

**Return to Baguia: an ethnographic museum  
collection on the edge of living memory**

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## **Declaration**

This thesis contains no material that has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any university. To the best of the author's knowledge, it contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference is made in the text.

Joanna Barrkman

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I first sighted the Baguia Collection at the Museum der Kulturen Basel in 2009 during a research trip supported by the Sidney Myer Trust. The scope and scale of the Baguia Collection struck me as being extraordinary, particularly in the context of loss experienced in Timor-Leste in recent decades. It was my good fortune to research an ethnographic collection held in perpetuity by one of Europe's most innovative and progressive ethnographic museums, the Museum der Kulturen Basel. Thanks to Dr Anna Schmid, Director, Museum der Kulturen Basel, for her interest and stimulating conversations during my visits to Basel. Mr Richard Kunz, Southeast Asia Curator, has diligently supported this research; at every twist and turn he has responded with enthusiasm and acumen. For this I owe him a debt of gratitude. Thanks to other staff who have fielded my requests.

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## **Abstract**

The question of what significance ethnographic museum collections might hold for source communities in the current era, particularly when collections sit on the edge of living memory, is explored in this thesis through a case-study of the Baguia Collection and its virtual return to the Makasae people of Baguia Sub-district, Timor-Leste, in 2014.

The Baguia Collection was acquired by Dr Alfred Bühler on behalf of the Museum der Kulturen Basel, Switzerland, in 1935 using salvage ethnology methodologies. This diasporic collection now exists in Switzerland as a record of Bühler's accomplishments and of Swiss ethnographic history, and as a time capsule of Makasae heritage.

This research explores an initial phase of engagement between the residents of Baguia and the Baguia Collection. Makasae responses to this Collection, which consists of 691 material culture objects and over 300 historical photos, raise issues pertinent to contemporary museology practice as it seeks to identify appropriate relational processes in collaborating with source communities. The research findings support proposals for the flexible, pro-technological access and digital return of museum collections to source communities, yet considers the inherent limitations and complexities in this methodology as well.

I argue that the Baguia Collection has shared heritage values and that digital access arrangements will enhance the restitution of cultural knowledge and its subsequent inter-generational transmission in Baguia while also providing the Museum der Kulturen Basel with more updated and relevant information about the Collection. My project demonstrates that access to digital images of the Collection has enabled residents of Baguia to assert their cultural authority over the Collection, and that with further digital access they would activate the Collection to meet their own development agendas. By animating the Collection through 'acts of transfer' the Baguia community illustrated the potential for the Collection to become a source of metacultural production that reinvigorates contemporary Makasae identity and develops Makasae social and cultural capital, while ultimately enhancing their capacity to aspire.





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## Acronyms and initialisms

RDTL	Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste
MKB	Museum der Kulturen Basel
NCTL	National Collection of Timor-Leste
PCA	Portuguese Colonial Administration
REMB	Royal Ethnographic Museum Berlin
CIBA	Chemical Industry Basel ( <i>Chemische Industrie Basel</i> , G)
SETAC	Secretaria de Estado Turismo, Arte e Cultura (Office of the Secretariat of Tourism, Art and Culture)

## Glossary – Makasae

<i>abalaku</i>	warrior shield
<i>afa falu; afa lebe</i>	sacred stone; amulet stone, also known as <i>molo</i> , M; <i>kakaluk</i> , T
<i>afa watakoru</i>	‘secure stone’ or ‘guardian stone’
<i>akadiru</i>	lontar or Asian palmyra palm; <i>Borassus flabellifer</i> , L; <i>akadiru</i> , T
<i>alasa</i>	gebang or cabbage palm; <i>Corypha utan</i> , L; <i>tali taban</i> , T
<i>ana’a gibere’e</i>	leader or person in a position of authority over the <i>aldeia</i> or <i>sala fu; liurai</i> , T. The word <i>liurai</i> is used in Makasae and other Timorese languages
<i>anu falu</i>	sacred person or revered elder
<i>arara</i>	season of food shortage at the end of the dry season
<i>asa namu</i>	feather headdresses; <i>manu fulun</i> , T
<i>asukai</i>	warriors
<i>ata lasi</i>	fire flint
<i>ata nei uai</i>	ancestral clan hearths where sacred food is prepared
<i>ate loi</i>	wooden walking stick

<i>ate ran</i>	wooden plates; <i>baku kai</i> , N; <i>bikan ai</i> , T
<i>ate sia</i>	cassava; <i>ai farina</i> , T
<i>atwaa asukai</i>	masks, mask worn by warriors
<i>atwaa, atwaaal</i>	wooden sculpted ancestral figures; <i>ai toos</i> , T
<i>ba</i>	loincloth, customarily worn by men; <i>bakfolik</i> , T
<i>biti, biti renda</i>	mat; <i>biti</i> , T
<i>boe malu</i>	betelnut [ <i>boe</i> = nut; <i>malu</i> = Piperaceae, L], chewed with lime powder ( <i>abu</i> , M); <i>Areca catechu</i> , L; <i>bua malus ho abu</i> , T
<i>boe tuka</i>	small woven basket with inset tray used to serve betelnut
<i>bu manu taba</i>	part of obligatory Makasae mortuary exchange rituals and gifts
<i>buli</i>	kendi; a container designed to store and pour liquid, which is most often without a handle. It has an opening at the top of its neck into which liquid is poured into the vessel, and a spout through which liquid is poured out; the word kendi is derived from Sanskrit
<i>bura kesi</i>	marriage negotiations within the extended family (i.e. a type of arranged marriage when a woman is promised at birth for marriage), known as ‘the threading together of cloth’
<i>dae</i>	foreigner, stranger; <i>malae</i> , T
<i>daesa</i>	hair clippings
<i>daru</i>	indigo; <i>Indigofera tinctoria</i> , L; <i>taum</i> , T
<i>data gi gnaaba</i>	guardian of the myths
<i>dato lolo</i>	recitation of origin narratives
<i>dicia</i>	arrowroot; <i>kontas mutin</i> , T
<i>diki</i>	shell flywheels used to weight spindles
<i>falu</i> , (n.); <i>falunu</i> (adj.)	sacred, prohibited, taboo, heated; <i>lulik</i> , T; <i>luli</i> , N
<i>fu</i>	see <i>sala fu</i>
<i>gaba</i>	necklace made of red coral beads; <i>morten</i> , T

<i>giginigini</i>	customs, tradition; <i>lisan</i> , T (the Tetun word <i>lisan</i> is widely used in Makasae language in preference to <i>giginigini</i> )
<i>giligili</i>	bell, worn by horses; <i>giligili</i> , T
<i>gula soru</i>	headdress; <i>kai-bauk</i> , T
<i>bedan</i>	pandanus; <i>Pandanus fascicularis</i> , L; <i>boro</i> , T
<i>kadi bua</i>	woven lidded fibre basket; <i>mama fatin</i> , T
<i>kai</i>	wooden disc-shaped plank that sits perpendicular to the house stump; <i>ai</i> , T
<i>kai ori</i>	spinning top made from <i>jambua</i> wood and twine
<i>kaka</i>	elder masculine sibling; <i>mane</i> , T
<i>kida ate</i>	wooden drop-spindles; <i>ti'i kabas</i> , T
<i>kiori</i>	woven fibre rice-flaying dish (medium size), also known as <i>luru barai</i> and <i>luru mata</i> for small dishes and <i>luru bere</i> for large dishes, M; <i>lafatik</i> , <i>lafatik ki'ik</i> and <i>lafatik bo'ot</i> , T
<i>kobe</i>	green-leaf vegetables; <i>mustarda</i> , T
<i>kola</i>	handwoven man's cloth wrap; <i>tais mane</i> , T
<i>kuma</i>	outer bark of the <i>Borassus flabellifer</i> tree; <i>tua metan nia kaskado</i> , T
<i>laida'a sobu-lolo'o</i>	lineage or ritual clan leader, also known as <i>naine</i> , M; <i>lian nain</i> , T
<i>lakasoru, laki</i>	wooden roof finials used to adorn the <i>oma falu</i> , also sometimes made from buffalo horns; <i>kakuluk</i> , T
<i>lama lebe</i>	ceremonial pendant used as a symbol of status and for bridewealth exchange; <i>belak</i> , T
<i>ledu kai</i>	cotton mangle; <i>ai dedu</i> , T
<i>lode</i>	woven shoulder bag; <i>kobe</i> , T
<i>luhu</i>	woven rice storage baskets with lids; <i>kobe bo'ot</i> , T
<i>luka</i>	taro; <i>talas</i> , T

<i>mana toe mana gauru</i>	obligatory gift exchange as part of mortuary practices known as ‘bridewealth of the dead’
<i>mani rasa</i>	amulets of rock and natural material, also known as <i>molo</i> or <i>afa falu</i> , M; <i>biru</i> or <i>kakaluk</i> , T
<i>mate bian</i>	‘spirits of the dead’
<i>molo</i>	amulets, stones (see <i>mani rasa</i> )
<i>mua busu</i>	earthenware ceramic pot; <i>sanan rai</i> , T
<i>mua ima</i>	clay; <i>rai</i> , T
<i>mua kaneka</i>	earthenware ceramic cup; <i>kaneka rai</i> , T
<i>na’a</i>	woven fibre carry-all basket; <i>bote</i> , T
<i>nanai’e</i>	lineage or ritual clan leader, also known as <i>laida’a sobu-lolo’o</i> , M; <i>lian nain</i> , T
<i>noko</i>	younger male sibling; <i>alin</i> , T
<i>noka</i>	container for carrying palm-wine, other liquids or foodstuffs; <i>au</i> , T
<i>oma falu</i>	ceremonial house, sacred house, also known as <i>oma bese</i> , M; <i>ume lulik</i> , <i>ume lisan</i> or <i>ume adat</i> , T
<i>oma harai / oma bere</i>	small ceremonial house / large ceremonial house
<i>oma namie</i>	male ceremonial house
<i>oma tufu</i>	female ceremonial house
<i>oma gua ha</i>	keeper or guardian of the sacred house
<i>oma taru</i>	ceremony to celebrate the completion of the construction of the ceremonial house roof; <i>taka uma</i> , T
<i>omarabe</i>	wife-givers; <i>umane</i> , T
<i>oro</i>	lance; <i>dimon</i> , T
<i>palmatori</i>	an implement used by Portuguese colonial administration officers and their staff to beat Timorese on the palms of their hands
<i>rabi</i>	handwoven form of customary attire worn by women; <i>tais</i> or <i>tais fetu</i> , T
<i>rate</i>	grave, burial site; <i>rate</i> , T

<i>re safa</i>	a platform in the ceremonial house that is the foundation for the floor of the house and/or a bench-like seat upon which elders sit, chew betelnut and pray to the ancestors. Also known as <i>uafa</i> in certain Makasae dialects.
<i>redi</i>	net, trap; <i>redi</i> , T
<i>sa'a</i>	four wooden pillars that form the stumps upon which the <i>oma falu</i> is built
<i>sa'a asukai</i>	male house stumps
<i>sa'a tufura</i>	female house stumps
<i>sabasili</i>	resist-dye frames; <i>ai lalae</i> , T
<i>sae</i>	candlenuts; <i>kami</i> , T
<i>sae daene</i>	spinning top made from a seed and twine
<i>safa lale</i>	thread counter, also known as <i>esu lale</i> , M
<i>safara</i>	resist-dye technique; <i>futus</i> , T; <i>ikat</i> , I
<i>sala</i>	warfare; <i>funu</i> , T
<i>sala fu, fu</i>	descent group from the clan; origin of one's genealogy is the clan, source, trunk or base; <i>umakain</i> , T
<i>samurai</i>	type of sword, also known as <i>sita mara</i> , M
<i>sasoka</i>	woven fibre lidded pouch used to carry tobacco, coins or small possessions; <i>tiu oan</i> , T
<i>rau-wai</i>	first eating of the harvest ceremony, harvest of crops; <i>sau batar</i> , T
<i>serum seru</i>	back-strap loom; <i>ai soru</i> , T
<i>sia</i>	sweet potato; <i>febuk midar</i> , T
<i>si'i</i>	sword
<i>sita</i>	machete; <i>katana</i> , T
<i>suri</i>	hair comb; <i>sasuit</i> , T

<i>sobudada</i>	elder, old man who adjudicates over conflict and issues within the clan, an ultimate authority; <i>lian nain</i> , T
<i>sua noka</i>	bamboo container, often used to store lime powder, paper
<i>tabi tabi</i>	a rolled-up fibre basket
<i>tana uli</i>	nail clippings
<i>taru falumu</i>	ceremonial sceptre; <i>rota lulik</i> , T; <i>kai ua luli</i> , N
<i>tasu</i>	earthenware ceramic frypan; <i>tasu</i> , T
<i>tau falunu</i>	coconut shell container used for drinking sacred water; <i>nu'u kakun lulik</i> , T
<i>tefi</i>	corncocks; <i>batar</i> , T
<i>tefi was siri</i>	corn crop harvest; <i>silu batar</i> , T
<i>tere luru</i>	woven fibre food-cover; also known as <i>bore luru</i> , M; <i>matan</i> , T
<i>teru meta</i>	black sugar palm; <i>Arenga pinnata</i> , L; <i>tali metan</i> , T
<i>tiba</i>	hand-drum; <i>babadok</i> , T
<i>titi, bobokasa</i>	drum; <i>babadok bo'ot</i> , T
<i>to anu lafu</i>	'if you do not give you are not human'
<i>toka</i>	small woven fibre basket used to carry cotton for spinning
<i>tufu seti</i>	to propose marriage; to 'open the door' in the context of marriage negotiations
<i>tufumata</i>	sisters or wife-takers; <i>fetosan</i> , T
<i>tufumata-umara'e</i>	extended family connections between the wife-givers and the wife-takers; <i>fetosan umane</i> , T. <i>Fetosan umane</i> is a part of <i>lia moris - lia mate</i> , T, ceremonies ( <i>lia moris</i> refers to marriage and celebrations at the ceremonial house; <i>lia mate</i> refers to mortuary ceremonies).
<i>tufuræ gi ira</i>	bridewealth gifts or dowry exchange for marriage; <i>barlake</i> , T
<i>tufuræ gi bura</i>	bridewealth gifts or dowry exchange for marriage; <i>barlake</i> , T
<i>tuka</i>	performance of the circular, rhythmic dance with call and response; <i>tebe dai</i> , T
<i>tuturu</i> (v.)	to carry goods on the head; <i>tutur</i> , T

<i>nai, nai lolae</i>	blood; two bloods
<i>nai buti</i>	white sperm
<i>utadili</i>	beans; <i>koto</i> , T
<i>uma-tala-fu'u</i>	clan origin narratives; <i>lisan</i> , T
<i>wa</i>	clan or family groups, also used to describe the land of origin to which a person and their family belong; <i>knua</i> , T
<i>Xefe/s de Suco</i>	chief/s of the village

## Glossary – Indonesian

<i>adat</i>	cultural law, protocols
<i>alang alang</i>	grass
<i>banteng</i>	fort
<i>ikat</i>	resist-dye technique; <i>futus</i> , T; <i>safara</i> , M
<i>keris</i>	dagger
<i>parang</i>	sword

## Glossary – Portuguese

<i>Administrador do Concelho</i>	District Administrator
<i>Chefe de Postu</i>	Sub-district Administrator
<i>Chefe de Suco</i>	Chief of the administrative area/village
<i>concelhos</i>	district
<i>escudos</i>	currency used in Portuguese trading bloc
<i>povoação</i>	settlement or hamlet; <i>aldeia</i> , T
<i>postu</i>	administrative centre
<i>reino</i>	a Portuguese-appointed authority figure, in a specific region

## Glossary – Naueti

<i>baku kai</i>	wooden bowls and vessels; <i>ate rau</i> , M; <i>bikan ai</i> , T
<i>luli</i>	sacred, prohibited, taboo, heated; <i>falunu</i> or <i>falu</i> , M; <i>lulik</i> , T
<i>kado</i>	hand-saw used for woodwork
<i>kai hala</i>	awl used for woodwork
<i>kai mamu</i>	chisel used for woodwork
<i>kai ua</i>	sceptre; <i>taru</i> , M; <i>rota</i> , T
<i>sabili</i>	hand-axe used for woodwork

## Glossary – Tetun

<i>ai farina</i>	cassava; <i>ate sia</i> , T
<i>ai lale</i>	ikat frame; <i>sabasili</i> , M
<i>ai dedu</i>	cotton mangle; <i>ledu kai</i> , M
<i>ai rin</i>	wooden pillars used for the construction of ceremonial houses
<i>ai soru</i>	weaving loom; <i>serum seru</i> , M
<i>ai toos</i>	ancestral figurine sculptures; <i>atwaa</i> , M
<i>alin</i>	younger sibling (either male or female); <i>noko</i> , M (younger male sibling)
<i>akadiru</i>	lontar or Asian palmyra palm; <i>Borassus flabellifer</i> , L; <i>akadiru</i> , M
<i>aldeia</i>	hamlets
<i>babadok bo'ot</i>	hand-drum; <i>tiba</i> , M
<i>babadok ki'ik</i>	small drum; <i>titi</i> , M
<i>batar</i>	corncoobs; <i>teli</i> , M
<i>belak</i>	metal pendant, symbolic of warrior prowess
<i>bikan ai</i>	wooden plate or vessel
<i>biti</i>	woven mat



<i>boro</i>	pandanus; <i>Pandanus fascicularis</i> , L; <i>bedan</i> , T
<i>bote</i>	carry-all basket; <i>na'a</i> , M
<i>buli</i>	water jar
<i>dimon</i>	lance; <i>oro</i> , M
<i>febuk midar</i>	sweet potato; <i>sia</i> , M
<i>fetosan umane</i>	bridewealth gift exchanges
<i>finta</i>	taxes
<i>funu</i>	war; <i>sala</i> , M
<i>futus</i>	resist-dye technique; <i>safara</i> , M; <i>ikat</i> , I
<i>hakefolik</i>	loincloth; <i>ba</i> , M
<i>jentiu</i>	animists, unbaptised people
<i>kabas</i>	cotton ( <i>Gossypium</i> sp., L); commercially spun and synthetically dyed cotton thread available from the shop
<i>kabas loja</i>	commercially spun and synthetically dyed thread, either cotton or rayon
<i>kabas sintetis</i>	commercially spun and synthetically dyed thread, either cotton or rayon
<i>kabas tradisional</i>	hand-spun cotton
<i>kaibauk</i>	ceremonial headdress
<i>kakuluk</i>	architectural finial; <i>lakasoru</i> , M
<i>kaneka rai</i>	earthenware cup; <i>mua kaneka</i> , M
<i>kami</i>	candlenut; <i>sae</i> , M
<i>katana</i>	machete; <i>sita</i> , M
<i>kontas mutin</i>	arrowroot; <i>dicia</i> , M
<i>kore metan</i>	observance of grieving period, which involves wearing black attire as a sign of mourning; also a series of mortuary ceremonies performed by family members of the deceased

<i>kornel</i>	colonel
<i>koto</i>	beans; <i>utadili</i> , M
<i>knuu</i>	clan or family group; <i>wa</i> , M
<i>lafatik</i>	woven fibre rice-flaying dish; <i>kiiori</i> , M
<i>leba</i> (v.)	to carry a load across the shoulders
<i>lian nain</i>	lineage or clan leader; <i>laida'a sobu-lolo'o</i> , <i>nainie</i> , M
<i>lisan</i>	customs, traditions; <i>giginigini</i> , M
<i>lisan, moris fatin; ume moris fatin</i>	clan origin narratives; <i>uma-tala-fu'u</i> , M
<i>liurai</i>	an indigenous ruler of a clan, village; <i>anu bere</i> , M
<i>lulik</i>	sacred, prohibited, taboo, heated; <i>falu</i> (n.), <i>falunu</i> (adj.), M
<i>malae</i>	foreigner, outsider, stranger
<i>mama</i>	betelnut; <i>Areca catechu</i> , L; <i>boe</i> , M
<i>mama fatin</i>	woven lidded basket or small basket with inset tray used to serve betelnut; <i>kadi bua</i> , <i>boe tuka</i> , M
<i>manu fulun</i>	feather and woven fibre headdress
<i>maun</i>	older brother; <i>kaka</i> , M
<i>morten</i>	red coral necklaces, customarily used as part of bridewealth exchange; <i>gaba</i> , M
<i>morador</i>	Timorese or creole soldier or guard who protected and acted on behalf of the <i>liurai</i> and enacted local indigenous law (as distinct from Portuguese soldiers)
<i>mustarda</i>	green-leaf vegetables; <i>kobe</i> , M
<i>palmatori</i>	wooden paddle used for beating the palm of the hand (as punishment)
<i>postu</i>	administrative centre, post, station
<i>rai nain</i>	land owner, insider

<i>rate</i>	grave, burial site; <i>rate</i> , M
<i>rota</i>	sceptre; <i>taru</i> , M
<i>sama haree</i>	rice harvest
<i>sanan rai</i>	ceramics
<i>sasuit</i>	hair comb; <i>suri</i> , M
<i>sau batar</i>	first eating of the harvest ceremony, rice harvest; <i>rau-wai</i> , M
<i>silu batar</i>	corn crop harvest; <i>teli was siri</i> , M
<i>suco, suku</i>	administrative unit, settlement, village
<i>surik</i>	sword
<i>tais</i>	handwoven textiles customarily worn by women and men and customarily constituting a form of wealth and used for obligatory customary gift exchanges; also <i>tais fetu</i> and <i>tais mane</i> , T
<i>taka uma</i>	‘closing of the roof’ ceremony to celebrate the completion of the construction of the ceremonial house roof
<i>talas</i>	taro; <i>luka</i> , M
<i>tiu oan</i>	woven fibre pouch for carrying tobacco, coins or small possessions, purses/pouches; <i>sasoka</i> , M
<i>tali metan</i>	black sugar palm, <i>Arenga pinnata</i> , L, used for roofing and rope; <i>teru meta</i> , M
<i>tasi fetu</i>	feminine sea
<i>tasi mane</i>	masculine sea
<i>tasu</i>	earthenware, ceramic frypan; <i>tasu</i> , M
<i>tali tahan</i>	cabbage or gebang palm; <i>Corypha utan</i> , L; <i>alasa</i> , M
<i>tebe dai</i>	circular rhythmic dance accompanied by drumming and call-and-response chants; <i>tuka</i> , M
<i>tudik</i>	paring knife
<i>tutur</i> (v.)	to carry objects on the head

<i>uma kain</i>	clan source, trunk or base, household; <i>sala fu, fu</i> , M
<i>uma lulik</i>	sacred house, ceremonial house; <i>oma falu, oma bese</i> , M
<i>Xefe de Suco</i>	chief of the administrative area; formerly the <i>Chefe de Suco</i> , P

We believe if our sacred objects are lost, taken or stolen, it is because we have done something wrong. In Makasae culture we believe that by continuing to perform our rituals at the *oma falu* [ceremonial house], that one day those objects will come back or be returned to us.

Jose da Costa, Darwin, Australia, 10 February 2017.



## Introduction

This thesis explores what happens when an ethnographic museum collection and a source community are re-connected. It is a meditation about the appropriate processes and methodologies that make a European museum collection digitally accessible to a geographically remote source community. The collection under examination is the Baguia Collection held at the Museum der Kulturen Basel (hereafter MKB) in Switzerland. The source community of Makasae- and Nauti-speakers reside in Baguia Sub-district, Baucau District, in the newly independent nation of Timor-Leste, the home of Makasae and Nauti people. My research describes how this process occurred, what happened when it took place, and what relevance and significance this ethnographic collection holds for the source community after an absence of nearly 80 years. Three principle questions directed my research in Baguia and Basel: What are the implications of working with digital and other representations of collection holdings for source communities? What interpretations, engagements, activations and animations can result from such encounters? How might this bode for future engagements, collaborations and consultations, both for the source community and the museum?

More broadly, this research explores why culture still matters. As Appadurai has eloquently stated, 'it is in culture that ideas of the future, as much as those about the past are embedded and nurtured'.<sup>1</sup> This thesis examines how access to cultural capital can facilitate the development of cultural and social capacity, which Appadurai refers to as the 'capacity to aspire', and in doing so enable a community to explore pathways through which to navigate its future.

In preparing to reunite the Baguia Collection with its source community, it is necessary to appreciate the motivations and thinking that underpinned the formation of this diasporic collection as well as how and why it was acquired by Swiss ethnologist Dr Alfred Bühler in 1935. This provides a context within which to consider the significance of the Collection (comprising 691 objects and more than 300 photographs), not only for the source community in Baguia, but also for the people of Basel. What this study reveals is that

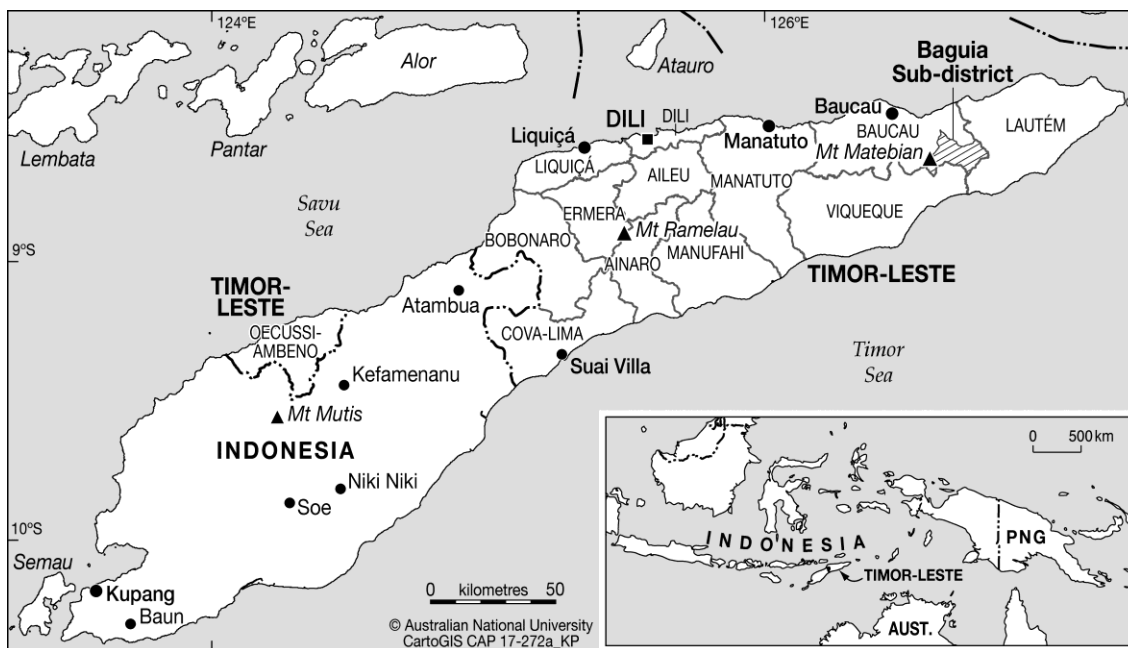
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<sup>1</sup> Arjun Appadurai, "The Capacity to Aspire: Culture and the Terms of Recognition," in *Culture and Public Action*, edited by Vijayendra Rao and Michael Walton (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2004), 59.

although the underpinning motivations that led to the formation of this ethnographic collection have since dissipated, the Collection nonetheless retains its significance in contemporary Switzerland. The Baguia Collection is thus positioned here as ‘diasporic’ and as a form of shared heritage, with significant value for the people of both Baguia and Basel.

## Background to the research

The Baguia Collection is the largest documented extant ethnographic museum collection of Timor-Leste cultural material outside of the nation. The importance of the Collection, following recent decades of Indonesian occupation (1974–1999) and over 400 years of prior Portuguese colonial administration, has grown exponentially following the widespread loss of life, damage to infrastructure, and destruction of material culture during the repressions of the Indonesian period and the violence of independence in 1999. The human tendency to eradicate the cultural identity of others, via the destruction of iconic and symbolic objects, was re-enacted time and time again in Timor-Leste by the Indonesian military during the occupation years.



Map 1: The districts of Timor-Leste, including Baucau District and Baguia Sub-district.

Source: Map by CartoGIS Services, ANU College of Asia and the Pacific, The Australian National University.



Western-style museums are a relatively new phenomenon in Timor. In 1973, during the Portuguese colonial era, Timor House (*Casa Timor*, P) was established with the intention of housing a permanent Timorese cultural and natural science collection. Timor House was built on the former site of the Fada Biru sacred house (*uma lulik*, T) of Nuu Laran community, Dili, but its development was interrupted by Indonesian occupation in December 1975.<sup>2</sup> The Republic of Indonesia established a Provincial Museum of Timor-Timur in the 1990s as part of its wider infrastructure development program.

The Provincial Museum of Timor-Timur was based on colonial Dutch-inspired museums that had been established in the new nation state of Indonesia, which had learned from its immediate coloniser, the Netherlands East Indies.<sup>3</sup> A process of acquiring collections to furnish the museum was undertaken in East Timor in advance of the museum's opening on 28 August 1995, Indonesia's Independence Day.<sup>4</sup> This museum and its collection was subject to considerable damage and looting during September 1999, the period following the referendum for independence.<sup>5</sup> Part of its collection was salvaged and cared for, ensuring its place as the foundation of the National Collection of Timor-Leste (hereafter NCTL). The NCTL has been consolidated over recent years with additional donations of cultural material, staff training and implementation of collection care practices and exhibitions. However, to date, a national museum of Timor-Leste has not been established.<sup>6</sup>

While the vast majority of Timor-Leste's population has no direct experience or understanding of European ethnographic museums, the museum concept can be aligned to Timorese customary indigenous clan-based practices of maintaining the sacred house (*uma lulik*, T). As the physical location and metaphorical centre of each clan, the *uma lulik* has for

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<sup>2</sup> A unilateral declaration of independence after over 400 years of colonisation occurred on 28 November 1975. After three weeks of independence, Indonesia invaded and occupied East Timor on 7 December 1975.

<sup>3</sup> Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 2006), 178.

<sup>4</sup> During Indonesian occupation, East Timor was known as the Province of East Timor (*Propinsi Timor-Timur*, I), the 27<sup>th</sup> province of the Republic of Indonesia.

<sup>5</sup> Virgilio Simith, "National Museum of Timor-Leste: Its Past, Present and Future," in *Husi Bei Ala Timor Sira Nia Liman – From the Hands of Our Ancestors*, edited by Joanna Barrkman (Darwin: Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, 2008), 19.

<sup>6</sup> Cecilia Assis, "Partnership between the National Directorate of Culture, Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste and the Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory," in *Husi Bei Ala Timor Sira Nia Liman – From the Hands of Our Ancestors*, edited by Joanna Barrkman (Darwin: Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, 2008), 24–25.

many centuries been an 'iconic marker of social and ethnic identity as well as cultural heritage'.<sup>7</sup> The *uma lulik* is the site of ritual processes and practices for relating and communicating with the clan's ancestors and is the 'physical focus for the ritual enactments of social relationships and ... a metaphor for the articulation of sociality [that] is a pervasive Timorese cultural value'.<sup>8</sup> *Uma lulik* are created in seven basic architectural styles based on ethno-linguistic groups.<sup>9</sup>

It is customary that objects are stored and preserved inside the *uma lulik*. These sacred (*lulik*, T) heirloom objects are passed from one generation to the next to reflect the longevity and continuation of the clan. Objects that document exchanges and encounters with neighbouring clans or foreigners over generations also form part of a clan's treasury as they are prized as status symbols. Warrior paraphernalia is stored in *uma lulik*, with specific houses being dedicated, in the past, to warfare. Whilst the content of each *uma lulik* varies from clan to clan, it is customary that textiles (*tais*, T), ceramics (*sanán rai*, T), swords (*surik*, T) and body adornment (*morten*, *belak*, *kaibank*, T) acquired from the ancestors are securely stored within. Other objects such as flags, coins and garments of foreign origin may also form part of *uma lulik* treasuries.

For the Makasae, the sacred house (*oma falu*, M) is the lineage house to which each person can trace their patrilineal origins. The inclination of the Makasae to classify their world and experiences into binary, complementary opposites, such as inner–outer, hot–cold, life–death and sun–moon, is inherent within the structure of the *oma falu*. One example is that the relationship between *oma falu* can be described as older brother and younger brother houses whilst specific structural poles are identified as feminine or masculine.<sup>10</sup> A dedicated keeper or guardian, *oma gua ba* (M), whose role it is to ensure the protection of the *oma falu* and its contents, resides at the site. Often a fireplace is located inside the *oma falu*, which is lit for the purpose of preparing food to offer and feed the ancestors and to keep the interior

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<sup>7</sup> Andrew McWilliam, "Houses of the Resistance in East Timor: Structuring Sociality in the New Nation," *Anthropological Forum*, vol. 15, no. 1 (March 2005): 28.

<sup>8</sup> McWilliam, "Houses of the Resistance in East Timor," 28.

<sup>9</sup> Ruy Cinatti, *Arquitetura Timorense* (Lisbon: Instituto de Investigação Científica Tropical, Museu de Etnologia, 1987). Cinatti documented seven classic Timorese house styles. The *uma lulik* style that originates from the Fataluku people of Lautem District has become an iconic emblem of Timor-Leste.

<sup>10</sup> Miguel Ximenes, interview with author, Bubuha, Larisula, Bagueia Sub-district, 16 August 2014.

metaphorically 'heated'. Fires also serve to ensure the preservation of objects within the *oma falu* as smoke and dry air reduce insects, rodents and mould in the humid tropical climate. Thus the *oma falu* in Makasae society and the *uma lulik* more broadly are forms of indigenous museum in Timorese culture where ownership is clan-based and the objects held within are central to the performance of clan rituals and as evidence of its continuity.

The extensive and sustained damage inflicted on Timorese people and their cultural practices by the Indonesian military for over two decades was exemplified by the targeted destruction of *uma lulik* in Timor-Leste. As recently as 1999, following the ballot in which the majority voted for independence from Indonesia, targeted vandalism of '[t]hese elaborately decorated timber and thatch structures, repositories of clan valuables and ancestral heirlooms ... quickly reduced [them] to smouldering ruins by the indiscriminate use of fire'.<sup>11</sup> Such attacks on *uma lulik*, as sites or 'theatre[s] of memory' where cultural knowledge is 'recollected and enacted' in rituals, were designed to erase Timorese identities.<sup>12</sup> Furthermore, people were relocated at a distance from their *uma lulik*, preventing them from physically maintaining and repairing them. Others fled into the forest to hide far from their clan houses. These circumstances resulted in those *uma lulik* that were not intentionally destroyed by the military becoming neglected and derelict, their contents often lost, removed or destroyed. This strategy to annihilate *uma lulik* was intentionally devised as a means to disrupt and dislocate Timorese society and cultures, including the social capital that such sites replenished, in order that acceptance of an imposed Indonesian identity might prevail.

In addition to the extensive loss of human life during the Indonesian occupation, the loss of material culture in the form of ceremonial houses and their contents resulted in the inability of clans to perform their cultural practices in the form of gatherings, exchanges and rituals during this time. This had the effect of dislocation of cultural practices and disruption of inter-generational transmission of cultural knowledge. Another major consequence has been

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<sup>11</sup> McWilliam, "Houses of the Resistance in East Timor," 28.

<sup>12</sup> James J Fox, "Comparative Perspectives on Austronesian Houses: An Introductory Essay," in *Inside Austronesian Houses: Perspective on Domestic Designs for Living*, edited by James J Fox (Canberra: Australian National University, 1993), 23. Furthermore, accounts of ancestral figurines being taken from ceremonial houses and lined up and shot at for target practice by Indonesian military are amongst several descriptions of the targeted destruction of Timorese material culture during the occupation period that have been conveyed to me over the past 15 years.

the displacement of the articulation and expression of memories in Timor-Leste in individual, social and national contexts. The recent and dramatic memories of war, trauma and occupation have been at the forefront of recall and have over-ridden conducive circumstances for the expression and recall of earlier experiences and histories. These factors, combined with the simultaneous effects of globalisation and modernisation, have resulted in significant social change, cultural vulnerability and fragility in Baguia and Timor-Leste more widely.

Since gaining independence in 2002, the Timorese swiftly reasserted their cultural identity by rebuilding *uma lulik*.<sup>13</sup> This phenomenon has been widespread across the nation and indicates the priority attributed to *uma lulik* as part of the renewal process. The human, organisational and financial resources, in the form of cash, livestock, food and materials, harnessed to rebuild *uma lulik* in the nation's over-arching context of hardship and entrenched poverty are phenomenal. They illustrate how central the *uma lulik* as their collective clan-based centre is to the Timorese sense of wellbeing, providing constancy and sustaining their social world in a changing world. This process was evident during the 2014 dry season in Baguia when I observed many clans were constructing and inaugurating their ceremonial houses.

As a newly formed independent nation, the construction of a national identity is relevant to the Timorese Government and people. The constitution of a national museum and material culture collections such as the NCTL are envisaged as contributing to a new Timor-Leste national identity.<sup>14</sup> For now though, other pressing demands of infrastructure development, poverty alleviation, food security and the delivery of basic education and health services leave the nation's ambitions of a national museum on hold.<sup>15</sup> When I informed Cecilia Assis, Director General, Secretariat Tourism, Art and Culture, Timor-Leste (SETAC), about the Baguia Collection during an interview, she acknowledged that several material culture

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<sup>13</sup> McWilliam, "Houses of the Resistance in East Timor"; Judith Bovensiepen, "Installing the Insider 'Outside': House reconstruction and the transformation of binary ideologies in independent Timor-Leste," *American Ethnologist: Journal of the American Ethnological Society*, vol. 41, no. 2 (2014): 290–304; James J Fox, "The Articulation of Tradition in Timor-Leste," in *Land and Life in Timor-Leste*, edited by Andrew McWilliam and Elizabeth G Traube (Canberra: Australian National University, 2011), 241–257.

<sup>14</sup> Cecilia Assis, Director General, Secretariat of Tourism, Arts and Culture, Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste, interview with author, Dili, 14 December 2014.

<sup>15</sup> A museum site has been identified in Dili and subsequent first stage plans were developed between 2010 and 2014, but no further development has occurred to date.

collections from Timor-Leste were acquired by museums, prior to 1975, with Portuguese Colonial Administration authorisation.<sup>16</sup> Although she indicated that in the future the República Democrática de Timor-Leste (Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste, hereafter RDTL) Government might be interested in requesting the physical return of material culture collections to Timor-Leste, she explained that the appropriate facilities and expertise to manage such collections were not yet in place:

If this collection is kept safely and in good condition in Switzerland then just let it be there ... we don't have the conditions to bring it here, we don't have the human resources to conserve and exhibit it so that we can introduce these materials to the people ... I hope that we could make an international exhibition or publication ... we can plan, budget and work together to run [an] international exhibition, which is dedicated especially to presenting the collections of Timor-Leste; but as a book and photographs, we can bring a book and photographs to Timor-Leste to show it to the communities, because if we wait for the museum [to be built], when can we make it [an exhibition]?<sup>17</sup>

Cecilia Assis articulated the priority of gaining access to the Baguia Collection, at this time, over and above seeking its physical return:

The issue of the return of collections of ethnographic material are issues that the Timor-Leste Government may choose to deal with in time.<sup>18</sup>

In the interim, knowledge of what constitutes each collection, how it was acquired and its subsequent history is needed before considering the implications of such actions or requests. For now, no explicit strategy or policy regarding diasporic collections of

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<sup>16</sup> Assis noted the existence of collections in Indonesia and Portugal. Material culture collections from Timor-Leste are also held in Australia, Canada, Germany, Indonesia, the Netherlands, Russia, Switzerland, and the USA. Collections of archaeological material and human remains are known to exist. See Ricardo Roque, "Stories, Skulls, and Colonial Collections," *Configurations*, vol. 19 (2011): 1–23.

<sup>17</sup> Cecilia Assis, Director General, Secretariat of Tourism, Art and Culture, Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste, interview with author, Dili, 14 December 2014.

<sup>18</sup> Cecilia Assis, Director General, Secretariat of Tourism, Arts and Culture, Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste, interview with author, Dili, 14 December 2014.

cultural material held in institutions outside of Timor-Leste has been developed by RD'TL.

## **Challenges to re-animating historic ethnographic collections**

The challenges faced by ethnographic museums in the early twenty-first century also provide a broader context within which this case study is located. It has been well documented that 'ethnographic museums were built upon the premise that the peoples whose material culture was being collected were dying out, and that remnants of their cultures should be preserved for the benefit of future generations'.<sup>19</sup> The original significance of ethnographic museum collections acquired during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries has been usurped by the continuation of those cultures that these collections presumed to document, resulting in museums becoming 'power-charged sites'.<sup>20</sup>

Many ethnographic collections are now artefacts of ethnographic practice itself or 'objects of ethnography'.<sup>21</sup> Ethnography has been dissected as an imperial and Eurocentric science that was motivated by aspirations to amass a universalist and encyclopaedic knowledge of humankind.<sup>22</sup> As colonial institutions devoted to Western knowledge formation and scientific classification, ethnographic museums implicitly asserted a Eurocentric dominance over colonised societies as their collections set out to document the indigenous 'other'. The development of ethnographic collections and museums was also part of European city- and nation-building enterprises, but today ethnographic museums exist as part of the colonial archive that emphasises collection, acquisition and the ownership and possession of physical cultural property.

Through ethnographic collecting practices, material cultural property became commodified and its 'ownership' was transferred from the original owner or maker to the collector,

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<sup>19</sup> Laura Peers and Alison K Brown (eds), *Museums and Source Communities: A Routledge Reader* (London: Routledge, 2003), 1.

<sup>20</sup> James Clifford, *Returns: Becoming Indigenous in the Twenty-First Century* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2013), 7.

<sup>21</sup> Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, "Objects of Ethnography," in *Exhibiting Cultures: The Poetics and Politics of Museum Display*, edited by Ivan Karp and Steven D Lavine (Washington DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1991), 386–443.

<sup>22</sup> Anthony Alan Shelton, "Museum Ethnography: An Imperial Science," in *Cultural Encounters: Representing 'Otherness'*, edited by Elizabeth Hallan and Brian V Street, (London: Routledge, 2000), 155–193.

institution or state, through purchase, exchange or deceit. Once possessed, artefacts were then classified as a static and fixed form of scientific or ethnographic data, akin to a moment frozen in time. As Stocking notes, museum collections acquired as part of the colonial project were often configured ‘out of the past’, possessing a quality of being ‘timeless – removed from history in the very process of embodying it, by curators seeking (among other goals) to preserve objects in their original form’. Stocking goes on to suggest that ‘the meaning of material forms preserved in museums must always be acutely problematic’.<sup>23</sup> According to Roque, this approach has created underlying ‘diverse theoretical sensitivities in the histories of such anthropological objects’.<sup>24</sup>

It has been asserted that the classification of objects by museums ‘shift[s] the grounds of singularity from the objects to a category within a particular taxonomy’.<sup>25</sup> Hence, as property, ethnographic collections were classified and ordered based on Western epistemologies, and then preserved. Ultimately, they were made ‘appropriate’ by European society, which references the Latin adjective *proprius* and noun *proprium* meaning ‘an attribute, characteristic, or quality of an object’ from which the related words ‘proper’ and ‘property’ derive.<sup>26</sup> In this context museums made objects ‘proper’ by assigning new meanings to them derived from Eurocentric paradigms of universalism, evolution, science, history, technology and aesthetics.<sup>27</sup> Even the naming conventions used to describe them, ‘such as *object*, *work of art*, or *specimen* are of course themselves artefacts of these processes of detachment and fragmentation’.<sup>28</sup>

The Western museum has also been characterised as object-focused, suggesting that artefacts were displaced from their original settings and re-placed into museums where they were

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<sup>23</sup> George W Stocking Jr, “Essays on Museums and Material Culture,” in *Objects and Others: Essays on Museums and Material Culture*, edited by George W Stocking Jr, (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1985), 4.

<sup>24</sup> Roque, “Stories, Skulls and Colonial Collections,” 4.

<sup>25</sup> Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, “Objects of Ethnography,” 392.

<sup>26</sup> ‘proprium, n.’, *English Oxford Living Dictionaries*.

<<https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/proprium>>. Accessed, 30 June 2017; Prakash, “Museum Matters,” 209. Prakash cites James Clifford, *The Predicament of Culture: Twentieth Century Ethnography, Literature and Art* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1988), 221.

<sup>27</sup> Gyan Prakash, “Museum Matters,” in *Museum Studies: An Anthology of Contexts*, edited by Bettina Messias Carbonell (Malden: Blackwell Publishing Ltd, 2004), 209.

<sup>28</sup> Ruth B Phillips, “Re-placing Objects: Historical Practices for the Second Museum,” *The Canadian Historical Review*, vol. 86, no. 1 (March 2005): 86.

displayed, viewed and appreciated predominantly for their visual, technical and aesthetic qualities. ‘In Western museum settings, artefacts are preeminently objects for the eye. Often, in fact, it is only the most visually-striking artifacts which are put on display ... Within the museum’s empire of sight, objects are colonized by the gaze.’<sup>29</sup> The dominance of Western visually oriented engagement – ocular-centricism – in museums has both shaped how museums provide access to their collections through displays and exhibition and occluded the possibility of other sensory engagements. Whilst the value of visual engagement is in no way obsolete – indeed it is ‘integral to other sensory modalities’ – it is only one valid form of sensory engagement.<sup>30</sup> Increasingly museums are exploring multiple forms of sensory perception and re-evaluating how objects are comprehended through cultural processes.<sup>31</sup>

Museums are seeking new ways to document, display and interpret ethnographic collections that are in their possession. To do so they need to identify the contemporary relevance of such collections, which were acquired, catalogued and preserved during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. This is especially the case for ethnographic collections located in European museums, situated at great distance from their original sites of production and acquisition.<sup>32</sup> Furthermore, in some instances collections have become an expensive burden for the museums that have the responsibility to preserve them, irrespective of how much is known about them and whether the museum has the capacity to present them authentically.<sup>33</sup> This leaves ethnographic museums with the conundrum of how to recast these collections so that they become and remain relevant during the twenty-first century.

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<sup>29</sup> Constance Classen and David Howes, “The Museum as Sensescape: Western Sensibilities and Indigenous Artefacts,” in *Sensible Objects: Colonialism, Museums and Material Culture*, edited by Elizabeth Edwards, Chris Gosden and Ruth B Phillips (Oxford: Berg Publishers, 2010), 200.

<sup>30</sup> Michael T Taussig, *Mimesis and Alterity: A Particular History of the Senses* (New York: Routledge, 1993), 26.

<sup>31</sup> Elizabeth Edwards, Chris Gosden and Ruth B Phillips (eds), *Sensible Objects: Colonialism, Museums and Material Culture* (Oxford: Berg Publishers, 2010), 3.

<sup>32</sup> This situation differs from American, Australian, Canadian and New Zealand institutions whose collections in the main are derived from the indigenous peoples of those nations.

<sup>33</sup> Michael Ames, “Museums in the Age of Destruction,” in *Reinventing the Museum*, edited by Gail Anderson (Lanham: Altamira Press, 2004), 87.



## Twenty-first century museums: shifting paradigms and practices

As ethnographic museums seek to reposition their roles and mission in the twenty-first century, their work is informed by the emergence of new museological practices that advocate wider and increased forms of engagement with the communities they serve.<sup>34</sup> The museum agenda and its ethical positions are increasingly oriented towards what Janet Marstine describes as social inclusion, radical transparency and shared guardianship of heritage.<sup>35</sup> The contemporary museum is increasingly faced with the challenge of engaging with its own local geographic community or communities (as the case may be), such as its audiences and constituents, their issues, concerns and diversity, and this in turn shapes and affects its public programming and delivery.

To be of value, museums need to find significance within these communities – without those connections the museum and its collections will be of little importance. It is people who bring the value and consequence to objects and collections; as a result, if a museum cannot forge associations with people it will have no meaning.<sup>36</sup>

At times it is unclear whether these engagements are most concerned with the revival of community or with the survival of the museums. “The two agendas are subtly interwoven – with museums presented as a means to forge community and the involvement of community as an opportunity to improve the relevance and sustainability of museums.”<sup>37</sup> The museum sector does not always engage with communities due to altruistic agendas. Museums

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<sup>34</sup> Gail Anderson (ed.), *Reinventing the Museum* (Lanham: Altamira Press, 2004); Stephen E Weil, *Making Museums Matter* (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 2002); Kylie Message, *New Museums and the Making of Culture* (Oxford: Berg, 2006); Heidi S Hein, *The Museum in Transition: A Philosophical Perspective* (Washington DC: Smithsonian Institution, 2014); Viv Golding and Wayne Modest (eds), *Museums and Communities: Curators, Collectors and Collaboration* (London: Bloomsbury Press, 2013); Ruth B Phillips, “Introduction: Community Collaboration in Exhibitions – Toward a Dialogic Paradigm,” in *Museums and Source Communities: A Routledge Reader*, edited by Laura Peers and Alison K Brown (London: Routledge, 2003), 155–170.

<sup>35</sup> Janet Marstine, “The Contingent Nature of New Museum Ethics,” in *A Routledge Companion to Museum Ethics: Redefining Ethics for the Twenty-First Century*, edited by Janet Marstine (London and New York: Routledge, 2011), 24.

<sup>36</sup> Elizabeth Crooke, *Museums and Communities: Ideas, Issues and Challenges* (London: Routledge, 2007), 131.

<sup>37</sup> Crooke, *Museums and Communities*, 79.

increasingly need community involvement to justify their existence to funding bodies, to make sense of their collections and to assist in the process of reassessing their future roles.<sup>38</sup>

Ethnographic museums have also responded to their changing mission by increased community engagement and collaboration with source communities. What constitutes community is an elusive and vague concept. For the purpose of this thesis I borrow Watson's definition:

[T]he essential defining factor of a community is the sense of belonging that comes to those who are part of it ... through association with communities, individuals conceptualise identity. Such identities are relational and depend on a sense not only of self but also of others ... Some communities are by our choice, some are ours because of the way others see us.<sup>39</sup>

Source communities, which are the communities from which the artefacts originated, are becoming key stakeholders within contemporary museological practice. The term 'source community', also referred to as 'community of origin' or 'originating community', is widely accepted as encompassing the community from which the artefacts were acquired, and the descendants of that community.<sup>40</sup> The emergence of community-oriented new museological practices, such as appropriate and indigenous museological practices that give prominence to source communities, informs this research and case study.

