indigenous ideas of order, time, and transition in a New Guinea cargo movement[1]

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Cargo movements are based on the belief that it is possible to acquire Western goods—"cargo," in pidgin English—through ritual means. Part of the fascination of cargo movements to Western observers stems from the apparent incongruity of using ritual organization and activities for the attainment of what we would consider secular material and political ends. Moreover, cargo movements appear bizarre to us because they are efforts to achieve an instantaneous transformation of society.

Despite all that has been written about cargo movements, a number of important questions remain incompletely answered. The most fundamental of these questions is why cargo is desired. It cannot simply be assumed that Western goods, aside from axes and knives and other goods of obvious practical value, are intrinsically very desirable. Not only is there the question of why cargo is so keenly desired, there is the question of why it is desired in such enormous quantities. Stanner (1958), for one, has called attention to this question of why cargo is given such a "factitious value." Some writers, such as Burridge (1960) and Lawrence (1964), have dealt in part with this question by suggesting that the extraordinary value placed on cargo can be explained if cargo is viewed not only as good in itself, but as the means to a more important goal. Their argument is that cargo is desired because Melanesians feel that only if their society is transformed so that they are as wealthy in material goods as Europeans are will Europeans treat them as moral equals. As long as they are without cargo, Europeans will continue to reject them. However, even if such a desire for relations of moral equality exists—and I think that it does—the question of why Melanesians even care what Europeans think of them must first be answered. Since Europeans do not control the pigs, women, shell money, and ritual secrets that are traditionally the basis of prestige in Melanesia, it is at least conceivable that Melanesians should reject Europeans. Why then should particular native groups even be interested in establishing relations of equality with Europeans?

These questions concern the goals of a cargo movement. Once they are understood, there is still the question of the means by which the goals are to be reached. The question of means concerns the social form of the cargo movement as well as its choice of activities. For instance, if the goal is to achieve more satisfactory relations with Europeans, why is this goal pursued through a cargo movement rather than through a

The goals of a Duke of York Island cargo movement and the means by which these goals are to be realized rest on indigenous assumptions about social organization, ritual process, and time and transition. Much that seems bizarre and inexplicable about cargo movements to Western observers and anthropologists stems from the failure to understand adequately these non-Western assumptions about reality.

chaotic march on the administrative headquarters in Port Moresby with placards stating "Black is Beautiful" or through a tightly organized labor union which enforces its demands through strikes?[2]

My discussion will concern a cargo movement found in the Duke of York Islands situated between New Britain and New Ireland in the Territory of Papua and New Guinea. This movement, called the Kaun, has its focus among the 225 inhabitants of the small island of Karavar. I will contend in my analysis of the Kaun that the means by which a cargo movement attempts to cause the cargo to arrive and the society to be transformed can be adequately understood only in terms of implicit indigenous assumptions about social organization, ritual process, and time and social transition—assumptions very different from those held by us about our own Western society.[3]

The following logic underlies the cargo activities and goals of the Kaun:

The achievement of social order in the Karavaran view is an elusive but highly desirable goal. To be ordered is to be fully human. Karavarans consider Europeans to be more ordered than they are, and as a consequence admire them and attempt to emulate them in their cargo movement.

Social change—in this case becoming like Europeans—is seen as an abrupt transition rather than as a gradual process. This corresponds to the Karavaran view of time.

Because indigenous social order is achieved during ritual, the Karavarans, in their effort to attain a European level of order, pattern their cargo movement on the model of their traditional ritual.

The Karavaran cargo movement, the Kaun, is, then, an effort to instantaneously acquire a European level of social order through conforming to the pattern of efficacy found in their traditional ritual.

Karavarans are preoccupied with achieving social order. Order is not inherent in existence; it cannot be assumed. Social life is a continual effort by men to tame themselves and others by channeling their desires and energy into orderly paths. Their view of social life as a process of domestication rests on ideas about the nature of man—both European and Karavaran—and about the nature of order. The Karavarans make their clearest statement about the nature of man and the basis of order in an image, not of their society as it now exists, but of an antisociety they call the *momboto.*

Literally, the *momboto* means that men could not see clearly: the path of proper conduct was hidden from them. During the time of the *momboto,* men looked like wild animals and behaved as such. They did not shave nor did they cut their hair; they had red eyes "like wild pigs"; they ate human flesh, even the flesh of those who would now be considered their kinsmen. There was no kinship or regulation of sex: men had sexual relations even with such women as their sisters and sisters' daughters. Men did not purchase brides nor did they pay adultery fines. In the absence of a way to regulate access to women, men simply fought over them.

