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Part III

Articles and Papers
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Part III

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- (3) 'Boti'. (Presumably the preliminary draft of Lundsgaarde, Henry P., and Martin G. Silverman, 'Category and Group in Gilbertese Kinship: an Updating of Goodenough's analysis').
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- (4) Lundsgaarde, Henry P., and Martin G. Silverman, 'Category and Group in Gilbertese Kinship: an Updating of Goodenough's analysis'. TS. 44pp. (Published in Ethnology, vol.11 (1972), pp.95-110.
- (5) Silverman, Martin G., 'Banaban Adoption'. TS. 22pp.
(Published in Carroll, Vern (ed.), Adoption in Eastern Oceania. ASAO Monograph No.1. Honolulu, University of Hawaii Press, 1970.
- (6) Latouche, Jean-Paul, 'The Evolution of Polynesian Chiefdoms and the Tungaru Transformations'. TS. 25pp.

The Banabans of Rabi Island and their economic affairs.

Although the Banabans are a numerically small people originating from an isolated island in the mid-Pacific their affairs are of particular interest to the economist. Unfortunately little work has been done on the anthropological background of these peoples because it is now apparent that most of their problems arise from the impact of modern economic activity on native ~~custom and~~ ^{and custom} culture, and with inadequate information on the latter, it is not always easy to gauge the influence of native custom on economic life. One thing seems fairly clear, however, they were peculiar amongst Pacific island communities in that they practised a form of individual land ownership on Ocean Island under which land could even be alienated subject to certain safeguards to the sellers' family. This peculiarity has been of importance in the later history of their funds from phosphate royalties and land ownership on Ocean island; and, as their internal political system seems to rest on landownership, has influenced their political life on Rabi.

Information on the early year of the phosphate operations on Ocean island is contained in Sir Albert Ellis' book 'Ocean Island and Nauru' and on the war-time history of the islands in 'Mid Pacific Outposts' by the same author. A government paper by H.E. Maude 'The future of the Banabans of Ocean Island with special reference to their lands and funds' contains

Industry the natives benefited from a more prosperous existence details of the earlier agreements between the Phosphate company and the Banabans, and these details are summarised in the present paper so that the development of the funds can be shown. Supplementary information was gained for this paper from documents in the possession of the Rabi Island Council and from discussions with leading Banabans during my stay on Rabi which however was too brief for me to gain as much insight into their affairs as I should have wished. This paper has been produced very much as a by-product of my study on the Fiji economy and the work on it has shown me only how much there still remains to be learned about the Banabans both from contact with the people and by analysing the various papers on their affairs which are in the Archives of the West Pacific ^{High} Commission, the Fiji Government and the Phosphate Commission.

There is little information available on the customs and condition of the inhabitants of Ocean island before Sir Albert Ellis' visit to the island in search of phosphate in 1900. In 1851 the population was reputed to number about 2,000 or more and was flourishing. A series of severe draughts subsequently reduced their number and made the people willing recruits when ships called to obtain native labour. When Ellis arrived on the phosphate mission there were only about 450 Banabans, in an extremely impoverished condition, living on the island. After the arrival of the phosphate mining

industry the natives benefitted from a more prosperous existence and from medical services. In the removal to Rabi in 1945, 703 Banabans were collected from the various islands to which they had been taken by the Japanese but some toll had been taken of their numbers during the occupation. The Banabans marry young (the women sometimes at 14 years of age) and they have large families so that there is every indication that their population will increase rapidly in Rabi.

In 1900, the Pacific Islands Company applied for a goano license to dig phosphate on Ocean island, but were told by the British authorities to make their own arrangement with the inhabitants as no formal annexation of Ocean Island had been made. Thus there came about the first of a long series of agreements between the people of Ocean Island and the Phosphate company.

Under their first agreement made between the Pacific Islands Company and the "King ¹ and population of Ocean Island", the company was to pay £50 per annum for the right to ~~pay~~ mine phosphate for 999 years. Payments averaging £20 per acre were to be made for land taken and the agreement included

1. Actually a head man.

the payment of compensation to the Banabans for the loss of food bearing trees.

Following on the sudden importance of this small isolated island it was annexed to the crown later in the same year. The agreement remained virtually the same except that the £50 per annum was payable to Crown revenue and the period was limited to 21 years. In 1901, however, this was extended to 99 years and it was agreed that after 1906, a royalty of 6d a ton should be payable to revenue instead of the £50 annual payment.

In 1902 a subsidiary of the Pacific Islands Company called the Pacific Phosphate Company was created and a new licence merely transferred the agreement to the new company. This agreement was in operation until 1913.

In 1913 a further block of land of 145 acres was purchased from the Banabans and an agreement was made covering the following provisions.

- (a) Payment for land was to be £40 to £60 an acre.
- (b) Compensation was to be made to the natives for destruction of food-bearing trees.
- (c) An additional royalty was to be paid of 6d on each ton of phosphate removed.

The payments for land were to go the landholders themselves, but the royalty was to be divided on the following manner. (a) In 1913 and 1914, the whole of the royalty, except for £300 was to be distributed to the people, the final approval for the distribution being with the Resident Commissioner.

(b) The £300 excepted was to start a Banaban fund. In the year following 1914, only the interest from the fund was to be distributed amongst the landholders, all royalties were to be paid to the principle of the fund. This fund accumulated in this fashion until 1930 and in spite of quite sizable deductions being made for Banaban Services, about £1550 per annum was then distributed, giving the landholders an average of about £6 a head per annum.

In 1920 the interests of the Pacific Phosphate Company were bought out by the British Phosphate Commission for £3,500,000 sterling. The British Phosphate Commission is a government owned corporation run autonomously on business lines; the shares held being, 42% each by the U.K. and Australian governments and 16% by the New Zealand government. There are three commissioners one from each of the powers concerned.

By 1927 further land was required. The natives however could not be persuaded to agree to proposals made by the Phosphate Commission and the government; thus the mining ordinance of 1928 was enacted to permit compulsory acquisition of land.

The suggestions for a settlement which were made to the natives by the Commission in 1927 were generous and sympathetic to native interests. The Commission suggested that royalties invested at a compound interest should be accumulated to £175,000. If the commission required further land before this limit had

been reached it would guarantee to make up the Banaban Fund to the £175,000 before negotiating a further agreement.

Why were the Banaban leaders not agreeable to these terms? Firstly no doubt because it might reduce their cash available for immediate expenditure, and furthermore perhaps because lower cash handouts would be made to landholders. Secondly, mistrust in the authorities was undoubtedly present amongst Banaban leaders. The proposal was raised again by the Commission in 1930 but the negotiations were unsuccessfully concluded, land being purchased under the provisions of the 1928 Ordinance. There was a strange sequel to this incident. When further land was purchased in 1948, the head man and largest landholder, Rotan, claimed that as the Commission had purchased more land while the Banaban Fund stood at less than £175,000 the Commission was liable to pay the Banabans the difference. It was necessary for an official of the Commission to proceed to Rabi and endeavour to convince the Banabans that following their own wishes, no such agreement had ever been signed and no such responsibility fell on the Commission. It is difficult to see whether Rotan's action was prompted by ignorance, by a hope of 'putting one over' on the government or by a political motive to cement his prestige in the eyes of his own people, or the upholder of their "rights". Although it is probable that Rotan was ultimately persuaded of the thinness of his case, it was an unfortunate incident as many of the less well-informed people thought a swindle had been perpetrated.

The terms under which 150 acres were acquired in 1931

under the mining ordinance were there as follows.

- (a) A rent of 2/6 per acre per annum was to be payable to colony revenue.
- (b) Direct compensation to be paid to owners for loss of food bearing trees.
- (c) £150 per acre to be paid to landowners for surface rights.
- (d) 2d a ton royalty on every ton of phosphate mined to go to the Banaban provident fund until such time as it reached £175,000.
- (e) 8¹/₂d a ton royalty to go to the Resident Commissioner on trust for the Banaban community generally.
- (f) The sum of £20,000 to be transferred from the old Banaban Trust Fund to form the nucleus of the new Banaban ^{Provident} Trust Fund.

When this agreement came into force there were then three funds held in trust for the Banabans.

- (1) The old Banaban Trust Fund from 1913. Now decreased by the £20,000 transferred to the Provident Fund.
- (2) The New Banaban Royalty Trust Fund, created under the new settlement by the 8¹/₂d a ton royalty.
- (3) The Banaban provident fund. This fund was started by the £20,000 transferred from the old Banaban Trust Fund and was to accumulate by means of the special 2d a ton royalty. The object of this fund was to provide the Banabans with a new

home as it had, by then become clear that the surface land on Ocean Island was gradually being destroyed by mining operations. It appears that the Banabans had so far viewed any proposal to resettle them with some mistrust as they feared that they would be deprived of their rights. It was however from this fund that Rabi Island was eventually purchased.

(4) The Banaban Landholders Fund was created by the surface right payment of £150 per acre. The interest from this fund was paid to the landholders who were thus receiving an income from the old Royalty Trust Fund and the interest from the new Banaban Landholders Fund which was distributed by their own Council. The landholders have always been anxious to obtain the capital and revenue from the landholders' fund themselves, but in all fairness to them it must be noted that they raised no objection to the transfer of £20,000 from the old fund to the new provident fund.

As well as the payments to landholders, annuities were paid to all Banabans from the revenue of these funds. The system of payments inaugurated in 1937 was as follows.

(a) All Banabans and $\frac{1}{2}$ Banabans resident on Ocean Island

Adults	£8	Each	per annum
Children	£4	"	" "

To all Banaban landowners owning:

	Less than 1 acre	£2	per annum
	1-2 acres	£4	" "
	5-10 Acres	£8	" "
	10 & over	£10	" "

2-5 acres - 1/6 p.a.

The payments were to be reduced accordingly should

the revenue be insufficient to meet all payments.

The system of paying annuities was somewhat unpopular both with the administration and with the Banabans themselves. As H.E. Maude has said the payment of annuities to the Banaban 'sapped his moral fibre, turning him often into a dole-fed hanger-on of the British Phosphate Commission'. The Banaban Landowners themselves were not in favour of this system of payment as it stood, because the landholders, especially the larger ones, were at a distinct disadvantage. That members of the community who own property should subsidise members with large families (however praise-worthy it may appear in the light of modern taxation criteria) is not part of the Banabans' economic philosophy. Although it must be pointed out, in all fairness, that the effects are political and social rather than economic, as large families would not be allowed to suffer real hardship while there was food available in the community.

In 1940 a further 240 acres was acquired under the following conditions.

- (a) Payment of £175 per acre was made for surface rights.
- (b) 2d a ton royalty was to be paid to the Banaban Provident Fund (as in 1931)
- (c) 10d a ton royalty was to be paid to the Banaban Royalty Trust Fund.
- (d) The Banaban Provident Fund was to accumulate to a limit

of £250,000 instead of £150,000. The new Royalty terms were to apply to all phosphate mined irrespective of whether it came from areas under the new agreement or by previous arrangements.

In 1940 the Banabans began to listen with some interest to proposals to purchase another island. They insisted however that they could not consider replacing Ocean Island as their main homeland although they were quite interested in the suggestion that a 'second homeland' should be purchased, partly as an investment for their funds and partly as a country for the settlement of some Banaban families. The island of Wakaya in the Fiji group was on the market and its purchase was considered. A survey done by the Fiji government however, showed that the fresh water supply was poor and the soils were too shallow to support an expanding population. Further enquiries resulted in Rabi Island being offered by Lever Brothers who were then running it as a copra plantation. Rabi was considered to be most suitable as a place for settling a native population. Negotiations proceeded for the purchase of both islands from Banaban Funds, the Banabans' idea being to purchase Rabi mainly as an investment. In 1942 Rabi was purchased for £A25,000 but the negotiations to purchase Wakaya fell though, which was unfortunate as the island would certainly have appreciated in value when copra prices rose and, being nearer to Suva and Levuka might have provided a base from which the Banabans could trade. Sir Albert Ellis' book 'Mid Pacific outposts' the story is told of the tragic three years from 1942 to 1945 when the people of

Ocean Island were under Japanese rule. Owing to Ocean Island's dependence on imported food, most of the Banabans were moved either to Tarawa, Kusaie, in the Carolines or Nauru. Ellis also tells of the subsequent collection of these people from the various islands, after the cessation of hostilities and their removal to Rabi in 1945. Circumstances, unpleasant in themselves had forced the Banabans to accept the mass settlement at Rabi, which although from the long term view obviously desirable, would not have been easily achieved at ordinary times owing mainly to the very natural bonds between the people and its homeland. But Ocean Island was virtually uninhabitable after hostilities and it was clear that at least two years would be needed to restore housing, food supplies and other communications. The Banaban leaders thus agreed to the removal of all Banabans to Rabi on the understanding that they would remain there for two years in the first instant and after that all the Banaban people would decide by ballot whether they would stay at Rabi or return to Ocean Island. The cost of taking them to Rabi was to be borne by the Gilbert and Ellice Islands administration as was the cost of erecting the reception camp at Rabi, and a vessel was provided by the Phosphate Commission for the removal of the people.

In accordance with the wishes of the Banabans a number of Gilbertese accompanied them and the persons landed on Rabi in December 1945^{were} constituted as follows:-

management of this fund is carried out by a Board consisting of the Banaban advisors and five members and the revenue of the fund are to be used for the benefit of the community as a whole, apart from the payments to landowners and annuities (later abolished) under the 1947 agreement. There are two Banaban funds in existence, the Banaban Trust Fund and the Banaban Landowners Fund.

	<u>Banabans</u>	<u>Gilbertese</u>	<u>Total</u>
Men	185	152	337
Women	200	97	297
Children	<u>318</u>	<u>51</u>	<u>369</u>
	<u>703</u>	<u>300</u>	<u>1003</u>

A final agreement for the purchase of Banaban lands on Ocean Island by the British Phosphate Commission was made in 1947. Under this agreement land was purchased from Banaban landowners on the following terms.

- (1) 291 acres of land were purchased at £A200 per acre.
- (2) 380 acres of land were purchased at £A65 per acre.
- (3) 1/4 per ton royalty was to be paid on all phosphate removed from Ocean Island regardless of whether it came from land bought under the new agreement or under previous agreements.

It was reiterated in the new settlement, that all mining land, when worked out should revert to former Banaban landowners. Although to an outside observer, the ownership of land on worked out Ocean Island may seem a subject of little importance, the Banaban point of view is perhaps understandable and it was natural too that being removed from the scene they should demand definite documentary recognition of their joint and individual rights on Ocean Island.

Following Mr. H.E. Maudes' suggestion that the Banaban Funds should be simplified, the Banaban Royalty Fund and the remaining part of the provident fund left after the purchase of Rabi were amalgamated into the Banaban Trust Fund, the

management of this fund is carried out by a Board consisting of the Banaban advisor and five members and the revenue of the fund are to be used for the benefit of the community as a whole, ~~a~~ part from the payments to landowners and annuities (later abolished) under the 1937 agreement. There are thus two Banaban Funds in existence. The Banaban Trust Fund and the Banaban landowners Fund.

Before launching on a description of the Banabans' economic life on Rabi there are several interesting points, emerging from their past history, which substantially affect the attitude of the Banabans towards economic matters.

When the first agreement was signed between the Banabans and the Pacific Islands Company, Ocean Island had not been annexed. Any payment of the nature of a royalty was thus payable to the people themselves. Once however a territory is annexed to the crown, according to British law, royalties are paid to the crown. Thus from the time, later in 1900 when Ocean Island was annexed until its absorption into the Gilbert and Ellice Islands colony in 1916, annual payments and royalties were paid to the crown. Although many services were provided for the Banabans out of these revenues and the arrangement seems reasonable from impartial eyes, it is also clear that seen through Banaban eyes it would appear that certain cash payments promised by the company on its first arrival were later filched from the people by the Government and there is little doubt that mistrust in the Government, still strongly apparent among

Banaban leaders dates from this period as the events are still well remembered by older members of the Community.

An outside observer might again wonder why, after establishing its rights to such revenues, The Crown repudiated the usual practice when in 1913 it permitted royalty payments to be paid again both to individual Banaban and into Banaban funds, a practice which has continued to the present day. Clearly the Banabans have a good case to be considered and exceptional, firstly by virtue of the extreme nature of the despoiling of their homelands by mining activities and secondly because it may be claimed, admittedly with doubtful legal validity that the first agreement was signed actually with the people, before annexation. Nevertheless a British administration must accord with the British law and the Gilbert and Ellice Colony Administration has rightly stated that the Banabans receive royalties by grace and not by right. It is important that this should be emphasised, not because any resumption of the Crown's rights are probable in the Ocean Island case but because, should minerals ever be commercially abstracted from Rabi, the Fiji governments' right to royalties is evident. Although it is very unlikely that the Banabans would see the problem in the same light and it is perhaps, to be hoped, that such a position will not arise.

A further concession to the Banaban claims on this matter was made in 1913 when royalties were actually made

payable to individual landowners. The under surface rights are claimed by Banaban Landowners as being individually owned by surface owners. The Banabans claim that this principle is part of their customary land law. Their case is however extremely ~~thin~~, and the authorities have rightly discouraged this outlook in later agreements. The only example of ~~un~~der-surface activity on Ocean Island before phosphate mining was the use of caves as sources of fresh water and it appears that groups of persons may have held rights to these. It is hardly possible that Banaban customary land-law could have included any clearly defined rules to the ownership of minerals extracted from land.

The history of the Banaban attitude to negotiations of an economic nature shows very emphatically the ~~link~~ between their own community political and social system and economic affairs. It seems that the Banaban community on Ocean Island was based on a system of Government on which landownership ~~was~~ conferred political power more or less in proportion to the amount of land owned. There was it seemed a limited amount of 'democracy' in that all landowners would be consulted on major issues and in so far as the laws of succession made everyone a landowner this 'democracy' was more far reaching than in many Pacific communities. Nevertheless, the political power of the large landowners, particularly of Retan and his family is apparently undisputed.

This system of government has been transferred to

Rambi; and in spite of the complete breaking up of the community during the war it appears that the society was reformed on its old political lines. Indirectly, the colonial government, by modifying the land-laws of the Banabans on Ocean Island have given this form of society the documentary backing that serves more to freeze its pattern than to allow for evolution and development. Rotan appears to have the complete confidence at least of the older members of the community and there is little doubt that this confidence results not only from respect for the traditional form of leadership but also from a deep admiration for his personal qualities of leadership. Rotan is certainly a born politician. He is an adept at the politician's old game of turning every situation either to the advantage of the Community and thereby gaining personal prestige or else to his own advantage by cementing his followers behind his own leadership in a fight against "impossible odds".

Since their arrival in Rabi, the landholders have been, if anything more anxious to display their traditional rights, and there is much to suggest that the demands by landowners for cash payments, the demands for the abolition of annuities to non-landowners, demands for documentary recognition of their rights on Ocean Island and for the division of Rabi land in accordance with Ocean Island holdings, are not demands purely based on thoughts of economic advantage but are of more importance in exhibiting and maintaining the political status

at Rabi. At Rabi, the position of Rotan and his group may not be so secure, especially if his policies are questioned by younger people who have been ~~away~~ and obtained outside education. It was clear when I visited Rabi that some Banabans considered that Rotan's mistrust of the government had gone too far and was partly to blame for the mess in which they now find themselves

It would of course be wrong and foolish for any outside person or government to intervene in the political affairs of the community. It will however be difficult for any European administrator to understand the economic behaviour of the community and its leaders unless he is partly well informed on political movements and aspirations within the Banaban society. It is unfortunate that no anthropological study has been made of these people so that the details of their traditional customs, land laws, and government could be known.

To return to the economic affairs of the Banabans from their arrival at Rabi, it seems that the first two years was a period in which, although much good work was done in the way of building, planting and learning about the new food which could be grown in Rabi, it was also a period of some difficulty.

The Banabans felt the colder climate of Rabi, and due mainly to their treatment when in Japanese hands, ~~there~~ were

bad outbreaks of dysentary and Beri-beri. It may be inferred too that the Banabans were feeling a natural frustration in being unable to get control of adequate cash to meet community contingencies as well as for personal needs and there appears to have been some personal conflict of views between Rotan and the Banaban adviser in 1946. Mr. H.E. Maude was asked to give a report on the position and his recommendations on which the Fiji governments' statement of intentions was ultimately based served to remove most of the grievances.

A concrete policy could not however be outlined until it was known whether or not the Banabans were going to elect to stay on Rabi. Any doubts which might have been held at the time of the settling in crisis, were quickly removed by the results of the ballot. Clearly, no matter how strong the calls of their old homeland, the Banabans' were well aware of the advantages which life on Rabi could confer on them and on their children. Rabi is a rich island and is isolated from the full-time European influence which, on Ocean Island had threatened to break up their traditional way of life.

The ballot was held on March 10th and 11th 1947 by secret vote. Of those entitled to vote, 94.6% voted and the result was as follows.

For making Rabi the Banaban homeland 270 (84.9%)

Against making Rabi the Banaban homeland 48 (15.1%)

A statement of the Fiji administrations' intentions

and policy with regard to the new settlers was at the same time, presented to and accepted by the Banabans. The main points of this statement being as follows:-

The decision taken by the Banabans to reside in Rabi, in no way affects their rights on Ocean Island and the title to all worked out phosphate land reverts to the original owners.

The ownership of all land on Rabi, except for the Fiji government reserve of 50 acres at Katherine Bay is vested in the Rabi Island Council on behalf of the Banaban Community. The division of land on Rabi is to be carried out in accordance with Banaban custom and is the responsibility of the Rabi Island Council.

Following on the recommendations made by Mr. H.E. Maude, the Banaban Royalty Fund and the remaining part of the Provident Fund were amalgamated and the Banaban Trust Fund Board was created to administer this fund which was to be used for community purposes.

It was also agreed that, as regards taxation, the Banabans are subject to the laws of Fiji, they are thus eligible to receive all normal services provided by the government on the same terms and conditions as such services are provided to other residents.

There are thus two Banaban Funds now in existence, the Banaban Trust Fund whose main income consists of annual phosphate royalties and the Banaban landowners fund whose income,

the interest from invested moneys for surface right payments, is distributed to the landowners.

The Banaban Landowners Fund consisted of two parts; £A22,500 from surface right payments in 1931 and a further £A85,155 was added under the 1947 agreement. The two parts have however, for all practical purposes been amalgamated. All moneys accrue to the Trust Fund Board whose responsibility it is to make payment to all who are lawfully entitled to a share in the fund. There are 685 landowners (345 male and 340 female) so that the preparation of a scheme by which this money could be distributed presented no small problem. It was due to the ingenuity and hard work of the auditors, Messrs Main and Kay of Suva, that a method was developed by which the interest from the fund could be shared out without causing unfairness to any landowner, and which was, at the same time reasonably simple for the Banabans to understand.

