

on PepsiCo and piety in a Papua New Guinea “modernity”

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In this article we focus on the relationship between global processes and local realities. In particular we explore the experience and construction of what Chambri of Papua New Guinea's East Sepik Province were, in 1994, defining as “tradition” and “modernity.”¹ For these Chambri, nearly half of whom were living in urban settlements such as Chambri Camp in the provincial capital of Wewak rather than in their rather remote home fishing villages, extensive and continued social change was regarded as virtually inevitable. For many Chambri, as well as other Papua New Guineans, however, the degree and kind of social change that should take place was highly controversial.

Focusing on two modernist settings—a widely viewed music-video television program entitled *Pepsi Fizz* and a popular Christian youth group called Antioch—we examine two ostensibly competing discourses about the appropriate relationship among the past, present, and future: in other words, discourses about the nature and relationship between traditional and modern selves and socialities. These discourses—of consumer capitalism and Christian evangelism—were especially salient to Chambri (and other) urban youth for whom ancestral language and social forms were becoming less relevant in their understanding of who they were—or might become—in a rapidly changing and increasingly urbanizing Papua New Guinea.²

Although these discourses were invoked as sharply conflicting models for the construction of new sorts of selves and socialities (advocates of Antioch condemned *Pepsi Fizz* as materialistic while proponents of *Pepsi Fizz*—at first glance, surprisingly—condemned Antioch as antitraditional), both discourses were thoroughly modernist. This is to say (without here, or perhaps anywhere, defining precisely something so protean—so multifaceted and situationally contingent—as modernity [see Sutton 1994]) that both discourses funneled contestation about the appropriate relationship among what were understood as the past, present, and future so as to support a particular and significant shift in Chambri views—indeed, experiences—of self and

Exploring global processes of “modernity” as they engaged Chambri of Papua New Guinea, we examine two locally salient discourses, presented by PepsiCo and by Antioch, a Catholic youth organization. These were employed by rebellious youths and more conservative elders to debate the appropriate relationship among “traditional” and “modern” selves and socialities. Both of the discourses into which the debate was channeled were concerned with “self-creation.” This meant that “modernism” was more consolidated than challenged. Consequently, even for its most vigorous proponents, “tradition” became progressively less compelling (or binding) in any of its particulars and increasingly developed as a form of self-expression—of personal choice and appreciation. [Papua New Guinea, modernity, transnationalism, socioeconomic change, identity]

American Ethnologist 23(3):476–493. Copyright © 1996, American Anthropological Association.

sociality. Both discourses were, in effect, conveying *and* reflecting a modernity in which many Chambri would have “ever more responsibility for self-creation” (Miller 1994:71)—for the creation of increasingly “subjective” selves and of corresponding social contexts that enabled self-expression focused on personal choice, whether of marriage partners, brand-name goods, or religious affiliations. Correspondingly, these discourses were premised on a construction of self that generated a sociality based in substantial measure on personal choice rather than on “external” constraint or precedent. Finally, these discourses acknowledged that this modernist sociality could have both positive and negative aspects: it could be enhanced through the extension of relationships with new and stimulating people or be diminished by atomization, alienation, and loss of reference. In effect, that the debate between the proponents of Antioch and of *Pepsi Fizz* concerning the relationship among modes of being in the past, present, and future—between the traditional and the modern—was so frequently framed within these discourses of “self-creation” meant, we will argue, that modernism was becoming more consolidated than challenged.³

Thus we offer this article as an ethnographic example of the local instantiation of a complex of sociocultural transformations increasingly significant throughout the 20th-century world. We emphasize that this is but a single ethnographic example of such instantiation because the global processes loosely characterized as modernist should certainly not be regarded as monolithic (despite some central tendencies), whether in the construction of selves or in that of socialities. This is so not only because, as Friedman (somewhat uncharacteristically) has stated, “global social processes are constituted largely by distinctive local strategies” (1992:365), but also because, as in the present instance of Papua New Guinea or in the United States, these strategies are likely to employ a range of often competing rhetorics of self and social construction (see Battaglia, ed. 1995). Hence our effort to present an ethnographically grounded exploration of an aspect of Chambri modernity seeks to capture a localized process of unfolding and competing strategies and rhetorics, a process more of an ongoing shift than an abrupt and absolute transformation, one in which important parameters concerning personal and collective identity have been in flux.

Despite the fluidity of this process—the absence of fixed and accepted parameters—it had certainly been obvious for some time to Chambri of all ages that important changes were underway. By 1994 it had become equally obvious that the newly introduced discourses of *Pepsi Fizz* and Antioch had become central to debating and shaping these changes.

on the new generation

By the summer of 1994 we had been working with Chambri for some time: Deborah had been returning since 1974, and Frederick since 1983, to live with them both at their home villages on Chambri Island and at Chambri Camp. During this time we had been concerned with understanding not only indigenous Chambri life but continuing transformations of that life (see, especially, Errington and Gewertz 1987; Gewertz 1983; Gewertz and Errington 1991). Thus, during our 1987 visit, a matter of great interest to us, in part because of its obvious concern to many Chambri, was an increasingly overt conflict between youths and seniors affecting both the identity of Chambri selves and the constitution of Chambri sociality. Although Chambri youths (young men in particular) had probably long bridled under the authority of their seniors, they had become ever more insistent in recent years that they—not their elders—should choose their marriage partners. Strongly influenced by modernist representations (emanating from such sources as schools, churches, and advertising), Chambri youths cited the importance—if not the inherent right—of “choice,” especially as it concerned what these youths termed their “young lives.” Their elders cited the importance of following the tradition of ancestral “marriage-roads.” In fact, Chambri youths were attempting to increase personal autonomy in a way

that would challenge not only their seniors but also a social organization centered on a clan-based, affinal politics of multigenerational alliances and competitions (Errington and Gewertz 1993). Indeed, we concluded during our 1987 research, regardless of whether rebellious youths would in their turn become regulating seniors, relatively novel discussions reflecting and promulgating important ontological shifts were taking place.

Despite the fact that these changes were clearly part of an ongoing process, we were nonetheless struck during our 1994 research both by the extent of the shift toward the empowerment of youths (and, correspondingly, toward altered understandings of self and sociality) and by the change in the rhetoric concerning that shift. Indeed, as we have suggested above, and will discuss in further detail below, much of the rhetoric about the relationship among the past, present, and future had become channeled into two elaborated discourses in which the polar terms of contention—those of tradition and modernity, respectively—were each defined in a newly modernistic fashion.

We first sensed the extent of the shift that had taken place since 1987 when our Chambri friends—as virtually their initial order of business—escorted us to the home of a non-Chambri civil servant. There, along with a rapt crowd of several hundred Chambri and other Papua New Guineans ranging from toddlers to seniors, we were introduced to *Pepsi Fizz*, the weekly PepsiCo-sponsored program of nationally produced and consumed top-ten (or potential top-ten) music videos. Many of these videos, featuring nationally known and trendy Papua New Guinea musicians, involved a nostalgic and significant juxtaposition of the traditional with the modern.