The antisociety of the *momboto,* according to the Karavarans, ended within a few days after the arrival of George Brown, the first Methodist missionary in the area.[4] When he arrived, the Karavarans say, he could see that the native population wanted to kill him. So he and his entourage stayed on their boat for three days and three nights singing hymns. At the end of that time Brown dipped his hand into the sea and found that it was no longer hot as it had been when he arrived—an indication that the unruly passions of the native population had been cooled by the singing. Brown went ashore, no longer afraid of harm. With the arrival of Brown and what is now seen as the virtually concurrent arrival of other Europeans, the *momboto* ended and the present era was inaugurated.

Karavarans refer frequently to the *momboto*. It is a statement that their basic human nature is a nature of greed, violence, and untrammeled self-interest. In their view, their basic human nature persists unchanged into the present. What has changed since the *momboto* is not human nature itself but the introduction of certain means by which human nature can be regulated and social order thereby established. Specifically, the Europeans ended the *momboto* by bringing the Karavarans the idea of shell money and matrimoieties, the basic unit of kinship. Shell money, the Karavarans say, was introduced explicitly to regulate the anarchy of the *momboto*. Moiety was introduced by the biblical figure Noah whom they regard as George Brown's contemporary. Moiety provides the context in which shell money is used to constrain human nature.

A number of conclusions may be drawn from the Karavaran account of the *momboto* and the circumstances which brought it to an end: Human nature is anarchic and is controlled only through exterior constraint; social order is possible for the Karavarans only because Europeans intervened; social transitions, as between the *momboto* and present era are abrupt transformations.[5]

The Karavaran view of time and social transition differs significantly from the now prevalent Western view which holds that history is a continuum of change: human customs and institutions have extensive and complex antecedents and do not suddenly assume their present form. According to a contrasting view held by the Karavarans as well as by people in many non-Western societies, history is a series of discrete and static states: human customs and institutions have either always been as they currently are or they instantaneously acquired their present form. The transition between states and the creation of social form is not seen as a gradual and cumulative process: it occurs when some decisive event transforms one state into another. Following Gellner (1964) I will call the first view of history and social transition "evolutionary" and the second "episodic." The evolutionary view is familiar enough to us; the episodic view of the Karavarans requires some elaboration.

The Karavarans believe that the antisociety of the *momboto*, became their present society through a decisive leap. Since the inception of the present society they feel that fundamentally nothing has changed. They are of course aware that people die and are replaced, that political alliances and individual fortunes alter, yet they feel that the fundamental values and characteristics of their society are the same as they were when it emerged from the *momboto*. Because history is not seen as a process of development in which the past contains the seeds of the present and the future, the decisive leaps which are seen to characterize social change occur only through the intervention of outside forces.

The Karavaran episodic view of time and transition is implicit not only in their concept of society, but also in their concept of what it is to be a person. Neither society nor the individual is understood as the product of a process of development or evolution. Rather than following a course of inner development, both society and the individual are seen as acquiring their present form through response to external influences. As a consequence, Karavarans do not believe that individuals are creative; they do not seek to understand individual behavior as the expression of a unique personality or character, itself the product of an unfolding course of personal development.

This, then, is the Karavaran view of transition: social change takes place through decisive leaps rather than through gradual development, and such changes are not implicit in existing events. Nor do such changes stem either from a general development of human capacities or from the flowering of some individual creative genius. Change requires

outside influence, and in the case of the Karavarans that influence rests with the Europeans.

There are two possibilities that they envision for future change. One is the grim possibility that the episode of the *momboto* might return. Their fear of this is expressed in their reaction to the possibility of self-government: they are extremely afraid of self-government for New Guinea because it would mean withdrawal of the Europeans. Since the Karavarans believe that they were able to emerge from the *momboto* only with European intervention, they fear that if the Europeans were to withdraw, then they would lapse back into the *momboto*. The other possibility is to make a leap into yet another episode. The difference between the present Karavaran society and the *momboto* is the difference between social order and no social order; the difference between present Karavaran society and another episode would be one of increased social order—increased domestication. In their cargo movement the Karavarans are trying to move into another episode so that they can achieve the level of order—or domestication—that they consider characteristic of European society.