To begin with the fund had to be expressed in ~~Rin~~ Fiji currency and the share of each landowner was expressed ~~inx~~ in a pound or multiples of a pound. There were thus no shares of less than £1 and it was ruled that no transfers of less than £1 should take place. A total of £F75,700 worth of shares which are all invested in Australian Government Bonds was allocated to various landowners. The distribution of ownership which is of course a direct reflection of landownership on Ocean Island is shown in the following table.

<u>Number of shares held.</u>	<u>Number of female landowners.</u>	<u>Number of male landowners.</u>	<u>Total.</u>
1-10	27	19	46
11-20	41	42	83
21-50	69	84	153
51-100	77	77	154
101-200	77	67	144
201-500	38	51	89
501-1,000	11	4	15
over 1,000	11	1	1
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	340	345	685
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>

Although consideration has been given by the authorities to suggestions for using the capital of this fund for development purposes such as, for instance, the improvement of Rabi land, no concrete suggestions have come from the Banabans by which this capital can be employed in a way that is unlikely to lower its value. Repeated requests have come from the landowners that they should have the money to invest or spend as they think fit but the fund was created as a trust fund and such requests have been resisted.

The exactness with which the Banabans have insisted that this fund be allotted to individuals in accordance with Ocean Island rights is again, I feel a reflection not of economic aspirations on the part of larger landowners but rather a reflection of the importance with which the traditional heirarchy of landownership is regarded. This is supported to some extent by the following incident. I asked both Rotan and Tito (The

Island Scribe) at different times, what would be the attitude of the Banabans to freeing the shares in the Landholders' Fund for sale amongst the Banabans themselves. Supposing, for instance it was permitted for one Banaban who worked hard and saved much money to purchase the shares belonging to another Banaban landowner who needed cash. On the surface such a scheme (if it could be administrated) would seem to have the benefit of providing the cash constantly asked for by some landowners (and some of this might find its way into land development or education) and also of encouraging thrift, while at the same time leaving the capital of the landholders' fund intact. Tito (who is not an important landowner) said that the landowners would consider it a shameful thing to buy and sell the property of their family in such a way. Rotan said that such a thing would be against the Banaban custom.

On the surface it seems inconceivable that the Banabans should wish on the one hand to secure the principle in this fund in cash with apparently no intentions as to its conservation (money given to the Banaban landowners for surface rights in 1913 was simply frittered away) and yet on the other hand should consider the buying and selling of shares amongst themselves as so serious a departure from tradition. However it is apparent that any re-allocation of the shares would in fact seriously undermine the social heirarchy both in terms of individuals and of family groups. It is probable too that the intentions of the

landowners if they got their hands on the cash are to invest the money either in securities or capital development. It is suspected however that, should one landowner embark on a spree of conspicuous expenditure and present - giving it would be incumbent on the rest to follow suit, each according to his status, whatever the original good intentions! Already landholders pass - books have been pledged as security against credits at the community store, although in view of the rigidity and illiquidity of the fund it is difficult to see of what value they can be as collateral.

The Banaban trust fund consists of a capital of £F91,650 (Dec. 31st 1953) which has accrued from past unspent Royalties and from the moneys transferred from the provident fund. The interest from these investments and the annual revenue from Royalties are, after payments of bonuses to landowners (the annuities to Banaban individuals were discontinued in 1951) expendable for community development.

The main development programme on Rabi has featured permanent housing. Gilbertese type housing is not suitable for Fiji as these huts are not resistant to hurricane; and the Rabi Island Council has endeavoured to provide about 10 concrete houses a year. These houses are strong and well designed. Schools and village halls and a Manobea (meeting house) are also under construction and a church and hospital of permanent materials are at the planning stage. To give an indication

of the trend which this expenditure is taking, two accounts are reproduced below. Firstly the draft estimates for the Trust Fund 1949 and secondly the actual income and expenditure account for 1953.

Banaban Trust Fund. Draft estimate 1949.

Revenue

	£f.
1) Royalties 300,000 tons phosphate at 1/3 a ton	£16,593
2) Interest from investments	£ 6 125
	<u>£22,718</u>

Expenditure

Administration		£1546
Banaban annuities 1937 agreement		£5068
Landowners annuities 1937 agreement		£ 920
Education		£ 880
Public works:		
11 houses at £600 each	£6600	
School	£3500	
2 Houses at £1000	£2000	
Other labour & material expenses	<u>£2204</u>	
		<u>£14304</u>
		<u>£22718</u>

Banaban Trust Fund
Income and Expenditure Account

for Year Ended 31st December, 1953.

Income

Royalty on Phosphate		£14,995	1	7
Payments for Sand and Shingle			92	18
Interest on Investments		2,512	19	8
		<u>£17,600</u>	<u>19</u>	<u>9</u>

Expenditure

Housing 1952 - Materials	£	528	3	10
Housing, 1953		9,000	-	-
Maneaba - progress payment		2,000	-	-
Carpenters' Wages		486	3	3
Coconut Replanting		508	13	8
Bonus to Landholders		4,920	12	-
Audit Fees		44	-	-
Sundry Expenses		3	8	2
		<u>£17,491</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>11</u>

Underspent for year

£ 109 18 10

The change over from paying annuities to all Banabans to paying only landowners has made little difference to the actual outlay on this item. The building programme has proceeded steadily, according to schedule and some money has been used for the very important work of investment in coconut planting. Expenditure on outside education appears to have declined in 1953. Several Banabans were, in early years on Rabi, sent to schools at Suva, to the Teachers' Training College at Nasinu and some were receiving medical training. Although expenditure on education at home has increased it would appear that fewer are leaving Rabi. I was told by one or two younger members of the community, that if one wanted to go away to study much time was wasted obtaining the co-operation from the Rabi Island Council, one suspects that red-tape and lack of appreciation of educational needs are frustrating some of the more ambitious people. Rotan himself did not appear particularly convinced of the merits of external education. He was however interested in the establishment of some kind of farm school where the Banabans, accustomed to an economy in which settled farming was not possible, could learn to use the rich soils of Rabi to some advantage. The establishment of a modern farm under trained management which could both teach farming and supply some of the seeds, livestock, & vegetables needed by the community

would perhaps be one of the most economically and socially desirable of the possible uses of Banaban Funds and lands. Mechanisation too, is well to the foreground in Banaban plans for development but the derelict cars, lorries and other items of machinery lying about Banaban villages show that it is little use such goods being bought until the people are fully aware of the simple fact that machinery demands maintenance and repair and until some skilled mechanics are available. Indeed, as regards all form of real capital, particularly houses and boats, it appeared that very little maintenance had been carried out whatsoever and that a regular programme of painting and repairing should be at least as important a demand on their funds as the acquisition of new property. It is evident in many parts of Fiji that natives are anxious to acquire machinery, generally with no understanding of the expense and skill necessary to keep it running. For this reason it would perhaps be a good thing if the Banabans, when budgeting for the purchase of machinery were encouraged to budget at the same time for running costs, maintenance repairs and depreciation as only in that way will they understand the financial commitments which they are taking on.^{1.}

1. In 1953 The Banaban Provident Fund was recreated with an initial grant of £1,615 from the Trust Fund. The idea being to ensure some source of income to replace royalties on the eventual cessation of operations on Ocean Island.

Although to the outside observer, the Banaban Funds may seem somewhat complicated. It is my belief that the Banabans, by now, have achieved a fairly thorough knowledge of them and the fragmentations of interest payments, complicated as it may seem to us, offers no real problem to them accustomed as they are to thinking in terms of the small economic claims of many people. When, however, we turn to the other aspects of their economic life, producing and trading activities, we find they have involved themselves in a very serious mess; the result perhaps of ignorance and insufficient guidance.

Rabi was worked as a copra plantation by Messrs Lever Brother Pacific Plantations before the Banabans arrived on the scene, there are nearly 3,000 acres of coconuts, most of which are less than fifty years old and are in good bearing. Lever Brothers were able to produce about 900 tons of copra a year when working the island as a plantation. The average Banaban yield appears to be about ~~1/3~~^{2/3} this amount. The copra plantation is worked on a community basis with the village stores. Workers are now paid for their labour according to the amount of copra cut and dried and the rates are such that a man working all day could earn up to £1. Drying is carried out by the worker who either dries copra in a home-made type of drier at home or brings his nuts to the central drier. It was not always worked on this principal. In early years in Rabi, plantation wages were paid and drying was all carried out centrally. But there was some discontent over the ~~low~~ level of wages paid. It is also evident

that taxation can be avoided by the community if higher wages are paid and less is paid to reserves. Copra revenues were as follows for the years 1949-1951

1949	£F 32620
1950	28059
1951	41024

The store accounts show the following figures for the years 1949-52.

	Sales.	Purchases.	Closing stock.	Wages.	Gross profit.
1949	30487	7061	6891	891	4124
1950	44441	39344	6705	1009	3825
1951	44715	40722	5018	1414	-829
1952	47861	61842	13447	963	-6575

The collection of trochas, hire of launches and lorries a cinema and an electric plant are also run on business lines. These show a small turnover and invariably make a loss. The net loss on all activities in 1952 was £10,166. The 1953 books are still in the hands of the auditors but it is understood that the position showed no improvement. The figures for the stores indicate where the trouble lies. There are three stores in Rabi and previously the accounts were centralised but it has been suggested that the stores show their balances separately in order to show their relative positions.

Being a centrally "planned" economy, it was possible for the store authorities to arrange a system of debits and credits for all members of the community, the idea, it seems was to make book entries against all purchases (including visits to the cinema) and make corresponding debits from wages and other payments due to individuals. Debts appear to have accumulated to a level at which full payment is unlikely and this is the main reason for the serious loss. The system of book entries has been severely condemned by the Banaban advisers and by the auditors and was supposed to have been discontinued in the last year but little progress seems to have been made in the collection of outstanding debts. It would also appear that goods are still being obtained without cash payment (and perhaps without book entries either). Increases in stock valuations would also indicate that to some extent goods with little demand are being stocked in the stores. On the other hand, the stores are frequently out of tinned meat and fish and other goods of every day demand.

In spite of their long contact with Europeans the Banabans still evince many of the characteristics of Pacific Islanders in economic matters. Although, as was stated earlier, the political influence of large property owners is high; in every day living standards, little difference would be found between any of the families. Their society is a communal society in which the good things of life must be shared. Thus there is a tendency to view the store as a community cupboard from which all

can draw as the need arises. When questioned about the store losses the leading Banabans would say the store is for all and does not have to make a profit. They do not appear particularly concerned over the size of the loss and the drain on reserves. It is significant that in 1952 creditors stood at £28,529 and debtors at £22,057. If the position does not improve it may be something of a shock for the Banabans to find, as they will find, that the Suva traders do not take such a benevolent attitude to indebtedness as they do themselves. There is perhaps only one way in which this unfortunate position can be righted, drastic as it may be. Every effort should be made to collect outstanding debt (including setting it off against landowners' bonuses and interest payments?) within a period of a year, all debts owed should be discharged immediately and if necessary it appears that the difference will have to be written off capital once and for all. Strict cash payments should then be adhered to, including of course the punctual payment of wages and copra payments by the store to the individuals. It is likely that the old system of book entries was also working as a serious disincentive to copra cutting. As ^The incentive to cut copra for goods already consumed is very small compared with the incentive to earn further cash for future purposes.

In general the Pacific Islander follows least of all men, the pattern of 'economic man'. Very rarely will he compare the profits of relative occupations, and once his simple needs are satisfied he will almost always prefer leisure to further work

no matter how rich the rewards. One economic faculty with which he appears to be quite well endowed, (in common with most races) is the faculty of avoiding taxation. It is difficult to say how important a link there is between the Banabans' losses and tax avoidance but the matter cannot be ignored.

The Banabans trading activities were originally carried on as a registered co-operative society which would seem an admirable form of organisation for their needs, giving them a certain amount of supervision and taxation benefits. It appears that they left the co-operative movement ~~there~~^{by} four years ago, for what reasons are difficult to ascertain, although it is probable that Rotan, if not other Banabans preferred to be independent and presented what they felt to be interference from the Fiji Government. For two following years profits were made and company tax of 6/3 in the pound was charged on profits. This appears to have been a source of great irritation to Rotan and payment of tax is ~~still~~ outstanding and will presumably sooner or later lead to an action for recovery by the Fiji Government. It is to be ~~generally~~ hoped that this matter will be settled without such an action. The loss of which will only lead to further mistrust ~~of~~ the Government on the part of the Banabans who will no doubt accept Rotan's version of the story. It was, of ~~course~~^{course} specifically stated in the Fiji Governments' original statement of intentions that the Banabans should pay the same taxes and receive the same services as other Fiji residents and the

Banabans accepted this. Nevertheless their own attitude seems to have been somewhat inconsistent. At some stage they have expressed concern less the Fiji Government might expect them to pay for services which other residents obtained from central funds and yet at other times they appear to have ~~aspired~~ ^{aspired} to independence in these matters, even going as far as to request that Rabi and Ocean Island should be a separate British Colony with its own exchequer.

Clearly taxation considerations should not be allowed influence production and trading policy. It is to be hoped that the Banabans will see the advantages which can be gained to themselves by re-entering the co-operative movement. Under the present law, taxes would then be waived for an initial period. After that a balanced policy towards reserves would necessitate some taxation being paid but, being a community enterprise, and large surpluses being therefore undesirable, taxes should not be large, and certainly could not be considered exorbitant in view of the present taxation system in Fiji which places no taxes on native production; so that native populations ^{tend to} obtain relative advantages particularly in the form of medical services.

Owing to the muddled nature of many of their books and accounts and their ~~lateness~~ ^{lateness} in getting them balanced, it is not possible to estimate exact social accounts for the Banabans for a particular year. Analysis of the accounts, and observations made on Rabi, however, indicate that the average annual social income during the years 1950-1953 would approximate to the

following pattern.

	£F
Income from phosphate Royalties	15,000
Income from interest on funds	5,500
Copra and trochas	42,000
Salaries and wages: Official and workers on Rabi (ex copra and trochas labour)	10,000
Profit or loss on trading	-1,000
	<hr/>
Total money income	71,500
	<hr/>
Non-money income	
Food crops, fish and meat, eggs milk valued at market prices	22,000
	<hr/>
Total social income	93,500
	<hr/>

Approximately £12,000 per annum is being used for capital improvement and thus the distributed money income is about £59,500 although, in view of the increased indebtedness of the community, full account of which has not been taken this £59,500 viewed as personal expenditure probably an underestimate.

The standard of living amongst the Banabans is higher than the average of Fijian villages but not in any marked degree. The Landowners do not enjoy a significantly higher income than other people as their cash hand-outs average no more than £10 or £12 a head the highest being about £70 per annum but a large number of them receiving very small payments. Younger men, and

Gilbertese who have no land rights on Ocean Island can earn as much by very little extra work cutting copra.

The production of food crops is almost certainly lower, and the consumption of tinned goods higher, than in the average Fijian village, as would perhaps be expected of a community from a soilless island such as Ocean and who have been in longer contact with European store goods. The diet on Rabi includes a large amount of tinned meat and fish, although the stores are frequently out of these important goods. This is not I feel solely due to a bad policy of stocking but also due to the tendency (also found amongst Fijians) for the Banabans to consume a large amount of food when it first becomes available and to do without afterwards. This habit, which has some point when the fruits of a hunting or fishing expedition may rot or disappear if not consumed, seems to some extent to have been transferred to the more durable tinned products, and many people on Rabi told me that the Banabans tend to eat when they are hungry rather than having any set meal time. Thus the amount of food eaten does not seem to depend on the amount of cash available.

The Banabans own cattle, pigs and poultry and fresh milk is available but there seems to have been some resistance to the adoption of fresh milk as a regular food for children and it is only now becoming widely used. The Fijian Assistant Medical Practitioner who was at Rabi when the Banabans arrived and for much of the time since, said that it appears to have been customary

amongst the people to wean children young but this too is now being corrected. With inadequate information in the traditional background of the Banabans it is difficult to say whether these habits are of customary origin or are due to ignorance. Miss S. Holmes notes, in a memorandum on Gilbertese Nutrition prepared by the South Pacific Health Service, that Gilbertese when sick or pregnant have 'no taste' for certain protein foods and this is believed to be a psychologically induced state resulting from certain customary observances.

The weekly diet of a family is variable; as at some times tinned foods may not be available; and at others fresh fish may not be caught as the Banabans say that Rabi is an inferior fishing ground to Ocean Island and that fishing has deteriorated since they arrived. Again a pig or cow may have been killed and provide, at another time, fresh meat. A weeks' consumption of food by man woman and two children between five and twelve years approximates to the following pattern.

Fresh meat or fish	15 lbs
Tinned meat or fish	8 lb
Eggs	4 eggs
fresh milk	3 pints
tinned milk	2 tins powdered
Bread, cakes flour	8 lbs.
Butter and margerine	1 lb.
Tea	$\frac{1}{2}$ lb.
Rice	6 lbs.

Other foods consumed regularly are dalo, tapioca, kumala, paw-paw, banana (eaten raw and ripe or cooked green) mango, pandanus fruit and coconut (the Banabans use coconuts when green for drinking and ripe for cooking and eating, including green nuts, they probably consume about 3 per head per week, they also make sweet and sour toddy). Fish is generally eaten raw. In general the Banaban diet appears to be rich in protein foods. They consume less carbohydrates than the Fijians and like the Fijians are probably deficient in vitamins which may be a contributing factor to their lack of energy.

Although the traditional methods of making fans, mats and baskets are remembered by some of the older women in Rabi, the output of traditional craft-work is extremely poor and is not done on a commercial level. Many of the younger women said that they would like to learn some of these crafts done by their own people and it might be worthy of consideration to bring a Gilbertese instructress to Rabi for a period, especially as the Banabans have now planted pandanus more widely on Rabi and this is one of the basic materials, although Gilbertese fans, which are amongst the best in the Pacific are made mainly from coconut.

The Banaban women are good cooks and bake excellent bread. Sewing however, is only now being taught to girls in schools and I was surprised to find some girls of post-school age using a sewing machine and yet who were not able to handle a needle and thread. Banabans show great interest in learning new techniques and it is well worthy of note that their apparent laziness where labour for

for profit is concerned does not mean they are lazy as regards music dancing and household arts. Perhaps there is some basic wisdom in their attitude as the improvement in their leisure time activities could be at least as great a genuine civilizing ~~in~~fluence as could more money.

The object of this paper is to present facts rather than to make any recommendations. To summarise the economic problems of Rabi is not however seriously to depart from this object.

To the enthusiast it may appear that Rabi is an admirable place for some programme of intensive economic development.

It may be argued that rich land is available and that Banaban capital could be used to build roads, plant crops and buy machinery and that by this means the island could be turned into a profitable agricultural and copra estate with perhaps even some processing industries. But it seems that such plans face certain obstacles when translated to real life. What better form of capital could the Banabans have at the moment than their full-bearing coconuts? and yet they are not providing the labour by which the full profitability of this capital can be obtained. No amount of investment can succeed unless the necessary labour is available both to carry out the initial investment and to put the asset to profitable use. It is true that roads could be built and other improvements made by contracting with outside firms to provide most of the labour but with no assurance that such improvements will ultimately lead to a greater money income on Rabi, such work is sheer waste of money.

The shortage of labour on Rabi arises firstly because the population is a small one to carry out activities such as the Banabans with their capital can envisage but secondly, and to a much greater extent the shortage arises from the Banabans' dislike of work. It is easy, looking through European eyes to condemn this as down right laziness but this is the Pacific way of life which is proving almost completely resistant to the technical and economic revolutions which have swept millions of peoples from primitive to modern mechanised economies within the space of one generation. Perhaps the islander has more sense than is generally conceded. He is happy as he is and he hesitates to alter his way of life before he is sure that the new way is better. His attitude to money is to get what he can and enjoy what he gets. But even the greatest incentive will not spur him to exceptional effort.

He has resisted being driven into a pattern of living where he is dependent on money. Even in the case of the Banabans, who have been in contact with money for longer than most natives, I do not believe a sudden loss of all money income would make them substantially unhappier, or, after the initial adjustment, unhealthier people. However in their case the continuance of a money income is assured and the problems of managing it will have to be faced by them.

Thus plans for the future development of Rabi must be fitted into the framework of their own way of life. The presentation of a plan to the people for their acceptance and the setting of a

time limit for the plans' completion is found, in most native economies, to be the best way of achieving results but obviously the amount of work to be done in a given time must be geared to the actual potentialities of the people and not to any European conception of output per man-hour. Above all improvements should only be made or machinery purchased with a complete understanding of the future commitments in terms of skilled and unskilled labour time that such assets bring with them. Progress it seems, may be slow and indeed it may be difficult to keep capital development even at the level where it will barely offset wastage of existing assets. Perhaps the criteria of advance should be that sufficient development be carried out to prevent an actual decline in the living standard as the population rises. Their present living standard is sufficient for healthy living and to try and persuade them to work ^{much} harder for greater riches would be foolish and would fail. If it succeeded it in all probability impoverish them in terms of happiness, courtesy, family loyalty, hospitality and social charm. For if we measured prosperity in these assets the Banabans would certainly rank as millionaires.

The Banabans of Rabi Island and their economic affairs.

Although the Banabans are a numerically small people originating from an isolated island in the mid-Pacific their affairs are of particular interest to the economist.

Unfortunately ~~very~~ little work has been done on the anthropological background of these peoples

NON-UNILINEAR KIN GROUPS IN THE GILBERT ISLANDS

by Ward H. Goodenough

Non-Unilinear Kin Groups in the Gilbert Islands

by Ward H. Goodenough

The purpose of this brief account of Gilbertese Social Groups is to clarify what seems to me to be a conceptual gap in our thinking about Malayo-Polynesian social organization.¹ Gilbertese society illustrates forms of kin group organization which I suspect have a fairly wide distribution among Oceanic and Malaysian societies. There is not time here to review the evidence for the occurrence of these forms in other societies, or to discuss their implications for our understanding of original Malayo-Polynesian social organization. Describing the Gilbertese groups, however, will indicate a problem area for further study.

In Gilbertese society we must distinguish formally and functionally between five kinds of kin group.

1. The utu, a bilateral kindred.
2. The oo, an unrestricted descent group including all the persons descended from an original ancestor, regardless of whether through men or women.
3. The mweenga, a household. Formerly it was an extended family unit. It was predominantly patrilocal, but matrilocal marriages kept it from being completely so.
4. The bwoti, a non-unilinear descent group based on land rights, functioning in connection with community meeting house organization.
5. The kainga, a non-unilinear descent group based on parental residence. Now defunct, it formerly functioned in connection with some aspects of property organization, feuding, and some economic activities.

The oo, the bwoti, and the kainga are all of interest for this discussion.

