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Author's note

The research for this paper was carried out in Lae and Goroka during 1976 as part of a wider project on population migration in and from the Eastern Highlands. The results depend heavily on interviews with members of association executives in all the major centres of the country. They are too numerous to name and some would prefer to remain anonymous but to them I would like to express my thanks for the time they gave and the interest they showed in the research. I would like to thank Werner Knoll who allowed me to tap his formidable knowledge of associations in Lae.

This is a draft of a chapter which will appear in a forthcoming volume entitled Micronationalism in Melanesia, edited by R.J. May.
Introduction

In pre-contact Papua New Guinea associations were based primarily on sex, age and some kind of kin relationship. As contact with the wider world produced greater and more widespread mobility, new forms of social groups were created around common needs or interests. The distinction between the latter groups, or voluntary associations, where recruitment is to some extent influenced by choice, and the former where membership is ascribed, is blurred. The pre-contact patterns influence the question of who will join a particular association, for example in the membership of particular cargo cults, or where traditional clan groups attempt to continue their rivalry through joining and manipulating different missions. On the other hand, much to the anthropologist’s despair, recruitment to traditional clan groups in the Highlands seems to have defied neat kinship rules and membership was influenced to some extent by adoption and choice. However, in general terms the voluntary associations have a much wider recruiting base than the traditional societies as new forms of consciousness have evolved, often resulting in the emergence of ethnic groups. They tend to proliferate in situations of rapid social change as the indigenous population tries to come to terms with and relate to its transformed environment.

In this paper I will restrict myself primarily to one particular type of voluntary association, the regional association. These are formed by migrants in towns who come from a common area of origin and who group together to form a club which is identified with their particular home area. Regional associations are found in the towns and cities of many developing countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America and their role in the process of urbanization has been the subject of considerable debate. Although the history of urbanization

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1 For a recent review of voluntary associations, see Kerri (1976) and the commentaries following his article. See also Jongkind (1974).

in Papua New Guinea has been relatively short compared to other parts of the Third World, associations of migrants are to be found in most of the urban areas of the country.

It may be illogical to separate for study regional associations per se from the rest of voluntary associations as all groups in town, whether based around a church, a savings and loan society, artisan or dance group, are formed primarily by migrants.¹ These groups are also "regional" as individual churches can be identified with specific parts of the country and dance or artisan skills too are peculiar to certain areas. However, it is in associations which are formed to represent particular areas of origin that identification with the home area is strongest and a conscious ethnicity is evolving. In these groups, the idea of being a "Manus" or a "Finsch" is strong, while back in the home areas this concept is still weakly developed, where the divisive influences based on traditional lineage and clan loyalties still prevail. Where an individual is separated from his kin group he tends to associate with those others who are closest, in language and custom, to his society. The regional associations in town are in a sense a more formal expression of a wantok system.

I briefly examined some of these migrant groups during the course of an enquiry into population migration in and from the Eastern Highlands. My experience is restricted, being mainly limited to those associations in Lae, although I did contact officials of certain clubs in Goroka, Mount Hagen, Rabaul and Port Moresby. The paper is heavily biased towards the two most successful clubs, SUNAM and the Vitiaz Association, and makes no attempt to deal with all the regional associations which exist in Papua New Guinea. The paper is therefore little more than a prolepsis which hopefully will map out the principal characteristics of the terrain, and indicate avenues for possible future research.

¹ Lucas (1971/72) discusses some of these associations in Lae.
Clubs representing different areas of Papua New Guinea have begun to proliferate throughout the major towns, and especially in Lae and Port Moresby, and it is impossible to say just how many exist. Many are small and may be short-lived. Most are recent. Oram, in his exhaustive study of Port Moresby, noted the relative lack of importance of voluntary associations compared to cities in Africa and explained their absence by the fact that the population most likely to form associations was involved in a network of kinship and village-group relationship which provided them with their basic security (Oram 1976:142). This made it unnecessary to create migrant associations. Lucas, in his study of Lae, observed that "neither town-based voluntary associations nor occupational groups yet operate as nuclei for the formation of broad-based interest groups or classes" (Lucas 1971/72:262). Both writers were describing the situation in the early 1970s and although in 1976 it is still true to say that regional associations in Papua New Guinea are poorly developed compared to those in towns in Africa, Asia and Latin America, they are increasingly becoming an important feature of urban life in this country.

There is general agreement among those who have studied regional associations in other parts of the world that they play an adaptive role in the process of urbanization. (see Kerri 1976). They provide a reference group for migrants in the city which affords them modernization within a traditional and familiar framework (Little 1973). The regional association recreates, albeit in a modified form, the tribal or village society of their home area. It is in effect a rural enclave in the urban environment (see Doughty 1970). Jongkind (1974), from an analysis of clubs of migrants in Peru, has taken an opposite point of view and has suggested that the associations provide little assistance to migrants but are truly urban institutions being made up primarily of well adjusted long-term city residents who create the association as a medium for urban prestige.

I have elsewhere stressed the danger of drawing conclusions based on the analysis of the situation at one point in time, especially without taking into consideration the history of the development
of contacts between the city and the communities of origin of the migrants (Skeldon 1976; in press). Using data from Peru, I hypothesized that the role of the association changed as the nature of the link between area of origin and area of destination of migrants, as expressed through the type and pattern of population migration, changed. The association should therefore be regarded as neither rural nor urban in nature but as a temporary stage in the system of urbanization whose role changes as both rural and urban societies, and the needs of their people, are transformed through the shift of population from the one to the other.

In this paper I examine the roles of several types of regional associations which can be found in towns in Papua New Guinea and in the conclusion view these developments against the background of rural-urban contacts and suggest tentative parallels with the situation in other developing countries. The very recency of urbanization and of association formation in Papua New allows us to study the early phases of these developments and, although they are taking place under conditions very different from those in Latin America or Africa, may help to throw some light on the evolution of a general model of association development.

The types of regional association in Papua New Guinea towns are various. The most common is the soccer or Australian rules football club which is entered in city-wide competitions. For many of the clubs this simple recreational function is as far as they have evolved: groups of youngsters who band together to play soccer in one of the minor city leagues. However, others have developed more complex welfare and developmental roles while the recreational role is either maintained or developed at the same time.

