This dissertation examines identity formation and transformation among the Tolai of Papua New Guinea through a historically grounded ethnographic analysis of the *tubuan*, a masked ritual figure which they generally regard as a prime symbol of their “traditional” culture. Much has been written about contemporary constructions of tradition in the Pacific. It has been suggested that people constitute identities by articulating notions of tradition in opposition to what is considered “Western” or “modern” – particularly church, state, and business. Tolai do distinguish their “traditional” culture from what they refer to as *lotu* (church), *matanitu* (government), and *bisnis* (business), but their constructions of tradition are often situated within these three separate yet closely intertwined institutions, which were originally introduced from outside but which they have made their own. This is most clearly evidenced by the deployment of the *tubuan* in “modern” settings, such as church celebrations, state functions, and tourism events. In the dissertation, I explore historical dimensions of the contemporary use of the *tubuan* in the institutional contexts of *lotu*, *matanitu*, and *bisnis* by paying particular attention to specific political circumstances in which Tolai negotiated problematic relations between these indigenous and exogenous forms. I show how Tolai maintained the institution of the *tubuan*, which was a vehicle for social reproduction, while eagerly appropriating new institutions; how Tolai came to see the *tubuan* as a prime symbol of their “traditional” culture through their power struggles with European colonizers; and how Tolai have used the *tubuan* to reproduce or reshape power relations within their society or country that have been manifested since national independence in 1975. The appearance of the *tubuan* in “modern” settings, which emphasizes the continued relevance of the “traditional” values it embodies to contemporary Tolai life, helps Tolai visualize a distinct Tolai identity that combines and synthesizes seemingly antithetical themes – an identity that challenges a simplistic dichotomy between tradition and modernity that is still perpetuated in ethnographic writing.
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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Many individuals and institutions have contributed to this dissertation in many ways.

The field and archival research on which this dissertation is based was carried out in Papua New Guinea in the period between March 2002 and May 2004. I would like to thank the National Research Institute and the East New Britain Provincial Administration for permission to carry out the research and their practical assistance at various stages.

My greatest debts are to the Tolai people of Karavi who warmly welcomed me to live in their village and treated me as one of their own. I must mention some of them, without whose help and support my fieldwork would have been impossible. Foremost, I am greatly indebted to my Tolai “father” and “mother,” Allan Tagete and Delilah IaKapa, who generously allowed me to stay in their house and looked after me on a daily basis until they sadly passed away early in 2003 within 40 days of each other, and my Tolai “sister,” Miriam, who took good care of me thereafter. I also owe special thanks to Karavi Councillor Valvalu Bualten and his relatives, especially Melchior ToKu’uk and Melchior ToMot who often welcomed me into their houses and helped me to settle into a foreign environment.

I was also cordially received by every Tolai village I visited. For their hospitality, I am particularly grateful to the people of Matupit, Ramalmal, Tavuiliu, Malmaluan, Karavia No.2, Raluana, Vunamami, Napapar No.1, Tinganalom, Navunaram, and Bitakapuk.

So great a number of Tolai people shared with me their knowledge of their history and culture that I cannot name them all. I would like to express my gratitude to the following persons in particular: Valvalu Bualten, Melchior ToKu’uk, Melchior ToMot, Peter ToKele, Michael ToBing, Rev. Bobo Akuila, Eliab ToVuat, Harrison Ereman, Nelson ToKoki, Barry ToWamilat, Willy ToVakit, IaNila Libai, Bernard Titimur, Melly Paivu, Joel ToGita, Thomas ToBunbun, Damien Kereku, Henry ToKubak, Simon ToPindian, Phillip Kameng, Thomas ToWaninara, Luvi Tingai, Penny ToRarang, Rochus Jack, Elias Tapa, Isaac ToLubang, Sir Rabbie Namaliu, Allan ToBalbal, ToLun Kamienel, Pr. Kenneth Bale, Apolos Purtdma, Alfred ToLagot, Ken ToMiki, ToMano Talikung, Pr. Nathan Mano, Sir Saimon Gaius, Bill Kwamin, Sialis Tedor, Levi ToVilihon, Eliakim ToKulau, Buana Baluka, Samson Bernard, Eremman ToBaining, Jessie IaUtul, Rev. Eron Diop, Peter Buak, Sir Martin ToVadet, Henry ToMatamata, John ToPeono, Sir Paulias Matane, Pr. Nerrius Guan, Alfred Kiala, Pr. Nick Patili, Bishop Patrick Tavul, Joseph Danlee, Benedict ToKitaau, ToPeto ToVutung, Paul ToGigi, ToMateo Tarimut, Joseph Mision, Peter Lane, Bernard Ruben, Konrad Tiriman, Beverlyn Judas, and Joaph Eremas.

For their assistance in my research at libraries and archives, I am grateful to Rev. Robinson Toirima at the United Church New Britain Regional Office; Pr. Eky Perebuko at the Rarongo Theological College Library; Fr. Winfried Holz at the Catholic Church Vunapope Archive; Roselyne Wot at the Sacred Heart Interdiocesan Major Seminary Library; Malachai Param at the Sonoma Adventist College Library; staff at the East New Britain Historical Society (Kokopo Museum); Thomas Luai at the National Archives; and Ena Gimumu at the National Research Institute Library. Many government officers helped me to have access to government reports and other documents. I would like to
thank Akuila Tubal, the Provincial Administrator; Nicholas Pirpir at the Parliamentary Services; Sione Faiva at the Division of Education; Komet Malari and Raphael Tapin at the Division of Research and Planning; Samson Kakai at the East New Britain Tourist Bureau; and Mitmit Punian at the Kokopo/Vunamami Urban Local Level Government. I am also indebted to Martin Bechett at the Mitchell Library, Sydney, and Ewan Maidment at the Pacific Manuscript Bureau, Canberra, for providing me with photocopies of the Methodist Overseas Mission records that I requested. I appreciate the help of Yvonne Carrillo-Huffman at the Australian Museum for kindly responding to my enquiry about the tubuan masks held by it.

During my stay in East New Britain, I was lucky enough to be befriended by many members of the expatriate community in Rabaul and Kokopo. I enjoyed the hospitality of Bruce and Susie Alexander, John and Sandra Lau, and many other Chinese business owners whom I would like to thank. I owe particular thanks to David and Sekiko Seeto and their family, who often kind-heartedly invited me into their house for a wonderful dinner or lunch, lent me one of their cars when I needed it, and helped me in numerous other ways. No words are sufficient to express my gratitude to them. For their friendship, I would like to thank my “wantoks” from Japan working there for the Japanese International Corporation Agency (JICA) and the Organization for Industrial, Spiritual, and Cultural Advancement (OISCA), especially Masaharu Ueno who accommodated me for one week after my arrival. I benefited from conversations with two fellow doctoral students working among the Tolai, with whom I met during my fieldwork: Kier Martin from Manchester University, England, and Juntaro Fukada from Hitotsubashi University, Japan.

I am very grateful to my dissertation committee members for their guidance and assistance. My supervisor, Professor John Barker, patiently helped me to clarify many of my jumbled thoughts and gave me the advice and encouragement that enabled me to keep going and complete the dissertation. Professors Bill McKellin, Janice Boddy, and Michael Blake made helpful comments on the drafts of the chapters. The defects of argument and presentation in this dissertation are, of course, solely my responsibility.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge my deepest debt of gratitude to my wife, Ai, who stayed with me in Karavi for a year and provided me with much emotional support for the many years leading up to the completion of this dissertation.
CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

It has been a popular belief, especially since the end of the Second World War, that the future world will see the development of a single homogenous world culture. It is based on observations about the global expansion of transportation, trade, and communication, and the global flow of people, things, and ideas, especially from the dominant West to the rest of the world (see, e.g., Appadurai 1990). While it is true that the world is becoming increasingly borderless and interconnected, this prediction ignores what is really happening around the world today: the global processes produce and perpetuate local identities (see, e.g., Friedman 1994). Anthropology is better positioned than any other disciplines to respond to this paradox because its concrete attentiveness to human agency and the practices of everyday life facilitates an analysis of how local people actually experience the global processes (Inda and Rosaldo 2002:5). Only through such an analysis, we can gain a greater understanding of how local identities emerge and persist or change in the era of globalization.

This dissertation examines identity formation and transformation among a people who live within a radius of approximately 30 kilometres of the port town of Rabaul in the northeast corner of New Britain, Papua New Guinea (Figure 1), and who have come to call themselves Tolai. When Europeans and others began to converge on the area in the 1870s, the people perhaps numbered perhaps less than 15,000 (T. S. Epstein 1968:51). At that time, they were not a unified group (A. L. Epstein 1978:44), having no
centralized authority and living in small hamlets which were in a state of constant feud with one another, although they spoke a common language, which is classified as Austronesian. Accordingly, they had no inclusive name for themselves as a group. The incoming Methodist and Roman Catholic missions, which established their regional headquarters in the area, adopted the terms “Kuanua” and “Gunantuna” respectively to refer to the people, but the term “Tolai” came to represent them around the 1930s, subsequently winning complete acceptance as their group designation (A. L. Epstein 1969:13).¹

The area was a major commercial and administrative centre of New Guinea under German rule from 1884 to 1914 and under Australian rule from 1914 to 1975, which was interrupted by the Japanese military occupation during the Second World War. Despite the fact that they are among those peoples in Papua New Guinea who have had the longest and closest links with the outside world and therefore undergone the most radical religious, political, and economic transformations, the Tolai have been exceptionally successful in retaining their customary practices, thereby having a very strong sense of local identity. Based on the most recent national census (National Statistical Office 2002), they could be roughly estimated to number about 130,000²: one of the largest linguistic/cultural groups in the country whose population of 5.2 million are said to be divided into over 700 such groups.

¹ “Kuanua” means “over there” in the language spoken in the neighbouring Duke of York Islands where the Methodist missionaries first established themselves. “Gunantuna” means “true land” or “proper land” in the language spoken in the northeast corner of New Britain. The term “Tolai” is derived from “To lai!” or “To le!”—an expression used between men from the area in greeting a friend (like “Mate!”) or arresting attention (like “Listen!”).

² There is no population data by ethnicity. Only a ballpark estimate can be drawn from the sum of the total populations of the predominantly Tolai Local Level Government areas (Central Gazelle, Livuan/Reimber, Vunadidir/Toma, Bitapaka, Kokopo/Vunamami, Rahuana, Balanataman, Kombiu, and Watom), which is 134,147. It should also be noted that there are a number of Tolai living in other parts of Papua New Guinea.
The analytical focus of this dissertation is on what has become a prime symbol of Tolai identity: the *tubuan*. The *tubuan* is a being represented by a conical mask and a spherical leafy dress (Figure 2). It is worshiped by a male society, also referred to as *tubuan*, whose members strictly guard its secrets from women and children, though it publicly performs rituals and dances in a variety of ceremonies, which are still observed in the almost same manners described in accounts of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. “You are not a true Tolai man unless you are initiated into the *tubuan*,” was a sentence I frequently heard during my fieldwork.

This dissertation aims to present a “historically grounded ethnography” (Errington and Gewertz 1995:6) of the *tubuan*; that is, it places the *tubuan* in the colonial and post-colonial context in which the Tolai have interacted and negotiated with agents of global institutions—specifically, church, state, and capitalism. Particular attention is paid to how such interaction and negotiation have shaped Tolai practices and understandings of the *tubuan*. The main argument of this dissertation is that the *tubuan* is not a remnant from the past or an object of nostalgia for the past but an on-going focal point for cultural negotiation and social transformation as well as reproduction; and Tolai identity, represented by the *tubuan*, is not something intrinsically local but a specific product of the global transformation of Tolai society.

In this introductory chapter, I first situate this dissertation in the recent anthropological discourse of culture, tradition, and identity, with particular reference to Pacific studies. Next, I provide the historical and ethnographic background to the Tolai. This is followed by an illustration of some of the major aspects of the *tubuan* and a review of existing ethnographic accounts of it. I then describe the situation in which
fieldwork was conducted among the Tolai. Finally, I offer an overview of the chapters that follow.

Theoretical Setting

The understanding of culture, a concept which anthropologists have long fetishized, has radically changed in the discipline over the last two decades. In the past, most anthropologists, regardless of their theoretical orientation, accepted a “normative” definition of culture, according to which culture is a unified, coherent, and stable system of shared behaviour patterns, symbols, and values. But now there is a general consensus among anthropologists that culture should be viewed as a construction. This new premise, in fact, is “a hallmark of social-science scholarship in the postmodern era” (Linnekin 1992:249).

Within anthropology, this conceptual shift can be attributed to several theoretical developments. First, inspired by Bourdieu’s (1977) practice theory, which attempts to mediate between structure/system and process, and indebted to symbolic or interpretive anthropologists like Clifford Geertz and Victor Turner, many anthropologists have become concerned with examining the historical process in which social relations and cultural meanings are created, maintained, or altered by human intentions and actions (e.g., Fowler 1987; Ortner 1984, 1989; cf. Sahlins 1981, 1985). Second, Foucault’s (1977, 1980, 1984) notion of discourse and Williams’ (1977) refinement of Gramsci’s (1971) notion of hegemony—both of which emphasize the pervasive and strategic natures of
power in social relations and attend to the specifics of historically located and structurally derived practices through which power relations are constituted, reinforced, or resisted—have brought about a growing sensitivity among anthropologists to historical intertwinement between culture and power (e.g., Comaroff and Comaroff 1991; Dirks 1987, 1992; Fox 1985; Sider 1986). Third, it has been increasingly recognized among anthropologists, especially since the appearance of Wallerstein’s (1974) work on the modern world system, that the world’s populations have long been interrelated through European colonialism and capitalism (e.g., Asad 1973; Mintz 1985; Wolf 1982), and that local cultures, therefore, must be situated in the historical context of larger political economic processes (e.g., Nash 1979, 1981; O’Brien and Roseberry 1991; Roseberry 1983, 1988, 1989; Stoler 1985; Taussig 1980; Verdery 1983; Vincent 1982).

These theoretical developments have occurred together with a growing reflexive awareness of anthropological practice itself. Following Said’s (1978) attack on Orientalism, anthropologists have become critical of their own textual practices: the assertion of ethnographic authority and objectivism; the manipulation of writing strategies to produce persuasive texts; and the stereotypical representation of the non-Western world as a temporally distant, unchanging Other that is absolutely different from the West (e.g., Clifford 1983; Clifford and Marcus 1986; Fabian 1983; Marcus and Fischer 1986). Moreover, they have come to acknowledge that anthropological enterprise itself is historically grounded in power relations in which the societies they tend to study are politically and economically dominated by the West, and that their scholarly narratives work to legitimize a Western hegemony (e.g., Asad 1973; Thomas 1989, 1994).

Woven together, these developments have had a great impact on the way in
which culture is seen and written, resulting in a widespread rejection of objectivist, positivist, essentialist, and imperialist notions of culture, and leading to an analytic emphasis on its subjective, symbolically constituted, multivocal, contested, negotiated, and historically contingent characters. Thus, anthropologists have been led to view culture as a dynamic process in which asymmetrically related social actors produce, reproduce, or transform social structures and symbolic systems. The practical effect of this, then, has been to encourage anthropologists to take a historical approach, that is, to treat their subjects as historical agents and contextualize them in a complex, historical interplay of a wide range of political and economic processes (for review articles that examine anthropology's recent turn to history, see Faubion 1993; Kellogg 1991; Kelly and Kaplan 1990; Krech 1991; Medick 1987; Vincent 1986).

This shift in the conception of culture has been particularly evident in the growing literature on the “invention of tradition” (Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983). In this literature, “tradition” refers not to a core set of cultural characteristics that is passively or unconsciously handed down from one generation to another, but rather to a model of the cultural past that is actively or consciously constructed in the present to achieve political ends (see Handler 1984, 1988; Handler and Linnekin 1984; Linnekin '1983, 1990). The concept of tradition becomes politically salient especially in the context of modern nationalism in which “[i]nvoking the cultural past to validate and solidify group identity is a common practice” (Linnekin 1990:151).

The political use of tradition is a frequent occurrence in Melanesia, where nation-statehood is relatively new, linguistic and cultural diversity is exceptionally great, and people, therefore, are faced with the necessity of defining or redefining their
collective identities. At the national level, “tradition” is deployed by politicians, bureaucrats, and intellectuals to foster unity among the linguistically and culturally diverse groups comprising a young nation-state. At the local level, on the other hand, “tradition” is brought into play by these groups to differentiate themselves from one another in the face of stiff competition for power or resources, or in an effort to gain autonomy or even secede from the nation-state. Given the intense level of nation making and unmaking, it is not surprising that a number of anthropologists working in post-colonial Melanesia have taken an interest in studying the politics of tradition (e.g., Babadzan 1988; Bolton 1999, 2003; Foster 1995a, 1995b; Jolly 1994; Jolly and Thomas 1992; Keesing 1989, 1992; Keesing and Tonkinson 1982; Lindstrom 1998; Lindstrom and White 1994; Linnekin and Poyer 1990; Otto and Thomas 1997; Philibert 1986; Thomas 1992; White and Lindstrom 1993).

The new anthropological discourse of culture, however, has political and ethical implications for its application to specific indigenous societies (see Linnekin 1992). In the Pacific, there were angry reactions on the part of indigenous intellectuals (e.g., Trask 1991) to anthropologists who had questioned the authenticity of traditions “invented” in contemporary political discourse on the assumption that while colonial encounters allowed indigenous people to externalize and objectify their own culture, there still remain “un-invented” and therefore authentic cultures in villages (e.g., Keesing 1982, 1989, 1991; see also Babadzan 1988; cf. Hanson 1989). The dispute was not just over

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3 The Melanesian states of Fiji, Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands, and Vanuatu—all noted for their linguistic and cultural diversities—became independent in the years between 1970 and 1980. The concept of tradition is expressed by various terms in these countries: vaka vanua (“the ways of the land”) and vaka viti (“the ways of Fiji”) in Fiji; kastam (“custom”) and pasin tumbuna (“the ways of the ancestors”) in Papua New Guinea; kastomu (“custom”) in the Solomon Islands; and kastom (“custom”) in Vanuatu (Jolly and Thomas 1992:241, 247).
whether a tradition is authentic or not, but also over who has the authority to represent a
culture (Briggs 1996; Linnekin 1991a, 1991b). It has been suggested that the assertion of
ethnographic authority by anthropologists worked in the Western-dominated modern
world, but that is no longer the case in the post-modern world in which the West appears
to be in a terminal decline (Friedman 1992, 1994). In the end, anthropologists have been
reminded that all cultural representations, including their own, are symbolic constructions
embedded in a historically specific, socio-political context (see Linnekin 1992).

Moreover, the distinction between authentic cultures and inauthentic traditions
has been denounced as the denial of cultural self-consciousness to contemporary villagers
and, by implication, to pre-colonial societies. “It is perhaps Western and anthropological
presumption to insist that Westerners delivered to Pacific peoples a novel sense of
cultural awareness” (Jolly 1992:59). Recent Pacific studies have embraced the likelihood
that indigenous people were aware of cultural difference in pre-colonial times through
inter-group transactions (e.g., fighting and trade) or their own social categories that
differed from those of the Westerners, yet there is a general consensus about the radical
impact of colonial encounters on pre-colonial cultural self-consciousness (e.g., Jolly
1992; Linnekin and Poyer 1990; cf. Harrison 2000). In what specific ways, then, did
European colonization affect indigenous cultural self-consciousness?

European colonization was often less a directly coercive conquest than a
formation of hegemony, which was, in Comaroff and Comaroff’s terms, “a pervasive
attempt to colonize consciousness, to remake people by redefining the taken-for-granted
surfaces of their everyday worlds” (1991:313), amidst—and despite—their cultural
contestation generated by consciousness of being colonized. As a result, indigenous
people internalized structures and premises of the hegemonic colonial/Western discourse of culture—i.e., Manichean dichotomies of missionary discourse, assumptions of Orientalism, reified and bounded notions of culture, and the theory of ethnicity—to such a depth that they reproduced them in resisting colonial powers and even governments of the post-colonial states (Keesing 1989, 1992; Linnekin 1990; Linnekin and Poyer 1990).

Accordingly, as many Pacific case studies of the politics of tradition have demonstrated, notions of tradition are articulated most commonly in opposition to what is considered “Western” or “modern”—particularly church, government, and business—although their specific configurations vary from place to place, depending on specific colonial and post-colonial circumstances. Indigenous culture became reified against Western culture in the colonial context and has been appropriated as “tradition” by indigenous people themselves as a marker of their own ethnicity in the post-colonial context (Linnekin 1990; Linnekin and Poyer 1990). This makes us realize “how deeply the thought and experience of a colonized people bears the impress of colonial categories and ideologies” (Keesing 1992:236).

These generalizations may hold true when the concept of tradition is used in rhetoric. Rhetorical constructions of tradition are often so abstract that their meanings inevitably emerge against what is not considered “traditional”—that is, the modern. If one focuses on the rhetorical use of tradition, then identity construction in the Pacific is predictably read as a reactive or derivative project based on hegemonic Western discourses. This approach, however, obscures the more immediate reality in the Pacific (and elsewhere): very often in actual practice, people selectively combine indigenous and exogenous elements in syncretic forms. But there have been relatively few detailed
studies that explore this reality (see White 1991 for a major exception; see also Clifford 1988). This is probably because many anthropologists are still so obsessed with simplistic, dichotomous notions of tradition and modernity that they are not really ready yet to deal with "creolized" cultures that have been produced through various processes of globalization (see Hannerz 1992, 1992, 1997).

To deal with such "creolized" cultures, Geoffrey White (1993) suggests that rather than focusing on abstract notions of tradition and their antithetical relations with what is considered "modern," we look at particular, pragmatically defined forms of traditional knowledge and practice, and investigate how they are actually put to use in specific contexts where people negotiate problematic relations between indigenous and exogenous forms (477-478). In such contexts, he states, "contrasts between the local-traditional and foreign-modern may be construed as much in terms of similarity and incorporation as difference and exclusion" (475).

White’s suggestions are particularly useful in studying Tolai identity. According to Klaus Neumann (1992a:99, 1992b:305-306), Tolai categorize their "traditional" practices as balanagunan and distinguish them from those of lotu ("church" or Christianity) and matanitu ("government" or the state). However, he emphasizes “[t]he strikingly composite nature of Tolai identity and the marked absence of dichotomies such as tradition versus business, or indigenous versus Western” (1992b:312), stating that Tolai "rely on a well-established repertoire of modified traditions, and modified colonial innovations” (1992b:307). It then follows that the formation and transformation of Tolai identity cannot be explained simply in terms of the historical genesis of balanagunan in

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4 *Lotu* is a word from Tonga meaning “worship” and “religion,” while *matanitu* is a word from Fiji meaning “government.” Both terms were introduced to the Tolai by Pacific Island Methodist missionaries in the late nineteenth century.
opposition to _lotu_ and _matanitu_. Rather, the question that should be explored is how Tolai have incorporated elements of tradition and modernity into a distinct Tolai identity.

Following White’s lead, this dissertation, instead of looking at the abstract idea of _balanagunan_, takes the _tubuan_—a particular, pragmatic feature of _balariagunan_—as the analytical focus, and examines specific contexts whereby Tolai constructed its meanings by negotiating its relations with _lotu_, _matanitu_, and additionally _bisnis_ ("business" or the cash/capitalist economy) during the colonial and post-colonial periods. This, then, would allow us to understand how the _tubuan_ has come to stand for Tolai identity which is "strikingly composite."

There are a growing number of Melanesian studies that examine the ways in which people constitute a group identity—or culture or society—through the production, use, and control of a particular cultural practice or object which they consider historically important for them (e.g., Battaglia 1983; Bolton 2003; Fajans 1997; Hermkens 2005; Jeudy-Ballini and Juillerat 2002; Keller 1988; MacKenzie 1991; Weiner 1985, 1992). Such a practice or object functions as a symbolic mediator in the externalization and internalization, or the objectification and consumption (Miller 1987), of identity by its possessors. However, the assumption in many of these studies that the value of a cultural practice or object depends on its possessors’ subjective identification with it, inevitably leaves out the constitutive role of other people. I agree with Nicholas Thomas who says:

> Artifacts can be significant as markers of other people with whom one does not identity; they can signify difference, contest, and relatedness; they can also be created in order to represent histories or events rather than subjects or can be subsequently seen in those terms. The potential uses of artifacts...cannot be reduced to a unitary model or process such as the chain of objectification and sublation (1991:26).

Thomas then directs our attention from a “constrictive typology of object-meanings in an abstracted domain of man, subject, and object” to what he calls “entanglement”—“the
variety of liaisons men and women can have with things in the conflicted, transcultural history of colonialism" (1991:26). Thus, in his Entangled Objects (1991), he discusses the “European Appropriation of Indigenous Things” (artefacts). However, he also pays equal attention to the “Indigenous Appropriation of European Things” (pigs, muskets, whale teeth). What he tries to demonstrate through this juxtaposition is the historically situated uses of material objects in the conjunctures of Pacific islanders and Europeans, and transactional relations between the colonized and colonizers.

Following Thomas, I discuss the European appropriation of tubuan masks, but his thesis, which focuses on material objects in colonial contexts, is also applicable to institutions and ideas in both colonial and post-colonial contexts. This dissertation looks at specific points in Tolai colonial and post-colonial history where the tubuan intersected with lotu, matanitu, and bisnis. In doing so, I investigate both how agents of lotu, matanitu, and bisnis used the tubuan for their own purposes, and how Tolai took lotu, matanitu, and bisnis into their system of knowledge and practice. By this two-way analysis, I hope to demonstrate how the meaning of the tubuan and Tolai identity have been formed and transformed through transactions between Tolai and agents of lotu, matanitu, and bisnis.

Thomas’ work has arisen from anthropological discourses about appropriate ways of writing about non-Western societies. In the last two decades, according to Foster (1995b), there have been two divergent analytical approaches in Melanesian anthropology: the “New Melanesian Ethnography” (see Josephides 1991) and the “New Melanesian History.” In his terms, the former, which is represented by Strathern’s The Gender of the Gift (1988), “constructs an opposition between Us and Them in order to
criticize a mode of anthropological inquiry unselfconsciously predicated upon Our presuppositions" (Foster 1995b:2), while the latter, which is epitomized by Thomas’ work (1991), “deconstructs dichotomies between Us and Them in order to criticize a mode of anthropological inquiry that emphasizes (even essentializes) the otherness of the Other and de-emphasizes the contingent effects of time (history) and power (colonial and capitalist domination)” (Foster 1995b:3). Recently, there have been attempts to synthesize or reconcile these two approaches (e.g., Foster 1995b; Hermkens 2005; Mosko 2002).

This dissertation is apparently on the side of the “New Melanesian History” as it attempts “to situate ethnography in a shared world of historical experience rather than the romanticized and divided universe of Them and Us” (Barker 1992:145). Criticism have been directed towards conventional ethnographic practices that dehistoricize and essentialize the “exotic” and “authentic” Other (Carrier 1992a) and a long-standing analytic emphasis on the ordering of the “forms” in which social actors are passively situated—particularly the oppositional dichotomy between “gift” and “commodity” societies (Carrier 1992b, 1995; Thomas 1991); the leadership typologies of “chiefs,” “big men,” and “great men” (Feinberg and Watson-Gegeo 1996; White and Lindstrom 1997); and the anthropological, or more generally Western, idealization of “cargo cults” (Buck 1989; Lindstrom 1993). There have also appeared an increasing number of case studies that explicitly claim to offer a historically grounded ethnographic analysis (e.g., Beckett 1987; Biersack 1991; Burt 1994; Carrier and Carrier 1989, 1991; Errington and Gewertz 1995; Gewertz 1983; Gewertz and Errington 1991; Keesing 1992; Thomas 1991; White 1991). The encompassing theme that has emerged from these studies is that Melanesians
do have or make their own histories, dynamically constructing, maintaining, or transforming their societies and cultures through participating in larger political and economic processes that create specific relations of power.

Particularly important for my purposes is a historically grounded ethnographic approach taken by Frederick Errington and Deborah Gewertz in their work on Karavarans, *Articulating Change in the “Last Unknown”* (1995). The anthropologists counter two popular Western misconceptions of change—“the myth of the fragile Eden” and “the myth of the inflexible tradition” (5)—and seek “to render change complex and yet comprehensible” (72) and provide “a perspective that simultaneously makes both ‘others’ and ‘ourselves’ more understandable—more readily comparable—as culturally constructed, historically contingent, and mutually determinative” (4). Thus, rather than fixing their analytic eyes on the ethnographic present of a cultural or social system, they explore the people’s efforts to achieve a sense of identity and worth by enquiring into historical dimensions of their current engagements with Christianity, nationalism, and capitalism. Central to their narratives are vignettes that illustrate the way the people actively pursue and negotiate meaningful lives in a post-colonial world: the confiscation of indigenous shell money which expatriate artefact dealers attempted to export without an official permit; the enactment of the arrival of the first missionary; a fight between “conservative” and evangelical Christians; a “traditional” mortuary ceremony in which a national politician made a political speech; and the destruction of a tourist facility. By contextualizing these particular events (in some of which the anthropologists are themselves participants) in colonial history, they demonstrate the complexities of change which was effected by both the people and outsiders. What is presented, in short, is a
historical analysis of the ethnographically particular.

Following Errington and Gewertz, this dissertation avoids essentialism, both new and old, and takes local agency and historical contingency seriously. Rather than attempting to map the place of the *tubuan* onto a Tolai cultural or social system, which may be abstracted from my field notes and memory about the Tolai, I locate the *tubuan* in particular events—some unique and others ordinary—to glimpse larger patterns of Tolai involvement in a post-colonial socio-political world and illuminate global issues like the construction of ethnic and national identities and class formation in Tolai society and Papua New Guinea. More specifically, these events are those in which Tolai negotiate relations between the *tubuan* on the one hand, and *lotu, matanitu,* and *bisnis* on the other, among themselves and with other Papua New Guineans. These events are situated in colonial contexts whereby Tolai actively interacted with *lotu, matanitu,* and *bisnis* through their agents, and the *tubuan* became an emblem of Tolai identity. By this historically grounded ethnographic analysis of the *tubuan,* I hope to demonstrate how Tolai have shaped and reshaped their identity by configuring and reconfiguring their culture and society in directions they themselves have chosen.

The Tolai: Historical and Ethnographic Background

The Tolai are an Austronesian-speaking people and call their language *tinata tuna* (meaning “true word” or “proper word”), although it is more widely known as “Kuanua”
or simply “Tolai.”5 There is concrete linguistic evidence that they are more closely related to the peoples of the Duke of York Islands and southern New Ireland than to any of those of other parts of New Britain (e.g., Beaumont 1972; Chowning 1976). It is accepted that the north-eastern Gazelle Peninsula, where the Tolai currently live, was once occupied by small non-Austronesian-speaking groups like the Baining, the Sulka, and the Taulil, and that a few centuries before the coming of Europeans (cf. Salisbury 1970:286, n.9), Tolai ancestors migrated from southern New Ireland to the area via the Duke of York Islands and chased them away inland with the threat of raiding, enslavement, and cannibalism. Today, Tolai proudly recount their past as conquerors, regarding themselves as superior to the inland neighbours, especially the Baining (Neumann 1992a:237).

The Tolai area is one of continuing volcanic activity. A good number of active and extinct volcanoes surround Blanche Bay, which itself is the crater of a huge ancient volcano. Major eruptions occurred in 1878, 1937, and most recently 1994, devastating Rabaul which managed to rebuild itself each time (see Johnson and Threlfall 1985; Neumann 1996). At present, the only sign of volcanic activity is smoke and ash spewed out on and off from Mt. Tavurvur near Matupit, but there is much talk of another major eruption happening in fifty years’ time. Although the volcanoes are an ever-present threat, they have also brought advantages. The volcanic ash deposited for centuries across the land has made the soils unusually fertile. The land in this area is among the most productive in Papua New Guinea, so that the people earn very high incomes from the sale of cash crops (see Hanson et al. 2001:257-268). Rich vegetation, which is fostered by

5 Tolai is one of the most thoroughly studied Papua New Guinean languages. There are many Tolai dictionaries (e.g., Lanyon-Orgill 1960; Mannering and Mannering n.d.; Methodist Overseas Mission 1940; see also Franklin et al. 1974).
favourable climate, has sustained an exceedingly high population growth in this one of
the most densely populated areas of Melanesia. The existence of a great variety of
vegetables and fruits has encouraged local trade to flourish. By the time of European
contact, the people had already been keen traders using a highly developed form of
currency—the shell money tabu. The volcanoes also provided attractive environments for
incoming Europeans. In the area, they found a number of fine natural harbours with safe
anchorages for sailing ships, plenty of tropical products valued in European markets, and
people willing to trade. It is these topological, ecological, and demographic factors
attributed to volcanic activity that made the north-eastern Gazelle Peninsula one of the
first areas in New Guinea opened up to European contact and a major centre of a colony.

Following Carteret’s “discovery” of St. George’s Channel between New Britain
and New Ireland in 1767, European ships, particularly whalers, sailed through it at
intervals and used Port Hunter (Molot) in Duke of York Island as a safe harbour (see Sack
and Clark 1983:29). However, it was not until the 1870s that Europeans became seriously
interested in the area. In 1872, an Englishman operated a trading station at Port Hunter
for some time (Maude 1966:193-194; cf. Brown 1908:97), while the north-eastern tip of
New Britain was surveyed by Simpson in HMS Blanche, who named the harbour and the
bay after him and the ship respectively. In the following year, the German firm of J. C.
Godeffroy, based in Samoa, set up trading posts in Matupit and Nodup (Nogai), but its
two agents were attacked and driven out by the people within two months (Wawn
1893:169, 286-287, 294; see also Brown 1908:92, 122; Powell 1883:38; Sack and Clark
1983:29-30). The incident was investigated in 1875 by von Schleinitz who led a German
scientific expedition to the area in the naval vessel Gazelle, after which he named the
peninsula (Neumann 1992a:85-86). It was also sometime in the early 1870s that eight men were kidnapped from Nodup, presumably by whalers to use them as boat crews; only one of them was brought back alive from Sydney by Powell (1883:29-30) in 1877.

The first permanent European resident in the area was George Brown, a missionary from the Australasian Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society who landed at Port Hunter on August 15, 1875. After fourteen years’ work in Samoa, he wished to emulate the London Missionary Society in the westward expansion into New Guinea which had yet to be missionized. The LMS had begun work on the southeast coast of the mainland in 1874; Brown had his eyes on the islands region, particularly New Britain and New Ireland which had been reported as densely populated. Port Hunter was chosen as his regional base because it was located about halfway between them. By the time of his arrival, some islanders there had already been able to communicate with Europeans in pidgin English (Brown 1908:93; Sack and Clark 1983:29). Soon after securing his base, he started making contact and establishing relations with coastal communities on the north-eastern Gazelle Peninsula, where he soon set up mission stations and schools, using an increasing number of Fijian and Samoan missionaries. Brown stayed in the area until the end of 1880 when a “chief” of Vunamami was appointed the first indigenous preacher in New Britain (Brown 1908:378) and the Methodist mission began taking root on the north-eastern Gazelle Peninsula.7

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6 For his biographies, see Fletcher 1921, 1944.
7 On January 19, 1968, the Methodist Church in Melanesia (a church which had founded by the Australasian Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society in 1875), the Papua Ekalesia (an independent church which had developed out of the work of the London Missionary Society from 1874 onwards), and the United Church of Port Moresby (an interdenominational group which had commenced in 1958) were amalgamated to form the United Church in Papua, New Guinea, and the Solomon Islands. It was divided into the United Church in Papua New Guinea and the United Church in the Solomon Islands in 1992. For official histories of the Methodist/United Church in the New Guinea Islands Region, see Danks 1899; Fellmann 1973 [1918]; Lewis 1954; Threlfall 1975, 1977; Williams 1972:105-179.
A Roman Catholic mission was established there by three French missionaries from the Mission of the Sacred Heart (*Mission du Sacré-Cœur* or MSC) in 1882. Unlike their Methodist counterparts, they had an unstable and difficult beginning. Within one year following their arrival, they tried out four different locations as their base—Nodup, Kininigunan (Kokopo), Malaguna, and Volavolo. For the rest of the 1880s, mission work was confined to Volavolo and Malaguna, and later Volavolo only, because of a lack of manpower; there were only a handful of newly arriving MSC missionaries, including Louis Couppé. It was only after Couppé returned in December 1891 as the first Catholic Bishop of New Britain with a solid plan to carry out mission work that the Catholic mission began to see a good omen. He acquired a large plot of land east of Kokopo, which he named Vunapope (“the base of the Pope”) and made the mission’s headquarters. While the colonial policy in the 1890s of dividing the north-eastern Gazelle Peninsula into mission zones or “spheres of influence” made the extension of mission work very difficult, he laid the foundations of the Catholic mission on a firm basis with a gradual increase in the number of MSC missionaries mainly from Germany.

Commercial interest in the area focused on copra (dried coconut meat), which was in high demand in nineteenth-century Europe. Early copra trade was dominated by two German companies. One was the firm of Eduard Hernsheim, who arrived in Port Hunter in 1875 and traded out of Makada and later Matupit. The other was the D.H.P.G.

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8 In the previous year, however, a total of 76 children in Nodup, Baai, and Malaguna were reportedly baptised by a secular Catholic priest named Abbe Rene-Marie Lannuzel. He came to New Ireland in 1880 as chaplain to European settlers who were brought there through the Marquis de Rays’ scheme for the colony of “New France.” However, having found the colony a failure, he moved to the Gazelle Peninsula and resided in Nodup for several months in 1881. See Biskup 1974:6-20; Reed 1943:292-298 for more about the colony of “New France.”

9 See Adela 1968:7-34 for a biographic sketch of Couppé. For official histories of the Catholic Church in New Britain, see Catholic Church 1982, [1963?].

10 See Sack and Clark 1983 for Hernsheim’s reminiscences and diaries.
successor to the Godeffroy company which had resumed trading in the area around 1876 by setting up local headquarters on Mioko. By the end of 1883, the two companies were reportedly exporting annually about 1,000 tons of copra each from the New Guinea islands (Sack 1973:77). Their commercial interests, however, were threatened by the activities of British labour recruiters, or “blackbirders,” from plantations in Queensland and Fiji, who turned their attention to the islands region early in that year (Wawn 1893:279-280; see also Corris 1968). Immediate action was taken by the Germans, which resulted in the proclamation in November 1884 of a German protectorate over the chain of New Guinea islands, which was named “Bismarck Archipelago,” and the north-eastern quarter of the New Guinea mainland, which was named “Kaiser Wilhelmsland” (and of a British protectorate over the south-eastern quarter of the New Guinea mainland, which was called “British New Guinea” and, after 1906, “Papua”).

The exclusive right to administer German New Guinea was granted in May 1885 to a newly founded private business firm, the New Guinea Company (see Sack and Sack 1975:1-3), which was concerned primarily with the creation of a low-wage and high-profit plantation economy serving markets in Europe and only secondarily with the imposition of a system of colonial order over the inhabitants. The Company, however, failed to make profits and was taken over in 1899 by the Imperial Government which perpetuated its institutionalized commercial priorities. The capital of the colony was

11 In 1883, more than 1,200 New Guinea islanders were recruited for plantations in Queensland, whereas the number of recruits obtained from the same region by the D.H.P.G. for its plantations in Samoa was less than 300 (Firth 1983:15). One of the Queensland recruiters in that year was Wawn, one of the two Godeffroy agents who had failed to establish permanent trading stations in Matupit and Nonga ten years before. Although he secured 130 from New Ireland, he failed again in the Gazelle Peninsula; he and his companions were attacked in Nodup and severely wounded by spears and bullets (Wawn 1893:279-308).
Kokopo (then Herbertshöhe) from 1890 until 1910 when it was transferred to Rabaul.\textsuperscript{12}

In early years of German rule, Tolai frequently tried to expel foreigners from their land, but they "came to welcome the Germans as guarantors of a new order of prosperity based on copra trading" (Firth 1983:6). They were able to earn incomes by selling a surplus of coconuts and garden produce to Europeans, rather than by serving them as plantation workers. Since there were few Tolai who agreed to work on plantations at home, the labour force had to be imported from other parts of New Guinea. Thus, unlike many other New Guineans, Tolai participated in the developing cash economy without being much absorbed into the labour structure and without becoming totally dependent on Europeans. Meanwhile, people came under indirect administrative control through government-appointed village "chiefs" or Luluais, the political office introduced by Albert Hahl, Imperial Judge in New Britain from 1896 to 1898, Acting Governor of German New Guinea from 1901 to 1902, and Governor from 1902 to 1914 (see Biskup 1968).\textsuperscript{13} It was only with the introduction of the Luluai system that villages, each consisting of several hamlets, emerged as clearly defined entities. Located at the heart of a colonial economy and ruled longer than any other New Guineans, the Tolai lost almost 40% of their arable land by the end of the German colonial period in 1914 when the First World War broke out (Rowley 1966:118). Land shortage, coupled with an explosive rate of population growth, was to cause many social problems in many years to come.

Following military occupation by Australia, New Guinea became its mandated territory in 1921, Rabaul still being the capital. The Australian administration was obliged

\textsuperscript{12} "Kokopo" means "landslide" and "Rabaul" "the mangrove" in the vernacular.

\textsuperscript{13} For his autobiography, see Sack and Clark 1980.
to “promote to the utmost the material and moral well-being and the social progress of the inhabitants of the territory” (Commonwealth of Australia 1922:65), but little interest was shown in, and little money spent on, “native” welfare. However, Tolai took advantage of whatever opportunities were available to them. Education had been largely left to the missions by then, but when government schools were established at Malaguna and Nodup in the inter-war period, many Tolai acquired technical skills and learned English (A. L. Epstein 1969:38-39). Copra remained the main export commodity, although its prices dramatically dropped in the 1930s due to the Depression. Tolai continued to sell their coconuts and garden produce to Europeans, thereby retaining a considerable measure of their economic and social independence. However, they also explored other ways of earning cash incomes, such as casual employment in Rabaul (A. L. Epstein 1969:30, 61) and wage labour in the newly developing gold-mining centres of the New Guinea mainland (Salisbury 1970:51). This was made possible by the influx of “white” Australians in search of economic opportunities, which also led to strained race relations particularly in major towns like Rabaul where the presence of Chinese and Malay communities created additional problems (see Tetaga 1974). In terms of “native” administration, the Luluai system, which had been inherited from the Germans with some modifications, was extended in 1929 to have Paramount Luluais. Village councils were also experimented with on an informal basis in some parts of the north-eastern Gazelle Peninsula in the late 1930s. However, all the gradual developments which were taking place in the area collapsed with the Japanese military occupation of 1942-5 during which many Tolai died from maltreatment and malnutrition.14

14 Leadley (1976)’s thesis on the Japanese occupation of the New Guinea islands includes many Tolai accounts of the war.
After the Second World War, the Australian administration was restored in New Guinea, which was to be administered jointly with Papua, with Port Moresby as a single capital. Pre-war policies on the welfare of the inhabitants were radically modified to give way for major political and economic developments. The Tolai were among the first to form local government councils, and some of their councils were so successful that they were reputed as the most active and progressive councils in the territory (Salisbury 1970:57). Tolai also formed co-operative societies with much enthusiasm, although most of these went bankrupt within several years (see Salisbury 1970:216-236). Cocoa was introduced as an alternative cash crop, resulting in the establishment of the Tolai Cocoa Project (see A. L. Epstein 1969:67-68; T. S. Epstein 1968:114-133; Salisbury 1970:135-145; Williamson 1958). Taking advantage of the incomparable access to education that they had had over the years, first through mission schools and then through government schools, a growing number of Tolai sought white-collar jobs within and outside their area. Accordingly, Tolai quickly stood out as an indigenous occupational élite in the territory (A. L. Epstein 1969:58-60). At the same time that these changes took place in the 1950s and 1960s, Tolai became increasingly aware of wider political and economic issues adversely affecting their lives. Their frustration culminated in the formation in 1969 of the Mataungan Association, a Tolai anti-colonial movement, which was to play a prominent part in bringing about self-government in 1973 and national independence in 1975 for Papua New Guinea (see Grosart 1982). The Tolai, thus, emerged as one of the best educated and most influential and affluent peoples in the country.

Today, roughly half of the Tolai belong to the United (formerly Methodist)
Church and half the Roman Catholic Church. In addition to these mainline churches, there are a small yet steadily growing number of adherents to the Seventh-day Adventist Church and Pentecostal churches, which were established in the north-eastern Gazelle Peninsula in 1929 and after the Second World War respectively. Christianity provides a moral basis for everyday life among the Tolai. Local congregations spend a lot of money on the construction and maintenance of their church buildings. Every Sunday (or Saturday), whole families, wearing light-coloured neat cloths, attend the service in the morning and rest in the afternoon. During the week, one day is usually set aside to clean up the church building and ground. Tolai love to sing hymns from the heart, and are actually well-known as skilled hymn singers (see Webb 1995). They are not just Christians by belief but have a profound theological understanding (Neumann 1992a:104).

For administrative purposes, people are organized into wards, local level governments, and districts. Individuals are elected at each level, at intervals of five years, to represent them in a local level government council, the East New Britain provincial assembly, and the national parliament respectively. Wards are newly introduced administrative units, but in most cases they coincide with their predecessors, that is, “villages.” Each ward, with an average population of about 750, is administered by an elected councillor who is supported by ward committee members appointed by

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15 Most Tolai live in the Gazelle District (Central Gazelle Rural LLG, Livuan/Reimber Rural LLG, Vunadidir/Toma Rural LLG), the Kokopo District (Bitapaka Rural LLG, Kokopo/Vunamami Urban LLG, Raluana Rural LLG), and the Rabaul District (Balanataman Rural LLG, Kombiu Rural LLG, Rabaul Urban LLG, and Watom Island Rural LLG).
16 According to the most recent national census (National Statistical Office 2002), there are a total of 178 wards in the predominantly Tolai local level governments with a total population of 134,147 (see fn.2).
Each month (usually first Monday), he calls a ward meeting (laen) at a community hall (pal na kivung) to allow people to discuss various issues of community development—infrastructure, agriculture, welfare, education, law and order, etc—in relation to directives issued by upper levels of administration. Matters of business concluded, the remainder of the meeting is usually taken up in the hearing of disputes within the ward. Inter-ward disputes are referred to a village court of the local level government, while cases involving police charges are brought before a district court.

Most of the residential buildings in the area are made of permanent or semi-permanent materials. The most popular house type is a two-story structure with corrugated steel roofs, louvered glass windows, and rainwater tanks. Many Tolai own cars and are seen shopping in town. Most households earn cash incomes through the agricultural production of export commodities like copra, cocoa, and, more recently, vanilla, and the sale of a variety of garden crops at local markets. Some run small-scale businesses, such as bakeries, trade stores, cocoa fermentaries, and PMVs (public motor vehicles), while others are engaged in paid employment, working as public servants, teachers, bankers, clerks, carpenters, mechanics, and so on. There are also a number of Tolai living in other parts of the country, and in even other countries, where they have highly esteemed careers in the public and private sectors.

While features of modernity are intimately woven into daily life among the Tolai, most villagers also remain faithful to many of their customary practices, beliefs, and values. Subsistence farming is still an important part of household economy. Taro (pa), yams (up), sweet potatoes (kaukau), cassava (tapiok), and bananas (vudu) grown in the

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17 Councillors are paid a monthly allowance. Until 2000, it was K50 throughout the province. Since 2001, it has been K200 in Rabaul and Kokopo/Vunamami Urban LLGs; K150 in the predominantly Tolai Rural LLGs and Duke of York Rural LLG; and K100 in the other LLGs in the province.
garden are still major staples; although nowadays many families regularly eat rice, bread, and tinned food purchased at stores. Men of Vunamami continue to fish using huge basket-like fish traps (*ungut*) (see Salisbury 1970:152-154, 238-239; cf. A. L. Epstein 1969:77-80), while men of Matupit still go digging for eggs (*kiau*) of megapodes or bush turkeys (*ngeok*) in the warm soil close to the base of Mt. Tavurvur (see A. L. Epstein 1969:73-75). The fish and eggs caught by men are bought, cooked, and sold at local markets by women. Men keep on making canoes (*oaga*), hand drums (*kudu*), and slit gongs (*garamut*) out of wood (*divai*), and women, a wide variety of mats (*kubin*) and baskets (*rat, lokopit, and kakia*) of coconut (*lama*) and pandanus (*voivoi*) leaves.

Although elected councillors play an important role in ward affairs, “big men”—an ideal type of leaders in traditional Melanesian societies, who achieve their positions by demonstrating their entrepreneurial skills in economic activities and ceremonies—retain considerable authority within their own communities. Councillors often consult big men in ward meetings. Local disputes are still settled through a customary court procedure called *varkurai* (meaning “judgement” or “decision”), which is based on public opinion, persuasion, and compensation, and councillors often seek advice from big men in dispute hearings. Elders are generally respected by young people. Obedience is emphasized and physical punishment is common in the upbringing of children. The social arena is more or less sharply divided between the sexes. Men dominate almost all aspects of society—economic, political, religious, and ceremonial.