Together with Karavar, most of the other communities in the Duke of York Islands, a few communities on the west coast of New Ireland and a few communities in the Birar area of New Britain, belong to the Kaun. The leaders of the Kaun describe it as a "business." The activities of the Kaun include running a boat and tractor transport service for the marketing of copra, and building and stocking trade stores. In addition, the Kaun considers itself an alternative political organization to the administration-sponsored local government council, and as such the Kaun periodically collects money from its members. These contributions range from A.$ .50 to A.$2.00 for each adult and are collected at irregular intervals.[6] The Kaun also urges its member villages to contribute bags of copra. Business, in the view of the Kaun, consists of any activity that makes "money come up," consequently business includes collecting the cash and copra contributions. Business also includes key activities such as ordering from abroad. Despite the frequent use of the English words "business," "order," "factory," "economic development," members of the Kaun do not ascribe to these words their usual meaning. These terms are uttered with a kind of awe and are thought to refer to secret and powerful procedures which the Kaun is attempting to master. The goals of the Kaun and the means, including the organizational form, by which these goals are to be reached are much more those of a cargo movement than of a Western business.

The Karavarans are regarded as the original members of the Kaun. The antecedents of the Kaun go back at least to the late 1930s. In the beginning, a series of meetings were held on Karavar attended by big men from the various communities in the Duke of York Islands. The question addressed at these meetings was why the Europeans persisted in treating them like dogs rather than like human beings.

The Karavarans feel that the Europeans continue to treat them like dogs. During my fieldwork in 1968 and again in 1972 I was told again and again that Europeans refuse to eat their food, refuse to sit and talk with them, refuse to give them assistance. Instead they say "raus" (pidgin English for 'get out') as though they were dogs. This treatment is a clear indication to the Karavarans that the Europeans still regard them as the animalistic savages of the *momboto*. It is a denial that the Karavarans have been able to achieve an acceptable level of domestication and order in their lives.

The Karavarans refer to these meetings in the 1930s as the "dog affair" (*pop ling*, meaning literally 'dog thing') and say that no conclusions were reached and no action was taken.[7] No one at that time suggested that the solution to their problem might be to make a business of the sort that characterizes the activities of the Kaun.

Not long after these meetings, two Karavaran big men went into Rabaul with about $200.00 that had been raised through a general collection on Karavar. This money was presented to an administrative official with the question of what should be done with it. World War II came soon afterward to New Guinea, and the money was not retrieved by these two men until the war was over.

Then, in the early 1950s, Karavar wanted to join an existing cooperative society with Raluana, a Tolai village on New Britain's Gazelle Peninsula. The Karavarans say that they were discouraged by the administration from joining Raluana. One European who is often viewed as a guiding father for the Karavarans is described as approaching them and saying that it was not proper that a dinghy like Raluana should pull a trawler like Karavar: the church and the government had originated on Karavar and it should therefore be the Karavarans who led. He then told the Karavarans to meet him in Rabaul with a delegation. At that time he had them buy a trade store license and purchase trade goods from a wholesale house with the money they had earlier raised to join with Raluana. These goods were housed on Karavar, first under a canvas tent, and later, in 1953, in a small store covered with sheet metal that was purchased through another collection.

The name of the Kaun originated shortly after the new store was built. When I made inquiries in 1968 about the origin of the name, the Kaun had already acquired a mythological character. Some said that the name, and hence the organization, had come perhaps from Queen Elizabeth herself. Others said that it was given to them by their European benefactor; others thought its origin was lost in the past and that they should concern themselves only with working in its name.

After repeated questioning of a Karavaran big man who derived political advantage from his claims to be one of the early supporters of the Kaun, I finally elicited a plausible story: Once the trade store had been built, a number of Karavarans went to Rabaul to take out a savings account for their store. They were asked what name they wanted on their bankbook—that is, they were asked what kind of an enterprise they were engaged in. Was it a cooperative society, a social club, a savings club, or simply a savings account? They apparently seized on this last alternative and the name Kaun arose as a corruption of the word "account." I suspect as well that the word account was appealing because it had then, as it has now, the same powerful associations as other English words connected with business. To judge by the extreme reluctance of this informant to tell me this story, I conclude that he and the other Karavarans much prefer to view the Kaun as the gift of powerful Europeans. In this way they feel not only that Europeans are disposed to help them but that the Kaun is a European kind of activity.

In its early stages the Kaun was entirely a Karavaran concern. Significantly, during this period the administration was trying to introduce local government councils in the Duke of York Islands. My limited information suggests that those relatively few communities which joined the council did so partly as an expression of existing political rivalries with Karavar, although there are, to be sure, important substantive differences of policy between the Kaun and the council.[8] As one consequence of this concurrent development, the Kaun and the council immediately defined themselves as mutually exclusive organizations and their opposition to each other became the idiom by which competition in ritual and political matters was expressed.

