependence upon E's clan.

K's clan

1) achieved autonomy from X's clan through the latter's default;
2) established dyadic relationships with d and R's clans by accepting their offers of assistance.

X's clan

1) lost control of K's clan by failing to fulfil its wife-giving obligations as "wau" to H's grandson;
2) acknowledged R's clan as "bisnis" partners by accepting its assistance;
3) obligated itself to recompense d's clan, its wife-givers,

for the foodstuffs it provided during the haircutting transaction.

U

1) lost status by failing to assist his wife-givers to meet their external affinal debts.

R's clan

1) maintained X as a "bisnis" partner by assisting him to meet his affinal obligations;
2) established a dyadic relationship with d's clan by pooling its resources to assist X;
3) established an asymmetrical wife-giving relationship to E's clan through its assistance of X's clan.

d's clan

1) gained status by assisting K to sponsor the wife-giver's feast;
2) initiated an affinal transaction with X's clan, (its wife-takers,) by transmitting foodstuffs through it to K's clan;
3) established a dyadic relationship with R's clan by combining its resources to assist X;
4) established an asymmetrical wife-giving relationship to E's clan through its assistance of X's clan.

E

1) established a dyadic relationship with d, R and S by assisting them to purchase the wife-giver's pig;
2) gained status by simultaneously acting as wife-taker through his assistance of H and as wife-giver through

his assistance of d, R and S.

Wife-takers from D, H, E and K's clans

1) recompensed their wife-givers by donating to the hair-cutting ceremony.

Having presented in detail the relationships among individuals participating in two affinal transactions I now can induce some low-level rules governing the operation of affinal exchange among the Chambri.

1) When an individual accepts assistance from an unrelated clan to meet an affinal debt, he incurs obligations to his sponsors which may extend to other members of his clan, and to succeeding generations, so long as the assistance is maintained and is not reciprocated.

2) The obligations established are often publically expressed through an extension of kinship terminology to cover the newly related individuals.

3) It is considered appropriate for wife-takers to assist their wife-givers in fulfilling the latter's affinal obligations as wife-givers to other clans.

4) Wife-givers may initiate an affinal exchange with their wife-takers by assisting the latter to meet their affinal debts as wife-givers to other clans.

5) Giving assistance to weak clans in meeting affinal debts is desirable, and clans may compete for the privilege.

6) Failure to meet affinal obligation lowers the defaulter's status.

7) Wife-givers and wife-takers accumulate money to meet

their affinal obligations through an extensive network of relationships, extending far beyond the range of clans participating in a particular ceremony.

The last rule is by far the most important, for it reveals the modus operandi of the Chambri political system.[1] Given the high rate of tribal and phratry endogomy, people are actually or potentially related to each other in several different ways. It is therefore rare for an individual to be unable to justify his assistance of a fellow Chambri in meeting his affinal oblications. This "theoretical all to all linkage" (Schwartz, 1946: 90) of the Chambri people increases each individual's options in selecting partners to assist him in meeting his affinal debts, and it results in a fluid system of temporary patron/client relationships where the patronage shifts through time from one individual to another and from one clan to another. The Chambri affinal exchange system is, in effect, a client market. Large and

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1 Both examples of affinal exchange presented here have involved migrant laborers returning from town to reestablish or to reaffirm kin relationships. It could perhaps be argued that the processes described are atypical of traditional inter-village political organization, but reflect instead the limited and skewed alternatives of displaced individuals. It is not a mistake to assume that displacement leads to clan realignment through, first, the establishment of individual dyadic relationships of debt and assistance, and second, the incorporation of debtors into their sponsors' clans. It is a mistake, however, to assume that displacement is a phenomenon extraneous to indigenous political organization - the result, primarily, of labor migrations. Both displacement and clan realignment operated well before Europeans entered Papua New Guinea, as a consequence of natural demographic imbalances and as the outcome of previous realignments which established new demographic and economic imbalances.

powerful expanding clans compete for dominance over small and weak declining clans, the latter maintaining their autonomy by shifting their clientship from one large clan to another.

One significant question remains to be answered; specifically, why do Chambri find it important to extend their networks of control over affinally linked groups? Whereas ethnographers in the New Guinea Highlands have emphasized the importance of reciprocal transactions in creating and maintaining status divisions within and between communities, they have worked in societies characterized by large ceremonial prestations involving the symmetrical exchange of valuables between partners whose relationship is relatively egalitarian. Strathern, for example, writes that Moka system of the Eastern Highlands

> can thus be seen as a mechanism creating status divisions within the society. But this mechanism (and the big-men who emerge through it) has to be placed into the context of group transactions... [It is] a system of total prestations... [that are] made between groups who are in an unstable state of alliance with each other: the only way they can maintain their alliance is by continuing positive ceremonial exchanges of valuables ... [The system] is one in which reciprocative transactions prevail and the relationship between partners is relatively egalitarian (1971: 214-215).

But among the Chambri, and perhaps throughout the Middle Sepik, large scale ceremonial transactions between relatively egalitarian groups do not occur. Exchange takes place primarily between affinally linked groups that, by definition, are involved in an unequal relationship of dominance and sub-

mission. Status divisions, therefore, cannot be established and maintained by overcoming an equal through a large ceremonial transaction but only by controlling the affinal prestations of unequals. Both systems create and maintain status divisions, but their structures are inverse. Whereas highlands "Big-men" are the foci of all interaction involving large, ceremonial transactions, Sepik leaders are points of connection and dispersal for their subordinate clients who are involved in unequal exchange with their respective affines. And where highlands ceremonial exchange networks have "indefinite potential outer limits (extending) in point-to-point chains" (Schwartz, 1964:90), Sepik ceremonial exchange networks rarely extend beyond a village or ethnic group where the participants are united by a "theoretical all-to-all linkage" (ibid.). And finally, where highlands exchange relationships are often substitutes for inter-group warfare, Sepik exchange relationships, in which leaders of large clans have separately gained control of their less adept neighbors, often lead to inter-ethnic warfare as the ultimate expression of inter-clan competition.

In Chapter 5 I take up the question of inter-clan competition as expressed primarily in warfare. And in the sixth Chapter I examine the fish for sago marketing system in detail. These chapters answer the question of why affinal exchange and inter-clan competition are limited to the three Chambri villages, and they explore the similarities and

differences between highlands and Sepik integrative systems.

CHAPTER V

INTER-GROUP COMPETITION: DEBATING, SHAMANISM, SORCERY AND WARFARE

I suggested in Chapter 4 that, through political manipulations, certain Chambri clans accumulate wealth and power, maintaining and improving their positions by providing their less adept neighbors with assistance to meet their affinal obligations and thus effectively becoming their patrons. These large clans occasionally interact as unequals through their separate assistance of affinally linked clans. However, since their members have generally not intermarried they are not, in any real sense, unequal affines. Quite to the contrary, these large clans are equal competitors for the control of their neighbors, and their competition is effected through the unequal exchanges of their dependent clients. Unlike the typical Highlands' situation, in which A betters B by giving him x+y+z goods and B loses prestige if his return gift "fall(s) below the level of the gift it is compared with" (Strathern, 1971:11), Sepik clans are indirectly compared through the differential extensiveness of their networks of control.

Competition for power, however, is not expressed exclusively through affinal prestations. Among the Iatmul, for example, where "there are no steady and dignified chiefs - indeed no formulated chieftainship at all...

A man achieves standing in the community by

> his achievements in war, by sorcery esoteric knowledge, by shamanism, by wealth, by intrigue, and to some extent, by age. But in addition to these factors he gains standing by playing up to the public eye; and the more standing he has the more conspicuous will be his behavior. The greatest and most influential men will resort freely to either harsh vituperation or buffoonery when they are in the center of the stage, and reserve their dignity for occasions when they are in the background. (Bateson, 1958: 124-125).

The question I answer in this chapter is how debating, shamanism, sorcery and warfare articulate with the indirect competition of the Chambri client market. Each of these activities expresses the assertiveness of individuals who are in competition, and all actors are judged intuitively and immediately in comparison with the performances of other debaters, shamans, sorcerers and warriors. Clearly, debating, shamanism, sorcery and warfare are different activities, with different subjects, objects, contexts and consequences. Nevertheless, as we shall see, the assertion of personal power allows, on the one hand, large clans to retain political and economic power over their dependents and, on the other, members of small clans to assert their individual identities, thereby preventing wholesale takeovers by their more powerful neighbors.

Debating: The contenders

The stage referred to by Bateson, where vituperation and buffoonery are expressed, is the central area of a spirit house where men debate issues of importance to the community. The size and composition of the community, and

the number and identities of its debating representatives, vary with the issue under discussion. Some debates may involve as few as six or seven co-phratry members, while others may demand the participation of representatives from all clans within the three Chambri phratries. In the central stage area "there is a special stool, which differs from the ordinary stools on which men sit in having a 'back,' like a chair, carved into some representations of totemic ancestors" (Bateson, 1958: 125). Today, among both the Chambri and the Iatmul, most of the old "debater's chairs" have been purchased by artifact dealers, and the people have either made duplicate stools or have substituted folding chairs, card tables, or sections of broken canoes. A debater rises from his seated position on the elevated beds that flank the long sides of the ceremonial house, struts to the center of the house and picks up three bunches of Dracaena leaves or coconut leaflets. "He picks these up at the beginning of his speech and with the combined bunches he gives a blow to the stool. He then puts down the bunches on the stool, one by one, as if they were a tally of his sentences. When all are put down, he again bunches them together and gives another single blow. This series of actions is repeated throughout his speech, ending with a final blow" (ibid.: 126). Bateson's account of Iatmul debating is excellent, and, because it also describes precisely the style of Chambri debates I witnessed in the field, I reproduce it here.

> The tone of the debates is noisy, angry and, above all, ironical. The speakers work themselves up to a high pitch of superficial excitement, all the time tempering their violence with histrionic gesture and alternating in their tone between harshness and buffoonery. The style of the oratory varies a good deal from speaker to speaker and that of the more admired performers may tend towards the display of erudition or towards violence or to a mixture of these attitudes. On the one hand there are men who carry in their heads between ten and twenty thousand polysyllabic names, men whose erudition in the totemic system is a matter of pride to the whole village; and on the other hand there are speakers who rely for effect upon gesture and tone rather than upon the matter of their discourse. Such a man will make a speech in which there is only the barest minimum of contribution to the issue - and that minimum something which has already been said by other speakers - but he will fill out his speech with assertions of his scorn and threats that he will rape the members of the opposition, accompanying the word with obscene pantomimic dance. Meanwhile the insulted will watch and smile a little, or laugh aloud and shout ironic encouragement to the insulting speaker. Besides these two types - the erudite and the abusive - there are also nervous and apologetic speakers whose contributions to the debate are despised...
>
> As the debate proceeds, both sides become more excited and some men leap to their feet, dancing with their spears in their hands and threatening an immediate resort to violence; but after a while they subside and the debate goes on. This dancing may occur three or four times in a single debate without any actual brawling, and then suddenly some exasperated speaker will go to the root of the matter and declaim some esoteric secret about the totemic ancestors of the other side, miming one of their cherished myths in a contemptuous dance. Before his pantomine is finished a brawl will have started which may lead to serious injuries and be followed by a long feud of killings by sorcery (Bateson, 1958: 126-127).

Bateson observed that debates occurred between opposed "sides," but he did not clarify the composition of the competing groups. Before I do so, I briefly describe a debate I observed in a Chambri ceremonial house.

The dry season of 1974 had been uncommonly long. Tall weeds had grown up throughout Chambri Lake and the Kumalio River had dwindled to a narrow, sluggish channel bordered by mud, grass and reeds. The rains began late, in mid-October, but were sporadic and light throughout November. By early November an astronomical number and variety of mosquitos had bred in the shallow puddles that now constituted Chambri Lake. The Chambri people, although well-accustomed to the mosquito-ridden transition seasons, felt impelled to call a three-village meeting at the largest of Indingai's spirit houses to discuss the cause of the unusually large number of "natnats". In particular they were worried by the quantities of the black-bodied, long-nosed mosquitos, kamban, that inflicted particularly painful bites and were a scourge throughout that November.

The meeting began on the morning of November 8, 1974, and lasted throughout the day. It would take too much space to transcribe the entire debate, in which each of the oratorical styles described by Bateson was utilized by different men. The debaters dealt with four questions: which ancestor is responsible for bringing the mosquitos? why has the ancestor brought them? who has the power to provoke that ancestor? and who is in fact doing so?

It was quickly agreed that the ancestors Mali and Yambukei were responsible for the plague. No one doubted this and their descendants openly admitted it. However, which of the descendants was responsible for provoking them was not

at all clear. Nine men were named by various debaters as potentially having the power to bring the mosquitos. Six of these were present at the meeting, but one immediately denied any responsibility, asserting that as a recent widower he thought of nothing but his dead wife and young, motherless children. Each of the remaining five justified his ancestors' actions, claiming variously that Mali and Yambukei were angry because:

1) although they caused the wild fruit to grow on the trees, they had not received their annual recompense for this aid;

2) they resented the actions of Chambri children who cared nothing for the seeds of wild fruit and scattered them around at random;

3) although they produced the food that women sold at markets, they had never been thanked for their efforts;

4) they were embarrassed by the behavior of an Indingai who shamed his village by journeying to Mindimbit village while drunk.

Each of these putative reasons for the anger of Mali and Yambukei was extensively discussed by many debaters. Some of the men imitated pigs and chickens following Chambri children to eat the wild fruit seeds dropped carelessly from their hands. Others mimicked the drunken Indingai's canoe trip and his garbled and abusive conversation with the inhabitants of Mindimbit. Their performances were farcical, and the spectators enjoyed themselves wholeheartedly, loud-

ly guffawing at the mime and, in particular, at each lewd, drunken remark. Their amusement was abruptly terminated, however, when one speaker announced that, if his father were still alive, defaulters who failed to recompense Mali and Yambukei for the food the latter provided would die from sorcery. The next discussants, all accused of bringing the mosquitos, in turn challenged the speaker, each stating that his own father had inherited this or that power from Mali and Yambukei, whereas the speaker's father was a descendant "with nothing". For the next two hours, debater after debater seriously and angrily argued over the inheritance of totemic names, the ownership of tracts of land and water, sorcery prowess, clan realignments and debt relationships. The entire ethno-history of the former Mali/Yambukei clan was recapitulated. Experts (all old men of the first or second ascending generations) were called as eye witnesses to arguments, migrations of individuals between clans, name endowments and deaths from sorcery. Each of the men accused of brining the mosquitos, although denying direct responsibility for the situation, insisted he was the only descendant of Mali and Yambukei who had rightfully inherited the power to bring the insects. Nothing was decided, because each descendant could call on testimony as evidence to support his claim. Finally, as a reconciliatory move, an impartial participant suggested that whoever had the power must have "watered at the mouth" while drunk, telling his secret names to a "steal-man," to someone who was not a descend-

ant of Mali and Yambukei but who had used his stolen knowledge of their secret names to afflict Chambri with the mosquito scourge. It was late in the day, and his hypothesis effectively ended the debate. Nevertheless, the participants left the ceremonial house feeling angry and disgruntled. The confrontation had ended in a stalemate. There had been no victor - all of the disputants had argued well - and the mosquitos were still biting.

Although Bateson writes of individual aggrandizement through powerful oratory, he makes it clear that the orators are also representatives of "sides," implying by this term competing clans or moieties. That is to say, not only does a successful orator advance his standing among his confederates, with whom he is vying for status, but his suce cess also benefits the group to which he belongs. In the Chambri mosquito debate there were obviously three distinct factions, each of which argued on behalf of one or several of the descendants of Mali and Yambukei. One of these factions was in fact a large and powerful Indingai clan. The composition of the other two factions, however, was more complex, cross-cutting clan, moiety and even phratry boundaries. The first consisted of representatives of a small, declining Indingai clan and of a large, powerful Kilimbit clan. The leader of the former was ostensibly related to the leader of the latter as his father's father's father's father's brother's son's son's son's son. Both men considered themselves to be direct descendants of Yambukei.

It seems that these Kilimbit had severed relations with their Indingai co-clan members three generations ago. The prominence they rapidly achieved within their new phratry, (which they joined originally as affines of a declining clan,) paralleled the decline of their Indingai cousins. The latter attempted to maintain their autonomy as the rightful heirs of Yambukei. Over the past decade, however, reduced to three mature male members, one of whom is a migrant laborer, the Indingai clanspeople had been forced to seek assistance from their Kilimbit relatives, and their reunion was apparent during the mosquito debate.

The third faction's composition was the most complex of all. This group consisted of members of another large Kilimbit clan, who asserted no relationship with either Mali or Yambukei, and of several Wombun men from different clans who did so. All of the Wombun had in the past applied for, and accepted assistance from, the Kilimbit clan to meet their affinal debts. The relationships among these individuals are far too complex to discuss in detail here. This complexity, however, indicates that the competition which occurs in debates within the ceremonial house is neither clan- nor moiety-specific,but rather involves a variety of individuals related both by kinship and by debts. It is also apparent that large, powerful clans often compete with each other through the kin-specific arguments of their dependent clients. Thus, during the mosquito discussion, the histories of debt relations and of clan realignments

were publicized and "verified." In this way, the debate clarified the qualifications of the contenders while at the same time it provided the setting for their confrontation.

Approximately a week after the great mosquito debate, each of the two Indingai descendants of Mali and Yambukei who had been accused of bringing the mosquitos separately sacrificed a chicken to his ancestors, thereby initiating affinal compensations. I was told that the accused Kilimbit and Wombun men had acted similarly. By December the numbers of mosquitos had lessened somewhat, for, it was explained: "Mali and Yambukei have eaten well and have gone to sleep."

Shamanism, Debating and the Re-establishment of Autonomy

Most of the debates in ceremonial houses concern social or physical irritants that affect large numbers of people. Moreover, the identities of those who are potentially responsible for the irritants are known before the debate occurs, and they are willing to admit to having inherited the power to cause the trouble. However, when a misfortune or problem, such as illness, affects only one individual, and he does not know who or what is responsible for this, he hires a shaman to determine the direction from which the malign influence is emanating. Shamans are, in effect, diagnosticians, and their primary task appears to be diagnosis of the causes of sickness, which they invariably undertake within the woman's house where the patient

is confined.[1]

At Indingai, six people are recognized shamans, two of them women.[2] I saw only two complete shamanistic performances at Chambri. On both occasions the father and brothers of the victim hired the shaman who was most closely related to their clan, in the one case agnatically and in the other affinally. I was told that, when a woman is sick, her husband frequently engages the shaman, selecting if possible a member of her clan.

At each of the two performances that I witnessed, the shaman was cloistered together with the invalid and the latter's close relatives. He chewed large quantities of betel nut (over fifteen nuts) while chatting lightly with those present. After some fifteen to twenty-five minutes had elapsed, and without warning, the arms, legs and head of the shaman began to twitch involuntarily and erratically, as if he were suffering from Huntington's Chorea. With each twitch the shaman uttered a phrase or sentence in a soft distant monotone. The patient's relatives did

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1 I was told that shamans might also be hired to discover why a man's pigs are sick, or who has destroyed his crop of pumpkins, or why a tree fell on his roof during a storm; but invariably their job is to diagnose irritants of limited and personal significance. They are also hired to cure illness, and herein lies the advantage of securing a shaman from a closely related clan; in order to cure, the shaman must invoke the sacred ancestral names of the invalid's clan, and ask them to protect the invalid against all supernatural antagonists.

2 Only one of the six belongs to a large, powerful clan.

not look directly at the shaman but silently busied themselves with knife sharpening, food preparation, artifact carving and other tasks.

I was told that shamans, who are called mariyapkar ("blood") in the Chambri language, "feel the blood move through their bodies." The direction of its flow and the strength of its pulsation inform them from where the illness is emanating and the strength of its hold over the victim. Each twitch of their limbs and head also reveals to them the identities of those causing the illness, for different parts and sides of the body are "owned"[1] by different moiety and clan groups. A typical diagnosis is as follows: "an ancestor of Nyeminimba whose descendants are living beyond the land of the Wiarman ceremonial house, is causing this illness." Neither the shaman nor the invalid's relatives assume that this ancestor's descendants have performed sorcery to kill the invalid. Instead they believe that a "cross" or conflict exists between the ancestor and the patient's relatives that must be "straightened" if the invalid is to recover.[2]

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1 Different parts of the body belong to different clans and moieties, as do most natural phenomena such as trees, fish, stones, etc. The entire natural world is, in effect, divided between the clans and moieties.

2 "Crosses" vary considerably. Frequently they result from adultery, but they may also result from "stealing" another's supply of the wild reeds used in basket weaving, or from using another's carving knife without permission, or from any other "illegal" action.

After the shaman has found the area from which the malign influence is originating, he confers with the invalid's relatives to determine which particular ancestors are most likely to be responsible for causing the illness. Any ancestor with whom the invalid's clan has had a "cross" is a candidate, but the one eventually selected as the culprit is generally the one whose ill-will is most recent. Once the shaman and victim's relatives name the culprit, they send an emissary to fetch representatives of the clan with whose ancestor the conflict exists. If they come and admit that this "cross" is the cause of the illness, they exchange equivalent amounts of betel nut and, perhaps, money with the invalid's relatives. Both parties then consider the "cross" to be terminated.[1] The shaman is then paid for his services[2] and the incident is closed.

Those members of a clan whose ancestor has been rejected as the cause of the illness occasionally take umbrage at this assertion of their innocence. They may admit that an ancestor of another clan is angry with the victim, but they also insist that their ancestor "holds crosses" with the victim as well. A full scale debate will ensue in the ceremonial house, each clan or larger faction asserting the ef-

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1 The exchange generally takes place in the woman's house in which the invalid is confined. His relatives will form a line facing another line formed by representatives of the antagonistic group. Each member of both lines holds a small amount of betel nut which he gives to his counterpart.

2 He generally receives from two to ten dollars.

ficacy of its "cross" in much the same manner as the descendants of Mali and Yambukei argued for their exclusive inheritance of the mosquito-bringing power. For example, in one debate that followed a shamanistic performance, representatives of three clans each stated that their "crosses" were predominant. (See Figure 5:1 for the genealogical relationships of those primarily involved.)

The sequence of events resulting in the particular illness was readily agreed upon:

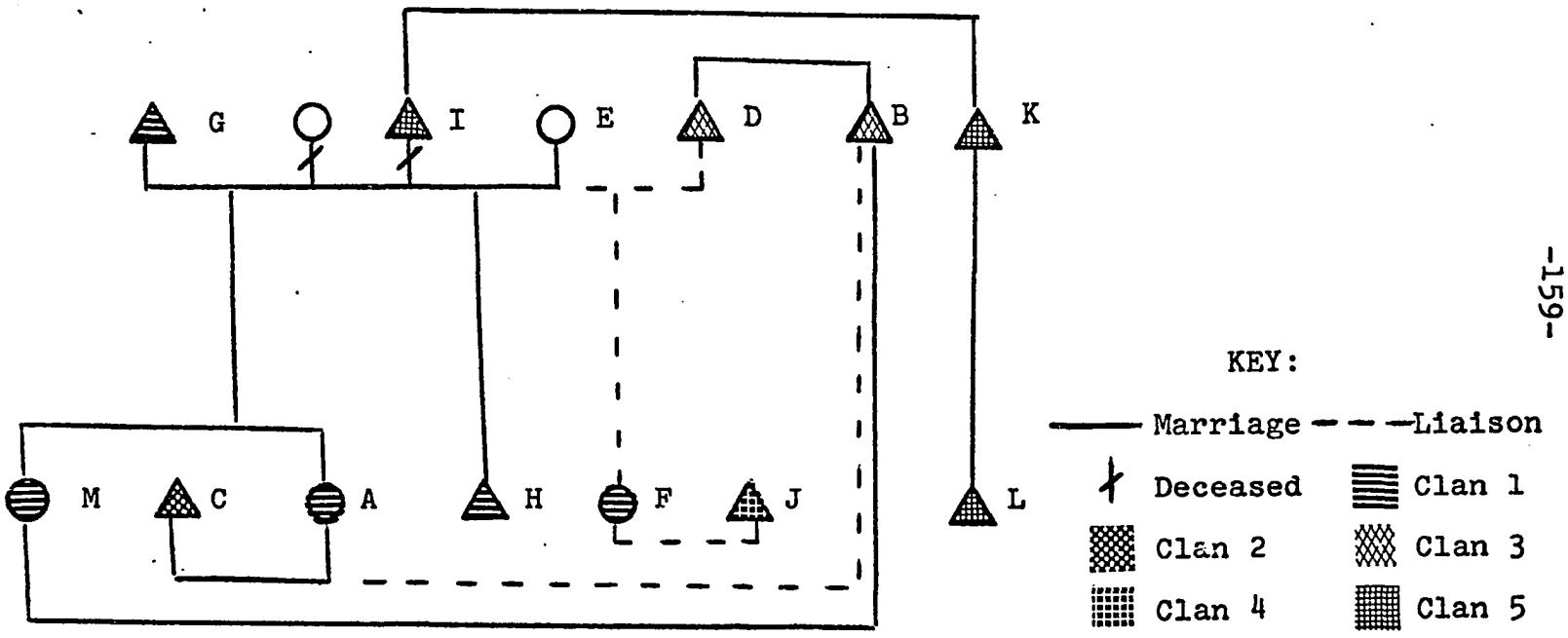
1) The woman A was philandering with B while her husband, C, was sleeping in his ceremonial house. (B had been married for some time to A's older sister, M.) One night B thought he heard C climbing the ladder to the house. He rushed from under A's mosquito net, made his escape through the back door, but fell and badly hurt his side. Picking himself up, he began to run but bumped into a tree and "broke" his testicles.

