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**BALOMA; THE SPIRITS OF THE DEAD  
IN THE TROBRIAND ISLANDS**

**BRONISLAW MALINOWSKI**

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*Baloma; The Spirits of the Dead in the Trobriand Islands*  
by Bronislaw Malinowski

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## Note

This article contains part of the results of ethnographical work in British New Guinea carried on in connection with the Robert Mond Travelling Studentship (University of London), and the Constance Hutchinson Scholarship of the London School of Economics (University of London), with assistance from the Commonwealth Department of External Affairs, Melbourne.

The writer spent some ten months, May, 1915-March, 1916, at Omarakana and the neighboring villages of Kiriwina (Trobriand Islands), where he lived among the natives in a tent. By October, 1915, he had acquired sufficient knowledge of the Kiriwinian language to be able to dispense with the services of an interpreter.

The writer desires to acknowledge the assistance he has received from Mr. Atlee Hunt, Secretary to the Commonwealth Department of External Affairs, and from Dr. C. G. Seligman, Professor of Ethnology in the University of London. The unfailing kindness and encouragement of Dr. Seligman have been of the greatest assistance throughout, and his work, *The Melanesians of British New Guinea*, provided a solid foundation on which to base the present investigations. Sir Baldwin Spencer, K.C.M.G., has been kind enough to read parts of the MS. and to give the writer his valuable advice on several important points.

# Chapter I

Among the natives of Kiriwina, death is the starting point of two series of events which run almost independently of each other. Death affects the deceased individual; his soul (*baloma* or *balom*) leaves the body and goes to another world, there to lead a shadowy existence. His passing is also a matter of concern to the bereft community. Its members wail for him, mourn for him, and celebrate an endless series of feasts. These festivities consist, as a rule, in the distribution of uncooked food; while less frequently they are actual feasts in which cooked food is eaten on the spot. They center around the dead man's body, and are closely connected with the duties of mourning, wailing and sorrowing for the dead individual. But--and this is the important point for the present description--these social activities and ceremonies have no connection with the spirit. They are not performed, either to send a message of love and regret to the *baloma* (spirit), or to deter him from returning; they do not influence his welfare, nor do they affect his relation to the survivors.

It is possible, therefore, to discuss the native beliefs in afterlife without touching the subject of mourning and mortuary ceremonies. The latter are extremely complex, and, in order to be properly described, a thorough knowledge of the native social system would be required.<sup>1</sup> In this article the beliefs concerning the spirits of the dead and afterlife will be described.

A remarkable thing happens to the spirit immediately after its exodus from the body. Broadly speaking, it may be described as a kind of splitting up. In fact, there are two beliefs, which, being obviously incompatible, yet exist side by side. One of them is, that the *baloma* (which is the main form of the dead man's spirit) goes "to Tuma, a small island lying some ten miles to the northwest of the Trobriands."<sup>2</sup> This island is inhabited by living man as well, who dwell in one large village, also called Tuma; and it is often visited by natives from the main island. The other belief affirms that the spirit leads a short and precarious existence after death near the village, and about the usual haunts of the dead man, such as his garden, or the seabeach, or the waterhole. In this form, the spirit is called *kosi* (sometimes pronounced *kos*). The connection between the *kosi* and the *Baloma* is not

very clear, and the natives do not trouble to reconcile any inconsistencies with regard to this matter. The more intelligent informants are able to explain away the inconsistencies, but such “theological” attempts do not agree with each other, and there does not seem to be any predominantly orthodox version.<sup>3</sup> The two beliefs, however, exist side by side in dogmatic strength; they are known to be true, and they influence the actions of men and regulate their behavior; thus the people are genuinely, though not very deeply, frightened of the *kosi*, and some of the actions observed in mourning, and the disposal of the dead, imply belief in the spirit’s journey to Tuma, with some of its details.

The dead man’s body is adorned with all his valuable ornaments, and all the articles of native wealth he possessed are laid beside it. This is done in order that he may carry the “essence” or “spirit part” of his riches to the other world. These proceedings imply the belief in Topileta, the native Charon, who receives his “fare” from the spirit (see below).

The *kosi*, the ghost of the dead man, may be met on a road near the village, or be seen in his garden, or heard knocking at the houses of his friends and relatives, for a few days after death. People are distinctly afraid of meeting the *kosi*, and are always on the lookout for him, but they are not in really deep terror of him. The *kosi* seems always to be in the mood of a frivolous, yet harmless, hobgoblin, playing small tricks, making himself a nuisance, and frightening people, as one man might frighten another in the darkness for a practical joke. He may throw small stones or gravel at anyone passing his haunt of an evening; or call out his name; or laughter may be heard coming out of the night. But he will never do any actual harm. Nobody has ever been hurt, still less killed, by a *kosi*. Nor do the *kosi* ever employ any of those ghastly, hair-raising methods of frightening people, so well known from our own ghost stories.

I remember well the first time I heard the *kosi* mentioned. It was a dark night, and I, in the company of three natives, was returning from a neighboring village, where a man had died that afternoon and been buried in our presence. We were marching in Indian file, when suddenly one of the natives stopped, and they all began to talk, looking around with evident curiosity and interest, but without a trace of terror. My interpreter explained that the *kosi* was heard in the yam garden which we were just crossing. I was struck by the frivolous way in which the natives treated this gruesome

incident, and tried to make out how far they were serious about the alleged appearance, and in what manner they reacted to it emotionally. There seemed to be not the slightest doubt about the reality of the occurrence, and I afterwards learned that although the *kosi* is quite commonly seen or heard, no one is afraid to go alone into the darkness of the garden where the *kosi* has just been heard, nor is anyone in the least under the influence of the heavy, oppressing, almost paralyzing fear so well known to all those who have experienced or studied the fear of ghosts, as these are conceived by us in Europe. The natives have absolutely no “ghost stories” to relate about the *kosi* beyond insignificant pranks, and even little children do not seem to be afraid of him.

In general, there is a remarkable absence of superstitious fear of darkness, and no reluctance to go about alone at night. I have sent out boys, of certainly not more than ten years of age, a good distance alone at night, to fetch some object left on purpose, and I found that they were remarkably fearless, and for a small bit of tobacco quite ready to go. Men and youths will walk alone at night from one village to another, often a couple of miles, without the chance of meeting anyone. In fact, as such excursions are usually carried out in connection with some love adventure, often illicit, the man would avoid meeting anybody by stepping aside into the bush. I well remember having met on the road in the dusk solitary women, though only old ones. The road from Omarakana (and a whole series of other villages lying not far from the eastern shore) to the beach passes through the *raiboag*, a well-wooded coral ridge, where the path winds through boulders and rocks, over crevasses and near caves, at night a very uncanny type of surrounding; but the natives often go there and back at night, quite alone; of course, individuals differ, some being more afraid than others, but in general there is very little of the universally reported native’s dread of darkness among the Kiriwinians.<sup>4</sup>

Nevertheless, when death occurs in a village, there is an enormous increase of superstitious fear. This fear is not, however, aroused by the *kosi* but by much less “supernatural” beings, *i.e.*, by invisible sorceresses called *mulukuausi*. These are actual living women who may be known and talked with in ordinary life, but who are supposed to possess the power of making themselves invisible, or of despatching a “sending” from their bodies, or of traveling vast distances through the air. In this disembodied

form they are extremely virulent, powerful, and also ubiquitous.<sup>5</sup> Anyone who chances to be exposed to them is sure to be attacked.

They are especially dangerous at sea, and whenever there is a storm, and a canoe is threatened, the *mulukuausi* are there looking out for prey. Nobody, there fore, would dream of going on any more distant voyage such as south to the D'Entrecasteaux group, or east to the Marshall Bennets, or still further, to Woodlark Island, without knowing the *kaiga'u*, a powerful magic, designed to ward off and bewilder the *mulukuausi*. Even when building a sea-going *waga* (canoe) of the large type, called *masawa*, spells must be uttered to reduce the danger from these terrible women.

They are also dangerous on land, where they attack people and eat away tongues, eyes, and lungs (*lopoulo*, translated 'lungs,' also denotes the "insides" in general). But all these data really belong to the chapter about sorcery and evil magic, and have only been mentioned here, where the *mulukuausi* interest us, as especially connected with the dead. For they are possessed of truly ghoulish instincts. Whenever a man dies, they simply swarm and feed on his insides. They eat away his *lopoulo*, his tongue, his eyes, and, in fact, all his body, after which they become more than ever dangerous to the living. They assemble all round the house where the dead man lived and try to enter it. In the old days, when the corpse was exposed in the middle of the village in a half-covered grave, the *mulukuausi* used to congregate on the trees in and around the village.<sup>6</sup> When the body is carried into the grave to be buried, magic is used to ward off the *mulukuausi*.

The *mulukuausi* are intimately connected with the smell of carrion, and I have heard many natives affirm that at sea, when in danger, they were distinctly conscious of the smell of *burapuase* (carrion), which was a sign that the evil women were there.

The *mulukuausi* are objects of real terror. Thus the immediate neighborhood of the grave is absolutely deserted when night approaches. I owe my first acquaintance with the *mulukuausi* to an actual experience. Quite at the beginning of my stay in Kiriwina, I had been watching the wailing round a freshly made grave. After sunset, all the mourners retired into the village, and when they tried to beckon me away, I insisted on remaining behind, thinking that there might be some ceremony which they wanted to perform

in my absence. After I had maintained my vigil for some ten minutes, a few men returned with my interpreter, who had previously gone to the village. He explained the matter to me, and was very serious about the danger from the *mulukuausi*, though, knowing white men and their ways, he was not so much concerned for me.<sup>7</sup>

Even in and around the village where a death has occurred there is the greatest fear of the *mulukuausi*, and at night the natives refuse to go about the village or to enter the surrounding grove and gardens. I have often questioned natives as to the real danger of walking about alone at night soon after a man had died, and there was never the slightest doubt that the only beings to be dreaded were the *mulukuausi*.

## Chapter II

Having dealt with the *kosi*, the frivolous and meek ghost of the deceased who vanishes after a few days of irrelevant existence, and with the *mulukuausi*, the ghoulish, dangerous women who feed on carrion and attack the living, we may pass to the main form of the spirit, the *baloma*. I call this the main form because the *baloma* leads a positive, well-defined existence in Tuma; because he returns from time to time to his village; because he has been visited and seen in Tuma by men awake and men asleep, and by those who were almost dead, yet returned to life again; because he plays a notable part in native magic, and even receives offerings and a kind of propitiation; finally, because he asserts his reality in the most radical manner by returning to the place of life, by reincarnation, and thus leads a continuous existence. The *baloma* leaves the body immediately after death has occurred and goes to Tuma. The route taken and the mode of transit are essentially the same as those which a living person would take in order to go from his village to Tuma. Tuma is an island; one must therefore sail in a canoe. A *baloma* from a coastal village would embark and cross over to the island. A spirit from one of the inland villages would go to one of the coastal villages whence it is customary to embark for Tuma. Thus from Omarakana, a village situated almost in the center of the northern part of Boiowa (the main island of the Trobriand group), the spirit would go to Kaibuola, a village on the north coast, from whence it is easy to sail to Tuma, especially during the southeast season, when the southeast trade wind would be dead fair, and carry the canoe over in a few hours. At Olivilevi, a large village on the east coast, which I visited during the *milamala* (the annual feast of the spirits), the *baloma* were supposed to be encamped on the beach, where they had arrived in their canoes, the latter being of a "spiritual" and "immaterial" quality, though perhaps such expressions imply more than the natives conceive. One thing is certain, that no ordinary man under ordinary circumstances would see such a canoe or anything belonging to a *baloma*.

As we have seen at the outset, when a *baloma* leaves the village and the people who wail for him, his connection with them is severed; for a time, at least, their wailings do not reach him or in any way influence his welfare.

His own heart is sore, and he grieves for those left behind. On the beach at Tuma there is a stone called Modawosi, on which the spirit sits down and wails, looking back towards the shores of Kiriwina. Soon other *baloma* hear him. All his kinsmen and friends come towards him, squat down with him, and join in his lamentations. Their own departure is brought home to them, and they are sorry to think of their homes and of all those they left behind. Some of the *baloma* wail, some sing a monotonous chant, exactly as is done during the great mortuary vigil (*iawali*) after a man's death. Then the *baloma* goes to a well, called Gilala,<sup>8</sup> and washes his eyes, which renders him invisible.<sup>9</sup> From here the spirit proceeds to Dukupuala, a spot in the *raiboag* where there are two stones called Dikumaio'i. The *balom* knocks these two stones in turn. The first responds with a loud sound (*kakupuana*), but when the second is hit the earth trembles (*ioiu*). The *baloma* hear this sound, and they all congregate round the newcomer and welcome him to Tuma.<sup>10</sup>

Somewhere during this ingress the spirit has to face Topileta, the headman of the villages of the dead. At what stage exactly Topileta meets the stranger my informants were unable to say, but it must be somewhere in the early part of his adventures in Tuma, because Topileta lives not far from the Modawosi stone, and acts as a kind of Cerberus or St. Peter in so far as he admits the spirit into the nether world, and is even supposed to be able to refuse admission. His decision does not, however, rest on moral considerations of any description: it is simply conditioned by his satisfaction with the payment made by the newcomer. After death the bereaved relatives adorn the corpse with all the native ornaments which the deceased had possessed. They also put on his body all his other *vaigu'a* (valuables),<sup>11</sup> in the first place his ceremonial axe blades (*beku*). The spirit is supposed to carry these away with him to Tuma--in their "spiritual" aspect, of course. As the natives explain simply and exactly: "As the man's *baloma* goes away and his body remains, so the *baloma* of the jewels and axe blades go away to Tuma, though the objects remain."<sup>12</sup> The spirit carries these valuables in a small basket and makes an appropriate present to Topileta.

This payment is said to be made for showing the proper way to Tuma. Topileta asks the newcomer the cause of his death. There are three classes--death as the result of evil magic, death by poison, and death in warfare.

There are also three roads leading to Tuma, and Topileta indicates the proper road according to the form of death suffered. There is no special virtue attached to any of these roads, though my informants were unanimous in saying that death in war was a “good death,” that by poison not so good, while death by sorcery is the worst. These qualifications meant that a man would prefer to die one death rather than another; and though they did not imply any moral attribute attached to any of these forms, a certain glamor attached to death in war, and the dread of sorcery and sickness seem certainly to cause those preferences.

With death in warfare is classed one form of suicide, that in which a man climbs a tree and throws himself down (native name, *lo'u*). This is one of the two forms of suicide extant in Kiriwina, and it is practiced by both men and women. Suicide seems to be very common.<sup>13</sup> It is performed as an act of justice, not upon oneself, but upon some person of near kindred who has caused offense. As such it is one of the most important legal institutions among these natives. The underlying psychology is, however, not so simple, and this remarkable group of facts cannot be discussed here in detail.

Besides the *lo'u*, suicide is also accomplished by taking poison, for which purpose the fish poison (*tuva*) is used.<sup>14</sup> Such people, together with those murdered by the gall bladder of the poisonous fish, *soka*, go the second road, that of poison.

People who have died by drowning go the same road as those killed in war, and drowning was said to be also a “good death.”

Finally comes the group of all those who have been killed by evil sorcery. The natives admit that there may be illness from natural causes, and they distinguish it from bewitchment by evil magic. But, according to the prevalent view, only the latter can be fatal. Thus the third road to Tuma includes all the cases of “natural death,” in our sense of the word, of death not due to an obvious accident. To the native minds such deaths are, as a rule, due to sorcery.<sup>15</sup> The female spirits go the same three ways as the male. They are shown the way by Topileta's wife, called Bomiamuia. So much about the various classes of death.

A man or woman unable to pay the necessary fee to the gatekeeper of the Underworld would fare very badly. Such a spirit, turned out of Tuma, would be banished into the sea and changed into a *vaiaba*, a mythical fish

possessing the head and tail of a shark and the body of a stingaree. However, the danger of being turned into a *vaiaba* does not appear to loom conspicuously in the native mind; on the contrary, on inquiry I gathered that such a disaster rarely, if ever, happens, and my informants were unable to quote any instance. When asked whence they knew about such things, they gave the usual answer, “ancient talk” (*tokunabogu livala*). Thus there are no ordeals after death, no accounts of one’s life to give to anyone, no tests to undergo, and in general no difficulties whatever on the road from this life to the other.

As to the nature of Topileta, Professor Seligman writes: “Topileta resembles a man in every way except that he has huge ears, which flap continually; he is, according to one account, of the Malasi clan, and seems to lead very much the ordinary life of a Trobriand Islander.” This information was collected on a neighboring island, Kaileula (called by Professor Seligman, Kadawaga), but it entirely agrees with what I was told on Kiriwina about Topileta. Professor Seligman further writes: “He (Topileta) has certain magical powers, causing earthquakes at will, and when he becomes old, making medicine which restores youth to himself, his wife and children.

“Chiefs still retain their authority in Tuma, and Topileta, though himself the most important being in Tuma . . . is so obviously regarded as different from all dead chiefs that he cannot, in the ordinary sense, be said to rule over the dead; indeed, it was difficult to discover that Topileta exerted any authority in the other world.”<sup>16</sup>

In fact, Topileta. is an intrinsic accessory of Tuma, but, beyond his initial meeting with all spirits, he does not in any way interfere with their doings. Chiefs do, indeed, retain their rank, though whether they exercise any authority was not clear to my informants.<sup>17</sup> Topileta is, moreover, the real owner or master of the spiritland on Tuma and of the villages.<sup>18</sup> There are three villages in the nether world--Tuma proper, Wabuaima, and Walisiga. Topileta is the *tolivalu* (master of village) of all three, but whether this is a mere title or whether he has anything to say in important matters was not known to any of my informants. It was also unknown whether the three villages had any connection with the three roads leading to the nether world.

Having passed Topileta, the spirit enters the village in which he will dwell henceforth. He always finds some of his relatives, and these may stay with him till a house is found or built for him. The natives imagine this exactly as happens in this world when a man has to move to another village—a by no means rare event in the Trobriands. For a time the stranger is very sad, and weeps. There are, however, decided attempts on the part of the other *baloma*, especially those of the opposite sex, to make him comfortable in his new existence, and to induce him to form new ties and attachments and forget the old ones. My informants (who were all men) were unanimous in declaring that a man coming to Tuma is simply pestered by the advances of the fair, and, in this world, bashful, sex. At first the spirit wants to weep for those left behind; his relative *baloma* protect him, saying, “Wait, let him have a spell; let him cry.” If he has been happily married, and has left a widow for whom he cares, he naturally wants to be left for a somewhat longer time to his grief. All in vain! It seems (this is again the male opinion only) that there are many more women in the other world than men, and that they are very impatient of any prolonged mourning. If they cannot succeed otherwise, they try magic, the all-powerful means of gaining another person’s affection. The spirit women on Tuma are not less expert, and no more scrupulous, in using love charms than the living women in Kiriwina. The stranger’s grief is very soon overcome, and he accepts the offering called *nabuoda’u*--a basket filled with *bu’a* (betel nut), *mo’i* (betel pepper), and scented herbs. This is offered to him with the words “*Kam paku,*” and if accepted, the two belong to each other.<sup>19</sup> A man may wait for his widow to join him in Tuma, but my informants did not seem inclined to think that many would do this. The blame for this rests, however, entirely on the Tuma belles, who use such potent magic that not even the strongest fidelity can possibly resist it.

The spirit, in any case, settles down to a happy existence in Tuma, where he spends another lifetime,<sup>20</sup> until he dies again. But this new death is again not complete annihilation, as we shall see hereafter.

## Chapter III

Until this occurs the *baloma* is by no means entirely out of touch with the living world. He visits his native village from time to time, and he is visited by his surviving friends and relatives. Some of these latter possess the faculty of getting right into the shadowy world of spirits. Others are able to get glimpses only of the *baloma*, to hear them, to see them from a distance or in the dark--just sufficiently clearly to recognize them, and to be absolutely sure that they are *baloma*.

Tuma--the place of the living--is a village where the natives of Kiriwina go from time to time. In Tuma and the adjoining islands turtle shell and the large white cowrie shells (*Ovulum ovum*) are very plentiful; in fact, this small island is the main source of those important articles of decoration for the northern and eastern villages of Kiriwina.<sup>21</sup> Therefore Tuma is often visited by men from the main island.

All my informants from Omarakana and the neighboring villages knew Tuma quite well. And there was hardly anybody who had not had some experience of the *baloma*. One man saw a shadow in the twilight receding at his approach; another heard a well-known voice, etc., etc. Bagido'u, an exceptionally intelligent man of the Tabalu subclan, the garden magician of Omarakana, and my best informant on all matters of ancient lore and tradition, has seen any number of spirits, and had not the slightest doubt that a man staying in Tuma for some length of time would have no difficulty in seeing any of his deceased friends. One day he (Bagido'u) was getting water out of a well in the *raiboag* (stony woodland) on Tuma, when a *baloma* hit him on the back, and, on turning round, Bagido'u just saw a shadow retreating into the bush, and heard a smacking sound, such as is usually made with the lips if a native wants to attract somebody's attention. Again, one night, Bagido'u was sleeping in Tuma on a bed. Suddenly he found himself lifted out of it and put on the ground.

A large party of men, with To'uluwa, the chief of Omarakana, went to Tuma. They landed not far from the Modawosi stone, when they saw a man standing there. They immediately identified him as Gi'iopeulo, a great warrior and a man of indomitable strength and courage, who had died

recently in a village not more than five minutes distance from Omarakana. When they approached, he disappeared, but they heard distinctly “*Bu kuisisusi bala* [You remain, I shall go]”--the usual form of “Good-by.” Another of my informants was in Tuma drinking water in one of the large water grottoes, so typical of the *raiboag*. He heard a girl called Buava’u Lagim cry out to him, calling him by name, out of this waterhole.

I have heard of many more such incidents. It is worthy of note that in all these cases the *baloma* are distinct from the *kosi*--that is, the natives are sure that it is a *baloma*, and not a *kosi*, that is seen or heard, though their slightly frivolous behavior (like the throwing of a respectable man out of his bed, or hitting him on the back) does not differ from that of the *kosi* in any essential respect. Again, the natives do not seem to regard any of those appearances or pranks of the *baloma* with any sort of “creepy” feeling; they do not seem to be afraid of them, as Europeans are of ghosts, any more than they are of the *kosi*.

Besides these intermittent glimpses of the spirit life, the living are brought into touch with the *baloma* in a much more intimate manner, through the mediation of those privileged people who visit in their own person the land of the dead. Professor Seligman writes: “There are individuals who say that they have visited Tuma and returned to the upper world.”<sup>22</sup> Such people are by no means rare, and are of both sexes, though, of course, they differ vastly in renown. In Omarakana, the village where I was living, the most renowned person of this sort was a woman, Bwoilagesi, a daughter of the late chief Numakala, brother and predecessor of To’uluwa, the present ruler of Omarakana. She has visited, and apparently continues to visit, Tuma, where she sees and speaks with the *baloma*. She has also brought back a *baloma* song from Tuma, which is sung very often by the women of Omarakana.

There is also a man, Moniga’u, who goes to Tuma from time to time and brings news from the spirits. Although I knew both those people very well, I was not able to get from them any detailed information as to their wanderings in Tuma. They were both very uneasy on this subject, and returned my questions with half-hearted and obvious answers. I was strongly under the impression that they were unable to give any detailed statements, and that all they knew was told by them to everybody, and was thus public property. Such public property was the song above

mentioned,<sup>23</sup> and also personal messages from various spirits to their families. Bwoilagesi--with whom I talked once on this subject in the presence of her son, Tukulubakiki, one of the most friendly, decent and intelligent natives I met--stated that she never remembers what she saw, though she remembers what was told to her. She does not walk or sail to Tuma; she falls asleep and just finds herself among the *baloma*. She and her son were quite positive that the song was given her by the *baloma*. But it was evident that the subject was painful to Tukulubakiki, especially when I pressed about details. I was unable to find any instance in which my lady informant derived actual economic benefit from her exploits in Tuma, though her prestige was immensely enhanced, in spite of the existence of sporadic, yet unmistakable, scepticism.

Thus I was told by two of my informants that all such claims about seeing the *Baloma* are downright lies. One of them, Gomaia, a boy of Sinaketa (a village on the southern half of the island) told me that one of the most remarkable men who used to visit Tuma was one Mitakai'io, of Oburaku; but even he was a humbug. He used to boast that he could go to Tuma in order to eat. "I want to eat now; I shall go to Tuma; there is plenty of food there: ripe bananas, yams and taro, ready to eat; fish and pigs; there is plenty of areca nut and betel pepper, too; all the time I go to Tuma I eat." It may be easily imagined how strongly these pictures would appeal to the natives' fancy, how they would enhance the personal prestige of the boaster and arouse the envy of the more ambitious. Boasting about food is the most prevalent form of native vanity or ambition. A commoner might pay with his life if he had too much food or too good a garden, and especially if he displayed it too boastfully.

