

PATHS OF *PINAUZU*:
CAPTIVITY AND SOCIAL REPRODUCTION IN RANONGGA, WESTERN SOLOMON ISLANDS

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In the pre-pacification Western Solomon Islands,¹ it was not only the heads of slain enemies that warriors brought back from long distance raids—live captives were also part of the spoils of war. During fieldwork on Ranongga Island in 1998-99, almost a century after pacification and more than eighty years after Christian conversion, I collected little detailed information about taking heads—a few senior men had only a limited knowledge of past practices. Much more salient was the legacy of captives taken on war raids (*pinauzu* in Kumbokota language of Ranongga, *pinausu* in the languages of Lungga, Simbo, and related New Georgia languages).² In some narratives about past war expeditions led by matrilineages of Ranongga, taking captives—not taking heads—was remembered as the primary goal. Furthermore, whether or not someone's ancestor was a *pinauzu* remains a crucial issue in reckoning rights and obligations to persons and property on Ranongga. Ranonggans often began genealogical accounts with the story of a grandmother who was taken captive from a distant island. Such ancestors are remembered in deed as well as narrative—in late 1999, for example, a group of cousins in Pienuna village opened a small sewing project and dedicated it to the memory of their grandmother, who had been purchased in Choiseul by a lineage of Ranongga and given the land where the project was built.

Although captives are central in the heritage of headhunting in Ranongga,³ they have not been a focus of ethnographic investigation. Headhunting in the Solomons has captured the imagination of generations of Europeans traders, tourists, missionaries, anthropologists, and tourists, whether seen as a sign of savagery or a key to understanding pre-colonial politics, religion, and sociality. Europeans in the Western Solomons have noted that captives were taken in war raids, but they have generally analysed this phenomenon as a pragmatic after-thought to headhunting raids, with captives providing a reservoir of victims for future sacrifice, a labour force, or marriage partners (e.g., Bennett 1987:13, Hviding 1996:91, Zelenietz 1979:98-99). Although depopulation due to increases in headhunting with the introduction of iron (McKinnon 1975; Bennett 1987:36) might explain a desire to bolster numbers by adopting captives, functional explanations do not explain why captives were incorporated in the particular ways that they were. Particularly remarkable in Ranongga and the rest of New Georgia is that foreign origins were not erased, even when captives were fully incorporated into the capturing group (see also Hviding 1996:91). In this way, Ranongga differs from many Melanesian groups who

incorporated captives into their social systems. Examples include the Marind-anim of New Guinea where approximately one in seven adult Marind-anim were actually adoptees from headhunting raids (Knauff 1993:136-171, pers. com.) and some Malaitan groups of the southeastern Solomons who sometimes gave children, against their parent's wishes, to distant groups to claim bounties of pigs and shell (David Akin, pers. com.). In these societies, the former identity of the captive was said to have been erased. In the Western Solomons, captives may have been dead in the eyes of their kinspeople (though, as Christine Dureau [this volume] suggests, this does not imply that they could not effect their kin). Yet in their adopted societies, these foreign origins were not erased—they remain significant even today, generations after the last captives were taken.

By focusing on captives rather than heads, I am reflecting the perspective of my Ranongga informants—for reasons I will return to in the conclusion, captives may not have been equally significant in other areas of New Georgia. Furthermore, I did not begin my investigations by eliciting information about headhunting or the 'time before' from acknowledged authorities. Instead, I heard stories about *pinauzu* during interviews on various subjects and interactions with a wide range of people on Ranongga, and only later did I turn to chiefs and experts on 'custom' to elaborate the stories. Though my focus on *pinauzu* reflects a particular fieldwork situation and methodological approach, I nevertheless suggest that *pinauzu* were of general significance in pre-colonial warfare in New Georgia. This significance has been largely overlooked because captivity does not fit into classical anthropological categories. Information about captives in A.M. Hocart's writings, for example, is split between separate discussions of warfare and death rituals. In much classic Melanesian ethnography and British structural functional anthropology more generally, warfare has been analysed in terms of social control (Knauff 1998:116-119); in the Western Solomons, it has been seen as functional in relation to chiefly politics. Captivity falls into an analytical gap between the domain of the political (public, usually male-dominated) and the domestic (private, with more participation from women)—a divide that has been enshrined in anthropology (see Strathern 1988). A serious consideration of captivity can challenge these analytical domains. Captives were taken from distant lands in warfare, but they became intimately attached to the land and people of their captors. Therefore, they must be understood in light of the processes through which social relationships are

constituted—relationships among living people, between the living and dead, and between people and place.

