5. "Pigs for Dance Songs"

Reo Fortune's Empathetic Ethnography of the Arapesh Roads

Lise Dobrin, University of Virginia
Ira Bashkow, University of Virginia

After Reo Fortune died in 1979, the ethnographic materials that re-mained in his possession were deposited by his niece and literary executor, Ann McLean, in the Alexander Turnbull Library in Wellington, New Zea-land. Nearly 600 pages of these materials are directly concerned with the Mountain Arapesh people of Papua New Guinea, whom Fortune studied during his famous joint fieldwork with Margaret Mead in the early 1930s. Among these materials are some real treasures, including numerous con-textualized translations of Arapesh *sakihas*, a now all but lost genre of richly allusive traditional speeches that, Fortune shows, were an impor-tant means of expressing and transmitting Arapesh morality at that time. But by far the largest part of Fortune's surviving Arapesh materials are notes and fragments toward what was apparently to be an ethnographic monograph on Arapesh society. Without a doubt, this manuscript was intended to stand in opposition to Mead's depiction of Arapesh culture in *Sex and Temperament*, with which Fortune vehemently disagreed (For-tune 1939, 1943; Roscoe 2003; Dobrin and Bashkow in prep), and pos-sibly also in opposition to aspects of Mead's multivolume *The Mountain Arapesh* (1938, 1940, 1947, 1949). The manuscript includes sections with titles such as "Arapesh Religion," "Arapesh Tribal Character," and "Arapesh Ritual Idiom" as well as unlabeled fragments dealing with the interwoven topics of sorcery, warfare, and the system of "roads" (Arapesh sg. *yah*, pl. *yeh* or *yegwih*) along which people and items of value moved through Arapesh territory on its north-south axis (RFFP).

In this paper we focus on one reasonably coherent section of Fortune's archived Arapesh manuscript that deals in detail with the purchase of a dance complex along these roads, an event Mead referred to in her *Diary of Events* as the "Kobelen feast" and which is sometimes mentioned in Mead and Fortune's correspondence as the "(Dogur-)Kobelen show" (PDS; Mead 1947:337, 351, 359, 360; MMP, RF/MM, February 23, 1936

[S2:2]). We also consider the nearly 40 pages of transcribed and meticulously annotated abstracts of the speeches given at this event that are included in Fortune's field notes (KFS). The roads were both real physical paths that permitted travel beyond one's own locality and social pathways for interaction and exchange. The subject of the roads is of particular interest, because it is central to the exception Fortune took to Mead's interpretation of Arapesh culture as expressed in his 1939 paper "Arapesh Warfare," inasmuch as Fortune saw that the roads historically served to construct and organize interlocality competition and war, whereas Mead's interpretation emphasized their function as routes by which sorcerers traveled and culture diffused.[1] The significance of the roads in their disagreement is underscored by the attention Fortune gave in his unpublished manuscript materials to phenomena that depended on them in the stronger sense of being structured in terms of them, the main examples being sorcery, wife abduction, and warfare. Fortune repeatedly asserted in his copious letters to Mead—and subtextually implied in "Arapesh Warfare"—that Mead had insufficient experience with the roads to write about them with authority (e.g., MMP, S2:2; Dobrin and Bashkow in prep).

It is in a section of manuscript entitled "Pigs for Dance Songs" (PDS) that Fortune's understanding of the Arapesh roads is expressed in its most insightful, artful, and explicit form. Although the manuscript is unfinished and only portions of it survive in the archive, it has all the markings of a text Fortune composed for publication, and its extant segments provide a remarkably clear picture of the functioning of the Arapesh roads at the time of Fortune's fieldwork in 1931–32, contributing an important source of evidence for understanding the Arapesh roads as a social and cultural institution. Moreover, in its style, perspective, and voice "Pigs for Dance Songs" is highly revealing of Fortune's ethnographic approach. The manuscript describes a journey Fortune took along the roads, accompanying a formal party of Mountain Arapesh villagers who were gathering in Kobelen to buy the rights to a new dance complex called "Shenei."[2] In addition to showing the roads in action and bringing to light new features of the roads—such as their "telescoping" quality, which iconically realizes the intermediate social relationships linking distant localities—Fortune's text is remarkable for the way it narrates the journey, seamlessly interweaving his point of view as an outside ethnographic observer with a perspective empathetically aligned with a group of participants originating from a particular Arapesh locality. "Pigs for Dance Songs" illustrates vividly that Mead and Fortune's disagreement over the interpretation of Arapesh culture was not only, or even primarily, a matter of substance; there was a great gulf between them in terms of their experiences during their fieldwork and, above all, in terms of their respective intellectual temperaments.

The Arapesh Roads in Mead's Ethnography

The story of Mead and Fortune's last "professional partnership of field-work" is well known, from Mead's perspective at any rate, and we will summarize only the most pertinent points here (Mead 1972:189).[3] At the end of 1931 the two anthropologists took their already strained marriage to New Guinea to study the region's cultures and collect art and other artifacts, a project for which Mead had funding from the American Museum of Natural History. The couple soon settled in the mountaintop Arapesh village of Alitoa, near the New Guinea north coast. Because of the rough terrain and her weak ankle, Mead had to be carried up to the field site, and she was unable to travel beyond the village perimeter until she was finally carried out again eight months later (Mead 1940:337). Given that Mead was the fieldworker whose responsibility it was to study the culture, while Fortune studied the language (Mead 1972:226), this was certainly a less-than-ideal research arrangement, since the Arapesh were "on the roads for time equivalent to one year in three, or two years in five" making the "transition up and down roads . . . a very large part of native life" (PDS 84).[4] It thus fell to Fortune to do a considerable amount of traveling during this period: "The ethnologist domiciled amongst the mountain Arapesh . . . , in order to study the culture from all angles, similarly spent a large part of his time on the roads" (PDS 84). Fortune accompanied villagers to their distant gardens, attended intervillage gatherings throughout the region, managed his and Mead's supply stores on the coast, and made visits to neighboring areas to collect artifacts, survey the extent of the culture, and explore possible sites for subsequent research. Ensconced in their well-appointed village home, Mead could only receive Fortune's reports of his travels and incorporate them into her developing understanding of how the culture she was studying fit into the regional world outside the village.

Drawing on these reports, on the artifacts Fortune brought back from his travels, and on her own fieldwork among the Arapesh and subsequently among the Mundugumor and Tchambuli in the Sepik, Mead's major publications on the Mountain Arapesh (1935, 1938, 1940, 1947) describe them as a people situated within a larger "culture area" through which "material and non-material culture traits" were spread by diffusion (1938:151–52). The roads were of importance in Mead's account as the main avenues connecting Mountain Arapesh villages to the other parts of this area. They gave people access to imported necessities, items of value, and ritual complexes, and they provided a pathway for the transmission of objects such as stolen exuviae (body dirt, food leavings, and so
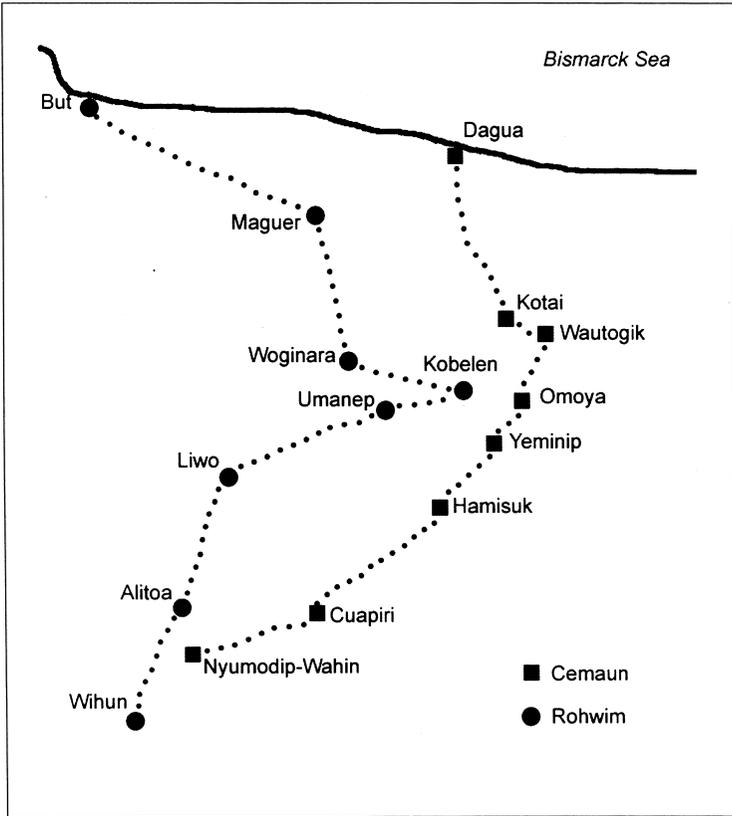
Fig. 1. Schematic diagram of the Cemaun (Shemaun) and Rohwim (Lahowhin) roads running across the Arapesh territory on its north-south axis. Note that not every historically attested locality is represented.