Belief in spirits persists among many Tolai. Beings known as *kaia* are said to live inside the craters of volcanoes in the form of a giant snake and cause eruptions (Neumann 1992a:235-236). Men seek artistic inspiration from spirits, generally referred
to as tabaran, using buai (betel nuts) as a medium of communication with them (see Neumann 1992a:90, 139-140). This is facilitated by a tena buai (magic expert) who prepares a buai na kodakodop (literally meaning “betel nut for remembering or learning”)—peeled buai which is covered with kabang (lime powder), wrapped in a daka (pepper plant) leaf, and treated with a special spell—and puts it in the mouth of a man who then chews it until it turns red and swallows it. Sometime later, the latter, while asleep, may have a vision in which a spirit advises him on the composition of a song (kakailai), the choreography of a dance (malagene), the design of a dance costume (moamoong), or a method for love magic (malira) or sorcery (taring). Buai are important in the secular world as well. Both men and women, young and old, constantly chew them, together with kabang and daka fruits; in fact, the Tolai are nationally well-known buai chewers. Buai are also given to guests and visitors as a customary gesture of welcome, and traditional ceremonies always begin with the distribution of buai (varlapang) by hosts to attendants.18

The cultural continuity of Tolai society is epitomized by the persistent use of the shell money tabu (or tambu) (see Bradley 1982:84-124; A. L. Epstein 1963, 1969:230-245, 1979; Neumann 1992a:183-203; Salisbury 1966, 1970:277-309; Simet 1991).19 Tabu consists of small cowrie shells (nassa camelus) threaded onto strips of rattan (Figure 3). The standard unit of measurement is the fathom or pokono, which is

18 The current prevalence of the buai-chewing habit among the Tolai and the spiritual and social significance of buai in Tolai society may change in the near future as health issues concerning it become publicized. Just recently, Papua New Guinea Post-Courier (2004j:7) reported that the World Health Organization (WHO) had officially listed betel-nut chewing as one of the most common causes of mouth cancer, and mouth cancer as one of the three most common types of cancer in countries like PNG where the habit is prevalent. The PNG’s television station EMTV soon followed the lead by starting an awareness campaign against betel-nut chewing (Papua New Guinea Post-Courier 2004b:7).
19 The same shell money is used in the Duke of York Islands, but it is called divara.
calculated as the distance between one’s two outstretched arms. *Tabu* can also be cut at smaller lengths, or arranged in lengths of ten *pokono* (*arip*) or large wrapped coils (*loloi* or *gogo*) containing one hundred to one thousand *pokono*. One of the major sources for the shells has been the Nakanai coast of New Britain, but today they are also obtained from as far afield as the Solomon Islands.

*Tabu* is an essential item in Tolai society and every Tolai is supposed to accumulate it during his or her lifetime. One of *tabu’s* functions is to establish and maintain social relationships, and this becomes most apparent in ceremonies. In a ceremony known as *gomagomo*, which is held for a first-born child, he/she receives *tabu* from the relatives and community for his/her future uses. In a coming-of-age ceremony for a boy, which is called *varkinim* (or *namata*), he receives *tabu* from the relatives and community for (part of) his bride-price payment (*varkukul*), which today ranges from 200 to 300 *pokono* for a young, never-married, and well brought-up woman.\(^{20}\) The bride-price is paid to the bride’s family in a ceremony called *varkukul* (literally “buying”) in which *tabu* is also exchanged between relatives of the groom and bride (*makumaku*). Through these “rites of passage,” an individual is brought into a wide network of social relations and comes to be in debt to society. When he/she becomes mature enough to control his/her own *tabu*, he/she begins to independently create and sustain his/her specific relations with others by carrying out ceremonial transactions of *tabu* (and food), which are based on the principle of debt: if A pays or helps B first (*vavalua*), then B must pay or help A back later (*balbali*). This obligatory repayment also applies to the use of

\(^{20}\) The standard amount of bride price differs from place to place. It is relatively high in Toma where it could be, I was told, as high as 700 to 800 *pokono*. Many local level governments in the Tolai area have set the maximum so that greedy fathers could not ask for an unreasonably large amount of *tabu* to be paid for their daughters.
tabu as compensation (bailali or varporong) in the restoration of peaceful relations between disputing parties in the varkurai and village court. The tabu which one has accumulated during his/her lifetime is eventually (partly) distributed in his/her mortuary ceremony known as minamai (literally meaning “chewing buai”) by his/her relatives, who also distribute their own tabu for him/her, in order to pay off his/her debts to society.

Another function of tabu is to pay for goods and services. Tabu was and still is a currency. It is used to purchase or loan songs, dances, costume designs, and magic, and to recompense those who perform dances and other tasks in ceremonies. Payments in these cases are made only in tabu, but in transactions among Tolai today, virtually all goods that can be bought with the national currency, Kina, can also be bought with tabu. The two currencies are exchangeable; the current exchange rate is one pokono for 3 or 4 Kina, depending on the area. Tabu can now be even used to pay for school fees and local level government head taxes on the north-eastern Gazelle Peninsula. The tabu thus collected is sold for Kina, often at a higher exchange rate. The use of tabu has become so extensive that the Tolai-dominated provincial government has been recently considering making tabu a formal second currency in the province. Tabu is always in high demand so that many Tolai purchase the shells imported by Tolai or non-Tolai entrepreneurs with kina to make it, or they sell goods they bought with kina for it.

Another distinctive feature of the Tolai is their social organization. The people are divided into two matri-moieties or papar (meaning “half”), which are named Pikalaba and Marmar, or Taragau and Minigulai, after two kinds of sea eagles or hawks, or Makadao and Kubar/Ngenge after two kinds of coconuts (Neumann 1992a:266, n.5;
People may not be able to name the *papar* they belong to, but are able to classify everyone in the community into “us” (*dai*) and “them” (*diat*). The *papar* is “strictly speaking a descent category whose main function is the regulation of marriage, breach of the rule of moiety exogamy constituting one of the most heinous offences known to the Tolai” (A. L. Epstein 1969:122). Each *papar* is further divided into numerous matrilineal descent groups (or clans), or *vunatarai* as they are called. The *vunatarai* is a dispersed unit associated with a particular place of origin. The term *vunatarai* is a compound of the prefix *vuna-* meaning “the origin of” or “the base of,” and *tarai*, meaning “people.” In its exact sense, therefore, it does not refer to a group of people per se, but rather the place in which they were founded. Indeed, each *vunatarai* carries the name of its *madapai*, the plot of land that was first cleared and claimed by its founding ancestors. The *madapai* is then an ultimate source of common identity for the *vunatarai*. Over the course of time, members of a *vunatarai*, with women “marrying out,” scattered from its *madapai* and acquired land and formed its local branches (or lineages) elsewhere within the area.

Today, the *vunatarai*, though members may be dispersed through many different local communities, still provides a basis for cooperation. This is due especially to the fact that land (*pia*), a vital element of Tolai society, is customarily owned by the *vunatarai*. Land is not merely the backbone of economic life, but also a major focus of political competition and struggle and a driving force in the formation of kinship ties (see A. L. Epstein 1969:110-200; Salisbury 1970:67-105). Members of a *vunatarai* are entitled to its

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21 The use of the first pair is also common in the Duke of York Islands and southern New Ireland where the same dual social organization exists (see Danks 1889:281-282; Errington 1974:23).

22 *Vuna-* is one of the most common prefixes used in the name of a place, most frequently in the form of a compound with the name of a tree.
estate for cultivation and settlement. The land is administered by its headman, or lualua, who is responsible for protecting the property against any actions by outsiders as well as insiders that he thinks are undesirable. Land disputes frequently arise, and to validate land claims, he needs extensive knowledge of the history of his vunatarai. It is the matrilineal inheritance of land that makes the relationship between a man and his sister's son very close and particularly important in Tolai society. The two persons, who address each other as matuagu; are expected to be one (see Neumann 1992a:139). It should be noted, however, that access to the land of a vunatarai is also granted to those who are "fathered" by (i.e., those whose fathers belong to) that vunatarai. But this is ensured only when these "children" (tamanabul) have good terms with their "fathers" (i.e., members of that vunatarai) by fulfilling their duties to help the latter. With land alienation by European colonizers and an explosive rate of population growth, land has become very scarce in the Tolai area. Whether a vunatarai can safeguard its land depends on its lualua's leadership and cooperation among its members and between them and its "children".

These are tested in vunatarai-based ceremonies, particularly those involving the tubuan. In the following section on the tubuan, I do not intend to repeat detailed descriptions provided by other scholars (see especially Errington 1974; Salisbury 1970:277-309; Simet 1977), or to reveal secrets, so that I keep my account general and confine it to what is most relevant to my discussion in the following chapters.

The Tubuan
The *tubuan* is supposedly the incarnation of a spirit. The creation of a new *tubuan* entails spiritual inspiration by means of *buai na kodakodop* (see above), and the control of a *tubuan* requires knowledge of magical spells and techniques that are specific to it. The *tubuan* is "raised" (*vatut*) at the *taraiu*, the *tubuan*’s scared ground located in the bush or the beach. On various ceremonial occasions, it comes out of, or "erupts" (*puongo*) from, the *taraiu*, accompanied by a group of men making certain shrieking noises ("kwok, kwok, kwok") to warn the village of its presence. Once raised, it is regarded as highly dangerous and harmful. The detrimental effects of its magical powers on humans are said to include injury (especially to the eyes, ears, and testicles), sickness, and even death. Both men and women are expected to fear the *tubuan*, but the latter are more vulnerable than the former to its powers. In the presence of the *tubuan*, men cover (parts of) their faces and bodies with magically treated *kabang* (lime powder) and/or *tar* (red ochre) as protective magic or *babat* against its power. Such protective magic is usually unavailable to women. Access to magic is largely restricted to men whose proper domain is said to be the bush (as opposed to the inhabited area, which is considered to be the proper domain of women) where they claim to be able to communicate with spirits.

Every Tolai man is supposed to get initiated into the *tubuan*. There are three stages of initiation. At each stage, men pay an initiation fee to the organizer in *tabu* and undergo a series of elaborate rituals, some of which are physically demanding, and then certain secrets (*pidik*) of the *tubuan* are revealed to them in the *taraiu*. Most men go through the first stage (*niolo*) and the second stage (*guboro*) by the age of about fifteen, with an initiation fee of one and five *pokono* respectively. Entering the last stage (*nidok*)
requires a lot of determination and commitment, as it involves an initiation fee of ten pokono (i.e., one arip), which is quite a large amount of tabu for most young men, and confinement in the taraiu for an entire week (a month or more in former times), which conflicts with their contemporary lifestyles. Men, however, are pressured to get through this stage by the age of about thirty, at which they are considered to reach maturity, since mature men who have not done so yet are ridiculed as mana, the term used to refer to young, uninitiated boys staying with women.

The secrets (pidik) of the tubuan are rigorously kept from the uninitiated, particularly women and children. Only initiated men are granted access to the taraiu, and they are forbidden to talk about what happens inside it or to take out things inside it. Women are prohibited from entering or approaching the taraiu and getting close to or staring at the tubuan. Those who have violated these rules are punished by the tubuan through its own court procedure known as vanga (or vaganga). Once an accused person is found guilty, the tubuan goes to his or her home where it thrusts its spear (rumu) into the ground and demands the instant payment of a heavy fine in tabu. If he or she fails to obey this demand in any way, it may burn down the house and destroy property. The vanga is also applied to those who have damaged the dignity of the tubuan. For instance, the tubuan levies heavy fines on initiates who have abused the vanga to extort tabu or made the shrieking noises without the presence of the tubuan, and non-initiates who have insulted the tubuan verbally or by imitating it. In former times, the tubuan functioned as a law enforcement agency, as it punished all wrongdoers and settled all disputes through the vanga. Those who had stolen, lied, beaten a wife faced heavy fines, while those who had committed more serious offences like adultery or incest were killed and eaten by the
tubuan. The decisions and actions of the tubuan could not be questioned since they were those of a spirit. Today, most disputes and offences are brought before varkurai, a village court, or a district court, but regulations set to protect the secrets and dignity of the tubuan are still enforced through the vanga.

There are different types of tubuan. Those which have a head with a round base and sides sloping up to a point are categorized as nialir (meaning “swimming”). Most tubuan west of Kokopo are of this type. The most common colours found on their heads are black, white, and red: black is the “skin colour” of the tubuan; white gives it facial features; and red makes it more attractive. Meanwhile, most tubuan east of Kokopo belong to a different type called matatar (meaning “pattern”). The base of the head of a tubuan of this type is not completely round but partly slightly angular. The colour scheme of the matatar type is similar to that of the nialir type, but green is often found on the head of a tubuan of the former type as paired with red. These two types of tubuan have different sets of rules. Tubuan of the nialir type can dance to the beats of the garamut (slit gong) and the kudu (hand drum) and on the canoe off shore in a ritual performance known as kinavai. Most tubuan of this type do not take the pig as food, and those which do are called kamivul or matakorong. Tubuan of the matatar type, on the other hand, can dance to the beats of the garamut only, cannot dance on the canoe, and can take the pig as food. These two types of tubuan also differ in ceremonial procedures.

In addition to the tubuan, there are two other kinds of masked figures: the dukduk and the lomlom. The tubuan and the dukduk have the same spherical leafy body (pepe) but different conical heads: the former has eyes (mata) and a feather headdress.

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23 All tubuan in the Duke of York Islands belong to this type.
24 The only exception I have is a tubuan with light-blue coloured skin that I saw when I participated in a certain tubuan ceremony in Gunanur.
(lakua), while the latter has no eyes but red paint in the lower part of its head on which it carries a tall, gaily decorated tower-like structure (kangal) (Figure 4). The tone of this red paint is an object of competition among dukduk: the darker and shinier the better. The dukduk is said to be the child (bul) of the tubuan. The lomlom, on the other hand, is identical to the tubuan except the head of the former is noticeably smaller than that of the latter (Figure 5). It is said to be the servant (tultul) of the tubuan. Thus, its jobs include bringing foods to the tubuan, clearing a path for the tubuan to walk, and frightening children on behalf of the tubuan by chasing them away with a stick (ram). The lomlom is what people can laugh at, while the tubuan and dukduk are not.25 The dukduk and lomlom appear only in connection with certain tubuan ceremonies and never show up without the tubuan.

Each masked figure has a distinctive design and individual name. Its sex is often denoted by the male prefix To or the female prefix la in its name.26 Each tubuan—and each dukduk and each lomlom for that matter—is identified with a particular vunatarai and managed and controlled by a particular man called bita tubuan, who is usually considered to be the lualua (headman) of that vunatarai. As a rule, a tubuan, together with magical and ritual knowledge associated with it, is inherited within the vunatarai identified with it, particularly from a man to his sister's son. However, it happens that it is passed down from a man to his son who belongs to a vunatarai different from his, when

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25 The most common way in which the lomlom makes people laugh is that it makes itself seem to do its best in imitating its boss, the tubuan, but to come up short. One occasion on which I saw people laugh at a lomlom was when it was making itself seem funny by sitting on a stone and leaning back a bit and crossing its legs. According to one of the men near me at that moment, it was imitating a masta (white man).

26 Many tubuan and lomlom take the female prefix la in their names (e.g., IaRumu in Matupit and IaGaira in Karavia No.2, respectively), and many dukduk the male prefix To (e.g., ToMatanakeake in Karavia No.2), but this does not mean that the tubuan and lomlom are female and the dukduk male (Simet 1977:1-2). I know a good number of tubuan with the male prefix (e.g., ToKilap in Karavia No.2) and tubuan and dukduk without any of these prefixes (e.g., Aingal in Karavia No.2 and Auravutung in Matupit, respectively).
he does not have anyone of his *vunatarai* who is initiated into the *tubuan* and old enough to receive his *tubuan*. In such a case, his *vunatarai* would at a later stage retrieve the *tubuan* from his son with the payment of *tabu* as a token of appreciation for his having looked after it. In theory, every *vunatarai* has a *tubuan*, but there are many *vunatarai* which have failed to pass their *tubuan* down from one generation to another. A *vunatarai* which has lost its *tubuan* for some reason, nevertheless, could purchase an unused one from another *vunatarai* with *tabu* or create a new one. Some *vunatarai* have more than one *tubuan*.

*Tubuan* activities and ceremonies are *vunatarai* affairs. A *tubuan* has its own *tabu* fund (*kiau*), which is mainly based on payments made by members of the *vunatarai* identified by it. Members of a *vunatarai* pay *tabu* to its *tubuan* not only as initiation fees and fines for the violation of *tubuan* rules, but also through rituals known as *tutupar* and *varlapang* in each *tubuan* ceremony. In a *tutupar*, the *bita tubuan* throw bundles of *tabu* at the *tubuan* kneeling down as rewards for its participation in a ceremony (Figure 6). These bundles of *tabu* are contributions by the *bita tubuan* himself and senior members of the *vunatarai*. By contributing *tabu* to their *tubuan*'s fund, they seek to gain and retain their influence in their *vunatarai*. In a *varlapang*, members of a *vunatarai* place short lengths of *tabu* in front of their *tubuan* kneeling down as a token of reverence (Figure 7). The *tabu* fund of a *tubuan* is managed by its *bita tubuan* on behalf of his *vunatarai* and used in *tubuan* ceremonies carried out by the *vunatarai*. A *vunatarai* carries out a *tubuan* ceremony at its ceremonial ground located in its *madapai* where its *tubuan*'s *taraiu* is also located. The *madapai*, as already mentioned, is the place where the

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27 As a general rule, a man is initiated to the first and second stages (*niolo* and *guboro*) by the *tubuan* of his father’s *vunatarai*, and to the final stage (*nidok*) by the *tubuan* of his own *vunatarai*. 

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vunatarai was founded. The tubuan then provides the vunatarai with a strong link with its past. Indeed, the most common reason for a vunatarai to raise its tubuan is to commemorate its dead ancestors...

When a person dies, it is the responsibility of his/her vunatarai (or the vunatarai that “fathered” him/her) to organize a mortuary ceremony known as minamai for him/her. A proper minamai involves the vunatarai’s tubuan. On the early morning of the minamai, the tubuan is raised and comes out of its taraiu (punuongo). It goes first to the deceased’s residence where it “cries” (takin)—that is to say that, in its grief, it kneels down in front of the house and then cuts down some trees—and then to the cemetery where it walks over the grave (talive ra minat). In the minamai, the tubuan shows up with its own tabu coil, which is then cut and distributed for the deceased—in addition to tabu distributed by the relatives—to acknowledge the vunatarai’s debt to society. This not being done can bring great shame to the vunatarai. At the end of the ceremony, the tubuan may perform dances. All these tasks done, then, the tubuan is said to have “buried” (punang) the deceased. In the past, a vunatarai raised its tubuan in a minamai only when its bita tubuan (i.e., lualua) died, but today it also does so at the death of an ordinary man or woman if he or she is considered to have been on good terms with the vunatarai.

A vunatarai also stages a large-scale tubuan ceremony in honour of all its ancestors. Such a ceremony is known generally as matamatam and, like other tubuan ceremonies except the minamai, held only during the dry season (taubar), roughly May to October. Since it requires many years’ preparations, it may be carried out about once a decade. A vunatarai which stages a matamatam invites a great number of vunatarai, each with its own tubuan and dukduk, to the ceremony in which a series of rituals and many
dances are performed. In coastal villages, a matamatam usually begins at dawn with a kinavai in which tubuan and dukduk dance on canoes off shore. All participating tubuan and dukduk then gather at the ceremonial ground of the host vunatarai. There follows a ritual procession called kanavo in which tubuan and fully initiated men go around the ground with certain kudu (drum) beats and dance steps. The host vunatarai pays tribute to its dead through a ritual known as rurua na minat in which its tubuan steps on the grave of a former bita tubuan (i.e., lualua), or a ritual known as rurua na vat in which its tubuan puts the feet on a concrete monument (vat na im) built in remembrance of all its ancestors. A matamatam is a costly event for the host vunatarai, which must reward each of the tubuan and dukduk of the invited vunatarai for its participation with bundles of tabu (through a tutupar). However, the implication is that the ceremony can only be staged by a wealthy vunatarai. The host vunatarai also displays a number of tabu coils belonging to its tubuan on a butur, a huge stand made of vertically crossing bamboos, in order to show off its wealth (Figure 8).

The tubuan thus links the living with the dead, and the present with the past, but also shapes contemporary social relations. Members of a vunatarai from all over the area are expected to get together in tubuan ceremonies, through which they strengthen a wide network of kin relations covering many different local communities. Although each tubuan is associated with a particular vunatarai, tubuan activities and ceremonies require the cooperation of members of a vunatarai and its “children,” whose active involvement

28 There are also non-tubuan ceremonies or feasts staged by a vunatarai in commemoration of its ancestors, such as gitvudu and balabalaguan. A gitvudu is held to honour a particular dead person (or more) who passed away recently (within the past few years). In this feast, cooking bananas (yudu) and raw pig (boroi) meat (and recently frozen lamb flaps purchased from stores) are distributed and a few dances performed. A balabalaguan, on the other hand, is carried out to remember all the deceased of a vunatarai and involves the distribution of a large quantity of uncooked foods mentioned above and the performance of a great number of dances. Many vunatarai are invited to this feast.
in ceremonial affairs of the vunatarai fulfills their obligations to their “fathers” and therefore sustains their access to its land. A bita tubuan solidifies his leadership position in his vunatarai by properly managing its tubuan and its tabu fund to ensure that the dead are honoured as they should be. He may gain influence and status beyond his vunatarai and become a big man by sponsoring a matamatam and other large-scale tubuan ceremonies (e.g., nidok), which involve a considerable amount of tabu and a high level of organizational skills. This, in turn, would make his vunatarai considered powerful. The successful staging of a tubuan ceremony by a vunatarai is thus a show of solidarity, wealth, and power and, by implication, an assertion of control over land.

In short, the institution of the tubuan reproduces social relations among the Tolai—relations between men and women, between men, between members of a vunatarai, between vunatarai, and between the living and the dead.

The Tubuan in Anthropology

The development of Tolai ethnography is inevitably tied to the wider socio-political circumstances in which the Tolai have been placed. They are one of the best documented groups in Papua New Guinea, having one of the longest periods of contact with the outside world. Dating from 1877 (Brown 1877), there is a huge corpus of ethnographic material on the people that was produced by missionaries, trader-planters, colonial officials, and travelers. There are also an ever increasing number of ethnographic treatises on the people by professional anthropologists, but this academic interest is rather
surprisingly of recent origin. In the interwar period, when intensive socio-cultural research among a single community became the hallmark of the discipline of anthropology, no anthropologist was interested in studying the Tolai. This was probably not only because the Tolai had already been well documented by amateurs, but also because they were no longer considered "truly primitive" to offer the kind of data that was sought at that time, having experienced intensive contact with European civilization at least since the mid-1870s (Rohatynskyj 2000:177). Such notable anthropologists as Gregory Bateson, Reo Fortune, Margaret Mead, and Hortense Powdermaker passed through Rabaul, the then capital of the Territory of New Guinea, only to greet E. W. P. Chinnery, Government Anthropologist, who "acted as a 'gatekeeper' to the region for all anthropologists" (Gosden and Knowles 2001:107), and to be entertained by his wife Sarah (Fortune 1998:33-35, 39, 50-52, 56-57, 115-116). Chinnery seemed to have a strong influence on choice of field sites for visiting anthropologists. For example, he persuaded Bateson to conduct his first fieldwork among the Baining (Bateson 1932)—the Tolai's immediate neighbours who were then regarded as "most primitive" but most accessible—instead of the Sepik to which he had originally intended to go (Lipset 1980:126; Mead 1972:203).

The Tolai were overlooked as a subject of ethnographic research until well after the Second World War. Then between 1959 and 1961, three established anthropologists suddenly turned their attention to them: T. S. Epstein, who studied economic growth in Rapitok (1968); A. L. Epstein, who examined urbanization and political development in Matupit (1969); and Richard Salisbury, who inspected economic and political

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29 Chinnery was appointed Government Anthropologist in 1924 when the position was introduced in the Territory, and promoted to Director of the Department of District Services and Native Affairs in 1932 when it was established (Fortune 1998:3).
transformation in Vunamami (1970). "It was not until questions having to do with integration into the larger regional and world economy and its political and social consequences became more relevant to the discipline, that Tolai were deemed worthy of study" (Rohatynskyj 2000:177). Since then, there has been a steady flow of ethnographic fieldworkers into the north-eastern Gazelle Peninsula and the Duke of York Islands, producing monographs on various topics—ritual (Errington 1974), male-female relations (Bradley 1982), land (Fingleton 1985), history (Neumann 1992a), psychology (A. L. Epstein 1992, 2000), social change and cultural identity (Errington and Gewertz 1995), and music (Webb 1995). At the same time, a growing number of Tolai scholars have written about their own culture (e.g., Simet 1991) and history, particularly since national independence in 1975.

Much about the tubuan has been said since it was first reported in 1877 (Brown 1877:148-149). Reading early reports, however, one finds that the institution was known among Europeans more commonly as dukduk than tubuan. The reason why the term dukduk prevailed over the term tubuan was that the first European settlers in the area were based on the Duke of York Islands where the same institution, with minor variations, was prevalent but the term dukduk could refer to both the dukduk and the tubuan (see Errington 1974:80). Thus, George Brown (1877:148-149, 1891:3, 1898:78-81, 1901:309-310, 1910:60-72), Eduard Hernsheim (Sack and Clark 1983:49), and Benjamin Danks (1889:283, 1892a:354-356; see also Deane 1933:280-283) lumped the two together and called them "dukduk." Their usage, then, was generally accepted by newly arrived Europeans in the area. In retrospect, this was the beginning of much confusion.

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30 There are a number of articles contributed by Tolai to the journal Oral History.
about the *tubuan* and *dukduk* that still exists today among outsiders. On the Gazelle Peninsula, it is incorrect to call the *tubuan* the “*dukduk*” and the male society the “*dukduk society*” (Simet 1977:1).

Some early European residents on the Gazelle Peninsula properly distinguished between the *tubuan* and *dukduk*, but mistook the *dukduk* as superior to the *tubuan* through their superficial comparison between the two. For instance, R. H. Rickard (Rickard 1890) asserted that the *tubuan*, “having a shorter, and consequently less beautiful, head-dress,” was “of inferior rank” and “the worker” (71) for the *dukduk* which he thought was “the central figure in that association” (70). Richard Parkinson (1999 [1907]:256), on the other hand, correctly understood the *tubuan* as superior to the *dukduk*. Nonetheless, Rickard and Parkinson referred to the male “secret society” as the “*dukduk association*” and the “*dukduk society*” respectively.

Each ethnographic account of the *tubuan* (or *dukduk*) reflects a set of questions or goals pursued at a particular moment in the history of the discipline of anthropology. Many of the early missionaries, planter-traders, government officials, and travellers in the area described the *tubuan* in scientific journals or their own ethnographic monographs (e.g., Brown 1877:148-149, 1898:78-81, 1910:60-72; Churchill 1890; Hahl [1897]:7; Parkinson 1999 [1907]:247-257; Pfeil 1898:184-188; Powell 1883:61-66; Rickard 1890; Romilly 1886:27-34). These writers were primarily concerned with recording the institution of the *tubuan* as evidence of “primitive society” before it vanished under the influence of European civilization. Thus, they detailed its origin myths, masks, sacred grounds, rules, initiation rites, and ceremonial cycle—often with photographs and grotesque illustrations—consequently revealing many of its secrets. The institution was
demonized in some accounts and romanticized in others, but they did not forget to emphasize that it was dying out fast. This sense of urgency was the main driving factor for the “salvage ethnography” of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. One of the early writers, George Brown, was not just a recorder of indigenous cultures, but also a theorist. He engaged himself in contemporary scientific debates about racial origins and divisions in the Pacific in his well-known 1910 volume *Melanesians and Polynesians*. His idea that the *tubuan* served as a form of government and jurisdiction in New Britain was deployed as a point to distinguish Melanesians from Polynesians who had hereditary “chiefs” instead of “secret societies” (1910:427, 429, 437), and to support his claim that “they are all descended from one common stock, of which the Melanesian is the oldest representative” (1910:426; see also Brown 1887:312). The *tubuan*, therefore, was an important custom trait for his evolutionist and diffusionist imagination of the peoples of the Pacific.

These first-hand accounts of the *tubuan* were used as sources of raw data for comparative studies by professional scholars in Europe, North America, and Australia who were informed by anthropological theories of their time. W. H. R. Rivers, in his 1914 diffusionist treatment of Melanesian societies, argued that the *tubuan*, which he characterized as “a hidden cult of the sun” (1968 [1914]:524), had been introduced from, or by way of, Polynesia. Meanwhile, the *tubuan* was brought beyond Melanesian anthropology by an evolutionist thinker, Hutton Webster, as an ideal type in his

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31 According to his biographer, C. B. Fletcher, he was foremost a missionary but “at heart an explorer and a man of science” (1921:46; see also 1944).

32 In the same volume, Brown expressed his confidence in the quality of his accounts of New Britain where there had been no white man living there—and therefore no outside influence—at the time of his arrival in 1875, and he had used, as a guide for collecting information, the British Association for the Advancement of Science’s (1874) *Notes and Queries on Anthropology for the Use of Travellers and Residents in Uncivilized Lands* (Brown 1910:v-vi).
cross-cultural study of “primitive secret societies” all over the world, which was first published in 1908 (see Webster 1932). Two decades later, the tubuan won the position of a representative at the bottom of the evolutionary ladder of political organization in Elizabeth Weber’s comparative study of primitive, classical, and medieval societies, *The Duk-Duks: Primitive and Historic Types of Citizenship* (1929). “The title of this volume, *The Duk-Duks*,” the editor noted, “is taken from the fact that in this particular tribe the ceremonies and mysteries of initiation are highly developed professionally and show clearly in their naiveté civic situations offered almost identical but far less obvious” (1929:xi-xii). In 1930, the issue of “secret societies” was scrutinized by Camilla Wedgwood (1930) in her cross-cultural study of those in Melanesia. She was critical of earlier theorists’ “historical” (i.e., evolutionist) approaches and asserted from a functionalist standpoint that all “secret societies,” including the tubuan, served to maintain the given socio-cultural systems within which they operated. In 1967, Michael Allen (1967) turned his eyes to social structure in his comparative study of male “secret societies” in Melanesia, concluding that initiation rites of cults like the tubuan were institutionalized expressions of sex division.33

The tubuan received renewed scholarly attention as modern ethnographic fieldworkers became attracted to the Tolai and Duke of York Islanders in the 1960s. Richard Salisbury conducted his fieldwork in 1961 at Vunamami where “[t]he religious ceremonies of the tubuan [were] carried out virtually unchanged from the description of 1880” (Salisbury 1966:115). He discussed tubuan ceremonies in terms of leadership and the finance of shell money or tabu (or tambu) used in them, suggesting that tubuan

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33 See Sack 1972:97-98, 102 for a review of some German treaties on the tubuan in the mid-20th century.
organizers were not only wealthy and powerful in traditional settings, but also successful in introduced economic and political structures (Salisbury 1966, 1970:277-309). His treatment of the *tubuan*, thus, mirrored emerging interest in social change among anthropologists at that time. Several years after Salisbury left Vunamami, Frederick Errington came to the island of Karavar and made the *tubuan* the focus of his study. Unlike Salisbury, who analyzed it in economic and political terms, Errington provided a purely symbolic analysis in his important monograph named after the island (Errington 1974). He showed that the *tubuan* ritual process established the relations between men and between men and women on which Karavaran non-ritual life was based. He then took this to argue that social order was not inherent in human life, but created through symbolic action. Thus, the purpose of his study was to challenge anthropologists of his time who understood social reality in structural terms.

While Salisbury stressed, and Errington assumed, the persistence of the *tubuan*, other ethnographers noted otherwise. In his monograph *Matupit*, named after the island where he did his fieldwork between 1959 and 1961, A. L. Epstein (1969) had little to say about the *tubuan* because “at Matupit these ceremonies [had]...virtually disappeared” (239). He said that no *tubuan* ceremonies had been held there since 1949, and ascribed this to Matupit’s poverty in *tabu*, which is essential to *tubuan* activities. His finding was echoed in 1977 by Jacob Simet, a Tolai from Matupit, who was then a research fellow at the Institute of Papua New Guinea Studies. In his discussion paper entitled “The Future of the Tubuan Society,” Simet (1977) expressed his concern about the decline of *tubuan* activities not just in Matupit but throughout the Tolai area (as well as correcting earlier writers’ misunderstandings about the *tubuan*). He was not a pessimist, however, as he
offered solutions to the problem. Christine Bradley (1982), who conducted her fieldwork in Pilapila between 1977 and 1978, confirmed the general decrease of tubuan activities by stating that no tubuan had been seen there since before the Second World War (259), that few adult men there were initiated to the tubuan (106), and that “the cult [was] dying out in many areas of the Gazelle, especially in those close to Rabaul” (ibid.). Unlike Simet, she was pessimistic: “Tubuan are still raised every year in some villages but, with the lack of initiates into the highest grade, it seems that the society has a limited future” (260). Bradley, a feminist anthropologist, implied that this would be good for Tolai women, who she understood had long been oppressed by the male “secret society.”

When Bradley returned to the “field” in 1981, however, she was surprised to find a general revival of tubuan activities throughout the Tolai area (1982:260, n.6). She only speculated that this was “a male bid to reassert men’s authority over women in the face of official rhetoric about sexual equality” (ibid.). This upward trend was confirmed by Klaus Neumann (1992a), who reported that “[i]n 1987 six tubuan were raised on four different occasions in Raluana and Ialakua” (197), which were the main sites of his fieldwork. He pushed the beginning of the revival of the tubuan back to the 1960s, however (225). Neumann agreed that this revival was an assertion of male dominance (ibid.), but he gave Tolai women a more active role than Bradley did. “[T]he fame of the Tolai tubuan,” he argued, “depends more than anything else on the significance attached to it by Tolai women” (228).

The political nature of the tubuan was also highlighted by Frederick Errington and Deborah Gewertz in their 1995 monograph on Karavarans, which locates it in power relations, not between men and women, but between “conservative” and evangelical
Christians and between a national politician and his constituency. More recently, A. L. Epstein (1998) published a brief historical account of the tubuan, in which he took up the question of its survival (rather than revival). He suggested that the tubuan had survived because it came to stand for Tolai identity first in opposition to European colonizers and later in contrast to other Papua New Guineans. Thus, ethnographers have increasingly seen the tubuan in terms of power struggles in broader contexts.

Another recent development in the study of the tubuan is a growing awareness among ethnographers of the sensitivity of its secrets, many of which have already been revealed by earlier works on the Tolai and Duke of York Islanders. Neumann (personal communication) did research on tubuan and dukduk masks held in museums in Germany, Switzerland, and Australia after his fieldwork among the Tolai in the late 1980s, but decided not to publish the results out of consideration for tubuan people. Similarly, A. L. Epstein prepared a detailed contemporary account of the tubuan after he had been fully initiated into it in 1995, but “[g]iven the secrecy that attaches to every aspect of the tubuan, and the susceptibilities of Tolai in the matter, I decided to follow the advice of a Tolai reader who, having agreed to monitor the manuscript for me, cautioned that it would be wiser not to publish it” (1998:26, n.2).34 However, there are still scholars who insensitively disclose secrets of the tubuan, such as the material used in the construction of tubuan and dukduk masks (e.g., Heermann 2001:19, 48-49).

Towards the end of his paper on the survival of the tubuan, A. L. Epstein asks: “Does the tubuan have a future? Can it survive much longer?” (1998:25). He is of the

34 His manuscript, which is entitled “A Melanesian Masquerade: The Male Cult among the Tolai of the Gazelle Peninsula,” is deposited in the archives of the Royal Anthropological Institute in London and the Melanesian Archive at the University of California at San Diego (ibid.). Access to the manuscript is restricted until 2008.
opinion that modern conditions pose so serious a threat to its survival that “it is hard to escape the conclusion that the sands of time are running out for the tubuan” (1998:25-26). Thus, for him, the tubuan is antithetical to modernity. A similar view is offered in the video The Drum and the Mask: Time of the Tumbuan (1999) by the Honolulu-based producer-director Caroline Yacoe, who won a Gold Apple Award for educational excellence for her previous work on the video Pacific Passages (1997). It conveys fantastic imagery and sound of a series of public tubuan rituals performed in the Duke of York Islands. However, despite the promise of illustrating rituals in the context of everyday life, the video focuses upon explaining the rituals themselves and ignores the contemporary daily lives of participants in the rituals, who are of course involved in church activities, government affairs, and business ventures. Some scenes of town, church, plantation, and logging appear at the beginning and towards the end of the program only for the blink of an eye. As a result, a viewer is left with images of exotic tribal rituals and a people isolated from the rest of the world. The video concludes with the following narration by a man with Anglo-American accent:

As you can see, many of the traditions remain strong and meaningful, both as expressions of the culture and as the guidelines for daily living. But outside contemporary influences are powerful, and no one is sure their ultimate impact. Will the old tradition survive?

Apparently, the premise here is that tradition and modernity are like water and oil—that is, incompatible with each other. Given this premise, it is understandable why the video has failed to fulfill the promise of presenting contextualized images of rituals.

Contrary to such anxious forecasts, I did not find any substantial evidence for the demise of the tubuan in the foreseeable future. In fact, I frequently observed the tubuan during my fieldwork, in not only “traditional” but also “non-traditional” settings. What I
found was a complex situation that cannot be explained simply in terms of a clash between tradition and modernity, that is, a situation where many Tolai continue to find the *tubuan* relevant to their real lives—lives which have been greatly transformed through colonial and post-colonial history.

**Fieldwork Situation**

I arrived in East New Britain in March 2002. Being Japanese, I was anxious about how I would be received by Tolai, since their area had been under military rule by the Japanese during the Second World War. As far as I knew, I was going to be the first Japanese anthropologist conducting long-term fieldwork among the Tolai. What I soon discovered was that contemporary Tolai seemed favourably disposed towards the Japanese. Many Tolai men and women told me that although the Japanese had greatly troubled them during the War, they had generously helped them thereafter. Some of them even said that they would have been better off today if Japan had won the War and colonized the territories.

Such positive commentaries about the Japanese might have been made merely to make me happy, but what was more interesting for me was that these were almost always juxtaposed with negative commentaries about the Australians and Chinese. In the colonial period, Tolai in general came to see the Australians and Chinese stereotypically as exploiters only interested in making money. Their current favourable views of the Japanese are of more recent origin, probably directly related to the restoration of the
Rabaul/Tokua Airport and the Radio East New Britain by official Japanese aids after the volcanic eruptions of 1994, and to volunteer work in the area by the OISCA (Organization for Industrial, Spiritual, and Cultural Advancement) and the JICA (Japanese International Corporation Agency) since the 1990s. Many Tolai also seemed aware of AusAID and other commitments by the Australian Government and various contributions by Australian and Chinese business houses in the area after national independence in 1975, but it appeared that stereotypic views of the Australians and the Chinese as exploitative still strongly persisted among them. Thus, positive images of the Japanese do not surface independently, but rather emerge in contrast to negative images of the Australians and Chinese.

I was particularly favourably received by the old generation who had grown up with the experience of the War. I was surprised to know that they still remembered, with much accuracy, many Japanese phrases, vocabularies, and songs which they had picked up from Japanese soldiers sixty years ago. While it was a strange experience for me to hear Japanese in such a remote corner of the world, it seemed an exiting moment for many old Tolai to speak Japanese to me. They tried to impress me with their knowledge of Japanese, which they did successfully. They often sang Japanese songs—some of which I did not know—as soon as they met me. They were also eager to tell me their war experiences and stories—both good and bad—about Japanese soldiers (often named). The topic of my study was neither the War nor the Japanese, but I was prepared to let people talk about these as much as they wished. This turned out to be a good way of establishing rapport with old Tolai, and some of them became key “informants” for my research in this way.
My Japanese identity was certainly useful to cultivate my relationships with old people, but contemporary Tolai images of Japan do not just centre around the War. Most Tolai regarded Japan as a rich, industrial nation with reference to such Japanese multinational corporations as Toyota and Nissan; in fact, almost all automobiles running around their area were Japanese used cars. When I was asked about life in Japan, questions often focused on high technology. Inevitably, I was seen in these terms. For some Tolai, it did not really matter whether I was Japanese since I was categorically a masta ("white man") or, alternatively, a kongkong ("Asian"). These terms bothered me a lot because of derogatory connotations which they came to have. Many Tolai were generally familiar with what anthropologists do. After all, the Tolai had hosted a number of anthropologists for more than four decades before I came as just another one. During my stay, I met two other anthropology students—one from England and the other from Japan—doing doctoral research on the Tolai. I usually introduced myself to Tolai by saying that I was a Japanese student at a Canadian university and came to obtain information about Tolai culture and history to write a thesis. Most Tolai I met were appreciative of what I was trying to do, and many of them asked me to send them a copy of my thesis on completion. However, there were also those who speculated that I would make big money by selling the thesis or books about the Tolai that I would write in the future, which was not entirely incorrect. My general impression was that in the eyes of Tolai, anthropology was irrelevant to their real lives and something which only a rich person could pursue, and fieldwork only served anthropologists as a path to build up their careers in their own home countries. Whether Tolai saw me as Japanese, masta, kongkong, or anthropologist, it was probable that they did not regard their relationships with me as
exactly equal as I did.

I planned to base myself in a village close to an urban centre so that it could facilitate my conceptualization of the Tolai in a wider society. My preference was the vicinity of Kokopo because the town of Kokopo have been rapidly growing as an administrative and commercial centre of the East New Britain Province since Rabaul, the former provincial capital, was devastated by the 1994 eruptions. I talked over this with Peter Buak, then Kokopo Town Manager, who then kindly introduced me to an old Tolai man named Allan Tagete, then Councillor of Karavi Ward, saying that Allan would be a suitable host for a foreigner like me because he understood English and did not chew *buai* (betel nuts), and also because the supply of electricity and water was available at his house. I did not ask for any of these attributes in my would-be host; in fact, I was prepared for anything in line with a conventional image of an anthropologist “going native.” However, talking to Allan, I found him a real gentleman, so I accepted his kind offer to accommodate me. I was also impressed by his knowledge of Japanese. Thus, Karavi became my home base during my fieldwork.

Karavi is located three kilometres west of Kokopo town and next to Vunamami where Salisbury conducted his fieldwork in 1961. It is one of the twenty wards under the Kokopo/Vunamami Urban Local Level Government. It is a fairly large ward with a population of about 870 at my count in 2002. A half of the residential buildings there are permanent, and the other half semi-permanent. The supply of electricity and water, and telephone services, have only reached a small area of the ward that faces the main road. Most households are engaged in cash crop production (copra, cacao, and vanilla) as

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35 According to the 2000 national census (National Statistical Office 2002:18), however, the population of Karavi Ward is 747.
well as subsistence farming. Some run small-scale businesses like trade stores, bakeries, and PMVs (public motor vehicles), while others work in town as public servants and for private companies. In terms of religious affiliation, the people of Karavi are almost equally divided into the United (formerly Methodist) Church and the Roman Catholic Church. In addition to these mainline churches, there are a small number of Seventh-day Adventists and Pentecostals. In Karavi, there are four land-owning vunatarai or matrilineal descent groups: Kabakada, Tuluai, Tavagai, and Bonat (or “Ta Beo Vaira”).

As soon as settling down, I paid courtesy visits to “big men” in Karavi, who all enthusiastically welcomed me with Japanese words and songs. I was formally introduced to the people of Karavi at the first monthly ward meeting (laeri) after my arrival. It was suggested then that I help Karavi Ward and at the same time get to know the people by conducting a census. Actually, I did not plan to do census taking, but I was convinced that it would be compatible with my original plan to begin with unfocused observations, learning the vernacular, and establishing “organic” relationships with members of the community where I would stay. Thus, I started visiting each household to obtain information on a wide range of variables—biographical, social, economic, and religious. It was a time-consuming process because it was not just data collection, but also socialization through eating food and chewing buai (betel nuts) together with people. I was only able to visit two households a day at best. What I did not know at the beginning was that there were almost 170 households in Karavi. Accordingly, it took me seven months completing the census itself. I think I achieved all I had wanted to achieve through census taking, except learning the vernacular. My ability to speak and understand the Tolai language did not go beyond basic conversation, because I relatively easily
picked up Tok Pisin (the Papua New Guinean Pidgin English) in which most Tolai adults were fluent.\(^{36}\) Although Tolai considered it to be a language “inferior” to their own, I came to rely too much upon it. Hence, Tok Pisin, regrettably, became the main language for my fieldwork.

The purpose of my study was to investigate why it is, as noted by many ethnographers, that the Tolai, probably having longer and closer links with the outside world than any other groups in Papua New Guinea, have been exceptionally successful in retaining a strong sense of who they are. The tubuan became a useful focal point for me to tell my narrative of identity work among the Tolai in this dissertation due to specific experiences I had during my fieldwork, especially through interactions with people in Karavi.

I lived with Allan and his elder sister IaKapa who had been looking after each other after they lost their own partners. For me, he was my “father” and she was my “mother,” and people in Karavi saw us in these terms. Allan and IaKapa were children of a man belonging to Kabakada, one of the major vunatarai in Karavi. I was therefore naturally drawn into close relationships with those who belonged to or were related to Kabakada. Accordingly, some of them (e.g., Melchior ToKu’uk and Valvalu Bualten) became my key “informants.” Kabakada has a tubuan named IaTatakila, which is one of the oldest tubuan in the area (Figure 9). That a vunatarai has successfully inherited its tubuan over many generations means that it has maintained strong bonds among its members and their “children.” Since IaTatakila was the pride of people to whom I was most attached, I became particularly interested in learning the tubuan. I went through

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\(^{36}\) About ten per cent of the Tok Pisin vocabulary is made up of Tolai words (Salisbury 1967:46).
niolo, the first stage of initiation into the tubuan, at Matupit in July 2002, and nidok, the last stage of initiation into the tubuan, at Karavia No.2 between August and September 2003. However, it was from men belonging and related to Kabakada that I learned much about the tubuan.

I was surprised to find that the tubuan culture was still strongly maintained by the Tolai. Fathers have their sons initiated into the tubuan at least to the first stage in their youth because they think that an uninitiated man would not be able to achieve a good standing in their society; he might even have difficulty getting married especially because women think him of inferior value and do not like to have him as a son-in-law. Those older men who have yet to be initiated into the tubuan to the final stage seek an opportunity for that. Those who live elsewhere participate in tubuan activities whenever they are back home. Whereas men are eager to engage and cooperate with each other in a variety of tubuan activities, women, though not directly involved in tubuan affairs, are willing to play their parts in tubuan ceremonies by attending them and contributing tabu to the tubuan through varlapang. “You are not a true Tolai man unless you are initiated into the tubuan,” was a sentence I frequently heard during my fieldwork.

It did not take me long to realize that knowledge about the tubuan was still strictly kept from those who were not initiated, particularly women. Whenever men talked to me about the tubuan, they first made sure no woman was around them, and then lowered their voice. They were so sensitive about the tubuan that I never used a tape-recorder when I inquired about it. I made several attempts to discuss the tubuan with women, but they typically evaded my questions by saying that it was something which belongs to men only. Many women were eager to help me understand Tolai customs other
than the *tubuan*, but it should be stressed that much of my knowledge about Tolai culture and history was acquired from men, particularly men of some sort of status in the "traditional" or "modern" sense.

Allan had close relationships with men belonging and related to Kabakada, but he was not involved in *tubuan* activities. He was initiated when he was a boy, but he had kept himself away from the *tubuan* since his conversion from the Methodist Church to the Seventh-day Adventist Church in 1950. Through him, I became acquainted with many Tolai Seventh-day Adventists throughout the area. It became apparent to me before long that they tended to disapprove of their customs in general and the *tubuan* in particular. In early days of my fieldwork, many United Church members and Catholics in Karavi thought that I was a Seventh-day Adventist because I was living with Allan and attending his church on Saturday. I soon realized that I had better distance myself a little bit from the Seventh-day Adventist Church in order to learn the *tubuan* and other Tolai customs, so I began to attend all the churches equally and to try to present myself as a Tolai *mangi* ("kid") by chewing *buai* and wearing *laplap* (loincloth). Thus, Allan was instrumental in directing my attention to relations between different Christian denominations and denominational differences in attitudes towards "tradition."

Two sad events hit me hard in early months of 2003. On February 8, IaKapa, who had become ill towards the end of the previous year, passed away at the approximate age of 77. Following a funeral service at the Butuwin United Church in which she had been a women’s leader, there was a traditional mortuary ceremony known as *minamai* in which *tabu* was distributed by her relatives to attendants. On this occasion, Kabakada’s *tubuan*, IaTatakila, was "raised" to mourn her death. From a historical point of view, I
found this unusual since a tubuan used to be raised only for big men. I was told that IaTatakila had been raised for her because she had been an important person and deserved such an honour. Hence, IaKapa's untimely death provided me with an important case to think about changing relations between the tubuan and women and between men and women.