To clarify these processes, I draw the notion of “path” from studies of kula exchange in Massim region of Papua New Guinea. Recent studies have reconsidered Malinowski’s (1922) notion of the kula as a simple system of circular exchange between men of different communities. They explore how the path of kula valuables links a regional system of long distance trading relationships to local systems of kin relations (see Campbell 1983; Munn 1983, 1986; A. Weiner 1983). My approach is roughly parallel—I trace how the path of *pinauzu* leads from inter-community warfare to intra-community kin and lineage relations. I also draw on Annette Weiner’s model of social reproduction as developed in her work on the Trobriands (1980, 1988), where she considers how transactions of value articulate a concern with continuity in the face of degeneration and death. Such a perspective, I believe, can shed light on the meaning of skulls and captives in New Georgia society. At the same time, as I will discuss in conclusion, considering the role of foreign captives in the reproduction of lineage relationships suggests that social reproduction on Ranongga differs from what Weiner has described for the Trobriands, that is, a matrilineage reconstituting itself across generations. In Ranongga, at least, social reproduction involves the possibility of a fundamental historical shift via the replacement of an autochthonous lineage with a foreign one.

The present essay begins by considering the various fates and incongruous functions of captives in New Georgia. I then turn to the writings of anthropologist A.M. Hocart based on his stay on Simbo (Eddystone) in 1908, just after pacification and just before widespread conversion to Christianity. Hocart’s descriptions indicate how captives were incorporated into Simbo society and suggest that they played an important role in the commemoration of the dead. Present day narratives from Ranongga reveal few details about the ritual function of captives, but much about broad patterns of social reproduction and historical change, and are the focus of the last half of this essay. Descendants of captives told me stories about their ancestors that indicate that they experienced a precarious oscillation from status as ‘captive’ and ‘child’ as they were incorporated into Ranonggan society. Accounts from the perspective of Ranonggan matrilineages indicate some of the motives for taking captives. According to these accounts, captives were sought not only as victims, wives, or labour, but also as sisters. Furthermore,

female *pinauzu* were sometimes designated to “change the tribe,” which meant that their descendents would eventually take over the rights and obligations of the landholding lineage. Anthropological discussions of headhunting have considered how taking enemy skulls brought prosperity to those who procured them (Dureau, this volume) or transferred life from one group to another (Hoskins 1996a:38). This paper extends these discussions by considering the role of captives in such processes. Life cycle rituals, recorded by Hocart, show a concern with commemoration in the face of individual death. Stories from the captive’s point of view highlight contradictions inherent in a liminal state between foreigner and kin. The histories of matrilineages articulate a concern for future continuity beyond the demise of the lineage. In all of these cases, foreigners appear to be crucial in processes of social and cosmological reproduction.

THE FUNCTION OF CAPTIVES

Some of the captives taken in war raids in the late nineteenth and early 20th century were later killed in what was known as *veala* sacrifice. It was this aspect of captivity that drew most attention from European observers as further proof of the savagery that was to be eradicated by government and mission. Methodist missionary John Goldie claimed, “These people are cannibals, and if victims for their feasts could not be obtained in the raid, then so much the worse for some unfortunate slave captured in some previous expedition” (1909:27). In addition to cannibal feasts (more a figment of his imagination than a reflection of actual social practice), Goldie cited affronts to neighboring villages and ceremonial occasions as excuses to sacrifice captives. Charles Morris Woodford, later the first Resident Commissioner of the Protectorate, noted that captives were sacrificed when a canoe or other major project was completed, and cited as evidence the 1883 account of a trader who witnessed the gruesome death of a young Isabel boy in Roviana (1890:154-57). The boy was dunked repeatedly in water before he was beheaded; his body was carried by the chief so that his blood splattered on a new canoe house. The account is much quoted (see also Bennett 1987:67, White 1991:87) and may have influenced Hocart’s classic definition of the motivation for headhunting:

Heads were not caught at random, but for the definite purpose of inauguration, if we may so translate the vernacular *vapenja* . . . The word *vapenja* should therefore mean “to moisten, to wet,” presumably with blood. The occasions of *vapenja* are new canoes, new communal houses (*paele, njelepande*), new skull-houses, the death of a chief, and the release from confinement of a widow (1931:303).

In the readings of later scholars, such inauguration served to make an object efficacious, blessed, or true (see Dureau, this volume, Hviding 1996: 89-91). There is, however, an incongruity in Hocart's definition. While it is clear how an object like a war canoe, a war house, or even a shrine could be inaugurated by splattering it with blood (as Europeans might inaugurate a ship by smashing a bottle of champagne on it), it is less obvious what was being inaugurated when a chief died or a widow was released from confinement.⁴

Most captives were well treated and were not killed. Woodford noted that captives appeared to "have as much liberty as they please; in fact, seem to be on a perfect footing of equality and familiarity with their captors" (1890:154). Goldie noted that many female captives married their captors, and were "treated with as much consideration as the women belonging to the tribe—which is perhaps not saying much" (1908:27). Wives, he seems to have suggested, were slaves by another name. Scholars, like Hocart, who seem more concerned with understanding the function of headhunting than with condemning the savagery of its practitioners, have noted the practical functions of taking captives. Hviding (1996:91), for example, notes with reference to Marovo that "more often than not, captives were brought home for more pragmatic purposes such as labour in 'slavery,' or even marriage." Yet, labour and marriage are not self-evidently practical.