I will discuss the associations in ascending order of complexity and success, starting with the welfare associations and what exists before associations are set up. I go on to consider those associations which represent provinces and groups representing smaller areas which seem to be a spin-off from the larger groups, although they need not necessarily be formally associated with them. Finally, I will consider the one example of an association which integrates groups at various levels, region, village and family.
The case studies

(a) Welfare societies and proto-regional associations

Excluding the soccer clubs, numerically the most common of the regional associations in the various towns of Papua New Guinea are the welfare societies. These are often set up with the aid of the government welfare officers, either through the direct influence of the welfare officer or through an approach to the officer by a group who request help to set up the association. Although a few of these societies do develop into successful associations; as for example the Vitiav Association in Lae which I will discuss later, the majority unfortunately fall by the wayside and rapidly become only names on paper or a sleeping account in a savings and loan society. This is particularly the case of those associations which represent broad regions in areas fairly remote from the cities; for example, the Unggai association for highlanders, the Bundi Welfare Society, the Kipu Welfare Society (Garaina people) and the Sepik East-West Association, although as I will point out later there is presently an attempt to revitalize the latter club. The exact number of these clubs is impossible to estimate with any accuracy as they are continually being founded and others are disintegrating; many are never registered with the welfare office and exist only as long as the enthusiasm of the founding members lasts (see also Oram 1976).

The pattern of these associations is remarkably similar. They are set up through meetings between the welfare officer and the leaders of the particular group; decisions are taken on the aims of the association, a bank account is opened and contributions taken. However, because the members come from such different areas and backgrounds, disagreements are frequent and decisions on either use of funds or on regular contributions are ineffectual. Often a member of the executive puts the funds to his own use and never repays the amount, thereupon leaving for his home area or another part of Papua New Guinea. Few of the members I spoke to expressed surprise or bitterness at this occurrence and it appeared to be an
acceptable "big-man" behaviour. With these disagreements and the disappearance of the funds the club becomes defunct.

The problem with these associations is threefold: the inspiration for the creation of the association or the responsibility for the organization of the group lies outside and not within the migrant group; the association attempts to represent too broad an area of origin; and most importantly there is a lack of an educated group with the potential to organize and maintain the functions of the association. The club, has a much greater probability of surviving and developing into a strong regional association where much of the initiative comes from the migrants themselves and from an educated elite within that group; and where the association is identified with a particular region which has meaning to the group. It is an educated elite or individuals of considerable experience outside their area who can translate the feeling of communality in being a Manus, a New Irclander or a Finschhafen to their fellow migrants and form an association.

Before going on to consider these associations, it is worth briefly examining a type of voluntary association which is set up among migrants who may not belong to a regional association and which appears to help the migrant in his adjustment to the town. Highlanders in Lae have no effective formal or informal regional associations but almost all highland migrants I interviewed in Lae, and in Goroka, participated in a very simple form of rotating credit system. This is known variously as 'sundaying' or 'forthnighting' and is a characteristic of the labouring and lower income groups; it is not typical of public servants or other white collar workers. In a sample of 28 working families in Lae, 22 heads of family engaged in 'sundaying' and in a sample of 89 migrant workers around Goroka

1 In the Household Expenditure Survey carried out in Goroka in February 1976, 90 national households were selected throughout the town of which at least 8 "sundayed", all of which were in low covenant or migrant settlement areas. 'Sundaying', however, is also common among students at the Teachers' College.
59 'sundayed', percentages of 66 and 79 respectively. Although 'sundaying' is found among lower income groups who are also members of a regional association, it is found among groups who are not represented by such associations. 'Sundaying' can perhaps be regarded as a primitive form of regional association, as it fulfills some of the functions of the wider association in providing security and even welfare in the town.

The phenomenon of rotating credit associations has been observed in other countries, particularly in Asia and Africa, and they have been described by Geertz as an intermediate institution which aids the transformation of people from a traditional agrarian society to one that is more 'modern' and linked to the world commercial economy (Geertz 1962). Many of the associations described by Geertz (1962) and Aréner (1964) are considerably more complex in organization than those found in Papua New Guinea, although the quantities of money involved in this country may not be inconsiderable. A small group of men (usually between two and five) pool their wages every fortnight and one takes the money. In successive fortnights each of the others takes his turn. The amount put by each man into the kitty is usually about half of his take-home pay, or K20 to K25 per fortnight, although it is not uncommon for him to retain only a minimal amount and put K40 or more into the pool.

Clearly it is almost impossible to live in a town on K5 to K7 per fortnight and difficult for those trying to support families on half their pay, and the 'sundayer' is forced to borrow money from friends or to seek credit in neighbourhood stores to tide him over his 'off' period. He may not borrow from the man who has received his 'sunday' or the pool. When his 'sunday' comes up he can repay his debts. The 'sundayer' therefore exists in a network of debt and credit binding him not only to his wanwoka (workmates) with whom he is 'sundaying'.

1 In the Lae sample all 22 'sundayed' in groups of 5 or less, while in Goroka 50 of the 'sundayers' did so. In Goroka there was one circle involving 25 workers so that their 'sunday' only came up once a year.
but also to other wantoks or relatives who work elsewhere and to whom he must turn for credit during his 'off' fortights.

The system appears to recreate in a modified form the cycles of debt and credit of exchange and reciprocity in the traditional society. It helps to integrate the migrant into a network of social responsibility in the urban environment. Again, as in the traditional society, he is afforded an opportunity of gaining prestige through the conspicuous consumption of a party that the 'sundayer' often gives to his workmates and friends, or through giving substantial amounts of money or goods back to his home village. One 'sundayer' in Goroka sent K290 (two thirds of his 'sunday') back to his village during his 'sunday', another sent a radio back while another spent K42 (one third of his 'sunday') on beer for his friends. The money can also, although more rarely, be used for investment purposes. One man in Goroka used almost his complete 'sunday' plus savings to buy a sewing machine for his wife and carpentry tools for himself so both could go into business to increase their family income.\footnote{These data were obtained from the Household Expenditure Survey run by the Bureau of Statistics in Goroka in February 1976.}

It is a method, as one 'sundayer' put it, 'of saving in someone else's pocket'.