In one striking juxtaposition, a Chambri musician named Pius and his non-Chambri partner, Geoff, sang “Kame,” a traditional Chambri song that was once performed by victorious Chambri headhunters on their return from a successful raid. They would beat its triumphal rhythm on the sides of their canoes as their leader danced and held his spear and the trophy head aloft. The song’s lyrics exalted the victors who had silenced their competitors by the magnitude of their achievement. Pius and Geoff’s performance clearly implied that the male efficacy of traditional warriors was analogous to that of modern popular music performers. Thus, during the video, Pius and Geoff were transformed from native warriors—dressed in leaves, shells, and feathers, playing pan-pipes, and waving spears in the jungle—into modern musicians dressed in contemporary clothing and operating the mixing and recording equipment in a sound studio. Their performance, however, also suggested an irrevocable and significant disjunction between the past and the present, a disjunction resulting in loss. Far from defiantly celebratory, Pius and Geoff’s rendition was less a performance of jubilation and more one of mourning. Our Chambri friends told us that the song made them feel sad. In this way it conveyed, as did many other songs on *Pepsi Fizz*, the sorrowful sense that more grounded and assured personal and cultural pasts had been lost.

During *Pepsi Fizz* we also saw a commercial that was broadcast frequently and that presented a Papua New Guinea variant of PepsiCo’s internationally proclaimed message:

All over this nation there’s a growing relation . . . as the young at heart . . . while working or playing . . . [learn that] nothing stays the same again. . . . [Pepsi] is the choice of the new generation, the voice of the new generation. . . . [It’s] the sign of the new generation, the time of the new generation. . . . Let your feelings show . . . drink Pepsi, PNG, [yes] Pepsi, PNG.

Again, juxtaposing the traditional and the modern, this commercial depicted Papua New Guineans of all sorts drinking Pepsi. The consumption of Pepsi was conveyed as central to the affluent lifestyles of young Papua New Guinean men and women as they danced together on a yacht or at a disco; as they relaxed in somewhat revealing swimsuits on a beach or in a speedboat; and as they competed in a “fun-run.” Pepsi was the source of welcome refreshment for a hard-hatted, heavy-equipment operator as he swallowed his Pepsi with gusto during a break from presumably well-paid and steady construction work. Pepsi was similarly enjoyed by a rural boy while looking fondly at his distant village. Finally, Pepsi was appreciated even

by a group of “mud-men” from Asaro dressed in their dramatic traditional ritual costumes as they sought a moment’s respite from their cultural performance. The commercial clearly sought to establish that the new generation was everywhere—was “all over this nation.” The new generation included not only urban sophisticates and construction workers but also rural lads and even traditional mud-men. But the depictions were highly selective. Everyone was in a carefully chosen outfit of some sort.

Significantly, the commercial did not appear to arouse anxiety about the possibly intractable nature of significant tensions in contemporary Papua New Guinea concerning disjunctions between the traditional and modern in lives and identities—disjunctions between young and old, poor and rich, village and urban, illiterate and educated, tribal and cosmopolitan. *Pepsi Fizz*, with its message that consumption led to an unambiguously satisfying life, projected assurance. It seemed not only to extol the pleasures and opportunities of the urbane and the novel, but to accord respect to the culturally distinct and indigenous. Indeed, senior Chambri often praised *Pepsi Fizz* because it helped young people to learn their culture and to value that culture. By equalizing Asaro mud-men and urban sophisticates as all participants in the new generation—as participants who had eagerly adopted (as self-evidently desirable) a Pepsi lifestyle—the commercial asserted a ready bridging of divisions between cultures and between the traditional and the new.

The disk jockey’s final words at the end of each show were entirely consistent with the themes of the Pepsi commercial and the show’s focus on the country’s most popular musicians; they reaffirmed that the bridging had taken place. A slim, young, light-skinned, and smartly dressed Papua New Guinean woman with an Australian accent—clearly professional and of the new generation—each week concluded, “Good night, PNG,” and thereby evoked a Papua New Guinea in which the polar extremes of Asaro mud-men and urban sophisticates coexisted comfortably. If we were to judge by the responses of our Chambri friends who gathered every Thursday night to watch *Pepsi Fizz*, the template presented therein for the construction of modern lives and identities and based on “the reproduction of a triumphant capitalist-consumer ideology” (Miller 1994:71) was at least temporarily compelling. It was particularly so to the urban youths—the core members of the new generation—who comprised at least half of those watching *Pepsi Fizz* with us.

If not full-fledged “global teenagers” (Baker 1989), these Wewak youths were certainly “music minded,” as Eric Pantu, a young (22-year-old) Chambri *Pepsi Fizz* viewer, characterized himself and his Chambri peers.⁴ For these youths, the music that moved them was no longer, as might once have been expected, an expression of clan solidarity and cosmological efficacy, achieved through the collective chanting of totemic names.⁵ Rather, these young Chambri, attuned to the PepsiCo injunction to “let your feelings show,” understood the music that compelled them to be expressive of their sensibilities.⁶

To understand the self-creation of personhood by these youths, however, we must recognize that *Pepsi Fizz* was not the only influence and embodiment of modernity that affected them. Other partially distinct templates were operating as well. Thus, for instance, Eric and several Chambri friends not only avidly followed the Papua New Guinea pop music scene through such venues as *Pepsi Fizz* but were also engaged as performers of Christian music in a band called Shalom. Their band performed as part of a Catholic youth organization known as Antioch, run by Papua New Guineans although American in origin. Its multiethnic membership in Wewak included some 50 Chambri young men and women.⁷ Indeed, we would often see Eric and his fellow performers hanging out at the Wewak Christian Book Shop. They looked longingly at the electronic keyboards for sale there, imagining what their futures as Christian musicians would be if they could afford even the cheapest keyboard.⁸ In fact, one band member told us that if he could only own a keyboard, he would devote all of his efforts to becoming,

not just a nationally prominent musician, not just a gospel musician, but a devoted performer of the latest in Antioch gospel music.

It is clear that these youths were strongly affected by the ideology we believe to be implicit in the world invoked by *Pepsi Fizz*, a world in which people were increasingly (and often willingly) cut loose from moorings of what they regarded as traditional significance. Yet this is not to say that cultural distinctions and identities, in a country with over 700 different linguistic groups, no longer had importance. Even in response to our persistent inquiries, we could find no Chambri who could imagine ceasing to be a Chambri. Even Eric, who had spent his entire life in town, who spoke virtually no Chambri, and who had not thought to ascertain his marriage moiety, shook his head with horrified amusement at our inquiry. "What, after all," he asked, "would I be if I weren't Chambri?" But it was also evident that what constituted being a Chambri was becoming less clear: for many it was an increasingly diffuse and varied experience. It was as much characterized by emphasis on the importance of preserving Chambri language as by actually speaking it,⁹ by giving voluntary presents to friends and age-mates as by giving obligatory prestations to kin and affines. Speaking Chambri with other Chambri was yielding to speaking Pidgin English to Chambri and non-Chambri alike. Paying a brideprice to affines was yielding to giving a cassette to a friend (possibly someone not even a Chambri) who shared one's musical tastes. These changes signaled that an important—and modernist—shift in ontological grounding was, and for some time had been, in progress.