Ranonggans say that *pinauzu* were 'servants' (*nabulu*) and could not refuse tiresome or dangerous jobs, such as building houses or climbing nut trees. These servants did not simply carry out everyday physical labour, but were designated to carry out work that was ritually important. Young female *pinauzu* were employed as 'prostitutes' (*tugele*) to raise money for chiefs during feasts—Ranonggans insist that these *tugele* were not like prostitutes today, but were respected for assisting the chief and were waited on by the chief's household. Male *pinauzu*, particularly in Roviana, produced shell valuables (see Zelenietz 1979). Throughout the region, *pinauzu* served as 'priests' (*iama*) in charge of mortuary ritual and ancestral offerings. Such work was supernaturally dangerous and, according to Dureau's Simbo informants (1994:84-5), people of Simbo preferred to have captives serve as priests because they were afraid of the power of the ancestors (also Aswani, pers. com.). This, however, does not explain why the ancestors would permit a foreigner to tend their shrines. In present-day Ranongga, where the Christian God is considered much more powerful than ancestor spirits, certain shrines are still

said to be dangerous to in-laws and visitors who trespass their boundaries (compare Scott, n.d.). Without one of their descendents to placate the spirits by explaining why the outsider is present, the outsider may suffer various physical and mental afflictions. One must wonder, then, how *pinauzu*, as former enemies whose foreign origins were not effaced, came to be on such intimate terms with the ancestors.

Like ‘slave’ labour, the quest for wives was not merely a pragmatic goal; it should be viewed in light of an ideology of extreme exogamy prevalent in New Georgia. In contemporary Ranongga, marriage or sexual relations are forbidden within named, land-holding matrilineages called *butubutu*.⁵ Marriage is also forbidden with the *butubutu* of ego’s father and paternal grandfather and with anyone with whom a kin connection can be traced. If incest occurs, it is seen to split the set of classificatory sisters and brothers (*tamatazi*) in question; compensation is required to “tie back together” (*varipuku tari sogu*) the families of the incestuous couple. Such an ideology might encourage Ranonggans to seek wives in distant lands or marry captives who were brought back. However, as I describe below, this is rarely presented by Ranonggans as a reason why captives were taken before pacification.

Captives entered into kin-like relationships with their captors. In fact, the term “*pinauzu*” is related to “*pauzu*,” a verb that means “to adopt” (cf. Waterhouse 1949 on Roviana). Adopted children (*pauzuna*) are semantically distinguished from captives taken from other lands (*pinauzu*). Yet, *pinauzu* addressed their captors and were addressed by kin terms (see Hocart 1931:306). As Dureau (1994:71) has discussed, Simbo captives “engaged in reciprocal, sustaining activities,” such as working on the land, eating and sharing food, and caring for those who captured them—thus acting very much like adopted children. Furthermore, on Simbo, skulls of long-resident captives were enshrined beside the skulls of Simbo ancestors (Dureau, this volume).

Lives of captives did not follow a single trajectory. Some were sacrificed, but others worked for and married their captors, bearing children and living much like their captors did. The contradictions inherent in such incongruent fates are the subject of narrative accounts by descendents of captives, examined below. First, however, I turn to Hocart’s descriptions of rituals that involved *pinausu* on Simbo in 1908.⁶

All of the warfare rituals that Hocart witnessed and many that were described to him by informants involved purchased captives and not the heads of slain enemies. During Hocart's fieldwork, three *pinausu* were brought to Simbo. In this section I focus on one—a young boy from Choiseul who was purchased by a Ranonggan man named Lembu who had been living on Simbo (1931:306). Lembu had no children and purchased the child as an adopted son. The exchange involved, among other goods, *bakia*, clamshell rings that continue to be used in Ranongga for transactions involving rights in land and persons. In addition to this initial purchase, Hocart described at several other types of rituals that involved this *pinausu*, but the descriptions are separated between his discussions of warfare and mortuary ritual. In “Warfare in Eddystone of the Solomon Islands” (1931), Hocart described the *pinausu*'s role in the ceremonial reception of a returning war canoe. In “The Cult of the Dead in Eddystone of the Solomons” (1922), he described the role of the *pinausu* in releasing two widows from confinement. In his description of *pinausu*, Hocart suggested that captives were functionally equivalent to heads and were taken for purposes of inauguration (see his statement above). Yet his descriptions suggest that *pinausu* played an important role in broader processes of social reproduction—in establishing the *pinausu* as an adoptee and in commemorating deceased kin.

Hocart described return of Lembu and his captive as an example of the return of a victorious headhunting expedition. When Lembu brought the *pinausu* back to Simbo, he was received by the chief and the village (Hocart 1931:306). After landing at the north of Simbo, Lembu and his company paddled, sang, and blew the conch shell as they came ashore at Narovo village. The chief asked where they had taken the slave, and Lembu listed the places he visited in his journey. The chief then “threw” an arm-ring to Lembu and the rest of the villagers followed suit. Then the women took the “little slave” and led him to a house. In addition to celebrating the return of the headhunters (in this case, slave buyers), such interactions appear to welcome the captive. In describing his journey, Lembu would have traced the path of his captive from Choiseul to Simbo. The shell rings given by the people of Simbo may have transferred some rights in the captive from Lembu to the village as a whole, and the women of the village seemed to adopt him by ushering him away.