2) At about the same time, the man D was having an affair with E, whose husband, I, had recently died. I and E were the parents of H, the young man whose illness had provoked the debate. E bore D a daughter, F, who was adopted by E's second husband, G, as was I's son, H. (A, as it happens is G's daughter from his first marriage.)

3) Years passed, and F, now a young adolescent, was molested by J. D was angered by his daughter's loss of innocence and demanded compensation from J. But B, then the village

Figure 5:1

The Genealogical Relationships Between Those Primarily Involved in the Debate About the Causes of H's Illness



"committee"[1] fined both D and J, stating that, although J had acted wrongly, D had "started" the trouble in the first place by sleeping with E.

4) D is B's younger brother. He objected to B's imposing a fine upon him, because, he said, B owed him money. It seems that, while traveling to Pagwi, B lit a cigarette over an open drum of petrol, causing a fire that destroyed D's carvings, the outboard motor and canoe, and the fish belonging to two women who had been passengers.

5) Shortly after B fined D and J, he became sick. The man L then received a letter, apparently written by his father's brother's son, H, who was at school in Wewak. The letter said that H would pay for a recuperative Mass to be said for B at the Catholic Mission in Wewak.

6) B died, and H said that he knew nothing about the letter L had received, that he had not written it and that certainly he never paid for the Mass. H asserted that whoever sent the "giaman pas" (lying letter) must have caused B's death, and suggested that C wrote the letter, to "pay back" B for having slept with his wife. C had been at Wewak when the letter was posted. However, H never formally accused C while I was at Chambri.

The debaters decided that B's ghost was causing H's illness. But it still remained unclear, after hours of

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1 Each village within the Gaui Local Government Council elects a "committee", a man who theoretically is liaison to the official council representative who may or may not come from that village.

argument, whether B's wrath had been aroused by: 1) H's failure to pay for the recuperative Mass, 2) G's adoption of D's daughter, F, 3) D's refusal to pay the fine imposed upon him by B or 4) J's rape of F.

Clearly the four "crosses," any of which could have provoked B's wrath, reflect one basic perplexity, namely the reasons for the membership of H and F in G's clan. F is D's daughter and H is I's son; but both call G aso (father)and both belong to his clan. They were co-opted, so to speak, by their mother's second marriage to G. An additional complexity resulted from G being D's wife-giver. Wife-givers receive bride prices in return for their daughters and sisters and for the children that these women bear. G, however, through his marriage to E, gained the daughter of a member of his wife-taking clan. Other "crosses" were, of course, also discussed - the lack of unity between the brothers, D and B, and J's rape of F. But it is significant that these "crosses" were expressed in terms of the basic problem - B had prevented D from reasserting his claim over F by refusing him the right to receive J's compensation.[1]

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1 I have summarized the sequence of events leading to H's illness as they were presented within the debate. The first event, namely the affair which caused B to "break" his testicles, was never mentioned as potentially causing his wrath. If his testicles did, in fact, break, they healed sufficiently for him to sire five children, three of whom are still alive. It may be that the phrase "breaking his testicles" symbolized the depletion of his clan through its loss of F to G. Or it may be that C's implication as the sorcerer responsible for B's death prevented further discussion of his involvement with A within the context of H's illness.

The fact that H and F belonged to G's clan even though they were descended from I and D's clans respectively blurred the social and economic boundaries among the three separate groups - the status of H more so than that of F, for H, as I's legitimate son and F's biological half-brother, irrefutably linked the groups. The debaters recognized intuitively that H's illness resulted from his ambiguous status; their "crosses," however obliquely, reflected their inability to act correctly within distinct social categories. Were D and B brothers, or was D the father of a member of B's wife-givers? Were the clans of G and B related asymmetrically as wife-givers to wife-takers, or had G taken the daughter of his own wife-taking group? Was D the father of H's sister, or was he the brother of H's sister's husband? Was L the brother of H and hence a half-brother of F and M? And, if he was their half-brother, was he then affinally linked to B? H's illness could only be cured by the reestablishment of clan integrity and by the restatement of conventional asymmetrical relationships. And significantly the exchange of betel nut, which was to "straighten the crosses" and cure H, took place between, on one side, H, representatives of I's clan, E and representatives of B's clan, and on the other G's clan.[1] The clans of B and I were reclaiming their own, so to speak, and thereby reestablishing the correct cognatic

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1 F was not at Indingai at the time of her half-brother's illness. If she had been, I am sure that she would have joined H's line to exchange betel nut.

and affinal relationships among the debaters.

Identification, Ambiguity and the Hierarchic Principle

On every occasion of debating and shamanism that I witnessed at Chambri, regardless of the irritant which brought together the participants, the issues discussed concerned the correct membership in kin groups or correct ownership of names, land, water, ceremonial accoutrements, or powers. It is clear that such debates and discussions occur when the internal cohesiveness of clans is disturbed, for as Burke points out:

> In pure identification there would be no strife. Likewise, there would be no strife in absolute separateness, since opponents can join battle only through a mediatory ground that makes their communication possible, thus providing the first condition for their interchange of blows. But put identification and division ambiguously together, so that you cannot know for certain just where one ends and the other begins, and you have the characteristic invitation to rhetoric (1969: 25).

Clan boundaries become blurred over time, primarily through the establishment between clans of patron/client relationships within the affinal exchange system. It becomes increasingly unclear which particular clans control what names, powers, etc., and which clans are symmetrically or asymmetrically related. Public debates and semi-public discussions provide opportunities for dependent clients, whether individuals or clans, to assert personal power through displays of oratory and esoteric knowledge. By demonstrating such power, these individuals and clans reinforce their identities, thereby preventing wholesale takeovers by large, powerful clans.

They reestablish their autonomy and maintain the continuity of inheritance by publicly declaring their distinctiveness.

To return for a moment to the mosquito debate: it should now be clear that although three factions argued for their exclusive ownership of the mosquito-bringing power, the ambiguity of division and identification which resulted in their verbal interchanges was not limited to inter-faction relations. The Mali and Yambukei descendants who had become dependents of larger, more powerful groups were asserting their independence as separate clans with distinct and inalienable inheritances. Their patrons, on the other hand, were concerned to verify the bases of their dominance. The debate was as much one of clients against patrons as it was of faction against faction. And the subsequent sacrifices to Mali and Yambukei by their descendants, acting independently and alone, validated the autonomy they had achieved in debate within the ceremonial house.

Debating, therefore, appears to be a mechanism through which small, dependent clans reestablish their autonomy and integrity. Nevertheless, as I have demonstrated in Chapter 4, these small clans are aware of their value within the client.market of the Chambri affinal exchange system, and through time they shift their dependence from one large group to another in order to prevent a complete takeover by any powerful clan. Why then, if a small clan can achieve autonomy through adept manipulation of exchange relationships, is debating such a significant part of the Chambri political

system?

Forge believes that in the Sepik area:

> ... clans essentially consist of a series of names: names of spirits, of totems, of ancestors, of men and women, as well as the possessions of clan members: axes, canoes, dogs, pigs, etc. The clans are essentially identical, all that differentiates them are their name sets (1972a:531).

These "essentially identical" clans are however involved in two kinds of relationships: asymmetrical relationships with affines that are irreversibly unequal in terms of the dominance of wife-givers and the submission of wife-takers, and symmetrical relationships with coordinate groups. These coordinate groups, though ideally irreversibly equal, are in fact also involved in patron/client relationships. Whereas hierarchy is the sine qua non of affinal relationships, it is antithetical to symmetrical relationships - and yet it exists in both.

Significantly, hierarchy can operate on two levels -- both as an event, whereby one group or individual in fact dominates another, and as a principle or idea of social organization. Hierarchy as a principle is, of course, of a higher logical type, for as Burke suggests:

> ... the hierarchic principle is complete only insofar as it works both ways at once. It is not merely the relation of higher to lower, or lower to higher, or before to after, or after to before. The hierarchic principle is not complete in the social realm, for instance, in the mere arrangement whereby each rank is overlord to its underlings and underling to its overlords. It is complete only when each rank accepts the principle of gradation itself, and in thus "universalizing" the principle, makes a spiritual reversal of the ranks just as meaningful as their

actual material arrangement (1969: 138).

I think we can begin to see why Chambri debates, with their lengthy recounting of both the ideal, egalitarian, inherited order and real, hierarchic, manipulative order, are so significant. They verify the reversability of pragmatic hierarchy while validating the unchanging principle of hierarchy through time. "What is yours today, may be ours tomorrow" is their message. And, most important of all, the validation of hierarchy as a principle simultaneously promises the restoration of equality, for if I am dependent today and you are dependent tomorrow, we both in the long run will prove equal or "essentially identical."

In Chapter Two I stated that the ideal model of the Chambri people, based upon the assumption of correct and orderly genealogical relationships, serves as a criterion against which to measure the success or failure of individuals and groups in their struggle for power and prestige. And the degree to which the ideal remains distinct from the real system of inter-clan migrations, fissions and name- and land-bifurcations enhances its value for the Chambri as a gauge for judging the success or failure of actual social performance. I, of course, am not the first to suggest that the idea of patrilineality substantiates the flux of socio-political manipulations. Evans-Pritchard, for example, writes that among the Nuer the

> ... deeply rooted lineage structure... permits persons and families to move about and attach themselves so freely,for shorter or longer

> periods, to whatever community they choose by whatever cognatic or affinal tie they find it convenient to emphasize; and that it is on account of the firm values of the structure that this flux in the state of social relationships does not cause confusion or bring about tribal disintegration (1969: 361).

And Murphy, proclaiming Evans-Pritchard's remark as "one of the most mordant insights ever to come out of social anthropology" (1971: 241), suggests that there is a contradiction between "activity (which) is sequential in time, continuous, multifaceted, and nonrepetitive... (and) norms (which) are timeless, discontinuous, repetitive, and one-dimensional" (ibid.: 242). He suggests that

> ... we should consider the possibility that certain activities are specific in both form and content. And we should also think about whether some norms are diffuse in both form and content. These norms and actions, by partaking of each other's qualities, could serve as mediators of the contradiction between norm and act (ibid.).

In other words, Murphy suggests that a dialectic exists between, for instance, the act of political manipulation and the norm of patrilineality. He postulates that social phenomena such as ritual and etiquette, which are both "highly specific in content, but... also have a remarkable and highly distinctive specificity of form, ... bridge the contradiction between norm and activity and mediate the alienation of man from his fellow man" (ibid.: 243).

Certainly, Chambri debates are rituals with a highly distinctive specificity of form. And moreover, their content invariably places the sequence of nonrepetitive multifaceted, political manipulations within the context of a

timeless, repetitive, idealized order. But if we insist that the idea of patrilineality substantiates political flux vis-à-vis the timeless norms expressed in ritualized debating we are ignoring the synthesizing effect of the ritual by concentrating on one term of the dialectic. For it is also true that, by recounting the events of socio-political flux and validating the principle of hierarchy, Chambri debates perpetuate the ideal of patrilineality by promising a restoration of egalitarianism. Clans remain equal so long as equality can be re-established in the future. And for equality to be re-established the potentiality of reversing patron/client relationships must be just as meaningful as their present temporal arrangement.

Sorcery and the Ambiguity of Death

We have seen that the recognition of social irritants becomes both stimulus and opportunity for the re-establishment of autonomy by small, dependent clans, and for the validation of the hierarchic principle of dependency reversal. In this section I deal briefly with the ultimate social irritant: death. Neither debating nor exchange can salve it, and the only shamans capable of diagnosing its causes are the dead themselves.

When an individual (either male or female, but generally at least five years of age) dies of natural causes, be they snake bite, malaria, dysentery, or falling from a tree, the "mambu" divination is performed. A thick piece of bamboo, approximately twenty feet in length, is placed

vertically by members of the deceased's clan near his grave. Between 24 and 48 hours elapse before the bamboo is removed, sufficient time for the deceased's spirit to have entered it. It is kept near the dead man's house until night falls. Then the men who retrieved it place one end in the door or window of the house and rest the other on a small wooden gong. Between three and five men grasp the bamboo, underhand, and ask questions of the deceased's spirit. Occasionally they are his affines, but frequently they have no traceable genealogical relationships to him. Invariably, however, they prove to either be members of, or affines to, the clan or clans which are later found to be responsible for his death. Their questions concern the causes of his death and are always asked in a yes/no form. "Was the 'cross' between you and Mangemeri over the women, Tupikumban?" is a typical example. If the deceased's spirit answers affirmatively, the bamboo moves vertically to pound the split gong. If no, the bamboo slides horizontally along the drum. As the questions touch on events approaching the present, the bamboo's movements become increasingly violent and frequently the frame of the window or door is torn from the house.

Only men may grasp the bamboo, and arguments occur among those who claim the right to do so. These arguments are resolved by asking the deceased's spirit if this or that man is acceptable to him. Assuming that the spirit's opinions are not likely to diverge too sharply from those

through whom he is speaking, then those who manage to take hold first in effect choose the remaining participants.

An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth is the message of the "mambu" divination, for without exception every death proves to have been inflicted in retaliaton for a previous death or outrage. For example, when A ensorcelled B, C and D, members of B's clan, retaliated with sorcery to kill E, a member of A's clan. Although it was now the turn of the clan of A to take revenge, D struck again and attempted to ensorcell his daughter's lover, a member of A's clan. He explained his killing out of turn as being necessary to help his son-in-law who was greatly disturbed by his wife's infidelity. D performed a "sing sing" - an incantation of his ancestral names - over tobacco that he intended his daughter's lover to smoke. However, F, the younger brother of the lover, smoked it. F's muscles degenerated, and he was bedridden for some 20 years before he died. During the "mambu" divination of the cause of his death, the entire series of retaliations, extending through three generations, was recounted in detail.

In another "mambu" divination performed for G, a young man who died suddenly of acute hermorrhaging after exhibiting "long long" (crazy) behavior for years, his spirit indicated three potential reasons for the death. He was a member of B's clan and could therefore have been killed in retaliation for F's death. But perhaps the chain of deaths leading to his own began when H (while hunting in the tall

Kunai grass) mistook I for a wild pig and speared him through the heart. H accepted valuables from his affine, J, in order to compensate I's clan. Because I's death was accidental, compensation could in theory "straighten the cross" between the clans of H and I. I's spirit was angered by J's assistance of H, and it was possible that, with the help of a living clan member, he smote G, J's son. Finally, G's death could have been caused by K. G, when a young boy, accidentally discovered K's wife in bed with another man. He revealed the affair to the village, thereby shaming K who was forced to admit to his wife's infidelity. K, before he died, may have performed a "sing sing" over soup which he then gave G to eat, and this soup may have poisoned G.

The ambiguity surrounding G's death will not be clarified until his clan demonstrates its responsibility for the death of a member of one or other of the three clans potentially responsible for G's death. Needless to say, G's clan will by vying with other clans for the right to claim revenge, just as responsibility for G's death was claimed by three clans. We can see a homology between the competition involved in defining the right to revenge and that connected with the correct and orderly inheritance or names, land, etc. In both cases individuals and clans compete for recognition and, through their competition, express their autonomy. But, unlike a mosquito plague or an illness, death is an irreversible <u>fait accompli</u>. Although a "mambu" divination, like a debate, clarifies the qualifications of the contenders while

it provides a setting for their competition, it does not allow them to re-establish correct social relationships vis-à-vis one another. They are irrevocably linked by the death. It seems therefore, that the importance of "paybacks" or revenge to the Chambri people stems from the irrevocability of the union between individuals and clans linked through death. Once united through death, clans can ~~re~~achieve their autonomy only through the continual validation of the hierarchic principle, promising the eventual restoration of equality between individuals and groups. "Paybacks" are the means through which the hierarchic principle is expressed.

Inter-tribal Competition: Sorcery and the Chambri Wars

Unlike debating and shamanism, which rarely occur between Chambri, Iatmul, Sepik Hills or Sawos groups,[1] sorcery accusations transcend tribal boundaries. The father of my research assistant, for example, had died ostensibly of sorcery performed by an Iatmul man from Timbunmeri Island. To guard against such occurrences, a host customarily samples the food he provides a visitor from another tribe to

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1 On one occasion, while I was living among the Chambri, several Indingai elders were asked to journey to the Iatmul village of Parambei to settle a dispute over water rights between Parambei and Malingai villagers. They were called as advisers to the disputants because they knew the traditional water boundaries. Although the Parambei request raised their status within Indingai by demonstrating their extensive reputations as men of knowledge, their rhetoric within the Parambei ceremonial house debate had no effect upon intra-Chambri political relations.

assure his guest that the food has not been poisoned. Nevertheless, Chambri leaders rarely leave their village, for they are convinced that all non-Chambri wish to encompass their deaths as a way of acquiring status within their own villages. Some villages are feared more than others. In the past the Chambri attributed most sorcery deaths caused by non-Chambri to the Peliagwi and Manabi living on Peliagwi and Timbunmeri islands, respectively. And, as might be expected, the Chambri, aided by Nyaula and Garambambu, eventually decimated the Peliagwi and Manabi populations.

The origin of the Peliagwi and Manabi is shrouded in myth. I elicited the myth from Chambri, Mensuat and Iatmul informants and, although I found a great many minor variations, the story, runs roughly as follows:

> A Mali named Kakan (or Nali or Chembarukamembi) beat his older brother's youngest wife after she shamed him by comparing his testicles to ripe malay apples. She complained to her husband, who then fought with his brother. In the fight Kakan's finger was badly injured, and he filled a half coconut shell with the blood that flowed from it.
>
> Kakan decided to leave Mali for he feared that his brother would kill him. After numerous misadventures, he arrived at Mensuat where he met Wulian (or Mangemeri). He asked Wulian about Peliagwi Island as a possible home and was told that it was not an island at all, but merely a large clump of floating grass. Kakan told Wulian that he would try Peliagwi anyway. He made a spear out of wood and attached a bamboo hook to one end and a long piece of rattan to the other. He threw his spear at Peliagwi and, after making sure that the hook had taken firm hold, attached the rattan to Mensuat.
>
> Arriving at Peliagwi he found the island inhabited by women and dogs. The dogs had intercourse with the women and slept in ceremonial houses just as men do. When their wives bore them offspring, they killed all male humans and female canines, but allowed female humans and male canines to live. Kakan lived in a

tree while observing the Peliagwi. One day two sisters came to fetch water from a pool that had formed near the roots of his tree. They saw his reflection in the water and, at first, were very scared. When they discovered Kakan in the tree they liked him very much. They took him home with them, hiding him in a basket of fish so that their husband would not pick up his scent. During the day, while their husband was hunting, Kakan would have intercourse with the sisters. They lived like this for a long time.

Eventually Kakan grew tired of hiding in the fish basket. He decided to kill the dogs. He placed the blood from his finger (which he had carried from Mali) in a hole and then covered the hole with a big rock. Men grew from his blood and from the rock - over 500 men - but still Kakan waited. The dogs decided to hold a feast. They told their wives to prepare the pigs they had brought back from the bush. They did not know that, while they were hunting, Kakan had placed kindling under the beds in their ceremonial house. After they feasted the dogs fell asleep. Kakan and his blood-men lit the kindling and the ceremonial house caught fire. Many of the dogs died. Some escaped unburned to Chambri Lake, and their descendants are our white dogs of today. Others were only partially burned, and these sired our mottled dogs. Those which were burned all over but managed to live are the ancestors of our black dogs.

The blood-men married the women of Peliagwi. Many of their descendants migrated to Timbunmeri Island. The Peliagwi and Timbunmeri, as descendants of blood-men, were very hot and mean. The Chambri were forced to destroy them.

Without embarking on a lengthy analysis of the Peliagwi origin myth, it is obvious that the Chambri, Iatmul and Mensuat view the blood-men and their descendants as anomalous. Both the Iatmul and Chambri believe that a child's bones are the product of its father's semen, whereas its blood comes from its mother. Most of the rites of passage are rationalized as attempts to rid their patrimonial heirs of weakening female influences, and affinal prestations, in this sense, are attempts to buy children from their mothers. Initiation,

the most important of their ceremonies as measured by the size of the affinal prestations and by the high seriousness of the actors' comportment, is specifically designated to remove mother's blood.[1] It is only after the initiates are bled and scarified that they can "fight strongly for their ancestors." If mother's blood circulates through their bodies, they become weakened during battle by thinking of their mothers mourning their dead bodies.

The Peliagwi blood-men, unlike Iatmul and Chambri, originated from male blood. Their bones, it is implied, grew from a rock placed over a hole. Although it is possible to assert a homology between the hole and the vulva, the resulting equation:

Men	+	Finger-blood	
Finger	+	Hole	= Children
Blood	+	Bone	

is still an anomalous reversal of the conventional equation where:

Men	+	Women	
Penis/Semen	+	Vulva	= Children
Bone		Blood	

When blood comes from the father, there is no need to purge

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1 Occasionally, when her mother's brother is wealthy, a girl will be scarified along with her brothers. Removing her mother's blood is not however necessary to a female's maturation.

it to make children grow strong. And given the significance of blood to affinal relations, and of affinal relations to the exchanges which produce status differentials within society, the Peliagwi blood-men were from birth free of obligations of submission and dominance - free of the constraints of an organized socio-political life.

It is likely that both the Peliagwi and Manabi were originally Sepik Hills residents who moved onto islands within Chambri Lake abandoning their migratory existence for life in permanent villages.[1] They both fished and processed sago. Uninvolved in bartering relationships, they regularly attacked Chambri trading parties en route to Mensuat and Changriman market sites.

> Manabi's crimes for which they were exterminated by Chambri and other groups in about 1900 were the harassment of market parties paddling past Timbunmeri to the Kamanbo market site. Warfare was long established with Manabi having no allies. The turning point was the capture... of the fight leader, Meibaraban, by a Chambri/Nyaula party. He was taken to Nyaurengai and killed. With their leader gone the Manabi were easy target, and a combined raiding party of many groups including Chambri and Kandingai soon defeated them.
>
> Peliagwi dominated the channel to Ai'ul market with Mensuat and often raided market parties. They also raided foraging parties and as a result war developed. In 1930 Mensuat and Changriman had seven sneak type killing raids. Finally, Peliagwi was hit by an epidemic of some sort, (caused, it is claimed, by Chambri's sorcery). In 1940 Garamambu, Chambri and other groups raided and wiped the village out... (Bragge, 1973).

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1 Although a few people claim to be direct descendants of Manabi and Peliagwi, they have been so thoroughly incorporated into the groups in which they now live that they are unwilling to admit that their native tongues differed significantly from the languages they now speak. Consensus has it, however, that the Manabi spoke a Mali dialect while the Peliagwi spoke a Bisis dialect.

The Manabi and Peliagwi raids made life intolerable for the Chambri for three reasons:

1) The economic system demanded frequent marketing trips by Chambri to acquire necessary produce.

2) The existence of people who both fished and produced sago blurred the essential distinctions between fish-supplying and sago-producing populations.

3) Once attacked, a Chambri clan had either to retaliate or to lose status in the eyes of its neighbors.

The first reason needs little explication here. The mutual interdependence between fish-supplying the sago-producing populations has already been mentioned in Chapters One and Three, and it will be the focus of Chapter Six.

The second reason is a corollary of the first, expressed in symbolic terms as the blood-men's sexual heritage. Both the Iatmul and Chambri view "fish (as) male and phallic while sago preparation is female. Cutting the tree and beating the pith is male. Inferentially, the tree is female" (Rutherford, n.d.: 32).[1] Male fish is traded for female sago at barter markets; they are wedded, so to speak, at these markets. And through their union the sago-producing and fish-supplying populations become involved in relations of submission and dominance. The self-sufficient economy of

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1 Unlike Iatmul, Chambri is a multiple classifying language with at least 13 noun classes. Men, women and sago are all in the "ank" class, while fish belongs to the "ar" class. Yet I think it is accurate to state that fish is cognized as masculine, while sago is thought of as feminine, for fish is described as "bone-food" while sago is food of the flesh and blood.

the Manabi and Peliagwi was cognized by the Chambri as incestuous - as destructive of the correct order of things on both the pragmatic and symbolic levels.