Gomaia apparently did not like Mitakai'io's boastings, and tried to get at the truth. He offered one pound. "I'll give you one pound if you take me to Tuma." But Mitakai'io was satisfied with much less. "Your father and mother cry for you all the time; they want to see you; give me two sticks of tobacco and I shall go, see them, give them the tobacco. Your father saw me; he told me, 'Bring the tobacco from Gomaia.'" But Mitakai'io was not in a hurry to take Gomaia to the other world. Gomaia gave him the two sticks, and these were smoked by the wizard himself. Gomaia found it out and was very indignant, and insisted on getting to Tuma, promising to give the pound as soon as he returned from there again. Mitakai'io gave him

three kinds of leaves, which he ordered him to rub all over his body, and to swallow another small parcel. This was done, and Gomaia lay down and went to sleep--but he never reached Tuma. This made him sceptical, but, though Mitakai'io never got the promised pound, he retained his general prestige.

The same Mitakai'io exposed another minor Tuma seer, by name Tomuaia Lakuabula. There was a chronic controversy between the two, Mitakai'io often expressing a contemptuous opinion about Tomuaia. Finally the matter had to be settled by a test. Tomuaia promised to go to Tuma and to bring some token from there. As a matter of fact, he went to the bush and stole a bunch of betel nuts belonging to Mourada the *tokaraiwaga valu* (village headman) of Oburaku. He consumed plenty of the nuts himself, keeping one, however, for future use. In the evening he said to his wife, "Prepare my mat on the couch; I hear the *baloma* singing; I shall soon be with them; I must lie down." Then he began to sing in his house. All the men outside heard him and said to each other: "It is Tomuaia who sings alone and none else." They told him so the next day, but he said they could not have heard him, but many of the *baloma* were singing, and he had joined them.

When day was approaching, he put the one betel nut, kept for the purpose, into his mouth, and at daybreak he got up, went out of his house, and, taking the betel nut from his mouth, cried: I have been to Tuma; I have brought a betel nut from there.' All the people were highly impressed with the token, but Mourada and Mitakai'io, who had watched him carefully on the previous day, knew that he had stolen the bunch of nuts, and they exposed him. From that time Tomuaia did not talk about Tuma. I have noted this story exactly as I heard it from Gomaia, and I am telling it in the same form. The natives in their narrative very often do not preserve the right perspective, however. It seems to me probable that my informant has condensed into his account different occurrences; but in this place it is the main fact of the natives' psychological attitude towards "spiritism" that is interesting; I mean the pronounced scepticism of some individuals on this subject and the tenacity of belief among the majority. It is also obvious from these stories--and it was stated outright by my sceptical friends--that the chief element in all wanderings to Tuma is the material benefit derived from this by the seers.

A slightly different form of communication with spirits is that of the men who have short fits, in which they talk to the *baloma*. I am not able even approximately to define the psychological or pathological basis of such phenomena. Unfortunately, they were only brought to my notice towards the end of my stay--in fact, about a fortnight before my departure, and then only by accident. One morning I heard loud and, it seemed to me, quarrelsome vociferation from the other side of the village, and, being always on the alert for some sociological "document," I inquired from the natives in my hut what it was. They replied that Gumguya'u--a respectable and quiet man--was talking to the *baloma*. I hurried to the spot, but, arriving too late, found the man exhausted on his bed, apparently asleep. The incident did not arouse any excitement, because, as they said, it was his habit to talk to the *baloma*. The conversation was carried on by Gumguya'u in a loud and high-pitched tone that sounded like an abusive monologue, and it was said to have reference to a big ceremonial boat race which had taken place two days before. Such a race is always held when a new canoe is built, and it is the duty of the chief, who organizes it, to arrange a big *sagali* (ceremonial distribution of food) in connection with the festivities. The *baloma* are in some impersonal and vague manner always interested in festivities, and they watch to ensure plenty of food. Any scarcity, caused either by slackness or the bad luck of the organizer, is resented by the *baloma*, who blame him for it, whether it be his fault or not. Thus, in this case, the *baloma* had approached Gumguya'u with the intention of expressing their strong disapproval of the meager character of the *sagali* made the other day on the beach. The organizer of the feast was, of course, To'uluwa, the chief of Omarakana.

Dreams also seem to play some part in the commerce between the *baloma* and the living. Perhaps the cases in which principally the *baloma* thus appear to the living occur immediately after death, when the spirit comes and tells the news to any near friend or relative who is not on the spot. Again, *baloma* often come to women in dreams to tell them that they will become enceinte. During the *milamala*, the annual feast, people are frequently visited by dead relatives in dreams. In the first of the cases mentioned (when spirits after death come to absent friends or relatives) there is some latitude and some "symbolizing," such as has been assumed in the interpretation of dreams throughout all ages and civilizations. Thus a large party of Omarakana boys went away to work on a plantation in Milne

Bay, on the extreme east end of the mainland of New Guinea. Among them was Kalogusa, a son of To'uluwa, the chief, and Gumigawa'ia, a commoner from Omarakana. One night Kalogusa dreamt that his mother, an old woman, one of the sixteen wives of To'uluwa, now living in Omarakana, came to him and told him that she had died. He was very sad, and apparently showed his grief by wailing. (The story was told to me by one of the party.) All the others knew that "something must have happened in Omarakana." When they learned on their way home that the mother of Gumigawa'ia had died, they were not at all astonished, and found in this the explanation of Kalogusa's dream.

This seems to be the proper place to discuss the nature of the *baloma* and their relation to the *kosi*. Of what stuff are they made? Of the same or of different substance? Are they shades, or spirits, or are they conceived materially? It is possible to put all these questions to the natives, the most intelligent of whom will grasp them without difficulty and discuss them with the ethnographer, showing a considerable amount of insight and interest. But such discussions have proved to me unmistakably that in dealing with these and similar questions one leaves behind the domain of belief proper and approaches quite a different class of native ideas. Here the native speculates rather than positively believes, and his speculations are not a very serious matter to him, nor does he trouble at all as to whether they are orthodox or not. Only exceptionally intelligent natives will enter into such questions at all, and these express rather their private opinion than positive tenets. Even the exceptionally intelligent natives have nothing in their vocabulary or store of ideas that would correspond even approximately to our ideas of "substance" or "nature," though there is a word, *u'ula*, corresponding approximately to "cause," "origin."

You may ask: "What is the *baloma* like? Is its body like ours, or different? And in what manner is it different?" You may further point out to the native the problem of the body remaining and the disembodied *baloma* going away. To such questions the answer will be almost invariably that the *baloma* is like a reflection (*saribu*) in water (or mirror for the modern Kiriwinian), and that the *kosi* is like a shadow (*kaikuabula*). This distinction--the "reflection" character of the *baloma* and the shadowy nature of the *kosi*--is the usual, but by no means the exclusive opinion. At times both are said to be like *saribu* or like *kaikuabula*. I was always under the

impression that such answers were not so much a definition as a simile. By that I mean that the natives were not at all certain that a *baloma* is made of the same matter as a reflection; they knew, in fact, that a reflection is “nothing,” that it is a *sasopa* (lie), that there is no *baloma* in it, but the *baloma* is just “something like a reflection” (*baloma makawala saribu*). When forced against a metaphysical wall by such questions, “How can a *baloma* call out, and eat, and make love if it is like a *saribu*? How can a *kosi* hammer against a house, or throw stones, or strike a man if it is like a shadow?” the more intelligent replied more or less to the effect: “Well the *baloma* and the *kosi* are like the reflection and like the shadow, but they are also like men, and they behave all the same as men do.” And it was difficult to argue with them.<sup>24</sup> The less intelligent or less patient informants were inclined to shrug their shoulders over such questions; others, again, would obviously become interested in the speculations, and produce extempore opinions, and ask your view, and just enter into a metaphysical discussion of a sort. Such extemporized opinions, however, never amounted to very far-reaching speculations; they just turned round the general views above mentioned.

It must be clearly understood that there were certain tenets which my informants one and all would endorse. There is not the slightest doubt that a *baloma* retains the semblance of the man he represents, so that if you see the *baloma*, you recognize the man that was. The *baloma* live the life of men; they get older; they eat, sleep, love, both whilst in Tuma and on visits which they pay to their villages. All these were points on which the natives had not the slightest doubts. It will be remarked that these tenets refer to actions of the *baloma*, describe their behavior, and also that some of them--such as the belief in the *baloma*'s need of food, for instance--imply certain behavior on the part of men (compare below, description of the *milamala*). The only almost general tenet concerning the *baloma* and *kosi* was that the former are like reflections, the latter like shadows. It is noteworthy that this double simile corresponds respectively to the open, defined, permanent nature of the *baloma* and to the vague, precarious, nocturnal character of the *kosi*.

But even as to the fundamental relations between the *baloma* and *kosi* there exist essential discrepancies--discrepancies which bear not merely on their nature, but even upon their relative existence. By far the more general view

is that the *baloma* goes straight to Tuma and that another spirit, the *kosi*, roams about for a short time. This view admits of two interpretations: either there are two spirits in the living man, and they both leave the body at death, or else the *kosi* is a kind of secondary spirit, appearing only at death and absent in a living body. The natives understood this question if I put it in this form: "Do the *baloma* and *kosi* stop in the body all the time? Or, on the contrary, does the *baloma* alone stop in the body and the *kosi* only appear at death?" But the answers were all vacillating and contradictory, the same man giving different answers at various times, the best proof that one was in the domain of pure extempore speculation.

Besides this more general view, I found several men who repeatedly maintained that the *kosi* is the first stage of a development, and that subsequently, after a few days, the *kosi* is transformed into a *baloma*. Here we would have, therefore, only one spirit, who lingers for a time after death round and near his home and then departs. In spite of its greater simplicity and logical plausibility, this belief was by far the less pronounced. It was, however, independent and developed enough to prevent the former belief being assumed as exclusive or even orthodox.

An interesting variation of the first version (that of a parallel existence of both *baloma* and *kosi*) was that given by Gomaia, one of my best informants. He was positive that only such men as had been sorcerers (*bwoga'u*) during their life would produce a *kosi* after death. To be a *bwoga'u* is not very difficult, however. Any man who knows any of the *silami* (evil spells), and who is in the habit of practicing them, is a *bwoga'u*. According to Gomaia, the others (the ordinary persons) would not become *kosi*; they would become *baloma* only, and go to Tuma. In all other particulars—such as the respective nature of *baloma* and *kosi*, and the behavior as well as the precarious existence—Gomaia agreed with the general views. His version is noteworthy, because he is a very intelligent native and his father was a great wizard and *bwoga'u*, and his *kadala* (maternal uncle) is also a sorcerer. Moreover, this version agrees very well with the fact that the *bwoga'u* is always imagined as prowling at night, and, in fact, except for the *mulukausi*, he presents the only serious terror of the night. Again, the *mulukausi*, though not the *bwoga'u* (a still more virulent form of evil-minded human being, wise in sorcery), have, as we saw above, a "double" or "sending" called *kakuluwala*, which leaves

their body and travels invisibly. This belief in a “double” or “sending” is parallel to another, which affirms that the *mulukuausi* travel bodily.

These remarks show that, generally speaking, the question as to the nature of the *baloma* and *kosi* and of their mutual relationship has not crystallized into any orthodox and definite doctrine.

The relation of the *baloma* to the body of the living man is still less clear to the natives. They are unable to give any definite answers to such questions as: “Does the *baloma* stop in any part of the body (head, belly, lungs)? Can it leave it during life? Is it the *baloma* that walks in dreams? Is it the *baloma* of some people that go to Tuma?” Though the two last-mentioned questions are usually answered by “yes,” it is a very unconvincing affirmation, and it is obvious that these speculations are not backed up by orthodox tradition. Intelligence, memory, wisdom they localize in the body, and know the seat of each of those faculties of the mind; but the *baloma* they are not able to locate, and, indeed, I rather think they imagine that it is a double that detaches itself from the body at death, and not a soul that dwells in the body during life. I am only sure, however, that their ideas are in an uncrystallized form, rather felt than formulated, rather referring to activities of the *baloma* than analytically discussing his nature and various conditions of existence.

Another point about which there appears to be no one definite, dogmatic answer is the actual abode of the spirits. Do they reside on the surface of earth, on the island of Tuma, or do they live underground or elsewhere? There are several opinions, and the respective supporters were quite definite in upholding their views. Thus from a number of informants, including Bagido’u, a very serious and reliable man, I received the answer that the *baloma* live on the island of Tuma, that their villages are somewhere there, exactly as the *baloma* camp somewhere in the neighborhood of a village in Kiriwina on their annual return during the *milamala*. The above-mentioned three villages of the dead share the surface of the island with Tuma, the village of the living. The *baloma* are invisible, and so is everything that belongs; to them, and that is the reason why their villages can be there without being in anybody’s way.

Another view is that the *baloma* descend underground to a real “nether world,” and live there in Tumaviaka (Great Tuma). This view was expressed in two different versions, one of which speaks of a kind of two-

storied underworld. When the *baloma* dies at the close of his first spiritual existence he descends to the lower story, or stratum, from whence only he is able to return to the material world (*cf. infra*, VI, Reincarnation). The majority reject this theory, and say that there is only one tier of nether world, which agrees with Professor Seligman's statement: "The spirits of the dead do not stay in the upper world with the living, but descend into the other world below the earth."<sup>25</sup> Again, this view of an underground Tuma seems to harmonize better with the prevalent idea on Kiriwina that the first human beings emerged from holes in the ground. Professor Seligman even obtained the account that "the world was originally colonized from Tuma, men and women being sent to the upper world by Topileta, who himself stopped underground."<sup>26</sup> That I did not come across this statement is not astonishing in consideration of the great diversity of views on certain matters, the nature of Tuma and its relation to the world of the living being one of them. Seligman's statement corroborates the opinion that "underground Tuma" is the most orthodox version, though, as already stated, the whole question is not dogmatically settled in native belief.

## Chapter IV

Let us return to the intercourse between living men and the spirits. All that was said above on this subject refers to what takes place in dreams or visions or to what is effected by furtive, short glimpses of spirits, as seen by men while awake and in a normal state of mind. All this kind of intercourse may be described as private and accidental. It is not regulated by customary rules, though, of course, it is subject to a certain frame of mind, and it has to conform with a certain type of belief. It is not public: the whole community does not share in it collectively, and there is no ceremonial associated with it. But there are occasions on which the *baloma* visit the village or take part in certain public functions--occasions on which they are received by the community collectively, when they obtain certain attentions, strictly official and regulated by custom, when they act and play their role in magical activities.

Thus every year, after the garden crops have been harvested and there is a marked pause in the gardening, because the new gardens cannot be seriously tackled yet, the natives have a time of dancing, feasting, and general rejoicing called *milamala*. During the *milamala* the *baloma* are present in the village. They return in a body from Tuma to their own village, where preparations are made to receive them, where special platforms are erected to accommodate them, and where customary gifts are offered to them, and whence, after the full moon is over, they are ceremonially but unceremoniously driven away.

Again, the *baloma* play an important part in magic. Names of ancestral spirits are recited in the magical spells; in fact, these invocations are perhaps the most prominent and persistent feature of the magical spells. Moreover, in some magical performances offerings are made to the *baloma*. There are traces of the belief that the ancestral spirits have some share in fostering the ends of the given magical performances; indeed, those offerings to the *baloma* are the only ceremonial element (in the narrower sense) in magical performances I was able to detect.<sup>27</sup>

I wish to add in this place that there is no association between the *baloma* of a dead man and the relics of his body, such as his skull, jawbone, arm and

leg bones, and hair, which are carried about by the relatives and used as lime pot, necklace, and lime spatulae respectively, a connection which exists among some other tribes of New Guinea.<sup>28</sup>

The facts connected with the *milamala* and with the magical role of spirits must now be considered in detail.

The annual feast, *milamala*, is a very complex social and magico-religious phenomenon. It may be called a "harvest festival," as it is held after the yam crops have been harvested and the food houses are full. But, remarkably enough, there is no direct, or even indirect, reference to field activities in the *milamala*. There is nothing in this feast, held after the old gardens have yielded their results and the new ones are waiting to be made, which would imply any retrospective consideration of the past year's gardening or a prospect of the future year's husbandry. The *milamala* is the dancing period. Dancing usually lasts through the moon of *milamala* only, but it may be extended for another moon, or even for two. Such an extension is called *usigula*. No dancing proper takes place at other times of the year. The *milamala* is opened by certain ceremonial performances connected with dancing and with the first beating of the drums. This annual period of feasting and dancing is, of course, also accompanied by a distinct heightening of sexual life. Again, there are certain ceremonial visits paid by one village community to another, and return visits associated with gifts and with such transactions as buying and selling of dances.

Before proceeding to the proper theme of the present section--the description of the part played by the *baloma* in the *milamala*--it seems necessary to give a picture of the general aspect of the festive period, otherwise the detail about the *baloma* would perhaps appear out of focus.

The *milamala* comes in immediate succession to the harvesting activities, which themselves present a distinctly festive character, though they lack the fundamental element of enjoyment for the Kiriwinian. The native finds, however, an enormous amount of joy and amusement in bringing borne the harvest. He loves his garden and takes a genuine pride in his crops. Before they are finally stacked in the special storehouses, which are by far the most conspicuous and picturesque buildings in a village, he takes several opportunities of displaying them. Thus, when the tubers of *taitu* (a species of yam)--much the most important crop in that part of the world--are taken out of the ground, they are properly cleaned of all earth, the hair with which

they are covered is shaved off with a shell, and the tubers are piled in large conical heaps. Special huts or shelters are constructed in the garden to protect the *taitu* from the sun, and under these shelters the tubers are displayed--a large conical heap in the middle, representing the choice of the yield, and round it several smaller heaps, in which inferior grades of *taitu* are stacked, as well as the tubers to be used for seed. Days and weeks are spent in cleaning the tubers and piling them artistically into heaps, so that the geometrical form may be perfect and none but the very best tubers be visible on the surface. The work is done by the owner and his wife, if he has one, but parties from the village walk about the garden, paying each other visits and admiring the yams. Comparisons and praises are the theme of conversation.

The yams may remain thus for a couple of weeks in the garden, after which time they are carried into the village. These proceedings have a pronouncedly festive character, the carriers decorating themselves with leaves, scented herbs, facial paint, though not with the "full dress" of the dancing time. When the *taitu* is brought into the village the party shout a litany, one man saying the words and the others responding in one strident scream. Usually they come in running to the villages; then the whole party busy themselves arranging the *taitu* into conical heaps exactly similar to those from which it has just been taken in the garden. These heaps are made in the large circular space being put up in front of the yam house, where the tubers will be finally stored.

But before that happens the yams will have to spend another fortnight or so on the ground, and be counted and admired again. They are covered with palm leaves as a protection against the sun. Finally, there is another festive day in the village, when all the heaps are put into the yam houses. This is done in one day, though the bringing of the yams into the village covers several days. This description may give some idea of the considerable heightening of the tempo in village life at the time of the harvest, especially as the *taitu* is often brought in from other villages, and the harvest is a time when even distant communities pay each other visits.<sup>29</sup>

When the food is finally in the storehouses there is a pause in native gardening, and this pause is filled by the *milamala*. The ceremony which inaugurates the whole festive period is at the same time a "consecration" of the drums. Previous to this no drums may be beaten publicly. After the

inauguration the drums can be used, and the dancing begins. The ceremony consists, like the majority of ceremonies in Kiriwina, of a distribution of food (*sagali*). The food is put in heaps, and in this particular ceremony it is cooked and the heaps placed on wooden dishes or in baskets. Then a man comes along, and in a loud voice calls out a name at each heap.<sup>30</sup> The wife or other female relative of the man named takes the food and carries it to his house, where it is eaten. Such a ceremony (called distribution of *sagali*) does not seem to us much of a feast, especially as the climax--as we understand the climax of a feast, *i.e.*, the eating--is never reached communally, but only in the family circle. But the festive element lies in the preparations, in the collection of the prepared food, in making it all a common property (for each has to contribute his share to the general stock, which is to be equally divided among all the participants), and finally in the public distribution. This distribution is the opening ceremony of the *milamala*, the men dress in the afternoon and perform the first dance.

Now life in the village changes distinctly. People do not go to the gardens any more, nor do they perform any other regular work, such as fishing or canoe building. In the morning the village is alive with all the inmates who have not gone to work, and often with visitors from other villages. But the real festivities begin later in the day. When the hottest hours of the day are over, at about three to four o'clock in the afternoon, the men put on their headdresses. These consist of a great number of white cockatoo feathers, stuck into the thick black hair, from which they protrude in all directions, like the quills of a porcupine, forming large white haloes around their heads. A certain accent of color and finish is given to the whole by a plume of red feathers that overtops the white sphere. In contrast to the gorgeous variety of feather headdresses found in many other districts of New Guinea, the Kiriwinians have only this one type of decoration, which is repeated invariably by all individuals and in all forms of dance. Nevertheless, in conjunction with the cassowary tufts tipped with red feathers, and inserted into belt and armllets, the general appearance of the dancer has a fantastic charm. In the regular rhythmic movement of the dance, the dress seems to blend with the dancer, the colors of the red-tipped black tufts toning well with the brown skin. The white headdress and the brown figure seem to be transformed into a harmonious and fantastic whole, somewhat savage, but in no way grotesque, rhythmically moving against the background to a monotonous and melodious chant and the overbearing beat of the drums.

In some dances a painted dancing shield is used, in others they hold in their hands streamers of pandanus leaves. These latter dances, always of much slower rhythm, are disfigured (to the European taste) by the custom of men wearing women's grass petticoats. The majority of dances are circular, the drumbeaters and singers standing in the middle, while the dancers move round them in a ring.

Ceremonial dances in full ornamentation are never held at night. When the sun goes down, the men disperse and take off their feathers. The drums stop for a while--it is the time when the natives have their main repast of the day. When night has fallen the drums are sounded again, and the performers, now wearing no ornaments, step into the ring. Sometimes they sing a genuine dancing song, and sound a proper dancing beat, and then the people perform a regular dance. But usually, especially later in the night, the singing ceases, the dancing is given up, and only the continued beat of the drums rings through the night. The people, men, women and children, now join and walk round the central group of drumbeaters in twos and threes, women with small children in arms or at the breast, old men and women leading their grandchildren by the hand, all walking with an untiring perseverance one after the other, fascinated by the rhythmical beat of the drums, pursuing the aimless and endless round of the ring. From time to time the dancers intone a long drawn "Aa . . . a; Eee . . . e," with a sharp accent at the end; simultaneously the drums cease to beat, and the indefatigable carousal seems for a moment to be freed from its spell, without, however, breaking up or ceasing to move. Soon, however, the drummers take up their interrupted music no doubt to the delight of the dancers, but to the despair of the ethnographer, who sees a lugubriously sleepless night before him. This *karibom*, as it is called, gives the small children the opportunity to play, hopping about and across the slowly moving chain of grown-ups; it allows the old people and the women actively to enjoy, at least, a kind of imitation of dancing; it is also the proper time for amorous advances among the young people.

The dancing and the *karibom* are repeated day after day and night after night. As the moon waxes, the festive character, the frequency and care with which ornamental dances are held, and their duration, increases; the dances begin earlier, the *karibom* lasts well-nigh throughout the night. The whole life in the villages is modified and heightened. Large parties of young

people of both sexes visit neighboring villages. Presents of food are brought from far away, and on the road people may be met loaded with bananas, coconuts, bunches of areca nut, and of taro. Some important ceremonial visits are paid, in which a whole village calls on another officially, under the leadership of the chief. Such visits are sometimes connected with momentous transactions, such as the buying of dances, for these are always monopolies, and have to be bought at a considerable price. Such a transaction is a bit of native history, and will be spoken of for years and generations. I was fortunate enough to assist at one visit connected with such a transaction, which always consists of several visits, on each of which the visiting party (who are always the sellers) perform the dance officially, the onlookers learning the dance in this way, and some of them joining in the performance.

All big official visits are celebrated with considerable presents, which are always given to the guests by the hosts. The latter, in their turn, will visit their former guests and receive the return gifts.