One of the earliest attacks made on the Kaun by the council was to suggest that the government was not controlling and supporting the Kaun. This implied that the Kaun was just drifting aimlessly, without purpose and ordered movement. The members of the Kaun must have felt sensitive to such an attack, phrased as it was in terms of their most fundamental value of order, so they made a direct appeal to Queen Elizabeth, the

individual they considered to be the ultimate European authority. The Karavarans withdrew $100.00 from their account and sent it to her with an accompanying letter. They asked why the council wanted them to join it and what they should do: "You Elizabeth, you are our boss, is the Kaun good or is it bad?" If Elizabeth did not approve of the Kaun, the $100.00 was to make her change her mind and alter any prohibitions which might have existed against the Kaun. I was told that the money was returned in a letter from one of her officials. The letter stated that since the end of the war everything was opened up and anyone could make any sort of business or other activity he wanted. Whether or not these letters were actually written or their contents accurately described to me, the Karavarans now feel that they have received a direct endorsement of the Kaun.

According to my Karavaran sources, other communities in the Duke of York Islands were also seeking alternatives to the council system that the administration was urging them to support. A big man from Vetira and one from Inolo raised a considerable amount of money in their local communities. Together they took this money to the administration asking what they should do with it. They were, I was told, advised to join the Kaun. These two met with other big men of the Duke of York communities to debate whether they should join the Kaun. Finally a decision was reached, and they came to Karavar asking to join. The Karavarans agreed, and the next day a delegation of about ten big men, including three Karavarans, went to the administration subdistrict office in Kokopo. There on January 13, 1960 they made out a new bankbook in the names of six. The various bankbooks I have seen indicate that the new account contained $1673.00 of which $645.00 had come from the Kaun and $1028.00 had come from the rest of the Duke of York Islands.

The merger allowed and encouraged an increase in the scale of the Kaun's activities. Trade stores were immediately built throughout the Duke of York Islands. In 1960, with great expectations, an order for goods costing $408.00 was placed in the name of the Duke of York account with a large European import firm. The order was for one ton of rice, ninety-five pounds of twist tobacco, twenty cases of corned beef, half a ton of sugar, and fifteen cartons of biscuits. Although the invoice shows that the full order did in fact arrive, there was nonetheless considerable disappointment that the cargo was not of simply enormous proportions. Many said that part of the shipment had been intercepted by the Australians in Sydney or that part of it had been permanently impounded at customs. In the distribution of this cargo big men were given bags of rice, and others received more modest portions.

The first major capital purchase of the Kaun was a twenty-three-foot Diesel work boat bought in 1963 for $2400.00. This boat was named the Kaun and came under the permanent control of a Karavaran big man, one of the founders of the Kaun. More recent purchases were a tractor, with trailer and tools, bought in 1966 for $1000.00 and a thirty-three-foot Diesel work boat bought in 1967 for $5000.00, of which only $4200.00 was ever paid. Both the tractor and the larger work boat came under the control of big men. The money for all three of these purchases was raised through general collections in Kaun villages in the Duke of York Islands, in New Ireland, and in New Britain.

By the time of our arrival in 1968 the Kaun had lost impetus. The various business enterprises had not proven successful, although the work boat named the Kaun had for a while done a brisk business as the only native-owned work boat in the area. Most of the trade stores had long since closed; the tractor was inoperative and there had been expensive repairs on the boats. The amount of cargo which had arrived from the order was all too finite, the administration still seemed opposed to the Kaun, and Europeans were treating the Karavarans no better than they had before.

The night of our arrival on Karavar I was sought out by Kaun leaders who poured out their dissatisfaction with what the Australian administration had done for them. The expectation was expressed then, as it was throughout our stay, that we should tell them the secrets necessary to run a business, to order from abroad, to build a factory. We were welcomed, as anthropologists often are in Melanesia, as the moral Europeans who would finally disclose the European secrets of cargo. We were particularly welcome, moreover, because we were Americans. In Karavar, as in Melanesia generally, America is viewed as the most wealthy and the most generous of those countries which control cargo secrets, an impression that stems from American largess during World War II. This impression persists mainly because Melanesians have never had extensive contact with Americans and hence have not had the opportunity to suffer the disillusionment which must necessarily follow from any administration's failure to fulfill cargo expectations. The Karavaran view was that we were the special emissaries of President Johnson and Queen Elizabeth; we were the vanguard of the American administrators who would replace the Australian administrators currently in power.