We can begin to understand the third reason by recalling the importance of "paybacks" or revenge for the maintenance of clan autonomy. On the intra-tribal level, the irrevocability of union through death made the reestablishment of clan autonomy impossible except by continually reiterating it through "paybacks." Each retaliation reversed the dominance/submission relationship and reaffirmed clan integrity. On the inter-tribal level, "paybacks" are similarly important. However, Chambri clans have distinct inter-relationships that are defined on the one hand by descent and on the other by political manipulations. The relationships among Iatmul, Mali and Bisis with Chambri, on the contrary, are not thus distinct. As groups they are, to use Simmel's term, "strangers," for 'though near they are far, and though far they are near' (1950:402).

> ... the proportion of nearness and remoteness which gives the stranger the character of objectivity, also finds practical expression in the more abstract nature of the relation to him. That is, with the stranger one has only certain more general qualities in common, whereas the relation to more organically connected persons is based on the commonness of specific differences from merely general features (ibid.: 405).

When a Manabi attacked and killed a Chambri the social distance which characterized inter-tribal relations was transformed into subjective and specific grievances. The Manabi were no longer strangers but enemies, and in order to re-

establish the correct proportion of nearness to remoteness, the Chambri were forced to retaliate.

Whereas retaliation within the tribe is specifically directed at those clans responsible for a previous affront, inter-tribal "paybacks" are generalized to the entire enemy group. It is the obligation of all Chambri to avenge the death of a fellow Chambri, and the death of any member of the enemy groups is appropriate revenge. But, whereas successful revenge reestablished the integrity of the Chambri with respect to their enemies, the particular group that "brings home an enemy head" gains considerable status among its complementary groups. For example, after the war with Manabi, all five of Kilimbit's ceremonial houses displayed enemy heads on top of their thatch, while only four of the five Indingai haus tambarans" had heads to exhibit. Simbuksaun, a member of the fifth Indingai "haus tambaran," Wiarmankeko, had migrated from the Iatmul village of Parambei to live among the Chambri. He had been visiting Parambei while the Manabi battle was in progress and, upon hearing the sound of Chambri victory gongs, returned home to Indigai. While paddling his canoe through the Sirorwangen rivulet, he met Yebiwelli, a Parambei who had been assisting the Chambri in their battle. Simbuksaun killed Yebiweli and brought his head back to Indingai, displaying it on top of his "haus tambaran." His action provoked Parambei, traditionally allied to Chambri, to retaliate. Eventually, unable to contend with the shotgun acquired by Parambei from

the Germans, the residents of the three Chambri villages fled their island to live for about 20 years among the Changriman and Kabriman. They returned to their villages in about 1928.[1]

Simbuksaun had clearly been in a precarious position. As a migrant from Parambei, his failure to participate in the Manabi war could easily have been interpreted by the Chambri as indicating his lack of loyalty. However, by killing a Parambei he severed relations with his natal village while at the same time displaying his courage and prowess as a member of a Chambri clan within the Wiarmankeko ceremonial house. Warfare, therefore, does more than re-establish tribal autonomy. Like debating, it provides an opportunity for individuals and clans to assert their identities or to define their statuses. During warfare the internal cohesiveness of the Chambri is counterpointed by the internal segregation of individuals and groups arising from their success or failure to secure heads. Stalemate is impossible, for a head is either taken or it is not. Hence, the coincidence of luck, courage and skill during battle provides an unparalleled opportunity for dependent individuals to reaffirm their distinctiveness and

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1 Wombun villagers fled to the Kabriman on the Korosameri river, while those of Indigai and Kilimbit went first to Timbunmeri Island and then to the Kabano market site at the shore of the Changriman's mountain, Babarasuali.

worth.[1]

Conclusion

Throughout this chapter I have emphasized the significance of debating, shamanism, sorcery and warfare in the people's attempts to maintain or reestablish the internal cohesiveness of clans and tribes. These activities accomplish such ends primarily by validating the "principle of hierarchy," thereby promising the restoration of equality. In this sense they are homeostats for they maintain

> ... the values of one or more of the variables included in a system within a range or ranges that define the continued existence of the system (Rappaport, 1971: 59).

On the intra-tribal level the system ideally consists of clans linked either in symmetrical, competitive equality or in asymmetrical, affinal relations of submission and dominance. However, political manipulations often transform complementary, equivalent clans into sets of patrons and clients. The expressive behaviors of debating, shamanism and sorcery use words that have power as

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1 The Chambri are aware, however unconsciously, of the relationship between success in sorcery and warfare and individual and clan integrity. When an individual either kills an enemy or is a descendant of an ancestor who ostensibly caused a co-Chambri's death through sorcery, he adds a feather to the bone, wood, or metal spatula with which he dips lime from his gourd while chewing a betel nut. White feathers are used to signify intra-tribal deaths; black ones stand for heads taken in war. The lime gourd with its feathers is transmitted from father to son, and is a record of the distinctiveness and worth of its owner and his ascendants.

> ... a way of persuading through the production of pleasure as well as the assertion of idea or course of action ... (A) ll language is a process of naming, (and) naming gives comfort by creating a feeling of control, (for) to know the name of a thing is to achieve magical control over it, and ... this control can be used by the speaker simply by voicing the "name" (Abrahams, 1968: 145).

The ancestral names used by debaters, shamans and sorcerers juxtapose the ideal, egalitarian, inherited model of Chambri society against the hierarchic, manipulative order of political reality. The real order of political life is seen in light of the ideal order of ancestral sanctification, and the former is clarified as temporal and reversible.

On the inter-tribal level, the system consists of large, endogamous groups that are not politically integrated. They live near one another, but they see each other as remote, foreign-strange. And yet their neutrality can easily be changed to hatred once individuals or groups of individuals, concerned to assert their identities within their tribes, disturb the accepted "proportion of nearness and remoteness" (Simmel, 1950:405). Once tribes are linked through death, their autonomy can only be reestablished through a continual validation of separateness through "paybacks." Tribe A reestablishes its remoteness by killing a member of tribe B, and tribe B retaliates through the death of a member of tribe A, ad infinitum.

Bateson calls "this type of progressive change ... symmetrical schizmogenesis" (1958: 177) and suggests that "unless other factors are present to restrain the excesses

of assertive ... behavior, A must necessarily become more assertive, while B" (ibid.: 176) will be forced to reply in kind. In other words, the homeostat of warfare, which re-establishes the integrity of tribal boundaries, must itself be controlled if the larger inter-tribal system is not to destroy itself. In the next chapter I shall discuss the main ways in which inter-tribal relations, including warfare, are controlled.

CHAPTER VI

INTER-VILLAGE RELATIONS: BARTER MARKETS AND THE LIMITS TO WARFARE

I ended the last chapter with the assertion that Chambri warfare, by maintaining inter-clan distinctiveness and inter-tribal autonomy, is a homeostat which is itself in need of regulation if the larger social system is to endure. The inter-tribal competition or "symmetrical schizmogenesis" which promises the restoration of equality through an open-ended sequence of paybacks can potentially drive the participants

> ... into excessive emphasis of the pattern, a process which if not restrained can only lead to more and more excessive rivalry and ultimately to ... the breakdown of the whole system (Bateson, 1972: 68).

Bateson, concerned to discover the factors that restrain symmetrical schizmogenesis, suggests that

> ... schizmogenesis between two groups can be checked by factors which unite the two groups in loyalty or opposition to some outside element (ibid.: 71),

and in this chapter I wish to examine such an outside element, namely the fish-for-sago marketing system of the Chambri.

The Discovery of Sago

The marketing relationships characteristic of the Middle Sepik are well illustrated by the Chambri myth about the discovery of sago. Variations of the myth are told through-

out the area, and I collected several versions from Chambri informants. I include the Sengabi/Wulian version here because it concerns the creation of what was, until about ten years ago, a major Chambri fish-for-sago market.

> A long time ago the people of Chambri had no sago. They ate white earth which they found beside small streams. Sometimes they dried the earth in the sun before eating it, and sometimes they smoked it over a fire.
>
> One day Sengabi, a man from Indingai, had a craving for frogs, so he decided to go and hunt for some. He followed the Warramar waterway and landed close to Mensuat, telling his two wives to remain in the canoe while he hunted.
>
> As Sengabi was searching, Wulian of Mensuat saw him. Wulian strung his bow, planning to kill Sengabi. But he was afraid, so he approached Sengabi and said, "I am Wulian and you must not kill me. Why have you come here?" Sengabi replied, "I am here only because I hunger for frogs." Sengabi called to his wives, telling them to bring fish, tobacco and white earth so that he and Wulian could eat and smoke together. Wulian refused to eat the white earth and asked Sengabi to wait until he brought a better food from his camp. He was absent only a short while and returned with sago.
>
> The first time Sengabi tasted sago he vomited. He tried it again and vomited again. On the third attempt he kept the food down. He then gave Wulian some tobacco. Until that time Wulian had only smoked the water plant, pliplimank; when he inhaled the tobacco he fainted. He inhaled again and fainted again. After the third puff he felt fine.
>
> Sengabi gave Wulian some shell money. Then he said: "From now on your wives and sisters prepare sago for five days, and on the sixth day they meet my wives and sisters at Aiwul. My family will bring fish and tobacco to exchange for your sago." Wulian and Sengabi tied six knots in two tanget leaves (Taetsia fructicosa) to mark the market cycle. Sengabi took his tanget back to Chambri, and Wulian took his to Mensuat. After each day they cut one knot from the leaves. When only one knot was left they knew that the next day was market day.

Four aspects of the Wulian/Sengabi story are of interest here, namely that

1) Although Sengabi had journeyed to Wulian's territory,

Wulian was afraid of Sengabi.

2) Wulian offered sago to Sengabi who had not come in search of it, but it was Sengabi who wished to regularize marketing.

3) Sengabi paid for his marketing privileges much as men pay for their wives.

4) Although the market was established by men, their wives and sisters were to be the principle participants.

I would like, at this point, to examine each of these aspects of the Sengabi/Wulian story in turn to determine their relevance to traditional and contemporary marketing.

Wulian's Fear of Sengabi

The Chambri always journeyed to the bush in order to exchange fish for sago, primarily because the Sepik Hills' speakers, who supplied the Chambri with most of their sago requirement, were not water-going people and had not, until recently,[1] mastered the technique of making and using their canoes.[2] Although it is sometimes possible during the dry season to walk from the Sepik Hills to Chambri Island, the weight of the sago (one large block weighs between 20 to 30 pounds) would make the trek across miles of muddy, weed-choked lake bottom an onerous one. And, in any case, for over half the year the trip is impossible except by canoe.

1 About 25 to 50 years ago.

2 The Chambri also trade fish with the sago-producing Garamambu. Although they live in the Sepik Hills, the Garamambu do not speak a Sepik Hills' tongue, and both they and the Chambri claim that Garamambu always made and used canoes. Yet, fish-for-sago transactions were invariably made in Garamambu territory.

Because the Chambri are intruding on another group's territory, one might expect their manner to be conciliatory. Yet this is not the case. Gardi, for example, describes fish-for-sago transactions he witnessed in the early 1950s at the Kamanbo market site thus:

> In Chambriman,[1] far from the Sepik, which is reached across Lake Chambri and through narrow channels in the marshland bordering it, we were present at a transaction of straight barter where no money changed hands. Fishwives had come with their laden canoes through the channels to a point near a village, situated not by the water but up on a hill, and about fifteen of them were squatting on the ground near their canoes with the fat, smoked fish spread out before them. Soon the women from Chambriman came down the hill with their heavy carrying nets containing lumps of sago as big as a child's head and of all colours from grey to rose-red.
>
> As in the days of head-hunting, when the people were still hostile to each other, scarcely a word was spoken. A woman from Chambriman laid a lump of sago beside a dried fish which she fancied, and waited. The fisherwoman needed only a brief glance to weigh up the size and quality and if she did not like the goods offered she looked away and let the other wait.
>
> Sometimes, too, a buyer ventured to pick up the fish without waiting, only to have her hand slapped if the fishmonger did not agree with the exchange. Then the woman from the hill village took away her lump of sago and put down another and bigger one. If the fishwife was now satisfied, she wrapped the sago in a fresh water-lily leaf, but kept a good watch to see that only the fish which lay beside the sago was taken and no more.
>
> Very silently, almost wordlessly, the barter proceeded while the stocks of fish became smaller and the piles of sago behind the fishwives grew bigger, and gradually the housewives from Chambriman went back up the hill to their village.
>
> One had the impression that the position of the fisherwomen was stronger than that of the women who had brought sago, because all the fish found buyers, but some women had to carry part of their sago back home with them. It may be that on

---

1 Chambriman is now called Changriman.

other market days the situation is reversed (1960: 97-98).

As submissive as the Changriman women seemed to Gardi, they were in fact engaged in a rather daring experiment. The village on a hill to which Gardi refers is not the original home of the Changriman people. Rather it was built by refugee Chambri after the Parambei war. When the Chambri returned to their three villages, the Changriman gradually moved down from their hamlets on top of Babarasuali and Brobwi mountains to occupy the abandoned village. By 1950 their descent was complete, making them the first of the Sepik Hills people to exhibit sufficient trust in the Australian government's imposed pacification to abandon their relatively secure mountain hamlets. The Mensuat, Mali, Milae and Garamambu followed suit in the early 1960s, each moving from their mountain homes to villages nearer the shores of Chambri Lake.[1] In the past each of the shore settlements had been temporary hunting and fishing camps, but now they are more or less permanent villages.[2]

1 The Mensuat moved to Peliagwi Island, the Mali to Kurapio village on Timbunmeri Island and to the Tanincha hamlet at the foot of Brobwi mountain, the Milae to Marikuman village near Brobwi mountain and the Garamambu to Warpien and Yerkai villages near Garamambu mountain.

2 The Garamambu and Sepik Hills people still maintain only a semi-sedentary life, and frequently spend long periods of time at temporary camps in order to hunt or process sago. Their settlements at the shore of Chambri Lake are permanent in the sense that the people spend longer periods of time at them than at any temporary camp, and also in that they are centers for ceremonial performances.

Traditionally, the mountain hamlets of the Garamambu and Sepik Hills people, like those of the Heve who live on the northwest edge of the Sepik Hills linguistic group, were

> continually changing in composition as families shift(ed) from virilocal residence to uxorilocal residence to residence with some other close kin... The mobility serv(ed) to redistribute people in relation to resources, and dependents in relation to food-producers. The preservation of resources to maintain a hunting-gathering economy demand(ed) a small scattered population (Townsend, 1968:178).

The small scattered hamlets of the Garamambu and Sepik Hills people were potentially vulnerable to head-hunting attacks by the larger and better unified populations of Chambri and Iatmul. Bragge believes that even today, "without law enforcement these small groups would be in constant danger" (1973: page unknown).

Clearly, by living on top of mountains, the sago-producers reduced their vulnerability to large scale attack. A Chambri or Iatmul war party would have had to hike for two to four hours before reaching a Sepik Hills or Garamambu hamlet, sufficient time for the inhabitants to become alerted to the intruders and to disappear into the jungle. But interestingly, in addition to living on top of mountains, the Sepik Hills and Garamambu peoples reduced the likelihood of Chambri and Iatmul attacks in another manner by catering to the Iatmul and Chambri demand for heads. Every adult Chambri and Iatmul had to commit an act of homicide and take the victim's head in order to achieve adult status, symbolized by the killer's wearing black paint during ceremonials. The bush-dwellers endeavored to satisfy this need by selling their

own infants as homicide victims.[1] Although I am unqualified to analyze Garamambu and Sepik Hills demographic processes in any detail, it seems obvious that by selling infants the bush-people maintained their small, scattered populations while reducing the chances that adult food-producers would be slaughtered in warfare.

Wulian's fear of Sengabi, therefore, if translated as the bush-people's vulnerability to Chambri and Iatmul attack, is based on fact.

Wulian Offered Sago/Sengabi Regularized Marketing

Like the sale of infants, the offering of sago by the Sepik Hills people tended to discourage Chambri/Sepik Hills

1 Anywhere from between one to three kina or from between two to ten talimbun were paid per child. Of the 20 Indingai men alive in January, 1976, who have had infants bought for them so that they could "earn black paint," eight killed children from Mali, four killed Milae children, two killed Garamambu children and six killed children from neither Sepik Hills nor Garamambu hamlets. Of the eleven Indingai women alive in January, 1975, who had infants bought for them, six killed Milae children, two killed Garamambu children and three killed children from neither Sepik Hills nor Garamambu hamlets. Mead distinguishes the Iatmul from the Chambri by asserting that "the Tchambuli were not enthusiastic about warfare or headhunting; it is true that a ceremonial house must have heads, but they preferred to buy the bastards and orphans and criminals of the bush people and kill them ceremonially in the village, rather than run the risks of battle" (1963: 242-243). My Iatmul informants assured me, however, that they too frequently bought bush infants to be ceremonially slaughtered. It may be that the Tchambuli antipathy to warfare, observed by Mead in 1932, resulted from their recent return to their island from their exile at Changriman after the devastating Parambei war. Certainly McCarthy suggests their readiness to fight when he writes of a patrol he undertook in 1930: "As we reached Garamambu we found we had company. No less than 30 Chambri canoes, loaded with warriors, had accompanied us, intent on being on the winning side of any fight that might occur and thus bagging a few free heads" (1972:59).

warfare, for once marketing relationships were regularized, the Chambri were loath to destroy their sago-suppliers.[1] Obviously there is a relationship between economic dependence and peaceful coexistence. But the relationship is made more complex within the Chambri Lake Census Division by the fact that the Chambri were more dependent on their sago-suppliers than the sago-suppliers were upon them. Wulian offered sago because he wished to live in peace. Sengabi regularized marketing because he needed the sago.

I am aware, of course, that Gardi believed the position of the fish-suppliers to be stronger than that of the sago-producers, but he admitted that his impression was based upon observing only one market. It must be remembered that the sago-producers always had some access to the rich fish resource of Chambri Lake,[2] and they could, given their small, scattered mobile populations, adjust "to changes in the productive capacity and needs of the members" (Townsend, 1968:179). Regardless of whether during any particular market the sago-suppliers were obliged to return to their hill-village with untraded sago, they are essentially the more self-sufficient

1 It is interesting that the Changriman and Mensuat, who have always been the major suppliers of sago to the Chambri, rarely sold them their infants (see note 1, p.190). And indeed, although warfare did occasionally break out between the Chambri and the Garamambu, Mali and Milae, I know of no instance where a Mensuat or Changriman head was taken.

2 The Sepik Hills and Garamambu people would descend from their mountain hamlets to shoot fish, tortoises, eels and crocodiles with their bows and arrows. As far as I can determine they used neither spears, traps nor nets and, except for the Garamambu, did not use canoes.

of the two groups. The relationship between bush and lake populations here resembles that described by Schwartz between the Usaiai and the Manus of the Admiralty Islands, where the Usiai

> ... might have been as self sufficient as many of the interior peoples of Melanesia and New Guinea, but with the availability of fish, they seemed as committed as the Manus to trade. They were much more heterogeneous than the Manus culturally and linguistically. Their villages were smaller, usually fewer than 100 persons, located in hilltop clearings in the rugged and heavily forested interior (1964:61).

The Chambri dependence on their sago-suppliers is evident from the lengths to which they have been driven when the supply has been cut off. The ethno-histories of both the Chambri and the Iatmul are filled with large scale village migrations which were undertaken, it is asserted, when access to sago markets was curtailed during warfare with other fish-supplying villages. Many of my Chambri informants attributed their exodus to Changriman during the Parambei war, not to fear of death by Parambei spears, but to an inability to visit regularly their Mensuat and Changriman sago markets because the Parambei had stationed war canoes along the access channels. And it is well established that the migration of a large segment of the Kandingai Iatmul to Timbuneri Island followed a battle with the Yentchamangua who had blocked access to the Torembi sago market (see Bragge, 1973).

Moreover, I was told that the sago-producers have always threatened to stop trading with the Chambri in order to "get what they want." Frequently, what they want is the

right to consume a crocodile that they have killed without paying compensation to the Chambri who claim it as their "ancestor crocodile"; the right to gather reeds or wood from land claimed by the Chambri as their own; the right to gather water lily seeds, etc. The Chambri do not retaliate by threatening to deny the sago-producers their fish; but invariably they give in to these demands, while loudly proclaiming that the Changriman, Mensuat, or Garamambu wish to see Chambri children die, as they undoubtedly would without a generous supply of filling sago.

Sengabi Paid for his Marketing Privileges much as Men Pay for Their Wives.

Chambri and Iatmul men assert that their ancestors bought the right to market with certain sago-producing villages. As we shall see in the next section, their assumed ownership of marketing privileges has little relevance to the actual marketing procedure as it is practiced by women, but is nonetheless a significant aspect of the Chambri and Iatmul men's understanding of marketing.[1] What follows is a typically male description of marketing, given me by Patrick Yarapat, a leading Indingai, whose father Kanda figures in the story.

> The night before the market Wabiyangal built a fire on top of the mountain and my father, Kanda,

1 The Chambri belief that marketing privileges are bought became an important issue in the land dispute between the Chambri and the Kandingai inhabiting Timbunmeri Island. It seems that when Wapiyeri, ex-luluai of Indingai, invited the sago-starved Kandingai to seek temporary shelter on Timbunmeri Island, the Chambri assumed that the shell money Kandingai paid to Changriman, Garamambu and Mali leaders was to purchase marketing privileges. The Kandingai assert, however, that they were buying the island.

> saw it. The fire talked: tomorrow we shall meet and exchange. Kanda then answered Wabiyangal's fire with one of his own. After they both made their fires die, Kanda hit his split gong and called all his family to his house. He told them: "Wabiyangal made a fire and I answered it. Tomorrow we will meet and exchange." Now the market place is called Waŋma. It is a patch of kunai grass (Imperata sp) with a grove of sago nearby. Kanda and his family readied five canoes and paddled to Waŋma. Wabiyangal and his family came down from their mountain and walked to Waŋma. The two families met and exchanged. Sometimes they exchanged fish for sago, Chambri fish for Milae sago, and sometimes sago was bought with shell money. Wabiyangal brought the eggs of wild-fowl and cassowaries, and also sago grubs and pig meat. Kanda brought crocodile meat, eels and tobacco. When the market was finished, Kanda or Wabiyangal gave presents. Kanda gave tobacco or banana leaves or shell money. He gave to Wabiyangal, his good friend. And sometimes Wabiyangal gave him presents back at once. But sometimes he waited for the next market. They were good friends and big men and they gave each other many presents. Then the two friends tied the tanget[1] with six knots, one for each day. Kanda would cut one knot off on each day and when five were gone he would look for Wabiyangal's fire. The fire would tell him that the sixth day was the market day. If another family went to exchange with Wabiyangal, Kanda would get very angry. They should go to their own markets. If another man exchanged with Wabiyangal at Milae, this man would die. Kanda would kill him.

Yarapat's description of marketing emphasizes the asymmetrical exchange of foodstuffs between trading partners. He is unconcerned about the dynamics of fish for sago barter, but describes "a formal reciprocative, paired relationship... in which both sides benefited from steady exchange of their

1 For a more detailed explanation of a "tanget" see page of this chapter.

complementary products "[1] (Schwartz, 1964: 79). The asymmetrical exchange of complementary produce between trading partners is formal, regular, and a-political.

> The value of a particular trade partnership depended on the level of exchange to which it was set, and did not depend closely on the actual balance of the account between the two. Most large cross-ecological transactions took place through trade partnerships, as well as a good deal of routine exchange of foodstuffs paralleling the market exchange. Delay allowed also for the co-ordination of different ecological and ceremonial calendars of the two partners (Schwartz, 1964: 79, my emphasis).

As among the Manus islanders described by Schwartz, Chambri trading partners were not in competition for power. Rather, they introduced the goods acquired through their trading relationships into their separate political systems. When a Chambri male returned from Milae with six bird of paradise plumes, or when he "wheedled a good price from the purchaser" (Mead, 1964: 254) of his wife's mosquito bag, his

1 Trading partnerships exist today, and are generally passed on from father to son. Frequently they originated with the ostensible migration of an individual from a bush-village to Chambri. One trading partnership, for example, is said to have begun seven generations ago when Yambukei's wife, Palwanper, adopted a Mensuat boy, Abandimi, as her son. Abandimi's descendants still trade with the descendants of his biological father, although neither the Chambri nor the Mensuat place any significance on the genealogical link. Some trading partnerships are of more recent origin. One Indingai man established a trading partnership with the brother of his wife, a Milae woman who had been bought as an infant to be ceremonially slaughtered. She was bought by an Indingai leader, whose wife, having no female children, begged for the girl's life. She was brought up speaking the Chambri language. Although neither she nor her Chambri brothers maintain regular trading relations with her Milae relatives, her husband sought out her Milae brother to establish a trading partnership.

success was measured not in terms of the Milae's failure, but in terms of comparable successes or failures of co-Chambri. The political significance of such success or failure is distinct from the interaction of trading partners and is judged solely in respect to the comparable but separate interactions of other Chambri. Like the Kula trading system of the Trobriand Islands, Chambri trading partnerships "have two prongs: one bridges the 'essential hostility between two strange tribesmen,' whilst the other suspends the political identity between two fellow tribesmen... it parcels them out... duly... prepared to compete among themselves..." (Uberoi, 1971:147).