Another sad event came in the following month. On March 18, Allan died of heart attack at the age of 67, as if he had followed IaKapa. A funeral service was held at the Butuwin Seventh-day Adventist Church standing on the plot of land that he had donated in 1983. This was followed by a minamai in which IaTatakila appeared again. Actually, Allan had not wanted a minamai at his death because of his religious conviction, and many Tolai Seventh-day Adventists to whom I talked shared the same wish. However, unlike some of his fellow church members, who had antagonistic relations with members of the mainline churches and avoided any traditional ceremonies, Allan committed himself to customary social relations and obligations while maintaining his religious beliefs. In fact, I often attended traditional ceremonies with him and saw him exchange tabu with others. Accordingly, for most people in Karavi, it was natural to see a minamai held for him, and for men belonging and related to Kabakada, it would have been a shame not to raise IaTatakila at his minamai. Thus, Allan made me aware that the opinions about customs might be not uniform among members of a church. I may be accused of using someone's death for anthropological purposes, but my point here is that both Allan and IaKapa were not only respected by many people but also influential persons for me and my research in many ways.

From the existing literature, I knew the importance of the Mataungan
Association, a Tolai nationalist movement of the late 1960s and early 1970s, in Tolai history, and its use of the *tubuan* as a symbol of unity. I was excited to find that Karavi had been one of the strongholds of the Association and that some of its former leaders were living there. I was able to have extensive interviews with Melchior ToMot, who had been the secretary of the Association; Peter ToKele, ToMot’s younger brother who was recognized as a militant leader of the Association; and Michael ToBing, who turned out to be the creator of IaMataungan, the *tubuan* of the Association. ToKele and ToBing also connected me to Sir Rabbie Namaliu, Kokopo MP (since 1982) and former Prime Minister of Papua New Guinea (1988-1992). ToKele was the president of the Pangu Pati—the political party of Sir Rabbie—in East New Britain, while ToBing was a classificatory brother and “spiritual” advisor of Sir Rabbie because their fathers belonged to Bonat, one of the major *vunatarai* in Karavi. Sir Rabbie was initiated into the *tubuan* to the last stage (together with A. L. Epstein) through a *nidok* sponsored by his father in Karavi in 1995. These men provided valuable insights into Tolai political history and enabled me to look at the Tolai and the *tubuan* in a wider political context.

My interest in the *tubuan* was also stimulated by developments in tourism in East New Britain during my fieldwork. Following the inauguration of the direct flight between Narita (Tokyo) and Port Moresby (the capital of Papua New Guinea) in April 2002, many Japanese tourists, film crews, photographers, and travel writers began to visit Rabaul and Kokopo. I was often asked to help them as a guide and take them to Tolai ceremonies, including those in which *tubuan* appeared. Thus, I was a historical agent myself. In the annual National Mask Festival, which started in Rabaul/Kokopo in 2001, the *tubuan* became a precious tourism product. Karavi men and I participated in the
Festival of 2003 with a dukduk. These events helped me situate the Tolai and the tubuan in a wider political economic context.

My fieldwork and social relations with Tolai were not confined to Karavi. I travelled throughout the Tolai area (and the Duke of York Islands) to interview people and attend events, including those in which tubuan appeared. I observed tubuan rituals and dances not only in “traditional” village settings but also in “non-traditional” settings like church celebrations, state functions, and tourism events. Moreover, I found tubuan in various places in various forms. A drawing or image of a tubuan was on a wall of the main church building at Vunapope (the headquarters of the Archdiocese of Rabaul); in the provincial flag; in the crests of the provincial government and most of the local level governments in the area; on T-shirts and laplap (loincloth) sold at Chinese stores in Rabaul and Kokopo; on a wall of the terminal at the Tokua (Rabaul) Airport; and on a large signboard with the word “WELCOME” along the main road in Kokopo. Songs of the tubuan were on the radio. Models of a tubuan were for sale at a guesthouse, and on display at a museum, in Kokopo. At a farewell party organized for me by the people of Karavi, I received, among many other things, two large models of a tubuan as special gifts. These unconventional yet accepted uses of the tubuan challenged my simple notions of tradition and modernity.

While in the “field,” I did archival research in the following places: the Catholic Church archive at Vunapope; the Sacred Heart Interdiocesan Major Seminary Library at Rapollo; the United Church archive at Malaguna; the Rarongo Theological College library at Rarongo; the Sonoma Adventist College library at Sonoma; and the East New Britain Historical Society office in Kokopo. There are many un-catalogued historical
documents in the Vunapope archive, which have been little explored by ethnographers so far. I got through documents (many of which are in German) in the box entitled “Native Affairs” only. Archival research was also conducted for a month at the National Archives of Papua New Guinea and the National Research Institute Library in Port Moresby after I left East New Britain in April 2004.

Overview of the Chapters

In the three chapters that follow, I present three historical narratives of the tubuan in the contexts of lotu (“church”), matanitu (“government”), and bisnis (“business”), respectively. Particular attention is paid to how the tubuan emerged a prime feature of Tolai “traditional” culture through interactions between the Tolai and various agents of modernity, and how the contemporary tubuan symbolism shape and reshape power relations between the Tolai and other Papua New Guineans and within Tolai society. I highlight the process of domination, subordination, and confrontation, which have been particularly important in the historical formation and transformation of Tolai identity.

Chapter 2 is concerned with the historical relationship between the tubuan and lotu. Tolai readily accepted lotu which they thought was a new kind of magic. Early missionaries, both Methodist and Catholic, condemned many features of Tolai culture as incompatible with the Christian faith. Due to their hegemonic control over the Tolai cultural field, many Tolai converts chose to abandon customs that they were told to discard. Some, however, did not agree with missionaries’ disapproving view of the
tubuan in particular, so they kept practicing it in a “cleansed” form—a form that was acceptable to them according to their understanding of lotu. This led missionaries to pick out the tubuan as the greatest enemy of mission work and to keep fighting against it without knowing much about its realities. Changes came in the 1960s and early 1970s with the accelerated indigenization of the church organizations, the Second Vatican Council, and the approach of self-government and independence. Following these events, Tolai began to explore the relevance of their culture to lotu, but the old questions remained to be answered—what customs are good and what customs are bad. Previously, these questions had been ruled on by the foreign missionaries whose decisions had been more or less blindly followed by most Tolai to please them. Situations were now set which allowed or encouraged Tolai themselves to make their own decisions on their cultural and social life according to their received knowledge and values of lotu. The tubuan, which had been long criticized by the foreign missionaries, became a salient custom to be defended by Tolai church officials who were trained in Melanesian Christian theology. Today, ordinary members of the mainline churches generally see no contradictions between the tubuan and lotu. The new challenge they face, however, is their often confrontational relationship with new religious groups (Seventh-day Adventists and Pentecostal-Charismatics) who strongly disapprove of the tubuan and many other Tolai customs.

Chapter 3 deals with the historical relationship between the tubuan and matanitu. Early missionaries, traders, planters, labour recruiters, and government officials looked for a “chief” for their own use, but they were disappointed to find only a “big man” who gained his influence by sponsoring large-scale ceremonies, especially those involving the
tubuan, but whose authority was largely limited to his own small matrilineal descent
group (i.e., vunatarai). “Big men,” who were nonetheless called “chiefs,” accumulated
wealth and power through dealings with these Europeans. In 1896, the German
administration, for its administrative purposes, invented government-appointed “chiefs”
or Luluais in each village, but those who were appointed Luluais were rarely “big men”
men of influence in their villages. The Australian administration inherited the Luluai
system and later invented the Paramount Luluai who assumed administrative
responsibility over ten or so villages that were looked after by their corresponding
Luluais. It seems that the old and new political leaderships merged to some extent by the
late 1930s, given the evidence that some Paramount Luluais and Luluais of the following
years organized tubuan ceremonies in their villages. After the introduction of the council
system in 1950, some council presidents and councillors, too, carried the image of the
“traditional big man” by sponsoring tubuan ceremonies in their villages. Towards the end
of the 1960s, however, those educated young men who had been frustrated by older and
less educated councillors being too subservient to administrative officers, became
instrumental in forming the Mataungan Association to mobilize Tolai opposition to the
Australian administration. The Mataungans used the tubuan as a symbol of Tolai
autonomy. Since independence, the tubuan has been a symbol of authority for the
Tolai-dominated provincial government, which often use tubuan rituals and dances in on
such occasions as the opening of its new office buildings and development projects.
Meanwhile, expecting their contemporary leaders not only to be well-educated but also to
be respectful of customary values, Tolai villagers try to assimilate the image of the
“traditional big man” into their politicians by staging tubuan performances for them.
Thus, Tolai have long negotiating the tension between “traditional” and “modern” socio-political structures through the tubuan.

Chapter 4 focuses on the historical relationship between the tubuan and bisnis. I first discuss Tolai involvement in the cash economy in early stages of colonization with special reference to “Queen Emma” (Emma Forsayth, later Kolbe), who run a plantation and trading empire in German New Guinea from her headquarters on the north-eastern Gazelle Peninsula with the help of her sister Phoebe and her husband Richard Parkinson. I then turn my attention to Tolai engagements with the artefact trade and tourism. Tolai actively exploited the artefact trade by selling their objects which they no longer used and by making objects anew for sale – including tubuan masks. However, when the tubuan became a symbol of anti-colonialism towards the end of the 1960s, Tolai came to strictly protect tubuan masks from the artefact trade because they had to maintain the authenticity of the tubuan to use it for their political struggles. Tubuan masks are still strictly guarded from foreign artefact dealers who seek to exploit the tubuan for profit. Since the heyday of the Mataungan movement, Tolai have also prevented the tubuan from becoming an item of entertainment. Most recently, however, with the strong push for cultural tourism by the Tolai-dominated provincial government for the dual purpose of cultural preservation and economic development, tubuan rituals and dances have been performed in a cultural show which attracts a number of tourists. There are also some villagers who explore the possibility of using the tubuan as a tourism product for their grass-roots development projects. I explain this recent interest in cultural tourism among many Tolai by focusing on power struggles between the Tolai and other Papua New Guineans and between wealthy Tolai and Tolai villager.
Figure 1. Papua New Guinea.
Courtesy of the University of Texas Libraries, the University of Texas at Austin
Figure 2. Tubuan dance.
Photo: H. Tateyama
Figure 3. *Tabu* distributed.
Photo: H. Tateyama
Figure 4. A dukduk and its bita tubuan (owner).
Photo: H. Tateyama
Figure 5. A *tubuan* (left) and a *lomlom* (right).
Photo: H. Tateyama
Figure 6. A *tutupar*.
Photo: H. Tateyama
Figure 7. A varlapang.
Photo: H. Tateyama
Figure 8. *Tabu* displayed on a *butur*.
Photo: H. Tateyama
Figure 9. laTatakila, the tubuan of Vinatarai Kabakada.
Photo: H. Tateyama
CHAPTER 2

TUBUAN AND LOTU ("CHURCH")

Christianity, in a variety of denominational forms, is the most pervasive religion in the contemporary Pacific. It has become "part of the indigenous reality: an important aspect of Pacific islands cultures, one dimension of the integration of local cultures into regional and global cultures" (Barker 1990b:22). Islanders' experiences and understandings of Christianity are complex and dynamic, however. It is not that the Christian religion has conquered and replaced traditional religions. Nor is it that religious changes have taken place merely in the organizational or formal aspect of village life. Instead, local religious fields consist of both traditional and Christian ideas and forms, which constantly shape and redefine each other. Islanders make their own religions and construct their religious identities by invoking these competing elements selectively according to local social contexts influenced by regional and global political and economic processes (see Barker 1990a).

Like other Pacific islanders, Tolai draw on both traditional and Christian themes to make sense of their world. This is most apparent in events following death (cf. Neumann 1992a:190-195). I have already mentioned that when a person dies, his/her vunatarai, or the vunatarai that "fathered" him/her, organize a minamai in which tabu is distributed, and that a proper minamai involves the vunatarai's tubuan, which is said to "bury" (punang) him/her. But the minamai is preceded by a Christian funeral organized by his/her congregation, in which the pastor or catechist gives a sermon on death and the
body is buried in the midst of prayers being said and hymns sung. Thus, the deceased is “buried” twice—first in a Christian way and then in a traditional way.  

This practice, however, is not shared by all the Tolai, but applies only to United Church members (formerly Methodists) and Catholics, who see no contradiction between traditional and Christian elements. Among other Christians like Seventh-day Adventists and Pentecostals, on the other hand, death is usually followed only by a Christian funeral. Adhering to a strict reading of the Bible, they tend to denounce as unbiblical not only the minamai but also all the other traditional ceremonies carried out by United Church members and Catholics. But more than anything, disagreement between members of the mainline churches and new “sects” is evident as to the tubuan, which is emphasized by the former as an important custom but rejected by the latter as a satanic cult. The controversy over the tubuan, however, is not a new phenomenon; it has been the most contentious aspect of Tolai society since the introduction of Christianity. The Methodist and Catholic missions both sought to eradicate the tubuan, but many Tolai Christians refused to leave it behind. While the mainline churches became lenient in their attitudes towards the tubuan, opposition to it was taken over by new “sects.”

In this chapter, I present a social history of the relationship between the tubuan and Christianity. What was the nature of the missions’ opposition to the tubuan? How did

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37 A minamai is followed by ul a ubu for several nights. The ul a ubu was originally a custom of grieving relatives sleeping in the house of the deceased, or over the corpse, for a month or more. Today, it is a night-time gathering organized at the deceased’s residence by neighbouring congregations who come en bloc in turn to comfort the bereaved family by singing hymns continuously for a few hours. The visitors contribute basic food and drink items, such as tea, coffee, sugar, buns, biscuits, rice, and tinned meat, to the deceased’s family, who are expected to reciprocate the help when an opportunity arises. A period of ul a ubu ends with a feast known as ki kutu in which foods are distributed by the deceased’s relatives. The foods distributed in the ki kutu used to be cooked taro, sweet potatoes, fish, pork, or chicken that are mixed with specially prepared coconut cream (ku). Since these foods require a lot of preparations, they have been replaced by rice and tinned meat sold at stores, which are served cooked or uncooked. The ul a ubu may precede the minamai, and in that case the ki kutu is done at the end of the minamai.
Tolai deal with the *tubuan* while accepting Christianity? How did the mainline churches come to accommodate the *tubuan*? How do their members today see the *tubuan* in relation to Christianity? What is their relationship with those of new “sects” with regard to the *tubuan*? Through examining these questions, I hope to elucidate continually changing circumstances whereby the meanings of the *tubuan* have been negotiated by Tolai Christians.

The Missions’ Opposition to the Tubuan

Contrary to a popular view of Christianity in Melanesia as a missionary imposition (see Barker 1990b:8), Tolai actively pursued the new religion, which they came to call *lotu*.

According to their oral traditions, their ancestors first thought of the *lotu* as a new magical charm or *malira* and bought it from missionaries with *tabu*—typically five or ten fathoms. Especially used by a man to trick a woman into loving him, a *malira* was activated by incantations and sold by magic experts or *tena buai* for *tabu* as any other types of magic. It was the ritualistic performance of prayers and hymns by missionaries that fascinated Tolai ancestors and caused them to immediately recognize the *lotu* as a new *malira* and the missionaries as *tena buai* from whom it would be purchased. They wanted it out of a desire for power. In their society, magic was science—that is,

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38 *Lotu* is a word from Tonga meaning “worship” or “religion.” The term was adopted in Fiji to denote the Christian religion, which came from Tonga, and then Fijian missionaries introduced it to New Britain (Threlfall 1975:41, n.2). Christianity is now known as *lotu* throughout Melanesia.

39 This story is popular among both the United Church members (e.g., Neumann 1992a:81-82; Threlfall 1975:39; Webb 1995:xix; Williams 1972:107-108) and the Catholics (e.g., Tultul 1985:12). It is said that Methodist converts had been attracted to the singing of hymns by South Sea Islands missionaries, while Catholic converts had been impressed by the performance of an elaborate mass by European priests.
knowledge about the world that is based on experiences and experiments—and everything that happened—good or bad—was attributed to the work of magic. Those who were knowledgeable about magic, then, were able to gain wealth and influence. In other words, magical knowledge was the road to success not only in the supernatural world but also in the material world.

As Tolai actually tried out the *lotu*, however, they found out not only that it was not a *malira* at all (Neumann 1992a:103) but also that it was something much more powerful. We cannot deny the assertion by some contemporary Tolai narrators of the coming of the *lotu* that the power of the Holy Spirit worked in the hearers of the Gospel (see e.g., Midian 1999 [1990]:37; Threlfall 1975:39), but the power of the *lotu* was also observed in missionaries themselves. Missionaries possessed a new message that captivated many persons; they were fearless of the people who had always regarded strangers as enemies; they were capable of bringing peace to the communities that had long been in a state of constant feuds and isolation from one another; and they were materially wealthy. In addition, other incoming white people like traders, labour recruiters, planters, and colonial officials, who appeared to be as materially wealthy as missionaries, also knew the *lotu*. It was because of such logical assessments, as well as of spiritual enlightenment, that Tolai desired to learn the *lotu* as it really was.

While Tolai appropriated the *lotu*, missionaries used Tolai culture to their own ends. Early European settlers on the north-eastern Gazelle Peninsula—products of their age—saw themselves as culturally superior to the Tolai. Missionaries were no exception. As the cultural wing of European colonialism, they sought to transform or elevate the cultural order of the people by replacing pagan customs with Christian practices in
particular and European ways of life in general. Pagan customs, however, were eagerly studied by them to understand the fundamental nature of the people. Such customs also served the missionaries as a reference point to show the people what the *lotu* was not, and to show their "heathenness" to missionary supporters back home through the missions' official organs (e.g., *The Missionary Review* for the Methodist mission and *Hiltruper Monatshefte* for the Catholic mission). The missions' extensive knowledge of Tolai customs was also found useful by secular Europeans. Early traders and planters usually established themselves near a mission station to avoid troubles with locals. Government officials often looked to the missions for information regarding the local culture. Many missionaries attained intellectual reputation by contributing to scientific journals their accounts of vanishing "primitive" customs, which fuelled evolutionist imagination among professional scholars and others in Europe and elsewhere.

The *tubuan* was one of the Tolai customs most strongly condemned by both the Methodist and Catholic missions, to which it seemed the work of the devil and exterminating it was the work of God, but their tones of disapproval were different. Therefore, I discuss their opposition to the *tubuan* separately.

*The Methodist Mission*

Early Methodist missionaries on the north-eastern Gazelle Peninsula and in the Duke of York Islands regarded the *tubuan* as not just a heathen custom but also a tyrannical institution. Rev. George Brown, who served from 1875 to 1880, defined it as a "secret society" of men whose "principal object appeared to be to extort [shell] money from everyone else who was not a member, and to terrify women and those who were not
initiated” (1910:59-60; see also Brown 1898:780). Similarly, Rev. R. H. Rickard, who served from 1882 to 1892, stated that “[e]verything that was wrong in their eyes, gave them an opportunity to extort ‘tabu’” and that “the weak, especially the women, were the victims of their lust for gain” (1890:73). He went on to provide a detailed account of the tubuan’s law enforcement procedure or vanga in which it punished wrongdoers with heavy fines, property destruction, or possibly death. “Its decisions,” he wrote, “are the vox populi, and its strength is the ‘might’ which among natives is undoubted ‘right’” (1890:74). It was because of such “undesirable practices” that the tubuan was opposed at the New Britain District Synod in 1880 (Williams 1972:112). Rev. Benjamin Danks, who served from 1878 to 1886, wrote:

It was solidly opposed to our work in the beginning and we felt it in all our efforts. We therefore set ourselves to overcome it, with such good effect that for some years it was practically banished from Molot and the surrounding places (Deane 1933:282).

Exactly how, then, did the mission set out to “overcome” the tubuan? According to Rev. Neville Threlfall, the author of the most recent “official” history of the Methodist/United Church in the New Guinea Region (1975), the mission, in its early years, did not have any pre-set policy on dealing with indigenous customs, but worked it out as situations arose. “The only local practices with which the missionaries interfered directly,” he wrote, “were warfare and cannibalism” (1975:58). The tubuan, although opposed, seems to have been handled only on an ad hoc basis, as far as the following accounts could tell.

In his autobiography, Rev. Brown (1908:293) describes his visit to Raluana on

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40 He made his own contributions to scientific journals on certain indigenous customs other than the tubuan (Danks 1888, 1889, 1892a, 1892b).
41 There is the Kuanua version of this work (Threlfall 1977).
March 5, 1879, for the opening of church buildings. In this visit, he found that they had been built on a taraiu which those uninitiated into the tubuan, particularly women, were forbidden to enter or approach. This suggests that men intended to “monopolize” the lotu (Threlfall 1975:50). There were some cases in which church buildings that had been erected on or near a taraiu were relocated on a place to which anyone could go (e.g., Deane 1933:81), but Rev. Brown, who “always found it the safest and best plan to observe and respect, as far as possible, the customs and laws of the natives” (Brown 1881:219), tried out a different approach based on the Melanesian way of dispute resolution—that is, compensation:

After some trouble I got them [i.e., tubuan people] to remove this tabu [i.e., the taboo on the taraiu] by paying them for it; and then we prepared to have service. It took an hour, however, before we could persuade any of the women to venture in. Not only had they never dared to go on the land before, but it was quite a new thing for women and men to assemble or sit together (Brown 1908:293).

Rev. Danks also describes his own ways of coping with the tubuan in his autobiography (Deane 1933):

On Sunday, 22 February [1880], I preached in Molot from John iii. 3. We had a heart-to-heart talk with some of the young men who had been intimidated by the chiefs, and who through fear had joined the dukduk and observed their hurtful native customs. Their eternal interests were faithfully placed before them, and they were urged to make their choice for God and good. I was much pleased to note the close attention given to the sermon, and better pleased still to know that some of them did decide to forsake their former evil customs and cleave only to God (81).

On one occasion some young men did some work for me for which they were paid. Someone, knowing that they were being paid, put on the [tubuan] dress and met them on the way, demanding their wages. By this time, however, the society in that place was on the wane. The young fellows instead of yielding as they would have done a little while before, came back to the house and told me their trouble. I went down to the beach and told the beo [i.e., the person wearing the dress] to go away and let the boys alone. A dead silence ensured. I then went quite close to him and whispered that I knew him and would call out his name if he did not go away and let the boys alone. In frightened tones he whispered back: “Don’t do that, don’t do that.” I persisted, however, and he hurriedly left. None of my young people were ever molested again in this way (282).

I was very much surprised...during my visit in 1909 to find that there had been a strong revival of it [i.e., the tubuan], and that some of our native teachers had joined it. They were young men who had had no experience of its tyranny and evil. This I
explained to them and gave them its history, with happy results so far as the teachers were concerned (282-283).

These accounts indicate that in counteracting disruptions caused by the *tubuan*, the missionaries employed persuasion or negotiation, as opposed to coercion. This appears to have worked well, as all the above episodes conclude with positive remarks. Similarly, in his Raluana section report of 1885, Rev. Rickard records signs of progress in spite of difficulties:

> We have experienced a deal of trouble from the secret and tyrannical native institution—the “Dukduk.” Neatly every boy left us when it re-appeared, and they were away from school & church for months, and women were not allowed to live or come here as the societies’ grounds adjoin ours. But now we have secured the land, and the Chief himself has cast in his lot with us, and his example has been followed by several young men and boys. (Methodist Overseas Mission 1885:1).

These accounts also imply that the local people were not passive recipients of changes brought by the missionaries, but active participants in the process of missionization. Rev. Threlfall summarizes the relationship between the Methodist Church and indigenous customs in the early years of missionization (rather defensively), with an emphasis on decision-making on the part of the local people.

>[A]s the number of Christian converts grew they themselves raised questions about traditional practices, as they saw that some of these did not agree with Christian belief and conduct. Sorcery, for example, was linked with spirit-worship and was often used to cause harm to others. Some dances went on all night and ended in general sexual promiscuity. When Church members were asked to avoid such things, it was because the local Christians agreed that this was necessary, not because the missionaries ruled against them (1975:58).

What about the *tubuan*, then? Did the local people find it necessary to relinquish it in order to be Christians? As in Rev. Danks’ episode in Molot, they were advised to make a choice between the *lotu* and the *tubuan*, or more specifically for the former, and some of them did so. However, there is evidence to suggest that others did choose both of them. Richard Parkinson, a pioneer trader/planter, as well as an amateur ethnographer, who lived on the Gazelle Peninsula for many years from 1882, provides the following
example:

A native from Makada in the Duke of Yorks, who for many years has been a keen and, as I believe, also quite an upright adherent of Christianity but is not permitted to belong to the duk-duk society there, has for long years taken part in all the ceremonies of the society in a district not far from my dwelling [at Kuradui near Koköpó]. When I occasionally made pretence of rebuking him, he explained that the customs of the society contained nothing that contravened the teachings of the Holy Scripture that he had read, and he therefore did not regard it as a sin to belong to the society and to take part in its ceremonies. (1999 [1907]:249).

The European missionaries, who regarded the tubuan as incompatible with Christianity, would have undoubtedly denounced such an opinion, but it was supported by their South Sea Islands counterparts, who played a significant part in this early stage of mission work by the Methodists. By the turn of the century, more than 130 missionaries were brought from Fiji, Samoa, and Tonga into the New Guinea Islands Region and worked under a total of nine European ministers (Threlfall 1975:248-251). Many of these islanders died while serving in the region and were buried there. The fact that nearly all the early missionaries were “blacks” must have led the local people to feel that the new religion called lotu was not foreign to them. These “black” missionaries (and their wives), especially Fijians who were the far greatest in number, had considerable social, as well as Christian, influences on the local people, as they taught them effective ways of gardening, weaving coconut-leaf mats and baskets, and constructing houses and canoes. They were not invited to European social functions, but they were always invited to local social events, including tubuan ceremonies. Again, an example comes from Parkinson:

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42 Brown and Danks produced literature in the Duke of York language, but Kuanua, the language of the Tolai, soon became the main language for mission work among the Methodists in the New Guinea Islands Region (Threlfall 1975:48, 55-57).

43 Latukefu (1978, 1981) discusses South Sea Islands missionaries’ relationships with their European counterparts and local peoples in Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands.

44 Fijians contributed many words to the local vernaculars, such as Kalou (God), talatala (minister), and matanitu (government).
In the Duke of York group missionaries have succeeded in totally suppressing the duk-duk in many districts, while in Blanche Bay the teachers brought in from Samoa, Tonga and Fiji not only tolerate the duk-duk but also take part in ceremonies connected with it. Indeed I know of several cases where the teachers allowed themselves to join the duk-duk society and participated with their society brothers in the inherent advantages (1999 [1907]:249).

Hence, unlike the clear-cut case of practices like warfare, cannibalism, and sorcery, there were discrepancies in the opinion about the tubuan between “white” and “black” missionaries. Given that South Sea Islands missionaries who knew well enough about the tubuan found it compatible with the lotu, it was most likely that the European missionaries prejudged the tubuan without fully understanding it. However, it would be a mistake to regard the tubuan as a fixed custom. Parkinson’s anecdotes could be taken to mean that within the first few decades of missionization, the tubuan transformed up to the point to which a local Christian of long standing and South Sea Islands missionaries could see no contradiction between it and the lotu. While some converts chose to do away with the tubuan entirely, others might have examined and modified it in accordance with the teachings of the Bible, that is, by discarding what they learned to see as evil and emphasizing what they learned to see as good. The European missionaries, who had the tendency to perceive culture as a static assemblage of things, were then probably ignorant of the changing realities of the tubuan that their local followers were creating and their South Sea Islands assistants were aware of.

It should be pointed out, however, that the European missionaries seemed more or less lenient with the festive aspect of the tubuan. Rev. Rickard acknowledged in passing that “it affords general amusement, and provides liberal feasts for the members” (1890:72). Rev. Brown (1898:780, 1910:60) agreed with him; in fact, he was a keen observer of tubuan ceremonies in his years (1875-80) in New Britain (Brown

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1877:148-149, 1901:309-310, 1910:61-68, 71-72) and even when he returned there in 1891 for a hurried ten-day visit (Brown 1891:3). Likewise, comparing the *tubuan* with the *ingiet*, another “secret society” among the Tolai, Rev. Threlfall maintains that “the *tubuan* was seen as the less harmful of the two” (1975:58) because “the *tubuan* or *dukduk* provided fellowship and entertainment for the members...[while] the *ingiet* was directly linked with sorcery and with murder” (1975:20). The European missionaries’ attitude towards the *tubuan*, thus, may be summarized by Rev. Danks’ following statement: “We may hope that it will absolutely perish or be changed into a harmless amusement” (Deane 1933:283; see also Rickard 1890:76 for a similar comment).

By the end of the First World War, many church members thought that the *tubuan* was no longer harmful, but European missionaries did not. Thus, they began to mobilize more active opposition to it thereafter. It was resolved in 1919 that church members be disciplined for participating in *tubuan* affairs (Methodist Overseas Mission 1919, Resolution No.23); and in 1922 that the *tubuan* be thoroughly investigated as regards church membership and a report made (Methodist Overseas Mission 1922, Resolution No.26). All these decisions notwithstanding, many church members reportedly kept engaging in *tubuan* practices, which led the mission to pass another resolution in 1931; this time, it was forbidden for church members to have or raise *tubuan* (Methodist Overseas Mission 1931, Resolution No.45).

The immediate effect of this particular decision is unknown, but judging from reports made by European missionaries, it appears that the 1930s saw a decline in *tubuan* activities. In Kabakada Circuit, for example, following special evangelistic meetings, a “number of men closely associated with the ‘Dukduk’ Society (a society existing from the
past which has been responsible for much evil doing)...turned to the Church...speaking in strong terms of the evil connected with it and the desiring to be rid of it” (Methodist Overseas Mission 1933:1). In Raluana Circuit, it was reported that “[t]he Igiet Secret Society is practically a thing of the past, and the Dukduk Secret Society has lost a good deal of its influence” (Methodist Overseas Mission 1938:1), and that “each year our people show a more enlightened and Christian standard of living” (Methodist Overseas Mission 1939:1).45 If there was actually a decline in tubuan activities in the inter-war period, this was probably not so much because of the more or less suddenly strengthening will of the European missionaries to suppress them, but rather because the lotu had increasingly become a part of village life amid the passing away of those who knew pre-Christian customs and under the influence of a growing number of indigenous catechists, pastor-teachers, and ministers (Threlfall 1975:108, 245), who accepted that the tubuan, among other customs, was unable to get along with the lotu (e.g., Missionary Review 1944:12, 1963:5).

Although European missionaries disapproved of the tubuan, they sometimes used it for their own purposes. From the early years, the opening of church buildings and the annual practice of thank-offering were always accompanied by a feast with such traditional dances as deemed accorded with the teachings of the Gospel or containing no evil elements (Threlfall 1975:58-59).46 One such dance among the Tolai was one called kulau (“young coconut”), whose main theme is mother-child bonding. While such dances were fully supported by the mission to allow the people to express joy, those of the

45 In 1940, however, Raluana Circuit was reported to have lost a number of church members through an “outbreak” of tubuan activities (Methodist Overseas Mission 1940:2).
46 Such dances were also a feature of Jubilee celebrations by the circuits within the New Britain District (e.g., Methodist Overseas Mission 1935:1, 1935:1; Missionary Review 1935:12).
were not. In May 1939, there was a singular event, however. Several hundred people from the mother church in Australia came to New Britain on a missionary cruise for a four-day tour (see Methodist Overseas Mission 1939; Missionary Review 1939:10-13, 1939:7-9). They were taken for inspection to major mission stations and schools on the Gazelle Peninsula and in the Duke of York Islands, where they were entertained by the local church members with pre-Christian customs in the morning and Christian customs in the afternoon. On this occasion, the pre-Christian customs performed included not only such dances as kulau but also those of the tubuan and even of the ingiet, which was among the Tolai customs most strongly condemned by the mission. The whole intention of the mission staff in New Britain was to show the tourists the difference that the work of the pioneer missionaries had made to the local people and to appeal to them for further support for mission work there. By adding such “heathen” customs as the tubuan and the ingiet to the items of entertainment, they wished to emphasize how “primitive” the local church members had been and still were. The opening statement of the “Program of New Britain Cruise 1939” is a telling comment on all this: “WELCOME, to this land of pioneer missionary enterprise and primitive natives!” (Methodist Overseas Mission 1939:1)

The accelerated pace of political and economic developments in the area after the Second World War effected various social changes. For the mission, this meant a rapid growth of secularism and new “evils” among its members. Especially young people seemed to be losing interest in the lotu and turning away from the quiet village way life,

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47 Similar cruises to New Britain were organized in 1967 and 1971, and traditional dances, excluding those of the tubuan or the ingiet, were performed on these occasions as well (Methodist Overseas Mission 1967:14, 21; United Church 1971:3, 8).
of which it had become a part. Drinking, gambling, the love of money, and Sunday entertainments and sports are frequently cited in minutes of the district synods and annual reports from the circuits in the post-war period as elements weakening the spiritual and moral conditions of many people.

Meanwhile, some pre-Christian customs continued to bother the mission. Tubuan activities among church members were reported from time to time well into the 1960s (e.g., Methodist Overseas Mission 1946:2, 1965:23). By then, indigenous ministers had taken over the role of taking the lead in opposing the tubuan from European counterparts. A case in point is an incident in the official opening of the Gaulim Teachers College in 1966. The Australian minister stationed at Gaulim, according to Rev. Threlfall, saw no harm in letting tubuan dances be performed on the road outside the college as a way of celebrating the occasion, but this offended the indigenous ministers who then deplored the practice at the subsequent district synod (Epstein 1998:18). Taking a firm attitude against the tubuan, the same synod also passed the following resolution: “That in order to prove there is no further belief or evil in the Dukduk or Tubuan, we instruct our Methodist people to break laws of the Tubuan and to refuse to make payments to the Tubuan” (Methodist Overseas Mission 1966, Resolution No.53 – 2).

The Catholic Mission

Like Revs. Brown, Danks, and Rickard, many of the early Catholic missionaries on the north-eastern Gazelle Peninsula were keen to learn indigenous customs. Among them were Frs. Josef Meier, August Kleintitschen, Otto Meyer, and Josef Winthuis, who all

48 It is said that the people learned from the Japanese to distil spirituous liquor from local produce during their occupation. So-called “jungle juice” is still produced, traded, and consumed in many Tolai villages, though secretly.
began their mission work there around the turn of the century and published a number of articles on various aspects of Tolai culture in German scientific journals (e.g., *Anthropos*). Unexpectedly, however, there is no sign of their having seriously studied the *tubuan*. This was perhaps due partly to the fact that it had already been well-known in the German-speaking anthropological community especially through Parkinson’s detailed studies (Parkinson 1887, 1999 [1907]). However, the early Catholic priests’ views of the *tubuan* may be represented by the comments left by Fr. Kleintitschen in his 1907 monograph on the Tolai. Unlike the Methodist ministers who understood it basically as a tyrannical form of government and jurisdiction, he characterized it more like an unruly, underground criminal organization:

> How many brutalities, cruelties and vices of all kinds may have taken place on the *Tereiu* [secret meeting place]? How many cases of murder, theft and rape may be hidden behind the mask of the *Tumbuan*? And these excesses last not merely days but weeks and months. During this whole period the natives are incapable of anything positive. The initiated indulge exclusively in unrestrained pleasures. Night and day they accompany the *Tumbuan* and *Dukduk* and behave like wild animals. The uninitiated, especially the women, do not dare to leave their hamlets (Kleintitschen 1907:352-353, translated and quoted in Sack 1972:101).

One can immediately sense a very strong feeling of disgust in Fr. Kleintitschen’s words compared with those of the Methodist ministers. How much did his description reflect the Catholic mission’s attitude towards the *tubuan*? There are two unpublished church documents available for consultation here. One is a two-page paper entitled “Reasons for the total abolition of the Tubuan (Dukduk),” which is dated May 1921 and signed by four priests—Frs. E. Jakobi, J. Bender, G. Hofmann, and A. Krähenheide. The other is a 14-page paper entitled “The Tubuan (a secret society),” which is dated 1926.

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49 Meier also produced three monographs on Tolai social organization in English (Meier 1929, 1938, 1939). A selected collection of Tolai myths and legends that had originally published in Kuanua and German by Meier, Meyer, and Kleintitschen, was later published in English (Janssen et al. 1973).

50 Kleintitschen wrote a paper on the *tubuan* in 1924 but did not publish it (Sack 1972:102).

51 Catholic Church Archive, Vunapope.
and authored by an anonymous priest. These two documents were most likely circulated for discussion among the Catholic priests on the Gazelle Peninsula at that time; therefore, they, although slightly different in position, should be regarded as a continuous effort by the mission to reach a consensus about policy on the *tubuan*. Let us now take a look at each of them.

The first paper, self-evidently, enumerates the reasons for the total abolition of the *tubuan* that are as follows: 1) during the *tubuan* season, men are away from, and neglectful of, family life, doing no work of production in the daytime and spending the nights either in a *taraiu* or roaming about; 2) nocturnal dances and excesses in a *taraiu* cause many diseases such as pneumonia and phthisic, and excessive *buai*-chewing, which is part of these activities, has a stupefying effect on younger members; 3) daily feasts and no work by men during the *tubuan* season result in women and children suffering from food shortage and hunger; and 4) the *tubuan* is an organization of a minority of rich men that rules over, and extorts *tabu* and food from, the rest of the community by means of intimidation. "In conclusion," the paper states,

> it may be remarked, that all endeavours to eradicate from this Society all abuses and immoralities have been in vain. All attempts to make it a clean recreation and enjoyment for the Natives have failed. They themselves declare, that without the abuses above mentioned, the Society is meaningless and has no reason of existence. Hence it is essentially not an institution for pleasure, but stands for all that is immoral and destructive of the social, hygienic and economic life of the Natives, not to mention the difficulties it causes to the administrative powers of the Government (2).

The author of the second paper not only embraces all the points raised in the first paper, but also adds to them religious and moral points of view. Thus, he portrays the *tubuan* as a heathen, wicked, and immodest institution by associating it with spirit and ancestor worship, all kinds of sorcery, murder, theft, extortion, gluttony, adultery, rape, sodomy, and dishonesty, thereby arguing that it is directly against most of the Ten
Commandments. “As the Tubuan is the greatest enemy of the mission and undermines, and even destroys her influence,” he goes on to say, “it is necessary that the mission takes a clear cut position against the Tubuan” (9). He, however, prefers a more realistic and practical approach than that of the abolitionists. “To abolish the Tubuan completely,” he reasons, “is impossible for the time being” (ibid.) because it “is rooted too deeply in the character of the natives” (10). What he proposes, then, is its reformation at least to the level of harmless dances and festivals, which he recognizes has been already taking place, though rather slowly. He argues that this process of reformation would be fostered through such religious means as sermon, prayer, sacrifice, reparation-devotion, and apostolic labour, because

The chief weapons against the Tubuan are the supernatural means. Our Lord Himself used to wage war against the world and her spirit. He gave the very same means to our help. It is a battle of religion against heathendom, of faith against unbelief, of grace against sin, of the new man against the old man (12).

In addition, the author recommends that indigenous catechists assist this battle by participating in tubuan activities as the church’s delegates to show, through their teachings and examples, what from the religious point of view must be rejected and permitted.

We are now in a better position to observe differences between the Methodist and Catholic missions in their attitudes towards the tubuan. It is apparent that although both missions hoped that it would perish altogether or turn into a harmless entertainment, the Catholics were much more determined than the Methodists to effect this change with specific plans. There are at least a couple of reasons for this difference. First, the two missions understood the tubuan in a slightly different way. It is a fact that the missionaries in both missions lived in New Britain for a period long enough to become
fluent in the local vernaculars and familiar with indigenous customs, although the Catholics stayed much longer than the Methodists. What made their understandings of the *tubuan* different from each other, then, was their points of view. The Catholics generally demonized it by linking it with all sorts of evils—factual or imaginary—thereby making it “the greatest enemy of the mission.” Since they regarded the *tubuan* as being “rooted too deeply in the character of the natives,” they sought to fight against it at the “deep” level as well—that is, the religious or supernatural level. The Methodists, on the other hand, tended to concentrate their attention on political and juridical aspects of the *tubuan*, such as tyranny, extortion, and severe punishment, but not so much on its supernatural aspects, such as spirit and ancestor worship and sorcery. In other words, they saw the *tubuan* largely as a secular problem, rather than a religious problem. Therefore, they were not so religiously committed to the fight against the *tubuan* as their Catholic counterparts.

Secondly, the two missions had different opinions about the indigenous people. Not surprisingly, Rev. Brown, who was respectful of their customs, stated: “the natives have a keen sense of right and wrong” (1910:411). Rev. Danks’ characterisation of the people was also positive, though not without reservation: “On the whole, they are industrious and intelligent—as we understand the terms when applied to savages” (1892b:615; see also Danks 1888:315-316). Moreover, the Methodists’ accounts of mission work with regard to the *tubuan*, as already shown, are often of the “progress-despite-difficulties” type and convey a sense of optimism and hopefulness, which suggests that they were confident in the people’s ability to change for the better. This is in sharp contrast to those of the Catholics, which are full of negativity and pessimism and cast doubt on the people’s ability to change. The Catholic priests must
have shared an opinion of the indigenous people with Leo Scharmach, the Bishop of Rabaul from 1938 until 1963, who writes in *Manuale Missionariorum* (Missionary’s Manual): “The native is not predominantly a creature of strong will or intelligence. Impulsive rather and imaginative his actions are prompted by instinct” (Scharmach, [1950?] :2).

That the Catholic missionaries were more severe than the Methodist counterparts on the *tubuan*, is supported by contemporary Tolai. There are several stories in which a Catholic priest took a drastic measure against the *tubuan*: one priest, stationed in Tavuiliu from 1902 until 1913, intentionally revealed *tubuan* secrets to women, which angered men who then tried to kill him in secret; another priest, stationed in Gunanba from 1949 until 1954, chased *tubuan* and burned *taraiu*. It is also said that the Catholic mission excommunicated church members who belonged to the *tubuan* during the inter-war period (see also Simet 1991:318). As already mentioned, in the same period the Methodist mission, too, decided to exclude from the church those who participated in *tubuan* activities, but strangely enough, I was told that the Methodist mission did not forbid the *tubuan*. This was probably because the Methodists did not execute their decision effectively enough to have an impact on its members, or because the Catholic mission’s opposition to the *tubuan* was so much more visible than the Methodist mission’s in the past that the people have come to emphasize the former and deemphasize the latter.

Not all the Catholic priests were against the *tubuan*, however. For instance, Fr. Hermann Zwinge, who served in New Britain from 1909 until his death at Vunapope, was
open-minded about the *tubuan* and was even initiated in Nodup.\(^{52}\) But the major exception was Fr. Carl Laufer, who came to the Gazelle Peninsula in 1929, served in Rakunai, Vunapope, and Vunavavar until he left for Germany in 1955 due to ill health, and died in 1969. While he was stationed in Rakunai (1930-49), he was a member of the *tubuan* and even had his own *tubuan* named “IaLotu.”\(^{53}\) The exact reason for his close involvement in the *tubuan*, and other priests’ perceptions of it, are unknown, but it is most likely that he had genuine interest in studying indigenous customs and was tolerated to pursue it, given that he left an exceptionally larger number of anthropological papers—mostly in German—than any other Catholic priests who served in New Britain.\(^{54}\)

Evaluating his works, Fr. Hermann Janssen states: “It was Laufer’s primary anthropological and missionary concern to show that God has been in Papua New Guinea before the white man entered these islands” (Janssen 1975:19).

Although Fr. Laufer never published a monograph on the *tubuan* as he had intended (see Sack 1972:102), he demonstrated his intimate knowledge about it elsewhere (e.g., Laufer 1949, 1962, n.d.). In his article on the religious beliefs of the Tolai (Laufer n.d.), for instance, he devoted a section to the *tubuan*, reporting how it had come into being and what its members actually did inside the *taraiu*, in the initiation rite, and with the *tabu* they collected.\(^{55}\) His account, as well as his participation in the *tubuan*,

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\(^{52}\) Minutes of “A Kivung kai ra Umana Pater ma ra Umana Patuana / The Meeting of the Fathers and the ‘Patuana’ or Tubuan People,” dated 30 November 1966, p. 5. Catholic Church Archive, Vunapope. Zwinge was the author of many articles on Tolai children’s songs and games (see Krähenheide 2001 [1938]:33, n.83).


\(^{54}\) See Janssen et al. 1975:259-266 for a bibliography of Laufer’s works.

\(^{55}\) The Catholic Church Archive at Vunapope has an English translation by Fr. J. Theler of the section entitled “Der Tubuan-geheimbund [The Tubuan Secret Society]” in this article (Laufer n.d.). There is no indication of when this article was originally published; it was presumably published under the title “Die Religiösen Vorstellungen der Gunantuna auf New-Britain (Südsee) [The Religious Beliefs of the Gunantuna in New Britain (South Sea)]” in the journal *Ein Beitrag zur Kulturhistorischen*
gives us an impression that the *tubuan* was not as bad as many of his fellow priests understood, or that by the time of his writing, it had already become something close to what they wanted it at least to become—a harmless recreation. Thus, he argued that the *tubuan* had lost many of its pagan elements, and as proof of this, he stated that his own *tubuan* "IaLotu," which he had brought to light without any pagan doings, had been respected as any other *tubuan*. While he acknowledged the *tubuan*’s continuous spiritual associations, he recognized powers of sorcery only in *tubuan* managers (*bita tubuan*) who he said were also members of the *ingiet*. He was of the opinion that the *tubuan*’s concern was mainly materialistic—that is, the collection of *tabu*. He was certainly aware of the forceful nature of *tabu* collection by the *tubuan*, but he attributed it to the fundamental religious belief among the Tolai that the accumulation of *tabu* was the essential condition for a blessed life in the other world. Thus, his account, a result of his participant observation, presents a picture of the *tubuan* that is completely different from the one that was held by the Catholic mission. This difference led one to contemplate that the mission’s policy against the *tubuan* was largely based on superficial observations, unfounded allegations, or self-serving imaginations.

By the end of the Second World War, many Tolai catechists had absorbed their priests’ hard-line attitude towards the *tubuan*. It did not seem uncommon that they intentionally revealed *tubuan* secrets to women and children and were then abused and threatened by *tubuan* people.\(^{56}\) One such incident developed into a public controversy in

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\(^{56}\) Religionsforschung [Contribution to the Cultural Historical Research of Religions]. However, it is neither in a bibliography of Laufer’s works that was compiled by Wittkemper and Sterly (Janssen et al. 1975:259-266) nor in the one (mimeograph, compiled 1970, Hamburg) at the library of the Institute of Ethnology in Basel, Switzerland (Nigel Stephenson, personal communication, 8 November 2005). In the Catholic Church Archive at Vunapope, there is an undated letter, originally in the Tolai language and translated to English, which is authored by a man (named) who identifies himself a member of the
1951. On July 31, the then Australian Minister for Territories, Paul Hasluck, met people at Reimber during his brief visit to Rabaul. On that occasion, the recently established Reimber and Rabaul Native Councils presented an address to him.\textsuperscript{57} The address included a complaint that missionaries forced the people to give up all their customs against their will. The complaint was made with special reference to an incident at Tavuiliu in which men who had beaten a native Catholic catechist for talking about \textit{tubuan} secrets were punished. In his reply, Hasluck stated: "If the foolish native catechist at Tawuiliu has broken the law in telling the girls about the tumbuan secrets he will be tried in a Government court".\textsuperscript{58}

Bothered by this exchange, Bishop Scharmach wrote Hasluck a letter defending the mission's policy against the \textit{tubuan}.

\begin{quote}
It seems to us that in your treatment of the Tumbuan Society, you imply that the Government will defend the Society and all it stands for. ... [T]he organization is essentially pagan and hence antichristian. No native can be a member of the Tumbuan Society and at the same time a member of the Catholic Church. The native himself freely makes the choice - there is no question of compulsion being brought to bear when a native relinquishes his pagan beliefs for those of a Christian nature.\textsuperscript{59}
\end{quote}

His letter was accompanied by "A Memorandum on the Tumbuan" (dated 20 August 1951) that lists all its disturbing "facts...based on the investigations made by our missionaries during the past 69 years - missionaries who are adept linguists and ethnologists here in the islands." Also attached were letters of support by three prominent church members—two named men and one woman who asked for anonymity out of
tubuan, and which is addressed to a catechist (named) from Gunanba who was one of the students at the seminary that was inaugurated in 1937 at Vunapope but interrupted by the Second World War. In this letter, the author accuses the catechist of having revealed the secrets of the \textit{tubuan} to the uninitiated, labels him as a "meri" (a Tok Pisin word for "woman"), and threatens him with black magic.

\textsuperscript{57} Parts of the address were published in Tok Pisin in \textit{Rabaul News}.

\textsuperscript{58} Letter from Paul Hasluck to ToPoi and Vuia, the presidents of the Reimber and Rabaul Native Councils, dated 31 July 1951. Catholic Church Archive, Vunapope. His reply was translated into Tok Pisin and published in \textit{Rabaul News} on 18 August 1951.