It is a highly flexible arrangement as a man can set up a 'sunday' for a specific reason: a personal emergency, to make a major purchase, or to augment his leave pay before going on vacation, and he can later disband the system. 'Sundayers' can opt out of the circle after fulfilling their debt and obligation and enter when they like. The fear of social sanctions or worse ensures that no-one will leave the circle before completing his obligation - many of them in fact maintain a savings account so that they can fulfill their payments even if they lose their jobs.

'Sundaying' in effect acts as a type of crude welfare association which guarantees the migrant money if he is in trouble and helps to
bind him into life in town. These associations are also in a sense proto-regional associations as they tend to be formed by people from the same general area. Amongst migrants to Goroka who 'sundayed' 8 of 36 'sundayed' with people from the same language group, 20 with people from the same general area (i.e. highlanders with other highlanders; coastal New Guinean with other coastal New Guineans, and so on) and another 8 with people from other parts of Papua New Guinea. Among the 22 'sundayers' in Lae the division was not quite so clear; 7 'sundaying' with people from their particular region, 7 with people from the same general area and 8 with people from other parts of Papua New Guinea.

Where there are no large organized migrant groups from particular areas 'sundaying' affords a degree of protection in the urban environment and an avenue for social prestige; both of these are also evident in the larger regional associations discussed below.

On the other hand, the larger regional associations have been organized primarily by an educated upper income group although most of them include lower income people. 'Sundaying' can perhaps be considered as a proto-phase in association development as it is informal, flexible and requires little organization and it exists where more formal associations do not.

(b) Clubs representing provinces

The SUNAM club representing the Manus people is the most developed example of all the provincial clubs; there is also a strong West New Britain association in Lae and the Mungkas club of the North Solomons and the KAPIT club of Northern Province are also well developed. SUNAM has branches in almost every urban centre in Papua New Guinea but its degree of success varies greatly from town to town. It is most successful where there is, first, a strong and enthusiastic leader; and second, a relatively small community of Manus people. It is perhaps paradoxical that in areas where the Manus population is largest, in Lae and Port Moresby, the clubs have had fluctuating
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Membership of sporting teams is not restricted to the Manus islanders themselves but can include any Papua New Guinean, although other New Guinea islanders are more usual; even Europeans may also play in the teams.

Attempts to give the club functions other than recreation have not met with uniform success. The Mount Hagen and Rabaul SUNAM clubs have progressed furthest in defining their aims. The objectives of the Mount Hagen club as outlined in the proposed constitution are:

"(a) To create opportunities for the association of members of the Club in a friendly and relaxed atmosphere;

"(b) To establish means whereby members of the Club can meet with other Manus people living in Mount Hagen or any other area outside Mount Hagen;

"(c) To create and promote an awareness and interest among Manus people of the social, political, economic and cultural affairs of Papua New Guinea;

"(d) To establish means of action to safeguard and promote the welfare and interest of Manus and in particular to assist Manus members in the House of Assembly;

"(e) To promote mutual friendship and understanding amongst members of the Club and fellow New Guineans;

"(f) To undertake any activities which the members of the Club feel are necessary to achieve the above aims."

The aims of the Rabaul club were twofold: to identify with the Manus people and to help Manus people in Rabaul. These aims of the Mount Hagen and Rabaul clubs are primarily social although both clubs make provision for welfare. In Mount Hagen there exists an emergency fund from which full financial members only are eligible
to apply for assistance. This fund can be used to defray the costs of a charter flight to send a deceased member back to Manus (this has not yet occurred in the Mount Hagen association) and to pay the hospital costs of a member injured in the course of a sporting accident while representing SUNAM. The fund can also be used to grant loans of up to K200 for a particular crisis in a member's life: hospital costs from a road accident or illness, legal fees or an emergency trip back to Manus. All requests for loans must be made in writing to the club and be approved by the elected committee. These loans must be repaid either in a lump sum or on the basis of one third of the loan-holder's fortnightly income until the loan is paid off.

The Rabaul and Madang SUNAM clubs make similar provision for sending home the bodies of deceased members. About six bodies had been sent home from Rabaul and one from Madang at the time of writing. Providing for the funerary expenses seems to be a common characteristic of regional associations in other parts of the world (see Wallerstein 1966:320). Where the members of the club are not so well integrated, as in Port Moresby and Lae, and there is no central emergency fund, special collections are raised among the Manus people for such purposes. Other welfare activities include helping Manus children to go to school in cases where the parents would not be able to afford the fees (Rabaul club) and making contributions to local school and welfare associations; the Mount Hagen club even sent $1000 to help Queensland flood victims in 1974.

Apart from their social, recreational and welfare aspects, the associations can also act as a means of applying pressure on the government. The association itself does not form a pressure group but it provides a forum for the formulation of policy and a centre for the diffusion of information among the Manus people in any particular urban centre, between Manus groups in different centres, and between SUNAM and Manus itself. It also provides the front for the presentation of demands to the government. SUNAM's activity along these lines has so far been limited. In 1971 it brought pressure on the Department of Education to reopen the Catholic high school at Papitali after it had been closed following the murder of a staff member. Secondly, members lobbied successfully for the installation of Radio Manus in 1975 and at present there is some agitation to persuade the Minister of Posts and Telegraphs
to link the island to the STD system. However, I should emphasize that it is not strictly speaking SUNAM as an association which applies the pressure, but groups of concerned individuals, usually the youngest and most highly educated, who act in the name of SUNAM and by implication in the name of the Manus people in general. They discuss the issues at SUNAM meetings and inform the Manus people of progress made through the association, but it is rather the minority manipulating SUNAM to attain progress than SUNAM acting as a political arm. This is not the case with other associations such as Mungkas which has an overtly political role.

The Manus islanders are therefore beginning to use the club as a link between the area of origin and the government, and most importantly at the present time, between the area authority and the government. It is worth noting that the top Manus public servants in Port Moresby are often not financial members of the club but are ready to use their influence to help their province whenever they are called upon to do so and to use the club as the means of informing the Manus people of relevant government policy and to stimulate them to action. At the time of writing there was great activity in SUNAM with regular meetings to discuss a draft constitution for provincial government.