Another ritual described by Hocart more clearly connects the *pinausu* to his adopted home. Recounting how it was performed for another captive, a woman from Choiseul, Hocart wrote:

Widow Vuru took her down to the water, dipped in the water some four leaves in each hand and passed them down the side of the captive's face and body four times, saying, "I stroke down the *inatunu* of the people of Vellalavella. Let the sun carry it away in setting. Stroke it down" (1931:313).

This ritual was not performed in Simbo for Lembu's captive because it had already been performed in Ranongga. Elsewhere Hocart described *inatunu* as a shrine where warriors performed rituals before embarking on a war canoe expedition (1931:308),⁷ but in this description, the *inatunu* seems to be a charm or blessing. The captive described had been captured by Vella Lavellans prior to her purchase by the Simbo party, and, according to Hocart's informants, the *inatunu* of the Vellans had to be removed so that she would belong to them. Furthermore, they said that if the captive had not come from Vella but directly from Choiseul, the words of the charm would have been "I stroke, let not the person die" (1931:313). As a charm, the *inatunu* seems to attach captives to their new home, perhaps establishing an identity with the place that would prevent local ancestral spirits from afflicting them.

Lembu's *pinausu* was involved in releasing two widows from confinement (Hocart 1922:89-91). Immediately after his ceremonial arrival on Simbo, Lembu went to the house of Widow Emele, whose husband had died about a week earlier. Inside the house, Lembu blew a conch shell and removed the door of her small confinement room. In return, the widow paid him two large shell valuables. Later, Lembu repeated the procedure for another widow, Widow Gage, whose husband *Irana* died a few days after Lembu returned to Simbo.⁸ *Irana* was also from Ranongga. Hocart said that he and Lembu were 'brothers' and described Lembu's important role in *Irana*'s mortuary rites. When Lembu 'blew the conch' for Widow Gage, Hocart reported that he and the widow wept and Widow Gage did not pay Lembu with shell rings. It is not clear how the *pinausu* released widows from confinement. Widows in Simbo observed restrictions in which they mimicked the bodily state of the deceased. They assumed crouched sitting positions in a small enclosure and only left their houses under a mat; they wore dark clothing, did not cut their hair (or shave if male), did not bathe, and could not eat from the same kitchen as the rest of the community (Hocart 1922:84). Writing of similar mortuary rituals in Borneo, Metcalf (1996) suggests that widows were confined for their own protection, because the recently dead were angry and sought retaliation against their closest kin. In this context, human sacrifice served to contain the anger of the deceased and transfer the danger of retaliation onto another group. Alternatively, MacIntyre (1989) suggests that in Tubetube (Massim, PNG),

widows are responsible for keeping the deceased metaphorically present in the village; their confinement represents the “symbolic transformations wrought by death” (p. 138). If such a reading is applied to Simbo, Lembu’s *pinausu* did not necessarily release the two widows—indeed, Hocart noted that *pinausu* could not actually release the widow from confinement unless a specific amount of time had already passed. Instead, blowing the conch shell may have transferred the burden of representing the dead from the widow to the *pinausu*.

Hocart wrote that taking a head or captive in honour of a chief to set the widow free is known as “*teku vavolo*,” and he translates *vavolo* as the last death-feast and the great war-feast (1922:90). In Kumbokota language, *vavolo* is a feast, but “*teku vavulu*” refers to take something in commemoration of a chief’s death. In Pienuna village on Ranongga, the grave of one *pinauzu* records that she was taken from Choiseul around 1910 to commemorate the death of a man named Rabageto of Vitu tribe (*na vavuluna i Rabageto pa butubutu Vitu*). Human heads or live captives were not the only things used as *vavuluna*; Ranonggans say that turtles also served to commemorate chiefs’ deaths. In at least one instance, the *vavuluna* of a chief was neither human nor turtle. On his deathbed, the last great heathen chief of Ranongga, Beibanara, told his successors to go on a war canoe to Vella Lavella and return with a missionary. Thus, according to his grandson Apusae Bei, the Seventh Day Adventist church was Beibanara’s *vavuluna*. In these cases, *vavulu* seems to correspond to what people now refer to in Pijin as *memori*, and object or person that is a tangible reminder of a person who is dead or absent.