The Kaun came to full life again immediately after we appeared. During 1968 there were monthly meetings attended by members of all the Kaun communities, including members from New Ireland who came by canoe across forty miles of open sea. Another collection was soon taken of both cash and copra to which members contributed with apparent enthusiasm. There was the general expectation that their two Americans would tell them what had gone wrong with their business efforts. We were, of course, unable to give them the business secrets they sought, and this led some of the Karavaran big men to apply direct pressure on us. At one point the Karavarans held a meeting in which it was said that we had already been on Karavar for a number of months, and still we had not taught them the necessary cargo secrets. Not only did they not know how to make a business, but, in addition, other communities would ridicule them for having wasted such a unique opportunity to find out how to make a business. As a consequence, another collection was taken on Karavar and the money was presented to us with the request that we tell them what to do with it. (Fortunately for us, soon afterward some land was offered for sale to the Karavarans and we took that opportunity to return the money to them.) By the end of our study in 1968, the members of the Kaun were discouraged and there was even talk about joining with the council in some new organization.

Although the Kaun is a movement which has arisen in recent years, its pattern of social organization is traditional. The leaders of the Kaun, with few exceptions, all conform to the traditional definition of a big man. They are ritual adepts in the male *dukduk* and *tubuan* society, they are wealthy in shell money, and they control a political following which constitutes their kin group. In their dealings with each other and with their followers the leaders of the Kaun also follow the traditional behavior of big men. These leaders meet with each other as much to assert their individual independence and importance as to transact the affairs of the Kaun. Just as there is no one to whom a big man must account for his actions, so the leaders of the Kaun never have to account for the financial status of the Kaun.

The Kaun is actually composed of separate enterprises focused around a piece of property: a trade store, a boat, a tractor, etc. Each of these enterprises has its own bankbook held in the names of several big men. None of these little clusters of big men ever ask each other what the status of a particular enterprise is. As a consequence, no one had a clear idea whether the Kaun is making or losing money overall. In fact, it is usually unclear even to the big men directly involved whether their particular enterprise is making money.

The affairs of the larger work boat are especially confused. The boat was purchased from one account, the boat's crew is paid from another account, the gross profits are supposed to go into another account, and the cost of repairs comes out of yet another account. Furthermore, there was money still owed on the boat and no one seemed to know, or wanted to decide, out of which account this money should come. When I was collecting information from these various bankbooks, I was sometimes questioned by big men about the bankbooks they did not control. No one within the indigenous political system has the power to demand to see all the bankbooks and to coordinate all of the enterprises. Moreover, no one has the power, and perhaps no one has the inclination, to demand evidence that the sums entered in a bankbook actually include all of the money that had come in from that particular enterprise.

The autonomy that the leaders of the Kaun assert against each other also characterizes their relationships with followers of their home communities. The membership is ill informed and largely unconcerned not only with the financial status of the various enterprises, but with the use made of their direct contributions. The few complaints I did hear about the activities of the Kaun were made by individuals who wished to replace the current leadership with closer kinsmen. And these complaints should be understood as part of current political rivalry between big men, not as efforts to make the Kaun a more responsive and democratic organization. In fact, the only attack I heard on the probity of the current Karavaran Kaun leadership can be interpreted better as a retaliation by a defeated political rival than as an advocacy of reform. This attack came from an old man who had overextended himself financially years before in a series of lavish mortuary ceremonies. With the expenditure of his shell money came his political demise and he was squeezed out of his position of prominence in the Kaun. He accused his successors of leaving the Karavarans adrift while they used the money of the Kaun for their own political ends. Specifically, he accused them of using Kaun funds to buy European food with which to entertain visiting big men and to buy European trade goods which they then sold as their own in the village for shell money. The old man's bitterness at his political eclipse was not without irony since he had once during his period of leadership of the Kaun simply asserted to his rivals that the several hundred dollars raised on Karavar and in his care had been stolen—and that was that.

As I have suggested, Karavarans feel that social order comes only with the control of their anarchical *momboto* natures. Order rests with the big men who control their followers with shell money. Followers are not regarded as a constituency to whom leaders must account for their actions. Although there is often grumbling by followers about particular actions of their big man, there is also the realization that society would not exist at all if it were not for the activities of big men. Just as followers support their big man with shell money in return for leadership, the members of the Kaun support the Kaun and its leaders with cash during the collections.

The Kaun is supported not only because Karavarans think it proper that they be controlled by their big men, but also because they oppose the council which they regard as the first step in acquiring self-government.[9] They believe that if self-government were to come Europeans would no longer be present as a guarantor of order and they would be plunged back into the *momboto* state in which they believe the Europeans found them. The leadership of the Kaun always presents the Kaun and the council as the only two alternatives. To be neither would be to drift without direction, control, or guidance. It would be a state of chaos.

