

SECOND
FIELDWORK REPORT

Kiriwina, Trobriand Islands.

by

H.A. POWELL, B.A.

Research Student of

The Royal Anthropological Institute
Horniman Scholarship Trust
LONDON,
and

The Australian National University
CANBERRA

SECOND FIELDWORK
Kiriwina, Trobriand Islands.

Research Student of

The Royal Anthropological Institute
Horniman Scholarship Trust
LONDON,
and
The Australian National University

Second Fieldwork Report: June-September

1950

Contents

I Introduction	Page 1
II Current Events: quarantine	Page 3
III <i>Kayasa pela Wosi</i>	Page 5
IV The <i>Milamala</i> Moon	
Dates	Page 9
Proceedings	Page 10
V Gardening	
A/ Harvest 1949-50	Page 13
B/ New Season 1950-51	Page 15
VI Copra	Page 18
VII Law and Order	Page 19
VIII Kinship	Page 22
IX Conclusion	Page 23
Diagram - Kinship	Facing 22

Second Report- Field Trip to Kiriwina 1950-1951

I Introduction:

This report covers the period of three months from the end of July to the end of September 1950. This period has been marred by the fact that for four weeks I was put out of commission with some sort of sinus trouble which necessitated my leaving Omarakana and staying at Gusaweta with Mrs. Lumley. This trouble more or less cleared up after a month but it left me with a continual catarrh discharge from the head which causes me a great deal of inconvenience though it does not prevent my taking an interest in life as did the earlier stages of the disorder. At the end of this month I stayed at Gusaweta for a further four weeks while a quarantine was in force owing to an outbreak of poliomyelitis. During this last month I was able to get around and visit Omarakana and other villages when the weather permitted, which in fact was not too often. I returned to Omarakana as soon as the quarantine was lifted, on the 28th August. In point of fact this period was not entirely wasted for I was able to do a certain amount of work around Gusaweta though again the weather was a definite handicap, and my ability to speak the language has increased considerably, I had done a lot of reading in Baldwin's grammar etc as well as holding converse with many natives, but I noticed no great improvement for a week or so after my return to Omarakana, when suddenly I found myself conversing far more easily and what is more understanding the private conversation of my visitors. Thus I learnt by overhearing some men, who had been visiting Omarakana, talking on my veranda that there had been a charge of adultery there and that one of Mitakata's wives was involved. I had been doing a little writing inside the house but when I heard this I came out. The man at once began to talk all together about other matters, looking so guilty, that I wanted to laugh; but after a time I was able to introduce the matter of the adultery charge casually as though I already knew all about it. After the initial shock my unwitting informants shrugged a mental shoulder and talked quite freely - and I found after using similar shock tactics on various people more closely connected

with the affair that it all came to naught, a mistake having been made by one of the wives of councilors. This added ease of converse has enabled me the better to pursue the task of making friends, but this is not easy, as it is impossible to approach intimacy in conversation with anybody if twelve or more others are listening and I have not yet found a technique for getting privacy. Everybody is far too fond of me, and hang eagerly on to my

Page 2

words- and to my tobacco.

This tendency to scrounge- in their own phrase "*nigada*" remains a marked handicap to me. I wrote of it in my last report. and said that with time and usage it might lessen. It has not. I repeat here; it is the old established custom of a token appreciation of any sort of service rendered or gift made. run wild. I am told that the custom was getting out of hand even before the war. but I suspect that the troops had a good deal to do with it. Now, the general idea seems to be just that the *Dimdim* has any amount of tobacco and any means of getting it are justified. If he gives it away the more fool he; if he doesn't, but insists on some sort of return. as I do. well, anything will do - any old tomatoes etc that one picks up in the bush. This practice grew until I would find fifteen or twenty people assembled outside my house in the evening waiting for me all with handfuls of tomatoes or pawpaws or pumpkins which if I bought them went bad on me before I could possibly eat, them and if I gave them away, as it was suggested I might do, the cost in tobacco became quite unreasonable. I was pretty, generous with this commodity during the *Milamala*, deliberately; but even if I continued that rate of expenditure - £6 worth of tobacco in ten days-- still it would not satisfy. The more one gives the more they think one has and the more they want. I am however slowly learning wisdom, I think, and convincing the folk that I mean what I say about, not owning all the tobacco factories the world; and I hope that in time, as I succeed in killing it, the attitude may become less of a barrier in my dealings with individuals. I have to go through the same processes of argument and explanation repeatedly with every fresh man. I meet; and it is very wearying. At last however my campaign is having some success at Tilakaiwa and Omarakana, and I can, to some extent, relax and talk to people as human beings.

But here, having been accepted more, or less as "kinsman" and a friend I am expected to make contributions to village economy in the shape of e.g. files to sharpen their axes and knives, or kerosene for their lamps, I give them - a little, and surreptitiously; otherwise I should be stripped of my all like Egypt in the plague of locusts. At least however this perennial campaigning tends to keep ones wits on the alert for the thin end of the next wedge.

Thus in spite of poor health I think I have made some progress in language and other respects. I am at present in the state rather of continually coming across new leads that in systematically following up

Page 3

such leads as they occur. This is at present the season of intense work in the gardens and for the month since I returned to Omarakana I have been primarily occupied with the gardens and various issues arising out of them, The next section will be. n brief summary of events in Kiriwina over the last three months; and in the third section I shall deal with some of these events in greater detail.

II Current Events. The Quarantine

I was not able to include in my last report an account of the Dance Feast given at the end of June by Mitakata, I shall deal briefly with this in the next section. Almost as soon as that was over a period of very bad weather for this season of the year set in, and lasted with breaks of only a few days till the end of August. During the first month of this period I was hors de combat at Gusaweta, and during the second the quarantine was in operation, With the effect of the weather on gardening I shall deal in the section devoted to a survey of activity. The quarantine was lifted before 'the *Milamala* and *Yoba* were over in Kiriwina and I returned to Omarakana in time to see the end of the festivities - such as they were, This also I shall deal with more fully in a later section, I will say here though that what with the very unusual weather and the quarantine though the effect of the latter was relatively small, this season has been quite atypical of the ordinary course of events, at least to the extent that routine activities have been dislocated.

The quarantine, with which I will deal here as it hardly comes under the heading of normal activities, lasted five weeks. The outbreak of poliomyelitis fortunately turned out to be by no means as bad as it might have done. In all some sixteen natives were hospitalized, none of them over the age of about twelve, and most of them a lot younger. None of these died, and none suffered permanent ill effects, though all suffered symptoms of partial paralysis of various limbs. Nearly all the whites suffered an attack of what might have been an acute form of influenza, but what the visiting doctors thought was probably a very mild attack of Polio; and there is no knowing how many of the natives had similar symptoms. Dr May of the Government Medical Service tells me that there was a much more serious outbreak of Polio in the 1920's, and that he thinks that there is a degree of immunity still in the islanders as a result. Anyhow the only death was that of a visiting American Journalist

Page 4

who suffered a far more virulent attack than anyone else.

