

# IRIAN

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### **Ikhtisar (Kapitalisme SHELL di antara orang Muyu)**

Seperti dinyatakan di dalam Kata Pengantar, ciri yang menonjol dalam proses penerimaan unsur modern oleh orang Muyu adalah pemerolehan milik. Dalam situasi kontak perhatian yang pernah terpusat kepada nilai-nilai tradisional setempat khususnya uang kerang itu sedang berubah atau telah berubah menjadi keinginan memperoleh komoditi barat dan uang barat.

Berbagai tahap perubahan itu serta akibat-akibatnya dapat diikhtisarkan sebagai berikut. Tahap pertama: penghargaan benda-benda dan barang berharga yang tradisional, khususnya *ot* itu. Tahap kedua: penghargaan barang-barang modern, khususnya kapak dan pisau. Tahap ketiga: penghargaan kekayaan barat pada umumnya, khususnya uang. Tahap keempat: upaya menghayati nilai-nilai barat.

Keinginan ini menggalakkan diterimanya berbagai unsur modern yang dikaitkan oleh orang Muyu dengan kekayaan, seperti pendidikan, agama Katolik, dan administrasi pemerintahan. Namun, harus ditekankan bahwa justru orientasinya terhadap milik itu pun menghalangi penerimaan unsur-unsur baru.

Mula-mula, peresapan uang pemerintah dicegah oleh keterikatan pada *ot* itu. Kesulitan dalam pembentukan kampung serta penghuniannya langsung dapat dikaitkan dengan pemeliharaan babi, yang penting karena nilai *ot* yang dimiliki babi itu. Pembolosan pun meningkat akibat pemeliharaan babi itu, karena orang-orang tua akan tinggal di hutan untuk memiara hewan mereka. Poligini pun digalakkan bahkan di kalangan orang Kristiani karena memudahkan pemeliharaan babi dan dengan demikian kesempatan memperoleh kekayaan. Akhirnya perlu dicatat bahwa orang Muyu karena semua itu menafsirkan agama Katolik dengan bias yang khas: mereka mengaitkan agama Katolik dengan kesejahteraan yang materiil.

Dengan terjadinya situasi kontak timbullah ancaman kerawanan struktur kehidupan bermasyarakat di daerah orang Muyu. Dinantikan dan dikehendaki mereka pewujudan yang pesat dari kekayaan dan kekuasaan modern di daerah mereka, baik melalui cara yang alamiah maupun yang bersifat ajaib. Namun, perkembangan ekonomis mustahillah berlangsung

seiring dengan harapan mereka. Untuk mencegah pemecahan sosial haruslah dimengerti persepsi orang Muyu terhadap dunia Barat serta unsur-unsur ekonominya. Maka harus dipercepat upaya-upaya menciptakan kesempatan kepada orang Muyu untuk memperoleh uang dan komoditi-komoditi barat. Lagipula, penerangan yang terarah dan terstruktur harus membenarkan gambaran orang Muyu tentang dunia modern.

Kebudayaan Muyu sangat potensial untuk mengadakan modernisasi, dan masyarakat Muyu siap untuk berkembang dengan pesat. Akan tetapi keberhasilan ke arah itu tergantung pada perhatian terhadap ciri-ciri kehidupan orang Muyu yang lain, seperti ditekankannya individualisme.

## Samenvatting (Schoorl: Shell Capitalism among the Muyu People)

In de Introductie wordt vastgesteld dat de opvallende eigenschap van de Muyu cultuur van het verwerven van eigendom, van bezit, een belangrijke rol speelt in het proces van het accepteren van moderne elementen. In de contact situatie ziet men dan dat de interessen, die in de traditionele situatie gericht waren op inheemse waardegoederen, in het bijzonder het schelpengeld, de *ot*, zich wijzigden of reeds waren veranderd in het verlangen naar moderne goederen en gouvernementsgeld.

De verschillende stadia van verandering en de resultaten daarvan kunnen als volgt worden samengevat:

Het eerste stadium was: de waardering van de traditionele goederen en waarde-artikelen, in het bijzonder de *ot*.

Het tweede stadium was: de waardering voor moderne goederen, in het bijzonder ijzeren bijlen en stalen messen.

Het derde stadium was: een algemene waardering van moderne welvaart, in het bijzonder gouvernementsgeld.

Het vierde stadium houdt in: het streven naar de internalisering van de moderne wereld.

Deze begeerte naar de moderne rijkdom bevordert een gemakkelijke aanvaarding van allerlei moderne trekken of eigenschappen, die de Muyu associeert met welvaart, zoals onderwijs, het Rooms Katholicisme, en de organisatie van het gouvernement. Maar tegelijkertijd verhindert deze oriëntatie op bezit de aanvaarding van andere nieuwe elementen. In het begin van de contactsituatie werd de penetratie van het gouvernementsgeld tegengehouden door de gehechtheid aan de *ot*. Moeilijkheden in de vorming van dorpen kunnen direct toegeschreven worden aan het fokken van varkens, wat zijn belang ontleent aan de waarde van varkens in *ot*. Absenteïsme van school wordt bevordert door de teelt van varkens, daar de ouders in het bos, in de bostuinen, verblijven om voor de varkens te zorgen. Polygynie wordt aangemoedigd, ook onder christenen, daar dit de teelt van varkens vergemakkelijkt en daarmee het verwerven van rijkdom. Tenslotte kan opgemerkt worden dat door deze preoccupatie de Muyu het Rooms Katholicisme interpreteren met een unieke vertekening: zij associëren de religie met het materieel welzijn.

Met de contactsituatie ontstond de dreiging van instabiliteit in de sociale structuur van de Muyu regio. De mensen verwachten en wensen een snelle realisatie van de moderne welvaart en macht in hun gebied, of met natuurlijke of met bovennatuurlijke middelen. Economisch ontwikkeling kan waarschijnlijk geen gelijke pas houden met hun verwachtingen. Om sociale desintegratie te voorkomen zal het nodig zijn de perceptie van de Muyu ten opzichte van de moderne wereld en zijn eigenschappen te begrijpen. Inspanningen moeten worden versneld voor het creëren van mogelijkheden waardoor de Muyu gouvernementsgeld kunnen verdienen en zodoende moderne goederen kopen. Bovendien zal door systematische voorlichting het beeld dat de Muyu zich heeft gevormd van de moderne wereld gecorrigeerd moeten worden.

De Muyu cultuur bevat bijzonder gunstige mogelijkheden voor modernisering en de Muyu samenleving is rijp voor een snelle ontwikkeling. Het succes in die richting is echter afhankelijk van de aandacht die wordt geschonken aan andere kenmerken van het Muyu bestaan, zoals de grote nadruk op het individualisme.

**IRIAN**  
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## SHELL CAPITALISM AMONG THE MUYU PEOPLE

J. W. Schoorl  
Vrije Universiteit, Amsterdam

Ikhtisar

Kertas ini, yang merupakan salah satu hasil penelitian penulis pada tahun lima puluhan, membahas beberapa segi kehidupan, terutama yang berkisar pada pemakaian dan fungsi ot, masyarakat Muyu, yang mendiami daerah bagian selatan Irian Jaya dekat perbatasan Indonesia-Papua Nugini.

Beberapa hal yang diuraikan dalam kertas ini, misalnya pemakaian ot itu sendiri, tidak lagi dikenal di daerah itu. Banyak adat kebiasaan asli telah hilang, apa lagi kanibalisme, yang telah tidak ada lagi waktu penelitian ini dilakukan. Namun data-data dan informasi baru tentang masyarakat Muyu sampai saat ini tidak ditemukan, dan oleh karena itu pemuatan kertas ini merupakan kebutuhan yang terasa.

Penulis menguraikan fungsi ot, mata uang dari kulit kerang, yang memainkan peranan penting dalam kehidupan masyarakat Muyu waktu dahulu. Penulis menguraikan dengan mengambil contoh-contoh yang jelas penghapusan ot sebagai alat penukar, dan karenanya juga sebagai salah satu faset kebudayaan, serta reaksi penduduk setempat.

Meskipun tidak tepat sama dengan mata uang modern, ot telah dipakai berdasarkan sistem nilai yang dapat dikatakan baku, yaitu setiap benda ditentukan nilainya dengan sejumlah ot tertentu.

Kertas ini juga menyinggung adanya gerakan "kepercayaan", yang dimulai oleh seorang bernama Kuram, yang membangkitkan harapan akan datangnya "Orde Baru", yang menjamin kemajuan, kebijaksanaan, dan kemakmuran untuk seluruh masyarakat di Irian bagian selatan.

Menurut penulis, kebudayaan Muyu menunjukkan unsur-unsur yang peka dan mudah menerima perubahan dan modernisasi, dan hal ini memerlukan perhatian khusus.

Masyarakat Muyu mengenal dua macam pesta yang dapat dipakainya sebagai sarana transaksi ot, yang pertama berupa pesta kecil di mana satu atau dua ekor babi dipotong; pesta ini disebut awonbon. Yang kedua bernama ataton, di mana babi dalam jumlah yang lebih besar dipotong, dan para tamu menarikan tari ketmon. Menurut pengamatan penulis, alasan pokok untuk mengadakan pesta besar ini ialah mengusahakan terkumpulnya ot, yang didapat dengan memperjual-belikan daging babi yang dipakai dalam pesta itu.

Dalam setiap pesta dan transaksi ot, perhitungan timbal-balik selalu dilakukan, dan setiap penyelenggara pesta ingat dan mengetahui dengan siapa dan dalam jumlah berapa ot itu ditransaksikan. (Ed.I.S.)

## I. Introduction

The Muyu people inhabit the hilly country between the Central Highlands and the plains of the South Coast, along the Papua New Guinea border (see map). A small number of Muyu actually live in Papua New Guinea. The census conducted by the Dutch Administration in June 1955 counted 12,223 members of this group in the Muyu region of what is now Irian Jaya.

Contacts between the Muyu and the West date from the Dutch military explorations between 1907 and 1915. More intensive contacts resulted from expeditions out of Merauke, which sought the bird of paradise. Between 1914 and 1926, Chinese and Indonesian hunters penetrated deep into Muyu territory. The Muyu assisted these hunters in return for such Western goods as axes and knives, and many Muyu — especially the younger men — accompanied the foreigners to Merauke. In this way Western culture (as it existed in Merauke then) was introduced to Muyu society.

In 1933, the Order of the Sacred Heart founded a mission post at Ninati. An Administration post followed in 1935. From the beginning, the missionaries endeavored to concentrate the Muyu population into villages of at least 100-150 inhabitants, in order to facilitate the educational process. Schools were an important factor in mission work, and as concentration of the population was also desirable for governmental reasons, the Dutch Administration supported the program with a subsidy for schools having at least 15 pupils.

The new ideology which the schools taught did not repel the Muyu<sup>2</sup>, who embraced Western education unhesitatingly as a means of acquiring "progress", i.e., Western material culture. This acceptance was due to their knowledge about schools in Merauke.

In spite of the people's willingness to be educated, the village-formation program encountered difficulties. Attachment



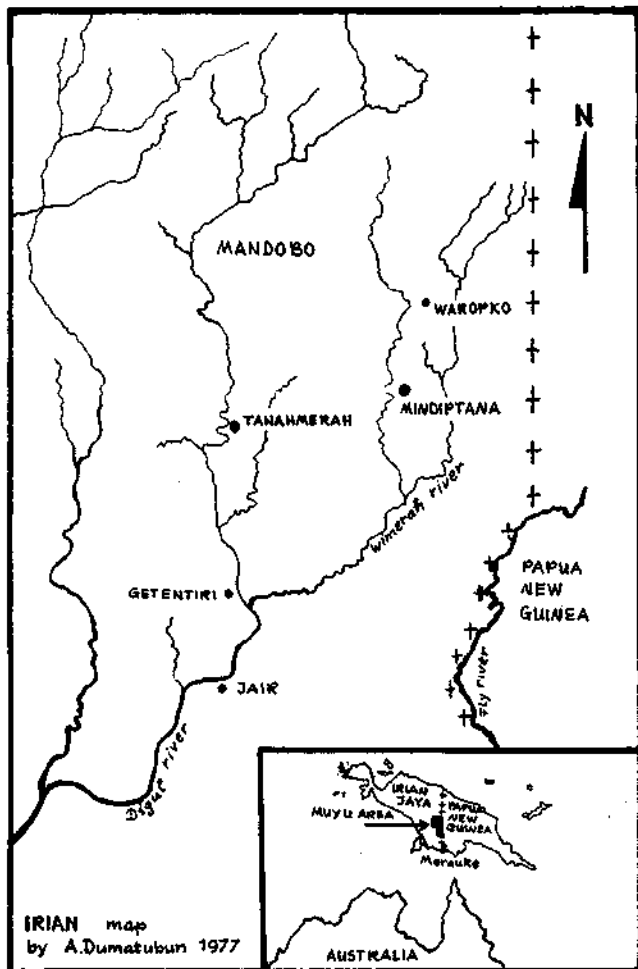
to the way of life in the original settlements, economics (especially pig breeding), individualism, and strong ties to the land all conspired to hinder the formation and permanent settlement of the new villages. Paucity of kinship relations is not the reason for any lack of village integration: nearly all the villagers were related to some degree. But the Dutch-Administration-appointed village chiefs and their assistants (mandor, an Indonesian term) had little authority.

Aboriginally, the Muyu lived in small patrilineal groups (the 42 investigated lineages ranged in size from two to 61 members). The lineage was the landholding entity, and though the dwellings of its individual families might be scattered, they were always situated on lineage territory. The importance of this territoriality is indicated by the Muyu term for lineage, nuwambip, which literally means "our dwelling". The territory belonging to the lineage is nuwambipkin, "the place of our dwellings".

The lineage is attached to its land by traditional and religious bonds. Each territory has a sacred spot called ketpon which is amop, taboo, a place to be avoided. The stories and myths associated with each ketpon are typically the exclusive property of the lineage. In spite of all this, land tenure within the lineage is not communal but individual.