The identity of Chambri—especially of youths such as Eric—had thus become open to reformulation in important ways. Many, as we have suggested, responded directly to the consumer ideology of *Pepsi Fizz*, which was far from the only source of consumer ideology they encountered. Many—sometimes the same people—also responded to this consumer ideology in an ostensibly more critical, although equally modernist, fashion. Indeed, Antioch, as we shall see more clearly, provided these young men and women with a rhetoric for understanding and reappraising their lives as capitalist consumers. In ways they found periodically compelling, Antioch tried to convince them that, regardless of how much they might be able to buy, they would (and should) find their purchases ultimately unsatisfying (see Campbell 1987). It suggested to these youths, who were no longer traditionally grounded, that consumption alone would not yield a life of personal fulfillment. Antioch's modernist discourse appeared to these Papua New Guinea youths to demonstrate the insufficiency of *Pepsi Fizz*'s consumer ideology. It tried to do so by providing religious answers that were carefully keyed to the particular circumstances of this PepsiCo-affected new generation.

Despite the contrast Antioch sought to establish between itself and *Pepsi Fizz*, however, we consider the relationship between the two—as any reading of Weber (1956), as well as of the literature on missionary penetration in Papua New Guinea, would suggest¹⁰—more parallel than antagonistic. Although it was true that some Antiochers might either temporarily or more permanently eschew capitalist consumer ideology as the empty pursuit of "things of the ground," the sensibility that Antioch sought to develop was very much in the "spirit of capitalism."¹¹ (Again, this is not to say that such global processes as modernity, in general, or capitalism in particular [see Kelly 1992], would take precisely the same form everywhere.)

We regard the sensibility Antioch fostered as closely akin to that of *Pepsi Fizz*, in part because Antioch advocated a personal industry that, in addition to showing commitment to the plan God had made for each individual, might also generate the personal income that could sustain capitalist consumption. But, more important, we regard the two as ultimately comparable because both fostered a form of nontraditional, substantially subjective personhood and sociality in which central aspects of identity were formed by personal experiences, manifested in personal feelings, and confirmed through freely entered relationships. Although often dependent on others for the emergence and verification of their identities—and in this sense still socially engaged—those strongly influenced by both Antioch and *Pepsi Fizz* were, we

maintain, significantly unlike Chambri we had encountered earlier. Certainly the Chambri we had known before—substantially although not exclusively socially embedded in clan-based, affinal politics of multigenerational alliances and competitions—were not inclined to consider themselves the products of formative experiences and the repositories of personal feelings. (See, in particular, Errington and Gewertz 1987.) In a contrast to earlier Chambri selves (a contrast, to be sure, more relative than absolute), Antioch and *Pepsi Fizz* selves were in consequence *more nearly* ontologically autonomous. This view is premised on the formation (and reformation) of *increasingly* private subjectivities and their subsequent joining with freely chosen others. (We emphasize that in our efforts to note a transition in Chambri lives that both they and we regard as important, we are not suggesting an essentialist contrast—categorical and immutable—between “us” and “them” or between “them” in the past and “them” in the present and future; nor are we suggesting that the subjectivity and concomitant choice among Chambri was precisely the same as that appearing elsewhere.) Such relatively novel Chambri (and other Papua New Guinea) selves thus lent themselves not only to what some described as the transcendent miracle of Antioch but also to the more earthly wonder of *Pepsi Fizz*.

from criminal to Christian

Our first introduction to Antioch came through the account of a 24-year-old Chambri we shall call Joe Karam. He was one of Eric’s closest friends and a fellow member of Shalom. (Joe played the bass, Eric, the rhythm guitar.) We had seen Joe walking through Chambri Camp, but had not spoken to him until we found ourselves together in line at a Wewak bank. We were cashing travelers’ checks and Joe was drawing a money order to pay for another semester of training in accountancy and English through a correspondence school in Manchester, England. He asked us if we might help him with his homework from time to time, and we said we would be happy to try. When, accompanied by Eric, he came to see us at our house in Chambri Camp later that week, however, he wanted primarily to talk about his life—his criminal past and his Christian present.

Joe told us (in Pidgin English) that he had been a criminal. Often arrested and still formidable (he said he still possessed homemade guns), he had robbed trade stores. He would sneak out of his house in the middle of the night, his parents unaware. They really did not try to stop him. Indeed, he still had many stolen things, including the shirt he was wearing. Joe had finished grade eight and his gang consisted of former schoolmates, youths from many different groups living in Wewak. They had all been “destroyed by the *wantok* system” so that “their roads had been blocked.” (Wantok was a system of preference premised on personal and kinship-based connections.) They could neither pursue education nor get jobs. And then they saw “these rubbishy grade-six graduates with connections get the jobs for which we were told we did not qualify.” When they stole, it was to challenge “the authority that was blocking us.”

Long before he became a thief, Joe continued, he had not believed in God. When he was still at St. Xavier High School, for instance, he would hide in the bathroom rather than go to church. Or sometimes he would pretend to be sick with malaria, lying in bed feigning chills. Only later did he hear about the Antioch movement. He decided to go to a weekend retreat; he did not want to be left out because Antioch seemed “cool,”¹² especially since he knew there would be good-looking girls there. Arriving late and not knowing what was going on, he entered the room during the testimony of a young man. At first Joe thought that this person was actually talking about him, and he wanted to sneak out. How had this man found out about him? Was he associated with the police? He asked his cousin who was also attending the meeting and learned that the man was giving testimony about his own life. Joe thought with awe, “Shit, how could this be? How could his life be so like mine?”

Joe stayed on. The next day, Sunday, was Commitment Day (when public commitments to God were sought), and at that time he had a vision. "It was like a videotape. Jesus said, 'You see, I know all about you. I have not lost you.' " At that moment, Joe decided to change his life: "I knew others had done it, and I could too." So he joined Antioch. Like any other new member, he was placed under the supervision of older Papua New Guinea Antioch "parents"—a "mommy" and a "daddy." They helped him leave his old friends and find new Antioch ones—new "brothers" and "sisters"—and he traveled around the country with them, radiating the light of Antioch while learning and respecting the good (as opposed to the bad) customs of the different people of Papua New Guinea. He had wanted to go to Sydney with Antioch but was short of funds. He and Eric, who also had been a criminal, had become musicians for Antioch. Chambri Camp, he continued, was very dependent on them to provide accompaniment during prayer meetings and also as examples for young people in the camp. He knew from personal experience that Antioch worked. It promised to "turn your life around," to replace darkness with light, and—to use an image that has no clear traditional Chambri parallel—to transform one's life from "a stone to a flower." Indeed, Joe said that he had been transformed: once hard and closed, he had become open and receptive to the Holy Spirit.