As already indicated, the oo consists of all persons descended from a common ancestor regardless of whether descent is traced through men or women. This group functions only in relation to land, individual rights to which may

be held by both sexes. When a man (or woman) dies, his land passes to his children. Each daughter who marries receives a small share of the inheritance. The bulk of it is divided among the sons, with a slightly larger share going to the eldest. Division among the sons may be delayed until their death, being subsequently accomplished by their heirs. If there are no sons, the daughters receive the entire inheritance. Since women also pass their shares on to their children, some of the land allotted among brothers and sisters comes from their father and some from their mother. If their mother was without brothers, they may ^{more} get/land from her than from their father. As this process continues a tract of land is divided and subdivided within various lines descended from the original owner. All of his descendants form an oo. Some of them may not have acquired a share of the land coming from this ancestor, but are eligible to do so should present share holders die without heirs. Land may not be alienated from the oo, without the consent of its members. When a person dies without children, therefore, his several holdings revert for distribution among the nearest of his kinsmen, who like him, are descended from the original owner. Land which came through his mother cannot revert to kinsmen on his father's side; it can go only to those of his mother's kin who are her oo mates with respect to that land. Membership in the oo is not terminated by settlement in a different community or atoll. It lasts for as long as the genealogical ties are remembered.

Community meeting houses in the Gilbert Islands, as in Samoa², have a highly formalized organization. Every member of the community has the right to sit in one or more of the traditional seating places under the eaves around the meeting house. Each seating place is named and together with the people who occupy it constitutes a bwoti. Bwoti membership is based on individual rights in certain plots of land. All persons who own a share in such a plot, ^{if} of no more than one square foot, have the right to a corresponding seat. Since all persons holding a share in the same plot are theoretically

lineal descendants of its original holder and thus members of the same oo, all persons entitled to the same seat in the meeting house are ipso facto consanguineally related and so recognized. But not all members of the same oo with respect to such a plot have actually inherited shares in it; they hold lands acquired from other ancestors. Not holding a share, they are barred from the associated seat, ^{and} but must sit elsewhere as their present holdings permit. While all bwoti mates belong to the same oo, only a segment of any one oo belongs to the same bwoti. From his various ancestors a man may acquire shares in several plots, each entitling him to a different seat. He is potentially a member of several bwoti at once, but can activate membership in only one. His children are not bound by his choice, however, and he himself may change his affiliation, either because he has quarrelled with his mates or because he wishes to help keep up the numerical strength, or take over the leadership of a bwoti in which he has the right of active membership. A man entitled to sit in two places may so divide his land holdings that one son acquires the right to sit in one bwoti while another son acquires the right to sit in the other. There are instances where brothers belong to different bwoti. Everyone has the right of membership in at least one; people divide their land holdings amongst their heirs in such a way as to insure this. Women pass on these rights to their children in the same way that men do. We have seen, however, that unless they have no brothers, they traditionally receive smaller allotments of land, and then only at marriage. As a result, men belong more often to their father's than to their mother's bwoti. It is understandable ^{therefore,} that this kin group should have been erroneously labeled "patrilineal" by such outstanding reporters of Gilbertese custom as Grimble and Maude.³ In the light of existing concepts, this was the best label they could use. The bwoti, then, is a common descent group whose membership is restricted not by reckoning descent exclusively through one sex, but to those descendants of the common ancestor whose share of the original inheritance includes a portion of a particular plot of land.

Kainga appear originally to have had the same membership as bwoti, for in some instances their names coincide, and they often have the same founding ancestors. In time, however, they diverged, for the principles governing their membership differ. Like the bwoti, each kainga was a descent group associated with a tract of land. Its founding ancestor, also, was the original holder of the tract. Theoretically, the original ancestor established residence on his land. Those of his descendants who continued to reside there, formed together with their spouses an extended family, or mweenga. Together with those who were born and raised there, but had moved away after marriage, they formed a kainga. Residence was usually patrilocal, but matrilocal residence was considered proper under some circumstances, as when a man's share of his kainga lands was small while his wife's was large. While residence did not affect one's own kainga membership, it did affect that of one's children. It appears to have been the rule that if a person's parents resided patrilocally, he belonged to his father's kainga, but if they resided matrilocally, he belonged to his mother's. Since residence was predominantly patrilocal, most Gilbertese belonged to their father's kainga. Succession to leadership in the kainga, moreover, could descend only in the male line. Neither of these facts, however, made the kainga a true patrilineal lineage, for if membership were patrilineal, then the children of men who went in matrilocal residence would still have belonged to their father's kainga. Patrilineal succession to its leadership was guaranteed by having the eligible successor reside patrilocally, so that his son would in turn be a member and eligible to succeed him. We seem to have in the kainga, then, a kin group resembling a lineage, but whose membership is determined by parental residence rather than parental sex.

Normally, each member of the kainga had a plot in the tract^t of land associated with it. If this tract had a corresponding bwoti in the meeting house, all of the kainga's members would be eligible to sit there. The plots of those members of the kainga who moved away after marriage, however, went

to their children, who belonged to other kainga. These children thus became eligible to membership in a bwoti other than that to which most of their kainga mates belonged. By this process members of the same kainga could and did belong to different bwoti, and, conversely, members of the same bwoti belonged to different kainga, even though both types of group were founded by the same ancestors. While each kainga tends to be associated with a specific bwoti, their respective personnel are not congruent.

To sum up, all three descent groups are somehow connected with land. An ancestor ^{who} ~~having~~ established ownership of a tract was the founder of all three. All of his descendants form an oo. Those in actual possession of a share in the land are eligible to membership in a bwoti. Those whose parents resided on it form a kainga. None of these groups is unilinear. Yet they are not to be confused with bilateral kindreds as classically defined by Rivers,⁴ for their memberships do not coincide with that of the utuu, which is a true kindred. They do conform, however, to the kindred as defined in Notes and Queries,⁵ and hereby stems the conceptual confusion to which I referred at the beginning of this paper.

Rivers and Murdock⁶ both treat the kindred as a group of persons who have a relative in common, regardless of whether kinship is traced through men or women. Such people are not necessarily related to one another. The cousins on your father's side, for example, are not related to those on your mother's side. They have no ancestry in common. What unites them in your kindred is the fact that they have you as a common relative.

As defined in Notes and Queries, on the other hand, the term kindred "should be limited to a group of persons who acknowledge their descent, genealogically or by adoption, from one family, whether through their father's or mother's." Here a kindred refers to people who have an ancestor in common as distinct from people who have a relative in common. In this sense a kindred has continuity through time and all its members are related

to one another. As Notes and Queries defines it, a kindred is any non-unilinear descent group; as Murdock and Rivers define it, it is not a true descent group at all. The source of confusion has clearly been the feature common to both types of group; namely, that in both cases consanguineal connections are traced through either sex indifferently. The difference is that in the kindred of Rivers and Murdock these connections are traced laterally to a common relative, while in the kindred of Notes and Queries they are traced lineally to a common ancestor.

The fact that both types of group are represented in the Gilberts shows how important it is to distinguish between them. Gilbertese organization also shows the necessity for distinguishing different types of kindred within the Notes and Queries sense of that term. They may include all descendants of the founding ancestor, like the Gilbertese oo, or only some of them. Unilinear descent is one way to limit the membership, but the bwoti and kainga illustrate other ways.

In conclusion, then, the Gilbert Islands reveal principles of kin group organization which do not conform readily to traditional anthropological concepts. Since there are indications that the Gilbert Islands are not unique in this regard, students of Malayo-Polynesian societies must be prepared to discern more than the customary clans and kindreds.

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FOOTNOTES

1. Field work was conducted during the summer of 1951, when the writer was a member of a team making an ecological study of Onotoa under the auspices of the Pacific Science Board of the National Research Council and the Geography Branch of the Office of Naval Research.
2. The Samoan fono and Gilbertese mwaneaba (meeting house) probably have a common origin, for mwaneaba customs are attributed to Samoan invaders arriving in the Gilbert Islands several hundred years ago.
3. Grimble, C. M. G., The Migrations of a Pandanus People, Polynesian Society Memoir No. 12, pp. 19-20, 1933; We Chose the Islands, p. 78, New York, 1952; and Maude, H. C. and H. E., "Adoption in the Gilbert Islands," Journal of the Polynesian Society, Vol. 40, p. 232, 1931.
4. Rivers, W. H. R., Social Organization, pp. 15-16, New York, 1926.
5. Notes and Queries, Fifth edition, p. 55, London, 1929.
6. Murdock, G. P., Social Structure, pp. 56-62, New York, 1949.

Boti

The word boti (phonetically = [bós~bóts~boté]) is used interchangeably with the word inaki to refer to a particular seating division in the maneaba; i.e., the community meeting house. It embodies a plurality of social meanings which we ascribe to any type of area formally designated for the use of specific persons on particular occasions. The boti is a place in the community meeting house where a person seats himself when attending a political assembly, a village feast, a religious service, or any of the many other types of social gathering held in the meeting house. A person who attends any of these gatherings cannot choose to be seated in any boti of his own choice. He must only seat himself in the boti division assigned to him in accordance with prescribed customary rules. These rules, although modified over the years by the continuous evolution of the entire meeting house complex, are quite simple and few in number. A person entering the meeting house may thus choose among the following rules or seating options:

(1) He may seat himself in the boti division occupied by either one of his parents or their ancestors.

(2) He may, depending upon the purpose for which the meeting is being held, seat himself in accordance with the directives of the elders temporarily placed in charge of the meeting.

(3) He may, if visiting a meeting house while being away from his own village, seat himself in accordance with rule "1" described above or sit in the boti division assigned to all visitors and "strangers" who cannot claim seating privileges in any of the boti divisions within that

particular meeting house.

(4) A person is privileged to sit in the boti occupied by his spouse, adopter, or other person invested with the power to extend the privilege.

(5) He may sit in a boti division if formally invited to do so by the recognized spokesman for that division.

Of the several options, the most frequent choice of a man is to sit in the boti division occupied by his father and male relatives and, for a married woman, to sit in the boti of her spouse. It seems unnecessary to complicate this picture by invoking theoretical issues concerning the appropriateness of such labels as "descent" and "social group" to explain why Gilbertese persons observe rather formal seating privileges in the community meeting house. This, however, is the direction which Goodenough's analysis requires us to take.

The problem is to find out if boti seating privileges derive from rule of descent or if those persons who sit together in the same boti represent some other type of social category or group. Finally, we will briefly consider the alleged relationship between boti membership and land tenure principles.

To evaluate Goodenough's data and interpretations of the Gilbertese boti we can first look comparatively at the data on Gilbertese culture collected and published by A. F. Grimble and H. E. Maude during the four decades preceeding Goodenough's visit to Onotoa Island in 1951. We also compare Goodenough's Onotoan data with more recent field data from the southern Gilberts, the Ocean Island or Banaban Gilbertese settlement on Rambi Island in Fiji, and the relocated Gilbertese settlement on Gizo

Island in the British Solomon Islands Protectorate.

This procedure should ideally allow us to place the Onotoan data in a functional as well as a historical perspective. Any variance between the Onotoan situation and other parallel examples may hereafter be attributed to either (1) a uniqueness of boti practices on Onotoa Island or (2) a discrepancy between different analytical approaches applied to roughly similar ethnographic facts. While we fully recognize that inter-island differences may lead to different analytical conclusions, we nevertheless maintain that our more inclusive ethnographic perspective seriously challenges Goodenough's generalizations drawn from one particular island setting.

The Pacific historian H. E. Maude has provided us with the most complete and definitive exposition of the boti in his monograph on The Evolution of the Gilbertese Boti: An Ethnohistorical Interpretation. Although Maude used data collected from informants on Beru Island as his primary source, he has made extensive use of the other ethnographic data collected by his predecessor and colleague, the late Sir Arthur Grimble, and he draws equally from his own treasure of ethnographic knowledge acquired during some 25 years of residence in the Gilbert Islands—a kind of ethnographic knowledge, we might add, that only a handful of professional anthropologists have ever possessed on any given culture.

Maude's analysis of the boti has a direct bearing on our re-examination of Goodenough's view of the boti as a kin group founded on non-unilineal descent principles. Maude (1963:25) begins his analysis of descent in the boti by comparing Grimble's earlier data with his own. He carefully notes, for example, how Grimble infers a general rule of boti membership from a specific case that was brought Grimble in his capacity as a Native Lands Commissioner. (Grimble says: "Descent, deter-

mining membership of the social group possessing a given boti, is reckoned patrilineally on all islands.") Maude further quotes directly from Grimble's unpublished paper on "Procedures and Privileges of the Clans in the Maneaba" to illustrate this point:

"An elderly man named Rioti claimed membership of the boti Karongoa-n-uea, which had consistently been denied his ascendants in the male line for several successive generations. He provided me with a list of 20 lineal ascendants, alleged to be males back to his ancestor Kirata the First, a semi mythical Chief of Tarawa, known to be of the Karongoa-n-uea group. None disputed the authenticity of the names he furnished; issue was joined on a point of sex. It was argued by the opposition that an ascendant in the sixth generation back from Rioti, named Tearoko, was not a man but a woman. Under these circumstances, it was insisted, Rioti must count his boti-descent, not from Tearoko, but from her husband, who belonged to the Ababou group. Rioti himself admitted such reasoning would have been perfectly just had Tearoko been indeed a woman; his whole argument was limited to showing that this person had been a man."
(Grimble in Maude 1963:25)

The principle invoked to defeat Roti's claim to seating privileges in the boti of the Karongoa-n-uea is clearly founded on an absolute rule stipulating patrilineal affiliation with a boti member as a minimal condition of admission to the boti. This, if taken by itself, would appear to close the door on any further discussion of alternative ways to obtain seating privileges in a particular boti. But Maude now turns to his own ethnographic data, also collected while he himself served as a Native Land Commissioner for the southern Gilberts, and notes several important

exceptions to Grimble's patrilineal membership rule. First he cites two specific dispute cases involving succession to boti membership where a boti member has only female heirs. Although the two cases deal directly with succession to the headship of the utu, we learn how exceptions to the straightforward patrilineal succession principle also applies to the allocation of boti seating privileges. Maude (1963:26) quotes directly from statements made by knowledgeable Gilbertese elders:

"The 'karimoa' (the eldest child in a family) should always be the head. When there are only female children to the head, the next of kin being a male takes on the duties until one of the female children has a male child when he becomes the head of his mother's boti. If they only had females again, they would wait until these females had a male child."

"If a man dies with only female issue, the eldest daughter becomes the head of the utu. If her father's branch was the senior in the clan, she is recognized as the head of the clan but takes no active part in clan ritual and cannot speak in the maneaba. Her place in ceremonial is taken by her father's brother. Her own son, however, will become head of the clan, or utu, and on arriving of age will take over his duties from his grandfather's brother." Maude adds that in more ordinary cases, i.e., those involving succession to membership in less prestigious and important boti divisions, ". . . the rule enjoining the transmission of boti membership through the daughter was regarded as permissive and not mandatory . . . but when succession to the headship of a boti was involved, procedure was more strictly proscribed and enforced" (Ibid.).

Other exceptions to the strict application of the patrilineal succession principle are also evidenced by what Maude terms "the Taboni

Kamava Principle" which is invoked as a matter of convenience; i.e., a man's children may be assigned to a seating place in their mother's boti "to relieve sitting pressure in an overcrowded boti" (Ibid.). A man, who for economic or marital reasons resides away from his own family lands and derives his daily living from his wife's family estate, will also as a matter of convenience assign his children to their mother's boti. And, finally, it is noted that an adopted person will sit with his adopter's boti although he retains residual privileges in the boti of his father and mother.

These exceptions, while they point away from a strict patrilineal membership principle, show how such factors as convenience, physical crowding, economic circumstances, or formal social arrangements may be as significant as any rule of descent in the determination of a person's boti seating privileges. We may go even further by stating that any analytical difficulties fostered by hierarchical and optional seating rules cannot be resolved by the introduction of a non-unilineal descent group principle. It is more in line with the available historical and ethnographic sources on boti organization to say that the evolution of boti seating privileges within the community meeting house complex began with a rather strict adherence to a patrilineal principle closely linked to the earliest type of clan organization developed by the Samoan settlers on Beru Island. As the meeting house organization was adopted on other islands, it underwent further changes. We postulate that the processes of adaptation and change of the meeting house complex have led to the abandonment and modification of some of the original rules and the gradual emergence of so-called "exceptions" as rules in themselves.

We only need to consider briefly how the total disengagement from

from traditional boti seating rules found on such islands as Tamana, Arorae, and the Gilbertese resettlement communities elsewhere in the Pacific, to illustrate how new social circumstances have effected a clear breakdown of former practices. In these settings, where the islanders view the community meeting house primarily as a central gathering place during public celebrations, the word boti still denotes a seating division within the meeting house but it has lost all connotations of social privilege and exclusiveness. Knudson's (1964:17-20) study of the community meeting house on Gizo Island indicates how the boti has reached its penultimate significance as a social category. He describes how meeting house gatherings are supervised by leaders democratically chosen for the occasion, how anyone can seat himself in a location of his own choice, and how anyone can take to the floor and speak before the gathering.

The devolution of the boti in the southern Gilberts is now accepted as an undisputed fact although its disengagement from traditional practices is much less apparent than on Gizo. The presence of several alternative seating arrangements observed on Nonouti and Tabiteuea Islands (which are comparable to those reported for the islands of Onotos, Beru, and Nikunau) -- allowing a person to seek affiliation with the boti occupied by his father, mother, adopter, or spouse--does not detract from our analysis of the boti as a functional category. The alternative rules for validating a person's claim to seating privileges do caution us against viewing the boti as a descent group.

Now let us turn to the problem of defining the boti as a group and further challenging Goodenough's assertion that the boti is a ". . . group based on land rights."

A group, according to Nadel, ". . . may be defined as a collection of individuals who stand in regular and relatively permanent relationships, that is, who act towards and in respect of each other, or towards and in respect of individuals outside the group, regularly in a specific, predictable, and expected fashion" (Nadel 1951:146). If we operationalize Nadel's definition of group in the Gilbertese context we immediately encounter several ethnographic and theoretical difficulties. First, since we are treating the boti synchronically and diachronically, it may be possible to think of the traditional pre-contact boti type as approximating what is here defined as a group. We know that most of the boti members were in fact blood relatives and most, it may be assumed, shared certain rights and privileges as part of their group membership. However, as soon as we add the synchronic or functional perspective, we encounter difficulties with the data presented by 20th century observers on meeting house customs. Maude (1963:48-51) reasons that the boti decayed as a functioning social institution shortly after the turn of the 20th century. This, of course, raises the interesting possibility that we as anthropologists may have kept something alive that has been buried by ethnohistorians and half-forgotten by our informants. But since Lundsgaarde observed "functioning" boti divisions on Nonouti and Tabiteuea Islands in 1964-1965, and Goodenough presumably observed similar practices on Onotoa Island in 1951, we are prepared to say that the boti continues to play a part in the total complex of the community house organization. Some observance of seating privileges are still in effect on these islands and we need to say something about their possible significance as part of present-day Gilbertese social organization (cf. Lundsgaarde 1970:242-264). We note, for example, that boti members may or may not share consanguineal

ties and that they may be bound by different obligations to other non-members. Because of this we feel that it may be most accurate at this stage to think of the boti as the survival of a traditional feature of the meeting house complex which continues to provide a public platform for the articulation of collective views through a membership designated authority figure. This interpretation resolves some of the definitional problems and it finds support in our data. Each boti, for example, selects from among its most senior and articulate male members one man who will represent the boti in meeting house affairs. Each boti representative, formally designated as "the head of the boti", is primarily charged with two duties: (1) he serves as the boti representative in village and island council meetings and (2) he invokes the high prestige of his position to mediate in conflicts arising among the boti constituents.

We could then conclude that because a boti representative is empowered to negotiate and act on behalf of his constituents he must, therefore, represent a functioning social group rather than serving an aggregate of individuals. But this interpretation is deceptive as it is tautological. It is in fact just as inaccurate as saying that the President of the American Anthropological Association presides over a group when in fact the President, like his Gilbertese counterpart, merely symbolizes a category of person who for some rather specific public purposes require representation as one entity.

Our final arguments take issue with Goodenough's finding that the boti is a group based on land rights. The problem here is once again placed in perspective by consideration of Maude's conclusions on this point. He says: "The boti had functions related to many aspects of Gilbertese life, social, economic, political and judicial, but not in

connection with land, which was owned individually and inherited through the utu" (Maude 1963:54; emphases ours). We note that Maude does not deny the possibility that members of the same boti might also share common interests in land. His observation merely concurs with our data on land tenure practices. These data, among other things, show that land rights and tenure privileges follow a series of different principles that relate directly to almost every other feature of Gilbertese social organization except for boti membership. Land rights, as we shall see in the following discussion of the kainga estate, are most frequently acquired by inheritance from either or both parents. Rights may also be acquired through a variety of other and less frequent modes of property conveyance. Since these rights always pass from one individual to another, it is difficult to envision how boti constituents--who exercise individual rights to individually held land parcels--can act as a corporate legal entity. Good-enough's answer to this difficulty appears to rest on his interpretation of the boti as a group of consanguineal kinsmen. In his own words:

"Bwoti membership is based on individual rights in certain plots of land. All persons who own a share in such a plot, if no more than one square foot, have the right to a corresponding seat. Since all persons holding a share in the same plot are theoretically lineal descendants of its original holder and thus members of the same oo, all persons entitled to the same seat in the meeting house are ipso facto consanguineally related and so recognized. But not all members of the same oo with respect to such a plot have actually inherited shares in it; they hold lands acquired from other ancestors. Not holding a share, they are barred from the associated seat, but must sit elsewhere as their present holdings permit. While all bwoti

mates belong to the same oo, only a segment of the oo belongs to the same bwoti" (Goodenough 1955:74).

What is needed here is perhaps to argue the question of boti seating privileges in much the same fashion as Goodenough (1955:71-83) argued with Fisher (1958:508-517) about residence rules. Or, it may be more expedient to dismiss the entire argument by following Goodenough's own updating of the "patrilineal" interpretation used in the earlier writings of both Grimble and Maude; e.g., "In the light of existing concepts, this (patrilineal) was the best label they could use" (Goodenough 1955:74). We have, however, found the labels "nonunilinear descent" and "functioning group" even less revealing than the label "patrilineal." If we allow for polysemy in both native and analytical categories, the very least we can hope to do as scientists is to prevent our own labels from attaining greater significance than the ethnographic facts which they are designed to order.

CATEGORY AND GROUP IN GILBERTESE KINSHIP:

AN UPDATING OF GOODENOUGH'S ANALYSIS

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INTRODUCTION

Goodenough's article "A Problem in Malayo-Polynesian Social Organization" (1955) is one of a group of roughly contemporary landmark papers in the development of Oceanic social anthropology. Among other things, the author described Gilbertese "kin groups," and used the material to address historical and evolutionary questions, with particular reference to land tenure. From the current perspective, it was the way in which he broached the "bilateral problem," considered alongside the contributions of Firth (1957), Davenport (1959) and Freeman (1961), to cite but a few, which made, and still makes, Goodenough's contribution so important.