Women Participate in Barter Markets

Chambri and Iatmul men view the marketing activity of their wives as being an extension of their own trading partnerships. They insist, for example, that only certain women from the Burui Kunai village of Marap can exchange with certain members of Parambei's Pangembit ceremonial house, or that the Chambri clan of Sekumbumeri acquires its sago exclusively from Wansi's family at Changriman. When pressed, however, they will admit that in fact barter markets are characterized, not by enduring trading partnerships, but by spontaneous agreements based on the suitability of goods. Because this admission is a disturbing one, they rationalize it by claiming that women are incompetent to make business decisions - and justify the institutionalization of imputed incompetence by stressing that marketing for sago is beneath the dignity of males.

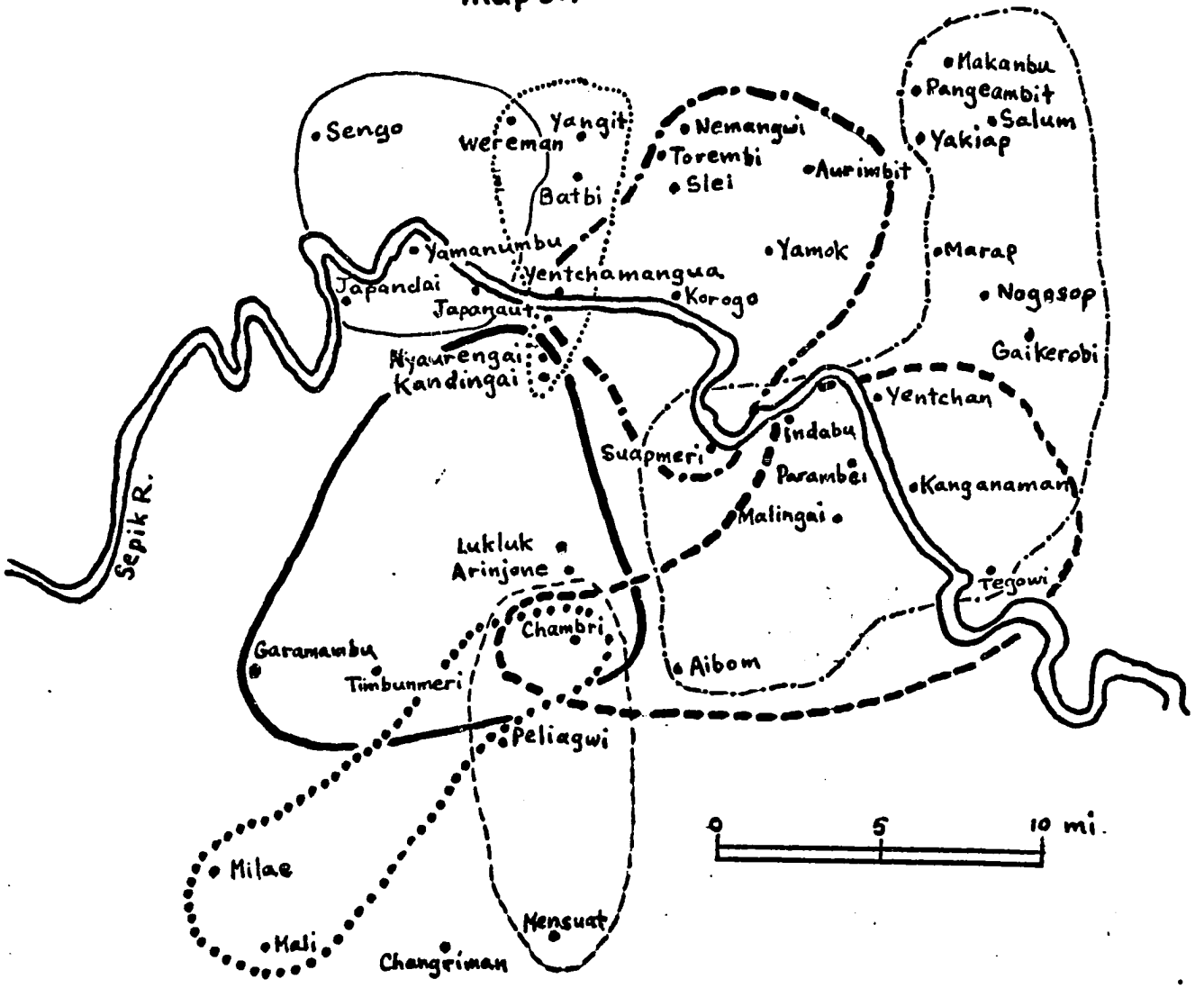
As marketers, however, Chambri and Iatmul women are neither undignified nor incompetent. At least once each week, they carry out the highly regularized incursions into alien territory on which depends the sustenance of their families. The following description is based on my observation of Iatmul markets but, in virtually all particulars, it could represent a traditional Chambri barter market as well.[1] The fishwives rise well before dawn and load their canoes. Dried fish, smoked whole over an open fire or split and flattened before smoking, are transported in baskets loosely woven from coconut fronds. Fresh fish, retrieved from nets on the way to the market, are strung on rattan strips and left to expire in the canoe. Turtles, their legs trussed, are stuffed into string bags. The women place their produce on large pieces of palm bark to keep it from the bilge water in the canoes.

The journey to market can take as long as three hours, depending on the destination and the season. Although many of the northern tributaries that link the Burui Kunai market sites to the Sepik River, and the southern tributaries through which Chambri women travel to the Sepik Hills and Garamambu markets, dry up during August, for the rest of the year accessibility is no problem for the light, narrow canoes

1 Map 6:1 depicts the range of the major traditional barter markets of the Middle Sepik. The descent of the Sepik Hills and Garamambu people from the mountain hamlets, and the growth of mission and government stations throughout the Middle Sepik have wrought many changes in the traditional marketing system. These changes will be discussed in the next chapter. It is important to realize, however, that some Chambri and most Iatmul women still acquire their sago in the traditional manner.

RANGE OF MAJOR BARTER MARKETS OF THE MIDDLE SEPIK

map 6:1



Key

- Aiwul Market
- Marap Market
- Yangit Market
- Sengo Market
- Malinjaua Market
- Torembi Market
- Milae-Mali Market
- Kamanbo Market

of women. Moving in single file, the canoes make silent, steady progress against the current. Women rarely travel singly; they prefer to make the journey in groups of four or five, using the largest canoes available which they paddle in a kneeling position. A fire burns at the stern of each canoe, both to ward of mosquitos, which swarm out from the swamp grass and forest, and to cook fish for breakfast.

On reaching the shore, the women remain in their canoes until all participants are present. Then, chattering loudly, they unload their cargo. They swing their bulging string bags onto their heads, the handles tight against their foreheads, cushioned by pads of folded leaves, and march to the market site, which is rarely more than 100 yards from the shore. The bush women arrive there at the same time having tramped along muddy paths from their villages. They carry string bags filled with sago and betel nuts. Once at the market place, the unpacking begins. The bush women produce large chunks of sago, each about the size of a cinder block, and cut them into nine to twelve pieces. The goods are displayed on the bark of the toddy palm or on water-lily leaves. The women group themselves by villages and, with their unpacking finished, sit, brushing flies from their fish or sago while they wait for the bartering to begin.

Suddenly, the bush-women rise. Holding the small chunks of sago shoulder high, they march in single file and obsequiously offer their wares to the fishwives. The latter, who remain seated, are haughtily indifferent to the sago-suppliers;

even when they accept a piece of sago in exchange for a fish, they do so contemptuously. In one transaction that I witnessed, an Iatmul woman from Korogo, having previously exchanged fish for sago with a woman from Torembi, changed her mind upon seeing another woman with larger, fresher chunks. She waited until her original partner came around again, and thrust the sago at her. She demanded that her fish be returned, yelling: "You think I want this pig-feed sago. You must be crazy!" The Torembi woman took back her sago and returned the fish without a word.

The behavior of the water-women toward the bush-women duplicates, in many ways, the complementary relationship described by Bateson as existing between Iatmul men and women.

> A relationship between two individuals (or between two groups) is said to be chiefly complementary if most of the behavior of the one individual is culturally regarded as of one sort (e.g. assertive) while most of the behavior of the other, when he replies, is culturally regarded as a sort of complementary to this (e.g. submissive) (1953: 308).[1]

Throughout Naven, Bateson describes the masculine and feminine behavior of the Iatmul as antithetical. Men are "proud," "histrionic," "self-conscious," "buffoon-like," self-assertive," and "harsh," while women are "unostentatious," "cooperative," and "quiet." Certainly these two sets of adjectives can be applied as well to the aggressive fishwives and their submissive sago-suppliers. Thus, whereas the relationship between male trading partners is egalitarian, involving

1 Complementarity, in Bateson's sense, need not result in balance.

the exchange of complementary goods in a non-competitive, a-political manner, the relationship between bush- and water-women at barter markets is complementary, resembling male/female relations within the water villages.[1]

Although Bateson does not describe barter markets in detail, he recognizes the complementarity of the exchanges, for in a recent book he writes:

> Cases in which group A sometimes sell sago to group B and the latter sometimes sell the same commodity to A, may be regarded as reciprocal; but if group A habitually sell sago to B, we must, I think, regard the pattern as complementary. The reciprocal pattern, it may be noted, is compensated and balanced within itself and therefore does not tend towards schizmogenesis... It is certain, as in the case quoted above in which group A sell sago to B while the latter sell fish to A, complementary patterns may sometimes have a stabilizing effect by promoting the mutual dependence between the groups (1972:69).

Bateson, although ignoring the ritualized interactional patterns of the bush- and water-women, is evidently puzzled by the stability of their complementary relationship. Why, given the asymmetry of market exchange, has the complementary relationship not reached its inversion point? In answer to this question he speculates that the complementarity stabilized itself by promoting dependence between groups inhabiting different ecological zones.

But, as I have already stated, their mutual interdepend-

1 Although Bateson, summarizing Mead's work on the Tchambuli, writes that: "The ethos of the Tchambuli men was less harsh and more exhibitionistic than that of the Iatmul, while the Tchambuli women were somewhat harder and more businesslike than those of the Iatmul" (1958: 172), I found the aggressive/passive complementarity operant between both Iatmul and Chambri men and women.

ence is not an economic necessity, for the sago-producers could lead relatively autonomous lives. What then is the nature of the mutual dependence between complementary groups that Bateson believes links the fish-supplying and sago-producing populations?

If we recall for a moment the dependence of both Chambri and Iatmul men upon their wives for sustenance, with women providing both fish and sago for their husbands, (see Chapter 1, page 35) an interesting equation emerges between economic dependence and behavioral aggressiveness:

$$\frac{\text{Men}}{\text{Women}} = \frac{\text{Behavioral Aggressiveness}}{\text{Behavioral Deference}} = \frac{\text{Economic Dependence}}{\text{Economic Independence}}$$

And the same equation appears to be operating between bush- and water-women, for the former, it will be remembered are capable of surviving without the latter;

$$\frac{\text{Fish-women}}{\text{Sago-women}} = \frac{\text{Behavioral Aggressiveness}}{\text{Behavioral Deference}} = \frac{\text{Economic Dependence}}{\text{Economic Independence}}$$

But there is an additional dimension to the equation, that I wish only to mention here and discuss later, namely that both women and sago-suppliers are vulnerable to encroachment by their aggressive counterparts. The Sepik Hills and Sawos[1] people have always been open to attack by their fish-supplying neighbors; women, in their capacity as "supreme gifts...

1 The Sawos, like the Sepik Hills and Garamambu, lived in small, scattered, mobile hamlets.

(circulating) within the group according to a continual mechanism of prestations and counterprestations" (Levi-Strauss, 1969: 63) are continually subject to demands for allegiance from both their natal clans and those of their husbands. When the equation is complete:

Men	:	Women		Fish-Suppliers	:	Sago-Producers
Behavioral Aggressiveness	:	Behavioral Deference	::	Behavioral Aggressiveness	:	Behavioral Deference
Economically Dependent	:	Economically Independent		Economically Dependent	:	Economically Independent
Invulnerable	:	Vulnerable		Invulnerable	:	Vulnerable,

it appears then that it is in the interests of vulnerable groups to maintain an economic advantage. As purveyors of sago, the bush-people perpetuate Chambri and Iatmul dependence, paying for their economic supremacy with deference. Similarly, women of fish-supplying villages establish autonomy from the competitive, aggressive males through their domination of the fish resource and of marketing, again paying for their independence with a show of deference.

At the beginning of this chapter I asserted that the Chambri marketing system was a homeostat, regulating the symmetrical schizmogenesis of inter-tribal competition. Judging from the nature of the basic economic relationships between bush- and water-people, it appears that women, as the marketers, must also be regulators. I propose, therefore, to depart from a description of Chambri marketing, in order to

discuss the peculiar structural position of Chambri women that allows them to assume their regulatory role.

Chambri Women

Although Chambri women are jural members of their fathers' clans, their husbands hold rights to them *in uxorem* and *in genetricem*. These rights are purchased upon marriage and confirmed with each affinal transaction made during rites of passage celebrated for the wife and her children. A woman is permitted to fish in both her father's and her husband's waters, but the benefits of this productive task generally accrue only to her husband. If, however, a crocodile is accidentally caught in a fishing net that she places in her father's water, it belongs to him. A woman is not expected to prepare or to tend gardens but, if she elects to do so, she uses her husband's land. Pig tending[1] and food preparation are her other daily productive tasks; both are accomplished within her husband's clan-territory.

Chambri marriages, according to Mead, were arranged through "secret competition(s), in which young men and young women are both likely to lose to the will of their elders" (1963:262). Certainly some fathers nowadays still attempt to establish advantageous affinal connections through the marriages of their daughters. Nevertheless, there is a public recognition that young girls should not be unduly pressured to marry men they find repugnant. For example, in one

1 Pig tending is far less important in the Middle Sepik than it is throughout the Highlands of New Guinea. Only two households at Indingai kept pigs, a total of 15 pigs in the village.

woman's house I asked about a string bag filled with human bones and was told that they were the remains of Andembo, a young woman who had wished to marry her lover, Plagusan, but was forced instead by her father to marry an older man, Wantamkowi. Plagusan was visiting his trading partner at Garamambu when the marriage took place. On his return to Chambri he learned of Andembo's wedding and starved himself to death while wailing his ancestral names and playing his bamboo flutes. When Andembo was told of her lover's demise, she hanged herself. The clans of Andembo, Plagusan and Wantamkowi have been involved in compensation suits ever since. For the Chambri the moral of the tragedy of Andembo and Plagusan is: "We should allow our daughters to marry whom they please. Andembo's bones remind us that by forcing her to marry Wantamkowi we brought more grief upon ourselves than we would have if we allowed her to marry the man of her choice."

Divorce is permitted in Chambri, but men rarely choose this means of dealing with marital problems - perhaps because they have other recourses available to them. Polygyny enables men to relegate infertile or sexually unattractive wives to the positions of baby-sitters, fishmongers and housekeepers, and infidelity is cause to kill rather than to divorce a wife. Sororal polygyny is favored, and frequently a man's second wife will be the widowed sister of his first, particularly if her late husband was his clan co-member. Women usually initiate divorce, the most common grounds being

economic and sexual maltreatment. The failure of husbands to provide adequate houses and canoes are the women's chief economic grievances; the failure of husbands to have intercourse, either because of indifference to the act or because of the preference for another woman, is the major sexual grievance. The Chambri believe that, whereas intercourse at least once a month is necessary for a woman's health[1], men can safely abstain for far longer periods.

A woman carefully plans her separation from her husband, and does not leave him until she is assured of a place in the home of her lover and husband-to-be, who is frequently prepared to compensate her first husband for his loss, and also to initiate affinal exchanges with his new wife's father and brothers. Generally, the divorcee has kept her grievances secret from everyone. If her father and brothers learned of her desire to establish a new, permanent liaison, they would strenuously object, unless they felt that affinal connections with the new husband and his clan would benefit them more than did those with her old husband and his clan. The divorced husband generally threatens to kill his ex-wife and her lover/husband. His wrath, he asserts, can only be softened by a generous compensation, at least equivalent to the bride price he paid. And if he neither receives the valu-

1 After child-birth a woman should refrain from intercourse until her baby is weaned, that is, experience between three to four years of abstinence. Women complain that their husbands are unable to restrain themselves for so long a period, while they, to the contrary, "have their own milk and are no longer worried about their husbands' milk" (semen).

ables nor kills his ex-wife and her new husband, he is shamed into leaving the village or killing himself.

Divorce is infrequent, however, because the matrix of affinal debts and patron/client relationships includes both male and female obligations. Men say that women are, after all, members of the natal clans. Although viri-patrilocality separates them from their fathers and brothers, the separation, on account of phratry endogamy, rarely entails a move of more than a few hundred yards. Women are expected to assist their fathers and brothers in meeting affinal debts, and, because of the incomes they gain as producers of mosquito-bags, they have the capacity to contribute generously.[1]

> And the most important manufacture, the mosquito-bags, two of which will purchase an ordinary canoe, are made entirely by women. The people of the middle Sepik purchase these mosquito-bags, in fact they are so much in demand that purchasers take options on them long before they are finished. And the women control the proceeds in kinas and talibun (Mead, 1963: 253-254).

Mead continues:

> ... when a man has the final negotiations for one of his wives' mosquito-bags in hand, ... he goes off to spend a delightful few days over the transaction. He will hesitate and equivocate... But only with his wife's approval can he spend the talibun and kina and the strings of conus shells he brings back from his holiday. He has wheedled a good price from the purchaser; he has still to wheedle the items of the price from his wife (1963: 254).[2]

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1 Mosquito-bags are no longer produced, but Chambri women still have an independent source of income. This, and other changes in the Chambri social, political and economic systems will be discussed in the next chapter.

2 See also Chapter 3, p.90, 92-93.

Women as fishwives, marketers and producers of mosquito-bags control the means of production. They do not, however, control the relations of production, e.g. "those social relations which dominate (i.e. determine the economic rationality of) the material process of production in given techno-economic conditions..." (Friedman 1974: 446).

> For food, the people depend upon the fishing of women. Men never fish unless a sudden school of fish appears in the lake, when they may leap in canoes in a frolicsome spirit and spear a few fish... But the real business of fishing is controlled entirely by women. For traded fish they obtain sago, taro and areca nut. And the most important manufacture, the mosquito-bags... are made entire by women... Real property, which one actually owns, one receives from women. Once one has obtained it, it becomes a counter in the games men play; it is no longer concerned with the underlying economics of life, but rather with showing one's appreciation of one's brother-in-law, soothing someone's wounded feelings, behaving very handsomely when a sister's son falls down in one's presence. The minor war and peace that goes on all the time among the men, the feelings that are hurt and must be assuaged, are supported by the labour and contributions of the women (Mead, 1963: 254).

But, it is the games men play - the affinal transactions with their by-products of patron/client relationships - which define the rationality of Chambri socio-economic life. These games, and the patrilineal organization within which they take place, determine the ownership of land and water rights, the assignment of women to their productive roles and the distribution of the products of labor.

Although it is true, then, that both men and women are under pressure to meet affinal debts, the pressure constraining women is quite different from that facing men. A woman's

identity - her self-image and position within Chambri society - is not affected by her success or failure in affinal exchange. She has in effect established her husband's debt by figuring as the primary item of exchange. Her husband, her father and her brothers may press her to assist them, but their insistence is particularistic since it is based upon dyadic relationships between the woman and each of her men. Men, on the contrary, succeed or fail as members of corporate groups.[1]

A Chambri rubbish-man is one who has failed to meet his obligations as a clan representative dealing with representatives of other clans. A rubbish-woman is one who has refused to provide food for her husband or to give monetary assistance to her own clan and to her husband's clan.

Although women should provide men with food and valuables, they have no direct access to the political arena in which their products are used. They can challenge male dominance "in assertions of independence over marriage choices, sabotage of the exchange system through divorce; both in claims to be treated as quasi-transactors and manipulation of political subordination of their own advantage." (Strathern, 1972a: 314). These challenges, however, are meaningful only within the constraints of the extant socio-political organization. They are the challenges of subversives who have no

1 Similarly, among the Hageners of New Guinea's Western Highlands, women are "not involv(ed) in corporate confrontations with men, but as individuals following the dictates of the noman" (e.g. mind, disposition, will; Strathern, 1972a: 314).

direct access to political decision-making. A woman can subvert the affinal relations between her present husband and her father by secretly arranging to leave her husband; she can kill herself and cause difficulties for her father; she can hold back from her husband and father kina, talimbun and strings of conus shells she earned by weaving a mosquito bag. Perhaps if enough women used the techniques of guile, secrecy and holding back over long enough periods they could destroy the male-dominated affinal exchange system. But without the "normative rules through which order is maintained" (Bailey, 1969: 87), the techniques of subversion, which allow women their autonomy and control, are valueless. Herein lies the defacto power of women in Chambri society: they have a high degree of control over a system of which they are not part, and they can expoit its advantages without concerning themselves about its restrictions. They are women, and as such are unequal, submissive - complementary. "People who are by definition unequal cannot compete" (Forge, 1972a:537), but they can affect the exchange relationships and control the items exchanged between those equal men who do compete.

Complementarity Within Barter Markets

We have seen that the marketing relationship between water- and bush-women replicates the male/female relationships within Chambri society, but with role reversal on the part of the fishwives. The fish-suppliers are to their sago-producers as their men are to them - both specifically, in terms of the interaction between a particular fishwife exchanging

her produce with a particular sago-producer - and generally, in terms of Chambri comprehension of the bush-people. Chambri women treat the sago-producers as inferiors, while both Chambri men and women view all bush-people as weak, submissive and dirty. Chambri mothers are continually scolding their dirt-covered children for being "the same as bush-people," and parents of both sexes chastize a crying child who has run away from a fight for being "afraid like the bush-people."

We have also seen that Chambri women are economically independent of their men, just as sago-producers are economically independent of their fish-suppliers. Both relationships appear to demonstrate that the vulnerable groups can maintain an economic advantage by clothing their independence with a show of deference. Yet neither the submissive behavior of the Chambri women toward their men, nor of the sago-suppliers toward the fishwives can be explained exclusively as a function of vulnerability or economic independence. It is rather that the three traits (submissiveness, economic independence, vulnerability) are inextricably linked within the interactional and cognitive patterns of the dominant polity. Chambri society defines women as unequal; hence they cannot compete in the arena of masculine politics. Between the Chambri and their sago-producers no competition occurs; hence the sago-producers are defined as unequal. If the Chambri were in competition with their sago-suppliers, then the latter would, by definition, be their equals. And if the sago-pro-

ducers were defined as equals, then the marketing system would cease to operate and would be replaced by the only possible expression for inter-tribal competition, warfare.

Disturbances of the Marketing System

To return to Map 6:1, it appears that there is a correspondence between marketing zones and linguistic boundaries. The Marap market primarily accommodates the Parambei-Iatmul villages; the Torembi, Yangit and Sengo markets serve the Nyaula-Iatmul villages; the Yakuri market is used by both the Chambri villages and the Kandingai and Nyaurengai Iatmul; the Malinjaua market is visited by Chambri and Parambei Iatmul; the Kamanbo, Mali/Milae and Aiwul markets are used by the Chambri alone. And interestingly, although one might expect the majority of inter-village conflicts to occur between villages exchanging within different marketing zones, a great many head-hunting raids occurred between villages within the same zone. It appears, in fact, that the female-dominated marketing system, with its explicit, culturally-defined interactional inequality between bush- and water-women, remained relatively immune from the inter-village competitiveness of Iatmul and Chambri males. There were occasions, however, when the marketing system was disturbed and I describe four of these occasions here.

Suapmeri

My information about Suapmeri comes from the brief migrational history collected in 1973 by Assistant District Commissioner Laurie Bragge. I reproduce his account verbatim.