Thus nothing really occurred to bring it home to the natives that anything out of the ordinary was taking place. The illnesses did not in fact reach epidemic proportions, Losuia was for some time strictly quarantined because of the presence of the cases in the hospital, A. D. O. ordered that there were to be no *sagalis* or other gatherings in the villages. The Mission Headquarters suspended services, and school, and the Catholic Mission's outposts followed suit; but I believe the Methodist village posts carried on as usual. In the absence of police force to carry out patrols of the roads etc it was impossible to check native movements except around Losuia itself, and the *sagalis* went on in the outlying villages as usual. At the request of Mr Hardy, I tried to explain the situation to various villages when I started getting around again but in the absence of any readily appreciable reason for precaution my homilies had little effect, though Mitakata promised to postpone ceremonial filling of his storehouses till the quarantine was lifted. But as it turned out the weather did the postponing anyway, as I shall tell later. For a time the villages immediately around Losuia were scared by the death of Kruse, the American, and kept to themselves for a few days; but again as there was no

sequel this scare soon died out. The other villages of course heard of it but were not greatly affected. Thus there was no panic, no apprehension of wholesale sorcery, in fact no real result at all, except that the Europeans observed precautions at the request of the Government. I postponed my return to Omarakana on the advice of Dr. May -and his advice was quite right I think for neither he nor any else had any means of knowing that things were going to get no worse, especially as there is a serious outbreak of a worse form of the disease at Misima which is still quarantined. However during this period as I was able to visit villages when things were taking place there- when weather permitted. I have an autocycle-- a very useful and handy little machine - and by its use was able to keep contact with Omarakana and Tilakaiwa as often as the weather permitted - apart from the state of the roads I found that a soaking or a chill aggravates my sickness. I also attended the filling of the *Bwaimas* at Kwaybwaga- fortunately, for as I shall relate later, no such event took place at Omarakana or any where else this year, because the crops are so bad

Page 5

III. *KAYASA pela wosi.*

Without doubt this was the biggest event in the year for Omarakana, and I think that Mitakata intended it to be so for the whole of Kiriwina also; but unfortunately his desire was not fulfilled.

In the pleasure of the Kiriwinians, I think that the dance is rated highest. But there is a *tabu* relating to death which forbids any form of noisy pleasuring on the *baku* of a village where there has been a death during the current year. This *tabu* does not apply to Omarakana, CF.. Malinowski, Sexual Life of Savages. In the old days before the introduction of cricket, dancing was the only large scale communal recreation, and as such may have had a tendency to get out of hand. But the above mentioned *tabu* would have the effect of limiting the number of villages where dances could be held in any one year, and so operate as a check on the time that could be given to dancing. Further, dancing ipso facto did not occur except in the winter months. But cricket is not controlled by any of these checks. It does not take place on the *baku*, or village square, because there is not enough room so deaths do not affect it; and even if it could still be played outside the village - - a dance is

only possible actually on the square. At the same time, although a big dance would be given during the daytime, the practices would take place in the evening and so not interfere with daylight activities. But all cricketing, matches and practice, obviously have to take place during the daylight hours. When a lot of villages have been debarred from holding dances therefore, they might naturally turn to cricketing for their pleasure, and in the absence of any check a craze would easily develop, seeing how strong is the competitive element in Kiriwinian life, and gardening inevitably suffer as a result, At the same time, cricket gives an excuse for holding a *kayasa* as well as offering an alternative for the dance. The cricket *kayasa* I mentioned in the introductory report. I think that what I said there in regard to the integration of a new activity into established cultural traditions holds true, and .that the above remarks explain in part the outbreaks of violent cricketing.

I am told that Omarakana always holds dance *kayasas*, never cricket. The Obwelia *kayasa* I mentioned in the last report, and even more the Olivilevi one held a few days later, were generally recognised as setting a very high standard in the lavishness of the show, and the Omarakana *kayasa* was intended to reemphasise Mitakata's prestige, There is I think a good deal of latent rivalry between the various lesser

page 6

chiefs and the ?[unclear word] headmen, as Austen suggests in his paper on Cultural Change in Kiriwina (Oceania XVI I) and it is a point of - not perhaps honour, but certainly prestige, that they should not out-do the Paramount Chief. However, in spite of the best efforts of Mitakata and his helpers--including myself-- a good many people went relatively empty away after that feast.

The organisation was briefly as follows:

The givers of the feast were Mitakata allied by his fellow villagers with the men of Tilakaiwa, Kasanai, Ulauta, and various other villages that are closely tied to Mitakata by relationship with one or other of his wives, as well as one or two others - e.g. Kwaybwaga, who supplied the biggest

Pwatai in the Show - who are traditionally "helpers - *Topilasisi*" of Mitakata, and a few individuals in other villages again. The contributions made by these people, though I only found this out afterwards, was counted as part of the *Urigubu*, or "tribute" , they pay to Mitakata annually. The *taitu* supplied came, as far as I could make out, mostly at least from the thinning out of the new crop - the *Basi*. Not knowing this I made no attempt to keep any real check on the amount of the contributions; therefore I cannot, as I hoped provide much in the way of comparative figures of Mitakata's *Urigubu* this year for comparison with that of To'uluwa given by Malinowski in the appendix to Coral Gardens, Vol. I in any case even if I had known this it would have been impossible for anyone with less than a squad of FBI and CID men to get such figures. The food was partly cooked in the villages of the contributors, or, where they were far off, was brought in to Omarakana in a kind of procession - *Delitiniges*- consisting of men and women carrying baskets of *taitu*, bunches of betelnut and bananas, and groups of men carrying the wretched pigs, tied to poles by the feet. These were hung up around the village until their turn came to contribute to the feast. I felt like going round and shooting the poor brutes. All the pigs, about 50 were of course Mitakata's, as was the betelnut, and they were all slaughtered and butchered at Omarakana. The process of bringing in the foodstuffs etc is called "*Dadodiga Bwaima*" not to be confused with the *Dadodiga Bwaima*, which is the filling of the yam houses at harvest time. I helped to "fill Mitakata's house", contributing 45 sticks of tobacco, 14 bunches of bananas, a *liku* of yams and a bunch or so of betelnut - all this except the tobacco, was supplied by my "kinsfolk" of Tilakaiwa Lukuba clan, who *dadodigaing* my *Bwaima* --lest I should let them down by not *dadodigaing* Mitakata's in my turn.