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In recent years, Papua New Guinea youths—young men in particular—had become a major source of public concern both for the present as well as for the future of the country. Frequently disgruntled, sometimes committing crimes ranging from theft to rape and murder (Joe's—and Eric's—offenses were comparatively minor), youths were the target of various governmental and religious organizations. These youths were frequently described to us by a range of both church and state representatives in rather modernistic and often social-scientific terms.

The Chambri supervisor at Boy's Town—a correctional facility near Wewak run by the Catholic Church with government support—told us, for instance, that an immediate cause of law and order problems among Papua New Guinean youths was the widespread use of marijuana. Youths were readily encouraged by peers who were themselves already adrift to smoke marijuana because "they believe they have no future"; marijuana in turn "blinds young people from seeing the enormity of their crimes." According to a "survey" that he had devised and administered to his wards, only 3 out of 29 had not smoked marijuana at some time. Moreover, he stressed that the majority of those under his care were "troubled" because they came from "broken homes, where they received inadequate supervision." This was an important factor in tempting them to become criminals in the first place. Furthermore, once released from institutions such as Boy's Town they would probably have "nowhere to go and no parents to guide them."

For several reasons we found aspects of this interpretation of "troubled" youths perplexing. Certainly it contrasted with what we had heard before. In 1987, when we had last discussed law and order problems with Chambri (and other Sepiks), we thought their analysis made more sense in indigenous terms because it focused on the capacity to effect social relationships. Many of them had already begun to recognize that the commensurate differences permitted by traditional egalitarianism were being threatened by the incommensurate differences of modern forms of hierarchy, including class (see Gewertz and Errington 1991). They therefore spoke of "jealousy" and of the "anger" that resulted from it. They argued that youthful criminals wished through theft and often through violence "to bring those who had more than they down to their level." These criminals, in other words, knew they could not otherwise achieve even potential parity with those who, by virtue of their good jobs, nice clothes, and fancy cars, regarded them as lacking social efficacy or significance.

Especially perplexing to us in this present and relatively novel rhetoric concerning troubled youths with disturbed lives was its emphasis on the importance of proper parental supervision.

What, we wondered, could the idea of a broken home—of a disrupted nuclear family—as a cause of maladjusted youths mean to a still significant number of Chambri, both in Chambri Camp and back on Chambri Island, who continued to regard their society as patrilineal and clan-based, one in which, for example, children were readily adopted by kinsmen and other allies?

We gradually came to recognize that modernist organizations such as Boy's Town and—even more important here—Antioch were committed to more than changing young lives. They were also working to create the lives from which youths had to be transformed. Thus, before Antioch could make flowers out of the young, it had to make stones out of them first, and stones of a particular kind. After hearing Joe's account of his Antioch conversion and listening to (and reading) others, we came to see that from a modernist perspective his was both atypical and typical, both inappropriate and appropriate. It reflected, as did all Antioch accounts in differing degrees, work in progress.

Atypically and inappropriately, Joe provided what was in effect a systemic analysis of why he had become a criminal—of why he had been justified in stealing. It was the unfair wantok system that kept him from getting a sufficiently good job, or any job at all, whereby he could earn enough for everyday living expenses in town, let alone the electronic and sartorial accouterments of urban identity. This was the kind of analysis in terms of jealousy and anger with which we had earlier become familiar. More typically and appropriately with respect to Antioch rhetoric, however, Joe also presented himself as succumbing to “bad influences” because of inadequate parental control. It was from these bad influences that Antioch had promised him release. His new parents—with God's help—enabled him to find the personal strength to break from his old group of friends, with whom he had been united in collective and criminal disgruntlement. Through Antioch he had emerged as a Christian self, free to join with his Antioch brothers and sisters in touring Papua New Guinea (and eventually perhaps abroad) as a positive influence for others.

Central to the construction of Joe's life and the lives of many Antioch youths as based on a particular sort of before and after—as having modern problems and a modern life trajectory—was a carefully orchestrated program of instruction, termed the “Antioch experience.”

the Antioch experience

For Joe, as for most Papua New Guinea youths, the Antioch experience really began with a decision to attend an “Antioch weekend”—a decision often prompted by the prospect of extensive socializing with other youths, especially members of the opposite sex. (Such socializing, it should be noted, was not unlike that portrayed in other “cool” contexts like *Pepsi Fizz*.) The weekend we attended was fairly typical. About 100 youths from four adjacent Catholic parishes in the Wewak area convened during a term break at a Catholic girls' boarding school just outside of town. Each had signed up in advance and had paid a fee of K5.00 (U.S. \$5.50) to cover transportation, room, and board.

Many had been prepared for the Antioch weekend the week before, at one of the regular twice-weekly Antioch services—this one following Sunday mass. They were told what to bring to the weekend (bedding, a change of clothes, and eating utensils) as well as what to leave behind (tobacco, betel nut, marijuana, liquor, radios). They were also given a preview of the welcoming ceremonies, speeches, and songs they would later experience. For instance, as part of a “VIP welcome” they were showered with flower petals as they filed between two columns of smiling young men and women who had already joined the movement. As these Antioch members tossed the petals on the prospective members, they sang “You Are My Sunshine.” In addition, prospective members were told in a speech by one of the daddies that they were about

to enter "Christ's men's house," where they would be transformed in a way equivalent to initiation. The speaker continued:

People say that youths are a problem but they aren't; families and communities are the problem. During this weekend you will change your family for the Antioch family. Your real father and mother will be the first to stone you, but your Antioch family will provide you with strength. Your real mother and father won't stop you from drinking, from smoking and stealing, but we are strong enough to break iron and stone. We are strong enough to change you. Christ was a serious man and we are serious too. I must tell you that Christ looks on all of his children equally. In his men's house, men aren't superior to women. This weekend all will become brothers and sisters in Christ's family.

For much of the rest of this meeting, Antiochers, both prospective and veteran, joined together in heartfelt prayer as their emotion-choked voices both invoked and attested to the presence of the Holy Spirit. These "music-minded" youths also joined in joyful song. Particularly engaging were "action songs," in which they would enhance with broad gestures and movement such lyrics as "Since Jesus came to me and washed my sins away, I'm inside, outside, upside, downside, forward, backward, sideways, sideways, happy all the time."