forth) and blackmail payments associated with sorcery. Two main roads traversed the region,[5] each running roughly north-south from the coast across a large swath of precipitous mountain lands and over the watershed of the Torricellis (Prince Alexander Mountains) to an inland piedmont, a region that Mead and Fortune referred to as "the Plains" (calling the people who lived there the "Plains Arapesh").[6] Alitoa is on the western or Rohwim Road; the eastern road is called Cemaun.[7]

In the model developed by Mead, the Mountain Arapesh were sandwiched between the Plains Arapesh to the south and the Beach Arapesh on the coast. The Plains Arapesh played a role in the regional economy as the source of shell rings and other culturally distinctive items and, above all, as death-dealing sorcerers who in their villages maintained inventories of their neighbors' exuviae that could be used to ensorcell them on others' demand. The Beach Arapesh, by contrast, were the region's link to the local coastal maritime trade, which provided access to the highly valued fashion and sophistication associated with distant others, including riverine people living inland along the Sepik River. The roads thus functioned as an arc connecting these three economically interdependent Arapesh groups.[8]

While the general cultural significance of the roads was as thoroughfares of "trade and diffusion" (Mead 1938:330), Mead recognized that they existed for individuals as exchange partnerships that were strung together, forming particular paths for interlocality relationships. (For a detailed discussion of Arapesh topographical, residential, and political units, see Roscoe 1994.) Each man thus had his own personal version of a road, consisting of the series of dwelling places belonging to his individual exchange partners, or *buanyim* (singular *buanyin*). In Mead's account these buanyim, which she glosses alternately as "trade friends" and "gift friends" (see, e.g., 1938:321–28), were "hereditary in the patrilineal line" (321). So a man could say, "This is my path. Along this path I *always* travel" (Mead 1938:322; cf. 1947:363). But in Mead's ethnography the personal mediation of these exchange pathways is not central for understanding the roads' functioning; indeed, it has very little consequence beyond determining the precise pathway that a boy will be shown ceremonially upon his initiation (Mead 1935:75–76, 1938:322). As we will see, a very different view of the roads emerges from Fortune's materials, which emphasize their competitive political dimension and the mobilization of chains of personal exchange relationships.

Fortune Parts Ways with Mead on the Arapesh Roads

When Mead sent Fortune two draft chapters of her *Mountain Arapesh* monograph for comment, he wrote back that he had no criticism except

for the section "On the Roads and on Diffusion." Of this he disapproved in no uncertain terms, telling her he thought she should burn it: "You did no substantial work on the roads, but were carried over one road twice under European conditions — and the whole chapter betrays it. [It] is largely garbled from my gossip to you and largely incorrect in consequence" (MMP, RF/MM, February 23, 1936 [S2:2]; see also Dobrin and Bashkow in prep). Mead appears to have at first been taken aback by the strength of Fortune's objection and penciled in "very little of this can be in" on the copies of the manuscript she retained (MMP: Mountain Arapesh manuscripts [I13:5]). But she must have later reconsidered deferring to Fortune in this way, since she eventually published a revised and, indeed, expanded description of the roads, albeit moved "from a statement introductory to the details of the local material culture, to a position as a brief conclusion" (1938:147). Thus, in the Arapesh ethnography Mead ultimately published to lend scientific legitimacy to her theoretical interpretation of Arapesh culture in the *Sex and Temperament* framework, the account of the larger "culture area" in which Arapesh culture participates no longer depended upon sources to which Fortune could lay proprietary claim (1938:151).[9]

The primary point on which Fortune brought his disagreement with Mead over the Arapesh into print was the cultural importance of warfare. In his 1939 article "Arapesh Warfare," published in the *American Anthropologist*, he opposed Mead's characterization of Arapesh men as placid, nurturing, and lacking in cultural resources for systematized aggression or violence. As Fortune illustrated in that article, before pacification Arapesh culture had had "a highly organized social pattern" of male competition and rivalry in which men schemed to lure away women from other localities, thus provoking interlocality violence and warfare (1939:24). While the topic might well have warranted some account of the roads inasmuch as they served to structure interlocality competition and alliances, Fortune's arcane article was narrowly focused on its more immediate aim of casting doubt on Mead's portrayal of Arapesh men as peace loving and maternal in temperament; it also cryptically attacked Mead's ability to speak about such matters with authority (Dobrin and Bashkow in prep). But while "Arapesh Warfare" reveals little about the functioning of the roads as such, it presents the only examples ever published of the richly allusive rhetorical art associated with male competitive politics in traditional Arapesh society — a matter that turns out to be central in Fortune's documentation of the Kobelen feast.

The Roads Fortune Walked to the Kobelen Feast

Fortune's unpublished materials describe the roads' actual functioning in service of the purchase of a dance, the Shenei, from the coast to a more inland locality. For the Arapesh at that time, dances were highly valued ritual complexes that served as prestigious objects of exchange. For a locality to acquire a dance was not only to enjoy "the baubles of a few days' gaiety" (Mead 1935:13); it was to publicly manifest its political sophistication and demonstrate its influence in the region. The performance of dances was associated with the competitive realm of feasting and with the ability to attract and impress guests, who would afterward spread talk of the dance, thus increasing the host locality's renown. The story of a dance's pathway of ownership testified to the power and skill of those who had acquired the dance, since in order to do so they had to have exceeded their rivals in complex negotiations and successfully orchestrated the participation of large numbers of people who contributed wealth and work toward the purchase.

The dance transaction witnessed by Fortune took place in Kobelen over a three-day period in May 1932. Fifteen years earlier, the coastal village of Dogur had purchased the Shenei dance from Murik traders traveling by sea from their home at the mouth of the Sepik River. Dogur thus acquired the Shenei masks, paraphernalia, and styles of body adornment as well as the right to perform the dance, to make copies of the paraphernalia, and to sell the dance with its masks to others in turn. For many years Kobelen had been politicking to get the dance, earmarking pigs for this purpose. Finally, Dogur had agreed to send a contingent (a trading "canoe") inland to Kobelen to formally present the dance to them at a feast, whereupon the men of Kobelen, led by Kabiam of Korugen, a sublocality of Kobelen, called on their allies throughout the region for contributions of shell rings, dogs' teeth, feathers, tobacco, sago, and pigs in the hopes of concentrating sufficient wealth to persuade Dogur to grant them ownership of the dance. Fortune, eager to witness the event, "decided to organize a party and go" (Mead 1947:360).[10]

In "Pigs for Dance Songs" Fortune's narration concentrates on the journey to Kobelen that he took with his Alitoan traveling party along the Rohwim Road, the men shouldering poles from which the gift pigs were hung. Such a party could not go by any route it pleased but was obliged to follow a route that passed through the hamlets along the way: "The wider track made under Government supervision runs down the main hill crest, away from the deep cut valleys where water runs and where hamlets are built by the water. We do not go near the wider track, which is new and for non-traditional business only; but we follow down [the] waterways and

over [the] steep divides between them" (PDS 59). But the formality of such an occasion determined not only the proper "path that a pig must take" (Mead 1947:360). It also determined the manner in which the journey took place:

> The carrying of pigs is a ritual business, and it is the gravest insult to carry pigs ourselves over neighbours' territory. We call on our neighbours and they carry our pigs on over their own territory. But first we sit down in the hamlet and our hosts give us coconuts to drink and food to eat. They talk a little with everyday enquiries and answers, and after the food there is some brief orating by the hosts. This is usually talk of the antiquity of the road, for the road that is open to the carrying of pigs today is the road that was open also in the old days of war. [PDS 60–61]
>
> Once the oratory about the antiquity of the open road is done, our hosts take up the pigs and go off at a trot, while we follow behind. So we go up and down to the next hamlet on the coast-wards road. Here again we are fed. . . . [PDS 62–63]
>
> Then shortly after, the oratory of the hosts begins, addressed to their next inland neighbors, who have just been carrying the pigs, more than to us. We are the guests of guests of our hosts only. The oratory done, the orators and their men take up the pigs and trot off, we all following behind. The procedure occurs again in the next hamlet, where we are by now the guests of guests of guests of our hosts — and we are all present. The last hosts take up the pigs and run them into Kobelen village,[11] we all streaming behind. [PDS 66]
>
> This is the manner of the open road. We A go to our friends B, who escort us to their friends C; then C escort us all to their friends D, who then take upon themselves the escorting of all us to their friends E — and before escorting, feeding in each case. At least this is the manner of the open road when gifts of pigs are carried upon it. All the people of the road swell the carriage upon the road, and we come into our destination half way down to the coast as if our pigs have rolled up the men of the roadway and carried them with them. Indeed they had. Pigs of other inland villages converged also upon Kobelen by the same general road, but through other hamlets in many cases. [PDS 66–67]

As we see from Fortune's description, this remarkable "convention of the 'telescoping' safe road by repeated escort" (PDS 69) meant that when pigs were carried on the roads to feasts, the exchange relationships linking

localities were brought out into the open in the form of a growing assembly of persons. Such an assembly concretely manifested the road as a system of interlocality relationships, making visible the intermediate ties that defined the sections of the extended "telescope" a road represented. In addition, since road friendships had historical depth and were often said to reflect a shared ancestry, the assembly of road friends arriving at a feast could be seen as a living tableau depicting the history of a sequence of places as a chain of genealogies and step-wise migrations, which perhaps sheds some light on why the Mountain Arapesh were able to "count their genealogies in the direct paternal line for twenty to thirty generations back. The open road is maintained by memory of a migration that may have occurred five hundred years ago or more. Friends in the road may be descendants of a collateral line that split off and migrated twenty five or only four or five generations ago. Or again the friendship may be traditional without origin in any known migration" (PDS 62).