A Muyu depends on his garden for an important part of his diet. Bananas and tubers are the principal crops. Fish is not abundant. Pigs are bred not to provide meat for home consumption, but as a way to obtain cowry-shell money. Women occupy an important position in the economy through their roles in gardening and especially in the care of pigs.

Trading expeditions ranged 40 to 50 kilometers from home. "Pig feasts", while functioning as markets, are also aimed at obtaining cowry-shell money.



Four salient features distinguish the Muyu from other primordial cultures:

1. Individualism. The Muyu enjoys a relatively high degree of independence in respect to his lineage.
2. Mobility. The Muyu spends much time away from home trading or just maintaining friendly relations.
3. Suspiciousness. An atmosphere of fear, distrust, and circumspection apparently results from his preoccupation with personal justice, vengeance, fear of sorcery, and the divination of witches.
4. Acquisitiveness. The main preoccupation of the Muyu is the accumulation of property in the form of the ot and other valuables.

## II. The Role of Shell Money in Muyu Society

### Shells as money: the "ot"

It is necessary first to establish whether the cowry shell, which the Muyu calls ot, should be designated as "money". On the basis of current descriptions of the concept "money", I feel justified in doing so. Within Muyu society we can see that the ot "can at all times ... be used as a medium of exchange", and further that it functions as money normally does in Western society: "(1) as a medium of exchange; (2) as a store of purchasing power; and (3) as a standard of value" (Gould and Kolb 1964:437)<sup>3</sup>. The attributes which Herskovits (1952:238) recognized in money are also attributes of the ot: homogeneity, portability, divisibility, and durability.

We need not assume that the Muyu self-consciously busied themselves with the creation and development of the shell-money institution. According to their mythology, the ot was born out

of the woman Tunok. The upper part of the (Muyu) cowry shell is missing because Tunok's husband, the culture-hero Kamberap, was not present at the birth, and therefore the ot was subjected to the gnawing of various rodents. Muyu people will not accept as legitimate any new shells which show human workmanship. According to some informants, villages in the southeastern region of Muyu territory used to import cowry shells from the Fly River (Papua New Guinea) area. The top part of these shells had been ground off. Nevertheless they were not accepted as genuine ot. A true ot is somewhat yellowed and obviously ancient, and of a definite size: between two and three centimeters long and one to one and a half centimeters wide. The same informants did report that counterfeiting took place: sometimes such new shells were buried for a while in the fireplace. Once they looked properly aged, they were passed into circulation as authentic ot. It may be suggested that this stratagem allowed the ot to remain scarce while the necessary replacement of specie could take place.

#### The wedding gift

The ot occupies a central position in the system of marriage. The core of this institution is the wedding gift, the amot, through which a man acquires rights in his wife. Although some of his gift is returned in the form of other goods, an important part of the amot is a true bride price, a compensation for the transfer of a lineage-member to the bridegroom's lineage.

Note that this is an asymmetric system of marriage, one in which wives are not exchanged for wives, but for goods. Its unusual aspect lies in the fact that it is not a closed asymmetric system where group A delivers wives to group B, group B to group C, and group C to group A, while valuables circulate in the opposite direction (de Josselin de Jong, 1952).

The Muyu system has remained open<sup>4</sup>: there are no fixed relationships between kinship groupings, and women are traded in an indirect fashion. The bride price makes it possible for the bride-giving group to find a wife elsewhere on a later date. Even the southern Muyu, who exhibit a marital preference for mother's brother's daughter (which could fit neatly into closed asymmetrical exchange), practice an obviously open system.

It is safe to say that the wedding gift constitutes the most important element in the marriage system throughout Muyu country. It allows individuals within the lineage a greater freedom in finding a bride, a woman to join the patrilineage, than is possible through a closed system. And the ot is perhaps the most important element in the amot.

Characteristically, Muyu wedding gifts are goods which have an everyday functionality. The items involved are important beyond their role as part of the gift, as the following list of principal elements in a traditional amot demonstrates:

1. The ot, whose number can vary from 12 to 84. Generally 84 is considered a maximum.
2. The inam, a woven band on which small, ot-like shells (1 - 1/2 cm.) have been fastened. A number of inam fastened together serves as a decorative headband for both men and women. The value of an inam is usually expressed in ot; a band of 30 to 40 cm. has a value of 2 or 3 ot. The number of inam in an amot ranges from one to twelve.
3. The wam, a large, flat, white shell whose edges have been filed. Wams are valued between 3 and 24 ot. One particular example of 16 X 7 cm. was rated at 24 ot. Both sexes wear wams suspended by a cord as chest or back pendants. A typical wedding gift will include one or two such shells.

4. The yirip, a small band to which the incisors and canine teeth of dogs have been attached. Especially the canines determine a yirip's value (see 7 below), which runs from 2 to 6 ot. Yirips are worn by men at feasts, as decorative fasteners of the penis sheath.
5. The tamat, a stone ax. Its value, based upon its size, is 2 to 8 ot. The number of tamat in any amot may run as high as ten.
6. The tabukyot, a roll of tobacco with 1 or 2 ot value. Usually one or two tabukyot are required in any amot.
7. The mindit, the canine tooth of a dog. Such teeth serve as "small change". Four mindits are equivalent to one ot in value. The price of a dog is therefore one ot. Mindits are used to pay for items whose value is less than one ot. They may also be worn as a necklace. The wedding gift may require as many as 100 such fangs.

Besides these most important elements, various articles of lesser meaning to the Muyu are usually included in a wedding gift. Their values, too, are expressed in ot or in mindit.

The Muyu recognize two primary goals in the giving of the gift:

1. Part of the amot is a true bride price, a compensation for the loss of a woman or of rights in a woman. In this connection the Muyu mention the expenses of child rearing, especially the cost of pork in ot.
2. The remaining portion is there to create or maintain friendly relations between the two kin groups.

The first part of the amot concerns the bride. The second part merits a return present, as the following example from my

field notes illustrates. The gift in question consisted of  $36 + 24 = 60$  ot (Muyu count by sixes). The 24 were to be repaid by the bride's relatives. Ot of similar size and coloring were collected and placed alongside the presentation ot. When agreement had been reached, the ot were exchanged. The remaining 36 were munop, that is to say, "free", or "gift". But even though these particular ot were thus viewed as a true present, as something for which no reciprocation was required, it was nevertheless necessary to counter the munap with a yimini, a "starting capital". In this case the Yimini consisted of a pig valued at 12 ot, an animal which could be raised or bred to supply future ot.

Other items in the wedding gift similarly engender partly a counter gift and partly a yimini.

The size of the wedding gift depends upon a number of factors, including:

1. The size of the brideprice which was paid for the girl's mother. Normally the same price is asked for the daughter, at least insofar as ot are concerned.
2. The wealth and the associated prestige of the man who "gives the bride away". One particular village chief was renown for having achieved the maximum of 84 ot in every wedding gift with which he had been involved.
3. On the other hand, a "poor" man would demand a low wedding gift for his daughter or sister, since otherwise he might have difficulty in collecting the countergift.
4. The looks of the woman, but more importantly, her dedication to gardening and pig raising, play an important role.
5. The financial capacity of the prospective groom. One can ask more if the man or his relatives are wealthy.

6. If the woman has been married before, the value of the amot is usually lowered.

Clearly, the Muyu system of marriage is influenced by the existence of this medium of exchange—the ot and other valuables. It is this which has made possible the indirect exchange of women. There is also a connection between the highly developed trade and the ideal of seeking marriage partners in as many different lineages as is possible: such varied marital links assure an expanding trading sphere.

#### Pigbreeding as a source of income

In his article on the pig feast, Den Haan (1955:93) mentions "the cycle which holds the adat-life of the male Papua throughout these regions in a grip of iron, a cycle consisting of the entities pig, shell, woman". He also recognizes the raising of hogs as the major method for acquiring ot. Although there are other ways to gain the shells, swine husbandry is indeed the most important.

Pigs are not raised for home consumption, but to be sold for ot. Since care of the animals is usually left to the women, a man who has many wives can expect to raise more pigs and to accumulate more ot.

The value of a single piglet is 1 or 2 ot, depending upon whether the beast is male or female. Large adult hogs may bring as much as 30 ot. Evaluation is based upon the value of the beast's several parts: head, hind leg, etc. Muyu are constantly involved in the commerce of pigs and parts of pigs. Important occasions for selling the animals are the "pig feasts". Two types of feast can be distinguished: the awonbon, which is a modest affair at which one or two pigs, usually belonging to a single family, are butchered and sold; and the atatbon, a more



ambitious event involving more pigs and more guests. At the latter feasts, guests enter the festival area while dancing the ketmon. We are here concerned with the larger type of pig feast.

The atatbon is organized by a number of persons acting in concert for the purpose of acquiring a large number of ot at one time. Usually the organizers belong to the same lineage. Guests at the atatbon are required to pay cash for the pork served them. The organizers invite their trading relations to buy specific portions of the animal to be slaughtered. Those who consent to become guests, in turn invite their relatives to accompany them to the banquet, and sometimes to help pay for some of the meat. Feasts therefore may attract huge numbers of visitors, often from widely scattered settlements. Den Haan, in a fine description of such an affair (1955:93-106; 162-190) estimated the number of guests at one 15-pig atatbon to be about 3,000. A feast in Kawangtet in 1954, at which ten pigs were butchered, attracted visitors from 22 villages.

The number of pigs per feast varies considerably. In Kawangtet in 1954, four feasts were being organized to use three to ten pigs each. Den Haan reports that the average number of animals per feast in one year (1949) was 15. Even thirty-pig feasts have been reported.

Preparation for the affair requires a good deal of effort. Guest houses must be built, sago and other foods have to be collected, and large areas of forest have to be cleared for the guest lodgings and the banquet hall— which is also called atatbon. Furthermore, a huge plaza and its access roads must be cleared and cleaned to enable the guests to enter dancing the ketmon. Besides exertion, there are also expenses. Together, the hosts must buy some consecrated pigs which are used in a religious ceremony to ensure the event's success. Preparing a feast may therefore require years. The work tempo is never high, and may be interrupted for other important events such as the

funerals of relatives, collection of debts, fishing when the water in the rivers is low, visiting other pig feasts, and last but not least, the cares of everyday existence.

The Muyu themselves claim that the major reason for giving one of these celebrations is the cash which results from the sale of pork. In view of the very real difficulties which they have in collecting outstanding debts, this claim appears to be realistic. Even the religious ceremony referred to above appears to be aimed primarily at gaining cash from the guests.

The motive for participating in the feast as a guest is less obvious. To explain why people accept the invitation, one has to be aware of their existing obligations to the host. Even though Muyu trading has a predominantly commercial character, it nevertheless involves reciprocity. Most of the buyers (guests) were themselves purveyors (hosts) at earlier feasts, and they apparently feel obligated to help the present feast-giver dispose of his pork.

The following list of sales illustrates this reciprocal aspect. The seller, one of seven hosts, could point to a kinship connection with every one of the buyer guests. The list outlines the reasons he could sell a particular cut of pork at his atatbon:

1. To someone from Kawangtet: head, brisket, and two legs for 12 ot; the buyer was planning his own feast in which he would be able to count on the present host for 12 ot.
2. To another from Kawangtet: hind quarters for 8 ot; earlier a piece of meat had been bought from him for 7 ot.
3. To still another from Kawangtet: brisket for 6 ot; this person was a co-host for this feast and supplied our seller with a 6-ot brisket.

4. To someone from Minipko: hind leg for 3 ot; a piglet had been bought from this guest, but it has run away. He corrected the situation in this manner.
5. To someone from Woman: leg for 3 ot; buyer will hold his own feast and can then demand that the present host purchase a similar piece of meat.
6. To someone from Kanggim: head for 8 ot; at an earlier atatbon a head and legs were bought from him for 10 ot.
7. To another from Kanggim: hind quarters for 8 ot; this person bought a pig for the feast, and an 8-ot piece will be purchased from him in return.
8. To someone from Minipko: leg for 3 ot; a piglet bought from him had disappeared (see 4 above).
9. To someone from Kanggim: leg for 3 ot; a three-ot leg had been bought from him previously.
10. To someone from Jetemot: a whole pig for 12 ot; buyer is a relative of seller's wife, and volunteered for his act without having been involved in a previous transaction with seller.
11. To someone from Kawangtet: brisket for 6 ot; meat had been bought from him earlier, but he is also a brother-in-law who in this way helps assure the success of the feast.

The list shows that in all but one transaction, i.e., no. 10, previous trade relationships had been invoked. Muyu themselves view these affairs as part of the distributive system. The term they use is maman-maman, which is translated into local Indonesian dialect as baku-tukar, "to trade with each other". The pig feast fits completely into the network of existing trade relationships. The feast giver gains the

chance to realize all his economic potential and simultaneously to collect on his outstanding balance. The atatbon makes it possible for him to accumulate so much cash that he can again plunge into the general round of exchange.

The sales list is computed long before the festivities begin, as is the probable flow of the pork traffic between not only hosts and guests, but also among the guests themselves. Any invitation to a feast typically involves suggestions of this latter trade, illustrated with small bricks of sago cakes which represent the parts of the hogs to be slaughtered. I witnessed the invitation to the village chief of Kawangtet by one of his relatives from a neighboring village in the Mandobo area. The prospective host brought with him four sago sticks which represented three heads of 5 and 6 ot, and a 2-ot leg. The village chief was to buy the 5-ot head and the 2-ot leg, to give these to respectively the leader of the feast and the chief of the Mandobo village. He would be repaid with a 6-ot head, which he would pass on to those among his own villagers who were going to the feast. Finally, these people would then buy their own 6-ot head to give to their chief, the man being invited.

This trading of "options" on the pork closely resembles the actual food exchange. Immediately after the guests' arrival, the hosts distribute previously prepared sago cakes. These, too, are traded over and over again. The visitors bring their host dried meat and fish, and live snakes, for which they are compensated with sago and bananas.