In addition to the welcome and speeches, prayers, and songs, novices were told portentously that at the Antioch weekend they would experience events that could not be discussed in advance. The forthcoming weekend was thus to be a joyful, engaging, yet serious experience, one that would confer special knowledge and status through the initiation of those newly elected into the Antioch family. Significantly, however, the comparison between traditional and Antioch initiations presented the latter not only as distinct from the former but as obviously superior to it. Unlike the language and conduct of traditional initiations, those of the Antioch initiations were not restricted to a circumscribed context but were intended to pervade and thereby continually revitalize everyday life. Moreover, in contrast to traditional male novices who entered a Sepik men's house to be transformed into more complete members of their patriline, purified of their mother's blood (Gewertz 1982; Gewertz and Errington 1991), young men and women entering Antioch were to become adults in a manner that distinguished them from their parents in important—because modernistic—ways. Indeed, from the perspective of novices such as Joe Karam, the Antioch initiation—and the transformed Antioch life more generally—was far sexier, far cooler. At the weekend retreat we attended, the creation of new Antioch selves was effected through a well-organized sequence of structure-breaking events. The master schedule was virtually Tayloristic in its organization of time: available in mimeographed form to the 25 mommies and daddies present, it was composed of ten-minute blocks that filled the entire day between 5:00 p.m. and 11:00 p.m. on Friday, between 7:00 a.m. and 11:00 p.m. on Saturday, and between 7:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. on Sunday. At 5:00 p.m. on Sunday, the newly initiated would return to Wewak for a candlelight procession.

Most of the important events of the weekend took place in the large school auditorium, decorated with an official Antioch banner and with posters illustrating Antioch themes. First, came another—and even more profusely floral—VIP welcome. Next the novices, together with participating veterans and the mommies and daddies, participated in a set of exercises designed, we were told, to "break their shame and fear." As a leader explained to us, "Many of these kids have never spoken to strangers before; they have to be encouraged to do this so as to trust one another and become members of our family." In one typical exercise—which perhaps both aroused and partially sublimated sexuality—the teenagers, moving to the music of a gospel band, formed two concentric, counterrotating circles, with boys on the outside and girls on the inside. Then, when the music suddenly stopped, each boy and the girl opposite him were directed to hold hands and to recite lines of Pidgin English conversation. Thus, during one pause in the music, each boy was told to ask the girl whose hand he held whether she liked "Sepik disco." During another pause, each girl was told to ask, "You like to dance? Why?" These exercises (which were partly intended to develop *savoir faire*) did in fact seem to have their desired effect: Christian confidence came to replace giggles and squirms. Indeed, one of our

young Chambri friends told us later that he knew God's strength was with him once he overcame his shame and fear at interacting with young women during exercises of this kind.

The testimonies were also carefully scheduled and structured. There were 12 in all; they had been previously selected and carefully prepared by experienced Antiochers in extensive consultation with their designated Antioch parents. All the performers, each flanked by someone of the opposite sex with an arm extended across that person's shoulder, read their hand-written testimonies in front of the entire group. Many performers were overcome with emotion. While they took time to compose themselves, the band and congregation filled the time with solemn lyrics: "The road I'm walking on is hard; it is hard to find the straight road; I go from side to side; please take my hand so I can carry on." After a testimony was completed, everyone went forward and shook the speaker's hand as the band played "You Are My Sunshine." After this ceremony, all the youths moved into previously assigned, small discussion groups. In these groups (each of which bore the name of a flower) the youths—primarily the novices—related the experiences of their stone-like pasts to the new experiences conveyed in the testimony.

Meanwhile, the mommies and daddies moved outside the hall to evaluate progress. In particular, they were interested in whether the testimonies had successfully moved the novices—whether the novices had begun to change from stones into flowers as a result. They discussed, for example, whether the speakers had "projected" sufficiently, for several novices had fallen asleep. They thought that a stomach ailment contracted by one novice was in fact a good sign, for there had to be pain before release from suffering was possible. More ominously (though still thrillingly), they discussed what it meant that a stray dog had bitten one participant: they regarded this, too, as a good sign, because it indicated that the devil (the biting dog) was present, angered and threatened by the powerful, holy work in progress.

One of the testimonies by a young woman we shall call Pauline Kamasap was evaluated as especially compelling in content. We here present in translation from Pidgin English an excerpt from her testimony in order to convey the Antioch rhetoric of self-creation.

God made me special so that I could do special works. All of us have to concern ourselves with what is special about each of us, with our own special competencies. . . . I once thought that I was alone with my feelings, that no one else felt the things that I did, that no one else would understand. But we must talk to each other about what kind of men and women we are. . . . I have discovered I still have two sides, a good one and a bad one. Yes, Antiochers, sometimes even now I sit down and think to myself that I would like to be a famous singer like Janet Jackson, would like to take a big airplane all around the world. I would like to wear long earrings, lipstick, and my hair in little snakes. I haven't done any of this. Yet I still want it all. . . . My mother and my father struggled to pay my school fees; they wanted me to go to high school. . . . But I ended up with a Standard Six Certificate—with nothing. . . . And I thought I was rubbish. I couldn't find a job but Antiochers have come to discover that it is all right. God has a plan for me: I can sew clothes, can help my parents take care of the house. And I know God loves me. . . . Let me tell you about a time when I was angry and when I was strong. I was angry with my father. I threw a stone at our house. I wanted to fight with him, I was so angry. A true friend, a member of Antioch, took me to her house and told me that this attitude wasn't good. I took her advice, and now I am a new woman. Now I am peaceful: I smile and chat freely. . . . I have dedicated myself to sewing. I practiced hard. I learned how to use the big machines in the Wirui Catholic Mission laundry house. I am happy with what I have accomplished. . . . Yes, Antiochers, I have told you everything. God wants me to be a special person. He put special things inside me.

Every novice to whom we spoke found such testimonies extremely compelling, particularly the revelations about personal experience to which, often to their surprise, they could relate. Indeed, as the weekend unfolded, the novices became progressively involved in the tightly scheduled progression of revelation, discussion, and action dancing, punctuated only by brief and simple meals and exhausted sleep. By closely monitoring the course of intensification, as indicated by more frequent sobbing and weeping during talks and by the increasing ease in interacting with those who had been strangers, the mommies and daddies became assured that the Holy Spirit was proving triumphant this weekend because stones were so evidently changing into flowers. The last day was the most intense of all. After five morning testimonies and a slightly embellished lunch, the time came for each of the novices and more experienced Antiochers

alike to make a public commitment to Christ. While the assembly alternately sang, prayed, and swayed in unison, all the novices examined their previously hardened hearts to experience what most understood as an almost uncontrollable up-swelling of the Holy Spirit. Inwardly compelled, an individual would, for instance, call out, "Father, I have been a man of the ground, but now I know that I have two works to accomplish in my future. The first work is the work of Jesus; the second work is my own work. With the strength of the Holy Spirit I can accomplish both works forever and ever." Indeed, so strong were the manifestations of the Holy Spirit that individuals often swooned. Bystanders supported them and prayed over them, whereupon they regained sufficient strength and composure to sustain others who had meanwhile been similarly stricken.

