

ment based on a scheme of the discreteness of several categories of exchangeable items, hierarchically arranged, has created several difficulties and inconsistencies. It is considered admirable to invest one's wealth in wives and children—the least expendable form of wealth traditionally known to Tiv, and that form most productive of further wealth.

But Tiv have come upon a simple paradox: today it is easy to sell subsistence goods for money to buy prestige articles and women, thereby aggrandizing oneself at a rapid rate. The food so sold is exported, decreasing the amount of subsistence goods available for consumption. On the other hand, the number of women is limited. The result is that bride wealth gets higher—the price of women becomes inflated. Under these conditions, as Tiv attempt to become more and more wealthy in people, they are merely selling more and more of their foodstuffs and subsistence goods, leaving less and less for their own consumption.

Indigenous Tiv ideas of the sort we would call economic not only formed a basis for their intellectual ordering of their economic exchanges, but also supply motivation for their personal economic striving. These ideas are inconsistent with a monetary economy on the fringe of industrial society. Tiv, to whom these are not “economic ideas” but a “natural” ordering of phenomena and behavior, tend to see the difficulty as being with the monetary economy. The ethnographer can only look on and attempt to understand the ideas and motivations, knowing that the discrepancy between ideas and the actual situation will become greater until one is smashed and then adapted to suit the other—and he knows also that the conclusion is foregone.

NOTES

¹ Twenty-six months' research was carried out between July 1949 and January 1953 among the Tiv, under the auspices of the Social Science Research Council and the Wenner-Gren Foundation for Anthropological Research, with supplementary grants from the Colonial Social Science Research Council and the Government of Nigeria, to all of which bodies grateful acknowledgment is made.

² This fact may be a function of the time observations were made, which was a time of inflation in Tivland as elsewhere.

³ I believe Akiga to be giving examples of a category rather than quoting prices here. But the price stability may have been generally recognized in the pre-money days of stable exchange to which Akiga refers.

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A Problem in Malayo-Polynesian Social Organization¹

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DESPITE the wide differences in the social systems which now exist among Malayo-Polynesian societies, Murdock (1948; 1949:228-31, 349-50) offers convincing evidence that they are derived from an original “Hawaiian” type of structure. The features characterizing this type include bilocal extended families, bilateral kindreds, the absence of unilinear kin groups, and Generation-Hawaiian kinship terminology.

Not considered by Murdock, because it was beyond the scope of his immediate interests, is another feature characterizing the organization of a great many Malayo-Polynesian societies: the association of individual rights to land with membership in some kind of kin group. It is so widespread as to suggest that it may be an original Malayo-Polynesian pattern.

If Murdock's reconstruction is correct, the only two kin groups with which land ownership could be associated were the bilateral kindred and the bilocal extended family. Now a person's kindred as defined by Murdock (1949:44, 56-62) includes roughly half of the members of his father's and mother's kindreds, respectively, coinciding with the kindreds of neither of them. This means that there is no continuity of kindred membership from one generation to the next. Kindreds, as so defined, cannot, therefore, function as land-owning bodies. Bilocal extended families could so function, but this would require that all out-marrying members of a family lose membership in the land-owning group while all in-marrying spouses acquire such membership. Yet the present-day Malayo-Polynesian land-owning groups stress consanguinity as the basis of membership, not residence alone. Since, moreover, consanguineal ties are the normal basis for the transmission of land rights, consanguineal groups are more effective instruments of collective land ownership than residential ones. I find it difficult, therefore, to accept the idea that the early Malayo-Polynesians associated ownership directly with the bilocal extended family.

But what alternatives are there? The evidence for Murdock's reconstruction is too consistent to allow for any serious questioning of his conclusions. There is, however, the possibility that he has left something out, something which neither his data nor existing social organization concepts could readily have revealed.

A clue to what this something is may be sought in the current confusion as to what is meant by the term “kindred.” In the literature it has two distinct definitions. Rivers (1926a:15-16) and Murdock (1949:56-62) 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 cannot all be related to one another. As just indicated, the kindred in this sense is ephemer-

eral and cannot, therefore, function as a land-owning group. And it is in this sense that Murdock attributes kindreds to early Malayo-Polynesian society.