Private travel and exchange by road friends did not require the same formal hospitality or escort as carrying pigs to a feast, but it was sanctioned by the same principle of commutative relationships:

> The manner of the open road is somewhat different for the party of one or two men bound on private business. They may call upon friends in various hamlets by the way without escort. But a man has not scattered friends in various hamlets. He is one of a line of friends, inland to seacoast, who are friends of one another. If a man goes unescorted he does not go to other friends than if he goes escorted. Escort is behind the fixed line of friendship, as its sanction and principle. The natural friendships, following migration in former generations and the like, are usually between neighbouring places, and friends in more distant places are the friends of friends, or friends two or three or four times removed. The escort in the manner of the road when pigs are carried is naturally enough formulated with food gifts and oratory, for this extended road served a man well in keeping communication [open] from the hills to the sea and back again, even when war made travelling in other directions a tenth of the same distance impossible or dangerous. [PDS 67–69]

The "open road" was thus a guarantee of safe passage, allowing people the possibility of travel in areas controlled by other localities without fear of ambush. But the notion of a road's "openness" derived not only from the possibility of travel it afforded as such; it also implied a particular *manner* of travel that was aboveboard rather than secretive.[12] The good

and proper route for travel and exchange was along the open roads as opposed to "the road of pig and cassowary," which, when used for social purposes instead of ordinary hunting and gathering in the forest, connoted business that was hidden, shameful, or illegitimate. In several of the Kobelen speeches, for example, men expressed their concern that an untoward event such as a death might cause the transaction to unravel, leading everyone to retreat to their homes by road of pig and cassowary, carrying with them news only of failure and fear of further death in revenge (KFS 270, 279, 295, 297, 301, 302, 306).

Empathy in Fortune's Ethnography of the Roads

The Authorial Style of "Pigs for Dance Songs"

In addition to providing us with new information about the ethnography of the Arapesh roads, "Pigs for Dance Songs" is interesting for what it reveals about Fortune's ethnographic approach to studying the Arapesh. Although the handwritten manuscript (on notepaper from the trans-Pacific vessel MV *Rabaul*) is unpolished and digressive in the manner of a first draft written while aboard ship, it nevertheless exhibits certain consistent stylistic features that contrast with many of Fortune's published writings, with Mead's texts, and with the conventional anthropological writing of their time. The most striking of these features is a seamless switching back and forth between the impersonal voice of an objective, outside observer and the empathetic voice adopting the perspective of an interested participant. The scholar's voice is heard in Fortune's comparative observations, linguistic identifications, and historical commentaries and generalizations. So, for example, he informs his readers in scholarly fashion that "the 'telescoping' safe road . . . does not occur in the Arapesh form very generally in New Guinea" (PDS 69), that "the people of Murik speak a Papuan language, not a Melanesian [i.e., Austronesian language]" (PDS 52), or that "fashion becomes old on the Arapesh beach before it is released into the hills" (PDS 53). But in the greater part of the text, Fortune narrates events from the standpoint of an individual traveling the road from a specific Arapesh locality. In many passages his use of pronouns places him as a member of the traveling party his readers "follow" to the Kobelen feast:

> *We* come first to a wide stream with no habitation near it. Here *we* bathe, men and women, the women doffing their grass skirts and slipping leaves into their belts instead. Then *we* are off up a hill again, men puffing and blowing, and the women with jaws tensely thrust forward from the weight of the loads suspended

from the forehead. *We* go up and up, then down and down, to the first hamlet on the way. [PDS 59–60]

Five or six of *us* take up each carrying pole [for carrying pigs] and up and down *we* go, panting over the tracks. [PDS 58–59, emphasis added]

Or recall the wonderfully rich passage quoted earlier, repeated here with new emphasis:

It is the gravest insult to carry pigs *ourselves* over neighbours' territory. *We* call on *our* neighbours and they carry *our* pigs on over their own territory. But first *we* sit down in the hamlet and *our* hosts give *us* coconuts to drink and food to eat. [PDS 60–61, emphasis added]

Such use of pronouns communicates Fortune's firsthand involvement in the events he describes, confirming his ability to speak of them with authority even as he does so. In conveying a general feeling of intimacy and identification with his Alitoa traveling companions, Fortune's account of the journey moreover provides for his readers a locally situated perspective on how the roads were constituted by a systematic shifting of groups among different roles (except for the Alitoans, who set off alone with their pigs, thereby activating the road), each group participating first as hosts and orators, then as escorts and carriers, and finally as followers, guests of guests, and so on.[13] So thorough was Fortune's identification with his traveling party that it is not until 30 pages into the text—at the point where the party's contribution of pigs is assessed and officially recognized by Kobelen—that Fortune is led to view his group with any objectivity and specify who "we" are more precisely than "we of the remoter, more inland higher hills" or "we of the middle hills"; it is only here that we learn that "we who carry a pig" hail "from Totoa'laibys clan of Alitoa village" (PDS 54, 79, 81). Even a humorous dig at the Catholic clergy is made from the perspective of Fortune's Arapesh companions, for whom it makes sense to wonder "how Catholics continue to exist, [inasmuch as] all we have seen, men and women, are missionaries and celibate" (PDS 58).

Heightening this sense of empathetic identification with the people he has studied, at various points throughout "Pigs for Dance Songs" Fortune overtly adopts Alitoa's low position in the regional social hierarchy in order to convey the limits of the roads' potential for diffusion:

We of the middle hills are poor. Our land is mountainous, poor and subject to landslides [that destroy our gardens]. [PDS 79]

[We] will probably never be able to purchase the Shenei for ourselves from Kobelen later, even after fifteen more years. For

> Kobelen is richer than we, as Dogur is richer than Kobelen, but we purchase the cheaper dance rights, in time, and the two pigs we carry now will go toward something else later on from Kobelen. Other villages of our inland hills will be doing likewise. . . . We inlanders all pull together to bring fashion inland the one stage only. Kobelen will later hold the Shenei as grudgingly from us as Dogur has from Kobelen, and we have less interior hinterland to help us pull one stage more. But we do our best. [PDS 55–56]

Fortune also conveys empathy by resorting only minimally to the aloof empiricism of the "anthropological gaze," or behavioral observation in the tradition of Malinowskian "I-witnessing" (Geertz 1988:73). Rather, his descriptions serve to humanize his ethnographic subjects by expressing a solidarity of feeling with them. So, for example, Fortune joins with the Alitoans, again using "we," in feeling "excited and keen at . . . the prospect of the new dance" (PDS 57). He also shares in their embarrassment when their poverty is objectified in the contrast between "our two miserable pigs" and Kobelen's "huge fattened pigs" (PDS 55–56). Indeed, so thoroughly does Fortune identify with his Alitoan companions that we cannot always tell for certain whether a feeling he expresses is theirs or his, though at times he also makes it quite explicit that his and their views converge. Certainly this is the case when Fortune discusses the exceptional requirement that the costs of acquiring the Shenei include a night of wife lending. This topic gives Fortune the opportunity to comment disparagingly on the institution of "open marriage," which he does on the basis of both Arapesh and Western moral norms simultaneously: "We [this is his empathetic *we* referring to the Alitoans] do not habitually practice wife lending any more than is European and good Christian custom" (PDS 57). Here, of all places, Fortune came by his empathy honestly, given the circumstances surrounding his turbulent divorce from Mead (see Dobrin and Bashkow in prep).