\textsuperscript{59} Letter from Bishop Scharmach to Paul Hasluck, dated 11 September 1951. Catholic Church Archive, Vunapope.
fear—claiming that the *tubuan* was the source of all evil things; that women already knew all the “*tubuan secrets*”; that it was church members themselves who decided to abolish the *tubuan*; and that the majority of the people, both Catholic and Methodist, did not want the *tubuan* to be revived again.\(^{60}\)

Both the Methodist and Catholic missions, thus, persistently fought against the *tubuan*, though in different manners, but it is important to stress that their fights continued because many Tolai Christians kept on resisting the hegemonic view of the *tubuan* as incompatible with the *lotu*. The missions’ attitudes towards the *tubuan*, however, began to change in the 1960s and 1970s as the *lotu* became increasingly indigenized as a result of changes in a wide society.

### The Indigenisation of the *Lotu*

If indigenization is measured by self-propagation, self-support, and self-government, the United Church in the New Guinea Islands Region had already achieved it to a considerable degree by 1975—one hundred years after the arrival of the first Methodist missionaries (Williams 1970:666-672). In fact, the goal of the Methodist mission (and many other Protestant missions) was from the outset to create a local church with these three “selves.”

As soon as South Sea Islands missionaries won converts and established village congregations, local people engaged themselves in evangelism, which they accepted as

\(^{60}\) These letters were originally in Tok Pisin and translated by the mission into English.
their responsibility. Some of the earliest converts—including Elaita ToGimamara of Vunamami who was one of the first two Tolai converts (baptised in 1880)—became lay preachers, and from the late 1880s on, training institutions produced a number of lay preachers, pastor-teachers, catechists, and ministers (Threlfall 1975:50-51, 57, 70-71). They scattered over the region to evangelize their own people and later extended their evangelistic task to other regions. The village congregations supported mission work financially, through the annual thank-offering or vartabar (the Tolai word for “gift”) from 1886, and through the partial payment of their workers’ salaries from 1910 (Threlfall 1975:58, 89). In 1915, Peni ToPitmur of Matalau became the first indigenous minister in the region (Threlfall 1975:103). The number of indigenous ministers, however, grew only slowly for almost half a century after that (Threlfall 1975:245). It was, according to Rev. Threlfall, not because the missionaries were reluctant to admit more local men to the ministry, but because “[t]he indigenous Church members saw the work of a minister as one which demanded great abilities, and which also gave him a position of great importance, and they were only willing to nominate men of mature age and long service” (1975:103). The number dramatically increased after 1962 when the Methodist Church in Melanesia began discussions towards its union with the Papua Ekalesia and the United Church in Port Moresby (Threlfall 1975:245-246). Consequently, this prepared the ground for the inauguration of the United Church in Papua, New Guinea, and the Solomon Islands as a self-governing (but not fully self-supporting) independent church in 1968, with Rev. (now Sir) Saimon Gaius, a Tolai, as the first bishop in the New Guinea Islands District. “Self-government [had] come,” according to Rev. Williams, “before it

61 See Missionary Review 1956 for a biographic sketch of Gaius.
was demanded” (1970:672), as

it has been the practice of the church to give full responsibility to local leaders before they considered they were ready for it. This is because the church has been convinced that the learning process towards full maturity of leadership comes after the acceptance of responsibility, not while responsibility is in the hands of another (Williams 1970:671-672).

Compared to the United Church in the same measures, the Catholic Church was less indigenized in 1982 when it celebrated the centenary of its commencement of work in New Britain. Unlike the Methodist mission, which aimed to develop a local church out of a foreign-controlled mission, the Catholic mission did not make such a clear distinction between the church and mission, but rather “conceived the Church as ‘universal’ and reduced this universality to practices that involved world-wide standardization” (Murphy 1970:700). All the Catholic missionaries were Europeans. They came in greater numbers than their white Methodist counterparts. Not having South Sea Islands assistants, they had a hard time in penetrating villages. Thus, rather than building up village congregations, they established a few central mission stations, around which they tried to create Christian communities modelled on those in Europe. They had seemingly unlimited access to overseas funds for that purpose, and the Catholic converts, being allowed to be financially dependent upon them, “teased the Methodists about their Vartabar, saying, ‘Join our Church, where you don’t have to pay any money!’” (Threlfall 1975:60). 62 Provided these patters of work, which was in sharp contrast to those of the Methodist Church, it is not difficult to see that the growth of the Catholic Church was very much in the hands of the missionaries and not the local people.

The first training school for catechists was set up in 1898, and only a very small

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62 According to Fr. Holz at Takabur Parish, Tolai Catholics still see their parish priests as sources of money.
number of catechists were selected to be trained for the priesthood in a minor seminary at Vunapope, which was opened in 1937 but interrupted by the Second World War. It was only in 1953 that two of the first seminarians, Herman ToPaivu of Tapo and George ToBata of Malaguna, became the first indigenous Catholic priests in New Britain (and in New Guinea, for that matter).\(^{63}\) By 1970, two more indigenous priests were added to the number (Murphy 1970:704). In the space of a century, the Catholic Church in New Britain produced ten indigenous priests (MSC General Bulletin 1982:100), as compared to about 90 indigenous ministers from the Methodist/United Church in the New Guinea Islands Region (Threlfall 1975:245-246). This marked difference was certainly due to the fact that the Catholic Church required exceptionally high qualifications for the indigenous clergy (Murphy 1970:695), but it was attributable to the church’s continued paternalism more generally. In 1982, 48 out of 54 parish priests in the Archdiocese of Rabaul—established in 1967—were foreigners (MSC General Bulletin 1982:99), who seemed to rarely consult parishioners on matters relating to the running of their parishes, and Archbishop Albert Bundervoet still regarded his church as “a Church which is truly a child of her mother,” stressing “a great need that the Mother-Church continue her work until, with God’s help, the young local Church can stand and move around on her own two legs” (MSC General Bulletin 1982:101).\(^{64}\)

We have thus far looked at indigenization in organizational terms, but what is more important for my purpose here is with regard to the penetration of the *lotu* into local

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\(^{63}\) The first Papuan priest was ordained in 1937, having been prepared for the ordination in far-away Africa. ToPaivu was consecrated as bishop in 1974 and became Archbishop of Port Moresby in 1976 (for his biographical sketch, see Times of Papua New Guinea 1981:1). ToBata became Auxiliary Bishop of Rabaul in 1978.

\(^{64}\) According to Fr. Holz at Takabur Parish, expatriate Catholic priests—mostly Germans—generally see the speeding up of the localization of the Methodist Church as well as the government by the Australians as failures.
culture. To the Methodist mission, this simply meant the use of the local vernaculars. A few years after establishing themselves in New Britain, the Methodists began to produce Christian literature first in the Duke of York language and then in the Tolai language, but it was decided in 1896 to make the latter the regional language for mission work in general and for literature in particular (Threlfall 1975:48, 55-56, 69). The first complete Tolai translation of New Testament (*A Buk Tabu Kalamana*) and the first extensive Tolai translation of Old Testament (*A Buk Tabu Lua*) appeared in 1892 and 1917 respectively, which were followed by many revisions and additions (Lanyon-Orgill 1960:53-56; Moore and Moore 1980:104-105).\(^{65}\) Methodist gospel hymns were also translated into, and occasionally composed in, the Tolai language from the early years (Webb 1999:xxii). In addition, there was *A Nilai Ra Dovot* ("The Voice of Truth"), the official organ of the Methodist Church in the region—all in the Tolai language—that was published from 1909 until 1977 (Cass 1992:62-63; Moore and Moore 1980:104; Threlfall 1975:87). Thus, the Tolai Methodists were long able to domesticate the *lotu* in their own tongue. However, the use of the local vernaculars in mission work, after all, was the rigid translation of not only the teachings of the *lotu* but also the minds of Europeans who had invented it.

The Catholics, too, produced Christian literature in the Tolai language, including the translations of certain portions of New Testament (*A Buk na Ivai na Evaqelio* and *A Buk Tabu: A Kalama na Testamento*),\(^{66}\) the translation of Apocrypha (one portion of Old Testament that was not recognized by the Methodist and Lutheran Missions) (Bible Society of Papua New Guinea 1983:3), hymn (and prayer) books (see Krähenheide 2001).

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\(^{65}\) For the history of the translation of the Bible in the Tolai language, see *New Guinea Islands News* 1974:4-5.

\(^{66}\) Interview with Fr. Winfried Holz, MSC, at Takabur Parish Church on 16 February 2004.
[1938]:48), and *Talaigu* (later *Talaigu*), a periodical which started in 1929. Church services, however, were conducted in Latin for many years, which reflected the Catholic Church’s emphasis on universality and world-wide standardization. Not surprisingly, the old generation of Tolai Catholics say that Latin was the language of the *lotu* and therefore the sacred language, while the vernacular was simply the language of the village. In comparison with the vernacular-using Methodists, they might have proudly imagined themselves as part of the universal church through sharing the same language as well as ritual. With hindsight, however, they recall that they did not quite understand the meanings of Latin prayers and hymns in church services that they considered to be the most important aspect of the *lotu* and therefore eagerly memorized. These suggest that more than the Methodists, the Catholics felt that the *lotu* was a foreign import.

However, there was an ambitious attempt at cultural penetration by the Catholic mission—an attempt in which the Methodist mission was generally uninterested. In the 1930s, Fr. Laufer put forward the then revolutionary idea of creating Christian hymns based on melodies of traditional Tolai songs (Krähenheide 2001 [1938]:31). *Lili* songs, which had been sung especially by women to mourn for and honour the deceased (Krähenheide 2001 [1938]:28), were deemed acceptable for the purpose. Fr. Laufer observed:

> Two of my kanaka artists wrote Christmas songs and put them to old, almost forgotten, plainsong-like melodies, the so-called *lili* songs. Even very old men, who could not open their mouths for the Our Father, rehearsed with eagerness and enthusiasm, because it was something that was rooted in their own thinking and was not imported from outside (quoted in Krähenheide 2001 [1938]:31).  

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67 The Catholics also had a Tok Pisin periodical called *Katolik Nius* after the Second World War. *Talaigu* and *Katolik Nius* were probably published until 1968 when they were replaced by *Garamut* and *Kundu* respectively. The two, however, were discontinued in the following year.  
68 See Niles 1999a, 1999b for a historical overview of approaches taken by churches in Papua New Guinea to hymnody.
The idea had been opposed by old priests who thought that such traditional songs would bring many pagan beliefs back into people's memories (Krähenheide 2001 [1938]:28-29), but it was eagerly supported by younger and more musically inclined ones, including Fr. Anton Krähenheide who was in favour of the total abolition of the tubuan but interested in learning Tolai songs, dances, and musical instruments (2001 [1938]). The opinions were also divided among Tolai catechists; some argued that they should stick to tunes from the missionaries' home countries in order to maintain true devotion to God, while others insisted that they wanted something distinctive to them and that they were so devoted to God that nothing would change even if these tunes were replaced by lili melodies (Krähenheide 2001 [1938]:31-34). Although by 1951 a collection of Catholic hymns based on lili melodies was compiled by Fr. Zwinge (Krähenheide 2001 [1938]:33, 48), the use of traditional music for hymnody remained experimental at best for many years after that.

These patterns of work in the Catholic Church changed after the Vatican II Ecumenical Council of 1962-65, which "marks a definite turning point in the theology of mission within the Catholic Church" (Arbuckle 1978:280). Historically, the Catholic Church had been committed in theory to respect local cultures or at least to tolerate them, but in practice it had not in most mission lands, including Oceania (Arbuckle 1978:276-277; cf. Murphy 1970:683-688). One of the major consequences of Vatican II was a renewed emphasis on the adaptation of the expressions of the Christian faith to the specific cultures being evangelized (Arbuckle 1978:279-282; Murphy 1970:688-692).

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69 Krähenheide, born in Germany, served at Paparatava and Vunapope from 1913 until 1930.
70 Webb argues that "the Tolai resisted early attempts by some missionaries, particularly Catholic, to develop a hymnody based on indigenous music, possibly seeing this as a strategy devised to restrict their participation in the changing social order" (1999:xxvi; see also Webb 1995, Chs. 1 and 5).
This came to be called "inculturation," which Pope John Paul II defined as "the incarnation of the Gospel in native cultures and also the introduction of these cultures into the life of the Church" (Pope John Paul II 1985, Paragraph 21). The concept thus represents the Catholic Church’s commitment to the exploration of the creative and dynamic interaction between Christianity and local cultures, and to the development of the universal church as a communion of local churches with their own cultural characteristics.

The effects of the changes initiated by Vatican II on the attitudes and actions of Catholic missionaries might have varied from congregation to congregation. In Rabaul, the ideal of "inculturation" appeared to be immediately embraced by MSC priests, given that many Tolai Catholics today pinpoint the late 1960s as the beginning of change in the way their church dealt with their culture. Change was visible in several ways: most of the Latin prayers and hymns used in church services were translated to the Tolai language (Laudate: A Buk na Niaring ma a Kakalai); the use of traditional melodies in hymnody was energetically pursued; traditional dances, together with traditional costumes and musical instruments (e.g., kudu), were incorporated into certain church services; and traditional feasts with the performance of dances and the distribution of tabu became an essential part of occasions like the opening of church buildings, the ordination of Tolai priests, and jubilee and centenary celebrations. In 1982 when the Catholic Church in New Britain celebrated its centenary with such a traditional feast at Vunapope, Archbishop Bundervoet envisioned a successful church as "a Church that fits into this particular culture, a Church that has her own face, where people feel at home, which purifies the

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71 In his 1974 survey of the impact of Vatican II on attitudes of the Marist Fathers in Oceania, Arbuckle concludes that "although many Marist missionaries have accepted the values of Vatican II, there is little indication that these values are in fact influencing behavior to any significant extent" (Arbuckle 1978:296).

Such radical changes did not occur in the United Church. However, there were efforts to reconfigure the relationship between Christianity and culture in a direction similar to that which was taken by the Catholic Church. This was largely due to the political climate of the late 1960s and early 1970s when the approach of self-government and independence awakened feelings of pride among local people—both United Church members and Catholics—in their own traditions as part of national culture. Another factor that influenced the United Church (and the Catholic Church) at the time was growing ecumenical cooperation, particularly between the Catholic and Protestant denominations which had been unfriendly or sometimes hostile to each other. After Vatican II, the Catholic Church and the United Church, as well as other churches in Papua New Guinea, participated in common bible translation work, joint prayer services, and inter-denominational associations like the Melanesian Council of Churches and the Melanesian Institute for Pastoral and Socio-Economic Service. In this ecumenical climate, there was theological rapprochement among these churches, particularly with regard to Melanesian cultures. Thus, the primary goal of the Melanesian Institute (based in Goroka, Eastern Highlands Province), for instance, was phrased as “to help expatriate and Melanesian church workers in the process of incarnating Christianity within the

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72 In 1968, the United Church and the Catholic Church agreed with the Bible Society of Papua New Guinea to prepare a common Kuanua (Tolai) Bible which would be acceptable to both churches. They decided to include Old Testament, Apocrypha, and New Testament in it and standardize names and important words for worship, which the two churches had previously called differently. One important decision was to use the word “God” for God, which had been called Kalou (Fijian) by United Church members and Deo (Latin) by Catholics. A Buk Tabu: A Maulana Kunubu ma a Kalamana Kunubu was thus first published in 1983 (Bible Society of Papua New Guinea 1983:2-3). Even though “God” is used in it and the Tolai have been long familiar with the term, most United Church members and Catholics still call it Kalou and Deo respectively. United Church members usually bring a copy of A Buk Tabu with them in Sunday services, but Catholics rarely do so, though they probably have it in their homes; Catholics usually bring with them a copy of Laudate, which contains prayers and hymns in Kuanua (some still in Latin).
cultures of this region” (Whiteman 1983:142).

This theological current was evident in the United Church as early as in 1970, as Rev. Ronald Williams, for example, argued that the task of indigenization would be incomplete without “mak[ing] Christ incarnate in the culture of our people” (Williams 1970:679). This concern with culture was pushed in theological education at the Rarongo Theological College in Rabaul. In his Principal’s Report of 1980, Rev. Albert ToBurua, a Tolai who became the first Papua New Guinean Moderator for the United Church in Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands in the following year, noted that an increasing emphasis was placed on “the relevant [sic] of worship to our Melanesian Context and how worship can incooperate [sic] some of our Melanesian ways” (United Church 1980:109). Since then, there have been a growing number of Tolai graduates who attempt in their Bachelor’s theses to develop an indigenous Christian theology by contextualizing the Christian faith in particular aspects of their own culture (e.g., Boas 1995; Gigie 1996; Kowa 1996; Midian 1999 [1990]; Namete 2003; A. D. Peni 2002; Vetenge 1995). A similar trend is also observed at the Catholic counterpart, the Holy Spirit Seminary at Bomana (e.g., ToVaninara 1982, 1985). In fact, the development of indigenous Christian theologies has been a phenomenon in a wider area, as an increasing number of indigenous scholars in and beyond Melanesia have been voicing that “the Gospel is not Western” (Trompf 1987).

Post-Mission Attitudes towards the Tubuan

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73 See Ailans Nius 1978:6 for his biographical sketch.
The changes that took place in the 1960s and 1970s prompted Tolai Christians to explore the relevance of their culture to the *lotu* and make their own decisions on what customs are or are not in accordance with the *lotu*, a question which had previously been ruled on by European missionaries. Such practices as warfare, cannibalism, and sorcery were left behind long ago without objection, but those practices which appeared to have been unnecessarily or unreasonably forbidden by the missions had to be re-evaluated. The *tubuan*, on which many Tolai Christians had disagreed with the missions, became a major subject of reassessment, especially in the Catholic Church.

The effects of Vatican II on the *tubuan* seemed almost immediate. On 30 November 1966, Catholic priests and *tubuan* elders from all over the Gazelle Peninsula held a conference to find out the truth about the *tubuan*, so that Archbishop John Hoehne could make an informed policy decision on it. The conference began with Fr. Paivu’s (Tolai) presentation of his paper entitled “A Tubuan kai ra Gunantuna” (The Tubuan of the Gunantuna [i.e., Tolai]), which detailed the *tubuan*. Encouraged by Fr. Bata (Tolai) to freely express their opinions, *tubuan* elders said that the *tubuan* had been forbidden without any consultation with people, so they did not know why it had. According to them as well as Fr. Paivu, the *tubuan* forbid theft, fighting, adultery, murder, and any other immoral deeds, and had nothing to do with the *ingiet*, so contrary to what had been said about it, it was not bad at all and therefore not against the *lotu*. The bad reputations of the *tubuan* were then ascribed to a handful of *tubuan* people who were low in morality, disobeyed its laws, and brought these evil things into it from the outside, and those *mana*

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(uninitiated men and women) who, knowing nothing about it, made false accusations about it and its people to their priests who mainly got their stories about it from them and were consequently misinformed about it. It was therefore argued that it was the people who were to be blamed, not the priests. This conference on the *tubuan* was followed five days later by a Fathers’ conference in which Fr. J. Theler\textsuperscript{75} presented an English translation of the section on the *tubuan* in Fr. Laufer’s paper (n.d.), which argued that it was no longer harmful.\textsuperscript{76} Two days later, then, Archbishop Hoehne announced his decision to lift the restriction placed on church membership among *tubuan* people, adding that “those who started, built, bought, or resurrected the Tubuan and those who work in the taraiu are obliged to swear off the Tubuan before the parish priest and flock.”\textsuperscript{77}

Since 1970, no new MSC priest has come to the Archdiocese of Rabaul. The second last was Fr. Winfried Holz who arrived in 1968. According to him, those priests who had came before Vatican II had a hard time in adjusting themselves to the changes resulting from it, and many of them persisted in opposing the *tubuan*. Fr. Holz, on the other hand, was initiated into the *tubuan* in 1977 or 1978 at Volavolo where he had replaced Fr. Paivu as parish priest in 1974 and served until 1989 when he was transferred to the Takabur Parish. In 1982, as already mentioned, the great majority of the parish priests in New Britain were foreigners. Today, half of the parish priests on the Gazelle Peninsula are Papua New Guineans; white priests are getting older and dying out. With a change in the demography of priests as well as in their attitudes towards local cultures,

\textsuperscript{75} He served in the Tolai area from 1928 until his death in 1984. According to Fr. Holz at Takabur Parish, he was consistently against the *tubuan*.
\textsuperscript{76} Archbishop Hoehne’s Letter, dated 7 December 1966. Catholic Church Archive, Vunapope.
\textsuperscript{77} Ibid.
the *tubuan* is no longer an issue in the Catholic Church.\(^78\)

The Archdiocese of Rabaul’s policy on traditional customs is expressed in its centennial history book with reference to *1 Thessalonians* 5:21-22: “You must judge everything. You must keep what is good and discard what is not good” (Catholic Church 1982, the chapter “Wok Aposel Bilong Ol Katolik Long Nu Briten,” my translation). The book also carries the pictures of some of the “good” customs, and they include the picture of a *tubuan* (*ibid.*). Traditional customs, however, are not the only things to be judged.

The church has a duty here: it must help people judge anything well, the ways of ancestors and those of white men. … The church must teach people what God wants, it is not good that they judge things in the way they like. Because there is only one guide to judging, it is the words of God. (Catholic Church 1982, the chapter “Wok Bilong Lokal Sios,” my translation)

The United Church came to use a similar language in its policy on local cultures. Thus, the 1973 synod of the New Guinea Islands Region stated: “it would be undesirable to seek to suppress traditional ceremonies, but that rather our people must be helped to grasp clearly the Gospel of Jesus so that they can, each one, decide for themselves that which can be held along with faith in Jesus, and that which is incompatible” (United Church 1973:11). The synod then urged the Department of Education to give careful attention to what is to be taught in school for a one-hour-a-week subject called “cultural activities” (introduced in 1972), and listed the following “good activities”: “Good stories and legends, customs, shell-money, correct behaviour towards brothers and sisters, in-laws, etc., preparation for marriage, hospitality to visitors, making canoes, nets, baskets, fish-traps, bird-traps, traditional methods of cooking, making garamuts

\(^78\) The Tolai customs that have recently been debated most frequently in the Catholic Church, according to Fr. Holz, are *varkukul* (bride price), which has become costly, and *varkinim* (male coming-of-age ceremony) whereby goods and food items are lavishly distributed and alcohol is often involved. He is of the opinion that these customs are no longer about daughters and sons, but about fathers who are greedy for profit and reputation.
[slit-gongs], drums, bark-cloth, plates and cooking utensils in the traditional way, canoe-paddles; good singing and dancing” (United Church 1973:11). The “bad activities” that should not be taught, on the other hand, were enumerated as follows: “Sorcery, belief in evil spirits, spells, frightening people, asserting men’s dominance over women, weather-magic, magic for blighting gardens, bush-medicine to make women barren” (United Church 1973:12). People were thus encouraged “to value and keep what is good in their traditions and to teach it to their children as a gift of God and not to be afraid to take good customs into their Christian lives” (United Church 1972:86).

While some cultural activities were clear enough to be divided into good and bad ones, others were not. In the United Church, opinions were mixed with regard to the tubuan. In the 1970s, as Rev. Threlfall recalls, “younger ministers showed an acceptance of the [tubuan] society as a colourful part of local culture which had lost much of its pagan religious significance” (cited in Epstein 1998:18), but older ministers were reluctant to accept it or to deny their lifetime of opposition to it. It was probably the idea of younger ministers to let a tubuan dance be one of the traditional dances performed in a large church fête at the Malmaluan Lay Training Centre on 25 September 1976 (see Island Trader 1976:25). There was also a general gap between the church officials and the people. Thus, in his report to the regional synod of 1988, Bishop William ToKilala wrote: “The ways of ancestors overcome many leaders – dukduk, tubuan, tabu distribution, big feasts, and many things interfere with the people around. What is your theology or explanation for these ways of ancestors?” (United Church 1988:66, my translation from the original in Tok Pisin). A conservative mood prevailed among the church officials, as the regional synod of 1990 agreed to even stop a practice that had
long been maintained from the early years of mission work—the use of traditional dances in the church ground on vartavar (thank-offering) days, at the opening of church buildings, and in other major church events (United Church 1990:7). However, the new generation of United Church ministers today, who have been trained in Melanesian Christian theology, have liberal attitudes towards the tubuan. In fact, many of them even assert that the tubuan is a good custom and should be promoted together with the lotu. Among them is Rev. Eron Diop of the Vunamami Circuit, who said that they were trying to change the attitudes carried over from the European missionaries who had condemned culture as a sin.

The Christianization of the Tubuan

During my fieldwork, I was very much surprised at the degree to which elements of the tubuan were incorporated into the domain of the lotu, especially in the Catholic Church. Visitors to Vunapope, the headquarters of the Archdiocese of Rabaul, would not miss wall paintings of tubuan and dukduk (and masked figures of the Baining and the Pomio) at the main office building. This clearly indicates the Catholic Church’s endorsement of the tubuan as an emblem of Tolai culture. But my prime examples come from three special church events I attended, in which the tubuan was used extensively.

One was a ceremony organized at the Rakunai Parish Church on 31 May 2002 on the occasion of an annual Oceania Bishops’ Conference held in Rabaul. The purpose of the ceremony was to commemorate the late Peter ToRot, a Tolai (Rakunai) catechist
and martyr and the only indigenous saint in the South Pacific.\textsuperscript{79} About 80 bishops from all over Oceania and thousands of Catholics from all over the Tolai area were present. On their arrival, the bishops were greeted by two \textit{tubuan}—one from Rakunai and the other from Matupit—which were rewarded with \textit{tabu} through a \textit{tutupar} and a \textit{varlapang}. The bishops were then escorted to the church building by Tolai traditional dancers in procession for a memorial service. After lunch, the bishops were entertained with a series of traditional Tolai dances (\textit{labar}, \textit{kulau}, \textit{perapere}, etc.), which came to a climax when dances were performed by the two \textit{tubuan}.

Another event of this kind was a ceremony held at Vunapope on 16 August 2003 to celebrate the anniversary of Archbishop of Rabaul Karl Hesse's 40\textsuperscript{th} year as Priest and 25\textsuperscript{th} year as Bishop\textsuperscript{80} and the official opening of a newly built conference centre. It was attended by thousands of Catholics from all over the Archdiocese of Rabaul. To mark the occasion, many \textit{tubuan} and \textit{dukduk} were raised by Tolai and Duke of York parishioners, and a number of \textit{tabu} coils were displayed on a \textit{butur}. The ceremony began at dawn with a \textit{kinavai} in which a \textit{tubuan} danced on a canoe off shore. After landing, the \textit{tubuan} met other \textit{tubuan} and they, followed by men, made their way up to the church ground where they were awaited by Archbishop Hesse who was bare-chested and wore a feather headdress, a leafy necklace, and a red \textit{laplap} on which a \textit{tubuan} was printed (and pairs of socks and shoes). As soon as these \textit{tubuan} arrived, he joined a \textit{kanavo} in which the \textit{tubuan} and men went around the church ground with certain \textit{kudu} (drum) beats and dance steps. He was also given a privilege that only \textit{bita tubuan} have—a privilege to control a

\textsuperscript{79} He was killed with a lethal injection by the Japanese during the Second World War because he had disobeyed the order to stop church work. The beatification of the late Peter ToRot was the central event of the papal visit to Port Moresby in 1995.

\textsuperscript{80} Arriving from Germany in 1966, he served in the Baining area for many years. He became the bishop of Kavieng in 1981 and the Archbishop of Rabaul in 1990.
tubuan; thus, he thrust a spear (rumu) with tabu into the ground in front of a tubuan. He then led a tubuan and a dukduk to a stone monument (vat na im) erected to mark the official opening of the conference centre for a rurua na vat in which the tubuan and the dukduk stepped on the base of the monument as a gesture of “blessing” the new building (Figure 10). After these rituals, each parish made a presentation in front of Archbishop Hesse who sat under a roofed structure called pal na pidik (“secret house”) with three miniature tubuan on its roof top. Some parishes performed a tutupar; other parishes performed a tubuan dance; and still other parishes sang a hymn in traditional attire. By the end of the ceremony, Archbishop Hesse was presented a lot of tabu and leis.

The uses of the tubuan in these two church events seemed out of context, but accorded closely with traditional themes surrounding it. As already mentioned, the most common reason for raising the tubuan is to honour the dead. The raising of the tubuan in the ceremony at Rakunai was found appropriate because it was to commemorate the most important ancestor for Tolai (and other) Catholics. The ceremony at Vunapope, on the other hand, was not for the dead, but in its form, it was unmistakably a matamatam, a ceremony staged by a vunatarai to commemorate all its ancestors. The staging of a matamatam was found suited for honouring Archbishop Hesse because it is one of the most essential attributes of the “traditional big man” and he is certainly the most important “big man” for Tolai (and other) Catholics. He was “qualified” to receive such a respectful treatment by tubuan people because he had been initiated into the tubuan in the late 1990s.

There is one more church event involving the tubuan that I attended. It was held at the Ramalmal Parish Church on 29 July 2003. It was not for any particular individual
but for the church's centenary celebration. With a ringing of a church bell at noon, parishioners were instructed to assemble at Vunakamkambi, a few kilometres down from the church, where a Catholic mission station had been established in 1901. Not surprisingly (due to the "PNG time"), it took me about four hours to see things get started. After a prayer, some three hundred parishioners solemnly walked up in procession to the church under police escort. The procession, led by four catechists carrying a large-sized bible on a wooden carrier ornamented with a white cloth, palm fronds, and colourful flowers, made its way into the church building by passing under a pal na pidik with two miniature tubuan on its roof top. It was a symbolic enactment of the arrival of the lotu from Vunakamkambi to Ramalmal one hundred years ago. After a memorial service was conducted, the parishioners went outside to wait for the last event of the day, although it was getting dark. Two tubuan suddenly showed up in the church ground where a large red-painted stone monument (vat na im), inscribed with the names of all the past parish priests of Ramalmal (all German), had been erected near a statue of the Virgin Mary to mark the centenary. They then performed a rurua na vat in which they treaded upon the base of the monument as a gesture of respect for all the past priests and ancestors of the church. This was followed by a varlapang in which the two tubuan kneeled down at the opposite sides of the monument and each collected from the

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81 The station was established by Fr. Nolen with the assistance of Tabaran, ToKivu, IaTel, and ToRuga who are said to have "purchased" the lotu with 5 pokono of tabu and a pig from Fr. Bley at Volavolo in the previous year. There is a stone monument (vatnaim) at Vunakamkambi commemorating the coming of the lotu with the inscription of the names of these founders.

82 Ramalmal was formerly called Vunavar. Fr. Nolen at Vunakamkambi sent a catechist named ToArikailua for patrol to Vunavar where he taught the lotu to the people, some of whom were baptised at Malaguna and Volavolo. However, it was not until 1903 that a mission station was established there by Fr. Ernst Hisgen and Br. John Weber. Vunavar was renamed Ramalmal (meaning "the peace") by Br. Weber after the end of a big fight between Catholic and Methodist adherents in the area, which resulted in the latter becoming Catholics. I am indebted to Simon ToPindian for my knowledge of the beginning of the Ramalmal Parish (see also Tultul 1988:8).
parishioners and the current parish priest tabu or money which was then received by the church (Figure 11). Having performed these rituals, the tubuan disappeared into the bush.\textsuperscript{83}

What amazed me was the significance that Ramalmal parishioners attach to these two particular tubuan. One of them, IaUraliu, is the tubuan identified with the vunatarai that offered a plot of land for the establishment of the church in 1903. IaUraliu is raised not only in traditional ceremonies but also in church events in order to remind the parishioners that the lotu was founded on the land of that vunatarai and to assure that the church ground belongs to the church and would not be disputed. The other tubuan, much to my surprise, is a Christian tubuan, which was newly created in 1988 when the opening of the current parish church building was celebrated. It was named Toloane after the patron saint—or turangan (spirit) as it is often called—of the church, St. John (Johannes in Latin) the Baptist (Figure 12). Toloane is not identified with any particular vunatarai; it is the tubuan of the Ramalmal Parish Church and therefore is raised only in church events.\textsuperscript{84} However, like any other tubuan, Toloane collects tabu through tutupar

\textsuperscript{83} On July 31, an official ceremony for the centenary was held whereby Auxiliary Bishop of Rabaul Fr. Patrick Taval (Tolai) blessed the monument and the parishioners celebrated the occasion together with invited dignitaries, who were welcomed with flowers, songs and refreshments, made congratulatory speeches, and enjoyed the performance of choirs. August 3rd was Sunday and the 100\textsuperscript{th} anniversary of the foundation of the Ramalmal Parish Church for the reason that the first baptism had been performed at Ramalmal on the day in 1903. The parishioners attended a Sunday service as usual, but it was special as it was conducted by Bishop Taval and included a confirmation for recently baptised school children. The centenary celebration ended with a traditional feast called balabalaguan at an open field near the church ground on August 21. The feast was pushed back to this day due to extensive preparations necessary for it. It turned out to be the largest feast I had ever attended during my fieldwork. Large coils of tabu were displayed on a butur at the centre of the field, and next to it stood a large pal na pidik under which a garamut was placed. The feast was hosted by the Ramalmal Parish Church whose members brought pigs, frozen meat, and bunches of bananas—all uncooked—and distributed them among themselves and to members of other Catholic parishes who were invited to the feast. The two tubuan that had appeared on the first day showed up again to perform dances. A number of traditional dances were also performed by not only members of the host parish but also those of the invited parishes.

\textsuperscript{84} Ramalmal parishioners took part in the ceremony at Vunapope on 16 August 2003 together with Toloane.
and varlapang and has its own tabu (kiau), which in this case belongs to the church. One important occasion on which Toloane is raised is when the parish priest dies. Part of its tabu is cut and distributed in a minamai for him, just as in traditional settings. Toloane, thus, serves as a symbol of the Ramalmal Parish Church that allows its members imagine themselves as one big “vunatarai” with the parish priest as its lualua (headman).

In contrast to the Catholic Church, the United Church generally disallows the tubuan to take part in church activities or enter church grounds. During my fieldwork, I never saw the tubuan in events organized by the United Church. I asked some United Church members what they thought about Catholics using the tubuan in their church events. They seemed uninterested in such a practice, saying that it was a way of the Catholics only. However, there is a sign of change as I heard that a tubuan had danced in a graduation ceremony at the George Brown Pastors’ College on 1 November 2003. Rev. Diop, who had attended it as an invited guest, told me that he had been very moved by the tubuan songs (tapialai) sung on that occasion. Under the influence of the new generation of pastors and ministers, we may see more church events involving the tubuan among United Church members in the near future.

Despite these differences, Tolai Catholics and United Church members work together in a variety of tubuan activities in traditional settings. Neither of them are hesitant about incorporating elements of the lotu into the domain of the tubuan. Saying grace before eating is an established practice among tubuan people inside as well as outside the taraiu. I also witnessed a “Sunday service” inside the taraiu. This was when I was confined in a taraiu in Karavia No.2 together with some fifty men for a whole week to fulfill the requirements for nidok, the final stage of initiation into the tubuan. Catholics
and United Church members gathered in separate spots inside the taraiu, and a sermon, though brief, was given by their church elders in place of their catechist and pastor who were at the time conducting a regular Sunday service in their respective churches. It was also during this confinement period that what is called the Catholic Youth Awareness Program was carried out in the taraiu. It is a weekly program which was developed by the youth coordinator of the Archdiocese of Rabaul for Catholic youths to learn various subjects and issues pertaining to the Christian faith, and which is scheduled for every Thursday evening in Karavia No.2. On this particular occasion, youth leaders made poster presentations on the overall structure of the Roman Catholic Church and "youth problems," such as AIDS, drugs, rape, theft, drinking, early marriage, and child abuse. Some of their church elders were also present at that time, and when one of them was asked for a concluding remark, he, appropriately enough, emphasized the importance of the tubuan in staying away from these problems. It is against the tubuan law to disclose what happens inside the taraiu, but fascinated by the fact that these activities of the lotu were done inside the taraiu, I asked ToRarang, the organizer of the nidok, whether I could write about it in my dissertation. His answer was that I should do so to let people know that tubuan people are true Christians.

Most of the Tolai Catholic priests and catechists, and the United Church ministers and pastors, with whom I became acquainted, had gone through at least the first stage of initiation into the tubuan in their youth. Although such religious leaders do not present themselves in the public as a member of the tubuan, I occasionally saw them join other men in the taraiu. When I participated in a tubuan ceremony known as dokvarvaki in Tinganalom in which a tubuan "died" in its taraiu, the pastor in charge of the United
Church congregation of that village was present. He was in his forties. He never played a leading role there except when grace was said, but he behaved as an ordinary member of the tubuan. Nevertheless, his presence was much appreciated by the other men present because they perceived it as a clear endorsement of the tubuan by the church and a good opportunity to let its representative confirm that nothing bad happens inside the taraiu. I had a chance to talk to the pastor after the ceremony, and he stressed his responsibility for guiding people in their spiritual life even in the taraiu. When I went through the nidok, one of our initiates was a recently retired Catholic catechist of Karavia No.2 who was in his sixties. He belonged to the old generation of catechists who had been inculcated with a view of the tubuan as the work of the devil and prohibited from engaging in tubuan activities, so that he had refrained from being dok (i.e., initiated into the tubuan to the final stage) until his retirement. He was the oldest among our initiates, who were mostly in their twenties and thirties. Although he was overshadowed by these young men, I heard many already fully initiated men commending him on his determination to be dok even at this late stage of his life. Also among our initiates was a man in his late twenties who was a catechist-in-training. Catholics of Karavia No.2 were excited to see the emergence of a catechist fully initiated into the tubuan.

Although ordinary members of the Catholic Church and the United Church are not formally trained in Melanesian Christian theology, they put forth their own interpretations of the tubuan in relation to the lotu. As already mentioned, the male society has three types of masked figures, namely the tubuan, the dukduk, and the lomlom, and these are said to be the boss (lualua), the child (bul), and the servant (tultul) respectively. Drawing on the Christian concept of family, many told me that the tubuan
was like the father, the *dukduk* the child, and the *lomlom* the mother. Some likened these masked figures to the Trinity: the *tubuan* as God the Father, the *dukduk* as Jesus Christ the Son, and the *lomlom* as the Holy Spirit. However, the most commonly accepted interpretation focuses on the following three moral principles of the *tubuan*, which are said to be consistent with the teachings of the *lotu*. The first is *varmari* – pity or love. This is said to be most apparent in a *minamai* in which the *tubuan* “cries,” walks over the grave in grief, and offers its own *tabu* to be distributed for the deceased. The second is *variru* – respect. It is thus emphasized that many *tubuan* ceremonies are held in honour of the ancestors and that *tubuan* (and *vunatarai* for that matter) respect each other. The last principle is *tinorom* – obedience. This refers to obedience to *bita tubuan* and *tubuan* elders, which is regarded as essential to the solidarity of a *vunatarai*. These moral principles are also often stressed by big men in their speeches at the end of a *minamai* without mentioning the *tubuan*.

For United Church members and Catholics, thus, the *tubuan* and the *lotu* are no longer the alternatives from which they must choose, but rather the two accommodate and complement each other in representing who they are. However, they are still haunted by the spectre of incompatibility. More specifically, their stance on the *tubuan* is challenged by new Christian “sects” in whom they see images of early European missionaries who were strongly opposed to it.

**The Tubuan and New Christian “Sects”**
Tolai experiences of new Christian “sects” date back to 1929—54 years after the arrival of the Methodists and 47 years after the arrival of the Catholics—when Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) missionaries came to Rabaul and established a station and school in Matupit. Their unique beliefs and practices—particularly the observance of the Saturday (seventh say) Sabbath, strong belief in the second coming (advent) of Jesus Christ, and strong commitment to healthy diet and living—soon drew some converts from the Methodist and Catholic missions. Their intention, however, was not to compete in the Tolai religious field, which had already been tightly occupied by the other missions, but to train young men there and send them as missionaries to other parts of New Guinea that had not been missionized yet (Stewart 1956:139). Thus, while there was the rapid growth of the SDA Church in places like St. Matthias Group, the New Guinea Highlands, and Manus thanks to Tolai missionaries, Adventist expansion in the Tolai area was rather gradual. In fact, until the 1960s the Tolai villages with a SDA congregation were Matupit, Baaì, and Napapar (No.1) only. The Adventists in these places, which sent out many missionaries, established themselves primarily through kinship and marriage ties in the absence of missionaries in their own homeland.

The mid-1950s saw the arrival in Rabaul of another new “sect”: the Jehovah’s Witnesses. With the task of “showing them the truth,” Jehovah’s Witnesses attacked the mainline churches, especially the Catholic Church, as instruments of Satan through their extensive door-to-door visitation. Their aggressive manner of proselytizing, as well as their beliefs and practices, many of which are more or less alien to the Christian tradition,

often provoked puzzlement and anger, rather than interest, among the people. In 1959, there was a growing antipathy towards the Jehovah’s Witnesses after a brawl resulting from their having held a meeting in Ralabang, an established Catholic area. Greatly concerned about the trouble, the combined Tolai councils, in the following year, had a petition sent to the Secretary-General of the United Nations requesting that no more sects be brought to New Guinea. The petition stated: “we do not like the newly [sic] churches to interfere the old churches which we had [sic] now.” The Australian Administration, however, did not take the matter seriously, attaching to the petition its observations noting that “the multiplicity of religious missions had not created any real administrative problems.”

The Tolai request fell on deaf ears. In the late 1960s, Pentecostal missionaries began work in Rabaul through open-air meetings, camps, and film shows (Namunu 1983:57). They emphasized the gifts of the Holy Spirit, such as healing, prophecy, wisdom, and “speaking in tongues.” Their work caused a lot of confusion within the mainline churches, especially the United Church which also realized the need for spiritual revival and with which they sought to establish some sort of working relationship (Namunu 1983:56-59). While the leaders of the United Church recognized their evangelistic work, they were very reluctant to associate with Pentecostals, who argued against the church’s organization, ministry, doctrine, baptismal practices, and so on (ibid.). However, some members chose to leave the “mother” church and join an established

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88 See Hovey 1990 for an overview of Pentecostal churches in Papua New Guinea.
Pentecostal church like the Assemblies of God. At the same time, some United Church ministers, having been inspired by Pentecostal work, became committed to “neo-Pentecostal” or “Charismatic” renewal within the church, thereby creating a cleavage among their congregations (see E. Peni 2001; ToNurvue 1983 for a Rapitik case). Those who had been baptized in the Holy Spirit, or “born again,” created a feeling that they were better than those who had not. Their spontaneous styles of worship, which entail guitar playing, hand clapping, hand raising, jumping, and praising, were abhorred by those who were faithful to the “mother” church and accustomed to formal preaching and hymn singing.

Today, the United Church and the Catholic Church still predominate over the Tolai religious field. However, it is important to note that Tolai membership in various Christian “sects” dramatically increased over the last three decades at the cost of the mainline churches, and that the trend is likely to continue in the future. It is estimated that one fifth of the Tolai population now fall into non-mainline religious groups. In spite of their differences, these new groups share an orientation to a theological fundamentalism. Their recent rise, as Ernst (1994:243) has suggested on the basis of his study of new religious groups in the Pacific, is due to the occurrence of rapid socio-economic transformation. In an increasingly instable, insecure, and chaotic world, many Tolai began to search for a new sense of life and community. The new religious groups, which provided a means of getting back to fundamentals, met their affective needs, needs which the mainline churches became too institutionalized to effectively meet. In the wake of nationalism, many Tolai sought to be free from conventionalized church doctrines and rules of worship and make conscious decisions in pursuing their own religious interests.
However, joining a new religious group has often unfortunate social consequences. Members of a new religious group tend to worship, sing, speak, and dress in Western ways and condemn their customary ways. In their eyes, traditional culture is sin: in particular, the Adventists oppose the chewing of *buai* (betel nuts) and the consumption of pork, while the Pentecostals see traditional supernatural beings as obstructions to the flow of the Holy Spirit. This immediately means to members of the mainline churches that these new “sects” refuse socialization since these are essential to “traditional” Tolai ceremonial life. Their disapproving attitudes towards customary practices and beliefs create social distance between them and members of the mainline churches, who are in fact knit together in dense networks of links formed through marriage and kinship.

Their disagreement is most considerable on the *tubuan* and sometimes results in violent clashes. Such disturbances occurred at Matupit in September 1986, which local press reports referred to as “holy war” (cf. Epstein 1998:19; Neumann 1992a:226). The whole incident began when members of the SDA Church blocked a path between a *taraiu* and a ceremonial ground that runs through their church ground in the day before a *tubuan* ceremony was scheduled. This angered *tubuan* people who then confronted them at the church ground on the morning of the ceremony. The Adventists insisted that they would no longer allow *tubuan* to cross their church ground, while *tubuan* people threatened to break a blockade that had been set up there. In this exchange, some of the church members shouted insults at the *tubuan*, which for *tubuan* people must be met by a punishment through the *vanga*. Thus, in the evening, a *tubuan*, accompanied by a group of men, went to the home of one of the offenders, thrust a spear at the door step, and
demanded compensation in *tabu*. However, the accused man, instead of complying with the *tubuan* rule, threatened to destroy the *tubuan* with dynamite—which was then commonly used to catch fish (now illegal)—so the *tubuan* and the men were forced to retreat to the *taraiu*. But in the following evening, they came back and destroyed his house and car and those of many other Adventists. Those whose properties had been damaged filed a lawsuit against the three *bita tubuan* involved, claiming about K50,000 in compensation. The case took two years to come to court. At the close of the trial at the national court in Rabaul, the judge, a Sepik, reserved his decision and advised the parties that as soon as he was ready, he would deliver the judgment. However, he never did. It seemed that he was in a difficult position since he was married to a Tolai woman, lived in his wife's village of Ngatur, and was considered to be a member of the *tubuan* as he had gone through the first stage of initiation. In 1994, the judge declared the trial a mistrial for the alleged reason that all the court files had been destroyed by the volcanic eruptions. The plaintiffs gave up going through a trial all over again on grounds of cost and time.  

There were also brawls involving the *tubuan* during my fieldwork. These came about in July 2003 at Navunaram where a relatively large number of evangelical Christians live. The whole episode was triggered off when several of the youths participating in a touch rugby tournament at the Navunaram playing field mimicked the *tubuan* and its shouting while two *tubuan* and a group of men from Tavuiliu passed by in the truck. Enraged by this, the men stopped the truck, got off, and chased the offenders, but no fight broke out at this time. It was alleged by *tubuan* people that such a thing happened because those parents belonging to the new sects did not teach their children to

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89 For information regarding this court case, I am indebted to Sialis Tedor, a Tolai lawyer who represented the plaintiffs and is now based in Lae.
respect the tubuan. Representing the tubuan people, the councillor of Tavuiliu, who had been in the truck at the time of the incident, met the councillor of Navunaram, an evangelical Christian who had been present at the field at that time as an organizer, and informed him that the payment of compensation in tabu to the tubuan must be arranged within a week, or peace would not be guaranteed. A week, however, passed without any payment. Consequently, two tubuan, accompanied by about one hundred tubuan people from Tavuiliu, Malmaluan, and Karavia No.2, descended on the field, where a touch rugby tournament was held again, and on grounds that compensation had not paid, the tubuan people destroyed facilities and attacked players and spectators with clubs, bottles, and stones. The fight ceased with the arrival of the police. No one was arrested, but a meeting was arranged for all the leaders involved to settle the dispute at the police headquarters in Kokopo. A week later, a large amount of compensation was eventually paid there to the tubuan side by the Navunaram side, who were considering available options to claim compensation for the facilities destroyed by the tubuan people.

I was able to talk to all the main figures involved in the 1986 and 2003 incidents. In both cases, the tubuan people justified their actions by asserting that they had only enforced the tubuan rule, while the evangelical Christians claimed that the tubuan people had been drunk and abused the tubuan. I also sought outside opinions on these particular incidents from tubuan elders. Most of those whom I spoke to, surprisingly enough, disagreed with the ways in which the vanga was carried out. According to them, it is still in a way true that the tubuan has the unlimited power to punish those who have violated a tubuan rule, but the vanga always has to be based on reason, fairness, and common sense. In both cases, the tubuan people were seen as having gone beyond the bounds of reason,
fairness, and common sense in that they had inflicted a substantial amount of damage on
the offenders that was disproportionate to the offences committed. It was argued that
when the offenders refused to pay compensation, the *bita tubuan* must have consider
other available options before choosing to destroy the property, which could not be
compared with property in pre-contact times. Many *tubuan* elders also said that as their
society changed with outside influence, the practices of the *vanga* should also evolve
with and be influenced by modern legal and Christian values.

In this chapter, I have thus tried to show how the relationship between the
*tubuan* and *lotu* ("church") has changed over the years and how the meaning of the *tubuan*
has been constructed, negotiated, and contested at a particular point of time and
according to social and political circumstances. In the next chapter, I employ a similar
approach to examine the relationship between the *tubuan* and *matanitu* ("government").
Figures in Chapter 2

Figure 10. Archbishop of Rabaul Karl Hesse, presented as a "traditional big man."
Photo: H. Tateyama
Figure 11. *Tubuan* appeared in a ceremony to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the establishment of a Catholic parish church.
Photo: H. Tateyama
Figure 12. Toloane, a Christian *tubuan*.
Photo: H. Tateyama
Matanitu is a term originally introduced to the Tolai by Fijian Methodist missionaries in the nineteenth century to refer to introduced government structures, and has long been assimilated into Tolai understandings of their identity (Neumann 1992a:99). Along with lotu (“church”), matanitu stands in contrast to a notion of “tradition” or “custom” (balanagunan). Although Tolai tend to separate these categories, they overlap and play off each other in many ways. In Chapter 2, we have seen how the Tolai religious field has been transformed through the complex interplay between the tubuan and the lotu. The interaction between the old and the new is also apparent in the transformation of the Tolai political field, and the tubuan has been a major presence in this transformation as well. The colonial administrations introduced new systems of government to replace an indigenous form of leadership and jurisdiction that centered around the tubuan. Although the tubuan was destined to disappear as irrelevant to modern political structures, it has continued to be a significant factor in both familiar and new guises over the years. A study of the history of the matanitu, then, provides another key entry point to an examination of the evolution of the tubuan in modern times.