Many captives on Ranongga were killed as the *vavulu*- of chiefs. This raises an obvious question: if captives were adopted into the captor’s society (subject to the *inatunu* ritual, addressed with kin terms), why were they sacrificed when someone in the community died? Hocart’s informants claimed that captives were killed when a chief died because they were suspected of witchcraft (Hocart n.d.),⁹ but the sacrifice of slaves is similar to the death of widows, which do not appear to have been based on sorcery accusations. In an account related by Hocart (1922:86), the widow of a major chief went willingly to her death so that she could follow her husband, persisting even when the suicide proved difficult. Rather than mourning, she wore her finest clothes and sat beside her deceased husband; all others wailed, but she “did not cry or she could not have died, for a widow who cries cannot hang herself” (p. 86). Stories from Ranongga indicate that mothers killed themselves to die with their sons. Dureau has suggested a similar logic for *pinausu*: “the killing of a son or daughter captive was a way of

providing a dead *banāra* [chief] with a son or daughter in Sondo [the home of the dead] without forcing the living to sacrifice those who had been ‘born from a single mat,’ that is, siblings who had grown up together since infancy” (1996:349). This suggests that the sacrifice of a captive was not a betrayal of a promise of kinship, at least not from the perspective of the captors. As metaphoric replacement or as a companion on the journey to the land of the dead, *pinausu* played an important part in commemorating the dead.

AMBIGUOUS INCORPORATION

The sacrifice of captives did not necessarily negate the incorporation of the captive into the capturing group. Stories from the perspective of the captives as reported by their descendents, however, do reveal a sense of the disjuncture between the status of captive (*pinauzu*) and child (*tuna*). Sometimes descendents of captives would tell me that their forebears were not *pinauzu* because they were addressed as ‘children’; I heard this most often in contexts where descendents of captives were claiming rights *vis-a-vis* the capturing tribe. Others described how their ancestors were supposed to have been children to their captives, but when an occasion for sacrifice arose were killed as though they were *pinauzu*. One woman, Timoli of Suava, described how a group of captives from Sabana, Isabel had come to occupy a particular territory on the east side of Ranongga. They had been captured in Isabel by *butubutu* Patukogo of Ranongga. But when the Patukogo group returned to Ranongga, they declared, “We will not call them ‘*pinauzu*’ now, let us call them ‘*butubutu*’ (lineage).” Later, however, when a chief of Patukogo died, a Sabana child was killed (*na vavuluna na bangara*). When the child’s mother returned from her garden, she cried: “So they have killed us. They said that we were ‘*butubutu*,’ but they are killing us now. So that is alright, let us run away.” She and others from Sabana found refuge on the other side of the island. In this account, the sacrifice of the child represents a betrayal of the promise of kinship.

The captives from Sabana were taken as enemies, but even *pinauzu* who were not taken as enemies could be victims of sacrifice. Pize of Rava (born. c. 1915, died September 1999) was the daughter of two *pinauzu* from Isabel. Her mother, Kiapaku, was taken from Isabel by Ranonggans, but not in the context of a raid. Without denying that her mother was a *pinauzu*, Pize emphasized that she was taken as kin:

They took her, those people of Nulu and Solezaru tribes. They took the canoe that belonged to Tiqui [a woman of Nulu tribe] when the church had not yet come. . . . Ogere and Sogavaka went to Marige [in Isabel], went in Tiqui's canoe . . . They went to take her, but they didn't go to fight . . . "You go and bring back to me a sister for my son," Sirikana [a Ranonggan chief] had said. So that is why they went and they took my mother from Kokota [Isabel].

Kiapaku was taken as a girl and she later married another captive on Ranongga. Many years later, after she had borne several children, an important man in Nulu tribe died, and there were rumors that Kiapaku would be killed. At these rumors, her eldest daughter strangled herself as a substitute for her mother. This story, like that of the Sabana refugees, seems to illustrate the betrayal of a promise of kinship. Pize, however, did not narrate it as a story of betrayal. In fact, I only learned of her sister's suicide when I was eliciting genealogical information about her siblings—not as part of a story about *pinauzu*.

Some *pinauzu* who were initially taken in war raids and brutally victimized were eventually granted rights in Ranongga. Such a transformation is evident in a story told Lila Lina of Keara village (born c. 1924) about her grandmother, Awana, who was captured with her infant child by warriors of *butubutu* Ovana during a raid on Kia, Isabel.

They paddled and they came to a small island, near the island where the Gilbertese people live now [Wagina]. They came there, and they asked for the child. They asked for him, and she refused, she cried and cried for her child. They asked and asked, they pleaded with her. The mother cried and wouldn't be comforted. "No, he is my child," she said. But they pleaded, those warriors. And then she had to agree. She took down the child from his sling, they killed him . . .

So the mother they brought back alive, but they blew the conch shell to show that they were bringing the head of the child . . .

She cried and cried. "Don't cry," they told her, "you will have a nut grove, *nari* trees, *neni* trees, [two varieties of *Carnarium* almond], garden land. We will give this to you, so don't you cry."

[McDougall]: So, did she stop crying?

Eh, but it was her child so she was sorry for him.