The reasons I have given so far suggest that the organization of the Kaun is like the organization of Karavaran/Duke of York society and that the Kaun is the preferred

alternative to the council because the Karavarans fear that to conduct life in other than the present pattern would be to lapse back into the *momboto*. The Kaun should not, however, be regarded primarily as an effort to maintain present circumstances—as a holding action against disaster. Rather, the Kaun's activities should be seen as an effort to transform present circumstances through business. Although the Karavarans speak of the potential profits of the Kaun, there is very little interest in, no concrete plans about, what should be purchased with this money. Instead, the emphasis of the Kaun seems to be on the *activity* of business.

Why is it of such importance to the Karavarans that they make a business? The reason seems to be that they wish to impress the Europeans. When we talked to the big man from Inolo about the time that he and a big man from Vetire had taken hundreds of dollars to the administration office in Rabaul, he recounted the incident in this way: "All right, I said, we will make a new work so that our money will be big and we can take it to the government and it will say 'good work you have done' and it will help us with our life. It isn't long that we have done this work; no white man taught us how to do it. No, the mission did not teach us . . . . We made a white man's work. Plenty of natives have not made a white man's work but we have."

Another leader of the Kaun speaking publicly in favor of his plan for each village to contribute five bags of copra a month (worth $40.00 to $50.00) to the Kaun said that the Kaun would then be like a plantation because money would come in regularly every month. The government would be pleased and therefore would give help to the Karavarans and the other members of the Kaun.

The question raised here is why it is important to impress the Europeans. The answer lies in the Karavaran conception of Europeans. In the Karavaran view, Europeans are supremely domesticated—they do not fight, quarrel, commit adultery. They have never had an antisociety but have always led an orderly, regulated life. Only through European intervention were the Karavarans able to order their own lives. Europeans are, therefore, the font of order, the arbiters of what is to lead an ordered life.

The Karavarans, as I have indicated, feel that their social order is precarious and that the *momboto* still lurks in every man. They feel that the Europeans regard them with contempt, as only slightly changed from the savages George Brown encountered. To be treated like a dog, is, in the context of Karavaran beliefs about themselves, a particularly devastating criticism because it touches directly on their self-doubts. This criticism is all the more telling coming as it does from the very group considered best able to regulate themselves. To be accepted as moral equals with the Europeans would be proof that the Karavarans were indeed fully domesticated, fully ordered. This is why, I think, the Karavarans want so badly to impress the Europeans and why they have no real option of ignoring the Europeans and their criticism.

If, then, the Karavarans want to impress the Europeans, why do they try to impress them through business? Why should the Europeans be pleased and impressed at the Kaun's business efforts? The answer lies in what business is thought to involve. Karavarans equate business with European life: to be a European is to do business. In talking about the nature of business Karavarans stress the hard work and discipline of Europeans. Therefore the Kaun leaders exhort their followers to work hard in the activities of the Kaun. Europeans, they say, do not spend the day fishing or loafing on the beach at the men's ground. They spend their time working, all day, every day. The reason, then, that the Europeans would be pleased with the amount of money raised by the Kaun, and with the copra coming in every month as it does on a plantation, is that this would be proof that the Karavarans and the other members of the Kaun are capable

of the same kind of disciplined, orderly control that is implicit in European business and life.

If the activities of the Kaun are designed to impress the Europeans and to result in their help, what kind of help is wanted? The secrets (*pindik*) necessary to make a business are wanted. Unlike many Melanesian groups with cargo movements, the Karavarans in the Kaun are not trying to get cargo or money directly from deities; they do not expect that cargo is magically created out of nothing or that rocks can be transformed into tins of beef. Karavarans have absorbed the idea that cargo comes from a factory, that business is necessary to make money for the order of cargo. But the way in which this happens is mysterious to them and they believe that there are elusive secrets involved.

The secrets for the domestication inherent in business that Europeans are thought to possess can be understood only in the context of Karavaran ritual. During this ritual big men bring the dangerous masked *tubuan* figure under control. The *tubuan* is an image of the vital and disruptive force of human *momboto* nature. In ritual this force is brought under control by shell money. The domestication of the *tubuan* is a domestication by the Karavarans of themselves: when the *tubuan* is brought under control, the Karavarans immediately behave with exemplary order. Any deviation from this order, such as quarreling, fighting, or shouting, is immediately punished by the *tubuan* through its special representatives. The Karavarans consider themselves at their most orderly at this time; they also feel that the Europeans concur in this judgment.[10]

Karavarans feel that Europeans behave at all times in the orderly fashion which Karavarans can only achieve briefly and infrequently during periods of ritual. European business is seen as a full-time ritual having the same ends of domestication as the *tubuan* ritual; the ritual of business is seen as based on the same kind of ritual secrets as is the ritual through which the *tubuan* is brought under control. If the Karavarans are to perform the ritual of business correctly, they must first be taught the necessary secrets by the Europeans just as an aspiring big man, if he is to perform the ritual of the *tubuan* correctly, must first be taught the necessary secrets by a ritual adept. The ritual of the *tubuan* is taught only to men who, through their resources of shell money, are able to demonstrate that they are big man material—that they can domesticate others.