The number of buyers on the organizer's sales list is small in proportion to the total number of visitors at the feast. The buyers invite their relatives to accompany them to the banquet, and divide the meat they bought among these without asking for recompense, unless there is a previous agreement to "sub-contract" for part of the pork. If they do not require payment, the buyers can expect a future treat of the same

value, when the people they have invited become the buyers at some other feast.

Another important reason for going to a pig feast, even for those who will neither buy nor be given any of the pork, is the possibility of taking part in the general trading of goods which always accompanies an atatbon. Any person going to a feast takes along some articles to trade. At a given point during the festivities, all those present walk around with their wares looking for customers. Meanwhile, they buy the goods which they themselves need. Trade items include ornaments, bows, reed skirts, penis sheaths, arrows, carrying nets, etc. The feast has now become a market in which true commercial exchange takes place: in these transactions kinship need play no part (Den Haan 1955:188, 189).

In spite of their heavily commercial attributes, atatbon may be realistically referred to as "feasts" because of the dances which the guests perform. They even enter the feast terrain dancing. These katmon dances express various themes such as fishing, a treelimb bobbing in a moving stream, fruit falling from a tree, war. At night all sorts of dances are performed on the feast terrain or in the banquet houses. The Muyu explain that "we do this to please our hosts, who have worked so hard to organize this feast". The dancing, the body decorations, the meeting between relatives who have not seen each other for some time, all give this market a festive character (Den Haan 1955:183, 186). Many people go to them just to look around, for sheer enjoyment.

At these affairs many groups of Muyu are thus brought together for a period of some days. Often mutually antagonistic individuals and groups attend the same feast, which can result in extreme tensions. Therefore, as soon as the guests have arrived, they are addressed by the leader of the feast or one of the co-hosts. Guests are warned not to pursue old feuds,

not to try to collect debts, and not to bother other people's women or to pilfer things. They are encouraged to help make the feast succeed. Feuding and debt collecting must be postponed until after the celebrations.

Pig feasts are of extreme importance to the whole of Muyu economy not only because they encourage large-scale trade, but because they speed the circulation of shell money. The frequency with which they take place is difficult to determine. According to my informants, a Muyu might hope to organize at most two feasts during his lifetime, but he might co-host a number of others. This seems to imply that a typical lineage organizes an atatbon about every five to ten years, and that a larger one would do so more frequently.

#### The Muyu as trader

Pig breeding, pig trading, and pig feasts are but manifestations of the complex pattern of commercial exchange in Muyu life. This trade is made possible through the media of exchange, of which the ot is the most important. In thought or action, the Muyu is constantly preoccupied with business. He is ceaselessly involved in the accumulation of money and valuables by various means: the sale of piglets, pork, tobacco, bows, stones and formulae with magical powers, or occupied with such mercenary enterprises as healing, murder, and the weddings of his women.

Because of this trade, many individuals, numerous families, scores of lineages, and sundry areas of Muyu land are part of a direct and indirect trading complex. Neighboring tribes are also caught up in this network. I do not know exactly how far these trade-relations extend, but the items involved attest that the indirect relationships often involve considerable distances.

Although there are notable general tendencies in this traffic, regional specializations have led to different trade routes and contacts for lineage and every family. The trade system exerts great influence on the kin and marriage systems. A Muyu employs his kinship relations in his business: his relatives are trading relations. Because of them he can engage in the long journeys that allow him to sell products for which he could find no buyers in his home locale. The true Muyu entrepreneur, the wealthy man, attempts to broaden his trade network as much as possible. Kinship reckoning is stretched to the limits of plausibility. Marriage with a woman from a far distant settlement is always welcomed, but weddings involving the sister of brother's wife are discouraged: it would be redundant to take a woman from a lineage with which amicable relations have already been cemented. In this way the Muyu trader can undertake long journeys by always going from one settlement where relatives will give him food and lodging to the next. These people sometimes accompany him further into territories beyond his own kinship range, to help him sell his wares among their relatives. A trader may travel some 30 or 40 km from his own settlement.

Each Muyu thus constructs his own, egocentric network of kinship relations in order to improve his mercantile possibilities. The trade nets of the members of a single lineage will overlap to a large degree, but not totally. Each individual's web is truly centered upon him, and his personal capabilities ultimately determine whether he will realize all the potentials which the kinship system offers.

If the journeys to and via relatives, and the trade with them, exhibit a strongly mercenary character, non-commercial factors also play a role in the exchange system. A skillful Muyu can exploit his kinship position in selling his products. Reciprocity is very important in such business.

One of the central features of commerce and the associated institution of shell money is the phenomenon of credit, the postponement of payment for goods or services received. Credit is viewed broadly and spread widely. Every Muyu knows not only the contents of his yowotan (a little woven bag in which shell money and valuables are kept), but exactly what claimable debts are due him, and what liabilities he still has. Debts arise when a wedding gift has not been completed in whole or in part, when trade goods are acquired on credit, or when required fees or fines have not been settled immediately.

To illustrate the complexity of credit relations, I offer the following outline of the credit-and-debt status at a given moment of one of my informants, the village chief of Yibi.

Uncollected debts:

Name of the debtor's village	Amount to be collected	Goods sold on credit
Jemtan	6 <u>ot</u>	iron ax
Kobontan	6 <u>ot</u>	iron ax
Inggimbit	6 <u>ot</u>	iron ax
Anggutbim (1 person)	2 <u>ot</u>	piglet
	4 <u>ot</u>	piglet
	2 <u>ot</u>	two matches
Arimko	2 <u>ot</u>	ax
Kurungkim (1 person)	4 <u>ot</u>	machete
	4 <u>ot</u>	<u>yirip</u> (dog-tooth ornament)
Kimki (1 person)	5 <u>ot</u>	machete
	1 <u>ot</u>	tobacco
Kunam	1 <u>ot</u>	chicken



Continued:

Name of debtor's village	Amount to be collected	Goods sold on credit
Yeteram	1 <u>ot</u>	string for a noose to catch pigs or cassowaries
Yetemot	2 <u>ot</u>	iron ax
Kawangtet	1 <u>ot</u>	bow
Nitrati (1 person)	6 <u>ot</u>	iron ax
	4 <u>ot</u>	iron ax
	1 <u>ot</u>	tobacco
	2 <u>ot</u>	<u>inam</u>
	2 <u>ot</u>	pig leg
Konontetput	5 <u>ot</u>	pig
Katanam	1 <u>ot</u>	pig head
Wonopoko	2 <u>ot</u>	loan
Yibi (various persons)	1 <u>ot</u>	pork
	4 <u>ot</u>	<u>yirip</u>
	1 <u>ot</u>	piglet
	1 <u>ot</u>	pork
	2 <u>ot</u>	pork
	1 <u>ot</u>	pork
	1 <u>ot</u>	pork

This list of outstanding obligations is followed by one of unpaid debts:

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Name of creditor's village	Amount to be paid	Goods bought on credit
Yibi	1 <u>ot</u>	pork
Komera	48 <u>ot</u>	wedding gift for 3rd wife
Timka	2 <u>ot</u>	pork
Kunam	2 <u>ot</u>	pork
Wonopoko	1 <u>ot</u>	pork
Yetemot	1 <u>ot</u>	pork

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Not every Muyu has such an elaborate series of debts to be paid or collected, but practically everyone has a number of similar relationships. Credit relations are mostly found within the bounds of kinship, just as trade relations are.

Because of credit, the amount of money in use is greater than the supply of ot in Muyu territory. There is a certain elasticity in the flow of money. Nevertheless, it can happen (as when debts are forcibly collected) that a person will try to force collection of the ot owed him in order to pay his own debts, starting a chain reaction.

At a death, the debits and credits of the deceased must be settled, if possible. The inheritors often have to engender new debts so that those of the deceased can be cleared. Claims can become lost if the inheritor is not aware of a debt, or if the creditors do not insist. With elderly persons, repayment is therefore postponed as long as possible. Also, dubious claimants sometimes show up at a funeral.

If the wedding gift has not been completely paid off, the bride-giver can claim the wedding gift for the woman's daughter. Other debts may also be translated into claims on a wedding gift. The village chief of Kawangtet helped pay the debts of someone who had died, and was therefore to receive the future wedding gift for the dead man's then 14-year-old daughter.

The collection of debts entails much patience, time, travel. A Muyu must constantly exhort his debtors to fulfill their obligations. Sometimes one will sell his debtor something else in order to collect for the debt, also. If his creditor is a close relative and a bachelor, a debtor will try to postpone payment with the excuse of having to help him sooner or later with the arrangement of a wedding gift.

Muyu point out that one must be strong to collect one's debts. Women and old men cannot do it, and lose many claims. If necessary, if his patience has worn out or if his claim threatens to be lost, a creditor must be able to back up his rights with the threat of physical violence, to force payment.

#### The role of money in the maintenance of social organization

Muyu culture does not incorporate an institution capable of the authoritative resolution of conflict. Of course there are some common-sense opinions about what sort of behavior will cause a conflict, and what sort of behavior is to be expected from an injured party, but professional mediating roles such as are found in a native court simply do not exist. This lack is a function of the broader social organization. Within the lineages, families to a large extent develop their individual relationships. There are no coordinating organizations. In general, conflict occurs between members of different lineages, but they also originate within the kinship group. Even in the latter

case, the kayepak or old men (also translatable as "rich men") have no formal jurisdiction. Ideal culture denies the very existence of any intra-lineage factionalism, however.

In any event, conflict focuses first of all on the disturbed relationship between two individuals. The injured party must personally take the initiative in seeking satisfaction, either in the form of revenge, or of a fine.

The most important sources of conflict are the disputes over women, over money -- especially debts -- and those resulting from illness and death. Disagreement about money and valuables plays an important part in all of this. Problems about women, for example, usually concern the value of the female in terms of cash and commodities, rather than her intrinsic attributes. Premarital sexual intercourse is forbidden. If it is discovered, the man has to marry the girl. Should he refuse, a serious conflict will result: he has damaged the property of the girl's next-of-kin; the wedding gift which can be expected for her will be considerably less because of his behavior. In this sense, this type of case is essentially a financial dispute.

On the other hand, the value of an expected wedding gift can be increased if it becomes clear that sexual intercourse has taken place between an engaged couple. Furthermore, the breach of an engagement by the girl or by her parents brings them in conflict with the ex-fiancé, and will lead to his claim for compensation.

Disputes about ot and other valuables are the main source of conflict in Muyu life, but money is also the main instrument for conflict resolution. The demand for reciprocated payment has been institutionalized throughout Muyu culture. It is a form of exchange of treasure to prevent the threat of severed relationships. Consider, for example, the case of a person dying on his way to a pig feast. The host is held responsible.

The deceased's relatives point out that "he died because he came because you invited him." Probably one of the feast givers will have to pay an indemnity, a pitaYam. Its amount may vary greatly: composition and size of the payment are as difficult to agree upon as those of the wedding gift. Typically, 24 to 72 ot are demanded, plus a number of inam. The wam, the Yirip, and the pig may all be brought into the suit.

Such payments must be returned in kind. In Kawangtet, the countergift is made fairly promptly, but in Yibi the return payment is not given until either the giver or the receiver dies. In the latter area, only a portion of the original gift is returned. In Kawangtet, the total compensatory gift must be matched.

If a pig damages someone's garden, its owner is presented with a demand for redress, usually in the amount of one or two ot. This is a true fine, and will not be returned. Similar fines are assessed for the theft of food from a garden, or of game from a trap.

Non-reciprocated payments are also demanded when an engagement is broken. Throughout the period of betrothal, gifts are exchanged between the two sets of prospective in-laws. Relationships are cemented. Unilateral breach of the alliance forces the other party to suffer damages: time and energy have been spent in vain. Furthermore, the party has been shamed. The size of the fine (konkopo) depends upon the amount of wealth which has been exchanged already, and may therefore vary between three and 18 ot, perhaps enriched with some inam or other valuables.

When two groups are at war, peace can be concluded through the payment of a fine or other compensation. This usually occurs when one of the two parties no longer controls sufficient wealth to continue the fight or to avenge its dead. The

opposition is then asked to indemnify each unavenged victim for a price ranging from 30 to 60 ot. This payment "replaces the killed person." But as long as a Muyu possesses sufficient ot and other wealth, he is not likely to consider any cessation of hostilities. Peace, in any case, implies that someone has paid a fine.

Ot and other valuables can be used to enlist helpers in a conflict. Many vengeance-murders are committed by hired assassins. The payment for such killings varies. An analysis of the available court cases for 1947 indicates that the top price for a hired killer was "24 ot plus 2 inam," while another murderer had been hired for a mere two ot.

Typically, the vengeance seeker's nearest relatives are the first to be asked to kill his enemy, for they usually share the retaliatory mood. But it also happens that kinsmen of the target are pressed into service, under threat of their own lives. Such relatives are less likely to be suspected of evil intent, and are therefore in a better position to carry out the deed. It is also possible to hire someone who lives along the route which the victim travels, if his itinerary is known. Sometimes a whole chain of middlemen develops between the avenger and the actual instrument of his vengeance.

In this fashion, a Muyu hell-bent on revenge can organize a war. In essence this is still a murder-by-hire, but a larger group of men is invited to participate in an attack upon the enemy's house or settlement. Motives for warfare are the same as those for murder. Wars usually involve a number of persons who seek revenge upon the same man. The campaign is financed cooperatively. Invitations may spread from one lineage to another, and groups from great distances may be brought together.

The cooperative aspect may extend to the request that the murderers remove the victim's body and eat it, in this way

fulfilling the ultimate demands of vengeance. The hiring patrons then receive a predetermined portion of the corpse, in reciprocation for the money which they had to pay the murderers in the first place. Others who wish to avenge themselves upon the victim may afterwards obtain their own piece of the body in exchange of some ot, inam, or stone axes.

The rich Muyu has more opportunity to hire assassins and to wreak vengeance. He not only enjoys prestige because of his wealth, but he is feared. This apprehension, in turn, makes it easier for him to collect his debts, means that he will be treated with deference, and that he will be asked to help with payments, if necessary. In short, among the Muyu as elsewhere, a wealthy man is a powerful man.