Beyond the brutality of the murder of the child, what is striking about this story is the way the warriors pleaded with and comforted Awana. Rather than simply taking the child, which they certainly had the power to do, they asked for it and pleaded with her until she gave in. She had

little choice, but her formal consent is, nonetheless, significant. Similarly, the warriors attempted to comfort Awana as she mourned her child, telling her of the nut groves and garden land she would receive. These kinds of property are often transferred before or after death from a man's matriline to his children or other people who have cared for him in his old age. Nut trees, especially, have strong ceremonial and emotional associations—it is said that old women wept for felled nut trees. The promise of nut groves and garden land indicates that Awana would be given stakes on the land and in the society of her captors. Arriving on Ranongga, Awana's name was changed to Mija, a name that meant that she would bear no more children. But Mija married the chief of *butubutu* Ovana and did bear children—their eldest son (Lila's father) replaced his father as a priest and chief.

Narratives by descendants of *pinauzu* illustrate a dialectical transformation of identity—the *pinauzu* moves between opposed states of sharing identity with her captors and being an outsider. Captives were incorporated into local systems of kinship and property, but their foreign origins were not effaced (cf. Hviding 1996:91). In the stories above, this difference became salient when crises arose, and *pinauzu* were victims of sacrifice.

CHANGING THE LINEAGE

People say that female *pinauzu* were 'taken' or 'stolen' during raids. Yet there is also an element of luring or persuasion in stories about taking captives. In story of Awana, for example, warriors from Ranongga cajoled and persuaded rather than using brute force to take her child. Ranonggan ancestral spirits seem to have desired another *pinauzu* from Isabel, Kaida (the father of Pize, see above)—he was originally the captive of Vella Lavellans who had come to visit Ranongga, but the ancestral spirits (*tomete*) hid him in the forest until the Vellans departed. Later, people of Ranongga adopted him as their own. In another story, a young girl, Tepavido, was charmed by a special war spirit so that she swam after a departing Ranonggan war canoe that had just devastated her village on Isabel (Den Maka, n.d.). Though Ranonggan charms of attraction used in war and fishing bear similarities to love magic (*roro*), the persuasion is not primarily aimed at obtaining a wife or sexual partner. In the case of Tepavido, a warrior from Vuruvasu lineage had joined the raid with the sole purpose of finding an adopted daughter for his sister. Similarly, Pize's mother (see above) was taken from Isabel because the chief wanted a sister for his son.¹⁰

Thus, it appears that sisters and not wives were what Ranonggan warriors and chiefs hoped to bring back from war raids. In Ranongga and other areas of the Western Solomons, classificatory cross-sex sibling (*luluna*) relations are highly charged. In pre-pacification Simbo, according to Dureau (1998:245-247), the death of male warriors was attributed to the corporeal transgressions of their classificatory sisters. In contemporary Ranongga, sisters are required to demonstrate shame or respect (*panaga*) toward their brothers, and it is not acceptable to mention any aspect of a sister's sexual or corporal existence in front of her brother. Cross-sex sibling relations are also important in property rights. Land-holding lineages (*butubutu*) are traced matrilineally, so that a man and his sisters' children are of the same lineage. Seeking a sister's daughter or a son's sister could reflect a concern with the continuity of the lineage—a reasonable concern in an era of high mortality during the late nineteenth century (Bennett 1987). But female *pinauzu*, even those taken expressly as sisters, were not usually assimilated into the lineage of their captors. Rather, they retained their natal matrilineage identity and passed that identity onto their children.

Far from ensuring the continuity of the matriline, female *pinauzu* were sometimes taken so that their descendents would replace those of their captors. In such a case, the *pinauzu* was specially designated to be the “one to change the lineage” (*na sogana na butubutu*). In Solomon Island Pijin, the phrase is rendered “*senisim traeb*” (change the tribe). The Kumbokota term *soga* can refer to paying a debt, revenging a wrong, designating a chief's successor, or repeating something; with a reciprocating prefix, it means exchange (*varisoga*). *Soga* conveys the notion that something is replaced with an equivalent, but the equivalent may not be identical. In the case of the replacement of the tribe, it is not—one named category of people is replaced by a different one. In such a case, there is a change in the English as well as the Pijin sense of the term.

Pinauzu were much sought after to ‘change the lineage.’ In one account of events that occurred many generations ago, people of the Maluku lineage returned to Ranongga from an expedition to Choiseul with a woman named Osmali. When she was brought ashore, the Maluku chief declared that she would be the “one to change the Maluku lineage” because it would be unfortunate if the tribe ran short (*ura keta mi papaka nada butubutu*). Later, other chiefs sought Osmali, so that she could change *their* lineages instead of Maluku lineage. In another account, a number of *pinauzu* were taken during a raid on Vella Lavella, which was organized by a female

chief named Ajapaqo who had recruited war canoes and warriors from several other lineages by paying each with shell valuables. The expedition was successful, and each war canoe returned with a female captive. Because Ajapaqo had sponsored the raid, she had the rights to these *pinauzu*. However, three of the lineages she had commissioned decided to return her payment rather than relinquishing rights to the women, whom they wanted to retain so that they could ‘change their lineages.’