The newly constituted community, forged during the Antioch weekend by the Holy Spirit, now had to be reintegrated—as a transformed and transforming force—into everyday society. This was done through a candlelight procession during which hundreds of well-wishers gathered at dusk in the amphitheater outside Wewak's St. Mary's Catholic Church to welcome the youths' return.

soft drinks and Satan in self and society

The Antioch movement, like *Pepsi Fizz*, was predicated on the presence of a new generation of Papua New Guinea youths, already modernized or at least in the process of modernizing. Antioch leaders knew that these youths were consumer-oriented, music-minded, and strongly affected by such phenomena as *Pepsi Fizz*. More specifically, they knew that these young people coveted cassette tapes and trendy clothes: Pauline Kamasap, for instance, wanted "to be a famous singer like Janet Jackson, [taking] a big airplane all around the world . . . [wearing] long earrings, lipstick, and my hair in little snakes."

Antioch leaders also knew that many of these youths—unemployed with only rudimentary education, living in urban contexts filled by Antioch standards with bad influences and inadequate parental control—were likely to make the wrong choices. These young people were caught in what was understood as a modernist dilemma of confusion and alienation between a lingering traditional world of largely irrelevant values and a rapidly changing contemporary world of compelling material desires and elusive satisfactions. Moreover, those who chose to pursue the changing contemporary world of commercial things of the ground, sometimes by criminal means, were (presumably as one response to their feelings of confusion and alienation) likely to become hard as stones.¹³ What Antioch and *Pepsi Fizz* promised, in their different ways, was the creation of a positively experienced, less asocial (if not antisocial) identity out of the relative isolation of alienation and disaffection. Each promised a self both validated by, and linked with, a community of engaged, freely chosen, like-minded others. Each, in other words, was helping to create an objectively verified subjectivity in which persons came to regard themselves not only as special but, through the endorsement of others, as valuable in their distinctiveness.

Pepsi Fizz achieved this rather simply. In its advertisements it promised valued distinction and personal gratification as well as community membership through the individual exercise of the choice to purchase a PepsiCo soft drink product. Such a product, though relatively expensive for most Papua New Guineans, was presumably within the occasional economic reach of all. Indeed, *Pepsi Fizz* defined Papua New Guinea at large as a community composed of those who marked and punctuated their leisure time by choosing the same soft drink—by sharing the same commodity choice (see Foster n.d.). The program itself, let us recall, evoked a national community of music-minded Pepsi-drinkers by ending with "Good night, PNG."

Antioch sought in a more fundamental way than did *Pepsi Fizz* to shape and verify a modernist, subjectively focused personhood. Through a process of individual resocialization

rather than of structural critique and transformation, the lives of Antioch youths were modified under the watchful guidance of mommies and daddies. Through this parental guidance the (supposed) consequences stemming from the prior and inadequate supervision of broken homes could be reversed: it was held that rebellious and misguided youths who had been under the pernicious influences of disaffected peers could become spiritually open and productive members of society. In the process, Antioch's claim that (primarily nuclear) families were crucially formative in shaping (and reshaping) youthful subjectivities—in determining the kinds of choices youths would make—was both asserted and verified. Moreover, according to Antioch's social philosophy, which was more psychological than sociological (see Varenne 1977), the right kind of family was presented as the source of the general well-being of society, since the choices of properly or improperly socialized youths would strongly affect—if not determine—the society at large.

Starting from this perspective, Antioch made every effort to make its resocialization impressively effective. Indeed, focused as it was on personal and public testimonies followed by small-group discussions about conversions from stones to flowers, Antioch resocialization was designed so that modernist youths could compose their testimonies, compare them with those of others, and, in so doing, convincingly validate their transformed (and transforming) subjectivities.

Pauline Kamasap's testimony was by its very nature an example of such resocialization at work. Indeed, it conveyed in axiomatic fashion the parameters of an Antioch-constructed and authorized subjectivity. Her account, like those of the others, freely acknowledged the personal shortcomings of her former, self-centered life. Defiant of legitimate (especially parental) authority and wedded to things of the ground, she had been unhappy and filled with loneliness and a sense of worthlessness. But her life changed when she decided to accept the positive influence of an Antioch friend as well as the influence of Antioch more broadly. Hence Pauline came to realize that God had a plan for her in particular. From this she gained peace, renewal, respect, and satisfying, useful work. In other words, she learned in the context of the Antioch community—of "God's Great Big Family," to cite another Antioch song—to recognize the special things that God had put inside her.

Pauline's testimony revealed a subjectivity that elicited responses of empathetic identification. It was at the same time a means of self-discovery and of mutual validation. Antiochers learned—and rehearsed this affirmation—that each of them was a subjectivity composed of a distinctive mixture of desire, frustration, longing, and self-doubt. Each was thereby shown to be both unique and comparable to others. In addition, each had a special place in God's eyes and plan. Thus, for example, Joe and Pauline could realize through each other's testimonies that they were different from each other as well as similar. Whether from bandit to band member (and accounting student) or from stone thrower to seamstress, each was making a personal journey of redemption in the company of like-minded and mutually validating others (see Varenne 1977). Their mutual empathy went well beyond the identification with commodity-consuming others (presumably including that of Joe with his criminal friends) fostered by *Pepsi Fizz*. In this way Antiochers could contribute through communal consensus to the objective validation of the special worth of each other's lives.

Furthermore, the Antioch experience included a validation of the Holy Spirit. In the expression "stones were turned into flowers," flowers were understood as like-minded others who (in a frequently used phrase) "opened themselves" to others because they had also been opened by and become open to the Holy Spirit. Indeed, the truth of the Holy Spirit was substantiated both by the intensity and by the collective nature of personal feeling. The collected Antiochers, in speaking so directly with each other without shame or embarrassment and in professing their commitment in so public a manner, had provided objective—consensually undeniable—validation of the existence and the working of the Holy Spirit.

Antioch thus provided a context in which personal testimony and response were understood to provide convincing evidence, both idiosyncratic in detail and general in purport, about the nature of the world—about matters of ground and spirit—and about the nature of a subjective self in that world. In these regards, we would like to suggest that the Antioch testimony, and perhaps the Antioch experience more broadly, was *somewhat* analogous to that conveyed in, and through, the early European novel. We do not wish to imply that the processes of modernism and capitalism in late 20th-century Wewak precisely replicated those that can be identified in 18th-century England, for example (see Miller 1994). In both cases, however, a roughly comparable subjective self may have been developed in rapidly and profoundly changing socioeconomic circumstances.¹⁴

Addressing the often linked experiences of relative personal isolation and mutual curiosity, both Antioch testimonies and novels purported to provide realistically detailed glimpses of the personal life of others (see Abercrombie et al. 1992; Taylor 1989; Watt 1957). Through these accounts, listeners and readers could gain empathetic access to a largely hidden world of domestic details and to the private sensibilities often engendered there. In gaining access, moreover, listeners and readers would find the means (as “models of” joined with “models for” [see Geertz 1973]) to form, understand, and validate their own subjectivities as both comparable to and distinct from those of others.