Of

Page 7

course I had to pay for the stuff. There were two types of containers on display in the village - *pwatai* and *bubuugas*. *Pwatai* as described by Malinowski. The *Bubuuga* is a platform of sticks with a cylindrical tube of sticks standing behind it. The latter is filled with uncooked yams, and the cooked yams and pork, with betelnut, bananas etc is heaped on and around the platform. The load of the latter is the part given to the guests; the contents of the cylinder are for those who provide the cooked

meats. The contents of the *pwatai* were also for the helpers - who seemed to me to be getting more than the guests. The *pwatai* were filled by the villages and individuals contributing to the feast as units, but the *bubuwaga* had assigned to each one a team of six men, usually kinsmen who live in the same area, who were to see to the organisation of supplying the food on the day of the feast. Thus I was allocated to a *bubuwaga* with four of the Tilakaiwa men who are my "kinsfolk" - *lubogu* - and the village constable of Omarkana. Each *bubuwaga* was assigned to a village group or *Barreki* - that is the villages which share responsibility for the building and maintenance of the *Barreki* - Government- Resthouse - and who share the village constable also. The receiving side of the feast as well as the dancing was organised in *Barreki*. The dances were the usual formal Kiriwinan style--- not very inspiring to the European beholder, and were performed by teams of men or women-not both from various *Barreki*. It was supposed to be competitive but no one seems to have worried very much about that angle; I asked many informants, including Mitakata, who won, but hardly two of them gave the same answer. The peoples behaviour while the dancing was going on was as, Malinowski described it. After the dancing the distribution of the food took place. with the recipients gathering in the general vicinity-of the *bubuwaga* assigned to their *Barreki*, and the helpers filling each *Barreki's* quota in turn with each type of comestible. Previously the platforms of the *bubuwaga* had been empty, though the cylinders were full. There was a final council of the leaders of the helpers immediately before the distribution started, and the food was carried round the *baku* on the way to the *bubuwaga* in procession, with much shouting. Actually the organisation was very poor; there was much confusion, people finding that they had not enough food to fill their stall and running around trying to borrow some from others. Even so I have been informed that a good half of the guests did not get enough to eat. At this time other things were going on too; Mitakata was *Peumkwala*-ing the local notables - making them individual presents of pigs, betelnut etc. graded according to their rank. This was done with

the usual ostentation, the gifts being thrown down on the ground in the middle of a ring of spectators

with an air of challenge. afterwards some women from Mulasaida formed up in front of Mitakata's house and performed a *Sipura* - a standing dance - cum-song in honour of their local chief. Thereafter the proceedings more or less petered out with people wandering of home as they got tired of sitting around and talking. One could hear remarks as to the poor showing at this time. Visitors from far off- there were, men from Sinaketa and Kitava as well as either all the local villages-stayed overnight and went home the next day. That day there was a *sagali* for the helpers, when food was given out in the normal manner - not cooked but shared out and carried away to their own villages. I received a *pwatai* of yams and a rib or two of pig. This I was told was rather niggardly.

I am not yet prepared to attempt an analysis of this event. beyond the remarks I made earlier at the beginning of this paragraph, and to add that the following features strike me as significant:-

1. The emphasis on the *Barreki* in the organization.
2. The event seems to me to savour of European influence, as I think that the idea of sitting down together and feasting is introduced through mission influence; it is the sort of thing that the missions do at their meetings for sports, etc.
3. At the same time the native emphasis on "exhibitionism" in the distribution, and on the acquisition of *Butura* - renown - is very clear all through.
4. I have of course more material than is presented here; but it needs further working up. Unfortunately, I was ill with the sinus trouble at the time the feast was given, and retired to Gusaweta two days later, so was unable to discuss the affair much with my informants then. This was the more unfortunate in that I think it very unlikely that there will be another such event during the rest of my stay here. Since I have been back here I have been too busy with other affairs to go into this matter again, but I hope to do so-when the gardening rush dies down. However I believe that this form of *kayasa* is slowly ousting the outright gardening *kayasa*, for the latter does not give much an opportunity for pleasuring as does the dance, which is preferred for this reason, and at the same time the cricketing also gives far more opportunity for

sociability too than does competitive gardening. But the gardening is still too important to be left out altogether as it were, and the feasts which wind up the cricketing season and which mark the

Page 9

culminating point of the season's dancing, carry an implicit recognition (?) of this though they involve new features - e.g. at the material level the *bubuwaga*, which is I think the direct product of European influence.

IV. The *Milamala* Season. Of Malinowski, *passim*.

Date. The *Yoba* in Kiriwina, with the exception of one village took place five days after the full moon of August 28th, on September 2nd. In an extract from a letter he sent to Professor Elkin, Austen refers to his article on the Kiriwinian Calendar in *Oceania*, IX 3, and says that according to his calculations this should be an intercalary year in Kiriwina and that there would probably be some confusion as a result. As to the confusion, he was right. There was a dispute between Mitakata and the Kuboma people as to whose moon it was to *Yoba* at the end of August. Austen says that the Kiriwinans would want to *Yoba* on this moon, but that if they did they would be wrong and would throw the rest of their season's gardening out. As it was the Kubomas, not getting the moon they wanted, had no *yoba* at all this year. Mitakata claimed to know that it was "his" moon from his knowledge of the heavenly bodies, but I was not clear about what stars he used; so I contacted the present "astronomer royal" of Kiriwina, one Mosiuna of Wawela, whom Austen used as an informant. This man confirmed Mitakata's claim, and said that Mitakata was capable of judging for himself, but that he would normally consult him. He said that he had told the Kuboma men they were in the wrong but that they would not listen to him. I did not go far into astronomy with him as I found his accent hard to follow and did not get much out of his use of unfamiliar words, but I was able to obtain a list of the moons for this year from him, which I append, giving as he did the

Kuboma moons with his remarks about other peoples':

June full moon	<i>Kaluwalasi</i>	Kitava <i>Milamala</i>
July	<i>Milamala</i>	Kuboma - <i>Mosiuna's</i> own
August	<i>Iakoi</i>	<i>Mitakata's Milamala</i> - Kiriwina
September	<i>Iakosi</i>	No <i>Milamala</i> anywhere
October	<i>Iavatakulu(?)</i>	- - -
November	<i>Toliyavata</i>	<i>Milamala</i> Vakuta
December	<i>Iavatam</i>	Europeans' Christmas
January	<i>Gelivilai</i>	<i>Milamala</i> now all over
February	<i>Bulumaduku</i>	
March	<i>Kuluwotu</i>	
April	<i>Utokokana</i>	
May	<i>Ikaibisilia</i>	

The remarks in the right hand column are free translations of *Mosiuna's* own comments. I got him to repeat the list four or five times, being concerned over the occurrence of *Iakoi* - *Iakosi* in the sequence;

Page 10

but the list was always the same and he admitted no doubt when I asked him about it specifically. He was quite clear about there being two months between the Kiriwina and the Vakuta *Milamala*, and that Christmas was the next month after Vakuta's. I was not able to discuss much else with him as I found his account hard to follow, and I had not much time with him- we had met halfway between Omarakana and Wawela, at the Catholic Mission at Gusaweta, and he wanted to get home for his gardening. I had indeed only intended the meetings as a sort of reconnaissance, and told him that I hoped later to get down to Obulaku and Wawela for a few days which will enable me to get my ear in. For the rest I am going to wait until I knew what time the Palolo worm actually does turn up at Vakuta. *Mosiuna's* remarks on the *Towosi* I shall refer to later.