The Gilbertese, both historically (in Goodenough's analysis) and theoretically (in subsequent work by others), have become something of a prototype in Oceanic and kinship studies. Goodenough's formulation, based on a summer's field work on the island of Onotoa, has been taken up by the writers of texts (e.g., Bohannan 1965 and Fox 1967) and through its frequent reprinting (e.g., Bohannan and Middleton 1968; Vayda 1968;

Bobbs-Merrill n.d.), the 1955 paper has become something of a text in itself.

Perhaps all prototypical specimens, by their very prototypical nature, invite redissection by later analysts. In this paper we wish to call attention to the results of some recent research, as well as some older research, which qualify Goodenough's interpretation of the Gilbertese.¹ One might argue that the rectifications could be made in the normal course of the publication of the several works on the Gilbertese which are forthcoming over the next few years. These publications, however, are likely to receive the most careful consideration mainly in specialist circles, and the "text-book" nature of the case recommends an early and more widely disseminated hint of things to come.

We hope it is clear that we are not challenging the insight or importance of Goodenough's paper. We just want to try to get some crucial facts straight on the Gilbertese.²

In order to get these facts straight, we have the advantage of conceptual clarifications which have been made during the intervening period--clarifications which Goodenough has been instrumental in making. The possibility exists, as it does with all problems of this kind, that Onotoa is different from the areas with which we are familiar, or that different time periods are involved. Both change and internal variation within the Gilbertese culture area must be confronted at some point. But we accept and operate upon the tactical legitimacy

of the procedure implicit in Goodenough's own approach, which is to take data from a limited sample and construct an empirical hypothesis about the larger area. It does seem, however, that there may be important transformations which correlate with the level of stratification achieved on different islands. The southern Gilberts and Ocean Island seem less stratified than the central and northern Gilberts. We are using information from the south and Ocean Island to construct a picture of the relatively less stratified situation. We speak of "the Gilbertese" for brevity, but it should be kept firmly in mind that our hypothesis applies to the relatively less stratified islands--not that stratification is necessarily the most important variable. We must await further systematic and comparative thinking on Gilbertese ethnography before more encompassing statements about social organization are made.

The point from which our analysis takes off is the demonstrated utility of making a simple but still powerful analytic distinction in the analysis of social structure. For the purposes of our paper this distinction can be phrased as that between (a) the meanings of cultural categories (in the consideration of which verbal labels are generally prominent) and their interrelationships within a system of meaning, and (b) the organization of roles and collectivities and their interrelationships within a social organization. This distinction (for brevity) between conceptual organization and social organization does not pretend to be exhaustive of the domain

of social behavior. It only pretends to be helpful. The failure to make this kind of distinction has created a good deal of confusion in the kinship literature. Recent papers by Schneider (1965) and Scheffler (1966) are attempts to straighten it out.

Generally speaking, the best strategy is to consider each of these questions, conceptual organization and social organization, in its own terms. One of the problems that confronts the student of social structure is that the indigenous labels with which one encounters (labels variously translated as 'kinsmen,' 'family,' 'kinship,' etc.) are labels which, empirically, are used in action during the process of social organization, and are labels through which the members of a society articulate the meaning of social organization to themselves.

Methodologically, the separation of the two kinds of organization, the analysis of each in its own terms, as a first step, implies that a wider range of relevant questions can be asked than could be asked if one hurries to attach indigenous labels to groups and produce an undifferentiated analysis. The description of each system could theoretically be written independently of the other. The properties of each system can be investigated as such. With regard to labels or cultural categories in general, for example, one can ask about their organization (e.g., levels of contrast, marked vs. unmarked categories, metaphor). With regard to groups, for example, one can ask about their mode of integration within an operating

society. In the first case one develops a coherent picture of a system of meaning. In the second case one develops a coherent picture of a functioning social organization. Ultimately one's hope is to articulate the two pictures. But to be articulated they must first be drawn. And as evidence accumulates one can ask general questions about the properties of systems of meaning, the properties of social organization, and the general modes of articulation between them.

The length and scope of this paper forbid the carrying out of this program. But what we can try to do is to unravel certain aspects of the Gilbertese situation with this program in mind.

Specifically, we take issue with Goodenough's contention that in the Gilberts,

". . . we must distinguish formally and functionally between five types of kin group.

1. The utuu, a true bilateral kindred.
2. The ooi, an unrestricted descent group, including all the persons descended from a common ancestor, regardless whether through men or women. This group functions only in relation to property. [After ooi, the following footnote appears: 'I am not certain that ooi is the correct native term for this group. Literally, the word means 'fence.' It was only in the last two days of fieldwork that I learned it referred to some

type of kin group as well. Answers to last-minute queries suggested that it referred to the unrestricted descent group which I had already isolated but had thought to be unnamed.' Vayda's (1968:136) editorial note to the reprinted article adds: "'Ooi' is the author's corrected spelling of this term; in the previous publication of the present article, "oo" was used.']

3. The mweenga, a household. Formerly it was an extended family unit. It was predominantly patrilocal, but matrilocal marriages kept it from being completely so.

4. The bwoti, a nonunilinear descent group based on land rights, functioning in connection with community meeting-house organization.

5. The kainga, a nonunilinear descent group based on parental residence. Now defunct, it formerly functioned in connection with some aspects of property organization, feuding, and some economic activities. The ooi, the bwoti, and the kainga are all of interest for this discussion" (1953:73).

Following standard Gilbertese orthography, we will write these labels as utu, oi (and o), mwenga, boti, and kainga, respectively. Our arguments are that (1) utu in relevant ways labels more than a true bilateral kindred and only in

certain restricted ways refers to the kindred as a group;
 (2) oi does not label a descent group (and does not mean
 fence; the original o does) but is a bound morpheme that
 commonly denotes "the essence of," "the stem," or the em-
 phatic "the thing itself" of a morpheme; (3) mwenga is, as
 Goodenough described it, a dwelling, household, or family
 place of residence; (4) boti does not exclusively denote a
 particular descent group but also refers to a membership
 category in the community meeting house organization and the
 particular seating privileges defined by such membership;
 (5) kainga is neither "defunct" nor can it be adequately
 characterized as "a nonunilinear descent unit based on
 parental residence."

UTU

Utu as a word combines certain aspects of what in English
 we call relative, relatives, kinsman, kinsmen, family, and
 kinship.³

Utu means:

- (a) A kind of common identity, defined as originating
 through a connection by blood or adoption;
- (b) A kind of code for conduct, which stipulates a
 behavioral relationship of enduring, diffuse solidarity
 (see Schneider 1968).

And consonant with this definition, utu can be used to
 apply to (a) and (b), and also to:

(c) An alter who shares with ego either utu identity, or utu code for conduct, or both;

(d) A plurality of alters who share with ego either utu identity, or utu code for conduct, or both, whether or not they constitute a social group (e.g., a "kindred");

(e) A plurality of individuals who share with one another either utu identity, or utu code for conduct, or both, whether or not they constitute a social group (e.g., a "descent group").

The identity and code elements are separable but can also be combined. The manner in which they are separated or combined reveals one of the most consistent features of Gilbertese kinship labeling if not of labeling in general: marked vs. unmarked categories (see Greenberg 1966).

Before we begin, by looking at identity, it should be observed that the choice of either the identity or the code framework, by Gilbertese speakers, explains much of the surface variation or apparent ambiguity in usage. For example, consider two kinsmen who have fallen out or who have simply drifted apart. They may be utu in the identity sense and non-utu in the code sense. It is thus perfectly plausible for a person in such a situation to say of the other that he is his utu, that he is not his utu, or that he is his utu but This is a case where identity is present but code is absent. An example of the reverse, where code is present but identity is absent, is the spouse. It is perfectly appropriate for a man to say that his wife is his utu, is not his

utu, or is somebody else's utu. The absence of code in the presence of identity, or the absence of identity in the presence of code, may specify a person as not utu, somebody else's utu, or utu but. Identity + code is the great unmarked category of Gilbertese kinship.

The initial statement about identity stipulates two types of identity, or rather two modes of identity origin: 'blood' (te rara) and 'adoption' (te tabetabe and similar labels). Adoption is marked vis-à-vis non-adoption, and in this context blood is the descriptive label for the unmarked category. Thus one might say of someone who has been adopted by a relative: "Yes, he is our utu, but he is adopted." Or, "No, he is not our utu, he is so-and-so's [i.e., his natal parent's] utu."

A second contrast which is consistent with the definition concerns distance. One can label a kinsman, a kinship connection, or an utu as a unit, as 'distant' or 'close' to oneself. One can compare people as being 'closer' or 'more distant' than others. The image of distance here is one of genealogical spacing rather than intimacy.

The boundary of distance is not invariable. Whatever boundary is invoked at a particular time (e.g., one separating lineal from collateral kin), those beyond the boundary may be indicated as 'not utu,' 'not the real utu,' 'outside,' or 'utu but distant.' Thus in this context, distance and closeness are structured so that distance is marked and closeness is unmarked.

As there are different modes of the origin of kinship identity, there are different modes of the independent origin of kinship code for conduct.

One mode is 'the meeting' (te bo). It is a term which first applies between very good friends with a continuing relationship which often arose in a particular circumstance, such as traveling together, or unusual acts of kindness. The acts of kindness were unusual because the people were not already utu. Although the relationship allows the participants to act informally with one another, as kinsmen do, it is formal in the sense that 'the meeting' is created by the mutual and public recognition of the relationship. The special feature of 'the meeting' is the expectation that the relationship will not die with the people who formulated it, and it may even extend laterally beyond the initiators to their close kin. People related through 'the meeting' may be utu or not, falling under the general rule that "code only" utu can be marked or excluded vis-à-vis identity + code utu.

Marriage is a second mode of origin of the utu code for conduct. From the point of view of an individual, his spouse is his only real kinsman by marriage. His spouse's kinsmen are not his kinsmen qua their position as spouse's kinsmen, although he does use kinship terms for some of them.

A third mode of origin of the utu code for conduct (which might be considered as subsuming the second) is coresidence. Let us say that ego is an elder male in a household which

includes his wife's nephew as a more or less permanent resident. (Such residents are almost always related through identity or marriage links.) They are not utu because of the affinal tie. But they may easily regard one another as utu, and be so regarded by others, because of the kinship behavior between them.

We are in a better position now to consider the use of utu as a label applying to a plurality of individuals. The preceding discussion has hopefully made it clear that there is a variability, but a structured variability, in the concrete personnel to whom an individual at different times may apply the label utu. As noted above, utu can apply to a plurality of people who share with an individual, or with one another, either utu identity, or utu code for conduct, or both, whether or not they constitute a social group. Any collection of people related by kinship behavior or kinship identity can be called 'an utu.' This applies, for example, to the totality of kinsmen (which, considering the links through code for conduct, is not the same thing as the kindred), to the kindred, to the descendants of a common ancestor (through blood or adoption), to the residents of a house, or to any segment of the personnel to which these conceptual units apply, keeping in mind the marking options as they may apply in each case.⁴

Let us now take up Goodenough's identification of the utu as a true bilateral kindred. The "true bilateral kindred" is something to which the label utu may be applied. In

conversation about kinship matters, Gilbertese may speak about the utu in this sense, about its functions (e.g., in rites of passage), and about decisions which it might make. As a true bilateral kindred, if the cumbersome usage be excused, the utu is conceptually a social group, but as a regular feature of Gilbertese social organization, it is not socially a social group.

Freeman's term (1961) "kindred-based action group" suits at least some aspects of the collectivities of utu role performers which concretely do things together in the Gilberts. The period intervening between the publication of Goodenough's paper and the present has taught us that if one is going to speak of N types of kin group in a society, it is a critical necessity to distinguish between groups as institutionalized parts of an on-going social organization, and categories such as utu which may apply to groups, but which groups may or may not be found on the ground. A particular confusion that could arise from ignoring this practice is drawing up an inventory of N kinds of kin group, some of which are groups in the conceptual or category sense only, some of which are groups in the social sense only, and some of which are both. One would then not have N types of the same thing.

The reason why we are paying so much attention to the utu, which was beyond the scope of Goodenough's paper, is that the ins and outs of its usage bear a structural relationship to the units to which he does pay attention. Indeed, given

his definitions of units, utu could apply to them all.

OI

With the oi the problem is somewhat different. As a distinct kind of conceptual social group which "functions only in relation to property," it is, as far as we know, non-existent (and we will soon indicate what might have been the source of Goodenough's error, again assuming that Onotoa is not a special case). As an "on the ground" social group, it is not quite what he described.

Goodenough wrote, it will be recalled, that the oi is "an unrestricted descent group, including all the persons descended from a common ancestor, regardless whether through men or women. This group functions only in relation to property" (1955:73). The situation he describes is, in brief, one where an individual's land is inherited individually both by his sons and his daughters, who in turn later subdivide it among their own children, and so on. This is quite correct so far. The descendants of the original owner form the oi, which includes those who may not have received a share of the tract in question. Those who did not get a share are still in the position of residual heirs. If someone dies childless, his lands are divided up among his nearest kin, but only those in the line of descent from the original owner. "Membership in the ooi is not terminated by settlement in a different community or atoll. It lasts for as long as the genealogical ties are

remembered. The Gilbertese oi illustrates how an unrestricted descent group can be associated with land ownership. We must, therefore, enter this type of group as a candidate in our search for original Malayo-Polynesian social forms" (1955:73).

If the word "category" replaces the word "group" in the beginning quotation of the last paragraph, then some of what is described embodies one of the meaning of utu: the descendants of a common ancestor. Again, all these descendants may be a social group conceptually but not necessarily concretely.

Before taking up the question of property, it is worthy of note that o (and not oi) means 'fence,' and Maude (1963:33) observed that the term might be used to describe a kainga which happened to have a fence around it as it might also describe any other enclosure. Oi refers to the same thing as "essence" or "stem" and does not by itself denote a kin group.

Lundsgaarde's informants on Tamana Island were led to construct the expression te oi n te utu (literally the "essence" or "stem" of the utu) to label those persons said to share a common set of claim rights to a particular estate. Other informants on both Nonouti and Tabiteuea Island found this usage pleasingly odd but meaningless. Yet Lambert's technical definition of a "minimal ramage" (Lambert 1966:641-622) generally concurs with what might be described as the Gilbertese property-inheritance group. This group, however, extends only through more than three generations in the sense that the right of residual heirship remains indefinite, as a principle of

succession. That, of course, does not necessarily make it a social group in the same sense that, for example, a household is a social group. Such a "group" is not culturally recognized, and socially, its "members" do not do anything together as a group which they might not otherwise do as individuals in the society. What the situation reflects is a combination of the concept of utu with specific rules of inheritance and succession. The expression "te oi ni bai (literally "the thing in itself" or "the essence of the thing") can refer to a variety of claim rights in property. The person who can exercise such rights may be referred to as te tia oi ni bai or "title holder." This is not, however, an expression which is frequently used. It sometimes can be overheard in a conversational context involving reference to a relationship between an elder person who holds title to land which is worked or used by his junior kinsmen. Goodenough's error may possibly have resulted from this source.

The situation which applies on the ground may be clarified by Figure 1.

[Insert Fig. 1 about here]

Assume that at time₁, A, B and C are living. They constitute one particular property-inheritance group with A occupying the position of title holder. At time₂, A dies. B, C, E and D survive A. B and C, by inheritance from A, now form two separate property-inheritance groups labelled B--E

and C--D (of which B and C, respectively, have become title holder). The principle applies to all succeeding time intervals.

We note that the property-inheritance group in this sense is a temporally restricted one which ceases to exist with the death of a particular title holder, and which is recreated by a cultural principle of succession to property by bilateral inheritance. All members of this group are consanguineal or adopted kinsmen, generally spaced within the genealogical time span of two, but rarely more than three, generations distance from the title holder.

The property-inheritance groups seems to be a good candidate for genuine group status. This group is not continuing, either ideally or actually, in the sense in which we generally think of "descent groups," and it is not culturally differentiated from utu. The relevant category (utu) which in one of its sense regularly have a "counterpart" social group.

BOTI

The word boti (phonetically = [bos~botš~botč]) is used interchangeably with the word inaki to refer to a particular seating division in the maneaba; i.e., the community meeting house. It embodies a plurality of social meanings which we ascribe to any type of area formally designated for the use of specific persons on particular occasions. The boti is a place in the community meeting house where a person seats himself when attending a political assembly, a village feast,

a religious service, or any of the many other types of social gathering held in the meeting house. A person who attends any of these gatherings cannot choose to be seated in any boti of his own choice. He must only seat himself in the boti division assigned to him in accordance with prescribed customary rules. These rules, although modified over the years by the continuous evolution of the entire meeting house complex, are quite simple and few in number. A person entering the meeting house may thus choose among the following rules or seating options:

(1) He may seat himself in the boti division occupied by either one of his parents or their ancestors.

(2) He may, depending upon the purpose for which the meeting is being held, seat himself in accordance with the directives of the elders temporarily placed in charge of the meeting.

(3) He may, if visiting a meeting house while being away from his own village, seat himself in accordance with rule "1" described above or sit in the boti division assigned to all visitors and "strangers" who cannot claim seating privileges in any of the boti divisions within that particular meeting house.

(4) A person is privileged to sit in the boti occupied by his spouse, adopter, or other person invested with the power to extend the privilege.

(5) He may sit in a boti division if formally invited

to do so by the recognized spokesman for that division.

Of the several options, the most frequent choice of a man is to sit in the boti division occupied by his father and male relatives and, for a married woman, to sit in the boti of her spouse. It seems unnecessary to complicate this picture by invoking theoretical issues concerning the appropriateness of such labels as "descent" and "social group" to explain why Gilbertese persons observe rather formal seating privileges in the community meeting house. This, however, is the direction which Goodenough's analysis requires us to take.

The problem is to find out if boti seating privileges derive from rule of descent or if those persons who sit together in the same boti represent some other type of social category or group. Finally, we will briefly consider the alleged relationship between boti membership and land tenure principles.

To evaluate Goodenough's data and interpretations of the Gilbertese boti we can first look comparatively at the data on Gilbertese culture collected and published by A. F. Grimble and H. E. Maude during the four decades preceding Goodenough's visit to Onotoa Island in 1951. We also compare Goodenough's Onotoan data with more recent field data from the southern Gilberts, the Ocean Island (or Banaban) settlement on Rambi Island in Fiji, and the relocated Gilbertese settlement on Gizo Island in the British Solomon Islands

Protectorate.

This procedure should ideally allow us to place the Onotoan data in a functional as well as a historical perspective. Any variance between the Onotoan situation and other parallel examples may hereafter be attributed to either (1) a uniqueness of boti practices on Onotoa Island or (2) a discrepancy between different analytical approaches applied to roughly similar ethnographic facts. While we fully recognize that inter-island differences may lead to different analytical conclusions, we nevertheless maintain that our more inclusive ethnographic perspective seriously challenges Goodenough's generalizations drawn from one particular island setting.

The Pacific historian H. E. Maude has provided us with the most complete and definitive exposition of the boti in his monograph on The Evolution of the Gilbertese Boti: An Ethnohistorical Interpretation (Maude 1963). Although Maude used data collected from informants on Beru Island as his primary source, he has made extensive use of the other ethnographic data collected by his predecessor and colleague, the late Sir Arthur Grimble, and he draws equally from his own treasure of ethnographic knowledge acquired during some 25 years of residence in the Gilbert Islands--a kind of ethnographic knowledge, we might add, that only a handful of professional anthropologists have ever possessed on any given culture.

Maude's analysis of the boti has a direct bearing on our

re-examination of Goodenough's view of the boti as a kin group founded on non-unilineal descent principles. Maude begins his analysis of descent in the boti by comparing Grimble's earlier data with his own. He carefully notes, for example, how Grimble infers a general rule of boti membership from a specific case that was brought Grimble in his capacity as a Native Lands Commissioner. (Grimble says: "Descent, determining membership of the social group possessing a given boti, is reckoned patrilineally on all islands." [Grimble quoted in Maude 1963:25]) Maude further quotes directly from Grimble's unpublished paper on "Procedures and Privileges of the Clans in the Maneaba" to illustrate this point:

"An elderly man named Rioti claimed membership of the boti Karongoa-n-uea, which had consistently been denied his ascendants in the male line for several successive generations. He provided me with a list of 20 lineal ascendants, alleged to be males back to his ancestor Kirata the First, a semi mythical Chief of Tarawa, known to be of the Karongoa-n-uea group. None disputed the authenticity of the names he furnished; issue was joined on a point of sex. It was argued by the opposition that an ascendant in the sixth generation back from Rioti, named Tearoko, was not a man but a woman. Under these circumstances, it was insisted,

Rioti must count his boti-descent, not from Tearoko, but from her husband, who belonged to the Ababou group. Rioti himself admitted such reasoning would have been perfectly just had Tearoko been indeed a woman; his whole argument was limited to showing that this person had been a man" (Grimble quoted in Maude 1963:25).

The principle invoked to defeat Roti's claim to seating privileges in the boti of the Karongoa-n-uea is clearly founded on an absolute rule stipulating patrilineal affiliation with a boti member as a minimal condition of admission to the boti. This, if taken by itself, would appear to close the door on any further discussion of alternative ways to obtain seating privileges in a particular boti. But Maude now turns to his own ethnographic data, also collected while he himself served as a Native Land Commissioner for the southern Gilberts, and notes several important exceptions to Grimble's patrilineal membership rule. First he cites two specific dispute cases involving succession to boti membership where a boti member has only female heirs. Although the two cases deal directly with succession to the headship of the utu, we learn how exceptions to the straightforward patrilineal succession principle also applies to the allocation of boti seating privileges. Maude (1963:26) quotes directly from statements made by knowledgeable Gilbertese elders:

"The 'karimoa' [the eldest child in a family] should

always be the head. When there are only female children to the head, the next of kin being a male takes on the duties until one of the female children has a male child when he becomes the head of his mother's boti. If they only had females again, they would wait until these females had a male child."

"If a man dies with only female issue, the eldest daughter becomes the head of the utu. If her father's branch was the senior in the clan, she is recognized as the head of the clan but takes no active part in clan ritual and cannot speak in the maneaba. Her place in ceremonial is taken by her father's brother. Her own son, however, will become head of the clan, or utu, and on arriving of age will take over his duties from his grandfather's brother." Maude adds that in more ordinary cases, i.e., those involving succession to membership in less prestigious and important boti divisions, ". . . the rule enjoining the transmission of boti membership through the daughter was regarded as permissive and not mandatory . . . but when succession to the headship of a boti was involved, procedure was more strictly proscribed and enforced" (Ibid.).