As defined in *Notes and Queries* (1929:55), 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 fathers or mothers." 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 nonunilinear 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: in both cases consanguineal connections are traced through either sex. 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. I wish to suggest that the kindred in the latter sense must be added to the kindred in Murdock's sense as an element in the social organization of early Malayo-Polynesian society. Hereinafter, I shall reserve the term kindred for the bilateral group which Rivers and Murdock had in mind and shall refer to the group defined by *Notes and Queries* as a nonunilinear descent group.

As we shall see, nonunilinear descent groups may take many forms. We are, therefore, faced with the problem of ascertaining its probable form in the original Malayo-Polynesian group.

Logically, true descent groups, i.e., groups in which all the members trace descent from a common ancestor, may be of two basic types. The first type we may call an "unrestricted descent group," for it includes *all* of the founder's descendants, whether through males or females. Such groups must of necessity overlap in membership, for each individual will belong to as many of them as he has known ancestors. The second type restricts membership to include only some of the descendants of the original ancestor. The unilinear principle, by which only the children of existing members of one sex are added as new members, is but one of several possible ways of restricting membership in descent groups. A second possibility is to include only those descendants who acquire certain land rights as their share of the original inheritance. If both sexes are eligible to inherit these rights, then the line of descent by which a member carries his genealogy back to the founding ancestor is likely to go sometimes through men and sometimes through women. A third way to restrict membership in a descent group is to include only the children of those members who after marriage continue to reside in the locality associated with the group. If residence is bilocal, then the line of descent will go sometimes through men and sometimes through women. Still another device is to make membership in the father's or mother's group optional depending on the individual's own choice of residence between the localities with which they are respectively associated. These are simple ways of maintaining restricted descent groups of a sort analogous to sibs and lineages, but not unilinear in structure. Such groups

can readily function as land-holding units. What evidence do we have among Malayo-Polynesian societies for the presence of such nonunilinear descent groups either now or in the past?

Let us turn to the Gilbert Islands first.² Here we must distinguish formally and functionally between five types of kin group.

1. The *ulum*, a true bilateral kindred.
2. The *oo*,³ 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.
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 *oo*, the *bwoti*, and the *kainga* are all of interest for this discussion.

As already indicated, the *oo* 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 is without brothers, they may get more 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 this land, but are eligible to do so should present shareholders die without heirs. Since land may not be alienated from the *oo* without the consent of its members, the several holdings of a person who dies without children 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. The Gilbertese *oo* 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. Let us now turn to the *bwoti*.

Community meeting houses in the Gilbert Islands, as in Samoa,⁴ 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 caves 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 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*.

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 quarreled with his mates, or because he wishes to help keep up the numerical strength or to assume 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 among 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 that this kin group should have been erroneously labeled "patrilineal" by such outstanding reporters of Gilbertese custom as Grimble (1933:19-20) and the Maudes (1931:232). In the light of existing concepts, this was the best label they could use.⁶ 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 commonly patrilocal but matrilocality was considered proper under some circumstances, as when a man's share of *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 matrilocality 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. This membership principle is, of course, tailor-made for societies practicing bilocal residence.

Normally, each member of the *kainga* had a plot in the tract of land associated with it. If this tract had a corresponding *bwoti* in the meeting house, all 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 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.

Because of its intimate connection with bilocal residence, we must look upon the *kainga*, like the *oo*, as quite possibly an original Malayo-Polynesian form of kin group. The *bwoti*, too, despite its special function in relation to meeting-house organization, commands our interest on structural grounds. What indications are there of the presence of groups like the *oo*, *bwoti*, and *kainga* among other Malayo-Polynesian peoples? Let us turn to the *oo* and *bwoti* first.

Barton's account of the Ifugao indicates clearly that an unrestricted descent group of the *oo* type occurs there. In describing the Ifugao "family," as he calls it, he leaves no doubt about the presence of bilateral kindreds (1919:15). When he talks of family-owned land, however, he is clearly talking about something else (pp. 39-41). He indicates that some holdings have been associated with a particular family for generations. They may descend through

daughters as well as sons (pp. 50-55). When a person dies without children his property reverts for division not to his kindred as a unit but to the nearest of his kin who like him are descended from a former owner. Indeed, as far as the reversion of land to collateral heirs is concerned, Ifugao law is almost identical with Gilbertese law. Members of this land-holding family, moreover, have a voice in its alienation even though they possess no shares in the land. Clearly, when Barton talks about the family as a land-holding unit, he is talking about an unrestricted descent group like the *oo*. The Ifugao are one of the societies considered by Murdock (1949:349) to preserve the original Malayo-Polynesian Hawaiian type of organization unchanged. If he is right, we must accept the *oo* as one of its characteristic features.