Other clubs have also consolidated or even grown out of the need for political pressure groups. The Boda Togelu association (which literally means 'people away from home') of the Goodenough and Fergusson islands again evolved from an association representing a wider area - the Lord Isles or Methodist Welfare Society - to bring the people together to draw attention to the fact that their MLA no longer lived in his electorate. However, this was not enough to hold the association together and once the problem had been resolved the club fell into decline; it was only revived again in May 1976 with a broader range of activities based on sporting and social events. So far no welfare role has been proposed although this is one of the aims of the organizers.

Both the Mungkas (North Solomons) and the New Ireland regional associations have clear political goals. Both evolved out of student
associations on the campuses of Waigani or Lae rather than from soccer associations. The Mungkas, with branches in Port Moresby, Lae, Goroka and Arawa, was started in the capital in the late 1960s to act as a watchdog to keep in touch with the negotiations between the administration and the mining company, Con Rio Tinto Zinc. It was only in 1974 that the social side of the club developed with sporting teams entering soccer competitions. However, it still maintains its watchdog role and public servants who do not want to identify with the political nature of Mungkas have formed a separate association, the Chebu, which is primarily social in nature. Although membership in the clubs is not mutually exclusive, the Mungkas is mainly made up of students and the Chebu of public servants or other white collar workers.

The New Ireland association in Lae evolved out of the student association in 1974, when the students set up a joint club with workers in town. Although there is a strong political side to the club through the New Ireland Action Group, this is a sub-committee of the main association whose goals are similar to those of SUNAM: to organize and help New Irishers in the city. The association provides interest-free loans to members and the Port Moresby association chartered a plane to allow New Irishers to go home for the Malangan Festival. The Lae club was thinking of contributing to the development of the home province by supporting the building of a new high school in New Hanover.

Another club similar to SUNAM and the New Ireland association is the KAPIT club representing the Northern Province, with clubs in Port Moresby, Lae, Kima, Bougainville, and a branch in Popondetta to be formed in the near future. KAPIT was set up in 1974 but its roots go back to 1961 when a soccer club, 'Kokoda Trail', representing a small part of the Northern Province (the subprovince of Kokoda), was operating in the capital. So far the club has no constitution although one is being drafted and no activities other than social and sporting have so far been developed.

1 Acronym of the first letters of all the districts of the province: K - Kokoda; A - Afore; P - Popondetta; I - Ioma; T - Tufi.
Apart from regular contributions by members of the provincial associations there are other fund-raising activities: the organizing of minuus and dances are the most common; raffles appear to be the most lucrative. One club in Lae estimated that it would gross some K30,000 from raffles during the 1976-77 financial year. Another profitable enterprise is the hiring out of string or rock bands. The SUNAM clubs in Port Moresby, Mount Hagen and Rabaul have bands and the latter plays at least every weekend at K60 a night. The band is composed of volunteers and the money goes to the club. The primary use of the funds is to further the sporting activities: to pay for the charter of buses to send teams to competitions. The West New Britain Sports and Welfare Club raised money to send the national team to Guam for the South Pacific Games but is presently concentrating its fund-raising efforts to buy a sports oval and club house. The Rabaul SUNAM club also hopes to rent land to build a club house to outdo the Mount Hagen SUNAM club which is the only club with an actual physical base. The latter has a liquor licence, which helps to bring in revenue, and pool and darts facilities. It is one of the most congenial meeting places in Mount Hagen, not only for Manus people but for all residents of the town. The funds accumulated from these various sources can also be used for dealing with members' emergency situations and to provide the financial basis of the association.

The role of the provincial clubs is primarily social and recreational although welfare and political functions have been developed. The provincial club represents too large an area to allow the role of home-area development to be important. There are divisive elements within the associations, especially between people from different areas and between young and old. The Sepik East-West Assication (SEWA), representing the Sepik people in Lae, has been rendered ineffective and has almost been abandoned by such division. The initiative had come from the students at the university who collected all the older Sepik men together to try and form an association. However, the latter considered the students 'bigheads' and loyalties became inflamed resulting in a fight in Chinatown between the Angoram river Sepiks and the Maprik lines. Some money still remained in the association's account but the club had gone into complete decline; in mid-1976 there was an attempt
under way by the younger educated Sepiks to resuscitate SEWA with its primary, perhaps idealistic, aim of unifying all Sepiks whether young or old, from the river or inland, or from West or East Sepik.

It would also be incorrect to give the impression that the Manus islanders or New Irelanders in town present a unified front: divisive elements are still important even among relatively well organized associations. The Titan still look upon themselves as superior to and more dynamic than the other two major groups in the Admiralties: the Matankol and the Usias. Schwartz has noted that in Rabaul Titans would "first associate with their own kin if any are present, second with members of their own village, third with other Manus and fourth with other Admiralty islanders of their own locality, religions, background, etc." but he does note that this was more true of non-elite than elite urban workers (Schwartz 1975:125). In the SUMAM club of Rabaul in the early 1970s there was a division between the older men, who saw the club merely as an opportunity for people to get together to cook food in the traditional ways and to engage in singing the songs from their village, and the younger people who wanted to use the association for more political and economic involvement. The differences in this particular club have been ironed out through the appointment of a traditional leader as president with a younger executive committee so that the aspirations of both sectors can be realized.

Hence there are still important divisive elements in provincial associations which do not encourage the role of home-area development as this would favour the progress of one group at the expense of another. For associations which do encourage the development of their home communities we must look at those clubs now emerging which represent smaller groups.

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1 The Titan are technically the Manus. However, in this paper I use the Manus in its common usage to refer to all the peoples from Manus Province (the Admiralty islands). It is a case of the term for the dynamic group, which was early contacted and recruited by the Europeans, being extended and referring to the emergence of a new Manus identity encompassing people from the whole area. Outside Manus, Matankol and Usias refer to themselves as Manus.
(c) Micro-regional groups

Throughout Papua New Guinea there are many small development associations. Most have been set up in the rural areas. In this paper I am not primarily concerned with these groups although, as I will show, a definite distinction between urban and rural development groups is deceptive. The areas close to the major towns are a case in point: the associations are based in the villages but most of the organizers live or work in the towns – for example, the Vuala Development Association Inc., created to promote development in Hula, Central Province, or the Nasowapan Progress Society, the Nabak Association and the Hapa Community Association in the Morobe Province all close to Lae. Areas distant from the main urban centres are also represented by development groups and I shall look particularly at the case of Manus.