Fortune's Locally Situated View of the Scope of Arapesh Culture

Fortune's Arapesh-centered perspective has consequences for more than just his writing style. It is also reflected in his substantive interpretation of the scope of Arapesh culture. Fortune's account of the pathways of diffusion through the region parallels Mead's in many respects, for example in recognizing that the dance complexes purchased by the Mountain Arapesh originated on the Sepik river "before Murik village peddled them to

the Arapesh" (PDS 71). Fortune's text also includes a lengthy discussion of sorcery that agrees with Mead's writings on the role of the Plains villagers, or *warybim*, in the regional economy as professional sorcerers who received payments both to commit sorcery and to avert it. But Fortune had a different view of what constituted the relevant culture area, implicitly contradicting Mead's adoption of the entire Sepik region for this purpose "without confining [her]self to a too-narrow or systematic use of the term [culture area]" (Mead 1938:157). Whereas Mead gave all cultural similarities and evidence of trade connection equal weight in defining the area, Fortune emphasized the cultural elements that had special significance as imports for the Arapesh people themselves as well as to Arapesh understandings of the limits of their culture based on the way these limits were substantiated in the working of the roads:

> The system [of diffusion] is covered by the native phrase "*urai ani mbuluguh sharupok*," "dance songs contest against pigs." [Through this saying,] it is indicated that dances are the principal merchandise peddled up the roads; and on this basis rights to wear clothing, rights to important *sacra* such as initiatory flutes, and other important cultural rights are also sold. [PDS 72]
>
> Dances and new cultural forms go up the roads to the watershed [of the Prince Alexander Mountains], and pigs go down to buy the rights and the paraphernalia — as far as the watershed. [PDS 79]
>
> The limit to the purchase of dances and cultural rights is the watershed. The Arapesh villages that debouch onto the Sepik plain on the inland side of the watershed do not purchase dances and rights that come inland from the coast. . . . [T]he men of these trans-Prince Alexander Mountains Arapesh villages . . . , called *warybim* . . . by the Arapesh who live seawards from the watershed . . . are modified in culture by influences accepted from their neighbours of the wide plains who speak a language allied to that of the Middle Sepik River [the Abelam], and not by influences accepted from their own people across the watershed. The watershed is a cultural barrier, because at it the system of "*urai ani mbuluguh sharupok*" ends. [PDS 72, 77, 74]
>
> They of the Sepik side of the watershed look to the inland Sepik River instead [of to the coast], and the watershed is the boundary of two varying cultures in the one tribe in consequence — although, of course, much culture is held in common. [PDS 64–65]

While Fortune obviously draws the boundaries around Arapesh culture differently than does Mead, he does not make his disagreement with her explicit, and it must be recognized that Mead's account is not wrong; it is merely different and ultimately complementary. As discussed below, Mead's intellectual temperament inclined her to an etic, generalizing, bird's-eye perspective, and in her Arapesh fieldwork this perspective would have been reinforced by her work collecting Native art and artifacts for the American Museum. While staying in Alitoa, Mead catalogued the artifacts that she purchased from natives visiting from neighboring areas as well as those obtained by Fortune during the strenuous collecting trips he made on her behalf. In so doing she must have formed a mental map of each type of artifact's local "center of . . . manufacture" along with the sources of the most highly decorated and "elaborate specimens" (1938:310, 314). These sources tended to be far away, and when not on the coast they were invariably inland, in Plains Arapesh villages close to the Abelam, a people whose flamboyant artistry and imposing architecture were so attractive to Mead and Fortune that it was the Abelam they had wanted to study when they set out for their fieldwork initially, though they were unable to continue past Alitoa to reach them. Indeed, several important classes of objects Mead described, including cassowary bone daggers, wooden spears, and net bags, were "much more highly developed . . . among the Abelam, and secondarily among the Plains Arapesh" than the "cruder forms" of the Mountain Arapesh, leading Mead to infer that the Mountain Arapesh were "look[ing] to the Plains . . . for inspiration" (Mead 1938:308–9). Moreover, many of the net bags, shell rings, and clay pots present in Alitoa were known to have been imported from the inland Plains region directly (1938:308–19, 327–28). Thus, Mead was hardly unjustified in including the inland villages of the warybim within the Mountain Arapesh culture area.[14]

But Fortune's perspective was enriched by the immediacy of his experiences among the warybim and Abelam, and, as we will discuss further below, it reflects an ethnographic approach very different from Mead's, one that inclined him to take on "the chief interests of [the] people" with whom he traveled throughout the region (Boas 1966[1911]:23). The truth in Fortune's account is very much an emic one that reveals the cultural boundaries the Alitoans themselves perceived, a matter bearing crucially on their sense of their own identity.[15] Again, his adoption of an Arapesh point of view brings to light the extent to which a relativity of perspective was intrinsic to the roads' functioning. So, for example, the warybim did travel along the roads and were incorporated into them as road friends and affines such that the roads appeared *to them* to extend across the

"Pigs for Dance Songs"

watershed from the coastal villages to their own (PDS 74; Mead 1938, 1947).[16] However, as Fortune points out elsewhere in his manuscript materials, while "Arapesh plainsmen . . . came constantly to the coast . . . , coastal men never visited the inland plains before the country came under control by a metropolitan power" (RFFP, 80–323–15/2 ["New Guinea Fieldnotes (iii)"], 348). And when Mead and Fortune's Mountain Arapesh informants spoke of the roads by naming them along with the localities through which they passed, the warybim villages were never included in their overlapping descriptions—and they were similarly not included in the (again overlapping) description of the roads volunteered to us in 1998 from the perspective of Wautogik village, on the same (coastal) side of the watershed as Alitoa (KFS 285; Mead 1938:331).[17] The Mountain Arapesh feared the warybim as sorcerers and cultural others, and the immense importance of their sorcery and shell rings in the local political economy notwithstanding, they were not felt to properly belong to the structure of alliances that the roads represented. In effect, whether or not one saw the warybim as included in the roads or not depended on one's perspective. The more general point is that Arapesh constructed political and cultural boundaries along the roads from the standpoint of their own localities.[18]

Of course such relativity of perspective arises whenever identity is at stake, and the importance of the roads as a vernacular framework for establishing identity is still very much alive in the Arapesh region today. When we visited the coastal village of Dogur, for example, we were told of Dogur's traditional importance as the "mother village" of the Cemaun Road: "Everyone everywhere called Dogur 'mother'—in the bush and along the seacoast, where the sun rises and where it sets." Though clearly hyperbolic, the story of Dogur's road status serves even today as the basis for Dogur villagers' distinctive self-conception. And its importance for people was underscored by the fact that this was the very first thing Dogur villagers "officially" told us about themselves, even before the story of the village's founding, the theme that ordinarily takes pride of place when New Guinea villagers are visited by outsiders and have the opportunity to present the story that tells who they are. The significance of the roads as a framework for identity at the time of Mead and Fortune's fieldwork is attested by quotations in both ethnographers' writings. In another of his draft manuscripts, for example, Fortune quotes his Cemaun informants as saying that they differed from the people of Rohwim in that "[w]e [Cemaun], we weep over friends," likening the depth of their grief to certain species of trees that, "when cut their sap bleeds and stays bleeding." They used their own capacity for great feeling as a basis for contrasting themselves with the bitter Rohwim, who they said "weep not for

friends" (RFFP, 80–323–15/2 ["New Guinea Fieldnotes (iii)"], 348).
Mead's writings, too, contain evidence that the roads served for the Arapesh as a framework of identity, though she did not seem to take this very seriously. In one of the "bulletin letters" she wrote from the field, she remarked that "this mountain people . . . have no name for themselves, just friendly little nicknames or names for sections of a community, like . . . 'poisonous snakes' " (Mead 1977:117). This term "poisonous snakes" is none other than a literal gloss of *Rohwim*, the name of Alitoa's road (Mead and Fortune more frequently gloss it as "death adder"). Perhaps Mead felt the roads were not terribly important because the groups they defined failed to coincide with the cultural boundaries she herself discerned. But whatever the reason, Mead's failure to recognize the roads as important identity categories was reflected in her analysis, which treats the roads as avenues of diffusion, travel, and trade connecting people across a very broad region while overlooking the roads' simultaneous role in distinguishing political and cultural groupings of narrower scope. Mead was undoubtedly right that the roads served as pathways of diffusion. But for the Mountain Arapesh themselves, this function was eclipsed by the roads' more culturally salient meaning as categories of identity, categories whose expression was nowhere more evident than in the key domains of feasting and war.