This chapter begins with a discussion of the attitudes of early European settlers—missionaries, traders, planters, etc.—on the north-eastern Gazelle Peninsula towards the socio-political system they encountered among the Tolai. This is followed by an examination of a sequence of the introduced government structures: the Luluai system
(1896), the council system (1950), and the provincial and national governments (1975-1976). Here, particular attention is paid to the roles of the tubuan in the process in which the Tolai have appropriated the introduced political offices and constructed and negotiated new models of leadership. The process traces the shifting significance of the tubuan in the development of indirect rule during the early colonial period and in the eventual decline of indirect rule following the Second World War, and the re-emergence of the tubuan as a potent political symbol in the post-colonial period.

Ngala or “Chiefs”

Early European settlers on the north-eastern Gazelle Peninsula struggled with how to describe the Tolai socio-political system, which appeared to refute their persuasion that “savage” people were always ruled by “chiefs.” A typical observation was that of the German trader Eduard Hernsheim: “there were no chiefs and no large villages; every family lived on its own, mostly in a state of feud with its neighbours” (Sack and Clark 1983:47). By “family,” he probably meant what Tolai called vunatarai (matrilineal descent group), as they lived in small hamlets of seldom more than ten huts and each hamlet was associated with a particular vunatarai (see Parkinson 1999 [1907]:27).

While no “chief” was supposedly found among the Tolai, we find the term “chief” here and there in early European accounts of the people. Most authors stuck to the label “chief” in referring to local men of relative prominence for the sake of convenience; after all, no better word came to the minds of nineteenth-century Europeans in speaking
about such individuals among “savage” tribes. Some cautious writers, however, used the
term “chief” with certain qualifications. For example, the Methodist missionary George
Brown wrote:

The power of the chiefs is very small indeed; in fact, they seem to have little or no
authority over the people... The rank, so far as we know at present, is not hereditary.
The rule here also seems to be “the selection of the fittest and the survival of the
strongest.” The man who has the most shell money and is the best fighter appears to
be acknowledged chief (1877:148).

Richard Parkinson, a German trader/planter and amateur ethnographer, generally agreed
with Brown, adding that “the authority of a chief [went] as far as it serve[d] the benefit or
the needs of the whole sib [by which he meant vunatarai]” (1999 [1907]:27). A similar
view was offered by Octave Mouton, a Belgian trader/planter, who differentiated the
“chief” from the “Chief” (with the capital C) or “great chief”:

To my knowledge there is no recognized king or Chief, the authority only go [sic] as
far as the head of the family [presumably vunatarai], and the strongest and richest
has a little more say in the matter, and is recognized as the chief of a district but has
no power to command nor to punish, he has the same right as the head of any family
in his district, for this reason there is no such a thing as a great chief behind the
district... (Biskup 1974:104).

By “chief,” these writers probably meant what Tolai called ngala na tutana,
literally “big man,” or simply ngala (see Hahl [1897]:5-6; Parkinson 1999 [1907]:27-28).
The ngala was, first of all, a lualua, that is, the head of a vunatarai. The main duty of the
lualua was to administer the property of his vunatarai, particularly land, tabu, and tubuan.
The members of his vunatarai were expected to obey him, yet he had to persuade them to
support him rather than dictating to them. His position was hereditary, normally
succeeded by his brother or his sister’s son on his death, but he might be deposed before
his death if he were found unworthy of the position. While ngala were usually lualua,

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90 I disagree with T. S. Epstein (1972:40) who implies that Parkinson blindly applied the term “chief” to
Tolai leaders.
only a lualua with certain achieved qualities was regarded as a ngala. Thus, the ngala was often a lualua who was also an accomplished war leader or luluai. But more importantly, for a lualua to be looked upon as a ngala, he had to be a wealthy man or uviana with exceptional entrepreneurial flair, which was best demonstrated in his ability to command a considerable amount of tabu in organizing large-scale ceremonies, especially those involving the tubuan. Although the ngala’s sphere of influence was limited to his vunatarai, he was revered by some other vunatarai for his wealth in tabu. Nevertheless, the practice of his tabu being distributed on his death (i.e., minamai) militated against the development of a formalized hierarchy with a centralized position of power that would extend over a large area.

What puzzled the early European settlers, then, was how order was maintained in a seemingly fragmented society without actual “chiefs.” For them, the answer lay in the institution of the tubuan, which Hernsheim probably had in his mind in mentioning “quasi-religious ties” (Sack and Clark 1983:186). The tubuan was generally seen as “the administration of law, being judge, policeman, and hangman all in one, as [it] settles all disputes and punishes all offenders” (Powell 1883:61). Brown argued that “[t]here was...no form of government outside that of the secret societies” and that “[their] regulations, indeed, were practically the only laws which existed” (1910:271). His fellow missionary R. H. Rickard agreed with him, saying that “[t]hese large societies...were really the Government in the various towns” (1890:73). This led Brown to conclude that “this association [i.e., the tubuan] had its own sphere of usefulness in a state of society...where there were few chiefs of sufficient power to compel any obedience to law or to enforce punishment against a transgression” (1898:781). Similarly, Parkinson stated
that "[i]n a district like, for example, the north-eastern corner of the Gazelle Peninsula, where no actual chief is recognized, the tubuan represents the principle of social order and conventional justice and looks after the maintenance of this" (1999 [1907]:256). An effect of these observations was to demote the Tolai one further step down the ladder of social evolution. The Tolai, who had "secret societies" instead of real "chiefs" as agents of government and jurisdiction, were deemed more "primitive" than those "savage" tribes who had institutionalized or hereditary chieftainships (e.g., Brown 1910:426-438).

"One of the most unfortunate things for the stranger visiting New Britain, and one that makes intercourse with the natives most difficult, is the fact that there are no actual chiefs. ... Should the country ever be annexed to any civilized power, this absence of responsible men will make the task of government a most difficult one" (Romilly 1886:27)

The absence of a centralized socio-political system on the north-eastern Gazelle Peninsula created practical problems for the early European settlers. "[I]t was soon realized that it would be extremely difficult to influence or civilise these natives quickly as had been done on other islands like Samoa, Tonga and Fiji, and that this might in fact be impossible for years to come or even in the second generation" (Sack and Clark 1983:205). For missionaries like Brown, "the lack of authority on the part of the chiefs, and the constant feuds of the people," were "the great hindrances" to the spread of the Gospel (Brown 1908:146). The situation was also discouraging for traders, including Hernsheim who complained that

it was impossible to make long-term agreements with these savages ... it would take years for any really profitable trade to develop here ... it was quite impossible to buy at one time any substantial quantity of any of the export commodities available. I
thought of giving up the business here altogether... (Sack and Clark 1983:47-48).

In the absence of powerful “chiefs,” whom early missionaries and traders had wished to use for their own purposes, the best strategy left to them was to rely upon petty “chiefs”—that is, *ngala*. Thus, in initiating contact with each local community, missionaries first looked for *ngala* whom they gave presents to win their friendship, and then they proceeded to negotiate with them for the placing of a missionary, the erection of a missionary’s house and a church building, and so forth (see Brown 1908:103-176). Likewise, traders very often counted on *ngala* to collect, or organize men to collect, supplies of what they wanted—especially coconuts for copra (see Powell 1883:38).

Through these interactions, *ngala* emerged as middlemen between Europeans and locals. They were willing to act as such since their dealings with Europeans allowed them to enhance their status. For their services, *ngala* were paid by Europeans in trade goods (and later in *tabu* as well), some of which they then exchanged with others for *tabu*, thereby increasing their personal wealth. Firearms were concentrated in the hands of *ngala*, enabling them to subject their old enemies to their control.91 Land sales were made by *ngala* on behalf of their *vunatarai*, but because of their desire for gain, they frequently sold land without the consent of the other members. “It is clear that the *ngala* were now acting more arrogantly and independently of their supporters than they had done at the time of first contact” (Salisbury 1962:334-335). As power concentrated on them, they came to exercise their influence far beyond their own *vunatarai*. Hence, while Europeans made use of *ngala*, *ngala* also exploited the presence of Europeans to their own advantage.

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91 The supply of firearms (and liquor) to New Guineans was prohibited in 1887, but by then about 700 rifles were reportedly already in Tolai hands (Sack and Clark 1979:19-20).
Although ngala were predisposed to accumulate wealth and power in the new situations brought about by Europeans, their success depended on how wisely they maintained good relationships with Europeans. To explain this, we may refer to two “chiefs” who are frequently mentioned in early European accounts of the Tolai and who present two different strategies: namely Talili of Kabakada and ToKinkin of Raluana. Within a few years after Europeans began to converge on the north-eastern Gazelle Peninsula, Talili came to control local trade in trade goods over a large area. In April 1878, when four Fijian Methodist missionaries went inland from Kabakada to spread the messages of the *lotu*, they were killed and eaten at the instigation of Talili who feared that he would lose his monopoly over the supply of trade goods to inland people. Convinced that this was a general assault against all Europeans, Brown and traders mounted punitive expeditions against the villages of Talili and those who were involved in the evil deed (see Brown 1908:250-287, 304-320; Powell 1883:117-158; Sack and Clark 1983:42-43). After this “crime,” Talili became known by Europeans as a “notorious chief,” and this perception hindered his interactions with them, thereby limiting the expansion of his wealth and power.\textsuperscript{92}

ToKinkin, in contrast, was a “good chief” for Europeans. As early as in 1883, he was a reliable “trader” for Hernsheim, buying coconuts from locals for him with trade goods provided by him on credit (see Sack and Clark 1983:149-150). He soon became powerful enough to sell Europeans land which did not belong to his *vunatarai* (*Times of Papua New Guinea* 1985:16). In 1893, he was tagged as a “millionaire” in *tabu* (*Missionary Review* 1893:7). ToKinkin was also on good terms with Methodist

\textsuperscript{92} See *Missionary Review* 1924:12-14 for “Talili’s Last Crime”. 

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missionaries and became a convert. He had an elaborate Christian wedding ceremony (Heermann 2001:188, Fig.2). Referring to him as a “chief” and a “professed Christian,” Rickard stated in 1893: “He has been exemplary in his giving to the Church, his manual labour for the Church, and his attachment to the Teacher (Missionary Review 1893:7).

Later, ToKinkin invested his wealth to buy two boats—worth about 1000 marks, which was equivalent to about 500 fathoms of tabu at that time—from the Chinese shipbuilder Ah Tam (Times of Papua New Guinea 1985:17). He probably used these boats, which were bigger than Tolai canoes, to dispatch a large number of men to the Nakanai coast of New Britain in order to obtain shells of which tabu was made (see Salisbury 1970:35). Accordingly, he must have amassed tabu in his “unusually decorated tabu-house” (Heermann 2001:192, Fig.2). ToKinkin’s case clearly shows the multiplication of wealth and power in those ngala who successfully adapted to new situations brought about by Europeans.

How to introduce a new system of law and order to the “natives” was a major concern for the German administration. Officials in the New Guinea Company, which administered German New Guinea from 1885 until 1899 on behalf of the Imperial Government, were quick to notice the absence of “districts” or large “villages” under the centralized leadership of “chiefs” and the presence of small hamlets of a “family” type that were in a state of feud with one another, noting in the annual report for 1886-87 that “[t]his fragmentation is an obstacle to winning over the people peacefully” (Sack and Clark 1979:19). Nevertheless, they also viewed it as advantageous, naively believing that “it reduces the danger which might arise if a group of larger tribes were to join forces to

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93 Ah Tam (whose real name is Lee Tam Tuck) came to the Gazelle Peninsula in the late 1870s or 1880s as an agent for the trading firm of Hernsheim and established himself as an independent shipbuilder and trader on Matupit by the end of the nineteenth century (Wu 1982:20-21).
attack or resist the sparsely occupied [white] settlements” (ibid.). By then, there had been incidents where traders living in isolation were murdered by locals, but these were regarded as “only isolated cases” (Sack and Clark 1979:20) and the attitude of the “natives” towards Europeans was considered to be “more or less friendly” (ibid.). This relaxed mood was reflected in the fact that the New Guinea Company, at first, established no structure of administrative power except the installation of a few imperial judges, and depended entirely on a passing visit by an imperial warship for the actual enforcement of the laws. Frustrated with this unsystematic administrative undertaking, Hernsheim called for “a force far more powerful and more permanent than that represented by a few men landed from a warship, for 24 hours at the most” (Sack and Clark 1983:187). “But we must at all costs make sure,” he went on to say, “that the removal of the barriers which have in the past isolated the individual tribes from each other does not become the occasion for the natives to combine against the whites in order to avenge wrongs which can so easily be committed against them if new laws are blindly implemented by a superior force which is at hand only for short periods” (Sack and Clark 1983:187-188).

His suggestion fell on deaf ears, and what he had feared happened in 1893. Men from Tingenavudu, Ulagunan, Malakuna, Palnapuru, and Bitarebare unied in a series of armed attacks on the New Guinea Company’s station and plantation at Kokopo (then Herbertshöhe) (see Biskup 1974:112-116; Firth 1983:60-61; Hempenstall 1978:128-131; Mead 1960:195-197; Neumann 1992a:127-133; Sack 1973:88-89, 107-108; Sack and Clark 1979:75; Salisbury 1970:79-80). The unrest was caused by the alienation of land by Europeans and the behaviour of imported plantation labourers (mainly from the Solomon Islands and New Ireland) who harassed local women, stole market produce, and
destroyed gardens. The immediate target of the attackers was the New Guinea Company, but their goal was to expel all the foreigners from their land. They possessed a special weapon—a magical ointment which they believed repelled bullets. It was said that it had been discovered by a sorcerer named Tavalai (or Taulavai) and bought from him for one thousand fathoms of tabu. The administration’s hastily assembled troops, comprising European volunteers and New Guinean police and labourers, mounted several punitive expeditions against the enemy, killing at least 43 men and demanding compensation in tabu, but the rebels refused to surrender. A state of war extended over six months, disrupting local markets which provided foreigners with foods and locals with trading incomes. Peace was eventually sealed with a compensation payment after a punitive expedition assisted by a warship, which disembarked part of its crew, fired a number of shells at the enemy territory, and killed 17 Tölai.

While the Germans officials attributed the ending of the revolt to the demonstration of their military power, the Tolai dissidents seemed to have decided to accept peace for other reasons. According to Mouton, who joined the punitive expeditions, it was when Tavalai, smeared with the magical ointment he had invented, was killed by a bullet in the last punitive expedition that the insurgents were led to sue for peace, as they were convinced that he was a fraud (Biskup 1974:115-116). It is also plausible that they changed their minds because they realized that if they drove foreigners out, they would be no longer able to obtain trade goods and tobacco to which they had become accustomed. Whatever the reason, this uprising clearly demonstrated the ability of Tolai groups, who had long been isolated from and hostile to one another, to form a large-scale alliance when they had a common enemy and a shared cultural symbol—in this case, the
foreigners and the magical ointment, respectively.

This so-called “war of the bullet-proof ointment” was an important lesson to the administration, causing it to recognize the need for some means of more effective control over the “natives.” Georg Schmiele, the Administrator, wrote shortly after the end of the war: “Conditions in Blanche Bay absolutely demand a more or less direct government of the tribes” (quoted in Firth 1983:61). What he came up with, then, was the idea of appointing “men of trust” and giving them “a certain authority, so that they are able to maintain order in their districts” (ibid.). In fact, this idea had been put forward by him two years earlier, but ignored by the New Guinea Company (Hempenstall 1978:132). This time his idea was given the green light; however, he died in 1895 without implementing it himself (ibid.). The task was then entrusted to Albert Hahl, an imperial judge who arrived in Kokopo in January 1896. After studying the Tolai language and “legal matters” (see Hahl [1897]) in earnest for seven months, he began to appoint local men he trusted to act as “chiefs” with limited magisterial and police powers. The system of government-appointed “chiefs”, which had been pioneered by Hahl on the Gazelle Peninsula, was adopted by the Imperial Government, which officially took over the administration of the Protectorate from the New Guinea Company in 1899, and was introduced in other parts of the colony.

The Luluai System
These government-appointed “chiefs” were given the title “Luluai”94 and presented with a cap and a stick as the insignia of the position. One wonders why Hahl chose the Tolai term “luluai” for this new office over other qualified Tolai terms, especially “ngala,” which he defined as a “great master” who was a lualua (the head of a vunatarai), a luluai (war leader), and an uviana (wealthy man) all in one (Hahl [1897]:5-6; see also Parkinson 1999 [1907]:27-28). This was because Hahl understood the luluai as a prototype of the modern magistrate.95 He wrote:

If he [the luluai] enjoys special respect he is called upon to give decisions between parties in civil disputes. The force of his personality ensures the carrying out of his verdict, for which he on his part may demand tabu (Hahl [1897]:5).

All Hahl had to do, then, was to somehow “modernize” the luluai for the benefit of the administration. He took particular notice of the appearance of the luluai, who was, according to him, “distinguished by a special ornament...wear[ing] a head band...on the head a bunch of white cockatoo feathers...a belt...and a neck band...” (Hahl [1897]:5; cf. Parkinson 1999 [1907]:28). By replacing these adornments with a cap and a stick, Hahl probably sought to replace the image of “primitive” warfare and court with that of “modern” government. The luluai, thus, became the Luluai (with the capital L).

A Luluai was appointed in each “village,” which was a collection of several hamlets, each associated with a particular vunatarai, and consisted of about three hundred people. The Luluai assumed two functions.96 First and foremost, he was a village magistrate with limited judicial authority. His magisterial powers were officially defined in July 1903 by Hahl, now Governor of German New Guinea, in a proclamation in the

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94 At first, they were given the title “Lualua” (Firth 1983:64).
95 It seems that Hahl did not know that the Tolai actually have words to describe an individual whose role is akin to that of a magistrate (tena varkurai or kukurai).
Tolai language ("A vartulag tadap ra umana luluai"). The Luluai was given authority to judge minor legal disputes involving property up to the value of 25 marks or 10 fathoms of tabu. He was to impose fines not in tabu but in money, and hand over the proceeds of the fines to the Kokopo district office rather than appropriating them. Judgements were to be made in accordance with indigenous law, in so far as this was not incompatible with German law. The villagers had the right to appeal against the decisions of their Luluai to the imperial judge at Kokopo. Cases involving incest, adultery, divorce, land, inter-village warfare, or serious crimes such as arson, rape, and murder, were to be brought before the imperial judge. Secondly, the Luluai was a village policeman. In this capacity, he was supposed to facilitate the development of a colonial economy into which the Germans sought to integrate the Tolai step by step: first by having them build a network of roads throughout the north-eastern Gazelle Peninsula to open the colony to traders, planters, and labour recruiters (1896); secondly by obliging the people to sell processed copra, as opposed to whole coconuts, in order to "train" them to habits of work (1901); thirdly by prohibiting them from using tabu in all transactions with foreigners to promote a cash economy (1902); fourthly by imposing forced labour for roads and government plantations (1903); and finally by replacing forced labour with taxation in cash (1907). The Luluai was then responsible for supervising road building, organizing adult males for forced labour and later labour in lieu of tax, and collecting head tax. In other words, he was expected to play a crucial part in drawing his villagers to work within the colonial economy as road builders, copra producers, plantation labourers, and taxpayers.97

97 Luluais were assisted by Tultuls, who acted as interpreters between them and the German officials. The Tolai term tultul means "servant" or "messenger."
The German administration, however, had difficulty in installing the Luluai system over the traditional Tolai socio-political system. On the north-eastern Gazelle Peninsula, according to the annual report of German New Guinea for 1899-1900, "in a number of cases considerable difficulty was experienced in finding suitable persons whose standing with their fellow-tribesmen was sufficiently high to guarantee their authority in the exercise of their magisterial powers" (Sack and Clark 1979:195). Schnee, the imperial judge at Kokopo from 1898, described the problem more specifically:

Naturally, where possible respected and influential natives were appointed as village headmen [i.e. Luluais]. However, only in a few cases had these headmen enjoyed far-reaching influence prior to the transfer to them of administrative authority. Frequently, they achieved importance among their tribal members, apart from their immediate family [presumably vunatarai] circle, only through being invested with official honour (quoted in T. S. Epstein 1972:44).

This is strange, though. By the time the Luluai system was introduced, ngala had come to wield their influence far beyond their own vunatarai since they had rapidly accumulated wealth and power through their relatively intense interactions with Europeans. It then follows that the ngala should have been the best candidate for the position of Luluai. Indeed, ToKinkin was among the first Luluais appointed by Hahl (Times of Papua New Guinea 1985:17). However, from the above German accounts, it seems that he was the exception rather than the rule. In other words, the German officials appear to have often failed to locate ngala to appoint them as Luluais, or selected only a few "good chiefs" out of them. We may speculate that most ngala chose not to come forward for the new office because they were less interested in receiving authority from the German officials and performing formal duties for them than accumulating wealth. After all, Luluais drew no salaries; they only received occasional small gifts from the administration (Sack and Clark 1979:195). Most ngala probably left the new office to
those younger men who had some experience in dealing with Europeans but were not as skilful as them in doing so, with the intention of manipulating Luluais. Most of those who were appointed as Luluais, then, were likely to be lualua at best, whose spheres of control had been limited to their own vunatarai and who were therefore aspired to enhance their status on the strength of “official honour.” Thus, as Schnee and other government officials noted, “it happened that one or other of these village headmen [i.e., Luluais] used his administrative powers to extort or collect fines to increase his own wealth rather than to hand them on to Herbertshoehe according to regulations” (quoted in T. S. Epstein 1972:45; see also Sack and Clark 1979:195, 212, 237).

Even though the newly defined administrative unit of “village” appeared to be too large for the Luluai to administer, the German administration actually wanted to have a much larger administrative unit into which “villages” were amalgamated under the leadership of a single Luluai (Rowley 1958:216), but over a period every government station was forced, in the interests of comparative peace, to accept the demands of individual villages for the appointment of their own [L]uluais. ... As early as 1907 there were 212 [L]uluais in the Rabaul area alone. ... All the force at the disposal of the stations was insufficient to compel those villages unwillingly included in the unions to recognize the authority of [L]uluais who might be chosen from groups traditionally hostile. The [L]uluai in his turn was no doubt ready to use his position to pay off old scores. The only way for the administration to avoid such trouble was to allow each village to have its own official (Rowley 1958:219).

Thus, the implementation of the Luluai system among the Tolai was constrained by their traditional socio-political organization.

In this experimental phase of the Luluai system, however, there emerged some influential Luluais in Tolai society, the most famous being Abram (or Abaram) ToBobo of Vunamami (see Neumann 1992a:125-140; Salisbury 1970:315-317). He rose to prominence in the “war of the bullet-proof ointment” in 1893, not because he was a war
leader, but because he was a leading protagonist of peace. After that war, he became the lualua of his vunatarai, but he was certainly not a ngala of, say, the calibre of ToKinkin; rather, he distinguished himself as a very active preacher in the Methodist mission. As one of the first Luluais appointed by Hahl, ToBobo saw himself as a leader of the new generation. He recognized the need for peaceful adjustment to the expanding colonial economy. For instance, as a means of preventing further land encroachment by Europeans, he persuaded his villagers not to resort to violence, but to populate the land densely by increasing the population through encouraging early marriages with lower bride-prices, and to plant coconuts all over the land for the purpose of cash cropping. He also urged his villagers to strictly follow Christian principles, especially the Sunday Sabbath, and their children to attend mission school. Moreover, he was a kind of man who constantly wore a shirt, trousers, and shoes which were given by the Germans. In the eyes of his villagers, ToBobo represented the new order based on government, business, and church.

ToBobo’s profile suggests that new conceptions of leadership emerged among the Tolai with the introduction of the Luluai system. The authority of Luluais was sanctioned from above, which meant that they were not simply deposed even if they failed to show themselves to be equal to their position. Their status was not necessarily based on traditionally valued personal achievements, especially wealth in tabu; in fact, ToBobo is said to have abandoned his entire tabu riches by either distributing or burning them (Neumann 1992a:134). The influence of Luluais was also expansive. Not only did

98 He was the only Tolai who assisted the administration’s troops in the war (Neumann 1992a:132). According to one local oral tradition, the Tolai warriors ceased fighting because ToBobo obtained some of the magic ointment and took it to the administration’s New Guinean troops who then smeared themselves with it to make themselves invulnerable (Salisbury 1970:80, 316).
they administer the affairs of their own villages, but they were also allowed to voice their opinions on the matters affecting a wider area, especially if they were Methodists. From the first decade of the twentieth century, the Methodist mission had regular meetings of Luluais, or Kivung na Luluai, first on a circuit and then on a district basis; ToBobo was one of the Raluana Circuit representatives in the Kivung na Luluai of the New Britain District (Threlfall 1975:88-89). Luluais, thus, appeared as the regional elite in Tolai society.

Meanwhile, the Luluai system undermined the authority of the tubuan. The government officials, Parkinson observed, “come into conflict with the secret societies when the latter inflict punishments and penances that do not always coincide with the clauses of the Penal Code; such proceedings are then forbidden and the reputation of the society falls” (Parkinson 1999 [1907]:249). Local disputes were now supposed to be settled by Luluais within the limits of the German law, and not by the tubuan through its court procedure known as vanga. The administration’s objection to the tubuan was thus largely on legal grounds. Hahl, the institutor of the Luluai system, had a sincere respect for indigenous customs in general so that he let tubuan ceremonies continue. However, this was subject to certain strict conditions. He restricted tubuan ceremonies to “particular times of the year” (Sack and Clark 1980:38)—probably the month of May (see below)—undoubtedly because he thought that a prolonged period of festivity, which could extend over several months, would hamper his efforts to “train” the Tolai to habits of work. He also obliged permission for a tubuan ceremony to be obtained from him (Simet 1991:312-313, f.n.). Another thing that bothered him was the fact that whenever they [secret societies] held their festivities, by special order of their leaders or chiefs the roads were blocked or opened to travellers only on payment of special dues in shell-money. I did not interfere in any way with their customs or organization.
but prohibited all attempts to block free movement round the country. ... Early in the morning I saw the dukduk dancers in masks and costumes once again setting up their tabu signs on the beach. These signs meant that free movement by the public was barred — tabu means sacred, forbidden. I took advantage of this opportunity to make the dancers take off their masks and costumes which I ordered to be burned. These measures had far-reaching effects. The secret societies never gave serious trouble...

It soon transpired that these regulations were also welcomed by the natives themselves (Sack and Clark 1980:38).

It is doubtful that all these rules were effective and welcomed by tubuan people, but it is certain that Hahl, who lived among them for many years, first as Imperial Judge (1896-98), then as Acting Governor (1901-02), and finally as Governor (1902-14), had a strong influence on them. In fact, he was reportedly initiated into the tubuan (Salisbury 1967:47). It also seems true that he was generally respected by Tolai, given that when he left for good on April 13, 1914, a great crowd of people from Matupit came to Rabaul to shake his hand and see him off and tubuan danced for him (A Nilai Ra Dovot 1914:3-4).

The introduction of the Luluai system, coupled with the negation of the tubuan, underplayed the leadership of the ngala, who commanded the respect of people particularly by demonstrating his ability to control a considerable amount of tabu and the power of the tubuan. However, this ought not to be overstated. Although the Luluai’s authority was guaranteed by the administration, it is likely that few Luluais were acknowledged by their villagers, except members of their own vunatarai, as having the right to make decisions on “real” matters of village life which was still based on traditional values; where they were, this was not because of their ascribed status as Luluais, but because of their good standing in their villages according to prescribed cultural measures (Rowley 1958:231-232). Most Luluais were probably looked upon by their villagers just as intermediaries between them and the administration, but not as authorities in their villages. Real power in the village most likely remained in the hands of the ngala since his influence was always in accordance with commonly accepted
traditional principles.

After the First World War, the Luluai system was inherited by the Australians, who, knowing little about the colony they were to rule and the “native” policy of their predecessors, assumed at first that the Luluai was an indigenous “chief” and that the Germans had used a socio-political system already in existence (Mackenzie 1927:220-221). Luluais who had held office under German rule were dismissed, however, and new ones were appointed (Salisbury 1970:44) by the District Officer in Rabaul on the recommendation of patrol officers. Luluais under Australian rule were given a dark-blue peaked cap with a single red band to replace one issued by the Germans.99

Like the Germans, the Australians faced the problem of how to group villages, each headed by a Luluai, for political and economic purposes. The administration thought it wise to seek advice from the Christian missions on “native affairs,” and when it did so in the mid-1920s,100 the matters raised included the Luluai system about which the missions, it turned out, had sharply different opinions. The Methodists suggested that the administrative and judicial powers of the Luluai be enlarged to develop their ability to control their own people.101 The Catholics, on the other hand, stressed that Luluais were not ready for empowerment and must be controlled very closely by the administration because “[a]s a rule they have not the sufficient sense of DUTY and RESPONSIBILITY, and connected therewith the necessary serenity, impartiality and courage for such a

99. Tultuls under Australian rule were given a dark-blue peaked cap with two red bands.
100. Letter from Colonel John Ainsworth, Rabaul, to the Catholic Mission, Vunapope, dated 5 March 1924; Minutes of the Meeting at Capt. Cardew’s House in Rabaul on 7 May 1924, written by Fr. Lakaff, MSC. Both in the Catholic Church Archive, Vunapope.
101. Letter from W. H. Cox, Chairman of the Methodist Mission, Rabaul, to Colonel John Ainsworth, Rabaul, dated 30 April 1924; Minutes of the Meeting at Capt. Cardew’s House in Rabaul on 7 May 1924, written by Fr. Lakaff, MSC. Both in the Catholic Church Archive, Vunapope.
To complicate the matter further, the Catholics also warned the administration of malign effects of the *tubuan* on *Luluais*:

At all cost the *Luluais* should be protected efficaciously against all evil influence from...the secret societies, in particular the *Tubuan*; it is a fact that fear for damage and even from poisoning [i.e., sorcery] prevents many just trials. This is a most important point and the *Luluais* should receive strong advice to report any such interference, which of course would be severely punished.  

The government-chiefs [i.e., *Luluais*] should protect their subjects against forceful payments and rape and, if necessary, report them to the government. It should be indicated to them that the existence of the *Tubuan* depends on his good behaviour.

The administration was more faithful to the Methodists, who were Australians, than to the Catholics, who were Germans. Thus, in 1929, the position of Paramount *Luluai* was introduced as a representative of a grouping of ten to twenty villages, each represented by a *Luluai*. Paramount *Luluais*, locally known as *waitpus*, received a white peaked cap with a single red band and a sliver-headed walking stick to signify their authority. Those who were appointed Paramount *Luluais* were usually one of the *Luluais* in an area who had been trusted by the administration. In addition to the powers of an ordinary *Luluai*, they now assumed considerable power as they directly reported to, and were frequently consulted by, the District Officer (Salisbury 1970:49). In 1932, there were twelve Paramount *Luluais* in Rabaul District (*ibid*.). E. W. P. Chinnery, who was promoted from Government Anthropologist to Director of the Department of District Services and Native Affairs in that year (Fortune 1998:3), was concerned about the mounting power of Paramount *Luluais*, which could lead to resistance to Europeans (Gosden and Knowles 2001:41).

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102 Letter from the Catholic Mission, Vunapope, to H. C. Cardew, Commissioner for Native Affairs, Rabaul, dated 11 March 1925, Catholic Church Archive, Vunapope. Capitalization and underlines are original.


As for the *tubuan*, the Australian administration treated the Catholics’ advice with indifference. Actually, the administration did them the courtesy of asking for their views with regard to “the disruption of village life and the effect on the economic well being of village communities by the dances of the Society known as the DUKDUK...[and] the limitation or the cessation of these dances.”

The Catholic mission, in its reply, asked the administration for cooperation in the fight against the *tubuan*, particularly through the strict enforcement of the practically existing restriction of *tubuan* ceremonies to the month of May. However, one Catholic missionary complained that

> the Natives are not sticking to the existing regulations about the Tubuan. They take no notice of the time stipulated for the beginning and the ending of the Tubuan. Every year the Tubuan continues until a police boy is sent by the D. O. [District Officer] to put an end to the matter.

The Catholics seem to have already given up on the administration because they knew that “the government will never use force against the Tubuan.” In fact, the administration was bothered less by the *tubuan* than by “over-zealous” missionaries who sought to eradicate it. In his presidential address entitled “Applied Anthropology in New Guinea” in a Science Congress held at Sydney University in 1932, Chinnery was reported to allege that:

> very serious results frequently followed the efforts of over-zealous missionaries who went into sacred places and dragged out sacred emblems; they should try to effect a change gradually. ... The missions with their trained staffs and widely influential and far-reaching organizations had introduced new social and religious ideals which

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107 An undated document entitled “Father Hofmann on the Tubuan.” Catholic Church Archive, Vunapope. Fr. Hofmann came to New Britain in 1910. According to Fr. Holz, Takabur Parish priest, this document was written most likely in the inter-war period.
struck killing blows at the very root of native culture (Age 1932).

This comment enraged the Catholic mission in particular, which defended itself by asserting that “instead of killing the native culture [it] is lifting it up to a higher standard of peace and prosperity.”

In spite of the Catholic mission’s worries about the “evil influence” of the tubuan on Luluais, the fact is that the Luluai was often a lualua who was usually a biita tubuan, that is, a man who managed and controlled the tubuan of his (or his father’s) vunatarai. Whereas Luluais in an early phase of the Luluai system appear to have been largely concerned with carrying out their official duties and serving as intermediaries between their villagers and the administration, thus leaving “real” matters of village life to ngala, they gradually came to fulfill many of the customary functions of the ngala as well, including the sponsoring of elaborate tubuan ceremonies which required a lot of tabu. According to Salisbury (1966:124), this became common in the Vunamami area by the 1930s. For instance, Enos Teve of Vunamami (Methodist), who was appointed Luluai in 1935 and Paramount Luluai in 1937, was reported to have given five such ceremonies until the end of his tenure in 1950 (Salisbury 1970:300).

Luluais and Paramount Luluais, once appointed, held office for many years unless their bad behaviours caused the administration to replace them with new ones. Long-serving officials like Enos were trusted by the administration and therefore given relative autonomy not only in their official activities, particularly the settling of disputes and the punishing of offenders, but also in extra-official activities, such as accumulating tabu and giving elaborate tubuan ceremonies. This then allowed them to pursue the status

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of ngala in addition to that of Luluai or Paramount Luluai. But at the same time, this was a political manoeuvre on the part of the office holders who sought to legitimize their official status by drawing on a traditional form of leadership. Again, a good example is Enos Teve. He organized a large-scale ceremony for the first time immediately after he had been appointed Paramount Luluai (Salisbury 1970:300). Having been given more power by the administration, he was probably urged to do something to balance his new official status and old social relations so as to avoid feelings of remoteness from his people. His solution was to demonstrate his willingness to fulfill customary obligations by giving a large-scale ceremony in honour of his father. Thus, we see the assimilation of the image of the ngala into the introduced political offices in a later phase of the Luluai system.

The involvement of Luluais in tubuan ceremonies would have been tolerated by the Australians, who, like the Germans, denied the tubuan the role of law enforcement by way of the Luluai system but allowed it to continue its ceremonies under certain conditions. As one Methodist missionary regretfully admitted in 1933, many Australians looked upon the tubuan as an “innocent pastime” (Methodist Overseas Mission 1933:1). Tubuan people, however, refused to reduce the existence of the tubuan to ceremonies and dances. It was reported that disputes which had already been settled by the Luluai or patrol officer were brought up again by the tubuan and settled through the imposition of fines in tabu. The tubuan, therefore, still functioned as a law enforcement agency in the village, exercising a distinct jurisdiction from that of the government.

During the Second World War, the Japanese occupiers in Rabaul, who

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recognized neither ngala nor Luluais as local authorities, recruited young and strong local men to the kenpei tai—the Japanese term for the military security police. The war-time cruelty of the Japanese is still remembered by many old Tolai, but it is also said that Tolai kenpei tai, who were responsible for punishing and even executing those who had disobeyed orders from above, were often as cruel as their Japanese bosses. Sometime after the War officially came to an end, an Australian plane dropped hundreds of leaflets with a drawing of a tubuan over Rabaul to inform the Tolai, who were still frightened of the evils of war, that the War had ended (see Mosel 1977:84-88; Tetaga 1973:31). The Australians, knowing that the Tolai were in awe of the tubuan, probably hoped that the drawing of a tubuan would convey to them the authenticity of the fact that the War had already ended. According to Tolai oral histories, however, the leaflets were dropped when the fighting was still going on, and having seen the tubuan depicted on these leaflets, Japanese soldiers, who still hid themselves in the bush and prepared themselves for fighting, were tricked into coming out and surrendering to the Allied Forces; therefore, it was the tubuan, or more precisely its magical charm (malira), that put an end to the fighting and brought peace back. For the Tolai, the tubuan was powerful enough to be able to settle even disputes between colonial powers.\textsuperscript{112}

\textsuperscript{112} The details of this story vary from person to person. Some say that the leaflets depicted a dukduk as well as a tubuan, and others say that the leaflets were dropped over all the areas in New Britain and New Ireland which were occupied by the Japanese during the War. Another version of the same story includes an account of an event preceding the dropping of the leaflets over Rabaul: Towards the end of the War, the Allied Forces in Lae (Morobe Province) were having difficulty in finding Japanese soldiers who hid themselves in the bush there. One Tolai who was working there for the Allies as a carrier, hit on the idea that Japanese soldiers might come out of the bush if a kinavai were performed. It is a ceremony held at dawn in which tubuan and dukduk dance on canoes offshore and is considered to be the most spectacular of the tubuan ceremonies. Thus, a group of Tolai who were working there for the Allies made a tubuan and a dukduk and held a kinavai at the beach in Salamaua near Lae one early morning. Hearing men sing with kudu (drum) beats, a group of Japanese soldiers appeared from the bush without weapons and came near the beach where Tolai were performing a kinavai. While they saw it, Allied soldiers, who had been waiting for them to come out, suddenly showed up and shot at them. Some of them died, while the others were captured. From this experience, the Allied Forces were led to believe that the tubuan of the Tolai had
The Council System

After the War, the Australian administration recognized the necessity of progressive policies for political and economic developments among its subjects. One of its major policy changes was the replacement in 1950 of the Luluai system with the council system, which was envisaged as an instrument for political education to develop a new democratic society. Actually, since 1936-37 “village councils” had already been experimented with on an informal basis in Rabaul Sub-District, which was the most “advanced” part of New Guinea (Australia 1938:41, 1939:28, 1951:19). Naturally, then, the north-eastern Gazelle Peninsula was one of the first regions in the Territory of Papua and New Guinea, where local government councils were officially formed after the War; five of the eight councils established in the Territory by 1954 were of the Tolai of Reimber, Vunamami, Vunadidir, Rabaul, and Livuan areas (see McAuley 1954).

The council system introduced new concepts of political organization to the Tolai. Councils were corporate bodies with taxation powers, which were supposed to carry out minor executive, legislative, and police functions and provide public services in their areas under the close guidance of the administration (see Feinberg 1951). Each council embraced twenty or more villages, consisting of their representatives who were elected biennially by the people rather than appointed by the administration. Councillors magical charm (malira). A few months later, the Allied Forces tried the magical charm of the tubuan again—this time by dropping leaflets with a drawing of a tubuan over Rabaul. This indeed worked well, as we have seen. Of course the Tolai know the official history of the War that tells them that the Allied Powers defeated Japan, but they also have their own (unofficial) histories that tell them that it was the tubuan that won the War.

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were expected to perform a wide range of administrative functions, some of which
required novel skills (e.g., budgeting), by following formalized procedures for making
and executing decisions. The activities of the council and its sphere of influence,
therefore, were radically different from those of the Luluai or ngala.

Nevertheless, there were strong elements of continuity. Elected councillors still
represented villages that had previously been represented by Luluais. Obvious choices for
the new office, then, were former Luluais; indeed, most of the first councillors in the
Tolai councils were former Luluais (or Tultuls) (see A. L. Epstein 1970:432). The
president of a council did not necessarily have to stand for election in a village so that a
widely respected and politically experienced individual could be acclaimed as such
(Salisbury 1970:57). Accordingly, four of the first presidents of the five Tolai
councils—ToPoe (Reimber), Enos Teve (Vunamami), Nason ToKiala (Vunadidir), and
ToLiama (Livuan)—were former Paramount Luluais.  

Many early Tolai councillors
and council presidents kept on modelling themselves on the traditional ngala while in
office or retirement, sponsoring elaborate tubuan ceremonies which required a
considerable amount of tabu; after their retirement, they were most likely to be
authorities in matters concerning customary land, the tubuan, and other customs
(Salisbury 1966:124-125). Consequently, the Tolai councils in their early stages were
well equipped for intervening in controversies over traditional customs, including the
tubuan.  

The political structure of the Tolai that had emerged in the later stages of the

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113 The first president of the Rabaul Council, John ToVuia, was not a Paramount Luluai but a leader of the
kivung na baramana (young men’s assembly), which came into being at Matupit during the 1930s (A. L.
Epstein 1969:253). “At Matupit, when administrative officers paid their first visits to discuss the
introduction of councils, the elders referred the matter to the kivung” (A. L. Epstein 1969:254).
114 In 1951, the Reimber and Rabaul Councils presented an address to Paul Hasluck, then Australian
Minister for Territories, including a complaint about missionaries’ persistent condemnation of the tubuan
Luluai system seemed to reproduce itself through the introduction of the council system. This continuity was most clearly seen in Vunamami. After his retirement from council presidency in 1952, Enos Teve gave several more elaborate tubuan ceremonies, including a matamatam in honour of the dead of his own vunatarai in 1958 (Salisbury 1970:300-301). He also continued to attend council meetings as an advisor (Salisbury 1970:320). His office was succeeded by his classificatory son-in-law, Vin ToBaining, who had been appointed Tultul after the War and elected councillor in 1950. Before going into politics, ToBaining had not much involved in village life due to his mission (Methodist) schooling and employment at Raluana and Vunairima. In order to remedy this deficiency, he took two months off after his first election to go through the entire cycle of initiation into the tubuan, from which his mission education had prevented him. Full initiation then made it possible for him in 1959 to give a matamatam in commemoration of his dead father (Salisbury 1966:125, 1970:326). It was his way of acquiring the calibre of Enos Teve as a rising modern politician. “[T]he giving of a matamatam had set the seal on those who were successful” (Salisbury 1966:125). In the 1961 elections to the Territorial Legislative Council, ToBaining was elected Member for New Guinea Islands; “despite his lack of English, he was one of the most effective native members of the legislature” (Salisbury 1970:326, n.2). He was then one of the two highest political office holders among the Tolai, as well as “the epitome of the traditional Tolai big man” (Salisbury 1970:326). After failing to be elected to the first House of Assembly in 1964, he succeeded ToKiala as president of the Gazelle Local

(see Chapter 2). In 1953, the Vunamami Council discussed a complaint about the disruption of village life by the tubuan and considered the desirability of getting rid of unwanted elements in its activities (A. L. Epstein 1998:26, n.5).


116 The other was John ToVuia, who was a nominated member of the Territorial Legislative Council.
Government Council, into which the five Tolai councils had been amalgamated in 1963.

ToBaining was thus able to carry over the image of the traditional ngala in the introduced political offices well into the 1960s. However, he was a rare exception. Within several years after the introduction of the council system, most of the councillors who were influential in the traditional sense left their official positions and focused on their entrepreneurial activities, both modern and traditional. As a result, the social composition of the council quickly changed. A. L. Epstein has characterized Tolai councillors of the late 1950s and early 1960s in the following terms:

In the Rabaul Council, for example, the majority of members were in their thirties or early forties. According to Tolai ideas, therefore, they fell into a status category intermediate between 'youths' and 'elders'; they had not yet acquired the prestige and authority that attached to elderhood. Lacking the ripeness of wisdom in the traditional sense, they also lacked education in the formal Western sense. ... This lack of formal education was also reflected in their occupational status. ... In short, councillors are not necessarily the most influential men in their own communities in the traditional sense... (1969:276-277).

What Epstein implies is that the image of the traditional ngala evaporated from the councillor. This was because it turned out that the role of the latter was nothing like that of the Luluai. The maintenance of law and order at village level remained one of the most important responsibilities of councillors, but they themselves had no magisterial powers of the kind that had formerly been bestowed upon Luluais. Instead, councillors were given a lot of demanding tasks by the administration which shifted its emphasis from the maintenance of the status quo to development. Although the councils had certain executive and legislative powers, the decisions and rules they made were often rejected by the administration. They were rather expected to simply execute what the administration instructed them to do. Therefore, councillors did not have autonomy of the kind that Luluais had formerly enjoyed in their activities, both official and traditional. Epstein went on to say from the perspective of the village:
The council was of secondary importance; it was a creation of the Administration and served as an instrument of government policy. Such a view has a direct bearing on the selection of the councillor. His role is perceived principally as that of an intermediary and a buffer between the villagers and the Administration. What is required therefore is not a man of independent outlook who will take decisions that bind his constituents, but one of docile temperament who can be controlled by the village elders and will serve simply as their mouthpiece or voice (1969:277-278).

Noticeably absent from this local political arena were more educated young men who had received schooling in English after the War. Because of a chronic shortage of land, they pursued wage labour in Rabaul and other centres of the Territory. As they were absorbed into the modern economy, cash became more important for their lives than iabu, which was used to establish and maintain social relationships. Consequently, they became estranged from village life. At the same time, they became increasingly aware of political issues, which threw light on rapidly growing social problems of their area. Realizing that many of these problems could not be dealt with effectively by the councils that lacked any real power, some of them began to consider getting involved in a wider political arena.

One such an ambitious man was Oscar Tammur of Ulagunan (see Chowning et al. 1971:63-64; A. L. Epstein 1970:436). Shortly after his return in 1967 from one-year training as a motor mechanic in Australia, he played the leading role in an incident where his villagers, short of land, “illegally” occupied the nearby unused Raniola Plantation until the intervention of an armed detachment of police. This incident brought him into prominence; some regarded him as radical. He decided to stand for the Kokopo Open in the elections for the second House of Assembly in 1968. His main rival was ToBaining, the president of the Gazelle Council, which Tammur strongly criticized for its subservience to the administration. The result was Tammur’s landslide victory. He was then 26 years old—less than half of ToBaining’s age.
Meanwhile, the Gazelle Council was about to undergo some major changes. When it amalgamated the five Tolai councils in 1963, it had two major goals. One was to absorb villages under the influence of the Warbete ("being partners" or "working together") Kivung, an "anti-council" movement that had sprung from the Raluana area in the early 1950s (see A. L. Epstein 1969:256-260). It had its own council; the tax was lower and the services were poorer than those of the Gazelle Council, but the Warbete villagers were proud of their doing things in their own ways. Not surprisingly, then, the Gazelle Council's attempts to bring in the Warbete villages met with little success. The other goal of the Gazelle Council was to reconstitute itself as a multi-racial council, as instructed in the 1963 Local Government Ordinance (which came into effect in 1965) (see Mair 1970:88-97). This meant that the jurisdiction of the council was to be extended to non-Tolai (i.e., Papuans, New Guineans, Europeans, Chinese, and others) who then would be obliged to pay tax and became eligible to vote and stand in elections. In 1967, all the councillors were instructed to discuss the proposed change with their constituents, and with a report of unanimous approval, the Gazelle Council asked the administration to change its structure accordingly. Thereupon, the Gazelle Council was proclaimed multi-racial in February 1969, and multi-racial council elections were scheduled for three months later. By then, however, strong objections to the multi-racial policy had been raised in public meetings organized at Vunamami by Tammur, the recently elected Member for Kokopo. Soon after the proclamation, he was also approached by men from Matupit who were deeply troubled by the same policy. It was asserted that there should have been a popular consultation. Opposition then quickly spread over the Kokopo and Rabaul areas, culminating in the formation of the Mataungan ("be alert" or "watch out")
Association, with Tammur as its patron, in a mass meeting held at Malaguna right before the elections.\footnote{117}{Interview with Melchior ToMot of Karavi on 6 March 2004.}

The initial objective of the Mataungan Association was to revoke the Gazelle Council’s proclamation to be multi-racial. The creation of a multi-racial council made good financial sense to the Mataungans because tax could be levied on European and Chinese property. They were also aware that most of the councils in the Territory had by then become multi-racial.\footnote{118}{By mid-1969, more than three-quarters of a total of 142 councils in the Territory were multi-racial (Mair 1970:95).} However, their main objection was that outsiders, particularly Europeans, could dominate the council’s work and make Tolai participation ineffectual. To achieve their goal, the Mataungans first employed peaceful means—addressing the meetings of the old council, staging a large but orderly protest march through the town of Rabaul, presenting a petition to the district commissioner, and boycotting the multi-racial council elections. It was only when all these protests were ignored by the administration that the Mataungans took drastic measures. Thus, they declared the new council closed by “stealing” the keys of the council chamber at Rabaul, and carried out raids on a number of leading proponents of the multi-racial council, including ToBaining. After each of these incidents, the administration flew hundreds of police reinforcements to Rabaul, and a number of Mataungan leaders and supporters were arrested and jailed. There followed a series of massed confrontations between the Mataungans and the police at various places. At different times, the administration attempted to negotiate with the Mataungans but to no avail; they even rejected an offer of mediation by the prime minister of Australia, John Gordon, who visited Rabaul in the course of his tour of the Territory in July 1970.
With the Mataungans' uncompromising attitude, the multi-racial council was eventually reconverted into an all-Tolai institution in January 1971. By then, however, the status of the Gazelle Council no longer mattered to them because that issue had been submerged by the desire to do things independently. After all, as long as the council was part of administrative structure, it would be an instrument of administrative policy. Thus, in December 1970, the Mataungan Association announced that it would set up its own council, the Warkurai Nigunan (literally meaning “the law of the village”), with 48 councillors representing 48 wards (each consisting of two or more villages) of the Tolai area, and its elections were held early in the following year. Unlike the Gazelle Council, which had been so centralized and bureaucratized since its amalgamation that the councillors often failed to listen to the opinions of their villagers, the Warkurai Nigunan was intended to restore power to the villagers so that they could decide the course of their own development. A ward meeting was held every Friday for villagers to discuss matters concerning village life, and a general meeting every Sunday for councillors to speak and debate on behalf of their villagers. To allow ordinary villagers to be involved in the decision-making process, a general meeting was conducted in village settings, as opposed to the “foreign” atmosphere of the council chamber, and exclusively in the Tolai language, as opposed to Tok Pisin in which administrative officers interfered with council proceedings (Salisbury 1971:9). The Warkurai Nigunan also drew up its own constitution based on Tolai customary laws rather than Western legal concepts. With the establishment of the Warkurai Nigunan, the Mataungan Association developed into a fully-fledged grass-roots political movement.