Ulaw in the Solomon Islands is another society which exemplifies Murdock's (1949:349) original Hawaiian type of social structure. As reported by Ivens (1927:45-46, 60-61), the Ulawans live in hamlets whose members consider themselves kinsmen. Patrilocal residence prevails, but Ivens notes that commoners marrying into a chief's family may live matrilocally. In addition to extended families there is a kindred, called *komu*. Now, Ivens says that garden grounds and coconut trees belong to the *komu*, and adds that daughters as well as sons may acquire rights in them and retain these rights after moving away in marriage. We have already noted that a kindred cannot be a land-owning group. As such, the *komu* can scarcely be a true kindred. I conclude that the term *komu* must refer in fact to two kinds of kin group—one a kindred, the other a nonunilinear descent group associated with land rights. While the published evidence gives no direct clue as to how membership in the latter group is determined, it is enough to restrict the probabilities. I infer that it is an unrestricted descent group like the *oo* or is restricted either on the basis of land shares like the *bwoti* or on the basis of parental residence like the *kainga*, for Ivens is emphatic about the absence of unilinear groups.

When we turn to Polynesia we find abundant evidence of nonunilinear descent groups. All authorities stress the importance of lineal descent, whether through men or women, in connection with social rank and land rights. Some authorities use the term kindred in the *Notes and Queries* sense for these nonunilinear groups.

Macgregor's account (1937:54) of Tokelau, for example, describes a kindred as all persons descended from a common ancestor, whether through men or women, indicating that it is an unrestricted descent group of the *oo* type. He adds that "the land that was given to the heads of families [in the original settlement] became the common property of the kindreds descended from them. Each member of the kindred received the right to use a section of the land." Children thus acquired claims to a share of land in both their father's and mother's groups. Macgregor states that normally only one of these claims was activated, sometimes on the mother's side and sometimes on the father's. But he does not give the criteria for this choice. It could not have been parental residence for residence was regularly matrilocal, while leadership in the group descended patrilineally in the primogeniture line as in the Gilbert

Islands. We can only conclude that in addition to the unrestricted descent group there was a restricted group comprising persons who actually possessed shares in the ancestral land, resembling in this respect the Gilbertese *bwoti*.

In his account of Uvea, Burrows (1937:62-68) likewise uses the term kindred to refer to two nonunilinear descent groups. One appears to be unrestricted like the *oo*, its members having rights in ancestral land regardless of where they or their parents reside, though if membership is confined to those descendants who actually possess shares as distinct from the right to possess them it corresponds to the Gilbertese *bwoti*. Which is the case is not clear. A segment of this group is localized as a bilocal extended family. This more restricted group is analogous to the Gilbertese *kainga*. In fact, the Uveans use the name *kainga* for it, as well as for the larger group.

Burrows (1936:65-78) develops the same picture on Futuna, where the *kutunga* is either an unrestricted group like the *oo* or a restricted group like the *bwoti*. Here the term *kainga* is reserved for that portion of it which is localized on *kutunga* land. Since residence is bilocal, membership in the *kainga* must be based on parental residence, as in the Gilbert Islands. Burrows calls the *kutunga* a kindred and cites *Notes and Queries* as his authority for doing so. Futunan society is another of those which Murdock (1949:349) regards as typifying original Malayo-Polynesian forms of organization.

The demonstrable presence of unrestricted descent groups associated with land in Ifugao and Gilbertese society, and their probable presence in Uvea, Futuna, and Ulawa means that either they developed independently in Indonesia, Micronesia, Polynesia, and Melanesia, or they were a part of original Malayo-Polynesian social structure. Of these five societies, three are represented in Murdock's survey. That each of them should be considered by him, for other reasons, to preserve the original social structure unchanged is not without significance in this regard.

Given the presence of unrestricted descent groups, it is evident that groups structurally similar to the *bwoti* readily tend to develop. All that is required is a distinction between those who as descendants have rights to acquire a share of ancestral land and those among them who actually have received such shares. If the latter are organized as a separate social group for any reason, they necessarily constitute a restricted descent group in which membership follows the *bwoti* principle. The conditions for its presence, therefore, may well have obtained in early Malayo-Polynesian society. The distributional evidence, however, is too limited to warrant any conclusion in this regard.