The nature of engagement with the original source community members differs from the nature of engagement with their descendants, due to the passage of time and attendant change experienced by the community. Yet 'the importance of memory in relation to images and objects is now widely recognized in the museum'.<sup>41</sup> Who is doing the 'memory work' and what is being remembered are issues central to this thesis, as is the question: What are the implications for source communities when they engage with digital images of an

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<sup>38</sup> Bernadette T Lynch, "Custom-made Reflective Practice: Can Museums Realise Their Capabilities in Helping Others Realise Theirs?" *Museum Management and Curatorship*, vol. 26, no. 5 (2011): 449, 454, 456.

<sup>39</sup> Sheila Watson, *Museums and their Communities* (London: Taylor and Francis, 2007), 3–4

<sup>40</sup> Peers and Brown, *Museums and Source Communities*, 2.

<sup>41</sup> Diane Hafner, Bruce Rigsby and Lindy Allen, "Museums and Memory as Agents of Social Change," *The International Journal of the Humanities*, vol. 5, no. 6 (2007): 91.

ethnographic museum collection comprised of three-dimensional artefacts and historical photographs that are situated on the edge of living memory? The issues of how and for whom memory is activated in cases where the cultural material pre-dates lived experience or is located on the edge of living memory are discussed throughout this case study. Similarly, the notion of the Baguia Sub-district is in part a ‘community’ constructed by me as an outsider; yet within this geographic area a number of types of communities co-exist and overlap. Cultural and linguistic affiliation is one dominant provider of local identity, as well as one’s region, such as Baguia Sub-district.

Engagement between museums and source communities has resulted in ‘partnership’ and ‘collaboration’ being terms often used in museums ‘to describe many different arrangements and usually from the perspective of the museum itself’.<sup>42</sup> Through such relationships the opportunity for increased collaboration and improved access to collections can exist between museums and source communities. Access may enable input from source communities regarding culturally appropriate storage and display options, such as the periodic making of offerings to the objects, or the use of objects in keeping with customary practices.<sup>43</sup> Alternatively, access by community members to objects may be used to derive inspiration for continued cultural production. In some instances, restrictions on access have been instituted, in order to uphold customary practices that restrict the circulation of knowledge and objects based on gender, clan affiliation, level of initiation and/or age. Such practices are designed to ensure the wellbeing of people and the maintenance of cultural cohesion. In the museum context such access protocols, developed through a process of negotiation, exemplify how engagement between stakeholders and museums can lead to shared custodial responsibilities that ensure the best care of the objects for all concerned.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> Michael M Ames, “How to Decorate a House,” in *Museums and Source Communities: A Routledge Reader*, edited by Laura Peers and Alison K Brown (London: Routledge, 2003), 171–172.

<sup>43</sup> Moira G Simpson, *Making Representations: Museums in the Post-Colonial Era* (London and New York: Routledge Press, 2001), 197, 200.

<sup>44</sup> Lindy Allen and Louise Hamby, “Pathways to Knowledge: Research, Agency and Power Relations in the Context of Collaborations between Museums and Source Communities,” in *Unpacking the Collection: Networks of Material and Social Agency in the Museum*, edited by Sarah Byrne, Anne Clarke, Rodney Harrison and Robin Torrence (New York: Springer Science+Business Media, 2011), 214–217; Elaine Heumann Gurian, “What is the Object of this Exercise? A Meandering Exploration of the Many Meanings of Objects in Museums,” in *Re-inventing the Museum*, edited by Gail Anderson (Lanham: Altamira Press, 2004), 277–279.

Another access model is the ‘temporary release’ of objects from museum collections to source communities for use in cultural events and ceremonies.<sup>45</sup> Rather than an official outward loan, whereby the stringent museum conditions of handling, storage and care are upheld, the emphasis is on the temporary suspension of these care requirements so that the community can access and engage with the object on their own terms. Such ‘temporary release loans’, by necessity, are negotiated on a case-by-case basis. The temporary release and re-entry of objects back into the source communities can have various benefits: it can replenish the ‘ceremonial power’ attributed to the object, strengthen cultural maintenance within the community and enhance the provenance and social life of the object, thus extending its significance within and beyond the museum.<sup>46</sup> This is one of several models of access to collections that fosters collaboration between museums and source communities and mutually enhances relationships, suggestive of emergent processes, which can also be termed ‘appropriate museology’.<sup>47</sup>

Appropriate museology values and acknowledges the diverse ways people perceive, value, experience and make sense of their cultural heritage and recognises diverse epistemologies. It is

an approach to museum development and training that adapts museum practices and strategies for cultural heritage preservation to local cultural contexts and socioeconomic conditions. It is a bottom-up, community based approach that combines local knowledge and resources with those of professional museum work to better meet the needs and interests of a particular museum and its community.<sup>48</sup>

Increasingly the significance of ethnographic and heritage collections to source communities is being interrogated. How and to what purpose can existing ethnographic collections be activated by source communities? Such questions underpin the increased emphasis and

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<sup>45</sup> Margo Neale, “If It’s Mine Can I Take It Back Please?” A presentation at the AIATSIS Seminar Series 2, 2013, Mabo Room, AIATSIS, Canberra, 2 September 2013.

<sup>46</sup> Simpson, *Making Representations*, 213.

<sup>47</sup> Christina F Kreps, “Appropriate Museology in Theory and Practice,” *Museum Management and Curatorship*, vol. 23, no. 1 (2008): 23–41.

<sup>48</sup> Kreps, “Appropriate Museology,” 23.

recognition of indigenous curation practices and appropriate museology and have implications for indigenous and source communities, as well as for how museums operate.<sup>49</sup> Kreps argues for the need to be aware of and respect differences as a matter of practice.<sup>50</sup> By comparison with the object-based, visually oriented presentation of objects in Western contexts, indigenous curation argues for a bottom-up, people-oriented approach. ‘At issue are questions of power and authority concerning who has the right to speak for and represent whom.’<sup>51</sup>

By de-centralising the object-centred epistemology of museums and engaging with source communities as they remember and reconstitute intangible heritage, which is intimately connected to ethnographic objects and artefacts, multiple forms of knowledge can emerge, with further implications for how such knowledge is understood, transmitted and interpreted. Such models of appropriate museology and indigenous curation

contribute to the overturning of political injustices and improprieties and bring new meanings to the objects in museum collections. The fundamental change that these models bring, however, is a shift in focus away from objects themselves ... *This is a very important change, and it needs to be recognized and acknowledged* [italics added]. The discipline of looking, which involves wonder at the object itself, is becoming in this context a thing of the past.<sup>52</sup>

Multiple perspectives prevail rather than any single authoritative account. As the value attributed to intangible knowledge increases in the museum sector, this challenges the encasement of the object within a fixed state; a status that effectively traps the object in a stasis detrimental to ongoing expressions and transmission of attendant intangible

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<sup>49</sup> Christina F Kreps, *Liberating Culture: Cross-cultural Perspectives on Museums, Curation and Heritage Preservation* (London: Routledge, 2003); Christina F Kreps, ‘From Colonial to Appropriate Museology.’ A presentation at ‘Museum of Our Own’ conference, Gadjah Mada University, 18–20 November 2014.

<sup>50</sup> Christina F Kreps, ‘Appropriate museology and the ‘new museum ethics’; honouring diversity,’ *Nordisk Museologi*, vol. 2 (2015): 5.

<sup>51</sup> Kreps, *Liberating Culture*, 2.

<sup>52</sup> Lissant Bolton, ‘The Object in View,’ in *Museums and Source Communities: A Routledge Reader*, edited by Laura Peers and Alison K Brown (London: Routledge, 2003), 53.

elements.<sup>53</sup> Rather, more fluid and flexible interpretations are acknowledged as the object mediates relationships and knowledge through what are, more often than not, cross-cultural engagements. Ultimately, objects become enlivened through source community engagement, thus the benefits of such engagements flow between all stakeholders and to the collections themselves.

The interactions between source communities and museums are mutually important in continuing relationships around the storage, curation and management of collections of cultural materials.<sup>54</sup>

As museums reinvent their relationships with communities and move beyond their traditional roles of acquisition, preservation and display of collections, ‘intangible heritage is gradually adopted as a new field of action’.<sup>55</sup> The emphasis on intangible heritage<sup>56</sup> and people-oriented engagements has lasting implications for how the museum perceives its preservation role in regards to living culture as well as material culture.<sup>57</sup> A focus on the process of transmission of culture inter-generationally will potentially lead to changes in cultural expression.<sup>58</sup> Recognition that objects are largely inert without being accompanied by forms of intangible heritage supports calls for museums to participate with people-based, bottom-up engagements that interpret and recognise the value of the collections they hold. This is not intended to denigrate the significance of objects and their care, but rather to loosen their ‘encasement’ and place them into more culturally appropriate and fluid contexts.

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<sup>53</sup> Elizabeth Burns Coleman, “Repatriation and the Concept of Inalienable Possession”, in *The Long Way Home: The Meanings and Values of Repatriation*, edited by Paul Turnbull and Michael Pickering (New York and Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2010), 83–85.

<sup>54</sup> Hafner et al., “Museums and Memory as Agents of Social Change,” 87.

<sup>55</sup> Marilena Alivizatou, *Intangible Heritage and the Museum: New Perspectives on Cultural Preservation* (London: Left Coast Press Inc., 2012), 18.

<sup>56</sup> UNESCO cited in Alivizatou, *Intangible Heritage and the Museum*, 33. The UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, 2003, Article 2.1 states that: Intangible heritage is the practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills – as well as instruments, objects, artefacts and cultural spaces associated therewith – that communities, groups and in cases individuals recognize as part of their cultural heritage. This intangible cultural heritage, transmitted from generation to generation is constantly recreated by communities and groups in response to their environment, their interaction with nature and their history, and provides them with a sense of identity and continuity thus promoting respect for cultural diversity and human creativity. UNESCO, “UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, 2003,” Article 2.1, Definitions. <[http://unesco.org/en/convention/2003/2003\\_2\\_1\\_definitions.html](http://unesco.org/en/convention/2003/2003_2_1_definitions.html)>. Accessed 26 June 2017.

<sup>57</sup> Alivizatou, *Intangible Heritage and the Museum*, 18, 35–36.

<sup>58</sup> Alivizatou, *Intangible Heritage and the Museum*, 35.

Whilst it is recognised that in some cultures objects themselves are thought to contain their own inherent powers and agency, it is now widely suggested that objects become

like props in a brilliant play, [they] are necessary but alone are not sufficient ... When parsed carefully, the objects, in their tangibility, provide a variety of stakeholders with an opportunity to debate the meaning and control of their memories. It is the ownership of the story, rather than the object itself, that the dispute has been all about.<sup>59</sup>

Such people-oriented engagements have implications that extend to the role of the curator, which increasingly is shifting away from being an arbiter of taste and a singular authoritative voice of knowledge towards becoming a facilitator, mediator and co-producer of knowledge.<sup>60</sup> The curator's contemporary role is as a conduit for community engagement between the source community and museum collection, facilitating access and collaboration and knowledge production or transmission. Often such work occurs as cross-cultural enterprises and requires well-considered methodological approaches. Thus, the curator increasingly plays a pivotal role that influences and shapes how source communities engage with museum collections. As Bouquet notes,

Museum people can be vitriolic about recent academic interest in museums, and about what seems to them the naivety bordering on ignorance with which the theoreticians pronounce on their new-found territory. Some academics still appear to regard museums with a disdain comparable to philosophers of science and historians of ideas, who avoid the messiness of the laboratory.<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>59</sup> Heumann Gurian, "What is the Object of this Exercise?" 271.

<sup>60</sup> Declan McGonagle, "The Museum Reconsidered as 'Common Land'," *Future of Museums: New Thinking about Museums of the Future*, 2 May 2008. <<https://futuremuseums.wordpress.com/2008/09/25/the-museum-reconsidered-as-common-land-paper-by-declan-mcgonagle/>>. Accessed 9 May 2014; Edmundson, Anna. "Curating in the Postdigital Age." *MediaCulture Journal*, vol. 18, no. 4 (2015). <<http://journal.media-culture.org.au/index.php/mcjournal/article/view/1016>>. Accessed 5 July 2017. The term 'content-producer' is also used in museums to denote curatorial work, but I reject this term as it is museum-centred, relating only to the development of exhibitions, displays, public-programs, publications and websites in a museum context.

<sup>61</sup> Mary Bouquet, "Thinking and Doing Otherwise: Anthropological Theory," in *Exhibition Practice in Museum Studies: An Anthology of Contexts*, edited by Bettina Messias Carbonell (Malden: Blackwell Publishing Ltd, 2004), 193.

Implicit in this case study is an exploration of the intersection between museological practice and academic theory. For professional curators such as myself, the challenge of working in museums is how to apply improved and ethically informed approaches to our work, particularly in relation to collaboration with source communities. Such approaches also need to be sustainable within the institutions within which we work. Thus, my thesis contributes to the development of museological theory and practice, particularly comparative museology as ‘the systematic study and comparison of museological forms and behaviour in diverse cultural settings’.<sup>62</sup>

These shifting aspects of ethnographic museums and engagement with source communities occur at a time when a confluence of other forces is shaping the museum sector, including the use of digital technologies. Twenty-first century museum environments are increasingly being shaped by the digital age, and the provision of access to collections via digital platforms has implications as a method for the reciprocation, return, restitution and repatriation of collections.<sup>63</sup> Technologies are a game-changer for museums in the future as

[v]irtuality, both in its narrower technological and its broader cultural meaning, will prove itself as a fundamental category of museum practice ... their physical structure is a shell that museums partially need to leave behind. Their relevance will be defined through a much broader local/global network and their success in claiming venues outside their onsite structure.<sup>64</sup>

While digitisation of collections can provide advantages and opportunities for increased participation in cultural production and creative engagement via new media, the digitisation and circulation of museum collection images in the ‘global museumscape’ and via Web 2.0

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<sup>62</sup> Kreps, *Liberating Culture*, 4.

<sup>63</sup> Robin Boast and Jim Enote, “Virtual Repatriation: It’s Neither Virtual nor Repatriation,” in *Heritage in the Context of Globalization: Europe and the Americas*, edited by Peter F Biehl and Christopher Prescott (New York: Springer, 2013), 103–113; Kimberley Christen, “Opening Archives: Respectful Repatriation,” *The American Archivist*, vol. 74, (2011): 185–210; Ruth B Phillips, “Re-placing Objects: Historical Practices for the Second Museum Age,” *The Canadian Historical Review*, vol. 86, no. 1 (March 2005): 83–110; Ramesh Srinivasan, Jim Enote, Katherine M Becvar and Robin Boast, “Critical and Reflective Uses of New Media Technologies in Tribal Museums,” *Museum Management and Curatorship*, vol. 24, no. 2 (2009): 161–181; Graeme Were, “Digital Heritage, Knowledge Networks, and Source Communities: Understanding Digital Objects in a Melanesian Society,” *Museum Anthropology*, vol. 37, no. 2 (2014): 133–143.

<sup>64</sup> Klaus Müller, “Museums and the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century,” *Future of Museums: New Thinking about Museums of the Future*, 25 September 2008. <<http://futuremuseums.wordpress.com>>. Accessed 16 July 2017.



technologies are also accompanied by numerous issues and disadvantages.<sup>65</sup> On the one hand, databases of cultural collections may simply perpetuate past power imbalances and ‘reproduce, in new form, older orders of things’<sup>66</sup>; on the other, they have the potential to create new relationships between museums and source communities. ‘The situation is complex and challenging, but digitization, when done responsibly, does broaden access.’<sup>67</sup>

One disadvantage of digital return via Web 2.0 technologies (which were not used in my research project) is that it assumes that source communities have connectivity to the internet. This is not always the case for impoverished and geographically remote communities residing on ‘the other side of the digital divide’.<sup>68</sup> Secondly, whilst the visual and possibly aural aspects of objects can be emphasised through digitisation, other characteristics – such as texture, dimensionality, weight, scale and scent – are silenced. Yet, museums and galleries often render many of these characteristics off-limits when objects are on display, by preventing visitors from touching or handling objects, or in storerooms, where objects and all their characteristics are under lock and key.

A key advantage of digitisation of collections is that it offers new opportunities and spaces for contextualising and investigating objects through the interaction and participation of diverse stakeholders and audiences, including source communities. As the distinction between ‘authentic’ and ‘copy’ become increasingly fluid, ‘[t]he narration of material/virtual culture – as a form of reflection, interpretation and representation – will become the fluid

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<sup>65</sup> Basu, “Object Diasporas, Resourcing Communities,” 28; Kate Hennessey, “Virtual Repatriation and Digital Cultural Heritage: The Ethics of Managing Online Collections,” *Anthropology News*, vol. 50, no. 4 (2009): 5–6; Supriya Singh, Meredith Blake and Jonathan O’Donnell, “Digitizing Pacific Cultural Collections: The Australian Experience,” *International Journal of Cultural Property*, vol. 20 (2013): 77–107; Supriya Singh and Meredith Blake, “The Digitisation of Pacific Cultural Collections: Consulting with Pacific Diasporic Communities and Museum Experts,” *Curator: The Museum Journal*, vol. 55, no. 1 (2012): 95–105.

<sup>66</sup> Haidy Geismar and William Mohns, “Social Relationships and Digital Relationships: Rethinking the Database at the Vanuatu Cultural Centre,” *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, vol. 17, (2011): S134.

<sup>67</sup> Singh et al., “Digitizing Pacific Collections,” 85.

<sup>68</sup> Graeme Were, “Digital Heritage in a Melanesian Context: Authenticity, Integrity and Ancestrality from the other side of the digital divide,” *International Journal of Heritage Studies*, vol. 21, no. 2 (2015): 154. Were indicates that ‘little research has explored the users of digital heritage from the perspective of those who live on the other side of the digital divide. By the latter, I mean those dispersed communities who live in regions of the world which remain outside the scope of most museums and where access to digital technologies is limited’; Paul Basu, “Object Diasporas, Resourcing Communities: Sierra Leonian Collections in the Global Museumscape,” *Museum Anthropology*, vol. 34, no. 1 (2011): 38. Basu also makes the point that ‘[i]nternet access in Sierra Leone is currently limited’; Geismar and Mohns, “Social Relationships and Digital Relationships,” S134.

core of what museums are about.<sup>69</sup> In a Melanesian context, Graeme Were argues that access to digital three-dimensional images of heritage can be perceived as a reconstitution of ‘understandings of authenticity in terms of completeness and integrity’.<sup>70</sup> Furthermore, another advantage of such technologies is the interactability they can accommodate, which is especially relevant for source communities where knowledge is performative rather than representational.<sup>71</sup> Some of these issues become apparent in this thesis.

The digitisation of collections is not intended to replace the physical object and ‘[t]echniques of connoisseurship and material and visual analysis that are necessary elements [to] ... open mute objects to the possibility of meaning’; rather, it is a means for ‘re-placing objects in new kinds of interpretive contexts that draws on both the local knowledge of originating communities and on new theories of historical materiality and visibility’.<sup>72</sup> In fact, digital representations of museum collections arguably motivate people to want to see the real thing.<sup>73</sup> My research considers how the community in Baguia, with which I worked, engaged powerfully with digital images of objects and photographs; although this thesis does not relate specifically to website development, it does raise interesting questions about our definitions of what constitutes the material object and raises other ethical issues for museums to consider in approaching negotiations with source communities.

Whether digital access to collections is a form of return or repatriation is debatable. It has been asserted that museums are not actually giving anything back, but are merely creating data based on objects in the archive; thus, they are sharing museum-generated data.<sup>74</sup> ‘Data sharing’, ‘digital information sharing’, ‘digital objects’, ‘shared digital objects’<sup>75</sup>, and ‘digital surrogates’<sup>76</sup> are other terms used to describe the digital representations of collection objects. The word ‘repatriation’ literally means: a) ‘[t]he return or restoration of a person to his or her native country; b) the return or restoration of money, historical artefacts, etc., to their country

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<sup>69</sup> Müller, “Museums and the Challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.”

<sup>70</sup> Were, “Digital Heritage in a Melanesian Context,” 153.

<sup>71</sup> Helen Verran and Michael Christie, “Using/Designing Digital Technologies of Representation in Aboriginal Australian Knowledge Practices,” *Human Technology*, vol. 3, no. 2 (May 2007): 214–227.

<sup>72</sup> Phillips, “Re-placing Objects,” 95, 109.

<sup>73</sup> Edmundson, “Curating in the Postdigital Age,” <<http://journal.media-culture.org.au/index.php/mcjournal/article/view/1016>>. Accessed 5 July 2017.

<sup>74</sup> Boast and Enote, “Virtual Repatriation: It’s Neither Virtual nor Repatriation,” 109.

<sup>75</sup> Boast and Enote, “Virtual Repatriation: It’s Neither Virtual nor Repatriation,” 103, 104, 107, 109.

<sup>76</sup> Were, “Digital Heritage, Knowledge Networks, and Source Communities,” 133.

of origin?<sup>77</sup> Hence, repatriation has become associated with cultural material being returned to its place of origin, which strictly speaking is achieved only where the physical person or object is returned. Therefore, such definitions render the term ‘virtual repatriation’ a misrepresentation of what is more accurately described as digital information sharing.<sup>78</sup>

Other terms such as ‘digital return’ or ‘virtual return’, whilst more accurate, indicate the shortfall of returning collections only in an ephemeral form. ‘Virtual reciprocation’ is another term used by the *Artefacts of Encounter* project at the Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, University of Cambridge; it is suggestive of two-way engagement, and seeks to clarify these processes to establish wider access to cultural collections for source communities and other stakeholders of the museums and potentially revive or establish relationships that result in meaningful engagement and exchange.<sup>79</sup>

While not replacing the need for the real repatriation of [physical] objects, it [digital repatriation] will nevertheless restore connections to the collections that remain in museums, reopening channels of knowledge that were closed off by the massive collecting projects of the first museum age and to which community members have a moral right.<sup>80</sup>

## **Return, restitution and repatriation of museum collections to source communities**

Return, restitution and repatriation of museum collections to source communities is another issue underpinning museum practice in the twenty-first century. As indigenous societies and source communities gain access to collections, in some cases they have articulated desires and made requests and demands for cultural material housed in museums to be physically

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<sup>77</sup> ‘repatriation. n.’, *Oxford English Dictionary*.

<<http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/162690?redirectedFrom=repatriation#eid>>. Accessed 14 June 2017.

<sup>78</sup> Boast and Enote, “Virtual Repatriation: It’s Neither Virtual nor Repatriation,” 104.

<sup>79</sup> Boast and Enote, “Virtual Repatriation: It’s Neither Virtual nor Repatriation,” 106. Boast and Enote cite ‘virtual reciprocation’ as a term used by Maia Jessop and Carl Hogsden in the presentation, ‘Virtual Repatriation – What is It? Can it Work?’ Pacific Arts Association 10th International Symposium: Pacific Art in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: Museums, New Global Communities and Future Trends, Rarotonga, Cook Islands, 9–11 August 2010.

<sup>80</sup> Phillips, “Re-placing Objects,” 108.

returned. Debates around return, restitution and repatriation – the ethics, politics, logistics, meaning, contestation and lack of uniformity in practice – continue to unfold.<sup>81</sup>

For the purposes of this thesis I use the term ‘return’, based on the following explanation of this concept:

Return concerns the problem of international claims for historically removed material objects and turns on the inalienability of the object from its original context that is the *provenience* [provenance] of the object. Return is most often based on voluntary action or goodwill underwritten by ethical considerations of what rightfully constitutes a nation’s cultural patrimony.<sup>82</sup>

It is important to note, though, that for my case study no claims for return prompted the project or research.

Central to the issue of repatriation and return are property and ownership rights: ‘Who, if anyone, may be said to own the past?’<sup>83</sup> A philosophical framework referred to as the 3Rs – surrounding the restitution of cultural property to their countries of origin, the restriction of imports and exports, and the rights of ownership, access and inheritance – provides a useful analytical tool to consider the philosophical issues surrounding ownership of cultural

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<sup>81</sup> Steven Conn, *Do Museums Still Need Objects?* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010), 59–85. Specifically I refer to Conn’s chapter “Whose Objects? Whose Culture? The Contexts of Repatriation”; Paul Turnbull and Michael Pickering (eds), *The Long Way Home: The Meanings and Values of Repatriation* (New York and Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2010); Phillip Batty, “White Redemption Rituals: Reflections on the Repatriation of Aboriginal Secret-Sacred Objects,” *Moving Anthropology*, edited by Tess Lea, Emma Kowal and Gillian Cowlshaw (Darwin: Charles Darwin University Press, 2006), 58, 60; Simpson, *Making Representations*, 215–247 (specifically the chapter “The Repatriation Debate: An International Issue”); Michael Pickering, “‘Dance Through the Minefield’: The Development of Practical Ethics for Repatriation,” in *A Routledge Companion to Museum Ethics*, edited by Janet Marstine (London and New York: Routledge, 2011), 256–274; Phyllis Mauch Messenger (ed.), *The Ethics of Collecting Cultural Property: Whose Culture? Whose Property?* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1999).

<sup>82</sup> Martin Skrydstrup, “What Might an Anthropology of Cultural Property Look Like?” in *The Long Way Home: The Meanings and Values of Repatriation*, edited by Paul Turnbull and Michael Pickering (New York and Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2010), 66.

<sup>83</sup> Karen J Warren, “A Philosophical Perspective on the Ethics and Resolution of Cultural Properties Issues,” in *The Ethics of Collecting Cultural Property: Whose Culture? Whose Property?*, edited by Phyllis Mauch Messenger (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1999), 1; Simpson, *Making Representations*, 191–214 (specifically the chapter “Cultural Artefacts: A Question of Ownership”); Kathryn Whitby-Last, “Legal Impediments to the Repatriation of Cultural Objects to Indigenous Peoples,” in *The Long Way Home: The Meanings and Values of Repatriation*, edited by Paul Turnbull and Michael Pickering (New York and Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2010), 35–47; Haidy Geismar, “Cultural Property, Museums, and the Pacific: Reframing the Debates,” *International Journal of Cultural Property*, vol. 15, no. 2 (2008): 109–122.

property. This framework, created by Karen J Warren, also incorporates philosophical arguments for and against claims by countries of origin for the return of cultural material.<sup>84</sup> Acknowledgment of the intangible aspects of knowledge associated with the tangible objects is referred to as ‘ownership of the past’ and is given equal weight to the material object itself. Martin Skrydstrup has built upon Warren’s framework to create the *New Three R’s Model* of restitution, return and repatriation, suggesting that these processes ‘transcend local settings and national frameworks and seem to be all about networks and relations’.<sup>85</sup> He also argues that repatriation needs to be understood as ‘deeply embedded’ in reference to ongoing contact history and that it takes place within a new ‘intercultural space’.<sup>86</sup>

Several of the arguments mounted by Warren about the 3Rs have relevance when speculating on the perspectives of the MKB and those of the Baguia community in relation to the Baguia Collection. Notably, ‘the rescue argument’ could be asserted by the MKB, noting that if Bühler had not acquired the collection in 1935 it would most certainly no longer exist *in situ*. The intervening years of social change, war, disorder and environmental conditions in Timor-Leste would have ensured the erasure of such material objects; as Cecilia Assis said of Bühler, ‘He did a good thing!’<sup>87</sup> One counter-argument from the Baguia community perspective might be that although Bühler had official permits that endorsed the legal acquisition and removal of objects from Timor-Leste, this occurred under Portuguese Colonial Administration (hereafter PCA) law which did not necessarily uphold the interests

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<sup>84</sup> Karen J Warren, “A Philosophical Perspective,” 2–11.

<sup>85</sup> Skrydstrup, “What Might an Anthropology of Cultural Property Look Like?” 67. Skrydstrup (66) discusses cultural property rights and the terms ‘restitution, return and repatriation’ in relation to one another as follows:

- i) Restitution concerns the problem of contemporary illicit trafficking of antiquities between source nations and market nations and hinges on the provenance (i.e. ownership history) of the object. Restitution is most often mandated by a strict legal interpretation of cultural property
- ii) Return concerns the problem of international claims for historically removed material objects and turns on the inalienability of the object from its original context that is the provenance of the object. Return is most often based on voluntary action or goodwill underwritten by ethical considerations of what rightfully constitutes a nation’s cultural patrimony
- iii) Repatriation concerns the problem of Indigenous claims for human remains and cultural objects within the nation state. Repatriation seems to pivot on the necessity of the object for a minority group’s ceremonial practices, narratives and reconciliation within settler colonial nation states.

<sup>86</sup> Skrydstrup, “What Might an Anthropology of Cultural Property Look Like?” 67.

<sup>87</sup> Cecilia Assis, Director General, Secretariat of Tourism Arts and Culture, Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste, interview with author, Dili, 14 December 2014.

of the Timorese, thus questioning the law under which the Swiss became the legal, genuine beneficiaries of the artefacts.

Ultimately, what is more useful is a ‘rethinking of the debate’ by recognising that cultural property arguments are often couched in divisive ‘either/or’ and ‘win/lose’ terms. An alternative view to contested cultural property or shared heritage is to view it as a ‘non-renewable resource’, along the lines of environmentally endangered species, irretrievable and irreplaceable once damaged or lost, and unable to be ‘owned’ as property.

Our relationship to them [cultural properties as non-renewable resources] is more like that of a steward, custodian, guardian, conservator or trustee than that of a property owner. Since these cultural properties ought to be preserved yet are no one’s property, no one has a right to them. Hence, no one has a claim to their restitution or restriction based on an alleged right (e.g. the right to ownership) to them. Their protection and preservation is a collective responsibility of all of us as stewards: it must acknowledge our important connection with the past, be conducted with care and a sense of responsibility for peoples and their cultural heritages, and respect for the context in which cultural remains are found.<sup>88</sup>

Such debates raise the question of whether it is possible and responsible to protect and preserve a material cultural heritage collection based on a non-adversarial, inclusive, web-like ethic of care of joint custodial arrangements.<sup>89</sup>

The agenda of closer working relationships between museums and source communities has also emerged due to greater claims by indigenous and source communities for access to their cultural material, particularly in Australia, Aotearoa (New Zealand), USA and Canada. Protocols such as the Council of Australian Museums Associations *Previous Possessions, New Obligations: Policies for Museums in Australia and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples* (1993), *Continuous Cultures, Ongoing Responsibilities* (2005) and the *Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) Legislation* (1990) in the USA have fostered a shift in the museum

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<sup>88</sup> Warren, “A Philosophical Perspective,” 19.

<sup>89</sup> Joint custodianship is also referred to as shared guardianship.

sector towards greater acknowledgment and increased recognition of the inherent interests of indigenous and source communities in the spiritual and practical care and control of their cultural material. Once given access to collections of cultural material, the question of return or repatriation can dissipate, in some instances, through the creation of custodial access arrangements. This suggests that collaborative processes can be initiated only once positive working relationships between cultural institutions and source communities have been established.

The experience of repatriation of cultural material to indigenous populations in countries such as Aotearoa, Australia, Canada and the USA has led to critical assessments of a ‘one size fits all’ approach to repatriation and the identification of a disjuncture between official and bureaucratic representations of repatriation versus the logistics and realities in the field.<sup>90</sup> Accounts suggest that in some instances repatriation may have become an imposed ‘bureaucratic ritual’ that seeks ‘atonement for past wrongs’.<sup>91</sup> The return of objects can rekindle past hostilities and unfavourably affect local power dynamics. The complexity of clarifying ownership of artefacts and determining who has the right to make decisions has been identified as another hurdle. Issues relating to custodianship and long-term storage, security, maintenance, access and cost implications are considered a lower priority in some communities compared with more pressing difficulties, thus causing an ambivalent attitude to having cultural material returned.<sup>92</sup> What such accounts indicate is that,

[i]n restitution, we can look at the process by which the objects were initially acquired, the kinds of ways the objects have become embedded in museums and the ways in which they can, in turn, be liberated. That is not an issue of just simply putting things in a box and sending them off through the post. It is really a significant issue that requires all parties to look very seriously at what happened, how it happened and what the program for the future represents.<sup>93</sup>

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<sup>90</sup> Batty, “White Redemption Rituals,” 56.

<sup>91</sup> Batty, “White Redemption Rituals,” 56.

<sup>92</sup> Batty, “White Redemption Rituals,” 56–58.

<sup>93</sup> Nick Stanley cited in Kreps, *Liberating Culture*, 17.

Paul Basu postulates that the postcolonial response to demand restitution of museum collections in the form of repatriation is the museological equivalent of a ‘diasporic return movement, which insists on the static isomorphism of people, culture (including material culture), and place, and which sees return as the only response to rupture’.<sup>94</sup> He proposes the concept of ‘object diasporas’ which, when applied in transnational contexts, acknowledges museum collections and their ‘entanglement in networks, flows and power disparities of colonialism’; yet, rather than seeking repatriation, these collections in their ‘diasporic locations’ may be positioned as a valuable resource for communities or nations of origin.<sup>95</sup> With the advent of digital technologies, diasporic collections can now be ‘untethered from their local context (in this case the museum store or gallery) and let loose to circulate in the “global mediascape”’.<sup>96</sup> This thesis contributes to the exploration of ‘object diaspora’ and how source communities identify the value of a museum collection that might flow back to them in a transnational context when the collection is reappropriated for their own purposes and agendas.

## Museums as relational entities and contact zones

Increasingly the role of museums is as agents of social action, change and inclusion. Museums are striving to become relational entities and are shifting ‘from being about something to being about somebody.’<sup>97</sup> As Basu notes, ‘transnational museological relationality and responsibility’ is implicit in holding collections from other countries.<sup>98</sup> Informing this shift has been the concept of the ‘contact zone’. As defined by Mary Louise Pratt, contact zones are ‘social spaces where disparate cultures meet, clash and grapple with each other, often in highly asymmetrical relations of domination and subordination – like colonialism, slavery or their aftermaths as they are lived out across the globe today’.<sup>99</sup> Pratt extends the concept by suggesting that ‘[a]utoethnography, transculturation, critique, collaboration, bilingualism,

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<sup>94</sup> Basu, “Object Diasporas, Resourcing Communities,” 37.

<sup>95</sup> Basu, “Object Diasporas, Resourcing Communities,” 28; John Pepper, “Africa’s Diasporas of Images,” *Third Text* (2005): 339–341.

<sup>96</sup> Basu, “Object Diaporas, Resourcing Communities,” 28.

<sup>97</sup> Stephen E Weil, *Making Museums Matter* (Washington: Smithsonian Books, 2002), 28–52. I specifically refer to the chapter “From Being about Something to Being for Somebody: The Ongoing Transformation of the American Museum”.

<sup>98</sup> Basu, “Object Diaporas, Resourcing Communities,” 28.

<sup>99</sup> Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation* (London: Routledge, 1992).



mediation, parody, denunciation, imaginary dialogue, vernacular expression – these are some of the literate arts of the contact zone’.<sup>100</sup>

The concept of the museum as a ‘contact zone’ was widely endorsed and applied to museological practice during the 1990s after James Clifford borrowed the term from Pratt.<sup>101</sup> He proposed the museum as a site of engagement where cultures meet and grapple with each other, relationally positioning objects, histories and communities in post-colonial contexts. ‘When museums are seen as contact zones their organising structure as a *collection* becomes an ongoing historical, political, moral *relationship* – a power-charged set of exchanges, of push and pull.’<sup>102</sup> Clifford suggests that the museum as contact zone goes beyond ‘consultation and sensitivity ... it becomes an active collaboration and a sharing of authority’.<sup>103</sup> It provides no pre-emptive rights, and positions the museum to grapple with the ‘real difficulties of dialogue, alliance, inequality and translation’.<sup>104</sup> The museum as contact zone encompasses reciprocity.

The contact zone analogy was influenced by wider paradigm shifts within museum practice known generally as the ‘new museology’ movement.<sup>105</sup> Mary Hutchinson claims

New museology is one way of describing a body of practical and theoretical museum work that takes account of the way museums position cultures and social identities in their collections and exhibitions and of the way they interact with their publics ... Typically, the new museology’s interest in democratic and inclusive practice involves developing collaborative relationships with diverse groups and individuals and engaging diverse audiences.<sup>106</sup>

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<sup>100</sup> Mary Louise Pratt, “The Arts of the Contact Zone,” *Profession*, vol. 91 (1991): 37.

<sup>101</sup> James Clifford, “Museums as Contact Zones,” in *Routes: Travel and Translation in the Late Twentieth Century*, edited by James Clifford (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1997), 188–219.

<sup>102</sup> Clifford, “Museums as Contact Zones,” 192.

<sup>103</sup> Clifford, “Museums as Contact Zones,” 210.

<sup>104</sup> Clifford, “Museums as Contact Zones,” 213.

<sup>105</sup> For summaries of new museology see: Edmundson, “Curating in the Postdigital Age”; Kreps, *Liberating Culture*; Message, *New Museum and the Making of Culture*; Watson, *Museums and their Communities*; Weil, *Making Museums Matter*.

<sup>106</sup> Mary Hutchinson, “Shared Authority: Collaboration, Curatorial Voice and Exhibition Design in Canberra, Australia,” in *Museums and Communities*, edited by Viv Golding and Wayne Modest (London: Bloomsbury, 2013), 145.

New museology is community focused and fosters support and interpretation of living cultures.<sup>107</sup> Social change and service are now a major mandate of the museum in the twenty-first century. This movement has ‘promoted education over research, engagement over doctrine and multi-vocal[ity] over connoisseurship’<sup>108</sup>, with an emphasis on open exchange of and access to information. New museology has also been described as being ‘largely about giving people control over their cultural heritage and its preservation as part of how they maintain, reinforce, or construct their identity’.<sup>109</sup> Respect for conflicting perspectives and competing agendas, and questions of who has control and the authority to speak on behalf of others are raised through this approach to museum practice.<sup>110</sup>

How accurate the conceptualisation of the museum as a contact/engagement zone project has been is debatable. Some interpretations declare that collaborations generated from within the museum are inherently neocolonial exercises.<sup>111</sup> It has also been suggested that the advancement of the contact zone as a space for cross-cultural dialogue and source community involvement in reality reinforces the role of museums as instruments of government, and the delivery of their broader goals to complement the dominant political and social agendas of the day, to the exclusion of dissent and divergent views.<sup>112</sup> Arguably, the notion of the museum as contact zone continues to be propagated as a way of covering ‘fundamental asymmetries, appropriations and biases [within museums]’.<sup>113</sup> This suggests that such asymmetries need to be addressed and that the museum as the ultimate site of accumulation, knowledge, authority, expertise, arbiter of taste and primary documenter is under review and reconstruction.

The ‘engagement zone’ concept has been applied to encounters between museums and communities, acknowledging and ‘emphasiz[ing] the agency of participants and the potential

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<sup>107</sup> Weil, *Making Museums Matter*, 40–46.

<sup>108</sup> Robin Boast, “Neocolonial Collaboration: Museum as Contact Zone Revisited,” *Museum Anthropology*, vol. 34, no. 1 (2011): 64.

<sup>109</sup> Kreps, *Liberating Culture*, 10.

<sup>110</sup> Rhiannon Mason, Christopher Whitehead and Helen Graham, “One Voice to Many Voices? Displaying Polyvocality in an Art Gallery,” in *Museums and Communities*, edited by Viv Golding and Wayne Modest (London: Bloomsbury, 2013), 163.

<sup>111</sup> Boast, “Neocolonial Collaboration,” 65.

<sup>112</sup> Tony Bennett, *Culture: A Reformer’s Science* (London: Sage Publications, 1998), 210–213.

<sup>113</sup> Boast, “Neocolonial Collaboration,” 67.

for power fluctuation despite inequalities in power relations'.<sup>114</sup> Bernadette Lynch suggests the museum is an 'invited space – a fact that sets the limits of engagement from the outset'.<sup>115</sup> She argues the museum retains control over which topics are included on the agenda and which are not. Despite inviting people into their spaces and fostering engagement with communities, museums often fail, according to Lynch, to share power for fear of opposition or conflict. Museums 'maintain order and control ... ideologically, through a hegemonic culture in which the values of the institution become the 'common-sense'.<sup>116</sup> The realities of how museums engage with communities, Lynch argues, require museums to participate in creative conflict and reflective practices that 'focus on supporting and facilitating people's capabilities as active citizens, inside and outside the museum, to act freely, speak openly and confront the power of others'.<sup>117</sup>

During the early twenty-first century, the advent of a Second Museum Age has been announced.<sup>118</sup> This heralds the museum as both a repository and theatre, aiming to combine aspects of older and established museological approaches with newer conceptualisations of objects, including their materiality. More inclusive, divergent, cross-cultural, collaborative and consultative practices have emerged in museums, which acknowledge diverse interpretations of collections, histories and cultures.

I adopt the concept of 'contact zone' for my research, based on the following definition presented by Tony Bennett:

The contemporary museum-as-contact zone ... relocates the object as the site for a process ... of the negotiation of meanings and values between different cultures. Detached from the monologic universalism of the museum-as-collection, the object is now the site, instrument and occasion for dialogic

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<sup>114</sup> Bryony Onciul, "Community Engagement, Curatorial Practice, and Museum Ethos in Alberta, Canada," in *Museums and Communities, Curators, Collections and Collaboration*, edited by Viv Golding and Wayne Modest (London and New York: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2013), 83.

<sup>115</sup> Lynch, "Custom-made Reflective Practice," 450; Bernadette Lynch, "Collaboration, Contestation, and Creative Conflict," in *The Routledge Companion to Museum Ethics: Redefining Ethics for the Twenty-First Century Museum*, edited by Janet Marstine (London and New York: Routledge, 2011), 154–155.

<sup>116</sup> Lynch, "Custom-made Reflective Practice," 450.

<sup>117</sup> Lynch, "Custom-made Reflective Practice," 454.

<sup>118</sup> Phillips, "Re-Placing Objects," 83–110.

exchanges structured, ideally, as non-hierarchical relations of reciprocity, between different cultures and communities.<sup>119</sup>

This thesis explores the source community as contact/engagement zone, in anticipation of identifying useful models that enable the museum to revisit its own modus operandi while simultaneously instigating self-empowerment and increased capacity in source communities. Implicit in this approach is that the curator operates more as a facilitator of dialogue and exchange (between the community and the museum/collection) and at times as a conduit of information.

### **Scope of this research project**

My research contributes to wider conversations about emergent processes that can assist museums in becoming increasingly relational entities, facilitating more egalitarian, respectful and meaningful engagements between their collections and source communities, based on shared authority, dialogical processes and collaboration. It sets up and documents a preliminary encounter and re-engagement between the Baguia community and the Baguia Collection, using images of objects rather than the objects themselves to temporarily ‘digitally return’ the Collection to the source community. This case study considers the significance of the Collection to the people of Baguia in the current era. I did not attempt to convey Bühler’s ethnographic analysis or conclusions about the Makasae or their material culture to the members of the Baguia community, nor did I attempt to document their response to his collecting practices. However, within my discussion in this thesis about Makasae responses to the viewing of the Collection, I include informants’ comments and perceptions about Bühler when these were offered in response to viewing the Collection. I did not feel that confronting the Makasae community members with details of German anthropological theory of the early twentieth century would be a productive line of enquiry, and made only occasional reference in interviews to the theoretical inferences drawn by Bühler from his fieldwork. No prior knowledge of the Collection existed in Baguia in advance of my research. It was predominantly a movement of the Collection in one direction, from MKB in Basel to Baguia in Timor-Leste, with the Collection being reunited with its source community *in situ*.

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<sup>119</sup> Bennett, *Culture: A Reformer’s Science*, 203.

As a preliminary encounter, this case study provides a platform from which to tentatively consider future potentialities between the Collection and the Baguia community.

I emphasise the methodological issues inherent in the enterprise of digital return of the Baguia Collection throughout this thesis as '[o]ur methods are the mediums through which the research itself becomes the experiment'.<sup>120</sup> I reflect on the advantages, disadvantages and appropriateness of photo-elicitation and processes that facilitate the digital return of cultural material. What implications do these processes have for how people perceive and engage with material? What actually constitutes the material when it is presented in ephemeral forms? These are key questions. What, if anything, is being returned? Does the digital image of an object become an object in its own right? Does the materiality of the object matter when the source community prioritises its engagement with the intangible heritage activated through a material culture collection, rather than the objects themselves? 'Knowledge is knowledge of (or about) objects; objects are things of (or about) which knowers know. In this sense, knowledge may be embodied in objects. A necessary condition for the generation of knowledge is engagement with objects.'<sup>121</sup> Hence the reading of the object, or the image of the object, becomes of paramount importance to the process, as this has implications for whether the source community can elucidate intangible knowledge through these engagements, especially when the collection sits on the edge of living memory.

This research adds to the understanding of how and why source communities, in this instance Makasae and Naueti people, engage with the digital return of cultural material, and tentatively identifies future uses for the Collection that meet community agendas. The scope of this thesis does not extend to considering the benefits of engagement with the Baguia community for the MKB. That task is best considered by the MKB itself. I do, however, extrapolate some insights from this case study that have implications for museological practice and collaboration with source communities in the twenty-first century.

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<sup>120</sup> Sandra A Niessen, "More to It Than Meets the Eye: Photo-Elicitation Amongst the Batak of Sumatra," *Visual Anthropology*, vol. 4, no. 3-4 (1991): 416.

<sup>121</sup> Boast, "Neocolonial Collaboration," 58.

My research is not intended to suggest that the Baguia Collection is contested at this time, for this does not appear to be the case. I do not attempt to specifically address the issue of physical return or repatriation of the Baguia Collection to Timor-Leste, nor do I attempt to advocate positively or negatively on behalf of any possible stakeholder in regard to this matter.

I argue that the digital return of ethnographic museum collections to source communities is a valid, stand-alone process that has merit irrespective and independent of whether or not it leads to requests for return, restitution or repatriation of physical objects. My findings suggest that the physical possession or property ownership of objects is not necessarily the priority of the Baguia community at this time, but that the digital return of collections that can foster the restitution and transmission of intangible heritage is their priority and of ultimate value to them. The community seeks to engage with and reappropriate the Collection, on an ongoing basis, on its own terms, into the future. It will become evident how the social capital of the Makasae people became a critical resource that enabled them to identify ways to animate the Collection to strengthen their cultural capital.

I identify new approaches that enable source communities to consider whether they can be enriched by engagement with ethnographic collections acquired during the colonial era of twentieth-century museum development, rather than merely inviting them to document, authorise or authenticate collections of their heritage. I reverse the rhetoric about the museum as contact zone, which implies that source communities enter the museum sphere and engage with objects, collections, representations and experiences. By contrast, I reposition the community as the contact/engagement zone, into which an ethnographic collection is temporarily and digitally returned.

My research advocates that instead of thinking about museums, now or in the future, as places, we should think of them as sets of functions and relations. The questions then centre around where and how these functions could be enacted and where and how these relations could be negotiated.<sup>122</sup> This builds on the notion that ‘the museum becomes a participant in the community’ and imagines the museum or collection as ‘a process or an experience ...

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<sup>122</sup> McGonagle, “The Museum Reconsidered as ‘Common Land’”.

not limited to its own walls, but mov[ing] as a set of processes into the spaces, the concerns and the ambitions of communities'.<sup>123</sup> My research explores how museums can become more relational with the communities from which their collections are derived.

## Thesis outline

The thesis consists of this Introduction, six chapters, and a Conclusion.

Chapter One provides an overview of Baguia, the Makasae people and their tumultuous history over the past century. It establishes the broader social context of change and continuity in relation to local cultural practices and the material world of the Makasae as exemplified by the role and presence of the ceremonial house (*oma falu*, M; *uma lulik*, T). This analysis suggests that the Makasae have a well-developed capacity to accommodate change within a continuing customary framework. I argue that whilst the material culture of the Makasae is in transition, the repertoire of their culture – its performance and enactment – remains vibrant and continues to reinforce the identity and sociality of Makasae society.

Chapter Two considers the history of Swiss ethnographic practice and the motivations behind the formation of ethnographic collections in Switzerland. It positions Swiss ethnologists and natural scientists within the wider context of late nineteenth and early twentieth-century Germanic colonial salvage collecting practices and international networks of knowledge production. I argue that Switzerland, although a neutral nation, was complicit and therefore participated in colonial activities, including ethnographic collecting practices, which met civic, national and transnational agendas. This chapter provides an overview to the motivations behind the commissioning of the Timor, Rote and Flores Expedition, 1935, by the Museum Commission of the MKB and explains how the broader European agendas of physical anthropology – a fascination with the identification of racial typologies and delineation of borderlines – ultimately led Bühler to undertake ethnographic salvage collecting in remote Timor and island Southeast Asia.

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<sup>123</sup> Phillips, "Introduction," 161; Eilean Hooper-Greenhill, *Museums and the Interpretation of Visual Culture* (London and New York: Routledge, 2000): 152–153.

Chapter Three documents the formation and scope of the ethnographic collections acquired in Baguia by Bühler between 31 July and 18 August 1935 and the subsequent process of the formation of the Baguia Collection; that is, its transfer from privately owned material in Baguia to becoming accessioned as ‘objects of ethnography’ into the permanent collections of a Swiss ethnographic museum. This diasporic Collection itself is addressed, in terms of its scope, documentation and classification, together with how it was documented for temporary virtual return to Baguia as part of this research project during 2014. A detailed discussion considers the sensory aspects of the material and the issues associated with the return to Baguia of digital and printed images as representations of three-dimensional objects. The chapter also provides accounts of the display and interpretation of the Collection over the intervening years since its acquisition, most specifically its display in the exhibition *Expeditions. The World in a Suitcase* (2012–2016). This chapter establishes the heritage value attributed to the Collection in Basel and Switzerland more generally.