Other exceptions to the strict application of the patrilineal succession principle are also evidenced by what Maude terms "the Taboni Kamawa Principle" which is invoked as a matter of convenience; i.e., a man's children may be assigned to a seating place in their mother's boti "to

relieve sitting pressure in an overcrowded boti" (Ibid.). A man, who for economic or marital reasons resides away from his own family lands and derives his daily living from his wife's family estate, will also as a matter of convenience assign his children to their mother's boti. And, finally, it is noted that an adopted person will sit with his adopter's boti although he retains residual privileges in the boti of his father and mother.

These exceptions, while they point away from a strict patrilineal membership principle, show how such factors as convenience, physical crowding, economic circumstances, or formal social arrangements may be as significant as any rule of descent in the determination of a person's boti seating privileges.

We may go even further by stating that any analytical difficulties fostered by hierarchical and optional seating rules cannot be resolved by the introduction of a non-unilineal descent group. On the other hand, it may be more in line with the available historical and ethnographic sources on boti organization to say that the evolution of boti seating privileges within the community meeting house complex began with a rather strict adherence to a patrilineal principle closely linked to the earliest type of clan organization among the settlers on Beru Island. As the meeting house organization was adopted on other islands, it underwent further changes. The processes of adaptation and change

of the meeting house complex might have led to the transformation of some of the original rules and the gradual emergence of so-called "exceptions" as rules in themselves.

We only need to consider briefly how the total disengagement from traditional boti seating rules found on such islands as Tamana, Arorae, and the Gilbertese resettlement communities elsewhere in the Pacific, to illustrate how new social circumstances have effected a clear breakdown of former practices. In these settings, where the islanders view the community meeting house primarily as a central gathering place during public celebrations, the word boti still denotes a seating division within the meeting house but it has lost all connotations of social privilege and exclusiveness. Knudson's (1964:17-20) study of the community meeting house on Gizo Island describes how meeting house gatherings are supervised by leaders democratically chosen for the occasion, how anyone can seat himself in a location of his own choice, and how anyone can take to the floor and speak before the gathering.

The devolution of the boti in the southern Gilberts is now accepted as an undisputed fact although its disengagement from traditional practices is much less apparent than on Gizo. The presence of several alternative seating arrangements observed on Nonouti and Tabiteuea Islands (which are comparable to those reported for the islands of Onotoa, Beru, and Nikunau) -- allowing a person to seek affiliation with

the boti occupied by his father, mother, adopter, or spouse-- does not detract from our analysis of the boti as a functional category. The alternative rules for validating a person's claim to seating privileges do caution us against viewing the boti as a descent group.

Now let us turn to the problem of defining the boti as a group and further challenging Goodenough's assertion that the boti is a ". . . group based on land rights."

A group, according to Nadel, ". . . may be defined as a collection of individuals who stand in regular and relatively permanent relationships, that is, who act towards and in respect of each other, or towards and in respect of individuals outside the group, regularly in a specific, predictable, and expected fashion" (Nadel 1951:146). If we operationalize Nadel's definition of group in the Gilbertese context we immediately encounter several ethnographic and theoretical difficulties. First, since we are treating the boti synchronically and diachronically, it may be possible to think of the traditional pre-contact boti type as approximating what is here defined as a group. We know that most of the boti members were in fact blood relatives and most, it may be assumed, shared certain rights and privileges as part of their group membership. However, as soon as we add the synchronic or functional perspective, we encounter difficulties with the data presented by 20th century observers on meeting house customs. Maude (1963:48-51) reasons that the boti decayed as a functioning

social institution shortly after the turn of the 20th century. This, of course, raises the interesting possibility that we as anthropologists may have kept something alive that has been buried by ethnohistorians and half-forgotten by our informants. But since Lundsgaarde observed "functioning" boti divisions on Nonouti and Tabiteuea Islands in 1964-1965, and Goodenough presumably observed similar practices on Onotoa Island in 1951, we are prepared to say that the boti continues to play a part in the total complex of the community house organization. Some observance of seating privileges are still in effect on these islands and we need to say something about their possible significance as part of present-day Gilbertese social organization (Cf. Lundsgaarde 1970). We note, for example, that boti members may or may not share consanguineal ties and that they may be bound by different obligations to other non-members. Because of this we feel that it may be most accurate at this stage to think of the boti as the survival of a traditional feature of the meeting house complex which continues to provide a public platform for the articulation of collective views through a membership designated authority figure. This interpretation resolves some of the definitional problems and it finds support in our data. Each boti, for example, selects from among its most senior and articulate male members one man who will represent the boti in meeting house affairs. Each boti representative, formally designated as "the head of the boti," is primarily charged with two duties: (1) he serves

as the boti representative in village and council meetings and (2) he invokes the prestige of his position to mediate minor conflicts arising within his boti.

We could then conclude that because a boti representative is empowered to negotiate and act on behalf of his constituents he must, therefore, represent a functioning social group rather than serving an aggregate of individuals. But this interpretation is as deceptive as it is tautological. It is in fact just as inaccurate as saying that the President of the American Anthropological Association presides over a group when in fact the President, like his Gilbertese counterpart, merely symbolizes a category of persons who for some rather specific public purposes require representation as one entity.

Our final arguments take issue with Goodenough's finding that the boti is a group based on land rights. The problem here is once again placed in perspective by consideration of Maude's conclusions on this point. He says: "The boti had functions related to many aspects of Gilbertese life, social, economic, political and judicial, but not in connection with land, which was owned individually and inherited through the utu" (Maude 1963:54; emphases ours). We note that Maude does not deny the possibility that members of the same boti might also share common interests in land. His observation merely concurs with our data on land tenure practices. These data, among other things, show that land rights and

tenure privileges follow a series of different principles that relate directly to almost every other feature of Gilbertese social organization except for boti membership. Land rights, as we shall see in the following discussion of the kainga estate, are most frequently acquired by inheritance from either or both parents. Rights may also be acquired through a variety of other and less frequent modes of property conveyance. Since these rights always pass from one individual to another, it is difficult to envision how boti constituents--who exercise individual rights to individually held land parcels--can act as a corporate legal entity. Goodenough's answer to this difficulty appears to rest on his interpretation of the boti as a group of consanguineal kinsmen. In his own words:

"Bwoti membership is based on individual rights in certain plots of land. All persons who own a share in such a plot, if no more than one square foot, have the right to a corresponding seat. Since all persons holding a share in the same plot are theoretically lineal descendants of its original holder and thus members of the same oo, all persons entitled to the same seat in the meeting house are ipso facto consanguineally related and so recognized. But not all members of the same oo with respect to such a plot have actually inherited shares in it; they hold lands acquired from other ancestors. Not holding a share, they are barred from

the associated seat, but must sit elsewhere as their present holdings permit. While all bwoti mates belong to the same oo, only a segment of the oo belongs to the same bwoti" (Goodenough 1955:74).

What is needed here is perhaps to argue the question of boti seating privileges in much the same fashion as Goodenough (1956:71) argued with Fisher (1958:508) about residence rules. Or, it may be more expedient to dismiss the entire argument by following Goodenough's own updating of the "patrilineal" interpretation used in the earlier writings of both Grimble and Maude; e.g., "In the light of existing concepts, this (patrilineal) was the best label they could use" (Goodenough 1955:74).

KAINGA

In Cooperation in Change (1963), Goodenough wrote that ". . . the prohibition of fighting and of resort to private justice imposed by colonial law had reduced personal dependence on the kaainga at the same time that the economic changes we have noted were reducing dependence on the extended family associated with it. As a result, the ambiguities as to kaainga membership that followed the increase in independent residence resulted in the kaainga's complete demise as a feature of Onotoan social organization within fifty years" (Goodenough 1963:341).⁵

We take strong exception to this narrow conceptualization

of the kainga as a kin group and feel that (a) the problem of polysemy should be addressed directly and (b) the "demise" of the kainga has been far from complete. The fact is that it has proven difficult for anyone to define kainga very precisely. The difficulty, we feel, resides with the polysemic nature of the label itself and the multiple land tenure and kinship variables that over centuries have contributed to conceptualizations of the kainga as a social category. We find, for example, that Gilbertese kinsmen to this day reside together on large land tracts which they refer to as kainga but that they do not (as corporate groups) exercise tenure rights to all individual land parcels that fall within such kainga boundaries. Our data suggest that the role of residence, in accounting for Gilbertese notions of "group identity," must be seen in terms of the more general pattern of "utuness" (or "kinship"), where co-residence can exemplify the code-for-conduct half of the definition and where identification with a tract of land through ownership--or potential ownership of a segment of such a tract--can symbolize both common identity and code for conduct.

Goodenough perceptively marks out land as something critical to the understanding of Gilbertese society and culture. There is a difference, however, in identifying residential propinquity and claims to land as either criteria for membership in on-going social groups, which are descent groups, or as correlates of cultural ideas about kinship and locality.

One of the advantages of the second alternative is that it leaves the question of whether concrete groups form themselves in accordance with these principles as an open question. Principles of kinship and locality do not "create" groups, but provide means through which groups can be created--and dissolved--when other variables (e.g., demographic, ecological, or political ones) enter the social equation.

According to our data, the term kainga signifies several overlapping categories: it can refer to a person's ancestral estate, to the locality of his parental or own household, or--more abstractly--to an aggregate of remembered persons who have held claim rights to different segments of a particular land tract sometime in the remote past. Kainga land tracts encompass large sections of territory that, generally speaking, cross-cut the island from east to west. A further distinction is sometimes made between kainga lands, which are relatively close to primary residential areas, and buakonikai or "bush" lands (i.e., those lands located on the "ocean side") found on more distant areas of the island. Formerly, the boundaries of large kainga land tracts extended beyond the land itself to include lagoon and reef resource areas.

Each kainga is known by a specific name that calls attention either to some conspicuous physical feature within its boundaries (e.g., a large protruding coral formation or excessively sandy surface soils) or to past historical events associated with its earliest occupants (e.g., the name of the

person who first acquired the land tract by conquest). In the earliest times (as we might extrapolate from Maude's and Grimble's ethnohistorical data) each kainga may have comprised what we would call a "family estate" in that various land ownership and tenure rights collectively vested in particular utu; i.e., succession to the tenure rights of particular kainga land tracts was limited to consanguineally related persons. The eldest authoritative kinsman of an utu was then known as te atu n te kainga or "the head of the kainga." Although it is now most common to find kainga land tracts subdivided among several often totally unrelated landowners, one does find contemporary examples of a pre-colonial kainga system bounded by exclusive and consanguineally held tenure rights.

In the contemporary society, the kainga is best described as a land tract or locality which variously overlaps with our own conceptions of residential district, neighborhood, or real estate. This usage removes any connotation of a single line of descent from our broad definition of the kainga as a large tract of land. It also corresponds more closely to the modern system of land tenure which allows an individual landowner to record title to separate land parcels, or sub-divisions, within a kainga locality. In actual practice this means that all land titles registered with the native island administration correspond to individual land parcels found within the boundaries of one or more kainga. In accordance with this system

of recording, universally adopted in the southern Gilberts as early as the 1930's, the individual tends to regard the place where he was born, the place where he later in life may live and own land, and--when married--the locality of the family household, as his kainga.

In more than one sense, therefore, it seems reasonable to infer that the Gilbertese identify themselves with particular island localities. It is less reasonable, on analytical grounds, to minimize the importance of the kainga as a significant social category because it no longer serves as the exclusive residential estate for a single group of consanguineally related kinsmen.

In the remote past it may have been entirely possible for all the members of one utu to share and control all the land within a single kainga division. But we also learn from Maude (1963) that the original kainga on Beru Island were partitioned into smaller parcels and that new kainga were added soon after it became necessary to accommodate the expanding population (see Maude 1963, esp. pp. 28-32). It is reasonable to assume that the processes of sub-division and growth of kainga divisions on Beru Island were paralleled by similar processes on other islands. Our data from Nonouti and Tamana Island suggest that kainga divisions on these islands long ago reached a state of equilibrium. In 1965, for example, there were 450 separate kainga divisions on Nonouti and 110 on Tamana.

While the number of kainga divisions on each of these islands may have fluctuated over time, the very nature of the island habitat itself has prevented new kainga divisions from becoming more numerous than space would allow. The alternative method of land division, or subdivision of land parcels within existing kainga boundaries, has persisted to this day. The implications of this are rather different from saying that the kainga has become "defunct" or that it has ceased to play a part in Gilbertese social organization.

NOTES

1. Our combined fieldwork includes two field trips to the Gilberts by Lundsgaarde (1964-1965 and summer 1966) and two visits to Rambi Island by Silverman (summer 1961 and 1964-1965).

2. According to Bohannan (1965:129)

"The second type of cognatic group is the omnilineal descent group--the cognatic group computed from an ancestral ego. This sort of descent group, in part because it is obvious and therefore not easy to see, was discovered very late in the development of kinship studies. Goodenough (1955), who called this group an 'unlimited descent group,' is the first to give adequate analysis of it. He found, while working in the Gilbert Islands, that the criteria for limiting membership in descent groups were not kinship criteria, and therefore the usual modes of describing descent groups did not apply. Goodenough found three descent groups in the Gilbert Islands, none of them unilineal.

"First of the three is the unlimited descent group from any ancestor, which the Gilbertese called an ooi. This group is an entity and functions in relation to the property that was owned by the founder. This group can be limited by the application of a nonkinship criterion of eligibility: when the inheritance of certain seats in the community meeting house is considered, only the holders of certain lands are eligible and such a group is called a bwoti by the Gilbertese. A third group is the kainga: it is made up of those members of an ooi that

form a residential or local unit. Thus, the primary criterion of all three of these groups is descent. Secondary criteria of a nonkinship nature limit the membership of two of the groups. The ooi contains all the people who have a right to inherit land from a single ancestor or ancestress, whether they have actually taken it up or not. Some people take up the inherited land from one of their ancestors, whereas others take it up from another. Therefore, only a relatively small portion of a person's descendants will actually inherit his land. Nevertheless, the fact that they do not inherit does not remove their right to inherit, because residual rights in land (if a person dies without heirs) revert to the other members of the ooi of the original holder of the land. Thus, the ooi is a group determined by land rights, and it is also an unrestricted descent group.

"The bwoti is quite a different group, but all of its members are members of the ooi. However, instead of being based on the possibility of inheriting land rights, it is based on the allocation of positions in the community meeting-house organization. Each position goes to the bwoti of the person who first held the position. The bwoti of those kinsmen or members of the ooi descended from the original position holder, who actually have inherited specific plots of land. It differs from the ooi in that the ooi is an unlimited descent group of all of whom may inherit, and the bwoti is a limited descent group--limited to those members who have

actually inherited. Bwoti, thus, has two criteria of membership: (1) membership in the ooi, and (2) actual inheritance of land that belonged to the ancestor of the ooi. A man is potentially a member of as many bwotis as oois to which he belongs. But he can activate only one bwoti membership at any one time. Thus, although the bwoti is a descent group, full brothers may belong to different bwoti; since the secondary criterion of membership is not kinship-based: one brother has taken the land that came to them from one ancestor, whereas the other took the land that came to them from quite a different ancestor.

"The third type of descent group is the kainga, which is a residence group. A man and a woman, when they marry, move into the area in which they will inherit land. Since either is entitled to inherit land, they will probably move into that area in which the larger holdings will be available. In most cases, residence is patrilocal: however, the exceptions are critical in understanding the principles. A person belongs to the kainga associated with the land that was associated with the ancestor of that ooi in which his parents have decided to reside. Thus, all the members of an ooi have the right to reside on the lands of the original ancestor, until they move away. There upon, their children, although remaining members of the ooi, no longer have the right to live on the land of the ooi and are said to lose membership in the kainga. The kainga are those descendants, members of the ooi, who have

actually lived in the area originally associated with the ancestor of the ooi."

According to Fox (1967:156):

"The Gilbert Islanders have several kinds of kinship group but we will concern ourselves with their cognatic descent groups. The most all-illusive of these is an unrestricted cognatic descent group known charmingly as the oo. Both men and women hold land and on the death of an individual his land is divided between all his children. (His daughters may have received their share on marriage.) As this process continues, a tract of land is divided and subdivided amongst the descendants of the original owner. The oo regards itself as in a sense jointly responsible for all the land, and members of the oo may not sell land without the permission of all the others. If any line of the oo dies out, then the land reverts to the oo generally and is redistributed among the members. Members who leave the area in which the descent group owns land do not thereby lose rights in it. Any one who is descended from the original owner keeps his rights in the land and passes these on to his children. The fact that the oo are bound to overlap means that an individual may hold rights in several of them. In such a system the various plots of land that an individual holds in the various oo territories must not be too far from each other or he could not work them. On small islands, such a system of landholding is feasible . . .

"Another important descent group on the Gilbert Islands is the bwoti. This is a segment of an oo which is concerned with seating-rights in the community meeting-houses. These rights are very important to the Gilbertese. Each meeting house is marked out, and certain areas of it belong to the descendants of men who owned particular plots of land. Now all the descendants of one of these men would be an oo, but not all would have inherited a piece of his land. When a man died, his land would be divided amongst his children, and he would bequeath the land in one of his oo to one child, that in another oo to another child . . . and so on. Thus a child might be a member of an oo but not necessarily have inherited any of its property; hence he would not be able to sit with the bwoti associated with the oo. He would, however, have got some land in at least one oo that had bwoti rights in one of the meeting houses. A person would so distribute his property to his heirs that each of them obtained such a right. The division of inheritance is such that men got much more than women, and in consequence a man is more likely to get bwoti membership from his father than his mother. This gives the bwoti a patrilineal tinge. Early writers often described it as a patrilineage.

"The bwoti is then a common descent group whose membership is restricted to those descendants of a common ancestor who have acquired rights in a particular plot of land.

"Thirdly, the Gilbertese have the kainga. Now, every

ancestor who founds a bwoti, also founds a kainga, but the membership rules are different, so that although each kainga is associated with a bwoti, their membership is not coterminous. The rule for kainga membership is again hitched to landholding. The original ancestor had lived on a certain tract of land. Some of his descendants continued to reside there but others moved away. Those who continued to reside there plus those who had been born and raised there but had moved away after marriage, formed the kainga. Thus, those who were born on the land inherited membership even if they moved away; but if they moved away their children did not inherit membership. Thus, if a man's parents were living patrilocally he would belong to his father's kainga: if they were living matrilocally he would belong to his mother's. It was thus in a sense parental residence choice that determined an individual's kainga membership. Since residence was predominantly patrilocal, most people belonged to the father's kainga. Leadership of the kainga was passed on patrilineally. This was worked by having the eligible successor reside patrilocally so that his son would be eligible to succeed him and so on. Thus, the kainga very much resembled a patrilineage, but this resemblance was arrived at by a route far different from the simple rule of patrilineal succession."

3. Some of the material in this section is drawn from Silverman 1971.

4. It should be noted, however, that at least among the Banabans, the following situation applies: In the named descent unit context, utu in the possessive form is utun X, 'the utu of X,' where X is the founding ancestor. In the kinsmen or kindred sense, the utu is ana utu X (ana 'his, her, its'), where X is the relevant person. The form used in the named descent unit context is the same as that for the things of a place, or the parts of a body.

5. Some of the material under discussion has been taken up again in Goodenough 1970.

6. Maude's (1963) work makes it quite clear that the pre-colonial boti and kainga cannot be fully understood without considering their place within traditional cosmology and religious organization. The issues on this point are too complex to be carried further here.

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BANABAN ADOPTION¹

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In this paper I will indicate the cultural meaning of adoption among the people of Rambi Island, Fiji. Rambi was settled in 1945 by the natives of Ocean Island, or Banaba, a phosphate island in the Gilbert and Ellice Islands Colony, and some other Gilbertese. In 1964-5 the population was almost 2000.

"Adopted" in Gilbertese is tabekaki, which also means "lifted up, raised up;" this is quite appropriate since the adopted person is at least partially "lifted up" from his natal family. By "natal family" I mean a contrast that the Banabans make themselves: adoption contrasts with "blood" as an avenue to kindred membership.

Different forms of adoption are distinguished by the kinship identity of the adoptee vis-à-vis his adopter. The forms are: "child adoption," "grand-child adoption," "sibling of same sex adoption," "sibling of opposite sex adoption," "father adoption," and "mother adoption." The latter two types are also referred to as "the replacement." Our problem is to specify the similarities and differences among these forms. Child adoption will be discussed first, and then the others in comparison with it. First, however, there are two background points which must be made: the nature of the concept of utu, and the concept of Banaban identity.

The word utu has several meanings (see Silverman 1966); when people are speaking about adoption and it is said that someone has become utu to another, it is best translated as "kindred." The term is used in the sense of a dyadic connection, and a social aggregate; one can say, "X is Y's utu," or, "that utu is very cooperative." It is also used verbally (utuna) meaning "to behave as kinsmen;" two kinsmen may not utuna one another, and two non-kinsmen may.

Another relevant meaning of utu is that of bilateral descent unit. The founder of such a unit resided at an ancestral hamlet on Banaba, and his

descendants are referred to as "members of that utu," or "members of that hamlet" (See Maude, 1932, Silverman 1966). They are identified with the land of the hamlet.

The central ideas associated with utu are those of mutual affection, diffuse solidarity, continuity, and equivalence, symbolized in common blood, and land. Only continuity and equivalence need comment here. There is an expression used to comment upon the process of gift exchanges at marriage, one of the few really well-defined obligations of kinship: "it cannot stop." The utu relationship is seen as one extending indefinitely.

Second, with regard to equivalence, members of an utu are referred to as being "just the same" as one another. A person can represent his cousin, or his mother, at a certain family gathering because they are "just the same." This sameness can be seen in terms of common substance, blood, and/or common interest in land. By "common interest," I mean that the people concerned need not currently own land inherited from a common ancestor, e.g., the founder of a descent unit. Common interest is expressed in the term kaititi: when X and Y are kaititi, this means that if X's line dies out, Y will inherit X's land, and vice-versa. Kaititi is used as an expression of genealogical closeness: "They are close, they are kaititi," or simply, "They are kaititi."

The point here is that kinship is symbolized in both blood and land. Some people do say, when asked by the ethnographer, that one of the reasons for maintaining certain kinship relations is that people have an eye to the future, to the possible inheritance of land. It should be noted, however, that before such a person could inherit a kinsman's land, there might be several score people with prior claims. The amount of land involved may be economically insignificant. Land functions here symbolically in some of the same ways that blood does; assertion of common interest in land is similar to assertion of common blood.

Both land and blood are "natural," essential, and divisible (see Schneider 1966). It is the passing of at least one Ocean Island land from adopter to adoptee (with the approval of the former's "close utu") that finalizes an adoption.

In devolving land upon another one gives him part of one's social personality. The relationship between land and social personality is expressed in the word mwi, which means "something which follows, consequence, remains." One can distinguish land inherited from the father and from the mother as "the male mwi" and "the female mwi." "There is also his mwi in the Gilberts," is a common phrase indicating that a Gilbertese adopted as Banaban still maintains property rights and relationships in the Gilberts. To indicate that a person belongs to the utu of some other people by adoption rather than blood, one might say, "He has some land of theirs."