Proceedings. So far as the actual *Milamala* season and the *Yoba* are concerned, this year was very disappointing, The weather as I mentioned in the introduction had been very bad for some weeks before the *Yoba* took place. The people had been *Karibomming* in the various villages but it was not very spectacular - there has been more since the *Yoba* than before it - and the actual night of the *Yoba* was marred by heavy rain, so that the driving of the spirits out of the villages was not very enthusiastically carried out. In fact only the young boys took part and they definitely hurried the proceedings. On the afternoon of the next day however the- *Pem* took place - the driving out of the spirits of young infants. the halt, the maim and the blind, who do not count as full adults, and whose *baloma* are handicapped in the same way as their physical aspects; they cannot get around well at night and so have to be driven out by day. Again in the early part of the afternoon there was a lot of rain, but it cleared up later on and the youths of the villages - the half dozen surrounding Omarakana - went on their round. with a couple of older lads beating drums. I waited at Omarakana with my camera and tried to make a film of the "fight" "between the invading youths and the women and girls, but the fight was very poor and I do not know whether it will come out or not.

I gained the impression anyway that in general the attitude of the people was closer to that which one sees in England at May Day festivities, for example than to that of a serious observance. The rite is taken seriously enough still by the older men- by Mitakata for example and others of his generation, but with the younger generation who are

Page 11

strongly mission influenced, the occasion is just one of permitted rowdiness. There was as far as the eye could see little put out in the way of food for the *Baloma* -- *Kasi Baloma* -- and not much valuables, but at the time this was taking place -- in the middle of *Milamala* moon before the *Yoba* but was performed -- the quarantine was on and I did not see every day's events. However at Omarakana, I asked Mitakata about this and he told me that he had little food to give the *baloma*, since his stores were almost empty after the feast. He protested vehemently however that he had given all his valuables -- a pair of To'uluwa's *mwali*, four *soulava* and five greenstone axes -- naming

each article and showing me how he had displayed them, with a good deal of emotion; I think he was feeling pretty guilty really. So far as the *Karibom* is concerned, the same sort of activities go on as are described by Malinowski, but some care is taken to see that they are not too obvious, and I do not think that they are so general. The occurrence of the *Ulatile* and girls parties has I am assured been stopped, since missions disapprove; nevertheless individual youths get around, and fights occur over girls still -- there was one while I was at Gusaweta which resulted in almost the whole of the male population of three or four of the northern villages spending a month in gaol -- followed by a further three weeks owing to the quarantine. This as I shall say later had a noticeable effect on the harvest. Further, I have since the fine weather set in I noticed many parties of adolescent girls wandering around the roads in the evening, and I am inclined to wonder whether the *Katuyausi* as an institution is quite so dead as the natives would have me believe.....

With regard to Mitakata's sense of guilt -- I was told by many informants, including Mitakata himself, that the heavy and unseasonable rain was certainly the result of the ill will of the *Baloma*, who were angry with people for not giving them enough food etc. This all agreed was the fault of Mitakata, his *kayasa*. I was asked by a few people -- not Mitakata, ordinary folk -- what month it was Dimdim, for some believe that Mitakata had made a mistake and they wanted to check with me; I told them, and in my turn asked, would it not make the *baloma* mad if people *milamaled* the wrong month when they were not there and so could not join in the fun? But no one seemed to know the answer to that one. However, I asked where Mitakata why he did not make rain, or anti-rain, magic at this time. The answer I found rather interesting and typical

Page 12

of the attitudes to magic described by Malinowski. I was told repeatedly that it was no use trying to make rain magic against the *baloma*. The rain was obviously the result of their magic, and as they include in their numbers all of the dead and gone magician's of the past, and as the *baloma* are spirits anyway, obviously no mere human rain magician's efforts could hope to prevail against them once

they really got cracking. No; they wouldn't do anything about it till after the *yoba*. Then the *baloma* would have gone off home and either would not or could not interfere any more. Thus Mitakata told Giotilawa of Kasanai, the present rain wizard, to start work on this Sunday morning after the *yoba* was over. This he did, and the Monday was the first bright sunny day for three weeks. I went and congratulated Mitakata and Giotilawa; but I was somewhat premature, for on Tuesday it rained like blazes again. So went and said what was all this -- had something gone wrong? Oh no, said Mitakata-- it was quite in order. After all the *baloma* had been at their rainmaking some time and obviously had left some pretty potent magic lying around, and it was more than likely that Giotilawa would have to increase his own by daily repetitions before it finally prevailed. So indeed it turned out; Giotilawa continued his efforts for some 10 days before finer whether really settled in.

With regard to Austen's suggestions in the above mentioned article in Oceania, no attempt has been made to adapt old rites to new ways by either missions or government. The Catholic mission is talking of trying to do this -- I shall have some more to say on the matter in the section on gardening; but I fear it is a little late to try and turn the *Milamala* into a serious ritual. However, Father King tells me that he spent last year's *yoba* at Omarakana, and found the event rather impressive. It is quite likely that this year circumstances combined to put picture out of focus, so that I may have underestimated its present importance. So I've asked him to let me have an account of the event -- he prepared a short one for possible publication in a Catholic journal -- so that the two might be compared. At the same time I am assured by both the older natives and the white residents that the occasion is not what it was even by immediately pre-war standards. This and other matters of religious type I hope to take up later with the native teachers; but it is not too easy to get on terms with them, especially as my nearest one Keleba of Omarakana, is a bit of intriguer and somewhat suspicious of me. He probably thinks I want to revive sorcery -- and fears the loss of his monopoly.

V. Gardening a. Harvest -- season 1949- 50

The weather has greatly affected the harvest this year as it affected the whole *Milamala* season. The gardens were planted late last year, owing to the cricket mania, and were consequently small also. Thus the season's harvest was in any case late and small. But the rain set in about the end of June. At that time many people were still in the process of thinning out their crops, as noted earlier. The rain continued until about 12 September. It was not of course continuous, but it was frequent enough and heavy enough to prevent burning off of the *kaymugwa* plots where they had been cut, and to send half the crop rotten in the ground. At the same time it held up the harvesting, partly because the people did not want to dig up their tubers wet, and hoped for enough sun to dry out the land, and partly because they hoped the crops might yet be improved if the weather cleared. But it did not, until after the *Yoba* but, as related above. These remarks relate primarily to Carina of course and especially to Omarakana district; but the weather conditions were the same all over the Trobriands. During the greater part of this period -- from the end of June to 26 August, I was living at Gusaweta as related earlier, and the harvest was going in fits and starts all this time. I did not see anything of the sort of the ceremonial bringing in of the crops such as Malinowski described. There was only one village where this was going on -- the village of Kwaybwaga just north of Omarakana, which held a *Kayasa* this year, and had their gardens planted more or less on time in 1949, and had more or less completed their harvest by the time the rain set in. But even they were affected to some extent. I of course did not learn of the Kwaybwaga *Kayasa* till the date it was held and arrived at the village on my auto cycle when it was almost over-- the filling of the *Bwaimas*-- for the roads very bad with the continued rain. I was too late to make a check of the amounts of foodstuff brought in to the village or to see the major events of the day. The *Kayasa* had been declared at the instigation of the citizens, who had offered prizes for the best garden, the best crop etc.; but the judging was over when I arrived; I was in fact only in time to make some films of the filling of the *Bwaimas*. I was told however that the crop had been about the same as the average yield in a good year. Anyway, I saw the Kwaybwaga heap at Omarakana later, when they sent it in for Mitakata's *Urigubu*, and I was

told it comprised a 150 peta of *taitu*, which was about what they would have given in a normal

Page 14

year. They had previously contributed by far the largest *Pwati* to the dance feast, which also of course counted as part of the *urigubu*.