Chapter Four begins to explore the relevance of the Baguia Collection to its source community. It commences with an overview of Makasae material culture and its continuities and changes between 1935 and 2014 to provide a context for the source community’s re-encounter with its tangible cultural heritage. It analyses the process of digital return of the Collection to the Baguia community in 2014, specifically considering the methodology used to present the Collection through a series of community viewings of slideshows in seven villages in Baguia Sub-district. I document the community’s mixed responses, both positive and negative, to encountering images of Collection objects and how the objects serve as a time capsule and a marker of change and continuity. The topics of remembering, memory-work, forgetting and prosthetic memory are explored in this chapter, together with ‘non-responses’ to the Collection. Three vignettes are presented that elucidate varying responses by residents of Baguia to re-encountering the Collection objects, further illustrating the Collection’s significance to them at that time.

Chapter Five considers the significance of the historical photographs from the Baguia Collection as containers of history for the people of Baguia. An overview to the historical photographs taken by Bühler during his three-week visit to Baguia in 1935 is provided. I argue that Bühler’s photographs exist, on the one hand, as an enduring record of his ethnographic practice, while, on the other hand, they resonate as a valuable resource for the



people of Baguia; as such they embody a 'double vision'. The chapter recounts the process of viewing the historical photographs by the Makasae residents of Baguia Sub-district. The methodology used to show the Collection photographs to the Baguia community members is explained and reflected upon. Emphasis is given to the manner in which photographic images hold multiple meanings and elicit a range of responses from viewers. Three vignettes are provided as evidence of the diverse ways in which people engaged with the Baguia Collection historical photographs. This chapter establishes the manner in which the Makasae asserted their own cultural authority over the Collection.

Chapter Six considers how the Baguia community animated the Baguia Collection to serve their own agendas. Community leaders and teachers used their available resources of social capital, combined with local knowledge, skills, habitus and habitat to instigate some initial animations of the Collection. These animations, in the form of presentations, workshops and demonstrations, indicate how culture was 'performed' and enacted through acts of transfer with the intent of ensuring the inter-generational transmission of knowledge and intangible heritage. These animations provide insights into the potential applications of the Collection as a resource for metacultural production into the future.

The Conclusion summarises the key findings of this thesis for future museological methods and practice. It also presents some broader speculative reflections relating to the value of diasporic collections to source communities for the formation of partnerships and exchanges, ownership of cultural property and shared authority / joint custodianship arrangements between source communities and museums. The ethical implications of the digital return of museum collections to source communities are also considered as museums strive to become more relational and reciprocal institutions in the twenty-first century.

## **Conclusion**

Ultimately this thesis reflects upon the fundamental changes and transitions being experienced by twenty-first century museums as they strive to become more inclusive relational entities recognising the 'dynamic relations between persons and things, as well as

generating them'.<sup>124</sup> Whilst, arguably, museums have always been relational entities, what is under review is how this relational capacity can be strengthened to engage the wider plurality of stakeholders, including source communities. This thesis reflects the gathering paradigm shift in museums, which sees a change in focus from objects to stakeholders, including source communities and audiences. It adds to our understanding of comparative museology.

In recognition of the evolving and changing nature of museums and their roles, it is necessary to re-consider diasporic collections held in ethnographic museums so that their past appropriations and biographies can be understood and their 'regimes of value' – in the past and present – can be considered and determined.<sup>125</sup> These understandings evolve in social, spatial and temporal contexts and in dialogic partnership with stakeholders, such as source communities and audiences, who seek access to collections that embody significant aspects of their intangible cultural heritage. These new models and partnerships have the capacity to shift museums from their former roles as premier colonial institutions towards becoming twenty-first century relational entities. Through this process museums are being challenged to create new models for working with communities. In doing so museums may need to relinquish, at times, control, resources – including collections – and authority for agendas beyond their experience, knowledge or imagination.<sup>126</sup>

## **The Baguia Collection and the Online Cultural Collections Analysis and Management System**

For the purposes of this thesis the collection acquired by Bühler from Baguia in 1935 is referred to as the Baguia Collection or the Collection. This nomenclature enables identification of the sub-collection of artefacts acquired in Baguia as a specific part of the larger collection acquired during the Timor, Rote and Flores Expedition, 1935. At the MKB the entire collection from this expedition is referred to as the Bühler Collection.

An outcome of this research has been the initial development of a password-controlled Online Cultural Collections Analysis and Management System (OCCAMS) database of

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<sup>124</sup> Joshua A Bell, "Museums as Relational Entities: The Politics and Poetics of Heritage," *Reviews in Anthropology*, vol. 41, no. 70 (2012): 70.

<sup>125</sup> Arjun Appadurai (ed.), *The Social Life of Things* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 15.

<sup>126</sup> Boast, "Neocolonial Collaboration," 67.

working images and metadata of the Baguia Collection objects and photographs. OCCAMS has been designed by the Australian National University for use by researchers working with cultural collections. The metadata featured on OCCAMS regarding the Baguia Collection includes object details (names, measurements, year and place of acquisition, name of collector, accession number) and accession cards created by Bühler as well as documentation ascertained through the digital return of the Collection to Baguia community, such as names, descriptions and uses and the currency of the objects in 2014. Various footnotes in this thesis reference the corresponding accession number for Baguia Collection objects and photographs discussed. These objects and photographs can be sighted in the password-controlled OCCAMS database. (Refer to Appendix A for log-in details to the Baguia Collection on OCCAMS).

## **Note on translations, languages and place names**

### **Translations**

Interviews during this research were conducted in Makasae and Tetun languages. Naueti informants spoke Tetun when interviewed. With the consent of the various *Xefes de Suco*, we recorded all discussions at the community viewings. I also recorded or filmed other informants, with their express permission, during interviews and informal viewings. These recordings were transcribed in Tetun or Makasae by Salustianus Fraga or Jacqueline MF Ximenes and then translated into English by Nani Marques, Uka Pinta and Sergio Marques at Timor Aid under the direction of Camilla Zwack, linguist and former co-ordinator of the National Tetun Dictionary Project hosted by Timor Aid, Dili. In instances when informants spoke Tetun, I conducted the interview in Tetun. In instances where the informant spoke English, interviews were conducted in that language.

The quotations presented in this thesis are based either on my own interpretations of Tetun language, based on the Tetun transcripts or original recordings, or on English translations of the transcripts. In some cases, I have amended the English translations to omit non-standard English.

The language key used in this thesis is as follows:

## Introduction

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Bahasa Indonesia	(I)
French	(F)
German	(G)
Latin	(L)
Makasae	(M)
Naueti	(N)
Portuguese	(P)
Tetun	(T)
Uab Meto	(UM)

I have aimed to consistently provide the English name or title of objects, institutions or publications, followed by the foreign language term. The exception to this is citations that were published in German; in these cases I have provided an English translation of the title in parentheses. Assistance with German language translations of archival material and accession records written in German are attributed accordingly in footnotes throughout this thesis. Due to the demands of archival research in the German language and my language limitations, a decision was made to exclude Portuguese language archives from the scope of this research. Access to these archives would certainly have produced a more rounded account of Baguia historical experience and the specific colonial context at the time of the Baguia Collection's formation, but my own skills and the tyranny of time and resources required that I limit the thesis to just certain aspects of the Collection's historical context.

### Place names

Timorese place names used in this thesis are based on those published in the *Jornal Da República*.<sup>127</sup> It is important to note that various place names have been contemporised since Bühler's visit to eastern Indonesia and Timor in 1935. Common examples include 'Baaguiaa' and 'Roti'. I have used the contemporary official spellings except in the case of quoted material or references, where I have retained the published spelling. Also, I have cited

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<sup>127</sup> Parlamento Nacional República Democrática de Timor-Leste, "Que fixa número de Sucos e Aldeias em Território Nacional Exposição de motivos," *Jornal Da República*, vol. 1, no. 33 (2009): 3588–3620.

contemporary place names followed by historical place names in those cases where the names have changed; for example, Jakarta (Batavia).

In relation to district names, I only note those outside of Baucau District. If no district name appears, the location named is within Baucau District. Throughout this thesis I use the terms Baguia Sub-district and Baguia interchangeably. The township and administrative centre of the Baguia Sub-district is referred to as Baguia Villa.

All photographs included in this thesis are by the author, unless otherwise specified.



## Chapter 1

# The Makasae of Baguia: their history, society and material world

It was the putative Papuan origins of the Makasae that attracted Dr Alfred Bühler to Baguia on the Timor, Rote, Flores Expedition, 1935. Bühler's interest in racial boundaries (discussed in detail in Chapter 2) motivated him to select Baguia as a point of investigation and acquisition in his quest to document disappearing cultures. During his fieldwork, Bühler acquired material culture from and documented the lives of both Makasae people and the neighbouring Naueti people. My research occurred nearly 80 years after Bühler's visit, during a period of Makasae history where stability had been tentatively established following more than two decades of Indonesian occupation. The Indonesian occupation followed four centuries of Portuguese colonial rule and resulted in extreme oppression, dislocation and disorder, leaving the population deeply traumatised and fragmented.<sup>1</sup> The loss and damage sustained to human life, social systems and cultural practices was extensive and substantial. Hence, the period during which my research occurred in 2014 was one of social and political fragility.

The pressures of rebuilding life and society in a predominantly subsistence farming community, in post-independent Timor-Leste, have been immense. The difficulty of this process has been exacerbated by a society recovering from trauma as it emerged from sustained colonisation and recent occupation. Furthermore, the process of reconstruction and development, including infrastructure establishment, resumption of cultural and social practices and implementing self-governance at local, district and national levels required focus and energy. Such circumstances and hardships undoubtedly affected the capacity of the community, to varying degrees, to engage and respond to the Baguia Collection at the time of my research.

Nonetheless, it is evident throughout this thesis that Makasae society is highly dynamic. 'Although Timorese traditions might be thousands of years old, these are not static ... Engagement with the world involves continual adaptation and reinterpretation.'<sup>2</sup> This chapter explores aspects of continuity and change in Makasae society since Bühler's visit to

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<sup>1</sup> This research occurred during 2014, with a visit to the MKB in Basel, Switzerland, to document the Collection and an extended period of research in Baguia, Timor-Leste, working with the community.

<sup>2</sup> Fox, "The Articulation of Tradition in Timor-Leste," 242.

Baguia in 1935. By considering aspects of daily life, cultural practices and the material culture of the Makasae people of Baguia, between 1935 and 2014, it is possible to establish a sense of what has remained constant and what has altered. This exploration of continuity and change in Makasae society since Bühler's visit provides a nuanced context for later discussion (chapters 4–6) about the digital return of the Baguia Collection to its source community in Baguia Sub-district.

I begin the chapter by providing a brief overview of the Makasae and Naueti peoples and of Baguia, followed by an historical account that describes the tumultuous experiences of the people of the region, particularly during the last 100 years. Next I discuss Makasae culture, including customary gift exchange and alliance formation, and comment on the constancy of these practices, albeit with recent modifications. I introduce the concept of sacredness (*falu*, M; *luli*, N; *lulik*, T) as embodied by the ceremonial house (*oma falu*, M) and consider its continued relevance as part of Makasae identity and culture.

In the final part of the chapter I explore the shifting dynamics of the concept of sacredness in relation to the material culture of the Makasae. I argue that although the context for the use of objects remains predominantly constant, the materials, techniques and methods used for the creation of Makasae material culture are shifting. Without these material forms, aspects of the performance of Makasae culture are compromised.

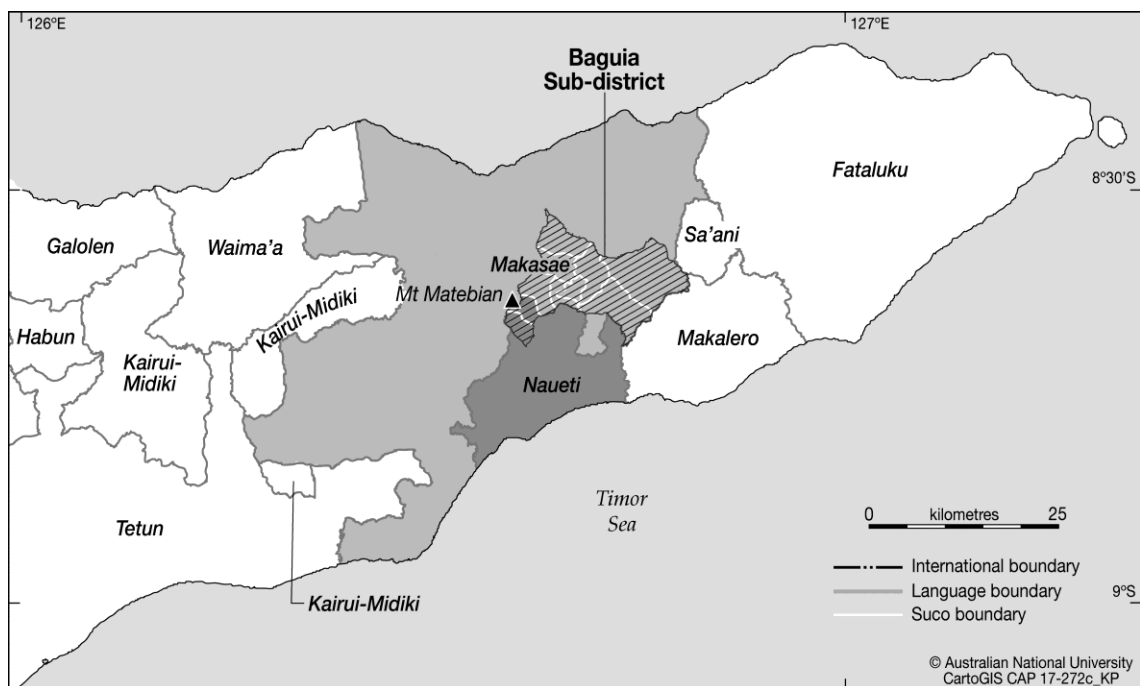
The themes of continuity and change reveal a society in transition, striving to accommodate these modifications within a continuing customary framework. With consideration of various historical influences and an analysis of change and continuity as exemplified through the *oma falu*, and object classification as *falu* or non-*falu*, a sense of how Makasae negotiate change and external influences, whilst also continuing to maintain deep traditions, becomes evident.

### **The Makasae and Naueti peoples**

When Bühler visited Baguia in 1935 he encountered the Makasae people who are one of three Papuan-language-speaking cultural groups within the wider cultural-linguistic context



of Austronesian cultures of the island of Timor.<sup>3</sup> Makasae is the most widely spoken Papuan language on Timor, with 123,840 speakers, or approximately 9.7 per cent of the total Timor-Leste population, located predominantly in Baucau and Viqueque districts.<sup>4</sup> Although a West-Trans New Guinea Papuan linguistic group, Makasae culture does not vary greatly from that of the neighbouring Austronesians. Papuan speakers in Timor share many similarities with Austronesians: ‘This is a region where the vitality of Papuan or non-Austronesian societies reveals their cultural accommodation with Austronesian cultural ideas and forms’.<sup>5</sup>



Map 2: Makasae- and Naueti-speaking language distribution in Timor-Leste.

Source: Map by CartoGIS Services, ANU College of Asia and the Pacific, The Australian National University.

<sup>3</sup> The other Papuan-speaking cultural groups of Timor are the Fataluku and Bunak peoples. Whilst the Fataluku reside in Timor-Leste, the Bunak straddle the border of Timor-Leste and West Timor, Indonesia.

<sup>4</sup> General Directorate of Statistics, Timor-Leste, ‘Census, Table 12 Population by mother tongue, age, urban/rural location and municipality,’ 2015.

<<http://www.statistics.gov.tl/category/publications/census-publications/2015-census-publications/volume-2-population-distribution-by-administrative/4-language/>>. Accessed 16 April 2017.

Mikdiki, Waima’a, Kairui and Makalero are other dialects of Makasae spoken in the region.

<sup>5</sup> Andrew McWilliam and Elizabeth G Traube, *Land and Life in Timor-Leste Ethnographic Essays* (Canberra: ANU E Press, 2011): 19.

Throughout this thesis I discuss the Makasae as the dominant cultural group, unless the informant is Naueti or subject-matter is specific to Naueti people. Many of the comments that follow regarding cultural practices of the Makasae are also broadly applicable to the Naueti people. Whilst the majority of Baguia Sub-district's 9,465 residents speak Makasae, approximately 1,489 residents speak Naueti, an Austronesian language.<sup>6</sup> The Naueti-speaking areas of Baguia Sub-district, where Bühler visited, include Afaloicai and Osso Huna, whilst Uatolari and Uatocarbau are Naueti-speaking areas on the borders of Baucau and Viqueque districts.<sup>7</sup> An inter-connectedness exists between Makasae and Naueti speakers, down to the family level:

Speakers of these languages [Naueti and Makasae] appear to share a wife-giver/wife-taker kinship system, which has allowed for fairly pacific, gradual blending and spreading of both [languages]. War occasionally played a part in the diffusion of one language over another. Today in this region [Baguia-Uatocarbau valley] people identify more readily by locality of origin than by 'ethno-linguistic group'.<sup>8</sup>

Households may speak both Makasae and Naueti languages, due to inter-marriage. Since independence, Tetun is increasingly spoken as the national language.

### **Notions of land, clan and duality**

From the time of Bühler's visit to Baguia until 2014, the customary attachments and ties to land which have been described as 'the substance of life' have been central to Makasae

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<sup>6</sup> General Directorate of Statistics, Timor-Leste. *Population and Housing Census of Timor-Leste*, National Statistics Directroate and United National Population Fund, vol. 2. 2011, 75. Population Distribution by Administrative Areas. <[http://www.statistics.gov.tl/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/Publication\\_202\\_20FINAL\\_20\\_20English\\_20Fina\\_Website.pdf](http://www.statistics.gov.tl/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/Publication_202_20FINAL_20_20English_20Fina_Website.pdf)> Accessed 16 April 2017.

General Directorate of Statistics, Timor-Leste. <<http://www.statistics.gov.tl/category/publications/census-publications/2015-census-publications/volume-2-population-distribution-by-administrative/>>. Accessed 16 April 2017. Naueti is spoken by approximately 16,500 people nationally. In Baucau District, 1,489 people speak Naueti, predominantly in Baguia Sub-district. Just under 14,000 people speak Naueti in neighbouring Viqueque districts.

<sup>7</sup> Afaloicai is Naueti-speaking while Ossou Huna is both a Naueti- and Makasae-speaking area. Uatocarabu is a Naueti-speaking area whilst Uatolari has a mixture of both Naueti and Makasae languages.

<sup>8</sup> Janet Gunter, *Violence and 'Being in History' in East Timor: Local Articulations of Colonial Rebellion*. Masters Thesis, Instituto Superior de Ciências do Trabalho e da Empresa: Lisbon University Institute, 2008, 34.

traditional framework.<sup>9</sup> These traditions also reflect relationship to specific migrations and origins, which are remade and invoked through the recitation of origin narratives by the clan elder (*dato lolo*, M). Locations are recalled in these ceremonies, which constitute a ‘topogeny ... a recitation that functions much like a genealogy to locate individuals and groups within an ordered past’.<sup>10</sup> The site of such ceremonies for the Makasae is the lineage house (*oma falu*, M; *uma lulik*, T), which is a physical and metaphorical representation of the centre of each clan. The landscape, together with the *oma falu* and the ceremonies held within, continue to shape, inform and replenish basic understandings about clan identity and membership.

The significance of the lineage house is central to notions of both individual and collective wellbeing. As one informant explained in 2014, without the continuation of the *oma falu* and related ritual practices, Makasae people believe that ‘we will cease to exist’ or ‘we will die’.<sup>11</sup> The act of consuming betelnut occurs at the *oma falu* indicative of clan membership. As another informant indicated, ‘Even if you live in Baucau, Dili or even Australia, maybe you are young and go to university, but you must eat the betelnut from your *oma falu* so as you remain connected to it. Without this you are nothing’.<sup>12</sup>

Duality permeates the cultural beliefs of the Makasae and underpins their worldview, in the same way it does for other cultures in Timor and eastern Indonesia.<sup>13</sup> The capacity for the Makasae to adapt to change and to incorporate external influences into their existing traditional structures is attributable to their conception of the world through a system of complementary opposites that provides a ‘general rhetoric and a pervasive logic’.<sup>14</sup> Complementary opposites such as light–dark, masculine–feminine, secular–sacred, left–right,

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<sup>9</sup> Fox, “The Articulation of Tradition in Timor-Leste,” 242.

<sup>10</sup> Fox, “The Articulation of Tradition in Timor-Leste,” 254.

<sup>11</sup> Artur Ximenes, interview with author, Alawa Leten, Baguia Sub-district, 24 August 2014; unidentified informant’s comment, Uasufa, Alawa Craik, Baguia Sub-district, 27 August 2014. Translated from Tetun audio recordings by Salustianus Fraga.

<sup>12</sup> Celestino Guterres, interview with author, Bahatata, Hae Coni, Baguia Sub-district, 7 October 2014.

Celestino also chanted in Makasae at a ceremony welcoming sacred stones to the Mandati ceremonial house (*oma falu*, M) in honour of his grandmother: ‘*Fanarae hai mau di’i? Nonoi hai mau, dai-dai hai mau, hai mau, ni kota gau mau, ni wa’a gau mau, mau do hau diara’a, mau do nia boe tia ni malu tia, mau?*, M (‘Young girl has come? Girls come on, boys come on, come to sit in your house, come to sit in your place, come and sit, come to chew your betelnut, come and sit.’ Translation by Jacqueline MF Ximenes.)

<sup>13</sup> James J Fox and Monni Adams, *The Flow of Life: Essays on Eastern Indonesia* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press), 1980; David Hicks, *A Maternal Religion: The Role of Women in Tetum Myth and Ritual* (Illinois: Northern Illinois University Center for Southeast Asian Studies, 1984): 2–4.

<sup>14</sup> Fox, “The Articulation of Tradition in Timor-Leste,” 242.

upper–lower, outer–inner, hot–cold and young–old inform much of the world view of the Makasae.

One obvious example that reflects these dualistic notions in Baguia Sub-district is Mount Matebian (2,316 metres above sea level), which is conceptualised as masculine; a counterpart to the feminine Mount Ramelau (2,986 metres above sea level).<sup>15</sup> Mount Matebian is renowned for its physical and cosmological prominence, as an ancestral resting place and home of the ‘souls of the dead’.<sup>16</sup> It is revered as a sacred site, together with other Timorese mountains, where ancestral entities first appeared on earth and as locations ‘through which communication with their powers could be achieved’.<sup>17</sup> Formed from a giant outcrop of sandstone, Mount Matebian is a major geological feature of the area, which is noted for its clay soil layers. Also, its rocky outcrops have served as sites of refuge and protection from political adversaries.<sup>18</sup> The rugged inland mountainous range in Baguia Sub-district makes it a temperate location prone to heavy cloud-cover, high rainfall and frequent landslides. As described by Bühler:

The landscape is very beautiful because there is a clear view to deep valleys covered in magnificent green rice fields or towards the mountains of which the two steep main peaks of the Fatumatabia Massif are particularly gorgeous.<sup>19</sup>

From the peaks of the range both the northern sea and southern sea are visible. The northern ‘masculine’ sea (*tasi mane*, T) and the southern ‘feminine’ sea (*tasi feto*, T) reflect aspects of duality that Makasae society constantly strives to keep in balance.

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<sup>15</sup> Mount Matebian has two peaks; one peak is attributed as masculine and the other as feminine.

<sup>16</sup> In the Tetun language the word *mate* literally translates to ‘dead, death’ and *bian* translates to ‘soul’.

<sup>17</sup> Ricardo Roque, “Mountains and Black Races,” *The Journal of Pacific History*, vol. 47, no. 3 (2012): 280.

<sup>18</sup> Roque, “Mountains and Black Races,” 279.

<sup>19</sup> Alfred Bühler, Tagebuchnotizen Reise zu den kleinen Sundainseln Timor, Rote und Flores 27 März – 18 Dezember 1935. Unpublished field diary, 70. Museum der Kulturen Basel Archives. Translated by Julia Scult, 10 April 2014.



Figure 1.1: 'Fatu Matabia – Gebirge' (Mount Matebian mountains).

Source: Museum der Kulturen Basel, MKB (F)IIc 1285. Photograph by Alfred Bühler, 1935.

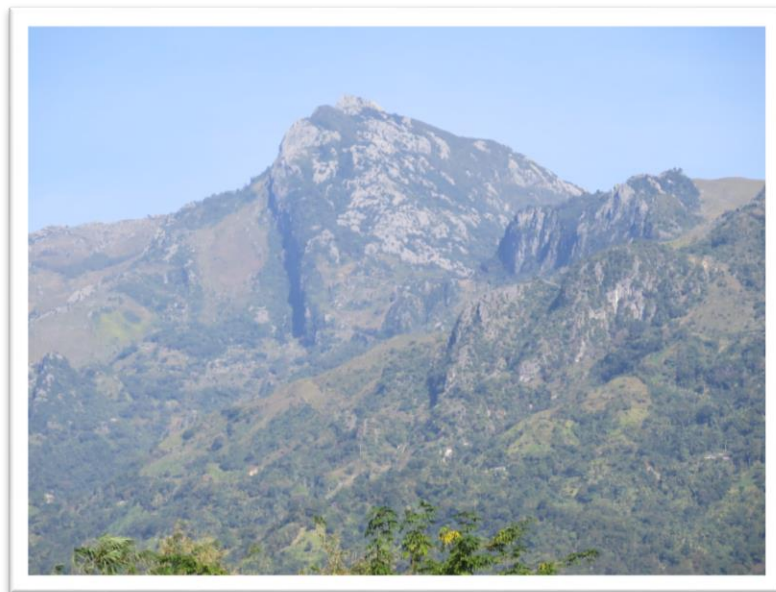


Figure 1.2: Mount Matebian, 2014.

## Baguia Sub-district – the land, produce, climate and population



Map 3: Baguia Sub-district and its ten *suco*.

Source: Map by CartoGIS Services, ANU College of Asia and the Pacific, The Australian National University.

Located in Baucau District, Baguia Sub-district comprises 20,720 square kilometres.<sup>20</sup> The administrative headquarters of Baguia Sub-district are located in Baguia Villa. Baguia consists of ten settlements (*suco, suku*, T): Afaloicai, Alawa Craik, Alawa Leten, Defawasi, Hae Coni, Larisula, Lavateri, Osso Huna, Samalari and Uacala. Each *suco* forms an administrative unit akin to villages, which comprise various hamlets (*aldeia*, T). The term for clan or family group (*wa*, M; *knua*, T) is also used to describe the land of origin to which a person and their family belong. It represents the place of one's ancestral origins and is a common site for the location of the clan's *oma falu* and burial site (*rate*, M, T).<sup>21</sup> Identity in Makasae society, within and beyond the clan, is based on membership in a specific lineage house. The origin of one's genealogy is the clan, source, trunk or base (*sala fu, fu*, M; *umakain*, T).

The Makasae are primarily small land-holders and subsistence farmers who grow crops for local consumption.<sup>22</sup> Tropical trees provide fruits and lontar palms (*Borassus flabellifer*, L; *akadiru*, M, T) are tapped for local wine. Wet rice is cultivated in low-land, terraced fields. Cash crops include the collection of betelnut (*boe*, M; *bua, mama*, T; *Areca catechu*) and candlenuts (*sae*, M; *kami*, T) for oil manufacture. Livestock, such as pigs, goats, chickens and buffalo, are raised as exchange goods and for sacrifices and feasting.

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<sup>20</sup> Armindo da Silva, *Perfil Distriktu Baucau*, edited by Instituto Nacional de Linguística (Dili: INL – Universidade Nacional Timor-Leste), 2008, 38.

<sup>21</sup> These graves, made of stone, are often referred to as graves for animists (*jentiu*, T). The word *jentiu* is often qualified by the explanation, 'those people that were not baptised'.

<sup>22</sup> Crops consist of corn (*teli*, M; *batar*, T), cassava (*ate sia*, M; *ai farina*, T), taro (*luka*, M; *talas*, T), sweet potato (*sia*, M; *febuk midar*, T), green-leaf vegetables (*kobe*, M; *mustarda*, T), arrowroot (*dicia*, M; *kontas mutin*, T) and beans (*utadili*, M; *koto*, T).



Map 4: Baguia Sub-district and its ten *suco* and various *aldeia* noted in this thesis.

Source: Map by CartoGIS Services, ANU College of Asia and the Pacific, The Australian National University.

The Makasae year is structured by seasonal cycles. The monsoon season commences in November and continues until April and is dominated by agricultural activity ensuring crops



and foodstuffs. With the onset of rain, crops are planted including the first corn crop of the year.<sup>23</sup> Seeds are prepared in January for planting in February.<sup>24</sup> In February and March, the fields and terraces are tilled with the assistance of buffalo, ploughs and hand-held metal digging sticks.<sup>25</sup> The second corn crop is planted in the low lands, whilst beans are planted in the mountainous areas.<sup>26</sup> The annual rice crop is sown in March or April and the corn crop is harvested usually in April.<sup>27</sup>

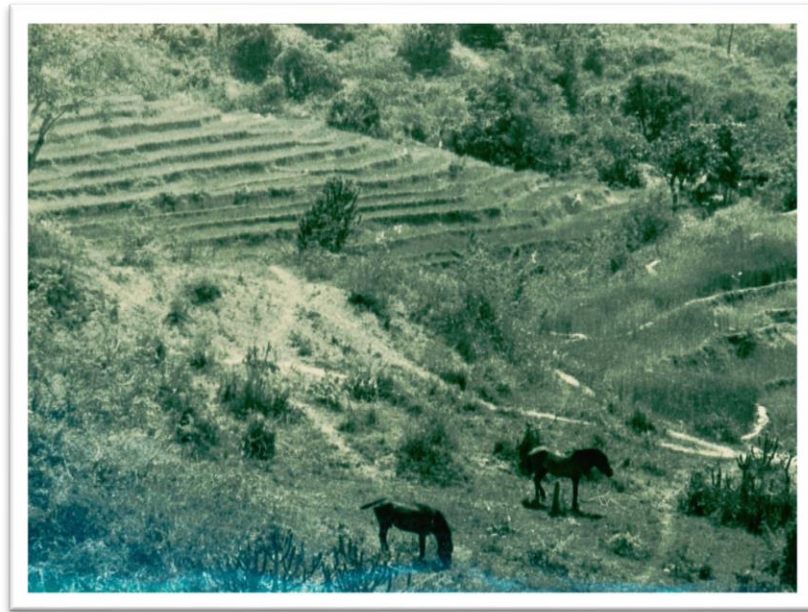


Figure 1.3: 'Reisfelder bei Baagua' (Rice fields near Baguia).

Source: Museum der Kulturen Basel, MKB IIc(F) 1326. Photograph by Dr Alfred Bühler, 1935.

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<sup>23</sup> *Tele silu*, M, is the term used to describe the planting of the crops.

<sup>24</sup> *Tele koe*, M, is the term used to describe the preparation of the seeds.

<sup>25</sup> Terraced fields are known as *kabubu*, T. See the digging stick, MKB IIc 6627, which Bühler listed as a *Grabstock*, G; *ossodia*, M, *ai suak*, T.

<sup>26</sup> These areas include Afaloicai, Osso Huna and Hae Coni.

<sup>27</sup> Harvest of the rice crop is known as *sama baree*, T; harvest of the corn crop is known as *teli was siri*, M; *silu batar*, T.



Figure 1.4: Terraced fields in Baguia Sub-district, 2014.

During the dry season between August until October, agricultural activity continues together with the construction and maintenance of ceremonial houses and gravesites, and the performance of ceremonies. Beans are harvested during August and September. Betelnut is harvested, skinned, dried, skewered and sold throughout the dry season. The rice harvest and the second corn harvest occur towards the end of the dry season. The fields are then burnt off before the rains arrive and planting commences again in November. Food security can be an issue during this season in Baguia.<sup>28</sup>

As documented by Bühler, the local economy of Baguia in 1935 revolved around weekly market days, which continue today.<sup>29</sup> In addition to foodstuffs, other local produce is occasionally sold nowadays, including handwoven textiles and locally smithed machetes. Canned and packet foodstuffs are plentiful, as are manufactured goods including domestic utensils, tools and gardening equipment, and commercially printed cloths imported from China and Indonesia. An active market in foreign second-hand clothing exists. A barter system of goods continues in Baguia although this has largely been usurped by a cash

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<sup>28</sup> *Arara*, M, is the term used when food is scarce, usually towards the end of the dry season.

<sup>29</sup> Weekly markets are held as follows: Thursday at Lafatere, Friday at Laka Gua in Alawa Craik and Saturday at Osso Huna.

economy.<sup>30</sup> In 2014 stock is carried by foot or motorbike from Baguia Villa to outlying markets. Alternatively, people sell local produce and other groceries at makeshift road-side stalls and home kiosks.<sup>31</sup> Local carpentry workshops and ‘fuel stops’ are scattered sparingly along the road-side.



Figure 1.5: ‘Markt in Baaguia’ (Market in Baguia).

Source: Museum der Kulturen Basel, MKB (F)Ic 1172. Photograph by Dr Alfred Bühler, 1935.

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<sup>30</sup> The US dollar is the official currency of Timor-Leste.

<sup>31</sup> Kiosks set up at the front of houses sell fruit, vegetables, bottled water, packets of noodles, sacks of rice, sachets of coffee, shampoo and washing powder, along with other basic groceries.



Figure 1.6: Laka Gua market, Alawa Craik, Baguia Sub-district, 1 August 2014.

Rural poverty and lack of facilities in Timor-Leste remain high due to ‘low returns in agriculture and limited non-farm livelihood opportunities, as well as limited access to basic social services (e.g. education, health and water) and infrastructure (e.g. markets and roads)’.<sup>32</sup> Baguia is no exception. National census data suggest that Baguia has a dominant youth demographic, with 60 per cent of the population aged beneath 25 years.<sup>33</sup> Youth unemployment is a major issue, with an increasing flow of young people to urban centres seeking employment and tertiary study. Seven secondary schools and 35 primary schools in Baguia reflect the national educational and school enrolment statistics.<sup>34</sup> Baguia Villa includes

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<sup>32</sup> International Labour Office, “Timor-Leste: Decent Work Country Programme, 2008–2013,” 2007, 5. <<http://www.ilo.org/public/english/bureau/program/dwcp/download/timorleste.pdf>>. Accessed 16 April 2017.

<sup>33</sup> Indexamundi statistics, “Timor-Leste National Demographics Profile 2016.” Indexamundi states that approximately 41.3 per cent of Baguia community is 0–14 years of age and 20.11 per cent are 15–24 years of age. <[http://www.indexmundi.com/timor-leste/age\\_structure.html](http://www.indexmundi.com/timor-leste/age_structure.html)>. Accessed 16 April 2017.

<sup>34</sup> Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste Government, “Strategic Development Plan Timor-Leste 2011–2030,” 15. <<http://timor-leste.gov.tl/wp-content/uploads/2011/07/Timor-Leste-Strategic-Plan-2011-20301.pdf>>. Accessed 16 April 2017. A total of seven secondary schools are in Baguia: two Catholic, four government and one independent school (Fundasaun Satelus). There is a total of 35 primary schools and kindergartens: ten Catholic and 25 government-operated. National student enrolment figures in 2014 were as follows:

Primary: 6–11 years – 242,000

Lower-secondary: 12–14 years – 63,000

Secondary: 15–17 years – 45,000.

a health clinic, a police station, and the EBC Sao Jose Bosco Catholic Church operated by the Salesianos Order; there is a private guesthouse, and a single volleyball court provides a well-patronised recreational venue in the town centre.



Figure 1.7: Baguia Villa, as people leave a local volleyball match, 2014.

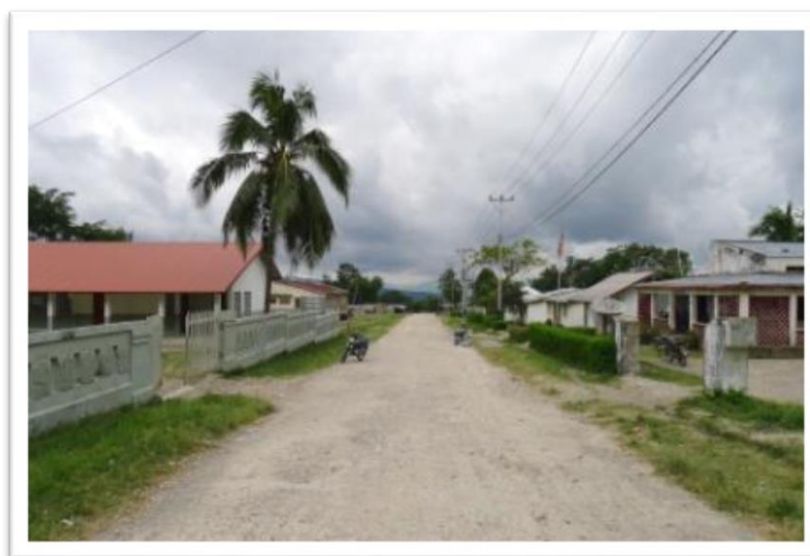


Figure 1.8: Baguia Villa, 2014.

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Education Policy and Data Centre, “Timor-Leste National Education Profile 2014 Update,” 1. [https://www.epdc.org/sites/default/files/documents/EPDC%20NEP\\_Timor%20Leste.pdf](https://www.epdc.org/sites/default/files/documents/EPDC%20NEP_Timor%20Leste.pdf). Accessed 30 August 2017.

Baguia is geographically remote by Timorese standards, with little infrastructure and exceptionally poor roads. Access to Baguia is often difficult during the monsoonal season due to heavy rains, flooding rivers and damaged roads. Diminutive Timor ponies, harnessed, continue to transport goods into the mountains using simple rig and saddlery, examples of which were acquired by Bühler, but increasingly motorbikes are replacing the ponies. The majority of people, however, walk mountain tracks to gardens, markets, schools, workplaces, churches and homes. Local accounts indicate that Makasae people walk over 20 kilometres to exercise garden rights. Privately owned trucks transport people and goods between Baguia and Viqueque, Baucau and Dili.

Communications beyond Baguia are largely via mobile telephone networks. Internet access is intermittent but the vast majority of the population does not own a television, let alone a computer, while phones are owned by most households. For those households fortunate to have electricity, it is primarily used for lighting. Other electrical appliances, such as whitegoods, are not commonplace as people cook on open fires or hot plates. The free-of-charge electricity supply is regularly disrupted where it is provided in central parts of Baguia, whilst outlying areas use private generators for electricity, if at all.

Baguia Sub-district is geographically isolated from centres of power and trade routes with little infrastructure changing the broad socio-economic dynamics of the area since Bühler's visit in 1935. The Makasae continue to practise subsistence farming with the majority of young adults being 'unemployed' or relocating to Dili in pursuit of employment or tertiary study. Since Bühler's visit in 1935, changes such as the provision of electricity and more widespread telecommunications have transformed certain aspects of daily life in Baguia, but most other aspects remain unaltered. People in Baguia still work, live and struggle with the natural elements in order to survive.

### **An historical overview of Baguia and Timor-Leste**

The Baguia Fort is emblematic of Baguia's tumultuous history over recent decades, which has left it in ruins. The fort, also known as a *postu* (P) and *benteng* (I), was constructed by the PCA as part of a Portuguese pacification campaign to build 20 new *postu* between 1912 and

1918, following the Manufahi Rebellion in 1912.<sup>35</sup> The fort housed the Portuguese administrative centre. As a headquarters of the Portuguese colonial administration in the region, the fort was located in Baguia due to its strategic location between Viqueque in the south coast and Baucau in the north coast. The area and the ‘natives from the mountains of Fatu-Mate-Bian’ had developed a reputation for lawlessness in 1904, as reported by the Governor of Timor<sup>36</sup>, which possibly contributed to a fort and the colonial presence being strengthened in the area.

The towers of the fort were used by the PCA as a prison until 1975. Thereafter Indonesian commanders appropriated the fort for their military operations in the region. In 2014 plans were underway to redevelop the fort as a potential heritage site and tourist destination, by the RDTL Government.<sup>37</sup> The derelict condition of the Baguia Fort is a metaphor for the trauma inflicted upon the region and its people since the early decades of the twentieth century.



Figure 1.9: ‘Haus des Kommandanten von Baagua’ (The Commander’s house in Baguia). Baguia Fort, Baguia Villa.

Source: Museum der Kulturen Basel, MKB (F)IIC 1175. Photograph by Dr Alfred Bühler, 1935.

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<sup>35</sup> Flavio Miranda, interview with author, Dili, 2 October 2014.

<sup>36</sup> Roque, “Mountains and Black Races,” 275.

<sup>37</sup> Flavio Miranda, interview with author, Dili, 2 October 2014.



Figure 1.10: Entrance to the Baguia Fort, Baguia Villa, 2014.

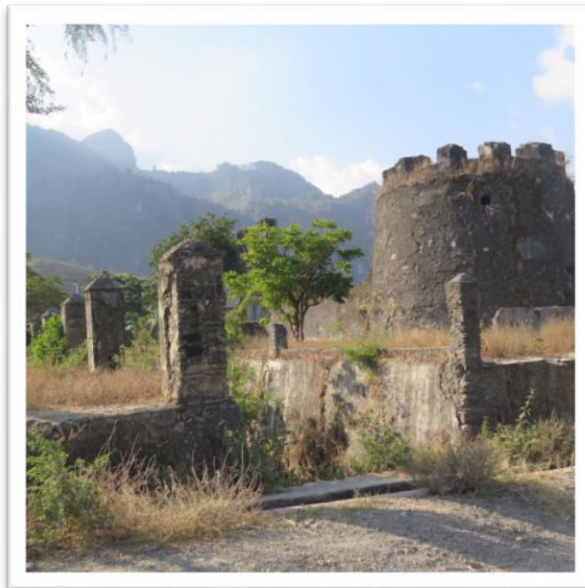


Figure 1.11: Side view to Baguia Fort, Baguia Villa, 2014.

An historical overview of the past century provides insights into the conditions under which Timorese people lived at the time of Bühler's visit to Baguia in 1935, and the events that have shaped the Baguia community prior to and since then. Change, disruption and oppression reveal themselves as common experiences of the Makasae people. This historical



overview draws largely on national history, and some more regionalised experiences, such as the 1959 uprising, all of which have affected and shaped the Makasae people.

Colonial Portuguese Timor endured for over 400 years but it is widely regarded as having failed to comply with “modern” moral, economic and technical standards which then ought to guide the Western “civilizing mission”: the profitable exploration of the country, the military power, the moral improvement of the “natives”, or the territorial extension of an efficient state administration’.<sup>38</sup> Having failed to deliver significant economic returns after three centuries, proposals in the 1880s to relinquish the colony were over-ridden by imperialist-nationalist ideologies of the 1890s. ‘In Timor, the empire could be adrift; but in the name of a glorious imperial past, no colony, not even Timor, could be given away.’<sup>39</sup>

The PCA experienced its first major political turmoil of the twentieth century between 1911 and 1912 when the Manufahi revolt occurred. Led by Dom Boaventura, a *reino*<sup>40</sup> and *liurai*<sup>41</sup> of Manufahi on the south coast of Timor, this revolt found its origins in protests against local taxes (*finta*, T) and the foreign colonial presence. Central to the revolt, which ended with more than 3,000 people being massacred, was the obligatory payment of *finta*.<sup>42</sup>

The Manufahi revolt marked the formation of nationalist aspirations by the Timorese. The announcement of the establishment of the Republic in the Province of Timor in October 1910, following the ousting of the monarchy in Portugal, contributed to mounting tensions that caused unrest amongst the *liurai* who had embraced the royal Portuguese insignia, depicted on the flag of Portugal as a sacred, *lulik*, object. Thus ‘this climactic about-face by the Portuguese administration in doing away with symbols of the monarchy was achieved

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<sup>38</sup> Ricardo Roque, “The Unruly Island: Colonialism’s Predicament in Late Nineteenth-Century East Timor,” *Portuguese Literary and Cultural Studies*, vol. 17, no. 18 (2010): 303–330.

<sup>39</sup> Roque, “The Unruly Island,” 305.

<sup>40</sup> A *rei* was a Portuguese appointed authority figure, in a specific region. Often the traditional *liurai* were appointed as *rei* by the Portuguese administration to infiltrate existing indigenous power and authority structures.

<sup>41</sup> A *liurai* is a traditional, indigenous ruler of a village or *aldeia*.

<sup>42</sup> Geoffrey C Gunn, *Timor Loro Sae: 500 Years* (Macau: Livros do Oriente, 1999), 178. Gunn cites Raphael da Does, *Apontamentos para um Dicionario Chrographico de Timor*, Imprensa Nacional, Lisbon, 1903, 46. Gunn describes Manufahi as ‘a south coast *reino* forming part of the military district of Alas in line with the rationalization of 1860’. In 1903, it was estimated that \$96,000 was paid in taxes from a population of 42,000, or 6,500 households, in Manufahi.

over the head of the Timorese as if it were an exclusive matter for metropolitans and *civilisê*.<sup>43</sup> The Manufahi revolt subsequently erupted and stands out as an epic event in both Portuguese colonial history and Timorese history, with over 12,000 troops required to control the uprising.<sup>44</sup>

A commission in 1910 had estimated that 98,920 heads-of-family in Portuguese Timor paid taxes collected by approximately 75 local *reinos* and *liurai* on behalf of the Portuguese, in return for a percentage kick-back.<sup>45</sup> The *datos* also acted on behalf of the *liurai* by infiltrating the villages and implementing colonial orders to recruit labour, collect taxes and introduce the growing of plantation coffee.<sup>46</sup> When *finta* was increased circa 1911, several local *reino* requested reconsideration of the decision. As the tensions escalated, over 1,000 Timorese people fled into the Dutch West Timor enclave of Maucatar to avoid Portuguese attack.

This crisis, although far from Baguia, reflects the onerous obligations placed on the Timorese at that time to augment the income of the Portuguese colony. Increases in taxes of two *patacas*, the Mexican silver coin used as currency by the Portuguese, was levied for each tree cut, for the registration of livestock and coconut trees, and five *patacas* was levied for the slaughter of livestock.<sup>47</sup> As Timorese culture revolves around animal sacrifice this tax incensed the Timorese who had limited access to *patacas* in their barter economy.<sup>48</sup>

By 1915 the economic situation of Timor was in crisis according to the metropolitan *Revista Colonial* (25 July 1915), a condition that continued throughout WWI and the Great Depression into the 1930s.<sup>49</sup> Portugal verged on bankruptcy and, as a result, the development of Timor was neglected.<sup>50</sup> In the 1930s taxes increased, including the introduction of a tax on bridewealth payments in order to recoup deficits from dwindling coffee production initiatives. By 1936, 98 per cent of the adult male population paid an annual tax of 11 *patacas*,

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<sup>43</sup> Gunn, *Timor Loro Sae: 500 Years*, 176.

<sup>44</sup> Gunn, *Timor Loro Sae: 500 Years*, 177.

<sup>45</sup> Gunn, *Timor Loro Sae: 500 Years*, 179.

<sup>46</sup> According to customary authority structures in Timor, *dato* are akin to a minister of the *liurai* and may have specific administrative, ritual or military responsibilities. See Gunn, *Timor Loro Sae: 500 Years*, 178–179, 188.

<sup>47</sup> Gunn, *Timor Loro Sae: 500 Years*, 183.

<sup>48</sup> *Patacas* were used to pay salaries for the Portuguese officials and military. From a Timorese perspective, their high silver content made them desirable for making jewellery.

<sup>49</sup> Gunn, *Timor Loro Sae: 500 Years*, 192.

<sup>50</sup> Gunn, *Timor Loro Sae: 500 Years*, 199.

which was equivalent to four months' labour. Those unable to meet this tax were taken into *corveé*, where Timorese worked in chains and were beaten by Timorese soldiers (*moradores*, T)<sup>51</sup> with bamboo rods and wooden paddles (*palmatori*, M, T). *Palmatori* were used to strike the victim's palm, with up to 200 strikes, causing pain and bleeding.<sup>52</sup> Bühler collected a *palmatori* in 1935, evidence of their existence at that time.<sup>53</sup>

Although these impositions of tax and labour were wrought on the Timorese, little opportunity existed for them to accumulate private wealth. The Timorese remained illiterate, with Portuguese hardly spoken.<sup>54</sup> The isolation of rural communities and an unswerving adherence by the Timorese to customary practices and sacrifices also meant the rate of conversions to Catholicism in the 1930s only totalled approximately 19,000 people, after 300 years of religious proselytisation.<sup>55</sup> Despite this limited success, influences such as the historical 'civilising' role of the church, the role of the colonial military and the creolised *moradores*, together with Portuguese state rituals, left a Latinised imprint upon this Melanesian lineage-based society.<sup>56</sup>

During WWII, in December 1941, Timor was invaded by Dutch and Australian forces whose mission was to prevent its use as a base for a foreign invasion into Australia. This pre-emptive allied invasion into neutral Portuguese Timor led Japan to also invade on 20 February 1942, with approximately 20,000 Japanese troops entering the island.<sup>57</sup> The Timorese provided on-the-ground assistance to Australian forces who eventually withdrew from the island in February 1943. Thereafter Japanese reprisals including torture and death were directed towards those Timorese who had assisted the allied troops.<sup>58</sup> As Japanese occupation continued, American and Australian bombing raids destroyed over 90 per cent of Dili's

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<sup>51</sup> *Morador* refers to a Timorese or creole soldier or guard who protected and acted on behalf of the *liurai* and enacted local indigenous law (as distinct from Portuguese soldiers).

<sup>52</sup> Gunn, *Timor Loro Sae: 500 Years*, 212.

<sup>53</sup> See MKB IIc 6597.

<sup>54</sup> Gunn, *Timor Loro Sae: 500 Years*, 214.

<sup>55</sup> Gunn, *Timor Loro Sae: 500 Years*, 214.

<sup>56</sup> Gunn, *Timor Loro Sae: 500 Years*, 220–221.

<sup>57</sup> James Dunn, *Timor: A People Betrayed* (Milton, Brisbane: The Jacaranda Press, 1983), 22. The day before, Japanese aircraft had repeatedly bombed Darwin, Australia.