> Suapmeri is an ancient village site with stone monoliths similar to those found at Parambei and Chambri. The stories of origin state that Suapmeri was the first village on the Sepik, and in the distant past the Suapmeri people migrated from Tipmangei. Legend has it that as the village grew trade relations were set up with Yamuk. Yamuk raided Suapmeri, however, and Suapmeri retaliated with the result that Yamuk ceased to trade sago with them. Without its staple food, Supmeri broke up. One migration went to Nyaurengai and other migrations went all over the countryside, leaving few people at Suapmeri. The people who moved away turned upon those who stayed, and this is the justification for the wars between Suapmeri, Nyaula and Parambei. Suapmeri was sandwiched between these two forces, and was hit from both sides. Finally it was abandoned and the people fled to Indabu and to Kwalingai where just prior to the German administration, a Nyaula raid destroyed both villages, on the same day, and the Supmeri survivors scattered. Most went to Malingai, some to Yentchan and some to Parambei. They gave two women to Malingai, and the refugees at Parambei then also came. They lived at Malingai until the 1930's when they moved back onto their own land.

Garamambu

The Chambri attribute the breakdown of their marketing relations with Garamambu to the following series of events. I collected accounts of these events, independently, from several Indingai informants, but I include here a transcription of the story told to me by a man who participated in them.

> After we destroyed the Manabi, some Garamambu were living on Timbunmeri's mountain, Simandangwan. Now Chambri had also built houses and haus tambaran at Timbun, near to where the Kandingai now live. We were all angry with a Garamambu who was playing around with an Indingai woman. Our fathers worked poison on a pig and some tobacco and then gave them to the Garamambu. Garamambu smoked the tobacco and it awakened their blood so that they wanted to fight with Chambri. One Garamambu came to where

> the Chambri were staying. They called this man Təpwi. He was returning to his house when he met Tive of the Mangəmbit haus tambaran, and he cut Tive's head off altogether and then ran away with it. The big men of Chambri met and talked and did magic. They took away all of Garamambu's strength. Some Chambri were afraid because Garamambu lived on top of a mountain and had bows and arrows. But they went anyway. They went in four groups. Two groups went to Kurapio, and two groups went to Mepen. Nyeminimba held the shields and Nyauinimba held the spears, because it's right for mothers to protect their children. They fought mostly with Təpwi's clan. Soon they changed positions and Nyauinimba held the shields and Nyeminimba held the spears. They surrounded Təpwi's house so that those inside couldn't run away. But Təpwi turned himself into a fly and escaped. Eventually they set fire to his house and everyone inside of it died. The Garamambu heads were gathered and put into string bags. The Chambri went back to their hamlet and sang all night at Timbunmeri.

The subsequent two episodes of the Garamambu/Chambri war have already been described in Chapter 3, p. 77.

Japandai

The migrational history of Japandai village, as it is presented by the linguist, Philip Staalsen (1965: 134-188), is extraordinarily complex. I am particularly interested in two incidents, the formation of the Minow market,[1] and the Japandai attempt to accustom the Yesan-Mayo bush-people to the practices of water-people. I give the significant passages from Staalsen's article:

> At this time the Japanday[2] came up river and they built a house at Tugwan. Japanday gave fine

1 I know little about the Minow market, having confined my marketing expeditions to the markets used by the Iatmul and the Chambri of the Middle Sepik. Those Japandai living at Brugnowi and Tugwan were beyond my field of reference. Most Japandai living at Japandai village trade at Wereman market.

2 "Japanday" is spelled "Japandai" on official government maps.

women to Malu and Yambon... They also gave pay for pigs and ground. They put down a great deal of pay. Then Ngumberiygumbon wanted to kill Bensiyndumal so he gave a tanget to the men of Sesermen. Sesermen received the tanget at the market.

In times past there was no market there. But Ngumberiygumbon, Bensiynduma and Poriygumbon brought Sesermen out of the bush and inaugurated the market at Minow.

The people of Washkuk saw the people of Sesermen eating shrimps and fish and asked them "Where did you get that sweet food?" "We got it from Ngumberiygumbon and Bensiynduma," they replied. Having said this they agreed to have a market... While at the market... they both gave tangets to the people of Sesermen and Washkuk. Bensiynduma gave a tanget to the Washkuk so they would shoot Ngumberiygumbon, and Ngumberiygumbon gave a tanget to Sesermen so they would shoot Bensiynduma.

Washkuk and Sesermen later met and said, "Why should we shoot these men? They are good men. Should we shoot one and not the other?" That's all they said... They shot the two men at Ndogova on the appointed day.

Yambon decided to fight again... While we were discussing revenge white men came...

We said, "When the white man leaves we will attack them. For now we will go up river and stay at Brugnowi." We did not come and stay there without paying. We gave much pay to Yesan and Mayo... We always say, "You people of Yesan and Mayo, you are not river people. You are from the hills. You are penis and vulva, having no breech clouts and grass skirts..."

They (Yesan and Mayo) are another kind of people. We introduced them to women's cowls, grass skirts, paddles and canoes. We taught them how to live, but they wouldn't learn. We said, "Shoot fish like this. Paddle like this. Jump in the water and wash like this. Put on a grass skirt like this." But they would not go near the water. They did not know how to swim; the just sank...

"It is not good," we said, "that river people and bush people should live together." They are of one kind and we are of another. Our forefathers put Yambon on the river and Yesan on the river... So the boundaries of

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1 Bensiynduma was a Malu who joined Ngumberiygumbon and his brother Poriygumbon while the two Japandai were living at Pagwiy, (or "Pagwi," as it is spelled in official government maps).

> Japanday are from Nibarangi up river to Komaragu. The boundary of Mwewiy is from Sabangit up river to Nibarangi. Mwewiy's market is at Ngungusu. Japanday's market is Wereman... (186-187).

Kandingai

The Kandingai exodus to Timbunmeri Island has already been mentioned on p.193 (see note 1). Bragge's version is as follows:

> A Kandingai trading party using the Gungus barit to Torembi was waylaid by Yentchamangua and attacked in the late 1930's.[1] A fight developed and as a result Kandingai was refused use of the barit, and therefore access to the sago markets at Torembi and Yangit... The Administration had withdrawn as the Japanese approached, and there was no enforcement of law and order. Kandingai approached Chambri for the use of Timbun, and Luluai Wapi of Indingai invited them in. While clearing ground for their settlement, the Kandingai camp was attacked by a joint Chambri/Nyaula force, the latter having convinced Chambri to oppose the settlement. The arrival of the Japanese detachment under Captain Sibianjo saved a massacre. Susequently the Kandingai purchased land rights (1973: page unknown).

It is possible to summarize the events of the four occasions on which the marketing system was disturbed in the following manner:

1) Yangit attacks Suapmeri/ Suapmeri retaliates/ Marketing ceases/ Scattering of Suapmeri inhabitants/ Attack of remaining inhabitants by a joint contingent of Nyalua and Parambei.

2) A Garamambu has sexual relations with an Indingai woman/ Chambri make magic to induce Garamambu anger/ A Garamambu beheads an Indingai/ Indingai attacks Garamambu/ Marketing ceases.

3) A Malu wishes a Japanday's death/ A Japanday wishes a

1 The Kandingai/Yentchamangua fracas, though begun in the late 1930's, extended over many years.

Malu's death/ Each asks a different sago-supplying village to kill his antagonist/ The sago-supplying villages band together and kill both men/ Marketing ceases.

4) Yentchamangua and Kandingai attack one another/ Yentchamangua blocks access to the Torembi and Yangit markets/ Kandingai flees to Timbunmeri/ Marketing continues at Torembi with Yentchamangua and other Nyaula as fish-suppliers.

In three cases, the cessation of marketing results from a dispute between bush- and water-villages. In the last case, the bush-village is not a participant in the conflict, and there is no cessation of marketing. Staalsen's informant's synopsis of bush/water interaction - that "it is not good... that bush- and river-people should live together. They are of one kind and we are of another" (1965:187) - is highly insightful given the cultural necessity of defining competitors as equals. As long as the bush- and water-people remain of different kinds, their marketing arrangements remain viable. As soon as the bush-people lose their lowly status as "penis and vulva... (without) breech clouts and grass skirts"(ibid.), and begin demanding recognition as men among men, the marketing system fails.

Unfortunately, given my limited knowledge of the socio-economic processes at work within the bush-villages before the European intrusion, I can only speculate upon the reasons why some of these villages began demanding the status of equals. I list some possible reasons:

1) The bush-villages grew in size, partially abandoned their

migratory existence and became less afraid of their fish-suppliers.

2) The bush-villages became allied with water-villages and felt assured of assistance in case of attack by other water-villages.

3) The bush-villages began exploiting the advantages of their economic independence by imposing embargos on the outflow of sago.

4) The bush-villages, united with water-villages through some joint interest, participated in warfare as allies of their fish-suppliers and learned the relative strengths and weaknesses of their marketing partners.

Each of these reasons implies that the bush-villages became less vulnerable to attack by their aggressive neighbors and no longer found it necessary to maintain their submissive role. But equally important is the fact that the water-people began to recognize the bush-people as political competitors - to become aware that their donning of breech clouts and grass skirts was complete. To the best of my knowledge, bush-villages, whether or not they were allied to water-villages, have always been among the initiators of bush/water warfare. And yet, in every case, the water-village that was attacked takes credit for having instigated the attack. Thus, the Chambri say they aroused Garamambu bellicosity by offering them magically poisoned pork and tobacco. Japandai asserts that its perennial enemies, the Yambon, who "made a tanget and gave it to Malu so that they would join them in shooting Japanday"

(Staalesen, 1965: 186), were taught all they know by Japandai forefathers. Previously the Yambon lived "like pigs and the children of dogs here and there in the bush, children of bush spirits. Now having been brought out, they are just like us" (ibid.). Water-villagers obviously find it difficult to admit that bush-villagers are "just like us". By acting aggressively toward water-villagers the bush-villagers force this recognition upon them. Because the water-villagers assume themselves to be superior, they inevitably take credit for transforming the "children of dogs" into men. But once the transformation is recognized as complete, the complementarity of marketing is no longer possible. It is replaced by the strained inter-village and inter-tribal relations of symmetrical groups who are linked by the payback system of "a head for a head" or who are not linked at all.

Conclusion

Although marketing relations occasionally break down when bush-villagers demand and receive recognition as the equals of the water-villagers, the chances of altering the asymmetry of bush-water relations are reduced by: 1) the control of actual marketing by women who replicate the asymmetry of male/female relations while interacting during exchange, and 2) the non-competitiveness of inter-ecological, male-dominated trading partnerships. In effect, the formalized, stereotyped complementary interaction of women at the markets and the non-competitive reciproci-

ty[1] of trading partnerships alienate the bush-and water-villages from each other. And so long as they maintain this social or cultural distance, the competitive interaction of equals is prevented and the marketing system remains viable. It is not, as Bateson asserts, that "complementary patterns may sometimes have a stabilizing effect by promoting mutual dependence between groups" (1972:69), but rather that the existence of complementary, interactional patterns is necessary for the maintenance of mutual dependence. The alternative to complementarity, given the interactional possibilities of Sepik peoples, is symmetrical competitiveness. And the fine balance between the economic dependence of the water-villages, on the one hand, and the vulnerability of the bush-villages, on the other, could not be maintained through symmetrical interaction.

We have seen that inter-village/inter-tribal symmetrical interaction is expressed primarily through warfare, and that in this region warfare generally takes the form of a series of "paybacks" extending through generations. Although the death of any member of the enemy village will suffice to complete a payback, the higher the status of the man whose head has been taken, the higher the status which accrues to its taker. The members of each water-village are most vulnerable when they leave their village, but women,

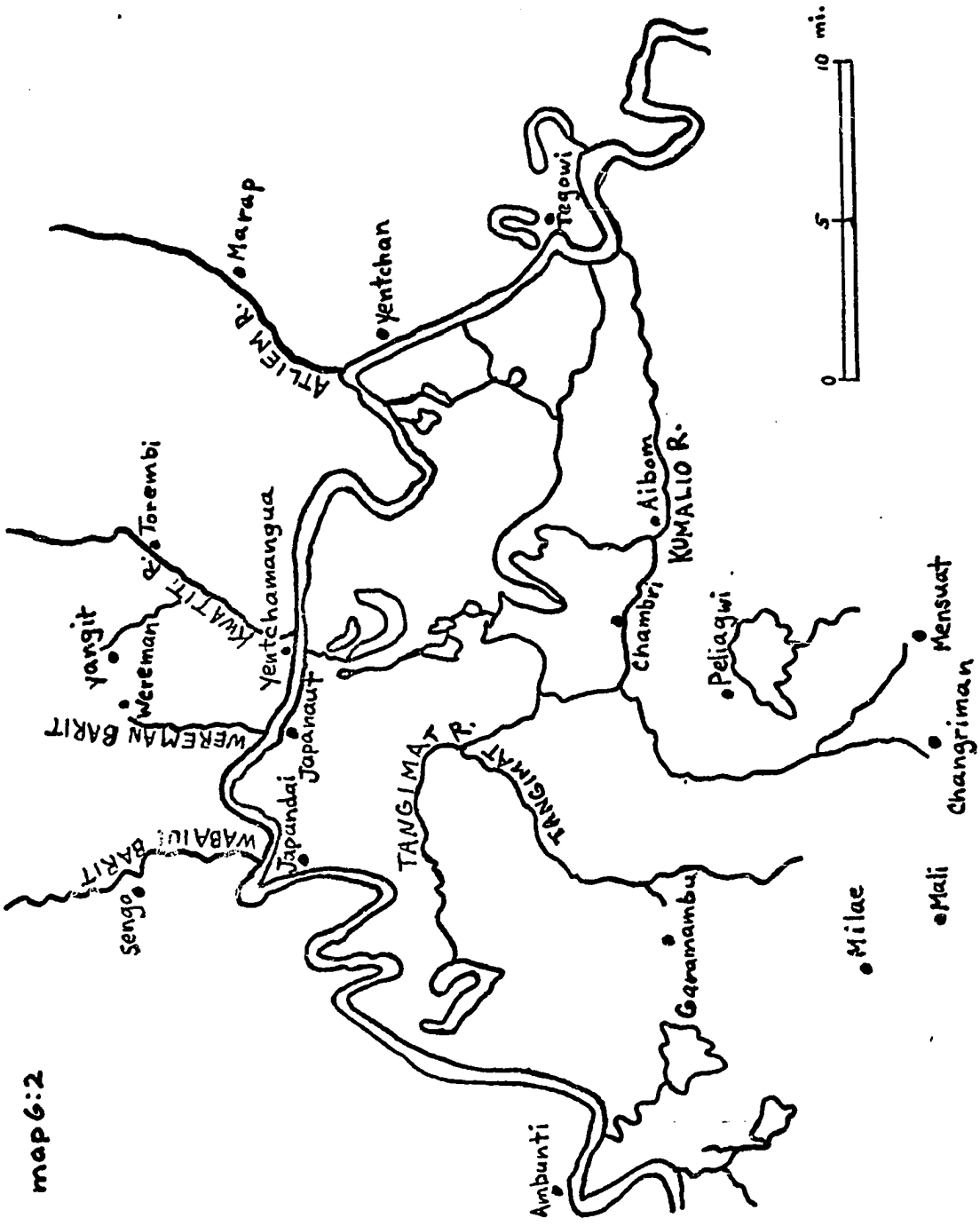
1 I am using the term reciprocity, in much the same way Bateson does, to connote an exchange relationship which is "compensated and balanced within itself and therefore does not tend toward schizmogenesis" (1972: 69).

journeying to markets, are the only members who regularly travel abroad. And although many women have died to pay back another death, both Chambri and Iatmul males feel the "killing of a woman is not enough. Women are just like the bush-people. They don't fight. They just lie down and die. A strong man avenges a death with the death of a man."

In view of the complementarity of male/female relations, it is tempting to regard the folk explanation of why women are not regulalry attacked en route to barter markets as persuasive. But it is also true that it is to the advantage of each water-village to keep its marketing routes open. Each congeries of villages within a zone must use the same rivulet to arrive at their bush-market (see Map 6:2). To attack the women of one village as they are journeying to market is to reduce accessibility for all the marketers.

To the degree that villages of the same marketing zone increase their symmetrical interaction, the likelihood that women will be attacked en route to markets also increases. Thus, villages united through a common interest in maintaining accessibility to barter markets have a tendency to: 1) limit warfare, and 2) accept other forms of compensation (e.g. valuables and occasionally women) when warfare develops. But what of inter-zone marketing? What are the factors that check the development of symmetrical schizmogenesis between groups that are not united through a common interest in market accessibility?

Recalling Burke's suggestion that strife depends upon



THE MAJOR RIVULETS USED BY CHAMBRI AND IATMUL WOMEN TO GO TO MARKET

map 6:2

the sharing of a "mediatory ground" (1969: 25) that makes communication between antagonistic groups possible, I think we can understand how the division of the Chambri and Iatmul people into distinct language, dialect and marketing groups limits conflict between the groups. There is no ambiguity in the Nyalua/Parambei/Chambri divisions. Each group sees itself as separate and distinct, with different languages and customs. Nor is there ambiguity in the division into different marketing zones. (It will be remembered that Staalsen's Japandai informant distinguished his village from Mwewiy in terms of both geographic boundaries and marketing zones.) It is primarily those villages whose status is ambiguous - because of their intrusion into territory traditionally not their own, or because of their use of a market traditionally not their own, or because of a betrayal of traditional allies - that bear the brunt of Iatmul and Chambri attack. Thus Suapmeri was wiped out by a joint contingent of Nyaula and Parambei, for neither linguistic groups knew to whom the Suapmeri owed their allegiance; Korogo, though a Nyaula village, was raided by both Nyaula and Parambei war parties, because it regularly transferred allegiance from Nyaula to Parambei; Indingai was attacked by its ally, Parambei, for condoning and celebrating the murder of Yebiweli by the Parambei emigré, Simbuksaun; and the Manabi and Peliagwi were destroyed by Chambri, with assistance from Nyalua and Garamambu, for disrupting the Chambri marketing system.

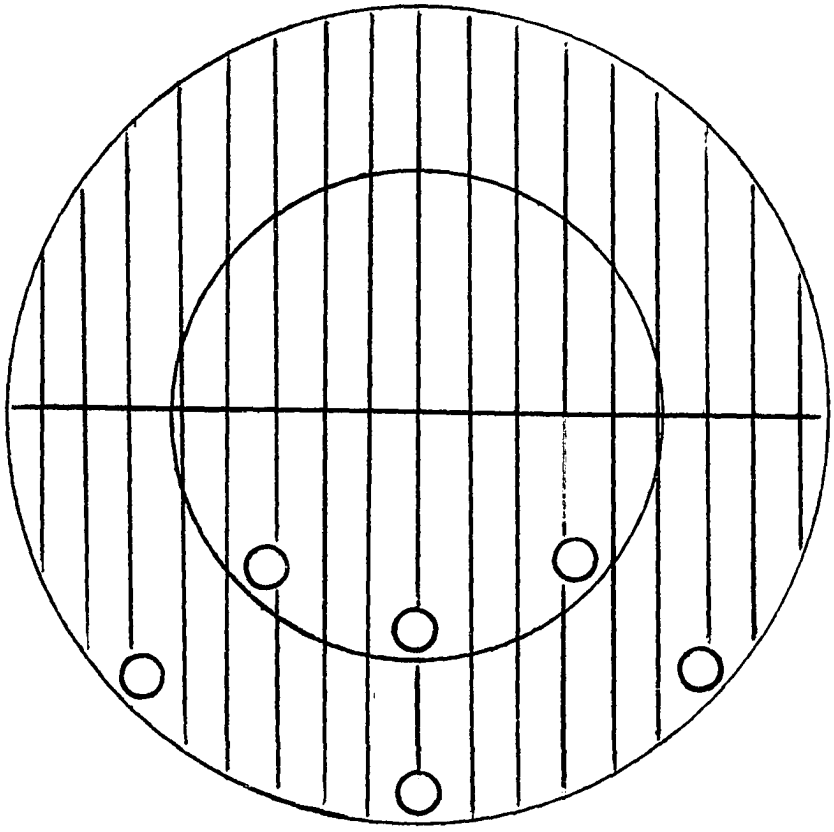
Prior to the European intrusion, it was as impossible

for the Chambri to avoid warfare as it was for them to avoid debating and shamanism within Chambri villages. And yet it is not incorrect to claim that the Chambri conceive of a universe potentially devoid of warfare - just as they conceive of the intra-tribal social organization to be potentially devoid of unequal patron/client relationships. In effect, the Chambri expand their idealized model of their social organization (with its segmentation of the social universe into equal phratry, moiety, haus tambaran and clan groupings) to include the larger inter-tribal system. The two Iatmul dialect groups and the Chambri correspond to the three Chambri phratries, the Iatmul and Chambri villages to the Chambri clans, and the bush/water divisions to the inter-marrying, asymmetrical moieties (see Figure 6:1). But, as with the idealized model of Chambri social organization, the stability of the larger system is illusory. It is continually being disturbed by the growth and decline of villages, by the ambiguity of village and bush allegiances and by the competitiveness of males who measure prowess and status in terms of the taking of heads.

To the best of my knowledge, neither the Chambri nor the Iatmul have taken a head in over twenty-five years. In the next chapter I shall examine the effects of the cessation of warfare on marketing and political organization.

Figure 6:1

Chambri World View



KEY:

Inner Circle

- Phratry
- Clans
- Exogamous Moieties

Outer Circle

- Language Groups
- Villages
- Bush/Water Division

CHAPTER VII

SOCIAL CHANGE

German missionaries and explorers first penetrated the East Sepik District in the early 1880s. A mission station was established at Marienberg and a patrol post at Angoram before World War 1. After the war, what had been Kaiser-Wilhelm-Land became a mandated territory of the League of Nations under the control of Australia. A government station was operating at Ambunti by 1924. In 1933, Townsend and Eve explored and mapped the triangular area limited by Aitape, Wewak, and Pagwi, while in 1938 Taylor and Black carried out a similar survey of the territory between the Sepik and the Western Highlands. Mead asserts that by 1926 the Chambri were under control by the Australian government (1949a:424), "but World War II intervened, and the Japanese occupied the area until May, 1945, and it was probably not before 1950 that ANGAU[1] and the civil administration began to re-establish some form of effective control..." (Philpott, 1972: 29).

By effective control Philpott means, of course, the imposition of a Pax Australia. The cessation of warfare, the proliferation of mission stations[2] and the introduction

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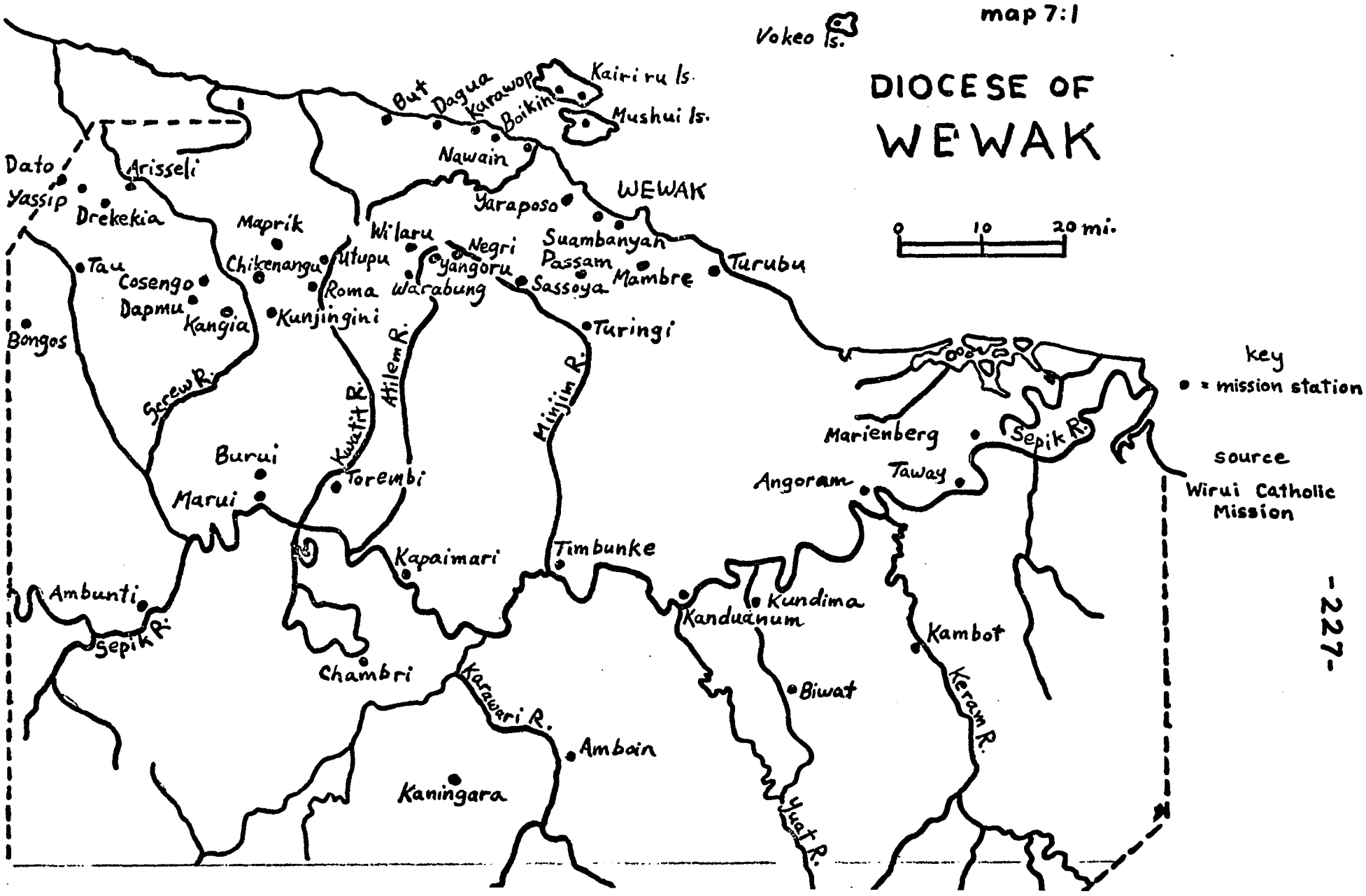
1 ANGAU stands for the Australian New Guinea Administrative Unit.