Towards the end of the *milamala*, visits are received almost daily from quite distant villages. Such visits in olden days had a very compound character. They were undoubtedly friendly, and were intended to be so, but there was always danger lurking behind the official friendliness. The visiting parties were always armed, and it was on such occasions that the whole array of "ceremonial" arms came into display. Indeed, even now the carrying of arms is not entirely suppressed, though at present they are nothing more than articles of decoration and display, owing to the white man's influence. All the large wooden sword clubs, some of which are beautifully carved in heavy hardwood; the carved walking sticks and short, ornamental spears, all so well known from the New Guinea collections in the museums, belong to this class of weapon. They serve equally the purposes of vanity and of business. Vanity, display of wealth, of valuable, finely ornamented objects, is one of the ruling passions of the Kiriwinian. To "swagger" with a large wooden sword, murderous looking, yet nicely carved and painted white and red, is an essential element of the fun to a Kiriwinian youth in festive paint, with a white nose sticking out of a completely blackened face, or one "black eye," or some rather complex curves running all across his face. In olden days he was often called upon to use such weapons, and even now may resort to them in the white heat of passion. Either he fancies a girl, or

be is fancied by one, and his advances, unless very skillfully conducted, are sure to be resented. Women and the suspicion of magical practices are the main causes of quarrels and village brawls, which, in accordance with the general quickening of tribal life at the *milamala*, were, and are, very much in season at these times.

Towards the time of full moon, when enthusiasm begins to reach its high-water mark, the villages are decorated with as large a display of food as possible. The *taitu* is not taken out of the yam houses, though it is visible there, through the large interstices of the beams, forming the wells of the storehouses. Bananas, taro, coconuts, etc., are laid out in a manner which will be described in detail hereafter. There is also a display of *vaigu'a*, the native articles of value.

The *milamala* ends on the night of the full moon. The drums do not cease to be used immediately afterwards, but all dancing proper is absolutely stopped, except when the *milamala* is prolonged into a special period of extra dancing, called *usigula*. Usually the monotonous and insipid *karibom* is performed night after night, for months after the *milamala*.

I have been through the *milamala* season twice: once in Olivilevi, the "capital" village of Luba, a district in the southern part of the island, where the *milamala* takes place a month sooner than in Kiriwina proper. Here I saw only the last five days of the *milamala*, but in Omarakana, the main village of Kiriwina, I watched the whole proceedings from beginning to end. There I saw, among other features, one big visit, when To'uluwa went with all the men from Omarakana to the village of Liluta, in connection with the purchase of the *rogaiewo* dance by the latter community from the former.

Let us now pass to that aspect of the *milamala* which really bears upon the subject treated in this article, namely, to the part played in the festivities by the *baloma*, who at this time pay their regular yearly visit to their native villages.

The *baloma* know when the feast approaches, because it is held always at the same time of the year, in the first half of the moon, which is also called *milamala*. This moon is determined--as their calendar in general--by

the position of the stars. And in Kiriwina proper, the full moon of *milamala* falls in the second half of August or first half of September.<sup>31</sup>

When the time approaches, the *baloma*, taking advantage of any spell of fair wind that may occur, sail from Tuma to their native villages. It is not quite clear to the natives where the *baloma* live during the *milamala*. They probably stay in the houses of their *veiola*, that is their maternal relatives. Possibly they, or some of them, camp on the beach near their canoes, if the beach is not too far, exactly as a party of near kinsmen from another village or from another island would do.

At any rate, preparations for them are made in the village. Thus, in villages belonging to chiefs, special rather high, though small, platforms, called *tokaikaya*, are erected for the *baloma* of the *guya'u* (chiefs). The chief is always supposed to be in a physically higher position than the commoners. Why the platforms for the spirit *guya'u* are so very high (they measure some 5 to 7 meters in height) I could not ascertain.<sup>32</sup> Besides these platforms several other arrangements are made in connection with the display of valuables and of food, with the professed intention of pleasing the *baloma*.<sup>33</sup>

The display of valuables is called *ioiova*. The headman of each village, or the headmen, as there are at times more than one, have usually a smaller covered platform in the neighborhood of their houses. This is called *buneiova*, and here the man's valuables, such articles of wealth as fall under the native name of *vaigu'a*, are displayed. Large polished axe blades, strings of red shell discs, large arm shells made of the conus shell, circular pigs' teeth or their imitation, these, and these only, form the proper *vaigu'a*. They are all placed on the platform, the strings of *kaboma* (red shell discs) being bung under the roof of the *buneiova*, so as to be readily accessible to view. When there are no *buneiova*, I saw temporary roofed platforms erected in the village, on which the valuables were displayed. This display takes place during the last three days of the full moon, the articles being put up in the morning and removed at night. The proper thing, when visiting a village during the *ioiova*, is to look at the things, even handle them, ask their names (every individual piece of *vaigu'a* has a proper name), and, of course, express great admiration.

Besides the exhibition of valuables, there is a great display of food, and this gives a much more “showy” and festive aspect to the villages. For this, long scaffoldings of wood, called *lalogua*, are erected, consisting of vertical stakes, about 2 to 3 meters high, planted in the ground, with one or two rows of horizontals running along the verticals. To the horizontals are attached bunches of bananas, taro, yams of exceptional size, and coconuts. Such structures run round the central place (*baku*), which is the dancing ground and center of all ceremonial and festive life in every village. The year I was in Bwoiowa was an exceptionally poor one, and the *lalogua* did not reach more than 30 to 60 meters, encircling only one third or less of a *baku*. I was told by several informants, however, that in a good year they might extend not only all round the central place, but also round the circular street which runs concentrically with the *baku*, and even outside the village into the “high road,” that is the path leading to another village. The *lalogua* are supposed to please the *baloma*, who get angry whenever there is little display of food.

All this is merely a show which must afford the *baloma* a purely aesthetic pleasure, But they receive also more substantial tokens of affection, in the form of direct offerings of food. The first repast which is given to them takes place at the *katukuala*, the opening feast of the *milamala*, with which the festive period really begins. The *katukuala* consists of a distribution of cooked food, which takes place on the *baku*, and for which the food is supplied by all the members of the village and redistributed among them.<sup>34</sup> This food is exposed to the spirits by being placed on the *baku*. They partake of the “spirit substance” of the food exactly in the same way as they take away to Tuma the *baloma* of the valuables with which men are adorned at death. From the moment of the *katukuala* (which is connected with the inauguration of the dancing) the festive period begins for the *baloma* as well. Their platform is, or ought to be, placed on the *baku*, and they are stated to admire the dance and enjoy it, though, in fact, mighty little notice is taken of their presence.

Food is cooked early every day, and exposed in big, fine wooden dishes (*kaboma*) in each man’s house, for the *baloma*. After an hour or so the food is taken away and is presented to some friend or relative, who in turn will present the donor with an equivalent dish. The chiefs have the privilege of giving to the *tokay* (commoners) betel nut and pig, and of receiving in

return fish and fruits.<sup>35</sup> Such food, offered to the *baloma*, and subsequently given away to a friend, is called *bubualu'a*. It is usually put on the bedstead in the house, and the man, laying down the *kaboma*, says: “*Balom'kam bubualua.*” It is a universal feature of all offerings and gifts in Kiriwina that they are accompanied by an oral declaration.

*Silakutuva* is the name for a dish of scraped coconut exposed to the *baloma* (with the words “*Balom'kam silakutuva*”), and then presented also to some man.

It is characteristic that this *baloma* food is never eaten by the man who offers it, but always presented after the *baloma* has finished with it.

Finally, in the afternoon before the departure of the *baloma*, some food is prepared, and some coconuts, bananas, taro, and yams are put handy, and the *vaigu'a* (valuables) are placed in a basket. When the man hears the characteristic beat of the drums, which constitutes the *ioba*, or chasing away of the spirits, he may put these things outside, the idea being that the spirit might take away their *baloma* as a parting present (*taloï*). This custom is called *katubukoni*. The putting of these things in front of the house (*okaukueda*) is not quite essential, because the *baloma* can take them out of the house equally well. This was the explanation given to me when I was looking for the *baloma* gifts in front of the houses, and saw only in one place (in front of the chief's house) a few stone tomahawks.

As said above, the presence of the *baloma* in the village is not a matter of great importance in the mind of the native, if compared with such all-absorbing and fascinating things as dancing and feasting and sexual licence, which go on with great intensity during the *milamala*. But their existence is not altogether ignored, nor is their role by any means purely passive-consisting in the mere admiring of what goes on, or in the satisfaction of eating the food they receive. The *baloma* show their presence in many ways. Thus, while they are in the village it is remarkable how many coconuts will fall down, not by themselves, but plucked by the *baloma*. Whilst the *milamala* was on in Omarakana, two enormous bunches of coconuts fell down quite close to my tent. And it is a very pleasant feature of this spirit activity that such nuts are considered public property, so that even I enjoyed a coconut drink, free of charge, thanks to the *baloma*.

Even the small unripe coconuts that fall down prematurely do it much more often during the *milamala*. And this is one form in which the *baloma* show their displeasure, which is invariably caused by scarcity of food.

The *baloma* get hungry (*kasi molu*, their hunger), and they show it.

Thunder, rain, bad weather during the *milamala*, interfering with the dancing and feasting, is another and more effective form in which the spirits show their temper. As a matter of fact, during my stay, the full moon, both in August and September, fell on wet, rainy and stormy days. And my informants were able to demonstrate to me by actual experience the connection between scarcity of food and a bad *milamala*, on the one hand, and the anger of the spirits and bad weather on the other. The spirits may even go further and cause drought, and thus spoil the next year's crops. This is the reason why very often several bad years follow each other, because a bad year and poor crops make it impossible for the men to arrange a good *milamala*, which again angers the *baloma*, who spoil next year's crops, and so on in a *circulus vitiosus*.

Again, at times, the *baloma* appear to men in dreams during the *milamala*. Very often people's relatives, especially such as are recently deceased, come in a dream. They usually ask for food, and their wish is satisfied by gifts of bubualu'a or silakutuva. At times they have some message to impart. In the village of Olivilevi, the main village of Luba, the district south of Kiriwina, the *milamala* (at which I was present) was very poor, there being hardly any food display at all. The chief, Vanoi Kiriwina, had a dream. He went to the beach (about half an hour from the village), and saw a big canoe with spirits, sailing towards the beach from Tuma. They were angry, and spoke to him: "What are you doing at Olivilevi? Why don't you give us food to eat, and coconut water to drink? We send this constant rain for we are angry. Tomorrow, prepare much food; we will eat it and there will be fine weather; then you will dance." This dream was quite true. Next day anybody could see a handful of white sand on the threshold (*okaukueda*), of Vanoi's *lisiga* (chief's house). How this sand was connected with the dream, whether it had been brought there by the spirits or by Vanoi in his dream existence and dream walk, none of these details was clear to my informants, among whom was Vanoi himself. But it was certain that the sand was a proof of the anger of the *baloma* and the reality of the dream. Unfortunately, the prophecy of the fine weather failed entirely, and there was no dancing that day, as the rain was pouring. Perhaps

the spirits were not quite satisfied with the amount of food offered that morning!

But the *baloma* are not entirely materialistic. They not only resent scarcity of food and poor offerings, but they also keep strict watch over the maintenance of custom, and they punish with their displeasure any infraction of the traditional customary rules which ought to be observed during the *milamala*. Thus I was told that the spirits strongly disapproved of the general laxity and slowness with which the *milamala* was at present observed. Formerly, nobody would work in the fields or do any kind of labor during the festive period. Everybody had to be bound on pleasure, dancing and sexual licence, in order to please the *baloma*. Nowadays, people will go to their gardens and potter about, or go on preparing wood for house building or canoe making, and the spirits do not like it. Therefore their anger, which results in rain and storm, spoils the *milamala*. This was the case at Olivilevi, and later on at Omarakana. At Omarakana there was still another cause for their anger, connected with the ethnographer's presence in that place, and I had to hear several times reproachful allusions and remarks from the elders and from To'uluwa, the chief, himself. The fact was that I had bought from various villages some twenty dancing shields (*kaidebu*); I wanted to see what the *kaidebu* dances were like. Now, in Omarakana there was only one dance in progress, the *rogaiewo*, a dance performed with *bisila* (pandanus streamers). I distributed the *kaidebu* among the *jeunesse dorée* of Omarakana, and the charm of novelty being too strong (they had not had sufficient *kaidebu* to dance with properly for the last five years at least), they at once began to dance the *gumagabu*, a dance performed with the dancing shields. This was a serious breach of the customary rules (though I did not know it at the time), for every new form of dance has to be ceremonially inaugurated.<sup>36</sup> The omission was very much resented by the *baloma*, hence bad weather, falling coconuts, etc. This was brought up against me several times.

After the *baloma* have enjoyed their reception for two or four weeks (the *milamala* has a fixed end, the second day after the full moon, but it may begin any time between the previous full moon and the new moon), they have to leave their native village and return to Tuma.<sup>37</sup> This return is compulsory, and is induced by the *ioba*, or ceremonial bunting away of the spirits. The second night after the full moon, about one hour before sunrise,

when the leatherhead (*saka'u*) sings out, and the morning star (*kubuana*) appears in the heavens, the dancing, which has been going on the whole night, ceases, and the drums intone a peculiar beat, that of the *ioba*.<sup>38</sup> The spirits know the beat, and they prepare for their return journey. Such is the power of this beat that if somebody struck it a couple of nights earlier, all the *baloma* would leave the village, and go to their home in the nether world. The *ioba* beat is therefore strictly tabooed whilst spirits are in the village, and I could not prevail upon the boys in Olivilevi to give me a sample of this beat during the *milamala*, whereas, at a time when there were no spirits in the village (a couple of months before the *milamala*), I was able to obtain quite a performance of the *ioba* in Omarakana. Whilst the *ioba* beat is sounded on the drums, the *baloma* are addressed, entreated to go, and bidden farewell:

“*Baloma, O!*  
*Bukulousi, O!*  
*Bakalosi ga*  
*Yuhuhuhu . . . . .*“

“O spirits, go away, we shall not go (we’ll remain).” The last sound seems to be just a kind of scream, to rouse up the sluggish *baloma* and to spur them to go.

This *ioba*, which takes place as stated above, before sunrise on the night of *Woulo*, is the main one. It is meant to drive away the strong spirits, those that can walk. The next day, before noon, there is another *ioba*, called *pem ioba*, or chasing away the lame. It purports to rid the village of the spirits of women and children, the weak and the crippled. It is performed in the same manner, by the same beat and with the same words.

In both cases the cortège starts at the end of the village farthest from where the road to Tuma strikes the village grove (*weika*), so that no part of the village remains “unswept” They go through the village, stopping for a time on the *baku* (central place) and then they walk up the place, where the road to Tuma leaves the village. There they finish the *ioba*, and always end up with a beat of a peculiar form of dance, the *kasawaga*.<sup>39</sup>

This concludes the *milamala*.

This information, as it stands here, was collected and written down before I had an opportunity of witnessing the *ioba* in Olivilevi. It is correct in all

points, it is complete and detailed. I was even told by my informants that the drums are beaten by the young boys only, and that the elder men do not take much part in the *ioba*. Yet, in no instance perhaps, of my field work, have I had such a striking demonstration of the necessity of witnessing things myself, as I had when I made the sacrifice of getting up at three in the morning to see this ceremony. I was prepared to witness one of the most important and serious moments in the whole customary cycle of annual events, and I definitely anticipated the psychological attitude of the natives towards the spirits, their awe, piety, etc. I thought that such a crisis, associated with a well-defined belief, would, in one way or another, express itself in outward form, that there would be a "moment" passing over the village. When I arrived at the *baku* (central place), half an hour before sunrise, the drums were still going on and there were still a few of the dancers sleepily moving round the drummers, not in regular dance, but in the rhythmic walk of the *karibom*. When the *saka'u* was heard, everybody went quietly away -the young people in pairs, and there remained to farewell the *baloma* only five or six urchins with the drums, myself and my informant. We went to the *kadumalagala valu*--the point where the path for the next village leaves the settlement, and we started to chase the *baloma*. A more undignified performance I cannot imagine, bearing in mind that ancestral spirits were addressed! I kept at a distance so as not to influence the *ioba*--but there was little to be influenced or marred by an ethnographer's presence! The boys from six to twelve years of age sounded the beat, and then the smaller ones began to address the spirits in the words I had been previously given by my informants. They spoke with the same characteristic mixture of arrogance and shyness, with which they used to approach me, begging for tobacco, or making some facetious remark, in fact, with the typical demeanor of boys in the street, who perform some nuisance sanctioned by custom, like the proceedings on Guy Fawkes' day or similar occasions. And so they went through the village, and hardly any grown-up man was to be seen. The only other sign of the *ioba* was some wailing in a house where a death had recently occurred. I was told it was the right thing to wail at the *ioba* as the *baloma* of the kindred were just leaving the village. Next day, the *Pem ioba* was a still more paltry affair: the boys doing their part with laughter and jokes, and the old men looking on with smiles, and making fun of the poor lame spirits, which have to hobble away. Yet there is no doubt that the *ioba*, as an event, as a critical point in

tribal life, is a matter of importance. It would never on any account be omitted.<sup>40</sup> As already noted, it would not be performed except at the proper moment, and the *ioba* drum beat must not be trifled with. But in its performance it has no traces of sanctity or even seriousness.

There is one fact in connection with the *ioba* which must be mentioned in this place, as in a way it may seem to qualify the general statement made at the beginning of this article, that there is no connection between the mortuary ceremonies and the lot of the spirit that has departed. The fact in point is, that the final casting off of mourning (called “washing of the skin,” *iwini wowoula*, literally “he or she washes her skin”) always takes place after a *milamala* on the day following the *ioba*. The underlying idea would seem to be that the mourning is still kept during the *milamala*, as the spirit is there to see it, and as soon as this spirit departs, the “skin is washed.” But strangely enough I never found the natives either volunteering this explanation or even endorsing it. Of course, when you ask the question, “Why do you perform washing of the skin just after the *ioba*?” you receive the invariable answer, “*Tokua bogwa bubunemasi*--[our old custom].” You then have to beat about the bush, and finally ask the leading question. And to this (as to all leading questions which contain an untrue or doubtful statement) the natives always answer in the negative, or else they consider your view as a new one, and throwing some light on the problem, but such consideration and acquiescence is at once distinguishable from a direct endorsement of a statement. There was never the slightest difficulty in deciding whether an opinion obtained was a customary, well-established, orthodox native view, or whether it was an idea new to the native mind.<sup>41</sup>

Some general remarks about the natives’ attitude towards the *baloma* during *milamala* may follow this account of details. This attitude is characterized by the manner in which the natives speak about them, or behave during the ceremonial performances; it is less tangible than customary items, and more difficult to describe, but it is a fact, and as such must be stated.

The *baloma*, during their stay, never frighten the natives, and there is not the slightest uneasiness felt about them. The small tricks they play in showing their anger, etc. (see above), are done in broad daylight and there is nothing at all “uncanny” about them.

At night the natives are not in the least afraid to walk about alone from village to village, whereas they are distinctly afraid of doing so for some time after a man's death (see above). Indeed, this is the period of amorous intrigues, which entail lonely walks, and walks in couples. The most intense period of *milamala* coincides with full moon, where the superstitious fear of night is naturally reduced to its minimum. The whole country is gay with the light of the moon, with the loud beat of drums, and with the songs which resound all over the place. By the time a man is out of the radius of one village, he bears the music from the next. There is nothing of any oppressive atmosphere of ghosts, of any haunting presence, quite the reverse. The mood of the natives is gay and rather frivolous, the atmosphere in which they live pleasant and bright.

Again, it is to be noted that, though there is a certain amount of communion between the living and the spirits by dreams, etc., the latter are never supposed to influence in any serious way the course of tribal affairs. No trace of divination, taking counsel with the spirits, or any other form of customary communion in matters of any importance, is to be detected.

Apart from the lack of superstitious fear, there are no taboos connected with the behavior of the living towards the spirits. It can be even safely asserted that not too much respect is paid to them. There is no shyness whatever in speaking about the *baloma*, or mentioning the personal names of such as are presumably present in the village. As mentioned above, the natives make fun of the lame spirits, and in fact all kinds of jokes are passed about the *baloma* and their behavior.

Again, except in the cases of people recently dead, there is little personal feeling about the spirits. There are no provisions for singling out individual *baloma* and preparing a special reception for them, excepting perhaps the gifts of food solicited in dreams by individual *baloma*.

To sum up: the *baloma* return to their native village, like visitors from another place. They are left to a great extent to themselves. Valuables and food are displayed to them. Their presence is by no means a fact constantly in the native's mind, or foremost in his anticipations of, and views about, the *milamala*. There is not the slightest scepticism to be discovered in the mind of the most civilized natives as to the real presence of the *baloma* at the *milamala*. But there is little emotional reaction with reference to their presence.

So much about the annual visit of the *baloma* during the *milamala*. The other form in which they influence tribal life is through the part they take in magic.

## Chapter V

Magic plays an enormous part in the tribal life of the Kiriwinians (as it undoubtedly does with the majority of native peoples). All important economic activities are fringed with magic, especially such as imply pronounced elements of chance, venture, or danger. Gardening is completely wrapped up in magic; the little hunting that is done has its array of spells; fishing, especially when it is connected with risk and when the results depend upon luck and are not absolutely certain, is equipped with elaborate magical systems. Canoe building has a long list of spells, to be recited at various stages of the work, at the felling of the tree, at the scooping out of the dugout; and, towards the end, at painting, lashing together, and launching. But this magic is used only in the case of the larger sea-going canoes. The small canoes, used on the calm lagoon or near the shore, where there is no danger, are quite ignored by the magician. Weather--rain, sun and wind--have to obey a great number of spells, and they are especially amenable to the call of some eminent experts, or, rather, families of experts, who practice the art in hereditary succession. In times of war--when fighting still existed, before the white man's rule--the Kiriwinians availed themselves of the art of certain families of professionals, who had inherited war magic from their ancestors. And, of course, the welfare of the body--health--can be destroyed or restored by the magical craft of sorcerers, who are always healers at the same time. If a man's life be endangered by an attempt on the part of the above-mentioned *mulukuausi*, there are spells to counteract their influence, though the only safe way to escape the danger is to apply to a woman who is a *mulukuausi* herself--there is always some such woman in a distant village.

Magic is so widespread that, living among the natives, I used to come across magical performances, very often quite unexpectedly, apart from the cases where I arranged to be present at a ceremony. The hut of Bagido'u, the garden magician of Omarakana, was not fifty meters from my tent, and I remember bearing his chant on one of the very first days after my arrival, when I hardly knew of the existence of garden magic. Later on I was allowed to assist at his chanting over magical herbs; in fact, I could enjoy the privilege as often as I liked, and I used it several times. In many garden

ceremonies part of the ingredients are chanted over in the village, in the magician's own house, and, again, before being used in the garden. On the morning of such a day the magician goes alone into the bush, sometimes far away, to fetch the necessary herbs. In one charm as many as ten varieties of ingredients, practically all herbs, have to be brought. Some are to be found on the seabeach only, some must be fetched from the *raiboag* (the stony coral woodland), others are brought from the *odila*, the low scrub. The magician has to set out before daybreak and obtain all his material before the sun is up. The herbs remain in the house, and somewhere about noon he proceeds to chant over them. A mat is spread on the bedstead, and on this mat another is laid. The herbs are placed on one half of the second mat, the other half being folded over them. Into this opening the magician chants his spell. His mouth is quite close to the edges of the mat, so that none of his voice can go astray; all enters the yawning mat, where the herbs are placed, awaiting to be imbued with the spell. This catching up of the voice, which carries the spell, is done in all magical recitations. When a small object has to be charmed, a leaf is folded so as to form a tub and at the narrow end of this the object is placed, while the magician chants into the broad end. To return to Bagido'u and his garden magic. He would chant his charm for about half an hour, or even longer, repeating the spell over and over again, repeating various phrases in it and various important words in a phrase. The spell is sung in a low voice, there being a peculiar, half-melodic fashion of recital, which slightly varies with the divers forms of magic. The repetition of the words is a kind of rubbing in of the spell into the substance to be medicated.

After the garden magician has finished his spell, he wraps up the leaves in the mat and puts them aside, to be presently used in the field, usually the next morning. All actual ceremonies of garden magic take place in the field, and there are many spells which are chanted in the garden. There is a whole system of garden magic consisting of a series of complex and elaborate rites, each accompanied by a spell. Every gardening activity must be preceded by a proper rite. Thus there is a general inaugurative rite, previous to any work in the gardens whatever, and this rite is performed on each garden plot separately. The cutting down of the scrub is introduced by another rite. The burning of the cut and dried scrub is in itself a magical ceremony, and it brings in its wake minor magical rites performed for each plot, the whole performance extending over four days. Then, when the

planting begins, a new series of magical acts takes place, which lasts for a few days. Again, the weeding and the preliminary digging are introduced by magical performances. All these rites, as it were, a frame, into which the garden work is fitted. The magician orders rest periods, which have to be observed, and his work regulates the work of the community, forcing all the villagers to perform certain labors simultaneously, and not to lag behind or be too far in advance of the others.