<sup>58</sup> Tania Correia and João Ferro, *Dare memorial, honouring the memory, nurturing the future* (Dili: Arquivo and Museum Resistencia Timorense, n.d.); Dunn, *Timor: A People Betrayed*, 24.

buildings. Targeted Japanese bombing had destroyed Portuguese *postu* and the 600-strong Portuguese community was interned into concentration camps.<sup>59</sup>

In Baguia in 2014, senior men recall the harshness of Japanese occupation and working in construction gangs. They built roads from Baguia Villa to Hae Coni, Osso Huna and Afaloicai village, and Uatolari and Uatocarbau villages in neighbouring Viqueque District.

During this time ... we did not use tractors and cars but only crowbar and machetes to make the roads. The width of the road we built was determined by the width of the car ... In the Japanese period, when people did not do the work they were ordered to do, the Japanese would hit them with a wooden stick until the Timorese people almost died ... During the Japanese period, Timorese people were still continuing with their culture as usual ... we as men were wearing a loincloth, as there were no shirts and pants to wear, we just used a loincloth and a piece of handwoven cloth ... Also women used female and man's cloth as clothing until they rotted. The cotton used to make these *tais* was grown before the Japanese came.<sup>60</sup>

In addition to memories of hardship and scarcity under Japanese occupation, recollections of the introduction of weapons, predominantly machetes, remain in Baguia. One style of sword known as the *samurai* was, in 2014, a reminder of the Japanese occupation. The introduction of metal drinking flasks and aluminium cooking pots was also associated with this period.

Famine and forced labour on road-building programs contributed to extremely harsh conditions in East Timor during WWII. The war devastated the livelihoods, food production and cotton growing for many Timorese. Most available food was taken by the Japanese.<sup>61</sup> In 1946 a census carried out by the Australian Government indicated that between 40,000 and 70,000 East Timorese died due to war, related hunger and disease during WWII.<sup>62</sup> This was

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<sup>59</sup> Gunn, *Timor Loro Sae: 500 Years*, 224–225. Portuguese people were sent to Liquica and Maubere concentration camps.

<sup>60</sup> Celestino Guterres, interview with author, Bahatata, Hae Coni, Baguia Sub-district, 8 October 2014.

<sup>61</sup> Dunn, *Timor: A People Betrayed*, 24, 25.

<sup>62</sup> Gunn, *Timor Loro Sae: 500 Years*, 236.

equivalent to 10–15 per cent of the pre-war population estimated to be 450,000 people. In terms of loss of life relative to population, East Timor was one of the great catastrophes of WWII.<sup>63</sup> In the late 1940s and 1950s life expectancy was below 30 years of age.<sup>64</sup> Records of post-war infant mortality rates are scant, but in the early 1970s the infant mortality rate in East Timor was reportedly at a staggering 50 per cent.<sup>65</sup>

After the war, Timor's extreme isolation persisted, with the exception of contact with Portugal and its colonies.<sup>66</sup> Post-war tax reached 20 *patacas* per male, which contributed to an annual revenue of 2,000,000 *patacas*.<sup>67</sup> Together with other direct or indirect imposts, these taxes ensured the colony ran a balanced budget.<sup>68</sup> However, over time the Portuguese Timorese ranked as one of the world's poorest people with their meagre wealth being unevenly distributed.<sup>69</sup> In 1958, the *patacas* currency was replaced with the *escudos*, which was non-exchangeable outside the Portuguese trading bloc.

Resistance to Portuguese rule occurred again in 1959, in the form of the Viqueque uprising. This rebellion emanated from the Nauti, Makasae and Midiki-speaking area of Viqueque District and was orchestrated by Indonesian members of Permesta, an outer-island regionalist movement from the South Moluccas that fought against Sukarno's centralising government. In 1958 the PCA granted asylum to Permesta members from Indonesia, most of whom settled in eastern Portuguese Timor.

Upon observing the treatment of the Timorese by the Portuguese, the Permesta refugees gained influence with the local *liurai* and orchestrated a revolt against the Portuguese administration between 7 and 20 June 1959.<sup>70</sup> This anti-colonial rebellion commenced in Uatolari and spread to Viqueque Villa, Uatocarbau and Baguia Villa. The Portuguese quelled

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<sup>63</sup> Dunn, *Timor: A People Betrayed*, 26.

<sup>64</sup> Martin Shanahan, "Southeast Asia and Australia/New Zealand," in *A History of the Global Economy: 1500 to the Present*, edited by Joerg Baten, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016, 299.

<sup>65</sup> Dunn, *Timor: A People Betrayed*, 45.

<sup>66</sup> Portugal's colonies consisted of Macau, Mozambique, Angola and Goa.

<sup>67</sup> Gunn, *Timor Loro Sae: 500 Years*, 194. The term *patacas* was derived from the Mexican eight reales, known as Pataca Mexicana or silver dollar coin.

<sup>68</sup> Gunn, *Timor Loro Sae: 500 Years*, 251.

<sup>69</sup> Gunn, *Timor Loro Sae: 500 Years*, 251–252. In 1974, labourers earned \$1 per week compared with clerks who earned \$25 per week.

<sup>70</sup> Pedro Guterres, interview with author, Dili, Timor-Leste, 28 August 2014.

the uprising, with the assistance of Fataluku militia, resulting in between 500 and 1,000 casualties.<sup>71</sup> The rebellion ended in Baguia with approximately 65 leaders arrested, some of whom were exiled to Angola. This uprising has been interpreted as an early attempt by Indonesia to destabilise Portuguese Timor or as the beginnings of the post-war nationalist movement. Although the 1959 uprising was virtually unreported internationally because of the colony's isolation from the broader world, it nonetheless marked a critical turning point in post-war colonial history.<sup>72</sup> This uprising had a lasting impact on the political awareness of the Timorese.<sup>73</sup>

As of 1963, Timor became a province of Portugal with its own administration and structure of Governor, District Administrator (*Administrador do Concelho*, P)<sup>74</sup>, Chief of Administrative region (*Chefe de Postu*, P) and Timorese village head (*Chefe de Suco*, P), who headed each settlement (*suco*, T; *povoação*, P). Each *postu* employed several Timorese police officers and the *Chefe de Postu* collected the taxes, supervised indigenous labour forces and attended to administration and supervision of the *Chefe de Suco*.<sup>75</sup> These administrative structures are reflected today in the positions of District Administrator, Sub-district Administrator and *Xefe de Suco*. Also, there is now the role of *Xefe de Aldeia*, who reports to the *Xefe de Suco*.

By the 1960s, basic consumer goods imported from Macau and Hong Kong were available for purchase through a network of Chinese-Timorese owned stores that existed across Portuguese Timor. Retail trade in the hands of the Chinese resulted in a range of foodstuffs and goods being too expensive for consumption by local subsistence farmers.<sup>76</sup> Local reports in Baguia recall that Chinese merchants arrived in 1973 and left at the time of Indonesian invasion, suggesting that commercial products arrived in Baguia later than in other less remote areas.<sup>77</sup> Some infrastructure development, such as the building of the Baucau airstrip

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<sup>71</sup> Gunn, *Timor Loro Sae: 500 Years*, 260.

<sup>72</sup> Gunn, *Timor Loro Sae: 500 Years*, 259, 261.

<sup>73</sup> Frédéric Durrand, "Three Centuries of Violence and Struggle in East Timor (1726–2008)," *Online Encyclopedia of Mass Violence*, (14 October 2011), 7–8. Published 14 October 2011.

<<http://www.sciencespo.fr/mass-violence-war-massacre-resistance/en/document/three-centuries-violence-and-struggle-east-timor-1726-2008>>. Accessed 28 March 2017.

<sup>74</sup> The 13 *concelho*, P are reflected in the 13 districts that form modern-day Timor-Leste. There were 60 *postu* or administration offices established by the Portuguese colonial administration in Portuguese Timor.

<sup>75</sup> Gunn, *Timor Loro Sae: 500 Years*, 244–245. In contemporary Tetun orthography *Chefe* is spelt *Xefe*.

<sup>76</sup> Dunn, *Timor: A People Betrayed*, 30.

<sup>77</sup> Francisco Raimero da Silva, personal communication with author, Afaloicai, Baguia Sub-district, 1 October 2014.

in 1963, led to the opening up of the territory to foreign, particularly Australian, tourists.<sup>78</sup> A coffee boom in the 1960s and 1970s also boosted the economy.<sup>79</sup> However, road and bridge construction was limited, particularly in areas as remote as Baguia, leaving Portuguese Timor with abysmal infrastructure.

Exploration for oil and gas had occurred on the coast of Timor from 1947 onwards, with activities concentrated around Sai and Aliambata. Subsequent negotiations occurred between Australia and Portugal over sea boundaries, with Australia securing 70 per cent of the seabed between north Australia and Timor, leaving a 250 km 'gap', which became known as the internationally contested Timor Gap. However, no major oil and gas excavation occurred prior to 1975. Portuguese Timor continued to experience the State's inability to effectively develop extractive industries along the model of northern European colonialism.<sup>80</sup>

After 400 years of colonial rule, Timor received independence from Portugal in November 1975. This independence was prompted by the fall of the conservative and authoritarian *Estado Novo* (Second Republic) regime in Portugal on 25 April 1974 due to the Carnation Revolution in Lisbon, a military *coup* by left-wing Portuguese military officers from the Movement of the Armed Forces. This ended 48 years of dictatorship in Portugal and commenced the process of Portugal divesting itself of its colonies, including Timor.

Timor's independence, proclaimed on 28 November 1975 by Xavier Francisco do Amaral, was fleeting. In December of the same year Indonesia invaded. East Timor was established as the 27<sup>th</sup> Province of the Republic of Indonesia.<sup>81</sup> A resistance to integration and occupation ensued. Simultaneously, Suharto sought to 'develop' Indonesia, including a 'fight against atheism.' As the population of Portuguese Timor was predominantly animist, Benedict Anderson maintains that Indonesia's mission of '[m]aking them [the Timorese] "Indonesian" meant "raising" them from animism to having a proper religion, which given existing realities meant Catholicism'.<sup>82</sup>

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<sup>78</sup> Dunn, *Timor: A People Betrayed*, 29.

<sup>79</sup> Gunn, *Timor Loro Sae: 500 Years*, 250.

<sup>80</sup> Gunn, *Timor Loro Sae: 500 Years*, 241.

<sup>81</sup> East Timor became Propinsi Timor-Timur.

<sup>82</sup> Benedict Anderson, "Imagining East Timor," *Arena Magazine*, vol. 4 (April–May, 1993): 27.

The spread of Catholicism was to become a vexed question for Indonesian authorities as papal Rome insisted on bypassing the Indonesian Catholic hierarchy and dealing directly with the East Timorese archdiocese. Between 1975 and the 1990s, the membership of the Catholic Church increased from 30 per cent to over 90 per cent in East Timor, suggesting the emergence of popular Catholicism as an expression of common suffering whereby the persecution and suffering of Jesus Christ became a metaphor for the pain and violence inflicted upon the Timorese by the Indonesian military. A 'communal foundation for resistance' was formed as '[s]uffering for the Timorese people is not distinct from their vision of God'.<sup>83</sup> Catholicism became a form of protection during Indonesian occupation, as a means of adherence to the Pancasila values of the Indonesian state as opposed to indigenous, customary beliefs.<sup>84</sup> The use of Tetun as the dominant liturgical language had a nationalising effect, and became a strategic means through which the church fostered political organisation and a national identity in East Timor. The Papal visit in 1989, at a time when East Timor was cut off from the world, undoubtedly boosted adherence to and identification with Catholicism.<sup>85</sup> Adherence to Catholicism has also resulted as the Catholic Church defended the Timorese against oppression, hence spiritual authority has become widely vested in this institution.<sup>86</sup>

Although Indonesia contributed to East Timor's infrastructure development, including the establishment of roads, schools, health clinics and irrigation, the Timorese mounted a bitter resistance to occupation that continued for 25 years. The loss of human life, trauma and damage inflicted upon the Timorese during these years was extreme. The violence that Timorese people endured included torture, rape, arbitrary imprisonment, disappearances, killings, massacres, mass displacement and forced relocation. It is estimated that 102,800 (+/- 12,000) people died as a result of conflict between 1974 and 1999 and that 84,200 (+/-

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<sup>83</sup> Joel Hodge, "The Catholic Church in Timor-Leste and the Indonesian Occupation: A Spirituality of Suffering and Resistance," *South East Asia Research*, vol. 21, no. 1 (2013): 159.

<sup>84</sup> Pancasila consists of five philosophical values that underpin the Indonesian state and are enshrined in the Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia. The first Pancasila value is a 'belief in the absoluteness of God' (*Ketuhanan Yang Maha Esa*, I). The Indonesian Government recognises only six religions: Islam, Protestantism, Catholicism, Hinduism, Buddhism and Confucianism.

<sup>85</sup> Hodge, "The Catholic Church in Timor-Leste and the Indonesian Occupation," 158.

<sup>86</sup> James J Fox and Dionisio Babo-Soares, *Out of the Ashes: Destruction and Reconstruction of East Timor* (Canberra: ANU E Press), 2003: 24.



11,000) deaths occurred due to hunger and illness.<sup>87</sup> Displacement was widespread and varied in length.<sup>88</sup> According to a report compiled by the Australian Council for Overseas Aid in July 1979, between 268,644 and 318,921 people were displaced and held in 15 detention centres in Timor-Leste during the later part of 1978.<sup>89</sup> Thousands of Timorese, including resistance leaders, took refuge on Mount Matebian for months and even years. Survival rates varied as Mount Matebian was routinely bombed and napalmed by the Indonesian military.<sup>90</sup> The name of the mountain ‘*mate bian*’, ‘souls of the dead’, underwent a grim, renewed significance.

The resistance to Indonesian occupation forged a nascent consciousness of being East Timorese, which was supported by the widespread use of Tetun.

A profound sense of commonality emerged from the gaze of the colonial state. Indonesian power is infinitely more penetrating, infinitely more widespread, than Portuguese colonial power ever was. It is there in the smallest villages, and is represented by hundreds of military posts and a huge intelligence apparatus. Thus the consciousness of being East Timorese has spread rapidly since 1975 precisely because of the state’s expansion, new schools and development projects also being part of this.<sup>91</sup>

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<sup>87</sup> Romesh Silva and Patrick Ball, “The Profile of Human Rights Violations in Timor-Leste, 1974–1999,” in *A Report by the Benetech Human Rights Data Analysis Group to the Commission on Reception, Truth and Reconciliation (CAVR)*, 9 February 2006, 1–2.

<sup>88</sup> Silva and Ball, “The Profile of Human Rights Violations in Timor-Leste, 1974–1999,” 2.

<sup>89</sup> Arnold Kohen and John Taylor, *An Act of Genocide: Indonesia’s invasion of East Timor* (London: TAPOL, 1979), 87.

<sup>90</sup> Sara Niner, *To Resist is to Win: The Autobiography of Xanana Gusmão* (Richmond, Victoria: Aurora Books in association with David Lovell, 2000), 60. Niner cites Gusmão’s recollections of visiting Mount Matebian in 1979 where he had witnessed the aftermath of Indonesian military bombing and encirclement in 1978, ‘I returned to the west of Matebian, climbing into the hills. Sad, silence, desolation. Grass was spreading its cover over short cuts and paths, struggling to smother the cabbages and potatoes which were the only signs a human hand had ever been there. Every ridge, every stone, every brook and tree had witnessed tremendous suffering. Our group of seven marched on in silence. All the scenes of the last months rushed back into our minds. We could hear the voices of the dead, those same voices that created the sensation of respect felt when entering a *lulik* house. Matebian was our great home because the entire population of Ponta Leste [the eastern part of Timor-Leste] had relocated there during the massive operation of annihilation. The fine rain and thick mist made us sweat beneath our uniforms.’

<sup>91</sup> Anderson, “Imagining East Timor,” 27.

A nationalist consciousness emerged from what until then had been diverse ethno-linguistic groups.

The failure of the Indonesian state to perceive the East Timorese as Indonesian was due to a 'deep inability to imagine East Timor as Indonesia'.<sup>92</sup>

The vast scale of the violence deployed, the use of aerial bombardments, the napalming of villages, the systematic herding of people into resettlement centres leading to the terrible starvation of 1977–80, have no real counterparts in Indonesian government policy towards, as it were, 'real Indonesians'.<sup>93</sup>

The Indonesians were re-enacting the final phase of their own struggle for independence against the Dutch, despite the reversal in their role. The ultimate result for the people of Timor, including the Makasae people, was an alienation from their own social norms and cultural identity,

Being oppressed in this violent and manipulative way leaves the individual and the general culture deeply traumatized as each searches for answers to his or her situation. People can no longer rely on previous assumptions and practices unsuited to the new context of oppression, violence, evil and loss. ... people become alienated and isolated from their traditions and each other, which is the aim of state-sanctioned violence.<sup>94</sup>

Isolated from the outside world during this bitter war, non-military Indonesians were denied access across East Timor's border until the borders were re-opened in 1991 by Governor Mário Carrascalão. This re-opening allowed Indonesian people and goods to enter the region and marked the commencement of a wave of 'modernisation' which subsequently displaced a number of local craft production practices in Baguia and more widely in Timor-Leste.

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<sup>92</sup> Anderson, "Imagining East Timor," 25. No statistical records exist for the loss of life during this famine but people in Baguia who lived through it recall people literally dropping to death from starvation.

<sup>93</sup> Anderson, "Imagining East Timor," 25.

<sup>94</sup> Hodge, "The Catholic Church in Timor-Leste and the Indonesian Occupation," 163.

Following an intensification of resistance within Timor and increased international attention to the plight of the Timorese, Indonesia eventually bowed to international pressure and a United Nations-sponsored referendum was conducted on 30 August 1999. An overwhelming majority voted for independence from Indonesia. Upon relinquishing East Timor, Timorese militias sponsored by the Indonesian military destroyed property, livestock and sites of cultural significance, including the Museum Propinsi Timur-Timor (East Timor Provincial Museum) and collections, leaving East Timor to commence its hard-won independence in 2002 in ruins. Targeted destruction of cultural property such as the shooting of ancestral statues (*ai toos*, T) and burning of ceremonial houses, property and infrastructure was widespread.<sup>95</sup> An estimated 70 per cent of homes and schools were destroyed.<sup>96</sup> The post-independence period has been characterised by reconstruction of one of the poorest and most underdeveloped nations in the world, as exemplified by the recent rating of Timor-Leste as third in a list of nations most afflicted by ‘hunger’ in the world.<sup>97</sup> Peace-keeping forces from the United Nations, along with Australian Army and New Zealand Police, have been a presence in the country along with numerous aid and development workers since the events of 1999.

Crises such as the 2006–2007 conflict, which led to the violent eruption of political and ethnic divisions based on an east-west divide within Timor-Leste, have occurred since independence.<sup>98</sup> Following the dismissal of approximately 600 soldiers from the Timor-Leste military for reasons allegedly of ethnic discrimination favouring Timorese ‘easterners’ over ‘westerners’, violence erupted in Dili, as well as nation-wide.<sup>99</sup> Dili was ransacked, causing many residents to become homeless and displaced until 2009. Federal elections were held in April 2007, with Jose Ramos Horta democratically elected as the President of Timor-Leste. On 11 February 2008, an attempted assassination and *coup* against Horta failed. Since then

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<sup>95</sup> Cecilia Assis, Director General, Secretariat of Tourism Arts and Culture, Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste, personal communication with author, Dili, 2008.

<sup>96</sup> Shanahan, “Southeast Asian and Australia / New Zealand,” 296.

<sup>97</sup> Ashlee Betteridge, “Timor-Leste Performs Poorly in Global Hunger Index,” Devpolicyblog, Development Policy Centre. Last modified 22 October 2013. <<http://devpolicy.org/in-brief/timor-leste-performs-poorly-in-global-hunger-index-20131021-1/>> Accessed 21 February 2015.

<sup>98</sup> James Scambary, “Anatomy of a Conflict: The 2006–2007 Communal Violence in East Timor,” *Conflict, Security and Development*, vol. 9, no. 2 (2009): 265–288.

<sup>99</sup> Andrew McWilliam. “East and West in East Timor: Is there an Ethnic Divide?” in *The Crisis in Timor-Leste: Understanding the Past, Imagining the Future*, edited by Dennis Shoemith (Darwin: Charles Darwin University Press, 2007).

relative stability has followed this initial period of instability. This small, nascent democratic nation now faces the challenges of ensuring security, health, education and the economic and social welfare of its people.

## **Makasae beliefs, social exchange practices and relationships**

The expression ‘if you do not give you are not human’ (*to anu lafu*, M)<sup>100</sup> summarises Makasae social relationships which are endorsed by obligatory gift exchanges. The act of giving objects can be construed as giving a part of oneself, thus imposing a debt upon the recipient that must be reciprocated in order to balance-out or repay the debt.

At the heart of the Makasae alliance system is a deeply felt sense of obligations one has toward both individuals and groups in one’s community. The rituals by which these obligations are both discharged and recreated are not performed mechanically, but with full consciousness of moral dimensions. Moreover these obligations not only unite families, lineages and clans, but enable the circulation of wealth and the negotiation of political authority.<sup>101</sup>

To default on gift exchange results in a serious loss of status in Makasae society whereby the individual, and by implication their family, becomes valueless. Such emphasis on gift exchanges remains as valid in 2014 as when Bühler visited Baguia in 1935. Exchange has been noted as the ‘idiom of Makasae life’.<sup>102</sup> The continuity of alliance is punctuated by a series of highly elaborated and obligatory mortuary exchanges, which outweigh bridewealth negotiations in both their scale and significance.<sup>103</sup>

Makasae life is permeated by duality and oppositions through which social behaviour is structured.<sup>104</sup> Through complementary and analogical associations between wife-giver and

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<sup>100</sup> *To anu lafu*, M, literally means ‘a living person’; Shepard Forman, “Descent, Alliance, and Exchange Ideology among the Makassae of East Timor,” in *The Flow of Life: Essays on Eastern Indonesia*, edited by James J Fox (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1980), 157.

<sup>101</sup> Guterres, Justino Maria Aparicio. *The Makasae of East Timor: The Structure of an Affinal Alliance System*. Masters Thesis, University of Melbourne, Department of History and Philosophy of Science, Anthropology Programme, 1998, 97.

<sup>102</sup> Forman, “Descent, Alliance, and Exchange Ideology among the Makassae of East Timor,” 152.

<sup>103</sup> Forman, “Descent, Alliance, and Exchange Ideology among the Makassae of East Timor,” 152.

<sup>104</sup> T F Lazarowitz, *The Makassai: Complementary Dualism in Timor*, PhD Thesis, State University, Nova Iorque, Stony Brook, 1980.

wife-taker, masculine–feminine, control over fertility or lack thereof, and the exchange of masculine goods (buffalo, horse, swords) for the feminine gifts (pigs, handwoven cloth, rice and necklaces), these binary opposites are balanced in order that the sacred world of spirits is in accord with the secular world of the living. The maintenance of alliances between groups as part of a ‘wider system of social action tying together and integrating the worlds of the living and the spirits in stable equilibrium’ remains constantly in practice.<sup>105</sup> The entire Makasae social system can be envisaged as turning on a profound desire for union and balance across the spectrum of social relations, whether marriage, bridewealth transactions, agricultural ritual, or political and legal organisation. These desires support the exchange ideology, and their symbolic expression in ritual.<sup>106</sup>

The exchange of food between wife-givers and wife-takers is central to sustaining and continuing life in Makasae culture, and remains as relevant in 2014 as it was in 1935. Elaborate exchanges accompany the maintenance of alliance between lineages, such as the transition of the woman from her lineage into her husband’s lineage upon marriage. Marriage is both a partnership between a woman and a man as well as an alliance between their respective families. Reflecting a fundamental cultural emphasis on dualism, the wife-givers (*omarabe*, M) are considered feminine whilst the wife-takers (*tufumata*, M) are considered masculine. Makasae anthropologist Justino Aparcio Guterres states that the *omarabe* are the superior group as their responsibility is ‘providing blood for the perpetuation of the lineage of the *tufumata*’.<sup>107</sup>

The exchange of bridewealth gifts (*tufurae gi ira*, M<sup>108</sup>; *barlake*, *fetosan umane*, T) ensures the continuity of life via the exchange of food and the means of its production. The role of food, termed ‘child of mother earth’, cooked from sacrificial livestock and local produce is transformed in the bodies of wife and husband to create blood and sperm – the elements for successful reproduction. ‘In the end, it is people who propagate both the earth and the lineage through exchange and alliance’.<sup>109</sup> The children of a married woman become the

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<sup>105</sup> Lazarowitz, *The Makassai*, iii.

<sup>106</sup> Forman, “Descent, Alliance, and Exchange Ideology among the Makasae of East Timor,” 150.

<sup>107</sup> Guterres, *The Makasae of East Timor*, 6.

<sup>108</sup> This Makasae phrase literally translates to ‘the value of the women’.

<sup>109</sup> Forman, “Descent, Alliance, and Exchange Ideology among the Makasae of East Timor,” 153.

progeny of the husband's family and hence the wife's role is the regeneration of her husband's clan. Thus, payment of buffalo, horses and swords from the male's family to the woman's parents is required. In return, the woman's family gifts domestic textiles, pigs, goats, rice, and an orange-coloured coral necklace (*gaba*, M; *morten*, T). These gifts are the basis of wealth in Makasae society.

The quantity of gift exchange is based on the amount requested for the bride's mother at the time of her marriage. These bridewealth negotiations occur following the request for the woman, known as 'to open the door' (*tufu seti*, M) or in cases of arranged marriages as 'the threading together of cloth' (*bura kesi*, M). Customarily gifts of a fixed number of buffalo, horses and 'old Makassar swords' are gifted as part of this request.<sup>110</sup> Today, cash is increasingly given for bridewealth exchanges. The ceremonial and domestic realms, and related gifts, counter-balance each other.<sup>111</sup>



Figure 1.12: Women bearing *tufumata* bridewealth exchange gifts of handwoven cloth and rice at Bubuha, Larisula, Baguia Sub-district, 16 August 2014.

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<sup>110</sup> Forman, "Descent, Alliance, and Exchange Ideology among the Makasae of East Timor," 159.

<sup>111</sup> Once substantial bridewealth payments have been exchanged, the 'call to come out' (*rai wara*, M) ceremony occurs with the bride leaving her family wearing or shouldering handwoven women's cloth (*rabi*, M) and man's cloth wrap (*kola*, M). Signifying the agreement, it is also customary for the bride to wear prestigious *gaba*, attributed as a form of wealth amongst the Makasae. She follows her husband and his mother to their *oma falu*, representing the transition of the bride from her clan into that of her husband. The *gaba* is referred to as 'spindle and cotton basket' (*keida ate, toka*, M), which is gifted together with the handwoven cloths to her mother-in-law, symbolic of her arrival in the new family and lineage house.

The ideology of exchange is similar for bridewealth and mortuary exchanges, but the form and rate of exchange varies. The goods exchanged are the same as for marriage. Whilst bridewealth exchanges are transferred in portions, sometimes over an extended period of years, mortuary exchanges, once determined, are transferred immediately. Mortuary exchanges are mediated between wife-giver and wife-taker descent groups who co-ordinate their exchanges and death payments to the matrilineal kin of the deceased.<sup>112</sup> At funerals, gifts are received by descendants of the deceased from wife-taker and wife-giver groups. An obligatory exchange known as ‘bridewealth of the dead’ (*mana toe mana gauru*, M)<sup>113</sup> is a payment to the earth made by the deceased’s wife-takers to the nearest kin of the deceased, prior to burying the corpse. As one informant jested in 2014, he paid for his wife twice – once upon their marriage and once upon her death.<sup>114</sup>

These cultural practices, frequently referred to as ‘cultural law’ (*adat*, I), remain current and co-exist alongside Catholicism, which is widely practised in Baguia today. Informants describe ‘religion’ as separate to but accommodating of *adat*. One informant explained that God is a benevolent spirit who extends clemency and forgiveness when people sin; however, if *adat* is contravened, the ancestors are inconsolable and may inflict death as a punishment.<sup>115</sup> Others, however, tended to dismiss animist practices, such as the erection of sculpted ancestral figurines (*atewaa*, M; *ai toos*, T), in preference for Christianity. Distinctions were drawn between funerary practices for animists (*jentiu*, T) and Catholic grieving practices such as wearing black (*kore metan*, T), a derivative of European mortuary practices.<sup>116</sup> Catholic mortuary practices, which are widespread, appear to have grafted themselves onto, or in some instances replaced, older indigenous customary practices.

## The concept of *falu* and the *oma falu*

Central to Makasae society, belief systems and cultural practice is the concept of *falu* (n.) and *falunu* (adj.), M (*lulik*, T; *luli*, N), which translates as ‘heated, holy or sacred’. The term *falu*

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<sup>112</sup> Forman, “Descent, Alliance, and Exchange Ideology among the Makasae of East Timor,” 153, 158–159.

<sup>113</sup> The literal translation of ‘*mana toe*’ is ‘to dig the hole’ and ‘*mana gauru*’ is ‘to scratch the earth’. One informant referred to *mana toe*, *mana gauru* as ‘sacred money’, *osan lulik*, T.

<sup>114</sup> Bernardo Mango Ximenes, interview with author, Osso Huna, Baguia Sub-district, 9 October 2014.

<sup>115</sup> Julião de Olivera, interview with author, Uasufa, Alawa Craik, Baguia Sub-district, 12 December 2014.

<sup>116</sup> *Kore metan* refers to the donning of black attire, armbands or headscarves and is widespread.

refers to that which is restricted or forbidden. The counter-balance to this sacred concept is the mundane world of everyday existence. *Falu* dictates core moral values for Makasae people in the way that *lulik* does in wider Timorese society, as ‘[a]pplications of *lulik* are expressed in multiple qualities and forms ... [and] refer to a whole range of objects, places, topographic features, categories of food, types of people, forms of knowledge, behavioural practices, architectural structures and periods of time’.<sup>117</sup> The concept of *lulik* or *falú* remains as relevant in the twenty-first century as in 1935 to Makasae culture.<sup>118</sup>

*Lulik* refers to the spiritual cosmos that contains the divine creator, the spirits of ancestors, and the spiritual root of life including sacred rules and regulations that dictate relationships between people and people and nature ... *Lulik* as a philosophy is to ensure peace and tranquility for society as a whole, in which it can be achieved through the proper balance between differing and opposing elements.<sup>119</sup>

Although dual categories of wife-taker and wife-giver or notions of land owner, insider (*rain*, T) and foreigner, outsider (*malae*, T) may be fluid, the core *falú/lulik* values remain immobile.

The animist attributes of *falú* (n.), and their interaction with the world of the ancestors and its power over the mundane world is a major element in Makasae society. As another expression of the dualistic nature of Makasae society, the maintenance of order and balance between the invisible, ancestral, sacred, spirit world and the visible, living, mundane, human world is negotiated through sacred *falú* ritual activity and objects, as well as natural features such as trees, large boulders and water sources.

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<sup>117</sup> Andrew McWilliam, Lisa Palmer and Christopher Shepherd, “*Lulik* Encounters and Cultural Frictions in East Timor: Past and Present,” *The Australian Journal of Anthropology*, vol. 25 (2014): 304.

<sup>118</sup> McWilliam, et al., “*Lulik* Encounters,” 306 references contemporary disputes relating to the Catholic Church and local ritual custodians of *lulik* water sources in Baucau in 2010 illustrating the continued significance of *lulik* in the modern era.

<sup>119</sup> Jose ‘Josh’ Trindade, “Lulik: The Core Timorese Values,” Wikicommons, 2011, last modified 17 January 2014, 1. <[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Chp\\_58\\_Trindade\\_Lulik\\_The\\_Core\\_of\\_Timorese\\_Values.pdf](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Chp_58_Trindade_Lulik_The_Core_of_Timorese_Values.pdf)>. Accessed 23 November 2014.



The centrality of the concept of *falū* in Makasae society is indicated through the importance of the *oma falū*.<sup>120</sup> The *oma falū* is where the clan gathers to perform ritual sacrifices in honour of their ancestors and to receive members, together with those families with whom they share alliance. As an origin house the *oma falū* combines the ancestors and the living within a specific location, providing a collective identity.<sup>121</sup> The descent group from the clan, *sala fu*, includes a core group of men whose origins can be traced back through several generations of ancestors who ‘planted’ the house, together with their wives and children. Each *oma falū* has a lineage leader (*nanai’e, laida’a sobu-lolo’o*, M; *lian nain*, T), who officiates at all *sala fu* rituals and leads discussions and decision-making amongst senior clan members regarding the scheduling and nature of rituals. The fields and gardens, which are inherited patrilineally, are individually held together with houses and dwellings, which may include ancestral clan hearths (*ata nei uai*, M) where sacred food is prepared.<sup>122</sup>

Since independence, the reconstruction of ceremonial houses in Baguia, and more widely across Timor-Leste, has been a priority task.<sup>123</sup> This was evident during the 2014 dry season when several *oma falū* were under construction. At the beginning of this century many *oma falū* were derelict due to either natural disaster or lack of maintenance, or as a result of direct attack by Indonesian militias. Those clans that were physically relocated during the Indonesian occupation, away from ancestral land and into townships or nearer to roads where they were under closer surveillance, had no means by which to return to their *oma falū*, let alone perform the rituals to enable them to build a replacement *oma falū* in their new locations. Since 2000 many inhabitants have rationalised the earlier period of sustained war and crisis in Timor-Leste as a curse from their ancestors.<sup>124</sup>

The re-establishment of ceremonial houses and the re-implementation of ceremonial practices to feed the ancestors has arguably been motivated by a desire to rebalance their

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<sup>120</sup> In Tetun language other terms used to describe the ceremonial house include *uma lisan* and *uma adat*, the latter being a derivative of Indonesian language. The Makasae term *oma bese* is also occasionally used, which when literally translated means ‘a large house’.

<sup>121</sup> Bovensiepen, “Installing the Insider ‘Outside’,” 290.

<sup>122</sup> Alexander Loch cited in Forman, “Descent, Alliance, and Exchange Ideology among the Makassae of East Timor,” 154. Loch documented the construction of three *oma falū* in Baucau District between 1999 and 2004 in *Haus, Handy & Halleluia: Psychosoziale Rekonstruktion in Osttimor*, IKO-Verlag für Interkulturelle Kommunikation (Frankfurt am Main), 2007.

<sup>123</sup> Fox, “The Articulation of Tradition”, 252–254; Bovensiepen, “Installing the Insider ‘Outside’,” 290.

<sup>124</sup> Jose Fernandes, interview with author, Larisula, Baguia Sub-district, 16 August 2014.

world order and to prevent further upheaval and sanctions caused by the ancestors. *Oma falu* are built and rebuilt on the ‘original’ site of the houses’ establishment; an important aspect of the authenticity of these houses as the physical and metaphorical centre of the clan. Often a compound of two houses exists; one is the older house (*kaka*, M; *maun*, T) and the other the younger house (*noko*, M; *alin*, T). The construction of the *oma falu* is a communal activity with men and women participating in clearly defined activities. The men construct the house, including the cutting and preparation of beams, carving of the house stumps (*sa’a*, M) and collecting of the local fibre of the black sugar palm (*Arenga pinnata*, L; *teru meta*, M; *tali metan*, T) used for the roof covering and rope. The women also collect *teru meta*, prepare food on fires, tend the children and serve betelnut, coffee, snacks and cigarettes for the men and guests.

The construction of an *oma falu*, as documented by Bühler in 1935, features four phases.<sup>125</sup> Each phase is marked by sacrifices of livestock intended to ‘feed’ the ancestors and for communal *sala fu* feasting.<sup>126</sup> These activities require significant outlays of time, energy, livestock and funds for all families linked to the *wa*. The men predominantly work on the construction, whilst the women tend to food preparation and the children. The act of coming together and negotiating the construction of the *oma falu*, and negotiating and partaking in the attendant rituals, is arguably more important as acts of renewal and replenishment than as the physical construction of the house. Various stages of the building process for each ceremonial house are customarily accompanied by chants and recitations of genealogies, orchestrated by the ‘guardian of the myths’ (*data gi guaaba*, M), although such roles are rarely upheld these days. Nonetheless, versions of chants are still performed by the clan’s ritual

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<sup>125</sup> The four construction phases of an *oma falu* include:

1. *Dada sa’a* – carrying the four *sa’a* to the *oma falu* site
2. *Sa’a falu* – the insertion of the four *sa’a* into the ground and the subsequent construction of the frame and walls
3. *Oma tara*, M, *taka uma*, T – the construction and ‘closing’ of the roof
4. *Boe tuka*, M – the placement of two finials (*lakasoru*, M), on the top of the ceremonial house roof according to the clan’s tradition.

<sup>126</sup> Buffalo are slaughtered with a lance (*oro*, M; *dimon*, T). Once slaughtered, the men butcher the buffalo before further skinning and cutting the meat on a raised bamboo platform. In some clans, the men are required to also cook the ‘sacred’ meat due to its ‘heated’ powerful qualities, whereas, in other clans, the women are tasked with cooking the meat. The sacred meat was prepared and served by men in handwoven fibre dishes. The act of eating the meat together is believed to unify and strengthen the *sala fu*. Livestock sacrifices can also include buffalo, pigs, chickens and dogs.

leader (*nainie*, *laida'a sobu-lolo'o*, M; *lian nain*, T) and the men of the *sala fu*.<sup>127</sup> Performance of the circular, rhythmic dance (*tuka*, M; *tebe dai*, T) with call-and-response chanting accompanied the ceremony and continued throughout the night.<sup>128</sup>



Figure 1.13a–c: Men install the first pillar, (*sa'a*, M) of the *oma falu* at Bubuha, Larisula, Baguia Sub-district, 16 August 2014. The installation of this pillar is part of the *dada sa'a* and *sa'a falu* phases of building an *oma falu*.

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<sup>127</sup> Two phases of construction that I observed in Baguia in 2014 included the ‘closing the roof’ (*oma tara*, M) ritual and the placement of *afa lebe* at the gravesite of Mandati *oma falu*, in Bahatata, Hae Coni, and the insertion of the *sa'a falu* at the Bubuha *oma falu* at Larisula. In both instances, the *lian nain* conducted ceremonial chants. The Tetun term *lian nain* will be used in this thesis as it is the more commonly used term, the Makasae *laida'a sobu-lolo'o* being rarely used.

<sup>128</sup> At a *sa'a falu* ceremony that I attended at Larisula, women were asked to dance the *tebe dai* at one point in an area away from the *oma falu* construction site. It was explained that it was not appropriate for women to view a ritual killing of a dog at the site. Once slaughtered the blood from the dog was poured into the ‘male’ stump hole into which the *sa'a* had previously been inserted.



Figure 1.14: *Oma falu* structure installed at Bubuha, Larisula, Baguia Sub-district, 16 August 2014. Note the original *sa'a* are situated to the right, beside the newly constructed *oma falu*.

Customary Makasae architecture features four thick upright wooden pillars (*sa'a*, M; *ai rin*, T).<sup>129</sup> Each *sa'a* has a wooden disc-shaped plank (*kai*, M), with a central hole.<sup>130</sup> Of the four foundation stumps used for the *oma falu* structure, two are male (*sa'a asukai*, M) and two are female (*sa'a tufuræ*, M). During the installation of the first male stump at the construction of Bubuha *oma falu* at Larisula that I attended, a dog was slaughtered and its blood was poured into the *sa'a asukai* stump-hole. This activity represented the fertility of the clan house.<sup>131</sup>

A wooden frame and bamboo walls create the structure of the *oma falu*, and a sloping thatched roof adds to the prestige of the dwelling. The roof is thatched with *teru meta*, which is stitched onto the roof frame using a large metal needle and rope twisted from the *teru meta*. The *teru*

<sup>129</sup> Ruy Cinatti et al., *Arquitectura Timorense*, 98–119. An example of Makasae architecture in Gari-Uai and a Naueti/Makasae example of architecture in 'Ofulicai-Baguaia', which spelt in contemporary Tetun orthography as 'Afaloicai-Baguaia' is featured in this publication.

<sup>130</sup> *Kai* are placed horizontally onto the *sa'a* to prevent rodents climbing up the stump and entering the *oma falu*.

<sup>131</sup> Miguel Ximenes, interview with author, Bubuha, Larisula, Baguia Sub-district, 16 August 2014; I did not observe this directly as women were not permitted to participate in this ritual, but it was explained to me later by Miguel Ximenes. Forman, "Descent, Alliance, and Exchange Ideology among the Makassae of East Timor," 160–161. Forman comments that one interpretation is that this rite was an enactment of the Makasai belief that life, be it human or plant, is extended through the meeting and mixing of two bloods (*uai, uai lolæ*, M) and two sperm (*uai buti*, M). The insertion of the masculine stump having entered the feminine earth created the potential for the 'mixing of two bloods'; however, its ultimate fecundity resided in the offering of 'good' red blood.

*meta* roofs are replaced on an ‘as needs’ basis and local estimates indicate that they can last for up to ten years<sup>132</sup> whilst other reports indicate a life of 20 to 30 years.<sup>133</sup>

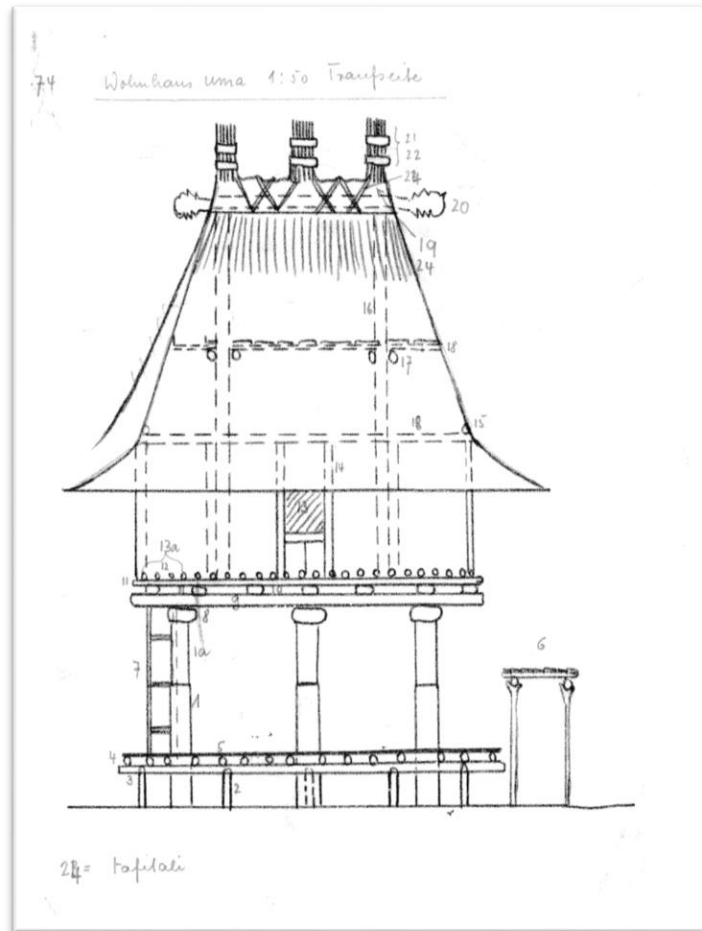


Figure 1.15: ‘Wohnhaus *uma* 1:50 Traufseite’ (Residence *uma* 1:50 eaves’ side). Illustration by Alfred Bühler during his visit to Adui, Larisula, Baguia, 9 August 1935.

Source: Alfred Bühler. Tagebuchnotizen. Reise zu den kleinen Sundainseln Timor, Rote und Flores 27 März – 18 Dezember 1935. Unpublished field diary, 1935, 74.

Changes are occurring in the materials used in the post-independence construction of *oma falu* in Baguia, as compared with those used in 1935 as documented by Bühler, with the use of corrugated iron roofs increasing, rather than *teru meta*. Concrete *sa’a* are appearing in place of wooden pillars. These changes result from a desire to minimise the maintenance work required for each *oma falu* and because of the additional expense associated with these new

<sup>132</sup> Bernardo Mango Ximenes, interview with author, Osso Huna, Baguia Sub-district, 9 October 2014.

<sup>133</sup> Forman, “Descent, Alliance, and Exchange Ideology among the Makasae of East Timor,” 176.

materials, they are increasingly perceived as more prestigious. Also electrical saws are replacing hand-tools where possible for efficiency. However, for such changes permission must be ‘endorsed’ by the ancestors through ritual.<sup>134</sup> To alter an *oma falu* without the consent of the ancestors would contravene customary beliefs and potentially invite the wrath of the ancestors upon clan members. In this way, change in Makasae culture continues to be mediated through established cultural structures and beliefs.

Diminished skills in wood-carving have resulted in a decline of decorative carving on *oma falu* since Bühler’s visit to Baguia. Some clans include carved finials (*lakasoru*, *laki*, M; *kakuluk*, T), to adorn the roof of their *oma falu*, whilst other *sala fu* explain that their ancestors never used them, ‘so we follow in their tradition’.<sup>135</sup> *Lakasoru* consist of a female (left) and male (right), which are inserted at either side of the top of the roof.<sup>136</sup> Customarily, *lakasoru* are embellished with carved geometric patterns of stars or birds, symbolic of the upper, sacred world in which the ancestors reside.<sup>137</sup> Another interpretation is that the shape of the *lakasoru* represents a buffalo horn symbolic of masculinity, strength and protection. Sometimes buffalo horns are used as *lakasoru*. At times of ritual activity, the ancestors would descend between the *lakasoru* into the *oma falu*.<sup>138</sup>

In 2014, *lakasoru*, if used at all, were made mostly from a flat piece of timber and sometimes painted or incised with simplified designs, derivative of older geometric patterns. Contemporary *lakasoru* are another illustration of how the material forms of objects are shifting, while their symbolic function remains unaltered.<sup>139</sup> One of the reasons cited for why people had not arranged the installation of *lakasoru* on their *oma falu* is that few people now

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<sup>134</sup> Miguel Ximenes, interview with author, Bubuha, Larisula, Baguia Sub-district, 16 August 2014; once an animal is slaughtered senior men inspect its intestines, which, if healthy, indicates the ancestors’ approval and, if unhealthy, is regarded as a sign of the ancestors’ disapproval.

<sup>135</sup> See MKB IIC 6406a&b and IIC 6407a&b; Julião de Olivera, interview with author, Uasufa, Alawa Craik, Baguia-Sub-district, 27 August 2014.

<sup>136</sup> The installation ceremony for the *lakasoru* requires them to be wrapped in handwoven cloth (*rabi*, *kola*, M; *tais*, T) and then lifted and inserted into the thatched roof.

<sup>137</sup> Trindade, “Lulik: The Core Timorese Values.” See Trindade for further discussion of the symbolism of *lakasoru*.

<sup>138</sup> Virgilio Simith, public floor talk for the exhibition *Husi Bei Ala Timor Sira Nia Liman – From the Hands of Our Ancestors* at the Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin, 10 September 2008.

<sup>139</sup> In Makasae society it is believed that if birds circle around a house it is a warning of enemies approaching. If birds fly over the roof of the house, it signifies that visitors are approaching. However, the inclusion of *lakasoru*, either of carved wood or buffalo horn, on the roof of the *oma falu* occurs only for those clans who observe this tradition.

know how to make them. Awareness of the purpose and function of *lakasoru* also appears to be diminishing.



Figure 1.16: Pair of carved wooden roof finials (*lakasoru*, M) acquired from Baguia by Alfred Bühler, 1935.

Source: Museum der Kulturen Basel, MKB IIc 6407a&b. Photograph provided by Museum der Kulturen Basel.

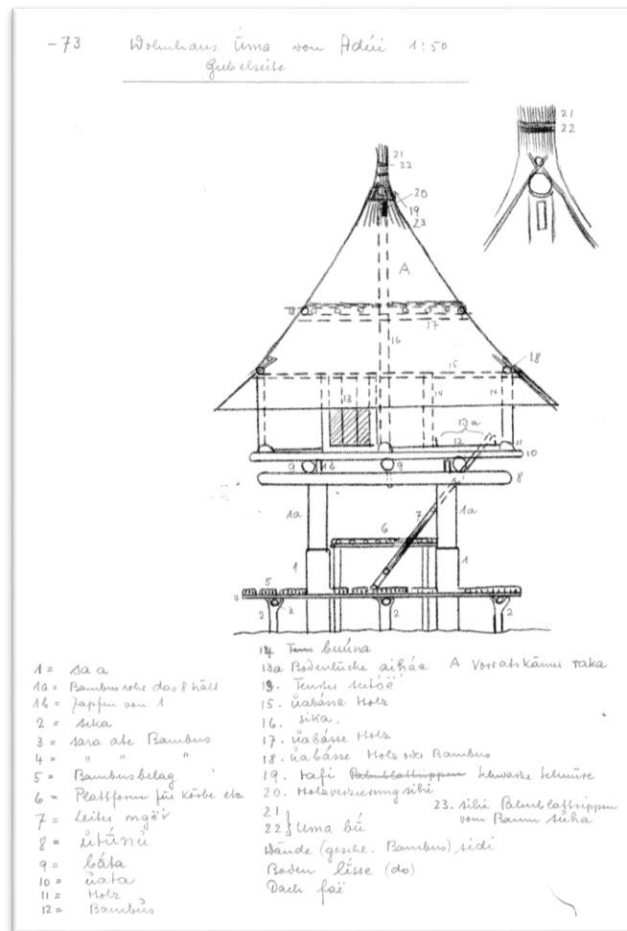


Figure 1.17: 'Wohnhaus *uma* von Adui 1:50 Giebelseite' (Residence *uma* from Adui 1:50 gable side). Illustration by Alfred Bühler during his visit to Adui, Larisula, Baguia, 9 August 1935.

Source: Alfred Bühler, Tagebuchnotizen Reise zu den kleinen Sundainseln Timor, Rote und Flores 27 März – 18 Dezember 1935. Unpublished field diary, 1935, 73.





Figure 1.18: 'Hausdach-Verzierung Betulari' (House roof ornament Betulari). Rooftop with buffalo horn roof finials (*lakasoru*, M).