The Mataungan Association encompassed the majority of the Tolai (and the
Duke of York Islanders)—young and old, educated and uneducated (in the formal sense), rich and poor (in money or *tabu*), Methodist and Catholic. Its popular appeal may be attributed to two factors. One is leadership. The most prominent, visible leaders of the Mataungan Association—namely Oscar Tammur of Ulagunan (its patron), Damien Kereku of Matupit (its president), Melchior ToMot of Karavi (its secretary), and John Kaputin of Matupit—were all young and had received at least part of their education outside the Territory. The villagers were generally sceptical of the young educated Tolai who had long been away from home, usually preferred town life to village life, and tended to look down on them. However, by living in villages and listening to villagers during the heyday of the movement, these Mataungan leaders seemed to have convinced the people that they were to be trusted (Salisbury 1971:9). Actually, these individuals presented themselves as spokesmen rather than leaders, but according to Tolai customary expectations, a skilled orator was a leader. Mataungan mass rallies always went with their eloquent speeches appealing directly to the common wish of the Tolai to run their own affairs. “To be a Mataungan was,” Tammur is reported to have said, “to stand on one’s own two legs in front of Europeans and to decide for oneself whether to say ‘Yes’ and then, whether to add ‘Sir’” (Grosart 1982:142). Such an anti-colonial remark easily captured the hearts and minds of many Tolai after almost a century of European colonialism.

The other factor that contributed to the Mataungan Association’s popularity was the *tubuan*, which served as its symbol. The use of a shared cultural symbol facilitated the

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119 See Anis 1974 for a biographical sketch of John Kaputin.
alliance of Tolai in a previously unknown scale, reminding us of the “war of the bullet-proof ointment” almost 80 years before. The first public use of the tubuan by the Mataungan Association was in early December 1969 when it organized a huge ceremony at Matupit to honour Ikenna Nwokolo, the African lawyer who had successfully conducted the defence for the three Mataungan leaders charged with “stealing” the council keys. On this occasion, “there was a performance, all the more significant because so many years had elapsed since it was last seen at Matupit, of a kinavai, a central and dramatic feature of the ceremonies associated with the dukduk and tubuan; for this event a number of tubuans, or masked dancers, appeared at Matupit from many different parts of the Tolai area” (A. L. Epstein 1978:59). The following month, another large-scale ceremony was held by the Mataungan Association, in which four tubuan performed rituals and dances. The guest of honour this time was Gough Whitlam, then Leader of the Opposition in Australia, who visited Rabaul in the course of his tour of the Territory. He and the Mataungans immediately embraced each other. In his address to them, he is reported to have said that “a Labour government would appoint an indigenous Administrator and district commissioners; it is alleged that he was interpreted into Pidgin as saying all these would be Mataungan” (Mair 1970:96).

This set of events was historically significant in at least two ways. Firstly, while that was certainly not the first time the tubuan was raised for outsiders, it was for the...
first time that tubuan ceremonies were organized by a group of Tolai who shared political ideology, to honour outsiders they considered to be political partners. Secondly, a tubuan was newly created for the first time to represent a political group crossing over the boundaries of vunatarai; it was IaMataungan, the Mataungan Association’s own tubuan, which was created by Michael ToBing, an elder of Karavi and a staunch Mataungan. After these ceremonial events, tubuan, including IaMataungan, often appeared in mass rallies organized by the Mataungans. In addition, they used an abstract tubuan design as their logo. It was, for example, seen on the body of a PMV (public motor vehicle) owned by a Mataungan. Mataungan PMV drivers refused to use stops set up by the administration and provided rides and drop-offs anywhere on the PMV routes at the request of passengers, thus setting a trend for today.123

For many Tolai, the tubuan was the government of the people (“Ra tubuan a matanitu kai ra tarai”) (Salisbury 1970:305), so the Mataungans found it quite appropriate to put the tubuan to use in their struggle for self-government. They even codified a new function of the tubuan in the constitution of the Warkurai Nigunan along this line.124 The constitution included a section entitled Ure ra Tumtubuan (Concerning the Tubuan), which defined customary rules and functions of the tubuan (see Appendix). One of the provisions regarding the work of the tubuan was not “traditional”: “A tubuan i tut upi ra Matanitu” (literally meaning that tubuan rise for the Government). According to Melchior ToMot, who said that he was the one who had originally entertained the idea

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123 Interview with Melchior ToMot of Karavi on 6 March 2004.
124 A copy of the constitution of the Warkurai Nigunan is found in the Catholic Church Archive, Vunapope.
of using the *tubuan* in the Mataungan activities, this meant that *tubuan* were to rise to greet delegates from Port Moresby or overseas on the occasion of their visit to Rabaul, the home of the Tolai. ¹²⁵ Unmistakeably, this was a symbolic manifestation of the desire of the Tolai to be recognized and respected as an autonomous group. Hence, the Mataungan ideology was intimately intertwined into the *tubuan* symbolism. Young educated Mataungan leaders—some of whom had never been initiated into the *tubuan* (e.g., Tammur) and might have even hoped that the custom would vanish in the shortest possible time—saw the *tubuan* as a good instrument in creating followings of villagers. At the same time, the *tubuan* provided the villagers with a means of fighting for autonomy by symbolic means while letting their educated leaders speak on their behalf. Thus, the *tubuan* facilitated the alliance or interdependence between the young educated leaders and the villagers, which was probably the single most important factor in the success of the *Mataungan* movement.

The Australian administration generally underestimated the Mataungan Association as a politically dissident minority of Tolai (Bishop 1972:40). Apart from it, there were two Tolai political factions, the Warbete Kivung and the Gazelle Council, each with its own council and constitution. Although the Warbete Kivung shared many political ideals with the Mataungan Association, the two organizations did not merge. However, it should be noted that many supporters of the former took part in mass rallies organized by the latter. Even those of the Gazelle Council, who hated the political radicalism of the Mataungan Association, did not completely disagree with its fundamental ideology. Rod Bishop, an Australian who visited Rabaul early in 1972 to

¹²⁵ Interview with Melchior ToMot of Karavi on 6 March 2004.
make a film of the activities of the Mataungan Association, including those involving the *tubuan*, wrote:

> We talked with some ‘anti-Mataungan’ Tolais—those who expressed certain reservations about the Association’s activities. When asked whether they supported Mataungan, they generally answered no, and followed this with some statement of regret about Mataungan militancy. Yet, when we asked the same people whether they were against the Mataungan Association, the answer was never in the negative. When the concept of the Association was questioned, no Tolai we encountered was against the principle of the movement. Hence the degree of latent support would appear considerable (1972:41, the italics is his).

As Bishop rightly argued (1972:41-42), this hegemonic influence of the Mataungan Association over the Tolai is attributed to their shared grievances against anomalies produced by European colonialism, particularly land alienation, and to their shared customs, especially the *tubuan* which became a symbol of Tolai anti-colonial resistance. The Australian administration, whose policy was based on legalistic and economic rationality, failed to recognize the historical and cultural bases of Tolai aspiration for their own ways.

**The Provincial and National Governments**

It was not surprising that in the third House of Assembly elections in 1972, Mataungan candidates won decisive victories in three of the four electorates in East New Britain: Oscar Tammur for Kokopo Open, John Kaputin for Rabaul Open, and Damien Kereku for East New Britain Regional. In the remaining electorate, Gazelle Open, Matthias ToLiman of Bitakapuk was re-elected, who was a leading proponent of the Gazelle Council. Shortly after the elections, the Chief Minister Michael Somare asked the Tolai members of the House of Assembly to go back to their people to find a way to bring political
factionalism to an end, so Tammur and ToLiman held a meeting with representatives from the Mataungan Association, the Warbete Kivung, and the Gazelle Council for the first time after three years of political turmoil. It was decided that the Gazelle Council should be temporarily dissolved and that a committee should be formed with four representatives from each of the three groups to visit villages and towns in the Tolai area and find out from the people what kind of government they desired (Our News 1972:3, 1972:3). However, things did not go as smoothly as expected: Supporters of the Gazelle Council, following its dissolution, set up their own council, the Greater Toma Council, with its own constitution, and the three groups remained separated as before. The only major development was probably the establishment in January 1974 of an organization called the Gazelle Peninsula Trust with a board of management made up of three representatives from each of the three groups, which was meant to look after the former property of the Gazelle Council and function only until the people decide a form of government for themselves.

As national independence approached, talk of a provincial government quickly developed. Thus, in August 1975, one month before national independence, Kereku convened a public meeting to discuss the matter, bringing together about 250 Tolai, including the presidents of the three political groups, church leaders, public servants, and university students. It was agreed that the Tolai should work together in preparation for a provincial government and that as the first step, a “Tolai Government” should be formed, comprising 38 members—15 from the Mataungan Association, 15 from the Greater Toma Council, and 8 from the Warbete Kivung. The Tolai Government was meant to be a device to unite the three Tolai groups and the core of a future provincial government.
Another meeting a week later selected ten men to form a committee responsible for consulting the people about the constitution, finance, assets, census register, and elections for the proposed Tolai Government. The committee, which began its work on September 22, travelled around the Tolai area, including Watom Island and the Duke of York Islands, for 72 days, holding meetings in 156 places in which about 400 leaders spoke out.\textsuperscript{126}

In the beginning of 1976, East New Britain received its first indigenous district commissioner, Rabbie Namaliu of Raluana, who was then 28 years of age and the most educated Tolai, having received a B.A. from the University of Papua New Guinea in 1970 and a M.A. from the University of Victoria in 1972.\textsuperscript{127} His mission was to establish a provincial government in East New Britain. As the first step, he set up a constituent assembly made up of 31 members—14 from the Tolai Government, 8 from the Pomio, 4 from the Baining (Lassul Bay), 3 from the churches, and 2 from a Tolai women’s organization called Nilai Ra Warden (“the voice of the women”). Unity was the keyword in the meetings of the Constituent Assembly, which passed a resolution “banning” political parties in the province to keep politics out of a provincial government (\textit{Island Trader} 1976:29). The three Tolai political groups thus suspended their operations and

\textsuperscript{126} Interview with Henry ToMatamatam of Bitakapuk (now living in Warangoi) on 23 April 2004; the Tolai Government Committee Full Report of 2 February 1976, made available by ToMatamatam. ToMatamatam was the chairman of the Tolai Government Committee.

\textsuperscript{127} Namaliu was among the first 57 students—including four Tolai—selected to attend the University of Papua New Guinea in 1966. He was awarded a Commonwealth scholarship by the Canadian Government to attend the University of Victoria in 1970. His M.A. thesis (Namaliu 1973) examines Australia’s participation in the United Nations Special Committee on the decolonisation of Papua New Guinea, based on his research at the United Nations headquarters in New York, which was sponsored by the Australian Government. He was a senior tutor and later a lecturer in history at the University of Papua New Guinea in 1973 and took up the post of Principal Private Secretary to the Chief Minister in the following year. Shortly before national independence, he was sent to New York for the last Trust Territory meeting in the United Nations, and shortly after national independence, he was sent to New York again for Papua New Guinea to become a member of the United Nations. From October to December 1975, he was on a scholarship to teach at the University of California, Santa Cruz. He wanted to pursue an academic career, but after much persuasion, he took the post of District Commissioner of East New Britain in 1976. According to him, nobody wanted to take the job because of fear for Tolai politics. Interview with Rabbie Namaliu at Kenabot on 12 April 2004.
formally dissolved themselves in the interests of Tolai unity and provincial unity. In June, the Constituent Assembly adopted the constitution of the Provincial Government, which had been prepared by its constitutional planning committee. The interim Provincial Government was finally declared and inaugurated in East New Britain on 13 July 1976, and the first Provincial Assembly elections were held in the following year.\textsuperscript{128}

While the Tolai political factionalism of the early 1970s gradually disappeared with the establishment of the Provincial Government, the legacy of the Mataungan movement lived on at symbolic level.\textsuperscript{129} Tubuan, including IaMataungan, were raised in the Queen Elizabeth Park at Rabaul on the occasion of a visit by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth the Second in February 1974.\textsuperscript{130} When an elaborate ceremony was held in the Queen Elizabeth Park to celebrate the inauguration of the interim Provincial Government in July 1976, tubuan from Matupit, one of the strongholds of the Mataungan Association, appeared to greet the delegates of the National Government—the Prime Minister Michael Somare, his senior ministers, and the leader of the Opposition. It has since become a convention that tubuan perform rituals and dances in ceremonies organized by the Provincial Government and attended by delegates of the National Government or a foreign government—especially those ceremonies which celebrate the opening of a new government building and development projects fully or partly funded by the National Government or a foreign government (Figure 13).

\textsuperscript{128} East New Britain was the second province in Papua New Guinea after North Solomons to establish a provincial government.
\textsuperscript{129} The Mataungan Association resurfaced shortly before the 1977 national elections to support its candidates, especially Tammur, Kaputin, and Kereku who then were all re-elected. Following the elections, the Mataungan Association had virtually broken up, supposedly because of a leadership feud between Tammur and Kaputin. In the 1982 national elections, Tammur and Kereku lost their seats to Michael Somare’s Pangu Party candidates, Rabbie Namaliu and Ereman ToBaining, while Kaputin won his seat and held office for another two decades.
\textsuperscript{130} Interview with Damien Kereku of Matupit (now living in Bitakapuk) on 22 April 2004.
In March 1977, a Provincial Flag and Emblem Act was enacted. A provincial flag was supposed to have a culturally, historically, or ideologically meaningful design which promotes the unity of the people of a province. This posed a particularly difficult problem in all the provinces of Papua New Guinea within which a number of different “ethnic” groups exist. The East New Britain Provincial Assembly, in the end, selected the tubuan of the Tolai and the masked figures of the Pomio and the Baining to be depicted in the provincial flag, as these three groups were considered to be major “ethnic” groups in the province where mask culture is prevalent. Hence, the tubuan officially became the symbol of the Tolai as one of the “ethnic” groups in the province. However, this was only part of the whole story. Although equal consideration was given to the three major “ethnic” groups in the design of the provincial flag, it was only the tubuan (and tabu) of the Tolai that was selected to be featured in the crest of the Provincial Government, which is most commonly found in its official documents and office buildings (Figure 14). In other words, nothing but the tubuan was chosen as a symbol of authority vested in the Provincial Government.

It is not surprising to find that a tubuan or a spear (rumu) of the tubuan is portrayed in the crests of seven of the nine local level governments in the Tolai area of the New Britain mainland—Central Gazelle, Livuan/Reimber, Vunadidir/Toma, Bitapaka, Kokopo/Vunamami, Raluana, and Balanataman (Figure 15). However, the gap in symbolism between the flag and crest of the Provincial Government is a telling comment on the political dominance of the Tolai in the province. There are a number of grounds on which the Tolai could justify this. First, they make up of about two third of the population.

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131 The crests of the two remaining local level governments, Rabaul and Kombiu, feature volcanoes and frangipanis.
of the province. Secondly, they are the best educated in the province (and even in the whole country). Thirdly, they are the ones who fought for self-government and played a leading part in establishing the Provincial Government on which they gave a more or less "free ride" to the minority groups in the province. Thus, while paying lip-service to the minority groups in the design of the provincial flag, the Tolai insisted upon symbolizing their authority in the crest of the Provincial Government.

By institutionalizing the tubuan, the Tolai-dominated Provincial Government seeks to maintain its close relations with Tolai villagers. More specifically, it uses the tubuan as a sign of approval and support by the villagers and at the same time as a means of giving them feelings of participation in the development processes. This is often deceptive, however. Since independence, educated men have assumed leadership at provincial and national levels. Tolai villagers do expect provincial and national politicians and bureaucrats to be well educated, while they do not care much about the level of education for councillors. But at the same time, the villagers expect provincial and national leaders to be socially close enough to them to be manipulated by them. However, many Tolai villagers feel that many Tolai provincial and national leaders, having taken office, do not look back to their people and leave them out from the decision-making process. In their eyes, these leaders are acting like masta ("white men"); they are not "big men" but "big shots."

It is said that tubuan activities have increased or have been revived in many Tolai villages since the 1970s. This is certainly because the Mataungan appeal for self-government and the subsequent attainment of independence awakened feelings of pride among the Tolai in their "traditional" culture. However, this resurgence of tubuan
activities has also resulted from the active efforts by the villagers to defend autonomy from, or outdo, educated provincial and national leaders whom they often perceive as implementing, without consulting them, the sort of development projects and strategies which had initially given rise to the Mataungan movement under Australian rule. Thus, even though the tubuan has been institutionalized as a symbol of government authority, a cleavage has grown between those who hold government office and the villagers.

There no longer exist Tolai leaders like Enos Teve and Vin ToBaining, who were able to assimilate the image of the traditional ngala into the introduced political offices by sponsoring elaborate tubuan ceremonies which require a great amount of tabu. However, there are attempts by villagers to create such a leader. We may refer back to Rabbie Namaliu. In the 1982 national elections, he stood for Kokopo Open as a candidate of the Pangu Pati led by Michael Somare, and he defeated his chief rival Oscar Tammur. Since then, Namaliu has won every national election. He was the Prime Minister of Papua New Guinea from 1988 to 1992 and received a knighthood in 1996 when he was the Speaker of the National Parliament. Despite his exceptionally colourful political career, he has been ably committed to engaging in traditional customs, fulfilling customary obligations, and maintaining kinship ties (see Errington and Gewertz 1995:142-150). He owes this to his late father Darius ToNamaliu, who was the lualua of vunatarai Bonat and “the most important big man in Raluana [area]” (Neumann 1995:142-150). He owes this to his late father Darius ToNamaliu, who was the lualua of vunatarai Bonat and “the most important big man in Raluana [area]” (Neumann

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132 After successfully completing his mission to establish a provincial government in East New Britain in July 1976, Namaliu was going to go back to the University of California to teach, but the then Prime Minister Michael Somare appointed him chairman of the Public Services Commission for a three-year term. In 1980, Namaliu was accepted to the Ph.D. program in political science at the University of California at Berkeley, but again Somare asked him to work for him, this time as principal research officer/advisor, which he did for a year while teaching at the Department of Politics at the University of Papua New Guinea as a part-time lecturer. In 1981, Somare sent him back home to prepare him for the 1982 national elections. Namaliu attributes his win in the elections to people's good assessment of his capability of doing things as District Commissioner of East New Britain six years earlier and of Tammur's limited ability to translate things on the ground into action. Interview with Rabbie Namaliu at Kenabot on 12 April 2004.
1992a:45). In July 1995, shortly before his father passed away, Namaliu had at last been initiated into the *tubuan* to the final stage in the *nidok* sponsored by his father in Karavi. He then took over the ownership of ToKila, the *tubuan* of Bonat, from his father.

On 10 April 2002, I was fortunate enough to witness a ceremony organized in Kokopo by the Pangu Pati to nominate Namaliu as its candidate for Kokopo Open in the upcoming national elections (see also *Papua New Guinea Post-Courier* 2002a:1). What interested me was that the ceremony was preceded by the performance of a *kinavai* at dawn by a large group of *tubuan* people from Karawara and Karavi, which are Namaliu’s two major strongholds because of his paternal kinship ties. Karawara is the island from which Bonat migrated to Raluana a few centuries ago (see Neumann 1992a:142-143), while Karavi is where Bonat has a *madapai*, which is looked after by Michael ToBing, now a very old man who is a “child” of Bonat, a “brother” of Namaliu, and his “spiritual” advisor. Karavi was also the village of Peter ToKele, the president of the Pangu Pati of East New Britain. The highlight of the *kinavai*, which attracted a large crowd of spectators, was a ritual whipping (*yarpakaf*) by a *tubuan* on the back of Namaliu, who was fully dressed in traditional attire (except a Pangu Pati *laplap*). *Tubuan* then led him and his supporters in procession to the Jack Emmanuel Park where *tubuan* performed rituals and dances again (Figure 16). This was followed by an official nomination ceremony in which he made an acceptance speech.

What surprised me in this event was that one of the *tubuan* raised was IaMataungan, the *tubuan* of the Mataungan Association (Figure 17). Back in the heyday

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133 On this occasion, about 30 men went through the *nidok*, and among them was the late Dr. A. L. Epstein.
of the Mataungan movement, ToBing, who created IaMataungan, was a staunch supporter of the Association; ToKele, a younger brother of Melchior ToMot, was its “militant” leader; and their village, Karavi, was its major stronghold. Namaliu was then a university student. Like many of his fellow Tolai students, he was an active supporter of the Association in its early days. Although he soon left for Canada to pursue a Master’s degree, he continued to support it on philosophical grounds until he came back as District Commissioner of East New Britain in 1976 to establish a provincial government. A quarter of a century later, IaMataungan was “revived” by Karavi men in his nomination ceremony after it had long been “dead.” What made them raise it long after the Mataungan days? I asked ToBing and ToKele, and what they indicated was that Tolai villagers had increasingly become frustrated with their provincial and national leaders, whom they generally saw as having forgotten the sort of spirit promoted by the Mataungans and having come to care only about themselves rather than their people, and that Namaliu was among a few exceptions. The raising of IaMataungan in 2002 was thus intended as a critique of Tolai political leadership.

This nomination ceremony may be interpreted as a familiar case in which “tradition” is used by a politician for his own political purposes. Indeed Namaliu won his parliamentary seat again, though less comfortably than he had in 1997. However, the result would have been the same even if he had not used “tradition.” From what I gathered, the raising of tubuan in his nomination ceremony was actually very much on the initiative of his supporters. Until then, the tubuan, I was told, had never been used by Namaliu or any other Tolai candidates for their election campaigns, although a “traditional” feast with singsing had been organized to celebrate his win in his past
elections. This time, however, his supporters wanted to make his nomination day a special one since he had indicated that he would retire after another five-year term. The best way they could think of to do so was to honour him as a “traditional big man” by organizing an elaborate *tubuan* ceremony for him. At the same time, this was a good opportunity for them to demonstrate an ideal model of Tolai political leadership to the public.

Enos Teve, Vin ToBaining, and Rabbie Namaliu all held the highest political office of their own times and became “traditional big men.” However, Namaliu is different from the other two in that while they sponsored an elaborate *tubuan* ceremony themselves, he had his supporters organize one for him. This is to say that he is not a self-made “traditional big man”; rather, he has been made one by his followers. It is safe to generalize that political office holders no longer achieve the status of traditional leadership, but it is now given to them by their followers. The implication, then, is that the villagers have ultimate power to control the authority of political office holders in traditional contexts.

However, it should be pointed out that it is only a well-respected, long-serving, high-ranking senior statesman like Namaliu that is given such a status by his followers. Another example would be Paulias Matane of Viviran, a former diplomat with a knighthood who was elected Governor-General of Papua New Guinea in May 2004. In his first official visit to East New Britain in October 2004, he was greeted by two *tubuan* at Tokua Airport as he walked the red carpet in his official white regalia before the guard of honour provided by the provincial police force (*Papua New Guinea Post-Courier* 2004:8, 2004:21). This association between top statesmen and the *tubuan* is a reflection.
of the Tolai situating themselves in the nation-state of Papua New Guinea. By injecting the image of the “traditional Tolai big man” into those prominent Tolai leaders who serve the nation in high office, the Tolai seek to attain and maintain their supremacy over other “ethnic” groups in Papua New Guinea.\textsuperscript{134}

One of the major challenges confronting the Tolai since European contact has been the adaptation of traditional communities to the introduced political structures or \textit{matanitu}. Positioned between the two ends have been \textit{Luluais}, councillors, and provincial and national politicians and bureaucrats. Their functions and qualifications have been different from those of traditional \textit{ngala} or “big men,” who, according to simple European evolutionary schemes, have been destined to disappear at the modern stage of political progress. However, the Tolai have selectively incorporated elements of traditional leadership into the novel political hierarchies to make them their own. This synthesis of new and old political systems has been a central feature of the political transformation of the Tolai. A central actor in this transition has been the \textit{tubuan}. As a symbol of “tradition,” it has been used in response to changing circumstances—sometimes in the legitimization of the new political offices and sometimes in opposition to them. Consequently, the authority of Tolai political leaders has emerged in transactions of meaning between modern and traditional spheres of power and identity.

\textsuperscript{134} In this context, it is also not without relevance to note that some non-Tolai national politicians are initiated into the \textit{tubuan} (to the first stage), including Sir Michael Somare, the current Prime Minister, and Paias Wingti, a former Prime Minister.
Figure 13. *Tubuan* appeared in a ceremony to celebrate the opening of a new government office complex.

Photo: H. Tateyama
Figure 14. The crest of the East New Britain Provincial Government.
Photo: H. Tateyama
Figure 15. The crest of the Bitapaka Rural Local Level Government.
Photo: H. Tateyama
Figure 16. *Tubuan* led Sir Rabbie Namaliu, Kokopo MP and former Prime Minister, and his supporters in procession to the venue of his nomination ceremony for the 2002 national elections.

Photo: H. Tateyama
Figure 17. IaMataungan, the *tubuan* of the Mataungan Association.
Photo: H. Tateyama
This chapter brings us to a third and final context in which the tubuan has both survived and become transformed since the arrival of the first European residents on the north-eastern Gazelle Peninsula: bisnis (the Tok Pisin term for “business”). During the late colonial period, the Tolai were regarded as among the most “advanced” peoples in the Territory of Papua and New Guinea. As we have seen in Chapter 3, the first serious experiments in local government were undertaken among the Tolai with the establishment of councils in 1950. As a group, the Tolai excelled in educational achievement, and early on established a strong presence relative to their numbers in the civil service and private sector. And yet few groups were as strongly and negatively impacted by European colonization in the early stages, suffering from both massive theft of lands and military defeat. These early losses left a strong and enduring imprint on contemporary Tolai identity.

As in the contexts of lotu (“church”) and matanitu (“government”), the tubuan appeared at significant points of the history of the economic transformation of Tolai society. I begin the chapter with an account of the defeat of Tolai and the creation of a plantation economy on alienated Tolai land, a story strongly associated with the fascinating figure of “Queen Emma”. This alienation of land was accompanied by a vast sale of Tolai material culture, including tubuan masks, for metropolitan museums and private collections in Western countries. By the late colonial period, Tolai political
activists and intellectuals in particular had come to see the *tubuan* as a key national symbol and thus inalienable. Yet in recent years, more and more Tolai have come to appreciate the value—both for national pride and *bisnis*—of including *tubuan* performances in cultural shows as a means of encouraging tourism. I return at the end of the chapter to a ceremony at Queen Emma’s cemetery, marked by the appearance of two newly created *tubuan*, which at once reconciled an unhappy past and looked towards a hopeful future in which tourists, lured in part by the *tubuan*, might enhance local *bisnis*.

**Prelude: “Queen Emma” and the Transformation of the Tolai Economy**

“Queen Emma” was born Emma Eliza Coe in 1850 in Samoa as daughter of a US Commercial Agent in Apia and a princess of the Malietoa family, one of the kingly families of Samoa. After schooling in Sydney and San Francisco, she married a Scottish trader named James Forsayth at the age of nineteen. However, having lost him at sea a few years later, she was left to run the Forsayth business on her own, which soon became moribund. She went into partnership with an Irish-Australian trader named Thomas Farrell, and then they formed a working arrangement with the German trading and plantation firm of J. C. Godeffroy, which was extending its trading operations into New Guinea islands. Seeing great business potential in this unexplored part of the South Pacific, the adventurous Emma left Samoa late in 1878 with Farrell, now her *de facto* 135

Robson’s *Queen Emma* (1973) is generally considered to be the most authentic biography of this remarkable woman, though he rarely indicates the sources of his information. Dutton’s novel *Queen Emma of the South Seas* (1976) presents a less “factual” yet excellent narrative of her life. She is also featured in the two-part TV movie *Emma: Queen of the South Seas*, which was first telecast in the United States in April 1988 (see [http://movies2.nytimes.com/gst/movies/movie.html?v_id=125294](http://movies2.nytimes.com/gst/movies/movie.html?v_id=125294)).
husband.

The couple had settled in Mioko, the Duke of York Islands; by mid-1879, some five years before the German annexation of New Guinea. At that time, there were only a handful of European settlers in the area: two Methodist missionaries and several traders. After working briefly for the Godeffroy company, Farrell and Emma became independent traders. The main item of trade was copra (dried coconut meat). Traders bartered things like beads, empty bottles, hoop-iron, tobacco, clay pipes, and clothes with local people for coconuts. Although these trade goods cost the traders practically nothing, they had a hard time developing a profitable business: they had to buy the coconuts all over the area and bring them to their head stations to process them into copra, and this depended very much on the willingness of the local people to collect, sell, and process the coconuts (see Sack and Clark 1983:47-48). It soon became obvious to Farrell and Emma that the best way to develop a profitable business was to set up their own copra plantations along the lines of those in Samoa.

Accordingly, the couple began to “buy” large areas of land here and there from the local people, and other settlers followed suit. In his memoirs, the German trader Eduard Hernsheim gives us a glimpse of how land was “purchased” by European settlers then.

In the olden days land was bought by pointing at it or, at best, by walking around it. Then one would hand over some trade goods to the natives and would make crosses with a pen they had touched under the document establishing the transfer of the land. These crosses were certified by another European who had witnessed the signing of the document. It was, of course, impossible to prove that the natives who signed the document were the owners of the land or that they understood the meaning of the document (quoted in Sack 1973:123).

Such a document was important only for the European settlers who wanted to legitimize their land claims under a future colonial government which would assess them for
registration. In this way, they prepared paper claims to an area of approximately 283,500 hectares on New Guinea islands, of which nearly 162,000 hectares was by Farrell and Emma alone (Sack 1973:125).

Back in Samoa, Emma's youngest sister Phoebe got married in 1879 at the age of sixteen. Her husband was Richard Parkinson, a German, who had been working for the Godeffroy company as a plantation manager and surveyor since 1876. In order to utilize his expertise in the plantation business, Emma brought the Parkinsons to Mioko early in 1882. By the end of the year, Parkinson had established the first commercial plantation in New Guinea at Ralum on the Gazelle Peninsula on behalf of Farrell and Emma, who then founded their own plantation and trading firm in the following year (Parkinson 1999 [1907]:366). Accordingly, Farrell and Emma set up a new house at Gunantabu, the east end of the Ralum plantation, and the Parkinsons at Malapau, its west end. When Farrell died in 1887, Emma took over the firm as E. E. Forsayth and Company. She brought most of her other siblings from Samoa to have them help to build up her business.

From these modest beginnings, she developed her company into the leading commercial enterprise in the Bismarck Archipelago, dwarfing all of its competitors in the area. At the end of 1883, the company had only one trading station and exported only about 100 tons of copra annually, while each of the two major firms, the D.H.P.G. (successor to the Godeffroy company) and Hernsheim & Co., had about ten trading stations in the area, besides their head stations at Mioko and Matupit respectively, and reportedly exported about 1,000 tons of copra annually (Sack 1973:77). Almost ten years later, the situation was quite the reverse. At the end of June 1893, E. E. Forsayth & Co. had nineteen traders and a plantation with a stand of 43,000 coconut palms, and for the
previous 18 months, it had exported almost 1,500 tons of copra, nearly twice the sum of
the amounts by the D.H.P.G., whose main function became the recruitment of labourers
for its plantations in Samoa, and Hernsheim & Co., which focused more on trading than
plantation (Sack and Clark 1979:83-84).

With the coming of European traders and planters, the Tolai began to participate
in a wider economic system. Unlike many other peoples who were similarly situated,
they were able to quickly take advantage of the new opportunities it provided because of
their predispositions towards trade and wealth accumulation (A. L. Epstein 1969:21), and
in doing so, they dictated the course of economic development. They eagerly collected
coconuts to sell to traders for trade goods, but refused to do more than that, leaving the
labour of processing the coconuts into copra to the traders themselves. As soon as they
become satisfied with their supplies of trade goods, they demanded tabu in exchange for
coconuts or other local products. The traders were therefore forced to obtain tabu
themselves as a medium of exchange with Tolai, and even to make a trip to Nakanai on
the northwest coast of New Britain to obtain stocks of shells from which tabu was made;
certain traders introduced fake tabu manufactured in Europe, but they failed to deceive

Since the Tolai were able to obtain trade goods and tabu relatively easily by
selling traders a naturally available surplus of coconuts on their land, they were generally
uninterested in wage labour on European plantations established in their area. Hence,
Europeans were compelled to import labourers from elsewhere for their plantations.
Farrell and Parkinson brought in about 150 labourers from the North Solomons and New
Ireland to kick off the Ralum plantation (Biskup 1974:81; Pitcairn 1891:163). By 1894
the labour force at Ralum had increased to over 1,000 (Cayley-Webster 1898:87; see also Sack and Clark 1979:66). Parkinson also recruited hundreds of labourers from the same areas for the New Guinea Company’s plantation at Kokopo (then Herbertshöhe), east of Ralum, in 1889 (Firth 1983:60). By 1896 the number of foreign labourers in the Kokopo area had risen to over 1,700 (Salisbury 1962:336).

The Tolai were quick to recognize the demand of the European plantations for large quantities of local foodstuffs to feed their large labour forces. Accordingly, they expanded their gardens to produce a surplus of garden crops to sell to the plantations. It was reported in the 1890s that every third day hundreds of women gathered from as far away as twenty kilometres at the Ralum plantation’s stations to sell taros, yams, breadfruits, bananas, megapode (wild turkey) eggs, and so forth for tobacco or tabu under armed guard by their men folk, and that since even this was not enough to meet the need of the plantation, Emma was obliged to send boats for many miles up and down the coast daily to buy more food (Cayley-Webster 1898:77, 87; see also Pitcairn 1891:176-177). Thus, the Tolai were able to earn trading incomes by selling Europeans not only coconuts but also foodstuffs.

Because ample trading opportunities were available to the Tolai in their homeland, they were generally unwilling to work in European plantations abroad as well. In 1883-84 when the British from Queensland and Fiji and the Germans from Samoa competed for labour recruiting in the New Guinea islands (see Firth 1983:13-20), few from New Britain offered themselves in contrast to 2,200 from the rest of the region (Salisbury 1962:332; see also Salisbury 1967:44; Wawn 1893:279-308). In 1885, the German administration prohibited the exportation of labourers from the Protectorate of
New Guinea except for German plantations in Samoa (Sack and Clark 1979:20). Between 1887 and 1894, a total of 2,962 labourers were sent from the Bismarck Archipelago to the New Guinea mainland, but only 552 were from New Britain (Salisbury 1962:335; see also T. S. Epstein 1968:36; Salisbury 1962:332). Thus, the Tolai did not allow themselves to be fully absorbed into the labour structure or to become totally dependent on Europeans; they were more prepared to work with Europeans than to work for them.

These patterns of involvement in the newly emerging economic situation suggest that the Tolai adapted well to it without much changing their lifestyles. However, after the administration of the Protectorate was taken over by the Imperial Government from the New Guinea Company in 1899, the Germans began to make serious efforts to drag the "natives" into a colonial economy. Thus, in 1900 the German administration obliged them to sell Europeans processed copra, as opposed to whole coconuts, in order to "train" them to habits of work (Sack and Clark 1979:217). In the following year, it also prohibited them from using any kinds of shell money in all transactions with Europeans in order to promote a cash economy (Sack and Clark 1979:220). These regulations were made mainly in response to the state of affairs in the Tolai area that the Germans had found unsatisfactory. There is a striking description that indicates how well the Tolai adjusted to the imposed changes in economic transactions with Europeans. With particular reference to the northern Gazelle Peninsula (and northern New Ireland), the annual report of German New Guinea for 1909-10 stated:

In those areas where the white traders and firms compete with each other, the natives know the precise value of copra and obtain very good prices when they sell it. There are native chiefs who have a regular monthly income of up to 300 marks from copra. In those parts where cash is beginning to become the regular medium of exchange, the natives prefer to sell their copra only for shiny new one-mark pieces. There are therefore highly prized and the companies and plantations, particularly all of which buy copra directly or through agents from natives in addition to their other regular business, do their best to obtain stocks of this coin or of other silver coins. As,
however, the natives have few wants and spend little money, and as they like hoarding coins, it is difficult to keep up the supply of cash. According to very reliable sources, there are chiefs who have in their possession 10,000 marks in silver coins, especially in one mark coins, in fact some individuals own even more. The Administration will have to see to it, that cash circulates more rapidly (Sack and Clark 1979:313).

This account clearly shows that the Tolai, especially big men, remained shrewd traders and that the transition to the cash economy was mediated by the “traditional” logic of wealth accumulation. When the German administration began to collect the head-tax amounting to five marks on the Gazelle Peninsula in 1907 ahead of other parts of the colony (Sack and Clark 1979:289), the Tolai were wealthy enough to pay it easily. Even when it was increased to seven marks or in some cases to ten marks in prosperous areas like the Gazelle Peninsula in 1910, it was paid “promptly and willingly” (Sack and Clark 1979:320).

While the Tolai were able to acquire riches by exploiting the copra trade to their advantage, there was also something which they lost a lot through it. By 1910 almost 40 percent of their land amounting to approximately 82,000 hectares had been alienated by Europeans (Sack and Clark 1979:324), and much of it had been turned to copra plantations. It must be pointed out, however, that much of the alienation of Tolai land had, in fact, taken place through crafty land “purchases” by Europeans before 1884 when Germany annexed New Guinea and began to assess their land claims for registration. It was big men who sold land belonging, or even not belonging, to their vunatarai to them for things like firearms, axes, knives, and tobacco without fully understanding what a sale of land meant in terms of European law. At first, Tolai were not worried much about it because the use of land by Europeans was initially limited largely to the establishment of mission or trading stations and small plantations. It was only as the plantations were
expanded, and their stations were linked by roads, by a growing number of imported
labourers that Tolai became alarmed about European encroachment on their land. But it
was too late for them to stop this since the land on which this was going on was already
"legally owned" by Europeans. Nevertheless, Tolai were determined to solve the problem,
even using violent means. Naturally, tension arose first around the Ralum plantation, the
first European plantation in the Tolai area.

Between March and April 1890 there occurred the first major confrontation
between Tolai and Europeans over land, which was triggered by Emma’s plan to build a
road along the foreshore from the main stations of the Ralum plantation at Malapau and
Gunantabu to the newly established headquarters of the New Guinea Company at
Kokopo (see Firth 1983:58-59; Hempenstall 1978:127-128; see also Dutton
1976:192-198). Local men were incensed by the plan particularly because the road was to
cut through their fishing sites and taraiu, sacred grounds of the tubuan. They argued that
the land belonged to their people, but it did belong to Emma according to European law.
The road building started under the supervision of a Filipino overseer named John Moses
who was arrogant with the local people. However, when the road reached an outstation at
Tokuka (near today’s Butuwin), a group of local men attacked Moses, killing him with an
axe and a knife. A punitive expedition, led by Parkinson and joined by Emma’s son Coe
Forsayth and over eighty foreign labourers from the Ralum plantation, was swiftly
mounted against Bitarebarebe, the place of the supposed ringleader ToRuruk, and they
destroyed a number of houses and gardens, killed a man, and demanded the surrender of
the murderers. However, there were no signs of the murderers being handed over. Instead,
hundreds of warriors from several coastal and inland settlements around the Ralum
plantation—Karavi, Vunamami, Bitarebarebe, Tingenavudu, and presumably Vunabalbal, Ulaulatava, and Malakuna—attacked its stations and withdrew after three of them were shot dead. Emma’s troops replied with another punitive expedition, driving the Tolai forces into the interior, killing several more people, and confiscating huge amounts of firearms, trade goods, and tabu. In the end, peace was negotiated through the Imperial Judge Georg Schmiele after the payment of compensation in tabu by two big men and the handing-over of six murderers, although ToRuruk was not captured and hanged before a crowd until a year and a half later. However, as a result of this battle, the Tolai were ordered to immediately evacuate all the coastal land between Malapau and Gunantambu that Emma had already acquired but not yet occupied or used. This enabled her to quickly expand the Ralum plantation further inland.

Three years later, the Tolai of roughly the same area waged another war, which later became known as the “war of the bullet-proof ointment” (see Chapter 3). This time, their chief target was the New Guinea Company’s plantation at Kokopo, which had steadily expanded since its establishment in 1890, but their goal was to expel all foreigners, both Europeans and imported labourers. The rebels stood out against them for six months. However, having suffered from heavy casualties (at least sixty Tolai were killed) and having been unable to obtain trading incomes, they were eventually led to accept peace. By then some Tolai in that area had come to realize that they could not drive foreigners out but find an alternative way to preserve their land against European encroachment. One of these was Abram ToBobo of Vunamami, “the most active protagonist of peace” (Salisbury 1970:316). Appointed Luluai in 1896, he managed to persuade the Imperial Judge Albert Hahl to negotiate with Emma for the establishment of
"native reserves" on her Ralum ground (ibid.), so that the villagers who were supposed to resettle on non-Ralum ground were allowed to hold on to their land for coconut planting, market gardening, and subsistence farming. Emma agreed, though reluctantly, to set aside small areas in her already-acquired land for that purpose, and other European plantations were urged to do their parts.

Meanwhile, the European plantations in the Kokopo area expanded quite radically after the war. In June 1893, the Ralum plantation and the New Guinea Company's plantation were about 590 and 165 hectares respectively (Hempenstall 1978:128; Salisbury 1970:80); by April 1900 they had increased to about 1,050 and 970 hectares respectively (Sack and Clark 1979:200-201). It was also in this period that the French-Belgian trader/planter Octave Mouton began to expand his plantation which he had started with 10 hectares in 1891 at Kinigunan, east of Kokopo (Biskup 1974:91); by April 1900 its planted area had risen to about 350 hectares (Sack and Clark 1979:202). In addition to the Ralum plantation, Emma had by then established new plantations at Kabakaül, east of Kinigunan, and Kabanga, some ten kilometres south of Kabakaül, and planted about 70 hectares with coconut palms (Sack and Clark 1979:201). Moreover, the Parkinsons had by then about 30 hectares of planted land in their own plantation at Malapau (Sack and Clark 1979:202). This brings us the fact that at least approximately 2,470 hectares of the Kokopo area had been turned to European plantations by the turn of the century. However, it was only the beginning. By then much of the Kokopo area was already in the hands of Europeans; in fact, much of the alienated Tolai land was concentrated in the Kokopo area (see Sack and Clark 1979:375, Map 3). Thus, in the many years to follow, the European plantations just took up already-acquired land for
new plantings, and as they expanded, many Tolai villagers were forced to live in small "native reserves" surrounded by vast areas of European land.

Since the late 1880s, E. E. Forsayth & Co. had been the largest privately owned firm in the Bismarck Archipelago. Emma was very rich and influential. Her house at Gunantabu was "the best-equipped and most luxurious residence in the South Seas" (Robson 1973:149), and she often hosted lavish champagne parties to entertain high-ranking German officials and other Europeans. Through these social interactions, she married many of her young nieces to prominent Germans; Emma herself eventually married a former Prussian cavalry officer named Paul Kolbe in 1893, which allowed her to obtain German nationality and secure her position in the German colony. It should be reminded, however, that her high-society life was financed through the exploitation of the land, labour, and produce of the New Guinea islanders, which she had acquired for a song. In 1907 when her health was beginning to fail, she decided to sell all the Forsayth interests, except some plantations transferred to her son Coe Forsayth, and leave New Guinea for Australia. In 1909, her company, which had by then controlled more than 60,000 hectares, was finally sold to the German firm of Rudolf Wahlen for the price in German marks that was equivalent to about one million US dollars. In 1913, Emma travelled to Monte Carlo to see her sick husband, and the couple died there within two days of each other. Her body was cremated, and the ashes were brought back to New Guinea in a small metal urn, which was then buried in her family cemetery at Malapau.

The Parkinsons were vital to Emma's commercial success, particularly in the development of the plantation side of her business. Although they were intimately connected with her company, they owned a small set of plantations separate from hers. In
1907 when Emma decided to put her company up for sale, the Parkinsons moved from Malapau to their second home at Kuradui near Raluana. Two years later, Parkinson died and was buried in their family cemetery at Kuradui. After the First World War, German properties were expropriated by the victorious Australians. Despite the fact that Parkinson was a German national, his wife Phoebe was allowed to keep her plantations. However, as many of the plantations left her control one by one in the years that followed, she retreated to Sumsum on the southeast coast of the Gazelle Peninsula. When the Japanese invaded New Britain in 1942, she was taken to a prison camp on New Ireland, where she died two years later.  

The Tolai and Artefact Collecting

Between 1881 and 1909, Farrell, Emma, and the Parkinsons sold or donated probably more than 10,000 artefacts from the Bismarck Archipelago to metropolitan museums in Australia, Germany, and the United States (Specht 1999:xx). It was the “golden age” of artefact collecting in New Guinea, as the region was opened up for Europeans, concomitantly offering them new opportunities to obtain “curios” from the “unknown.” Colonialism provided practical circumstances necessary for artefact collecting, but what made this particular period (as opposed to later periods) the zenith of this activity was intellectual currents popular in the West at that time. It was the time when anthropology developed into a distinct scientific discipline dedicated to the study of the cultures of

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136 See Mead 1960:175-210 for a biographical sketch of Phoebe Parkinson.
“primitive” peoples. Its main theories were evolutionism and diffusionism, both of which relied heavily upon material objects as data with an emphasis on typology and geographical distribution. There was also a sense of urgency among anthropologists to save the material evidence of the “primitive” peoples who were deemed to vanish under the influence of European civilization. This obsession of anthropology with material culture was reflected in its close association with museums where ethnographic specimens were preserved. The museum was the “institutional homeland” of anthropology (Lurie 1981:180, 184), supporting anthropological research and employing anthropologists (see also Stocking 1985:7-8). But its ultimate function was to disseminate to the public—particularly the upper-middle class—knowledge about “primitive” society by reference to the ethnographic collections it exhibited. Thus, there was a high demand in the West for artefacts from the colonies.

Farrell and Emma sold hundreds of artefacts to the Australian Museum in Sydney from as early as 1881 (Specht 1999:xx). For independent traders like them, artefacts were probably just another set of export commodities. Due to their preoccupation with profit, they tended to focus on collecting such objects in bulk, thus paying little attention to recording their places of origin, names, and usages. Museums—their main customers in this case—on the other hand claimed to be “purely” scientific institutions, thus deemphasizing the commercial realities surrounding them, and considered unlabelled or poorly labelled artefacts to be mere curiosities of little scientific value. To capitalize on the situation with these two contrasting interests, large commercial firms often employed qualified collectors. The Godeffroy company, in particular, dispatched full-time collectors—first Franz Hübner and then Theodor Kleinschmidt—to
the Duke of York Islands to obtain not only artefacts in the area but also detailed
information associated with them for its own museum and scholarly journal back in
Hamburg (Rosman and Rubel 1998:37-38; see also Spoehr 1963). Successfully
combining commercial and scientific concerns into a collecting venture, the company
was renowned as holding the best ethnographic collection from the Pacific Islands in
Germany until 1880 when it was eventually sold to separate museums following the
company's bankruptcy in 1879 (Buschmann 2000:58-60, 74).