Furthermore, like novels and other personal accounts such as journals, diaries, and private letters, the personal testimonies of Antiochers were especially compelling because they were written. As such they were an objectification or instantiation of what otherwise might have been insubstantial and ephemeral; they were also available for consultation. We know that Antiochers did consider themselves to be works in progress in the sense that the transformations they had experienced during the initiation were ongoing; the language and images of the retreat were to animate their everyday lives. Consequently, they not only wrote and rewrote their life stories before giving public testimonies—testimonies were given during the twice-weekly Antioch services as well as Antioch weekends—but subsequently, and more privately, read and reread them, thinking about their present in relation to their past selves.

That these modernizing selves were—again significantly unlike other Chambri we had known in the past—taught, encouraged, or otherwise inclined to think about their lives as being grounded in formative pasts that gave these lives distinctive direction and trajectory could also be expected to foster or at least accompany a concern with more general aspects of the relationship of the present to the past. The parallelism that (auto)biography and history appeared to be acquiring for modernizing Chambri and many other Papua New Guineans concerned what was for many a problematic relationship, that of their contemporary circumstances to those they viewed as traditional. This relationship was likely to be particularly problematic in Papua New Guinea for members of the new generation: not only had the traditional become increasingly less important for them as personal guides for conduct, belief, and feeling, but at the same time the traditional had remained highly relevant as sources of contemporary—albeit often diffuse—collective identities (see García Canclini 1993).

In fact, one could argue, *Pepsi Fizz* and Antioch each equipped youths and interested others with apparent solutions to this modernist and modernizing dilemma: each provided a complementary, if not comparable, template for making the enactment of cultural specifics increasingly a matter of personal choice while valorizing traditional culture as still a relatively important basis for collective identity and worth. As we have mentioned, many of the videos aired on *Pepsi Fizz* focused on the experiences of lives adrift, especially lives that had left village life behind; they evoked nostalgia for the left-behind and traditional. This nostalgia, we suggest, might be interpreted as the positive valuation of the anachronistic.¹⁵

Antioch, in turn, seemed to foster a comparable perspective by interpreting contemporary traditional practices as if they were already in the past: appreciated in their generality rather

than lived in their specificity, they were interpreted as if best preserved as generic objects of veneration. Thus, in an apparent counterpart to *Pepsi Fizz* with its individualistic commemoration of the nostalgia of the personal pasts left behind, Antioch advocated that its youths, with their properly (re)constituted subjectivities, form a touring troupe, spreading the light of Antioch while, as Joe put it, “learning and respecting the good customs of the different people of Papua New Guinea.” Indeed, Antioch’s claim to encompass Papua New Guinea through the circulation of appreciative youths throughout the nation was perhaps analogous to PepsiCo’s claims to encompass Papua New Guinea through the circulation of PepsiCo products. In this view, the banner of Antioch was roughly equivalent to the “Good night, PNG” of *Pepsi Fizz*.

if they have you asking the wrong questions, it doesn’t matter what your answers are

Like modernities elsewhere, and historical processes more generally, the Papua New Guinea modernity with which the Chambri were engaging was characterized by “contingency and variability” (Miller 1994:80). Indeed, as we have already suggested, to understand modernities requires the investigation of such local particularities as how *Pepsi Fizz* and Antioch were experienced, formulated, and contrasted by Chambri and their Papua New Guinea neighbors.

We have already seen that the Antioch movement tried to counter many of the preoccupations evidenced by members of the new generation of *Pepsi Fizz*. But it is also important to recognize that Antioch itself was far from unopposed. In fact, many senior Chambri and others found the changes Antioch postulated and enacted as more disruptive of still important values than the youthful preoccupation with things of the ground. While conceding that Antioch might be useful in returning seriously criminal youths to community control, many senior Chambri felt that Antioch made most youths less rather than more controllable. In particular, these seniors strongly objected to Antioch’s view of appropriate gender relations, a view that made it even less likely that contemporary youths would follow the wishes of their seniors concerning traditional customs of gender separation and arranged marriage.¹⁶ Again, although we recognize that intergenerational conflict may long have been a feature of Chambri life and that rebellious youth do become more staid when they grow older, we think that, in the trajectory of modernist transformation in Papua New Guinea, senior Chambri were probably correct in their view that their youths were becoming—and would, if unchecked, remain—Chambri of a new sort.

Significantly, only a few days after the Antioch weekend we have described, senior Chambri called a meeting in Chambri Camp to prevent Chambri youths from participating further in the movement. Apparently, several young Chambri women had decided to go off on their own one evening to attend an Antioch service in another parish. This provoked a torrent of concern; in particular, there was explicit castigation of “the bad white man’s customs of Antioch” that caused girls to “float” from man to man, and some claimed that the cross-gender relationships that Antioch fostered—again, clearly a part of Antioch’s appeal to the young—often resulted in pregnancies. When these young women wanted to go to other parishes, seniors complained, no one could stop them because they “just listen to their Antioch mommies and daddies.”

Yet these same Chambri who attacked Antioch for teaching “the bad white man’s customs” were also inclined to praise *Pepsi Fizz* for its videos, arguing, as we have mentioned, that these taught youths to value the traditional. From the perspective of these senior Chambri, or at least of the many in Wewak who were aware of *Pepsi Fizz*, the depiction of the traditional in music videos had become an acceptable formulation of intergenerational continuity.¹⁷ Moreover, these senior Chambri bought Pepsi for themselves and their children when they could afford to do so.

In acceding to *Pepsi Fizz* in its dual role as purveyor of tradition and soft drinks, however, these same seniors were, we think, undermining their own objections to Antioch. After all, the *Pepsi Fizz* commercial (and to some extent the music videos as well) did depict Papua New Guinea youths in somewhat intimate cross-gender relationships—a fact that probably affected the experience of Antiochers with each other. More important still, *Pepsi Fizz* shared central modernist assumptions with Antioch. Both, as we have seen, sought to transform old lives into new through the promulgation of a modernist ideology involving subjective identity and personal choice. In this regard it must also be stressed that the arguments of those who supported Antioch against *Pepsi Fizz* were comparably undermined. In other words, whereas each castigated the other (Antioch supporters held that *Pepsi Fizz* was too materialistic, too much of the ground, while *Pepsi Fizz* asserted that Antioch was too antitraditional, and too structure breaking), both nevertheless supported “the white man’s ways” in their positions and practices. The two positions could thus be regarded as critiques of one another in a manner that still sustained their common assumptions.