As I have said in the preliminary report, I had hoped to get an account of Mitakata's harvest tribute this year for comparison with that of To'uluwa's. But there was no accumulation of the tribute on the *baku* at Omarakana this year. I did not see or hear one party bring in the harvest with this ceremonialism described by Malinowski. Instead, it was brought in a few baskets at a time as the weather permitted; it was stacked in front of Mitakata's wives *bwaimas* -- except that from Kwaybwaga which was heaped near Dubilikwaiai, Mitakata's personal *Bwaima*; and it was not left there on display until all of the tribute was in, but the givers returned and stored it away in a day or so, with no fuss -- almost surreptitiously, in fact. I remarked on this to Mitakata and others, and was told that the crops were so bad it wasn't worth displaying them properly. Consequently the collecting and stowing away of Mitakata's harvest went on over the whole period I was at Gusaweta, and is still going on at present; and I have been quite unable to get anything like a complete record of amounts he received. All the time I was at Gusaweta I kept inquiring when would the filling of Dubilikwaiai take place, knowing that then all the harvest would be in and on display, and I could make a complete survey, more or less. But it had not taken place when the *yoba* was over, and the wives *bwaimas* were being slowly filled, so I pressed Mitakata for it, and he confessed eventually that there was just not enough *taitu* to fill his wives *bwaimas*, properly, let alone Dubilikwaiai, and they were not going to do it at all this year. I was in the village when the *bwaimas* of Geumwala and Kadumiyu were filled. Geumwala, the senior wife received 496 peta that day, and her *Bwaima* was about 90% full; Kadumiyu, the third wife, received only 250 peta, and her *Bwaima* was about 60% full. But no one could tell me how much had been contributed on their behalf to the dance feast, and there was still some more stuff to come in for both of them. No tally was kept of the amounts brought in, and I had to ask the givers how much was in each heap, and I think that not unnaturally

they tended to exaggerate. Judging the amounts given to the other wives in the same way, and by estimating contents of *bwaimas*, I think that on the whole they received an average of about 200 *peta* each. With twelve ----one of the 13 is as yet wife in name only being pre-adolescent, and her *urigubu* was only a token -- this makes a total about 2400 *peta* to the wives *bwaimas*.

Page 15

Reckoning about 25 pounds to each *peta*, this gives a total of about 60,000 apart from what was given for the feast, and from what Mitakata gave from his *urigubu* to his kinsfolk and friends -- e. g. Geumwala sent me three *peta* on his behalf, and Kadumiyu one; but that was all I received. This was of course the "public" part of the harvest; what Mitakata kept for himself from his own crop I have no means of telling. But the Chiefs gardening position is very weak compared to that of To'uluwa; he has only four men working for him in the gardens in the whole of Omarakana. I think that the non-filling of Dubilikwaiai is symbolic of the weakness of Mitakata's position in so far as it is based on native wealth. I shall have some more to say on this in the latter section

b./ The new season -- 1950-51

If the weather affected the harvest, it has I think through the planting right out. In Kiriwina the *Kaymugwa* plots were cut during the period of the quarantine, in spite of the rain. But the burning off and planting has only just been finished. The *Towosi* at Tilakaiwa spelled over the garden sites of the *Kaymata* or main plots at Tilakaiwa on the morning of Sunday, 17th September, the cutting started properly the next day, and is still in progress today, 29th. On Monday 18th I went to Losuia for the monthly council of village headmen and constables, and with Mr. Hardy ascertained that the cutting of the *Kaymata* was done or begun over the whole island. I took the opportunity to make some general inquiries - in particular I asked how many villages were having *Towosi* performed this year. The answer was for the whole of the island -- eleven. I shall return to this later. The present position seems to be that the planting of the main plots will probably not be finished before the middle of November or so at the earliest, which I think will not give the crops much of a start.

I have been under the impression for a long time that most of the villages of Kiriwina district, certainly Omarakana, at least still used the *Towosi* magic. In the course of a conversation with the Tilakaiwa villagers, about the cutting of their sites, I asked when would Mitakata be having his own site spelled over. I received an answer that startled me -- that the informants didn't know his mind; that for the last three years he had not had them *Towosi'ed*, and that they thought that this year also he would probably rely on the prayers of the Mission boy of Omarakana. I further found that Tilakaiwa had followed Mitakata's lead for these three years, but that this year they were going back to magic, for they were fed up with bad

Page 16

crops. The reasons given to me by Mitakata for his giving up the *Towosi* rites were that the garden magician had gone blind, that he himself who could otherwise have deputized for him was to badly handicapped by some form of rheumatism, I think it is; and that the *Towosi's* heir did not know the spells properly. Myself, I suspect from hints that have been dropped to me by various persons that Keleba had a good deal to do with it in the final instance, but I have not been able to get any real evidence, for it was a long time ago, and again I suspect that many of the people are rather afraid of Keleba and will not discuss him at all freely. However the mission - Methodists- has for some years before the war, or rather some of the native teachers have, it is not part of the declared mission policy at present - been carrying on a campaign against magic in all forms, with the view I think of increasing their own influence. As it happens I am told that some of them -- "no names, no packdrill" -- have something of a reputation as *Tobwagaus* -- sorcerers -- themselves. The war had a marked effect on gardening in Kiriwina, for during two seasons organized gardening virtually broke down while the men were conscripted for service as laborers with the Armed Forces. This breakdown must have damaged the prestige of gardening as an occupation, and of the *Towosi* in particular. In fact I suspect that it was something of a trauma, to the Kiriwina ego, for the people were suddenly confronted with t (missing words) that the cessation of their most important activity -- the *U'ula* of their way of life, their road, *keda* Kiriwina, did not result in the end of the world. Mission and white influence generally had been brandishing the wedge for years; the war produced a crack into which

the thin end slipped easily. Now I find that only about one fifth of the villages practice communal garden magic; it should be noted however that in most villages some people practice their own forms of private garden magic. This discovery -- none of the other whites seem to be aware of it, not even the head of the Methodists, caused me to severely revise my, I confess preconceived, idea of Omarakana as the center of Kiriwinan conservatism; I am still suffering from the shock.