The Chief Interests of the Arapesh People

The topic of war brings us to what is perhaps the most important manifestation of Fortune's embrace of the Arapesh perspective, namely, his emphasis on understanding Arapesh public discourse. To be sure Fortune's focus on discourse reflects in part his arrangement with Mead to divide their fieldwork labor, since he got the language (we discuss this further in Bashkow and Dobrin in prep). It also reflects his considerable linguistic talent (while Mead is reputed to have had little ear for languages) and the greater methodological importance he ascribed to learning people's language in depth — "half learning" being often sufficient, in Mead's view, while "virtuosity" was an inefficient excess (Mead 1939: 200, 203). Nevertheless, the fact remains that Fortune, unlike Mead, worked extensively in the native Arapesh language and that he placed particular emphasis on understanding and documenting formal oratory. In his fieldnotes and manuscript materials, significant attention is given to translated texts of high-status rhetorical forms, which, since they make heavy use of elaborate metaphors and arcane allusions, are all but impossible for an outsider to interpret. We know from Mead's letters and memoirs — not to mention from Fortune's 1942 Arapesh grammar and

texts — that Fortune devoted great time and effort during their fieldwork to documenting and analyzing Arapesh speech, and his fieldnotes from the Kobelen expedition consist primarily of some 40 closely written pages of glosses of feast speeches, (thankfully) annotated with meticulous detail so as to make their meaning more decipherable. These speech texts represent a sort of precis of the main spoken parts of the public proceedings of the Kobelen feast.[19] Such speeches are intrinsically political; each of the Kobelen feast speeches was intended to advance the speaker's interests and the standing of his locality and clan. They are therefore powerfully revealing of the situation of political competition that obtained at that historical moment. By the same token the speeches are saturated with the speakers' sense of the recent history leading up to that moment, a major aspect of which was the role of the roads in times of warfare.

We fully agree with Roscoe (2003) that Mead was wrong in her repeated contention that there was "a virtual absence of any war pattern . . . among the mountain-dwelling Arapesh" before pacification, a point which was central to her theoretical interpretation of the Arapesh cultural temperament (Mead 1938:161; see also Mead 1935, 1937, 1940, 1947, 1950; Dobrin and Bashkow in prep; Bashkow and Dobrin in prep). Such a contention could only have been sustained by seriously underestimating the extent of historical change in the colonial period, a tendency for which we find evidence elsewhere in her Arapesh ethnography (see also Roscoe 2003:585). In a brief summary of "how white contact has affected the functioning of Alitoa," Mead conceded that "a certain lightening of tension" had followed from the "Pax Brittanica," as the "removal of the threat of violence always alters the life of a people, but it would be hard to find a group to which it made less difference than to the prevailingly peaceful Arapesh." The "greater immunity of the traveling Plainsmen" had perhaps resulted in "a greater tyranny on the part of [these] sorcerers, who now walked unarmed among an unarmed people, where the power was all on their side." But the idea that the roads might be "losing their sanctions as the idea of the King's Highway developed" was a matter that could not be further explored without conceding the importance of warfare, something Mead did not do (Mead 1947:269–70; see also Mead 1938:322).

Yet as the speeches at the Kobelen feast outlined by Fortune amply attest, precisely this issue of a transformation in the roads' functioning was at the forefront of Arapesh interlocality politics at the time of Mead and Fortune's fieldwork. Only two decades earlier, before colonial authorities had succeeded in bringing warfare in the region to an end, open battles as well as isolated surprise attacks were part of the customary

background of Arapesh life, and the ever-present possibility of warfare was the basis for the roads' important functions of providing conduits for safe passage and organizing villages into idealized war alliances. However the roads actually worked as war alliances in particular instances, it is clear that the orators at the Kobelen feast believed the roads *should* function in this way. Road friends were felt to be natural allies, and localities on other roads were the homes of one's presumed enemies. This idea remains well entrenched today, nearly a century after pacification. The roads continue to serve as a generalized framework for intervillage competition, and in 1998 the roads were explained to us using the ready phrase "fighting group" (*Tok Pisin: lain bilong pait*). The significance of such roads for warfare and exchange is not restricted in the area to Arapesh-speaking peoples. Among the Yangoru Boiken the distinction is made between two great traditional war confederacies called "Lebuging" or "Labuhnina" and "Samawung" or "Samoun"; these terms are also used to refer to the two exchange moieties into which most of the region's villages are divided (Gesch 1985:170). The phonetic resemblance between these and the Arapesh terms is striking (Jim Roscoe, personal communication, March 20, 2005).

That the roads had traditionally served as warfare alliances was mentioned by many orators at Kobelen as a background against which the current dance transaction was an exceptional political achievement, because in fact the Shenei dance was being imported not up a road, but rather across two roads, from the Cemaun Road to the Rohwim Road. The road-based alliances thus represented a kind of idealized status quo from which contemporary social alignments diverged. So in one instance a speaker from Kobelen, a locality on the Rohwim Road, addressed the contingent from Kotai, of the Cemaun Road, as follows: "You of Kotai, before in time of war I did not know you — you did not know us all here. Your brothers who knew us are dead [i.e., if we met them, we killed them]. Before you killed our father" (KFS 180; see also 296).

Similarly, a speaker from Dogur reminded Kobelen that in former times their two roads had been enemies. Dogur had a special position as the coastal "mother village" of the Cemaun Road, a position in which it rivaled But and Semain, the mother villages of the Rohwim Road. It was from But and Semain that Kobelen formerly would have acquired its dances: "You of Kobelen tell But and Semain you had this dance from me. Before if I met them by river I fought them; if I met them by road I fought them" (KFS 181, 297). It was understood that such a cross-road transaction was facilitated by the newly enforced peace of the colonial administration: "Before we had no Government. . . . Before all men fought, broke

head, hand, jaw. Now we sit down well together" (KFS 289–90). "Before we had war. Now Government has finished war. A good [i.e., young, strong, healthy] man will not be killed. Before it was not so" (KFS 271).

At the same time, pacification was diminishing the political power associated with the roads by undermining their sanction. No longer did travelers need to fear ambush when moving along roads other than their own, and there was now, too, the new "wider track," the bridle path that Mead calls the "King's Highway" (no doubt a name then current among whites), which was used by colonial patrol officers and maintained by villagers at their direction (PDS 59; Mead 1947:269). The King's Highway provided everyone a path on which to travel in safety without being dependent for safety on local intermediaries, thus weakening a locality's power to block cultural transmission along its road. Formerly "each village on the way acted as a toll gate, preventing a valuable acquisition from going inland to the next village . . . until they were ready to release it" (PDS 71–72; see also Terrell 1986 for this pattern more generally in the Pacific). Now, however, the new possibility of bypassing traditional road friendships left people weakened in their ability to mediate transactions between their neighbors to either side, making them politically insecure. Thus, in apparent hopes of forestalling the likely event that he be shut out of his rightful place as a recipient of the Shenei dance in the future, a speaker from Liwo pointed out to his traditional road allies in Kobelen that the cross-road pathway of the Shenei dance they were buying was a violation of custom: "Before when your forefathers went sorcery hunting they slept with my forefathers and talked. Now you go past, going altogether to the [warybim]. The talk of friends you should hear first before going to the [warybim]. Our mother is one [i.e., we belong to the same road]. But before all the fathers of Dogur were the enemies of our fathers. Our enemies were they, their enemies were we" (KFS 284).

The snapshot of contemporary local politics afforded by the Kobelen speech texts differs markedly from Mead's brief account, in which the cross-road pathway of the Shenei dance seems to exemplify nothing more significant than the timeless and universal phenomenon of actual practice diverging from a culture's ideals: "Theoretically, each of these dance complexes should pass up the road, from one locality to another, inland, without skipping any one of them. In practice, now one locality, now another, will display the initiative necessary to inaugurate the payments" (Mead 1938:334). To be sure it would be naive to think that even in precolonial times each dance passed neatly up its road from one locality to the next, in apolitical stages.[20] Nevertheless, for the orators who spoke at Kobelen over those three days in 1932, it was precisely because "Kobelen

and Dogur [were] enemies by native custom" (KFS 305) that Kobelen's attempt — and ultimate success — at wresting the dance from its Cemaun rivals had particular interest and prestige. The Kobelen feast speeches thus bear eloquent testimony to the circumstances of change that increased the viability of nontraditional pathways for cultural transmission.

Pacification and the innovation of the King's Highway were perhaps the most important changes facilitating such cross-road alliances. But there was also the institution of plantation labor, which brought individuals from diverse, even formerly warring, localities together on neutral ground. Indeed, it was through "an alliance formed on Karawap plantation" on historically Boikin territory nearby on the coast that "negotiations for [the Shenei] dance" had begun. As one Kobelen orator emphasized: "This was not done as a friendship of old, of these places. It was a friendship of the white man" (KFS 292, 305).