His share is very much appreciated by the community; indeed, it would be difficult to imagine any work done in the gardens without the co-operation of the *towosi* (garden magician).<sup>42</sup>

In the management of gardens the *towosi* has a great deal to say, and great respect is shown to his advice, a respect which is in reality purely formal, because there are very few controversial, or even doubtful, questions about gardening. Nevertheless, the natives appreciate such formal deference and acknowledgment of authority to a degree which is really astonishing. The garden magician receives also his payment, which consists of substantial gifts of fish offered him by the members of the village community. It must be added that the dignity of village magician is usually vested in the person of the village headman, though this is not invariably the case. But only a man who belongs by birth to a certain village, whose maternal ancestors have always been the lords of that village and of that soil, can “strike the soil” (*iwoie buiagu*).

In spite of its great importance, Kiriwinian garden magic does not consist in any stately, sacred ceremonies, surrounded with strict taboos, performed with as much display as the natives can afford. On the contrary, any person uninitiated into the character of Kiriwinian magic might walk through the most important ceremony without being aware that anything of importance is going on. Such a person might come across a man scratching the soil with a stick, or making a small heap of dried branches and stalks, or planting a taro tuber, and perhaps muttering some words, Or else the imaginary spectator would walk through a Kiriwinian new garden field, with its soil freshly moved and cleared, with its diminutive forest of stems and sticks put into the ground to serve as supports for the *taitu*, a field which will presently look like a hop garden, and in such a walk he might meet a group of men, halting here and there and adjusting something in the corner of each garden plot. Only when loud spells are chanted over the fields would the

visitor's attention be directly drawn to the magical reality of the performance. In such cases the whole act, otherwise insipid, assumes some dignity and impressiveness. A man may be seen standing alone, with a small group behind him, and addressing in a loud voice some unseen power, or, more correctly, from the Kiriwinian's point of view, casting this unseen power over the fields: a power which lies in the spell condensed there through the wisdom and piety of generations. Or voices may be heard all over the field chanting the same spell, as not seldom the *towosi* summons the help of his assistants, who consist always of his brothers or other matrilineal successors.

By way of illustration, let us go through one such ceremony--that consisting in the burning of the cut and dried scrub. Some herbs, previously chanted over, have to be wrapped, with a piece of banana leaf, round the tops of dried coconut leaflets. Leaves so prepared will serve as torches to set fire to the field. In the forenoon (the ceremony I witnessed in Omarakana took place about ii a.m.), Bagido'u the *towosi* of that village, went to the gardens accompanied by To'uluwa, his maternal uncle and headman of the village, and by some other people, among whom was Bokuioba, one of the headman's wives. The day was hot, and there was a slight breeze; the field was dry, so setting fire to it was easy. Everyone present took a torch--even Bokuioba. The torches were lit quite without ceremony (by means of wax matches, produced by the ethnographer, not without a pang), and then everyone went along the field on the windward side, and the whole was soon ablaze. Some children looked on at the burning, and there was no question of any taboo. Nor was there much excitement in the village about the performance, for we left a number of boys and children behind, playing in the village and not at all interested or inclined to come and see the rite. I assisted at some other rites, where Bagido'u and I were alone, though there was no taboo to prevent anyone who wished from being present. Of course, if anyone was present, a certain minimum of decorum would be observed. The question of taboo, moreover, varies with the village, each having its own system of garden magic. I assisted at another garden burning ceremony (on the day following the wholesale burning when a small heap of rubbish, together with some herbs, was burnt on each plot) in a neighboring village, and there the *towosi* got very angry because some girls looked on at the performance from a fair distance, and I was told that the ceremonies were taboo to women in that village. Again, whereas some ceremonies are

performed by the *towosi* alone, in others several people usually assist, while there are still others in which the whole village community has to take part. Such a ceremony will be described in detail below, as it bears more particularly on the question of the participation of the *baloma* in magic.

I have spoken here of garden magic only in order to illustrate the general nature of Kiriwinian magic. Garden magic is by far the most conspicuous of all magical activities, and the broad statements exemplified in this particular case hold good with reference to all other kinds of magic as well. All this is just intended to serve as a general picture, which must be kept in mind in order that my remarks about the part played by the *baloma* in magic may appear in the right perspective.<sup>43</sup>

The backbone of Kiriwinian magic is formed by its spells. It is in the spell that the main virtue of all magic resides. The rite is there only to launch the spell, to serve as an appropriate mechanism of transmission. This is the universal view of all Kiriwinians, of the competent as well as of the profane, and a minute study of the magical ritual well confirms this view. It is in the formulae, therefore, that the clue to the ideas concerning magic is to be found. And in the formulae we find frequent mention made of the ancestral names. Many formulae begin with long lists of such names, serving, in a way, as an invocation.

The question whether such lists are real prayers, in which an actual appeal is made to the ancestral *baloma*, who are supposed to come and act in the magic, or whether the ancestral names figure in the formulae as mere items of tradition-hallowed and full of magical virtue, just because of their traditional nature—does not seem to allow of any definite decision either way. In fact, both elements are undoubtedly present: the direct appeal to the *baloma* and the traditional value of the mere ancestral names. The data given below should allow of closer determination. As the traditional element is closely bound up with the mode of inheritance of the magical formulae, let us begin with the latter question.

The magical formulae are passed from generation to generation, inherited from father to son in the paternal line, or from *Kadala* (mat. uncle) to nephew in the maternal line, which, in native opinion, is the real line of kindred (*veiola*). The two forms of inheritance are not quite equivalent. There is a class of magic which may be termed local, because it is bound up with a given locality. To this class belong all the systems of garden

magic,<sup>44</sup> as well as all such magical spells as are connected with certain spots endowed with magical properties. Such was the most powerful rain magic in the island, that of Kasana'i, which had to be performed in a certain waterhole in the *weika* (grove) of Kasana'i. Such was the official war magic of Kiriwina, which had to be performed by men belonging to Kuaibuaga, and which was associated with a *kaboma* (a sacred grove) near that village. Again, the elaborate systems of magic which were essential to shark and *kalala* fishing had each to be carried out by a man belonging to the village of Kaibuola or Laba'i respectively. All such formulae were hereditary in the female line.<sup>45</sup>

The class of magic which is not bound up with locality, and which may be easily transmitted from father to son, or even from stranger to stranger, at a fair price, is much smaller. Here belong, in the first place, the formulae of native medicine, which always go in couples, a *silami*, a formula of evil magic, the object of which is to produce illness, being always coupled with *vivisa*, a formula for annihilating the respective *silami*, and so curing the disease. The magic which initiates a man into the craft of carving, the *tokabitam* (carver) magic, belongs to this class, as well as the canoe-making charms. And a series of formulae of minor importance, or at least of less esoteric character, such as love magic, magic against the bite of insects, magic against the *mulukuausi* (this latter rather important), magic for removing the bad effects of incest, etc. But even these formulae, though they are not necessarily performed by the people of one locality, are usually associated with a locality. There is very often a myth at the bottom of a certain system of magic, and a myth is always local.<sup>46</sup>

Thus the more numerous examples, and certainly the more important class of magic (the "matrilineal" magic), is local, both in its character and in its transmission, whereas only part of the other class is distinctly local in its character. Now locality is in the mind and tradition of the Kiriwinian most intimately associated with a given family or subclan.<sup>47</sup> In each locality the line of men who have succeeded each other as its rulers, and who in turn performed those acts of magic essential to its welfare (such as garden magic), would naturally loom large in the minds of the natives. This probably is confirmed by the facts, for, as mentioned above, the names of matrilineal ancestors play a great part in magic.

Some examples may be given to confirm this statement, though the full discussion of the question must be deferred to another occasion, because it would be necessary to compare this feature with the other elements recurring in magic, and to this end the full reproduction of all the formulae would be necessary. Let us begin with the garden magic. I have recorded two systems of this magic, that of the village of Omarakana called *kailuebila*, which is generally considered to be the most powerful; and the *momtilakaiva* system, associated with the four small villages, Kupuakopula, Tilakaiva, Iourawotu', and Wakailuva.

In the Omarakana system of garden magic there are ten magical spells, each associated with a special act: one said while striking the ground on which a new garden is to be made; another in the ceremony initiating the cutting down of the scrub; another during the ceremonial burning of the cut, dried scrub, and so on. Out of these ten spells there are three in which reference is made to *baloma* of ancestors. One of those three is by far the most important, and it is said during the performance of several rites, at the cutting down ceremony, at the planting ceremony, etc.

This is the beginning:

“*Vatuvi, vatuvi*; (repeated many times)

*Vitumaga, imaga*;

*Vatuvi, vatuvi*; (many times)

*Vitulola, ilola*:

*Tubugu Polu, tubugu Koleko, tubugu Takikila,*

*Tubugu Mulabuoita, tubugu Kuaiudila,*

*Tubugu Katupuala, tubugu Buguabuaga, tubugu Numakala;*

*Bilumava'u bilumam*;

*Tabugu Muakenwa, tamagu Iowana. . .*

After this follows the rest of the formula, which is very long, and which, in the main, describes the state of things which the formula is meant to produce, *i.e.*, it describes the growth of the garden, the ridding of the plants from all pests, blights, etc.

The correct translation of such magical formulae presents certain difficulties. There are in them archaic expressions which the natives only partially understand, and even then it is extremely difficult to make them translate the meaning correctly into modern Kiriwinian. The typical form of

a spell consists of three parts: (1) The introduction (called *u'ula* = lowest part of a stem, used also to denote something akin to our conception of cause); (2) The body of the spell (called *tapuala* = the back, the flanks, the rump); (3) The final part (*dogina* = the tip, the end, the peak; etymologically connected with *doga*, a tusk, a sharp, long tooth). Usually the *tapuala* is much more easy to understand and to translate than the other parts. The invocation of ancestors, or, more correctly, perhaps, the list of their names, is always contained in the *u'ula*.

In the *u'ula* just quoted, the first word, *vatuvi*, was not understood by my informant, Bagido'u, the *towosi* (garden magician), of Omarakana, or at least, he was not able to translate it to me. On etymological grounds it can be translated, I think, by "cause" or "make."<sup>48</sup>

The words *vitumaga imaga* are composed of the prefixes *vitu* (to cause), and *i* (third person, singular, verbal prefix); and of the root *maga*, which is composed again of *ma*, the root of come, and *ga*, a suffix often used, which plays merely the role of giving emphasis. The words *vitulola*, *ilola* are quite symmetrical with the former, only the root *la*, "to go" (reduplicated into *lola*), figures instead of *ma*, to come.

In the list of ancestors, two points are to be noted: the first names are attached to the word *tubugu*, whereas the last but one is used with *tabugu*. *Tubugu* is a plural, and means "my grandfathers" (*gu* being the pronominal suffix of the first person); *tabugu* means "my grandfather" (in the singular). The use of the plural in the first group is connected with the fact that in each subclan there are certain names, which are the property of this subclan; and every member of this subclan must possess one of these ancestral names, though he may be called also by another non-hereditary name, by which he is known more generally. Thus, in the first part of the spell, not one ancestor of the name of Polu is addressed, but the magician invokes "all my ancestors of the name of Polu, all my ancestors of the name of Koleko," etc.

The second characteristic feature, which is also general in all such lists of ancestors, is that the last names are preceded by the words "*bilumava'u bilumam*," which broadly mean (without entering into a linguistic analysis) "you new *baloma*," and then the names of the few last ancestors are enumerated. Thus Bagido'u mentions his grandfather, Muakenuva, and his

father, Iowana.<sup>49</sup> This is important, because it is a direct invocation of a *baloma*, “O thou *baloma*” (in “bilumam” the m’ being the suffix of the second person). In the light of this fact, the ancestor names appear to be more likely invocations of the ancestral *baloma* than a simple enumeration, even though the ancestral names have an intrinsic, active, magical power.

In a free translation, the fragment may be rendered thus:--

“Cause! Make it! Be efficient!

Cause to come! Cause to go!

My grandfathers of the name Polu, etc. . . .

And you, recent *baloma*, grandfather Muakenuva, and father Iowana.”

This free translation leaves still a great deal ambiguous, but it must be emphatically stated that this ambiguity does exist in the mind of the man who is best acquainted with the formula. Asked, what had to go and what to come, Bagido’u expressed his opinion in guesses. Once he told me that the reference was to the plants which have to enter the soil; on another occasion he thought that the garden pests are to go. Whether “come” and “go” are meant to be antithetical or not, was not clear either. The correct interpretation must, I think, insist on the very vague meaning of the *u’ula*, which is merely a kind of invocation. The words are believed to embody some hidden virtue, and that is their main function. The *tapuala*, which presents no ambiguities, explains the exact purpose of the spell.

It is also noteworthy that *u’ula* contains rhythmical elements in the symmetry in which the four groups of words are placed. Again, though the number of times the word *vatuvi* is repeated varies (I have heard the formula actually chanted several times), it is repeated the same number of times in both periods. The alliteration in this formula is undoubtedly also not accidental, as it is to be found in many other spells.

I have dwelt somewhat at length on this formula, treating it as representative of the others, which will be adduced without detailed analysis.

The second formula in which ancestor names are mentioned is spoken at the very first of the series of successive ceremonies at the *iowota*, when the *towosi* strikes the ground on which the gardens are going to be made. This formula begins:

“*Tudava, Tu-Tudava,*  
*Malita, Ma-Malita,*” etc.,

mentioning here the names of two ancestral heroes, about whom there exists a mythological cycle. *Tudava* is claimed to be in a way an ancestor of the *tabalu* (the most aristocratic subclan, who rule Omarakana), though there is no doubt that he belonged to the Lukuba clan (whereas the *tabalu* belong to the Malasi clan).

The same two names are invoked in another formula, which is spoken over certain herbs, used in garden-planting magic, and over some structures of wood, made for magical purposes only, called *kamkokola*. This formula begins:

“*Kailola, Iola; Kailola, Iola;*  
*Kaigulugulu; kaigulugulu;*  
*Kailalola Tudava,*  
*Kaigulugulu Malita,*  
*Bisipela Tudava; bisila 'i otokaikaya,*” etc.

In free translation this means--

Go down [O you roots]; bore [into the ground, O you roots]; [help them] to go down, O *Tudava*; [help them] to bore [into the ground] O *Malita*; *Tudava* climbs up [lit. changes]; [*Tudava*] settles down on the *tokaikaia* (i.e., the platform for the *baloma*).

In the Omarakana system of garden magic there are no special references to any sacred places near the village.<sup>50</sup> The only ritual action performed in connection with the *baloma* during the ceremony is of a very trifling character. After reciting the appropriate spell over the first taro planted in a *baleko* (a garden plot, the economic and magical unit in gardening), the magician constructs a miniature hut and fence of dry branches, called *si buala baloma* (“the *baloma*, their house”). No spells are said over it, nor could I discover any tradition, or obtain any further explanation in connection with this quaint act.

Another reference to the *baloma*, and a much more important one, though it does not take place during a ceremony, is the exposition or offering to the spirits of the *ula'ula*, the fee paid for the magic. The *ula'ula* is brought to the *towosi* (garden magician) by the members of the community, and consists usually of fish, but there may be betel nuts or coconuts, or,

nowadays, tobacco. This is exposed in the house; the fish only in the form of a small portion of the whole gift, and, as far as I know, in a cooked condition. While the magician chants over the magical leaves and implements in his house previous to taking them out into the garden, the *ula'ula*, offered to the *baloma*, ought to be exposed somewhere near the medicated substance. This offering of the *ula'ula* to the *baloma* is not a feature particular to the Omarakana garden magic, but it obtains in all the other systems.

The other system (*momtilakaiva*), to which reference has been made, contains only one formula, in which there is a list of *baloma*. As this resembles that quoted above, the proper names only being different, I omit it here. In this system of magic, however, the role played by the *baloma* is much more pronounced, for in one of the main ceremonies, that of the *Kamkokola*, there is an offering made to the *baloma*. The *kamkokola* are large, bulky erections, consisting of vertical poles some 3 to 6 meters high, and of slanting poles of the same length, leaning against the vertical poles. The two side poles of the *kamkokola* are propped against a lateral bifurcation of the erect pole, formed by the stump of a protruding branch. Seen from above, the constructions present a right angle, or the shape of the letter L, with the vertical pole at the angle. From the side they look somewhat the shape of the Greek letter λ. These structures have no practical importance whatever, their only function being a magical one. They form the magical prototype, so to speak, of the poles put in the ground as supports for the *taitu* vine. The *kamkokola*, though they represent a merely magical item, require, nevertheless, a considerable amount of labor to erect. The heavy poles have to be brought very often from a great distance, as few are found near the villages in the low scrub, which is cut down every four or five years. For weeks men are busy searching for, felling, and bringing into their gardens the material for the *kamkokola*, and disputes about stealing the poles are frequent.

The *kamkokola* ritual occupies a couple of days in all the systems; four or more days are further taken up by the obligatory rest from all field work, which precedes the magical performance. The first day of the magic proper is devoted, in the *momtilakaiva* system, to the chanting over the fields. The magician, attended perhaps by one or two men, walks across the whole garden site--it was about three-quarters of a mile across country in the case

which I witnessed--and on each garden plot he chants the spell, leaning on one of the slanting poles of the *kamkokola*. He faces the plot, and chants in a loud voice, which carries well over the whole plot. He has some thirty or forty such recitations to make.

It is the second day which is really of interest in this connection, for then a ceremony is performed in the gardens in which all the villages take part, and in which the *baloma* also are said to participate. The object of this ceremony is to charm some leaves which will be put into the ground at the foot of the *kamkokola* and also at the junction of the vertical and the slanting poles. In the morning of this day the whole village is busy with preparations. The large earthenware pots used for boiling food on festive occasions are put on the stones which support them, and they bubble and steam while women move round and watch the cooking. Some women bake their *taitu* in the ground between two layers of red-hot stones. All the boiled and baked *taitu* will be brought out into the field, and there it will be ceremonially distributed.

In the meantime some men have gone into the bush, some have gone right down to the seashore, others to the *raiboag* (the rocky wooded ridge), in order to get the herbs necessary for the magic. Large bunches have to be brought, as after the ceremony the medicated herbs are distributed among all the men, each taking his share and using it on his own plot.

At about ten o'clock in the morning I went into the field, accompanied by Nasibowa'i, the *towosi* of Tilakaiva. He had a large ceremonial stone axe hanging over his shoulder which, indeed, he uses in several ceremonies, whereas Bagido'u of Omarakana never makes use of this instrument. Soon after we had arrived and seated ourselves on the ground, waiting till all were present, the women began to troop in one after the other. Each was carrying a wooden dish with *taitu* on her head, often leading a child by the hand and carrying another astride on her flank. The spot where the ceremony had to be performed was at a point where the road from Omarakana entered the garden of Tilakaiva. On this side of the fence there was dense low scrub of a couple of years' growth; on the other the garden lay bare, the ground naked, the wooded ridge of the *raiboag* and several groves in the distance showing through the fairly dense agglomeration of poles planted as supports for the *taitu* vine. Two rows of specially fine ones ran along the path, forming a nice espalier in front of me. They terminated

on this side with two specially fine *kamkokola*, at the foot of which the ceremony was to be performed, and which were to be supplied with herbs by the magician himself.

The women seated themselves all along the alley and on both sides in the fields. It took them about half an hour to collect, after which the food they brought was made into heaps, one heap for each man present, and each contribution was divided among the heaps. By this time all the men, boys, girls, and small children had arrived, and, the whole village being present, the proceedings began. The normal *sagali* (distribution) started the ceremony; a man walked past the heaps of food, and at each heap called out the name of one of those present, after which this portion (which had been placed on a wooden dish) was taken by a woman (a connection of the man called) and carried into the village. The women thus departed to the village, taking with them the babies and children. This part of the ceremony was said to be for the benefit of the *baloma*. The food thus distributed is called *baloma kasi* (food of the *baloma*), and the spirits are said to take some part in the proceedings, to be present there, and to be pleased with the food. Beyond these generalities, however, it was absolutely impossible to obtain a more definite or detailed statement from any of the natives, including Nasibowa'i himself.

After the women had departed, such of the small boys as remained behind were hunted away, as the ceremony proper was to begin. Even I and my "boys" had to step on the other side of the fence. The ceremony consisted simply of the recital of a spell over the leaves. Large bunches of these were put upon the ground on a mat, and Nasibowa'i squatted down in front of them and recited his spell right into the herbs. As soon as he had finished, the men pounced upon the leaves, each taking a handful, and running to his garden plot to put them under and on the *kamkokola*. This ended the ceremony, which with the waiting had lasted well over one hour.

Again, in the *momtilakaiva* magic, one of the spells refers to a "sacred grove" (*kaboma*), called Ovavavile. This place (a large clump of trees obviously not cut for many generations) is situated quite close to the villages of Omarakana and Tilakaiva. It is tabooed, swelling of the sexual organs (elephantiasis?) being the penalty for not observing the prohibition. I never explored its interior, for fear, not so much of the taboo, as of the small red ticks (scrub itch), which are a veritable pest. To perform one of the

magical rites, the *towosi* of Tilakaiva goes into this sacred wood and puts a large tuber of a species of yam called *kasi-iena* on a stone, this being an offering made to the *baloma*.

The spell runs:--

U'ula: "*Avaita'u ikavakavala Ovavavala?*

*Iaegula'i Nasibowa'i,*

*Akavakavala Ovavavala!"*

Tapuala: "*Bala baise akavakavala Ovavavala Iaegula'i*

*Nasbowa'i akavakavala Ovavavala, bala*

*baise,*

*Agubitamuaana, olopoulo Ovavavala; bala*

*baise*

*Akabinaiguadi olopoulo Ovavavala."*

There is no *dogina* (final piece) in this formula. The translation runs as follows:--

"Who bends down in Ovavavile?<sup>51</sup> I, Nasibowa'i (personal name of the present *towosi*) am bending down in Ovavavile! I shall go there and bend down in Ovavavile; I, Nasibowa'i, shall bend down in Ovavavile; I shall go there and bear the burden [here the magician identifies himself with the stone on which the *kasi-iena* is put] within the *kaboma* of Ovavavile. I shall go there and bulge out [here he speaks in the name of the planted tuber] within the grove of Ovavavile."

In this ceremony the association between the *baloma* and the magic is very slight, but it exists, and the connection with the locality affords another link between ancestral tradition and magic. So much concerning garden magic.

In the two most important systems of fish magic of Kiriwina--*i.e.*, the shark magic of the village of Kaibuola and the *kalala* (mullet?) magic of the village of Laba'i--the spirits also play some part. Thus in both systems one of the ceremonies consists of an offering to the *baloma*, which is also subtracted from the *ula'ula* payment given to the magician by the people of his village. In the shark magic one of the rites takes place in the magician's house. The performer puts small parcels of the cooked fish (which he had received as *ula'ula*) and some betel nut on one of the three stones (*kailagila*), which are placed round a fireplace and serve to support the large cooking pots. There he utters the following formula:

U'ula: “*Kamkuamsi kami Ula'ula kubukuabuia, Inene'i, Ibuyaigana I'iovalu, Vi'iamoulo, Ulopoulo, Bowasa'i, Bomuagueda.*”

Tapuala and Dogina: “*Kukuavilasi poulo, kuminum kuaidasi poulo; okawala Vilaita'u; okawala Obuwabu; Kulousi kuvapuagise wadola kua'u obuarita, kulousi kuluvabouodasi kua'u obuarita kuiaioiuvasi kukapuagiasi kumaise kuluvabodasi matami pualalala okotalela Vinaki.*”

The U'ula may be translated:--

“Eat your *ula'ula* (gift, payment for magic), O unmarried women, Inene'i,” etc. (all these are personal names of female *baloma*).

In the *tapuala* there are certain words I was unable to translate, but the general meaning is clear: “Spoil our fishing! bring bad luck to our fishing” (so far the spell is negative; it suggests in imperative form that which it is desired to prevent); ----- (?); ----- (?); “Go, open the mouth of the shark in the sea; go, make the shark to be met in the sea; remain open (yawning); come; make them meet the shark; your eyes are (?); on the beach of Vinaki.”

This fragmentary translation shows, at any rate, that the *bili baloma* (a plural form of *baloma*, used when they are treated as a kind of effective agent in magic) of the unmarried females are directly invoked to lend a hand in making the fishing lucky.

My informant was as puzzled as myself by the question why female and not male *baloma* are supposed to be effective in this magic. But it was a fact known, not only to the magician, but to everybody, that the female *baloma* are the *tolipoula*, the “masters of the fishing.” The magician and some other men in council tentatively suggested that the male *baloma* go out to the fishing with the men, and the female *baloma* remain behind and have to be fed by the magician, lest they should be angry. Another man pointed out that in the myth which explains the existence of the shark fishing in Kaibuola, a woman plays an important part. But it was clear that to all my informants the fact of women being *tolipoula* was so natural that it had never occurred to them to question it previously.