It is lucky for me that Tilakaiwa are backsliding this year, for it will, providing I have enough film, permit me to record the various events in the routine of garden magic in motion. The first rite, of magicing the sites, which should have been done in June, was combined with the cutting magic, for the villagers did not decide to

Page 17

have their site spelled over till after they had realized how bad were this year's crops, so the record will not be complete, but the magician whose name is To'uladoga, tells me that the rest of the rites will be performed in due course. The spells have the same form as described by Malinowski; but To'uladoga used no one for this first rite, and his axe was the ordinary trade article, not the traditional stone ceremonial one. But he spelled over his own and the axes and the bush knives of the rest of the men of the village the night before. No proper path had been prepared for him around the site, but a small patch was cleared before hand on each of the *balekos*, and he performed his rite here, with the full version on the corner or *laiwota* plots.

I asked Mosiuna, amongst others, what he thought about the falloff of the garden magic. I quote him because he gave a more definite opinion than others, but the general feeling seemed to be similar except among the conservative diehards: this was, that it was a good thing. The performance of the magic took a long time and held up work could have been earlier finished -- he made special reference to the fact that some of the rites involved tabus which prevent the men from working their own sites for days at a time. I asked him did he think the magic was false --*sasopa*; and he more or less shrugged his shoulders, and said that if folk did the right thing at the right garden season --

kweluva -- they would get good crops. If they didn't, like last year, magic would not get them their food. What about the towosi as regulator of gardening and getting things done at the right time -- as *Tokaraywaga*? Here he repeated his previous points and said that if people didn't do the job properly, the village counselors (he is one) could always get the Govemani in. I quoted him his own statement about the leaders of Kubome district refusing to listen to him about this year's *Milamala*, and he got rather huffy, and said they were fools anyway.

The fact remains that no one has really stepped into the breach left by the *Towosi*. The government may take steps, when gardening goes awry, but they will necessarily be therapeutic rather than prophylactic; the missions hold special services at planting and harvest -- some of them -- but keep no regular routine up as did the *Towosi's* rites. The Catholic mission is talking of reviving the magical rites but informing them with religion, on the model of European rites such as the blessing of the crops or the fields in the ?ltic [missing letters] states, before the communists anyway. This would be a good thing,

page 18

but permission has yet to be obtained from Rome for some aspects of the proposal. I think myself that it might be better to try and substitute ritual rather than to revive the old with new content; but that is a matter for further investigation.

VI Copra

There is I think no doubt that the production could easily be greatly increased from the technical viewpoint; the difficulty here would be to provide incentive. There is no commodity, other than tobacco of which the natives require regular supplies and which is outside their own capacities to produce. Other articles which are necessities such as hardware and calicos, or only bought occasionally. I have been inquiring amongst my informants why they do not buy other articles, such as bicycles, or other tools, such as iron yam spades, which though they are relatively expensive are appreciated and are not by no means out of the reach of man who would devote some real effort to copra production. The reason seems to be not that the men are too lazy, but that if anyone owned

something which other people haven't got, unless he uses it continually himself he must, as part of his kinship obligations, lend the thing to any of his relations who ask for it. To quote an example of what happens- some time ago Tobudasawa, the village constable of Omarakana district, bought a file to sharpen his axe and knives with. Four days after he obtained it, it was borrowed by an older brother of his who took it off to Kwaybwaga. This man lent it to Tobudasawa's wife's brother, who took it to Diaghila; from there it went to Mutawa, and then to Kaibola. Tobudasawa thinks that it will probably continue its journey by easy stages till it reaches Tuma, where it will pass and to the possession of the *Baloma*; he said rather doubtfully that he might catch you up with it when he dies. At the conclusion of this recital he tried to borrow my own file, hoping to have aroused my sympathy. He failed.

I have suggested that common ownership might help here; a man cannot ask for payment if he lends his kin anything, but he can if a stranger asked for it. Thus if two or more men own such an article, one man could always refer his own relatives to the other, who would have to be paid. But this is difficult for three reasons;

a./ because disputes as to use and share the payment would be sure to arise.

b./ Because the established working groups are up kinsfolk,

Page 19

amongst whom communal ownership would not work as suggested, for kinship ties would be the same in all cases, while a tie with a stranger would cut across affiliations and produce conflict.

c./ because although a man must lend his possessions, still they are his own, and the idea of communal ownership is repugnant.

But it might be possible to establish communal working in copra plantations, along the lines in

which the heavy work is done in the garden site at present. The product and its price s would have however to belong to individuals. It would be difficult though to ensure fair use of government provided tools etc., unless their employment were very closely supervised. These people not unnaturally have no concept of public ownership, and would be very bad at looking after tools etc.; especially as none of their own possessions require much attention. Unlike some of the mainline natives, the Trobriander is still so isolated that he has no real conception of himself in relation to the rest of the world. I have more and more a feeling that their outlook is extremely self-centered and as it were remote; it is very difficult to make any real contact with them even as individuals, for I'm continually made to feel that they do not consider Europeans, or anyone who isn't born Boyowan at least, to be real people, but rather phenomena to be exploited for the benefit of the Kiriwinans. This is a very obvious statement, of course; it lies at the root of the attitude towards my tobacco, for instance; but it is hard to realize until one is forced up against it, for one is so real to one's self.

VII: LAW AND ORDER.

This is the season when land disputes come to the fore. A case has just been settled at Omarakana, after the intervention of Mr. Hardy, which, I think, sheds some light on the present state of political affairs in the islands.

The dispute involved a village counselor of the name of Tobigaveaka, and a citizen called Modubalai. The land in question was a field of some 50 plots which lies at the village of Yalumugwa. Neither of the two men lived there, but in nearby villages; both had rights of citizenship there. The land had been sold without Modubalai's knowledge by Tobigaveaka to the men of Kabwaku, much of whose own land borders the inland swamp areas and is too water logged for growing taitu after all the rain recently. Modubalai claimed that the land, except for a few plots

Page 20

which belonged to two other men and four belonging to Tobigaveaka, was his. His claim was upheld on the grounds that his ancestors were the *Tosunapulo* - the ones who emerged, i.e. original inhabitants, of Yalumugwa and were therefore the original owners of the land. If anybody buys land

from the *Tosunapulo* or her descendants, either in myth or in fact, then the land belongs to the purchaser and his heirs; and the same applies if the land is given by the original owners; but Tobigaveaka claimed neither of these things, though he acknowledged Modubalai's "house" (place of emergence) to be there, and that his subclan, the Gumakasowari, to be the *tosunapulo*. He said that his father had sold the land, and his mother, and his elder brother in their turn, and each had had and kept the price of it, and that he was going to hold the price of it too. The case first came before Mitakata and the counselors at Omarakana, and they decided with no hesitation in favor of Modubalai, saying that Tobigaveaka had no right on the face of his story; and that everyone knew anyway that his father, who was only a commoner, had been a "big man" who was something of a sorcerer, and had "stolen" the land, relying on his reputation to get away with it. Tobigaveaka had himself been goaled for sorcery by Whitehouse after the war, and was up to the same trick- he is a counselor and was trying to use his status as well as his reputation to get away with a renewed theft.