‘Changing the lineage’ entails a transfer in the rights over the territory of the original, capturing lineage. The precise nature of such rights, however, is difficult to pin down, in part because there are no clear-cut cases where a foreign lineage has ‘changed’ an autochthonous lineage. Lineages are non-localized, so that even when a lineage seems to have no matrilineal descendents, it is possible that a branch of the lineage on another island can be found. For this and other complex circumstances that involve alliances between lineages, sorcery accusations, and colonial land transfers, the “changing of the tribe” seems to be continually deferred to the future. Though impossible to observe the “changing of the tribe” in practice, it is possible to speculate about what it involves in principle, with reference to other transactions. Relevant here is the story of Ajapaqo who organized the war raid mentioned above. Her father, a chief of Galagala lineage, saw that the chiefs of Galagala could not keep the people who were rapidly dying off. He decided to pass power over Galagala to his own children, that is, to the matrilineage of his wife (Nulu). Ajapaqo, her brother, and her mother were crossing the island from Nulu land to Galagala land when they were attacked by Vella warriors. Ajapaqo alone escaped, eventually to rejoin her father in Galagala land, where she organized the retaliatory raid on Vella and took over leadership of Galagala. What exactly was transferred in this case has been legally contested (Gizo/Kolombangara Local Court 1/80), but there is agreement about the four elements that could have, in theory, been transacted: 1.) the chieftainship (*binanara*), which involves care of and power over the people of a lineage or residence group, 2.) ancestor shrines (*tabuna*), which mark the landscape and were sites of veneration, 3.) shell valuables (*poata*), especially a special kind of valuable (*titi*, a term that also means anchor) which must remain in shrines on the land, and 4.) the land itself.

If the ‘changing of the tribe’ were to occur, it seems likely that the descendents of the *pinauzu* would take over shrines, valuables, and the land of the original matrilineage. (Chieftainship over the people would not be at issue if the original matrilineage had become

extinct.) Such a transfer would have involved accepting responsibilities as well as inheriting rights. As discussed above, captives were adopted (albeit ambiguously) by the capturing lineage. When the descendants of a female *pinauzu* ‘change the tribe,’ perhaps they, in turn, adopt the land, the valuables that anchor it, and the ancestors who inhabit it. On the level of social reproduction, the replacement of an autochthonous matrilineage with a foreign one is a discontinuity. On level of cosmological reproduction, however, this replacement might ensure a kind of continuity, if the new lineage would continue to venerate ancestors of the original matrilineage. They would be sustaining relationships between ancestors, the living, and the land even after the demise of original matrilineage.¹¹

CONCLUSION

Captives are crucial in social reproduction on Ranononga, but in a way that forces a rethinking what “reproduction” can mean. Social reproduction, as elaborated by Weiner (1980), involves expansion and contraction. A Trobriand matrilineage requires the input of outsiders, such as affines and patrilineal kin, but when an individual dies, all debts are paid with gifts from the deceased’s matriline. The situation in Ranononga is different. Rather than settling accounts at death, death seems to be the moment requiring the most expensive contributions from outsiders, which takes the form of the death of the widow or the taking of a head or captive as a *vavulu*. There is a similar dynamic at the level of lineage reproduction—a lineage provides for its own demise by obtaining a woman to produce the lineage that will eventually replace it.

Taking captives did not ensure the continuous reproduction of the social group or matrilineage. Captives were not fully incorporated into the capturing tribe. Even when a female captive married into the group of her captors, she did not provide them with children, since her children usually shared the lineage identity of her natal home. After many years of co-residence and cooperation, descendants of a *pinauzu* and those of her captors are closely associated. Nevertheless, the categorical distinction persisted and foreign origins are not forgotten. When a female *pinauzu* was designated to “change the lineage,” she did not ensure the continuity of the lineage, but foreshadowed its replacement with a different category of people. Yet, as I have suggested, this disjuncture in social reproduction may be a continuity in cosmological reproduction, a continuity based on the unity of lineage land, the stability valuables that anchor it, and the viability ancestors who inhabit it.

Such an interpretation is speculative, particularly in an era in which the dominant cosmology is Christianity and knowledge about shrines, valuables, and the cosmological value of land usually emerges in disputes over economic resources. Indeed, given contemporary political circumstances in Western Province, it is remarkable that Ranonggans emphasized external origins at all. Over the last couple of decades and especially with the rise of logging on non-alienated land in the 1980s, legal battles over property rights have flooded courts. In such cases, the original landholding matrilineages have usually been favored over those that came later. Furthermore, through a program of “Customary Land Recording,” the national government has been attempting to codify customary land law by defining membership in landholding groups in terms of strict unilineal descent. Transfers of rights in the land are seen as rare exceptions to this allegedly immutable law of custom.¹² In such a context, one might expect to see *pinauzu* marginalized or dropped out of genealogical narratives. Ranongga, however, has been on the periphery of post-colonial economic development in the Province. Although they are well aware of such controversy, Ranonggans may highlight *pinauzu* forebears to a greater extent than others might, particularly those whose genealogies are likely to be analysed in legal battles with high economic stakes.