In this manner the institutions of money and social control are closely interwoven.

#### Commercial aspects of gardening

All Muyu territory is divided into parcels and plots of ground belonging to individual owners. The lineage as such has no communal land. As soon as a man dies, his fields are divided among his sons. Individual possession of land thus simplifies the transfer of property rights. When societies such as this also have a strong monetary system, then all the prerequisites for strongly commercial land transactions are present. And indeed they occur among the Muyu. Although they are not frequent, the village chiefs of both Kawangtet and Yibi knew some examples.

In Kawangtet, at the time of my research, there was talk about the sale of a field. Buyer and seller belonged to different lineages. In Yibi, four transactions were recounted, each involving prices between two and five ot. In every case,

a roll of tobacco was part of the asking price.

Land prices are influenced especially by the number of sago palms which the field bears. These palms are planted along every creek and watercourse, and constitute the most important cultivation. Usually only sago-bearing land is bought. In Kawangtet I was told that plots with many sago palms could bring as much as 12 ot and one wam, while those with few of the trees might go for six ot and one wam. In Yibi, a field without sago was bought for 2 ot, 1 yirip, 1 roll of tobacco, and a machete.

Sale of land is a matter which concerns only its individual owner; other members of his lineage are not involved. There is thus agreement between individual property rights and commercial land transactions.

Apart from such sales, money plays almost no part in gardening. Every family gardens for its own consumption. If someone wants to develop a garden on land belonging to somebody else, the owner's permission must be obtained, but there is no need for payment. At harvest, the owner is usually presented with two or three carry-net loads of the garden's produce.

The only occasion requiring payment is the felling of a sago palm. If a Muyu lacks sufficient trees he may try to buy a palm from someone for an ot. But for the forest products which he collects, or for the game that he hunts on the land of another, no price is exacted. As certain products become scarcer, however, I expect that money will be demanded for such privileges, also.

#### The ot in religious thought and behavior

In view of the ot's implications for Muyu culture, it is to be expected that it involves an important aspect of religious consideration. As has already been noted, the origin of the



ot is described in the mythology about the culture-hero Kamberap. The consecrated pigs or yawarawon, which have ritual significance in the pig feast and elsewhere, are also traced back to Kamberap.

Boys are initiated into secret myths and rituals which deal primarily with the yawarawon. As part of the initiation, an ot is stored in the boy's yowotan, his money bag, along with a dog tooth and a piece of yawarawon meat. Later this ot will be used to buy a small yawarawon which the boy then raises. The importance of the ceremony lies in the fact that no youth can sell pigs for ot until he has undergone this ritual.

Ceremony to enlist the aid of supernaturals has been developed especially in regards to the pig feasts. The Muyu here envision two effects: the main one is the acquisition of a great number of ot through a quick sale of the meat and through cash payments for the parts of the swine; the second hope is that because of this success there will be enough food for all those present.

The ritual slaughter of consecrated pigs is one of the most important Muyu ceremonies. The event begins with the planting of the sacred tree in the front part of the feast house. This tree occupies the center of supernatural powers. From it originate the forces which attract ot. A special official performs various rites designed to maintain and strengthen the supernatural influences which will make the feast a success. He has a reserved place near the sacred tree, and gets to kill the first pig. The arrow used for this is also ritually manipulated. From the first hog to be shot emanates a special power, iptem, which affects the other pigs, all of which leads to enthusiastic buying and to cash payments.

A Muyu also expects his deceased relatives to help him increase his wealth. The ghost (tawat) of a rich man is especially sought. Such tawat are called benep, which is also

the term for crocodile. Usually the ghost of a father or grandfather plays the benep part. Even before his death such a wealthy man may announce that he will aid his son or grandson. But it may also occur that his special protection is not noted until after the old man's death. Benep, unlike the usual ghosts, do not journey to the afterworld. In Yibi it is said that they stay behind with the consent of the Keeper of the Dead. One can become rich through the aid of a benep. He warns when enemies plot against one's life. He protects one's yowotan and the valuables in it, but becomes very angry if the yowotan is allowed to become empty. No Muyu will spend his very last ot, therefore. The benep manipulates the hearts of buyers and debtors so that the ot will come flowing in. He is also angered if the gardens are neglected, or when such foods as fruit are wasted.

Each person has his own benep. Sometimes one inherits one's father's. Using a benep's name needlessly is a quick way to arouse his fury. When a benep is angry, he seizes the soul of the offender or of one of his relatives, and that person sickens. There are special treatments for such events. The benep may also leave and refuse to help any more. When someone stays poor, when his pigs run away and his gardens do not flourish, then it is clear that his benep has gone.

There is another belief about the link between ghosts and ot. This one concerns the idea that there are Muyu who can see the ghosts of the dead, the tawat. Such seers are used to track down murderers. They can request the tawat to give them pork or stones. When such items are taken back into the profane world, they become transformed into inam and ot. Muyu who do not raise many pigs or tobacco, who have few daughters, but nevertheless have many ot, are understood to have acquired their possessions in this manner.

A special shell called an otkap is also used to attract the ot. Such shells are bought from people in the upper territories for three or four ot, and are kept in the jowotan. The otkap exercises its magnetism in such a fashion that, again, debts are easily collected and goods are effortlessly sold. Stones called komocanok are used for the same purpose. According to Muyu belief, the Komocanok are the nails of Komot, who is the highest figure in the religious representations of this culture.

Although the Muyu know that the acquisition of wealth is irrevocably linked with hard work and diligence, they hold that the correct approach and employment of supernatural powers and beings is also necessary. An extremely important aspect of religious thought is concentrated on the acquisition of wealth in the form of ot. In this context, the existence of revitalization movements designed to acquire ot is not surprising.

### III. Revitalization Movements and Shell Money

In 1950 and 1952, two revitalization movements took place in Muyu territory. In derivation and purpose these movements evidenced characteristics which force us to place them outside of the category of Cargo Cults or other movements based upon the influence of Western culture. Admittedly this influence was noted in the course which these movements took: the first one actually resulted in governmental intervention. It is also true that certain elements within the movements had alien antecedents, but these played a minor role. Throughout, the dominant character was aboriginal.

The movement of 1950 originated with one Terenem, who lived in the village of Benkape (just north of Woropko). Terenem's younger brother, who had been dead for quite some time, appeared to him in a dream and placed an ot in Terenem's right hand.

The spirit told him that he must put this ot with his other money. Afterwards he was to find a snake (the nimbin) and cook it. The fat rendered from the snake was to be rubbed into the pouch wherein the ot were kept. Terenem was to wait one month, and was then to open his yowotan. The one ot which his dead brother had given him would have increased to five. After two months there would be ten ot, etc., "so that you will have no more difficulty in finding ot." Terenem did as his younger brother's ghost told him, with —he claimed— the promised results.

At first he only told his older brother Indep about all this, but after meeting with success he spread the word of his good fortune far and wide. At a pig feast in Woropko he climbed the roof of one of the buildings (the usual speaker's platform) and explained how he had acquired so many ot "without theft, without murder for profit, without pig feasts, without... etc."

Those who would also like to gain ot could take instruction from him. The first lessons were given at that pig feast, and included among other things the dancing of the amagop. (In this dance the body is allowed to move and tremble, even to fall, as one is possessed by the spirits of the dead. One utters whistling sounds which are the language of the spirits). These lessons were to be repeated several times. Eventually the students would also achieve visitations by ghosts, after which they would be able to transform pebbles into ot. For these lessons, each student paid Terenem one ot, which means that Terenem collected a considerable amount of cash.

The instructorship did not remain limited to Terenem. Persons who had already been instructed, passed themselves off as teachers even before they had achieved any results themselves. The movement spread throughout the villages of Katanam, Komera, Kwemdubenon (now Tembutkin), Woropko, and Kimkokawip (now Amupkim).

It was halted when the Government intervened, arresting the leaders and a large number of participants.

The second movement began in 1951 or 1952, and ran its course without outside intervention. It started with two men, Jeknon and Kawon, who came from settlements in the Australian area to the east of Jemtan village.

They and their followers also knew how to produce ot. Fruit called mongkapyop was to be collected in the forest, in sago ba skets or the bark of the Kawat tree. A bivouac was to be built in the jungle, and the collected mongkapyop were to be taken there. Through certain supernatural powers, the mongkapyop were to be transformed into ot. The men who would do the actual producing of the ot had to subject themselves to certain taboos. Near Yibi, Jeknon himself held a meeting during which fruit was to be turned into ot. The people who had brought their fruit stayed outside of the bivouac, which was completely sealed off. But first, of course, they had to pay: Jeknon and his aids (some of whom came from Jemtan) demanded 12 ot, 6 machetes, and a six-ot pig. Through the action of the former constable of Yibi, all these goods were returned: under his leadership the people threatened violence when the mongkapyop refused to become ot.

Long before this meeting, however, people from Yibi had invested their wealth to make the event possible. Men had come from Jemtan and Kurungkin to collect the fee. The collectors were to return later with the many ot which would result from the fruit. All together, Yibi had given six pigs' worth for this goal. Because of this fiasco, the village chief of Yibi still had claims against someone from Kurungkim. The debt consisted of 3 ot for a machete which had been collected, and one yirip or one inam for a yirip which had been turned over to the collectors. The mandor of Yibi had loaned four machetes to

people in Jemtan, for the same reason, and he still had not received any compensation, either. By 1954, the movement had already run its course. Probably it did not hold the interest of the Muyu for more than a year or two, and died from lack of results. But before its demise it penetrated Muyu territory as far as Woman, Kakuna, and Mokbiran.

In Kawa ngtet there were several people who had taken lessons in the art. The names of twelve men were listed in this context. These students of the Movement, having carried their nets of fruit to the jungle bivouac, first butchered two pigs (worth seven and ten ot) for their teachers. Eight men were involved in this aspect. Most of the goods traded for these pigs had not been returned or paid for by 1954.

In Kawangtet, the actual origin of the movement was not known. People supposed that those who began it were capable of contacting ghosts and received the ot from these tawat. Such are the powers of the angganemkukmen, the seers of ghosts.

Economic factors are clearly important in these revitalization movements. The central supernatural elements involved are the beliefs that contact with the dead is possible, and that their spirits can and will help realize the ideals of the living. The movements are thus aimed at fulfilling the central aspiration of Muyu culture: wealth in the form of ot. We may therefore state that these movements express the central theme (Linton 1936:443) of Muyu culture.

#### IV. The Ot's Special Position Among the Media of Exchange

It must now be obvious that the ot enjoys a special place among the items which Muyu use as media of exchange. In the first place, the value of other goods is expressed in ot, which therefore functions as the standard. In the wedding gift the

ot is central: a question about the size of this gift is usually first answered in terms of the number of ot.

One striking fact is that the other valuables in the wedding gift are intrinsically useful or ornamental, but that the ot lacks these functions. The only time that ot are worn is during the ketnon dance, when the guests enter the terrain of a pig feast. At that time some of the celebrants may dance the anotang. The leader of the anotang dance wears around his head the otnong, band of finely knotted string onto which many ot have been tied. If because of the great number of the ot, the band is very long, its ends may be wrapped around the body. In this way, wealth in ot can be displayed. Sometimes the otnong constitutes a wedding gift collection which will soon change hand. Or it may be the combined proceeds of an earlier pig feast whose various co-hosts are the co-owners of the exhibited ot.

Unlike other articles in the wedding gift which do not have an obvious utilitarian value, the ot apparently has lost whatever meaning as decoration it may once have had. Its single and paramount implication is that of being a medium of exchange. Apparently that is also the reason for its inclusion in the wedding gift.

It is possible, however, to conclude transactions with other valuables, even in the wedding gift. This was demonstrated in the sale of gardens and the hiring of murderers. But ot are used much more frequently and generally for such business.

The ot can be called "money" even when we use as our criteria the functions which money plays in our own economies. Other valuables used in transactions may have some of these attributes, but none have all. For this reason I have consistently referred to them by the more general term "valuables". An exception is the mindip, the dog tooth, which

clearly functions as "small change".

V. Shell Money and Western Money

The interest of government and mission in the ot:  
an historical review

The earliest notation on the ot's importance to the Muyu, as far as I am aware, is an entry from the diary of the Assistant officer of the Dutch Civil Service at Ninati, in April 1937. It mentions the drive for ot as one of the explanations for the fact that the Muyu have little zest for moving to the officially sanctioned villages. The Assistant writes that the ot form the true wealth of the Muyu.

Ot attain a more remarkable position in the diaries and reports dating from the period between late 1941 and late 1942. The Assistant, who ruled from Ninati during this time, used the ot's central position in Muyu culture to achieve the goals of the government. He levied ot-fines against those who remained outside the village at night without permission, and demanded guarantees payable in ot from all those who had not finished building their domiciles in the village. He further made fines payable in ot for the commission or incitement of murder.

In 1946, the ot again attracted the attention of state and church. At a meeting in August of that year between the Chief of subdivision Upper Digoel, the government Assistant, and the missionary for Muyu territory, the decision was made to levy an ot-fine. This fine was to be imposed whenever pigs ran free in a village. The constables would shoot the pig, and if its owner wanted the carcass back, he would have to give ten ot as payment for the bullet.

The Chief of the subdivision requested the Assistant Resident in Merauke to sanction this rule on the grounds that (1) it would



ban pigs from the villa ges, and (2) it would remove the ot from circulation because of its various disadvantages: magic, murder for profit, personal feuds, and resistance to the use of Western money among the Muyu.

This request caused the Assistant Resident to have the ot investigated more fully before he committed himself to a decision. He wrote the subdivision Chief (letter no. 871/30, dated March 22, 1947) that according to earlier reports the ot plays an important role (buying tobacco and pork, wedding gifts, conflict resolution, hiring assassins). To withdraw it from circulation appears to him to be rash, since such an act may have unwanted results such as unpopularity of the government, great deflation of the remaining ot, the impossibility of settling cases of customary law, and even the possibility of population dispersal to the source of the ot (here meaning the mouth of the Fly River). The subdivision Chief was asked to investigate this further, and to inquire what the mission's views were.