The situation of the Manus associations is difficult to understand without taking the Paliau Movement of the post-war period into consideration. Schwartz (1957) has traced the evolution of this movement which was the first attempt at pan-Manus unification. Paliau and others of similar conviction returned to Manus after the war influenced by their sojourn in various centres in New Guinea to find a society ripe for change after its profound contact with the wealth of the Allied forces. These men rejected the traditional village life, especially the apparent waste of wealth through the exchange system. They, and especially Paliau, who became the most dynamic of the new leaders, worked to launch a new way of life based on communal land and labour that would bring them the prosperity they had witnessed in the urban areas and in Manus itself through the presence of American troops. The emphasis was on integration of and cooperation among all Manus groups. The impetus of the Paliau Movement has dissipated but the development legacy is still strong among the people of Manus and is reflected in a series of development associations which have been set up in the island (Pokawin 1976). These associations have their counterparts in the urban areas. In fact, as many of the educated people are located there much of the planning and initiative has shifted from the rural to the urban areas. The Mok, Nali, Pere, Mbuke, Rambutso and Leli groups are among those which are represented in the cities.
The founders of these associations were influenced by the Paliau Movement and this is reflected in the goals of the clubs. The founder of the Mouk group formed the association in Manus in 1973 to unify all the Mouk people, who live in three different parts of Manus: the plantation of Langendowa on the island of Rambutso, Baluan island and Tiliese island. The founder considered the best way of achieving this aim was to work with the younger educated people living away from Manus and in 1975 a formal association was drawn up in Port Moresby. There is one constitution for the Mouk living at home and another for those living in other centres of Papua New Guinea. There are two branches which hold regular meetings other than that in Port Moresby: in Rabaul and Lae, although there are members in almost every major urban centre in the country. The Muli Association in Lae was started in mid-1976 but the society had been set up in Manus two years previously. The president of the association back home had visited both Lae and Port Moresby to encourage the setting-up of branches in these centres which could support the mother association.

The role of these associations is not social or recreational (they do not have sports teams) but primarily to channel funds back to the home area and to help their people through the promotion of development. Although the club may make provision for funderary expenses it is the welfare of the people at home rather than of those in the towns for which the club exists. Among all migrants in the city, the remission of funds to the home area is common but the associations institutionalise this transfer: the club sends a large amount rather than each individual making a piecemeal contribution. These associations are therefore usually built around a savings account. In the case of the Mouk group an initial contribution of K100 was expected from each member, whether in town or in Manus itself, although the onus was with those with public service jobs in the city, and this provided the association with a fairly solid financial base of about K26,000. They intend this money to be used to buy a plantation so that the Mouk, traditionally a migrant fishing and trading people, can have a permanent land base. Written into their constitution is the objective "to identify and pursue means of promoting business enterprises" and they have a long-term project, once the plantation
has been purchased, of obtaining a ship for coastal trading. The Nali group members in Lae each contribute K5 every month to a savings account to be transferred home. The Pere group also hope to buy a plantation and the Leli group intend to buy a shop and a sawmill. Although the emphasis is on helping the home area, the Mouk, as the best developed of the micro-regional associations in Lae, also contribute to an emergency fund to help their people in trouble in the city.

The Manus are not the only people to organize micro-regional development associations. I have already mentioned those close to the major cities of Lae and Port Moresby and several have been organized by peoples from Northern Province. For example, the Songe Association, set up in 1972 as a welfare society to help people from Songe census division in the city, especially to help members to pay bride price, has latterly taken on a more developmental role. Members contribute K10 per fortnight and they are trying to stimulate business in the home area. They have sent one member back home to organize the rural side of the association to discourage further movement to the city and to try to restructure their home society by nucleating the dispersed hamlets into one central village. As yet this society is very informal and poorly developed compared to the Manus group.

Individuals who are members of one of the small development associations are often also members of the broader-based provincial groups. Leaders of the one may be in the executive of the other. However, there is no formal relationship between the two forms of association. In fact, there is usually no formal relationship between provincial associations in the different urban centres. In 1976 for the first time SUNAM organized a sports carnival in Goroka for all the SUNAM clubs in the country. Although the leaders got together to discuss the possibility of forming

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1 The creation of nucleated villages as a key to progress has been common theme in indigenous concepts of development – for example, the Manus of Paliu (see Schwartz 1957), in the cult movements around Bulolo (R. Adams personal communication 1976) and in the Minj area of the Western Highlands (Keman 1975).
a national executive to coordinate the activities of all the SUNAM clubs. No concrete action was taken. They are looking forward to the second meeting of all the clubs in Manus in 1977 to formulate a more definite policy. The Mungkas are also organizing a general carnival of all the clubs in Bougainville and there are intentions to set up a coordinating body. However, these movements towards integration are as yet exploratory and although there is talk of the need for a strong coordinating bond, the relationship between the provincial club and the smaller development association is likely to remain informal for some time to come. Only in the case of the Vitiaz Association is there a well-integrated hierarchy of associations. Because of its scale and the ambition of its goals, the Vitiaz Association appears at present to be unique in Papua New Guinea and it deserves separate discussion although only the briefest outline can be given here.