2 Map 7:1 depicts the number of Catholic Mission Stations throughout the East Sepik District. The Iatmul, Chambri, Sepik Hills and Sawos people are chiefly under the missionary influence of the Catholics.



of steel tools, European consumer goods, money and migrant labor wrought immense changes in the world inhabited by the Chambri. By 1933 no self-respecting Chambri male would consider using a stone tool (Mead, personal communication), and at that time a two to five year stint on a European-owned plantation became almost as common an initiatory experience for young males as scarification.

It is beyond the scope of this inquiry to examine the effects of the European intrusion in detail. Many of the changes (such as the substitution of steel for stone tools, the introduction of money and European consumer goods and the alteration of traditional marketing relationships) have already been briefly discussed in Chapters 3 and 6. Here I wish simply to elaborate upon the transformation of the fish-for-sago barter markets of the Chambri into money markets, and in particular to demonstrate how changes in marketing relationships are reflected within the politics of the Gaui Local Government Council.

The Money Markets

Although the use of money is not forbidden at traditional barter markets, participants observe distinct conventions governing the exchange of produce for Australian currency.[1] Fish and sago are never sold. Only commodities such as betel nuts, the catkins of piper metysticum (which are chewed with betel), string bags, sweet potatoes, yams and tobacco

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1 Since 1975 the Government of Papua New Guinea has been issuing its own currency.

are available for money. Moreover, these commodities are rarely brought by regular participants at barter markets. Instead, individuals who have not come specifically to exchange their fish for sago or their sago for fish sell the commodities to the barterers. These vendors are regarded largely as outsiders. For example, at the Marap market I interviewed a man from Nogosop who had brought large bunches of betel to sell. He earned $1.10, but even his newly acquired wealth could not assuage the discomfort he felt at being at Marap. Having described marketing as "something belonging to women," he attached himself to my research assistant and motor boat driver who were the only other men at the market. He told us that he would have preferred his wife to have brought the betel nuts, but that she had refused, fearing that she would have been mocked for failing to prepare sago that week.

At barter markets, sales are made before the bartering begins. There is an initial period of about 15 minutes during which participants may exchange goods for cash. Once the bush-women rise to offer their chunks of sago to the fishwives, however, no one will offer or accept money.[1]

Quite a different set of conventions obtains at the modern money markets. Here barter is never practiced, and all exchanges involve the use of currency.

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1 On several occasions I tried to buy fish and fruit after bartering had begun. I was told by the women I had approached that "we are not up to selling you anything now, because if we look away from the bush women, they are likely to steal our produce."

There are three major money markets which are regularly attended by Iatmul, Chambri, Sepik Hills and Sawos women, at Indingai, at Kapaimari and at Pagwi. A fourth money market, behind Korogo village near the government primary school, is simultaneously a barter market, having replaced the Torembi barter market in 1964. These money markets grew up around government patrol posts, mission stations, or government or mission schools to accommodate the needs of teachers and native administrators who, possessing no land or water rights, are forced to buy all of their food.[1] Table 7:1 indicates the villages whose inhabitants regularly sell their produce at each of the four money markets.

Seiler, whose study of mobility and socio-economic development in the Maprik Sub-District includes a section on marketing, writes:

> ... for the most part, markets in the Maprik Sub-District are of very recent origin. The expansion of the market system began with the coming of the expatriate administration, and more recently, has been facilitated by the greatly increased mobility (1972: 109).

But, as we have seen, among the people of the Middle Sepik the existence of a marketing system is very old indeed. What is new is neither marketing nor mobility, but the separation of supply and demand from the indigenous struc-

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1 Kapaimari is a mission station and mission-run primary school. Attached to the station is a small hospital which primarily services pregnant women and women with young children. St. Mary's Primary School is located at Indingai. Pagwi is a government patrol post and the meeting place of the Gaui Local Government Council. The Marui Mission/Agricultural Training School is also located close to Pagwi.

Table 7:1

The Villages Selling Produce at the Four Major Money Markets

Market	Villages
Kapaimari	Parambei
	Korogo
	Kararau
	Mali
	Indingai
	Kanganaman
	Tegowi
	Malingai
	Nogosop
	Kegoropi
	Yentchan
	Indabu
Indingai	Indingai
	Kilimbit
	Wombun
	Timbunmeri
	Arinjone
	Changriman
	Luk Luk
	Aibom
	Peliagwi
	Mali
	Kanganaman *
	Suapmeri *
	Parambei *
	Indabu *
	Kamindimbit *
Korogo (Torembi)	Malingai
	Suapmeri
	Korogo
	Slei
	Nemangwi
	Olimbit
	Torembi
	Kosembi
	Yamuk
	Yentchamangua

Table 7:1, continued

Market	Villages	
Pagwi[1]	Yamanmbu	
	Japandai	
	Parambei	
	Kandingai	
	Japanaut	
	Nungwaigo	
	Patukwa	
	Serangwantu	
	Pukago	
	Mul	
	Isogum	
	Kunjingini	
	Waigamaga	
	Indingai	**
	Wombun	**
	Kilimbit	**
	Kanganaman	**
	Tegowi	**
	Yantchan	**
	Indabu	**
	Korogo	**
	Malingai	**
	Yentchamangua	**
	Suapmeri	**
	Nyaurengai	**
	Kumunugum	***
	Wombisa	***
	Tugaikim	***
	Kutigum	***
	Nungwaigo	***
	Rubugum	***
	Tambitanga	***
	Kwanasandu	***
	Nala	***
	Maundu	***
	Gwinyingi	***
	Kaugiak	***

Key:

* Attend approximately six times in a year
** Attend a few times in a year
*** Attend once or twice in a year

1 The data on the Pagwi market were taken from Seiler, 1972: 143-144.

ture of complementary bush/water relations, and the rearticulation of these relations within the higher level forum of the local government council.

Supply and Demand

Mead observed that Chambri males, when exchanging their wives' mosquito bags for other items, "hesitate and equivocate, advance here, draw back there... insist on changing half of the purchasing items after they have been spread out" (1963: 254). And although my informants declared that large stone adzes should have fetched a specific price in traditional shell money (see Table 3:5), they did admit that this value was subject to occasional variation. It appears, therefore, that the law of supply and demand must have operated prior to the European intrusion. But given the social relation of trading partnerships in which the exchanges took place, with their emphasis upon reciprocal assistance in meeting separate debts within distinct political systems, it is a fair supposition that exchange rates were set by social tact (compare Sahlins, 1968b).

At barter markets, on the other hand, exchange values have always been constant - one small chunk of sago for one fresh or smoked fish. Marketers do attempt to get the fattest, juiciest fish or the largest, freshest sago chunk, but the one-to-one ratio of protein to carbohydrate does not change.

However, the amount of sago which the Chambri acquire through barter is fast becoming insignificant. The Chambri now buy most of their sago, and its price changes with the

season, becoming more expensive during the dry season. Then it is difficult to find enough water to "wash" the carbohydrate from the palm's pith, and it is tedious to transport the product from the bush to Indingai's market where most of the selling takes place. In fact, the price of sago rises at least twenty cents during the dry season, with the price of a large block, varying from sixty cents to one dollar, compared with the forty to sixty cents price range during the wet season.

My Sepik Hills informants told me that they earn more from the sale of sago than from any other industry.[1] Indeed, the Mensuat of Peliagwi Island have established a sago store in which blocks of sago are displayed with price tags for the benefit of visiting customers from Chambri, Aibom, and the Lake Iatmul villages. In August, 1974, the store took in $58.30; in November, 1974, it took in $17.90, and in February, 1975, it took $38.40, indicating that approximately $458.40 per year[2] is earned by Mensuat at their sago store alone. Their annual sago revenue is much higher, of course, because most of their sales are made at Indingai market.

The Chambri were perturbed when the Sepik Hills people

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1 The only other Sepik Hills industry is coffee growing, and this is done on a very small scale. The Garamambu did, for a time, mine for gold, but I believe that their returns were small.

2 Figure derived by multiplying the 3 month arithmetic mean by 12.

began demanding money for their sago. They now say that they would never have allowed the bush-people to migrate to the shores of Chambri Lake if they had known that sago was going to become so dear. But they do recognize that the bush-people are far poorer than they. The Sepik Hills villagers have little or no access to the tourist trade,[1] and are still relatively inefficient fishermen. Therefore, the Chambri are willing to accept the fact that for the hill people the sale of sago "is their one road to earn money."

Chambri males are unaware, however, of how much is annually spent on sago - undoubtedly because their women purchase most of the carbohydrate with their own money. Looking once again at Table 3:13, we can see that just over $1,600 is annually spent on sago and, interestingly, just over $1,700 is earned in a year by women through the sale of fish and market produce. Thus Chambri women (at least during the time that I spent among them) re-establish the one-to-one ratio of fish to sago by selling enough fish and produce at money markets to purchase their sago requirements from the people of the Sepik Hills.

As we shall see, this is not the only instance in which

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1 The Sepik Hills people were never extraordinary carvers. They do now make carvings for sale, leaving them with Chambri friends who display them along with their own carvings for the tourists and artifact entrepreneurs to see when they arrive at Chambri. Few entrepreneurs and no tourists visit any of the Sepik Hills villages.

the use of currency sustains a traditional economic balance.

Markets and Migration

To earn enough money to buy sago, Chambri women periodically (usually once a year) journey to the large money markets of Pagwi, Maprik or Wewak, to sell their fish. Frequently one or two women from a clan will bring to market fish belonging to co-wives, sisters and sometimes sisters-in-law, leaving these other women in the village to care for children and tend to husbands, fathers and brothers.

The market price of fish varies, naturally, with the distance of the market from the fishing grounds. At Wewak, for example, one smoked fish costs ten cents; at Maprik the price is two for ten cents; while at Pagwi ten cents will buy two to three fish, depending upon their size (see Seiler, 1972: 106). Clearly, the attraction of higher market prices is offset by the costs of travel to, and of upkeep in, the large market towns (see Chapter 3, p. 99). Generally a woman plans her market trip to coincide with other obligations, such as the graduation of her son from high school, the naming of her town-born sister's son, or a visit to the hospital.

At each market town long-term Chambri migrants have built squatter settlements which may be utilized by visiting marketers. At Pagwi a motor-boat driver for the government built a native-style guest house behind his rented, government-built home to accommodate those Chambri with business at the patrol post, or those wishing to sell fish at the market. At Bainyk, a suburb of Maprik, four Chambri migrants

built a larger settlement consisting of two guest houses on land belonging to Numakum villagers. The Numakum were afraid that, if houses were not built on their land, the Bainyk Vocational School would take possession of it. They therefore encouraged the Chambri to build, after receiving a token payment of ten dollars. At Wewak, ten migrants who wished to live semi-permanently in town to sell carvings cooperated to build Kreer camp. It is now a large camp, with numerous women's houses and three small ceremonial houses. The Kilimbit live towards the west, the Wombun towards the east and the Indingai in the center of camp, duplicating the spatial arrangement of the three Chambri villages.

A woman's decision to visit a particular market is, I believe, more dependent on whether she is on good terms with those migrants who semi-permanently inhabit the various squatter settlements than it is upon her pecuniary interests. For example, Indingai marketers felt so ill at ease staying at the Kilimbit-and Wombun-dominated Bainyk settlement that one Indingai finally established another settlement close to Maprik High School.

The migration of Sepik Hills people to the shores of Chambri Lake and the subsequent destruction of the fish-for-sago bartering system have made circular migration between Chambri and town-based money markets an economic necessity. Table 7:2 shows the frequency with which women journey to market towns to sell fish. Males also visit towns fairly regularly, particularly when they wish to earn quick money

Table 7:2

Frequency of Trips by Indingai Women to Market Towns
from May 15, 1974 to March 15, 1975

Month	Town	No. of Marketers Leaving Village	Range of Time Spent in Town (days)	Average Time Spent in Town (days)
May	Pagwi	4	1 - 14	10
	Maprik	0	-	-
	Wewak	2	18 - 22	20
June	Pagwi	3	5 - 14	9.6
	Maprik	6	7 - 12	10.1
	Wewak	1	90	90
July	Pagwi	0	-	-
	Maprik	6	13 - 30	24.5
	Wewak	5	22 -245+	71.4+
August	Pagwi	5	2 - 14	9.6
	Maprik	11	8 - 90	28.2
	Wewak	1	75	75
September	Pagwi	4	2 - 6	5
	Maprik	1	14	14
	Wewak	0	-	-
October	Pagwi	0	-	-
	Maprik	3	18 - 39	32
	Wewak	4	14 - 60	28

Table 7:2, continued

Month	Town	No. of Marketers Leaving Village	Range of Time Spent in Town (days)	Average Time Spent in Town (days)
November	Pagwi	3	14 - 37	21.7
	Maprik	1	25	25
	Wewak	3	21 -112+	54.3+
December	Pagwi	1	7	7
	Maprik	0	-	-
	Wewak	0	-	-
January	Pagwi	1	5	5
	Maprik	2	43 - 52+	47.5+
	Wewak	1	52+	52+
February	Pagwi	0	-	-
	Maprik	0	-	-
	Wewak	0	-	-
March	Pagwi	0	-	-
	Maprik	0	-	-
	Wewak	0	-	-
	TOTAL	68		

No. of women going to town two times :10
No. of women going to town three times: 2
No. of women going to town four times : 1
% of de jure female population (15 yrs.+) making marketing trips:57%

by selling carvings to pay for their sister's son's initiation or their own bride price. Table 7:3 shows the frequency with which male artifact sellers journey to towns.[1]

We have seen that sorcery accusations transcend the village/town boundary (see Chapter 5, p.160). We have also seen that short-term circular migration, which is both regular and frequent, is necessary to the survival of the Chambri, both in terms of the economic necessity of purchasing sago, and of the socio-political dependence upon money in affinal exchange. The artifact sellers and marketers, who regularly travel to the towns, relay messages of importance to the semi-permanent migrants, who return periodically to Chambri for native cures, to marry, to be scarified, or for a mother's funeral. Chambri social, political and economic organization has not been bifurcated into town and village sectors, but rather has been extended to extract money from the towns for reintroduction into intra-tribal life.

Local Government

Although there was, as we have seen, some discomfort on the part of the Chambri at the destruction of the traditional fish-for-sago trade and the introduction of an inflation-prone money market, the more forward-looking Chambri were glad to see the transformation of their sago-supplying neighbors into entrepreneurs. Whether it was because they trust-

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1 I hope to discuss the full significance of Tables 7:2 and 7:3 in another context. I believe, for example, that village-based political processes determine the range of time Indingai women marketers and male artifact sellers spend in town.

Table 7:3

Frequency of Trips by Artifact Sellers to Towns from May 15, 1974 to March 15, 1975

Month	Town	No. of Sellers Leaving Village	Range of Time Spent in Town (days)	Average Time Spent in Town (days)
May	Pagwi	1	1	1
	Maprik	1	60	60
	Wewak	6	18 -105	36.2
June	Pagwi	1	5	5
	Maprik	1	18	18
	Wewak	4	7 -180	103
July	Pagwi	2	3	3
	Maprik	2	30	30
	Wewak	2	17 -245+	131+
August	Pagwi	0	-	-
	Maprik	5	3 - 20	13.4
	Wewak	1	7	7
September	Pagwi	0	-	-
	Maprik	1	14	14
	Wewak	2	5 - 9	7
October	Pagwi	1	30	30
	Maprik	3	16 - 39	23.6
	Wewak	3	7 - 19	13.3

Table 7:3, continued

Month	Town	Number of Sellers Leaving Village	Rage of Time Spent in Town (days)	Average Time Spent in Town (days)
November	Pagwi	0	-	-
	Maprik	2	25 - 31	28
	Wewak	2	90 -112+	101+
December	Pagwi	0	-	-
	Maprik	0	-	-
	Wewak	0	-	-
January	Pagwi	0	-	-
	Maprik	2	15 - 52+	33.5+
	Wewak	2	7 - 52+	29.5+
February	Pagwi	4	2 - 3	2.3
	Maprik	2	8	8
	Wewak	0	-	-
March	Pagwi	0	-	-
	Maprik	1	15	15
	Wewak	0	-	-
	TOTAL	51		

No. of men going to town two times : 5
No. of men going to town three times: 4
No. of men going to town four times : 1
No. of men going to town five times : 1
% of de jure male population (15 yrs.+) making artifact-selling trips: 33%

ed the Australians who brought them back to their island after the Parambei war, or because as purveyors of stone tools and mosquito bags they had gained a businessman's acumen in the face of change, the Chambri adjusted well to the modernization and encouraged Australian developmental schemes, even when these schemes included the permanent settlement of the semi-nomadic Sepik Hills people on the shores of Chambri Lake.

But before I discuss the Sepik Hills migration, I would like to include a few excerpts from the Indingai Village Book, a record kept by Australian patrol officers of their trips to Indingai which was left at the village to encourage responsibility and leadership among the villagers.

> 10/7-9/60:[1] Endeavored to stir up interest in coffee and coconut planting. Lack of ground would rule out any large scale plantings of the latter and coffee should be concentrated upon re: cash crop.
>
> 10/11-18/61: Coffee and copra production were encouraged. Deputations were brought to me by both the men and women to have Yambumpe recognized as the popular leader. He is very sincere and has done a lot in the coffee and native artifacts field and the people were told that they could make their choice when the L.G.C. was established.
>
> 12/5/61: Yambumpe of Indingai, Mindik of Kilimbit and Yampur of Wombun have apparently been selected as a sort of Business Committee for Chambri, to lead the people in Agricultural Development. All are sincere types, who are keen to do something. Long talk with them at Ambunti re: pitfalls of getting mixed up in politics

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1 Date notation has been changed to conform to the American system of listing the month before the day.

at village level and usurping position of officials. Appeared to understand all this. Also told that agricultural leaders should be actual leaders in work too and should have bigger and better coffee etc. plots than anyone else...

4/4/62: Yambumpe and others in office today. Deposited £ 187/11 in a society account known as Chambri Island Trading. Initial order sent to B.P.'s.[1] People intend to operate trade store... Villages of Indingai, Wombun and Kilimbit involved.

9/8-9/64: Arrived Tuesday. People in mourning for death of Kilimbit, ex-Tultul[2] and leader. Election deferred 'til tomorrow.[3] 9th-Yambumpe elected overwhelmingly. People keyed up with fruition of their desire of several years to join L.G. work. Talked with various people stressing necessity of hard work as prerequisite for prosperity and welfare.

9/18/69: Councillor Matias Yambumpe returned unopposed.

6/5/71: Mathias, L.G. Cr. of Indingai charged with debt-arbitration accepted by all. The Archimedes motor currently at K. Dowrie's store for repair is communally owned. After its repair Mathias will repay all shares if share holders so desire and take over full ownership of the motor...

9/17/71: G.C. election held. Mathias Yambumpe re-elected unopposed.

It is clear that Yambumpe, ignoring the patrol officer's warning to avoid politics on the village level, found local government politics more profitable than cash cropping. Neither coffee nor copra is now harvested at Indingai, and Yambumpe, one of the shrewdest and most powerful men of the

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1 The Burns Philp Company.

2 A "tultul" was assistant to the "luluai," both government "chiefs."

3 The first Gaui Local Government Council election.

Middle Sepik, is now the President of the Gaui Local Government Council. He, together with Australian administrative officers, encouraged the Sepik Hills people to move down to the shore, persuading them that neither economic development nor local government could succeed if they persisted in living like "bush spirits." To grow strong and rich they must "become men," build permanent villages, grow coffee and be counted in the census of the Gaui Council. The Sepik Hills people took this advice, moved from their mountain hamlets and promptly began charging money for their sago.[1]

Yambumpe's father, Walinakwon, was a powerful and wealthy Indingai. Mead, who knew Walinakwon as a young man, describes him thus:

> Walinakwon was beautiful, a graceful dancer, a fluent speaker, proud, imperious, but withal soft-spoken, and resourceful. In addition to his first wife, who had been given him as a child by his mother's clan, two other women had chosen him as husband. He was a fortunate man. All three of his wives could plait mosquito-bags, and Walinakwon was therefore in a fair way to become a rich man (1963: 254).

Yambumpe, who inherited his father's way with words, gained sophistication in European customs while working, from 1954 to 1956, as a copra cutter at Talasea, New Britain, and as Chambri's business advisor after he returned home. His so-

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1 The Sepik Hills people were not the first to think of selling sago. The idea was first instituted by Catholic Fathers at Chambri, whose motto is "industry through example." During the late 1950's and early 1960's they taught industry by selling sago and other Sepik Hills produce to the Chambri at a mission-run store at Indingai.

phistication is at time startling. In September, 1968, for example, a patrol officer wrote of him:

> Arrived to conduct a survey of Samugude Island for luxury hotel. Much time expended in explaining advantages of such a move but to no avail. Cr. Yambumpe being the stumbling block - he wants the people themselves to construct a hotel or some sort of building!!! No amount of talk on my part can get him to change his mind. The actual line and compass survey was still done, however, and the pertinent information for land investment report gathered. It is unfortunate that the Cr. can't see past the end of his nose; it appears that once again the people have missed out on a good thing due to their own stupidity. Have been waiting for over an hour now for the men to mark the ground. This man Yambumpe is not a Councillor's bootlace - the sad fact is that the people seem to think he is something out of the [the next two words were illegible] (Indingai Village Book).

If the patrol officer had bothered to find out why Yambumpe was adamant against the hotel scheme, he would have discovered in his antagonist, not stupidity, but a rather remarkable penetration. Yambumpe's main concern was to protect the integrity of his people. He feared that if tourism came to Chambri on a large scale neither wealth nor status would come of it, but rather "white men would become rich while the Chambri would lose their good customs." They would become underlings to white bosses, and no longer could escape back to their villages when tired of being misunderstood. "It is one thing when we work for white men in towns," he said when I questioned him about the incident. "Then we can come home again. But when the white men move into our villages, where can we go then? Tourism is all right. It's good when people come to buy our carvings. But we, our-

selves, want to be in charge, so that we, and not some strange white men, can earn the profits."

My impression of Yambumpe, during the monthly Gaui Council meetings that I attended, was that he, and he alone of all the Councillors, could see far past his nose, and that the only similarity between him and a Councillor's bootlace was that he managed to keep the other Councillors tied up in knots. At the July 1974 meeting, for example, the topic under discussion was the allocation of money for the following year. Yambumpe wished to propose a project and changed seats with the Vice-President to do so. After the Vice-President recognized him, Yambumpe began by avowing his own devotion to the work of the Council, reminding the Councillors of the gravity of their own responsibilities. He told them that the Queen of England had a book in which the Councillors' names were listed, and exhorted them to take their work seriously. Far be it from him to make himself a party to any action that would reflect badly on the reputation of the Council. However, the Chambri people had been asked to accumulate $5,000 to pay one-third of the cost of lengthening and improving Kilimbit's air strip to allow tourists to fly directly from Wewak to Chambri.[1] The Territory Airlines Limited had volunteered to defray two-thirds of the cost, $10,000 in all. Yambumpe assured the

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1 I do not believe a plane has landed at Kilimbit since 1964. The Kilimbit airstrip is too short and narrow, and the people, having received little encouragement or guidance from the local Catholic Father, have allowed it to become overgrown.

Councillors that the Chambri could find the money they needed elsewhere - that taking Gaui Council money really was not necessary. If they couldn't raise it by working, they could take a loan from the World Development Bank. But he suggested that it would not look good if he, Gaui's President, did not exhibit sufficient faith in the Council, and so he was willing to let Gaui allocate $5,000 for Kilimbit's air strip during 1975. No Councillor objected. No one suggested that World Development Bank loans have to be repaid while Council funds need not be. And several of the Councillors applauded Yambumpe's altruism.