The *kalala* fishing in the village of Laba'i is connected with the mythical hero Tudava, who is specially associated with that village, and who is, in a way, reputed to be an ancestor of the present rulers of Laba'i. The magic

which accompanies this fishing is essentially bound up with the mythological doings of Tudava. Thus, he lived on the beach where the fishing takes place and where the most important magical formulae are spoken. Again, Tudava used to walk on the road leading from the beach to the village, and there are some traditional spots connected with his doings on that road. The “traditional presence,” if such an expression may be coined, of the hero is felt in all the fishing places. The whole neighborhood is also enveloped in taboos, which are especially stringent when the fishing is going on. This is periodical, and lasts for about six days each moon, beginning on the *yapila* (the day of the full moon), when the fish are coming in shoals into the shallow water between the barrier reef and the beach. The native tradition says that Tudava ordered the *kalala* fish to live in “big river?” on the d’Entrecasteaux Archipelago, and once a month to come up to the beach of Laba’i. But the magic spells, also ordered by Tudava, are essential, for if these were omitted the fish would not come. Tudava’s name, coupled with those of other ancestors, figures in a long spell said at the beginning of the fishing period on the beach near a large tabooed stone called Bomlikuliku.<sup>52</sup> The spell begins:--

“*Tudava kulu Tudava;*  
*Ibu’a kulu, Wa’ibua;*  
*Kuluvidaga, Kulubaiwoie, Kulubetoto,*  
*Muaga’i, Karibuiiwa,”* etc.

Tudava and Wa’ibua are mythical ancestors who both belonged to the village of Laba’i, the first being, as we know already, the great “culture hero” of the island. Noteworthy is the play on the name Wa’ibua, evidently for the purposes of rhythm. Again, the word *kulu* inserted between the two first names (that of Tudava and of Ibu’a and prefixed to the three following names) could not be translated by my informants, nor do I see any etymological solution of the difficulty. After the personal names enumerated above follow eight names without a kinship term and sixteen with the kinship term *tubugu* (“my grandfathers”) preceding each. Then comes the name of the immediate predecessor of the present magician. My informant was unable to explain why some of the names were furnished with the kinship determination, whilst the others were not. But he was very positive that those two classes were not equivalent or interchangeable.

An offering is made daily to the *baloma* during the six days the fishing lasts. Small bits of cooked fish (about the size of walnuts) and bits of betel nut (now also tobacco) are put by the magician on the Bomlikuliku stone with the following words:--

“*Kamkuamsi kami ula’ula, nunumuaia:  
Ilikilaluva, Ilibualita;  
Kulisasisama,*”<sup>53</sup>

which mean--

“Eat your *ula’ula* (present for performing magic), O old women: Ilikilaluva (personal name), *Ilibualita* (personal name); open it.”

This shark spell or invocation is repeated daily with each offering. Another charm, called *guvagava*, is chanted daily for the six days over some leaves; it has the power of attracting the *kalala* fish. The spell begins with a list of ancestors, all of them styled “ancestor” or “grandfather.”

There is a spell performed once only, at the beginning of the fishing period, on the road leading from the village of Laba’i to the beach. It is chanted over a plant (*libu*) uprooted from the soil and put across the path. In this spell there is the following phrase:--

“*Iamuana iaegulo, Umnalibu  
Tai’ioko, Kubugu, Taigala, Likiba,*”<sup>54</sup>

which is also an enumeration of names, all of which are said to have belonged to the present magician’s ancestors.

Another formula in which names of ancestors occur is that recited while the magician sweeps his house at the beginning of the fishing period. This spell begins:--

“*Boki’u, Kalu Boki’u; Tamala, Kuri Tamala;  
Tageulo, Kuritageulo.*”

All these are names of ancestors of the magician’s subclan. Characteristic is the repetition of the names with a superadded prefix, “*Boki’u Kalu Boki’u,*” etc. Whether the man’s real name is represented by the first word and the second one is an embellished replica, or whether the first is only a curtailed second syllable of the real name, was not quite clear to my informants.

In the system of *kalala*-fishing magic just discussed the number of formulae in which ancestral names figure is five out of a total of seven, which makes a large proportion.

It would take up too much space to discuss in detail all the remaining magical formulae which have been recorded. A synoptic table (see next page) will be sufficient as a basis for a short discussion.<sup>55</sup>

As mentioned above, there are the two classes of magic, the “matrilineal” and “patrilineal,” the former bound up with a locality, the latter often handed over from one place to another. It is also necessary in Kiriwinian magic to distinguish between magic which forms a system, and that which naturally consists of unconnected formulae. The term “system” may be taken to denote that magic in which a number of formulae form an organic consecutive whole. This whole is usually connected with activities which are also part of a large organic total--activities all of which are directed towards the same end. Thus it is quite clear that garden magic forms a system. Every formula is connected with some activity, and all together form a consecutive series tending towards one end. The same applies to magic performed at different stages of a fishing period or to magical formulae said during the successive phases of a trading expedition. No single formula of such a system would be of any use. They must all be recited successively; they must all belong to the same system, and each must mark off some phase of the given activity. On the other hand, love magic consists of a number of spells (and they are innumerable in Kiriwina), every one of which forms an independent unit.

War magic (No. 2) again forms a system. All spells have to be recited, one after the other, in connection with consecutive magical activities. This system is connected with a certain locality, and references to this locality (and other places, too) are made, but no ancestor names are mentioned.

Weather magic (No. 1), chiefly rain magic and, less important, fine weather magic, is local and connected with a myth. The twelve spells all belong to one locality, and they are the most powerful rain magic in the island. They are the monopoly of the rulers of the village of Kasana’i (a small village, which forms practically one unit with the village of Omarakana), a monopoly which in times of drought brings an enormous income in gifts to the magician.

Again, in *kaitubutabu* magic (No. 3) the two formulae are part of a system; they must both be said at two different stages of a period, during which coconuts are tabooed, and the object of the whole series of observances and rites is to foster the growth of coconuts.

Thunder magic (No. 4) is connected with a tradition, in which there figures a mythical ancestor, and this is mentioned in the spell.

Canoe-making magic (No. 6) and *muasila* magic (No. 7), connected with a remarkable system of trading and exchange of valuables (called *kula*), form each an extremely important system of magic. No ancestral names are mentioned in the formulae recorded. Unfortunately, I have not recorded any complete system of *muasila*, and though one system of canoe magic has been recorded, it could not be properly translated. In both forms of magic there are references to localities, but none to ancestors.

The three spells of fishing magic (No. 11) belong to one system.

The other spells (Nos. 12-15) do not form systems. In the love spells there is naturally no mention of ancestral names. The only formulae where such names appear are those designed to bring a disease upon a man or to exorcise it. Some of these charms are associated with myths.

The data here given concerning the role of ancestors in magic must speak for themselves. It has not been possible to obtain much additional information from natives upon this subject. The references to the *baloma* form an intrinsic and essentially important part of the spells in which they occur. It would be no good asking the natives "What would happen if you omitted to invoke the *baloma*?" (a type of question which sometimes reveals the ideas of the native as to the sanction or reason for a certain practice), because a magical formula is an inviolable, integral item of tradition. It must be known thoroughly and repeated exactly as it was learnt. A spell or magical practice, if tampered with in any detail, would entirely lose its efficacy. Thus the enumeration of ancestral names cannot conceivably be omitted. Again, the direct question, "Why do you mention those names?" is answered in the time-honored manner, "*Tokunabogu bubunemasi*[our (excl.) old custom]." And in this matter I did not profit much from discussing matters with even the most intelligent natives.

That the names of the ancestors are more than a mere enumeration is clear from the fact that the *ula'ula* is offered in all the most important systems,

which have been thoroughly examined, and also from--the offerings and *sagali* described above. But even these presents and the partaking of the *sagali*, though undoubtedly they imply the presence of the *baloma*, do not express the idea of the spirits' actual participation in fostering the aim of the magic; of their being the agents through whom the magician works, to whom he appeals or whom he masters in the spell, and who perform subsequently the task imposed on them.

The natives at times express meekly the idea that a benevolent attitude of the spirit is very favorable to the fishing or gardening, and that if the spirits were angry they would do harm. This latter negative view was undoubtedly more pronounced. The *baloma* participate in some vague manner in such ceremonies as are performed for their benefit, and it is better to keep on the right side of them, but this view by no means implies the idea that they are the main agents, or even the subsidiary agents, of any activity.<sup>56</sup> The magical virtue lies in the spell itself.

The native attitude of mind towards the *baloma* in magic may become more clear when compared with that obtaining during the *milamala*. There the *baloma* are participants and onlookers, whose favor ought to be gained, whose wishes are naturally respected, who, further, are not slow in showing their disapproval, and who can make a nuisance of themselves if not properly treated, though their anger is not nearly so terrible as that of the normal type of supernatural beings, savage or civilized. In the *milamala* the *baloma* are not real agents in anything that goes on. Their role is purely passive. And out of this passivity they can be roused only by being put into bad humor, when they begin to show their existence in a negative manner, so to speak.

There is another side to the lists of ancestral names in magic, which must be remembered here. In all Kiriwinian magic a great role is played by myths, underlying a certain system of magic, and by tradition in general. How far this tradition is local and how far it thus becomes focussed on the family tradition of a certain subclan has been discussed above. The ancestral names mentioned in the several formulae form therefore one of the traditional elements so conspicuous in general. The mere sanctity of those names, being often a chain linking the performer with a mythical ancestor and originator, is in the eyes of the natives a quite sufficient *prima facie* reason for their recital. Indeed, I am certain that any native would regard them thus

in the first place, and that he would never see in them any appeal to the spirits, any invitation to the *baloma* to come and act; the spells uttered whilst giving the *ula'ula* being, perhaps, an exception. But even this exception does not loom first and foremost in his mind and does not color his general attitude towards magic.<sup>57</sup>

## Chapter VI

All these data bearing upon the relations between the *baloma* and the living, are, in a way, a digression from the story of the afterlife of the *baloma* in Tuma, and to this let us now return.

We left the *baloma* settled to his new life in the nether world, more or less comforted concerning those left behind; having, very likely, married again and formed new ties and connections. If the man died young, his *baloma* is also young, but with time he will age, and finally his life in Tuma will also come to an end. If the man was old at his death, his *baloma* is old, and after a period his life in Tuma will also cease.<sup>58</sup> In all cases the end of the life of the *baloma* in Tuma brings with it a very important crisis in the cycle of his existence. This is the reason why I have avoided the use of the term death in describing the end of the *baloma*.

I shall give a simple version of these events and discuss the details subsequently. When the *baloma* has grown old, his teeth fall out, his skin gets loose and wrinkled; he goes to the beach and bathes in the salt water; then he throws off his skin just as a snake would do, and becomes a young child again; really an embryo, a *waiwaia*--a term applied to children *in utero* and immediately after birth. A *baloma* woman sees this *waiwaia*; she takes it up, and puts it in a basket or a plaited and folded coconut leaf (*puatai*). She carries the small being to Kiriwina, and places it in the womb of some woman, inserting it *per vaginam*. Then that woman becomes pregnant (*nasusuma*).<sup>59</sup>

This is the story as I obtained it from the first informant who mentioned the subject to me. It implies two important psychological facts: the belief in reincarnation, and the ignorance of the physiological causes of pregnancy. I shall now discuss both these subjects in the light of the details obtained on further inquiry.

First of all, everybody in Kiriwina knows, and has not the slightest doubt about, the following propositions. The real cause of pregnancy is always a *baloma*, who is inserted into or enters the body of a woman, and without whose existence a woman could not become pregnant; all babies are made

or come into existence (*ibubulisi*) in Tuma. These tenets form the main stratum of what can be termed popular or universal belief. If you question any man, woman, or even an intelligent child, you will obtain from him or her this information. But any further details are much less universally known; one obtains a fact here and a detail there, and some of them contradict the others, and none of them seems to loom particularly clear in the native mind, though here and there it is obvious that some of these beliefs influence behavior, and are connected with some customs.

First, as to the nature of these “spirit children,” *waiwaia*.<sup>60</sup> It must be kept in mind that, as is usual in dogmatic assertions, the natives take very much for granted, do not trouble to give clear definitions or to imagine details very concretely and vividly. The most natural assumption--namely, that, of the “spirit child” being a small undeveloped child, an embryo--is the most frequently met with. The term *waiwaia*, which means embryo, child in the womb, and also infant immediately after birth, is also applied to the non-incarnated spirit children. Again, in a discussion on this subject, in which several men took part, some asserted that the man, after his transformation in Tuma, becomes just some sort of “blood,” *buia’i*. In what manner he could be subsequently transported in such liquid form was not certain. But the term *buia’i* seems to have a slightly wider connotation than fluid blood merely, and it may mean something like flesh in this case.

Another cycle of beliefs and ideas about reincarnation implies a pronounced association between the sea and the spirit children. Thus I was told by several informants that after his transformation into a *waiwaia*, the spirit goes into the sea. The first version obtained (quoted above) implied that the spirit, after having washed on the seabeach and become rejuvenated, is taken up immediately by a female *baloma* and carried to Kiriwina. Other accounts state that the spirit, after being transformed, goes into the sea and dwells there for a time. There are several corollaries to this version. Thus in all the coastal villages on the western shore (where this information was collected) mature unmarried girls observe certain precautions when bathing. The spirit children are supposed to be concealed in the *popewo*, the floating sea scum; also in some stones called *dukupi*. They come along on large tree trunks (*kaibilabala*), and they may be attached to dead leaves (*libulibu*) floating on the surface. Thus when at certain times the wind and tide blow plenty of this stuff towards the shore, the girls are afraid of bathing in the

sea, especially at high tide. Again, if a married woman wants to conceive, she may hit the *dukupi* stones in order to induce a concealed *waiwaia* to enter her womb. But this is not a ceremonial action.<sup>61</sup>

In the inland villages the association between conception and bathing is also known. To receive the *waiwaia* whilst in the water seems to be the most usual way of becoming pregnant. Often whilst bathing a woman will feel that something has touched her, or even hurt her. She will say, "A fish has bitten me." In fact, it was the *waiwaia* entering or being inserted into her.

Another rather important connection between the belief of the *waiwaia* dwelling in the sea and conception is expressed in the only important ceremony connected with pregnancy. About four to five months after the first symptoms of pregnancy the woman begins to observe certain taboos, and at the same time a large and long *dobe* (grass petticoat) is made (called *saikeulo*), which she will wear after the birth of the child. This is made by certain female relatives, who also perform magic over it, in order to benefit the child. On the same day the woman is taken to the sea, where relatives of the same class as those that made the *saikeulo* bathe her in the salt water. A *sagali* (ceremonial distribution of food) follows the proceedings.

The usual explanation of the *u'ula* (reason) for this ceremony is that it makes the "skin of the woman white," and that it makes the birth of the baby easier.<sup>62</sup> But in the coastal village of Kavataria a very definite statement was volunteered, to the effect that the *kokuwa* ceremony is connected with incarnation of the spirit children. The view taken by one of my informants was that during the first stage of pregnancy the *waiwaia* has not really entered the woman's body, but that there is merely a kind of preparation made for its reception. Then, during the ceremonial bathing, the spirit child enters the body of the woman. Whether this volunteered interpretation was only his opinion or whether it is a universal belief in the coastal villages, is not known to me, but I am inclined to believe that it does represent an aspect of the coastal natives' belief. But it must be emphatically stated that this interpretation was absolutely pooh-poohed by my informants of the inland villages, who also pointed out the contradiction that this ceremony is performed later on, during pregnancy, and that the *waiwaia* has been established long ago in the mother's womb. It is characteristic that any inconsistency is noted in a view which is not the

informant's own standpoint, while similar contradictions are most blandly overlooked in his own theories. The natives are, remarkably enough, not a whit more consistent on this point or intellectually honest than civilized people.

Besides the belief in reincarnation by action of the sea, the view that the *waiwaia* is inserted by a *baloma* is prevalent. These two ideas blend in the version that the *baloma* who inserts the *waiwaia* does it under water. The *baloma* often appears in a dream to the prospective mother, who will tell her husband: "I dreamed that my mother (or maternal aunt, or my elder sister or grandmother) inserted a child into me; my breasts are swelling." As a rule, it is a female *baloma* that appears in the dream and brings the *waiwaia*, though it may be a man, but the *baloma* must always be of the *veiola* (maternal kindred) of the woman. Many know who brought them to their mother. Thus To'uluwa, the chief of Omarakana, was given to his mother (Bomakata) by Buguabuaga, one of her *tabula* ("grandfathers"--in this case her mother's mother's brother).

Again, Bwoilagesi, the woman mentioned on page 162, who goes to Tuma, had her son, Tukulubakiki, given her by Tomnavabu, her *kadala* (mother's brother). Tukulubakiki's wife, Kuwo'igu, knows that her mother came to her, and gave her the baby, a girl now about twelve months old. Such knowledge is possible only in the cases when the *baloma* actually appears in a dream to the woman and tells her that he will insert a *waiwaia* into her. Of course, such annunciations are not absolutely in the program; indeed, the majority of people do not know who it is to whom they owe their existence.

There is one extremely important feature of the beliefs about reincarnation,, and however opinions differ about the other details, this feature is stated and affirmed by all the informants; namely, that the social division, the clan and subclan of the individual, is preserved through all his transformations. The *baloma*, in the nether world, belongs to the same subclan as the man before death; and the reincarnation moves also strictly within the boundaries of the subclan. The *waiwaia* is conveyed by a *baloma* belonging to the same subclan as the woman, as just stated, the carrier is even as a rule some near *veiola*. And it was considered absolutely impossible that any exception to this rule could happen, or that an individual could change his or her subclan in the cycle of reincarnation.<sup>63</sup>

So much about the belief in reincarnation. Though it is a universal and popular belief, *i.e.*, though it is known to everybody, it does not play an important role in social life. The last mentioned detail only about the persistence of kinship ties throughout the cycle is decidedly a belief illustrating the strength of the social division, the finality of belonging to a social group. Conversely, this belief must strengthen those ties.

## Chapter VII

It might seem quite safe to say that the belief in reincarnation, and the views about a spirit child being inserted into, or entering the womb of the mother, exclude any knowledge of the physiological process of impregnation. But any drawing of conclusions, or arguing by the law of logical contradiction, is absolutely futile in the realm of belief, whether savage or civilized. Two beliefs, quite contradictory to each other on logical grounds, may coexist, while a perfectly obvious inference from a very firm tenet may be simply ignored. Thus the only safe way for an ethnological inquirer is to investigate every detail of native belief, and to mistrust any conclusion obtained through inference only.

The broad assertion that the natives are entirely ignorant of the existence of physiological impregnation may be laid down quite safely and correctly. But though the subject is undoubtedly difficult, it is absolutely necessary to go into details in order to avoid serious mistakes.

One distinction must be made at the outset: the distinction between impregnation, that is the idea of the father having a share in building up the body of the child on the one hand, and the purely physical action of sexual intercourse on the other. Concerning the latter, the view held by the natives may be formulated thus: it is necessary for the woman to have gone through sexual life before she can bear a child.

I was forced to make the above distinction under the stress of the information I was gathering, in order to explain certain contradictions which cropped up in the course of inquiries. And it must be therefore accepted as a "natural" distinction, as one which corresponds to and expresses the native point of view. In fact, it was impossible to foresee how the natives would look upon these matters, and from which side they would approach the correct knowledge of facts. Nevertheless, the distinction once made, its theoretical importance is obvious. It is clear that only the knowledge of the first fact (that of the father's share in impregnation) would have any influence in shaping native ideas about kinship. As long as the father does nothing to form the body of the child (in the ideas of a people), there can be no question of consanguinity in the agnatic line. A mere

mechanical share in opening up the child's way into the womb, and out of it, is of no fundamental importance. The state of knowledge in Kiriwina is just at the point where there is a vague idea as to some *nexus* between sexual connection and pregnancy, whereas there is no idea whatever concerning the man's contribution towards the new life which is being formed in the mother's body.

I shall sum up the data which led me to make this statement. Beginning with ignorance of the father's share, to direct questions as to the cause (*u'ula*) of a child being created, or a woman becoming pregnant, I received the invariable answer, "*Baloma boge isaika* [the *baloma* gave it]." <sup>64</sup>

Of course, like all questions about the *u'ula*, this one has to be put with patience and discrimination, and it may at times remain unanswered. But in the many cases when I put this question bluntly and directly, and when it was comprehended, I received this answer, though I must add here at once that it was at times complicated in an extremely puzzling manner by some hints about copulation. As I was puzzled by that, and as I was very keen on getting this point clear, I discussed it whenever it could be approached as a side issue, I put it *in abstracto*, and I discussed it very often in concrete instances wherever any special case of pregnancy, past or present, was the subject of conversation.

Specially interesting and crucial were the cases where the pregnant woman was not married. <sup>65</sup>

When I asked who was the father of an illegitimate child, there was only one answer, that there was no father, as the girl was not married. If, then, I asked, in quite plain terms, who is the physiological father, the question was not understood, and when the subject was discussed still further, and the question put in this form: "There are plenty of unmarried girls, why did this one get with child, and the others not," the answer would be: "It is a *baloma* who gave her this child." And here again I was often puzzled by some remarks, pointing to the view that an unmarried girl is especially exposed to the danger of being approached by a *baloma*, if she is very unchaste. Yet the girls deem it much better precaution to avoid directly any exposure to the *baloma* by not bathing at high tide, etc., than indirectly to escape the danger by being too scrupulously chaste.

Illegitimate, or according to the Kiriwinian ideas, fatherless children, and their mothers are, however, regarded with scant favor. I remember several instances in which girls were pointed out to me as being undesirable, “no good,” because they had children out of wedlock. If you ask why such a case is bad, there is the stereotyped answer, “Because there is no father, there is no man to take it in his arms” (*Gala taitala Cikopo'i*). Thus Gomaia, my interpreter, had had an intrigue, such as is usual before marriage, with Ilamueria, a girl of a neighboring village. He had previously wanted to marry her. She had a child subsequently, and Gomaia married another woman. Asked why he did not marry his former sweetheart, he replied, “She had a child, this is very bad.” Yet he was sure that she had never been unfaithful to him during the period of their “betrothal” (Kiriwinian youths are much the prey of such illusions). He had not the slightest idea about there being any question of fatherhood of the child. If he had he would have acknowledged the child as his own, because he believed in his sexual exclusiveness with regard to the mother. But the fact that it came at an improper time was enough to influence him. This by no means implies that a girl who has been a mother, finds any serious difficulty in marrying afterwards. During my stay in Omarakana, two such girls were married, without any comment. There are no unmarried women in what might be termed the “marriage age” (25-45 years), and when I asked whether a girl might remain a spinster because she had a child, the answer was an emphatic negative. All that has been said above about the *baloma* bringing a child, and the concrete cases adduced, must also be borne in mind in this connection.

When, instead of merely asking about the *u'ula* of pregnancy, I directly advanced the embryological view of the matter, I found the natives absolutely ignorant of the process suggested. To the simile of a seed being planted in the soil and the plant growing out of the seed, they remained quite irresponsive. They were curious, indeed, and asked whether this was “the white man’s manner of doing it,” but they were quite certain that this was not the “custom” of Kiriwina. The spermatic fluid (*momona*) serves merely the purposes of pleasure and lubrication, and it is characteristic that the word *momona* denotes both the male and female discharge. Of any other properties of the same they have not the slightest idea. Thus, any view of paternal consanguinity or kinship, conceived as a bodily relation between father and child, is completely foreign to the native mind.

The above-mentioned case of a native not being able to understand the question, Who is the father of an unmarried woman's child? can be supplemented by two other instances concerning married women. When I asked my informants what would happen if a woman became pregnant in her husband's absence, they calmly agreed that such cases might occur, and that there would be no trouble at all. One of them (I have not noted his name, and I do not remember it), volunteered his own case as an instance in point. He went to Samarai<sup>66</sup> with his white master, and stayed there for a year, as he said, during which time his wife became pregnant and gave birth to a child. He returned from Samarai, found the child, and it was all right. On further questioning, I came to the conclusion that the man was absent for about 8-10 months, so there is no urgent necessity to doubt the virtue of his wife, but it is characteristic: that the husband had not the slightest tendency to count the moons of his absence, and that he stated the broad approximate period of one year without the slightest concern. And the native in question was an intelligent man; he had been a long time with white men, as a "signed-on" boy, and he seemed to be by no means of a timorous or henpecked disposition.