In the foregoing survey of possible examples of the *oo* type of group, we have noted the simultaneous presence of the *kainga* type on Uvea and Futuna, where, too, it is called a *kainga*. This suggests that there may be linguistic as well as other evidence for considering the *kainga* type of group an early Malayo-Polynesian form.

The term *kainga*, together with its variant *kainanga*, has a wide distribution in Micronesia and Polynesia. This distribution cannot be attributed to borrowing because its various forms show the proper historical sound shifts as

loan-words do not. While the meaning of the term is not always clear, it invariably has to do with land and/or some kind of social group. In Mangareva, for example, *kainga* refers to a section of land (Buck 1938). It means a kinsman in Lau and Tonga (Hocart 1929), and a nonunilinear kin group together with its land in Futuna, Uvea, and the Gilbert Islands, while an ill-defined family group is called *'aiga* in Samoa. The variant form occurs as *'ainana* in Hawaii, where it refers to a local population of some kind. The cognates *kainanga* and *hailang* or *jejinag* refer to patrilineal and matrilineal sibs, respectively, in Tikopia (Firth 1946) and the Central Caroline Islands (Lessa 1950; Goodenough 1951). Clearly there was some kind of descent group associated with land in the society from which both Polynesian and Micronesian peoples are jointly descended. But how in the course of history could this ancestral descent group come to be nonunilinear in some places and unilinear in others? And where it is unilinear, how could it become patrilineal here and matrilineal there? If we start with the assumption that this group was originally, as in the Gilbert Islands, one in which continuity of membership derived from parental residence where the residence rule was bilocal, then the answer becomes clear. In those societies shifting to regular patrilocal residence, the group automatically became patrilineal. Where matrilineal residence became the rule, as in the Carolines, the group became equally automatically matrilineal. And in each case no one need even be aware that a change had in fact occurred. Where bilocal residence continued or tendencies to unilocality did not go too far, the kin group remained nonunilinear. If this is so, where else in addition to Uvea, Futuna, and the Gilbert Islands do we encounter nonunilinear descent groups based on parental residence?

The so-called patrilineal clans of the Lau Islands are definitely kin groups in which membership is based on parental residence. The accounts by both Thompson (1940:54) and Hocart (1929:17) make this clear. Hocart, for example, says: "Usually a man 'follows' his father's clan, but many men live with the mother's people, even though both clans may be in the same village, next to one another. If a man lives with his wife's people, the children follow the mother's clan." The importance of parental residence for *hapu* membership among the Maori has been noted by Firth (1929:99-100). For predominantly patrilocal Tongareva we have the suggestive statement by Buck (1932:40) that "through matrilineal residence the children drop active connection with their father's kin and become incorporated and naturally absorbed into their mother's family and the organization to which it belongs." I suspect a similar situation in Tokelau (Macgregor 1937) and Manua (Mead 1930). Certainly it would be compatible with the meager facts reported there.

For patrilineal Tubuai, Aitken (1930:36) reports that in the absence of sons descent was carried through a daughter for one generation. This practice bears an obvious resemblance to *ambil anak*, or adoptive marriage, as reported for some Indonesian societies, where a patrilineal line may be continued for one generation through a daughter instead of through a son (Ter Haar 1948:175-76; Murdock 1949:21, 45). Here matrilineal residence is the social

mechanism whereby descent through a woman is legalized. The daughter who will carry on the line stays with her family of orientation, her husband moves in and the bride-price is waived. In short, the children take their lineage affiliation in accordance with the residence of their parents. Looked at this way, Indonesian kin groups, where these matrilineal marriages are practiced, are basically like the Gilbertese *kainga* and the so-called clans of the Lau Islands. Historically, it would appear that a shift toward patrilocal residence made affiliation with the father's group so common that kin groups came to be viewed as properly patrilineal. Jural recognition of patrilineal descent then required a legal device for reconciling it with the less frequent but traditional practice of matrilineal affiliation under matrilineal residence. This was accomplished simply by adoption of the husband. Adoptive marriage, then, points to the former existence in some Indonesian societies of nonunilinear descent groups of the *kainga* type.

From Melanesia I have no clear example of kin groups corresponding to the *kainga*. There is a possibility, however, that they occur in Ulawa, as has already been noted. Rivers' account (1926b:71-94) of Eddystone Island shows bilocal residence. His one reference to gardening rights (p. 93) indicates that a woman retains a share of her parent's land if she and her husband live matrilineally, her children presumably inheriting from her, but she loses these rights if she lives patrilocally for then her children presumably inherit from their father. If the same principle applies to men, rights in land are based on parental residence. If those having such rights in the same section of land are organized as a group, it is very likely of the *kainga* type.