Yambumpe rarely 'misses out on a good thing because of stupidity.' But there is little doubt that his first commitment is to his own people. Why then, it may be asked, did this sophisticated and shrewd politician encourage the resettlement of the Sepik Hills people when he must have suspected that their access to the Lake would destroy the bartering system upon which his people had depended?[1]

The answer to this question lies, I believe, in the relative lack of developmental potential in Chambri territory. According to a land research report by the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organization, the Chambri land system has "no agricultural land use capability" (Haant-

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1 I was told by several informants that maintenance of the bartering system was discussed as a precondition to allowing the Mensuat to move to Peliagwi Island. A small barter market still exists at Peliagwi.

jens, et.al., 1972: 182). The report also states that "land reclamation does not appear feasible, or would not produce good land" (ibid.). Moreover, the Chambri seem to be indefinitely limited to water transportation for their area has been deemed "unsuitable for road construction" (ibid.). The Pagwi Fishery Project "provides a significant means of entry into the monetary sector for a large number of river Sepik (and Chambri) who, apart from fishing, have little alternative means of earning a living" (Philpott, 1974: 38). But as we have seen, in Chapter 3, the Fishery Project closed down after three months.

Thus, because the Sepik area remains "out of the mainstream of economic development" (Philpott, 1972: 37), progress has come to be measured by villagers in terms of isolated economic benefits, such as the number of water tanks, aid posts, outboard motors, classrooms and roads in an area. Local Government Councillors are expected to transform tax money into projects which will directly benefit their constituents. Philpott, in his study of economic development in the Sepik River Basin, argues that "local government has a vital role to play and we would like to see the Councils more effectively integrated into the total planning process" (ibid.). He insists that "the people need to be able to make their ideas and plans known however unrealistic some of their demands may be" (ibid.). Philpott ignores the fact, however, that "grass roots participation" can become extremely competitive. Will a rivulet be dug this year, or will a road

be built? Will Torembi have two classrooms added to its school, or will Changriman's aid post be rebuilt? Where will the five available water tanks be placed, at Chambri, at Japandai, at Yangit? And since Kandingai had its rivulet dug last year, shouldn't Yentchamangua have its dug this year? These are the kind of questions that concern the villagers of the Middle Sepik - not only with respect to necessary improvements - but also in comparison with other villages within the Gaui Council. Under these circumstances, a Councillor who is incapable of satisfying his constituents' craving for tangible benefits will quickly lose their support and be replaced by another representative.

Yambumpe was aware that if he were to acquire for the Chambri the benefits they demanded from him as their Councillor, he had to have an adequate power base within the Gaui Council to sway the vote on important matters. Which villages could compose this power base? Certainly the Nyaula would never vote as Yambumpe desired, for the Kandingai Nyaula were involved in land litigation with the Chambri over Timbunmeri Island. The Parambei Iatmul have felt no allegiance with the Chambri since the Parambei war, and still resent the ascendancy of a member of the tribe they vanquished to the Council's Presidency. And the Sepik Plains and Burui Kunai Sawos speakers, who never were allied to the Chambri in the past, now see their developmental needs as quite different from those of the water-people. This left

the Sepik Hills people, but the only way to obtain them as allies within the Council was to transform them from bush-people to water-people - from the children of bush spirits to men - from sago-suppliers to entrepreneurs, interested in acquiring a developmental policy identical with that of the Chambri. Thus, in order to assure their prosperity, the Chambri were forced to make a sacrifice. They relinquished their superiority with regard to the Sepik Hills people in return for political viability. So far the exchange has proved an astute one.

CONCLUSION

Many anthropologists working throughout New Guinea have reported upon the existence and significance of ceremonial exchange systems, generated by private trading partnerships or by partnerships between whole groups through the entrepreneurial activities of individual Big-men (Barton, 1910; Malinowski, 1961; Teuting, 1935; Hogbin, 1935; Mead, 1970; Belshaw, 1957; Barnes, 1962; Schwartz, 1964; Sahlins, 1965; Harding, 1967; Rappaport, 1968; Hughes, 1971; Strathern, 1971; Forge, 1972; Meggitt, 1974). Generally speaking these ethnographers have emphasized that whatever the kind of ceremonial goods locally valued, and whatever the rationalization for their exchange, the prestations facilitate regional adaptation in terms of the reallocation of both surplus population and specialized economic produce. The trade maintains alliances, whether affinal, purely economic, or both, which allow for a readjustment of man/land ratios following warfare, population pressure, or catastrophic climatic events. Moreover, concomitant with and contingent upon the reallocation of population and produce is the "allocation of political power within and among the communities" (Meggitt, 1974:1). It is through the instrumentality of these entrepreneur-centered networks of ceremonial exchange that each well-defined social group is in relations of opposition to and alliance with other groups, "and it is possible to analyze the political system of the society at least partly in terms of these

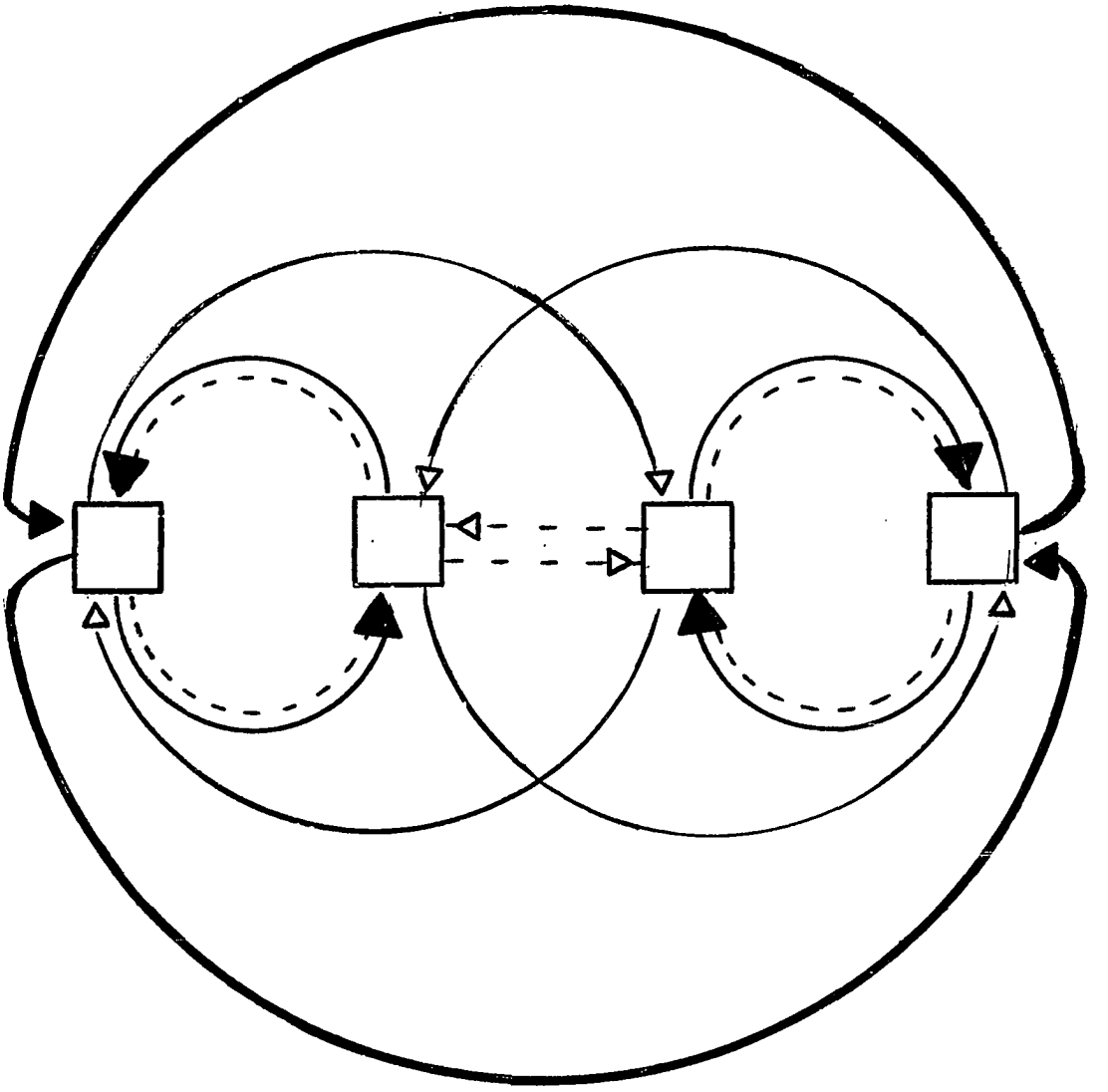
groups and their interrelations" (Strathern, 1971:220). In other words, most of the anthropologists working in New Guinea have emphasized ceremonial exchange as a multi-valent activity that underwrites the ties of kinship and affinity structuring each social group while it coordinates most inter-group activities.

I, however, found no extensive networks of ceremonial exchange among the Chambri. Throughout the Middle Sepik, large ceremonial transactions between relatively equal groups simply do not occur. Ceremonial exchange takes place between affinally linked groups that, by definition, are involved in an unequal relationship of dominance and submission. Status divisions, therefore, cannot be established and maintained through large ceremonial transactions but only by controlling the affinal prestations of unequals (see Figure C:1). Moreover, inter-village relations, rather than being coordinated by ceremonial exchange, are limited to the barter of fish-for-sago, the exchange of stone tools and mosquito bags for valuables, or occasionally to warfare. Barter takes place regularly between women who duplicate the "unequal" relationship between affines while interacting at the markets once or twice a week. The exchanges of stone tools and mosquito bags for valuables involve "equal" men whose trading partnerships partially limit supply and demand to reciprocal social relationships.

Figure C:2 depicts the inter-relationships between the affinal exchange, reciprocal exchange and barter spheres.

Figure C:1

The Symmetrical and Asymmetrical Relations Between Clans During Affinal Exchange Ceremonies



KEY:

Clan

Affinally Related Clans

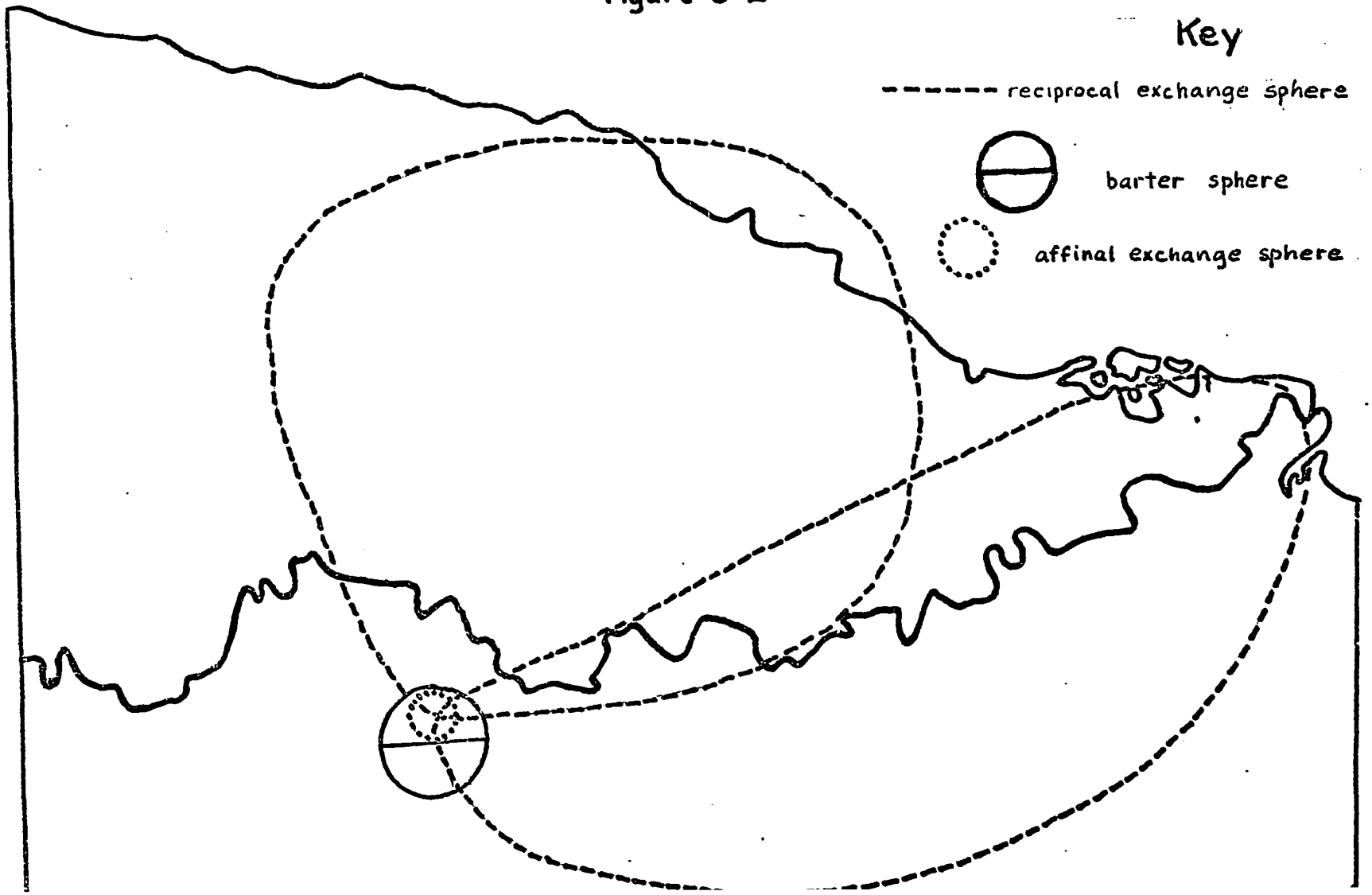
Patron/Client Relations

Asymmetrical Relations Through Separate Sponsorship of Affinally Related Clans

Symmetrical Relations

THE AFFINAL EXCHANGE, BARTER, AND RECIPROCAL EXCHANGE SPHERES FROM THE CHAMBRI PERSPECTIVE

figure C:2



The exchange of mosquito bags and stone tools for valuables proceeds along two networks from the coast, one through the Sepik Plains and Burui Kunai Census Divisions and the other through the Sepik Hills and the Karawari and Korosameri Census Divisions. The sago-producing Mali, Bisis and Garamambu people are nodes within the latter reciprocal exchange network, receiving stone tools and mosquito bags for cassowary skins, bird of paradise plumes and body oil. They are therefore engaged in both the barter and the reciprocal exchange spheres. Chambri women, as barterers and as items of affinal exchange, are also involved in two spheres. Both they and Sepik Hills people interact as complements within just one out of the two spheres they are involved with. Chambri men and women are asymmetrically inter-related as "equals" and "unequals." Chambri women, on the other hand, are the aggressors within the marketing relationship. The Sepik Hills people are vulnerable and deferent to their fish-suppliers. But they are "poroman" or blood brothers to their Chambri trading partners within the reciprocal exchange relationship. In effect, the transformation from equal to unequal interactional patterns between the spheres of exchange delimits the spheres. Interference from one cannot penetrate the other for their signals are different. The default of a clan in meeting its affinal obligations cannot prevent its women from aggressively acquiring sago at the market. And the overweening competition between large Chambri clans for control of the affinal ex-

changes of their less adept neighbors does nothing to disturb the reciprocity of their trading partnerships with the Sepik Hills people. Thus, the exchange spheres of the Chambri are multi-verse rather than multi-valent. And, as I shall demonstrate later, the lack of ultimate unity between the spheres is crucial to systemic viability.

In the New Guinea Highlands surplus production, advantageous manipulation of non-ceremonious trading partnerships[1] and the cessation of inter-group hostilities are all crucial to the operation of the ceremonial exchange system (Bulmer, 1960). Moreover, because rank and leadership are achieved through successful transactions, it is the ceremonial exchange system which leads to the accession of Big-men with power over local corporate groups. Through successful transactions, a powerful Highland Big-man enhances both the prestige and the wealth of his constituents; he is a respected arbitrator in all intra-societal disputes; and, perhaps most importantly of all, he is a proponent of competitive exchange as a substitute for inter-group hostility (Strathern, 1971: 187-229). When warfare does break out, however, it is those individuals and groups indebted to the contenders through reciprocal trading relationships who furnish assistance in battle and refuge in defeat. Where public trading intensifies intra-group solidarity while maintaining inter-group co-

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1 "Trade relations are ... contingent, finite and private transactions between individuals. They lack ceremony, do not involve the extension of credit and are not formally or structurally connected with the networks of public prestations" (Meggitt, 1974:169).

operation, it is the Big-man, through his achieved status, who articulates one with the other.

The consensus of ethnographers working in the Highlands of New Guinea is that the success of Big-men in expanding their networks of control eventually results in the decline of their influence: "the 'real big-man' is likely to be overthrown when the extent of his extraction - in whatever terms - from his supporters too grossly exceeds the value of the advantages he can bring them" (Strathern, 1971:3). The over-extraction has been measured variously in terms of the pressure a Big-man places upon his segmentary enclave to provide him with the goods he needs to distribute within his broader network (Sahlins, 1963) and in terms of the population pressure that results from the growth of those groups led by a successful Big-man (Meggitt, 1967). Warfare, fission, or both may be the cause of decline, and the process of growth begins anew through the ascendency of another astute leader.

There are no formal limitations to the growth of highland ceremonial exchange networks. They potentially can expand indefinitely in point to point chains, and they are limited only by the inability of any group to provide the necessary surplus of land, food, and ceremonial valuables to increase its network past a certain size. Chambri ceremonial exchange networks, on the other hand, are limited generally to one village. Rather than being focii of all interactions involving large, ceremonial transactions, Cham-

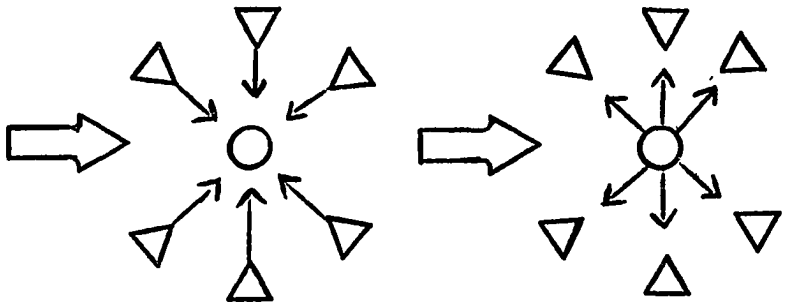
bri leaders are the points of connection and dispersal for their subordinate clients who are involved in unequal relations with the respective affines (see Figure C:3). The affinal exchange system cannot expand to incorporate both water- and bush-villages for, as I have shown in Chapter 6, competition between corporate groups defined as "equal" and "unequal" cannot occur. Without the asymmetrical relationship between the bush- and the water-villages, the marketing system, upon which both depend for survival, would be overrun by the symmetrical competitiveness of equals. The existence of complementary interactional patterns is necessary to the maintenance of mutual dependence between villages within different ecological zones. But why has there not been a greater expansion of the status-producing affinal exchange system between fish-supplying villages, between the Chambri and the Iatmul for example?

As in the Highlands of New Guinea, it is the disproportionate growth of some Chambri clans that eventually triggers their decline. But among the Chambri, the limits of growth are built into the relationships that integrate the system. An ordinary man who marries a woman from a large clan finds it difficult to meet his affinal obligations. He is forced to seek assistance from an unrelated group and may condemn himself to client-status or eventually become incorporated within the patron clan. His seeking of assistance is complementary behavior. But it is this inappropriate seeking of assistance from an equal that allows the

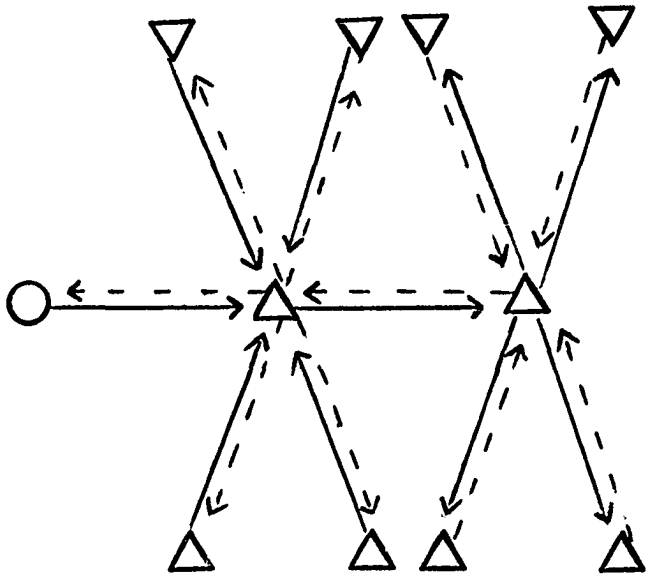
Figure C:3

The Place of Big-Men in Ceremonial Exchange in the Highlands and Middle Sepik of Papua New Guinea

The Highlands



The Middle Sepik



KEY:

○ Big-Man

△ Man

⟶ Direction of Movement of Valuables

- - -→ Direction of Movement of Foodstuffs

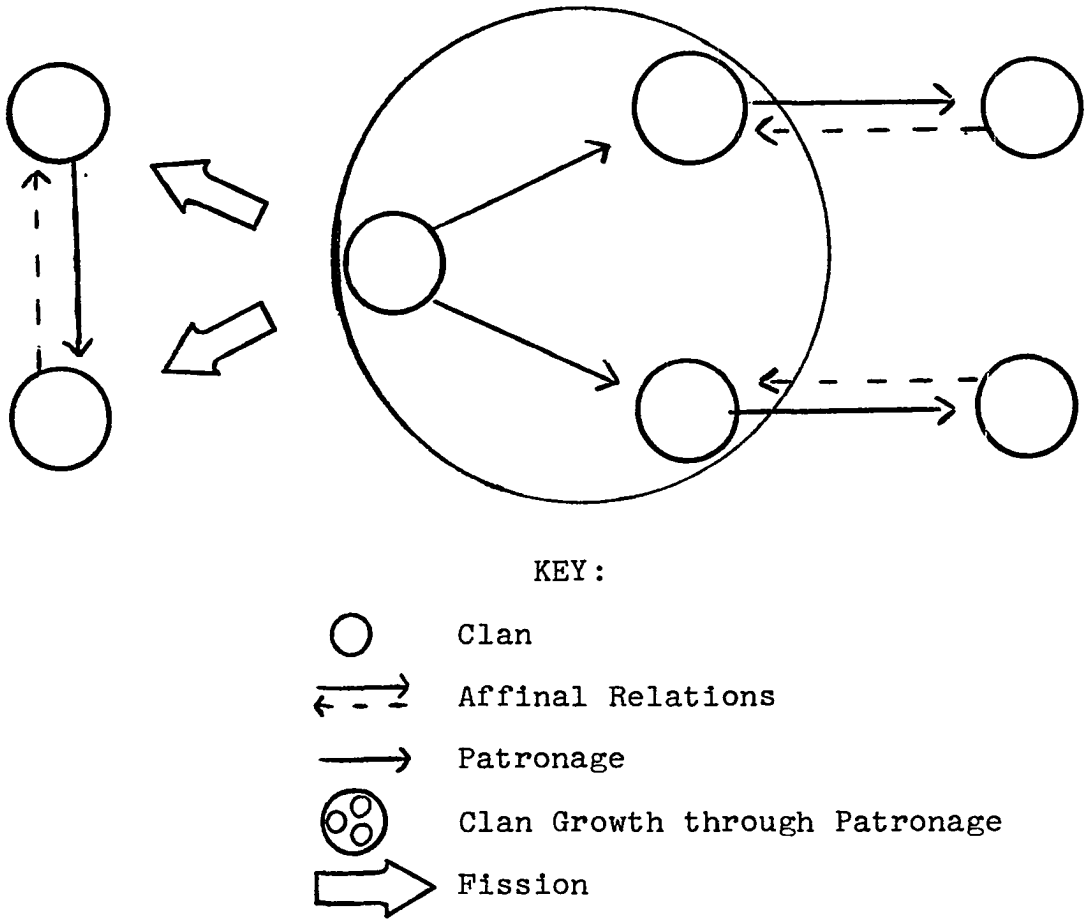
client to begin anew as a competitor in the game of prestige.