(d) The Vitiaz Association

The Vitiaz Association represents the people from the Huon Gulf area of the Morobe Province and is best developed and most active in the city of Lae. A branch was set up in Port Moresby in the late 1960s but has since disintegrated through the prevalence of parochial interests and a lack of central organization. The Vitiaz Association in Lae is however the most dynamic and successful of all regional associations in the country although, like the other associations, its history has been marked by periods of activity and disintegration. It was set up in 1962 as a welfare society with considerable help from the government welfare officer. Its primary aim was to help old and sick people from the Finschhafen area who were living in Lae, especially those who were in hospital. Within this welfare society there existed various sports clubs for soccer or rugby. There was never an emergency fund but whenever someone was in trouble or an accident occurred special meetings to raise funds were organized. A lack of finance led to the gradual running down of the society until by 1970 there were virtually

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1 Outside Finschhafen itself the word takes on a broader connotation to include those from the whole Huon peninsula and those from the surrounding islands.
no activities whatsoever. The society was resurrected in 1971, again with the help of the government welfare officer, when more than 300 people from the Finschhafen, Kabwum and Siasi regions turned up and an executive of ten members was voted into office. A constitution was also drafted and regular meetings were held at fortnightly intervals. The goals of the association were to encourage social, educational, sporting and welfare activities among the Finschhafen in Lae. However, to put the society on a firm financial footing it was decided, through the encouragement of the welfare officer, that it should promote business activities. In 1972 the society was registered as an association in Port Moresby thereby giving the group legal status. Applications for leases and loans for the Finschhafen people have since been carried out in the name of the society. Shortly after its registration sub-branches were set up. These generally represent smaller areas of the Huon Gulf region, for example, Kabwum, Dedua and Siasi. Since registration, the welfare, social and business roles have been transferred to the sub-branches. The Vitiaz Association itself acts purely as a broker linking the sub-branches to the national system and consists of an executive which is drawn from the members of the various sub-branches. Membership of the Vitiaz Association is through the sub-branches, not in the main society. Each member contributes K6 on joining and K1 in each successive year to the sub-branch and each sub-branch sends K30 each year to the central society. This money is used for fees, stationery, postage, and costs incurred in dealing with the government bureaucracy; it also covers the cost of the annual rent of the central Vitiaz office.

The aim of the society is still primarily to help the Finschhafen people in Lae but this is now realized in an organized and well developed fashion. For example, if Kabwum sub-branch members would like to regularize their land tenure or apply for land in a settlement in the city of Lae, they approach the Vitiaz Association, which applies for blocks of land in the name of the registered society. On approval.

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1 There were in July 1976 9 principal sub-branches: Kabwum, Dedua, Hube (Pindiu), Mape, Wamora, Siasi, Kosorong, Tewai and Nawai which had recently become associated with Vitia.
these blocks are given to the sub-branch for allocation to members. Similarly applications for trade stores and PMV licences are made through the mother society and are registered in the name of the sub-branch. The executive is made up of well educated public servants who have contacts in government and who understand how the bureaucracy functions and they therefore can facilitate the application process.

As with the provincial societies provision is made for emergencies. The sub-branch is responsible for raising the money to ship a body home although the central society might organize a charter through their network of contacts. Similarly, a young man arriving in Lae without a job can be helped by the society, which can act as an unofficial job search agency through its contacts or even find temporary employment for him in one of its many business ventures.

Within the sub-branches there are smaller groups which represent particular village groups or even particular families. For example, in the Dedua sub-branch, the two principal small groups are the Boyme and the Yunzain Brothers. Like the micro-regional groups discussed before, these associations are actively engaged in development but unlike the other small associations they are carrying out development not specifically for the home area but for the advancement of the particular members of the group. The Boyme group has two major projects near Lae: a piggery with about fifty animals and a poultry farm, and they are now embarking on a cattle project. The Menduan group of the Wemora sub-branch is engaged in the cultivation of cash crops and will start a cattle project in the near future. They are now negotiating for 1,095 acres of plantation in the Markham and hope to raise a K34,500 loan from the Development Bank and the Village Development Fund for its improvement, primarily through cattle projects. Other groups have PMVs and trade stores, not only in Lae but also outside the city in such areas as Wau and Bulolo. The amount of property currently controlled by the Vitiaz Association and the multiplicity of its various business interests led to their request for a valuation by the Valuer General. The official figures were not available at the time of writing but an estimate of between K150,000 and K200,000 gives an idea of the financial importance and success of the Vitiaz Association and its members.
Although not exactly engaged in home-area development, the business groups do promote rural development as they tend to lease or buy plantations close to Lae and all of them have savings and loan accounts which are used to channel funds back to the village. They also generate a limited number of employment opportunities for people in their home area through these projects. As the members of the groups based in Lae have regular urban employment, they bring or will bring people from their home areas to work the agricultural side of the businesses on these plantations.

A final but not unimportant aspect of the Vitiaz Association is as a basis of political support. The present patron of the society and Minister for Agriculture, Boyamo Sali, helped to set up the association in the early 1970s. The Vitiaz Association sponsored him and paid for his election fees in 1972. His success in the campaign was largely due to the wide bases of support provided by the Association and the society itself benefits from having such direct representation in government which can provide it with important information.

In the first city council elections in Lae in 1973, the Vitiaz Association supported ten candidates of whom six were elected and in the second city council election in 1976 they succeeded in getting four councillors elected including one woman. Although the Vitiaz Association is not a political organization, a population of around 7,000 people in Lae (estimate taken by the Association in 1974) forms a powerful interest group which can promote and propel candidates of its choice into positions of power in both local and national politics.

The primary goal of the Vitiaz Association is to look after the welfare of its members in Lae, a task which it succeeds in doing on several levels: leasing land for members to build their houses in the urban area, providing a link between its members and the bureaucracy to expedite official applications; promoting and aiding business activities among its members both in the city of Lae and elsewhere; and looking after the interests of the Finschhafen people at local and national levels by promoting candidates of its choice in city and national elections. On one level it can help the average Finschhafen to obtain
land for a home, and through the sub-branch, provide an interest-free loan to purchase materials for the house and build it under the umbrella of security of other people from his own area. On another level, it affords those members with the ambition to develop business (whether trade store, PMV or major agricultural project) the access to information and government agencies so that their plans may be realized. The complexity and magnitude of its business ventures attest to its success.

Conclusions

In the above case studies I have discussed the roles of a selected number of primarily successful regional associations in Papua New Guinea. I have not attempted to provide a representative cross-section of associations as most have had, at best, fluctuating fortunes and have been based on the enthusiasm of particular leaders. Any association which depends on the will of one individual must of necessity be fragile. All the associations I have examined are recent, being a creation of the last ten to fifteen years, with the majority being formed or put on a more formal basis only in the last five years.

Certain trends can be observed. First, regional associations are not found among those who come from areas close to the cities in which they are living. The reasons are clear: as Oram has observed, they have no need of associations since they are involved in their own kin and village group relationships (Oram 1976:142). Where associations do exist for these areas they are developmental groups based in the village themselves, although many of the organizers may live or work in the city.