Having considered the ~~general~~ idea of utu and its relation to blood and land, we now turn to the idea of "Banaban." By Fiji legislation, a status of "member of the Banaban Community" has been created, which is interpreted to include not only Banabans by birth and adoption, but also Gilbertese who migrated with the Banabans in 1945, and people currently married to Banabans. The people regard being a Banaban, however, as conferring the basic right to reside on Rambi. Gilbertese, although actually born on Banaba, are still considered "outsiders, foreigners." In community political matters where the household is considered as a unit, the Banaban husband of a Banaban wife is regarded as the formal household head. If the man is Gilbertese and the woman Banaban, it is the woman. If a Gilbertese man was married to a Banaban woman who died, it is their eldest child. His Banaban spouse or Banaban children define the link that an in-marrying Gilbertese has with the Banaban community.

The logic behind this situation is as follows: Rambi was purchased with invested Banaban phosphate royalties, these royalties represent Ocean Island lands,

and only Banabans own Ocean Island lands; therefore the Banabans own Rambi, and the Gilbertese are their guests. The only way for a person not born a Banaban to become one, is to be adopted as a Banaban.

Child Adoption

Two forms of te natinati, "child adoption," are recognized: te natinati proper, and te nati-ni-kauatabo, "child of two place," or "child of two ends."² The latter name refers to the equality in the relationship of the adoptee to the family of his adopter, and to his natal family. He can receive substantial amounts of Ocean Island land from both families.

There is one deviant and ambiguous case which represents a partial transfer of the ideas associated with Ocean Island land, to Rambi land. A young man, X, for several years helped on Banaba a Banaban man, Y, and the latter's Gilbertese wife, Z, while this couple's children were still young. The man is Y's sister's son. Y and Z brought X with them to Rambi. Y explained that he wanted to adopt X, but that the latter's family objected: they approved of X's helping his aunt and her husband, but wanted him ultimately to return to the Gilberts. Y indicated that a compromise was reached by his adopting X in the nati-ni-kauatabo form, granting him Banaban status. But the only land he received was Rambi land. The understanding is still that X will return to the Gilberts.

In "Banaban custom" (te katei-ni-Banaba), whether or not a person properly maintains a kinship relationship with his natal family after adoption as child depends on whether or not he has received a piece of Ocean Island land from them; it need not be more than a token amount. This land in te natinati proper is called "the accompaniment" (te iria), or "the wanting-to-return" (te kan-oki). As the receipt of land from the adoptive utu symbolizes incorporation in it, the receipt of land from the natal utu symbolizes a continuing link with it.³

A person can be adopted as child (when an infant or adult) by a married or unmarried adult, or a married couple. Similarly, one or both of his real parents can give him land. One of the reasons why only one of a married couple participates in the adoption is the objection of the near kinsmen of the non-adopting spouse when the latter is childless. Gossip generally ascribes their refusal to greed for the land of their kinsman: if he dies childless, his lands will be divided up among them. Although I adopt someone as child and my spouse does not (and the child thus becomes a member of my kindred, and the descent units of which I am a member), my spouse and my adopted child do behave in kinship roles, as step-relatives behave in kinship roles.

As only one of a married couple might adopt a child, a child might be adopted to the "side" of only one of the parents of the adopter. In such a case, the child receives land which his adopter inherited, for example, through the latter's father only, and is only a member of that utu.

With reference to his natal utu, it is said of a child adopted away that "he has gone." His adopter is responsible for him, and he is responsible to his adopter. If he has received land from his natural parents, to "he has gone" is added, "but he has his accompaniment." The child is unequivocally a member of his adopter's utu, but as long as an adoption is remembered (whether as "child" or in any other form), if it was from outside the utu, other members of the adopting utu point out that the adoptee "has our land." This means both that he is a kinsman, and that they would have more land themselves if the adoption did not take place. The adopted person is responsible to them for his social position; it is by their grace that he occupies the social position that he occupies.

Although he may have "left" his natal utu for a new one, it is recognized that a person may still love members of his real family, and want to express these feelings. "The blood loves its own." The adopters, if they want to, can

permit the maintenance of some relationships: If an adopted child's real kinsmen is getting married, the former can present a gift known not as "an utu contribution," as the ordinary gifts of kinsmen are known, but as "the wanting-to-eat." Members of the utu come to the wedding "not just to eat at the feast, but to help with the work." Their contributions go toward defraying the expenses of the feast (which are high ~~of course~~, because of their very presence). People point out that the returning adopted child does not present "the wanting-to-eat" because he simply wants to eat at the feast; he too comes to help. The phrasing of the gift permits the expression of a solidarity that is on the one hand broken, but on the other, unbreakable.

Some Banabans indicate that in the "truest" (i.e., most ancient, uncontaminated) Banaban custom, the child receives no land at all from his real parents; the emphasis is on severing relations with them. Today, this applies particularly to Gilbertese. H.C. and H.E. Maude (1931:227-8) write:

"On Banaba (Ocean Island) adoption from outside the kindred and if possible from outside the island was actually preferred, as it was considered that the son of a fellow-islander would tend, after his adopter's death, to carry on the name and fame of his true parents, whereas a total stranger, removed from his home-island, would rely for his local prestige upon the name of his adopter and thus perpetuate his memory. Such an adopted child could inherit all the adopter's land, even to the exclusion of the adopter's real children. This forms an instance of the vast difference, also noted in other phases of social organization, between the culture of the Banabans and that of the Gilbertese."

Gilbertese adults adopted by Banabans point out that the latter dislike the Gilbertese receiving a share of their real parents' land: they should be "finished with their Gilbertese side." These are remarks underscoring the way the Banabans guard the maintenance of their identity, and their rights to Ocean Island land. These rights are a focus of controversy with the British administration. On the same theme, it is said that the "wise" Gilbertese adopted as Banaban will marry a Banaban rather than another Gilbertese.

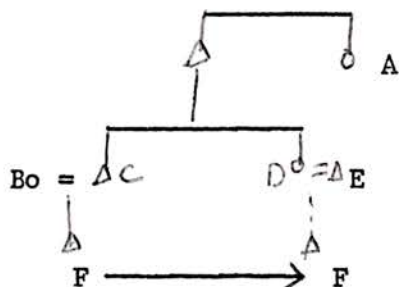
The elected Island Council has forbidden the adoption of non-Banabans (although not retroactively), but some recent adoptions of Gilbertese have occurred. The prohibition is explained as being for the good of both Banabans and Gilbertese. There are Banabans who later cast out their adopted Gilbertese relatives, "and then where will they go?" There are also adopted Gilbertese who later ignore their adoptive Banaban kin. The Banabans are also afraid that Ocean Island land might get into the hands of other Gilbertese: an adopted person, as any other person, should not dispose of his land without the consent of his "close kindred," in this case the close Banaban kindred. Yet a person might be able to dispose of it in an improper way, by some clever means giving it to his Gilbertese relatives.

With the possibility of the adopted child (whether Banaban or Gilbertese) later paying insufficient attention to his adopters in mind, it is considered wise to give the adoptee initially only a little land. At the same time, the adopted child is often referred to as "becoming the first-born" vis-à-vis the real children of the adopter, perhaps ultimately receiving more land than they do (note the Maudes' remark, quoted above). I once asked a young man whether he considered as "brother" a man adopted as "brother" by his sister. He said that he did, and indicated that with adopted kinsmen, one takes even more special care than one does with real kinsmen to fulfill the expectations of the role. This is perhaps one of the paradoxes of adoption. Relationships by blood are natural and durable. Relationships by adoption may not be natural, are visualized as more terminable, but a person is under a special obligation since the arrangement was entered into voluntarily (at least by the adults involved). You cannot say of a person, "If she didn't want to care for him, why did she bear him?" in the same way that you can say, "If she didn't want to care for him, why did she adopt him?" Adoptive relationships are the outcome of choice, not chance.

There is thus a sense in which the parties to an adoption are "on trial," and twice, to my knowledge, the matter of cancelling an adoption has recently come before the Rambi Island Council. (Other cancellations have occurred informally; the land transfers had not yet been officially made.) Both cases involved the adoption of a non-Banaban by a Banaban. In one, a woman complained that her adopted daughter, after marriage, went away to the Gilberts with her husband, resumed relations with her natal family, and ignored instructions to return to Rambi. In the other, a young man asked for the cancellation of his own adoption, and the adopters agreed; he said privately that they had turned him out of their house for no reason.

The simplest adoptions to effectuate are those within the utu. Among close kinsmen, especially siblings, it is difficult to refuse the request for the adoption of one's child. They are, after all, "just the same" as oneself. The initial situation of adoption within the utu -- who asks whom for a child -- is a dramatic statement of the strength and diffuseness of the kinship tie. Yet the central idea, or the outcome, need not be a strengthening of the solidarity of the kindred. As in many aspects of Banaban kinship, and Banaban social structure as a whole, one finds the concomitant expression of two themes: the unity of the social group, and the marking off, by the individual, of a domain distinctive to himself. For example, in adopting my sibling's child, I may indicate my preference that the child inherit only through me, and not through my sibling. I am the one who "governs the child"; he is my child, and I am emphasizing this point. At the same time, however, my sibling and I are "just the same," and it is because of this fact that I could adopt his child with such ease in the first place.⁴

This kind of ambiguity was nicely manifested in an episode involving the people in the following genealogy:



F, a young boy, was adopted by D and E; they ~~and~~ lived in the village of Buakonikai. He was playing on the Buakonikai wharf when A, who had been visiting in the village, was about to leave it in a small boat to return to her own village of Uma, where B and C lived. She is a woman with ^aquite ~~an~~ ironic sense of humor, and as the boat was preparing to pull away, called out to F, "Don't you want to come with me to Uma? Isn't C your father, and B your mother?"

There are also cases where the strengthening or maintenance of relationships are more clearly involved. We can consider these under four headings: the solidarity of the spouse-pair, the assertion of claims over children whose solidarity with the utu might be compromised, the strengthening of a previous adoptive relationship, and the realization of an adoption planned but interfered with.

(1) The solidarity of the spouse-pair is relevant where husband and wife adopt, as a couple, a child related to the husband, and a child related to the wife. The situation is thus equalized: each spouse cares for and gives property to a child initially related to himself, and a child initially related to his spouse. Similar are cases where the couple adopts a child related to both spouses.

The question of spouse-pair unity is also crucial in understanding a kind of adoption regarded as new, on Rambí: the adoption as child of the spouse of

one's deceased child. In one of the two cases, the adopted daughter of a childless couple, before death, told them not to grieve because there was someone who would replace her: her (Gilbertese) husband.

In the other case, a deceased Banaban woman's non-Banaban husband was adopted after his wife died, "to look after the children." He replaced her. The man later remarried, to a Gilbertese, and he is reported to be giving Ocean Island land to the children of his second marriage. Some of his first wife's relatives commented that this was improper. The purpose of the adoption was to ensure his position as guardian of the children, and he was made caretaker of their lands for this reason. The adoption, in this view, was not an unequivocal one, and he was transgressing its terms.

This idea of the making of stipulations in an adoption is not limited to the "spouse of deceased child" form. One controversial case illustrates the same kind of stipulation asserted for the above case. Before the resettlement, G, a Gilbertese man, cured an old childless Banaban, B, of illness. B adopted him. G had a child in the Gilberts who recently came to Rambi to settle there. Some commented that this was wrong: B had given G his land "to eat from until he died." It was an arrangement involving himself only; he had violated its terms by "bringing his child" to Rambi as if he were a true Banaban. When I asked a local official if G's child was a Banaban, he said, "Yes, because he is G's child." The decisive factor in cases of this nature should be the original terms of the adoption, but those terms may be under dispute.

(2) The assertion of claims over children was implicitly involved in the second spouse-of-deceased-child adoption discussed above. One cannot be sure that children will be well cared for by the surviving spouse, or that, if a foreigner, he might not take them away from the island. Where the utu of a deceased or divorced parent is fearful for the fate of the children, they may "take

them" and adopt them. In situations of this kind, adoption of the spouse of a deceased child, adoption of the children of kinsmen, and leviritic and sororitic marriages serve some of the same functions.

(3) One may "strengthen" (kamatoa) an adoptive relationship by further adoptions. It is implicit here, of course, that adoptive relationships may be well-served by strengthening. In one case, a man adopted the son of one of his adopted sibling's children "to strengthen the sibling adoption with that utu."

Another case was as follows: A Gilbertese boy, X, was adopted by a childless Banaban, Y. X went to Y and said that he wanted a sister from Y's utu. (There is a general idea of the need for both brothers and sisters to form a "complete" sibling set.) Y indicated that he had had the same idea himself. The boy's request demonstrated his identification with the utu of his adopter. The adopter showed by his own action that although he had adopted from outside the utu, he was still concerned with it, and wanted some of his land to remain in the hands of its true members.

(4) In some cases an adoption was planned with a certain person, but did not eventuate. Another member of the person's family is then adopted to realize the adoption, to replace his kinsman who was not adopted. The simplest instances are where the expressed motivation is the "rewarding of a kindness": for example, a man is particularly well cared for by a certain family on another island and wants to adopt one of their children. The prospective adoptee dies, and is replaced by someone else from that family.

The strengthening or maintenance of a relationship can be quite explicitly recognized by the people as motivations for child adoptions. The most frequent explanations, however, are: childlessness and simply the desire for a child; childlessness and the wish for a child to help the couple; the lack of a son or daughter and the wish for one to perform the tasks of that sex; the desire for

a particular child, or to help the parents of a particular child. The adopter may have helped the mother during the child's infancy, and come to love the child, to feel about it as one feels toward one's own child, and thus want it to become his child. The Banabans are quite open about the desire for a child as a worker when there is no child in the household, but at the same time recognize love as one of the precipitating causes of adoption.⁵

Other Forms of Adoption.

The forms of adoption differ among themselves in what the Banabans call their "strength." Another difference perceived is in origin: adoptive forms other than those of child and grandchild are said to be the results of contact with Gilbertese.

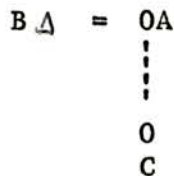
Adoption as child has the greatest degree of finality about it; the other varieties are recognized as more easily breakable, and more easily interfered with after the death of the adopter by his kinsmen who may be greedy for his land. For example, a childless woman on Banaba wanted to adopt as grandchild her Gilbertese husband's adopted daughter's son, who was "grandchild" to her through her husband. But she reconsidered because "grandchild adoption is not strong; it might be washed out," so she adopted him as child.

The idea of the propriety of the complete "break" with the natal utu is generally limited to child adoptions, and whereas the adopted child is expected to receive a share of land at least equal to that of the true children of his adopter (if he behaves himself), the adopted grandchild is not. He is often a person already "grandchild" (collateral) to the adopter, and the adoptions are explained mainly in terms of simply wanting the child, or seeing the child as a replacement for a person whose adoption was previously contemplated. The adopted grandchild can be in an especially favored position, since he may receive more land than he would otherwise be heir to: from both his parents, and his adoptive grandparent or grandparents.

Sibling and parental adoptions are thought not only to be Gilbertese in origin, but also to relate primarily Banabans and Gilbertese. The conceptual "type" parental adoption is of a Gilbertese step-parent by his Banaban step-children. The people adopted as parent are Gilbertese who do not have Banaban children, and thus lack one of the "links" described earlier as ^{defining} ~~ensuring~~ their position in the community.

Parental adoptions are explained in terms of affection. The adoption of a step-parent by his step-children cannot be effectuated by the surviving Banaban spouse. It is an affair to be arranged by the children themselves, since the surviving spouse is not a member of the utu concerned. A step-parent is supposed to treat his step-children well, but at the same time trouble is expected. The step-parent who is in fact very kind to his spouse's children can be adopted by them as a reward. He "replaces" the deceased true parent, and is given a share of his land. The relationship that has grown between them, one of parental and filial affection, is the basis for the conferring of utu status, and thus Banaban citizenship, upon him.

In one case, the Banaban wife, A, of a Gilbertese, B, before she died, asked B to continue caring for her adopted child, C. B is known for his



kindness toward the child. C later registered B in a father adoption as having replaced A. This is an instance of a man succeeding to the position of a woman, rather like the cases of a couple adopting the spouse of their deceased child. In both kinds of situation, the care of children can be a major factor.

Adopting a parent's second spouse when the parent is still alive is more than a reward to the step-parent. It is indirectly a statement of solidarity with the surviving parent, who is liable to pay more attention to his new spouse than to his children. Adoption states that affection reigns where it really ought to.

In the nature of property arrangements, parental adoptions differ from the other forms (unless special stipulations are made at the time of adoption in the other forms). When Ocean Island land is given to an adopted parent, it is assumed that the land will be "returned to its true place" -- to the adopting children -- after the adoptee's death. The latter is "living on it," or "eating from it," until he dies, and from the point of view of the larger utu, his position is marginal. He is not implicated in the continuity of the utu, and continuity is one of the ideas central to utu. In parental adoptions, it is the idea of mutual affection and solidarity that is stressed.

If one asks people other than the adopters whether the adoptee is a member of the utu, and whether he can participate in descent unit affairs, their answers are often of the "Yes, but..." type. It is conceivable for such a person to participate, but he is not expected to do so. In a limited way, the adopted parent "replaces," or assumes the kinship identity of, a deceased parent: limited in the sense that members of the utu other than the actual adopters recognize him as kinsman as a matter of courtesy. When he dies, it is as if he never lived at all. His social personality is not perpetuated through the children who adopted him. (This contrasts, of course, with the case of a person adopting, say, a step-child.)

I mentioned the "assumption" of the return of the land to the adopting children. The most ambiguous set of responses to any "hypothetical question" that I raised concerned this matter. If the adopted parent married again and had children, could he give the lands to those children? It was a hypothetical question since there was no concrete case which could be cited. Some said that the land really belonged to the adopting children, and that the adopted parent could not dispose of it at will. Others said that it was his land, and if he wanted to give it to his new children, he could. These different interpretations

reflect the "double meaning" of land, and indirectly the double meaning of utu. On the one hand, land "belongs to the person;" on the other, the land once occupied by a common ancestor is "our land." The primary utu relationship is between adopter and adoptee, but where land has passed, this relationship is set within a larger unit: "the utu." The adoptee has become a member by "replacing" a previous member, but the distinction between social identity and person is handled ambiguously. (This may apply also to the two contested cases discussed on p. 10; in the second, it is natural to assume that G's child is a Banaban "because he is G's child.")

The fact that the native "ideal-typical" parental adoption is of the Gilbertese step-parent presents us with an interesting analytic problem. Since there is an explicitly affective element grounding the adoption, why not adopt Banaban step-parents?

The answer lies, I suggest, in the dependency of adoptee on adopter mentioned earlier. When one person gives land to another, the recipient is seen as being under an obligation to the giver. The point is exemplified in a case where the recipient actually did not express awareness of the obligation. One man, X, commented privately that a certain elder's ancestor was adopted as a Banaban and received land from X's family, indicating that the elder was in a special position of obligation to that family thereby. The elder did not, however, extend special courtesies to the family. X commented that this was not the kind of thing that one should advertise (it is actually the kind of remark that might issue forth in an angry outburst), and if the elder chose to forget it, "it was all right" with him. X was expressing his generosity, and the principle that people do not like ^{it} to be known ^{that they are} under such obligations to others. Beyond the domains of kinship, age- and sex-roles, the people have a strongly egalitarian ethic, and even within those domains, obligation is often felt as oppressive.

When an adopted child or grandchild receives land from his adopter, the direction of obligation ^{complements} ~~conforms with~~ the direction of authority: the elder generation is superior, the junior generation inferior, ~~and dependent~~. In the case of adopted parents, however, there is a reversal; the adopted parent becomes obligated to his adopting children. For this obligation, the Gilbertese receives something valuable in return: Banaban status. For the Banaban, it would make little sense. (This assumes that the economic advantage in holding provisional title to a few pieces of Ocean Island land would be outweighed by the element of obligation entering the relationship.) The underlying Banaban attitude was expressed in a remark a man made at a time when there was little selling of garden crops among the people. I asked him why this was so, and he said that if ~~one~~ ^{one} had sold food to a man and saw him passing his house, the seller's reaction would be, "Look how fat he is getting on my food!"

In sibling adoption the idea of equality, which is the essential feature of siblingship, is shown in the emphasis on a mutual exchange of land. The relationship created does not end with death, as in parental adoption. The terms for sibling adoption (te i-taritari, "sibling of same sex adoption," and te i-mamane, "sibling of opposite sex adoption") also mean "brotherhood," and are frequently so used in oratory. If one states that a particular person is i-taritari or i-mamane with another, however, there are two specific meanings. The first is that they are in the relationship of te bo, "the meeting," which is a strong and enduring friendship thought to be "like utu." When land passes, the person has entered the utu, and it is an adoption. As one would expect, in "the meeting" alone, a person does not become a Banaban; in a sibling adoption, he does. He owns Banaban land, and in local theory, Banaban status and Banaban land-ownership covary.

If I want to adopt someone as sibling, as in any kind of adoption, the members of my "near kindred" must approve. My real siblings will consider him their sibling, but it is my share of land in which he shares; the share may be divided in half. He becomes part of the sibling set, but it is also clear that it was I who brought him into it. A sibling set may also want to adopt someone "to replace" a deceased sibling, in which case the person assumes the position and share of land of that deceased sibling.

One case will illustrate the operation of these principles in combination. Before the war on the island of Beru in the Gilberts, a woman cared for and was very friendly with a Banaban man, and the latter indicated that he wanted her to become his sister. On returning to Banaba, he informed his family of his wish.

He died on Banaba, and after the war, the woman and her family came to Fiji. On Rambi she was welcomed by the man's elder sister, and at a meeting of the siblings and some other relatives, a formal i-mamane was proclaimed, and she was "to replace" her deceased friend. The latter had a daughter on Rambi, and his Ocean Island land was divided between her and the adopted woman. The arrangements for the inclusion of the daughter in the woman's own property subdivision in the Gilberts were not yet made, but contemplated.

Sibling adoptions are generally the "returning of a kindness" of a Gilbertese to a Banaban during a time of difficulty, especially illness. Many were generated during the last war. They can also be grounded simply in "the peoples' feeling." The important point to note here is that it is one's kinsmen who are supposed to be supportive in times of trouble. The person who tenders this kind of support who is not a kinsman, is behaving as kinsmen are supposed to behave. One does not really expect non-kinsmen to behave in this way.

One particular kind of situation in which sibling adoption is used is where a Banaban sibling set adopts their non-Banaban half-sibling, who thereby becomes a Banaban and "equal to them." (The situation arises when, say, a Banaban man married a Gilbertese woman and had children; the man dies, the woman remarries to a Gilbertese, and has a child with him.)