It was evident from the first that the decision was going to go against Tobigaveaka, and twice during the first Council he tried to walk out, but was called back by Mitakata. But afterwards when the judgment had been pronounced by the chief he refused to give up the price of the land that was not his, and told the Kabwaku man to go on and cut it, which they did in all good faith. The matter was brought up at the monthly Council meeting referred to earlier, and Mr. Hardy said that he wished the Council to meet again the following Thursday and settle the matter themselves. Tobigaveaka now announced that he was not going to attend the Council, and said that Mitakata was unjust and favored his own relatives, but that he would appeal to the Govemani. On the Thursday he did not turn up. We sat and waited till about 2:30 PM, when Mitakata asked me to go to Losuia on my bike and tell Mr. Hardy. The matter had now become a question of Mitakata's authority, Tobigaveaka hoping to present the Govemani with a *fait accompli*, and to fog the matter by raising the issue of Mitakata's competence. Finally, Mr. Hardy came out to Omarakana ? [missing words]

day and upheld the court's decision in the matter of the land. He also strafed Tobigaveaka for

refusing to obey his order about the further Council and ask what grounds he had for questioning Mitakata's authority. In spite of the fact that I had heard that eight or nine other counselors had supported Tobigaveaka at Losuia, in the matter of Mitakata, ? [unclear handwritten word] over land, when he was talking to them after the meeting of the counselors, he made no attempt to put forward a case against him, but merely reiterated his case for the land under dispute. Mitakata however was evidently deeply disturbed by the accusation of favoritism and unfairness, and made a long dignified and rather impressive speech, denying the charge, and protesting that all he wished was to find the truth and act on it in the interests of whoever was in the right. I had heard all this before and knew that Mitakata and his allies were seriously upset, but the matter did not come out so clearly in the Council. But all the time the matter was under discussion both in and out of Council the only claim put forward by Mitakata to any right of control was that the govemani had appointed him. Beyond claiming that he was better acquainted with all of the *lilius* or myths of origin of the various clans on which the claims to land ownership are based he made no allusion to his position in Kiriwinan society, to the prestige of the Tabalu, or the power of the chief of Omarakana, and he and the rest of his supporters said that the government had made it his job with the Council to investigate the ownership of the land, of betel nut, and coconut palms because of their special knowledge.

Mitakata himself and various of his clansmen and cronies told me out of court that this was really an attack on the *Guyau*, and that there is a rising generation of commoners, "self-made man", who have profited by the breakdown of the old prerogatives of the Chiefs and now wish to break what prestige they have left so as to increase their own. It seemed to me significant and a tacit admission of the weakness of his own position that Mitakata made no reference to his own prestige in indigenous terms - control of resources, eminence in gardening and wealth; I think that there are in fact men who are his equal in all these things except only the matter of the number of his wives, and as I said in the preliminary report that is not so great a matter today as it might seem on the surface. The *Gumguyaus* of Obwelia and Olivilevi gave bigger and better feast this year than did he; there are other resources for the man who wants backing now than the Chiefs as such. At

The same time this matter of rank is still strong enough to be above direct attack; but Mitakata personally is weak enough to be stabbed at.

VIII Kinship.

More as an exercise in language than anything else, I have been obtaining kinship terms for myself, and comparing married results with Malinowski's. I have found him to be in error in one matter of fact. In the explanatory notes and particularly the diagram on page 435 and six of sexual life of savages, he says that a man calls his older or younger brother's wife by the term *Ivaguta*. This is wrong. A man calls his brothers wives by the same term as calls his brothers; i.e. *Tuwagu* or *Bwadagu* as the case may be; further, he calls his wife's sisters by the same term as his wife calls them; i.e. *Tuwagu* in the case of an elder, and *Bwadagu* in the case of a younger, sister. The same holds true of a woman, with the sexes reversed. That's the terms for "sibling of the same sex" are extended to include a stranger of the opposite sex, by a process of identification which is founded in the terms used towards, and the social relationship, with the children of the marriage is involved. CF. attached diagram.

The term *Lubogu* is used exclusively between men, and signifies either the husband of my sister, equals father of my *kadagu*; or my wife's brother. It is reciprocal. (So of course are *Bwada* - and *Tuwa*- as used above).

The term *Ivaguta* is used exclusively between women, and means either the wife of my brother, or the sister of my husband.

In neither of these two cases are the children of the marriage called "my children", so there is no need

as it were to invent a blood relationship which does not exist, and a special term is used to define the special social relationships. In the case of *Bwada* - and *Tuwa*- it seems to me that on the one hand a man calls his brothers children "my children", so he identifies their mother with his brother, for the children are not of course his own clan; in the case of his wife's sister, his wife is her sisters children's classificatory mother, and calls them her children, they call her husband "father", but the relationship is indirect, so he identifies himself with his wife. But this is not a very happy explanation, for a man whose own children are not directly is. But he cannot call his wife's sister "my wife"; that would be an adulterous, *kelasi*, Though only mildly so. There is a respect relationship between husband and wife: cf. Malinowski on marital relations, this extend to wife's sisters.

Page 23

IX CONCLUSION:

Today is September 30. As I write this, my "kinsman" of Tilakaiwa, Ulauta and neighboring villages and their relations are cutting "my" garden. This they have decided to make in the Bush which my primitive but so far private "small house" faces. They tell me that it will be nice, one I "go to consult with my *Kadagu* (Malinowski)" to be able to contemplate My Own Garden, and to see its growth from day to day. But I fear that others will have the same idea- of seeing how the garden grows - and that my last local retreat from prying eyes is about to be infiltrated. However this is one of the minor discomfort shares which one must endure in the cause of Science. I hope to use the case of my garden as material for a check on kinship obligations. At the same time, it will of course be spelled over by my friend To'uladoga, the *Towosi*. And I shall have the magic going on under my nose as it were. It is all too easy to miss things when they are taking place a mile or more away in the bush, as are the main gardens of Tilakaiwa . When the burning office done I hope to make his survey of the amounts of land that is being put under cultivation this year; at present it is impossible for me

to distinguish Bush from garden site.

In the last couple of days too a number of men have come over from Kitava to *Kula* - I got them to confirm the time of the *Milamala* there as given to me by Mosiuna. It is hardly the real *Kula* seizing yet, and I think there may be something to be thought out of these men. I am already under the impression that the orientation of the *Kula* has been somewhat altered, and I do not see much of the formality described by Malinowski in the activities of these men. But I shall have to go into it before I can really express my opinion.