Secondly, regional associations are not found representing the less developed parts of the country. Highlanders are not represented by a strong club in the cities. Certainly there are clubs involving highlanders, for example the Brothers football club, but no social or welfare society exists such as those developed for Manus, New Ireland or Northern Province. The principal reasons have already been outlined: the highlands region is too diverse to allow the evolution of a strong
common identity\(^1\); there are too few highlanders from each major group in the principal cities to permit the emergence of smaller-based regional associations; and most importantly there is a lack of educated highlanders to take the initiative in club formation.

Where attempts have been made externally to stimulate the development of highlands associations, as I have shown with the Unggai and Bundi welfare groups, they have failed through lack of leadership and the prevalence of local loyalties. Regional associations therefore tend to represent areas fairly distant from the cities in which they are located and which have a fairly large and well established educated migrant community in the city.

The evolution of regional associations over time is much more difficult to specify as the existing clubs are so recent and any conclusions must therefore be tentative. I think it would be fallacious to postulate that the simple rotating credit groups will evolve into larger associations. However, these small groups are found amongst migrants for whom no regional associations exist and although they continue to operate once the larger regional groups have evolved I think that they can be considered to be an early phase of association development. Geertz (1962) has suggested that they provide an opportunity of learning the techniques of the commercial economy; they also familiarize the migrants with a simple voluntary organization which may encourage them later to form more complex and broader groups. If the number of regional associations increases, we can expect the importance of ‘sundaying’ as a simple credit and welfare institution to decline as these functions are assumed by the broader groups.

The regional associations themselves appear to have their roots either in a sports club or in a student group at a university. Sometimes the two groups join to form the provincial association. In Africa, Wallerstein has observed that voluntary associations evolve in a discernible pattern.

\(^1\) In mid-December 1976 the Enga people living in Port Moresby indicated that they wanted to establish a separate identity from other highlanders (Post-Courier 17 December 1976). Significantly they were going to approach the government for help to organize an association.
"The movement was from European inspiration to African inspiration; from groups of the urban educated elite to mass organizations; from few groups to many; from small groups to large ones; from groups with vague and diffuse objectives to groups with specialized programmes."
(Wallerstein 1966:331)

Clearly regional associations in Papua New Guinea have not yet evolved to such an extent. The early welfare societies and many of the sports clubs were certainly of European inspiration and I have shown how the smaller development groups in Manus have evolved from the Paliau Movement, which itself was strongly influenced by the European model. This pattern is only to be expected as social change in Papua New Guinea has been generated by its contact with the European world but we can perhaps expect variations to develop in the independent era as the Melanesian Way evolves. There are no mass movement groups\(^1\) and the associations are still few and small rather than many and large. I have shown in describing SUNAM that most of the branches have developed constitutions and that the club as a whole is defining its aim specifically to aid in building the framework for provincial government, hence evolving specialized programmes as observed in the African cases.

The key to the evolution of regional associations is the number and type of migrants in the urban centres. In Peru almost every village community is strongly represented in the capital and there is a whole hierarchy of clubs from village through province to region (Jongkind 1974; Skeldon 1976). Migration in Papua New Guinea has not evolved to this stage as yet and there is no clearly defined hierarchy of clubs, although this appears to be evolving in such areas as Manus, Northern Province and Finschhafen.

The functions proposed by researchers for associations in Latin America and Africa are also present in Papua New Guinea and tentative parallels can be drawn. The associations through their welfare functions do help

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\(^1\) The very successful Lae Miscellaneous Workers Union run by Tony Ila is perhaps the exception among the voluntary associations in Papua New Guinea. However, it is not a regional association.
the migrants in the city and some societies aid their home area. In Peru, the broader-based associations had purely social and recreational functions, not making material contributions to their place of origin, and it was the smaller village clubs which were involved in helping the people back home. In Papua New Guinea too it is the micro-regional clubs which are so involved, the broader-based provincial associations concentrate on sports and the welfare of migrants in town.

I suggested from my Peruvian data (Skeldon 1976) that as migration evolved from circular towards unilinear movement and the village society was transformed by the rural exodus, the association in the city gradually lost its welfare and home-town developmental role and concentrated on social and recreational activities within the context of a purely urban social system. Again it is impossible to compare this situation with the one in Papua New Guinea due to the embryonic nature of urbanization and association development in this country. Migration in Papua New Guinea is primarily circular and consequently the relationships between town and country are close. It can be seen much more clearly in Papua New Guinea than in Peru, and perhaps also in the Black African countries, that regional associations are neither rural enclaves in the city nor purely urban institutions but a product of the general process of change which is affecting both rural and urban areas. The inspiration for the Palau Movement came from urban experience by the future leaders of the movement but was realized in the home area. It later spawned development associations in the province which branched to the city to tap the organizational and financial resources there for village development. In the cases of the development or progress societies close to Lae it is impossible to say whether the original inspiration was urban or rural in origin as there is a continuous interchange of people and ideas from village to town and vice versa.

Whether migration in Papua New Guinea will tend towards a more stable unilinear movement, and there is some evidence that this will be the case, or whether as this develops there will be a decline in the developmental and welfare roles of the regional association is difficult to predict. It will not, however, be a problem of the near future.
and we can expect that the number of associations in Papua New Guinea towns, both provincial and more especially micro-regional, will increase as people from the various parts of the country become more heavily represented in the towns through increased migration. As the number of associations increases we can perhaps expect that the welfare functions of the broader provincial groups will be passed down to the micro-regional groups and the former associations will concentrate on broader, social or even political aspects. The Vitiaz Association is the case in point and if a national SUNAM association is founded it can be expected to have a primarily social function to coordinate sporting activities of the various city clubs. A hierarchy of clubs with specialized and changing functions – which is a characteristic of certain countries in Latin America and Africa\(^1\) – may be expected to develop in the future. These will reflect the needs and aspirations of the migrant populations as their society moves from one that is small-scale and self-sufficient to one that has been transformed through contact with the commercial world.