Source: Museum der Kulturen Basel, MKB (F)IIc 1250. Photograph by Alfred Bühler, August 1935.



Figure 1.19a-b: *Oma falu*, Defawasi, Baguia Sub-district, 18 October 2014.  
Pair of *lakasoru* ornaments on the *oma falu* roof, featuring birds.



Figure 1.20: *Lakasoru* ornaments, featuring birds, on the roof of a ceremonial house, *oma falu*, with corrugated iron roof, Samalare, Baguia Sub-district, 18 October 2014.

The Catholic Church has replaced the significance of *falu* and the *oma falu* in some circles, especially the elite members of society for whom education at Catholic schools, seminaries and convents has ensured a strict adherence to Catholic practices. Beliefs in *falu* and *falunu* have been deemed uncivilised by the Catholic Church, the Portuguese and the Indonesians, thus creating a sense of stigmatisation, shame and ‘backwardness’ for those who uphold customary practices and beliefs.<sup>140</sup> However, many Makasae people who practise Catholicism also continue to adhere to customary Makasae beliefs and perform cultural practices attributed to honouring and feeding the ancestors.

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<sup>140</sup> Jose ‘Josh’ Trindade, “Lulik: The Core Timorese Values,” 10.



Figure 1.21: A decorated crucifix inside the Baguia Catholic Church, Baguia Villa, October 2014. The crucifix is decorated with warrior attire such as handwoven man's cloth wrap (*kola*, M), a pendant (*belak*, T), coral necklaces (*gaba*, M; *morten*, T), a silver headdress (*kai buak*, T) and a feather headdress (*asa namu*, M; *manu fulun*, T). Such attire is worn by Makasae men for ceremonial occasions.

## Makasae material culture – the contemporary classification of objects based on customary concepts

The material culture of the Makasae people reflects the duality that permeates their culture, with objects delineated into categories of *falū* and non-*falū*. *Falū* objects remain stored in ceremonial houses, sometimes together with dry foodstuffs, obscured within a dark 'inner' domain where they represent the longevity and continuity of the *sala fu*. Non-*falū* objects are mundane, 'cool' and used for functional and everyday purposes.<sup>141</sup> *Falū* objects are considered to be physical extensions of the ancestors that protect the *sala fu*. Sacrificial offerings are made to 'feed' these offerings and 'nourish' the potency that the Makasae believe is contained within.<sup>142</sup> Offerings such as slaughtered chickens, palm wine, betelnut, cigarettes and cash are made to the ancestors, via the objects.<sup>143</sup> Exactly how an object

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<sup>141</sup> Ian Hodder, *Entangled: An Archaeology of the Relationships between Humans and Things* (Hoeboken, New Jersey: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012), 22.

<sup>142</sup> Often a hearth exists within the *oma falū* with three sacred cooking stones (*ata lia falū*, M; *lalia lulik*, T) used to prepare ritual food as offerings to the objects and the ancestors.

<sup>143</sup> On the occasion of the construction of an *oma falū* in Uasufa, Alawa Craik, on 27 August 2014, I observed a collection of sacred objects that had been placed inside a temporary bamboo shelter for protection. A dish of cooked meat from the recently slaughtered buffalo was placed together with the sacred objects inside the shelter as part of the ceremony of erecting the *oma falū*. Over 300 people had gathered for the carrying of the

becomes *falu* remains difficult to determine, but the passing of an object from one generation to another is certainly one qualifying factor.

What one clan considers to be *falu*, may not necessarily be identified as such by another clan, with the exception of ancestral figurine sculptures (*atevaa*, M; *ai toos*, T), which are universally considered as sacred figurative depictions of the ancestors. Objects such as ceramic pots, swords, beads and/or textiles remnants, cherished not for aesthetic reasons but as ‘containers’ of power, are kept in the lineage house. *Lakasoru* are also categorically considered *falu*, as are a type of ladder ‘installation’ (*re safu*, M), which is placed outside the *oma falu*. The *re safu* is a means by which the ancestors descend into the clan’s *oma falu*. *Se rafa* are ‘fed’ to ensure fecundity, longevity and wellbeing of the clan.<sup>144</sup> Natural objects inherited from their ancestors or taken from significant sites, such as stones (*afa falu*, M), shells, fossils and animal bones, are considered *falu*, talismanic, protective amulets (*mani rasa*, M). Amulets of rock and natural materials (*mani rasa*, M) are stored in the ceremonial house and considered *falumu*. *Mani rasa* can also be carried by individuals for protection. One informant indicated that sacred rocks situated on his traditional land protect his clan. Chips of stone were used as *mani rasa* during the Indonesian era.<sup>145</sup> Stones, as well as *gaba*, are considered to embody guardian spirits of the land.<sup>146</sup>

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*sa’u* and timber beams to the construction site for the rebuilding of this lineage house. A buffalo was slaughtered and men cooked the ‘sacred meat’ whilst women cooked other food.

<sup>144</sup> Ernesto Dias, interview with author, Larigua, Hae Coni, Baguia Sub-district, 12 August 2014.

<sup>145</sup> Ernesto Dias, interview with author, Larigua, Hae Coni, Baguia Sub-district, 12 August 2014.

<sup>146</sup> Gunter, Violence and ‘Being in History’ in East Timor, 42.

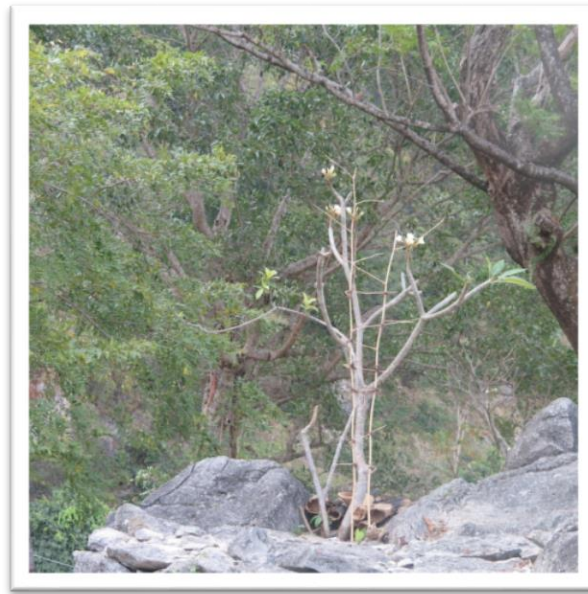


Figure 1.22: *Re safa*, at Larigua, Baguia Sub-district, 25 August 2014.

This binary description of Makasae material culture, however, does not recognise the role of those objects that, whilst not *falu*, are required in order to perform specific ceremonial activities. The status of these objects is somewhere between mundane and sacred. For example, when preparing feasts in the ceremonial house compound, many clans only permit the use of wooden and coconut spoons rather than aluminium spoons, which are now widely available. Locally woven baskets (*boe tuka*, M; *mama fatin*, T) are the only suitable receptacle in which to offer betelnut to the ancestors and the living clan members. Without the basket, the act of offering betelnut is compromised. Thus, a third category of objects exists in Makasae culture that are ‘non-*falu* but necessary for the performance of ritual ceremony’. Such objects have the capacity to move between the inner and outer realms, whilst *falu* objects remain inside the ceremonial house compound and non-*falu* objects remain part of daily use.



Figure 1.23: Woven baskets (*boe tuka*, M) are essential for performing offerings to the ancestors. Here a woven basket containing offerings of money and cigarettes is placed on top of a sacred stone (*afa leba*, M) installed in honour of Celestino Guterres' grandmother at Bahatata, Bagaia Sub-district, Baucau District, 10 August 2014.

Wooden bowls, ceramic water vessels and coconut spoons that were commonly used in daily secular contexts at the time of Bühler's visit are now becoming linked to ceremonial contexts and status as they become increasingly rare. As local production of these objects declines they are increasingly entering clan treasuries where they are preserved. The question remains whether ceremonial activity will continue, or how it will be affected, if the skills and knowledge required to make these objects disappear? Will these objects become replaced by other types? Will the performance of ceremonies become compromised without these objects? Such contexts indicate the importance of objects and material culture to set the context for the performance of rituals.<sup>147</sup>

The Portuguese administration manipulated the notion of sacredness to their advantage, through the distribution of a type of sceptre (*taru falu*, M; *kai ua*, N; *rota*, T) and flags to *liurai* across Timor-Leste.<sup>148</sup> In this way the Portuguese established relationships with Timorese elites, to the exclusion of commoners. As foreign objects, *rota* became symbols of authority

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<sup>147</sup> Howard Morphy and Morgan Perkins, "The Anthropology of Art: A Reflection on its History and Contemporary Practice," in *The Anthropology of Art: A Reader*, edited by Howard Morphy and Morgan Perkins, 1–32 (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2006), 22.

<sup>148</sup> Gunter, Violence and 'Being in History' in East Timor, 42.

as part of a ‘vertical tribute system at the top of which was the Portuguese administration’, and subsequently such foreign objects became classified as *falu*.<sup>149</sup> The *liurai* placed these objects inside the ceremonial houses as clan treasures. Elitism was endorsed by the ownership of foreign goods as, ‘[t]he tensions at play were not merely colonizer–colonized but indeed elite–commoner.’<sup>150</sup>

This manipulation of Makasae and wider Timorese classificatory systems of objects enabled the Portuguese to assert control over the *liurai* and to impose themselves as a legitimate institution of authority. In Afaloicai ‘[t]he *rota* took their place next to ... polished stones, totems, whistles and a musket. The *rota* represented the interdependence of political and ritual power’.<sup>151</sup> *Rota/taru* became political symbols that created respect between clans. ‘Timorese cosmology and social structure show a constant tension between the external, the outside, the ‘foreign’ and the interior, the base, the indigenous. In historical terms, indigenous power was constantly affected by stimulus from the outside.’<sup>152</sup>

Makasae people attribute different status to goods made locally compared with those goods made outside Baguia. Foreign goods, such as Portuguese cast-metal horse bridles or Chinese Qing Dynasty trade ceramics, which were associated with Portuguese or Makasae elites, were often perceived as *falunu*. Once acquired by Timorese people, these objects were stored in the *oma falu* as symbols of status and relationship with the external ‘world beyond’. Furthermore, spoils of war – such as skulls, porcelain, swords and daggers and foreign weaponry – have formed part of *falunu* treasuries, considered to be inalienable and imbued with powers from forebears.

Still within living memory in Baguia are the warfare practices and associated victory celebrations of a circular, ritual dance and chant (*tuka*, M; *tebedai*, T), which were performed after successful raids on neighbouring clans. The presentation of human skulls as trophies of triumph and the trance-inducing *tebedai* celebrations were essential aspects of the

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<sup>149</sup> Gunter, Violence and ‘Being in History’ in East Timor, 42; Trindade, ‘Lulik: The Core of Timorese Values,’ 11.

<sup>150</sup> Gunter, Violence and ‘Being in History’ in East Timor, 19.

<sup>151</sup> Gunter, Violence and ‘Being in History’ in East Timor, 43.

<sup>152</sup> Gunter, Violence and ‘Being in History’ in East Timor, 14.

ritualisation of warfare (*sala*, M; *funu*, T) for the Timorese.<sup>153</sup> In this regard the Makasae were no exception. Head-hunting practices remain in living memory in Baguia, with one informant mistakenly identifying a monkey skull in the Baguia Collection as a human skull.<sup>154</sup> In doing so the informant repeatedly reinforced the sacred *falu* nature of the skull.<sup>155</sup>

Amulets, attire and sacred weapons were used by the Makasae during warfare to evoke ancestral power and protection. *Oma falu* dedicated to ‘military clans’ and the storage of military paraphernalia, together with the skulls of victims, were considered deeply sacred. Masks (*atemaa asukai*, M), carved from wood and worn by warriors (*asukai*, M) for purposes of protection and to obscure their identity, are also considered sacred.<sup>156</sup> Drums (*titi*, *tiba*, M; *babadok*, T), metal gongs and buffalo horns, instruments that accompanied the *tebedai*, were stored in the *oma falu* and treated with reverence. Using sabres, shields, lances, blowpipes and arrows, people fought to control local land boundaries, secure livestock and kidnap people as slaves. Retaliation formed the basis of ongoing feuds that escalated into village raids. Considered a form of collective ritual catharsis, head-hunting served as a form of ‘ceremonial violence ... to attain autonomous political power’<sup>157</sup> and ‘as an organized, coherent form of violence in which the severed head is given a specific ritual meaning and the act of headtaking is consecrated and commemorated in some form’.<sup>158</sup> Head-hunting occurred amongst and within the segmented ethno-linguistic societies and indigenous fiefdoms across Timor that were inherently unstable.

Traditional war practices morphed into another style of resistance against the Indonesian military. While recent memories of that war dominate the Makasae consciousness, it appears that Makasae society shaped its own remembering of earlier *funu* practices into an emphasis on the *tebe dai*, which is now performed as a welcome dance to honour guests and dignitaries.

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<sup>153</sup> Joanna Barrkman (ed.), *Husi Bei Ala Timor Sira Nia Liman – From the Hands of our Ancestors: The Art and Craft of Timor-Leste* (Darwin: Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, 2008), 115.

<sup>154</sup> See MKB Ilc 6381. For further discussion about Timorese skulls in museum collections see: Roque, “Stories, Skulls, and Colonial Collections,” 1–23.

<sup>155</sup> Ernesto Dias, interview with author, Larigua, Baguia Sub-district, 12 August 2014.

<sup>156</sup> Barrkman, *Husi Bei Ala Timor Sira Nia Liman – From the Hands of our Ancestors*, 115, 121–33.

<sup>157</sup> Andrew McWilliam, “Severed Heads that Germinate the State,” in *Headhunting and the Social Imagination in Southeast Asia*, edited by Janet Hoskins (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1996), 129.

McWilliam cites the case of the Nabuasa domain from Amanuban in West Timor, Indonesia, in his article.

<sup>158</sup> Hoskins (ed.), *Headhunting and the Social Imagination in Southeast Asia*, 2.



It is also performed collectively at clan celebrations and gatherings.<sup>159</sup> Most young people nowadays have no knowledge of the origins of this dance and its former association with tribal warfare and the taking of life. Warrior attire also reflected a fascination with foreign objects and incorporated introduced coins, beads, cloth, bullets, metals and weaponry.<sup>160</sup> In 2014, discarded bomb shells, used by the Indonesians, and discarded wheel rims are used for sword manufacture. ‘Foreign’ objects also included tortoise-shell bracelets, shell bracelets<sup>161</sup> and stone water coolers<sup>162</sup> traded from the neighbouring coastal areas of Laga, in the north, and Viqueque, in the south. Active trade with Laga consisted of salt and gebang palms (*Corypha utan*, L; *alasa*, M; *tali taban*, T) being exchanged in return for potatoes, taro and pineapples from Baguia.<sup>163</sup> According to Pedro Lebre, the value attributed to rare, foreign objects reinforces the insularity of many people’s lives in Baguia, whose life experience revolved around their immediate surroundings.<sup>164</sup> Although this reported insularity has altered with access to motorised transport and telecommunications, to a significant extent the world-experience of many Makasae people remains geographically confined to the region.

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<sup>159</sup> Gunn, *Timor Loro Sae: 500 Years*, 283–284.

<sup>160</sup> Gunter, Violence and ‘Being in History’ in East Timor, 40. See a list of foreign weaponry imported to Timor to fight the military campaign referred to as the War of Matebian circa 1890s. These campaigns conducted by the Portuguese were periodic and served to ‘teach a lesson’ to the Timorese, as well as to collect taxes; Joanna Barrkman, “Symbols of Power and Life: Indian Trade Textiles and Their Inclusion into the Ritual Practices of Head Hunting and Ceremonial Houses by the Atoin Meto of West Timor,” in *Crossing Cultures: Art, Politics, and Identity*, edited by Sylvia Kleinert and Steve Farram, (Darwin: Charles Darwin University, 2006), 86–103.

<sup>161</sup> See MKB IIc 6213, MKB IIc 6214, MKB IIc 6217 and MKB IIc 6218.

<sup>162</sup> See MKB IIc 6127.

<sup>163</sup> Women carried goods on their heads (*tuturu*, M; *tutur*, T) and men hung produce suspended from a stick (*ate loli*, M) balanced across their shoulder (*leba*, T) as they walked for two days between Baguia and Laga to trade their produce.

<sup>164</sup> Pedro Lebre, interview with author, Dili, Timor-Leste, 18 October 2014.



Figure 1.24: Lime container made from a disused bullet and attached to a chain of old coins, Bahatata, Baguia Sub-district, August 2014.



Figure 1.25: Celestino Guterres, a *lian nain*, talks with his relative who carries a machete (*sita*, M; *katana*, T) in a plastic sheath slung over his shoulder. Machetes are carried by most men on a daily basis, for use in the gardens and fields. Previously, sheaths were made from animal leather. Mandati *oma fahu*, Bahatata, Baguia Sub-district, 10 August 2014.

The use by Makasae people of locally available materials to produce their material culture, has also rapidly declined since Bühler's visit in 1935, and knowledge of these production practices has either been lost or is in the process of disappearing. The role of objects in

bridewealth exchanges is diminishing and being replaced by cash. The shifting status of objects as either *falu* or non-*falu* is suggestive of the broader shifting dynamics between customary belief systems and newer social, religious, cultural and national identities, which increasingly inform both modern and traditional notions of Makasae identity.

As the frequency of production and circulation of certain objects diminishes, their status is becoming elevated. The status and income of those people who retain the skills to produce goods such as textiles, swords and ceramics has also risen, as now they can sell goods within their own community to those people who can no longer make them themselves. Hence patterns of trade and circulation of 'Makasae' objects have possibly become more localised as compared to the situation 80 years ago when Bühler visited. Nonetheless, the broad contexts and practices of the Makasae people endure even while the material objects are undergoing transformation.

## Conclusion

The broad cultural framework of the Makasae people remains largely unaltered since Bühler's fieldwork of 1935. Simultaneously the ability of the Makasae to incorporate and adapt external influences indicates that their society is resilient, dynamic and in constant transition. The contexts within which Makasae people negotiate and perform their culture, such as customary practices and rituals, remain lively and stable. These contexts include gift exchanges that form social alliances between wife-givers and wife-takers, and ownership of land and clan membership, as exemplified by the *oma falu* and participation in its physical maintenance and its ceremonial life. The Makasae have retained 'a cultural capacity to endure' because of 'the[ir] intimate, self-reinforcing relationships of kinship and alliance mediated and reproduced through the Timorese "house"'.<sup>165</sup> Through these activities both the ancestors and clan members are metaphorically and physically fed, wealth and resources are accumulated and distributed, and the *sala fu* reasserts its binding and regenerative nature through the coming together of its members. These established expressions of Makasae society foster alliance, continuity, cohesion and balance.

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<sup>165</sup> McWilliam, "House of Resistance in East Timor," 38.

The *oma falu* continues to be the site for the performance of rituals such as sacrifices to appease the clan ancestors, so that cosmic balance between complementary opposites can be achieved in the mundane world. The ongoing relevance and significance of the *oma falu*, and resilience of the Makasae economic, social and cultural systems, is evident in the renewed reconstruction of *oma falu* since 2002. Hence, the *oma falu* continues to be the site for the preservation and perpetuation of ‘sacredness’ as evidenced through the transmission of heirloom objects and treasuries between generations, representative of clan longevity and resilience.

The classification of sites, objects and rituals into *falu* and non-*falu* is the most obvious expression of a dualist worldview. Although cultural practices that uphold the balance of binary opposites continue to underpin Makasae social behaviour, these belief systems have been challenged and disrupted over time. Such challenges can be traced back to Portuguese taxation imposts, which undoubtedly affected socio-economic activity, as people sought to meet these obligations in a barter economy. Rather than actively destroying indigenous structures and systems, Portuguese colonialism tended to permeate and graft itself onto pre-existing traditional social structures and practices, as illustrated through the gifting of *rota/taru* and flags to *liurai* to gain authority and control. During the Japanese occupation, enforced labour disrupted agricultural practices and caused food scarcity, thus affecting the performance of local cultural practices. Yet local accounts suggest that the Makasae responded by incorporating the increased availability of metals and the advent of *samurai* swords into their social practices, such as gift exchange and wealth accumulation commodities.<sup>166</sup>

The major disruption to the continuation of Makasae customary indigenous practices since Bühler’s visit occurred due to the physical, emotional, social and cultural dislocation as a consequence of Indonesian occupation and the ensuing war during the late twentieth century. Under Indonesian occupation, people and communities were physically relocated away from the mountainous areas, and thus far from their *oma falu*, which impacted negatively on their

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<sup>166</sup> Celestino Guterres, interview with author, Bahatata, Hae Coni, Baguia Sub-district, 8 October 2014. The terms *samurai* and *katana* are Japanese in origin. Whilst the Timorese *samurai* sword in stylistically similar to a Japanese samurai sword, the Timorese *katana* varies in form from the Japanese *katana*. It is unclear whether the term *katana* is derivative from Japanese presence during WWII or not.

ability to gather and perform customary clan rituals.<sup>167</sup> Internment and relocation of communities resulted in the disintegration of clan houses, a state of dire consequences akin to the ‘death of the clan’ from a traditional perspective. The consequences of dislocation and isolation from cultural traditions resulting from Indonesian occupation is a phenomenon experienced by two generations of Makasae, causing the younger generations to be less versed in customary practices than those generations before them. This dislocation manifests in a precariousness that permeates the ability for Makasae cultural practices to be performed now and sustained into the future.

Globalisation and modernisation in telecommunications, transport and access to commodities, albeit limited in the Makasae region, have promoted fluidity between adherence to indigenous cultural practices and more modern, educated, Western beliefs and lifestyles. These influences were extended by the presence of foreigners as advisers, peace-keepers and aid workers since 1999. The advent of democracy challenges customary authority systems, be they indigenous or those introduced by the Portuguese or Indonesian colonisers, and affects social structures in Baguia and the nation at large. The widespread adoption of Catholicism, which although officially accommodating of animist beliefs, has in reality affirmed adherence to Christian ideology to the detriment of indigenous cultural practices. Local perspectives and opinion in regard to ‘tradition’ and ‘modernity’ at times co-exist seamlessly, while at other times they are in tension and oppose one another.

The nature of Makasae material culture and the means by which it has been produced has altered, albeit to varying degrees, since Bühler’s visit in 1935. Many goods previously made in Baguia have been replaced by commercially manufactured goods. But, as illustrated by the *oma falu* and the *lakasoru*, even where the materials and techniques used to construct them are changing, the basic forms remain in place. The shifting status of objects as either *falu* or non-*falu* is suggestive of the broader shifting dynamics between customary belief systems and newer religious, political and national identities. As these modern notions of Makasae identity develop alongside more established and enduring customary, animist, indigenous and social notions, they increasingly inform what it is to be Makasae in the twenty-first century.

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<sup>167</sup> Fox, *Out of the Ashes*, 22.

Irrespective of these shifts between tradition and modernity, the notion of *valu* and non-*valu* objects remains central to those clan treasuries that are still maintained; many treasuries were destroyed during recent decades. As certain objects that are used for gift exchange and for the performance of rituals become less common due to decreased local production, such as handwoven textiles, swords, baskets and coconut spoons, their value increases because they are critical for the continuation of ceremonial practices. As the barter economy is replaced with a cash economy, cash is increasingly used as part of customary exchanges, thus replacing textiles and swords. Therefore, the production of certain culturally relevant objects central to the performance of culture is diminishing over time. It remains unclear to what extent the performance of rituals and maintenance of cultural practices would be affected if such objects were no longer produced.

## Chapter 2

# The influence of Germanic ethnography and physical anthropology on the MKB and Alfred Bühler's work

Makasae material culture was one of the subjects of Alfred Bühler's enquiry and fieldwork in 1935. The topic of enquiry underpinning the Timor, Rote and Flores Expedition, 1935 (hereafter the 1935 Expedition) was determined by the Ethnographic Commission (*Ethnographische Kommission*) of the Museum of Ethnography Basel (*Museum für Völkerkunde Basel*), with the aim of ascertaining cultural relations, settlement waves and the accurate reconstruction of historical processes in the transitional region between Asia and Melanesia.<sup>1</sup>

This chapter outlines some historical precedents that shaped Germanic ethnographic and anthropological practice from the seventeenth to the mid-twentieth century, which are central to understanding the intellectual background of various key figures in German and Swiss ethnographic practice of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. This historical overview provides insights into the origins of the perspectives and trends that contributed to the MKB's establishment and focus in the early twentieth century. It also sheds light on the motivations behind the 1935 Expedition and the acquisition of the Baguia Collection, which was shaped by Bühler's training as a geographer and ethnographer.

I argue that the 1935 Expedition reflected Swiss and German anthropological and ethnographic preoccupations with notions of race. The formation of ethnographic collections and anthropological research during this period was largely motivated by racial determinism as well as Germanic regional, imperial and commercial interests that contributed to municipal and national identity building.<sup>2</sup> Although Switzerland was never a colonial power, I indicate how it practised 'colonialism without colonies', benefiting from its collusion with colonial activities such as trade (including that of human slaves) and knowledge

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<sup>1</sup> Richard Kunz, "The Five Sri Lanka (Ceylon) Expeditions, 1883–1925 – Paul and Fritz Sarasin: Measuring, Collecting, Measuring and Doing Research," in *Expeditions. The World in a Suitcase*, edited by Gaby Fierz and Sandra Hughes (Basel: Museum der Kulturen Basel, 2012), 6; Richard Kunz, "The Timor, Rote and Flores (Indonesia and East Timor) Expedition, 1935, Alfred Bühler: Cultural Relations and Style Provinces," in *Expeditions. The World in a Suitcase*, 2–3; Gaby Fierz, "Of Tents, Yam Tubers, Heidiland, and an Indonesian Cellar: The History of Space(s) in the Museum der Kulturen Basel," in *Intrinsic Perspectives: From Miss Kumbuk to Herzog & de Meuron*, vol. 2, edited by Gaby Fierz and Anna Schmid (Basel: Museum der Kulturen Basel, 2011), 102. The Museum of Ethnography Basel became the Museum der Kulturen Basel in 1996.

<sup>2</sup> H Glenn Penny, *Objects of Culture: Ethnology and Ethnographic Museums in Imperial Germany* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2002), 14.

production.<sup>3</sup> ‘Basel was deeply enmeshed in colonial networks of trade, science and missionary activity.’<sup>4</sup> I illustrate how Switzerland’s alignment to and complicity with colonial centres of power, Swiss scholars, including natural scientists and ethnographers, ‘were always highly integrated within the transnational scholarly networks of their time’ and thus their impact transcended ‘national understandings of the history of colonial knowledge’.<sup>5</sup> Germanic models were absorbed into Swiss ethnographic practice through shared language, geographic proximity and the dominance and prestige of German educational institutions as centres for the study of social science.

I explain how Germanic museum tradition formed the backdrop to the *Museum für Völkerkunde Basel*’s establishment and development due to its geographic proximity to Germany, the use of German language and exchange with German intellectual and academic circles. *Museum für Völkerkunde Basel*, known since 1996 as the Museum of Cultures Basel (*Museum der Kulturen Basel*, MKB), grew out of the sixteenth and seventeenth century European trend for the development of cabinets of curiosity (*Wunderkammer*, G).<sup>6</sup> Today MKB is the largest ethnographic collection-based institution in Switzerland. I discuss the key ethnographers including Paul and Fritz Sarasin, Felix Speiser and ultimately Alfred Bühler, each of whom was instrumental in the creation of the MKB collections, including the Baguia Collection. I also discuss the work of Wilhelm L Meyer, a dentist, who accompanied Bühler and collected anthropometric data independently of, but as part of, the 1935 Expedition team.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Patricia Purtschert, Francesca Falk and Barbara Lüthi, ‘Switzerland and ‘Colonialism without Colonies’: Reflections on the Status of Colonial Outsiders,’ *Interventions*, vol. 18, no. 2 (2016): 286–302; Patricia Purtschert and Harald Fischer-Tiné, *Colonial Switzerland: Revisiting Colonialism from the Margins* (London: Palgrave, 2015).

<sup>4</sup> Hilary Susan Howes, ‘[Review of] *Tropenliebe: Schweizer Naturforscher und niederländischer Imperialismus in Südostasien um 1900*,’ *The Journal of Pacific History*, vol. 51, no. 3, (2016): 348.

<sup>5</sup> Bernhard C Schär, ‘On the Tropical Origins of the Alps,’ in *Colonial Switzerland: Rethinking Colonialism from the Margins*, edited by Patricia Purtschert and Harald Fischer-Tiné (London Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), 44; Bernhard C Schär, ‘Earth Scientists as Time Travellers and Agents of Colonial Conquest: Swiss Naturalists in the Dutch East Indies,’ *Historical Social Research*, vol. 40, no. 2 (2015): 67–80; Patricia Purtschert, Francesca Falk and Barbara Lüthi, ‘Switzerland and ‘Colonialism without Colonies’: Reflections on the Status of Colonial Outsiders,’ *Interventions*, vol. 18, no. 2 (2016): 287, 289; Patricia Purtschert and Harald Fischer-Tiné, *Colonial Switzerland: Revisiting Colonialism from the Margins* (London: Palgrave, 2015).

<sup>6</sup> The word *Wunderkammer* can be translated as ‘room/s of wonder’ or ‘rooms of marvels’. Other related phrases include ‘room/s of art’ (*Kunstkammer*, G) or ‘cabinet/s of art’ (*Kunstkabinett*, G).

<sup>7</sup> An agreement (*Vertrag*, G) between the Museum Commission and Dr Alfred Bühler was signed on 18 March 1935 by Dr Felix Speiser, Vice-President of the Museum Commission, and Bühler. The original agreement was sighted at MKB Archives on 28 February 2014. Point 9 of this agreement specifies that



## The roots of European, Germanic and Swiss ethnographic museums

European collecting institutions and the disciplines of ethnography and physical anthropology have lengthy histories. During the eighteenth century the German terms *Ethnographia*<sup>8</sup>, *Völkerkunde* and *Ethnologia* were in use in parts of Switzerland, Austria-Hungary and what later became Germany. The German word *Ethnographie* was considered analogous to *Geographie*. *Völkerkunde* was defined as ‘knowledge of peoples’ as compared with the German notion of *Weltkunde*, ‘knowledge of the world’. By 1788, Swiss theologian Alexandre César Chavannes (1731–1800) had conceptualised the separation between physical anthropology and ethnology.<sup>9</sup> By the late eighteenth century, “‘anthropology’ came to stand for the physical study of man ... particularly on the European continent, whereas cultural or social anthropology was denoted as “‘ethnology’” (*Völkerkunde* in German-speaking countries)<sup>10</sup>; however, such terms, together with the terms ‘ethnography’ and ‘social anthropology’, have at times been used interchangeably. Although the origins of anthropology are highly diverse [t]he term “‘anthropology’”, introduced in the 1500s, obtained its modern meaning in the German lands of the 1790s, when it was used to label study either defined as the “‘natural history of man’” or as the “‘pragmatic philosophy of humankind’”.<sup>11</sup>

The establishment of *Wunderkammer* during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries paved the way for the later emergence of ethnography in the eighteenth century. The earliest known

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Dr WL Meyer, in his capacity as a companion to Bühler during the expedition, was not to undertake any private collecting during the expedition; however, he could collect dental specimens, and was allowed to obtain doubles of anything acquired by Bühler for the museum as a personal souvenir.

<sup>8</sup> The word *ethnographia* is derived from the Greek words *ethnos*, ‘nation, people’ (the German equivalent is *Volk*, plural *Völker*), and *graphein*, ‘to write’, see Sara Eigen and Mark J Larrimore (eds), *The German Invention of Race* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2006), 127.

<sup>9</sup> Marco Cipollini, “The Old Wor(l)d and the New Wor(l)d: A Discursive Survey from Discovery to Early Anthropology,” in Larry Wolff and Marco Cipollini, *The Anthropology of the Enlightenment* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2007), 304. Chavannes dubbed ethnology ‘a new science’ (*une science nouvelle*, F) or a general science of man (*science générale de l’homme*, F); see Eigen and Larrimore (eds), *The German Invention of Race*, 125.

<sup>10</sup> Han F Vermeulen, “The German Invention of *Völkerkunde* Ethnological Discourse in Europe and Asia, 1740–1798,” in *The German Invention of Race*, edited by Sara Eigen and Mark J Larrimore (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2006), 124; Matti Bunzl and H Glenn Penny, “Introduction: Rethinking German Anthropology, Colonialism, and Race” in *Worldly Provincialism: German Anthropology in the Age of Empire* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2003), 1.

<sup>11</sup> Han F Vermeulen, *Before Boas: the Genesis of German Ethnology and Ethnography in the German Enlightenment* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2015), 358–359, 4. Vermeulen cites Johan Friedrich Blumenbach who considered anthropology to be the study of the ‘natural history of man’ and Immanuel Kant who considered anthropology to be the study of the ‘pragmatic philosophy of humankind’.

*Wunderkammer* was established in Dresden, Germany, in about 1578<sup>12</sup> following the European discovery of the ‘New World’ in the late fifteenth century and initial exploration of Africa and Asia. This contact with African, Asian and Far Eastern cultures revolutionised the way Europeans saw the world and their place within it.<sup>13</sup> *Wunderkammer* were eclectic and idiosyncratic collections of ethnographic objects, artworks, relics and natural specimens intended to be encyclopaedic, illustrating universality, and ‘an attempt to mirror the whole world’.<sup>14</sup>

Voyages of discovery during the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries forged international trade routes linking South Asia, Southeast Asia, Europe, China and Japan. Such voyages, together with the establishment of the Dutch East India and British East India companies, fostered the acquisition of objects from around the globe. Due to international maritime trade, colonisation of the New World by European powers began in earnest. The British, Dutch, French, Portuguese and Spanish extended their military, political and trade influences through the acquisition of colonies worldwide. The possession of objects from foreign cultures reflected influence and control over an increasingly wide jurisdiction. ‘Colonial relations always involved material culture.’<sup>15</sup> The object as a trophy, symbolic of conquest, dominance and authority, became entrenched in Western European culture.

A shift occurred in the collecting practices of *Wunderkammer* during the eighteenth century, from ‘broad and eclectic’ towards a more focused investigation.<sup>16</sup> *Wunderkammer* became the ‘alembic’ in which a new view of the world was formed and frameworks for natural history

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<sup>12</sup> Barbara Glutfleisch and Joachim Menzhausen, “How a Kunstkammer Should Be Formed,” *Journal of the History of Collections*, vol. 1 (1989): 4. Established circa 1587 by Elector Augustus I of Saxony, the Dresden *Kunstkammer* consisted of 10,000 objects acquired during the height of the German art and craft renaissance. Four-fifths of the objects in his cabinet included ‘craftsmen’s tools and scientific instruments, most of superior quality and of matchless delicacy in technical detail’. The Dresden Electoral Commission acquired manufacturing tools, such as lathes, that enabled advances in the manufacture of wood, bone, ivory and horn. The technological methods of production were illustrated through the display of objects and the tools that had been used to make them.

<sup>13</sup> Hans Christoph Ackermann, “The Basle Cabinets of Art and Curiosities in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries,” in *The Origin of Museums: the Cabinet of Curiosities in Sixteenth and Seventeenth-Century Europe*, edited by Oliver Impey and Arthur MacGregor (Oxford: Claridon Press, 1985), 2.

<sup>14</sup> Brigitta Hauser-Schäublin, “Changing Contexts, Shifting Meanings: The Cook/Forster Collection, for Example,” in *Changing Contexts, Shifting Meanings: Transformations of Cultural Traditions in Oceania*, edited by Eleriede Hermann (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press in association with the Honolulu Academy of Arts, 2011), 33.

<sup>15</sup> Chris Gosden and Chantal Knowles, *Collecting Colonialism: Material Culture and Colonial Change* (Oxford, New York: Berg Press, 2001), 6.

<sup>16</sup> Ken Arnold, *Cabinets for the Curious: Looking Back at Early English Museums* (Aldershot, England: Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2006), 3.

and art evolved.<sup>17</sup> The natural world, human achievement, and their inter-relationship, became evident through the juxtaposition of objects within the cabinet, enabling consideration of the histories of nature, art and technology, which in turn inspired new systems of thought.

A rise in the practice of classification, which became a core function of museum practice, occurred simultaneously with the flourishing of the sciences of geography and biology. As new varieties and specimens were discovered, and collections arrived in Europe, the need for classification and taxonomy increased.<sup>18</sup> Human and animal skulls began to enter *Wunderkammer*, occupying a position between exotica and scientific specimen.<sup>19</sup> The development of these sciences affected the formation and classification of collections. Later in the nineteenth century, classification systems detailing geographical, material, functional and typological data were applied to cultural and ethnographic collections.<sup>20</sup> *Wunderkammer* collections were increasingly studied and published, contributing to the dissemination of knowledge.

## The foundations of Germanic and Swiss ethnographic practice

Georg Forster's (1754–1794) account of his voyage with James Cook elevated his status as a popular writer in the German-speaking world and added to the notoriety of German scientific travellers (*Bildungsreisenden*, G), from as early as 1630, amongst a European cohort.<sup>21</sup> *Bildungsreisenden* and explorers (*Forschungsreisenden*, G) advanced empirical frontiers and knowledge by amassing specimens and producing written accounts of their travel experiences. These roles became increasingly discipline-specific, based on human science, collection and missionary activities during the early nineteenth century.<sup>22</sup> German scientists contributed to research and formulated scientific knowledge in many disciplines, including

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<sup>17</sup> Horst Bredekamp, *The Lure of Antiquity and the Cult of the Machine: The Kunstkammer and the Evolution of Nature, Art and Technology* (Princeton: Markus Wiener Publishers, 1995), 7–9.

<sup>18</sup> Linnaeus, 1707–1788, a Swedish botanist, physician and zoologist, established the foundations for binominal nomenclature with its consistent application in his dissertation 'System of Nature', 1735 (*Systema Naturæ*), making him a forerunner in the establishment of modern taxonomy and ecology.

<sup>19</sup> David van Duuren, *Physical Anthropology Reconsidered – Human Remains at the Tropenmuseum*, vol. 375 (Amsterdam: Tropenmuseum, 2007), 14.

<sup>20</sup> Mary Bouquet, *Museums: A Visual Anthropology* (London and New York: Berg Publishers, 2012), 77–81.

<sup>21</sup> Buschmann, *Anthropology's Global Histories*, 154–170; Klaas van Berkel, 'The Natural Sciences in the Colonies,' in *A History of Science in the Netherlands: Survey, Themes and Reference*, edited by Klaas van Berkel, Albert van Helden and Lodewijk Palm (Leiden: Koninklijke Brill, 1999), 210–228.

<sup>22</sup> Regina Ganter, "Career Moves: German-Speakers in the Ethnographic Field," in *Hunting the Collectors*, edited by Susan Cochran and Max Quanchi (Newcastle, UK: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2007), 101.

anthropology and ethnology.<sup>23</sup> Although German expeditions were rare between 1750 and 1850 and did little to contribute to German identity<sup>24</sup>, German-speaking scientists participated in expeditions to non-German colonies.<sup>25</sup> They collaborated with the British, Dutch and Russians who benefitted from the knowledge generated by German universities, which fostered a research-based culture<sup>26</sup>, most notably at the University of Göttingen (*Göttingen Universität*), where the discipline of Ethnology (*Ethnographie* and *Völkerkunde*, G) was founded (circa 1772–1773).<sup>27</sup>

The *Bildungsreisende* Alexander von Humboldt (1769–1859), a graduate of Göttingen University, ‘contributed to the science of anatomy, mineralogy, and chemistry, and was interested in the relationship between humans and their environment’.<sup>28</sup> He studied under Johann Friedrich Blumenbach (1752–1840), a physician, naturalist, physiologist and anthropologist, who championed comparative anatomy and anthropology and became a founder of physical anthropology.<sup>29</sup> Humboldt was also influenced by Forster, with whom he travelled in Europe.<sup>30</sup> Humboldt’s writings reached an extensive reading public, and ‘profoundly influence[d] German science, reflecting what we might now call an ecological view of nature, consisting of integrated and interdependent systems’.<sup>31</sup>

With increased knowledge of the world publicly available, coupled with widespread economic and political issues, German emigration formed settlements and established

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<sup>23</sup> Ganter, “Career Moves,” 101; John Gascoigne, “The German Enlightenment and the Pacific,” in *The Anthropology of the Enlightenment*, edited by Larry Wolff and Marco Cipolloni, 141–171 (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2007); Vermeulen, *Before Boas*, 1–37.

<sup>24</sup> Rainer F Buschmann, “Oceanic Carvings and Germanic Cravings: German Ethnographic Frontiers and Imperial Visions of the Pacific, 1870–1914,” *The Journal of Pacific History*, 42, no. 3 (2007): 302.

<sup>25</sup> German-speaking researchers undertook voyages to Africa, South America, China, Australia and New Zealand.

<sup>26</sup> Gascoigne, “The German Enlightenment and the Pacific,” 143.

<sup>27</sup> Gascoigne, “The German Enlightenment and the Pacific,” 144. By the nineteenth century, German-speaking scientists were active contributors to anthropological discourse with periodicals such as *Verhandlungen der Berliner Gesellschaft für Anthropologie* (est. 1867), *Zeitschrift für Ethnologie* (est. 1868), *Internationales Archiv für Ethnographie* (est. 1888) and the multi-lingual missionary journal *Anthropos - International Review of Ethnology and Linguistics* (est. 1905). *Das Ausland* (est. 1829) drew on international literature to bring scientific, ethnographic and exploratory activities to the German public while *Anthropos* (c. 1905) was published in six languages. These publications enabled Germans to critique the colonial projects of other European nations, despite the fact that Germans had in some instances actively participated in these projects; see Ganter, “Career Moves,” 100–101.

<sup>28</sup> H Glenn Penny, “Traditions in the German Language,” in *A New History of Anthropology*, edited by Henrika Kuklick (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2008), 82; Andrea Wulf, *The Invention of Nature: The Adventures of Alexander von Humboldt, the Last Hero of Science* (London: John Murray, 2015).

<sup>29</sup> Hauser-Schäublin, “Changing Contexts, Shifting Meanings: The Cook/Forster Collection,” 35.

<sup>30</sup> Ganter, “Career Moves,” 104.

<sup>31</sup> Ganter, “Career Moves,” 105.

mercantile outposts in the New World throughout the nineteenth century. Missionaries 'set out to bring Christianity to the natives'.<sup>32</sup> In response to a Christian revivalist movement that swept Switzerland and Western Europe in the early nineteenth century due to economic and socio-political upheavals, the Free Churches, the Basel Evangelical Mission (*Evangelische Missionsgesellschaft Basel*; est. 1815), the Swiss Romande Mission (*Mission Romande*; est. 1883) and the Evangelical Missionary Society of Lausanne (*Evangelische Missionsgesellschaft Lausanne*; est. 1826) all supported ethnographic practices.<sup>33</sup> Missions, together with '[i]nstitutions such as the Sunday School, the museum and the botanical garden[,] introduced the Swiss – a people without colonies ... to this exciting new world ... [and] they also created the cultural conditions for the normalization of imperialism'.<sup>34</sup> The Basel Evangelical Mission Society<sup>35</sup> asked, 'Shall not the Christians learn from the scientists, who have invested much in travels abroad and gained much from them?'<sup>36</sup>

Following German unification in 1871 'German nationhood and the dream of colonial possession became inextricably entwined'.<sup>37</sup> By 1885 much of the German colonial empire had been established, predominantly in Africa and Oceania.<sup>38</sup> As a relative latecomer to the ethnographic and cartographic carving up of Oceania, Germany excelled in commercial exploration and established colonies in the wake of Euro-American exploration. German-speaking scientists distinguished themselves by integrating their roles and acquisitions processes around commercial exploration in the Oceania region.<sup>39</sup> Although '[h]umanism

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<sup>32</sup> Sara Friedrichsmeyer, Sara Lennox, and Susan Zantop, *The Imperialist Imagination: German Colonialism and its Legacy* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1998), 9.

<sup>33</sup> Patrick Harries, *Butterflies and Barbarians: Swiss Missionaries and Systems of Knowledge in South-East Africa* (Oxford: James Currey, 2007), 10–34.

<sup>34</sup> Harries, *Butterflies and Barbarians*, 4.

<sup>35</sup> Although largely active in Africa, India and China, the Basel Mission was active during the early twentieth century until 2001 when it underwent a name change. The inter-denominational mission of the Pietist movement, which began in the seventeenth century and continues today, shared strong links with Protestantism and drew its patrons from Switzerland and southern Germany. Missionaries from all over Europe prepared for foreign mission work at the Basel Mission. Many missionaries were practical people whose agrarian backgrounds suited the Pietist ideal of living close to nature. Training at the mission involved studies in botany, agriculture, language analysis, the basics of medicine and surgery, and the history of cultures; all skills deemed relevant to missionary work in remote territories.

<sup>36</sup> Ganter, "Career Moves", 105.

<sup>37</sup> Sara Friedrichsmeyer et al., *The Imperialist Imagination: German Colonialism and its Legacy*, 19.

<sup>38</sup> Germany's colonial empire, which existed until 1919, consisted of four African territories (German Southwest Africa, German East Africa, Cameroon and Togoland), various Pacific territories (north-eastern New Guinea, the Bismarck Archipelago, western Samoa, Nauru, and the Marshall, Mariana and Caroline Islands), and Kiaochow on the Shantung Peninsula in China. See Sara Friedrichsmeyer et al., *The Imperialist Imagination: German Colonialism and Its Legacy*, 10. Germany also held the northern Solomon Islands between 1885 and 1899.

<sup>39</sup> Buschmann, "Oceanic Carvings and German Cravings," 300–303.

had defined German national self-understandings<sup>40</sup>, the social, political and economic forces accelerated by the founding of the German Empire in 1871 undermined humanist self-understandings upon which German liberal nationalism was based. Imperial global and colonial trade networks brought German anthropologists into direct contact with non-European societies. The European human sciences encouraged the study of non-Europeans as humans, but with the significant caveat that non-Europeans were not capable of possessing full humanity. ‘Humanist notions of the self were both defined and profoundly threatened by the existence of humans whom Europeans regarded as inferior.’<sup>41</sup>

In preference to studying literate European ‘cultured peoples’, defined by their history and civilisation (*Kulturvölker*, G), the emphasis shifted to the study of colonised, illiterate ‘natural peoples’ (*Naturvölker*, G), societies presumed to be lacking in history and culture. The study of ‘natural peoples’ was considered to reveal human nature. From this, anthropology emerged as the study of the bodies and everyday objects of colonised natural peoples.<sup>42</sup> ‘Anthropology offered Europeans a modern identity as a cultural people whose status depended less on humanist *Bildung* [G], or self-cultivation, than on the development of the natural sciences – including anthropology as the study of natural peoples’<sup>43</sup>; thus imperialism reformed the German humanities.

When Germany first acquired colonies, not only were Germans travelling the world, but the world was visiting Germany and Switzerland in the form of ethnographic shows (*Völkerschauen*, G) or panopticons (*Panoptiken*, G) featuring non-European ‘performers’.<sup>44</sup> Panopticons were popular in the metropolis and enabled German-speaking anthropologists to research non-Europeans without travelling abroad. Referred to as ‘human zoos’, the Basel Zoo ‘hosted many shows of this type, based on a large extent on the German model’ during

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<sup>40</sup> Andrew Zimmerman, *Anthropology and Antihumanism in Imperial Germany* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2001), 2.

<sup>41</sup> Zimmerman, *Anthropology and Antihumanism in Imperial Germany*, 2–3.

<sup>42</sup> It is relevant to note that there are various branches of anthropology: philosophical anthropology, biological anthropology, cultural and social anthropology. See Vermeulen, *Before Boas*, 4.

<sup>43</sup> Zimmerman, *Anthropology and Antihumanism in Imperial Germany*, 3–4.

<sup>44</sup> Pascal Germann, “Race in the Making: Colonial Encounters, Body Measurements and the Global Dimensions of Swiss Racial Science, 1900–1950,” in *Colonial Switzerland: Rethinking Colonialism from the Margins*, edited by Patricia Purtschert and Harald Fisher-Tiné (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), 57; Roslyn Poignant, *Professional Savages: Captive Lives and Western Spectacle* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2004), 110–120.

the late nineteenth century until 1939.<sup>45</sup> Panopticons operated in close collaboration between entrepreneurs and recognised anthropologists.<sup>46</sup> Performers from foreign lands appeared at the Berlin Society for Anthropology, Ethnology and Prehistory, or society meetings were conducted at panopticon venues. Human remains, such as skulls, skeletons and soft tissue, were opportunistically acquired from deceased 'performers' who perished in cities such as Berlin and Paris for use by researchers to determine racial typologies.<sup>47</sup>

## The formation of Germanic notions of race

German-speaking scientists and universities debated the scientific notion of race as a sub-category of a single human species in the mid- to late eighteenth centuries.<sup>48</sup> The monogenetic position was dominant, but some opposed this view and maintained a polygenetic position, asserting that not all humans shared the same common origin. The German philosopher Immanuel Kant (1724–1804) argued that people belonged to 'one and the same natural kind' based on their ability to produce fertile offspring. Kant identified four racial types from one common species, specifying skin colour as the distinguishing feature.<sup>49</sup> Theories regarding the nature of 'race', a 'slippery' term that carried multiple meanings and varied substantially across both time and space, varied widely<sup>50</sup>; its pre-modern usage could

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<sup>45</sup> Patrick Minder, "Swiss Völkerschauen: The Fascination with Things Colonial," in *Human Zoos: The Invention of the Savage*, edited by Pascal Blanchard, Gilles Boëtsch and Nanette Jacomijn Snoep (Paris: Musée du Quai Branly, 2011), 140. Human exhibitions occurred at the Jardin Zoologique de Bâle from 1879 and a new space in the zoo was opened to facilitate these displays in 1892. 'La Caravane Schili' features Sundaese Egyptians consisting of 12 men, 15 women and three children in 1982 at the zoo. Nicholas Bancel, "The Place of Switzerland in the European System of Ethnic Exhibitions (1919–1939)," 3rd Swiss Congress of Historical Sciences, Freiburg: University of Freiburg, 2013. <<https://2013.geschichtstage.ch/referat/356/the-place-of-switzerland-in-the-european-system-of-ethnic-exhibitions-1919-1939>> Accessed, 29 June 2017; Zimmerman, *Anthropology and Antihumanism in Imperial Germany*, 23; Poignant, *Professional Savages*, 116.