Finally, the colonial situation afforded people a powerful new resource for political maneuvering, the force of the administration itself. Thus, in the fierce competitive politics surrounding the Shenei dance transaction, the mother villages of Kobelen's own Rohwim Road, But and Semain, had been so eager "to prevent [Kabiam of Kobelen from] buying the Shenei dance" that they had gone so far as to attempt to get him "imprisoned [by the administration] for alleged sorcery" (KFS 285). Like other native people throughout New Guinea, the Arapesh in this period were learning that white officials could often be manipulated into imprisoning (or even launching punitive raids against) their rivals for offenses of the whites' laws. It is surely revealing of Arapesh political priorities at this time that the end to which Kobelen's traditional road allies sought to harness this colonial power was the prevention of a cross-road dance transaction. Indeed, it might be taken as evidence not only of the high political stakes associated with the dances, but also of the changes in the roads as a force in Arapesh interlocality politics.

Why Mead and Fortune Portrayed the Arapesh Roads So Differently

In part the difference between Mead and Fortune's accounts of the roads reflects the divergent nature of the two ethnographers' experience of Arapesh culture, notwithstanding that they overtly studied it together as a husband-and-wife team. While Mead was confined to Alitoa, giving her a severely restricted view of the competitive realm of interlocality relations, Fortune traveled widely and frequently. And while Mead devoted herself to observing children and the nurture of caregivers and to assembling artifacts for shipment to the American Museum of Natural History, Fortune worked intensively to document the language, including the speeches

that occupied a central place in formal exchange and politics. It is certainly understandable that Mead's analysis of her collection might have led her to conceptualize the Arapesh roads relatively apolitically, as conduits of diffusion through a large culture area in which it was the different localities' specialized productions (wooden plates, spears, net bags, and so forth) that gave the roads their primary meaning. It is similarly understandable that Fortune's extensive travels, including the trip he took along the roads to the Kobelen feast, should have led him to give far greater prominence to interlocality competition and conflict and so to such topics as marriage and remarriage, war, feasting, and exchange.[21] People are often prompted to recall events of historical significance while traveling past the sites with which they are associated. It is no coincidence that the topic of warfare was raised in 1991 by one of Roscoe's Mountain Arapesh traveling companions when the group stopped to rest at the edge of an overgrown former battleground (Roscoe 2003:589), or that the lists of villages belonging to the Cemaun and Rohwim Roads recorded in our own fieldnotes were offered to us by our Arapesh friends while walking with them along the roads of today. Mead's strict confinement to a single hamlet for the entire course of her Arapesh fieldwork meant that she simply did not find herself in the kinds of situations that triggered such spontaneous recountings of interlocality history.

Then, too, there is the effect of the two anthropologists' different theoretical inclinations and prior interests. Let us consider Mead's first. Mead's interest in her Arapesh ethnography revolved around the dominant concerns of gender psychology and economics, and she brought to her work a wide and eclectic range of theoretical idioms from the American diffusionist anthropology in which she was raised, the British functionalist anthropology to which she was attracted, various strands of psychology and psychoanalysis, and American capitalism and popular culture. While Mead's concern with the cultural construction of gender is explicit in her best-known writings and has been much discussed (see, e.g., Banner 2003; Lapsley 1999; Howard 1984), the topic of the roads points to the idiom of Western economism that is also present, if less self-consciously, in her Arapesh work. For Mead the roads were seen as connecting not political entities, but rather individual exchange partners, or buanyim. Mead describes these interlocality partnerships as "institutionalized," "hereditary," and "definitely patterned" like fixed "kinship relationships" (1947:204). Although she recognized that they were changeable (1937:32, 1938:322, 1947:207), the model she used to explain them is reminiscent of Bronislaw Malinowski's portrayal of Massim *kula* partnerships as predetermined and permanent, as if some framework apart from the actual exchanges was

needed in order to "bind" the parties in their relationship (Malinowski 1922:83, 85, 91; Mead 1938:321–31). Like Malinowski, Mead did not see exchange itself as sufficient to constitute such a relationship. But unlike in kula, where Mead saw exchange as "linked with [a] great ceremonial superstructure" and celebrated as a prestigious form of sociality in its own right, the Arapesh buanyin relationship was fundamentally a means by which items of value were redistributed throughout the area. Since "each community is poor in many things and must look outside its borders for them . . . , exchange becomes not . . . the object of life, but the basis of life" (Mead 1938:164). An economically sophisticated American (indeed, an economist's daughter), Mead readily grasped that exchange along the Arapesh roads was "often a most uneconomic procedure," and given her collector's perspective on where goods were made and where they were scarce, she found it remarkable that individuals often carried items such as wooden plates or shell rings in "the wrong direction for profit" (1937:22, 1938:329). But she did not seriously consider the possibility that exchange along the roads was motivated by economics only secondarily, and her account of the roads makes frequent appeal to terms drawn from the vocabulary of Western capitalism, such as "profit and loss," "scarcity value," "demand," "currency," "purchase," "price," "fee," "debt," "haggling," "vending," "bartering," "banking," "economic crime," and "entrepreneur" (1937:22, 1938:176, 219, 324, 327–30, 333, 1947:206). That the Arapesh themselves mostly spoke about their exchange transactions "in terms of affection," friendship, and gratitude was seen by Mead as a "disguise": the real business was a "vital economic exchange" being conducted "under the guise of free giving" (1938:327–28, 1935:28). Mead of course recognized that people's motivations might be more or less economic and that feasting and exchange could also be used for such noneconomic purposes as "bolster[ing] prestige, establish[ing] ties between families or clans, or validat[ing] claims to position" (1947:223). Nevertheless, such functions were regarded as secondary, pursued within economic constraints, rather than regarded as themselves establishing the constraints and aims of exchange.[22]

Coupled with Mead's interpretation of the roads as primarily economic was her tendency to minimize in her analysis the political significance of exchange relationships and material transactions. Although she noted that buanyin exchange partners behaved assertively and competitively toward one another, she took pains in her texts to square this observation with her central claim that Arapesh men were culturally "schooled in gentleness and non-aggression" by consistently describing "the institutionalized exchange relationship" between buanyim as a patterned exception to

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the cultural norm (Mead 1940:354, 1947:204). According to Mead, Arapesh "society assumes, usually correctly," that for the ordinary Arapesh man "the active, competitive life" of a buanyin is "eminently uncongenial and distasteful" (1935:30). Nevertheless, since "the organization of large-scale feasts" requires careful accounting and assertiveness, certain individuals in every community were selected to receive "a definite training for the special, contrasting behavior that 'big men' must display." Eventually "a few of them [would] yield to all this pressure, learn to stamp their feet and count their pigs, to plant special gardens and organize hunting-parties, and to maintain the long-time planning over several years that is necessary in order to give a ceremony which lasts no longer than a day or so" (1935:30, 1937:32). In *The Mountain Arapesh*, Mead wrote that "the greatest function of the [buanyin] relationship" was that "it channels . . . feelings of aggressiveness and competitiveness into narrow, socially guarded grooves, and so permits their exercise for the benefit of the society, without the disruption of the mild helpfulness characteristic of the bulk of Arapesh social life" (1947:204–7). The buanyin relationship also served as an outlet for what Mead portrayed as men's natural frustration at the vague terms and open-endedness of so many economic transactions "in a society where the norm for men is to be gentle, unacquisitive, and cooperative, where no man reckons up the debt that another owes him, and each man hunts that others may eat" (1947:205, 1935:30): "whereas [ordinarily] cost accounting, dunning, [and] reproaching in economic terms are regarded [by Arapesh] as disgraceful, between buanyins there is a frank accounting system" (1937:33). (Mead comments, "What a relief to be able turn to one's *buanyin* and openly dun him" [1947:206].) In short Mead portrays the buanyin relationship as "a social institution that develops aggressiveness and encourages the rare competitive spirit," even while insisting that it does not really count as a culturally significant pattern of masculine competitiveness and aggression (1935:28).

Where Mead sees the buanyin relationship as motivated by something other than the need to release or channel primal competitive impulses, its motivation is described as economic and practical. Hence her suggestion that even in their roles as competitors, buanyim actually cooperate in the service of the common good. Mead writes in *Cooperation and Competition* that they are "expected . . . to goad one another on to economic activity. . . . Buanyins do not compete with each other, rather they keep each other up to the mark. They cooperate in maintaining a more rapid large-scale turnover of food than would otherwise occur in the community" (1937:33). It is as if buanyim, then, were rival producers in an idealized model of the capitalist market: their competition increases efficiency and lowers prices, thereby raising the standard of living for all.