Again, when I once mentioned this matter in the presence of a few white men, resident in the Trobriands, Mr. Cameron, a planter of Kitava, told me a case which had struck him at that time, though he had not the slightest idea of the native ignorance of impregnation. A native of Kitava had been away for two years, signed on to a white man on Woodlark Island. After he came back, he found a baby born a couple of months before his return. He cheerfully accepted it as his own, and did not understand any taunts or allusions made by some white men, who asked him whether he had not better repudiate, or, at least, thoroughly thrash his wife. He found it not in the slightest degree suspicious or suggestive that his wife became pregnant about a year after his departure. These are two striking examples which I find in my notes; but I had before me a considerable amount of corroborating evidence derived from less telling facts, and from imaginary instances, discussed with independent informants.

Finally, the ideas concerning the relationship between father and child, as it is conceived by the natives, bear upon this subject. They have only one generic term for kinship, and this is *veiola*. Now this term means kinship in the maternal line, and does not embrace the relationship between a father

and his children, nor between any agnatically related people. Very often, when inquiring into customs and their social basis, I received the answer, "Oh, the father does not do it; because he is not *veiola* to the children." The idea underlying maternal relationship is the community of body. In all social matters (legal, economic, ceremonial) the relationship between brothers is the very closest, "because they are built up of the same body, the same woman gave birth to them." Thus the line of demarcation between paternal and agnatic relationship (which as a generic conception and term does not exist for the natives), and maternal kinship, *veiola*, corresponds to the division between those people who are of the same body (strictly analogous, no doubt, to our consanguinity), and those who are not of the same body.

But in spite of this, as far as all the minute details of daily life are concerned, and further, in various rights and privileges, the father stands in an extremely close relation to the child. Thus the children enjoy membership of the father's village community, though their real village is that of their mother. Again, in questions of inheritance they have various privileges granted them by the father. The most important of these is connected with the inheritance of that most valuable of all goods, magic. Thus very often, especially in such cases as those mentioned above (in Section v), when the father is able to do it legally, he leaves his magic to his son instead of to his brother or nephew. It is remarkable that the father is, sentimentally, always inclined to leave as much as possible to his children, and he does so whenever he can.

Now, such inheritance of magic from father to son shows one peculiarity: it is given, and not sold. Magic has to be handed over during the man's lifetime, of course, as both the formulae and the practices have to be taught. When the man gives it to any of his *veiola*, to his younger brother, or his maternal nephew, he receives a payment, called in this case *pokala*, and a very considerable payment it has to be. When magic is taught to the son, no payment whatever is levied. This, like many features of native custom, is extremely puzzling, because the maternal relatives have the right to the magic, and the son has really no right whatever, and he may be, under certain circumstances, deprived of the privilege by those entitled to it; yet he receives it free of charge, and they have to pay for it heavily.

Forbearing other explanations, I simply state the native answer to this puzzling question (my informants saw the contradiction quite clearly, and perfectly well understood why I was puzzled). They said: "The man gives it to the children of his wife. He cohabits with her, he possesses her, she does for him all that a wife must do for a man. Whatever he does for a child is a payment (*mapula*) for what he has received from her." And this answer is by no means the opinion of one informant only. It sums up the stereotyped answers given to me whenever I discussed this matter. Thus, in the native mind, the intimate relationship between husband and wife, and not any idea, however slight or remote, of physical fatherhood, is the reason for all that the father does for his children. It must be clearly understood that social and psychological fatherhood (the sum of all the ties, emotional, legal, economic) is the result of the man's obligations towards his wife, and physiological fatherhood does not exist in the mind of the natives.

Let us now proceed to the discussion of the second point in the previously made distinction: the vague ideas about some connection existing between sexual intercourse and pregnancy. I mentioned above, that in the answers given about the cause of pregnancy, I was puzzled by the assertion that cohabitation is also the cause of the advent of children, an assertion which ran parallel, so to speak, with a fundamental view that the *baloma*, or reincarnating *waiwaia*, are the real cause.

The said assertion was very much less conspicuous, in fact it was so much overshadowed by the main view, that at first I noticed only the latter, and was persuaded that I had obtained this information quite smoothly and that there were no more difficulties to be cleared up. And when I was quite satisfied that I had finally settled the matter, and inquired into it, prompted merely by the instinct of pure pedantry, I received a severe shock, in finding that there was a flaw in the very foundations of my construction, which latter seemed threatened with complete collapse. I remember being told about a very fickle young lady of Kasanai, known by the name of Iakalusa, "*Sene nakakaita, Coge ivalulu guadi* [very wanton, she had a child]." On inquiring further into this very perplexing sentence, I found that, undoubtedly, a girl of very loose conduct would be more likely to have a child, and that if a girl could be found who had never had intercourse, she certainly could have no child. The knowledge seemed to be as complete here as the ignorance was previously, and the very same men seemed to

take, in turn, two contradictory points of view. I discussed the matter as thoroughly as I could, and it seemed to me as if the natives would say yes or no, according to whether the subject was approached from the side of knowledge or of ignorance. They were puzzled at my persistence, and (I admit with shame) impatience, and I was unable to explain to them my difficulty, though I pointed, as it seemed to me, straight to the contradiction.

I tried to make them compare animals with men, asking whether there is also anything like a *baloma* bringing the small pigs to their mother. I was told of the pigs: “*Ikaitasi ikaitasi makateki bivalulu minana* [they copulate, copulate, presently the female will give birth].” Thus here copulation appeared to be the *u’ula* of pregnancy. For a time, the contradictions and obscurities in the information appeared to me quite hopeless; I was in one of the desperate blind alleys, so often encountered in ethnographical field work, when one comes to suspect that the natives are untrustworthy, that they tell tales on purpose; or that one has to do with two sets of information, one of them distorted by white man’s influence. As a matter of fact, in this case as in most cases, nothing of the sort was the cause of my difficulties.

The final shock my confidently constructed views about “native ignorance” received brought also order into the chaos. In my mythological cyclus about the hero Tudava, the story opens with his birth. His mother, Mitigis or Bulutukua, was the only woman of all the inhabitants of the village, Laba’i, who remained on the island. All the others fled in fear of an ogre, Dokonikan, who used to eat men, and had in fact almost finished off the whole population of Kiriwina. Bulutukua, left behind by her brothers, lived alone in a grotto, in the *raiboag* of Laba’i. One day she fell asleep in the grotto, and the water dripping from the stalactites fell on her vulva and opened the passage. After she became pregnant, and gave birth in succession to a fish, called *bologu*; to a pig; to a shrub, called *kuebila* (having aromatic leaves and much appreciated by the natives as ornament); to another fish (the *kalala*, of which mention has been made above in Section v); to the cockatoo (*katakela*); the parrot (*karaga*); to the bird *sikuaikua*, to a dog (*ka’ukua*); and finally to Tudava. In this story the motive of “artificial impregnation” was most surprising. How was it possible to find, what appeared to be survival of a previous ignorance, among people with whom this ignorance seemed to be still complete? And again, how was it that the woman in the myth had several children in

succession, but had been only once under the dripping stalactite? All these were puzzling questions for me, and I put them to the natives on the chance of getting some light, but with little hope of success.

I was, however, rewarded and received a clear and final solution of my difficulties, a solution which has withstood a series of most pedantic subsequent tests. I tried my best informants one after the other, and this is their view of the matter: a woman who is a virgin (*nakapatu*; *na*, female prefix; *kapatu*, closed, shut up) cannot give birth to a child, nor can she conceive, because nothing can enter or come out of her vulva. She must be opened up, or pierced through (*ibasi*, this word is used to describe the action of the water drops on Bulutukua). Thus the vagina of a woman who has much intercourse will be more open and easier for a spirit child to enter. One that keeps fairly virtuous will have much poorer chances of becoming pregnant. But copulation is quite unnecessary except for its mechanical action. In default, any other means of widening the passage may be used, and if the *baloma* chooses to insert the *waiwaia*, or if one chooses to enter, the woman will become pregnant.

That this is so is proved, beyond any doubt, to my informants by the case of Tilapo'i, a woman living in Kabululo, a village close to Omarakana. She is half blind, almost an idiot, and so plain that no one would think of approaching her sexually. In fact, she is the favorite theme of a certain class of jokes all turning on the assumption of someone having had connection with her: jokes which are always relished and repeated, so that "*Kuoi Tilapo'i!* [Have connection with Tilapo'i]" has become a form of jocular abuse. In spite, however, of the fact that it is supposed that she never had connection, she once gave birth to a child, which died subsequently. A similar example, though even more striking, is afforded by another woman in Sinaketa, who, I was told, is so plain that any man would commit suicide, if he were even seriously suspected of having had anything to do with her sexually. Yet this woman has had no less than five children. In both these cases, it is explained that pregnancy was made possible by dilation of the vulva, due to digital manipulation. My informants dwelt on this subject with much relish, graphically and diagrammatically explaining to me all the details of the process. Their account did not leave the slightest doubt about their sincere belief in the possibility of women becoming pregnant without intercourse.

Thus I was taught to make the essential distinction between the idea of the mechanical action of intercourse, which covers all the natives know about the natural conditions of pregnancy, and the knowledge of impregnation, of the man's share in creating the new life in the mother's womb, a fact of which the natives have not even the slightest glimpse. This distinction accounts for the puzzle in the Bulutukua myth, where the woman had to be opened up, but this once done, she could bear the whole set of children successively, without any new physiological incident being necessary. It accounts also for the "knowledge" about animal impregnation. In the case of the animals--and the domestic animals such as the pig and the dog would loom most conspicuously in the native's picture of the universe--the natives know nothing about afterlife or spiritual existence. If asked directly, a man might answer "yes" or "no" with regard to the existence of animal *baloma*, but this would be his extemporized opinion and not folklore. Thus, in the case of animals, the whole problem about reincarnation and about the formation of new life is simply ignored. The physiological aspect, on the other hand, is well-known. Thus when you ask about the animals, you get the answer that it is necessary that the physiological conditions should exist, but the other side, the real problem of how life is created in the womb, is simply ignored. And it is no good to fret over it, because the native never troubles about consistently carrying over his beliefs into domains where they do not naturally belong. He does not trouble about questions referring to animal afterlife, and he has no views about their coming into the world. Those problems are settled with reference to man, but that is their proper domain, and beyond that they ought not to be extended. Even in non-savage theologies such questions (e.g., that of animal soul and animal immortality) are very puzzling, and answers to them often are not much more consistent than those of a Papuan.

In conclusion, it may be repeated that such knowledge as the natives have in this matter has no sociological importance, does not influence the native ideas of kinship, nor their behavior in matters of sex.

It seems necessary to make a somewhat more general digression on this subject after having dealt with Kiriwinian material. As is well known, the ignorance of physical fatherhood was first discovered by Sir Baldwin Spencer and Mr. F. Gillen among the Arunta tribe of Central Australia. Subsequently the same state of things was found among a large number of

other Australian tribes, by the original discoverers and by some other investigators, the area covered being practically the whole central and northeastern portion of the Australian continent, as far as it was still open to ethnological investigation.

The main controversial questions raised as to this discovery were: Firstly, is this ignorance a specific feature of the Australian culture, or even the Arunta culture, or is it a universal fact existing among many or all of the lower race? Secondly: is this state of ignorance primitive, is it simply the absence of knowledge, due to insufficient observation and inference, or is it a secondary phenomenon, due to an obscuring of the primitive knowledge by superimposed animistic ideas? <sup>67</sup>

I would not join in this controversy at all, if it were not that I desire to state some additional facts, partly derived from work done outside Kiriwina, partly consisting of some general observations made in the field and bearing directly upon these problems. Therefore, I hope I shall be excused for this digression, on the plea that it is not so much speculation upon controversial points, as additional material bearing upon these questions.

First of all I want to state some non-Kiriwinian observations which seem to show that a state of ignorance similar to that found in the Trobriands obtains among a wide range of the Papuo-Melanesians of New Guinea. Prof. Seligman writes about the Koita: "It is stated that a single sexual act is not sufficient to produce pregnancy, to ensure which cohabitation should be continued steadily for a month."<sup>68</sup> I have found a similar state of things among the Mailu on the south coast of New Guinea: ". . . The connection between cohabitation and conception seems to be known among the Mailu, but to direct inquiries as to the cause of pregnancy I did not obtain emphatic and positive answers. The natives--of this I am positive--do not clearly grasp the idea of the connection between the two facts. . . . Like Prof. Seligman among the Koita, I found the firm belief that it is only continuous intercourse for a month or more that leads to pregnancy, and that one single act is not sufficient to produce the result."<sup>69</sup>

Neither of these statements is very emphatic, and in fact they do not seem to imply a complete ignorance of physical fatherhood. Yet as neither of the investigators seems to have gone into detail, one may *a priori* suspect that the statements allow of some further qualification. As a matter of fact, I was

able to inquire into the matter on my second visit to New Guinea, and I know that my statement about the Mailu is incomplete. At the time of my visit to Mailu I was puzzled in the same manner as in Kiriwina. I had with me in Kiriwina two boys from a district adjacent to that of the Mailu, who gave me exactly the same information as that gathered in Kiriwina, *i.e.*, they affirmed the necessity of sexual intercourse before pregnancy, but were absolutely ignorant as to impregnation. Again looking through my notes taken in the summer of 1914 at Mailu and through some notes taken among the Sinaugholo, a tribe closely allied to the Koita, I see that the native statements really imply only the knowledge of the fact that a woman must have experienced some sexual life before conceiving. And that to all direct questions, whether there is anything in intercourse that induces pregnancy, I received negative answers. Unfortunately, in neither place did I directly inquire whether there are any beliefs about the "supernatural cause of pregnancy." The boys from Gadogado'a (from the district near Mailu) told me there were no such beliefs among them. Their statement cannot, however, be considered final, as they have spent much of their time in white man's service and might not have known much of the traditional knowledge of their tribe. There can be no doubt, however, that both Prof. Seligman's statement and my information obtained in Mailu would, if developed with the help of native informants, yield similar results to the Kiriwinian data with regard to the ignorance of impregnation.

All these natives, the Koita, the Southern Massim of Gadogado'a, and the Northern Massim of Kiriwina<sup>70</sup> are representative of the Papuo-Melanesian stock of natives, the Kiriwinians being a very advanced branch of that stock; in fact, as far as our present knowledge goes, the most advanced.<sup>71</sup>

The existence of complete ignorance, of the type discovered by Spencer and Gillen, among the most advanced Papuo-Melanesians, and its probable existence among all the Papuo-Melanesians, seems to indicate a much wider range of distribution and a much greater permanence through the higher stages of development than could be assumed hitherto. But it must be emphatically repeated that unless the inquiry be detailed, and especially unless the above-made distinction be observed, there is always the possibility of failure and of erroneous statement.<sup>72</sup>

Passing to the second controversial point named above, whether the ignorance in question may not be the secondary result of some obscuring,

superimposed, animistic ideas. The general character of the Kiriwinian mental attitude certainly would answer this question with an emphatic negation. The above-detailed account, if read from this point of view, is perhaps convincing enough, but some further remarks may add additional weight to the statement. The native mind is absolutely blank on this subject, and it is not as if one found very pronounced ideas about reincarnation running parallel with some obscure knowledge. The ideas and beliefs about reincarnation, though undoubtedly there, are of no eminent social importance, and are not at all to the fore in the native's store of dogmatic ideas. Moreover, the physiological process and the part played by the *baloma* could perfectly well be known to exist side by side, exactly as there exist side by side ideas about the necessity of the mechanical dilation of the vulva and the action of the spirit, or as in innumerable matters the native considers the natural and rational (in our sense) sequence of events and knows its causal nexus, though these run parallel with a magical sequence and nexus.

The problem of the ignorance of impregnation is not concerned with the psychology of belief, but with the psychology of knowledge based on observation. Only a belief can be obscured or overshadowed by another belief. Once a physical observation is made, once the natives have got hold of a causal nexus, no belief or "superstition" can obscure this knowledge, though it may run parallel with it. The garden magic does not by any means "obscure" the natives' causal knowledge of the nexus between proper clearing of the scrub, manuring the ground with ashes, watering, etc. The two sets of facts run parallel in his mind, and the one in no way "obscures" the other.

In the ignorance of physiological fatherhood we do not deal with a positive state of mind, with a dogma leading to practices, rites, or customs, but merely with a negative item, the absence of knowledge. Such an absence could not possibly be brought about by a positive belief. Any widespread gap in knowledge, any universal absence of information, any general imperfection in observation found among native races, must, pending contrary evidence, be considered as primitive. We might as well argue that humanity once had a primitive knowledge of wax vestas, but that this was obscured subsequently by the more complex and picturesque use of the fire drill and other friction methods.

Again, to explain this ignorance by assuming that the natives “make believe that they do not know it” seems rather a brilliant *jeu de mots* than a serious attempt to get at the bottom of things. And yet things are as simple as they can be for anyone who for a moment stops to realize the absolutely unsurmountable difficulties which a native “natural philosopher” would have to overcome if he had to arrive at anything approaching our embryological knowledge.

If one realizes how complex this knowledge is, and how lately we arrived at it, it would seem preposterous to suppose even the slightest glimmer of it among the natives. All this might appear plausible, even to someone who approached the subject from a merely speculative standpoint, arguing from what probably must be the natives’ point of view in this matter. And here we have authors who, after this state of mind has been found positively among natives, receive the news with scepticism, and try to account for the native state of mind in the most devious manner. The way from the absolute ignorance to the exact knowledge is far, and must be passed gradually.

There is no doubt that the Kiriwinians have made a step on the way by acknowledging the necessity of sexual intercourse as a preliminary condition of pregnancy, as, indeed, this recognition, though perhaps in a less clear form, has been made by the Arunta in Central Australia, among whom Spencer and Gillen have found the idea that sexual intercourse prepares the woman for the reception of a spirit child.

Another consideration which has been put forward by some authors previously, seems to me to be very much to the point, and, what is more, has seemed so to several of my native informants. I mean the fact that in the majority of savage races sexual life begins very early and is carried on very intensely, so that sexual intercourse is for them not an outstanding rare fact, which would strike them from its singularity, and therefore compel them to look for consequences; on the contrary, sexual life is for them a normal state. In Kiriwina the unmarried girls from six (*sic*) upwards are generally supposed to practice licence well-nigh every night. It is immaterial whether this is so or not; it matters only that for the native of Kiriwina sexual intercourse is almost as common an occurrence as eating, drinking, or sleeping.

What is there to guide the native observation, to draw his attention to the nexus between a perfectly normal, everyday occurrence, on the one hand,

and an exceptional, singular event on the other? How is he to realize that the very act which a woman performs almost as often as eating or drinking, will, once, twice, or three times in her life, cause her to become pregnant?

It is certain that only two outstanding, singular events easily reveal a nexus. To find out that something extraordinary is the result of an entirely ordinary event requires, besides a scientific mind and method, the power of investigating, of isolating facts, of excluding the non-essential, and experimenting with circumstances.

Given such conditions, the natives would probably have discovered the causal connection, because the native mind works according to the same rules as ours: his powers of observation are keen, whenever he is interested, and the concept of cause and effect is not unknown to him.<sup>73</sup> But although cause and effect in the developed form of these conceptions are of the category of the regular, lawful, and ordinary, in their psychological origin they are undoubtedly of the category of the lawless, irregular, extraordinary, and singular.

Some of my native informants very clearly pointed out to me the lack of consistency in my argument when I bluntly stated that it is not the *baloma* that produce pregnancy, but that it is caused by something like a seed being thrown on soil. I remember that I was almost directly challenged to account for the discrepancy why the cause which was repeated daily, or almost so, produced effects so rarely.

To sum up, there seems to be no doubt that if we are at all justified in speaking of certain "primitive" conditions of mind, the ignorance in question is such a primitive condition, and its prevalence among the Melanesians of New Guinea seems to indicate that it is a condition lasting right into much higher stages of development than it would have seemed possible to assume on the basis of Australian material only. Some knowledge of the mental mechanism of the native, and of the circumstances under which he has to carry out his observations on this subject, ought to persuade anyone that no other state of things could exist, and that no far-fetched explanations or theories are necessary to account for it.

## Chapter VIII

Besides the concrete data about native beliefs which have been given above, there is another set of facts of no less importance which must be discussed before the present subject can be considered exhausted. I mean the general sociological laws that have to be grasped and framed in the field, in order that the material, which observation brings in a chaotic and unintelligible form, may be understood by the observer and recorded in a scientifically useful form. I have found the lack of philosophical clearness on matters connected with ethnographical and sociological field work a great setback in my first attempts to observe and describe native institutions, and I consider it quite essential to state the difficulties I encountered in my work and the manner in which I tried to cope with them.

Thus one of the main rules with which I set out on my field work was "to gather pure facts, to keep the facts and interpretations apart." This rule is quite correct if under "interpretations" be understood all hypothetical speculations about origins, etc., and all hasty generalizations. But there is a form of interpretation of facts without which no scientific observation can possibly be carried on--I mean the interpretation which sees in the endless diversity of facts general laws; which severs the essential from the irrelevant; which classifies and orders phenomena, and puts them into mutual relationship. Without such interpretation all scientific work in the field must degenerate into pure "collectioneering" of data; at its best it may give odds and ends without inner connection. But it never will be able to lay bare the sociological structure of a people, or to give an organic account of their beliefs, or to render the picture of the world from the native perspective. The often fragmentary, incoherent, non-organic nature of much of the present ethnological material is due to the cult of "pure fact." As if it were possible to wrap up in a blanket a certain number of "facts as you find them" and bring them all back for the home student to generalize upon and to build up his theoretical constructions upon.

But the fact is that such a proceeding is quite impossible. Even if you spoil a district of all its material objects, and bring them home without much bothering about a careful description of their use--a method which has been

carried out systematically in certain non-British possessions in the Pacific--such a museum collection will have little scientific value, simply because the ordering, the classifying, and interpreting should be done in the field with reference to the organic whole of native social life. What is impossible with the most "crystallized" phenomena--the material objects--is still less possible with those which float on the surface of native behavior, or lie in the depths of the native mind, or are only partially consolidated into native institutions and ceremonies. In the field one has to face a chaos of facts, some of which are so small that they seem insignificant; others loom so large that they are hard to encompass with one synthetic glance. But in this crude form they are not scientific facts at all; they are absolutely elusive, and can be fixed only by interpretation, by seeing them *sub specie aeternitatis*, by grasping what is essential in them and fixing this. *Only laws and generalizations are scientific facts*, and field work consists only and exclusively in the interpretation of the chaotic social reality, in subordinating it to general rules.

All statistics, every plan of a village or of grounds, every genealogy, every description of a ceremony--in fact, every ethnological document--is in itself a generalization, at times quite a difficult one, because in every case one has first to discover and formulate the rules: what to count and how to count; every plan must be drawn to express certain economic or sociological arrangements; every genealogy has to express kinship connections between people, and it is only valuable if all the relevant data about the people are collected as well. In every ceremony the accidental has to be sifted from the essential, the minor elements from the essential features, those that vary with every performance from those that are customary. All this may appear almost a truism, yet the unfortunate stress on keeping to "pure fact only" is constantly being used as the guiding principle in all instructions for field work.

Returning from this digression to the main subject, I want to adduce some general sociological rules which I had to formulate in order to deal with certain difficulties and discrepancies in the information, and in order to do justice to the complexity of facts, at the same time simplifying them in order to present a clear outline. What will be said in this place applies to Kiriwina, but not necessarily to any other or wider area. And, again, only

those sociological generalizations will be discussed here which bear directly on belief, or even, more specially, on the beliefs described in this article.

The most important general principle concerning belief that I have been forced to respect and consider in the course of my field studies is this: Any belief or any item of folklore is not a simple piece of information to be picked up from any haphazard source, from any chance informant, and to be laid down as an axiom to be drawn with one single contour. On the contrary, every belief is reflected in all the minds of a given society, and it is expressed in many social phenomena. It is therefore complex, and, in fact, it is present in the social reality in overwhelming variety, very often puzzling, chaotic and elusive. In other words, there is a “social dimension” to a belief, and this must be carefully studied; the belief must be studied as it moves along this social dimension; it must be examined in the light of diverse types of minds and of the diverse institutions in which it can be traced. To ignore this social dimension, to pass over the variety in which any given item of folklore is found in a social group, is unscientific. It is equally unscientific to acknowledge this difficulty and to solve it by simply assuming the variations as non-essential, because that only is non-essential in science which cannot be formulated into general laws.