Unusually populous and wealthy clans, on the other hand, find it difficult to acquire wives. The highest incidence of intra-clan marriage occurs within the wealthiest clans. Once split and inter-married, the two new clans interact as complementary affines, with separate symmetrical relationships to all other "equal" clans within the village. Hence, in both the case of declining and expanding clans, a switch from symmetrical to complementary interaction is necessary for systemic viability. Disproportionately "more" or "less equal" clans can no longer adequately play in the game of prestige, but are redefined as non-egalitarian and hence defined out of the game which goes on among the "equals" (see Figure C:4). Thus, although there are no inherent limitations upon the extension of the affinal exchange system to incorporate both Chambri and Iatmul villages, the limits of growth are generally reached before a clan's network expands much beyond its own village.

If a switch from complementary to symmetrical interaction is necessary to rectify the disproportionate growth of Chambri clans, perhaps Bateson was right when he described Iatmul culture as a negative feedback system in which symmetrical schizmogenesis is kept within certain crucial limits by the operation of complementary schizmogenesis and vice versa (Bateson, 1958: 286-290). Schizmogenesis, according to Bateson, is a "process of differentiation in the norms

Figure C:4

The Growth and Decline of a Chambri Clan



of individual behavior resulting from cumulative interaction between individuals"(Bateson, 1958:175). Bateson believes that the predictability of response to culturally preferred behavior acts as a positive reinforcement for behavior of the same sort. In symmetrical schizmogenesis, the response is an augmentation of the stimulus and in complementary schizmogenesis the response is the opposite of the stimulus.[1] Thus, the sexually differentiated behavior of Iatmul is indicative of complementary schizmogenesis, with women admiring the spectacular performances of the men who "are more exhibitionistic because the women admire their performances" (ibid.: 177). The spectacular performances themselves, on the other hand, reflect symmetrical schizmogenensis, with each man trying to outdo all others.

> We have thus a potentially progressive state of affairs... unless other factors are present to restrain the excess of assertive and submissive behavior (ibid.: 177).

Schizmogenesis is thus a process of character formation which culturally selects responses, but is without a system of checks and balances to prevent their development ad infinitum. Having painted a "picture of schizmogenesis... (as) a process inevitably advancing toward such differentiation that

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1 On a very simple level, symmetrical schizmogenesis can be illustrated by the rhyme:

> Tit for Tat,
> Butter for Fat,
> If you kick my dog,
> I'll kick your cat.

Complementary behavior, on the other hand, would be if you kick my dog and I reply: "Thank you, he needed that."

some outside factor is bound to precipitate the final collapse" (ibid.: 190), Bateson's task is to delimit the controls which prevent the collapse from occurring - a task he does not accomplish to his satisfaction until 1958 when, in a new epilogue to Naven, he subsumes complementary and symmetrical patterns within the meta-level of cybernetic control.

By 1958 Bateson's interest in schizmogenesis had shifted from its role in character formation to its function as an internal generator of behavioral variability. The logic behind the shift is obvious: a culture is composed of individuals who become what they are through cumulative interaction with others; this cumulative interaction standardizes behavior but sets no limits upon its augmentation; hence, schizmogenesis, as the standardizing process, must also be the source of progressive change.

Given the inevitability of progressive development, Bateson requires an operative homeostat to regulate the behavioral variables and thereby prevent systemic breakdown; parametric change can only be prevented through the regulation of schizmogenesis.

> Substituting the notion of self-correction for the idea of purpose or adaptation defined a new approach to the problems of Iatmul culture. Schizmogenesis appeared to promote progressive change, and the problem was why this progressive change did not lead to the destruction of the culture as such... It was now necessary to ask, is there any communicational pathway such that an increase in symmetrical schizmogenesis will bring about an increase in the corrective complementary pattern? Could the system be circular and self-corrective (ibid.: 289)?

Bateson pin-points the self-corrective circuits he seeks with the naven ceremonies. He believes that the "exaggerated caricature of a complementary sexual relationship between wau and laua is in fact set off by overweening symmetrical behavior... (on the part of the laua whose) achievements in headhunting, fishing, etc., are particular examples of achieved ambition of vertical mobility... which place him in some sort of symmetrical relationship with the wau" (ibid.: 289-290). Furthermore, Bateson sees the transvesticism of Iatmul women as a statement of "symmetrical rivalry vis-à-vis the men, compensating for their normally complementary role" (ibid.: 291).

However, the presence of corrective circuits is not enough to regulate oscillating variables. Communicational pathways simply transmit the regulatory signal from the homeostat to its goal. The model demands the presence of a "director" who recognizes the need of systemic regulation and sends the corrective impulse through the communicational pathways to the sources of variability.

Having found no isolable homeostat within Iatmul culture, Bateson designates schizmogenesis as both the source of variability and the director of its regulation. He believes that the Iatmul "learn, besides the symmetrical and complementary patterns, to expect and exhibit certain sequential relations between the symmetrical and complementary" (ibid.: 291). Each individual, therefore, is a self-regulator, having learned through the schizmogenetic process to

introduce corrective change in his dealings with others.

Bateson was correct in identifying complementary or symmetrical behavior as correcting for its opposite. His mistake however, was in identifying "the rationality of the element while ignoring the rationality of the system" (Friedman, 1974:459). Achievements of sisters' sons in headhunting, fishing etc., are unlikely to be threats in any real sense to mothers' brothers who have had a generation to achieve status within their village. It is rather that during affinal exchange ceremonies celebrated for "achieved ambition" (Bateson, 1958:289) on the part of sisters' sons, the naven ceremonies objectify the asymmetrical, unequal relationship between wife-givers and wife-takers.

Frequently, and generally during the largest affinal exchange ceremonies, representatives of more than two clans participate. The wife-givers and the wife-takers exchange foodstuffs and valuables on behalf of the mother's brother and his sister's son, but their patrons have donated many of the items exchanged. Thus, a large affinal prestation involves unequal and equal exchange relationships simultaneously. The wife-giving and wife-taking clans are involved in unequal, complementary relationships with each other and with their patron clans. These latter are in competition for control of their less adept neighbors but interact during the exchanges as unequals through their separate patronage of the wife-givers and wife-takers. As I have shown in Chapter 5, the situation is an inherently ambiguous one, with

conflicting relationships and allegiances prevailing. It may be that the naven ceremonies, which "are not very often performed... limited by the expense which they involve" (ibid.: 10),[1] figure in those affinal exchange ceremonies involving numerous, ambiguously related clans. The ceremonies delimit the sphere of interaction appropriate to unequals so as to distinguish it from the interaction of equals who compete for dominance through control over the affinal prestation of smaller, less wealthy clans.

But with or without the naven ceremonies, clan boundaries become blurred over time, primarily through the establishment between clans of patron/client relationships within the affinal exchange system. It becomes increasingly unclear which particular clans control what names, powers, etc., and which clans are symmetrically or asymmetrically related. As I demonstrated in Chapter 5, the ambiguity of inter-clan relations stimulates debates in which dependent clients attempt to re-establish their autonomy and maintain the continuity of inheritance by publicly declaring their distinctiveness. The debates recount the events of socio-political flux and perpetuate the ideal of patrilineality by promising a restoration of egalitarianism. Clans remain equal so long as equality can be re-established in the future, and the debates promise that the potentiality of reversing patron/client

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1 I saw several examples of naven-like behavior among the Chambri, and it is likely that they too performed large naven ceremonies in the past.

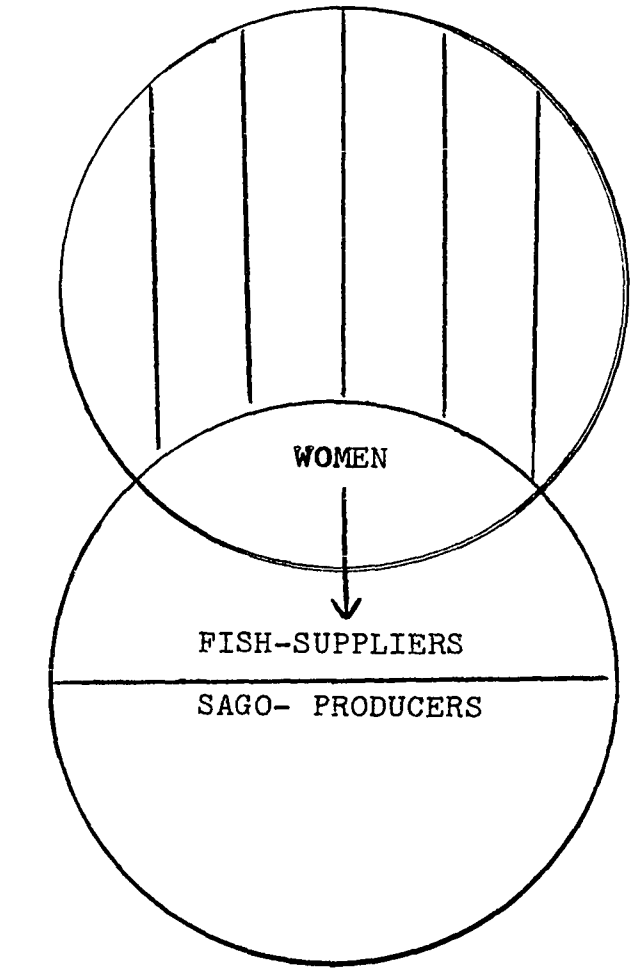
relationships is just as meaningful as their present temporal arrangement. They promise, in effect, the restoration of a clear-cut, genealogically-based separation of wife-givers from wife-takers, of "equals" from "unequals".

The same ambiguity between "equals" and "unequals" occasionally disturbs the marketing relationships between fish-suppliers and sago-producers. Fish-suppliers are aggressive; sago-producers are deferent. As long as the bush- and water-people remain of different kinds, their marketing arrangements remain viable. But, as I have shown in Chapter 6, as soon as the bush-people begin demanding recognition as equal competitors, the marketing system fails. It is replaced by the strained inter-village and inter-tribal relations of symmetrical groups who are linked by the pay-back system of "a head for a head" or who are not linked at all. The formalized, stereotyped complementary interaction of women at the markets alienates the bush-and-water villages from each other. And so long as they maintain this social distance, the competitive interaction of equals is prevented and the marketing system continues to operate.

Figure C:5 depicts the inter-village and inter-tribal relationships described thus far from the Chambri perspective. Clans are divided into equal competitors and unequal affines by women who are the source of inequality. "Basically men related to each other through women cannot be equal to each other and they cannot therefore carry on equal exchange" (Forge,1972a:556).But these "unequal" women articulate inter-

Figure C:5

The Relationship Between Affinal Exchange and Marketing Spheres



KEY:

○ Sphere

|||| Symmetrically Related Clans

⟶ Role Reversal

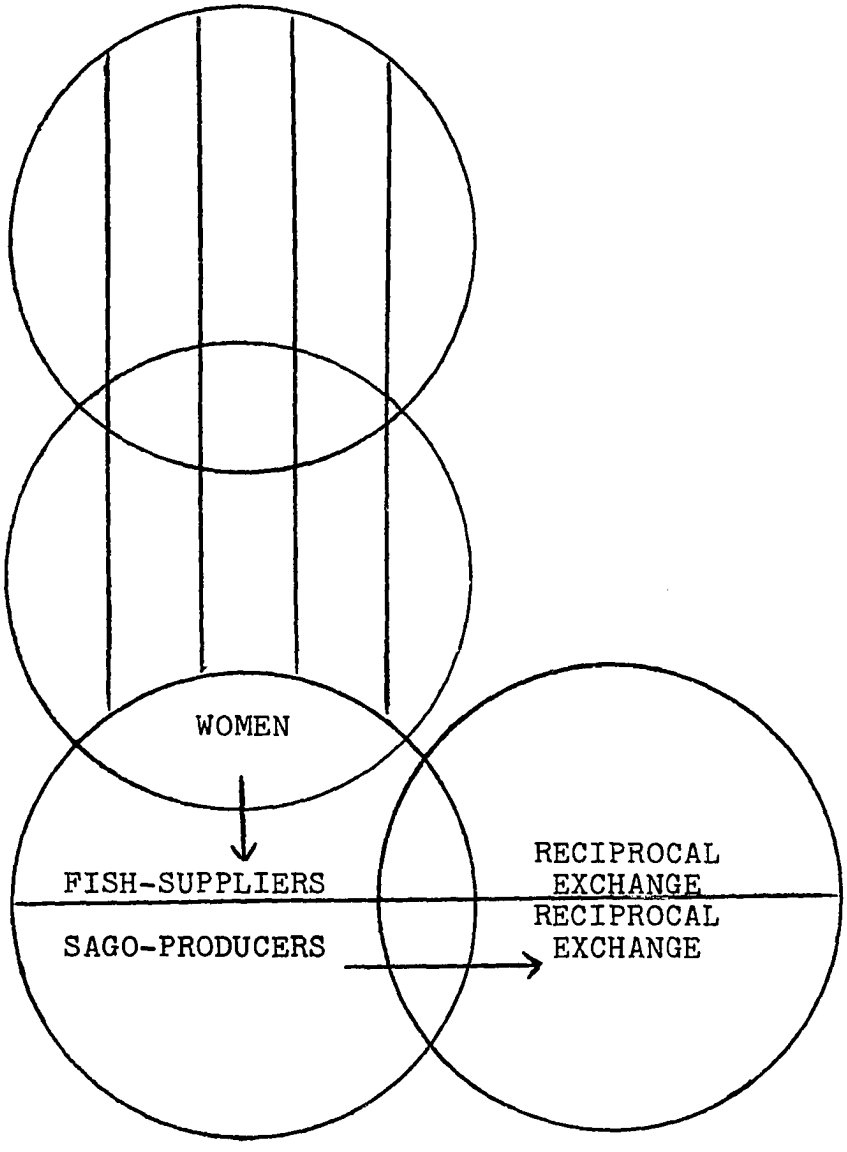
tribal marketing relationships. They are transformed, within the marketing system, from the source of inequality to the proponents of aggressive supremacy for the fish-supplying villages. The women are involved in asymmetrical relationships within both the affinal exchange and marketing systems, but through their role-reversal delimit one system from the other.

When the two networks of reciprocal exchange are added to the diagram, (see Figure C:6), it appears that a comparable role-reversal delimits the marketing system from part of the exchange network of stone tools and mosquito bags for valuables. The sago-producing Sepik Hills villages are "unequals" within the marketing relationship, but reciprocally exchange their valuable cassowary skins, bird of paradise plumes, body oil and shells for Chambri mosquito bags and stone tools.

Role-reversal does not, however, predicate the reciprocal exchange relationships between Chambri and Iatmul or between Iatmul and Iatmul. Instead their reciprocal trading partnerships coincide with the definition of one another as "equals", albeit equals from different villages. There is no switch from one mode of interaction to another between intra-village political organization via the affinal exchange sphere and the inter-village reciprocal exchange sphere. Hence, among fish-suppliers, competition for power can easily be transformed into competition for the items of reciprocal exchange.

Figure C:6

The Relationship Between Affinal Exchange, Marketing and Reciprocal Exchange Spheres



KEY:

Sphere

Symmetrically Related Clans

Role Reversal

When a large, powerful clan in a Chambri village is obliged to help an inordinate number of clients to meet their separate affinal debts, the clan members may be forced to press their Iatmul trading partners to supply them with the necessary valuables. The practice of pressing trading partners resembles the competitive equal exchanges of the Highlands of New Guinea. One individual gives a number of goods to his trading partner who reciprocates with more goods forcing the first donor to give even more goods. In the Sepik, however, this process has built-in limitations. Valuables ultimately come from the bush, and the bush-dwellers cannot be pressed too hard. Even the Chambri, though producers of the valuable stone tools and mosquito bags, could not inflate their exchange-rates beyond the point at which their Iatmul trading partners would be forced to press for larger reciprocal transactions from the bush-dwelling Sawos speakers.[1] Trading partners from the bush could not be forced into competitive exchange for, as I have shown, such exchanges would have destroyed the marketing system upon which the fish-suppliers depended for sustenance by re-defining the bush-dwellers as equal competitors. Hence, the incipient equal exchange system of the Middle Sepik was

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1 It may be that the preponderence of warfare between Iatmul fish-suppliers resulted from the inability to accommodate each other's need of valuables. Rather than pressing their sago-suppliers to engage in competitive exchange, a clan unable to adequately reciprocate the items donated by its trading partner would regain its lost status through a head-hunting raid.

limited by the existence of the asymmetrically-defined marketing system (see Figure C:7 and 8).

Finally, I wish to suggest, with Schwartz, that the discrete spheres of exchange I have analyzed throughout this thesis, (each with distinct rules governing its operation, but all constraining the development of the others), are an adaptation of the more familiar multi-valent exchange systems of the Highlands of New Guinea to an area characterized by absolute ecological interdependence (see Schwartz, 1964:89). By an adaptation to the absolute ecological interdependence of the Middle Sepik I do not mean that the discrete spheres of exchange resulted from the need for fish or sago or from the lack of arable land. "The ecological determinant is the cultural adaptation to an environment, not the physical environment itself" (Schwartz, 1964:91). Rather, I contend that the culturally-defined relationship between "equal" and "unequal" interactional patterns integrated the Middle Sepik through the discrete spheres of exchange. The exchange spheres follow from the contradiction between equal, competitive interaction and ecological interdependence. If the former were not necessary to status divisions, the latter would not have produced a discrete marketing system.

Figure C:7

The Relationship Between Affinal Exchange, Marketing and Reciprocal Exchange Spheres Among the Chambri, Sepik Hills, Iatmul and Sawos People

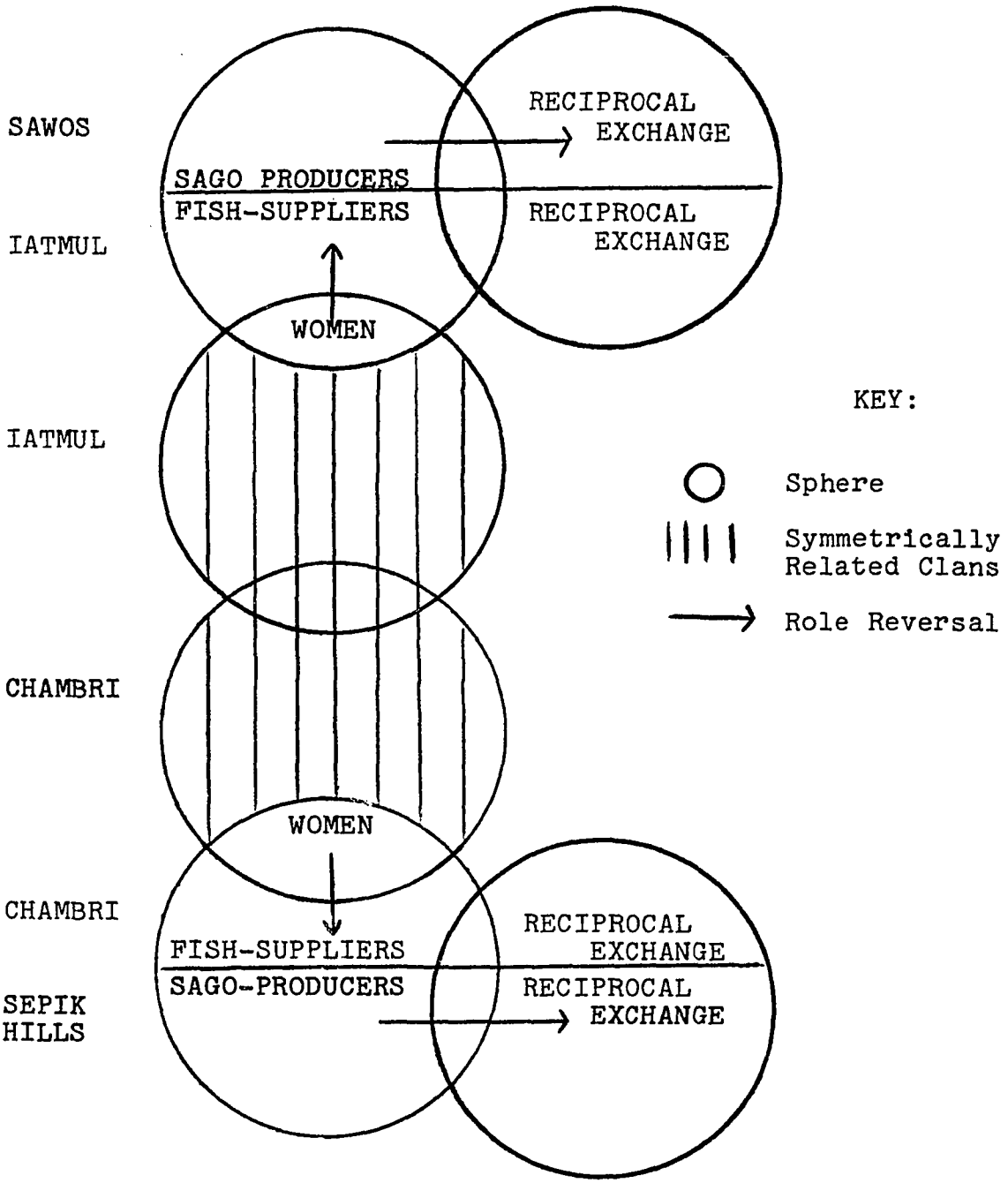
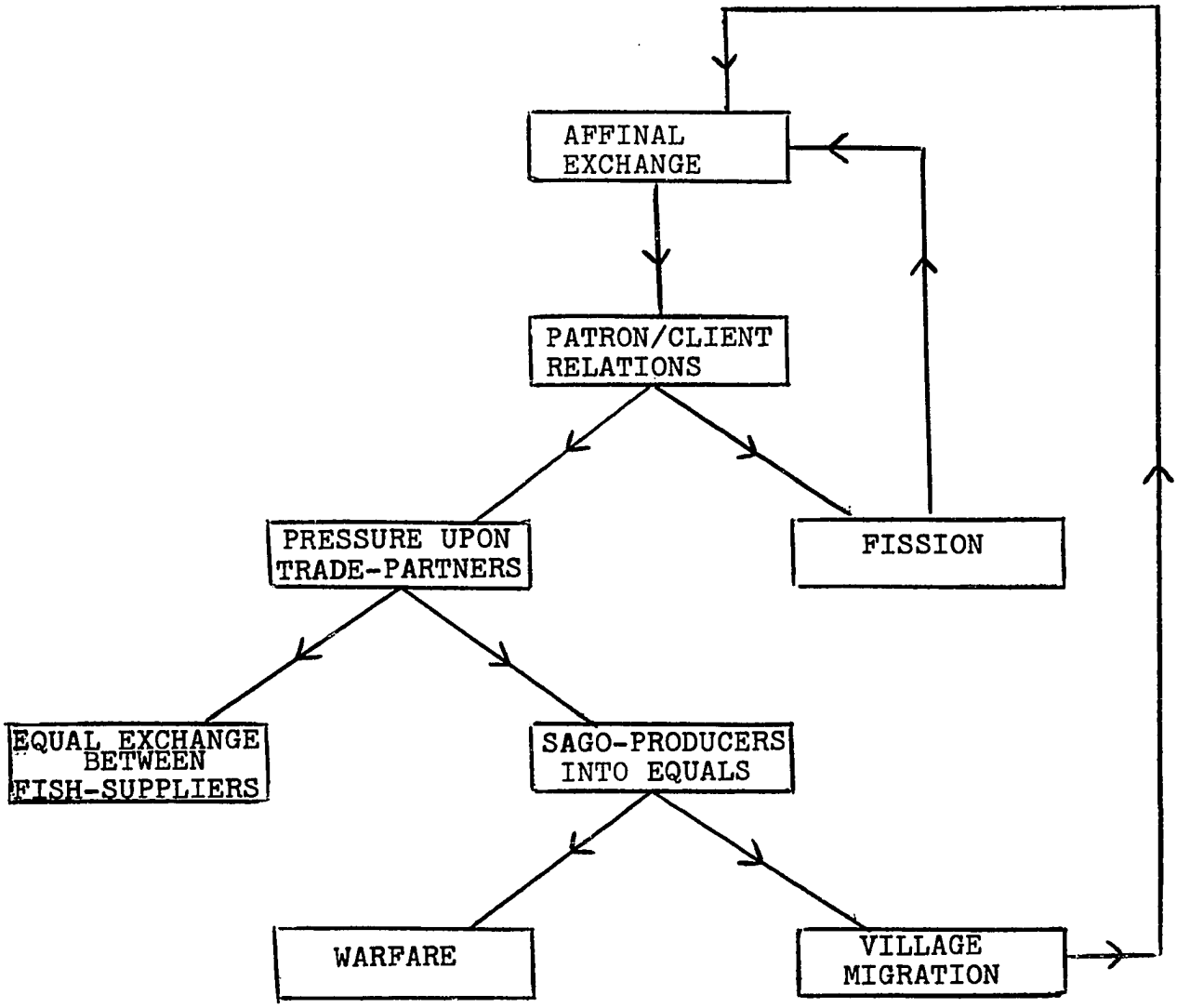


Figure C:8

The Chambri Socio-Economic System



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