Whereas Mead's analysis of the roads may draw too heavily on culture-external models, Fortune's "Pigs for Dance Songs" is hyper-particularistic: it is a document in which no model is imposed on the material at all. Even more than Fortune's other ethnographic writings, which have at least some anchoring in a disciplinary discourse if only in that "virtually everything is at variance with what others have found or assumed" (Rice 1979: 108), "Pigs for Dance Songs" is marked by an extreme paucity of exogenous perspective, a striking absence of the kind of objectivity we expect from a description by a professional outside observer. The extant fragment lacks so much as a single reference to the anthropological literature, and the sole ethnographic comparison in the text is drawn only to assert that the roads' system of "telescoping" escort was unique in the region. We know from comments Fortune made in his correspondence and publications that he disapproved of subordinating ethnographic material to theory,[23] and when we look at the use of analytic categories in his other writings, we find that they serve primarily as loose organizing devices, minimal connectors for what was the real stuff of his ethnographies: detailed descriptions of particular activities or events he participated in, observed, and heard reported. Given that the other manuscript fragments surviving in his papers are broadly divided into sections on such topics as religion, ritual, and (somewhat unsystematically) social organization, Fortune was apparently trying to organize his Arapesh materials according to the conventional rubrics. But the drafts tend to veer off topic and then break off, and they show evidence of repeated reediting, suggesting that he found it difficult to abide by the structure he imposed (and giving us some clue as to why the monograph was never completed).[24] In this sense "Pigs for Dance Songs" is an extremely limited document. It is so particularistic that it would be quite useless for a reader not already acquainted with Arapesh culture from some other source, ideally firsthand fieldwork.

But with all that said, what we find most striking about Fortune's work in the light of our own field experience among the Arapesh is its verisimilitude, the core of ethnographic truth in it that stands out across the intervening seventy years. Many of the specific institutions Mead and Fortune described—the *tamberan* cult, initiation ceremonies, the elaborate system of taboos, and the convention of telescoping escort when carrying pigs along the roads—have since fallen by the wayside. But the larger themes of Fortune's writings—sorcery, morality, formal exchange, and male competitive politics—remain important concerns for Arapesh villagers today and are prominent in their own discourse. We recognize that these are also themes Fortune developed in his earlier major works, *Sorcerers of Dobu* (1932), *Omaha Secret Societies* (1932), and *Manus Religion* (1935), so

that he began his Arapesh fieldwork already attuned to them. But this does not diminish our appreciation for how honestly his writings seem to reflect the idioms and concerns of the Arapesh people with whom he lived; hence our repeated reference to a quality of empathy throughout this paper.

Fortune achieved his empathetic understanding by placing primary methodological emphasis on listening, on trying to understand what people were saying, not only when speaking to him, but also when they spoke to one another. Fortune's emphasis on listening is evident in the attention he gave to how Arapesh people construed things, in the care he took to establish what they thought was important, and in the enormous effort he expended on recording and interpreting their words. As we have noted, Fortune's field notes contain numerous texts that are transcriptions or summaries of speeches, primarily the allusive politico-moral disquisitions called *sakihas* that sought to persuade listeners to adopt or eschew specific courses of action by framing moral precepts and explicating their consequences in terms of typified acts. That Fortune wrote down and struggled to translate this speech from a difficult vernacular substantiates the importance he attached to understanding the culture through listening.

And thus we are brought to the difference between Mead and Fortune's ethnographic approaches. The two anthropologists' views of the Arapesh roads differ in part because of their divergent fieldwork experiences and their division of labor, and in part because of the prior interests and theoretical idioms each brought to the research. But Mead and Fortune also had incommensurate explanatory ideals and analytical values (Putnam 1981). Mead aimed to achieve a view of the "culture as a whole," writing "as if the observer stood outside and looked down upon" it (Mead 1938:151). Fortune, by contrast, did not aspire to this kind of universal frame of reference. So whereas Mead applied the objective, distributional concept of the "culture area," an established analytical concept taken from her own scientific discipline, it was the people's own concept of the watershed along the roads that Fortune adopted as the relevant boundary of Arapesh culture. So closely did Mead's work respond to Western scientific questions and American cultural concerns that it has been widely appreciated even outside anthropological circles. Fortune's, in contrast, grew increasingly remote from these. His writings on the Arapesh adopt a local vernacular perspective to such an extent that they suffer in comprehensibility (they did, after all, have to be read by a Western audience), and they have thus been little valued even within Fortune's own discipline of anthropology.

Not only were Mead and Fortune's different analytical values reflected in their writings; these values had consequences for the methods they used. Mead administered projective psychological "Rorschach inkblot" tests and recorded detailed observations on children's lip play, breast-feeding, and people's behavior, for example, during "fifty minutes of village life in Alitoa" (1947:414–15). Fortune's form of empiricism, on the other hand, led him to write down long stretches of discourse, as he did at the Kobelen feast; this kind of patient, nondirective listening was something Mead, it seems, did much less of. Less of a watcher and more of a listener than Mead, Fortune arrived at his formulations of Arapesh morality on the basis of Arapesh public discourse in genres like sakihas that he heard people use with one another, whereas Mead derived hers largely from informants' responses to her inquiries and from her own observations. While Mead strove to make etic generalizations about behavioral patterns and psychological character, Fortune strove to gain an emic comprehension of the subtleties of vernacular idiom and verbal art. The methods Mead adopted on the basis of her scientific ideals distanced her from the Arapesh people she studied, whereas Fortune's attempt to understand this foreign people through careful listening led him to empathetically adopt the Arapesh perspective as his own.

It is one of the great legacies of the German Counter Enlightenment that we get through the work of Franz Boas and his students that empathetic insight is a legitimate and productive way of knowing in the human sciences. In conventional naturalist Enlightenment science, knowing other humans is really no different from knowing natural physical entities: we know them objectively by formulating a theory or abstract model that generalizes about their causes or regularities. But romantic Counter Enlightenment interpretivism recognizes the special power we have to understand human others by virtue of our fundamental similarities, our capacity to understand others subjectively "by empathizing with them and . . . putting ourselves in their situation" (Kögler and Stueber 2000:1). Because we are like others in our humanity, we can imaginatively project ourselves into their lives and even learn to simulate important aspects of their experience by actually taking their places, adopting their practices, listening to and speaking their words, and opening ourselves to their feelings. In attempting to identify in this way with culturally different others, we are often confronted with the limitations imposed by our own cultural perspective. Empathetic understanding is not—indeed, cannot be—absolute; it is instead hermeneutic, achieving only successive approximations to the other's point of view. For all their shortcomings, "Pigs for Dance Songs" and Fortune's outlines of the Kobelen feast speeches are redeemed by their

empathetic insight. Though Fortune was an outsider to American anthropology, he was a true Boasian in his empathetic ethnographic approach.

Fortune's excessive particularism might even be seen as a characteristic Boasian shortcoming, albeit in his case one that was so severe that it made his ethnographic materials all but unusable, except through a major interpretive effort such as we have undertaken here. Fortune's ethnography may accurately reflect the values, ideas, and concerns of the Arapesh people he knew, but there is no getting around the regrettable fact that he has left us but little by way of such reflection, just a tiny window only few of us can peek through. In this respect Mead's self-conscious ethnographic thoroughness and consideration of her readers, both those of her day and those she presciently envisioned revisiting her fieldwork far into the future, are virtues not to be regarded lightly. And yet, much as we rely on Mead, we find her Arapesh writings to be rather distorted by her "well-known penchant for excessive generalization" (Lohmann 2004:112). For all their polish and detail, we often need to second-guess Mead's writings in light of their discrepancies from the other sources of evidence. In some important sense, then, Fortune's Arapesh writings—iconoclastic, fragmentary, and mostly unpublished though they unfortunately are—are more trustworthy and reveal greater ethnographic insight than Mead's ably compiled oeuvre.

At the very least we would insist that Fortune's materials are an invaluable resource for getting at "the truth" about Arapesh culture and history, because the work of each ethnographer has strengths that help compensate for faults in the work of the other. Our understanding of the roads pieces together our own field experience, Mead's overview of diffusion, and the voice Fortune gives to the Arapesh people of the time. What emerge are the outlines of a remarkable and previously obscure regional institution, the Arapesh roads, whose central importance to Arapesh social organization, identity, and political rivalry—even to the point of warfare—Fortune fully reflected in his work. Even so, there is still much we do not know.

Notes

1. For example, in the glossary at the end of Mead's first Mountain Arapesh volume, she defines *road* as "the traditional route from hamlet to hamlet along which inter-group diffusion of complex forms of ceremonial behavior takes place" (1938:345).

2. As is the case with other proper names and vernacular terms, the name of this dance is spelled variously in Mead's and Fortune's writings. We have edited the spelling here in a way that we feel most adequately renders the Arapesh pronunciation (in the Cemaun dialect we know best) in English orthography. We take this approach with all vernacular proper names and quotations cited here.

3. For a more detailed account of Mead and Fortune's New Guinea fieldwork, their marriage's breakup, and their intellectual clashes, see Bashkow and Dobrin in prep, Dobrin and Bashkow in prep.