There is however in my opinion enough material in this report to show that changes having a considerable effect on the life of the Kiriwinians although on the surface there is little alteration in their way of living since Malinowski's time. My material is as yet various scrappy - scrappy or than it would have been but for the loss of two months, but if all goes well I hope to begin to get somewhere in the next months. I think that I may venture at this stage, in spite of the fact that I am only now beginning to get under the surface of things, the following tentative proposition;

It seems to me firstly that the fundamental economic

Page 24

basis remain the same as they were in Malinowski's time, but that their distribution has been altered. The only new element now operating is that trade in copra and this is at present very much of a sideline in the affairs of the people. The purling trade, important as it was before the war, has not been reestablished since, and is no longer an and effective element in native economy, though I hope to study the effect it's breakdown had on the economy of the lagoon villagers. I do not however hope to get much out of it for the pearl trade broke down well before the war and I think that at present the only effect is a faint nostalgia for the Golden age. Nonetheless it had an effect on economy and

may still be possible to trace that out some extent. But the old concentration of wealth in the hands of a few high-ranking local leaders is I believe already largely a thing of the past. For one thing there is a new attitude towards property and its disposal. One hears the word 'buy' (*gimwali*) very often these days, it was rare under the old system. Even immediately before the war for them since it was customary for travelers to be entertained with a little food and coconut mouth as they pass through the villages, and to return the gift with a small present when they left. Cf. Austen's description in cultural change. But that system has almost broken down now except among close relatives, I think. Certainly it has so far as Europeans are concerned, though the fact that they now travel and trucks may have something to do with it. But when Mr. Hardy visited Omarakana for the court described earlier, Mitakata made no effort to entertain him, beyond providing, on request, a few coconuts for drinking. So far as my own experience shows, only the "old-fashioned" people have ever given me a present, though I am of course continually giving presents of tobacco. I have received a check in from Kalogusa, one of To'uluwa's sons, and a bunch or two of bananas from others; but none of my casual gifts have ever been returned, even by Mitakata, according to the old custom. No; I have to buy. The point is that though in the old days a return was expected, the transaction was still regarded as an exchange of presents, not purchase and sale; but now the corresponding attitude is outright sale. I am wondering for example how this may have affected the *Kula*. I am sure already that the attitudes towards kinship kingship rites and duties have been affected, though just how I do not yet know, and I believe that this readjustment of values scales in economics- for that is what it amounts to, - is one factor the collapse of the

Page 25

Old basis of the prestige of chiefly ranks. Cf.. Mitakata's claims to authority as outlined in the account of the court case above; and after all the case of the old man is an index of the general situation. Nowadays I think there is a shifting of emphasis; there is a tendency for men to acquire

prestige because they are counselors, rather than to be elected counselors because they're prestige as chiefs. Cf. again Tobigaveaka; he is a counselor and a commoner. In the old days had he set out to be a "big man" (a native phrase - Toveaka) he would probably have been *bwagau'ed* by the chief on whose rights he was encroaching; nowadays being a man of strong personality he can use his own reputation as a source for to get himself elected counselor, as my informants told me, and then try to take advantage of his position. And he would have succeeded, had not Modubalai, who is a young man, then something of a budding Toveaka and more than usually bowled himself.

My references at the beginning of this report and in the preliminary one to the natives demands on myself were not altogether personal complaints. The war has in my opinion, as I've said elsewhere had a far more important effect on the natives than appears on the surface of things. Apart from its effect as a precipitating factor in matters of tendencies already present, it profoundly affected their attitude the white man, and consequently indirectly to the new post-world war, to which the people had sooner or later to adjust themselves. The truths behave quite differently from the whites the natives had known before, and the result is that I have been told that a good white man, as opposed to the traders and missionaries - a discreet silence was preserved about the government by my informant, who is a counselor- is one who gives the natives things - food, clothes, tools, lamps, kerosene etc. etc. And the average Islanders simply cannot understand why white men who apparently have far more belongings than they can use, either do not give them away at all- without any return- or insists on returns which so far as the natives can see are of no real value at all, and merely indicate an incomprehensible meanness. I am a type of good white man, not so much because I throw my goods around but because I understand their customs to some extent and try to fit in with them. And this is another aspect of the same problem. They firmly believe that the white has far more to learn from them than they have from the white man.

Thus it seems to me that if as Mr. Hardy tells me is the case

Page 26

The administration wishes to bring the programs into the general economy of New Guinea - to which without a doubt they could make a useful contribution, the first step before any real development scheme could be successfully started should be an attempt to give the population some knowledge of the outside world replace the ideas they gained as a result of the war. Otherwise it would be as well at to replace Mr. Hardy when he leaves with a trained muleteer.

Whether are not such development would be of good thing from the viewpoint of the native, I am not prepared to say. But it seems to me that compared with the impression one gains from Malinowski the social order has in some ways deteriorated. For instance, there seems to be now greater emphasis on a man's rights, were in the old days both rights and duties were more evenly stressed. The positive side of magical and religious belief has largely been undermined, cf. garden magic, and the *Milamala* which reflects declining belief in native concepts of the afterlife. So far as I can see native Christianity as yet does little to restore the balance. At the same time belief in *bwagau* and *mulukwausi* is as strong as ever, amen practice their private garden magic; and these are the means whereby a man may gain his own ends in the face of the rights of others. And even if the people do not yet attempt to exploit each other in the way they behaved towards the European, I think it will come to that in the long run, for the tendency as Malinowski said in his writings is there; the difference is that nowadays the old checks are showing signs of breaking down.

In short, in my gloomier moments I often feel that Kiriwinan is already far more like our own society than I had feared - without the compensations which to some extent relieve ours for us of its general cussedness.

H. A. Powell

Omarkana, Trobriands, 2 August 1950

The District Officer, Samarai

Dear Mr. Foldi,

Here with my second report on fieldwork in Kiriwinia. I hope it will be of greater interest than the past one which I fear was a mess but I was ill with the sinus when I wrote it.

The present report does not of course cover all of the ground I scratched in the course of my investigations but I hope it will give some light on the subject of culture change here. I may point out here that though much of it will be familiar to yourself e.g. as regards the status of Mitakata- it will not be so to the people at home. Also I have assumed a degree of familiarity with Malinowski's work on the part of my readers. None of the subjects dealt with here are of course by any means exhausted but I did not want to spend too long on the report my real job here is to gather material analysis and appreciation will follow when I get home. As it is the composition and writing has taken a week and during that time I have had to stop fieldwork for I find that otherwise I continually find fresh material which makes me change my mind and start all over again, and the report goes on for ages and still it is not finished. Again of course the conclusions or opinions expressed here are not by any means final and are open to future revision.

If you think that I am adrift over things or have any suggestions to make I shall be glad of them. I miss having anyone I can turn to for criticism and advice. There are times when I think I have "got something" but I have read the same words or remember the same idea an hour later and it just seems bloody nonsense!

The sinus trouble alluded to in the report has died down to some extent and modified its form under treatment so that I am no longer prevented from doing any work but at the same time I have a troublesome aftermath of catarrh and mucous discharges which is a definite nuisance all the time and on the odd day makes life miserable but I shall of course carry on unless I get a lot worse. I am perhaps a little anxious about the effect of the rainy season.

However we cannot expect everything to be a picnic all the time and life has its compensations mentioning which I am reminded that you have been on leave and I hope that you enjoyed the holiday and have benefitted by it.

I am sending a copy of the report to Port Moresby under a separate cover as it seems H. H. did not see the last one as he should have done. So this yours to do as you like with which is rather laying myself open. I hope you will be patient though.

Yours sincerely,

H.A .Powell