The latter request provoked an extensive letter (no.7/BT/47) from the then missionary, which elaborates the objections which the mission had against the ot institution. According to this letter, there would be no objection at all if the ot were merely a medium of exchange, an equivalent to the government's money, but this is not the case. Because the ot is so deeply involved in the personal and social life of the Muyu, the mission views the shell money as one of the dominant factors behind Muyu failure to accept civilization. The mission has therefore no choice but to attempt to lessen the influence of the ot.

The following disadvantages of the ot are named:

1. The ot is the primary payment in the hiring of murderers.
2. Unpaid ot-debts lead to revenge murders.
3. Possession of ot furthers polygyny.
4. The unmarried state of many young men is caused by

their lack of ot. Wealth in Western money or Western goods simply doesn't help them.

5. Finally, number 4 leads many youths to refuse to work. The great importance of ot forces everyone to gather as many of the shells as is possible, often through unacceptable means. This is evidenced in:

1. Forced marriages.
2. Blackmail, for instance by:
  - a. entering into sham engagements, at whose breach a compensation is demanded.
  - b. threats to sue through the government court unless a ransom is paid.
3. Hiring out for murder.
4. Pig raising, which carries with it:
  - a. complaints from garden owners if the pigs are raised within the village.
  - b. absenteeism from village and school if the pigs are raised outside of the village.
  - c. the organizing of pig fea sts, resulting in still more truancy from village and school.

On the basis of these objections, the mission feels that the ot must be abolished, and makes the following suggestions:

1. Gradual withdrawal of the ot from circulation by:
  - a. levying ot-fines on persons and collectives, even on villages.
  - b. demanding guarantees, with the possibility in mind that these will not be repaid if the stipulations are not fulfilled.
  - c. payment of the wedding gift in ot to the government, which will then pay the parties concerned in money. It is simultaneously suggested that wedding gifts be settled at 30 guilders in money and 20 guilders

in goods.

- d. payment of taxes in ot
  - e. making the leader of a pig feast pay an "amusement tax" in ot.
2. The government may decree that all ot are to be surrendered. Each ot will be exchanged for one guilder.
  3. Instigate inflation of the ot through mass import of the shells.

Although I am not familiar with further correspondence on this matter, it appears that the Assistant Resident decided against any attempt to repeal the ot. There is, in any case, no evidence in the archives of any such action. The same subdivision Chief did, in 1948, reinstate the ot-fine (for village absenteeism and the keeping of pigs in the village). His diary for January 1949 shows that the purpose of these fines was not the removal of the ot from circulation, but their resale for Western money.

During the enactment of Administrative policy in 1952, the ot again came up for discussion. In a letter (no. 354/11/1952, dated March 14, 1952) to the mission for subdivision Upper Digul, the size of the wedding gift is held to be an impediment to the development of a healthy marriage system. No particular attitude towards the ot was evidenced.

In its answering letter (May 4, 1952), the mission linked the institution of ot with:

1. Murder for revenge
2. Marriage abuses: forced marriage, polygyny, and child marriage.

Nothing was said about the desirability of repealing the ot.

In the position paper which the Chief of the subdivision composed after his conference with the mission, the ot is treated

in more detail. It is noted that

"... practically all offences and abuses in this territory can be traced back to one denominator: the ot. Shell money is the final and most profound cause for murder, magic, polygyny, child marriage and forced marriage. Throughout the lifeway of the population of these regions, the ot is the axis around which everything turns. Therefore this primitive coinage, although it has no inherent disadvantages, has become one of the most destructive factors in the social organization".

In this paper too, nothing is said about withdrawing the ot.

In 1954, when I began my studies in Muyu territory, the then Chief of the subdivision listed the institution of shell money as one of the greatest hindrances to government. In this connection he mentioned:

1. Difficulties in regulating marriage because of the wedding gift.
2. Related to this, the possibility of hiring assassins.
3. Resistance to the introduction of Western money. Pigs and chickens, for instance, are simply not available without ot.
4. The various fines and indemnities as for false engagements and cases of death en route, to which absurdly complicated reasoning is often applied.

The instructions regarding the ethnological research which I was to perform in 1954 charged me with investigating "the possibilities of overthrowing the tyranny of shell money". Here, obviously, the opinion was held that such tyranny existed, and that it was not desirable.

On the basis of the results of this research, the Governor gave orders not to attempt to limit the use of shell money, not to hasten its replacement with Western money (letter no. 19393/54/XIII, dated December 17, 1954).

In their conversation with government officials, the missionaries in Muyu territory in 1955 also let it be known that they would not prize the abolition of shell money. They had arrived at the conclusion that the ot in the wedding gift was an important factor in favor of marital stability.

#### Muyu conceptions about ot and Western money

Although there has never been an attempt to abolish the ot, the Muyu have good reason for seeing its position as being threatened. The measures which the Assistant officer of the Civil Service took in the period of late 1941 to late 1942, led the Muyu to the deduction that the ot were slowly being collected. Many ot were indeed removed from circulation through the levying of fines and the demand for securities. These were stored in the governmental office at N inati, but their total number is not known.

A general unrest resulted from this perceived threat to the shell money. This is evidenced in part by the juridical documents concerning the murder of a police constable in 1942. The murderer gave as the motive for his act the discontent in his village and, according to his statement, in all the villages. This discontent was the result of the rules of the government's Assistant. As specific grievances were enumerated (1) the conditions of the prison at Ninati, (2) the levying of ot-fines and securities, and (3) police brutality by some of the constables. Three witnesses, all former policemen (two had served in Sorong and one was still with the Mindiptana police force), also testified that there was general dissatisfaction at that time because of the seizure of so many ot.

In Kawangtet, a direct link is seen between the constable's murder and the levy of the ot. In Yibi, too, one of the arguments against the Assistant was that he confiscated ot.

According to these informants, people were afraid that he would withdraw all ot. They also pointed out that there was no point of origin, and hence no replacement, for the ot.

According to an informant from Yibi, when the Apostolic Vicar met with the village chiefs during his 1951 visit to Muyu territory, he tried to talk the Muyu into abolishing the ot. This is repeated here only because of the reaction which my informant described. Supposedly, a mandor (assistant village chief) of Ninati answered the Vicar that there was not enough government money yet, and asked how they could abolish the ot under the circumstances.

The teacher at Mindiptana, who lived there during the period in question, told that at that time some of the population of this village made an attempt to escape to the Fly area. Their motivation was the fear that the ot would be repealed.

Various Assistant officers of the Civil Service have asked the Muyu, especially the village heads, if it would be possible to give up the ot.

Because of all this, the Muyu are deeply worried. During my 1954 research, I tried to measure the attitude of the population about the restriction or abolition of the ot. In order to ascertain such sentiments experimentally, a number of people were told that in Sorong some young Muyu wanted to destroy the ot. As the following report demonstrates, the agreement between my respondents was remarkable.

The village chief of Mindiptana, about 45 years old: The Assistant in the 1945-1949 period asked us if the ot could be abolished. The younger ones thought that it was a good idea, until the elders asked what was to be used to pay for women. It could not be done yet. "Kompeni masih jauh" (Malay: "the government is still far away"). By this is meant that there is not enough Western money or Western goods available yet.

The mandor of Imko, aged about 35: We cannot get rid of the ot yet. Wedding gifts must be paid in ot. When there is enough money, we can use it and the ot as equivalents. Then we can do away with the other wedding gift goods. But the ot and the inam have to be kept, they have no origin, no place of derivation.

The village chief of Kanggewot, about 42: It is not possible to get rid of the ot. When we get a Chinese store here, and when there is enough money, when we can build houses like the teachers have and there is enough kitchen equipment so that the fire is no longer needed inside the house, then we can do away with the ot. (At this time, the Chinese store in Mindiptana had not yet been opened).

The village chief of Yiptem, about 41: It is not possible to throw the ot away. People got rid of the stone axes when there were enough iron axes and choppers. But there still is not enough government money, and if we get rid of the ot, what shall we use? The ot can be gradually replaced. Already the people who follow the village chief of Kawangtet sell pigs partly for ot and partly for money.

The village chief of Kakuna, about 45: The ot cannot be abolished yet, but people are trying to talk the elders into allowing the wedding gift to be paid half and half, in ot and in money.

A young man of about 25 from Kawangtet: The village people say that when progress is made, when there are automobiles, airplanes and stores, when everybody has clothing and eats well, in short, when we live like the foreigners, then we can do away with the ot. But there is nothing yet, and we want pork, so we need ot for trading.

The village chief of Kawangtet, about 43: He believes that eventually the ot will be replaced by money, just as the stone

axes fell to iron axes and machetes. Things are already headed that way. He hears it said that people collect ot for a son's marriage, but that they also sell their pigs for money so that they can buy clothing and other Western articles. He has heard about this from Kawangtet to Mindiptana.

The village chief and the mandor of Yibi, respectively 39 and 31: The ot cannot be abolished yet. First there must be a Chinese store in Ninati, which can buy surplus sago, kladi, and pigs, so that we have the money to buy in the store. The wam and the yirip are no longer wanted, but the ot and the inam retain their value because you can buy pigs with them. And people won't accept government money for wedding gifts, because you can't buy pigs with it. Older people don't understand money, and won't accept it. In the villages where there is no teacher, people won't take money either. They say: "What is it, a leaf or is it paper?" And when the Muyu who are used to money then explain that this is government's money and that you can buy things in the store with it, they still won't accept it. The ot, the inam, and the pig stay tied together. Maybe our children will ask money for the wedding gift.

It must be noted here that in former times the Muyu had almost no opportunity to earn money, since all sorts of services were paid in tobacco or matches. The government Assistant from 1946 to 1949 had also asked if there were no way to do without the ot. The people then, too, had told him that there was not enough money yet, and that when there was enough, the ot might "sink" and remain "below" government money.

Two Kawangtet men of about 26 years of age: For the wedding gifts for our children we ask only money. One of them adds: I am now collecting ot for my own wedding gift (he was recently married), but in the future I only want to bother with money.

An ex-cathechist from Metomka, about 29: People will get



rid of the ot as soon as there is enough money, just like they did away with the stone axes when there were enough iron ones. Now it cannot be done.

Finally, the opinion of an ex-constable of police in Yibi, age about 32: The young have no spiritual attachment to the ot, but the elders aren't used to money yet. But if they had to pay taxes, they would start hunting for money left and right, maybe for days at a time. The young do not save ot except for the wedding gift. You could get money by selling pigs partly for money, partly for ot. There is still too little money in Muyu territory. This is so because there are no market products to be sold. People would like to see a city "opened up", where carpenters and machine operators etc. could work, then there would be money in circulation and it could get into the hands of third parties.

Muyu who had been working in Sorong for some years when my research took me there in 1953, mentioned the existence of the ot as one of their objections to the lifeway of Muyu. The ot were in the hands of the older generation. The elders insisted on ot for the wedding gift, while refusing to accept government money. These young men wanted to see the ot destroyed. Nevertheless, they could see that because of the scarcity of Western money, the ot could not be repealed or destroyed yet.

The Resident at Merauke wrote me (in his letter no. I/1/PZ/5647, dated January 6, 1955) that he had asked the klapalima village chief for an opinion on the ot. This chief replied that he and many other Muyu who had lived a long time in Merauke definitely no longer prized possession of the ot.

People who settled in Mindiptana in 1955 and early 1956 from other villages in Muyu territory no longer sought the ot, according to an informant who is one of them. The ot is not a universal medium of exchange, after all, but good only in Muyu

land. Anybody can make money, but only the rich can get ot. Most of these people need ot only once, to get married, but after that they are interested only in manipulating Western money. If the government made a rule, they'd get rid of it altogether.

In areas other than Mindiptana there is also an urge to "push the ot into the background". But the chief of Mindiptana supposedly obstructs such moves: he wants to maintain the ot alongside of the money. Muyu who have recently come to Mindiptana accuse the older residents of not setting a good example.

A constable from Warumgi was asked by an old man from his village, after the information officer (a Papua from Biak) visited Muyu territory in 1956, what decision had been taken about the ot. According to his story, the policeman replied that the use of the ot had almost been outlawed, but that the village chief of Mindiptana had been able to forestall that possibility. (This was a distortion of the facts in the case). The man from Warumgi thought the village chief a capital fellow: "For how are we in the Uplands to get money? What am I supposed to ask for my daughter's wedding?" According to the constable, this is the general attitude of the people in the upper territory. They do say, however, that if there were ever a government post in Woropko, and if there were a store there, then they could get rid of the ot. But Mindiptana was too far away: They could not walk that far.

At the opening of the cooperative store in Mindiptana, a leading figure among the Muyu who had settled there made a speech in the native language. This was later explained as having been aimed at the elders "who still don't understand what is happening". He urged them to stop thinking exclusively in terms of ot, and to pay some attention to the acquisition of money. This celebration was not a pig feast for the purpose of ot, he reminded them, but a feast for the cooperative store, whose

purpose was money. They need not get rid of the wedding gift valuables yet, but they ought no longer to be so preoccupied with that sort of thing. As soon as there was enough money, the village chiefs would discuss further what to do about the ot. Ot and other valuables used to make too much trouble. But now "Mother Queen Juliana" was here, and so was the government, and they would give leadership. He also pointed out that spiritual life was important. The speech was illustrated with representation of the Virgin Mary, a paper guilder, and an ot.

From the foregoing it appears that there is among the younger Muyu a wish to replace the ot with Western money. Especially among the youth of Sorong and Merauke, and to a lesser extent among those living in Mindiptana, this desire is very strong. Among the elders, however, there are many who fear the consequences of prohibiting the ot. They know that money is not yet plentiful enough to replace the ot. Finally, there is a group of conservative elders who are wholeheartedly loyal to the shell money.