4. This no doubt played a part in energizing the couple's virtually constant efforts during their stay in Alitoa to find an alternate field site (see Bashkow and Dobrin in prep). As Mead mentions at numerous points in her writing (e.g., Mead 1972:229, 1977:124) and as a survey of the *Diary of Events* confirms (Mead 1947), Alitoa was often deserted.

5. Though it is conventional to call them "roads" in New Guinea, they are really no more than narrow footpaths.

6. These people were called *warybim* by Mead and Fortune's informants. They are speakers of Bukiyip Arapesh (Conrad 1978; Conrad and Wogiga 1991). Fortune and Mead's translation of this term, "river-men," presumably implying the Sepik River, is almost certainly incorrect, since this meaning would be expressed as *worybim* or *worybysim* in both Mountain Arapesh and Bukiyip. The term more likely means "villages-men" (i.e., "the men from those villages"), *waryb* being the plural of *wabyr* (village). This conventionalization would conform to the local preference for nonspecific or elliptical, and thus deniable, ways of uttering names (here sorcerers) that invoke trouble or could precipitate conflict if overheard. We are indebted to Bob Conrad for confirming the relevant dialectal variants for us.

7. Although Mead and Fortune note the existence of three or even four roads, only the two easternmost roads, Cemaun and Rohwim, figure directly in their accounts (Fortune 1939:22; Mead 1935:10, 1938:331–32), and it is only these two that had primary significance to the Arapesh people with whom we worked along the northern Arapesh/Boikin border in the late 1990s. Our discussion here is therefore focused on these two roads (though see Mead 1938:332 for mention of the roads further to the west). Mead and Fortune's common spelling of the road names, Shemaun and Lahowhin, reflects their pronunciation in the Rohwim dialect.

8. Mead surely took the roads-as-arc model too far when she suggested that people had "a tendency to regard the plains and the sea as interchangeable." She based this assessment on the symbolic association the roads shared with "the great *marsalai* of the sea" (1938:331). But this appears to be a result of Mead's misinterpreting people's uses of the term *Cemaun* (the name of the eastern road) as referring to generalized directions rather than to the road affiliation of numerous surrounding villages to the north, east, and south.

9. Never one to take criticism lightly, Mead was stung shortly before leaving for her Arapesh fieldwork by A. L. Kroeber's *American Anthropologist* review of *Growing Up in New Guinea*, which raised "questions . . . about paucity of ethnographic data," questions that applied as well, Kroeber said, to Mead's earlier book on Samoa (Kroeber 1931:250; see also Hart 1932). A bristling letter from Mead in reply notwithstanding, Kroeber stood by his assessment that "you have not in your two books given all the evidence which the ethnographer wants" (MMP, MM/ALK, May 1, 1931, ALK/MM, May 14, 1931 [C3:K]; see also Mead 1933:9). Mead's *Mountain Arapesh* ethnography, with its multiple volumes of ethnographic detail, would forestall any further such criticism by establishing Mead's credentials as an anthropologist capable of producing the kind of comprehensive cultural documentation that represented solid ethnological scholarship at that time. Given that the hallmark of such scholarship (particularly in the American tradition) was to present specific cultural forms — the material culture, kinship system, social organization, economic arrangements, religious ideas, and so forth — within their areal context, it would have been too great a risk to her professional reputation for Mead to allow the areal setting of her Arapesh ethnography to be founded predominantly on Fortune's material, since this material was potentially discreditable. Hence, Mead's account of the roads, which relied unavoidably on Fortune's material, was moved to a relatively freestanding section at the very end of the volume and her major "Description of the Area" is presented as the wider Sepik region, enabling her to draw extensively on her own Mundugumor and Tchambuli work and on the published studies of researchers other than Fortune (1938:150, 153–202, 321–32).

10. Fortune's decision to attend the Kobelen feast compelled the Alitoan man La'abe, who had a gift friend in Kobelen, to contribute a pig, lest he suffer the embarrassment of showing up empty-handed (Mead 1947:359–60). Another Alitoa man, Yapiaun, later added a second pig that he had found caught in one of his hunting traps on the day of their departure (PDS 81).

11. We have regularized Fortune's spelling of the locality names Kobelen and Dogur. See note 3, above.

12. A related custom elsewhere in New Guinea is the Yupno people's habit of singing the *koñgap* melody belonging to the landowner as a form of protection when walking across that person's land. The traveler thereby "proves himself to be in the know, to be a friend" (Wassman 1997:148).

13. To our knowledge this is not a voice in which Mead wrote. Even in the famous passage in *Sex and Temperament* describing the children's fright upon the arrival of the dangerous *tamberan*, intimacy is conveyed from the standpoint of an omniscient narrator observing the characters' thoughts and feelings (Mead 1935:64).

14. Mead did recognize that the importation of dances "breaks down at the last mountain ridge, because the Plains Arapesh receive all their ceremonial importations from the Abelam peoples" (Mead 1938:335). While she sees this as relevant to the dances' progressive devaluation as they proceed inland from village to village, she does not bring this fact to bear on her delimitation of the culture area.

15. See Bashkow 2004 for a more general discussion of the inevitably etic "culture area" concept and the contrast between emic and etic (folk and analytical) cultural boundaries.

16. Here again, we are indebted to Bob Conrad, who was able to share with us a contemporary Bukiyip perspective on village groupings across the watershed.

17. In his notes Fortune groups together Kotai, Autogi, Dagur, Yaminip, Malis, and Yauiya under the "eastern road." Listed for the other road are Mogahin, Koblen, Waginara, Umanep, Liwo, Aliatoa, Bugabehem, Numinihih, and Halisimi (KFS 285; see also Mead 1938:331; Roscoe 1994; these village names reflect Fortune's spelling). Our informant from Wautogik was Clemen Hayin of the leading Abahinem clan. He was the community's pre-eminent authority on traditional matters.

18. A perspectival understanding of the roads extends even to the road name Cemaun (or Shemaun), which is glossed as "dugong" in all the writings of Mead and Fortune, who lived in Alitoa on the Rohwim Road. According to Bob Conrad (personal communication, January 20, 2005), this is also the understanding of the term given by contemporary central Bukiyip people, whose traditional road affiliation is Rohwim. In a speech reported by Fortune, a Cemaun man says of himself, "I am a fish of the sea" (KFS 298). But the Wautogik villagers we worked among were resolute that the Cemaun Road, with which they identify, takes as its emblem not the dugong but the shark, and they manifest this meaning visually when they represent themselves on banners using the image of a shark.

19. It is virtually certain that these concise and focused texts do not represent the Kobelen feast speeches in full. Our best guess is that what Fortune wrote down was a running summary of the speeches as well as the commentary on them given by his informant and house boy Kaberman ("Tommy"), whose home village was Kobelen.

20. The detailed example presented in Fortune (1939:34) shows that interlocality warfare did not always take place across roads; war could also be provoked by escalation of conflict between localities along the same road.

21. Indeed, the interrelatedness of marriage, adultery, and warfare *was* the subject of Fortune's 1939 article on Arapesh warfare.

22. Elsewhere, in the context of comparing the Arapesh to a more "commercially minded people like the Manus," Mead calls the buanyin relationship "not commercial but ceremonial and symbolic," though without elaborating how this might constitute a positive form of motivation (1947:227). Even where she concluded that a particular type of transaction served economic ends poorly, her interpretations were still cast in terms of the rationality governing commerce and trade (see, e.g., 1947:221–25).

23. For example, in a laudatory book review Fortune compliments the "author for going nowhere into unfounded speculation": he "gives the theories on the subject in about seven concluding pages, the evidences . . . in the earlier five hundred and ninety odd" (Fortune 1931).

24. Apparently Fortune was not always limited in this way. In his 1927 book on dreaming, *The Mind in Sleep*, Fortune elaborates a typological model of the ways in which unacceptable attitudes are expressed in dreams, although here, too, his specific examples (his own and others' dreams) lead him to convolute the model, so that it is not expressed neatly (Lohmann n.d., personal communication, March 12, 2005).

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MMP: Margaret Mead Papers and South Pacific Ethnographic Archives. Manuscript Division. Library of Congress. Washington DC. Citations give box:file numbers.

PDS: "Pigs for Dance Songs." Manuscript by Reo Fortune, reconstructed in part by Paul Roscoe and in part by the authors from fragments in Reo Franklin Fortune Papers at the Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand, files 80–323–13/1 (ii) ["Arapesh Field notes (ii)" file], 80–323–10 ["Ordnance Survey" file], 80–323–21 ["Old New Guinea Notes (1)" file], and 80–323–21/3 ["Various Notes, Typescripts, etc." file]. Page numbers reference the pagination we applied to our own copy; they are not reflected in the papers in the archive.

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