The manner in which ethnological information about beliefs is usually formulated is somewhat like this: “The natives believe in the existence of seven souls”; or else, “In this tribe we find that the evil spirit kills people in the bush,” etc. Yet such statements are undoubtedly false, or at the best incomplete, because no “natives” (in the plural) have ever any belief or any idea; each one has his own ideas and his own beliefs. Moreover, the beliefs and ideas exist not only in the conscious and formulated opinions of the members of a community. They are embodied in social institutions and expressed by native behavior, from both of which they must be, so to speak, extricated. At any rate, it appears clearly that the matter is not as simple as the ethnological usage of “one-dimensional” accounts would imply. The ethnographer gets hold of an informant, and from conversation with him is able to formulate the native’s opinion, say, about afterlife. This opinion is written down, the grammatical subject of the sentence put into the plural, and we learn about the “natives believing so-and-so.” This is what I call a “one-dimensional” account, as it ignores the social dimensions, along which

belief must be studied, just as it ignores its essential complexity and multiplicity.<sup>74</sup>

Of course, very often, though by no means always, this multiplicity may be ignored, and the variations in detail overlooked as unessential, in view of the uniformity which obtains in all essential and main features of a belief. But the matter must be studied, and methodical rules applied to the simplification of the variety, and unification of the multiplicity of facts. Any haphazard proceeding must, obviously, be discarded as unscientific. Yet, as far as I am aware, no attempt has been made by any inquirer in the field, even the most illustrious, to discover and lay down such methodical rules. The following remarks ought, therefore, to be treated indulgently, being only an unaided attempt to suggest certain important connections. They deserve indulgence also on account of being the result of actual experiences and difficulties encountered in the field. If, in the account of beliefs given above, there is a certain lack of uniformity and smoothness; if, further, the observer's own difficulties are somewhat brought into relief, this must be excused on the same account. I attempted to show as plainly as possible the "social dimension" in the domain of belief, not to conceal the difficulties which result from the variety of native opinions, and also from the necessity of constantly holding in view both social institutions and native interpretation, as well as the behavior of the natives; of checking social fact by psychological data, and vice versa.

Now let us proceed to lay down the rules which allow us to reduce the multiplicity of the manifestations of a belief to simpler data. Let us start with the statement made several times, namely, that the crude data present almost a chaos of diversity and multiplicity. Examples may be easily found among the material presented in this article, and they will allow the argument to be clear and concrete. Thus, let us take the beliefs corresponding to the question, "How do the natives imagine the return of the *baloma*?" I have actually put this question, adequately formulated, to a series of informants. The answers were, in the first place, always fragmentary--a native will just tell you one aspect, very often an irrelevant one, according to what your question has suggested in his mind at the moment. Nor would an untrained "civilized man" do anything else. Besides being fragmentary, which could be partially remedied by repeating the question and using each informant to fill up the gaps, the answers were at

times hopelessly inadequate and contradictory. Inadequate because some informants were unable even to grasp the question, at any rate unable to describe such a complex fact as their own mental attitude, though others were astonishingly clever, and almost able to understand what the ethnological inquirer was driving at.

What was I to do? To concoct a kind of “average” opinion? The degree of arbitrariness seemed much too great. Moreover, it was obvious that the opinions were only a small part of the information available. All the people, even those who were unable to state what they thought about the returning *baloma* and how they felt towards them, none the less behaved in a certain manner towards those *baloma*, conforming to certain customary rules and obeying certain canons of emotional reaction.

Thus, in searching for an answer to the above question -or to any other question of belief and behavior--I was moved to look for the answer in the corresponding customs. The distinction between private opinion, information gathered by asking the informants, and public ceremonial practices, had to be laid down as a first principle. As the reader will remember, a number of dogmatic tenets have been enumerated above, which I have found expressed in customary traditional acts. Thus the general belief that the *baloma* return is embodied in the broad fact of the *milamala* itself. Again, the display of valuables (*ioiova*), the erection of special platforms (*tokaikaya*), the display of food on the *lalogua*--all this expresses the presence of the *baloma* in the village, the efforts to please them, to do something for them. The food presents (*silakutuva* and *bubualu'a*) show an even more intimate participation in village life by the *baloma*.

The dreams, which often preceded such offerings, are also customary features, just because they are associated with, and sanctioned by, such customary offerings. They make the communion between the *baloma* and the living, in a way, personal, and certainly more distinct. The reader will be able easily to multiply these examples (connection between belief in Topileta and his fee, and the valuables laid round the body before burial; beliefs embodied in the *ioba*, etc.)

Besides the beliefs expressed in the traditional ceremonies, there are those embodied in magical formulae.

These formulae are as definitely fixed by tradition as the customs. If anything, they are more precise as documents than the customs can be, since they do not allow of any variations. Only small fragments of magical formulae have been given above, yet even these serve to exemplify the fact that beliefs can be unmistakably expressed by spells, in which they are embedded. Any formula accompanied by a rite expresses certain concrete, detailed, particular beliefs. Thus, when, in one of the above-named garden rites, the magician puts a tuber on the stone in order to promote the growth of the crops, and the formula which he recites comments on this action and describes it, there are certain beliefs unmistakably documented by it: the belief in the sacredness of the particular grove (here our information is corroborated by the taboos surrounding that grove); the belief in the connection between the tuber put on the sacred stone and the tubers in the garden, etc. There are other, more general, beliefs embodied and expressed in some of the above-mentioned formulae. Thus the general belief in the assistance of ancestral *baloma* is standardized, so to speak, by the spells by which those *baloma* are invoked, and the accompanying rites in which they receive their *ula'ula*.

As mentioned above, some magical spells are based upon certain myths, details of which appear in the formulae. Such myths, and myth in general, must be put side by side with the magical spells as traditional, fixed expressions of belief. As an empirical definition of a myth (again only claiming a validity for the Kiriwinian material) the following criteria can be accepted: it is a tradition explaining essential sociological features (*e.g.*, myths about the division in clans and subclans), referring to persons who performed notable feats, and whose past existence is implicitly believed in. Traces of such existence in various memorial spots are still shown: a dog petrified, some food transformed into stone, a grotto with bones, where the ogre Dokonikan lived, etc. The reality of mythical persons and mythical occurrences stands in vivid contrast to the unreality of ordinary fables, many of which are told.

All beliefs embodied in mythological tradition can be assumed to be almost as invariable as those embodied in magical formulae. In fact, the mythical tradition is extremely well fixed, and accounts given by natives of different places in Kiriwina--natives of Luba and natives of Sinaketa--agreed in all details. Moreover, I obtained an account of certain myths of the Tudava

cycle during a short visit to Woodlark Island, which lies some sixty miles to the east of the Trobriands but belongs to the same ethnological group, called by Prof. Seligman the Northern Massim, which agrees in all essential features with the facts obtained in Kiriwina.

Summing up all these considerations, we may say that all beliefs as implied in native customs and tradition must be treated as invariably fixed items. They are believed and acted upon by all, and, as customary actions do not allow of any individual varieties, this class of belief is standardized by its social embodiments. They may be called the dogmas of native belief, or the social ideas of a community, as opposed to individual ideas.<sup>75</sup> One important addition has to be made, however, to complete this statement: only such items of belief can be considered as “social ideas” as are not only embodied in native institutions, but are also explicitly formulated by the natives and acknowledged to exist therein. Thus all the natives will acknowledge the presence of the *baloma* during the *milamala*, their expulsion at the *ioba*, etc. And all the competent ones will give unanimous answers in the interpretation of magical rites, etc. On the other hand, the observer can never safely venture to read his own interpretations into the native customs. Thus, for instance, in the above-mentioned fact, that mourning is always finally discarded immediately after an *ioba*, there seems to be unmistakably expressed the belief that the person waits till the *baloma* of the deceased has gone before giving up the mourning. But the natives do not endorse this interpretation, and therefore it cannot possibly be considered as a social idea, as a standardized belief. The question whether this belief was not originally the reason for the practice belongs to quite a different class of problem, but it is obvious that the two cases must not be confounded; one, where a belief is formulated in a society universally, besides being embodied in institutions; the other, where the belief is ignored, though apparently expressed in an institution.

This allows us to formulate a definition of a “social idea”: It is a tenet of belief embodied in institutions or traditional texts, and formulated by the unanimous opinion of all competent informants. The word “competent” simply excludes small children and hopelessly unintelligent individuals. Such social ideas can be treated as the “invariants” of native belief.

Besides the social institutions and traditions, both of which embody and standardize belief, there is another important factor, which stands in a

somewhat similar relation to belief--I mean the general behavior of the natives towards the object of a belief. Such behavior has been described above as illuminating important aspects of native belief about the *baloma*, the *kosi*, the *mulukuausi*, and as expressing the natives' emotional attitude towards them. This aspect of the question is beyond doubt of extreme importance. To describe the ideas of the natives concerning a ghost or spirit is absolutely insufficient. Such objects of belief arouse pronounced emotional reactions, and one ought to look, in the first place, for the objective facts corresponding to these emotional reactions. The above data concerning this aspect of native belief, insufficient as they are, show clearly that with more experience in method a systematic inquiry could be carried out into the emotional side of belief on lines as strict as ethnological observations admit.

The behavior can be described by putting the natives to certain tests concerning their fear of ghosts, or their respect for spirits, etc. I have to admit that, though realizing the importance of the subject, I did not quite see, whilst in the field, the proper manner to deal with this difficult and new subject. But I now clearly see that, had I been better on the look out for relevant data in this line, I should have been able to present much more convincing and objectively valid data. Thus in the problem of fear my tests were not sufficiently elaborate, and even as they were made, not sufficiently minutely recorded in my notes. Again, though I will remember the tone in which I heard them speaking--rather irreverently--about the *baloma*, I also remember that a few characteristic expressions struck me at the time, which I ought to have noted at once, and did not. Again, watching the behavior of the performers and spectators in a magical ceremony, certain small facts characterizing the general "tone" of the natives' attitude are to be found. Such facts I have observed partly, though, I think, insufficiently (they were only just mentioned in this article when speaking about the *kamkokola* ceremony, as they really do not bear on the subject of spirits or afterlife). The fact is, however, that until this aspect is more generally taken under observation and some comparative material exists, the full development of the method of observation is very difficult.

The emotional attitude expressed in behavior, and characterizing a belief, is not an invariable element: it varies with individuals, and it has no objective "seat" (such as the beliefs embodied in institutions have). Nevertheless, it is

expressed by objective facts, which can be almost quantitatively stated, as in measuring the amount of inducement needed and the length of an expedition on which a native will venture alone under fear-inspiring conditions. Now, in each society there are braver and more cowardly individuals, emotional people and callous ones, etc. But diverse types of behavior are characteristic for different societies, and it seems enough to state the type, since the variations are well-nigh the same in all societies. Of course, if it be possible to state the variations, so much the better.

To illustrate the matter concretely, by the simplest example, that of fear, I have experimented with this element in another district in Papua--in Mailu, on the south coast--and found that no normal inducement, no offering of even an excessive payment in tobacco, would prevail upon any native to cover at night and alone any distance out of sight and earshot of the village. Even here, however, there were variations, some men and boys being unwilling to run the risk even at dusk, others being ready to go out at night to some inconsiderable distance for a payment of a stick of tobacco. In Kiriwina, as described above, the type of behavior is absolutely different. But here again some people are much more timorous than others. Perhaps these variations could be expressed more exactly, but I am not in the position to do it, and at any rate the type of behavior characterizes the corresponding beliefs, when compared with the Mailu type, for instance.

It seems feasible, therefore, as the first approach to exactness, to treat elements of belief expressed by behavior as types; that is, not to trouble about the individual variation. In fact, the types of behavior seem to vary considerably with the society, whereas the individual differences seem to cover the same range. This does not mean that they ought to be ignored, but that, in the first approach, they may be ignored without making the information incorrect through incompleteness.

Let us pass now to the last class of material which must be studied in order to grasp the beliefs of a certain community--the individual opinions or interpretations of facts. These cannot be considered as invariable, nor are they sufficiently described by indicating their "type." Behavior, referring to the emotional aspect of belief, can be described by showing its type, because the variations move within certain well-described limits, the emotional and instinctive nature of man being as far as one can judge, very uniform, and the individual variations remaining practically the same in any

human society. In the domain of the purely intellectual aspect of belief, in the ideas and opinions explaining belief, there is room for the greatest range of variations. Belief, of course, does not obey the laws of logic, and the contradictions, divergencies, and all the general chaos pertaining to belief must be acknowledged as a fundamental fact.

One important simplification in this chaos is obtained by referring the variety of individual opinions to the social structure. In almost every domain of belief there is a class of men whose social position entitles them to a special knowledge of the beliefs in question. In a given community they are generally and officially considered to be the possessors of the orthodox version, and their opinion is considered the correct one. Their opinion, moreover, is to a considerable extent based on a traditional view which they have received from their ancestors.

This state of things is, in Kiriwina, very well exemplified in the tradition of magic and of the connected myths. Although there is as little esoteric lore and tradition, and as little taboo and secrecy, as in any native society which I know from experience or literature, nevertheless there is complete respect for a man's right to his own domain. If you ask in any village any question referring to more detailed magical proceedings in the gardening department, your interlocutor will immediately refer you to the *towosi* (garden magician). And then on further inquiry you learn, as often as not, that your first informant knew all the facts absolutely well and was perhaps able to explain them better than the specialist himself. None the less, native etiquette, and the feeling of what is right, compelled him to refer you to the "proper person." If this proper person be present, you will not be able to induce anyone else to talk on the matter, even if you announce that you do not want to hear the specialist's opinion. And, again, I have several times obtained information from one of my usual instructors and subsequently the "specialist" has told me that it is not correct. When, later, I referred this correction to my original informant, he would, as a rule, withdraw his opinion saying, "Well, if he says so, it must be correct." Special caution ought of course to be exercised when the specialist is naturally inclined to lie, as is often the case with the sorcerers (those who possess the power to kill people by magic).

Again, if the magic and corresponding tradition belong to another village, the same discretion and reserve is observed. You are advised to go to that

village for information. When pressed, your native friends may perhaps tell you what they know about the matter, but they will always wind up the report by saying: "You must go there and gather the right knowledge at the right source." In the case of magic formulae, this is absolutely necessary. Thus I had to go to Laba'i in order to get the *kalala*-fishing magic, and to Kuaibola to record the shark-fishing charms. I obtained the canoe-building magic from men of Lu'ebila, and I went to Buaitalu to get the tradition and spell of the *toginivaiu*, the most powerful form of sorcery, though I was unable to procure the *silami* or evil spell and was only partially successful in getting the *vivisa* or healing spell. Even if the knowledge to be obtained is not spells, but mere traditional lore, one is often sorely disappointed. Thus, for instance, the proper seat of the Tudava myth is Laba'i. Before I went there I had gathered all that my informants in Omarakana could tell me and expected to reap an enormous harvest of additional information, but as a matter of fact, it was I who impressed the natives of Laba'i, by quoting details which were hailed by them as quite true, but which had escaped their memory. In fact, no one there was half as good on the Tudava cyclus as my friend Bagido'u of Omarakana. Again, the village of Ialaka is the historic spot where once a tree was erected up to heaven. And this was the origin of thunder. If you ask about the nature of thunder, everybody will tell you straight off: "Go to Ialaka and ask the *tolivalu* (the headman)," although practically everybody is able to tell you all about the origin and nature of thunder, and your pilgrimage to Ialaka, if you undertake it, will prove a great disappointment.

Nevertheless, these facts show that the idea of specialization in traditional lore is strongly developed; that in many items of belief, and in many opinions about belief, the natives recognize a class of specialist. Some of these are associated with a certain locality; in such cases it is always the headman of the village who represents the orthodox doctrine, or else the most intelligent of his *veiola* (maternal kinsmen). In other cases the specialization goes within the village community. In this place we are not concerned with this specialization, in so far as it determines the right to obtain magical formulae, or the correct reciting of certain myths, but only in so far as it refers to the interpretation of all beliefs connected with such formulae or myths. Because, besides the traditional text, the "specialists" are always in possession of the traditional interpretations or commentaries. It is characteristic that, when talking with such specialists, you always get

clearer answers and opinions. You clearly see that the man does not speculate or give you his own views, but that he is fully aware of being asked about the orthodox view, about the traditional interpretation. Thus when I asked certain informants about the meaning of the “*si buala baloma*,” the miniature hut made of dry twigs during one of the garden rites (see above, V), they tried to give me a kind of explanation, which I saw at once, was their own private view of the matter. When I asked Bagido’u, the *towosi* (garden magician) himself, he simply waved away all explanations and said, “This is merely an old traditional thing, no one knows its meaning.”

Thus in the diversity of opinions there is one important line of demarcation to be drawn: that between the opinions of competent specialists and the views of the profane public. The opinions of the specialists have a traditional basis: they are clearly and categorically formulated and, in the eyes of the native, they represent the orthodox version of the belief. And, since on each subject there is a small group of people, in the last instance one man, to be considered, it is easy to see that the most important interpretation of belief does not present any great difficulties in handling.

But in the first place, this most important interpretation does not represent all the views, it cannot be taken even as typical, at times. Thus for instance, in sorcery (evil, homicidal magic), it is of absolute importance to distinguish between the views of the specialist and those of the outsider, because both represent equally important and naturally different aspects of the same problem. Again, there are certain classes of belief where one would in vain look for departmental specialists. Thus about the nature of the *baloma* and their relation to the *kosi*, there were some statements more trustworthy and detailed than others, but there was no one who would be a naturally and generally acknowledged authority.

In all matters where there are no specialists, and again in matters in which the opinion of non-specialists is of intrinsic interest, it is necessary to have certain rules for fixing the fluctuating opinion of the community. Here I see only one clear and important distinction: namely, between what can be called public opinion, or more correctly--since public opinion has a specific meaning--the general opinion of a given community on the one hand, and the private speculations of individuals on the other. This distinction is, as far as I can see, sufficient.

If you examine the “broad masses” of the community, the women and children included (a proceeding which is easy enough when you speak the language well and have lived for months in the same village, but which otherwise is impossible), you will find that, whenever they grasp your question, their answers will not vary: they will never venture into private speculations. I have had most valuable information on several points from boys and even girls of seven to twelve years of age. Very often, on my long afternoon walks, I was accompanied by the children of the village and then, without the constraint of being obliged to sit and be attentive, they would talk and explain things with a surprising lucidity and knowledge of tribal matters. In fact, I was often able to unravel sociological difficulties with the help of children, which old men could not explain to me. The mental volubility, lack of the slightest suspicion and sophistication, and, possibly a certain amount of training received in the Mission School, made of them incomparable informants in many matters. As to the danger of their views; being modified by missionary teaching, well, I can only say that I was amazed at the absolute impermeability of the native mind to those things. The very small amount of our creed and ideas they acquire remains in a watertight compartment of their mind. Thus the general tribal opinion in which practically no variety is to be found can be ascertained even from the humblest informants.

When dealing with intelligent grown-up informants, things are quite different. And as they are the class with whom an ethnographer has to do most of his work, the variety of their opinion comes very much to the fore, unless the inquirer is satisfied in taking one version of each subject and sticking to it through thick and thin. Such opinions of intelligent, mentally enterprising informants, as far as I can see, cannot be reduced or simplified according to any principles: they are important documents, illustrating the mental faculties of a community. Further on, they very often represent certain typical ways of conceiving a belief, or of solving a difficulty. But it must be clearly borne in mind that such opinions are sociologically quite different from what we called above dogmas or social ideas. They are also different from generally accepted or popular ideas. They form a class of interpretation of belief, which closely corresponds to our free speculation on belief. They are characterized by their variety, by not being expressed in customary or traditional formulae, by being neither the orthodox expert opinion, nor the popular view.

These theoretical considerations about the sociology of belief may be summarized in the following table, in which the various groups of belief are classified in a manner which seems to express their natural affinities and distinctions, as far, at least, as the Kiriwinian material requires:--

I. *Social ideas or dogmas.*--Beliefs embodied in institutions, in customs, in magico-religious formulae and rites and in myths. Essentially connected with and characterized by emotional elements, expressed in behavior.

2. *Theology or interpretation of the dogmas.*--

(a) Orthodox explanations, consisting of opinions of specialists.

(b) Popular, general views, formulated by the majority of the members of a community.

(c) Individual speculations.

Examples for each group can be easily found in this article, where the degree and quality of social depth, the "social dimension" of every item of belief, has been given, at least approximately. It must be remembered that this theoretical scheme, though dimly recognized at the beginning, has been only imperfectly applied, because the technique of its applicability in field work had to be elaborated bit by bit, through actual experience. It is, therefore, with reference to my Kiriwinian material, rather a conclusion *ex post facto* than a basis of method adopted at the outset and systematically carried out throughout the work.

Examples of dogma or social ideas are to be found in all the beliefs, which have been described as embodied in the customs of the *milamala* and in the magical rites and formulae. Also in corresponding myths, as well as in the mythological tradition, referring to afterlife. The emotional aspect has been treated, as far as my knowledge allows, in describing the behavior of the natives towards magical performances during the *milamala*, their behavior towards the *baloma*, the *kosi*, and the *mulukuausi*.

Of the theological views, several orthodox interpretations have been given in the explanations by a magician of his magic. As popular views (barring such as are dogmas at the same time) I may note the belief concerning spiritism: everybody, even the children, knew well that certain people went to Tuma and brought back songs and messages to the living. This, however, was in no way a dogma, since it was even open to scepticism on the part of

some exceptionally sophisticated informants, and since it was connected with no customary institution.

The speculations about the nature of the *baloma* are the best example illustrating the purely individual class of theology, consisting of private opinions.

I wish to remind the reader that local differences, that is the variation of belief according to district, have not been considered at all in this theoretical section.

Such differences belong to the domain of anthropogeography rather than sociology.

Moreover, they affect only to a very small extent the data presented in this paper, as practically all of my material has been collected within a small district, where local variations hardly exist at all. Only as regards the reincarnation, local differences may account for some divergencies in belief (see above, VI).

From such district variations the above-mentioned localized specialization in certain departments (thunder in Ialaka, shark in Kuaibuola, etc.) must be carefully distinguished, because this is a factor connected with the structure of society and not merely an example of the broad anthropological fact, that everything changes as we move over the surface of the earth.

All these theoretical remarks, it is plain, are the outcome of experience in the field, and it was considered well to print them here in connection with the data already given, because they are also ethnological facts, only of a much more general nature.

This, however, makes them, if anything, more important than the details of custom and belief. Only the two aspects, the general law and the detailed documentation, make information really complete, as far as it goes.

THE END

# Notes

[←1]

For an account of Kiriwina sociology, cf. Seligman's work, *The Melanesians of British New Guinea*, chaps. xlix-lii, pp. 660-707, and chap. lix for a description of the mortuary practices. Prof. Seligman gives also an outline of the native beliefs concerning an afterlife (chap. lv), and his data, which were collected in a different locality of the district, will be quoted hereafter.

[←2]

Seligman, *op. cit.*, p. 733.

[←3]

*Cf.* below, where the various versions are discussed. The nature of the *baloma* and *kosi*, and the material of which they are built, so to speak--whether shadow or reflection or body--will also be dealt with there. It may suffice here to say that the *baloma* are certainly considered to retain exactly the likeness of the living individual.

[←4]

I have been struck by the enormous difference in this respect obtaining between the Northern Massim and the Mailu, a tribe on the south coast of New Guinea, which I visited during a six months stay in Papua in 1914-15. The Mailu people are conspicuously afraid of darkness. When, towards the end of my stay, I visited Woodlark Island, the natives there, who belong to the same group as the Kiriwinians (a group called by Seligman the Northern Massim), differed so obviously in that respect from the Mailu that I was struck with this the first evening, which I spent in the village of Dikoias. *Cf.* "The Natives of Mailu: Preliminary Results of the Robert Mond Research Work in British New Guinea," *Trans. Roy. Soc. South Australia*, vol. xxxix, 1915.

[←5]

*Cf.* C. G. Seligman, *op. cit.*, chap. xlvii, where similar maleficent women from another district (Southern Massim) are described. I do not dwell here in detail on the beliefs about the *mulukuasi*, but I am under the impression that the natives are not quite sure whether it is a kind of “sending” or “double” that leaves the body of the witch or whether she goes out herself on her errand in an invisible form. *Cf.* also “The Natives of Mailu,” p. 653, and footnote on p. 648.

[←6]

The preliminary burial, as well as burying in the middle of the village, has recently been suppressed by Government.

[←7]

It must be noted that the grave was in olden days situated right in the middle of the village, and that a close vigil was kept over it, having, among other motives, that of protecting the corpse from these female ghouls. Now that the grave is outside the village the vigil has had to be abandoned, and the *mulukausican* prey on the corpse as they like. There seems to be an association between the *mulukausi* and the high trees on which they like to perch, so that the present site of burial, placed as it is right among the high trees of the grove (*weika*) surrounding each village, is specially odious to the natives.

[←8]

This well is situated not far from the shore, in the *raiboag*, the elevated, stony, wooded coral ridge, which runs in a ring round almost all the smaller islands of the archipelago and the greater part of the large island Boiowa. All the stones and the well here mentioned are real and can be seen by mortals.

[←9]

This effect of the Gilala water was explained by one of my informants only; the others did not know the object of this ablution, though all affirmed its existence.