#### Penetration of Western money into the Muyu economy

Before Western money is accepted, it must fulfill two prerequisites:

1. it must be known and trusted.
2. it must be exchangeable for desirable goods.

If we begin with point 2, then we must first know what the Muyu consider "desirable goods". It is also necessary to ascertain to what extent such goods are important to the Muyu.

From the very first contact, iron axes, knives, and machetes found an enthusiastic welcome. These are the goods which the bird hunters exchanged for captured birds of paradise. But even in those days, clothing was accepted by the Papuan hunters

as payment (Military Memoirs, August 12, 1927). In the thirties, when Muyu from Assike regularly came to Tanah Merah to work, they were rewarded with axes, machetes, tobacco, and clothing such as short pants and undershirts. Military Memoirs (January 6, 1933) state that "... the Papua must be called vain, for they love to parade about in some article of apparel, being especially fond of hats and caps". In his report of a military patrol (23 May - 12 June 1935), the commanding officer writes: "Ninati has become a trading center since the Mission is there. People come from as far as Ok Biriem and the British border to trade and to work in Ninati, only to vanish after a while, back to their settlements". As trade items for the offered tubers, sago, and bananas, "fish hooks and that sort of thing" were given. The report of the Chief of subdivision Upper Digul, dated 19 December 1944 to 22 February 1945, similarly notes the Muyu predilection for certain goods. Especially meat and fish in any form are wanted, as well as fish hooks and matches. Mirrors are less appreciated and "the stage of beads has definitely been passed". So-called "Java-tobacco" is disdained, according to this report. Otherwise, these particular sources have almost no information on the use of Western artifacts.

During my research in 1954 and my later sojourn among the Muyu, I made note of a great appreciation and desire for Western goods.

**Clothing:** Among the younger men, clothing was in general use. Where enough items of dress were available, they used in their everyday work such articles as short pants, with or without undershirts. Where clothing was scarce, only the penis pod was worn when gardening or hunting. Whenever possible, long trousers were worn at church services. According to the head of Kawangtet, the older men felt foolish to go to church without Western garb.

Many of the younger women wore a dress, sarong or kabaya (Indonesian: a skirt and jacket) to church. In everyday life, however, only a few women dressed in Western style. According to the mandor of Toemoetoe, women would be delighted to wear European clothes all the time; they felt ashamed of their reed skirts, but women's wear was still in very short supply.

**Shoes:** For special occasions such as church, the Muyu liked to wear shoes. This held true only for men. Many of them brought a pair of shoes back from Sorong. At a meeting of village chiefs in 1954, it was suggested that the government issue each village chief a pair of shoes.

**Axes, machetes and knives:** Every man uses such articles, and even women possess their own ax and machete.

**Kitchenware:** The use of pots and pans, frying pans and buvkets was still unimportant, but seems to be increasing. Generally, food is prepared in the traditional manner but Western cookware is increasingly used to prepare rice and vegetables. Kettles, pans and buckets are used to haul and keep drinking water.

**Utensils:** The use of plates and mugs is already widespread. Prepared food is always offered on plates to family members as well as to guests. Whenever Western foods are eaten, plates and spoons are used.

**Blankets and mosquito netting:** Such items are brought back from Sorong, where they are issued to every laborer. There is an increasing demand for such articles.

The use of the last three categories is a function of the desire among some Muyu "to build a house like that of the village teacher". In such houses one no longer sleeps near the open fire, but in a separate bedroom. This requires blankets and mosquito nets. And such a home deserves a kitchen of the type found in a teacher's house. And there, in turn, the kitchen equipment is needed. Usually, however, kitchens are organized

after the traditional model, that is, with fire hearths in the floor. They are the normal sleeping place for the women and children.

Food: Salt is a highly desired commodity. Fish and meat, canned, salted or dried, are also sought after. Rice is appreciated, but less so than the other items. Canned margarine is used in stewing vegetables.

Other often bought items include soap, matches, tobacco and fish hooks. Clothes are washed regularly, and soap is used in bathing. The so-called Java tobacco (pressed slabs) was very popular. According to the Muyu, native tobacco cultivation had declined with the use of Java tobacco. When officials went on inspection tours, tobacco was usually traded for food for their bearers. Fish hooks were also used as trade items for food during such trips.

In addition to the actual consumption of goods and foods by their buyers, we note that these Western items have entered the trading networks, the wedding gifts, and the exchange between relatives.

In the travel report of the Acting Chief of the subdivision, Upper Digul, (September 1935), it was already reported that articles such as axes, machetes, and various knick-knacks were traded for shell money. One ax was worth two to four ot.

Den Haan (1955:189) gives the following price list for the Western goods which were traded at pig feasts:

Axes, each	4 to 8 <u>ot</u>
American machetes, each	4 <u>ot</u>
Knives, each	1 <u>ot</u>
Salt, per Kg	1 <u>ot</u>
<u>Trassi</u> <sup>5</sup> per Kg	1 dog tooth
Matches, per ten boxes	1 <u>ot</u>
Fish hooks, each	1 dog tooth

Fishing line, each	1 <u>ot</u>
Mirrors, each	1 <u>ot</u>
Java-tobacco, per <u>lempeng</u> (Malay:slab)	1 dog tooth
Beads, white, per large string	1 <u>ot</u>
Bar soap, each	1 dog tooth
Nails, (15 cm. long), each	1 <u>ot</u>

These 6-inch nails were used as arrow heads.

Today trading journeys are taken just to sell Western goods. In 1954, four Yibi men went to the Mandobo territory to sell axes and machetes. They sold seven axes and three machetes on this trip, respectively for 28 ot, 5 inam and for 4 ot. They spent one ot once and another time had to spend two ot for pork. Two axes belonging to close relatives (older brother and mother's sister) of two of the traders were taken along for possible sale. One of these men had recently been to Sorong, where he had bought axes, machetes, and knives to be sold for the collection of his wedding gift.

Western goods are disseminated not only through sale at pig feasts and on trading trips to distant kin and strangers, but through sale to nearby relatives. On his return from Sorong in April 1954, the Yibi village chief sold five axes and a bolo knife to kin and trade-relations in the villages of Jemtan, Kobomtan, Inggembit, Ninati, Kimki, and Yibi itself. Except for a single ax, all these goods were sold on credit. His total sales are to realize 31ot.

Western articles are also used as gifts for relatives. The mandor of Yibi, who returned from Sorong at the same time as Yibi's village chief, gave nine axes, seven machetes, and two knives to close relatives. The latter included four women, each of whom received a machete. Most of these people lived in Yibi, two lived in Kimki, one in Metemko, one in Amupkim, one in Tembutkin, and two in Anggutbin. One bush knife was given to

"cover" a machete which had been received in the past. About the other gifts it was said that they would be "replaced" when their recipients made their own trips to Sorong, or else that they would be repaid with pork.

The quantity of the goods given away is a function of various factors such as (1) their availability in Sorong, (2) the pressure to use cash for such purposes as the wedding gift, and (3) the ease with which the goods can be sold. Upon his return from Sorong, a young bachelor from Yibi distributed the articles he had brought back as follows:

5 axes: one for own use; four sold for 2 ot.

1 machete: sold for 2 ot.

3 knives: one for own use; two sold for 1 ot.

6 boxes of matches: distributed among his nearest relatives and those who helped him carry his goods back from Mindiptana to Yibi.

8 sets of clothing: for own use.

1 blanket and 1 mosquito net: for own use.

1 package of fish hooks: some for own use; some sold.

It must be understood that this young man was collecting goods for his wedding gift. He did remark that a xes and machetes were still not readily available in Sorong.

Finally, Western goods are in large measure incorporated into the wedding gift. Steel axes and bolo knives have replaced the a boriginal stone axes, and any Western item which a Muyu fancies may be demanded in the wedding gift. The type and number of such articles are determined by their future recipient and by the amount of such goods which the suitor already possesses or can readily acquire.

The varied compositions of the amot are demonstrated by the gifts which the village chief of Yibi made for his wives. The first two women are sisters whom he married about 1937 and 1945.



The third wife he wed in 1951, but her wedding gift — insofar as it involved Western goods — was not paid until he returned from Sorong. This amot was received by the wife's sister, who demanded fewer ot than she might have, in order to avoid paying a counter-gift.

The first two lists indicate the items of the counter-gift in parentheses:

First wife:

66 ot (15 ot & 1 pig)

6 inam

1 wam

2 virip

2 axes

2 machetes

3 knives

2 boxes matches

2 strings of beads

1 roll tobacco (1 roll tobacco)

2 pair pants

2 shirts

Second wife

78 ot (30 ot)

8 inam (1 pig, about 6 ot)

1 wam

1 tum - a nose decoration

1 virip

2 axes

2 machetes

1 roll tobacco (1 roll tobacco)

2 bottles salt

3 boxes matches

Third wife

36 ot

6 inam

6 axes

4 machetes

6 boxes matches

1 bottle hair oil

1 roll tobacco

2 mirrors

1 blanket

2 pieces elastic

2 pairs pants

1 shirt

15 cans corned beef

15 cans fish

1 comb

1 bottle salt

Work for the oil company on a standard one-and-a-half year contract used to be a very important means for acquiring Western goods until the late 1950's, when the diminishing activities of the company severely restricted this avenue. Until that time, however, such labor contracts were the major supply source for the Muyu in their own territory. From Merauke came only a trickle of supplies. Most laborers in Sorong hoped for a speedy return to Muyu territory, and were typically preoccupied with the collection of goods for wedding gifts. None of their wages were spent on foods, since the oil company supplied them with prepared meals, and Muyu working in the oil fields had little opportunity to spend their money on other pleasures. On the other hand, most of the Muyu in Merauke do not anticipate returning in the near future, are responsible for their own maintenance, and are constantly tempted to acquire goods for personal use rather than for gifts or to be sold for ot. Occasionally quite large amounts of goods are brought back from Sorong. According to my calculations (based upon his sales and gifts), the village chief of Yibi brought home at least 30 axes, 24 machetes, 15 cans of fish and 15 cans of meat. Yibi's mandor left Sorong with at least 3 knives, 18 axes, and 11 machetes. Not every worker brought back such quantities, of course. It is noted, however, that a man from Kawangtet returned from his year-and-a-half stay in Sorong with a treadle sewing machine.

Since 1954, Mindiptana has also become a source to the Muyu. Here too they must supply their own food, but they attempt to live as much as possible off the many newly established gardens in and near Mindiptana.

It is in this light that fluctuations in the values of ot and Western goods must be understood. According to my Muyu informants it is becoming increasingly difficult to sell certain goods for ot, and their worth in ot is correspondingly decreasing.

A great quantity of manufactured items enters Muyu domain each year, especially from Sorong, and a certain surfeit has developed here and in the neighboring territories which trade with the Muyu. Through their adoption into the wedding gift, the actual supply of such items as axes is far greater than what is needed for everyday use. This condition is indicated by the great numbers of axes which are given a way to relatives by such people as the chief and mandor of Yibi. In fact, the latter has remarked that people don't really want axes any more.

Some goods can no longer be traded for ot although that was possible in 1954. Axes and machetes have been devalued in comparison with the price lists given by Den Haan (1955:189). An ax bought at most 2 to 4 ot during my research, but 4 to 8 during Den Haan's. The chief successfully demanded 5 or 6 ot each for a number of his axes, but his buyers were handicapped because of other factors. Machetes went for 2 or 3 ot, knives for one. A box of matches, a string of beads, a fishing line, six fish hooks, a mirror (about 20 x 30 cm.), and a set of clothes (shirt and pants) were still quoted at one ot each, but in fact such articles were almost impossible to sell for shell money. It was said of clothes that one might still vend them in areas where no villages had yet been formed. Instead of large beads, headbands of tiny white beads were being imported from Australian New Guinea, but their novelty was already wearing off. Soap (Den Haan: 1 dog tooth) was no longer desired. Java tobacco was sold at two or three lempeng (each slab 10 x 20 x 1.5 cm.) for one ot. Dog teeth were no longer used at all (see below). Nails and trassi (see Den Haan's list) were no longer traded.

Although a definite devaluation of axes and machetes had occurred, a minimum price was generally maintained. If no one offered more than one ot for an ax or machete, the item simply was not sold. "I almost killed myself in Sorong to buy that

ax", was the typical statement accompanying refusal to sell below standard price.

The foregoing suggests the degree to which Western goods have penetrated the Muyu economy. The next question is how readily the Muyu accept Western money.

The two Chiefs of the subdivision Upper Digul in 1946 and 1954 each emphasized that the spread of money in Muyu territory was limited by the ot. The more recent Chief cited as an example the fact that visiting officials could not buy chickens or hogs with Western money. Nevertheless, it is not true that the Muyu refuse coin. In the travel report of the Chief of subdivision Upper Digul dated February 1945, the following passage appears:

The recent practice of hiring great numbers of Muyu at Tanah Merah (and to a lesser extent at Merauke) for cash wages, coupled with establishment of a branch office at Ninati which pays its own local labor services, have encouraged a surprisingly rapid acceptance of our money. All along our route we were offered—even by little old ladies—the food we needed, not only in trade for salt, matches and fish hooks (items which because of their low value are never employed as payment), but for money. Bearer's wages are only paid in cash. Typically the Muyu can count sums up to two or three guilders.

The Chief did remark, however, that it is essential that the amount of money which enters the economy be balanced by a reasonable supply of manufactured goods. This condition does still not exist. Laborers can only buy corned beef and canned meats and vegetables—items which are, however, desired.

The idea of a necessary connection between the availability of money and the possibility of its expenditure is one which needs further elaboration. Not until 1954 did Mindiptana boast a

store with an adequate variety of consumer goods. Before this Chinese enterprise there was a Government's store, but that one was often badly supplied and open only at restricted times. Since the founding of Ninati it has been difficult to supply Muyu territory. Beginning in 1954 this situation improved, but periods of scarcity continued because of transportation problems. Already during my field work in 1954 it was obvious that Western money was playing an increasingly important role in the Muyu economy. In 1955 the signs were clearer still. These facts reaffirm the picture which develops from the Muyu's own feelings about the relationship between ot and money: If sufficient Western money were available, the Muyu would stop using the ot altogether.