Artefacts were collected not only by traders and companies but also by Christian
missionaries. The collecting activities of missionaries generally reflected their duty of
bringing the word of God to the savage heathen. Accordingly, they often collected
weaponry and idols representing indigenous gods to demonstrate the conquest of
savagery and heathenism and the triumph of Christianity to missionary supporters back
home (Thomas 1991:151-162). However, not all missionaries engaged themselves in
collecting in this way. For instance, the Methodist missionary George Brown, who stayed
in New Britain between 1875 and 1880, showed missionary zeal in his collecting
activities in a more subtle way. He accumulated artefacts partly through constant
exchange with local people, which he intended to facilitate contact with them for mission
purposes,¹³⁷ and through free offering by them, which he encouraged to teach them the
Christian ideal of the gift (Gardner 2000:41-44). But what is more apparent is that his
interest in collecting was part of his intellectual inquisitiveness to the cultures and
languages of the peoples he wished to convert to Christianity (Gardner 2000:46-49;
Rubel and Rosman 1996:60-66). His anthropological interests were guided by the British

¹³⁷ Brown states: "I bought everything [natives] brought whether we wanted it or not, with the exception
of tortoise shell [a popular item sought by traders at the time]... as I wished both natives and traders to
understand that we were not there for trading purposes (Brown 1908:118)."
Association for the Advancement of Science's first edition (1874) of *Notes and Queries on Anthropology for the Use of the Travellers and Residents in Uncivilized Lands* (Brown 1910:vi) and resulted in many scholarly publications (Brown 1877, 1881, 1887, 1898, 1898, 1901, 1910, 1911, 1914). The artefacts he collected included not just weaponry and idols but a wide range of ethnographic specimens (see Davis 1985). He sent some of them to anthropological theorists and museums in Australia, New Zealand, and England, with which he, like many other contemporary missionaries, maintained correspondence, while others were kept for his own private collection.

Following German annexation in 1884, the Bismarck Archipelago became firmly one of the German frontiers in artefact collecting. The New Guinea Company attempted to replicate the Godeffroy company's success in a collecting venture by employing qualified collectors. However, its company officials were actually less concerned with scientific aspects of artefacts than cashing them in or exploiting them as colonial curiosities to attract prospective German settlers to the distant colony in the South Pacific. This drew a lot of criticism from officials and ethnologists at the Berlin Museum of Ethnography to which the company was required to offer its assemblages of artefacts (Buschmann 2000:60-65). Meanwhile, to secure their own collections from the colony, other German museums relied largely upon personal contact with individual German traders/planters, missionaries, and officials who gathered artefacts rather casually along with their main duties.

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138 Among them was E. B. Tylor who received a specimen of the Tolai shell money *tabu* (or the Duke of York shell money *divara*) (Gardner 2000:35-36). The existence of currency in a "primitive society" would have threatened his evolutionary schemes.

139 Brown also took a lot of photographs. He obtained a camera soon after he began work in New Britain, and about 900 photographs (including those of *tubuan* and *dukduk*) that he took thereafter in the South Pacific are now held in the Australian Museum in Sydney (Ishimori 1999:26-27; see also Gardner and Philp 2006).
Back in Germany, there had been much public interest in the colony by 1899 when the Imperial Government took over its administration from the New Guinea Company. This was reflected in a sharp increase in the number of visitors to ethnographic museums. At the same time, the prices of indigenous artefacts were on the rise in the international market of material culture. These factors accelerated rivalry between various German cities, which were eager to enhance their status through the ownership and display of large ethnographic collections at their museums (see Penny 1998, 2002).

Accordingly, German museums began to use a system of rewards in the forms of medals, decorations, and civic honours to attract individual colonial residents to collect extensively for them (see Rosman and Rubel 1998:41-43). They also began to dispatch collecting expeditions, which were made up of professional or self-funding amateur researchers who were motivated by the promotion of their own scientific or academic reputations. Thus, the first decade of the twentieth century saw a series of large-scale, museum-linked, scientific expeditions by Germans to New Guinea (see Bouquet and Branco 1988; Knowles and Gosden 2004:66-69; Parkinson 1999 [1907]:139-140; Sack and Clark 1979:279, 294-295, 305; Specht 1999:xviii-xix). The growing national and international competition among museums, as well as scientific vigour, also provided the impetus for George Dorsey, Curator of Anthropology at the Field Museum of Natural History in Chicago, to send off his assistant, Albert Lewis, on a four-year South Pacific expedition from 1909 to 1913, during which he made an extensive collection from New Guinea and Papua (Welsch 1998:3-9).

Nonetheless, the most prominent collector in the Bismarck Archipelago during the German colonial period was undoubtedly Richard Parkinson. He was not just a
trader/planter but also an amateur ethnographer who pursued scientific eminence through his numerous publications spanning twenty years (see Specht 1999:xxvii-xxix)—most notably, his thick monograph *Thirty Years in the South Seas (Dreizig Jahre in der Sudsee)* (1999 [1907]). Although he did assist Emma’s company, managing plantations, recruiting foreign labourers, experimenting with new crops, and introducing new animals, money-making was secondary to intellectual endeavour for him. This is evidenced by the fact that he worked for the New Guinea Company as a surveyor and collector between 1889 and 1899, expecting many opportunities to travel and conduct ethnographic research around the colony, particularly the Bismarck Archipelago (Biskup 1974:81, fn.61; Mead 1960:199; Robson 1973:167-169; Specht 1999:xvii; cf. Buschmann 2000:61). While documenting various cultural aspects of people around him, he vigorously collected artefacts and even human skulls and skeletons. By the time he died in 1909, he had sold or donated thousands of objects to the Australian Museum, the Field Museum, and museums in Dresden, Stuttgart, Berlin and elsewhere in Germany (Specht 1999:xx). After his death, some of his collecting activities were taken over by his wife Phoebe who had been more fluent than him in the Tolai language and Tok Pisin and helped him obtain detailed information about indigenous customs (Mead 1960:184, 200, 202; Overell 1923:178; Robson 1973:168).

While Europeans exploited the artefact trade, so did the Tolai as a source of incomes—trade goods, *tabu*, and later money—in addition to the copra trade. The objects that Europeans especially sought were those which they regarded as representing the “primitiveness” of the people and as destined to vanish under the influence of European

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140 The collecting of human remains was prohibited by the Australian Administration (Commonwealth of Australia 1924:40-41).
civilization. One such object was the skull mask (lor) of the iniet, a secret society which was closely associated with sorcery. The iniet was strongly negated by the Christian missions from the beginning, and Tolai left it behind and abandoned its objects as they embraced the new religion. They were quick to recognize the demand of Europeans for skull masks, thus eagerly exchanging them for trade goods or tabu. It is no wonder that these masks soon became scarce; indeed, Parkinson (1999 [1907]:258) found when he arrived in the area in 1882 that they had already become rare. Yet Europeans were still able to obtain them in great numbers for many years that followed. Parkinson gives us a clue: “High prices of tabu brought me several beautiful old specimens, and, enticed by this, they [i.e., Tolai] resorted once more to manufacture in order to sell the product to warships and other visitors” (ibid.). Hence, Tolai were producing skull masks for sale as early as in the early 1880s (cf. Bourgoin 2002:69). Another Tolai object popular among Europeans was the stone carving of the iniet. It can be assumed that stone carvings, like skull masks, soon became rare through the collecting activities of Europeans. However, when Richard Thurnwald, a German ethnographer, visited the Gazelle Peninsula in 1906/07 during his two-and-a-half-year collecting expedition to the colony (Pullen-Burry 1909:48, 134; Sack and Clark 1979:295; see also Craig 1997), he was still able to acquire 741 stone carvings in the Toma area for the Berlin Museum (Specht 1999:xix). We cannot help but speculate that most of them were made for sale. These suggest that the artefact industry targeted on outsiders had already developed among the Tolai by the end of the German colonial period. It then followed that many of the artefacts from the Tolai area that are now stored in overseas museums may not be so “genuine” as have often been deemed. In addition, Tolai had already been combining “traditional” and “modern”
materials into their crafts by the early twentieth century (Heermann 2001:19).

**The Tubuan and the Artefact Trade**

Although both Tolai and Europeans exploited the artefact trade, it was Tolai who had ultimate control over artefacts since they sold only those objects which they were prepared to sell. Among objects which they refused to make easily available for sale was the *tubuan* mask. Like the *iniet*, the *tubuan* was suppressed by the Christian missions, so Europeans, predicting it would disappear within a short time, were urged to save its material evidence. However, while the *iniet* soon became marginalized and eventually banned in 1903 by the German administration at the persistent insistence of the missions, the *tubuan* managed to survive, with some minor reforms, throughout the German colonial period. Europeans looked for a chance to obtain *tubuan* masks at the end of a major ceremony. However, Tolai stuck to the customary rule that *tubuan* masks must always be ritually destroyed at the end of a ceremonial cycle to protect *tubuan* secrets. According to Parkinson, Tolai often allowed Europeans not only to attend *tubuan* ceremonies but also to enter *taraiu*; “even my wife was finally permitted entry, not without murmurs from several old mystery-mongers” (1999 [1907]:250). In doing so, however, Tolai guarded many of the *tubuan* secrets, particularly those associated with the mask, from Europeans, as evidenced by the following episode provided by Parkinson.

[T]he more the native cloaks himself in secret affairs and silence, the more [the white settler] sees it as his mission to solve the mystery. Many times evil befalls him through this; for example, I knew a trader who secretly took a *duk-duk* mask years ago. His somewhat airy home, a hut made from bamboo canes and coconut matting, was, however, not a suitable hiding place; the natives discovered the mask, broke
into the house, pulled out the *duk-duk* and only my fortuitous intervention saved the trader from a sound thrashing, if not worse. Since this affair the natives avoided the place and took their products to neighbouring traders (1999 [1907]:249).

It was thus difficult for Europeans to acquire *tubuan* masks. “Collectors of curios,” wrote the Methodist missionary Rickard, “have tried hard with tempting prices, to buy the head-dresses, but always in vain (1890:75). However, a major exception was Parkinson, whose export of *tubuan* masks began in August 1884 when he sold a “*duk-duk* headdress”—among other artefacts from New Britain, New Ireland, and Manus (Specht 1999:xx)—to the Australian Museum under the name of his wife Phoebe. Soon after settling in Malapau, Parkinson made contact with local people to obtain information about their customs. He was particularly fascinated with the *tubuan*, and as he learned it, he became more knowledgeable about it than any other Europeans in the German colonial period. This is apparent from his lengthy treatment of the *tubuan* in his *Thirty Years* (1999 [1907]:247-257). He does not provide any information, though, on how he acquired *tubuan* masks. However, given that *tubuan* masks were made only by permission of *tubuan* managers or *bita tubuan*, it is highly likely that on the strength of his intimate knowledge about the *tubuan* and other Tolai customs, as well as his power and wealth, he had close relationships with some *bita tubuan* and managed to persuade them to produce *tubuan* masks for his own purpose.

Among such *bita tubuan* was Pero ToKinkin of Raluana (Parkinson 1999 [1907]:251). When Parkinson arranged for a team of six Tolai men with *tubuan* masks to represent the New Guinea Company at the Berlin Colonial Exhibition of 1896, the team’s leader was ToKinkin (Neumann 1992a:iii-iv; Salisbury 1970:34, 307; *Times of Papua*

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The registration number of the “*duk-duk* headdress” is B003573. The information was kindly provided by Yvonne Carrillo-Huffman at the Australian Museum on September 18, 2005.
New Guinea 1985:16). They were not the only group of “black” people brought to Berlin; there were also groups from the German colonies in Africa (e.g., Masai and Cameroonian). All these groups performed dances and showed the objects they had brought with them in the presence of a great number of “white” spectators – not to mention that ToKinikin explained details of the tubuan mask (Neumann 1992a:226; Times of Papua New Guinea 1985:16). Also on display were ethnographic collections from all the German colonies (Buschmann 2000:64). It should be noted, however, that the Exhibition was not intended to enable visitors to gain a better understanding of the peoples of the colonies, but aimed to attract investors to the colonies. All these “black” people and ethnographic collections, then, served merely as baits to catch the attention of prospective investors in the exploitation of the colonies. The New Guinea Company was very much satisfied with the appearance of the Tolai group in the Exhibition, and its annual report noted: “The hope...that the living spectacle of the exhibition would create a clearer and more tangible picture of the conditions and prospects in the Protectorate than the most detailed accounts, was amply fulfilled, judged by the great number of visitors (reaching two and a half millions), by the lively interest they showed and by the comments published” (Sack and Clark 1979:123).

Although ToKinkin and his companions were used as company propaganda, the trip to Berlin was a great experience for them, allowing them to see the “white man’s country” and taste German beer. While the Company appropriated the tubuan through Parkinson, the Tolai group appropriated European artefacts. ToKinkin, for instance, got, among other things, an European headgear for himself (Heermann 2001:15) and an European dress for his wife (Times of Papua New Guinea 1985:17). On their return, the
Tolai group were “supposed to tell their tribesmen about the impressions gained in Berlin in order to spread reverence and submissiveness for the ‘smart white man’” (Times of Papua New Guinea 1985:16). This was probably a good reason for Parkinson to recommend the newly arrived Imperial Judge Albert Halh to appoint the group’s leader ToKinkin as Luluai (see Chapter 3).

Parkinson’s selection of the *tubuan* mask for the Exhibition suggests that by the mid-1890s it had been already regarded by Europeans as a major artefact representative of the Tolai. By the turn of the century, the *tubuan* mask had become so famous among German scholars that it was used as a reference point with which newly “discovered” masks in the areas beyond the Gazelle Peninsula were compared. Thus, in the early 1900s one scholar made a passing reference to “the well-known *duk-duk* masks” in describing the masks of the Sulka, which were then “still completely novel” to Europeans (see Parkinson 1999 [1907]:274).

In North America, the *tubuan* mask received scholarly attention relatively late. Parkinson’s contact with the Field Museum began in 1898, but it did not express its interest in the mask until ten years later. When Parkinson eventually sold his own personal collection to museum in 1908 with his retirement in mind (Specht 1999:xviii), it did not include any *tubuan* masks. George Dorsey, the museum’s curator who had visited Parkinson to inspect his collection, made a specific request for them among other things on his return to Chicago (Specht 1999:xix). Parkinson then placed “orders” to his mask makers in Raluana (ToKinkin?) for two *tubuan* and two *dukduk* masks. These were purchased at 50 marks each in 1910, one year after his death, by Albert Lewis, an anthropologist who visited Phoebe at Kuradui in the course of his four-year South Pacific
expedition to collect for the museum (Specht 1999:xix; Welsch 1998:326, 331).

Defending the Tubuan

After the German colonial period, collecting activities dwindled in the Tolai area in contrast to many other parts of New Guinea—such as the south coast of western New Britain (see Gosden 2000; Gosden and Knowles 2001:101-165; Knowles 2000; Knowles and Gosden 2004:70-72)—which continued to attract collectors, ranging from academics to travellers, from all over the world in the inter-war years. The Tolai, after all, had one of the longest histories in New Guinea of contact with Europeans and other foreigners and were living in its most cosmopolitan part, so they were considered too “influenced” or “civilized” to provide truly “primitive” artefacts that collectors sought at that time. For instance, Beatrice Blackwood, an anthropologist at the Pitt Rivers Museum in Oxford who made substantial collections of material culture at five different sites in New Guinea during her fieldwork in 1929 and 1937, discounted the Gazelle Peninsula as being “good for a study of culture contact, but probably disappointing from the standpoint of museum collecting.”142 No longer being classified as truly “primitive,” the Tolai failed to attract not only collectors but also professional ethnographic fieldworkers, even though the latter began to flock to New Guinea in the inter-war period when intensive socio-cultural research among a single people or in a single area became the hallmark of the discipline of anthropology.

Meanwhile, there were efforts to regulate the trade and export of indigenous cultural objects by legislation. The first of such efforts was made in the Territory of Papua in 1913 with the enactment of the Papuan Antiquities Ordinance, and a similar legislation, the New Guinea Antiquities Ordinance, was enacted in the Territory of New Guinea in 1922. These ordinances, each of which was subsequently amended a few times to accommodate newly arising specifics, prohibited the removal of “antiquities” from the Territories without proper government permission. Not surprisingly, these ordinances were not only paternalistic but also Euro-centric (Busse 2000:84-87). “Antiquities” were meant to be indigenously made objects of historical or scientific value or interest. What objects were or were not “antiquities”—and therefore worthy of protection—was determined not by their meanings for the people who made and used them, but by European ideas of what was indigenously made, what was historical, and what was scientific. The term “antiquities” generally refers to objects from ancient times, but “antiquities” within the meaning of the ordinances included objects made not only in the past but also in the present. This reflected European images at that time of non-Europeans as still living in the distant past. Following the administrative amalgamation of the Territory of Papua and the Territory of New Guinea, the two ordinances were consolidated into the Antiquities Ordinances of 1953.

The absurdities of the language of “antiquities” were realized as the Territory of Papua and New Guinea prepared itself for independence. The Antiquities Ordinance was repealed in 1965 by a new ordinance passed by the Territory’s House of Assembly, the National Cultural Property (Preservation) Ordinance, which, at independence, became the National Cultural Property (Preservation) Act. The Act defines national cultural property
any property, movable or immovable, of particular importance to the cultural heritage of the country... including any objects, natural or artificial, used for, or made or adapted for use for, any purpose connected with the traditional cultural life of any of the peoples of the country, past or present.

Thus, the replacement of the language of “antiquities” by the language of “national cultural property” represented a move from the protection of cultural objects defined in terms of European values and interests to the protection of cultural objects in terms of Papua New Guinean’s own understandings of their cultures and their past (Busse 2000).

The development of the legislation on cultural objects was paralleled by that of cultural institutions dealing with them. The idea of creating a museum in Port Moresby, which had existed since 1911, became a reality in 1954 with the establishment of the Papua and New Guinea Public Museum and Art Gallery. The National Cultural Property (Preservation) Ordinance of 1965 gave the responsibility for the administration of the ordinance to the Trustees of the museum. The National Cultural Council, established under the National Cultural Development Act of 1974, recommended that a larger museum be established under its direction to preserve cultural material objects of the country, which resulted in the opening of the renamed National Museum and Art Gallery in 1977. Growing national concerns with cultural objects also led the National Museum to request for the repatriation of collections that had been made from the country and were held by overseas museums. Immediate attention was paid to the MacGregor collection retained in the Queensland Museum, and between 1979 and 1992, a substantial portion of the collection was returned to Papua New Guinea (Quinnell 2000:95-97). Another collection in which the National Museum revived interest was the George Brown collection, which was offered for sale by the Hancock Museum of the University of
Newcastle in England to the National Museum of Ethnology in Japan in 1985. The National Museum in Port Moresby made efforts to have the sale deferred to allow negotiations for the return of the collection to their region, but it failed (Specht 1987; see also Benthall 1986; Carrington 1986; Gardner 2000).

The National Cultural Council also recognized the commercial potential for cultural objects of the country. Thus, the Village Arts, another national cultural institution operating under its direction, was entrusted with providing services in artefact trade to assist the people in local areas (Wari 1980:113). It was given tasks of promoting the artefact industry and preventing the exploitation of the people’s art work by foreign artefact dealers (Wari 1980:115).

The Tolai’s current opposition to the sale and export of tubuan masks may be traced back, as we might expect, to the heyday of the Mataungan Association that promoted a cultural revival in its fight for self-government, particularly through its own council, the Warkurai Nigunan, which administered customary Tolai law (see Chapter 3). A few years prior to national independence, there was an attempt by a small group of unidentified Japanese to export a tubuan mask and a dukduk mask that they had managed to purchase in the Reimber area. To cover up what they were doing, they were advised to put them in containers labelled “koshimaki”—a Japanese word popular among old Tolai for “laplap” or “underskirt.” By the time the masks were ready for shipment at the Rabaul wharf, however, the story came to the knowledge of Mataungans. They confiscated the masks, burnt them in keeping with the rules of the tubuan, and took those involved in the sale of the masks to a vanga (tubuan court) at the taraiu of a tubuan

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143 The following account is based on the Interviews with ToRarang of Karavia No. 2 on 14 October 2003 and with ToKele of Karavi on 17 April 2004.
named IaUralom in Malaguna where, as in the case of any other offenders to the *tubuan*,
y they were sentenced to pay fines in *tabu* (*varporong*) and hit their backs by a *tubuan*
(*varpakat*).

The Mataungans took the matter very seriously for two reasons. Firstly, they
were determined to prevent any activity that treated *tubuan* merely as masks because this
was to undermine or threaten the authenticity of the *tubuan* which they used as its
ideological symbol (see Chapter 3). Secondly, the ringleaders of the sale of the masks to
the Japanese were two long-serving councillors who had supported the
Administration-backed multi-racial council to which the Mataungan Association had
strongly opposed; in short, they were political opponents of the Mataungans. Given that
they themselves were well-known and highly respected big men, it was most likely that
the sale of masks had gone unchallenged until the Mataungan Association gained power.
The incident enabled the Mataungans to discredit the two men and their political allies as
trying to retain leadership without respecting their own culture. Meanwhile, the
Mataungans were politically influential enough to bring together *bita tubuan* from all
over the area to attend the *vanga*. By reminding them of the rules of the *tubuan*, they
pulled off a far-reaching reform in attitudes among the Tolai towards the sale and export
of masks.

The early 1970s was also the beginning of cultural development at the national
level. As independence was fast approaching, newly emerging political leaders (e.g.,
Somare 1973 [1972]) and intellectuals (see Beier 1973, 1980) began to express the desire
to create a sense of unity among a great number of culturally and linguistically distinct
peoples who would make up the new nation, as the degree of national unity was
obviously one of the major factors that would determine the future stability of Papua New Guinea. A source of national identity and pride was located in the extraordinary diversity of cultures in the country, and “unity in cultural diversity,” though seemingly paradoxical, became a major conceptual framework for nation building (Iamo and Simet 1998). It was institutionalized following the adoption of the National Cultural Development Act in 1974, which led to the establishment of the National Cultural Council as the central body responsible for coordinating cultural development in the country (Voi 1994:89-90; Wari 1980). Several national cultural institutions, including the National Museum and Art Gallery and the Institute of Papua New Guinea Studies, were created under the National Cultural Council. Provincial cultural councils and cultural centres or museums were also set up later. These institutions, as a whole, were to preserve and promote local cultures in all aspects and develop a national culture out of their diversity.

However, there were some academics who raised questions about the effects of these cultural institutions on the cultural life of local people. For instance, in 1976 Jacob Simet, a Tolai from Matupit who was then a research fellow in the Institute of Papua New Guinea Studies, expressed concern about museums and the disintegration of living art forms as a result of their separation from their cultural and social contexts, with particular reference to the *tubuan* which he was studying at the time. His study resulted in a discussion paper entitled “The Future of the Tubuan Society” (Simet 1977). He asked:

Do we need to tear masks and instruments out of their setting and stick them on to walls? … To encase a Tubuan mask in a glass case is an act that would call for a heavy fine according to the rules of the *tubuan* society. Is this really what we have to do to preserve the art? Has anyone ever tried to find out what effect museums have in this country? What is the purpose of a museum? And what is this culture that our politicians talk so much about—the culture they want to preserve so that it can give an identity to this country? Has it occurred to them that these things we call art have social, economic and spiritual functions? And if they see that, why do they still

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144 Its predecessor, the Papua and New Guinea Public Museum and Art Gallery, was established in 1954 (Busse 2000:88).
145 His study resulted in a discussion paper entitled “The Future of the Tubuan Society” (Simet 1977).
choose to treat it as a mere entertainment for visitors, or a curious object for people
to stare at and maybe admire? Where is this Western attitude to art leading us at this
moment? (Simet 1976:1-2)

Simet's and others' critical thinking was largely ignored by cultural policy
makers, however. Meanwhile, the Tolai continued to struggle after independence with
foreigners who wished to exploit tubuan and dukduk masks. Tension heightened on two
separate occasions between 1990 and 1991 both involving a German artefact dealer with
fourteen years' experience in Papua New Guinea who attempted to export artefacts which
he had purchased with the assistance of an American Catholic priest who was stationed in
the Duke of York Islands.146 The first occasion was when the artefact dealer requested
export permits for two tubuan masks from Duke of York Island at the National Museum,
which administers the National Cultural Property (Preservation) Act prohibiting the
export without its permission of national cultural property—“any property, movable or
immovable, of particular importance to the cultural heritage of the country...[including]
any object, natural or artificial, used for, or made or adapted for use for, any purpose
connected with the traditional cultural life of any of the peoples of the country, past and
present” (Section 2 of the Act, quoted in Busse 2000:88). Having required him to obtain a
letter of approval from local leaders for his export, Mark Busse (American
anthropologist), then curator of anthropology at the Museum, received a letter via the
priest, which was signed by four men stating that they were leaders on the island and that
they had no problem with the masks being exported because they were happy with the
money they had received for them. However, when Busse had a community government
officer who was stationed in the Duke of York Islands check the validity of the letter, it

146 The following account is based on correspondences regarding this matter in October and November
1991, which are filed in the office of the East New Britain Tourist Bureau at Kokopo.
was discovered that the four men who had signed it had no authority over the tubuan and were actually catechists working with the priest. Accordingly, the artefact dealer was denied export permits. Back on the island, angered by this incident, tubuan people fined the artefact dealer and the priest K2,000 each and threatened the lives of the catechists who had sold the masks. The masks were eventually burnt in accordance with the rules of the tubuan.¹⁴⁷

A year later, the artefact dealer requested export permits again. This time, however, they were for artefacts of various kinds mostly from East and West New Britain Provinces, excluding tubuan masks. He submitted the list and photographs of these artefacts—amounting to about 460 items and worth about K18,000 in total—to the National Museum. Unfamiliar with the cultural groups with which the artefacts were associated, Busse sought guidance from Simet, who was now director of the Institute of Papua New Guinea Studies, as well as informing him of the activities of the artefact dealer and the priest a year before. Simet advised against the export of a number of Tolai items in the artefact dealer’s list, mostly tabaran masks and turagan and igal figures which he insisted represented actual spirits; he was particularly disturbed by the proposed export of twelve coils of tabu (about 1,350 fathoms), whose continuing centrality to Tolai society he knew too well as a tabu using Tolai and a professional anthropologist who had just recently completed his Ph.D. thesis on tabu (Simet 1991). Busse thus asked the artefact dealer to remove the items specified by Simet from his collection and notified him out of suspicion that all the other items would be examined as well. However, rather than complying with the directive from the Museum, the artefact dealer flew back to

¹⁴⁷ This incident in 1990 is briefly mentioned by Errington and Gewertz (1995:52). In the same year, however, another German artefact dealer acquired one tubuan mask and one dukduk mask for the Linden-Museum Stuttgart (Heermann 2001:48-49).
Rabaul, got an officer for the East New Britain Tourist Bureau to write a letter of endorsement for his export on behalf of the Provincial Government, packed all the items in two large shipping containers, and left for Germany. Alarmed at his defiant move, Simet hurriedly flew to Rabaul to intercept the shipment on behalf of the Museum. In the company of a nationally well-known Tolai big man (politician-tuned-businessman), he met the priest at the Rabaul wharf. While inspecting the containers, he found the situation much more serious than he had expected: he discovered three tubuan masks which were not included in the list of artefacts for which the artefact dealer had requested export permits. It was obvious to Simet that the artefact dealer had not included them in his list because he had knew, especially after the previous year’s experience, that they would not be allowed for exportation. Consequently, the entire shipment was impounded for further investigation. After the incident was publicized (Papua New Guinea Post-Courier 1991:3), there were calls from various sectors of the Tolai community for reprimands to be taken against the artefact dealer and the priest.148

The Museum demanded a written explanation from the artefact dealer for his “smuggling” of the three tubuan masks. However, rather than responding to the Museum, he sought support from the PNG Ambassador in Germany and the Speaker of the National Parliament in Waigani; he even took legal action against the Museum which he said had illegally taken his property and destroyed his reputation in artefact business. He claimed that he had had no problems in the past obtaining export permits; that he had followed the correct procedure in obtaining export permits; and that all the artefacts in question had been produced with the full knowledge and approval of local leaders. Not

148 This incident is also a subject of historical analysis by Errington and Gewertz (1995:49-76), but their focus is on tabu.
only were all these claims easily rejected by Simet with firm evidence, but the artefact dealer also failed to account for his smuggling of the masks. What irritated Simet most was the artefact dealer's claim that all the artefacts had been produced on commission and were therefore basically “replicas” of traditional objects. The artefact dealer might have had in mind the fact that objects recently made for sale to artefact dealers and tourists are exempted from the National Cultural Property (Preservation) Act (see Busse 2000:90). On this point, Simet had to assert that all the Tolai objects for which the artefacts dealer had been denied export permits were genuine and culturally important for the Tolai, even though they had been made on commission,. Thus, he elevated them to items of national cultural property, according to its definition (see above). For him, however, the real question was not just what objects are genuine and important, but who has the authority to decide it. In short, at issue here was the exercise of power. Thus, he added that only the people were the best judges of the value of their material objects.

Towards the end of March 2004, Papua New Guinea's nationally circulated daily newspapers reported the discovery at the Jackson International Airport in Port Moresby of tubuan masks and about 400 to 500 fathoms of tabu, which were declared as personal effects of guests at a hotel in Rabaul and bound for Brussels, Belgium (National 2004a, 2004b; Papua New Guinea Post-Courier 2004h:4). The matter, according to the reports, was notified to the National Museum and Art Gallery, which then impounded the items for the reason that it is illegal to export sacred ritual objects without its proper permission. “A sacred traditional ceremony had to be performed before the shell money and masks were taken out of the boxes to avoid the spell from being broken” (Papua New Guinea Post-Courier 2004h:4). Dr. Jacob Simet, the executive director of the National Cultural
Commission, who is also a trustee of the National Museum and a Tolai himself, suggested that the impounded *tubuan* masks be destroyed after appropriate protocols in accordance with the rules of the *tubuan*, while the *tabu* donated to the National Museum. He also warned the nation that artefacts would continue to be smuggled out of the country until laws regulating their export—which currently only allow the confiscation of items and imposition of fines—were toughened to prosecute offenders. Back in Rabaul and Kokopo, Tolai villagers, upon reading or hearing about the newspaper reports, were angry about the incident, accusing foreigners of continuing to steal their cultural heritage.

These incidents represent the way in which people formerly colonized by Western powers have been increasingly preoccupied with certain objects (but not others) of their own cultures. During colonial periods, especially in the late nineteenth century and the early twentieth century, a great number of cultural objects were taken out of colonies and displayed at metropolitan museums. This sort of ethnographic collecting continues today, though in a much smaller scale. However, as the colonies have become independent nations, they have set out to protect selected objects they consider to be culturally significant to their nations from being exported and even to claim for the repatriation of assemblages of artefacts held by overseas museums. This is exactly what has happened in Papua New Guinea, and the Tolai have been instrumental in pushing the country in this direction through continuous struggles with artefact collectors who wish to exploit *tubuan* masks and their other cultural objects.

**Tourism and the Celebration of Culture among the Tolai**
In some ways, cultural tourism is not new for the Tolai. In 1939, several hundred parishioners of the Australian Methodist Church joined a “New Guinea Cruise” during which they visited Rabaul and were feted with native dances and ceremonies, including those of the tubuan (Methodist Overseas Mission 1939; see also Missionary Review 1939, 1939). Still, as late as 1954 one observer wrote: “Although Rabaul itself is attractive, and is surrounded by many districts of beauty and interest, no attempt yet has been made to develop the profitable tourist business” (Robson 1954:208). This would change in following years, due to developing government policies meant to encourage cultural revival and tourism. In the course of these changes, Tolai have had to revisit their understandings of the nature of the tubuan.

Culture has been an essential tool for the development of Papua New Guinea during its short history. Its cultural policy began to develop in the context of nationalism in the early 1970s. As independence approached, newly emerging political leaders (e.g., Somare 1973 [1972]), and intellectuals (see Beier 1973, 1980) embarked on a challenging task of creating a sense of solidarity among a great number of culturally and linguistically distinct peoples who would make up a new nation. The degree of national unity was obviously one of the major factors that would determine its future stability. A source of national identity and pride was located in the extraordinary diversity of cultures, and “unity in cultural diversity,” though seemingly paradoxical, became a major conceptual framework for nation building (Iamo and Simet 1998:192-197). It was institutionalized following the adoption in 1974 of the National Cultural Development Act—Papua New Guinea’s first comprehensive legislation on culture—which led to the establishment of
the National Cultural Council as the central body responsible for coordinating cultural
development in the country, and of national cultural institutions with specific functions,
including the National Museum and Art Gallery\textsuperscript{149} and the Institute of Papua New
Guinea Studies (Wari 1980:111-113). Under the Act, these cultural organizations, as a
whole, aimed to preserve and promote all aspects of culture and the arts in the country
and create a national culture out of their diversity.

Within a decade after independence, however, the main motivation for cultural
development in Papua New Guinea shifted from nationalism to economic progress. The
first sign of this change was in 1981 when the National Tourism Office was placed under
the National Cultural Council (Voi 1994:90). With a growing demand for increasing the
country’s foreign exchange earnings, the combination of culture and tourism received
further administrative support, which culminated in the establishment of the Department
of Civil Aviation, Culture, and Tourism by the Wingti Government in 1985, and of the
Department of Culture and Tourism by the Namaliu Government in 1988 (Lindstrom and
White 1994:212). The National Cultural Council, then, was made a division of these
successive departments (Voi 1994:90-91). The five-year cultural development plan
formulated by the Department of Culture and Tourism in 1988 (Lindstrom and White
1994, Appendix 3) was one that set the trend for cultural tourism in the country. Papua
New Guinea was claimed to be “one of the last societies in the world today where its
culture and arts are still in their original form despite modernization and fast
development” (217), and they were therefore recognized as “the country’s strongest
selling point for tourism boosts” (\textit{ibid.}). Cultural tourism was emphasized not just as a

\textsuperscript{149} Its predecessor, the Papua and New Guinea Public Museum and Art Gallery, was established in 1954
(Busse 2000:88).
device to boost up the country’s economy but also a practical step to cultural preservation and promotion in the contemporary society. A down side of this plan, however, was that “culture” was meant to be nothing but marketable entities like performing arts, visual arts, crafts, and national heritage (214).

The “love affair” between culture and tourism took dramatic turn in 1990 when the National Cultural Development Act was repealed to pave way for the Tourism Development Act and the National Cultural Council was reorganized to form the privatized Tourism Development Corporation (Iamo and Simet 1998:201). However, this caused resentment and confusion among the staff of the national cultural institutions (Voi 1994:91-92). Thus, the Tourism Development Corporation was revoked in 1993 to give way for the Tourism Promotion Authority which made tourism its focus (Papua New Guinea 1993), and the National Cultural Commission was established in 1994 to resume the functions of the National Cultural Council (Papua New Guinea 1994). These two new bodies have since administered national policies and programs on culture and tourism separately but co-operated with each other in various areas, including cultural shows or festivals held nationwide.

Cultural development at the provincial and local levels, on the other hand, has received little attention from the National Government. The National Cultural Council encouraged provinces to establish their own cultural councils and cultural centres and formulate their own cultural policies in accordance with the National Cultural Development Act, but most provincial governments faced difficulties due to a lack of funds and trained manpower (Wari 1980:114, 116). In East New Britain, there was a plan as early as in 1974 to build a cultural centre at Rabaul where cultural and historical items
were to be stored and displayed and cultural activities performed, but the proposed plan did not materialize because of the unavailability of land as well as funds (Island Trader 1976b; Papua New Guinea Post-Courier 1978:17, 1979a:13). The East New Britain Provincial Government was eventually able to secure finance and land in Kokopo for such a cultural centre in the early 1980s, which now largely functions as a museum ("Kokopo Museum"). Other early cultural initiatives by the Provincial Government included a project recording "traditional" customs on films which were distributed to schools and cultural institutions in the country for the purpose of cultural preservation and education (Ailans Nius 1979:5; Papua New Guinea Post-Courier 1979b:15).

Until recently, culture played a relatively minor part in tourism in East New Britain. For most tourists, East New Britain (or New Britain) meant—and still means—Rabaul. Historically, Rabaul was a prosperous settlers' town with a busy harbour, all modern amenities, and an atmosphere of a tropical island paradise that facilitated the coming of visitors. It was once called "the jewel of the South Pacific" particularly due to its magnificent scenery centring on active and sometime malevolent volcanoes and a beautiful natural harbour (which itself is a sunken volcano). Its colourful contact history left it many historic sites and remains of great interest to visitors, including those of World War II which attracted Japanese tourists in particular. Its inhabitants, the Tolai, were highly praised for their friendliness to visitors whom they welcomed with broad smiles and waving hands. These were major factors that made Rabaul one of the most popular tourist destinations in Papua New Guinea.

However, the number of tourists to Rabaul dramatically decreased especially after the 1994 volcanic eruption that buried and ruined the town, not to mention its airport
and hotels. In order to revitalize the tourism industry, as well as to diversify the economy of the province, which had been predominantly based on the agricultural sector (cocoa, copra, and more recently vanilla), the East New Britain Provincial Government, in 1997, gave top priority to the promotion of tourism (East New Britain Province and East New Britain Chamber of Commerce and Industry 2000:16). Its efforts to promote tourism have been quite visible at various levels since then. Firstly, since 1998 the East New Britain Tourist Bureau—in addition to the Papua New Guinea Tourism Promotion Authority—has received the volunteer services of a resident Japanese tourism expert sent by the Japanese Government (to be precise, the Japanese International Cooperation Agency). Secondly, the Tourist Bureau, together with local tour operators, strongly supported Air Niugini's (the national airline of Papua New Guinea) initiative to introduce a weekly direct flight between Port Moresby and Tokyo, which came true in April 2002 (Papua New Guinea Post-Courier 2002b:5, 2002c: 17). Rabaul felt its effects immediately; while I was there from March 2002 until April 2004, I encountered small or large groups of Japanese tourists almost every week. Thirdly, the Provincial Government has been pushing hard for a plan to take over the management and operation of the new Rabaul Airport at Tokua from the Civil Aviation Authority and to make it an international airport in order to directly bring tourists into the province (Papua New Guinea Post-Courier 2005b:4). Finally, the Tourist Bureau has recently distributed tourism awareness leaflets among the people to explain what benefits tourism can provide to them and what they can do to assist in tourism promotion.

One of the new tendencies in the Provincial Government’s approach to tourism has been to utilize culture more aggressively. It is intended to meet the needs and
expectations of both tourists and local people today. “International tourists who come from more developed industrialized countries,” according to the Provincial Government, “…have lost their cultures…[thereby being] more curious and anxious to learn about the cultures of other people” (East New Britain Province 1997:22). Meanwhile, the use of culture in tourism would allow local people not only to take central part in development processes with more job and business opportunities and incomes, but also to conserve and revitalize their cultural heritage, identity, and pride (East New Britain Province 1997:22-24).

This initiative to diversify tourism products to include culture is well-founded. Although Rabaul has managed to dig itself out of metres of black volcanic ash to the point that it can receive tourists again, it no longer is as beautiful or lively as it was before 1994 and still suffers from falling ash from Mt. Tavurvur that continues to smoke. Interest in WWII relics, which were and still are one of the main tourist attractions in the province, has been waning as most of today’s tourists do not know the War except through history books. Most of the WWII veterans, including Japanese ones who visited Rabaul each year in large groups to console their comrades who had lost their lives there during the Japanese occupation, are no longer alive after six decades following the end of the War. The Governor of East New Britain appeals to tourists in his foreword to a travel brochure published by the Provincial Government in 2000: “Take the time to view not only our World War II relics but also experience the rich, diversified and unique traditional music and dances of the Province” (East New Britain Province and East New Britain Chamber of Commerce and Industry 2000:1).
The Tubuan and Cultural Tourism

As far as culture is concerned, the most famous tourist attraction in East New Britain has been definitely the “Baining Fire Dance” in which Baining dancers wearing huge elaborate masks leap through the flames of a fire which is constantly replenished. Always performed at night, it has a dramatic and eerie effect. It is now renowned not just nationally but also internationally; just recently, it has been filmed at the Ralum Club in Kokopo by an American television crew for the Discovery Channel (Papua New Guinea Post-Courier 2004d:5). Originally, this spectacular was an initiation and fertility rite, but it has been so commercialized that it has been performed for tourists at hotels and clubs in Rabaul and Kokopo at their advance request. Today, the Baining are paid K800 to K1,000 a night for this particular dance.

The Tolai, in contrast, have not allowed their own masked figures, the tubuan and dukduk, to be used in such a manner, though it is not that they have never done so (e.g., Island Trader 1976a:27). In fact, they have not needed to sell their own culture to make money; they have, after all, been the wealthiest group in Papua New Guinea with incomes through cocoa, copra, and vanilla production in fertile land. Moreover, they have not needed to use their own culture to attract tourists as they have the non-cultural tourist attractions mentioned above. For those tourists who are interested in seeing “culture,” the Tolai have refused to display their own culture and let the Baining come down from the mountains and show their popular dance, giving them a chance to make some money, which otherwise is said to be difficult for them to earn. The Tolai themselves enjoy the
“Baining Fire Dance” as an entertainment whenever they have a chance to see it, but at the same time they ridicule the Baining masked figures as having totally turned into performing clowns for petty cash. This makes them proudly differentiate the *tubuan* and *dukduk* from the Baining masked figures and maintain a sense of cultural superiority over the Baining.

However, with a growing interest in cultural tourism, the Provincial Government, dominated by the Tolai, has recently elevated the *tubuan* and *dukduk* to the status of a major tourist attraction as equivalent to the Baining masked figures. Thus, the above-mentioned travel brochure, published in 2000, carries a picture of a *matamatam* (the most important *tubuan* ceremony) with two *tubuan*, in addition to two smaller pictures of the “Baining Fire Dance” (East New Britain Province and East New Britain Chamber of Commerce and Industry 2000:17-18). It is in striking contrast to a travel brochure that the Provincial Government published most probably in the mid-1980s (East New Britain Province n.d.); the latter contains a large picture of the “Baining Fire Dance,” but not any picture of *tubuan* or *dukduk* despite the fact that it is titled “Rabaul”—the home of the Tolai—and states that the *tubuan* and *dukduk* are the main feature of Tolai culture (6). More recently, the Provincial Government has had murals depicting *tubuan* and *dukduk* together with Baining masked figures completed on the front wall of the arrival lounge at the Tokua Airport and on a billboard at a roundabout leading into Kokopo to welcome tourists (*Papua New Guinea Post-Courier* 2004g:8, 2004i:1).

The *tubuan* and *dukduk* can be tourism products in the form of artefacts or performers. The making of *tubuan* and *dukduk* masks and wooden miniatures for sale is
prohibited today, and this applies also to the context of tourism. In fact, the arts and handicrafts that the Provincial Government encourages local people to make for sale to tourists are restricted to things like canoes, spears, baskets, and string bags (East New Britain Province 1997:24). Rather, the Provincial Government’s cultural tourism policies and strategies place more emphasis on the performance of “traditional” songs and dances (East New Britain Province 1997:22-23). The Tolai are happy to entertain tourists with a variety of “traditional” songs and dances they have, but they are ambivalent about the tubuan and dukduk—a prime symbol of their “traditional” culture—performing dances for tourists. They agree that performances by tubuan and dukduk would be as attractive to tourists as the “Baining Fire Dance” and provide the benefits the Provincial Government envisages to them. But at the same time they are cautious about the tubuan and dukduk becoming performing clowns like the Baining masked figures and thereby losing their cultural and social significance. However, it appears that their attitudes towards the use of the tubuan and dukduk in tourism have become lenient since 2001 when East New Britain began to play host to the annual National Mask Festival where ritual masked figures from all over the country gather and perform dances in the presence of tourists. Let us examine why the Tolai have been participating in this particular cultural festival with much enthusiasm.

The National Mask Festival is one of the many government-sponsored annual cultural festivals or shows in Papua New Guinea. Each year, between June and November, most provincial governments organize a large-scale show for the expressed purpose of protecting, preserving, and promoting the country’s arts and cultures with the assistance of the National Cultural Commission (NCC) and the Tourism Promotion Authority (TPA).
As a general rule, the highlight of such a show is “traditional” singsings performed by various groups who often compete for prize money given to the best performing groups. These cultural shows are where the concept of “unity in cultural diversity” is put into practice, thereby being important occasions for nation making. Singsing groups from all over the host and neighbouring provinces get together and showcase their cultures. It is needless to say that the national flag, as well as the provincial flag, is raised and the national anthem sung. National and provincial leaders are invited as guests and make speeches that typically seek to cultivate national pride by characterizing Papua New Guinea as a unique nation with culturally diverse groups that still maintain their own traditions despite modernization. These cultural shows are also major tourist attractions—rare occasions that allow tourists to view a wide variety of “traditional” or, for some, “primitive” singsings all at once live. Some events like the Goroka Show (Eastern Highlands Province), the country’s oldest show, are internationally famous. Judging from their speeches, however, most of the national and provincial leaders seem careless of the adverse effects of tourism on the cultural lifestyles of the people; rather, they are more concerned about a lack of “genuineness” that they see in many of the customs displayed to tourists. Thus, the Minister of Culture and Tourism has recently attempted to apply strict rules to singisings performed at all the major shows held in the country by saying:

Show participants and the organisers must do away with modern sunglasses, shoes,

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150 “Singsing” is a popular Tok Pisin word for “song” and “dance.”
151 The Goroka Show was inaugurated in the 1950s when the Highlanders began serious contact with Europeans. It started partly as an agricultural show where agricultural and industrial products were displayed and promoted, and partly as an instrument to bring warring tribes and clans together and establish harmony among them through the display of cultures. Although it has carried over some elements of an agricultural show, it is now defined as a cultural show, placing “traditional” singsings at the centre of attraction. Today, it is held in conjunction with Independence Day anniversary celebrations in mid-September.
neckties, brassieres, plastics and modern paints, which replace certain traditional attires. This will result in non-transfer of knowledge and skills in making these items and over time and eventually will be lost and die out of cultures (Papua New Guinea Post-Courier 2003b:8). 152

Unlike most of these government-sponsored shows, which are more or less localized and categorized as provincial shows, the National Mask Festival, as the name suggests, is a national event that showcases a particular cultural feature that is common to many parts of Papua New Guinea: masks or, more appropriately, tumbuan (as the event is also known as the Tumbuan Festival). Tumbuan, which is obviously derived from the Tolai term tubuan, is a Tok Pisin word for masked ritual figures that are believed to represent spirits. The National Mask Festival, which began in 1995, is a relatively recent invention, and its introduction was one of the first initiatives put forth by the NCC after its establishment in 1994 in response to the fact that tumbuan were seldom seen at provincial shows. The NCC was in a dilemma, however. Many of the groups who have tumbuan had reservations about their tumbuan being displayed because of the sacredness they attach to them. On the other hand, if they were simply left in the villages where they are located, their survival in the future would not be guaranteed under the hegemonic influence of modernization. The NCC was certainly aware of a risk that the values of tumbuan might deteriorate if they were taken out of their cultural settings and brought into totally different settings like cultural shows. However, Jacob Simet, the executive director of the NCC and a Tolai, reasoned: "We would have to take our chances because

152 In addition to these government-sponsored cultural festivals, there are those organized by schools at all levels where "traditional" singsings are performed by groups of students in "traditional" attire and coordinated by adults in their villages. These school festivals used to be known as kapti ("cup of tea"), a form of fund raising (see A. L. Epstein 1969:321), as in the Keravat National High School (Ailans Nius 1978b:1), which was established after WWII and is one of the oldest secondary schools in the country. These school events are viewed as occasions that enable young people to learn and respect their own cultural traditions, which, invited local and provincial leaders often warn them in their speeches, would otherwise die out under the influence of Western culture and modern technology (e.g., Papua New Guinea Post-Courier 2004a:21).
the leaving of masks in their cultural settings have [sic] resulted in a lot of the masks being lost forever” (Papua New Guinea Post-Courier 2000). He went on to say:

We just have to be careful how we handle it. So this is why we are having this mask festival to show it to everybody, so we are all aware of its significance to us. We are now independent, we are not dealing with expatriates who may not know how to deal with these things. We are in control of our own affairs, and what ever we do we should make sure we respect this aspect of our culture and keep them alive (ibid.).

His emphasis on cultural preservation and his nationalist remarks seem to have won the support of the people, given the successful staging of the National Mask Festival since its inception. It was held in Port Moresby from 1995 to 1998 and in Madang from 1999 to 2000, and has found its permanent home in Rabaul/Kokopo, the home of the Tolai, where it has been staged since 2001.

Before 2001, the Tolai had their own cultural show called “Warwagira,” meaning “show” in the Tolai language, which was inaugurated in 1971. It was the brain child of a handful of Tolai officers at the Radio Rabaul (established in 1961) who saw the need to preserve and promote indigenous music, both traditional and modern (Ailans Nius 1978d:2; Island Trader 1976d:2). The creation of such an indigenous-oriented show was timely when the expatriate-oriented Choir Festival and Kokopo Agricultural Show were no longer welcomed by the Tolai. Apart from the display of skills in music and culture, the Warwagira had two aims: to raise funds for schools, churches, hospitals, and cultural facilities in the Gazelle Peninsula (Ailans Nius 1977a:10, 1977b:31; Island Trader 1976d:2); and to unite the Tolai people who had been under political factionalism.