I suggest that the major concern of the Kaun is to convince the Europeans that the members of the Kaun, or at least the leaders of the Kaun, are business material—they are worthy of being taught the secrets of business, the secrets of European domestication. The Kaun makes a business of a sort so that Europeans will recognize that the Karavarans could in fact make a proper business if only they were taught how. If the parallel I am suggesting between the *tubuan* ritual and the business ritual holds, then the presentation of money to the Europeans can be seen not only as a demonstration of worth but as an actual effort to purchase the secrets of the business ritual in much the same way as shell money is used to purchase the secrets of the *tubuan* ritual.

Just as Karavaran society was instantaneously transformed from the anarchy of the *momboto* to the relative order of the present, just as Karavaran society is instantaneously transformed during ritual with the domestication of the *tubuan* into a state of high order, so too, the Karavarans believe, their society could be instantaneously transformed through the secrets of business into a society equal in order to European society.

Cargo and acceptance by the Europeans as moral equals, although valued in themselves, are primarily desired by the members of the Kaun as confirmation that the activity of business has been carried out properly. The activity of business is in turn valued as the means for and the concomitant of a transformed social order. The implicit assumption that the social organization of the Kaun is appropriate to the activity of business and the

implicit assumption that the social order can be transformed through the activity of business can only be understood in terms of the indigenous ideas of order, time, and social transition.

The analysis of the Kaun that I have presented is based on my 1968 fieldwork. During the summer of 1972 I again visited Karavar to further investigate Karavaran responses to the imminent approach of self-government. Most specifically, I wished to discover the degree of influence that had been exerted on them by the activities of the Mataungan Association, a recent radical political movement among the Tolai of New Britain's Gazelle Peninsula. I was confident that the Karavarans were aware of the Mataungan demands for immediate self-government since Karavar and the inhabitants of the rest of the Duke of York Islands are in close contact with the Tolai. Virtually all Duke of York males are fluent in Tolai, a language closely related to their own. The Tolai have the same matrimoieties, shell money, and *dukduk* and *tubuan* rituals as do the people of the Duke of York Islands. There is extensive intermarriage and ritual cooperation between the two groups. If the Karavarans had accepted or become sympathetic to the Mataungan demands for immediate self-government, this would suggest that they had altered their basic views about the nature of man and of society.

The Karavarans had not, in fact, altered these basic views. Their response to the Mataungan Association was enlightening: they condemned it as a seriously misguided effort which would leave New Guineans adrift without European guidance and they viewed it a source of disorder in itself. They felt that the great controversy and outbreaks of violence brought on by the activities of the Mataungans not only threatened social order, but were clear indications of the anarchy that would occur in the absence of Europeans.

I was fortunate during this fieldwork in that a Tolai supporter of the Mataungan Association was co-sponsoring a mortuary ceremony on Karavar with his Karavaran matrikin. He wanted me to understand the Mataungan position and he talked to me at length, both publicly and privately, about it. His view of the *momboto* and hence of basic human nature was substantially different from that of the Karavarans. He argued that during the *momboto*, prior to the arrival of the Europeans, Tolai society was fully ordered; the European intrusions created an unwarranted disruption. The reason given to explain why the Tolai had achieved such a satisfactory state of indigenous order was that they were at all times under the authority of the *tubuan*. Such a state of order comes for the Karavarans only briefly, during the irregularly scheduled mortuary ceremonies; such ceremonies, based as they are on shell money and moiety, were absent in the Karavaran picture of the *momboto*.

The Mataungan Association appropriately has taken the face of a *tubuan* as their emblem to symbolize the goal of returning to their earlier state of self-government. The particular variety of *tubuan* that was selected was named Mataungan which, my Tolai informant said, meant 'be alert.' This suggested that Mataungans must be alert to both European and native threats to their movement. In the view he was expressing, the *momboto* was an image of society rather than of the antisociety as is the case in the Duke of York Islands. In both places, however, the *tubuan* is an image and a creator of order.

Comparison between the Kaun and other Melanesian cargo movements is difficult because very few general accounts of Melanesian societies, much less of their cargo movements, specify the indigenous epistemology which expresses a society's most basic views about the nature of man and of society and about the nature of time and transition. Of the great deal that has been written on cargo movements, *Road Belong Cargo* by Peter

Lawrence is the most satisfactory in the detail given and in the precision with which the persisting indigenous epistemology is presented.