<sup>46</sup> Hilke Thode-Arora, "Johan Adrian Jacobsen: Impresario and Collector," in *Human Zoos: The Invention of the Savage*, edited by Pascal Blanchard, Gilles Boëtsch and Nanette Jacomijn Snoep (Paris: Musée du Quai Branly, 2011), 90; Zimmerman, *Anthropology and Antihumanism in Imperial Germany*, 90; Poignant, *Professional Savages*, 116–117. Johann Adrian Jacobsen (1853–1947), who collected artefacts for the Berlin Ethnological Committee, was one such collaborator, bringing two Inuit families from Labrador, Canada, to Germany in 1880, while employed by Carl Hagenbeck, a Berlin-based zoo keeper and animal importer. The entire group died of smallpox.

<sup>47</sup> Roslyn Poignant, *Professional Savages*, 12. Poignant mentions Saartjie Baartmann's body after her death in Paris in 1815. Zimmerman, *Anthropology and Antihumanism in Imperial Germany*, 23. Zimmerman refers to the skull of an Inuit 'performer' being kept in Berlin for study following his death.

<sup>48</sup> Hilary Susan Howes, *The Race Question in Oceania: AB Meyer and Otto Finsch between Metropolitan Theory and Field Experience, 1865–1914* (Frankfurt: Peter Lang Edition, 2013), 31–41; Sara Eigen and Mark J Larrimore, *The German Invention of Race* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2006).

<sup>49</sup> Howes, *The Race Question in Oceania*, 35.

<sup>50</sup> Bronwen Douglas, "Climate to Crania: Science and the Racialization of Human Difference," in *Foreign Bodies and the Science of Race, 1750–1940*, edited by Bronwen Douglas and Chris Ballard (Canberra: ANU Press, 2008), 34; Hilary Howes, [Review of] "Germany in the Pacific: Were the Germans before the Rise of

refer to a tribe, nation or common stock or physical characteristics of family ties, geography or culture.<sup>51</sup> However, a loose racial hierarchy of Europeans on top and Negroes on the bottom prevailed.

Blumenbach adopted Kant's theories and laid the foundation of the notion of races by studying humankind as part of natural history. In 1775 Blumenbach's dissertation, completed at the University of Göttingen, analysed the varieties of humankind (*Menschenvarietäten*, G), 'all of which he traced back in equal measure to one and the same species'.<sup>52</sup> His third comparative anatomy study, 'On the Natural Varieties of Mankind', 1795 (*De Generis Humani Varietate Nativa*, G), proposed that because all humans experienced the same physical stages of development, they could only be classified under racial typologies.

Blumenbach used Latin terms such as *varietas* to indicate 'variety and diversity' in human physical appearance, and *gens* to denote a natural division of collective human change, indexed in relation to regional differences in skin colour.<sup>53</sup> By 1860 this terminology became interchangeable with 'race' and 'racial' in an English translation of Blumenbach's work.<sup>54</sup> Blumenbach established a classification system of five *Abarten*, hereditary varieties – Caucasian, Mongolian, Ethiopian, American and Malay<sup>55</sup> – leading him to claim 'that these races were but varieties of one human species'.<sup>56</sup> His large collection of 'skulls of foreign nations', grouped according to the *norma verticalis* (the shape of the skull viewed from above), was part of a larger project to document biological notions of race.<sup>57</sup> Human beings, including Europeans<sup>58</sup>, were increasingly classified as natural objects, with emphasis

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National Socialism Racists? A Comment on the December 2007 Issue of The Journal of Pacific History," *The Journal of Pacific History*, vol. 52, no. 1 (2017): 123.

<sup>51</sup> Fenneke Sysling, *Racial Science and Human Diversity in Colonial Indonesia* (Singapore: NUS Press, National University of Singapore, 2016), 5.

<sup>52</sup> Hauser-Schäublin, "Changing Contexts, Shifting Meanings: The Cook/Forster Collection," 29.

<sup>53</sup> Douglas, "Climate to Crania," 38.

<sup>54</sup> Douglas, "Climate to Crania," 43.

<sup>55</sup> Douglas, "Climate to Crania," 37–38.

<sup>56</sup> Jeremy Vetter, "Wallace's Other Line: Human Biogeography and Field Practice in the Eastern Colonial Tropics," *Journal of the History of Biology*, vol. 39, no. 1 (2006): 95. Vetter cites Reginald Horsman, "Origins of Racial Anglo-Saxonism in Great Britain before 1850," in *Journal of the History of Ideas*, vol. 37 (1976): 387–410.

<sup>57</sup> Vetter, "Wallace's Other Line," 40; Gustav Jahoda, "Intra-European Racism in Nineteenth Century Anthropology," in *History and Anthropology*, vol. 20, no. 1 (2009): 38.

<sup>58</sup> Germann, "Race in the Making", 57, 58, 60. In a Swiss context, 'internationally influential anthropologist' Rudolf Martin, who taught in Zurich, instigated a study between 1927 and 1932 of 35,511 Swiss Army conscripts. This study was led by Zurich anthropologist Otto Schlaginhaufen and included the participation of distinguished anthropologists such as Fritz Sarasin to 'systematically study the racial-anthropological composition of the Swiss population' (see Germann, "Race in the Making", 50). Jahoda, "Intra-European Racism in Nineteenth Century Anthropology," 37–56.



increasingly placed on the shape of the skull, prompting the emergence of biology and physical anthropology disciplines.<sup>59</sup>

German physical anthropologist, physician, pathologist and biologist, Rudolf Virchow, drew links between cranial and social development.<sup>60</sup> He rejected Darwin's theories of evolution and survival of the fittest<sup>61</sup> as espoused in *The Origin of Species* (1859). He promulgated the notion of 'higher' and 'lower' races; however, in the first instance it was necessary 'to ascertain the entire breadth of individual fluctuations occurring within [each of] the separate tribes' before conclusions regarding 'the higher and lower character of the race or the stock' could be made from 'individual cases'.<sup>62</sup> Virchow researched human skulls to create empirical records to substantiate the unity of mankind, as he rejected a connection between physical characteristics and mental capacity.<sup>63</sup>

Virchow's work was extended by Ernst Haeckel (1834–1919), who formulated a relationship between biological race and culture. The work of Oscar Peschel (1826–1875) favoured a compromise between environmental influences and biological determinism, arguing that societies develop as a result of their environment, not as a consequence of differing abilities. The practice of physical anthropology, in the late nineteenth century German context, was 'quite "liberal" on matters of race'.<sup>64</sup> A standardised horizontal method for measuring crania was adopted in 1882 in Germany, developed by naturalist Hermann von Ihering (1850–1930). By adopting a common method for measuring skulls to avoid discrepancies that resulted from various measuring formulae, German anthropologists 'worked out a collective identity as natural scientists of humanity'.<sup>65</sup> Notwithstanding, contradictory theories, disagreement

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<sup>59</sup> Germann, "Race in the Making," 43.

<sup>60</sup> Rudolf Virchow, "Üeber einige Merkmale niederer Menschenrassen am Schädel und über die Anwendung der statistischen Methode in der ethnischen Craniologie" [On several cranial characteristics of lower human races and the application of the statistical method in ethnic craniology], *Zeitschrift für Ethnologie*, Bd. 12 (1880): 1–26.

<sup>61</sup> Penny, "Traditions in the German Language," 85–86.

<sup>62</sup> Rudolf Virchow cited by Howes, *The Race Question in Oceania*, 57.

<sup>63</sup> Sysling, *Racial Science and Human Diversity in Colonial Indonesia*, 6.

<sup>64</sup> Benoit Massin, "From Virchow to Fischer: Physical Anthropology and 'Modern Race Theories' in Wilhelmine Germany," in *Volkgeist as Method and Ethic: Essays on Boasian Ethnography and the German Anthropological Tradition*, edited by George W Stocking, Jr (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1996), 80. Massin examines the shift from this liberal stance to the reorientation of this discipline and its methodologies to the establishment of twentieth century 'pseudosciences' of 'science of race' and 'racial hygiene'.

<sup>65</sup> Zimmerman, *Anthropology and Antihumanism in Imperial Germany*, 88. Also see Lucile E Hoyme, "Physical Anthropology and Its Instruments: An Historical Study," *Southwestern Journal of Anthropology*, vol. 9, no. 4 (1953): 408–430.

and ongoing debate continued to characterise German physical anthropology and the topic of racial differentiation in the late nineteenth century.<sup>66</sup>

## **The establishment of European ethnographic museums and salvage collecting**

The creation of ethnographic collections by European institutions was supported by trade and commerce in the latter part of the nineteenth century. For those states possessing colonies, ethnographic museums were envisaged ‘as a means of understanding the subject peoples and of awakening the interest of the public and of merchants in them – all necessary conditions for lucrative trade. Toward this end ethnology [was] indispensable’.<sup>67</sup> The museums of Berlin, London, Paris and Rome were actively constituted at this time, with ethnological collections developing alongside collections of antiquities. Universal Expositions were staged in Paris (1855, 1878 and 1889) and a Colonial Exposition in London (1886). Mercantile interests were explicit in the establishment of the Lisbon Colonial Museum (1871), which promulgated the commercial agenda of stimulating imperial trade networks by exhibiting goods and products in the museum.<sup>68</sup> Objects of technical interest were displayed as evidence of skill amongst ‘exotic peoples’ and selected based on ethnologists’ interpretations of evolutionary theory and a naturalistic aesthetic.

The alignment of European ethnographic museums in the mid- to late nineteenth century with the political and economic competition for world markets was especially true in Germany. Following unification in 1871, Germany was conscious of the supplementary activity required to advance its commercial ambitions. Germany’s leading contribution lay in identifying a new ‘ethnographic frontier’ and in the cartographic dividing-up of Oceania and determining boundaries between Melanesia, Micronesia and Polynesia. However, ‘[o]ver the course of the nineteenth century, the attempt to identify local ethnic boundaries gave way to a different concern. The ... Pacific Ocean provided opportunities to study pristine cultures seemingly unmolested by the increasing Euro-American presence in the region’.<sup>69</sup> German-

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<sup>66</sup> Howes, *The Race Question in Oceania*, 51–62.

<sup>67</sup> Robert Goldwater, “The Development of Ethnological Museums,” in *Museum Studies: An Anthology of Context*, edited by Bettina Messias Caronell (Malden, USA: Blackwell Publishing Ltd, 2004), 134.

<sup>68</sup> Ricardo Roque, “Skulls without Words: The Order of Collections from Macao and Timor, 1879–82,” *Journal of History of Science and Technology*, vol. 1 (2007): 124.

<sup>69</sup> Rainer F Buschmann, *Anthropology’s Global Histories: The Ethnographic Frontier in German New Guinea, 1870–1935* (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 2009), 5, 1–11.

speaking ethnographers contributed to the development of ethnographic collections and museums that were deemed the world's leading ethnographic institutions in the late nineteenth century.<sup>70</sup>

German ethnographic museums were established in Berlin (1873), Dresden (1875), Hamburg (1879), Leipzig (circa 1869) and Munich (1862). These cities and museums enjoyed outward-looking, cosmopolitan, 'worldly' perspectives, whilst also being provincial and municipally focused. The social life of German museums reflected dynamic regional, national and international interests, together with the 'intra-German' competitiveness that characterised the German sciences. This civic competition fostered sponsorship of museums and leading scientists, support for their expeditions, and an enthusiasm to amass collections in a bid to out-do one another.<sup>71</sup> Over time this competitiveness led to ethnologists shifting focus from acquisition for the sake of science to 'possession for possession's sake'.<sup>72</sup>

Collaboration between mercantile interests, human scientists and colonialists aimed to secure commercial benefits, with mixed results. A number of commercial companies operating in German colonies became agents for the collection and transportation of ethnographic material from German colonies in Oceania and Africa. German ethnological museum officials and the Imperial Navy also collaborated, with the result that 'ethnographic frontiers [were tied] firmly with geographic ones'.<sup>73</sup> The Prussian Museum Administration supplied 1,000 to 2,000 marks biennially to support ethnographic collecting by the navy for the Royal Museum of Ethnology, Berlin (hereafter RMEB). The activities of Captain Adrian Jacobsen, who collected over 18,000 objects from the Banda Islands for the RMEB, storing them on the *Frigga* steamer under the control of Kingsin Linie, a Hamburg-based shipping company, illustrate such collaborations.<sup>74</sup>

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<sup>70</sup> Penny, *Objects of Culture*, 1.

<sup>71</sup> Penny, *Objects of Culture*, 10.

<sup>72</sup> Penny, *Objects of Culture*, 7.

<sup>73</sup> Buschmann, "Oceanic Carvings and German Cravings," 306.

<sup>74</sup> Elena Soboleva, "A Coleção Timorense Do Museu De Antropologia E Etnografia De S Petersburgo: Breve Inventário," *Oriente; Revista quadrimestral da Fundação Oriente*, no. 7 (2003): 67–68. Over 300 of these objects, of Timorese provenance, were exchanged in 1899 between the Berlin Ethnographic Museum and the Museum of Anthropology and Ethnology, St Petersburg. See Penny, *Objects of Culture*, 84–88, for details of Jacobsen's expeditions and his relationship with Bastian and the Berlin Ethnographic Museum. Furthermore, during a voyage aboard the *Gazelle*, Jacobsen acquired artefacts from Timor Island (Barique, Laga, Lacro, Manatuto, Matinaro and Maubara) in 1888, which remain accessioned in the Royal Museum of Ethnology, Berlin, collection.

The RMEB was endorsed as a centralised institution (*Zentralstelle*, G) by the Federal Council (*Bundestrat*, G) of Germany for the receipt of ethnographic objects acquired from the colonies by returning colonial officials.<sup>75</sup> This initiative was instigated by German ethnographer Adolf Bastian (1826–1905), Director of the RMEB (1873–1905), who greatly influenced late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century ethnographic practice and Germanic museum collection development.<sup>76</sup>

Bastian fostered ‘salvage ethnography’ collecting practices. His doctrine of scarcity, coupled with the imminent disappearance of ‘pure’ indigenous societies and their artefacts, created an urgent agenda for ethnographic collection. It also triggered the possibility of turning artefacts into marketable commodities. Duplicate artefacts, which Bastian purchased as ‘doubles’<sup>77</sup> (*Dubletten*, G), were ‘quickly sold to other collectors and institutions’.<sup>78</sup> Circuits of exchange existed between museums in Berlin, Dresden, Leipzig, Leiden and St Petersburg as their collections increasingly reflected local, national and imperial identity-building agendas, which extended into the early twentieth century.<sup>79</sup>

Building on the intellectual lineage of German ethnographers such as Forster and Humboldt, Bastian advocated a ‘psychic unity of mankind’ and the idea that all humans share a basic mental framework.<sup>80</sup> He proposed a set of universal characteristics, termed ‘elementary ideas’ (*Elementargedanken*, G). He asserted that human diversity, affected by geographic and historical variables, gave rise to different elaborations of elementary ideas into ‘folk ideas’ (*Völkergedanken*, G).<sup>81</sup> Ethnographic data enabled the study of the psychological laws of mental development as revealed in diverse regions and different conditions. The aim of research was not the study of individuals per se, but rather the ‘folk ideas’ or ‘collective mind’ of a particular people or cultural group.

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<sup>75</sup> Buschmann, “Oceanic Carvings and German Cravings,” 307.

<sup>76</sup> Buschmann, “Oceanic Carvings and German Cravings,” 303–307; Penny, *Objects of Culture*, 18–29.

<sup>77</sup> Penny, *Objects of Culture*, 56.

<sup>78</sup> Penny, *Objects of Culture*, 5.

<sup>79</sup> H Glenn Penny, “Fashioning Local Identities in an Age of Nation-Building: Museums, Cosmopolitan Visions, and Intra-German Competition,” *German History*, vol. 17, no. 4 (1999): 489–505, 490.

<sup>80</sup> This theory formed the basis of Carl Jung’s idea of unconscious collectivism and also informed twentieth-century structuralism. The work of anthropologist Franz Boas was also influenced by Adolf Bastian.

<sup>81</sup> Penny, *Objects of Culture*, 22.

Rather than focusing on the Melanesia/Polynesia divide that preoccupied much of the earlier nineteenth-century enquiry into the Pacific<sup>82</sup>, Bastian focused on Melanesia as a site for anthropological study. He deemed Polynesia to be of limited interest as it had already been acculturated. Bastian advocated an ethnographic approach based on the identification of *Elementargedanken*. His prediction that all indigenous societies were doomed to become 'infected' and influenced beyond their original pure state once in contact with external influences motivated salvage ethnography.<sup>83</sup> Hence, the collection of artefacts and material culture following such contact would no longer be appropriate as such cultures were then considered 'inauthentic'.<sup>84</sup>

Bastian's assistant at the RMEB, Felix von Luschan (1854–1924), remained enthralled by the possibility of redefining ethnic borders between Micronesia and Melanesia, conveniently straddled by German possessions and economic interests. When the Hernalshausen Company returned to Germany from the Bismarck Archipelago with artefacts, they provided von Luschan with an opportunity to redefine these borders through the analysis of artefacts from Wuvulu and Aua islands.<sup>85</sup> He instigated a 'systematic investigation of the region' of salvage ethnography; however, without accurate artefact documentation and provenance, the objects were rendered void of ethnographic value from the museum's perspective. Luschan claimed the Hernalshausen Company conducted the 'worst pillage in the history of ethnography'.<sup>86</sup> Failure to elicit suitable material and data through commercial companies prompted a shift towards more active engagement in the field, with fieldwork becoming more prevalent.<sup>87</sup>

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<sup>82</sup> Nicholas Thomas, "The Force of Ethnology: Origins and Significance of the Polynesia/Melanesia Division," *Current Anthropology*, vol. 30, no. 1 (1989): 27–41. This article concludes that the delineation of ethnic sub-divisions, such as Polynesia/Melanesia, served the discipline of ethnology and its preoccupation with human types and racial distributions as part of its quest to establish an evolutionary hierarchy of mankind. According to Buschmann, "Oceanic Carvings and German Cravings," 301, classifications were initially based on differences between local languages, indigenous reception of Europeans and the assumed treatment of women. Polynesians were attributed by European travellers with having intelligible languages and were generally more hospitable towards Europeans and respectful towards women. Melanesians, by contrast, posed serious linguistic puzzles and were deemed xenophobic and prone to domestic violence.

<sup>83</sup> Buschmann, "Oceanic Carvings and German Cravings," 304–305. As a result of ethnographic research conducted by Bastian in Polynesia between 1879 and 1880, he formulated a pessimistic outlook for the ethnographic future of this region, observing that 'disruptive processes of colonization, commercialization, and missionisation' had corrupted Polynesian cultures.

<sup>84</sup> Buschmann, "Oceanic Carvings and German Cravings," 304.

<sup>85</sup> Buschmann, "Oceanic Carvings and German Cravings," 308.

<sup>86</sup> Buschmann, "Oceanic Carvings and German Cravings," 308. Rainer F Buschmann, 'Exploring Tensions in Material Culture: Commercialising Ethnography in German New Guinea, 1870–1904', in *Hunting the Gatherers: Ethnographic Collectors, Agents and Agency in Melanesia, 1870s–1930s*, edited by Michael O'Hanlon and Robert L. Welsch (New York and Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2000), 55–79.

<sup>87</sup> Buschmann, "Oceanic Carvings and German Cravings," 308–309.

## Alfred Russel Wallace, mapping, biogeography and human biogeography

In addition to Germanic ethnographic practices of the late nineteenth century, the work of English geographer and naturalist Alfred Russel Wallace is critical to contextualising the 1935 Expedition. Wallace's most noteworthy achievement was the identification of the revolutionary concept of natural selection. This conclusion, also arrived at independently by Charles Darwin in 1858, revised the concept of natural species and ideas of human diversity, natural selection and place in nature. Wallace contended that Europeans were intellectually, morally and physically 'superior' to populations encountered in the Antipodes and Americas. He predicted the demise and extinction of these peoples through natural selection.<sup>88</sup> Such notions proved to be an enduring rationale, finding expression in salvage ethnography and the obsessive task of obtaining as much evidence, documentation and knowledge of 'natural people' and their cultures as possible, prior to their anticipated demise.<sup>89</sup>

Through his extended field observations in the 'eastern archipelago' between 1854 and 1862, Wallace identified the biogeographical feature that runs between Bali and Lombok islands in modern day Indonesia: the Wallace Line. This line identifies a transitional zone between the eco-zones of Asia and Australasia (Wallacea).<sup>90</sup> His publication *The Malay Archipelago*, 1869, outlined his biogeographical species evolution theories and confirmed the value of field observation and the survey tradition as a research methodology.<sup>91</sup> This publication was translated into German (1869) and Dutch (1870–1871) and remains 'enormously influential'.<sup>92</sup>

Wallace also identified a line based on the human diversity of the region, distinguishing the point of transition between the Malay and Papuan groups. His choice of the Malay Archipelago as his research site was due to his suspicion that this was 'a possible point of

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<sup>88</sup> Douglas, "Climate to Crania," 65.

<sup>89</sup> Douglas, "Climate to Crania," 71.

<sup>90</sup> Vetter, "Wallace's Other Line," 90.

<sup>91</sup> Previously, the roles of data collection and knowledge creation were more commonly separated, with one group collecting the data and specimens and the other group of 'armchair social scientist[s]' undertaking the analysis in Europe (see Vetter, "Wallace's Other Line," 97–98).

<sup>92</sup> Chris Ballard, "'Oceanic Negroes': British Anthropology of Papuans, 1820–1869," in *Foreign Bodies: Oceania and the Science of Race 1750–1940*, edited by Bronwen Douglas and Chris Ballard (Canberra: ANU Press, 2008), 175.

origin for human beings' as well as its abundance of quadrumana.<sup>93</sup> Wallace believed in the existence of three 'great races' – Negro, Mongolian and Caucasian – and he suspected that somewhere in the Malay Archipelago the 'faultline' between two of these races existed.<sup>94</sup> 'As the meeting place of two of his three "great races or divisions of mankind", the Malay Archipelago provided the perfect stage for a demonstration of the role of biogeography in asserting the depth of human antiquity.'<sup>95</sup> His field methodology 'radically raised the standard of evidence for racial discrimination' and became 'crucial to the consolidation of a science of race'.<sup>96</sup>

Wallace's human-geographical line ran between the western shore of Gilolo, through Buru (Moluccas), between Halmahera and Maluku islands in the north, and between Sumbawa and Flores islands further south. As Wallace stated about Gilolo:

Here then I had discovered the exact boundary line between the Malay and Papuan races ... I was very much pleased at this determination, as it gave me a clue to one of the most difficult problems in Ethnology, and enabled me in many other places to separate the two races, and to unravel their intermixtures.<sup>97</sup>

In Gilolo, Wallace identified the residents of the island as Papuan, and the island as the exact boundary line between the Malay and Papuan races.<sup>98</sup> According to Roque, Wallace also identified Timor as a site that had a 'rather strong "mixture" of characteristics of the two races'.<sup>99</sup>

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<sup>93</sup> Quadrumana and Bimana form an obsolete division of the primates: Quadrumana are primates with four hands (two attached to the arms and two attached to the legs), and Bimana are those with two hands and two feet.

<sup>94</sup> Ballard, "'Oceanic Negroes,'" 182.

<sup>95</sup> Ballard, "'Oceanic Negroes,'" 186.

<sup>96</sup> Ballard, "'Oceanic Negroes,'" 177, 159.

<sup>97</sup> Alfred Russel Wallace, *The Malay Archipelago: The Land of the Orang-Utan and the Bird of Paradise*, 5th ed. (London: Macmillan and Co., 1874), 316–17.

<sup>98</sup> Vetter, "Wallace's Other Line," 111. Virchow also endorsed this view as his attempts to characterise fluctuations within each racial group led him to the opinion that the Papuans, although considered to be a homogenous group, introduced confusion to his assessments as a 'multiplicity of variations' existed among inhabitants 'of individual islands and groups of islands'. Vetter cites Virchow, "*Ueber einige Merkmale niederer Menschenrassen am Schädel*," 1–2. Also see Howes, *The Race Question in Oceania*, 56. Howes discusses Virchow's position on physical anthropology's lack of empirical records to allow accurate demarcation of 'all tribes and races'.

<sup>99</sup> Roque, "Mountains and Black Races," 270.

Wallace adopted the terms Malay and Papuan as ethnological labels for his mapping work and the measurement and collection of crania.<sup>100</sup> He identified human biological variation clustered around fixed typological groups. Racial mapping emerged concurrent with robust debate between monogenesist and polygenesist theorists.<sup>101</sup> Supporters of polygenesis advocated that humans had emerged in several different places simultaneously and that races constituted separate species with distinct origins.<sup>102</sup> Physical anthropologists recorded the visible physical characteristics of their subjects, such as skin colour, eye shape, hair texture and type, height, build and facial morphology. ‘Thus all human biological variation could be classified into sharply defined racial types, distinguished especially by their physical features.’<sup>103</sup> By the mid-nineteenth century ‘the advocates of non-linguistic approaches, especially those based on physical differences, were clamouring to overthrow the monogenetic position’ and favoured ‘the study of man in its most extended sense’ as anthropology.<sup>104</sup>

The context and model for Wallace’s ‘human mapping’ project was the regional biogeography of the Humboldt era of science, focused on a specific region rather than adopting a global approach. By transferring approaches from the analysis of flora and fauna to the analysis of human beings, Wallace demonstrated the shared practical reasoning around the mapping of typological distributions within a geographically delimited region; a form of ‘human biogeography’. ‘The classic distinctions between Melanesian and Polynesian or Malay and Papuan are also fundamentally geographic distinctions, specific valuations of particular spatial end-points that serve to anchor racial clines.’<sup>105</sup> The task of ‘[m]apping a borderline ... involves identifying patterns and assessing differences over geographical space. One way

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<sup>100</sup> Wallace, *The Malay Archipelago*, 599–602. He measured 86 Malay and four Papuan crania.

<sup>101</sup> Monogenesis theorists argued for a single human species with one historical origin, traditionally thought of as described in the Bible as The Creation, with all races having descended from the same group at some time in the distant past. This theory was undermined by Darwin’s and Wallace’s theory of evolution in the nineteenth century. The monogenesis approach relied on philological evidence, such as identifying linguistic similarities and lineages that united groups across large geographical regions.

<sup>102</sup> Not all physical anthropologists supported polygenesis. See Douglas, “Climate to Crania,” 53–56; also George W Stocking, Jr, “The Persistence of Polygenist Thought in Post-Darwinian Anthropology,” in *Race, Culture, and Evolution: Essays in the History of Anthropology*, edited by George W Stocking, Jr (New York: Free Press; London: Collier-Macmillan, 1968), 42–68.

<sup>103</sup> Vetter, “Wallace’s Other Line,” 94.

<sup>104</sup> T Hodgkin cited in Vetter, “Wallace’s Other Line,” 95.

<sup>105</sup> Ballard, ““Oceanic Negroes,”” 178.



the problem of particularity has been solved in field work has been through the drawing of lines on maps to organise the world's seemingly endless diversity'.<sup>106</sup>

The 'power of the grid' was applied to European mapping, a powerful methodology that changed the form and function of colonised zones. European-style maps were conceived on the basis of a 'totalizing classification'.<sup>107</sup> Prior to Wallace, Jean Louis Agassiz (1807–1873), a Swiss biologist, geologist, physician, and Professor of Natural History at the University of Neuchâtel, Switzerland, linked different human species to different parts of the world along with animals and produced a map containing eight geographical realms, including an East-Indian (Malay) realm, an Australian realm, and a Polynesian realm, in an attempt to map global diversity.<sup>108</sup> Joseph Deniker (1852–1918), a French anthropologist, developed highly detailed maps of race in Europe.<sup>109</sup> Racial mapping had a lasting influence on European thought and history.<sup>110</sup>

Racial and biogeographic methodologies were applied to delineate, measure and classify groups of people in specific locations. Thus, systematic collecting and classification based on racial and geographic groupings became principles central to the ethnographic discipline. These scientific endeavours were complemented by the emergence of European ethnographic museums, public institutions that were shaped and structured to obtain, secure and store the natural specimens, human remains and material cultures of the peoples of the world, and thereafter to foster its analysis. Wallace's human biogeographical line provided impetus for ethnographers such as Bühler and physical anthropologists such as Meyer to

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<sup>106</sup> Vetter, "Wallace's Other Line," 92.

<sup>107</sup> Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 173.

<sup>108</sup> Vetter, "Wallace's Other Line," 95.

<sup>109</sup> Laurence Hare, *Excavating Nations: Archaeology, Museums, and the German-Danish Borderlands* (Toronto, Buffalo and London: University of Toronto Press, 2015).

<sup>110</sup> Deniker advocated six primary European races, including a Nordic race with a Germanic core in Scandinavia, North Germany and Frisia, the British Isles and the Baltic lands. This scheme was adopted by eugenicists and scientific racists, including American lawyer Madison Grant, and evolved to place the 'Nordic race' at the top of a racial hierarchy in popular early nineteenth-century racial theories. Gustaf Kossina (1858–1931), a linguist and professor of German archaeology at the University of Berlin, also adopted Deniker's theory. Kossina's theories about the origins of the German people as an autochthonous people and as the greatest of all cultural peoples served to support German nationalism that bloomed following Germany's unification and contributed to the Nazi ideology of the 'Aryan' race. Kossina established 'settlement archaeology' techniques (*Siedlungsarchäologie*, G) and a 'so-called culture-history school whose overarching thesis was that a unified set of archaeological artefacts, a "culture", was the sign of a unified ethnicity. Differences between cultures in different archaeological sites indicated, conversely, that the people who had inhabited them had belonged to different tribes or, Kossina claimed in his later writings, different races'. In this way, Kossina provided a strong argument for the advancement of ethnography as the study of people through their archaeological and material cultures. See Stefan Arvidsson, *Aryan Idols: Indo-European Mythology as Ideology and Science* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2006), 143.

undertake expeditions of enquiry to challenge, substantiate or further refine human mapping findings, in the Lesser Sunda Islands. In order to appreciate the context of how the 1935 *Expedition* became a priority, it is necessary to trace the origins of the MKB.

## Museum der Kulturen Basel

The MKB emerged as the premier centre of Germanic ethnographic practice in Switzerland and an internationally renowned ethnographic museum during the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Its origins can be traced to the legacy of Desiderius Erasmus Roterodamus (1466–1536), a Dutch Renaissance humanist and Catholic priest, who bequeathed his library and collection of artworks to Boniface Amerbach (1495–1562), a resident of Basel. This humanistic collection formed the basis of a *Wunderkammer* in 1539.<sup>111</sup> The collection was developed further by Basilius Amerbach (1533–1591), who distinguished himself by his systematic collecting and high-quality inventory.<sup>112</sup> Consistent with a trend in German-speaking countries, his collecting included examples of technological advancement and accordingly he acquired entire workshops and their assets.

The Amerbach Collection, known in German as the *Amerbach Kabinett*, was acquired in 1661 by the Mayor of the Basel Council<sup>113</sup> who made it accessible to the public as university property.<sup>114</sup> This was the first modern museum to be supported actively by a civic community and whose origins are not linked to a royal collection.<sup>115</sup> The Amerbach Collection was installed, together with other collections and the library, in the *Haus zur Mücke* near the Basel

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<sup>111</sup> Ackermann, “The Basle Cabinets of Art and Curiosities in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries,” 62–68. These collections are now kept in the Museum of Fine Art Basel (*Kunstmuseum Basel*), the History Museum of Basel (*Historisches Museum Basel*) and the University Basel Library (*Universitätsbibliothek Basel*) and include artworks by renowned artists such as Hans Holbein (senior and junior) and Albrecht Dürer.

<sup>112</sup> Basilius Amerbach was the son of Boniface Amerbach. The inventory recorded 67 paintings, 1,900 drawings, 3,900 woodcuts and engravings, 2,000 coins and medals, and 770 goldsmiths’ models together with an extensive library and musical instruments (see Ackermann, 1985, 63–64).

<sup>113</sup> Initially the *Amerbach Kabinett* was to be sold to the Netherlands, which caused the Basel Council, under Mayor Johann Rudolf Wettstein, to acquire it for the University in 1661 (Richard Kunz, Curator, Southeast Asia, MKB, email communication with author, 14 June 2017). The collection was acquired for the sum of 9,000 thalers, a silver coin used throughout Europe from the early 1500s until the early twentieth century (see Ackermann, “The Basle Cabinets of Art and Curiosities in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries,” 64).

<sup>114</sup> The Mayor of Basel, Johann Rudolf Wettstein, was a central figure in Switzerland attaining its legal independence from the Holy Roman Empire on the occasion of the Treaty of Westphalian Peace of 1648 (see Ackermann, “The Basle Cabinets of Art and Curiosities in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries,” 64).

<sup>115</sup> Ackermann, “The Basle Cabinets of Art and Curiosities in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries,” 64. Similar developments occurred elsewhere in the German-speaking world, notably in Augsburg and Nuremberg.

cathedral, and opened to the public in 1671. It remained there until the opening of the *Museum an der Augustinergasse* in 1849, to which it was relocated.<sup>116</sup> *Museum an der Augustinergasse* was designed by Melchior Berri to house the sciences and arts, and contained all the academic collections of the University of Basel (*Universität Basel*). Its collections included ethnographic (*völkerkundliche*, G) artefacts.<sup>117</sup> 'Basel therefore had one of the first ethnological collections in Europe that was open to the public.'<sup>118</sup>

In 1893, the independent Ethnographic Commission (*Ethnographische Kommission*) was founded to oversee the further development of the ethnographic collection.<sup>119</sup> Leopold Rütimeyer (1856–1832), a Basel physician and Professor at the University of Basel, served as Vice-President of the Ethnographic Commission (1893–1932). He appointed anatomist Julius Kollmann (1834–1918) as Chairman (1893–1896), who 'introduced systematic cataloguing to the collections modelled on the system developed by RMEB, one of the leading houses at that time'.<sup>120</sup> The collection then consisted of approximately 2,500 objects, divided into five geographic categories – Europe, Asia, Africa, America, Australia and Oceania – together with three sections entitled 'photographs, doublets and "incerta"'.<sup>121</sup> These regional categories continue as the basis of the cataloguing system of the MKB collections, derived from the Berlin system.<sup>122</sup>

In 1904 a special department for European ethnography and folklore (*Volkskunde*, G) was established. In 1917, the ethnological collection was moved into a separate annex of the

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<sup>116</sup> Other collectors during the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries in Basel included Felix Platter (1536–), who collected art, natural curiosities, coins and exotica such as North American Indian clothing and artefacts as well as 'mandrakes, freaks and living animals'; Theodore Zwinger (1532–1588), who collected engravings and drawings; and Remigius Faesch (1595–1667), whose extensive collections of 8,322 objects, mostly pictorial arts and German painting, became the property of University of Basel in 1823.

<sup>117</sup> Richard Kunz, Curator, Southeast Asia, MKB, email communication with author, 14 June 2017.

<sup>118</sup> Richard Kunz, Curator, Southeast Asia, MKB, email communication with author, 8 November 2013.

<sup>119</sup> Richard Kunz, Curator, Southeast Asia, MKB, email communication with author, 4 April 2017. The Ethnographic Commission (*Ethnographische Kommission*) was founded in 1893 to further develop the existing ethnographic collection into a collection in its own right, as until that time it was part of the wider historic-antiquarian collection. The artefacts physically remained housed at the Berri building, as part of the University's library and collections. In 1917 an annex to the Berri building was inaugurated and the ethnographic collection was physically moved to that site. With this move the ethnographic collection became a museum (1918) in its own right and the *Ethnographische Kommission* was renamed the Museum Commission (*Museums Kommission*). The *Museums Kommission* continues as the board of supervisors of the MKB collections, which remain the property of the University of Basel.

<sup>120</sup> Gaby Fierz, "The Museum in Change: New Names and Concepts," in *Expeditions. The World in a Suitcase*, edited by Gaby Fierz and Sandra Hughes (Basel: Museum der Kulturen Basel, 2012), 40.

<sup>121</sup> Gaby Fierz, "The Museum in Change," 40. 'Incerta' refers to those objects of 'uncertain' categorisation.

<sup>122</sup> Richard Kunz, Curator, Southeast Asia, MKB, email communication, 4 April 2017. The categories of 'doublets and incerta' have been discontinued.

Berri building and in 1918 it became an independent museum, the Basel Museum of Ethnology (*Museum für Völkerkunde Basel*), under the auspices of the Museum Commission (*Museums Kommission*). In 1944, the European *Volkskunde* department was given the official title of Swiss Museum of Folklore (*Schweizerisches Museum für Volkskunde*) by the Federal Council, causing the museum's name to become Museum of Ethnology and Swiss Museum of Folklore Basel (*Museum für Völkerkunde und Schweizerisches Museum für Volkskunde Basel*). In 1996 *Volkskunde* became a department of the newly named MKB.

The museum underwent extensive structural renovations between 1978 and 1986 and again between 2008 and 2011, relocating its entrance onto Münsterplatz, the city's central plaza.<sup>123</sup> To commemorate the MKB's refurbishment, the exhibition *Expeditions. The World in a Suitcase* (hereafter *Expeditions*) was mounted, featuring the expeditions of Alfred Bühler as well as those of Paul and Fritz Sarasin and Felix Speiser. These Swiss ethnologists, trained in the Germanic ethnographic tradition, all greatly influenced the directions of Swiss ethnographic museum practice, the MKB and the 1935 Expedition.<sup>124</sup>

### Paul and Fritz Sarasin

Second cousins Paul Benedikt Sarasin (1856–1929) and Karl Friedrich 'Fritz' Sarasin (1859–1942) were upper-class members of Basel society.<sup>125</sup> They shared interests in natural science and travelling. Paul studied medicine in Basel and then zoology, whilst Fritz initially studied zoology and geology in Geneva.<sup>126</sup> They undertook doctoral studies in Würzburg, Germany, under ethnologist and animal ecologist Carl Semper (1832–1893).<sup>127</sup> They became acquainted

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<sup>123</sup> Richard Kunz, Curator, Southeast Asia, MKB, email communication with author, 8 November 2013; Isabel Koellreuter and Franziska Schürche, "Space for Ethnography," in *Intrinsic Perspectives: From Miss Kumbuk to Herzog & de Meuron*, vol. 2, edited by Gaby Fierz and Anna Schmid (Basel: Museum der Kulturen Basel, 2011), 77–79; 93–107.

<sup>124</sup> MKB presented the exhibition *Expeditions. The World in a Suitcase* from 29 June 2012 until 10 April 2016. This exhibition is discussed in detail in Chapter 3.

<sup>125</sup> Fritz was the son of Basel's Mayor, Felix Sarasin; Kunz, "The Five Sri Lanka (Ceylon) Expeditions, 1883–1925," 5; Syliva Ohnemus, "Fritz Sarasin, Paul Sarasin, and Paul Wirz: Their Significance for the Indonesian Collection of the Ethnological Museum in Basle," in *Treasure Hunting? Collectors and Collections of Indonesian Artefacts*, edited by Reimar Schefold and Han F Vermeulen (Leiden, Research School of Asian, African and American Studies (CNWS), Universiteit Leiden; CNWS Publications and Mededelingen van het Rijksmuseum voor Volkenkunde, no. 30, 2002), 183–206. Also see Bernhard C Schär, *Tropenliebe: Schweizer Naturforscher und niederländischer Imperialismus in Südostasien um 1900* (Frankfurt am Main: Campus Verlag, 2015).

<sup>126</sup> In Geneva, Fritz studied under the German zoologist and geologist Carl Vogt and the Swiss mineralogist and entomologist Henri de Saussure.

<sup>127</sup> Kunz, "The Five Sri Lanka (Ceylon) Expeditions, 1883–1925," 5.

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with Adolf Bastian, Director of the RMEB, and Rudolf Virchow, co-founder of the Berlin Society for Anthropology, Ethnology and Prehistory (1869).<sup>128</sup>

The Sarasins undertook five privately funded expeditions to Sri Lanka and acquired 441 artefacts and 542 photographs for the MKB. Their first expedition (1883–1886) documented the anatomy and evolutionary history of caecilian (*Ichthyophis glutinosus*, L).<sup>129</sup> Their second expedition (1890) documented the Vedda people, ‘as a memorial to a tribe on the verge of extinction’.<sup>130</sup> Their intention was to shed light on the development of humankind and present an accurate picture of a primitive, unspoilt tribe to the people of Basel.<sup>131</sup> They measured physiological and somatic characteristics – physique, skin colour, hair type, cranial shape and facial structure – and documented environmental conditions, ‘later ordering the results according to systematic categories’.<sup>132</sup> They also studied and procured elephant embryos and captured an elephant calf, ‘Miss Kumbuk’. She was sent to the Basel Zoo, where she entertained admiring audiences from 1896 until her death in 1917.<sup>133</sup>

For the Sarasins, ethnography was contained within the broader fields of zoology and the natural sciences. When they returned to Sri Lanka (1907) they undertook systematic archaeological work and unearthed a wealth of prehistoric stone implements, prompting later archaeological research in the area. Over time their work became more ethnographic, assembling systematic collections from Egypt (1889) and New Caledonia and the Loyalty Islands (1911–1912). These collections provided a basis from which the MKB collections developed.

The Sarasins were motivated to solve the geological and zoogeographical boundary between Asia and Australia<sup>134</sup>, which fed into the paramount questions of their time about the historical distribution of life in geographical space and the history of evolution.<sup>135</sup> The

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<sup>128</sup> Anna Schmid, “Anthropology and Expeditions,” in *Expeditions. The World in a Suitcase*, edited by Gaby Fierz and Sandra Hughes (Basel: Museum der Kulturen Basel, 2012), 2.

<sup>129</sup> Caecilian are limbless, serpentine amphibians.

<sup>130</sup> Kunz, “The Five Sri Lanka (Ceylon) Expeditions, 1883–1925,” 6. Kunz cites Fritz Sarasin, “Zur Erinnerung an Paul Benedikt Sarasin 1859–1929 [In memory of Paul Benedikt Sarasin 1859–1929],” *Verhandlungen der Naturforschenden Gesellschaft (Separatdruck)*, Bd. XL, 2. Teil (1929): 7.

<sup>131</sup> Kunz, “The Five Sri Lanka (Ceylon) Expeditions, 1883–1925,” 5.

<sup>132</sup> Kunz, “The Five Sri Lanka (Ceylon) Expeditions, 1883–1925,” 7.

<sup>133</sup> Kunz, “The Five Sri Lanka (Ceylon) Expeditions, 1883–1925,” 6. The skull of Miss Kumbuk is part of the Basel Museum of Natural History collection.

<sup>134</sup> Schär, “Earth Scientists as Time Travellers and Agents of Colonial Conquest,” 72.

<sup>135</sup> Schär, “Earth Scientists as Time Travellers and Agents of Colonial Conquest,” 69.

highlands of Sulawesi (Celebes) became a site of interest, due to Sulawesi's non-conformity with the Wallace Line. They set out twice (1893–1896 and 1902–1903), undertaking seven expeditions to resolve the scientific controversy by

systematically crisscrossing through different parts of the island in order to reconstruct its geological structures and to collect large quantities of animals and plants ... to create a much more nuanced understanding of the internal animal distribution patterns and internal geological varieties of the island.<sup>136</sup>

In undertaking these activities, the Sarasins collaborated with Dutch colonials and their ambitions. As part of a transnational group of naturalists, their scientific exploration ultimately enabled the Dutch to gain increased political control by infiltrating remote highland areas of the Celebes, leading to 'violent social change'.<sup>137</sup>

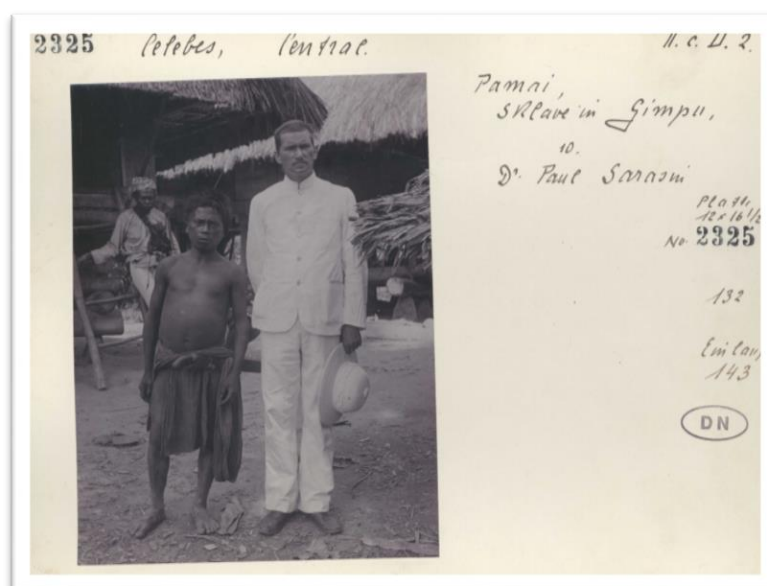


Figure 2.1: 'Pamai, Sklave in Gimpu, und Dr Paul Sarasin' (Pamai, slave in Gimpu and Dr Paul Sarasin), Central Sulawesi.

Source: Museum der Kulturen Basel, MKB (F)Ic 2325. Photography by Fritz Sarasin, 1902–1903.

Through their involvement with the Museum Commission, the Sarasins successfully convinced the Canton of Basel-Stadt to fund the museum's research expeditions and ethnographic collecting in Melanesia and Indonesia, as of 1927. Four expeditions with

<sup>136</sup> Schär, "Earth Scientists as Time Travellers and Agents of Colonial Conquest," 71.

<sup>137</sup> Schär, "Earth Scientists as Time Travellers and Agents of Colonial Conquest," 72.

dedicated research grants were approved by Fritz Sarasin and mounted by the museum (1928 to 1935). These included Eugen Paravicini's eastern Solomon Islands expedition (1928); Felix Speiser and Heini Hediger's western Solomon Islands, New Guinea (Sepik) and New Britain expedition (1929–1930); Bühler's first expedition to New Ireland and the Admiralty Islands (1931–1932); and his second expedition, the 1935 Expedition to Timor, Rote and Flores (1935).<sup>138</sup> Following Paul Sarasin's death in 1929, Fritz Sarasin published on archaeological findings excavated by Bühler during the 1935 Expedition.<sup>139</sup> This period of intense research activity consolidated the MKB's collections and research reputation, but ended abruptly with the 1930s economic crisis and the imminence of WWII.

### **Felix Speiser**

The Sarasins were role models for Felix Speiser (1880–1949), who also greatly influenced Bühler's work. Speiser began his career as a chemist, but he later became an anthropologist, following in the footsteps of Paul Sarasin, his uncle. He was influenced by the work of Virchow and Bastian, and studied prehistory and anthropology in Berlin under Felix von Luschan at a time when physical anthropology dominated the field. Speiser's work reinforced a Melanesian collection focus at the MKB.

During his fieldwork in Vanuatu (1910–1912), Speiser compiled an inventory of the material culture of the various groups inhabiting the 70 islands he visited. He 'swelled'<sup>140</sup> the MKB collection with over 3,000 objects and 1,500 glass-plate photographs from the field.<sup>141</sup> He noted that he had arrived just in time to 'salvage' remnants of this culture.<sup>142</sup> He sold these objects to the MKB and doubles were used for exchange and sale to other museums; thus he collected 'as both an anthropologist and commercial dealer'.<sup>143</sup> He performed anthropometry<sup>144</sup> and noted the reactions of the local people when 'he mentioned collecting

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<sup>138</sup> Syliva Ohenemus, *An Ethnology of the Admiralty Islanders: The Alfred Bühler Collection, Museum der Kulturen, Basel* (Bathurst: Crawford House Publishing, 1996), 3.

<sup>139</sup> Fritz Sarasin, "Beiträge zur Prähistorie der Inseln Timor und Roti," in *Verhandlungen der Naturforschenden Gesellschaft*, Bd. XLVII (1936), 2–59; Fritz Sarasin, "Über Spuren einer früheren weddiden Bevölkerung auf der Insel Roti oder Roti bei Timor," in *Zeitschrift für Rassenkunde*, Bd. VII (1938): 251–254.

<sup>140</sup> Gosden and Knowles, *Collecting Colonialism*, 102.

<sup>141</sup> Fierz, "We Salvaged What We Could," 10.

<sup>142</sup> Gosden and Knowles, *Collecting Colonialism*, 105.

<sup>143</sup> Gosden and Knowles, *Collecting Colonialism*, 123–124.

<sup>144</sup> Christian Kaufmann, "Felix Speiser's Fledged Arrow: A Paradigm Shift from Physical Anthropology to Art Styles," in *Hunting the Gatherers*, edited by Michael O'Hanlon and Robert L. Welsch (New York: Berghahn Books, 2000), 204.

human skulls and bones, or at least wanting to see them'.<sup>145</sup> The quest for evidence of a 'Pygmy race' was a 'key issue' for his work in Melanesia.<sup>146</sup>

While collecting such volumes of artefacts, his research focus shifted from physical anthropology towards a preoccupation with cultural anthropology and recognition of material culture and art as forms of human expression.<sup>147</sup> The controversial early twentieth-century topic of whether diffusion or evolution was the dominant mode of human and cultural development coalesced in his work as he concluded that 'human diversity [was] the result of long-range historical processes that led to the formation of local or regional "cultural complexes (*Kulturkomplexe*)"'.<sup>148</sup> Ultimately, he dismissed the notion of a linear human development in preference for the interconnection between peoples and cultures, leading him to hypothesise a settlement history for Oceania.<sup>149</sup>

Speiser was appointed to the Ethnographic Commission (1912) and continued to work on his collection on an honorary basis. He taught anthropology at Basel University and became 'extraordinary professor of cultural anthropology' in 1918. His career culminated in his directorship of the MKB (1942–1947).<sup>150</sup> During his directorship, he revised the museum's style of displays and brought a new sensibility to the enquiry of objects, acknowledging both their cultural and aesthetic values. Such a shift was evident in German, French and British museums during the early twentieth century, with the better examples of objects from ethnographic museums being selected and displayed as art based on aesthetics rather than technical value.<sup>151</sup>

### **Alfred Bühler**

Alfred Bühler (1900–1981) was born in Zug, a German-speaking city in central north-east Switzerland, the son of a railway train driver. He completed his schooling and qualified as a school teacher in Basel. He taught at the Cantonal Trade School for the last eight years of

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<sup>145</sup> Fierz, "We Salvaged What We Could," 12. See Kaufmann, "Felix Speiser's Fledged Arrow," 210, which suggests that Speiser collected human skulls in Vanuatu.