Melanesian possibilities aside, however, the demonstrable antiquity of the *kainga* for Polynesia and Micronesia, when taken together with the indications of its former presence in Indonesia, warrants the inference that this form of group was present in early Malayo-Polynesian society. Murdock's (1949:152, 228, 349) reconstruction of bilocal residence, without which the *kainga* is impossible, makes this inference even more plausible.

If we accept the proposition that descent groups like the *oo* and *kainga* were both represented in original Malayo-Polynesian society, how can it help us to understand the processes by which some of the complex social systems among present Malayo-Polynesian peoples emerged? By way of introduction to answering this question, I wish to call attention to the peculiar form of the nonunilinear descent group in the community of Bwaidoga in the D'Entrecasteaux Islands, where I had the opportunity to collect some information in 1951.⁶

Bwaidoga consists of several hamlets, *kali:va*, strung along the coast. Each hamlet is associated with one or two kin groups called *unuma*, which are localized there in extended families. Several related *unuma* form a larger non-localized kin group, called *ga:bu*. Most men inherit a share of their father's *unuma* lands and reside patrilocally after marriage. Under these conditions a man belongs to his father's *unuma* and *ga:bu*. He may, however, choose to reside with his mother's *unuma*, receiving a share of its land from his maternal

grandfather or maternal uncle. By doing this he loses rights in his father's land, unless he returns permanently to his father's *unuma* immediately following his father's death. If he remains with his mother's *unuma*, he forfeits these rights for himself and his heirs in perpetuity. By choosing to affiliate with his mother's *unuma*, a man automatically becomes a member of her *ga:bu* as well.⁷

The Bwaidogan *unuma* and *ga:bu* differ from the *kainga* in that residence is never matrilineal. The choice is between patrilocal and avunculocal residence. Men can acquire land from the *unuma* of either parent, and their choice of residence depends on where they can get the best land. As a result of this system, membership in *unuma* and *ga:bu* is traced sometimes through female and sometimes through male ancestors.

The avunculocal alternative to patrilocal residence suggests that the Bwaidogan *ga:bu* and *unuma* were formerly matrilineal, and that the *unuma* used to be localized as an avunculocal extended family. With a shift in favor of patrilocal residence, membership in the *unuma* became optionally patrilineal. The present system may be seen, then, as transitional from a matrilineal to a patrilineal form of organization. As such, it cannot be viewed as indicative of early Malayo-Polynesian forms. I mention Bwaidoga, however, not only to illustrate another kind of nonunilinear descent group, but to help point up a problem which I believe has played a major determining role in the history of Malayo-Polynesian social organization: the problem of land distribution.

In any community where cultivatable land is not over-abundant in relation to population, and all rights to land depend on membership in strictly unilinear kin groups, a serious problem must soon arise. Unilinear groups inevitably fluctuate considerably in size. The matrilineal lineages on Truk, for example, readily double or halve their membership in the space of one or two generations. As a result, one lineage may have twice as much land as its members need while another has not enough to go around. Unless devices are developed to redistribute land rights to persons outside the owning group, intracommunity conflict is inevitable.

As noted at the beginning of this discussion, Malayo-Polynesian societies characteristically vest land ownership in kin groups. Throughout their history, therefore, they have had to meet the problem of land distribution in the face of constant fluctuations in kin-group size. One of the simplest possible devices for achieving this end is to keep the land-owning groups nonunilinear. With the *oo* type of group a person has membership in as many *oo* as there are distinct land-owning ancestors of whom he is a lineal descendant. While he can expect little from those *oo* which have become numerically large, he can expect a lot of land from those which have few surviving members. The overlapping memberships inevitable with unrestricted descent groups make them an excellent vehicle for keeping land holdings equitably distributed throughout the community.

As a restricted descent group without overlapping personnel, the *kainga* is also admirably suited for keeping group membership balanced in relation

to its immediate land resources. With bilocal residence, as the size of one *kainga* decreases in relation to that of other *kainga*, more of its members remain at home after marriage; as its population increases, more move away.

How do these functional considerations help us to understand the development of other social forms?

In those societies where conditions came to favor neolocal residence, the *kainga* could not possibly survive. If the same factors promoted individual ownership of land, the *oo* would also have been weakened, leaving only the bilateral kindred—as among the Kalingas of Luzon (Barton 1949), who now have a social structure corresponding to Murdock's "Eskimo" type.