Although the groups of the Southern Madang District of New Guinea, with which Lawrence is concerned, do not appear to have a concept similar to the *momboto*, they do have a nondevelopmental view of person, time, and social transition, a view which is episodic rather than evolutionary. Lawrence stresses that man was regarded as uninventive; change occurred abruptly, if at all, and it was not seen as the expression of an inherent personal or social dynamic. He mentions, for instance, the incapacity of Yali, one of the principal leaders of the Southern Madang Movement, to understand the theory of evolution: "The dividing line between the remote and near past was extremely faint. And there was no hint of gradual material and social development. This was obvious, of course, in Yali's misunderstanding of Evolution: he could imagine only an immediate transformation from Ape to Man according to the pattern of Ngaing totemic myths" (Lawrence 1964:242).

As is the case with the Kaun, Southern Madang cargo ritual follows the same pattern as the indigenous noncargo ritual. In the indigenous Southern Madang epistemology, ritual was regarded as the way to acquire material goods and, therefore, ritual was used in the effort to acquire cargo. Lawrence, unfortunately, largely limits his discussion of indigenous ritual to the observation that it sought to make the deities "think on," and thus help, men. We are not told anything about ritual which might indicate its relationship to the social order. He mentions the indigenous Kabu ceremony, for example, without any discussion of its concerns. Social organization is discussed only briefly and then largely to show its irrelevance to an understanding of the epistemology.

However, if, as we both argue, cargo ritual and indigenous ritual have parallel concerns, then the concern with social order that appears in Southern Madang cargo ritual suggests that there is a concern with social order in the Southern Madang indigenous ritual and society, just as there is a concern with social order in the indigenous Karavaran *tubuan* ritual and society. For instance, when Yali visited Australia he was "suddenly more aware of those facets of European culture he had already experienced in New Guinea: the emphasis on cleanliness and hygiene; the houses in well kept gardens neatly ordered along the streets" (Lawrence 1964:123). He realized that "whatever the secret of all this wealth—the Europeans had to work and organize their labour supply to obtain it. Again he compared this with native work habits and organization. He felt humiliated by what he considered the deficiencies of his own society" (1964:123).

Much of the Southern Madang effort to acquire cargo consisted of attempts to duplicate these European standards of physical and social order. Special villages were carefully laid out and built with a particular emphasis on neatness and sanitation; in some cases a paramilitary order was instituted. People were enjoined to live by the Ten Commandments, not to quarrel over adultery when it occurred, and to otherwise conform to what were regarded as European standards of order.

Although there are appreciable cultural and social differences between the Duke of York Islands and the Southern Madang District of New Guinea, in both cases the similar indigenous view of the nature of person, the nature of time and social transition, and the similar preoccupation with social order led to an effort to emulate European standards of order as the pathway by which indigenous society could be abruptly transformed.

notes

[1] An earlier draft of this paper was read at the 1971 American Anthropological Association meeting in New York.

[2]I am indebted to Shelly Errington for this part of my discussion.

[3]Most of the material I am presenting was acquired during 1968 by Shelly Errington and myself through the support of NIMH Grant MH11234. During the summer of 1972 Richard Sandhaus and I did further fieldwork. In this I was supported by a Minor D. Crary Fellowship presented by Amherst College.

[4]In actual fact, Brown established his mission station on the largest island in the Duke of York group in 1876.

[5]The early accounts of Brown and his contemporaries show that cannibalism and warfare were prevalent. However, much as these Europeans disapproved of the social life of the natives of this area, there is no doubt from their descriptions that there was social order rather than anarchy. Shell money and moiety are specifically mentioned and clearly predate European arrival. The Karavaran account should be viewed thus as an image of an antisociety rather than as a factual account of an antisociety. The image of the *momboto* is of such importance for their understanding of their own society that it seems likely that a suitably phrased image of the *momboto* also predated European arrival.

[6]All sums referred to are in Australian dollars.

[7]Worsley's (1968) brief description of what he calls the Dog Movement agrees with the Karavaran account concerning the significance of the reference to dogs. He goes on to say, however, that the movement was repressed by the arrest of some of its leaders. If such arrests did take place, they were not mentioned by my Karavaran sources.

[8]Schwartz (n.d.), too, suggests that participation or opposition of a particular community in any given cargo movement may depend as much on existing relations of alliance or conflict as on any appraisal of the merits of the cargo movement *per se*.

[9]Unfortunately I do not know to what extent Duke of York council members genuinely favor self-government. It is possible that their interpretation of the activities of the council differs from that of the Kaun members.

[10]The ritual context and meaning of the *tubuan* are discussed in considerably more detail in Errington (n.d.).

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