Thus, the terms of the debate—the assumptions underwriting rhetorics of negotiation and contestation over the nature and basis of the construction and understanding of self and sociality—reflected an ontological shift: that such arguments could no longer readily be about “whither modernization” but instead concerned what form modernization would take attested to the consolidation rather than to the challenge of modernism. Few, for example, would reject both *Pepsi Fizz* and Antioch as undermining valued ways of life. Moreover, the adherents of each defended themselves against any attack on modernism as such by presenting the traditional as simultaneously valued and anachronistic—as either a source of nostalgia or as belonging in a living museum. Both *Pepsi Fizz* and Antioch thereby mutually discounted tradition’s relevance (and in fact authorized its irrelevance) as a template for negotiating the world—as a convincing and binding model of and for the ongoing construction and enactment of selves and concomitant socialities. Therefore, the anxieties and frustrations of alienation and of intergenerational conflict attendant on modernism were both vented and neutralized in a context in which the traditional was rendered symbolic rather than binding and in which the traditional was not considered necessarily compelling in any of its particulars but was instead defined as a matter of personal—albeit often collective—choice and appreciation.¹⁸ In other words, at least to judge by the formulation effected by the two (ostensibly) competing discourses we have been able to consider here—those that *Pepsi Fizz* and Antioch directed primarily to members of the new generation—modernism and its discontents would still be modernism.

notes

Acknowledgments. We wish to thank Amherst and Trinity Colleges for supporting our 1994 fieldwork among the Chambri. In addition, we are grateful to numerous colleagues for commenting on early drafts of this paper. In particular, John Barker, Jan Dizard, Janet Gyatso, Jerome Himmelstein, Dan Jorgensen, Jane Nadel-Klein, and Fereydoun Safizadeh made valuable suggestions. As well, we found the comments of the anonymous reviewers of the *American Ethnologist* enormously helpful, as were those of Michael Herzfeld. Moreover—and as always—we offer special thanks to our editrix extraordinaire, Carolyn Errington. Finally, we wish to note that, as in all our publications, the order in which our names appear should not suggest any inequality in our contributions.

1. The concept of “tradition” (or the “traditional”) as it is used here is the subject of local invocation and contestation. (See, among others, Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983.) The concept of “modernity” (or “modern,” “modernist,” or “modernization”) is to be understood as multifaceted and situationally contingent. This being understood, we see no further need to place these terms in quotation marks.

2. According to one estimate, nearly 25 percent of Papua New Guineans in 1994 had come to live in towns. (We thank Dan Jorgensen for providing this statistic.) Moreover, Chambri Camp had increased in population by 62 percent between 1987 and 1994, while the three Chambri home villages decreased in population by 14 percent. In addition, 31 percent of those living in the camp were below the age of 15 and nearly 90 percent of these had been born in Wewak or in another Papua New Guinea town.

3. The literature on modernity has become enormous. Of the vast corpus of works available, we have found the following to be among the most anthropologically germane to our present study: Berman 1982, García Canclini 1993, Giddens 1991, Harvey 1989, Jameson 1991, Lash and Friedman 1992, Miller 1994, Sklair 1991, and Taylor 1989.

4. We have used our discretion in changing some of the names in this account to protect privacy.

5. See Errington and Gewertz 1987:31–43; and see Harrison 1982 for discussions of the relationship between totemic names and cosmological and personal power in the Sepik.

6. Elsewhere (Gewertz and Errington 1991:128–145) we discuss music that might be considered transitional between Chambri totemic chants and the pop songs featured on *Pepsi Fizz*.

7. Evangelical Christianity has been sweeping Papua New Guinea. For descriptions of its meaning and effect, see Barr 1983, Counts 1978, Eyre 1988, Gewertz and Errington 1993, Leavitt 1989, Ryan 1969, Schieffelin 1981, and Tuzin 1989.

8. Of the 215 men and women above the age of 15 living in Chambri Camp (these comprise most, but not all, of those living in Wewak) during the time of our 1994 research, only 16 had jobs that paid regular wages. No one under age 25 had such a job. Some money was sporadically earned by both men and women through the respective sale of carvings and baskets. In addition, residents of Chambri Camp occasionally received remittances from family members living elsewhere in Papua New Guinea.

9. Interestingly, the national government of Papua New Guinea was promoting the establishment of community preschools to be taught in local languages. Chambri, both in town and in the villages, embraced this idea as a means of preserving their language.

10. See, among others, Brison n.d., Burridge 1960, Clifford 1982, Gewertz and Errington 1993, and Smith 1994.

11. There were, of course, important differences between Antioch and *Pepsi Fizz* that circumscribe the parallel we are claiming: after all, one was a television program that was watched and perhaps emulated, while the other was a social movement in which people actually participated. Nonetheless, most significant to us here is that both operated as salient and modernist Papua New Guinea discourses.

12. *Cool* had entered Chambri vocabularies in part because of the advertising in Papua New Guinea of Kool cigarettes.

13. Significantly, the theme song of the Antioch movement, “Keep the Faith,” was filled with images of confusion and alienation. It began: “Drifted alone by the wind of change, felt the pains of life in your heart; floated alone through the flood of sin, the darkness is all around you.”

14. Although we do think the particular forms and context of Antioch testimonies are modernist, we do not wish to imply that confession, whether public or private, is necessarily so. Certainly, as an anonymous reviewer has reminded us, the Catholic confessional long predates the modern period.

15. Feld has suggestively expressed this idea: “Just as ‘tradition’ was constructed as the nostalgia of modernity, so its vaguer cousin, ‘memory’ is inserted as the nostalgia of postmodernity” (1994:289). Nostalgia—and tradition—can, of course, be employed in a variety of ways within modernity. For instance, as Battaglia (1995) has shown, nostalgia might compel a practical reworking of the present so as to make aspects of the past relevant to the present (through, for example, the staging of a traditional yam festival in an urban setting). Such nostalgic practices, she argued, might enable the disempowered to reconfigure and so to resist aspects of postcolonial life. The practices Battaglia described would thus stand in partial contrast to those of the contemporary Chambri described here; for the Chambri nostalgia worked primarily to effect—and mark—an ontological shift in which tradition, while valued as a source of collective identity, was rendered increasingly irrelevant as a source of practice. Nostalgia was thus operating to enable them to embrace more fully (rather than resist) a range of modernist personal choices. Compare Rosaldo 1989:68–90.

16. Chambri elders seemed more concerned with Antioch’s effect on gender roles than on the basis of sociality as such, perhaps because the former was more immediate and evident. See also note 18.

17. An analysis of how these older men could regard *Pepsi Fizz* as an acceptable synthesis of past and present must await a more complete study of the full array of competing rhetorics of self-construction that were being utilized by Chambri.

18. We might point out that one of the insidious aspects of modernism (to say nothing of postmodernism) was that the development of a nontraditional, allegedly freely choosing subjective self tended to minimize recognition of the nature and importance of systemic constraints, economic, political, and cultural. (See Errington 1987 and Gewertz and Errington 1994.) In this regard we view Joe Karam’s traditional analysis of the workings of the “wantok system” as more accurate than that fostered by either *Pepsi Fizz* or Antioch (or by the supervisor of Boy’s Town with his rhetoric about broken homes).

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submitted December 22, 1994
 revised version submitted May 12, 1995
 accepted September 2, 1995