<sup>146</sup> Kaufmann, "Felix Speiser's Fledged Arrow," 204, 212–214.

<sup>147</sup> Kaufmann, "Felix Speiser's Fledged Arrow," 203–226.

<sup>148</sup> Kaufmann, "Felix Speiser's Fledged Arrow," 203.

<sup>149</sup> Fierz, "We Salvaged What We Could," 10.

<sup>150</sup> Fierz, "The Museum in Change," 40.

<sup>151</sup> Goldwater, "The Development of Ethnological Museums," 135–136. One example of this phenomenon was in 1921, when the Leipzig Museum of Ethnography (*Leipziger Museum für Ethnographie*) displayed the sculpture of the Congo as art rather than ethnography. Felix von Luschan, with whom Speiser studied, also recognised the importance of Benin art through his involvement in the 1897 Punitive Expedition.



his 18-year teaching career. Whilst teaching, he studied geography at the University of Basel (*Universität Basel*) under the Austrian-born geographer Hugo Hassinger (1877–1952). Bühler obtained his doctorate from the University of Basel in 1928. His thesis, ‘The Meiental Valley in the Canton of Uri’ (*Das Meiental im Kanton Uri*, G), explored the geography of Uri province and was a ‘testament to his love of the Swiss mountains’.<sup>152</sup> Hassinger provided ‘strict and methodological teaching’, which served Bühler well throughout his career. Bühler studied anthropology under Speiser and was influenced by the ‘magic of the Sarasins’ circle’.<sup>153</sup>

The mission of Bühler’s first expedition (March 1931 – August 1932), instigated by the Museum Commission, was to amass a collection from the Bismarck Archipelago. He began his work in New Ireland and the outer Tabar Islands (Tabar, Tatau, Simberi) and Squally Islands (Tench, Emirau, St Matthias group). He then visited the Admiralty Islands from 18 December 1931 to 10 June 1932.<sup>154</sup> During this expedition Bühler accumulated material culture from a land area of approximately 1,350 square kilometres, spread over more than 14,000 square kilometres of the earth’s surface; ‘a formidable undertaking’.<sup>155</sup> The expedition was envisaged by Fritz Sarasin and the Museum Commission to enhance the museum’s collections by documenting under-represented regions and ‘fill[ing] the gaps’.<sup>156</sup> During this expedition, Bühler established his reputation as an excellent collector with sharply focused observation skills, diligence, interpersonal skills, integrity and loyalty. Three publications and a 1933 exhibition resulted following his return.<sup>157</sup>

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<sup>152</sup> Karl Meuli, “Alfred Bühler,” *Festschrift Alfred Bühler*, edited by Carl A Schmitz and Robert Wildhaber, Basel: Pharos-Verlag (1965), 18. Translation by Dr Christiane Keller, 10 January 2014; Alfred Bühler, *Das Meiental im Kanton Uri* [The Meien Valley in the Canton of Uri] (Bern: Kümmerly & Frey, 1928).

<sup>153</sup> Meuli, “Alfred Bühler,” 18.

<sup>154</sup> Ohnemus, *An Ethnology of the Admiralty Islands*, 17. Bühler visited the western islands between 18 and 28 May, including Luf, Wuvulu, Aua, the Ninigo group and Kaniet.

<sup>155</sup> Ohnemus, *An Ethnology of the Admiralty Islands*, 391.

<sup>156</sup> E Paravicini undertook a funded expedition (1928) and was the first employed scientific official at the museum, 1931–1945. Bühler was the second. Meuli, “Alfred Bühler,” 20. Speiser also undertook another expedition to Melanesia (1929–1930).

<sup>157</sup> Meuli, “Alfred Bühler,” 19 (see footnote 7). These publications included an exhibition catalogue of the collection, an article about the currency in the Bismarck Archipelago, and an analysis of the inhabitants and culture of the Admiralty Islands:

*Vier Südseekulturen. Sammlung Dr Alfred Bühler* [Four South Seas Cultures. Collection Dr Alfred Bühler], (Ausstellung im) [exhibition at] Gewerbemuseum Basel 1933; Bühler, *Altes und neues Geld im Bismarckarchipel* [Old and New Money in the Bismarck Archipelago]: Schweiz. handelswissenschaftl. Zeitung Heft 7, Juli 1934, 1 ff; Bühler, *Versuch einer Bevölkerungs- und Kulturanalyse auf den Admiralitätsinseln* [Attempt at a population and cultural analysis on the Admiralty Islands]: Ztschr. f. Ethnol. 67 (1935) 1 ff.

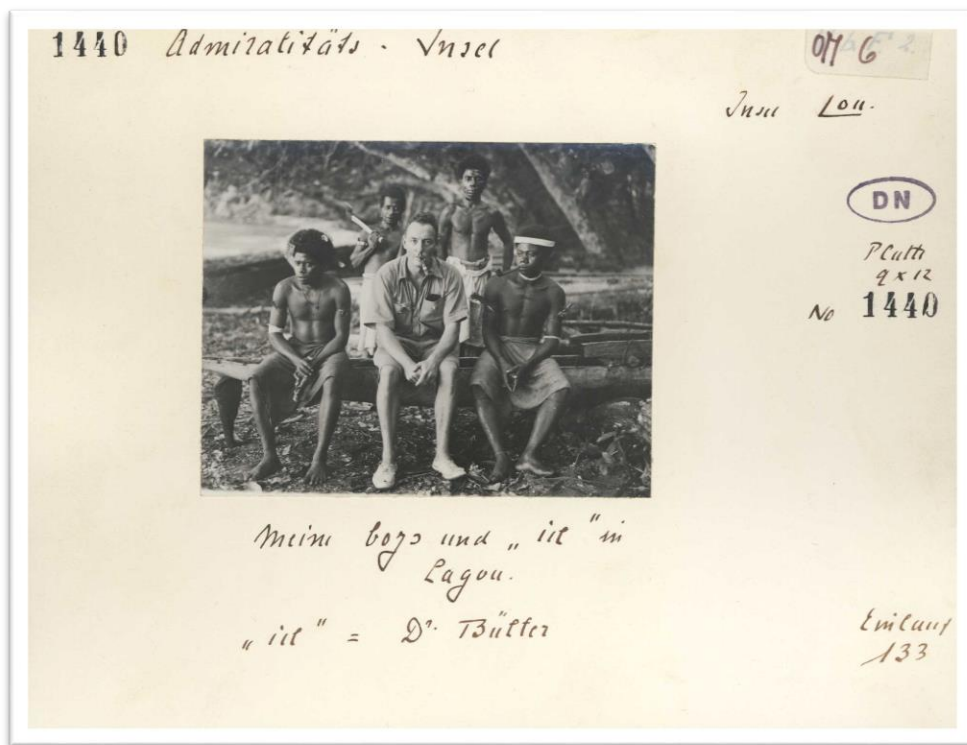


Figure 2.2: 'Meine boys und "ich" in Lagou' (My boys and 'I' in Lagou). Dr Alfred Bühler with his two companions, Poitri and Dedai, in Lagou, Lou Island, Admiralty Islands, February 1932.

Source: Museum der Kulturen Basel Collection, (F)Vb 1440. Photographer unknown, February 1932.

Next, the Museum Commission assigned the 1935 Expedition to Bühler, a nine-month-long venture. Bühler's focus in Timor, Rote and Flores was on collecting artefacts representing the islands' rich 'crafts' (*Handwerk*, G), including wood-turning, metalwork, pottery and textile weaving. The museum valued material culture that was not necessarily visually spectacular, which resonated with Bühler's interest in technical processes. He acquired a number of component parts of objects in various stages of production and recognised handwoven textiles as the 'technical and artistic highlight of indigenous work'.<sup>158</sup>

The 1935 Expedition introduced Bühler to indigenous weavers and dyers whose textiles prompted his enduring fascination with techniques that became a focus for his scientific enquiry throughout his career.<sup>159</sup> This expedition also shaped the MKB as a centre for textile excellence, which ultimately secured its international reputation. The textile collection was promoted by Chemical Industry Basel (*Chemische Industrie Basel*, G) (hereafter CIBA), a leading

<sup>158</sup> Meuli, "Alfred Bühler," 19.

<sup>159</sup> Meuli, "Alfred Bühler," 25.

Swiss manufacturer of chemical dyes for international textile industries whose journal *CIBA Review* (*CIBA-Rundschau*, G) also published Bühler's ethnographic research.

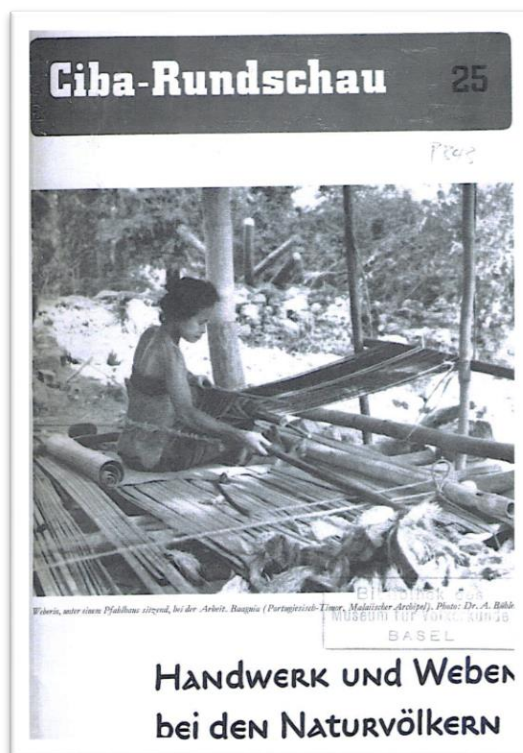


Figure 2.3: Cover of *CIBA Review*, 25 (*CIBA-Rundschau*, 25, G) featuring a Makasae weaver.

Source: Museum der Kulturen Basel Library. Photograph taken by Dr Alfred Bühler, 1935, Baguia.

Bühler became an MKB Curator / Scientific Official in 1938.<sup>160</sup> Thereafter, he summarised the museum's collection catalogue index, consisting of thousands of hand-written accession cards, some with illustrations, into a geographical index/register and a keyword, thesaurus-like index/register. These index cards contained the inventory numbers of artefacts from the same geographical area or that fell under the same keyword. Bühler did this to facilitate better access to the collection.<sup>161</sup>

Bühler became the Director of the MKB (1950–1964) following Speiser's death. The foundations laid down by the Sarasins and Speiser were consolidated under Bühler's directorship. The collection doubled from 83,000 objects (in 1942) to 165,000 objects (in

<sup>160</sup> Meuli, "Alfred Bühler," 18.

<sup>161</sup> Meuli, "Alfred Bühler," 22–23. See Fierz and Hughes (eds), *Expeditions. The World in a Suitcase* where various accession cards created by Fritz Sarasin, Speiser, Bühler and Hinderling are published.

1964).<sup>162</sup> Bühler revised display practices, preferring curated temporary exhibitions to monumental displays of collection objects, which the museum could not sustain due to rapid growth of the collection.<sup>163</sup>

During his five expeditions undertaken whilst at the MKB, Bühler limited himself to collecting for the museum with the aim of securing knowledge about people through their material culture, before what he believed to be their imminent disappearance. Prior to his directorship, he undertook a third expedition to Bali and Sumba (1949), where he acquired just under 4,000 objects.<sup>164</sup> Later, he travelled again to the Sepik region of Papua New Guinea (1955–1956 and 1959). These expeditions enhanced the existing collections with a rich yield of artefacts from under-represented areas. In this regard Bühler perpetuated Adolf Bastian's salvage project, but his extensive acquisitions sometimes came at the expense of documenting the cultural practices and social organisation within which these objects functioned.<sup>165</sup> However, much of what Bühler did acquire was meticulously documented. Bühler collected material evidence of the 'declining cultures' for scientific purposes, leading him to be likened to an 'antiquities trader' by Meuli, who suggests that many of the objects acquired by Bühler in the field were already seen as 'decaying, old junk' in their place of origin.

<sup>166</sup>

Bühler secured significant donations to the museum, including a gift of a rare and comprehensive textile collection, acquired over many years by Fritz Iklé-Huber, a St Gallen embroidery, lace and textile manufacturer, who had amassed a textile collection from around the world.<sup>167</sup> The existence of a significant silk ribbon industry in Basel prompted the dyeing

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<sup>162</sup> Meuli, "Alfred Bühler," 20.

<sup>163</sup> Fierz, "The Museum in Change," 40.

<sup>164</sup> Fierz and Hughes, *Expeditions. The World in a Suitcase*, 37. Bühler acquired 3,824 objects from Sumba, 983 objects from Bali, 86 objects from Flores and another 18 objects from other islands.

<sup>165</sup> Meuli, "Alfred Bühler," 21.

<sup>166</sup> Fierz and Hughes, *Expeditions. The World in a Suitcase*, 20.

<sup>167</sup> This gift was initially given to Bühler and his wife, Kirstin Bühler-Oppenheim, and later donated to the museum (1947). Bühler-Oppenheim co-authored a book with Iklé-Huber in 1948 entitled *Grundlagen zur Systematik der gesamten textilen Techniken* [Foundations of a classification of all textile production techniques]. Bühler-Oppenheim shared an enduring interest in the technical aspects of textile production with her husband (see Meuli, "Alfred Bühler," 21; Fierz and Hughes, *Expeditions. The World in a Suitcase*, 38). Further evidence of his ability to court philanthropic support occurred in 1952, when Bühler and Bühler-Oppenheim visited Egypt as the guests of Carl Leonhard Burckhardt, the son of a silk ribbon manufacturer, and his wife, Marianne, the daughter of Alfred Reinhart (1873–1935), a cotton merchant based in Alexandria. With financial support from the Burckhardt-Reinharts, Bühler collected textiles in Egypt to complement the famous textile collection of the MKB. In time, Carl Leonhard Burckhardt's extensive private collection, including rare and ancient Coptic textiles, was donated to the MKB.

for silk from which emerged large chemical companies such as CIBA, Sandoz and later Novartis. CIBA, a forerunner to modern-day multinational chemical company Novartis, was impetus for support of the development of a major international textile collection at MKB. As the textile collection grew, the significance of textiles was increasingly researched.<sup>168</sup> Bühler undertook study trips to France and Holland in 1938–1939; Egypt in 1950; Egypt, Denmark and Sweden in 1953; England in 1954; USA in 1955; and India and Japan in 1964.

Bühler completed his Habilitation under Felix Speiser at the University of Basel in 1944. Following Speiser's death, Bühler became an 'extraordinary' professor in 1950 and obtained a 'personal chair' (*persönliches Ordinariat*, G) in anthropology at the University of Basel in 1959.<sup>169</sup> In 1964 a regular chair for anthropology was established (*gesetzliches Ordinariat*, G) and Bühler became its first incumbent. He was awarded an honorary doctorate by the University of Neuchâtel (*Neuchâtel Universität*) in 1974.<sup>170</sup> Basel had developed a reputation as a centre for ethnology in Switzerland and Europe and, together with Speiser's contribution, Bühler succeeded in establishing anthropology as an official department within Basel's university,<sup>171</sup> of which he became the first Chair in 1964.

Speiser's influence was evident in Bühler's earliest ethnographic writings from his 1931 expeditions and the 1935 Expedition. This influence continued until Bühler's art history of Oceania was published (1961), realising an unfulfilled ambition of Speiser's.<sup>172</sup> Bühler and Speiser shared a 'natural, intuitive relationship to art, and even to modernism, therefore, also

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<sup>168</sup> Meuli, "Alfred Bühler," 25 (see footnote 27). Publications cited by Meuli focused on various textile production techniques including ikat, *pelangi* (a resist-dye technique), double ikat "*patola* influences in Southeast Asia", and *shibori* and *kasuri*, two traditional Japanese resist-dye techniques used for patterning cloth:

Alfred Bühler, "Materialien zur Kenntnis der Ikattechnik" [Materials relevant to knowledge of the Ikat technique], (Leiden: EJ Brill, 1943); Alfred Bühler, "Ikatten [Ikat]," *Ciba-Rundschaun*, no. 51 (1941): 1850–1887; Alfred Bühler, "Die Reservemusterungen. Versuch einer zusammenfassenden Betrachtung ihrer Technik, Entstehung und Herkunft [Resist-dye patterns. An attempt at a comprehensive analysis of their technology, development and origin]," *Acta Tropica*, 3 (1946): 242–271; Alfred Bühler, "Plangi," *Internationales Archiv für Ethnographie*, Bd. 46 (1952): 4–35; Alfred Bühler, "Plangi," *Ciba-Rundschaun*, nr. 111 (1953): 4062–4083; Alfred Bühler, "Patola Influences in Southeast Asia," *Journal of Indian Textile History*, vol. 4 (1959): 1–43; "Shibori und Kasuri. Zwei traditionelle Musterungsverfahren für Stoffe [Shibori and Kasuri. Two traditional methods of patterning fabrics]," *Folk*, 5 (1963): 45–64.

<sup>169</sup> Meuli, "Alfred Bühler," 23.

<sup>170</sup> Richard Kunz, Curator, Southeast Asia, MKB, personal communication with author, 27 February 2014.

<sup>171</sup> Meuli, "Alfred Bühler," 23.

<sup>172</sup> Meuli, "Alfred Bühler," 24 (see footnote 25); Alfred Bühler, Terry Barrow and Charles P Mountford, *Ozeanien und Australien. Die Kunst der Südsee* [Oceania and Australia. The art of the South Seas] (in der Reihe «Kunst der Welt»), Baden-Württemberg: Baden Baden, 1961.

to indigenous people'.<sup>173</sup> Bühler's Habilitation Lecture (30 January 1947)<sup>174</sup>, on the topic of the resist-dye technique, enabled him to articulate the role of material objects in the exploration of wider anthropological questions.

The 1935 Expedition defined Bühler's ethnographic career and influenced his museum directorship and the MKB collections throughout the twentieth century. His enduring interest in the documentation of textiles and their production, sparked by his encounters with indigenous Timorese and Rotinese weavers in 1935, was reflected in the collections and documentation he developed throughout his career. For the MKB, one of the first European public museums, the collection acquired by Bühler and his research trajectory built upon the work of the museum's founders – Paul Sarasin, Fritz Sarasin and Felix Speiser – who were all trained in Germanic ethnographic traditions and amassed significant ethnographic collections for the MKB.

### **Wilhelm L Meyer's role in the 1935 Expedition and the collection of physical anthropological data**

Wilhelm Louis Meyer (1899–1982) accompanied Bühler on the 1935 Expedition in a private capacity.<sup>175</sup> The two men had become friends whilst students at the University of Basel. During the expedition, Meyer undertook physical examinations of Timorese and Rotinese people and collected physical data for the purpose of analysis, publishing his results in a dental journal upon his return to Switzerland in 1936.<sup>176</sup> Wallace had noted, decades earlier, that racial groups on Timor overlapped in a 'dense tapestry'.<sup>177</sup> This diversity underlay the fascination for researchers such as Meyer with identifying and classifying the people and cultures of the island as part of a larger quest to precisely locate racial boundaries between Melanesia and Asia. Meyer concluded that, although he studied a mixed population, the small

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<sup>173</sup> Meuli, "Alfred Bühler," 24.

<sup>174</sup> The Habilitation Lecture tradition is the highest academic accolade in European academia and is a form of post-doctoral presentation.

<sup>175</sup> Meyer funded a component of the journey to Timor, Rote and Flores to the sum of Fr. 7,500; see Alfred Bühler, *Schlussbericht – Reise nach den Kleinen Sundainseln Timor, Rote und Flores* (Basel: Museum der Kulturen Basel, 1936); Meyer's father was strongly opposed to his son's involvement in the expedition and attacked Bühler sharply in a letter. Nevertheless, Meyer joined Bühler on the expedition. Richard Kunz, Curator, Southeast Asia, MKB, email communication with author, 20 December 2013.

<sup>176</sup> Meyer, WL. *Anthropologische und odontologische Untersuchungen auf den kleinen Sunda-Inseln Timor und Rote. Sonderdruck aus der Festschrift der Odontologischen Gesellschaft Basel*. Zürich: Buchdruckerei Berichthaus, 1936, 141–195. It remains unclear why Meyer did not collect anthropological data in Flores.

<sup>177</sup> Vetter, "Wallace's Other Line," 104.

stature of Baguia people indicated their Papuan identity. He noted that the people of the region were well-nourished, scantily clad, lived in huts, and had 'primitive pile-dwellings'.<sup>178</sup>

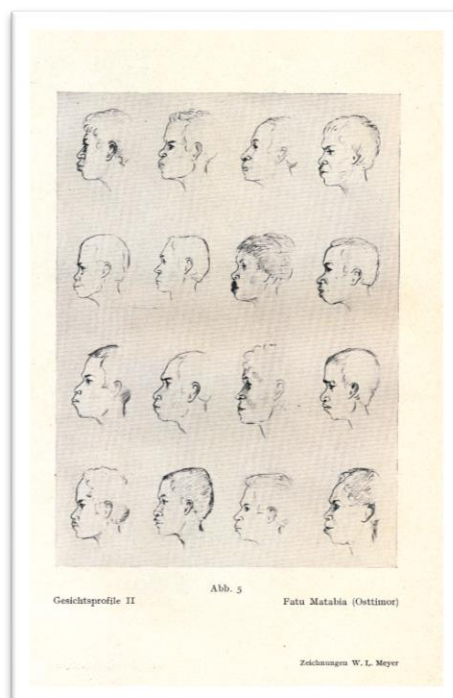


Figure 2.4: Page of illustrations depicting 'Gesichtsprofile' (facial profiles) of people from 'Fatu Matabia'.

Source: Dr WL Meyer, *Anthropologische und odontologische Untersuchungen auf den kleinen Sunda-Inseln Timor und Rote. Sonderdruck aus der Festschrift der Odontologischen Gesellschaft Basel*. Zürich: Buchdruckerei Berichthaus, 1936, between pages 148 and 149.

<sup>178</sup> AJ van Bork-Felkamp, *A Contribution to the Anthropology of Timor and Roti after Data Collected by Dr WL Meyer* (Amsterdam: Uitgave Koninklijk Instituut voor de Tropen [Royal Tropical Institute], 1951), 61–62.

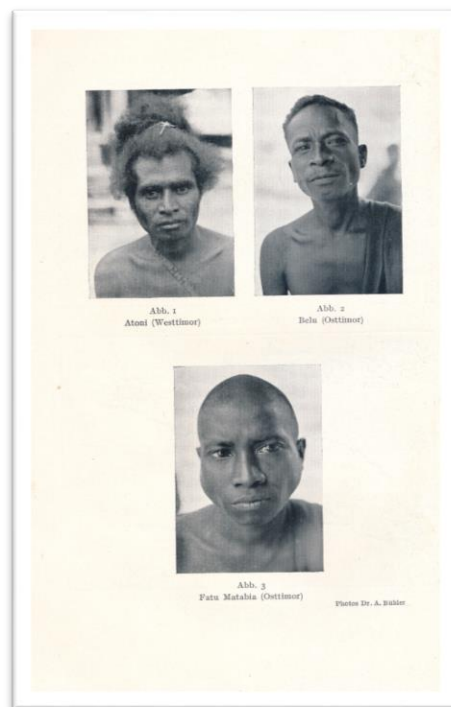


Figure 2.5: Photographs of Timorese men taken by Alfred Bühler and used by Meyer to illustrate his findings regarding racial typologies and facial features.

Source: Dr WL Meyer, *Anthropologische und odontologische Untersuchungen auf den kleinen Sunda-Inseln Timor und Rote*. Sonderdruck aus der Festschrift der Odontologischen Gesellschaft Basel. Zürich: Buchdruckerei Berichthaus, 1936, between pages 148 and 149.

Meyer gave his anthropometric data to Adele Jeanette van Bork-Feltkamp, of the Physical Anthropology Department, Royal Tropical Institute, Amsterdam, for further analysis.<sup>179</sup> She used data collected by Meyer and other physical anthropologists active in Timor, sometimes

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<sup>179</sup> van Bork-Feltkamp, *A Contribution to the Anthropology of Timor and Roti*, 46–47; see Plate 18. Figure 2.6. Meyer's measurements, taken in centimetres, included: stature/height, head breadth, head length, cephalic index (head index), bizygomatic breadth (width of face), minimum frontal breadth, nose height, nose breadth, nasal index, interorbital distance, average biogonial breadth, jugomandibular index, jugointerorbital index, jugonasal index, average nasointerorbital index, jugoparietal index, average of front parietal index, mouth width, jugobuccal index, buconasal index, buccomandibular index, buccointerorbital index, jugofrontal index, biauricular breadth, and biauricular index.



working as doctors or missionaries, as the basis for a comparative analysis of distribution curves.<sup>180 181</sup>

Meyer's work was useful to van Bork-Feltkamp, as the inland, eastern location of his study dealt with a virtually unrecorded population group, the Makasae people. Until then, the only record from this eastern region of Timor was by Henry O Forbes who wrote in 1884 that based on hearsay a 'race of dwarfish people' lived among Mount Matebian.<sup>182</sup> 'Pygmy fever'<sup>183</sup> gripped Europe during the late nineteenth century and into the twentieth century with Alexander Wollaston (1875–1930) promulgating the dichotomy of Pygmies and Papuans in his eponymous publication, based on his 1910–1911 New Guinea expedition. In the 1870s Ernest-Théodore Hamy suggested the existence of Negroites in Timor, based on a single skull.<sup>184</sup> The hope of discovering a 'purer, primordial pygmy race'<sup>185</sup> or the 'two "races noires of Melanesia": the Papuans and Negritos' may have prompted Meyer's journey to Timor.<sup>186</sup>

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<sup>180</sup> This comparative analysis system had previously been used by Professor HJ Lammers in 1948 when he analysed data collected by Bernadus Vroklage in Dutch Timor (1936–1938), which compared the Atoni people with the Tetun people of central Timor. Amongst their varied findings, ten Kate attributed Indonesian and Melanesian influences to the Atoni populations, with Bijlmer suggesting that the Atoni people were strongly Melanesian whilst the Tetun people of Belu showed a deutro-Malayan influence; however, both groups possessed 'mesocephalic' and proto-Malay traits. Corrae suggested that in Oecusse the coastal population was more mixed than the inland, mountain population where 'a negroid and a Vedda-Australian element is observable'. Nyëssen concluded that in Portuguese Timor, people were similar to those in New Guinea, using a Deniker classification of 'an ancient, mesomorphic ... population of small stature'; Keers identified Atoni People as 'a negrito element of a Papuan component'. See van Bork-Feltkamp, *A Contribution to the Anthropology of Timor and Roti*, 3–4.

<sup>181</sup> Herman FC ten Kate (visited in 1891; published in 1893, 1894, 1895 and 1915) was followed by Hendrik Bijlmer (visited in 1915–1916; published in 1929), who researched the Atoni and Tetun peoples of central Timor; Mendes Corrêa (visited 1915; published 1944), who researched the Atoni people of Oecusse enclave; Dionisius Jan Hendrik Nyëssen (1944–1945), who undertook an anthropological survey of Portuguese Timor; and Wilhelmina Keers (visited in 1937–1938; published in 1948). Ten Kate was in contact with ethnologist Adolf Bastian in Berlin (see Sysling, *Racial Science and Human Diversity in Colonial Indonesia*, 18).

<sup>182</sup> Henry O Forbes, *A Naturalist's Wanderings in the Eastern Archipelago* (Singapore: Oxford University Press, 1989), 466–467. Forbes collected eleven human skulls from the island of Larat, Timor-Laut, which were later analysed by JG Garson, a member of the Anthropological Institute in London (see Garson, cited in Forbes, 340–353).

<sup>183</sup> Sysling, *Racial Science and Human Diversity in Colonial Indonesia*, 149; Chris Ballard, "'Oceanic Negroes,'" 157–201; Chris Ballard, "Collecting Pygmies. The 'Tapiro' and the British Ornithologists' Union Expedition to Dutch New Guinea, 1910–1911," in *Hunting the Gatherers, Ethnographic Collectors, Agents and Agency in Melanesia, 1870s–1930s*, edited by Michael O'Hanlon and RL Welsch (New York and Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2000), 127–154.

<sup>184</sup> Roque, "Mountains and Black Races," 273–274.

<sup>185</sup> Sysling, *Racial Science and Human Diversity in Colonial Indonesia*, 152.

<sup>186</sup> Ballard, "Collecting Pygmies" 146–149. Ballard also explains AC Haddon's contribution to this phenomenon; Roque, "Mountains and Black Races," 274.

Meyer's measurements were taken from 102 men from Mount Matebian, Timor, and 83 men from Rote.<sup>187</sup> No women were measured, possibly because their cranial dimensions add a differential, a matter that Wallace commented upon when he undertook cranial measurements and racial analysis.<sup>188</sup> The use of prisoners for his data collection process was likely due to ease of access. This data collection identified an 'anthropological definition of these mountaineers', the Makasae in Mount Matebian.<sup>189</sup> Van Bork-Feltkamp concluded<sup>190</sup> that 'Timor repeatedly conjures up reminiscences of the Papuans, it would be the population of a mountainous area of Timor which shows a resemblance with the inhabitants of the higher regions of New Guinea'.<sup>191</sup>

Meyer contributed to physical anthropological research during the late nineteenth to mid-twentieth century in Timor, which was clearly 'on the map' for contemporary physical anthropology.<sup>192</sup> This modern discipline was supported by a 'positivist belief in objectivity through quantitative approaches'.<sup>193</sup> Anthropometry in field sites such as Timor sought to unravel the question of how the human diversity of the archipelago could be defined and explained, who the original inhabitants were, and what additional influences had contributed to the racial diversity. Although physical anthropology ultimately failed to quantify racial differences in Timor, particularly between Malay and Papuan societies, the notion of Timor

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<sup>187</sup> van Bork-Feltkamp, *A Contribution to the Anthropology of Timor and Roti*, 5, 54. Meyer measured 33 men from Baa Prison and 50 men from Tudameda.

<sup>188</sup> Wallace, *The Malay Archipelago*, 600. Another reason women may not have been measured was the cultural sensitivities of a non-local man having close contact with local women. See Sysling, *Racial Science and Human Diversity in Colonial Indonesia*, 54–61, for a discussion about the issues encountered by Dutch anthropologists when attempting anthropomorphic measurements in the field.

<sup>189</sup> Wallace, *The Malay Archipelago*, 54.

<sup>190</sup> van Bork-Feltkamp, *A Contribution to the Anthropology of Timor and Roti*, 53–54, wrote: 'an attempt must be made at making a summary of what the anthropometrical and descriptive characteristics teach about the men of Fatu Matabia[n] and Roti. The former are of small stature and dolichocephalic with long and narrow heads ... On the level of the jugal bones the face is narrow to medium; the nasal index places Fatu Matabia[n] among the chamaerhiny, taking into consideration that on measuring the nose height to the nasion the value of this index will very probably appear to be somewhat lower. The root of the nose is broad and to a certain extent the same may be said of the bigonial diameter: as compared with the bizygomatic breadth (jugomandibular index) it is medium-sized. When consulting the profile-drawings which Meyer made of each of his subjects, it appears, moreover, that the mouths with the fairly common convex upper-lips are very prominent in Fatu Matabia. The picture of these men must further be completed by reminding the reader of the existence of spiralled hair in 65% of the cases, of the tan or dark brown complexion, of the high frequency of the concave nasal bridge and of the flat-lying ears with ear-lobes small or altogether missing?.'

<sup>191</sup> van Bork-Feltkamp, *A Contribution to the Anthropology of Timor and Roti*, 54–55.

<sup>192</sup> Roque, "Stories, Skulls, and Colonial Collections," 1–23; Ricardo Roque, "Skulls without Words: The Order of Collections from Macao and Timor, 1879–82," *Journal of History of Science and Technology*, vol. 1 (2007): 113–154; Ricardo Roque, *Headhunting and Colonialism: Anthropology and the Circulation of Human Skulls in the Portuguese Empire, 1870–1930* (Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010).

<sup>193</sup> Sysling, *Racial Science and Human Diversity in Colonial Indonesia*, 3–4.

as a racial borderline continued to have currency in Europe well into the mid-twentieth century.<sup>194</sup>

TABLE 18<sup>1)</sup>

	N	min	max	$\sigma$	P	M $\pm$ m	V	D $\pm$ SD	D/D
STATURE									
Fatu Mesabia	102	1438	1691	55.88	0.7	1545.9 $\pm$ 5.53	3.61		
Roti	83	1466	1743	60.46	0.2 <P<0.3	1606.1 $\pm$ 6.64	3.76	60.2 $\pm$ 6.64	6.97
HEAD BREADTH									
Fatu Mesabia	101	128	160	5.02	0.3 <P<0.4	141.5 $\pm$ 0.50	3.55		
Roti	83	128	154	5.27	0.7 <P<0.8	140.5 $\pm$ 0.58	3.75	1.0 $\pm$ 0.77	1.30
HEAD LENGTH									
Fatu Mesabia	102	169	20.5	6.33	0.001 <P<0.01	187.4 $\pm$ 0.43	3.38		
Roti	83	174	20.5	6.25	0.5	187.1 $\pm$ 0.69	3.34	0.3 $\pm$ 0.93	0.32
CEPHALIC INDEX									
Fatu Mesabia	102	69.1	84.6	3.158	0.3	75.63 $\pm$ 0.313	4.18		
Roti	83	66.8	83.3	3.787	0.99	75.28 $\pm$ 0.416	5.03	0.35 $\pm$ 0.521	0.67
DIPLOMATIC BREADTH									
Fatu Mesabia	102	12.3	149	5.66	0.6 <P<0.7	134.2 $\pm$ 0.56	4.37		
Roti	83	12.1	145	4.77	0.8	133.2 $\pm$ 0.53	3.58	1.0 $\pm$ 0.77	1.30
MINIM. FRONTAL BREADTH									
Fatu Mesabia	102	99	126	5.50	0.01 <P<0.05	113.1 $\pm$ 0.54	4.86		
Roti	83	98	123	5.49	0.001 <P<0.01	112.9 $\pm$ 0.60	4.86	0.2 $\pm$ 0.81	0.25
NOSE HEIGHT									
Fatu Mesabia	102	38	50	3.68	0.2 <P<0.3	44.3 $\pm$ 0.27	6.05		
Roti	81	35	52	2.47	0.5 <P<0.6	45.2 $\pm$ 0.27	5.46	0.9 $\pm$ 0.38	2.36
NOSE BREADTH									
Fatu Mesabia	101	32	48	2.49	0.001 <P<0.01	41.0 $\pm$ 0.25	6.07		
Roti	83	33	45	2.34	0.5 <P<0.6	38.4 $\pm$ 0.26	6.09	2.6 $\pm$ 0.36	7.22
NASAL INDEX									
Fatu Mesabia	101	71.11	112.5	7.106	0.01 <P<0.05	92.59 $\pm$ 0.707	7.67		
Roti	81	70.21	107.14	6.495	0.9	85.37 $\pm$ 0.722	7.61	7.22 $\pm$ 1.021	7.08
INFROORBITAL DIVIANCE									
Fatu Mesabia	102	26	39	2.43	0.05 <P<0.1	32.0 $\pm$ 0.24	7.59		
Roti	83	27	37	2.41	0.3	31.5 $\pm$ 0.26	7.65	0.5 $\pm$ 0.35	1.43
DIAGONAL DIAMETER									
Fatu Mesabia	102	90	116	5.36	0.1	103.6 $\pm$ 0.53	5.17		
Roti	83	88	117	5.75	0.5 <P<0.6	100.4 $\pm$ 0.63	5.73	3.2 $\pm$ 0.82	3.90
JUGOMANDIBULAR INDEX									
Fatu Mesabia	101	65.75	85.94	3.195	0.1	77.28 $\pm$ 0.318	4.13		
Roti	83	66.90	82.39	4.059	0.1 <P<0.2	75.33 $\pm$ 0.445	5.39	1.95 $\pm$ 0.547	3.56
JUGOINTERORBITAL INDEX									
Fatu Mesabia	102	20.63	28.36	1.798	0.5 <P<0.6	23.86 $\pm$ 0.178	7.54		
Roti	83	20.59	26.87	1.548	0.7	23.61 $\pm$ 0.170	6.56	0.25 $\pm$ 0.246	1.02
JUGONASAL INDEX									
Fatu Mesabia	102	25.40	35.04	1.859	0.3 <P<0.4	30.44 $\pm$ 0.184	6.11		
Roti	83	23.91	33.86	1.805	0.3 <P<0.4	28.81 $\pm$ 0.198	6.27	1.63 $\pm$ 0.270	6.04
NASOINTERORBITAL INDEX									
Fatu Mesabia	102	62.50	97.22	7.400	0.3	78.59 $\pm$ 0.733	9.42		
Roti	83	67.44	103.03	7.240	0.5 <P<0.6	82.04 $\pm$ 0.795	8.82	3.45 $\pm$ 1.086	3.18
JUGOFRONTAL INDEX									
Fatu Mesabia	102	85.52	103.08	3.261	0.6 <P<0.7	94.75 $\pm$ 0.323	3.44		
Roti	83	87.14	103.76	3.557	0.05 <P<0.1	94.97 $\pm$ 0.390	3.75	0.22 $\pm$ 0.506	0.44
FRONTOPARIETAL INDEX									
Fatu Mesabia	101	72.67	90.00	3.146	0.7	79.70 $\pm$ 0.313	3.95		
Roti	83	70.95	88.32	3.534	0.5	80.50 $\pm$ 0.388	4.39	0.81 $\pm$ 0.499	1.62
MOUTH WIDTH									
Fatu Mesabia	101	42	61	3.38	0.3	51.7 $\pm$ 0.33	6.54		
Roti	83	36	55	3.41	0.05 <P<0.1	46.4 $\pm$ 0.37	7.35	5.3 $\pm$ 0.50	10.60
JUGOBUCCAL INDEX									
Fatu Mesabia	101	33.33	44.85	2.349	0.2 <P<0.3	38.52 $\pm$ 0.224	6.10		
Roti	83	28.68	41.80	2.457	0.99	34.85 $\pm$ 0.270	7.05	3.67 $\pm$ 0.337	10.28
BUCCONASAL INDEX									
Fatu Mesabia	100	66.67	95.45	4.957	0.4	78.80 $\pm$ 0.496	6.21		
Roti	82	68.75	107.14	5.618	0.1 <P<0.2	82.71 $\pm$ 0.620	6.79	3.91 $\pm$ 0.717	5.14
BUCCOMANDIBULAR INDEX									
Fatu Mesabia	101	43.12	60.42	3.449	0.3	50.15 $\pm$ 0.343	6.88		
Roti	83	37.50	57.30	4.283	0.3 <P<0.4	46.38 $\pm$ 0.470	9.19	3.77 $\pm$ 0.582	6.49
BUCCOFRONTAL INDEX									
Fatu Mesabia	101	50.00	78.26	5.762	0.6	62.17 $\pm$ 0.573	9.27		
Roti	83	36.60	82.05	6.106	0.01 <P<0.05	68.21 $\pm$ 0.470	8.95	6.04 $\pm$ 0.882	6.85
JUGOFRONTAL INDEX									
Fatu Mesabia	102	75.36	91.27	3.305	0.2 <P<0.3	84.28 $\pm$ 0.327	3.92		
Roti	82	73.94	90.55	3.050	0.01 <P<0.05	84.92 $\pm$ 0.337	3.60	0.64 $\pm$ 0.470	1.31
BIURICULAR BREADTH									
Fatu Mesabia	101	110	142	5.19	0.05 <P<0.1	125.2 $\pm$ 0.52	4.15		
Roti	83	115	135	4.66	0.05 <P<0.1	126.2 $\pm$ 0.51	3.69	0.10 $\pm$ 0.073	1.37
BIURICULAR INDEX									
Fatu Mesabia	102	79.43	98.57	3.399	0.3	88.50 $\pm$ 0.337	3.84		
Roti	83	82.19	98.50	3.237	0.5	89.87 $\pm$ 0.355	3.60	1.37 $\pm$ 0.489	2.80

<sup>1)</sup> In this table all figures are mentioned although some characteristics are not normally distributed. Measurements are given in millimeters.

Figure 2.6: Table 18 of comprehensive anthropometry measurements, in millimetres, compiled by Dr WL Meyer and collated by Dr Adele van Bork-Feltkamp.

Source: Dr Adele J van Bork-Feltkamp, *A Contribution to the Anthropology of Timor and Roti after Data Collected by Dr WL Meyer* (Amsterdam: Uitgave Koninklijk Instituut voor de Tropen (Royal Tropical Institute), 1951): 46–47.

<sup>194</sup> Sysling, *Racial Science and Human Diversity in Colonial Indonesia*, 117, 121.

See Roque, "Stories, Skulls, and Colonial Collections," 19. Roque gives an account of Barros e Cunha, a Portuguese craniologist, who in the 1930s made claims about the Papuans in Timor based on his study of 35 crania. His work was discredited due to the unreliable provenance of the crania.

## Conclusion

Switzerland participated in colonial knowledge production during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, although not as a colonising nation. Exemplifying this colonial knowledge production was Basel, which became the centre of Swiss ethnography, emerging from the Germanic ethnographic and anthropological disciplines and earlier trends in the formation of *Wunderkammer*. 'Basel Museum, through its personnel, was intimately linked to developments in Germany and particularly Berlin.'<sup>195</sup>

By continuing and perpetuating aspects of Germanic ethnographic practice, Bühler became recognised as one of Switzerland's most outstanding ethnographers of the twentieth century. As the collections of the MKB grew, his accomplishments brought Basel's ethnographic museum international recognition, supported by local commercial industries and complemented by outward-looking movements such as the Basel Evangelical Mission Society, which operated in Basel from the early nineteenth century. He amassed significant collections for the MKB, distinguished in part by their international textile holdings. Basel's reputation as a centre for Swiss ethnographic practice was ultimately endorsed by the establishment of an Anthropology Department at the University of Basel.

Bühler's motivations as an ethnographer were rooted in documenting the material culture of remote and undocumented 'natural people'. His ethnographic work was also shaped both directly and indirectly by the fascination with racial differentiation and determinism that permeated the disciplines of ethnography and physical anthropology in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. These disciplines 'were founded on the conviction that "facts" about the world's inhabitants existed independently of human knowledge or perception. This objectivist philosophy ... supposed that sufficient research, properly conducted, would reveal to the investigator real information of intrinsic validity'.<sup>196</sup>

Germanic ethnographic practice was closely aligned to physical anthropology and the anthropometric studies of foreign peoples, as a component within the broader sciences of geography, medicine, anatomy and biology. Both disciplines drew on systematic categorisation, a method first developed in the natural sciences, in attempts to identify

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<sup>195</sup> Gosden and Knowles, *Collecting Colonialism*, 102.

<sup>196</sup> Howes, *The Race Question in Oceania*, 27.

specific typologies – be that of humans or material objects. The origins of physical anthropology were grounded in an earlier European preoccupation with determining the origins of mankind. Ethnology was closely aligned to the study of man, as physical anthropology, suggesting a symbiotic relationship between these two disciplines. ‘In practice [*sic*] these two strands of thought were profoundly entangled and slippages from one to another were common.’<sup>197</sup> Although physical anthropology was originally the dominant discipline in Germanic traditions, by the twentieth century the focus had shifted with ethnology becoming more prominent.<sup>198</sup> Furthermore, the more liberal notions of racial typologies of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries became increasingly narrow and hierarchical in the early twentieth century.

This relationship between physical anthropology and ethnology, ‘disciplines which shared a more or less evolutionary outlook’<sup>199</sup>, continued well into the twentieth century. This is evidenced by Bühler’s expedition companion, Meyer, whose anthropometric research focused on identifying racial typologies, specifically distinguishing the cranial features of Papuans and Malays. This research was an extension of the European fascination with the classification and stratification of races in Oceania and related to human biogeographical mapping, as advanced by Alfred Russel Wallace; such ‘encounters did not happen in a vacuum but had a history that influenced the expectations and premeditated the behaviours of anthropologists’.<sup>200</sup> Bühler’s visit to Timor, the 1935 Expedition, and the acquisition of Makasae material culture, a Papuan culture, was designed to build upon interest in determining cultural relations, settlement waves and the historical processes in this transnational insular region between Asia and Melanesia.

Bühler successfully extended the lineage of Germanic ethnographers and applied their theories to his ethnographic practice. He adopted Bastian’s salvage approach of voraciously acquiring artefacts as a means of documenting cultures on the ‘verge of disappearance’. Bühler maintained that his top priority was to collect for the MKB throughout his career. Although he exhibited parts of the collections acquired from the 1935 Expedition, and in time developed an aesthetic appreciation for the art of Oceania, his primary focus was on collection development for the MKB. Bühler extended the work of Paul Sarasin, Fritz Sarasin

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<sup>197</sup> Howes, *The Race Question in Oceania*, 43.

<sup>198</sup> Penny, “Traditions in the German Language,” 81.

<sup>199</sup> Sysling, *Racial Science and Human Diversity in Colonial Indonesia*, 4.

<sup>200</sup> Sysling, *Racial Science and Human Diversity in Colonial Indonesia*, 3.

and Felix Speiser, 'filling in the gaps' by undertaking expeditions, in the fieldwork model of the time, and developing collections that complemented the earlier work of his mentors. He continued to focus on the geographic region of Melanesia and Indonesia, which had been of interest as both a German ethnographic collection site and a racial 'borderline'; it was also an important focus of the MKB collections, as established by the Swiss ethnographers, the Sarasins and Speiser.

Bühler developed systematic cataloguing for the museum's collections, reinforcing the scientific motivations of his endeavours to record and document 'the essences and development' of other cultures. The following chapter considers the 1935 Expedition and the resulting Baguia Collection, together with documentation and photographs from the expedition. This provides insights into how Bühler executed his ethnographic 'salvage collecting' practices in Baguia, amongst the Makasae people who resided at the foot of Mount Matebian, in 1935.

## Chapter 3

# The 1935 Expedition and the Baguia Collection at the Museum der Kulturen Basel

Having established the broader historical context of ethnographic practice in Switzerland in the early twentieth century, this chapter provides a history of the Baguia Collection, its goals, formation, and contents, and the contexts of its display and documentation since 1935.

The study of collections necessitates consideration of all the parties contributing to them, their interests, ambitions and failures. The collectors themselves are documented through their own recording activity and we need to take their intellectual interest, institutional histories, economic resources and social skills into account in understanding what they collected and why.<sup>1</sup>

I begin this chapter with an account of the 1935 Expedition, including its wider goals, its itinerary, challenges along the way, and how it was executed. I discuss the constitution of the Collection, from its acquisition in the field, to packaging and transportation from Baguia to Basel and, finally, how the Collection was documented and re-conceptualised as it was accessioned into the permanent MKB collection by Dr Alfred Bühler during 1936–1937. I also identify the scale of the Collection and provide an analysis of the types of ethnographic objects acquired and the field photographs taken by Bühler in Baguia in 1935. Reference is made briefly to the archaeological activity that Bühler instigated during his time in Baguia.

This overview of the Baguia Collection and its formation provides insights into the process of the Collection's transition from the private domain of Makasae people into the public domain of a European ethnographic museum. It tells the story of how the application of systematic documentation came to be part of the biography of the objects that form the Collection. It also sheds light on the impact of Bühler and his expedition colleagues on shaping the Collection.

I consider how the Baguia Collection has been researched, displayed and interpreted at the MKB since its acquisition in 1935 and accessioning from 1936 until 1937. These processes enable another part of the Collection's biography and historical trajectory to be understood.

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<sup>1</sup> Chris Gosden and Chantal Knowles, *Collecting Colonialism: Material Culture and Colonial Change* (Oxford: Berg, 2001), xix–xx.

In addition, this trajectory illustrates how shifting social attitudes have affected museological practices over the intervening years, as well as the manner in which ethnographic collections are displayed, interpreted and activated in the current era. By considering how the MKB has animated the Collection over time, it is possible to ascertain the value attributed to the Collection in a twenty-first century Swiss museum context.

## The 1935 Expedition

Fritz Sarasin encouraged the 1935 Expedition as part of a wider role as an agent in transnational colonial knowledge formation (as discussed in Chapter 2). During Sarasin's chairmanship of the Museum Commission, the importance of developing the ethnographic collection at the MKB was underpinned by his enduring interest in the study of humans as 'objects of nature', using natural science methods of 'measuring, describing, and examining' so that the results could be ordered 'according to systematic categories'.<sup>2</sup> The 1935 Expedition extended the Sarasin cousins' attempts to find answers to some of the leading questions of their time, namely 'the source and paths of human migration in South East Asia and as far as Australia, and, more generally, human evolution'.<sup>3</sup> Combined with the task of acquiring ethnographic material for the MKB, this foundational goal of determining the migration and establishment of populations in the broader region clearly influenced the choice of location for the 1935 Expedition.

Initially, the Commission had considered an expedition to the Lesser Sunda Islands, which would include Timor, Ceram and the islands lying east of Timor. "This is a region that is of importance to us because it links the Malayan cultures in the west with the Papuan cultures of New Guinea."<sup>4</sup> But, due to the expense and logistics of venturing to remoter islands beyond Timor, Bühler made the decision to focus on Timor, Rote and Flores, so as to remain within the expedition budget.<sup>5</sup> Upon receiving his second ethnographic expedition commission, Bühler was given authority to determine the places he visited and the period of

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<sup>2</sup> Kunz, "The Five Sri Lanka (Ceylon) Expeditions, 1883–1925," 7.