It is likely that *pinauzu* were more important on Ranongga than elsewhere in the New Georgia group. Although Ranongga did not suffer from headhunting raids to the extent that Isabel did (White 1991, 1979), neither was it as powerful as Roviana or Simbo, in part because Ranonggans had little access to European traders and firearms in the late 19th century (see McKinnon 1975). The cultural emphasis on captivity in Ranongga makes sense in functional terms, because taking captives could serve to bolster a population depleted by warfare. It is not, however, reducible to demographics. Even if the practical result of taking captives was an increase in population, questions remain about how and why captives were symbolically figured as replacements in specific contexts. Captives were often taken to fulfill certain kinship roles (recall the accounts of the chief taking a sister for his son, or the warrior finding a daughter for his sister), but they were not taken to replace particular sisters, brothers, sons, or daughters who had died or been slain. In the case of mortuary rituals on Simbo and Ranongga, *pinauzu* could be taken in commemoration of a chief, but they did not inherit his social identity. Finally, when a woman was taken so that her descendents would replace those of the land-holding lineage, they did not take on that lineage identity. In all of these contexts, captives and descendents of captives

were odd sorts of replacements. They retained their original identity even as they were designated to stand in for the original people and lineages of Ranongga.

Exploring variations in practical and symbolic functions of captives in New Georgia could shed much light on how a regional system of warfare and exchange was articulated. The Ranongga case suggests that captives were much more important in pre-pacification warfare than has been appreciated. Focusing on captives reveals much about linkages between chiefly politics and inter-group warfare and the constitution of place-based identity in the pre-pacification Western Solomons.

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Endnotes

1. In this paper, "Western Solomons" refers to the current Western, Choiseul, and Isabel Provinces. "New Georgia," or "the New Georgia Group," refers to the group of islands currently in Western Province.
2. I will use the Kumbokota term *pinauzu* when I am talking about captives generally, but *pinausu* when referring specifically to Simbo or Lungga. For place names, I use the standard government spelling, which indicates prenasalization of "g," "b," and "j." For indigenous terms, I have adopted the standard orthography of Roviana, which is used in the United Church of Ranongga (the Seventh Day Adventist church uses an alternative orthography). Prenasalization is not indicated, "q" denotes the velar plosive "g" (as in English "good"), and "g" is the velar fricative, and "n" is velar nasal (as in English "sing"). When citing Hocart, I retain his spelling.
3. I am using heritage in a sense similar to Hoskins (1996b), who contrasts headhunting as "heritage" to headhunting as "history" on Sumba (Indonesia). In Hoskins' formulation, heritage is a continuing tradition, where images and rhetoric of headhunting are employed in modern practices like marriage negotiation. History, in contrast, is a past alienated from the present but preserved in narrative, as a "mirror to the contemporary social order." In New Georgia, headhunting is "history" in this sense—it is an image of the 'time before' disconnected from the present, icon of regional identity in a multi-ethnic nation, and a symbol of indigeneity reformulated for tourists. This history of headhunting is significant in contemporary formations of identity in the Western Solomons, but it is not the focus of this essay.
4. I thank Shankar Aswani for pointing out to me that only Hocart cited the release of widows from confinement as a motivation for taking heads (pers. com.)
5. *Butubutu* on Ranongga are similar to those of Marovo as discussed by Hviding (1996:136-141). However, Ranonggan *butubutu*, in the strictest sense of the word as a nonlocalized descent category, are exclusively matrilineal and do not depend on residence or cumulative filiation in the way that Hviding describes for Marovo. Effective kin groups, which may also be called *butubutu*, are based on residence and cumulative filiation rather than lineal descent. In most of this paper, I am concerned with *butubutu* as category of identity and not as a social group.
6. Here I am drawing mainly on Hocart's published work. The analysis would benefit from a more thorough evaluation of Hocart's fieldnotes (see, e.g., Scales 1998).
7. In contemporary Ranongga, certain fishing shrines are known as *inatunu*.
8. Hocart does not indicate a delay between the two ceremonies. However, Lembu could not have gone directly from Widow Emele to Widow Gage, because he returned from Choiseul a few days after Ngea's "Fourth Day" feast, which was held on May 28th, and Irana died on 6th of June.

9. I thank Christine Dureau for bringing this to my attention.
10. Christine Dureau's informants recounted a case where a woman was desperate for a cross-sex sibling and adopted a *pinausu* as her brother (Dureau, pers. com.)
11. This interpretation was first suggested to me by Michael Scott (pers. com.), whose own work in Arosi, Makira explores how primordial cosmological relationships between lineages and land are constituted in social practice and history (Scott, n.d.).
12. George C. Scott, interview, Honiara, Solomon Islands, 4 March 1999.
13. The indigenous people of the island of Guadalcanal claim that they have been dispossessed in the context of economic development of Guadalcanal since the Second World War. Violent confrontations between a militant group on Guadalcanal and Malaitan immigrants resulted in the 1999 displacement of thousands of Malaitans. As of February 2000, a militant group of Malaitans had been formed and was demanding that the Solomon Islands government compensate them for loss of property and life during the crisis.

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