Music played at the Warwagira was thus tape-recorded and put onto gramophone records (Our News 1972:10, 1973b:4).

The Choir Festival was held in Rabaul in June each year in the late 1950s and 1960s to celebrate the Queen’s birthday (Jones 2004:53). The Kokopo Agricultural Show, which included the performance of “traditional” singsings in addition to the display of agricultural and industrial products, was held annually until 1970. It was revived in 1978 as the East New Britain Provincial Show in conjunction with the country’s third Independence Day anniversary celebrations (Ailans Nius 1978a:1), but faded away within a few years.
since the rise of the Mataungan movement in 1969 (Ailans Nius 1978e:5; cf. Ailans Nius 1978d:2). The Warwagira grew bigger each year in the 1970s with the increasing number of participants including non-Tolai groups, but it was held only occasionally in the 1980s and ceased thereafter for various reasons.155

However, the Warwagira was revived as an annual event in 2002, one year after Rabaul/Kokopo began to play host to the National Mask Festival (Figure 18). Since then, the two events have been held in conjunction in July, jointly organized by the East New Britain Provincial Government and the NCC, and promoted by the TPA as one of the country’s main tourist attractions. Recently, out of consideration for non-Tolai in the province who might have ill-feelings about the Tolai-centred nature of the Warwagira, which in fact was and still is known as the “Tolai Warwagira,” the Governor of East New Britain, a Tolai, has declared it as the “East New Britain Warwagira” (Papua New Guinea Post-Courier 2003a:36). Unlike most of the country’s provincial shows, the Warwagira, as it did before, features not only “traditional” singsing groups but also “modern” music groups like choirs, gospel bands, string bands, and electric (or power) bands, who all compete for prize money in their own music categories.156 Unlike most of the country’s other groups, the Tolai have maintained so strong a sense of who they are that they do not have to rely solely on “traditional” singsings to define their distinct cultural identity, but

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155 One of the major problems that led to the end of the Warwagira was that of venue. It had been held year after year at the Rugby League oval in Rabaul, but because of the damages to the grounds that were caused during it, the Rugby League Association had been unhappy with this arrangement. In the end the Association refused to allow it to be held there. Attempts were made to find an alternative and permanent venue for it but seem to have been unsuccessful.

156 For each category, there are judges who rigidly assess presentations by scoring each of the established criteria on a scale of 1 to 10. The criteria used in judging Tolai “traditional” dances, for example, are as follows: 1) a wanawana (marching-in); 2) a moamooong (costume and body painting); 3) kakailai (singing); 4) papaar/kudu (drum beating); 5) a vunuvung (the uniformity of the dancers’ body movements); 6) a garagarana (the first part of a dance); 7) a ogaoga tutuk (the second part of a dance); and 8) a olaoloai (the third and final part of a dance).
have also modified and incorporated modern forms of music into their own culture.

Like many of the groups who have *tumbuan*, however, the Tolai had a general consensus that the *tubuan* should not be involved in cultural shows. This consensus was based on the customary functions of the *tubuan*, but it was also shaped and influenced by the changing political milieu in which the Tolai lived. In its earliest years, the Warwagira did feature *tubuan* (see, e.g., Our News 1973a:1, 3), but this caused controversy in the midst of political factionalism among the Tolai in the early 1970s. Although Mataungan MPs like Oscar Tammur and Damien Kereku, together with leaders of the Greater Toma Council and the Warbete Kiving, supported the Warwagira from the beginning in response to the call for unity (Ailans Nius 1978d:2), Mataungan followers refused to take part in it for the first few years, claiming that its organizers intended to ruin the power of the *tubuan* by showing its dances to the public (Ailans Nius 1978e:5). This objection, however, was not just a culturally founded move but also a politically grounded move. The Mataungans regarded the Radio Rabaul, from which the idea of the Warwagira came, as an arm of the Administration against which they fought hard (Woolford 1976:54, 60). They were not ready to be united with their political rivals yet. The *tubuan*, as already mentioned, was the ideological symbol of the Mataungan Association, so for them any abuse of the *tubuan* was a threat not only to its authenticity but also to the political influence of the Association itself. By presenting themselves as the guardians of the *tubuan*, the central feature of Tolai culture, they sought political support from their fellow villagers. In fact, the Warkurai Nigunan, the Mataungan Association’s own council which administered customary Tolai law, ruled against *tubuan* appearing at the Warwagira (see Appendix). The Mataungans’ insistence prevailed as they maintained their political
prominence, and by 1976 when the Tolai united to establish the Provincial Government, people from all the political factions joined the Warwagira without any political animosity (Ailans Nius 1978c:5). Accordingly, the non-display of tubuan in any show or festival became the norm.

Opposition to turning the tubuan into a show item at that time is expressed in a discussion paper of 1977, which is titled “The Future of the Tubuan Society,” by Simet, then a research fellow at the Institute of Papua New Guinea Studies. He criticizes what he calls “cultural prostitution” (Simet 1977:20)—the act of promoting the arts and culture as tourist attractions in the name of preservation—and sarcastically concludes:

I would say that the tubuan could never become a good prostitute. It does not have enough attractive characteristics to inspire desire from potential customers. In fact most of the tubuan characteristics would turn away many prospective customers. Firstly it needs its relatives’ presence to give the customer his money’s worth. Secondly, it is bulky and ugly. Thirdly, it charges a high price not counting the amount added for its relatives’ participation. Fourthly, aesthetically it is uninteresting to watch, merely tom, tom, tom from the slit drum; and poom, poom, poom from the huddu (or kudu) while it jumps up and down. It can only exist where it belongs to have any meaning (Simet 1977:21).

What, then, about the National Mask Festival where tubuan now perform dances and rituals in front of a thousand of spectators, both foreign and local? It was Simet himself who, as the executive director of the NCC, decided to set off this very festival in 1995 and take it to Rabaul/Kokopo in 2001. One may wonder what happened between 1977 and today.

What happened was a change in the political climate surrounding the Tolai. After independence, to which they are proud of themselves for having contributed more than anybody else, they became one of the many groups in a nation. No longer were they in competition with colonizers for power or divided on political issues. Their political arena widened to cover the whole nation, and their rivals were now other fellow citizens.
Fortunately, the Tolai were among the best educated in the country right from the outset and have been able to establish themselves as one of the wealthiest and most influential groups in the country. However, they would welcome any opportunity to maintain, or remind the nation of, their dominance over other Papua New Guineans. The National Mask Festival is one such opportunity. It is a national event attended by national leaders and groups from many parts of the country and covered by national newspapers. What makes this event more suitable for them is the fact that it is all about the *tumbuan* culture, for which the Tolai are better known than most other groups.

Unlike many other *tumbuan*, the Tolai *tubuan*, as Simet would almost certainly agree, would have continued to survive without the help of such a festival. The National Mask Festival was, after all, introduced without the *tubuan* in mind that has maintained its significance in Tolai society. However, the decision to bring the National Mask Festival to Rabaul/Kokopo was embraced by the Tolai with much excitement. When it was staged there for the first time in 2001, Simet reassured them that it would preserve and promote the *tubuan* and other *tumbuan* by showcasing them in a controlled manner so as not to over-expose them (*Papua New Guinea Post-Courier* 2001). His historical reflections made him more persuasive:

> [B]efore independence traditional mask leaders had every right to protect the sacred mask culture from being over-exposed by foreigners, who did so for commercial reasons or for tourists. But since independence, people could decide what [is] best for them and the future of their cultures (ibid.).

Such rhetoric is quite appealing to the Tolai who are proud of themselves for having paved the way for the country's independence. However, the main reason the Tolai are enthusiastic about the National Mask Festival today, I speculate, is the fact that they are able to play a dominant part in a national event. It is true that its host is officially
East New Britain Province, but the Tolai are the virtual host. Thus, the festival begins with a *kinavai* and a *tutupar*, which are regarded as the main attractions of the whole event, and ends with dances by *tubuan* and *dukduk*, while *tumbuan* from other parts of the country perform dances in between (Figure 19). What the Tolai find most indispensable to the festival is the presence of national leaders as invited guests. In 2001 and 2002, the festival was attended by a number of national leaders led by the Prime Minister and the Governor General respectively. In 2002 Tolai MPs were invited to join the *tutupar* ritual in which they threw strings of *tabu* to *tubuan* and *dukduk* (Figure 20).

In contrast, the festival in 2003 suffered from the very poor attendance of such national leaders, which disappointed many Tolai participants and made some even angry. Why? One of the angry *bita tubuan* replied, “The *tubuan* does not rise for nothing.” As pointed out in Chapter 3, one of the contemporary functions of the *tubuan* is to greet “big men” of *matanitu* (“government”). From a perspective of the Tolai, the National Mask Festival is an initiative by the National Government, and the raising of the *tubuan* in this event, therefore, has to be matched with the attendance of national leaders who are expected to show respect and admiration to their culture. Thus, for the Tolai, the festival is not really an occasion for reviving, preserving, or promoting *tumbuan* as envisioned by the NCC or for entertaining international tourists as hoped by the TPA, but rather it is an opportunity for receiving national recognition and (re)asserting their cultural superiority and, I suggest, their dominant position in the country. The festival seems to have found its home in Rabaul/Kokopo. As long as they are allowed to play the dominant role and assured of the presence of national leaders, the Tolai would be happy to take part in it.

There have been some new developments in the Tolai cultural arena since East
New Britain began to play host to the National Mask Festival in 2001. First, there has been a resurgence of interest in cultural shows or festivals among the Tolai. The revival of the Tolai Warwagira in 2002 has been already mentioned. In 2003, the Kokopo District Administration inaugurated its own district youth cultural show, and the East New Britain Youth Development Foundation, a non-profit organization privately funded by a group of Tolai, launched a cultural festival called the “Battle of the Traditional Singsings.”

These two new shows are clearly targeted at the young, especially those unemployed, and intended to create an atmosphere where they could participate meaningfully in social and economic activities that would lead to a responsible, respectful, and harmonious living within their own communities. Cultural shows are now also staged even at the ward level. The main purpose of such a ward show is to raise funds for ward development projects and develop an attitude towards self-reliance (Papua New Guinea Post-Courier 2005a:24). Thus, cultural shows have been increasingly seen not only as occasions for preserving and promoting culture but also as boosts for overall social and economic development in contemporary Tolai society.

Another development is that tubuan ceremonies at villages have been often timed to coincide with the National Mask Festival (e.g., Papua New Guinea Post-Courier 2005c). This is not a problem at all since the festival is held in July, which is just the middle of the tubuan season proper (the dry season). For those tubuan groups participating in the festival, it is probably a matter of convenience, given that the raising of tubuan requires a lot of preparations. But what is interesting is that this arrangement also makes it possible for tourists coming to the festival to witness tubuan ceremonies in

157 The ENBYDF has been also developing youth programs in the areas of music, sports, health, environment, family life, religion, and village-based business.
actual village settings. Tourists' visits to villages where tubuan ceremonies are held are arranged by local tour operators, hotels, or the East New Britain Tourist Bureau. The Tolai have no problem with, or are even enthusiastic about, tourists visiting their villages to see tubuan ceremonies because all they do is to perform the ceremonies in their-own cultural settings as usual. What they are often displeased with, however, is local tour operators and hotels that they generally see as exploiting them and their culture. One such case I encountered was that of a wealthy Tolai tour operator in Rabaul, who is also a bita tubuan. In 2002, he sponsored a niolo, the first stage of initiation into the tubuan, at his village of Matupit three days after the National Mask Festival in which he and his fellow villagers had taken part. The tubuan ceremony, however, was in fact a pre-arranged one for a large group of Japanese television crews. After the ceremony, he rewarded with tabu and foods (taros and bananas, etc.) his fellow villagers who had helped organize the event. It is normal for a bita tubuan who sponsors a tubuan ceremony to do so, but in this particular context, the Matupit villagers were angry at him, alleging that he was selling the tubuan, their most precious tradition, and making a lot of money which he refused to share with them.

The Tolai have increasingly realized the potential of tourism as an alternative source of income since the East New Britain Provincial Government became serious about promoting it in the province. They have been convinced by the large number of tourists attracted to the joint staging of the National Mask Festival and the Warwagira in Rabaul/Kokopo each year that their best asset is their own culture. For ordinary Tolai villagers, however, turning their own culture into profitable tourism activities is quite a challenge. Even though participation in the National Mask Festival and the Warwagira is
rewarded with allowances and prize money respectively, these are very small amounts compared to those earned by, say, local tour operators and hotels from their businesses during the events. Tourists are taken to villages where dances and rituals are performed, but most profits from such a village trip go to local tour operators and hotels, while villagers themselves are rarely remunerated enough. Although villagers wish to operate their own tourism business through managing and promoting their tourism products by themselves, they lack resources possessed by local tour operators and hotels, such as finance, experience, and connection with foreign travel agents. On the other hand, they are well aware of the possible adverse effects of tourism on their culture.

Epilogue: The Tubuan of “Queen Emma”

Immediately after the First World War, Queen Emma’s ashes were removed from her gravestone in her family cemetery at Malapau and transferred to the Forsayth family cemetery in Sydney by her son Coe Forsayth (Robson 1973:215, 218). Her famous residence at Gunantabu was a landmark until it was totally destroyed during the Japanese occupation in the Second World War, except concrete steps descending from the residence. Meanwhile, most of Emma’s descendents became scattered across Australia and Europe. In 1961, her old cemetery was “over-grown with kunai grass, and forgotten” and headstones were “lying about, mostly broken and only partly decipherable” (Robson 1973:175). However, it was “discovered” by a group of Rabaul residents and identified as a historic site. It was precisely because of this newly acquired historic value that the
cemetery later became a site of contestation among local Tolai.

By the late 1960s, land alienation by foreigners, including Emma who “bought” more Tolai land than anybody else, had become a cause of dissidence in the north-eastern Gazelle Peninsula where more than one fifth of Papua New Guinea’s plantations were situated (Dennis [1980?]:239). The land crisis for the Tolai was partially relieved in the 1970s, thanks to the Mataungan movement, but still continues to affect their life in many ways today. The political activism of the Mataungan Association, particularly squatting on plantation land, was a clear indication of the urgent need for taking back ownership of alienated land. Thus the Somare coalition government introduced the Plantation Acquisition Scheme in 1974 to financially help villagers purchase foreign-owned plantations for themselves. A total of 68 plantations were acquired under this scheme by 1980 when it was suspended (ibid.). One of them was the Malapau Plantation where Queen Emma’s cemetery was located. Originally one of Emma’s many holdings, it was then owned by Coconut Products Ltd. (CPL), a subsidiary of W. R. Carpenter & Co. Ltd. It spread over four wards, namely Vunamami, Karavi, Balanataman, and Ranguna, and the cemetery was in the northwest corner of the Karavi portion. To acquire the plantation, the Tolai villagers raised money by forming a group called Malapau Wapirai Land Group, which sold shares (K225 each) to those who wanted to obtain a piece of land there. The plantation was divided into small blocks (2.5ha each), which were then allocated to shareholders.

The block holding Queen Emma’s cemetery was allocated to the Fascination Band, a one-time locally popular rock band consisting of young men from Karavi, which wished to establish its base there. In 1980, however, the same block was claimed by
another shareholder, the then Premier of East New Britain who had been the chairman of the land distribution committee for the plantation. He is from Balanataman and his vunatarai has its root in Karavi, but it was alleged that foreseeing potential benefits of Queen Emma’s cemetery as a historic site, he tried to steal the block using his political power. Karavi villagers staged a protest against his move and demanded the suspension of the Provincial Government and fresh elections (Our News 1980:13). But the Premier proceeded to have his men remove a house built by the band on the block and build his own house there. Angry members and supporters of the band, in return, destroyed his property and beat him up. The police were called in and several arrests were made. After this incident, the band ceased and the block under question was neglected. Today, the cemetery, signposted and surrounded by a wire fence, holds a dozen gravestones (Figure 21). All that remains of Queen Emma’s gravestone, however, is a big ground-level concrete slab with a hole in the centre.

January 24, 2004 was the day which Alfred Uechtritz, a 77 year-old Australian, had long waited for. He is a dearly beloved grandson of Phoebe Parkinson who helped her sister Emma run her commercial empire in German New Guinea. He had long been searching for his grandmother’s unmarked grave in the rainforest of New Ireland since she died there during the Second World War. Just two years earlier, her remains had been located at long last, and on this day, he and about 30 of his family members travelled from all over Australia into her former family residence at Kuradui, west of Kokopo, to fulfill her last wish—to be buried alongside her husband, Richard Parkinson, who had died in 1909. There was a deeply moving reburial ceremony at the Parkinson cemetery, and it was witnessed by a number of people from all over the area, both Tolai and
expatriates. The ceremony was followed by a “traditional” Tolai feast that was sponsored by the Uechtritz family who distributed foods and tabu (shell money) and had dances performed in honour of Phoebe. International and national journalists were present to cover this extraordinary event (Australian Broadcasting Corporation 2004; Papua New Guinea Post-Courier 2004:5).

What they did not cover, however, was a subsequent event in which I participated. After some hours of rest, the Uechtritz family were invited to Queen Emma’s cemetery. At the cemetery, which is located at the northwest corner of Karavi Ward, Karavi men gave a mida, a tubuan ceremony that a vunatarai stages at its madapai (place of origin where its dead used to be buried) in commemoration and honour of its dead ancestor or ancestors. On this special occasion, two newly created tubuan named ToKuka and IaViliran were “raised” to perform a series of rituals and dances. They are, I was told, twins and the tubuan of Queen Emma (Figures 22, 23).

Giving this particular ceremony was perfectly fitting from Tolai perspective. The names ToKuka and IaViliran are reminiscences of defeat in a battle against Emma’s Ralum Plantation in 1890, which was triggered by her decision to build a road along the foreshore from Ralum to Malapau under the supervision of a Filipino overseer named Moses: “ToKuka” is the name of the place, located in a waterfront of Karavi, where Moses was killed by Tolai who tried to prevent the road from desecrating the taraiu (tubuan ground); and “Viliran,” meaning “shuddering with fear,” is a contemporary interpretation of the Tolai ancestors who were overpowered by punitive expeditions led by Parkinson and joined by Ralum’s foreign labourers (see above).

Uechtritz is the son of Phoebe’s daughter, Dolly, which means that by Tolai
definition, he and Emma belong to a single *vunatarai* (matrilineal descent group). Karavi villagers, thus, loosely viewed the visiting party as a "*vunatarai*" coming together to its "*madapai*" (i.e., Queen Emma’s cemetery) to honour its dead "ancestor" (i.e., Queen Emma). For the visitors, who included direct descendants of Phoebe but not of Emma and whose primary purpose was to rebury the remains of the former, a visit to Queen Emma’s cemetery, which no longer holds Emma’s remains, was of secondary importance, and the *tubuan* ceremony that they saw might have been merely a traditional flavour added to the occasion or an entertainment by the “natives.” For Karavi villagers, however, it was much more than a display of tradition; in fact, it was an important occasion for remembering the past for the present and the future.

The Tolai have long had to deal with repercussions of the cash economy introduced by Queen Emma, the Parkinsons, and many others outsiders. It was ironic that Karavi villagers enthusiastically welcomed the Uechtritz family, or the "*vunatarai*” of Queen Emma as they perceived it, with an elaborate ceremony involving newly created *tubuan*, which reminded them of a battle in which their ancestors had been defeated. Their intention was to kick off a grass-roots development project by taking advantage of the historic value of Queen Emma’s cemetery. Although the newly created *tubuan* represent a particular historical event, the ceremony involving them was more concerned with the present and the future than the past. Karavi villagers wanted the visit by the Uechtritz family to Queen Emma’s cemetery to be the opportunity to mark the end of local disputes over the cemetery and the start of making good use of it as a tourist spot for their own benefit. For this to happen, the cemetery needed to be firmly recognized as a property of Karavi Ward, not of any particular individuals. Giving a *mida* was appropriate
for this purpose because this particular ceremony always implies an assertion of the right by the *vunatarai* staging it to its own land, including its *madapai*. All that was needed, then, was for Karavi villagers to unite themselves with the visiting party in order to become one “*vunatarai*” sharing Queen Emma as its “ancestor” and Queen Emma’s cemetery as its “*madapai*.” This was made possible by the creation of new *tubuan*, ToKuka and IaViliran, which allowed Karavi villagers to imagine themselves and the visiting party as one “*vunatarai*” on the basis of their shared past event, namely the 1890 battle.

Having achieved the results they wanted, Karavi villagers talk of development plans for the block holding Queen Emma’s cemetery. One of the plans is to build self-contained bungalows for tourists. ToKuka and IaViliran are said to be used to entertain them. The fact that the two *tubuan* are “twins” with very similar facial designs makes me speculate that they were created consciously with entertainment purposes in mind. In a way, the appearance of the *tubuan* marks the final reclamation of the land lost to Queen Emma by their ancestors. And yet, Queen Emma has herself become an ancestor and the *tubuan*, absorbing both the remembered past and a hope-for future, has acquired new and extended significance.
Figure 18. A group of Tolai men performing a singsing in the Warwagira. Photo: H. Tateyama
Figure 19. Tubuan dancing in the National Mask Festival.
Photo: H. Tateyama
Figure 20. Sir Rabbie Namaliu, Kokopo MP, participated in a tutupar in the 2002 National Mask Festival.
Photo: H. Tateyama
Figure 21. Queen Emma’s cemetery in Karavi.
Photo: H. Tateyama
Figure 22. ToKuka and laViliran, the *tubuan* of "Queen Emma."
Photo: H. Tateyama
Figure 23. The Uechtritz family saw the *tubuan* of "Queen Emma" perform rituals and dances. Photo: H. Tateyama
I began this dissertation by asking how and why the tubuan has survived

The purpose of this dissertation has been to examine the formation and transformation of Tolai identity. My analytical focus has been the tubuan, the most prominent customary institution of the contemporary Tolai. I have presented three historical narratives of the tubuan by paying particular attention to specific social contexts in which it intersected with three separate yet closely intertwined institutions, which had been originally introduced from outside, but which the Tolai have made their own: namely, lotu ("church"), matanitu ("government"), and bisnis ("business"). What I have tried to show is that Tolai have constructed their identities by integrating, rather than contrasting, "traditional" practices with "modern" ones through power struggles with outsiders and among themselves.

Prior to European contact, the Tolai were not a unified group. Even though they spoke a common language, which is classified as Austronesian, there were considerable dialectical variations. Without any centralized authority, they lived in dispersed small hamlets, which were often in a state of feud with one another. Accordingly, they had neither an inclusive name for themselves nor a common identity. But no doubt they were aware of their distinctiveness, judging by the presence of non-Austronesian-speaking inland neighbours (e.g., the Baining, the Sulka, and the Taulil). Although their self-consciousness predated European contact, it was radically elaborated through
European colonization. They were brought into contact with not only Europeans but also other New Guineans and Pacific islanders through the operations of Christian missions, the recruitment of labourers for plantations and mines, and the development of urban centres. It was through contact with these various others that the Tolai came to view themselves as a distinct group. Meanwhile, in introducing their religious, political, and economic systems to the Tolai, the Europeans, who sharply contrasted their ways of life to those of others to show, ethnocentrically, that the former were superior to the latter, attacked certain Tolai practices as "heathen" and "barbaric," while documenting them and collecting their material evidence (i.e., artefacts) in the belief that the practices would vanish under the influence of European civilization. In this process, the Tolai themselves came to objectify not just certain practices but ultimately their whole culture in opposition to that of the Europeans. Hence, today they categorize their customary practices as balanagunan and distinguish them from those of lotu, matanitu, and bisnis. In practice, however, this distinction blurs, as the Tolai have selectively incorporated old and new elements into their everyday lives. I have demonstrated this with particular reference to the tubuan, which appeared at significant points of the history of the religious, political, and economic transformations of Tolai society.

The tubuan has remained an important institution among the Tolai because their system of social relationships surrounding the vunatarai (matrilineal descent group), on which tubuan affairs are based, has remained strong despite their long and intense contact with the outside world and the alienation of much of their land by the Europeans. This social continuity, in turn, is attributed to their smooth economic transition, especially in the early stages of colonization. Owning to their predispositions towards trade and wealth
accumulation, the Tolai were able to quickly take full advantage of new economic opportunities brought by the Europeans. The Tolai vigorously sold coconuts, copra, garden crops, and other local products to the Europeans for trade goods, *tabu*, and money. Since ample trade opportunities were available for the Tolai to exploit, they were generally unwilling to offer themselves for wage labour on European plantations both within and beyond their area. Thus, the Tolai adapted well to the newly emerging economic situation without radically changing their lifestyles and totally depending on the Europeans. The *tubuan*, however, was not simply a remnant from the past as it came out in familiar guises in new contexts.

The Christian missions tried to eradicate from Tolai culture practices which they regarded as “evil” and “sinful,” especially cannibalism, warfare, the *iniet*, and the *tubuan*. As Tolai embraced Christianity, they themselves chose to do away with these practices. However, many converts held onto the *tubuan* since they thought that its principles were not necessarily incompatible with the teachings of their new religion. Their stance on the *tubuan* was supported by their Pacific Island missionaries who often joined them in its ceremonies. But as its activities continued to be carried out, it became a prime target of criticism by their European missionaries who nonetheless came to realize that it would be impossible to totally abolish.

While the colonial administrations were not as concerned as the missions with reforming Tolai culture, the introduction of the *Luluai* system did have a significant impact on the Tolai political and legal system. In particular, it undermined the authority of the *ngala* (traditional big man) and the legitimacy of the *vanga* (customary court procedure), both of which depended upon the *tubuan*. At the same time, *tubuan*
ceremonies, which usually lasted for many months, were restricted to particular times of the year in order to "train" the Tolai to habits of work. Despite such challenges to the tubuan, some Luluais came to sponsor elaborate tubuan ceremonies, thereby fulfilling some of the functions of the ngala. Moreover, local disputes which had already been settled by Luluais were sometimes brought up again by tubuan people and settled through the vanga. These did not bother the government officials as long as order was maintained.

The Europeans were also engaged in the artefact trade. For the Tolai, this was another opportunity to obtain trade goods, tabu, and money. Thus, they not only sold those objects which they no longer used, but they also made objects anew for sale. Perhaps there was no Tolai institution that caught the attention of the Europeans as much as the tubuan did because of its particular visibility through the public performance of rituals and dances by its masked figures in large-scale ceremonies. Indeed, the institution of the tubuan was documented by many early European residents on the Gazelle Peninsula. Naturally, then, the tubuan mask greatly attracted them, including Richard Parkinson who persuaded a team of Tolai dancers to bring it with them to the Berlin Colonial Exhibition in 1896. But this particular object was less easily available for sale than many other Tolai objects because Tolai were protective of the mask which itself constituted a secret of the tubuan. Due to restricted access to the tubuan mask, it became an especially valuable object for the Europeans, some of whom managed to purchase it from some big men by placing a special order.

Thus, forces for both change and continuity focused on the tubuan. While the Europeans put direct or indirect pressure on the Tolai to give up the tubuan, the Tolai maintained it by negotiating with the Europeans about its relationships with introduced
institutions. It was through this interaction with the Europeans that the Tolai came to see the *tubuan* as a salient feature of their culture. This became evident in the late 1960s and the early 1970s when the political climate in which the Tolai had long been situated rapidly changed. As the indigenization of the churches accelerated, Tolai church leaders became increasingly involved in decision-making on their church affairs. When the Catholic Church became lenient towards indigenous cultures following the Second Vatican Council, one of the first things its Tolai priests and elders did was to persuade their European missionaries to accept the co-existence of the *tubuan* and Christianity.

There was also the rise of educated young Tolai who became aware of anomalies that had been produced by European colonization in their society, particularly a shortage of land and a lack of autonomy. They were instrumental in mobilizing Tolai opposition to European colonization through their leadership in the Mataungan movement which used the *tubuan* as its symbol. The political use of the *tubuan* required the preservation of its authenticity. Hence, the Mataungans prevented the *tubuan* in particular from becoming a commodity by strictly guarding *tubuan* masks from the artefact trade and obstinately refusing to make use of *tubuan* performances for the purpose of public entertainment.

These suggest strongly traditionalist leanings, but what the Mataungan movement tried to achieve was actually the right to do things in Tolai ways based on a combination of customary values and introduced forms, such as the council system and the cash economy. The *tubuan*, then, was a political tool to unite the Tolai in order to take control over their own lives, which were simultaneously “traditional” and “modern,” back from the European colonizers. Not surprisingly, then, following independence, the *tubuan* was adopted as a symbol of authority by the Tolai-dominated Provincial Government and
many of the Tolai Local Level Governments.

Today, the tubuan is firmly the most prominent symbol of cultural identity among the Tolai. However, not all Tolai think that the tubuan is important in their contemporary lives. Colonization created unequal relations not only between the Europeans and the Tolai but also among the latter. As Tolai became engaged in the new religious, political, and economic systems differently, they came to relate themselves to the tubuan differently. Consequently, since independence, the relationships between the tubuan and the introduced institutions have become largely a matter of negotiation among the Tolai themselves who differ in their interests and resources. This negotiation often takes the form of a public event involving the tubuan, in which Tolai seek to reproduce or change existing power relations within their society.

In general, members of the mainline churches—i.e., the United Church and the Catholic Church—see no contradiction between the tubuan and Christianity. Thus, they carry out tubuan ceremonies not only in villages but also in special church events. In a way, this is an assertion of their dominance over evangelical Christians—e.g., Seventh-day Adventists and Pentecostals—who insist on the incompatibility between Christianity and the tubuan (and many other Tolai customs). But at the same time, many members of the mainline churches are critical of those who abuse the law of the tubuan against evangelical Christians.

The Tolai-dominated Provincial Government often use tubuan rituals and dances as a sign of public approval and support on such occasions as the opening of its new office buildings and development projects. While this works to symbolically demonstrate the close relationship between the Government and the people, there is a general feeling
among the Tolai that many of their well-educated politicians and bureaucrats behave like *masta* ("white men") and distance themselves from village life. Tolai villagers generally expect their contemporary leaders not only to be well educated but also to be respectful of customary values. Accordingly, in an attempt to demonstrate this ideal type of leadership, they assimilate the image of the "traditional big man" to a widely-respected, high-ranking, and long-serving Tolai statesman by staging *tubuan* performances in honour of him. This reflects their wish for their leaders to be equal to them in status.

For many years after the heyday of the Mataunigan movement, Tolai remained strongly opposed to the treatment of the *tubuan* as a commodity. *Tubuan* masks are still strictly guarded from the artefact trade through continuous struggles with artefact dealers who try to take them out illegally. *Tubuan* rituals and dances, on the other hand, have been recently performed in a cultural show which attracts a number of tourists. In this novel usage of the *tubuan*, Tolai leaders emphasize nothing but cultural preservation. However, with the strong push for cultural tourism by the Provincial Government for the dual purpose of cultural preservation and economic development, there are some villagers who explore the possibility of using the *tubuan* as a tourism product for their grass-roots development project without damaging its cultural, social, and historical significance, and of competing with those wealthy Tolai who are well equipped with resources necessary for operating a tourism business.

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Many Melanesian case studies on *kastom* or similar concepts have demonstrated that
people constitute identities by articulating notions of “tradition” which they developed in
the colonial context in opposition to what was regarded as “Western” or “modern” (e.g.,
Jolly and Thomas 1992; Keesing 1989; Keesing and Tonkinson 1982; Linnekin and Poyer
1990). It is then suggested that they have internalized premises and categories of
hegemonic Western discourse of culture and appropriate them for their contemporary
projects of identity construction. I agree with these studies, yet my argument has been
that this is not the whole process of identity construction among Melanesians. It is true
that in rhetoric “traditional” and “modern” practices are often depicted as absolutely
different from each other, but in practice they are well integrated into the everyday lives
of Melanesians, often in syncretic forms. I have examined how identity is formed and
transformed in practice rather than in rhetoric. In this case, abstracted notions of
“tradition,” whose meanings inevitably emerge in opposition to what is not “traditional,”
are inadequate as an analytical focus. Instead, I have focused upon a concrete practice
regarded as “traditional” and specific points in time when it intersected with practices
considered to be “modern.” This has enabled me to look at specific social contexts
whereby people have negotiated problematic relations between “traditional” and
“modern” features. Such a study is more needed among Melanesians who have
innovatively fashioned identities that combine and synthesize seemingly oppositional
themes – identities that challenge a simplistic dichotomy between “tradition” and
“modernity” that is still perpetuated in Melanesian ethnography.

Today, many Melanesian peoples view their rituals as central to what they call
kastom and therefore most frequently use them to represent themselves to outsiders.
Therefore, ritual is a crucial subject of study for anthropologists interested in identity
formation and transformation in contemporary Melanesia. However, it seems that anthropologists working in Melanesia (and elsewhere) are now not as interested in studying rituals as they used to be. When “structure” or “system” was the reality in ethnographic imagination, ritual was eagerly investigated as its reflection or vehicle of reproduction (e.g., Geertz 1973; Turner 1969; Valeri 1985). Since the discipline’s turn to history in the 1980s, however, many anthropologists have had a great deal of difficulty conceiving of rituals in historical terms, not only because they have carried over this conventional notion of ritual that emphasizes continuity as opposed to change, but also because rituals have been indigenously presented as unchanging customs. Meanwhile, there has been the rise of Melanesian studies concerned with various forces of globalization, such as mining, logging, environmentalism, Christianity, and expatriates, for the last decade. Consequently, ritual, which is seen as ahistorical and local, has been marginalized in ethnographic writing as a “classic” subject of study. In a way, this dissertation on the tubuan has been an exploration of the possibility that rituals are historical and global events. I have deliberately eschewed an attempt to locate a ritual complex in village contexts because I could easily end up representing it as a remnant from the past and its participants as isolated from the rest of the world. Instead, I have tried to find its places in the broader historical contexts of life and demonstrate that a history of rituals is a history of not only reproduction but also contestation and transformation.
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APPENDICES

Appendix 1

The Constitution of the Warkurai Nigunan – Concerning the Rising of the Tubuan (1973)

ORIGINAL

URE RA TUMTUBUAN

1. A Warkurai Nigunan i ter wung ra nga na warkurai upi da muria ure ra tuntubuan upi da muria dari:
   a) Ona ta tikana vanatarai dia mainge upi dia ta watur ra tuntubuan io, dia ta wana lua uti ra office kai ra Warkurai Nigunan upi dia ta warwai kapa kakapi ati ra office ma upi dia ta paat kadia kumbu ure ba a ivia bung na tur pa ia.
   b) Upi dia ta warwai kapa ba mangana papalum awa nam ra tuntubuan na tut upi na paat ia. Tago a umana nga na papalum nina ra tuntubuan ila tut upi ila paat diat go:
      i) A niriirip na pal kai ra minat, upi na rubat ra butur tara minat na tut paka tikana bung.
      ii) A mumumut na davai kai ra minat na tut paka tikana bung.
      iii) A pupunang na minat na tut paka tikana bung.
      iv) Upi na papakat warwolo natur pa ra ivat na wik.
      v) Upi na kakap na dok na tut pa ra ivat na wik.
      vi) Upi na paat ra matamatam natur pa ra ivat na wik.
   c) Ari a tuntubuan i tut upi na rip wue ra kabe ra minat io, na tale upi na tut pa ma na paat kapi ra pupunang ma na mat iat tanem ra bung. Koko na waak wue mule ta wuana bung ba ta wuana wik io, aumana bita tuntubuan iat tanem ra gunan nina ra Warkurai Nigunan i ga pilak tar diat upi diat gire ure nina ra umana tutana dia watur ra tuntubuan ma pa dia muria dari ra nga na warkurai i biit. Io na tale upi da kure tara balana pidik ma na werkul ma ra tabu koko na bolo ra wuana arip na tabu ba a mani koko na bolo ra $10.00. Damana bula ure ra mumumut na davai kai ra minat ma bula ure ra pupunang ma minat nem diat par dia ta tut paka ma diat mat mulai ke tanem iat ra bung, ma a nga na waarkurai na darika nanana liu di ter warike walue.
   d) Ari a tuntubuan i tut upi na paat ra matamatam, a pakat warwolo ma upi ra kinakap na nidok. A nga na waarkurai ure upi na tur pa ra ivat na wik. Ma ona nina ra tutana i watur ra tuntubuan pai mur ra waarkurai ma i waak wue ra wuana wik ba a wuana gai io, a umana bita tuntubuan dia ta kap balana pidik. Ma da mur ra nga na waarkurai mur ra nga na pidik nina ra umana bita tuntubuan dia tar kure tarip a upi nina i watur ra tuntubuan ma i warpiam tana.

2. A umana maningi ra tuntubuan go:
   a) A tuntubuan i tut upi ra Matanitu.

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158 A copy of the original was obtained from Melchior ToMot of Karavi, who had been the secretary of the Mataungan Association and kindly permitted me to reproduce it.
b) Upi na kakap na nidok pire ra wunatarai.
c) Upi na pakat warwolo ra umana kalama mana bul.
d) Upi na kakap na wardok tara umana kalama mana bul ure ra nilili ruk matatar ba a dukduk.
e) Ari a tubuan i tut, nem ra gunan a tubuan i tut tana na ki ma ra wariru ma na ururian upi ra umana nga na warkurai kai ra tubuan.
f) A tarai tanem ra gunan diat par dia ta ki tara balana taraiu; ma ra tubuan na gugu a bungbung; ma na paît woot wapar kapi nina ra lavur papalum nina i tutu upi na paît diat. Ma na wapar ia ma ra pulpuling.
g) Ari a tubuan i tut tae gunan, nem nina ra gunan a tubuan i tut tana pata tinangi na bul, pa ta tinangi na wawina, pata warngangar, pata nipo, pata warngangar na bartaman ma pata mangana purpuruan na kini tara gunan. Tanem ra e a tubuan i tutu tana nem ra gunan warurung ma ra wunatarai kai nina i watut ra tubuan dia ta ki wawan ma ki na warbalaurai upi koko dia ta paît ta wuana ninara.

h) Ari tarai tago ra gunan ninra ra tubuan i tut tana ma ari ta wuana ta diat i paît ta mangana ninra ra tubuan paît mainge io na tale upi a tubu an paît mainge io na tale upi a tubuan na wanga tana.

i) Ona nem ra tutana a tubuan i wana na wanga pirana ma paît torom upi na warkul, io a warkurai kai ra tubuan i tale upi na rapak ra kubane ha na ubu doko kana boro i ba kana umana kakarik ba ta mangana kakalai kai nem ra tutana di wanga i tale a tubuan na wakaina tago nam ra tutana pai ru ra tubuan.

j) A warkurai ure ra niwanga pire ra tarai tanem ra gunan ninra ra tubuan i tut tana, na tale upi ra tubuan na wanga pire ra lavur wunatarai par ona ta mangana nirara dia paît wakaina.

k) A tubuan koko na wana lake upi ra niwanga ta enana gunan nain na ba ba ra tubuan paît tut tana ma ra enana tutana ta ra enana gunan koko na papa ra tubuan upi na wanga tara enana gunan. Ona ta tutana i paît ia dari, io na tale upi ra umana bita lubu ta nem ra gunan ninra ba ra tubuan i tut tana dia ta kure nem ra tutana tara balana pidik ba dia ta kure nem ra tubuan upi na wanga tana tago pai mur ra nga ra warkurai ure ra niwanga; dari ra kukurai ra tubuan.

l) A tubuan na tale upi na wana lake ra enana gunan upi na paît ra wanga tana mur ra wunatarai ba mur ra barniuruna.

3. I tabu upi koko ta wuana na warike ra pidiki ra tubuan.

a) I tabu upi koko ta na pilapilai ma ra kukurai ra tubuan ba ra pidiki ra tubuan aina nagunan ba pire ra waden io a umana tumtubuan par dia ta wanga pirana.

b) I tabu upi koko da wung ra tubuan tara Warwagira upi da show me.

c) I tabu upi ta na diata pala pala ta tinata na pidik na tubuan pire ra waden ba tara umana na bul ba pire ra umana mana.

d) Ona ta tutana i rua taun ta tikai tago ra umana nga na watabu na tubuan, ma ari tana ta nina ra umana bita tubuan dia ta gire ba volongoro babare io na tale upi na kap ia ta ra warkurai na pidik ma ra umana bita tubuan tanem ra gunan dia ta kure ta nga ra warkurai na pidik ure upi da paît ia ure nem ra tutana nina i rua bubur ta nga na pidik na tubuan.

e) Go ra umana nga na warkurai parike ure ra nga na kukurai ra tumtubuan nem di ter ung warike nanama liu upi a tarai parika dia ta ru wangatngat pa diat par.
Ma ona ta tikai pai ru pa go ra umana warkurai io a pidik na tubuan na kure.

4. A Warkurai Nigunan iat na pilak pa ta umana bita tubuan iat tanem ra gunan nina ra tubuan i tut tana upi dia ta gire ure nina ra tutana i wanti ra balaguan na tubuan upi na mur bulu ra umana nga na warkurai na tubuan iat.

a) Ma ona pai mur bulu ra umana nga na warkurai naio, na tale go ra umana bita tubuan nina ra Warkurai Nigunan i ga ter wakilang diat, dia ta kap go ra tana upi na pait ia dari ra warkurai na pidik i tar to taria tana.

b) Go ra umana bita tubuan a Warkurai Nigunan, i tar pilak tar dia upi diata gire ure bula ra tarai parika upi koko dia ta pait wakuku pa ta nuknik nina ba pai takodo mur ra umana nga na warkura na tubuan, ma na tale diat dia ta kap diat ma wung, diat uto tara warkurai na pidik upi da kure diat tara halana pidik ona ba dia bubur ta nga na warkurai ra tubuan.

5. A Warkurai Nigunan i ter wung tikana nga na warkurai upi da wung ra gai ra tumtubuan tara gai April ma tara gai May watikai. Tago lualua a tarai dia ga wala watut ra tumtubuan tago ra ura gai watikai ma ia ra ura gai na tumtubuan iat. Goko rae a tarai dia kabur watut wakukunra tumtubuan muruka ra maaingai kai tikatikana gunan ma wakir di mur mule dari ra nga lualua urre ra gai na tumtubuan iat.

a) Ona da watut ra tumtubuan ta ra lavur gai warwana io, i wake pa ra tarai ta kadia lavur papalum ma i tur bat bula ra umana nga na papalum kai ra Matanitu ba kai ra Warkurai Nigunan Council oro ra balana gunan pire ra tarai. Io tana go ra nga na warkurai upi a kilala na tumtubuan watikai tago ra ura gai nem ure ra gai April ma ra gai May ia ra ura gai na tumtubuan upi kada Matanitu ma kada Warkurai Nigunan Council na walingalanga nem ra ura gai upi koko na wung kana ta nga na papalum uro pire ra tarai ba ra umana gunan nina dia maiinge upi dia ta watut ra tumtubuan ie.

b) Ma ra umaana enana gai wanawana i tabu upi koko tana na watut pa ta balaguan na tumtubuan tana. Ona ta tutana ba ta wunatarai i bubur go ra warkurai, io na tale upi da kap diat tara kiki na warkurai tara office kai ra Warkurai Nigunan ma dia ta kul ra office ma ra tabu koko na bolo ra wua wuana arip kai tika tikana tutana tanem ra wunatarai nina dia watut ra balaguan na tumtubuan tago dia bubur go ra nga na warkurai. Ma go ra tabu dia ta warkul me kai ra Warkurai Nigunan.

c) A Warkurai Nigunan i mulaot tar ra tubuan upi na tut tai ta enana gai wakuku upi na pait go ra umaana papalum dari:

i) Na tut upi na punang ta minati ra bita tubuan nem ure tikana bung uka.

ii) Na tut upi na rubat ta butur kai ra patuana tutana nem ure ke ra wuana bung.

iii) Na tut upi na rip wue ta pal a kube ra bita tubuan ba ta kube ta patuana tutana.

d) Ma ra warkurai ure upi ta tutana ona i maiinge upi na pait ta mangana papalum dari io, na wana iat tara office kai ra Warkurai Nigunan upi na warwai kapa ure go kana papalum nem ra tubuan na tut upi na pait ia.

e) Go ra umaana mangana papalum nem di ter watang diat nanama liu anga na warkurai i tar ki ure upi dia ta tut boko tikana bung upi na pait kapi nam ra papalum na na mat mule iat tanam ra bung iat.
CONCERNING THE RISING OF THE TUBUAN

1. The Varkurai Niguan has put in place laws governing the rising of the tubuan to be followed as such:
   a) When any vunatarai want to raise the tubuan, they first go to the office of the Varkurai Nigunan to inform it and get its agreement about when they commence the work.
   b) They inform the office of what sort of work the tubuan rises for and perform. The kinds of work which the tubuan is able to rise for and perform are as follows:
      i) The pulling down of the house of the deceased, and the uprooting of the butur (forked posts) of the deceased for one day.
      ii) The cutting down of the trees (especially fruit trees) belonging to the deceased for one day.
      iii) The burying of the deceased for one day.
      iv) Papakat Warvolo (the first stage of initiation) for four weeks.
      v) Nidok (the second and final stages of initiation) for four weeks.
      vi) Matamatam for four weeks.
   c) When the tubuan rises to pull down the house, cut down the trees, or bury the deceased, the tubuan must rise, do these tasks, and die the same day. It must not defer or carry any tasks over for another day or another week. If it does, the bita tubuan selected by the Varkurai Nigunan from the village will penalise the perpetrators with a fine not exceeding one arip of tabu or $10.00.
   d) When the tubuan rises for matamatam, papakat warvolo, or nidok, it must do so in the days specified. Those who go over the allocated time will be punished accordingly by the bita tubuan.

2. The features of the tubuan are as follows:
   a) The tubuan rises to greet delegates of the Government when they come to Rabaul, the home of the Tolai.
   b) To carry out nidok for a vunatarai.
   c) To carry out papakat warvolo for new members.
   d) To carry out nidok to initiate new members into the tubuan.
   e) When the tubuan rises in the village, everyone must respect and obey the laws of the tubuan.
   f) All the men (initiated) of the village should be at the taraiu and with the tubuan until all the tasks it has risen for are completed.
   g) There should be no sound of children or women crying, no family arguments, no drunkards, and no trouble from the relatives and women of those who raise the tubuan.
   h) If people break these rules, the tubuan will vanga (impose fines on) them.
   i) When they do not pay up, the tubuan laws permit the tubuan to break down their houses, kill their pigs or chickens, or destroy any of their properties.

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159 I am indebted to Amen ToPidik of Tinganalom and Darius Tagete of Karavi, both living in Port Moresby, for their interpretation and translation of the original respectively.
j) The vanga laws allow the tubuan to vanga all the members of the vunatarai in the village where it rises when the tubuan laws are disobeyed.

k) The tubuan will not vanga in a village where it has not risen. If any person engages the tubuan to vanga where it has not risen, the bita tubuan will penalize both the person and the tubuan for breaching the vanga rules.

l) The tubuan may only cross village boundaries to vanga along vunatarai or barniuruna lines.

3. It is forbidden for anyone to reveal the secrets of the tubuan.
   a) It is forbidden for any person to make fun of or talk about the meaning and/or secrets of the tubuan openly in the village or to women. All the tubuan will vanga those who do not observe this rule.
   b) The tubuan is not to be displayed and shown at the Tolai Varwagira.
   c) It is forbidden to disclose the tubuan secrets to woman, children, or the uninitiated.
   d) Anybody who breaches the law of the tubuan, or is seen or heard doing so by the bita tubuan, will be penalized accordingly.
   e) All these laws of the tubuan set out above are important and must be respected. Law breakers will be penalized through the vanga (tubuan court).

4. The Varkurai Nigunan will select tubuan elders in all villages where the tubuan rises to supervise the people who wish to raise the tubuan so that it is ensured that they follow all the tubuan laws.
   a) Anybody not complying with the tubuan laws will be dealt with by the bita tubuan selected by the Varkurai Nigunan.
   b) The bita tubuan selected by the Varkurai Nigunan are to ensure all the tubuan laws are observed. Law breakers will be dealt with accordingly.

5. The Varkurai Nigunan has resolved that the months of the rising of the tubuan be April and May each year, since these months have been observed by our ancestors. Nowadays people raise the tubuan in any time and place they wish and do not observe the customary season.
   a) When the tubuan is raised in any time people wish, then they take up the time for villager normal routines and occupy the time for day-to-day activities. By restricting the rising of the tubuan to the months of April and May, the Government and the Varkurai Nigunan are able to ensure that they do not plan their major activities for these months and keep the other months for peoples’ activities.
   b) All the other months are forbidden for the tubuan ceremonies. Any persons or vunatarai who do so will face the Varkurai Nigunan office and are liable to pay one arip of tabu per person of the vunatarai. The tabu paid becomes the property of the Varkurai Nigunan.
   c) The Varkurai Nigunan allows the tubuan to rise in any month of the year only for the following purposes:
      i) To bury a deceased bita tubuan for one day.
      ii) To uproot the butur of a deceased village elder for one day.
      iii) To pull down the house of a deceased bita tubuan or village elder for one day.
d) If anybody wishes to carry out any of the above mentioned, they have to come to the office of the Varkurai Nigunan and seek permission for the *tubuan* to do these tasks.

e) For the above-mentioned activities, the *tubuan* must rise, carry out the tasks, and then die the same day.