Labor in Sorong, Merauke, Tanah Merah and Mindiptana is of the greatest importance in this regard. Muyu laborers are paid in money which they spend in the markets. In this fashion they learn to handle money, acquiring the familiarity with it which is a prerequisite to its eventual acceptance throughout Muyu territory. Sorong is therefore especially important, since there is a constant turnover in the personnel of its work force. Since mid-1954, Mindiptana also offers regular work opportunities to such changing groups of laborers.

It is important to note that devaluation has affected valuables other than the ot and the inam. Although the ot is central, these other articles are linked to its fate.

Stone axes have become utterly worthless. In the wedding gifts they have been replaced with steel axes and machetes.

Dog teeth, too, have been almost lost from circulation. In their place, money or manufactured goods are used as small change. In Kawangtet, for instance, someone traded a sago-pouch formerly valued at one dog tooth, for a box of matches and a string of beads. Chunks of tobacco which once sold for mindit

now bring money. Dog teeth are no longer found in the wedding gift, except in a few of the northern villages. The Muyu cite as reason for this change the fact that beads have generally replaced the dog teeth as decorations.

The lowered value of the virip, the dog tooth headband, is probably related. The determining factor in the value of a virip was, after all, the number of fangs which it used. Now that these are no longer valued as cash, it is understandable that the virip is less desirable. They are still found in wedding gifts, but to a lesser extent than in the past, according to my informants in Yibi.

The wam is also losing importance, according to these same reporters and a kawangtet informant. Like the virip, it still occurs in the wedding gift, but less often than formerly. The reason given for their declining popularity is that both these items have a known point of origin, as distinguished from the ot and the inam. Wam are often brought back from the Coast.

Such goods as tum and iwimutu (both nose decorations) and awonbutak (a chain of pig's teeth) are now rarely encountered in a wedding gift. Their devaluation may be related to their lessening functional importance: their use as decoration is decreasing. Young people no longer wear the tum or the iwimutu, and the other decorations are used only at feasts. Feasts, in turn, are declining both in frequency and in significance, something which further depresses the value of such articles.

As the Muyu opinions (cited above) indicate, a part of the population believes that the ot and the inam will in the future be maintained alongside of Western money. They insist that ot and inam have no place of origin other than the mythological one, and cannot really envision a time when no ot will be required for the wedding gift "because you can't buy pork with money" (Yibi).

But if, as I have maintained, the ot became a part of the wedding gift precisely because of its useful functioning as specie, then it could be completely replaced with Western money. This event will come about when money is both sufficiently available and more attractive than the ot. And that stage, in turn, will be reached as soon as money can buy not only manufactured goods, but pork. At that time money will offer more alternatives than ot, and will probably replace the shells in the wedding gift. However, it would be inaccurate to view this eventuality as the inevitable result of a simple cause-and-effect relationship. There is a feedback system involved: the occurrence of money in the wedding gift will further the sale of pork and other goods in the villages.

Some examples of the penetration of money into Muyu culture follow. They are prefaced, necessarily, with the opinions which these Papua themselves have about the relationship between ot and money, opinions which indicate a willingness to use specie instead of shell.

In 1954 it was said of the village chief of Kawangtet — even by his own neighbors — that he was liquidating his ot possessions. As evidence the following facts were given: (1) He had bought a pig for 30 ot and sold it to the government for money; supposedly he also bought hogs to sell them to the village teacher. (2) He had helped a villager accumulate a wedding gift by giving him 2 yirip, 1 wam, and 2 ot, allowing himself to be compensated with dishes and a cooking pot. In 1955 he resigned as village chief and became a watchman at the government's office. This allowed him to become completely submerged in the money economy, which was a necessary function of his expressed desire to "live as a puanim" (foreigner). His wish to own a pressure lamp, uttered in 1954, was already fulfilled in 1955. He now wants ot only to pay off outstanding

debts. That his example and his ideas have influenced his surroundings, can be seen in the already reported opinions of the village chief of Yiptem.

Other examples:

During my stay in Kawangtet I heard that one younger man (a former police constable) wanted to sell a small pig for 10 guilders; ot were not acceptable. Earlier in 1954 another policeman's hog had been offered for sale at 2 ot or 10 guilders.

The village chief sometimes sold me meat for money. At the slaughter of hogs I occasionally heard complaints such as "if he would only sell for money, I could afford a piece of meat, too".

For "dalliance" with a woman without marrying her, a brother used to demand 3 inam, 1 yirip, 1 wam, and 12 ot. Recently some one demanded 120 guilders instead (Kawangtet 1954).

As wedding gift for his daughter, a man demanded from a constable: 12 ot plus 30 or 40 guilders (Kawangtet 1954).

In Yibi, little pork was sold for money, but during my stay there I was told that two people had already sold some. During a later visit the village chief offered to sell me a shank for 10 guilders. He sold another leg to a villager, also for Gld. 10, and sold me a chicken for Gld. 5. This chief had recently been to Sorong, and had brought back many goods. But instead of having been "satiated", he had acquired all sorts of new needs which made his entry into the financial world a foregone conclusion.

In Yiptem, pigs were sold for sums made up half of money, half of ot, according to local informants. There was some complaint that Mindiptana wages were so low that when one bought some little thing at the store, there was not enough money left for future pork purchases (1954).

In Imko and Kakuna, small pigs were sold for money, usually 5 to 10 guilders (1954).

In Jononggo, the mandor had sold three pigs for half money



and half ot. The village teacher in 1956 said that wild pigs, but not tame ones, were sold for cash in Jononggo.

The chief of Woman sold a large pig for money in 1954, and another in 1956. In this village someone was to demand a wedding gift from a man in Merauke. He thought to ask for 500 guilders, Gld.200 of which was to be returned in the counter gift (1954).

A police constable who came from kakuna had to include 30 ot in his wedding gift in order to satisfy his wife's elder brother. Her younger brother, who had just taken a position as village teacher, wanted the gift to be paid in money.

In Yibi there lived a girl whose future wedding gift was to go to a policeman. It was known that he intended to ask for money (1954).

The wedding gift demanded for a Mindiptana girl married to a Muyu who worked in Merauke was 1000 guilders plus 60 ot, (30 to be returned), 8 inam, 2 virip, and 1 wam. This was generally held to be excessive since a full amount of ot was asked as well as the already very high sum of money. It was understood, however, that part of the money was to be returned (1955).

The wedding gift for the daughter of the village chief of Woman included among other things 42 ot (18 to be returned) and Gld. 600 (300 to be returned) (1956).

For a stepchild of Mindiptana's village chief, a sum of 24 ot and 300 guilders was demanded. The counter gift involved only 2 pigs.

During the inspection trips by government officials, money is often asked for sago and other foodstuffs. The village chief of Tumutu asked 2 guilders for two packages of kenari nuts. He intended to buy rice with the money (1956).

In Mindiptana in 1955, vegetables were regularly offered for money, while in 1954 the typical asking price was tobacco,

salt, fish hooks, etc. At irregular intervals it was possible to buy chickens and eggs for money (1955).

Evidently, then, the ot is not absolutely irreplaceable. Further more, there are indications that as soon as a Muyu enters the Western market sphere, his loyalty to the ot is lost. The opening of a store in Mindiptana stimulated the desire for money. Through this and the introduction of money into the Muyu economy via construction activities, the penetration of modern money was greatly furthered. If money should continue to enter Muyu domain in sufficient quantities, the ot would be completely replaced. Its decline would be hastened by the interaction between money in the wedding gift and money for pork. As soon as money became more important than the shells, this replacement process would be accelerated.

It would be interesting to know when such a substitution could be completed. Any answer would first require an investigation of the actual number of ot in circulation, of the amount of money required to replace these shells, and of the sums of Western money which are actually entering the Muyu economy.

Any estimate of the number of ot in use must, of course, be mere speculation. Nevertheless it will be attempted here in order to gain some insight into the amount of money which will be needed to replace the shells. To estimate at 5 the mean number of ot in possession by the average Muyu over 18 is probably conservative. If we use this figure as our base, and accept the claim in the Memoirs of Transfer of 1956 that there are 6,319 Muyu over the age of 18, we arrive at a total of 31,595 ot now in circulation.

Converting ot into money can be done only through comparison of their relative values against certain goods, for the Muyu do not convert the two monies directly. Knives, which range in store prices from Gld. 2.75 to Gld. 2.95, are traded for one ot. A chicken which typically costs one ot is sold for Gld. 5.

A leg of pork which cost 1 ot was offered me for Gld. 10. Bows, which are traded for a single ot, are also sold for Gld. 2. On the basis of these examples the mean value of a single ot must be estimated to lie between three and five guilders.

Thus, if we assume our appraisal of the total number of ot to be realistic, it would take between 100,000 and 500,000 guilders to replace the shell money. This does not take into consideration the quantities of ot which are held by neighboring tribes, which can only increase the required sum. But again, we can anticipate that the process of substitution would be accelerated once money has made some large-scale intrusions into the ot's sphere. This suggests that the amount of money actually required to complete the changeover may turn out to be smaller than the corresponding quantity of ot.

The success of the substitution process requires not only a certain amount of money, but replenishment. Money is constantly withdrawn from circulation through the acquisition of merchandise. Ot can only be replaced, therefore, if money continues to enter the Muyu economy in a steady stream. This means that a great number of Muyu must have the opportunity to acquire Western money.

#### Muyu interest in the new money

Finally, we must take note of the Muyu's interest in the money-ot relationship.

The village chief of Kawangtet told me in 1954 that after every conference of chiefs his village elders would ask him what decisions had been made regarding the ot. According to him, the elders of Kawangtet thought it undesirable that I was given information about a certain type of magic which involves the inam. They feared that the government would outlaw the use of inam and ot.

The teacher at Ninati told me that the villagers viewed my research in 1954 as related to a possible repeal of the ot.

Reactions to the activities of the Assistant officer of the Civil Service in the 1941-1942 period also indicate a special interest in the relationship between the monies. Anxiety about the possible loss of the ot was responsible on the one hand for the full and continuous occupation of the villages and the lack of absenteeism in the village schools, and on the other hand for the efforts to leave the governed areas.

It is clear, therefore, that in the early contact situation the Muyu retained their interest in shell money, but that the penetration of Western goods led to a greater preoccupation with Western money.

The reported pronouncements of a number of Muyu indicate that the problem of ot versus money has long involved them. The relationship was extensively discussed in the introductory speech by the chairman at the opening of the cooperative store in 1956. A question on this subject was put to the Information Officer during his 1956 visit. The problem was a constant subject in the assemblies of the Catholic Youth Organization. In the first issue of the Publication of this club, which accepted contributions written by its members, a whole article was dedicated to the ot-money interaction.

Further evidence is found in the area of salaries. Both in Mindiptana and Merauke the Muyu were dissatisfied with their wages. Unskilled la borers earned Gld. 0.75 per day in Mindiptana and Gld. 1.50 in Merauke. Skilled workers were paid from Gld. 1 to Gld. 2.50 in Mindiptana; in Merauke such wages ranged up to 4 or 5 guilders per day. In Sorong, salaries were still higher.

These inequities were exhaustively discussed among the Mindiptana Muyu. It was said that it did not matter that their

salaries were so much lower, because they lived in, and helped develop, their own country. Yet, the profit motive is clear: the temporary acceptance of lower wages was based on the thought of opening up opportunities in the immediate environment.

This interest in money is especially pronounced in the revitalization movements (see section 6, below).

It appears that after the opening of the Chinese toko (store) in Mindiptana the Muyu preferred being paid money for work and products. Workers at the mission in 1955 received somewhat lower cash wages than those working for the government, but they also received free board while the government laborers had to supply their own meals. Although the mission workers were thus actually better paid, they were dissatisfied: they would rather have had more money than the food. In 1955, only money was demanded for the produce sold to officials in Mindiptana. This is in contrast to 1954. Now that there are things to buy, in other words, the Muyu would prefer spending the money themselves over receiving goods directly. Those who settle near Mindiptana maintain that they want to deal with money only.

The interest in the acquisition of ot among a large group of younger Muyu as well as among some of the older ones—has thus been transformed into a desire to accumulate Western money which is based upon their appreciation of Western merchandise.

## VI. Revitalization Movements and the New Money

The movements discussed in section 3 expressed the Muyu's fascination for material possessions and especially for ot. The movement among the Muyu of Merauke and the one in their territory during the 1953-1954 period evidence this same engrossment, but express it in an intense yearning for Western goods and especially for Western money.

### The Merauke movement

At the end of September 1953, some twenty Muyu requested a meeting with the Resident at Merauke. These were prominent men, including the president of the Merauke division of the Papua political party of that time, and the head of the Muyu district of Merauke. They handed the Resident a manuscript of 13 typewritten pages, which included a number of variously dated letters written to him, and some announcements and proclamations. Their subject was a new cargo cult which had secretly existed for some months. A number of Muyu wanted the government to be aware of this development to see how the authorities felt about this new way of precipitating the conditions which the Muyu so avidly desired.

According to these writings, the movement originated with the experiences of one Kuram, its prophet, visited in April 1953 by a spirit named Nelih, who offered to show him the path to progress, wisdom and wealth for all the land and people of South New Guinea.

God Almighty Himself would bring the New Order needed for all this. Muyu who joined the movement would be taught to communicate with ghosts, especially with the ghosts of deceased Americans.

According to these informants, Kuram was walking past the European cemetery in Merauke one night when he found a small purse with New Guinea money. He took the purse to his home in Klapalima (the settlement bordering on Merauke, where most of the Muyu live). There the purse began to swell and grow until it had assumed the proportions of a bag of rice. This was the prelude to other events. When Kuram fell asleep, the spirit of a dead man entered his body. He could feel it creep upwards from his feet. Kuram got the urge to vomit, but when he opened his mouth, the ghost began to speak and announced the coming

blessings. These involved primarily a material well-being of the Muyu to equal that of the Europeans.