In areas where there was an abundance of land, and slash-and-burn agriculture made the use of any plot a temporary matter, doing away with the need for permanent tenure, bilocal residence was no longer functionally advantageous. Unilinear residence rules could and did develop, and the *kainga* type of group became unilinear as a result. The large islands of Melanesia provided conditions of this sort, which accounts, I believe, for the high incidence of unilinear forms of organization there.

Tendencies toward unilinear residence and unilinear descent developed elsewhere also, as in the Caroline Islands and parts of Indonesia. These tendencies called for reliance on other devices for redistributing land. In the Carolines this was accomplished by separating use rights from membership in the owning group. Where formerly parental residence had been the basis for membership in the owning group, it now became one of several bases for transmitting use rights outside the owning group. I have shown elsewhere how the more complicated tenure system which resulted served to keep land use equitably distributed on matrilineal Truk (Goodenough 1951:44, 166-71).

Adoption of the land-poor by kinsmen in land-rich groups is another device for solving the land distribution problem. It is not mutually exclusive with other devices, and its wide practice is familiar to all students of Malayo-Polynesian societies. It is of special importance where the land-owning groups have become unilinear. We have already mentioned its wedding with the parental residence principle in Indonesia in connection with adoptive marriage there. Its elaborations on Palau in conjunction with financial sponsorship are so complex as to obscure almost beyond recognition the underlying matrilineal system (Barnett 1949).

The Bwaidogans provide an interesting example of a people whose land-owning kin groups became matrilineal, but, under the stress of land distribution problems, could not remain so. They had to become nonunilinear again. With matrilineal descent and avunculocal residence as the immediate antecedents of this return shift, however, the result was the peculiar type of group already described, not the original *kainga*. Pressures of the kind at work in Bwaidoga may well lie behind the series of shifts which culminated in double descent in Yap (Schneider 1953:216-17) and the bilinear groups of the New Hebrides (Layard 1942).

I conclude, then, that in addition to the characteristics reconstructed by

Murdock for early Malayo-Polynesian society, there were two types of kin group associated with land. One was an unrestricted descent group, while membership in the other was determined by parental residence. Because they stressed kin ties through both parents equally, these groups favored the simultaneous presence of bilateral kindreds and Generation-Hawaiian kinship terms as already reconstructed by Murdock.⁸ The structure of both groups helped resolve land distribution problems. Where residence became patrilocal or matrilineal, these groups tended automatically to be transformed into patrilineal or matrilineal sibs and lineages. Where this occurred, greater reliance on adoption, adjustments in the land tenure system, or a subsequent return to optional bases of group affiliation led to the complicated and varied social systems now present in parts of Indonesia and Micronesia, as well as to such unusual ones as we find in Bwaidoga.

NOTES

¹ This paper is a revised and expanded version of one entitled "The Typology of Consanguineal Groups," presented at the annual meeting of the American Anthropological Association, December 1952.

² Field work was conducted in the summer of 1951, when I was a member of a team making an ecological study of the Gilbertese atoll Onotoa, under the auspices of the Pacific Science Board of the National Research Council and the Geography Branch of the Office of Naval Research.

³ I am not certain that *oo* is the correct native term for this group. Literally, the word means "fence." It was only in the last two days of field work 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.

⁴ 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.

⁵ There remains the possibility, of course, that the *bwoti* are patrilineal on some Gilbertese atolls. On Onotoa, however, they are not.

⁶ In November 1951, I spent two days at Bwaidoga, at which time, due to the generous assistance provided by the Reverend Mr. William Coates of the Wailagi Mission, I was able to obtain from a group of native elders the information presented here. The field work of which the survey of Goodenough Island formed a part was sponsored by the Museum of the University of Pennsylvania.

⁷ The *ga:bu* seems to correspond to the totemic group described by Jenness and Ballantyne (1920:66-67) as patrilineal; and the representatives of such a group in one hamlet presumably correspond to the *umuma*. Their characterization of these groups as patrilineal apparently follows from the fact that patrilocal residence and consequent patrilineal affiliation predominated statistically.

⁸ The reasons given by Murdock (1949:152, 158) for the association of Generation terminology with bilocal residence and bilateral kindreds, for example, apply with equal force to its association with nonunilinear descent groups of the sort herein described.

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