Within the migrant communities in the town, the association allows particular individuals to build up prestige. Although multiple and elaborate offices such as those observed in some clubs in Africa (Little 1973:415) are not found in migrant associations in Papua New Guinea the associations are very much based on an European administrative model. There are usually offices for at least a president, a vice-president, a secretary and often an assistant secretary, a treasurer and a committee of elected members. Men holding these offices gain experience of organization and leadership which can establish not only their position among migrants in town but also a reputation which is recognized in their home village. This can also, as in the case of the Vitiaz Association, act as a stepping-stone to local or national politics, a situation which is common in Africa (Little 1973:415; Wallerstein 1966:333-335). As provincial governments develop we may

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\(^1\) Hierarchies of associations in East Africa strongly reflect the structure of the rural society: they are formed by migrants who come from a background of localized, polysegmentary descent groups. See Southall (1975) and Parkin (1966).
expect people who have played leading roles in the associations to act as important links between the government and the province or to return to take up positions in the provincial government itself.

Finally, we can ask to what extent the regional associations in Papua New Guinea reflect the emergence of ethnic groups. Ethnicity can be regarded as essentially the product of the immigration of people of varying origins and characteristics to towns or other destinations where they are seen to be, and perceive themselves to be, different (Charsley 1974:353-354). To the extent that both regional associations and ethnicity are generated by population movements they are related, and the existence of the broader provincial or regional association, such as Moanu, Finischafen, or Bougainville, expresses the evolving sense of identity of these groups. This is a sense of identity felt by the people themselves, or at least by a sector of these populations who can manipulate this sense of separateness to achieve particular social or political goals. The areas represented by provincial governments, although to an extent influenced by physical features and pre-contact linguistic boundaries, were essentially the creation of the colonial regime. It is from these regions that ethnic groups will emerge as they provide convenient units with which the people can both be classified and classify themselves. Ethnicity develops in the city where the problem of identity first arises and then is fed back into the home area by returning migrants; it is reinforced by the existing political framework which allows groups to manipulate the regional system to achieve their goals. This sense of identity is becoming well marked in those areas with a long history of contact with the European but is as yet poorly developed in more recently contacted regions. Highlanders in the largest cities are classified as 'Highlanders' or as 'Chimbus' by people from the coast although they themselves do not feel any common identity as Highlanders. As more educated migrants from the highlands come to the city we can expect definite associations to evolve which more or less reflect the provincial boundaries: Wabags (Engas), Hagener (Western Highlanders), Chimbus, or Gorokans (Eastern Highlanders) - are terms already in use in the highlands urban settlements - as they realize the advantages to be gained from such an identification.
These advantages are both epistemological and utilitarian: the former as the broader provincial group provides a simple means of allowing the apparent infinite variety of social groups in Papua New Guinea to be reduced to a manageable number so that migrant groups can easily classify themselves and relate to each other. The latter reinforces the former as it provides a practical incentive to belonging by allowing migrants access to the existing regional political structure. The smaller micro-regional associations satisfy the need to identify with a particular area rather than providing a means of meaningful classification in the urban environment. It may be that, if a hierarchy of associations evolves, these will be related to particular educational, occupational and political groups: the provincial associations for the elite operating at national and regional level and micro-regional groups for those primarily blue-collar workers operating within restricted networks in the city and in the village. This is the case in Peru.

No definite conclusions on the structure and function of regional associations can yet be drawn as the situation is in a state of flux, an urban life not having had time to crystallize. Whether both regional associations and ethnic groups will be only stages in the adaptation of the various groups to a modern Melanesian society is impossible to say. Regional associations in Peru appear to be on the wane, their functions becoming irrelevant as urban settlement and suburban associations based on occupational status and class divisions evolve to meet the needs of a dominantly urban society. Little (1973) has suggested that regional associations fulfil a paradoxical function in that, although apparently emphasizing regional peculiarities, they aid the formation of an integrated urban society. However, this is not always the case as inter-ethnic differences are often exaggerated over time, the various groups adamantly maintaining their identity (see Cohen 1974). It is probable that whichever of the two alternatives evolves will depend on structures in the city which facilitate or retard intra-urban spatial and social mobility (Skeldon, in press). Projecting such scenarios into a Melanesian future is little more than fantasy but as the process of social change continues, and even accelerates, we can expect the
number of regional and ethnic groups to increase and to play a major role in the future of Papua New Guinea.

**Some practical implications**

I have shown that although regional associations or migrant groups have not been particularly active in the past in Papua New Guinea the indications are that they will become an important feature of urban life in the not too distant future. I have shown too that associations can help the migrant in town and also aid with the promotion of development in the home village communities. Whether these associations, in reflecting an evolving ethnic identity, will become a permanent part of the urban environment or whether they are only a stage in the evolution towards a more integrated society is irrelevant at the present time. The associations do provide organizations within the city which could be harnessed for the furtherance of national objectives. The successful associations could be used as Melanesian models of development for those groups which as yet have not evolved an association or whose association or whose association is struggling to survive. Members of the executives of successful associations are justly proud of their achievements and would be willing to communicate their expertise and optimistically their enthusiasm to other groups. Encouragement and aid should be given to those groups attempting to develop national executives so that the activities of the associations in the various urban centres can be coordinated and so that the associations representing provincial and micro-regional groups can be integrated to facilitate development at various levels in the home area. Many of the small associations have substantial amounts of money in savings accounts which could be profitably invested if the group had access to advice and information on how government agencies could help them to help themselves.

Regional associations can play another important role in the city as a means of social control and as an agent for the resolution of intra-city conflict. The leaders or the executive of the association are respected men in their communities and will often represent different regions or factions within the province or smaller unit.
They know what is going on among their supporters and are in a position to control if not prevent any exuberances by their wantoks and association members. Perhaps more important would be the setting up of a forum for regular meetings of presidents from all the associations in a particular town. If tensions arose between any of the group this forum would provide an ideal locale for the resolution of problems and antipathies in the typical Melanesian way - through discussion. A variation of this approach using particular 'big men' has already been tried with success in Madang through the Intertownship Committee.

Although regional associations might appear to foster parochial customs and loyalties I feel that they do fulfill their apparently paradoxical function of promoting modernization. This role could be further stimulated through adequate government involvement and planning so that they could contribute not only to produce an integrated urban society but also to play an important part in total national development.
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