The most important innovation in this movement is the idea of a coming prosperity for all Muyu. This promise is repeated in various ways. The letter of September 6 states that all nations must collect money and send it to Merauke. If possible, each nation and each people should send one ton of money. A second letter of this date deals mainly with the relationship between population groups in Merauke, but ends with the request that the Resident tell the other nations to appear in Merauke to collect all the cash-monies of all types. After this has been done, God the Father, the Almighty, will divide everything. The Dutch government is requested to inform the other nations that they must send money machines. God will rule thereafter, and all regulations about all of life, including the possession of wealth, will be altered.

The letter dated September 14 explains the central issues of the movement. It holds that the spirit which Kuram received will bring progress, wisdom and wealth for all the people, and states that they are but a backward lot who have not received "the knowledge about the science of wealth". The tuans (Indonesian : masters) must take care of their fellow men and lead them and be an example to them, especially in the matter of this science. They must not keep this knowledge to themselves. All must cooperate, all must share in the riches.

The letter of September 19 is a proclamation which fixes the prices for all the store goods. First it announces that the maximum price for any item must be 5 guilders; then there is a list of goods cheaper than that whose prices are now settled. These are foodstuffs and merchandise such as rice at Gld. 0.40 per kilogram, sugar at Gld. 0.15 per kg., gasoline at Gld. 0.19 per bottle, wash basin at Gld. 1.13, cigarets at Gld. 0.13 per pack,

hair-scissors at Gld. 0.25, etc. Furthermore, prices for all articles not listed must be lowered.

Finally the letter of September 20 states that a new revelation from God does away with income tax deductions, and that the collection of money for charitable purposes (in the churches?) will be ended.

On September 23 another elaborate explanation was presented to the Resident. It summarizes what the New Order will bring. First, there will come a money factory and storage facilities for the money. These will be followed by a whole series of factories and machines: a factory for sun and moon; one for weapons and a warehouse for such arms; a factory and storage area for ironware; one for textiles; machines to shell rice, and more storage sheds; a bulldozer; and finally, an airplane complete with hangar. Other "solutions" are to follow.

On September 26 arrived still another summation of things to come. This one is to be forwarded to the Netherlands and to other nations. It involves 1000 weapons, a ship, an airplane, automobiles, and again, coinage and other items. Furthermore, the Dutch government is to supply food, and each month there is to be a payment of money at its Office.

In 1954 I met in Muyu territory some young men who in 1953 had still been attending the mission school in Merauke. They told me their experiences with this movement and gave me their views on the matter. Their descriptions of the birth of this cult-Kuram's finding of the purse, etc.—also focused upon monetary and material welfare. According to them, the cult leaders claimed that Kuram had already accumulated ten million guilders. He had brought one million to the head of the administration in Merauke, and the other nine million were to go to the local district chief.

This information is to some extent confirmed in the Kuram



papers by a letter dated June 20 to the "Queen of New Guinea", who is indicated by the term Ular Raja (Indonesian: literally "Snake Ruler"). This letter requests that the manager of Kuram's money-store be given 9 million guilders, which are to be handed over to two of Kuram's lieutenants. This move is reported to the Resident in a letter of the same date which explains that it is connected with the lack of food, drink, and clothing.

There are also several instances in the Kuram treatises which deal with the problem of salaries. On June 1 it is decided that all wages henceforth will be at least Gld. 5 per day. On June 6 it is requested that police constables in the future be paid Gld. 12 per day. It is noted that they have served the police a long time, ever since the founding of Ninati, that they work themselves half to death and receive low salaries and insufficient food and drink. At the same time it is announced that, for the same reasons, the soldiers will also earn 12 guilders per day.

The instructions and demands imply that the Golden Age will be realized in a totally new society. Although the letters do not show this Utopia clearly, various hints do occur:

The goods to be snet are destined for the new Kompeni<sup>6</sup> at Klapalima. This new kompeni will have its own soldiers and police, for whom the arms shipments are designated (Sept. 26 letter). The letter dated September 23 also discusses this new society.

The message which Kuram received on September 23 from Almighty God states that the Dutch government is to take care of the provisioning of the new company, to wit, the people of Klapalima and those natives of South New Guinea who live in that settlement. The government must also underwrite the building of a school and a church (letters of Sept. 22 and 23). Kuram himself will supply the teachers (Sept. 22). It is not clear whether these teachers will be men or spirits: in the letters the spirits are called teachers.

My informants reported that the ghost which visited Kuram had promised that Klapalima would suddenly become a big city "with everything complete". It would have a money factory, a local government office, a ship, many stores, and an automobile for everyone. The new city would have its own governor, doctors, Resident, bishop, pilots, navy, teachers, and babas (Chinese storekeepers): it would be "complete". Kuram, as governor, would sit on a tall golden chair, looking down on his subjects. Every Muyu would be a tuan, a gentleman, and no one would need to work himself "half to death". There would be an abundance of food. No one would die: one might be dead for half an hour but the local physicians could give the order to "Arise!" and the deceased would live again and be healthy.

The bachelors of Klapalima had already agreed among themselves that they would stop bothering the nona (here meaning the Indonesian girls) and that they would not marry Muyu girls, for otherwise the spirits would leave. Soon, when the New Order was realized, they would all have wives with beautiful large bodies — American and Australian women. They had to bide their time. If they did not follow these rules of abstention, they would later suffer the consequences.

In this ideal state there was to be no differentiation in the treatment of the various ethnic groups. This idea was elaborated in the wish that groups such as the Indonesians and the Indo-Europeans—which were seen as competitors to the Muyu—would disappear.

The informant's reports also illuminate the world view behind this movement. The Muyu simply cannot understand the origin of all the goods that the KPM<sup>7</sup> boat delivers to Merauke every six weeks. The nature of these goods also raises questions for them. They feel that all this cannot be the work of mere mortals. The Dutch must have enlisted the aid of God and the spirits. Otherwise

how could such ships exist, how could airplanes fly through the sky, where did the doctor, the Resident, and all those other tuans get their knowledge? All such things must have come from the land of the spirits, and the knowledge must have been gained through contact with ghosts.

#### The movement in Muyu territory

In February of 1955, the mission and the government in Mindiptana discovered that their territory had harbored a cargo cult like Merauke's since 1953. This movement centered on one Kameop from the village of Imko. In 1953 this Kameop had taken a journey to the Fly River area, where he met some Muyu from Merauke who told him about the new movement there. Upon his return to Imko he began to build a similar movement in Muyu territory.

In 1955 followers of this cult were found in 14 villages of Southern Muyu territory. Kameop can be seen as the cult leader, for people came to his village or invited him to come teach them in theirs. This was called sekolah-setan (Indonesian: "ghost school"). The purpose of the instructions, again, was to learn the techniques for making contact with the spirits so that Western money and goods could be acquired. The contact was sought at night in the cemeteries of the various villages where the cult was practiced. It was believed that this was also the method by which the people in Merauke reached the spirit world.

In each of these villages there were one or two individuals who functioned as promoters of the movement and the ghost school. In some cases these promoters knew about the Merauke movement, or had been associated with it. The following of the cult in the various villages generally was limited, however. Some people

did try to get results through the movement, but most waited to see if it succeeded.

In Toge and Kanggup, those wanting to learn how to contact the spirits were charged an ot by the organizers there. This was not done by Kameop or the cult leaders in other villages. In 1953, Toge's leader and four of his followers visited Kameop in Imko, where they toured the graveyard with him. After their return they went to Toge's cemetery. The group's leader then asked an ot from each of his companions, for the services he had rendered. After the village chief had warned him that he could not demand such payments, he returned the ot.

In Kanggup the promoter was followed to the cemetery by only one person, the village teacher, a Muyu who wanted to learn the secret of communicating with the spirits. He was asked to pay an ot. Otherwise there were few believers in that village.

In Metomka, the movement took on a different character. Here four people took up the practice of medicine with the explanation that such practices were part of the Kameop movement. In their search for wealth these individuals had first attempted to reach the spirits through visits to the cemeteries, and had also studied under Kameop in Imko. They claimed that their ghostly teachers had given certain healing techniques to them. Those who practiced the new medicine were subject to various amop (taboos) which were roughly similar to the food taboos which newlyweds must observe. Treatments did not commence until an ot or other payment had been made. Then small foreign objects were "removed" from the body of the ailing person, but these were never disclosed. The "physicians" of Metomka also practiced their craft in the surrounding villages.

In Wambiran and Yiptem there were also some persons who practiced the healing arts under the auspices of the revitalization movement.

The background of this movement, as that of the previously reported ones, is found in Muyu perceptions about the nature and origin of wealth and the knowledge of foreigners. This wealth and this knowledge are not the result of human endeavors but derive from the supernatural world. One catechist from Woman insisted to the other Muyu that the pastors were in continuous contact with the spirits: hence their wealth and wisdom. One of the adherents of the cult, Kameop's assistant, let it be known that when the movement had succeeded, everyone would buang (Malaysian: "throw away") the Roman Catholic religion.

The movement here had a less frenzied character. As far as is known, the political elements which were so important in Merauke were missing in the territory. In this respect the movement was similar to those of the 1950-1952 period. Its methods were different and so was the emphasis upon Western merchandise instead of ot, but the basic similarity remains; an attempt to acquire wealth through contact with the spirits of the dead. In fact, in some places the cult was apparently practiced for the sole purpose of collecting ot.

#### General observations on the movement

The Muyu generally believe that when the Kao River was created, the ancestors of all other peoples were swept along with its waters. Unfortunately they took along everything that foreigners have and Muyu lack. This belief is reflected in Kuram's writing.

One of the most important ideas of this movement — that which deals with the link between the supernatural and the Western world — was clarified in a manuscript which the village chief of Klapalima gave me in March 1954. This writing taught that wealth and knowledge beyond human ken could be acquired through the teachings of the ghost schools. Corpse-drippings were to be

drunk during the instruction, which would aid in the procurement of wisdom about all things in the ground, the water, the air, etc. It made a special issue of the ot.

The widespread Muyu belief that foreigners control unlimited supplies of merchandise and money is, of course, related. The catechist of Tumutu once told me that he had believed until recently that money was easily obtained in the "money-factory". He also used to think that there were endless hoards of goods in the Netherlands, and wondered why the Dutch did not give the Muyu more.

The movement in Merauke appears to have been directed against the foreigners, especially against the Indo-Europeans. This group is apparently seen by the Muyu as their strongest economic threat. After 1949 (when the territories, except the present Irian Jaya province, previously occupied by the Dutch were restored to the Indonesian republic), many Indo-Europeans settled in and near Klapalima, the Muyu's "homeland". They have begun to compete with the other ethnic groups in the meat and produce markets of Merauke. Indo-Europeans are furthermore accepting positions with the government which appear to lie within the Muyu range of capabilities. This is also true of the Indonesians there, but the Indo-Europeans are a mobile group just entering the social organization, while the Indonesians form an older, more settled population — at least in the eyes of the Muyu.

Revitalization movements express the central interests and problems of a culture. Both the movements in Merauke and Muyu Territory emphasized the procurement of material possessions, especially of money. In Merauke, furthermore, the movement expressed Muyu problems in their relationship with other population groups.

## VII. Muyu Capitalism and the Process of Modernization

As stated in the Introduction, a salient feature in the process by which Muyu culture accepts modern traits is the acquisition of property. In the contact situation, interests which once centered on native valuables, especially shell money, are changing or have changed into a desire for Western merchandise and Western money.

The different stages of change and their results may be summarized as follows: First stage: appreciation of traditional goods and valuables, especially the ot. Second stage: appreciation of modern goods, especially axes and knives. Third stage: generalized appreciation of Western wealth, especially money. Fourth stage: striving towards internalizing the West.

This avidity furthers an easy acceptance of various modern traits which the Muyu associate with wealth, such as education, Roman Catholicism, and government administration. It must be emphasized, however, that this same orientation towards property also hinders the acceptance of new traits. Initially, the penetration of government money was checked by the attachment to the ot. Difficulties in the formation and population of villages are directly attributable to pig breeding, which derives its importance from the ot-value of pigs. Truancy from the schools is also increased by pig raising, for parents will stay in the forests to care for their animals. Polygyny is encouraged even among Christians because it facilitates pig breeding and hence the opportunity to acquire wealth. Finally, it may be noted that because of this preoccupation, the Muyu interpret Catholicism with a unique bias: they associate religion with material well-being.

With the contact situation came the threat of instability in the social structure of the Muyu region. The people expect and desire a rapid realization of modern wealth and power in their

area, either through natural or supernatural means. Economic development cannot possibly keep pace with their expectations. To prevent social disintegration it will be necessary to understand the perceptions of the Muyu regarding the West and its economic attributes. Efforts must be hastened to develop the opportunities whereby the Muyu can earn money and buy Western merchandise. Moreover, systematic instruction must correct the picture which the Muyu have formed of the modern world.

Muyu culture embodies unusually felicitous opportunities for modernization, and Muyu society is ripe for rapid development. Success in this direction will, however, depend upon the attention paid to such other characteristics of Muyu existence as its great emphasis upon individualism.



NOTES

1. Translated by Dirk H. van der Elst, Ph.D.  
This paper was written in 1970 on the basis of my field work in the area in 1954 and 1955. No new facts from other field work than mentioned in this paper have been available. The information about some customs, especially cannibalism, deals with the situation when the Muyu culture had yet changed little about 10 to 20 years, different for each village, earlier than the period of the field work.
2. Parts of this article elaborate some aspects of Schoorl 1957.
3. See also Croom 1948; Herskovits 1952; and van Emst 1954.
4. Compare Salisbury 1956.
5. Tras(s)i (Indonesian) is an important ingredient for preparing Indonesian food. It is cake-like and made of small fishes or shrimps.
6. Kompeni is one term for the government. It derives from the former trade company in the area, the (Dutch) East India Company.
7. KPM is the Koninklijke Pakket Maatschappij, the Royal (Dutch) (Postal) Packet Company.

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