There were two cases where a sibling adoption was not between a Banaban and a Gilbertese, but two Banabans. In the first, there was no transfer of Ocean Island land, and none is envisioned. The man, however, is part-Gilbertese, and said he would give his adoptive sister a share of his land in the Gilberts. By getting a piece of land on another island one has a "place" there; this is one of the things one bestows upon an adopted sibling.

A factor which may contribute to te i-mamane both in the sense of "the meeting" and brother-sister adoption, as in the case just considered, is this: the normal pattern of "friendship" is between people of the same sex. Calling a non-kinsman of the opposite sex a "friend" (rao) can have overtones of a sexual relationship; the word rao is used for friend, kinsman, spouse, and lover. Familiarity between two non-kinsmen of the opposite sex in the same generation is an invitation to salacious gossip; te i-mamane circumvents this.

The second case of sibling adoption between two Banabans was different. Before death, a woman with an only daughter adopted a young man as brother to replace her deceased brother, and care for the girl. The woman was afraid, it is said, that her family might harm the young and defenceless girl in order to get her land. The adoptee's role was to protect her. He received the deceased brother's land, but none from his natal utu; his social position derives from his adoptive sister.

This adoption was rather like a retroactive child adoption. The woman had no sons, and no brother to look after her daughter, and adopted a brother herself. One can speculate that it seemed more reasonable to adopt a brother than a son,

since his generational position would give his word more weight with the fancied avaricious members of the family. Actual bodily harm toward one's child is not generally expected from collateral kinsmen after one's own death. Collateral kinsmen are supposed to care for orphans, but when they cannot be counted on to do so, a solution can be sought in adoption.⁶

One final question that must be attended to is the extent to which adoption relates groups. The kinsmen of someone adopted by one of my utu are not "my utu," but kinsmen of someone who is a kinsman of mine. It is still appropriate for me to extend courtesies to them if we should be together; I do this as an expression of my relationship with my kinsman. I may help my child prepare a gift for the life-crisis rite of one of his adoptive utu, if the former is living with me rather than with them at the time. I am doing it "for him," as in helping a child who belongs to another church prepare his contribution to the church, it is my relationship with him rather than with his church that is concerned. I might even attend the funeral of a real sibling of an adopted relative, as I might attend a feast of that church.

In contrast with the "fosterage" pattern described by Lambert for the Northern Gilberts, adoption is not a structural principle relating groups in the society, nor is it the regular expression of a continuing relationship between groups, although an adoption does have implications for people other than the adoptee and the kindred of the adopter. The idea of a heritable relationship involving two units is rather found in te bo, "the meeting," which is "like utu," and where neither utu actually incorporates something which originally belonged to the other.

The interesting feature of the forms of Banaban adoption somewhat unusual cross-culturally (and to a lesser extent about child adoptions as well) is that they often represent the addition of kinship in the categorical sense to kinship in the behavioral sense, or the conversion of a "feeling," as the Banabans

put it, into a social position, which is generally symbolized by land as a substitute for blood. The ultimate statement of solidarity and identity is the status of utu. The diversity of adoptive forms is understandable because one cannot enter an utu as a "member-at-large." If someone is to become my utu, he must become my utu as something: child, brother, or whatever. He must be somebody's something, and in a Banaban line if he is a foreigner and is to attain Banaban status. This means that he must be included in the family division of land; land ownership is implied both by utu status, and Banaban status.

Land is not, however, equivalent to blood. I cannot give my child blood on my father's side only, or exclude my blood from his children. Land symbolizes kinship as applying both to a category of person and a category of behavior. As I can give land to someone who acts in the role of kinsman but is not my utu, and he becomes my utu, I can also give more land to the child who acts as a child should, than to the child who does not.

NOTES

1. This paper is based on eighteen months' field-work on Rambi Island, Fiji. The support of the Social Science Research Council, and the American Educational Foundation in Australia, is gratefully acknowledged. Prof. David M. Schneider of the University of Chicago, and Mr. H.E. Maude of the Australian National University, gave extremely helpful advice at many points in the research. I am obliged to the Government of Fiji and the Rambi Island Council for facilitating the research in the field, and to Vern Carroll for many useful suggestions on a previous draft of this paper.

Much of the interviewing on individual cases of adoption was conducted by Kauongo Bio, my Banaban assistant, while I was engaged in other tasks. We have data on the adoption of 93 people as child, 13 as grandchild, 14 as sibling, and 7 as parent.

In native words and names, I have followed the standardized Gilbertese orthography.

2. In his Gilbertese-French dictionary, Sabatier (1954:912) translates kauatabo as follows: "mettre, faire tenir à chaque bout, chacun à un bout." Ka- is a causative prefix, and ua a morpheme meaning both "carry" and "two"; tabo means "end, extremity," and "place." "Child of two places" was how the word was explained to me (in Gilbertese) when I first heard it.

3. In the schedule of "customary land conveyances" drawn up by H.E. Maude during the Ocean Island Lands Commission (copy in Files of Rambi Island Council), it is stated that te iria passes to the family of the adopter if the adopted child dies without issue. Most local legal experts I consulted on Rambi said that it would revert to the original utu, it would "return to its proper place," although the matter is recognized as somewhat ambiguous. The ambiguity arises from the fact that land is both "the person's" and "the utu's."

4. In all but one of the cases where a person was adopted as child by someone already kinsman to him, and it was known what kind of kinsman he was, the adoptee was already in the terminological relationship of "child" (i.e., cognate, G-1) to the adopter. In the one exception, the relationship was a distant one, and the adoptee a collateral "grandchild." An Ellice woman adopted a close "sister" as "child," and my Banaban assistant, who had interviewed her, commented upon it as a rather bizarre idea.

5. During the discussion of a childless couple who had adopted, and later had a child of their own, a Banaban commented that this was one motivation for adoption: the continued presence of an infant could inspire an issueless couple to fertility. This arose at a time when there was no further opportunity to pursue it, and I do not know how general the idea is.

6. The second sibling adoption between Banabans discussed is one of the few cases where a certain ceremony in some ways similar to that reported by Grimble (1957) is remembered to have been performed. The spirits of the four directions were called upon, and the young man's change of name declared. The name is sometimes changed in adoption; taking a name from the adopting utu obviously symbolizes the change in social personality. One explanation offered for the calling of the spirits in this instance was that they should help the adopted brother in case some members of the family had bad intentions toward him.

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THE EVOLUTION OF POLYNESIAN CHIEFDOMS AND THE TUNGARU TRANSFORMATIONS

This lecture will be something like a summary of some parts of a book to be published soon about the traditional political & social organization of Kiribati (Gilberts~~es~~, Kingsmill, Tungaru). And the recent publication of two new books by P.V.Kirch about the evolution of Hawaiian & Polynesian chiefdoms, also give me the opportunity to make ~~some~~ comparative remarks.

In the 19th century, the Kiribati islands were^e among the last of the Pacific Islands groups, ^{to be colonized} even if some ships of the great colonial powers of the time had been interfering for many years in order to "protect" their citizens. In fact, at mid-century, the local political situation was diverse and very much in the process of change.

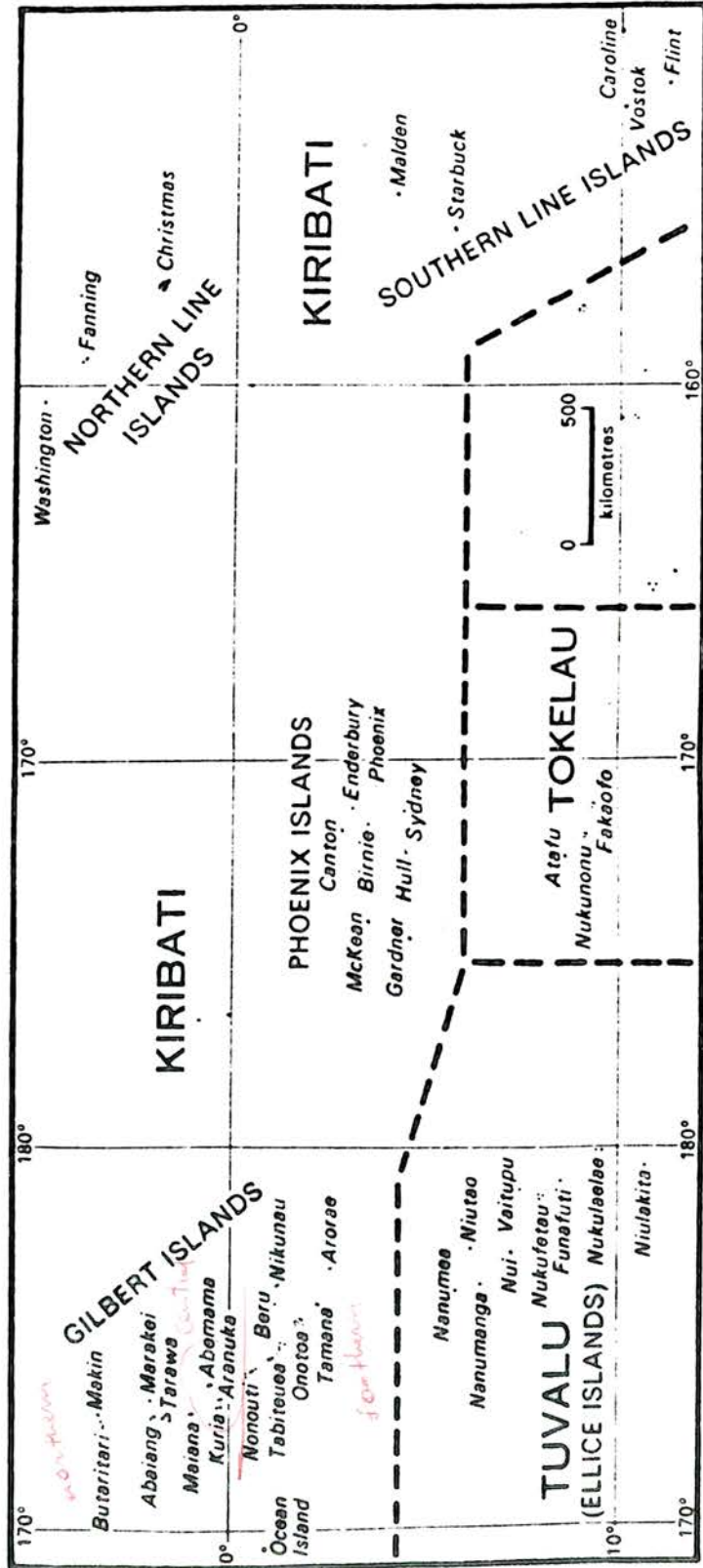
In the southern islands -by which I mean those beginning at Nonouti- there was apparently a very stable situation, especially in the far south. The villages -we'll use the term for now- were governed by assemblies of elders. This polity was soon upset by what have been called "the religion wars", especially at Tabiteuea : in September 1880, the final battle results in more than 600 fatalities.

In the northern~~A~~ islands - with the^e exception of Butaritari- warrior factions were attempting to impose their rule^e over Maiana, Marakei

and especially Tarawa and Abaiang. In 1860, the missionary Damon noted ~~with~~
 -doubtless with an ulterior motive : "The ~~state~~ of affairs looks like
 that of Hawaii before the conquest of Kamehameha. It would be a
 blessing if the island group was placed under a single powerful dy-
 nasty". This state of instability was in ^hstong contrast to the order
 observed by voyagers in the central islands (I will speak at times
 of the central islands - to differentiate them from the other
 Northern islands). In these central islands in 1891, the famous
 Tem Binoka was going to die, as the last independant high chief
 of a "kingdom", the independance of which he sought, apparently
 all his life, to preserve. It was not so easy.

The writer Robert L. Stevenson, who visited him for two^months in 1889,
 has left us a picturesque portrait, rather sympathetic -and I think,
 accurate enough. Binoka has often been viewed with condescension
 or severity by later European authors. Indeed, Abemama and its
 two satellites had displayed great stability for several decades.
 The ethnohistorical testimonies for this are abundant and precise.
 From the year 1867, we have the testimony of Bingham, Hiram B. Junior,
 the missionary, who visited the father of Binoka, Tem Baiteke.
 In 1878, the German battleship Ariadne visited Abemama and Captain
 Von Werner wrote in his journal : "We were received by the father
 of the king (Baiteke)...He asked me repeatedly to give a document
 declaring that I had found every thing in order on his island..."
 In 1889, Binoka will make exactly the same request for a "certificate
 of good management" from R.L. Stevenson.

In 1886,



In 1886, Captain Rooke, of the HMS Miranda visited Abemama and noticed laconically in his journal : "King Binoka has 37 wives...He is selling about 200 tons of coprah a year...All firearms are owned by him... The island is flourishing and peaceful..."

In fact, Binoka had a policy of domestic order, and annexation elsewhere : in 1883, he took advantage of dissensions on the neighbour island of Nonouti, in order to conquer it or at least the entire Northern section. He left a governor on the island and demanded half the copra harvest. He had also precise aims about Maiana. Certainly, he wanted to create and would have created for this group of islands, with a population of more than 30 000 people, the image of a centralized "State" like the Polynesian ones. So still in 1883, Binoka corresponded with the King of Hawaii, Kalaakaua who had proposed the creation of a political federation of the Pacific.

Also a good observer as Woodford, who was a naturalist travelling extensively in the Kiribati group and future British Resident Commissioner in the Solomon Islands, could write an unnoticed letter in June 1884 to the Western Pacific High Commissioner. Every word of this letter seems to me important: "Across the southern islands, the power in expansion of the King of Abemama is a subject of daily conversation, and the autochtones consider the acquisition of all the group of islands by this king as only a question of time.

He has already some agents working for him in the islands of Tabiteuea and Beru and he sent twice some tobacco gifts to Beru. These gifts, after discussion, have been accepted by the inhabitants." In my opinion,

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this says a great deal about the political sagacity and farsightedness of Binoka, who is often judged negatively.

So, when, some months after the death of Binoka, in 1892, Captain Davis, commander of HMS Royalist, anchored in the lagoon of Abemama Island and declared that all the group of Kingsmill Islands were, from now on, under the protection of the British Crown, he definitely put an end to a political evolution that had given to the three central islands a singular place in the archipelago. One cannot avoid the urge to speculate, as Patrick Kirch made it about Hawaii (p.253) on what Kiribati society would have looked like, had European powers not interfered with the local ones, and if the indigenous course of evolution had been allowed to proceed.

Any way, still to-day, this particular evolution of the northern islands has left clear traces in Kiribati social life. One aspect that still astonishes the observer is this difference between the psychology and the social life of northern and southern islanders, "kaain meang ao kaain maiaki" (and I believe no Kiribati present in this room would deny this). That difference is the subject of continual jokes of which the inhabitants of the south are most often the butt; sometimes it is also the subject of a preoccupation, even a slight anxiety of people of the north in front of the rise-in-power of southern Kiribati, specially in the modern socio-political domain. However, at my knowledge, nobody has tried to make a comparison or to give an interpretation of the origin of that differences. We'll come back later on this.

But, before talking about differences, we have to ~~speak~~ talk about the deep social unity of Kiribati. It is not unuseful to give some general considerations because the K traditionnal culture and history are much less known than ^h those of other Pacific groups. You know of course where Kiribati is situated . They are inhabited to-day by more than fifty thousand people : it is in fact one of the most heaviest ^o ppulated of Pacific islands, considering the superficiality of this group composed only with atolls. Culturally, the group is a part of the Micronesian area. But we have ^u very few modern linguistic research made on Kiribati, and to date, no archeological work. And this is a real call for help : we need badly archeological diggings in this group. It is very regrettable also that no archeological research has been done either on the islands of Baanaba and Nauru before the soil of this islands had been completely devastated ^{by} ~~par~~ the phosphate exploitation.

From an outside point of view, the social life, as the language, is similar in all the islands : each island is divided ^h in "districts", where, in the middle, a large meeting-house (called maneaba) is located, surrounded by smaller houses. This kind of settlements are similar on all the islands, north and south, as are similar the rules of marriage and kinship, the fundamental modalities of land tenure, the names of the main mythical beings and the global system of world-view. However, eventhough there is a climatic division between the North and the South, the South being much ⁱ dryer and arid, with more difficulties for cultivation of the essential staples -taro and breadfruit-

it seems like an invisible ^vfonteer curiously divides ~~the~~ North and the South in many other domains too, and this opposition has always puzzled me.

But what are and what were exactly these differences ?

If you ask a Gilbertse this question, he will probably answer with a simple sentence like : there were uea (= chiefs) in the north and none in the south. Other terms are toka, inaomata.

He could also say that in the south each family had its own lands, whereas in the north, many families had lost, temporarily or not, their land rights. He could also say that te katei n te maneaba, the maneaba custom, is still strong in the south, much less formalized ~~than~~ in the north, etc. These differences are the most striking, we could say, structural differences. Some others ^{ones} rather belong to the behavioral level : the right to public speech is not the same - in the north some people never speak publicly; in the south^t, interpersonal quarrels and a kind of defiant attitude is more frequent than in the north; economically, the south islanders spare more than the north islanders; traditionnal dances are more collective in the south, more individualists in the north (that affirmation would require long qualifications) etc. The list could be longer, but it is sufficient ~~ofr~~ the moment. To recapitulate in one sentence : there were uea, chiefs, "kings", real uea, real chiefs in the north (because we will see that there were also uea in the south, but that this cultural category underwent a semantic development, a semantic transformation in the north).

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In reality, the Gilbert Islands do present curiously in a nutshell the situation described by archeologists concerning Polynesia at large : a situation, in the words of Kirch, from "relatively egalitarian" to "highly stratified". Our problem is then to try to understand how these northern chiefdoms were established. By what internal, or external, logic ? What are the causes of that transformation?

Patrick Kirch, in his important recent book, The Evolution of the Polynesian Chiefdoms proposed a model of major processes of change that underlie the transformations of the various Polynesian societies, and it is interesting to see if this model can highlight the Kiribati case. Two difficulties arise : Kiribati, you could say, is not in the Polynesian area, but as I said it previously (I cannot develop this point now), I consider that many aspects of the K social system are related to the Polynesian type, Kiribati is para-polynesian, we could say. The other difficulty, a more serious one, is that the study of Kirch is mainly an archaeological work (and related sciences) and we have seen the archeological of K does not yet exist, and even the detailed ethnological or ecological studies, etc... are rare.

However Kirch, in the chapter 3, and in the third part of his book, but mainly in the chapter 8, makes some propositions on the process of transformation based on hypothetical reconstructions and ethno-historical accounts, and we may reasonably adapt these propositions to our domain. Particularly, Kirch studies (p.198 et ss) "the demographic and ecological correlates of war" and he proposes an inte-

resting general model, or scenario, in four phases, of the process of competition and conflict, illustrated in diagrammatic form, the entire process taking, "several hundreds or even a thousand or so years". This scenario, Kirch continues, is closely reflected, not only by ethnographic and archeological evidence, but by indigenous oral traditions of local political history from several island groups : for example Mangareva and Mangaia, Tahiti, Hawaii. (Unfortunately his references are a bit vague on this point, except for Tikopia and Futuna).

By all evidence, K considers the war, the territorial conquest, ^{has} a very important role even though he refuses to give it the "prime mover" status in the origin and the political consolidation of the chiefdoms.

Concerning Kiribati, war had also an important role in our ethno-historical documents. In a recent book, published for the occasion of national independence and which has the advantage of having been written by young Kiribati people, a whole chapter is devoted to "civil wars" as they say. They consider the struggle for land as the principal cause of these wars. I have myself collected many traditional accounts about the conflicts, mainly in Abemama, Aranuka and Tarawa, which will be analysed in my book.

Inarakei

What are the data concerning the Gilbertese chiefdoms ?

If we want to study the birth of the Tungaru chiefdoms, we must try to reconstruct the earlier state of affairs, maintaining that there is probably not a sudden transition from a pre-chiefdom state to chieftainship.

From this point of view, several variables should be studied diachronically : ecological, demographical, economical,...variables. But my aim in this lecture ^{is} ~~est~~ mainly to analyse the transformation of territorial and social relations.

Here a difficulty arises. Because, as often in Polynesia, our knowledge of the political and territorial organisation before the chiefdom stage is difficult to reconstruct, often contradictory, as if the "dynastic fact" had modified the representation that the people have about their own society.. This difficulty to reconstruct the pre-chieftainship state of affairs in Abemama where I begun my Gilbertese studies was the exact reason why I undertook another field work in one of the south islands.

I choose Nikunau because the people of Abemama themselves told me about an ancient relation between their island and Nikunau. For example, all the genealogical books of Abemama, and particularly the book of the High Chiefdom begin with the three founding genealogies of Taburitongoun, Taburimai and Riiki, the most important triad of Nikunau. And the study of recent familial traditions shows off very close relations between Nikunau and the central islands.

To go quickly. I postulate that the old territorial Abemaman organisation was probably related to the Nikunau organisation.

Therefore, what are the fundamental characteristics of the social organization of the south islands ? Some of them are relatively well known with the publication in English language by H.Maude, or more recently Lundsgaarde , Silverman, Goodenough, Bill Geddes,...

However, I would like to emphasize here very quickly on some other aspects and, according me, misunderstood aspects of the territorial organization. For this, I begin with how the Kiribati themselves represent their society. To simplify (too much!) : all the variants of cosmological genealogies (because there was not one unitary cosmological system, as nowhere in Polynesia, I think) end in mythical ancestors (anti or antiaomata^m) "spirits", which appear in a special place, in an island of the south as well as an island of the north, or even in other mythical places (as Taamoa). These ancestors, these deities" establish themselves on these lands, reproduct themselves, etc..; or they begin to travel, most of the time as a small group, never alone, long travels in canoes, but special, mythical canoes going through the oceans, sometimes in the sky, sometimes under the sea. Joel Bonnemaïson has recently, in a special ^{issue} ~~number~~ of Pacific Viewpoint edited by Murray Chapman, ^{port accent} again on this well-known mythical motive, and its importance as a symbol of social identity of groups. These canoes have a name, an emblem. But where are they going ? Through the islands, specially Beru, Nikunau, Tarawa, Nonouti, as if some places had more mythical importance than some other ones. So a good stry-teller, a good genealogist will know to narrate, for example, the story of Tetaake (Text number 12 of my book), an ancestral bird, very famous, which left from a mythical tree in Taamoa, went to Beru, to a certain place (kaainga) which has a certain name; gave birth to some children and then was chased out, went to Tarawa,

in a certain place, then to Tabiteuea, to Nonouti, etc...And each place is associated with new ancestors. This line comes finally to an end at the man or woman telling the story. We have moved without noticing it from myth (that we call myths) to the present time. One of the most interesting things is that, if the storyteller is a very good genealogist, he can tell the same kind of story for another mythical canoe, or ten other mythical ancestors, and these lines, after about twenty generations, come to an end at the storyteller himself.