[←10]

This is a contradiction of the statement that the *baloma* assemble round the new arrival and help him in wailing. See below, VIII, the remarks about such inherent inconsistencies.

[← 11]

The natives strictly distinguish between the *vaigu'a* (valuable possessions) and *gugu'a* (the other less valuable ornaments and objects of use). The main objects classified as *vaigu'a* will be enumerated in this article later on.

[←12]

In practice the corpse is most carefully stripped of all valuables just before burial, and I saw even small shell earrings being extracted from the ear lobes, articles which the natives would not hesitate to sell for half a stick of tobacco (three farthings). On one occasion, when a small boy had been buried in my presence, and a very small and poor belt of *kaloma* (shell discs) was left on the body by mistake, there was great consternation and a serious discussion whether the body ought to be unearthed.

[←13]

During my stay one young man committed suicide in the *lo'u* manner in a neighboring village. Though I saw the corpse a few hours after death, and was present at the wailing and burial and all the mortuary ceremonies, it was only after a few months that I learned he had committed suicide, and I never could learn his motive. The Rev. E. S. Johns, the head of the Methodist Mission in the Trobriands, informs me that he used at times to register as many as two suicides a week (through poison) in Kavataria, a group of large villages situated in the immediate neighborhood of the Mission station. Mr. Johns tells me that suicides occur in epidemics, and that they have been fostered by the discovery by the natives of the white man's power to counteract the poison. The aim of the suicide is to punish the survivors, or some of them.

[←14]

This poison is prepared from the roots of a cultivated vine; its action is not very rapid, and if emetics be properly administered in time life is usually saved.

[←15]

There seems to be some possibility of death by old age, especially in the case of very insignificant old men and women. Several times, when I was asking of what a man had died, I received the answer, "He was very old and weak and he just died." But when I asked about M'tabalu, a very old and decrepit man, the chief of Kasana'i, whether he was going to die soon, I was told that, if no *silami* (evil spell) were thrown on him, there was no reason why he should not go on living. Again, it must be remembered that a *silami* is a private thing, not to be talked about except with intimate friends. It must be emphasized that the "ignorance of natural death" is the general typical attitude expressed in custom and reflected in such legal and moral institutions as exist, rather than some kind of absolute apodictic statement, excluding any contradictions or uncertainties.

[←16]

Seligman, *op. cit.*, p. 733.

[←17]

The distinction between rank and authority is important in Kiriwinian sociology. The members, of the Tabalu section of the Malasi clan have the highest rank, The head of this clan wields authority over the village of Omarakana and, in a way, over a great portion of the main island and some adjacent islands. Whether he will retain this authority after death in Tuma seemed doubtful to To'uluwa, the present chief of Omarakana. But there was not the slightest doubt that he and all the other Tabalu, as well as everyone else, would retain their respective rank and. their membership in clan and subclan. To understand this, cf. the excellent account of the Trobriand social system, in Seligman, *op. cit.*, chaps. xlix-liii.

[←18]

In order to understand this statement the reader must be acquainted with the social system of the Kiriwinians (see Seligman, loc. cit.). There is a very close connection between every village and a certain section of a clan. Usually, but not always, this section is descended from an ancestor, who came out of the ground in that locality. In any case, the head of this section is always said to be the master or owner of the land (*tolipuaipucaia*, from *toli*, a prefix denoting mastership, ownership, and *puaipuaia*, ground, soil, land).

[←19]

This wooing in Tuma, as described to me by my informants, corresponds to the manner in which people mate on certain occasions called *katuyausi*. The *katuyausi* are expeditions of amorous adventure, in which the unmarried girls of a village go en bloc to another village and there sleep with the youths of that village. Any single male who fancies one of the girl guests gives her (through an intermediary) some small present (a comb, some shell discs or turtle shell rings), which is handed over with the words "*kam paku*." If accepted, the two belong to each other for the night. Such expeditions, though well established and sanctioned by custom, are strongly resented by the young men of the village from which the *katuyausi* starts, and they end as a rule in a sound thrashing administered by the male to the female youth of the village.

[←20]

A “lifetime” is undoubtedly a much less definite period to the natives than it is to ourselves.

[←21]

Another center is the Island of Kaileula.

[←22]

Seligman, *op. cit.*, p. 734.

[←23]

Similar songs have also been brought by other people from Tuma.

[←24]

To judge leniently such “inconsistencies” of native belief, it is sufficient to remember that we meet the same difficulties in our own ideas about ghosts and spirits. No one who believes in ghosts or spirits ever doubts that they can speak, and even act; they can rap on tables or with table legs, lift objects, etc.

[←25]

*op. cit.*, p. 733.

[←26]

*op. cit.*, p. 679.

[←27]

“Ceremonial in the narrower sense,” as opposed to the mere uttering of the spell over a certain object.

[←28]

For instance, the Mailu on the south coast. See *Trans. Roy. Soc. South Australia*, vol. xxxix, p. 696.

[←29]

In this short, purely descriptive account of harvesting, I have purposely avoided sociological technicalities. The complex system of mutual gardening duties is an extremely interesting feature of Kiriwinian social economics. It will be described in another place.

[←30]

In this and other instances I do not dwell upon such sociological details as do not bear directly upon the subject of this article.

The calendar arrangements in the Trobriand Islands are complicated by the fact that there are four districts, each of which places the beginning of the year, *i.e.*, the end of the *milamala* moon--at a different time. Thus in Kitava, an island to the east of the main island of the group, the *milamala* is celebrated some time in June or July. Then follow in July and August the southern and western districts of Bwoiowa, the main island, and some islands to the west (Kaileula and others). After which the *milamala* takes place in August or September in the central and eastern districts of the main island, in what is called by the natives Kiriwina, and last there follows Vakuta, the island to the south of Bwoiowa, where the *milamala* takes place in September or October. Thus the feast, and with it the whole calendar, is shifted over the space of four moons in one district. It seems that the dates of the garden activities also vary, keeping time with the calendar. This was stated by the natives with emphasis, but I found during the year I was in Bwoiowa that the gardens were more advanced in Kiriwina than in the western district, though the latter is one moon in advance of the former.

The dates of the moons are fixed by the position of the stars, in which astronomical art the natives of Wawela, a village lying on the beach in the southern half of the main island, excel. The Rev. M. K. Gilmour told me that the appearance of the *palolo*, the marine annelid *Eunice viridis*, which takes place on the reef near Vakuta, is a very important factor in regulating the native calendar, in fact, in doubtful cases it decides the question. This worm appears on certain days towards the full moon, falling early in November or late in October, and this is the *milamala* time of Vakuta. In Kiriwina the natives told me, however, that they thoroughly rely on the astronomical knowledge of the Wawela men.

[←32]

No tokaikaya were made in Omarakana or Olivilevi during the *milamala* I saw in those villages. The custom is on the decline, and the erection of a *tokaikaya* necessitates a considerable amount of labor and trouble. I saw one in the village of Gumilababa, where there lives a chief of the highest rank (Mitakata, *aguya 'u* of the *tabalu* rank).

[←33]

How far, besides and behind this professed aim, vanity and the aesthetic motive are at work in prompting such displays, cannot be discussed here.

[←34]

This is one of the innumerable food distributions (generic name *sagali*) which are connected with almost every feature of social life in the Trobriands. It is usually one clan (or two clans) that arranges the *sagali*, and other clans receive the food. Thus in the *katukuala* the Malasi clan first distribute the food and the *lukulabuta*, the *lukuasisiga* and the *lukubia* receive it. After a few days another *katukuala* is held, with the inverse social grouping. The dual arrangements of the clans varies according to the district. In Omarkana the Malasi are so preponderant that they form one moiety for themselves, the three remaining clans forming the other. It is impossible to enter here into the detailed examination of the social mechanism and of the other features of the *sagali*.

[←35]

Of course, the chiefs have as much pig as they require before giving any to the *tokay*. But it is characteristic that the privileges of the chief have much more to do with the liberty to give than with the liberty to consume. Vanity is a stronger passion than greed--though perhaps this reflection does not express the whole truth of the matter!

[←36]

Thus dancing in general is inaugurated by the initiation of the drums (*katuvivisa kasausa'u*), which is connected with the *katukuala*. The *kaidebu* have to be initiated separately by a *katuvivisa kaidebu*.

[←37]

There are names for each day about full moon. Thus the day (and night) of the full moon are called *Yapila* or *Kिताulo*. One day before, *Yamkevila*; two days, *Ulakaiwa*. The day after full moon, *Valaita*; the following one, *Woulo*. The *ioba* takes place on the night of *Woulo*.

[←38]

The drums of the Kiriwinians consist of: (1) the large drum (normal size of New Guinea drum) called *kasausa 'u* or *kupi* (this latter word being an obscene synonym for the *glans penis*): and (2) the small drum, about one third the size of the larger, called *katunenia*. All their drumbeats are a combination of the two drums, the *kupi* and the *katunenia* leading each its separate voice.

[←39]

There are two main types of dance in Boiowa. The circular dances, where the orchestra (the drums and the singers) stands in the middle, and the performers go round them in a circle, always in the opposite direction to the hands of a watch. These dances are again subdivided into: (1) *bisila* (pandanus streamer) dances with slow movement (2) *kitatuva* (two bunches of leaves), with a quick movement; and (3) *kaidebu* (wooden painted shield), dances with the same quick movement. In the *bisila* dances women can take part (very exceptionally), and all the performers wear women's petticoats. The second group of dances are the *kasawaga*, where only three men dance, always in imitation of animal movements, though these are very conventionalized and unrealistic. These dances are not circular, there are no songs (as a rule) to accompany them; the orchestra consists of five *kupi* drums and one *katunenia*.

[←40]

When a village is in mourning (*bola*), and drums are taboo, the *ioba* is performed by means of a conch shell (*ta'uiio*)--but it must not be omitted even under such circumstances.

The dread of “leading questions,” as expressed over and over again in all instructions for ethnographical field work is, according to my experience, one of the most misleading prejudices. “Leading questions” are dangerous with a new informant, for the first half hour or couple of hours, at the outside, of your work with him. But any work done with a new, and consequently bewildered, informant is not worth being recorded. The informant must know that you want from him exact and detailed statements of fact. A good informant, after a few days, will contradict and correct you even if you make a *lapsus linguae*, and to think of any danger from leading questions in such a case is absolutely groundless. Again, real ethnographical work moves much more in statement of actual details, details which, as a rule, can be checked by observation--where again there is in no case any danger from leading questions. The only case where direct questioning is necessary, where it is the only instrument of the ethnographer, is when he wants to know what is the interpretation of a ceremony, what is his informant’s opinion about some state of things; then leading questions are absolutely necessary. You might ask a native, “What is your interpretation of such and such a ceremony?” and wait for years before getting your answer (even if you know how to word it in native language). You would more or less solicit the native to take up your attitude, and look at things in ethnographical perspective. Again, when dealing with facts that are just out of range of immediate observation, like customs of war, and some of the obsolete technological objects, it is absolutely impossible to work without leading questions, if many important features are not to be omitted, and as there is no earthly reason to avoid this type of questioning, it is directly erroneous to brand the leading questions. Ethnological inquiry and judicial examination are essentially different, in that in the latter the witness has usually to express his personal, individual opinion, or to relate his impressions, both of which can be easily modified by suggestion: whereas in ethnological inquiry the informant is expected to give such eminently crystallized and solidified items of knowledge as an outline of certain customary activities, or a belief or a statement of traditional opinion. In such cases a leading question is dangerous only when dealing with a lazy, ignorant, or unscrupulous informant--in which case the best thing is to discard him altogether.

[←42]

A characteristic fact to illustrate this statement is furnished by a Scotchman, who has been living for years among the natives as trader and pearl buyer. He has in no way lost the “caste” and dignity of the white man, in fact, he is an extremely kind, hospitable gentleman; nevertheless, he has assumed certain native peculiarities and habits such as the chewing of areca nut, a habit seldom adopted by white men. He is also married to a Kiriwinian. In order to make his garden thrive, he uses the help of a native *towosi* (garden wizard) from the next village, and that is the reason, my informants told me, that his garden is always considerably better than that of any other white man.

[←43]

The broad generalities given about Kiriwinian garden magic are, of course, not to be taken even as an outline of this magic, which, it is hoped, will be described in another paper.

[←44]

It should be remembered that each village has its own system of garden magic, intimately connected with that village, and transmitted in the maternal line. The membership in a village community is also transmitted in the female line.

[←45]

I cannot deal here in detail with this rule, to which there are many apparent exceptions. This will be done in another place. The statement in the text ought to be amended: “hereditary in the female line in the long run.” For instance, very often a father gives the magic to his son, who practices it during his lifetime, but this son cannot pass it on to his son unless he has married a girl of his father’s clan, so that his son belongs to the original clan again. Cross-cousin marriage, prompted by this and similar motives, is fairly frequent, and is considered distinctly desirable.

[←46]

Thus, for instance, the *kainagola*, one of the most powerful *silami* (evil spells), is associated with a myth localized in the villages of Ba'u and Buoitalu. Again, certain canoe-building magic, called *wa'iugo*, contains references to a myth, the scene of which is the island of Kitava. Many other examples could be adduced.

[←47]

The native name for a subclan is *dala*, cf. Seligman, *op. cit.*, p. 678, where the form *dalela* is *dala*, with the pronominal suffix of the third person, “his family.” The author gives there the names of *dala* belonging to the four clans. They include the most important *dala*, but there are many others. As Professor Seligman says, the members of each *dala* trace their origin to a common ancestor. Such an ancestor emerged originally out of a hole in the earth in a given locality. And, as a rule, the *dala* lives in, or near, that locality--very often the “hole is in the grove surrounding the village, or even right in the village. These holes, called “houses” (*buala*), are, at present, either waterholes or stone heaps, or small shallow cavities. The hole mentioned by Professor Seligman on p. 679 is the one out of which emerged several of the most aristocratic *dala*. But this is an exception, the rule being one *buala*, one *dala*.

[←48]

I am almost certain that it is an archaic form, connected with *vitu*, a prefix expressing causation. Thus, “to show the way,” “to explain,” *vitu loki*, is composed of *vitu*, to “cause,” and *loki*, to “go there.” There are a number of such causative prefixes in Kiriwinian, each possessing a different shade of meaning. In this place, of course, they cannot be discussed.

[←49]

This is an example of the above-mentioned exceptions to the matrilineal descent of certain magical formulae. Iowana, father of Bagido'u, was the son of a *tabalu* (*i.e.*, of one of the family who “own” Omarakana). His father, Puraiasi, gave him the magic, and as Iowana married Kadu Bulami, his cousin, a *tabalu*woman, he could transmit the magic to his son, Bagido'u, and the office of *towosi* (garden magician) thus returned to the *tabalu* subclan.

[←50]

As a matter of fact, this system is imported from another village, Luebila, situated on the northern coast. Hence its name, kailuebila. It contains only one or two references to some places near that village, but it was not known in Omarakana whether those places were sacred or not.

[←51]

*Ovavavala* is an archaic form of the name Ovavavile.

[←52]

*Bom* ' is abbreviated from *boma*, which means taboo. *Likuliku* is an expression for earthquake, which is an important item in the magical vocabulary.

[←53]

*Kamkuam*, eat; *kami*, the personal prefix of the second person plural, used with food; *nunumuaia*, plural of *numuaia*, old woman. The two personal names of the *baloma* old women are remarkable for beginning with *ili*, very likely derived from *ilia*-fish. *Bualita* means sea. It seems thus possible that they are some mythical persons, associated with fishing, concerning whom the tradition has been lost. But such guesses have little charm, and still less value, in the opinion of the present writer.

[←54]

The first name is that of a woman; *iaegulo* means “I”; Iamuana is said to have been the mother of Umnalibu. Here also the name is suggestive of some connection with the spell, which is said over the *libu* plant. The last name but one, Taigala, means, literally, his ear, but here it was said to stand for a *bili balomaname*.

[←55]

It must be stated that several of these formulae have not been translated in a satisfactory manner. It was often impossible to secure the help of the man who recited the spell. Several spells were collected during short visits to outlying villages. In several cases the man was too old or too stupid to help in the, from the native point of view, extremely difficult and puzzling task of translating the archaic and condensed formula, and of commenting upon all its obscurities. And, as a rule, it is no use asking anyone but the original owner to translate or comment upon any formula. I have been able, however, from my knowledge of the “colloquial” language to grasp the general meaning of almost all the formulae.

[←56]

The full discussion of this subject must be deferred to another place. It is interesting that in a certain class of *silami* (evil spells) there is a direct invocation to a being, *tokuay* (a wood spirit living in trees), to come and perform the evil. And everybody agrees that it is the *tokuay* who is the *u'ula* (basis, reason, cause) of the *silami*, that he enters the body and produces disastrous internal disorders.

[←57]

All these general statements must be regarded as preliminary, they will be supported by proper documents in the proper place.

[←58]

Compare those data with the above-discussed “ignorance of natural death.” In this ignorance there ought to be distinguished: (1) the ignorance of the necessity of death, of the life coming to an end; (2) ignorance of the natural causes of sickness as we conceive it. Only the second ignorance seems to be quite prevalent, the action of evil sorcerers being always assumed, except, perhaps, in the above-mentioned cases of very old and insignificant folk.

[←59]

*Suma* is the root for pregnancy; *nasusuma*, a pregnant woman; *isume*, she becomes pregnant. There is no term denoting conception, as distinguished from pregnancy. The general meaning of *suma* is “take,” “take possession of.”

[←60]

I am using here the expression “spirit child” as a *terminus technicus*. This is the term used by Spencer and Gillen to denote analogous beings in Australia, where this type of reincarnation was first discovered. How far the Kiriwinian facts are ethnographically or psychologically connected with those described by Spencer and Gillen will not be discussed in this place.

[←61]

This information was obtained from a woman on the west coast. I think the woman belonged to the village of Kavataria. Mr. G. Auerbach, a pearl buyer, who resides in Sinaketa, a coastal village on the southern half of the island, told me that there are some stones there, to which a woman who wants to become enceinte may have recourse. My informant was unable to tell me whether this was ceremonial or not.

[←62]

There is a remarkable rule which compels the woman to perform all sorts of practices in order to have her skin quite light after childbirth; she keeps in the house, she has to wear the saikeulo over her shoulders, she washes with hot water, and frequently puts coconut cream on her skin. The degree of lightness of skin thus achieved is remarkable. The above described ceremony is a kind of magical inauguration of the period when she will have to keep her skin light.

[←63]

The majority of my informants were equally positive about the rule that a *baloma* of the *veiola* must convey the child. But I have come across one or two dissenting opinions, affirming that the father's mother may bring the child. It was said by one man that if the child resembles the mother it has been brought by some of her *veiola*; if it resembles the father it has been brought by his mother. But this opinion may be my informant's private speculation.

[←64]

In which, *nota bene*, by the *baloma* who “gave” the child, the natives mean either the original *baloma*, who has become the child, or the *baloma* who brought the waiwaia.

[←65]

The sexual freedom of unmarried girls is complete. They begin intercourse with the other sex very early, at the age of six to eight years. They change their lovers as often as they please, until they feel inclined to marry. Then a girl settles down to a protracted and, more or less, exclusive intrigue with one man, who, after a time, usually becomes her husband. Illegitimate children are by no means rare, cf. the excellent description of sexual life and marriage among the Southern Massim, who, in this respect, resemble the Kiriwinians to a great extent, in Seligman, *op. cit.*, xxxviii, p. 499, and the short but correct account there given of the same subject among the Northern Massim (including the Trobriand Islanders), chap. liii, P. 708.

[←66]

A white settlement in the east end of New Guinea.

[←67]

As I do not want to criticize particular views, so much as to add some data bearing on this problem, I shall not note any statements, especially from those authors whose opinions appear to me to be untenable. The probability of a “non-recognition in early times of the physical relation between father and child” was first suggested by Mr. E. S. Hartland (*The Legend of Perseus*, 1894-96), and the discoveries of Spencer and Gillen brilliantly confirmed his views. Mr. Hartland has subsequently devoted the most exhaustive inquiry extant to this problem (*Primitive Paternity*). Sir J. G. Frazer has also given the support of his illustrious opinion to the view that ignorance of physical fatherhood was universal among early mankind (*Totemism and Exogamy*).

[←68]

*The Melanesians of British New Guinea*, p. 84.

[←69]

*Trans. of Roy. Soc. South Australia*, vol. xxxix, 1915, p. 562.

[←70]

I Use Professor Seligman's terminology, based on his classification of the Papuasians, *op. cit.*, pp. 1-8.

[←71]

*Cf.* Seligman, *op. cit.*, *passim*; also chap. xlix.

My own notes taken among the Mailu, and the conclusion I drew from them, are typical of such a failure. As other instances, may be quoted the denial by Strehlow and von Leonhardi of the discoveries of Spencer and Gillen; a denial which, if the argument of von Leonhardi be carefully read, and the data given by Strehlow examined, turns out to be only a futile controversy based upon inadequate premises, and, in fact, completely confirms the original discoveries of Spencer and Gillen. Here the explanation lies in the insufficient mental training of the observer (Strehlow). You can no more expect good all-round ethnographical work from an untrained observer than you can expect a good geological statement from a miner, or hydrodynamic theory from a diver. It is not enough to have the facts right in front of one, the faculty to deal with them must be there. But lack of training and mental capacity is not the only cause of failure. In the excellent book about the natives of New Guinea (Goodenough Bay on the N.E. coast), written by the Rev. H. Newton, now Bishop of Carpentaria, than whom none could be better equipped to understand the native mind and to grasp native customs, we read the following statement: "There may be races as ignorant [of the causal relation between connection and pregnancy] as is implied [in Spencer and Gillen's statement]; it is difficult to imagine such, when marital infidelity appears to be so severely punished everywhere, and when the responsibility of the father for the child is recognized, if only to a small extent." (In *Far New Guinea*, p. 194.) Thus, an excellent observer (such as the present Bishop of Carpentaria undoubtedly is), living for years among the natives, knowing their language, has to imagine a state of things which exists fully and completely all round him. And his arguments for denying this state (everywhere, not only among his tribe) is that marital jealousy and recognition of fatherhood both exist (a recognition, which again is not known in the tribe in question, on the physical side)! As if there were the slightest logical nexus between jealousy (a pure instinct) and ideas about conception; or, again, between these latter and the social ties of the family! I have taken this statement for criticism, just because it is found in one of the very best ethnographical books which we have about South Sea natives. But I wish to add that my criticism is in a way unfair, because Mr. Newton, as a missionary, could scarcely discuss with the natives all the details of the question, and also because Mr. Newton gives the reader fully to understand that he has not inquired into the question directly, and candidly states the reasons for his doubts. I have quoted the statement, nevertheless, in order to show the many technical difficulties which are connected with the obtaining of accurate information on this subject, and the many gaps through which errors can leak into our knowledge.

[←73]

My experience in the field has persuaded me of the complete futility of the theories which attribute to the savage a different type of mind and different logical faculties. The native is not "prelogical" in his beliefs, he is alogical, for belief or dogmatic thinking does not obey the law of logic among savages any more than among ourselves.

[←74]

To test this sociological principle on civilized instances; when we say that the “Roman Catholics believe in the infallibility of the Pope,” we are correct only in so far as we mean that this is the orthodox belief, enjoined on all members of that church. The Roman Catholic Polish peasant knows as much about this dogma as about the Infinitesimal Calculus. And if it were proposed to study the Christian religion, not as a doctrine, but as a sociological reality (a study which, as far as I am aware, has never yet been attempted), all the remarks in this paragraph would apply, *mutatis mutandis*, to any civilized community with the same strength as to the “savages” of Kiriwina.

[←75]

I am purposely not using the term “collective ideas,” introduced by Professor Durkheim and his school, to denote a conception, which in their hands, more especially in the writings of Hubert and Mauss, has proved extremely fertile. In the first place, I am not able to judge whether the above analysis would really cover what that school denotes by “collective ideas.” Remarkably enough, there does not seem to be anywhere a clear, candid statement of what they mean by “collective idea,” nothing approaching a definition. It is obvious that in this discussion, and in general, I am under a great obligation to these writers. But I am afraid that I am entirely out of touch with Professor Durkheim’s philosophical basis of sociology. It seems to me that this philosophy involves the metaphysical postulate of a “collective soul,” which, for me, is untenable. Moreover, whatever discussion might be carried on as to the theoretical value of the conception of a “collective soul,” in all practical sociological investigations one would be left hopelessly in the lurch by it. In the field, when studying a native or civilized community, one has to do with the whole aggregate of individual souls, and the methods and theoretical conceptions have to be framed exclusively with this multiplex material in view. The postulate of a collective consciousness is barren and absolutely useless for an ethnographical observer.