Gradually, a sort of mythico-cultural geography appears, a geography made with ancestral itineraries and spaces organized as networks. One of the roles of genealogies is then to recapitulate the travels of the ancestors. But these ancestors are always associated, explicitly or, unfortunately, implicitly with place-names of any kinds. And if you do not know these local connotations, the genealogy is nearly mute, not understandable, or at least, you are losing the major part of the information and the meaning of the story. This is why, according to me, polynesian genealogies are so difficult to ^{be} fully understand^{ed}, because ^{oo} their comments are often lost, being considered by the teller as something evident.

Among these place-names, associated with genealogies, the names related to maneaba are very important. The maneaba are these big, very big, so typical, meeting-houses. Every district, every "village" has its own maneaba, which is in fact the pertinent characteristic of a district. Each maneaba has its founder, its name

name, its history, often complex, its status in relation to other maneaba, because they are in fact, at least on Nikunau, related hierarchically to one another. Also, a maneaba is divided, on its periphery, in boti or inaki : I translate this by seats. And an individual and its family can sit down in these seats, ^uduring public meetings, only if he has genealogical justification to do it. These seats have also their names, their ancestral founders, their history...and they are themselves hierarchized, ordered, because they are the place where important social exchanges are taking place. You can understand that, until now, the maneaba is the place of traditional politics: the old men are ruling. So, Captain Davis, in 1892, carefully took notice of the number of these old men in each maneaba of the south islands.

Now, we may look at my diagram n.1

In this diagram, I tried in a way to combine and modify the models of P.V.Kirch on pages 32 and 200 of his book.

(ORAL COMMENTS)

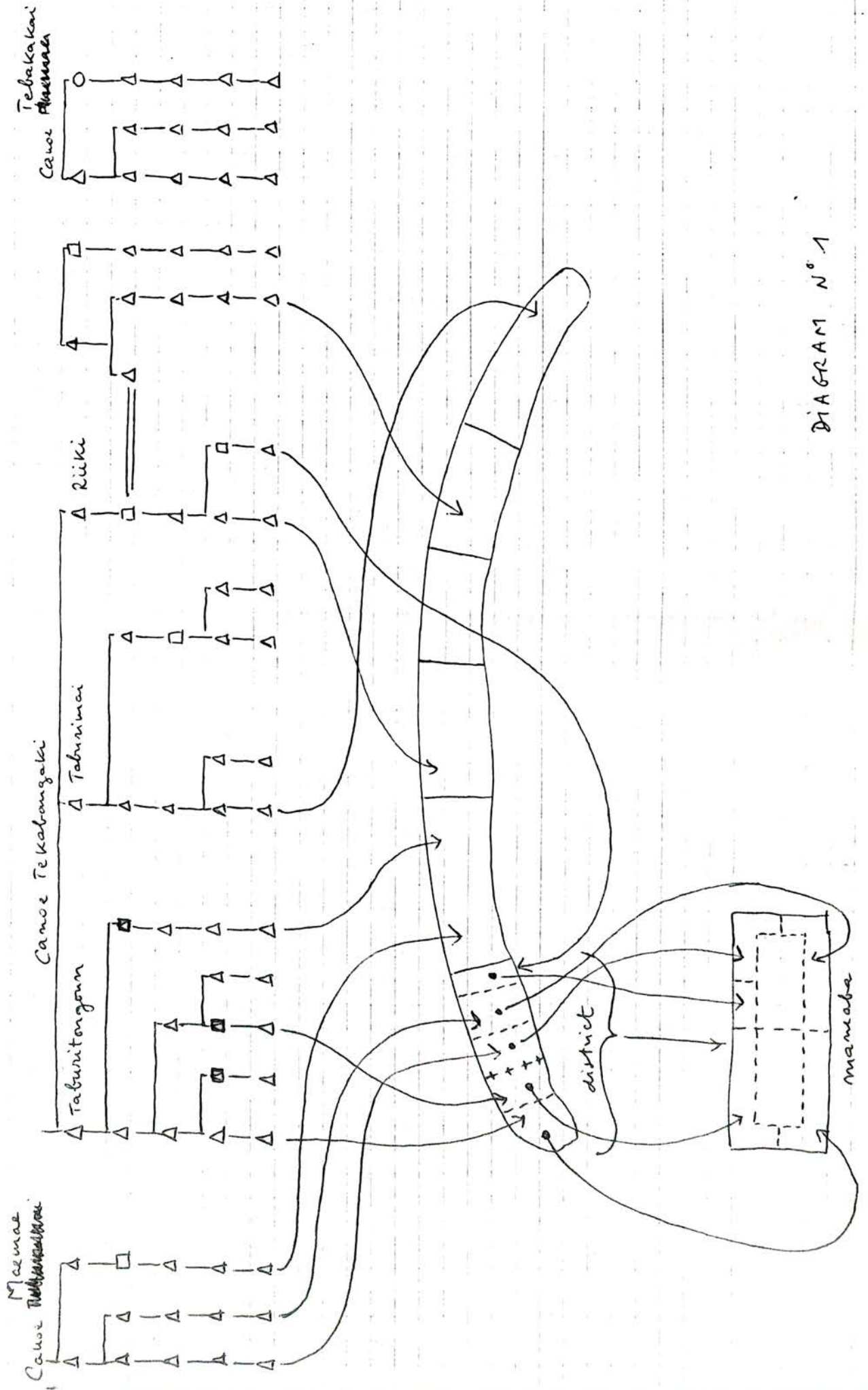


DIAGRAM N° 1

In an anthropological language, we may characterize the traditional Tungaru social system as follows :

Briefly, the descent system of Tungaru and its hierarchy of seats can be considered first from the viewpoint of the structure of kinship groups and, second, from that of local groupings. The basic kinship unit was the extended family, usually patrilocal, but often "historically" matrilineal. The members of one or a few families who traced common descent formed a local descent line in a district, called kaainga. A kaainga in a village was normally but a section of a multilocal group which had other branches scattered in several districts (baronga). Each multilocal group held seats in maneaba (meeting-houses), seats occupied by the old men of a local section. However the rank relationship between scattered branches and seats was not established by seniority of descent. Moreover a district usually contained many kaainga and many seats in the maneaba.

Those among you who are familiar with the discussion, quite fundamental, from my point of view, during the late sixties, in the American Anthropologist, between Derek Freeman, the specialist of Samoa, and Marshall Sahlins, will find that my description of Tungaru social system has many similarities with the Samoan social system, as described by these authors (in fact, my description is an adaptation ^{of} ~~de~~ Sahlins).

My point is, concerning the territorial organization, that the division of Tungaru districts only gave the appearance of being in a way under the domination of one particular seat (or kaainga).

We may now return to the northern, or to the central, islands, because it is in relation to that common territorial organization that we have to consider the ethnographic data and the traditional accounts of the political development.

These local traditions give, we have said, an essential role to the wars in the genesis of chiefdoms.

We shall consider two problems : (1) what was the status of war in Kiribati ? (2) what were the consequences of war on the level of the territorial and social organization ?

It seems that the extension of the phenomenon of wars in the last century create a real break, nearly a traumatism, in these societies. Indeed, if we look at the quite precise historical accounts, we see that the important conflicts were limited not only to the northern islands, but that, in the south, these struggles had a less destructive character than they had in the north. It is striking, for example, to notice, as K. Luomala has done already in a recent paper, the affirmation in 1881 of Garstang, a German who lived on Tabiteuea for many years : "Up until the arrival of protestant (Hawaian) instructors (which happened in 1868), Garstang said to Captain ~~XXXX~~ Maxwell, the autochtones did not kill each other. They struggled only with the intention to hurt each other with their teeth-shark swords". We have a testimony also of J. Gleeson, during the same period : "...Quarrelling and fighting with knives, never killed each other, their mode being to cut each other until one succumbed, always refraining from stabbing".

However, the same Captain Maxwell, only some days later, in 1881 (ten years before the Protectorate), is going to attend a battle between two factions in Tarawa. He describes the groups, with guns, face to face in the rereua. Maxwell does not try to interfere.

Therefore, concerning the problem of the status of war, we could say that there was something like two models of war at the same time, at least during the 19th century, in the Gilbert Islands : a model in the south was rather as a challenge, a defiance between men representing their groups. And the other one, in the north, was a real conquest war, an expansionist and nearly "exterminationist" war.

Then we have the problem of firearms, guns,...You know that a correlation has often been done between the diffusion of firearms during the 19th century and the rise of chiefdoms. I cannot make a detailed study of this problem here (I made it in my book to be published). But the examination of the distribution, very unequal in the different islands, of the firearms seized by the British authorities (Davis in 1892, but already Moore in 1884, etc...) seems to indicate that something a consensus, an agreement existed in the south, mainly in Nikunau, Beru, Onotoa,...to forbid or control the diffusion and use of guns (the case would not be isolated : Mervyn Meggitt remarks, among the Enga of PNG a tacit agreement to not use fire arms during the struggles).

A last word on an institutional and intriguing aspect of the conflicts. It seems that, in all the northern islands, there were two large war factions that were not territorial factions (I mean

they were independent of the district-organization) : their names were Tebatanauatabu and Tebatanteabike. Grimble does somewhere a fascinating remark about that two factions. : "These two ~~factions~~ political or military factions, without reference to the social organization, or to the familial links, struggled between 1770 and 1892 for the supremacy on the northern islands and made vanish the old clan organization". Unfortunately G. does not develop his points and I have not found in his papers any information on that. In any case, we have to consider in this context the political evolution of the chiefdom of Abemama , the House of Tuangaona. Very detailed local chronicles narrate the successive struggles between factions or political alliances of the central islands. These struggles involve ~~groups~~ more and more distant groups, from Abemama, then from Aranuka and Kuria, then from Maiana,...But it is mainly with the generation of Karotu, who became the high chief of Abemama , probably around 1820-1830, that a structural transformation of the chiefdom took place. Karotu, the great father of Binoka, is considered as the first secular chief, ueantautaeka or ueaniaonteaba , in opposition to the ueantemaneaba, the chief in the maneaba, the sacred chief of the southern islands.

The transformation brought by the wars on the territorial organization, and particularly in the land tenure system ^{of} in the central islands were considerable. Indeed nearly ^{all} ~~no~~ cultural aspects were radically modified in the process.

I only would like to state precisely the principles that can allow us to understand how gradually the subordination of certain people

took place.

When a group was beaten (we know that it was, by preference, a high status group) there was three possibilities : either this group escaped to an other island, or it was physically eliminated, or it stayed on the same place. I could give illustration for each case. But it seems that it was the third and last case which was the most frequent and interesting. Because, in the northern islands, for example in Tarawa, the occupation of lands was temporary, the lands being returned, given back to their owners after a while. I cite a document of 1922 (W.P.H.C.Archives) : "The wars conducted by the Uea (of Abemama) were truly "total" since the Uea had his power assured in a way that the victorious generals in the Tarawa wars never knew. On Tarawa, it was a rare occurrence for an unsuccessful warrior to be without land for more than a year or two". Whereas in Abemama, the conquest of lands was final and irreversible. Specially the Abemamans, in case of victory, imposed a curious and original custom which, I believe, has not been understood until now. In fact, according to the excellent old informant, the late Ten Tebao Tooma, if somebody was beaten in a ^{war} ~~war~~, his land was taken by his extended "family" which was with the winner party (and by land, we must understand that this also includes the non-material privileges).

So, if I am beaten, I am placed under an allegiance (kaaunga) by my own ~~remote~~ parents. How does this subordination operate in actual practice ?

Following the same principle used for the inheritance of a land without heir : a piece of land goes back to the descendants of

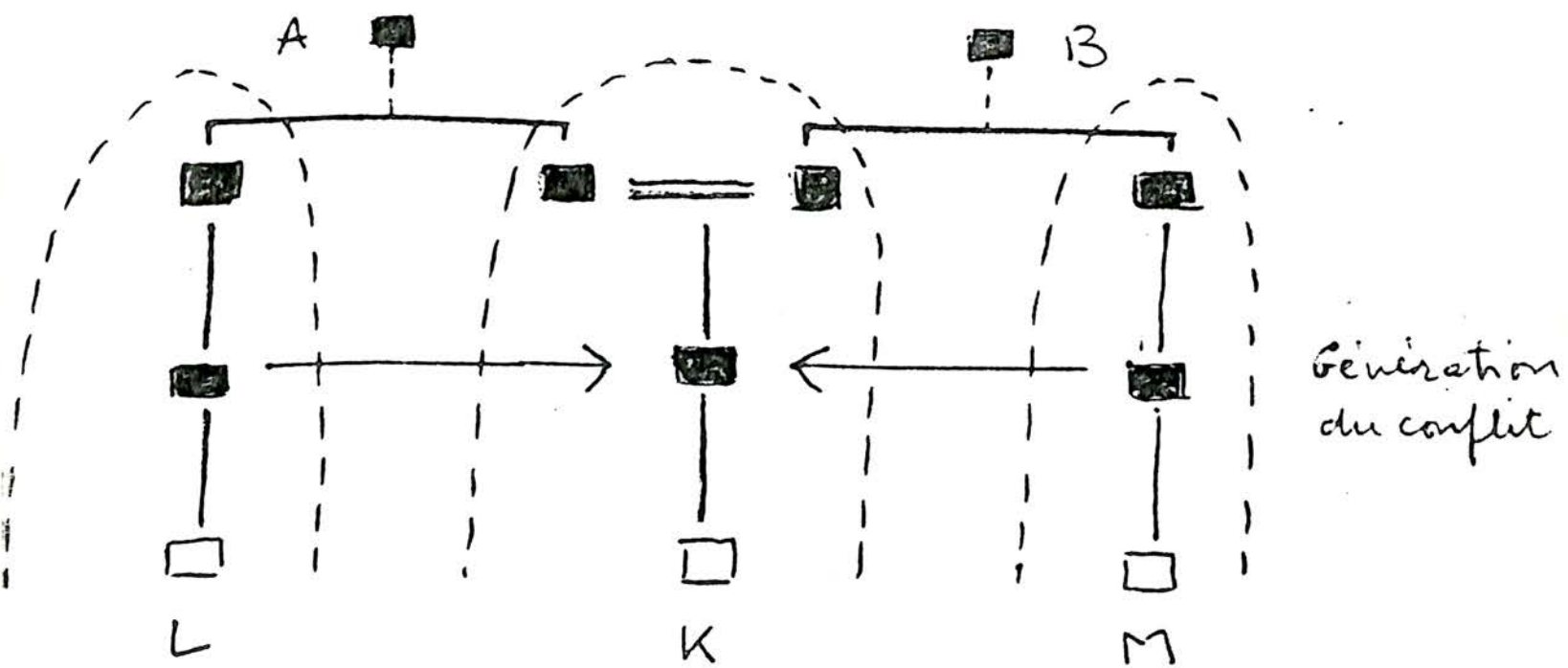


DIAGRAM N° 2

the oi who were in the winner party.

Diagram n.2

(ORAL COMMENTS)

If the group L is the winner, it assumes , it takes over the rights of the beaten group K (lands, seats,...) which the group K owns in relation to the same ancestor A.

Now we can set up a model for ^{the} process of superordination of land rights (diagram n.3).

It all takes place as if a kind of discontinuity occurred in the commonly accepted paradigm that existed earlier, before the new chiefly political organization. As if, by analogy with Nikunau, a chiefdom system had succeeded in imposing a new cultural order on the different districts of the island:

- either by establishing junior lines in defeated districts
- or by matrimonial alliances with ~~the~~ dominant local groups
- or by establishing junior lines in districts deserted by their original inhabitants.

I hast to add that those diagrams are not my own invention, but that they have been elaborated from a detailed study of land records and land registers that were written for the central islands in the beginning of this century by George Murdoch, an important personality in the history of Abemama.

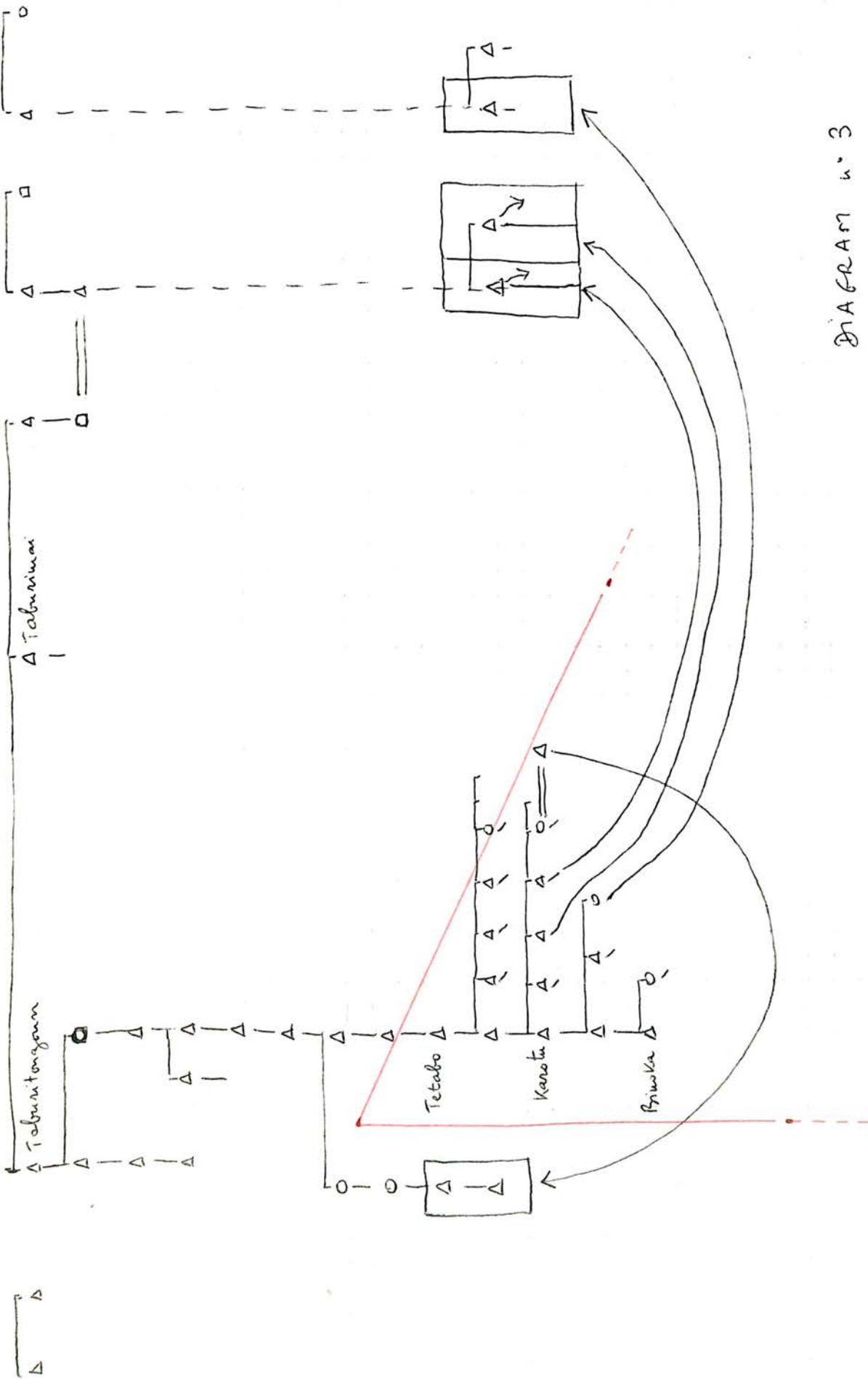


DIAGRAM n° 3

We can say that at some time, probably during the firstx decades of the 19th century, a major sociopolitical change took place in the central islands. And the interesting thing is that, by ethno-historical data and by a genealogical study of land tenure system, we have a precise information about this change:

(1) A conical clan (I think this concept requires some clarification, but it is convenient for the moment) began to appear, with its usual connotation : ranking of junior lines, closer and closer matrimonial alliances which became more and more political alliances,...

(2) A new system of social classification appeared consequently, completely unknown in the south. So, the Abemamans make a distinction between several categories : at the top, te uea and te ba n uea, then inaomata, chiefs and big land owners at the same time, closely related to the uea. Then aomata, people which are in one way or another under allegiance of inaomata, finally, kaaunga, people who have no landrights at all.

(3) Correlatively, we can observe a radical change in the system of land tenure and this change had large implications : a category of people became simple caretakers, for a part or for their whole lands; another category of people became sometime resident on the lands of their remote family.

(4) Gradually, the high chief acquired his own land domain (called te aba n uea), made with seized or deserted lands. This land domain was distinct of his own family lands. (It is not indifferent to remark this distinction appeared very lately in the French medieval history, for example).

(5) The genealogy of the chietainship became the most important genealogy for the Abemaman people and the important thing was to have an affiliation to it, through one line or another. So, many recent family genealogical books do not bother to record the generations before the chiefly line. Everybody wants to be a kain Tuangaona, an inhabitant of Tuangaona.

(6) Concerning genealogies, the category of people which lost their lands, also "lost" their genealogies. In fact, in some cases, they know it perfectly well, but they prefer not to speak about this problems. (That experience was one of my main difficulties during my field work in the central islands). Of course, you may compare with the Hawaian situation about genealogies : it is exactly the same, but in Kiribati, we know nearly exactly when and why that genealogical "amnesia" occured.

(7) On the level of territorial organization, the maneaba system was decreasing, the old classificatory order conflicting with the new one. The relation with the cosmology was also modified. In most of the northern islands, the very precise system of seating arrangements has nearly disappeared. Instead, something as the Hawaian konohiki system took place : the mataniwi. We could translate by "functionnal chiefs".

(8) I could give many other transformations, specially on the behavioral level. I already gave some of them at the beginning of my talk. ~~There~~ ^{There} are many others : the system of proper names was transformed, and also the adoption and sororate systems, etc...

I am afraid that I have been already too long and too compact. One of the points I wanted to do is that it is in relation to the genealogical cultural logic and to the cosmology, that the territorial conquest and the mechanism of accumulation of rights and privileges happened. Chiefdoms are fundamentally cultural conquests : it is a question of taking possession, among other things, of some vital, "magical" and not only economical, cultural places. Or, as James Boon says somewhere : "The symbolic schemes contain the conditions for their own reformulation".

I could have made my point with another illustration, from the south, if it had not been necessary to use too detailed genealogical data (Gilbertese are really terrific dialecticians in genealogical matters!)

Briefly, the Text n.28 of my book Mythistoire relates the story of a murder, and in fact the following war, between inhabitants of the island of Beru and those of Nikunau about fifteen generations ago. However, eventhough the murder took place in the district of Nikumanu in the south of Nikunau, the people of Karongoa of Beru came to take, by force, as a compensation, lands and seats, not in the maneaba of Nikumanu, but in the maneaba of Manriiki, because they believe, for mythological and cosmological reasons, that this maneaba is the dominant maneaba, the dominant place in Nikunau. So the people of the two main factions in Nikunau are still eagerly arguing these questions. And I think personally that this kind of questions still to day largely determines the politics on the local level.