<sup>3</sup> Kunz, "The Five Sri Lanka (Ceylon) Expeditions, 1883–1925," 7.

<sup>4</sup> Letter from the Museum Commission to Dr F Hauser, member of the Governing Council (*Regierungsrat*, G) Basel-Stadt, 4 April 1934. Translated by Richard Kunz, Curator Southeast Asia, MKB, 5 May 2017.

<sup>5</sup> Bühler, Final Report (*Schlussbericht*, G); *Schlussbericht: Reise nach den Kleinen Sundainseln Timor, Rote und Flores*, 27 März – 18 Dezember 1935. Unpublished report. Museum der Kulturen Basel Archives, Switzerland, II. Translated by Richard Kunz, Curator of Southeast Asia, MKB.



time to be spent in each region, once in the field, with the proviso that the expedition expenditure remain within the budgetary allocation of Fr. 10,000.<sup>6</sup>

The Expedition Agreement (*Vertrag*, G) stated:

Mr Dr A Bühler is commissioned by the Commission to make ethnographic and anthropological (skulls, skeletons, and photographic) collections for the museum.<sup>7</sup>

The Attachment: Instructions (*Beilage: Instruktionen*, G) to the *Vertrag* (hereafter the Instructions) explained that:

The traveller's primary task is to collect all manifestations of material culture displayed by the local tribes. Research on the intellectual culture, for which knowledge of language is required, is only of secondary significance as opposed to increasing the museum's collections ... Dr Bühler has been assigned the task of touring Timor and the Lesser Sunda Islands. However, it would be preferable to explore only a few of the islands thoroughly rather than visit all of them superficially. Equally, the museum places greater value on the possession of the full array of material culture from one or a few single islands than on acquiring a few single pieces from many provinces ... We should also like to make the point that the emphasis should not be exclusively on large and striking pieces, such as masks and statues, but also on the inconspicuous items of everyday use. Doublets [duplicates] are always welcome as items of exchange.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Attachment: Instructions (*Beilage*, G) to the Expedition Agreement (*Vertrag*, G); issued by the Museum für Völkerkunde Basel Commission, signed by Dr Felix Speiser, Dr Alfred Bühler and Dr Wilhelm L Meyer 18 March 1935 (see point 6). Unpublished documents. Museum der Kulturen Archive; Expedition Agreement, (see point 2). See Bühler, Final Report, *E Gesamtkosten der Reise*, which lists the 'total cost of the trip' as Fr. 24, 273.95, n.d. February 1936. This amount, noted in Swiss Francs, included state funds of Fr. 12,575.40 plus an additional Fr. 11,697.95 of 'private contributions' consisting of approximately Fr. 7,500 contributed by Dr WL Meyer for his travel and equipment expenses, and additional expenses covered by Bühler.

<sup>7</sup> Expedition Agreement (see point 1).

<sup>8</sup> Richard Kunz, "The Timor, Rote and Flores (Indonesia and East Timor) Expedition, 1935," 20, cites the Instructions to the Expedition Agreement (see points 1 and 6).

Bühler was instructed also to assemble zoological collections as well as geographical samples and fossils.<sup>9</sup> He ‘focused on compiling an inventory of the material culture and comparing data for the purpose of establishing evidence of cultural relations and migrations between Southeast Asia and Melanesia’.<sup>10</sup> Questions concerning cultural relations, settlement waves, and migration routes, and the accurate reconstruction of the historical processes were of considerable importance considering Indonesia and East Timor’s status as a transitional region between Asia and Melanesia.<sup>11</sup>

With these goals in mind, Bühler and his companion, Dr Wilhelm L Meyer, departed Basel for Marseilles on 27 March 1935 and voyaged on KPM Steamers Dutch transport from Marseilles to Jakarta (Batavia), Java.<sup>12</sup> From Jakarta they travelled on the KPM steamer *De Klerk* to arrive in Kupang, Dutch Timor, on 4 May 1935.<sup>13</sup> Following an initial period of work in Dutch Timor (24 May – 23 July) they travelled to Portuguese Timor (23–24 July), arriving in Dili (24 July 1935) before proceeding to Baguia for just under three weeks (31 July – 18 August). After returning temporarily to Dili (19–26 August), they went to Kupang and continued to Rote (10 September – 8 October) and then on to Flores (8–26 October). They returned to Basel via Sumba, Sumbawa, Lombok, Bali, Java and Marseilles, completing their expedition on 18 December 1935.<sup>14</sup>

After arriving in Kupang, Bühler and Meyer established the base of their expedition and remained there until 11 May 1935. From Kupang they proceeded to Baun village, Amarasi, where they stayed until their return to Kupang on 25 May. According to his field diary, Bühler documented textile and ceramic production in Amarasi.<sup>15</sup> After another sojourn in Kupang, Bühler and Meyer continued inland to the regional town of Soe (2–13 June). From here they ventured north to the Mollo region (14–19 June), back to Soe (20–24 June), then southeast

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<sup>9</sup> Instructions to the Expedition Agreement (see point 5).

<sup>10</sup> Schmid, “Anthropology and Expeditions,” 3.

<sup>11</sup> Kunz, “The Timor, Rote and Flores (Indonesia and East Timor) Expedition, 1935,” 16.

<sup>12</sup> In Java they visited Bogor, Yogyakarta and Surabaya.

<sup>13</sup> They travelled via Surabaya and Banyuwangi (Java), Buleleng (Bali), Ampenan (Lombok), Sumbawa Besar, Bima and Taliwangi (Sumbawa), Waingapu (Sumba), Ende (Flores) and Sawu island.

<sup>14</sup> Bühler, Final Report, 1–2.

<sup>15</sup> Bühler, Tagebuchnotizen, 4–16. Note: OCR of the original manuscript in the archives of the MKB with subsequent manual correction of the text recognition (Nadine Mhadbi) and, for easier readability, slight orthographic and syntactic adaptation, especially in the Indonesian text passages (Richard Kunz). Indecipherable texts were left unchanged. Footnotes are new additions by Richard Kunz, January–May 2012. English translation by Julia Schult, 10 April 2014.

to Niki Niki (25 June – 2 July), documenting the architectural styles of the areas, before returning again to Soe (3–9 July).<sup>16</sup> A cave excavation was undertaken at Niki Niki on 5 July 1935.<sup>17</sup>

Throughout this time Bühler actively acquired objects of material culture for the MKB. Meyer occupied himself by measuring people; ultimately, he measured the crania of a total of 200 living people and undertook 1,800 dental investigations during the expedition.<sup>18</sup> Meyer and Bühler assisted each other as required. Bühler spent time cataloguing anthropological measurements taken by Meyer on occasion, so they could be compared with material collected by Dutch anthropologist Hendrikus Johannes Bijlmer.<sup>19</sup> From Soe and Niki Niki they returned to Kupang (9–23 July) in preparation for their departure to Portuguese Timor.<sup>20</sup> On 24 July they departed on board another KPM steamer headed for Dili, Portuguese Timor. ‘The journey went along the north coast the whole time and we had a beautiful view of the mountains of Timor.’<sup>21</sup>

Upon arrival in Dili, Bühler and Meyer were confronted with several logistical problems. They were delayed while they awaited permission from the Governor for their research activities to proceed. Although their personal effects were released not long after arrival, Bühler and Meyer spent several days awaiting the Customs clearance of their expedition luggage. On Saturday 27 July, in addition to becoming accustomed to their new surroundings, Bühler and Meyer attended to the requirements for their journey eastward: ‘This morning I went to the bank to change our good Dutch money into *patachas*, that are not recognised anywhere outside Portuguese Timor, for a very bad exchange rate.’<sup>22</sup>

They also engaged an interpreter, ‘the Arab Mohammed who is absolutely necessary around here. He speaks Malay, Spanish and Tetun’.<sup>23</sup> It is probable that Mohammed was a resident

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<sup>16</sup> Bühler, Tagebuchnotizen, 19–58; also see Bühler, Final Report, 1.

<sup>17</sup> Bühler, Tagebuchnotizen, 51–56.

<sup>18</sup> Bühler, Final Report, 3; Bühler, Tagebuchnotizen, 59. Bühler’s diary entry for 18 July written in Kupang states that ‘Meyer went to Amarasi with the doctor to continue his special studies there’.

<sup>19</sup> Bühler, Tagebuchnotizen, 85. See Hendrikus Johannes Tobias Bijlmer, and Indisch Comité voor Wetenschappelijke Onderzoekingen, *Outlines of the Anthropology of the Timor-Archipelago*, vol. 3 (Indonesia: G Kloff, 1929). Also see Sysling, *Racial Science and Human Diversity in Colonial Indonesia*, 117–120.

<sup>20</sup> Bühler, Tagebuchnotizen, 59–60.

<sup>21</sup> Bühler, Tagebuchnotizen, 60.

<sup>22</sup> Bühler, Tagebuchnotizen, 62. Although referred to here as *patachas*, in other accounts Bühler refers to ‘Timoresische dollars’ (see List of Expenses 6 (*Abrechnung* 6, G); 1–31 August 1935). Unpublished document. Museum der Kulturen Basel Archives).

<sup>23</sup> Bühler, Tagebuchnotizen, 62.

of the 500-strong Muslim community of Dili, whose founders were merchants from Surabaya, Java or Makassar in South Sulawesi, ‘who, before World War II, had owned small shops selling mainly fabrics and perfumes, a form of trade subsequently taken over by the Chinese’.<sup>24</sup> A car was ordered to take the expedition team ‘far to the east where the influence of the white people is felt least strongly’.<sup>25</sup>

A letter of recommendation sent by the Consulate of Portugal in Basel announcing Bühler and Meyer’s expedition and arrival had not been received by the Governor, who was ill and absent upon their arrival in Dili (see Figure 3.1). This lack of communication caused further delays to the expedition. Eventually, the Governor’s adjunct issued permission for the expedition luggage to be released, only to rescind this decision. Meanwhile, Bühler, assisted by a local German gentleman, WF Rickman, ‘asked the police to prepare passports for us, the driver, the interpreter and our boy’.<sup>26</sup> A written request for permission to conduct the expedition research and for their expedition luggage to be released was submitted by Bühler on 29 July. Permission was granted for the expedition to proceed on 30 July. The expedition team departed in a ‘beautiful’ cargo vehicle on roads that were reportedly in good condition (see Figure 3.2 for an image of the vehicle taken in Manatuto upon the expedition team’s return from Baguia to Dili).<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> James Dunn, *Timor a People Betrayed*. Milton, Brisbane: The Jacaranda Press, 1983, 12.

<sup>25</sup> Bühler, *Tagebuchnotizen*, 62.

<sup>26</sup> Bühler, *Tagebuchnotizen*, 62.

<sup>27</sup> Bühler, *Tagebuchnotizen*, 64–65.

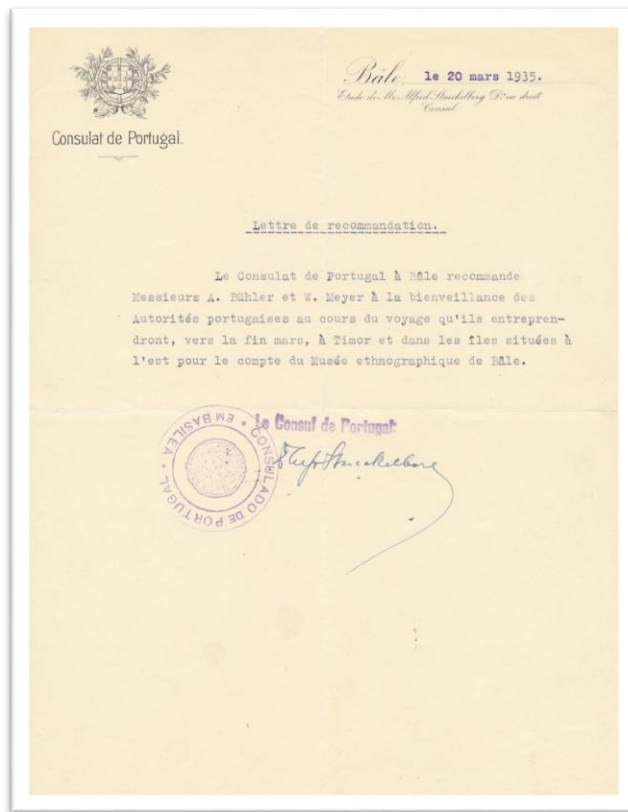


Figure 3.1: Letter of recommendation from the Consulate of Portugal in Basel, Switzerland, 20 March 1935.

Source: Museum der Kulturen Basel Archives.



Figure 3.2: 'Manatuto!' (Manatuto!).

Source: Museum der Kulturen Basel, MKB (F)Ic 1392. Photograph by Alfred Bühler, 1935.

Bühler's account of their journey from Dili via Manatuto to Baucau refers to his first sighting of 'Fatoe Matabiaat' (Fatu Matebian) before continuing towards Laga where 'a side road leads to the interior' towards their destination, Baguia.<sup>28</sup> On the day of their arrival in Baguia, Bühler noted:

From afar we had already been greeted by the house of the chief of the outpost laid out on top of the hill like a North African fortress with enormous walls, battlements and moats. Unfortunately, the man himself, a sergeant, speaks only Portuguese. We have to communicate with the help of our interpreter Mohammed. Of course he has not been informed of our arrival and our goals.<sup>29</sup>

More administrative hurdles awaited the expedition team the following day. On 1 August, Bühler wrote that the Commander had advised them that

we need a licence to buy ethnographica and animals. Of course no one knew about this in Dili, or thought it worth the trouble of telling us about it. So now we have to wait again until we can finally start our work. Lucky us if it takes as long as it did in Dili. At least they told us we were allowed to catch insects without a licence.<sup>30</sup>

The later part of this diary entry contains Bühler's initial impression of the residents of Baguia:

The people are extremely short and stocky and look a lot less beautiful than the Atonis on the other side. At least it is hardly imaginable that they have more foreign, Malay blood than for instance the Atoni. I am strongly reminded of the Ussiai of the Admiralty Islands. Their hair is curly or very often strongly wavy. They are very dirty and skin disease is common. It is quite possible that these are the remnants of the diminutive population of the area

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<sup>28</sup> Bühler, Tagebuchnotizen, 64.

<sup>29</sup> Bühler, Tagebuchnotizen, 64–65.

<sup>30</sup> Bühler, Tagebuchnotizen, 65.

of 'Fatumatubia' mentioned by Forbes and that he sourced his news from coastal people who were mostly recent immigrants.<sup>31</sup>

On the morning of the following day, 2 August, 'there was still no sign of a buying permit. The gentlemen in Dili must have completely missed this one'; yet, '[i]n the afternoon the Commander told us we had received permission to make purchases'.<sup>32</sup>

These accounts of the commencement of the expedition in Portuguese Timor and Baguia provide important insights into several aspects of the expedition. They establish the fact that Bühler and Meyer performed their research and collecting activities with full permission from the Portuguese Timor authorities. In-principle support from the colonial Portuguese Government for the expedition was evident in the 'stray' letter of recommendation sent to the Governor of the colony introducing Bühler and Meyer, which was eventually received.<sup>33</sup> Portuguese Timor permissions were granted, albeit tardily, by the Governor of the colony regarding the entry of the expedition equipment and approval to undertake research and acquisition activities. Police in Dili issued permits for travel into the interior of Portuguese Timor. In Baguia, a permit was endorsed and issued by the local authorities for the collection of 'ethnographica and animals'.<sup>34</sup> This indicates the multiple layers of permission that the expedition team sought in order for the 1935 Expedition to occur within the parameters of Portuguese-Timor regulations.

The acquisitions from Baguia were made as purchases, undertaken presumably as cash transactions, between the local residents of Baguia and Bühler, on behalf of the Commission. Although it is not possible to ascertain how these amounts were arrived at, or whether or not they were fair or commensurate with local values, it is likely that the prices were agreed upon through a process of bargaining by both parties. Thus, the basis upon which the exchange of objects occurred was within the existing legal framework of Portuguese Timor in 1935.

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<sup>31</sup> Bühler, *Tagebuchnotizen*, 65.

<sup>32</sup> Bühler, *Tagebuchnotizen*, 66.

<sup>33</sup> Bühler, *Tagebuchnotizen*, 89. The diary entry, which was written in Dili, states that: 'Yesterday we made a departing visit to the Governor, a doctor, who told us to our great amazement that he had received our letter of introduction three months ago!'

<sup>34</sup> Bühler, *Tagebuchnotizen*, 65.

Bühler's diary accounts also provide evidence of the broader make-up of the expedition team. In addition to Bühler and Meyer, there was Mohammed, the interpreter, and an unnamed driver and 'the boy'.<sup>35</sup> On one occasion Bühler referred to Achmad as an interpreter as well, possibly the name of either the driver or the boy, who proved useful in assisting Bühler with language.<sup>36</sup> (See Figure 3.2, Mohammed or Achmad stands beside the vehicle smoking while other expedition members also stand outside and recline inside the vehicle; Figure 3.3 documents members of the expedition team and Baguia residents resting in Adui, Larisula.)

Although not often referred to in Bühler's diary, these three people and the roles they performed undoubtedly contributed to the dynamics of the expedition and its success. This indicates that the expedition was fundamentally a collective experience involving the interdependence and relationship of various people.<sup>37</sup> Bühler and Meyer did not speak Tetun or Makasae; thus, these other expedition team members acted as intermediaries between the collectors and the Baguia residents: 'We have to communicate with the help of our interpreter Mohammed'.<sup>38</sup> Managing travel logistics, negotiating introductions, bargaining about prices and interpreting the information about objects acquired would have been critical roles performed by Mohammed and Achmad. Rather than being the 'masters of all they surveyed', Bühler and Meyer were dependent upon these intermediaries for the success of this phase of the expedition in Portuguese Timor and, in this context, it remains unclear who was the leader and who was led.<sup>39</sup> These largely unacknowledged contributors were central to the negotiations and execution of almost all facets of the Portuguese Timor leg of the 1935 Expedition.

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<sup>35</sup> Bühler, Final Report, C. *Ausgaben während des Aufenthaltes* includes payments to the 'coolie' (*Kuli*, G) and 'rations and wages for the servants' (*Verpflegung und Löhne für Bediente*, G).

<sup>36</sup> Bühler, Tagebuchnotizen, 84. Bühler wrote on Monday 12 August 1935: 'Our interpreter Achmad told me that huge numbers of these triangular whetstones are known in Dili, sometimes of such significant size that the Alorese bought them as whetstones'.

<sup>37</sup> Felix Driver and Lowri Jones, *Hidden Histories, Researching the RGS-IBG Collections* (London: Royal Holloway, University of London, 2009), 5.

<sup>38</sup> Bühler, Tagebuchnotizen, 65.

<sup>39</sup> Felix Driver, "Intermediaries and the Archive of Exploration," in *Indigenous Intermediaries: New Perspectives on Exploration Archives*, edited by Maria Nugent Shino Konishi, Tiffany Shellam (Canberra: Australian National University Press, 2015), 14–15.





Figure 3.3: 'In Adui' (In Adui).

Source: Museum der Kulturen Basel, MKB (F)IIC 1212. Photograph by Alfred Bühler, 9 August 1935.

It is worth speculating about why Bühler chose Baguia as his research site. He did not record any deliberations in his diary about determining sites for the expedition in Portuguese Timor, suggesting that he had identified Baguia as their destination prior to his arrival in Portuguese Timor. Bühler's diary indicates familiarity with the writings of the naturalist Henry O Forbes, who had visited Portuguese Timor in 1882–1883.<sup>40</sup> Forbes' field collecting was focused in Bubususso (Bibiçuçu) and Alas in Manufahi District<sup>41</sup>, in south-western Portuguese Timor, far from the eastern districts; however, he did record the following account of the residents in the east of Timor in his widely read publication *A Naturalist's Wanderings in the Eastern Archipelago* in 1885:

In the eastern extremity of the island the people, I am told, resemble Malays, and they speak the Malay language. Among the Fatumatubia Mountains – I have it on the, as I believe, best authority of one of the commandants of the district lives a race of dwarfish people, speaking a 'language' of their own. Their dwarfishness consists not so much in the dimensions of their bodies, as in the shortness of their limbs which are thick and strong. They live among the rocks, are great robbers and much detested. The men wear only the T-

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<sup>40</sup> Bühler, Tagebuchnotizen, 65.

<sup>41</sup> According to current place names, Bubususso is no longer located in Alas Sub-district, but in Fatuberlio Sub-district, Manufahi District.

bandage [loincloth]; while the women go absolutely naked, and when they appear to trade with other than their own people they ensconce themselves in baskets up to their armpits. These people may possibly be Negritos.<sup>42</sup>

Presumably Bühler had chosen Baguia as a site for his research as he was in search of these elusive ‘Negritos’, as described by Forbes, and also Hamy (as mentioned in Chapter 2). Certainly Forbes’ description reflected the ‘pygmy fever’ of the era and a line of inquiry that had long fascinated Germanic and other ethnographers and physical anthropologists. The fascination with ‘dark-coloured Oceanic races’ – be they Papuan, Negroid or ‘pygmy’ – that had been a driving force of physical anthropological research on the Malay Archipelago since the second half of the nineteenth century remained salient into the twentieth century. Additionally, ‘mountains became sites about which any sort of evidence or speculation seemed crucial in settling broader ethnological issues within the Archipelago, as sites capable of critically interfering with the entire ordering of races that they were called to represent’.<sup>43</sup> Mountainous areas in Timor, such as Mount Matebian, were considered by European ethnologists as sites of refuge for the island’s oldest indigenous inhabitants, where pure timeless primitive black races resided.<sup>44</sup>

The existence of the Makasae people near Mount Matebian and other Papuan-speaking cultures in Timor-Leste, such as the Bunak and Fataluku peoples, was attributed at the time to migration waves:

Earl, who wrote of the ‘utmost purity’ of the two races of the Malay Archipelago, also struggled with the racial grey zone between the heartlands of the pure Malay and the Papuan. He offered an explanation in which successive waves of ‘Malayu-Polynesians’, each differing from each other, had distributed themselves unevenly across the archipelago, thus accounting for pockets of the ‘old Polynesian race’ in places such as Ceram and Timor.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> Forbes, Henry O, *A Naturalist's Wanderings in the Eastern Archipelago* (Singapore: Oxford University Press, 1989), 466.

<sup>43</sup> Roque, “Mountains and Black Races,” 265.

<sup>44</sup> Roque, “Mountains and Black Races,” 267.

<sup>45</sup> Chris Ballard, “Oceanic Negroes,” 182.

Bühler was seeking evidence of cultural relations, albeit through ‘accurate documenting and categorising local differences with regard to artistic design and the artefacts’ decorative motifs<sup>46</sup>, whilst Meyer was collecting anthropometric measurements for use in the analysis of racial differentiation, or in Bühler’s words ‘to compare them with Bijlmer’s material’.<sup>47</sup> However, Bühler himself realised he had not found the ‘Negrito’ described by Forbes, as one of his diary entries stated:

The people here remember short people that walked around naked or wearing a T-cloth [loincloth] and lived all through the Fatumatabia region. However, that was very long ago and neither the names nor anything else is known about these people. Forbes has probably heard about them too and the custom of the T-cloth may have been taken from them. Or perhaps these people used to inhabit larger areas of Timor.<sup>48</sup>

Accounts of small-statured humanoids are not uncommon in Southeast Asia, such as the *mili mongga* of Sumba, the *edu gogo* of Flores, the ‘bogey’ from Buru, Moluccas and the ‘little people’ of Aruchete, near Alor.<sup>49</sup> Commonly they are described as being exceptionally short, strong, dark-skinned and hairy. However, it is possible that these elusive people that Forbes described were the Waiburu clan.<sup>50</sup> The Waiburu maintain gardens and reside close to Christu Rei on Mount Matebian, only accessible by foot via Hae Coni, Baguia Sub-district. The Waiburu people speak Makasae language and understand Naueti language.<sup>51</sup>

Nonetheless, the inclusion of a Papuan group of Timorese, such as the Makasae, as part of the 1935 Expedition inquiry extended the cultural diversity of the research sites through which to consider the historical migratory nature of the region. Bühler made notes in Baguia such as, ‘Amongst the women there are commonly fairer types and more Mongolian eyes than amongst the men’ and ‘[t]he skin colour varies a lot. Pronounced negroid faces such as

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<sup>46</sup> Kunz, “Timor, Rote and Flores (Indonesia and East Timor) Expedition, 1935,” 18.

<sup>47</sup> Bühler, Tagebuchnotizen, 85.

<sup>48</sup> Bühler, Tagebuchnotizen, 67.

<sup>49</sup> Gregory Forth, *Images of the Wildman in Southeast Asia: An Anthropological Perspective* (Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge, 2008), 2–9, 104.

<sup>50</sup> Abel Guterres, interview with author, Kaikasa, Baguia Sub-district, 3 July 2014; Salustianus Fraga, personal communication with author, Bahatata, Baguia Sub-district, 3 July 2014.

<sup>51</sup> Alternatively, another independent cultural group, the Ilimanu, are a diminutive people who reside in a remote mountainous location inland from Manatuto. The Ilimanu are notorious in Timor-Leste for retaining their fierce independence, isolation and cultural ways.

I never saw in the South Seas may originate from Negro soldiers'.<sup>52</sup> His exposure to other cultures in the region during his earlier New Ireland expedition in 1932 enabled Bühler to draw comparisons between the Austronesian-speaking Ussiai people of the Admiralty Islands, the Papuan Makasae of Baguia, and the Austronesian speakers of Uab meto (Atoin meto people) of Dutch Timor, the Rotenese and, finally, the Ende-Lio and Ende-Malay speakers of Endeh and Larantuka, which the 1935 Expedition visited. On his return journey to Kupang after visiting Baguia, Bühler reflected:

Slowly we come back into the mountainous part towards Loli, where the proud figures of the Atonis become more frequent and impress upon us how different they are from the stocky and clumsily-built people of Baaguaia. One could compare the latter to the mountain Melanesians, such as the Ussiai on Manus, and the former to Papuans or to the Manus people of the Admiralty Islands.<sup>53</sup>

This speculation about the racial borderlines and composition of Timor continued to attract comment. In the first section of the museum's 1936 Annual Report (*Bericht über das Basler Museum für Völkerkunde für das Jahr 1936*)<sup>54</sup>, entitled 'Malaiischer Archipel', Bühler reflected on racial migration:

Timor and Rote ... belong, like the neighbouring islands to those eastern parts of the Indian Archipelago, where a non-Malayan population is still very strongly represented. This is especially true for Timor. Here, unquestionably, the fundamental stock of the population belongs to the Melanesian race ... Anthropologically, the inhabitants of the Fatu-Matabia massif in the east of the island are particularly noticeable. They are small people with some very primitive somatic characteristics ... It would, however, be difficult to prove

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<sup>52</sup> Bühler, Tagebuchnotizen, 85.

<sup>53</sup> Bühler, Tagebuchnotizen, 92.

<sup>54</sup> This is the same as the *Annual Report 1936*, also referred to as:

a) Bühler, Alfred, "Malaiischer Archipel," in *Bericht über das Basler Museum für Völkerkunde für das Jahr 1936*, edited by Fritz Sarasin (Basel: Birkhäuser, 1937), 13–38.

b) Fritz Sarasin, "Malaiischer Archipel," in *Bericht über das Basler Museum für Völkerkunde für das Jahr 1936*," (Basel: Birkhäuser, 1937), 13–38.

c) Alfred Bühler, "Bericht über die im Jahre 1935 auf Timor, Rote und Flores angelegten Sammlungen," *Verhandlungen der Naturforschenden Gesellschaft*, Basel, Bd. 48 (1937), 13–38.

here [the existence of] a third racial element, and one might instead surmise, that it is a matter of an inland mountain variety of the same Melanesian race as [that represented by] the Atoni, as also appears to be the case on Melanesian islands. Following the anthropological division into older, long-established elements and younger ones, it would be particularly appealing to investigate the composition of the current culture, which is an even greater potpourri than the population [that carries it] ... In the main, the cultures of Rote and Timor consist of two components. A first, older component displays very strong links to Papuan and Melanesian regions, and a younger one ... reveals close connections to the cultures of Southeast Asia.<sup>55</sup>

Despite this fascination with defining racial characteristics and boundaries and delineating migratory routes, definite results remained elusive.

### **The collecting process in Baguia**

The primary sources for discerning the process used to develop the Baguia Collection are Bühler's field diary and the 300-plus photographs he shot while in the field. Bühler's diary entry for Friday 2 August continues to bemoan the fact that they have no 'shopping permit' yet.<sup>56</sup> However, on Saturday 3 August 1935, his entry briefly states, 'First purchases' (*Erste Einkäufe*, G). It is followed by a basic vocabulary list of German, Malay, Tetun and Makasae nouns, including terms for a woman's cloth (*tais fetu*, T) and man's cloth (*kola*, M).<sup>57</sup> His diary entry the following day indicates a plethora of objects encountered during his initial 'purchase' day.

The many swords are the first thing one notices; in Soe they already belong to the great rarities and in Amarassi [*siz*] they are attributed to the Rote people ... Chinese and Dutch plates are common here, too. It is interesting that the words for the *fekus* are identical, these flutes [whistles/pipes] that are blown like keys.<sup>58</sup> Brass items are common here. A disk like the one I bought in Pene [South Central Timor, West Timor], where people didn't

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<sup>55</sup> Alfred Bühler, "Malaiischer Archipel," in *Bericht über das Basler Museum für Völkerkunde für das Jahr 1936*, edited by Fritz Sarasin (Basel: Birkhäuser, 1937), 13–38.

<sup>56</sup> Bühler, Tagebuchnotizen, 66.

<sup>57</sup> Bühler, Tagebuchnotizen, 66.

<sup>58</sup> This is an accurate translation of the German text, which is also unclear in its meaning.

know its use, is used as a gong here, and a double-bell as a percussion instrument. Birds and people are a common motif at least on cloths. An ovula shell is used as an ornament on bags. A whole lot of new types of flutes exist, besides the wooden mouth organ. Houses are always in hamlets or granges on rocky ridges or in a place that offers protection. Magic stones and tooth-brushes that are reminiscent of Manus, also the braiding is reminiscent of the *passpass* [*sit*]<sup>59</sup> of Melanesia. Blowguns are also around, didn't buy because too long and only one piece but other than that the same as Atoni. For de-seeding of cotton in addition to machines [mangles] also a simple stick and stone. Small brass statue not bought because too expensive. Large wooden statues very worn, male and female.<sup>60</sup>

The following morning, on Monday 5 August, 'a huge crowd of people wanting to trade who brought, amongst other things, small round leather shields, 2 very beautiful women's combs and enormous spear heads. Interesting also a small lathe on which all the wooden bowls and also the small drums are made now'.<sup>61</sup> This activity continued as he wrote on 7 August, 'All of yesterday was spent buying and cataloguing. To relax we caught a few insects in between while Meyer is stuffing birds and pulling out teeth'.<sup>62</sup> These quotes establish the diverse acquisitions made by Bühler and that people came to him with objects for sale. How people knew to come to him with objects remains unknown. It is tempting to speculate that word had been sent into the community by someone in authority such as the Administrator or his staff alerting people to Bühler's interest in purchasing their local material culture.

On 5 August, Bühler commenced an excavation at 'a small shelter near the Portuguese administrative post'<sup>63</sup>, to a depth of approximately two metres.<sup>64</sup> This was one of eight excavations initiated by Bühler in Timor during the 1935 Expedition, together with seven on

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<sup>59</sup> *Paspas* is a woven amulet, in Tok Pisin language.

<sup>60</sup> Bühler, *Tagebuchnotizen*, 67.

<sup>61</sup> Bühler, *Tagebuchnotizen*, 68.

<sup>62</sup> Bühler, *Tagebuchnotizen*, 69.

<sup>63</sup> Ian Glover, "Alfred Bühler's Excavations in Timor – A Re-Evaluation," *Art and Archaeology Research Papers*, vol. 2 (1972): 127; Nuno Vasco Oliveira, *Subsistence Archaeobotany: Food Production and the Agricultural Transition in East Timor*. PhD Thesis. Australian National University, Canberra, 2008, 18. Oliveira states: 'The last site visited by Glover in Baguia was Sana Lila Cave, referred to as possibly the cave that Bühler had excavated in 1935'.

<sup>64</sup> Oliveira, *Subsistence Archaeobotany*, 11. According to Oliveira, the trench was dug to a depth of approximately 200 centimetres when it hit a rock bed.

Rote. The most comprehensive of these excavations occurred in Niki Niki, Dutch Timor.<sup>65</sup> In Portuguese Timor he chose to excavate at Baguia, which together with Niki Niki were 'the two most prolific sites'.<sup>66</sup> From a two by two-and-a-half metre trench dug in Baguia, 15 flaked stones, 63 pottery rim and body sherds and one bone spoon were unearthed and eventually sent to MKB for accessioning. According to Glover, 'the large size of the pieces in the [C]ollection sent to the Basel Museum, suggest that the deposits were not screened and that much was missed'.<sup>67</sup> The finds were grouped into four horizons for analysis.<sup>68</sup>

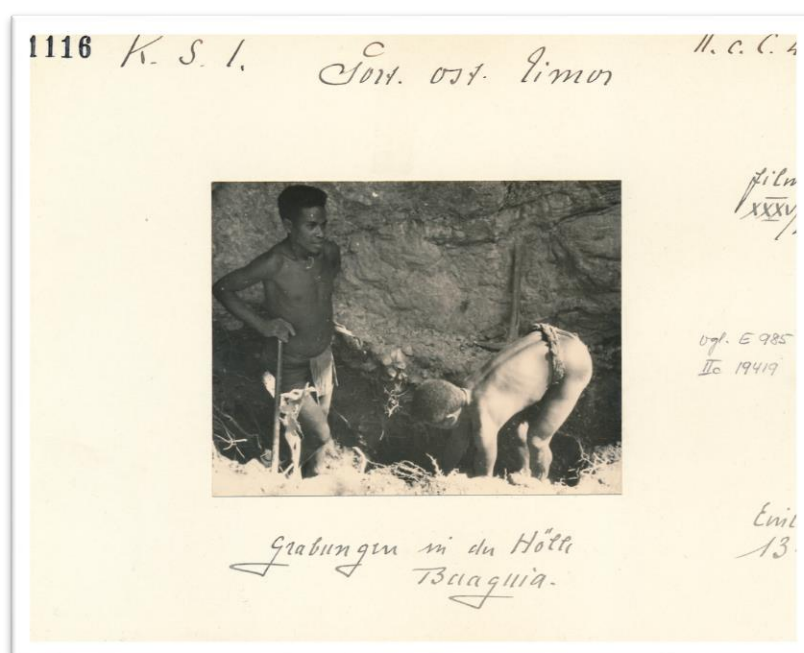


Figure 3.4: 'Grabungen in der Höhle Baguia' (Excavations in the cave Baguia).

Source: Museum der Kulturen Basel, MKB (F)IIC 1116. Photograph by Alfred Bühler, 5 August 1935.

Fritz Sarasin presented the findings of the excavations in two publications.<sup>69</sup> Sarasin's analysis of the Baguia excavation findings was limited by the lack of reliable prehistoric data to make comparative analyses. According to Glover, Sarasin and Bühler relied on

<sup>65</sup> Glover, "Alfred Bühler's Excavations in Timor – A Re-Evaluation," 120.

<sup>66</sup> Glover, "Alfred Bühler's Excavations in Timor – A Re-Evaluation," 120.

<sup>67</sup> Glover, "Alfred Bühler's Excavations in Timor – A Re-Evaluation," 120.

<sup>68</sup> Glover, "Alfred Bühler's Excavations in Timor – A Re-Evaluation," 128, records these, with some discontinuity, as Horizon 1: 0–20 cm, Horizon 2: 20–45 cm, Horizon 3: 50–160 cm and Horizon 4: 180–190 cm.

<sup>69</sup> Fritz Sarasin, "Beiträge zur Prähistorie der Inseln Timor und Roti [sic]," in *Verhandlungen der Naturforschenden Gesellschaft in Basel*, Bd. XLVII (Basel: Buchdruckerei E. Birkhauser & Cie, 1936); Fritz Sarasin, "Über Spuren einer früheren weddiden Bevölkerung auf der Insel Roti oder Rote bei Timor," *Zeitschrift für Rassenkunde*, Bd. VII, Heft 3 (1938): 251–254.

ethnohistories of the Atoin meto and Tetun people of Belu, together with an influential and ‘ambitious attempt’ by Robert von Heine-Geldern (1885–1968), an Austrian ethnologist, ancient historian, and archaeologist, ‘to write a culture history of Southeast Asia and Melanesia which would explain, according to diffusionist principles of the Viennese School, the distributions of material culture so assiduously recorded by travellers, ethnographers and missionaries’.<sup>70</sup>

There is almost certainly some truth in the idea that the inland mountain districts of Timor and other eastern Indonesian islands contain traces of very old populations. But it is difficult to relate this knowledge to the archaeological data so far as it is known at present, and the interpretations given to Bühler’s excavated material have been strongly biased by conjectural histories based on legends and on the linguistic and physical anthropological evidence.<sup>71</sup>

These influences led Sarasin and Bühler to draw the conclusion that the site was Neolithic.<sup>72</sup> However, Glover’s archaeology is considered the first reliable work due to advanced methods and technology. Glover presented evidence of continuous occupation from 8,000 BP. According to Glover, a later wave of occupation by people with domestic animals, pottery skills and stone tools occurred between 4,500 and 2,000 BP.<sup>73</sup> Nonetheless, Glover, who examined Bühler’s finds from Baguia, acknowledged the pioneering role of Bühler’s archaeological work in Timor as an important foundation for later archaeological research.

In addition to the archaeological evidence excavated and accessioned into the MKB collection, zoological specimens were also acquired; however, their current whereabouts is

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<sup>70</sup> Glover, “Alfred Bühler’s Excavations in Timor – A Re-Evaluation,” 130. Glover cites Robert von Heine-Geldern, “Urheimat und früheste Wanderungen der Austronesier,” *Anthropos*, vol. XXVII (1932): 543–619.

<sup>71</sup> Glover, “Alfred Bühler’s Excavations in Timor – A Re-Evaluation,” 121. Glover cites Sarasin, 1936, “Beiträge zur Prähistorie der Inseln Timor und Roti [sic],” 11–14; BAG Vroklage, *Ethnographie der Belu in Zentral-Timor*, 3 vols, vol. II, 147–154 (Leiden: Brill, 1953); L Berthe, “La Terre, l’au-delà et les Thèmes Maritimes chez les Buna (Timor central),” *Anthropos*, vol. 61 (1966): 903, as the sources of ‘conjectural histories based on legends and on the linguistic and physical anthropological evidence’.

<sup>72</sup> Geoffrey C Gunn, *Timor Loro Sae: 500 Years* (Macau: Livros do Oriente, 1999), 32–33.

<sup>73</sup> Oliveira, Subsistence Archaeobotany, 19–22.



unknown.<sup>74</sup> As noted in Bühler's packing lists, several zoological specimens were sent to the school where he worked; however, the specimens intended for the museum remain unrecorded.<sup>75</sup> It also remains unknown whether Meyer collected dental specimens. No such items were accessioned into the MKB collection.

The collection of 'ethnographica' largely occurred in the Baguia Villa (modern day Baguia Sub-district), with the provenance of the objects being recorded as 'Baguia'. This suggests that many of the acquired objects may have come from Alawa Leten and Alawa Craik, the two *sucos* that Baguia Villa straddles. However, it is possible that people also came from outlying areas such as Larisula, Hae Coni and Oosso Huna and even from as far as Afaloicai and Defawasi, bringing objects with the intention of selling them to Bühler.

Bühler recorded two horseback excursions to Adui and Betulari, during which the expedition team acquired objects. On Friday 9 August, Bühler described the landscape along the road to Adui as being 'very beautiful because there is a clear view to deep valleys covered in magnificent green rice fields or towards the mountains of which the two steep peaks of the Fatumatabia Massif [*sic*] are particularly gorgeous'.<sup>76</sup> In Adui, Bühler spent the day drawing detailed diagrams of a house that documented the local architecture.<sup>77</sup> He meticulously recorded each part of the house structure, commenting that '[t]he house is partly made from wood and partly from bamboo. Nowadays the latter is used more and more because it is easier to work with'.<sup>78</sup> He also sketched a plan of the Adui hamlet, which included a complex of ceremonial and residential houses, graves, sacrifice sites, sacred trees, the location of ancestral figurines, a pigsty and the compound fence. He commented that '[i]nside the hamlets are the graves that resemble heavy walls that are often covered by great slabs of *afu* [*sic*] *lebe* [flat stones]. They are sacred places probably used for sacrifices. There is also an

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<sup>74</sup> Inquiries to the Natural History Museum Basel (*Naturhistorisches Museum Basel*) regarding their collection holdings to ascertain whether any zoological specimens from the 1935 Expedition were accessioned into this institution yielded no reply.

<sup>75</sup> *Sammelliste 4* (Collection List 4). Unpublished document. Museum der Kulturen Basel Archives. This document states: 'Consignment 3, sent from Dili consists of 8 crates (M.V. 17 – M.V. 24 Basel). In M.V. 17 are also included zoological material and some coffee samples, the f.d. Commercial school. Please give these to my wife.'

<sup>76</sup> Bühler, *Tagebuchnotizen*, 70.

<sup>77</sup> Bühler, *Tagebuchnotizen*, 71–76.

<sup>78</sup> Bühler, *Tagebuchnotizen*, 70.

additional main site for sacrifices and every few minutes along the road there are sacred stones'.<sup>79</sup>

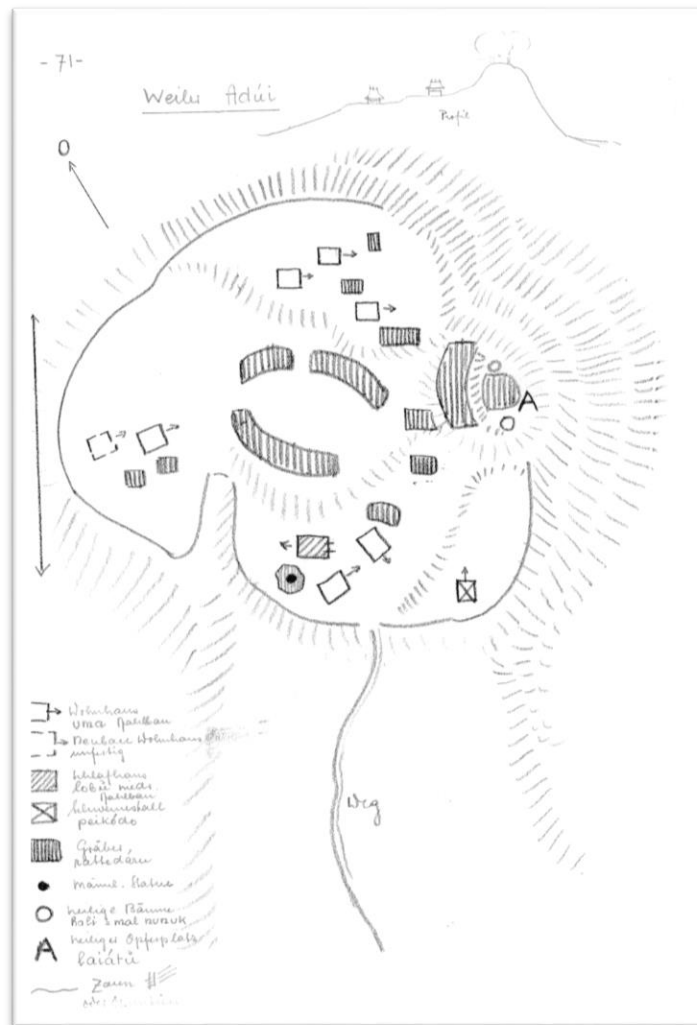


Figure 3.5: Bühler's hand-drawn map of the Adui compound, Larisula, Baguia, 9 August 1935. (N.B. The key of icons and text listed on this map include (from top to bottom): living quarters, new living quarters (unfinished), sleeping quarters, pigsty, graves, male statue, sacred trees, sacred place of sacrifice and fence/s.)

Source: Bühler, Alfred. Tagebuchnotizen. Reise zu den kleinen Sundainseln Timor, Rote und Flores, 27 März – 18 Dezember 1935. Unpublished field diary, 1935, 71.

In Adui, Bühler also acquired objects, as documented by the photograph taken there (Figure 3.6) showing an array of objects placed on surfaces outside, which was surely part of the process of viewing and selecting objects to purchase. Although entitled *Lente aus Adui*

<sup>79</sup> Bühler, Tagebuchnotizen, 70.

(People of Adui), the photo also captures objects that were brought out and spread on a table, presumably for sale.



Figure 3.6: 'Leute aus Adui' (People of Adui).

Source: Museum der Kulturen Basel, MKB (F)IIC 1295. Photograph by Alfred Bühler, 9 August 1935.

On Sunday 11 August, the expedition team rode to Betulari, a Nauti-speaking region near Osso Huna, where Bühler saw wooden bowls being made, blacksmiths at work and horn hair combs being produced. He noted amongst the beauty of the landscape and the terraces covered with fruit and other trees that the 'new' object he encountered was 'rain hats made from palm sheaths or pandanus'. In addition to a detailed description of the wood-turning process and a diagram of the lathe, he described the blacksmith's location:

The blacksmith's shop is under one of the houses. The lower platform has been partially removed so that a depression is formed. The man working the bellows is standing on top of a beam. The fire is below; it is only used to sharpen digging irons. Other tools or materials are not present. Two rolling stones are in the forge.<sup>80</sup>

<sup>80</sup> Bühler, Tagebuchnotizen, 78.



Figure 3.7: 'Schmiede in Betulari' (Smithy in Betulari).

Source: Museum der Kulturen Basel, MKB (F)IIC 1265. Photograph by Alfred Bühler, 10 August 1935.

In his expedition diary Bühler noted that certain objects were not acquired as the purchase price was too expensive, but this seemed to have been more of an issue in Flores than Timor.

<sup>81</sup> It is possible that some objects were priced highly as a strategy by their owners to either retain them, or not to let them go unless the financial reward was commensurate with or higher than the object's local value (see discussion about sculptures of ancestor figures in Chapter 5). Bühler encountered people who were not always willing to sell their ritual artefacts:

In Timor it was quite easy to acquire such objects. In the east [Baguia] we were able to purchase a few very old and beautiful ancestor figures. In Rote the situation was already a little more difficult and it was only during the last few days of our stay that we were able to buy a few interesting pieces. In Flores, this was practically impossible. The natives here adhere strongly to their old beliefs and thus also to their ritual paraphernalia. In other areas, where this bearing was no longer prominent, the people simply did not need

<sup>81</sup> Bühler, Tagebuchnotizen, 67.

the money because they had already paid their head taxes. Otherwise I am sure we would have been able to purchase a few more pieces which, however, are now missing in the collection.<sup>82</sup>

This suggests that the Makasae residents of Baguia were active participants in the sale of their material culture. However, Baguia residents made distinctions between objects that were ‘commodities’ and those objects that bore a different status or value. The ancestral figures (*atewaa*, M) were also assigned a high price commensurate with their cultural significance to the Makasae. Another example was the ritually significant coral necklaces (*gaba*, M) that were not traded but reserved for exchange use.<sup>83</sup> As Bühler noted, ‘*Moetisala* are called *gaba* here and are common and valued, perhaps even more than in Dutch Timor. They are not traded but only paid as a dowry. Apart from those there are some other stone and old glass beads that have a high value’.<sup>84</sup> Other objects that are not evident in the Collection include a type of thick belt worn by men (*paus kenet*, UM) symbolic of status, and medallions (*lawa lebe*, M; *belak*, T) formerly indicative of a warrior’s bravery, also widely regarded as status symbols. Such objects were not acquired by Bühler, as it is likely their inestimable value within Makasae society precluded their being offered for sale.<sup>85</sup>

It is relevant to speculate about the motivations of the Baguia residents in selling their material culture and ritual objects to Bühler. As Bühler mentioned, the funds received from the sale of goods may have been used to pay ‘head-tax’ to the Portuguese administration. Although exchanges in 1935 were conducted largely within a barter economy, cash was required to pay head-tax. Other possible reasons for the sale of artefacts in Baguia could include that some objects sold were considered ‘replaceable’ by their original owners or were simply parted with obligingly to this foreigner, who would undoubtedly have attained notoriety through word-of-mouth during his brief visit to the region. Or was the season of hunger phenomenon (*arara*, M) present in 1935 due to low rainfalls or crop failure? If so,

<sup>82</sup> Bühler cited in Kunz, “The Timor, Rote and Flores (Indonesia and East Timor) Expedition, 1935,” 19.

<sup>83</sup> Bühler, Tagebuchnotizen, 67.

<sup>84</sup> Bühler, Tagebuchnotizen, 67.

<sup>85</sup> Two small and humble examples of these forms were acquired; see MKB IIc 6321 and MKB IIc 6328. Bühler’s acquisitions from Baguia were exceptionally extensive, thorough and highly representative of the material culture of the region at that time. However, during my fieldwork it became evident that certain objects were not acquired by Bühler, including large medallions (*belak*, T); a tobacco pipe (*keai sumba*, M, T); a headband made from horn, turtle shell, metal or cloth worn for festive occasions (*bandalete*, T, P); a sacred firestone for cooking (*ata lina jalunu*, M); a rice-flaying basket (*keoiri*, M; *lafatik*, T); a design template (*banati*, T), used for weaving textile borders; and a type of rolled up basket (*tabi-tabi*, M).

Makasae people would have sold most of the goods at their disposal to ensure the physical survival of their family; however, Bühler does not mention such climatic issues in his diary. Possibly he was not aware of such environmental conditions due to his brief visit to Baguia.

Alternatively, the fear of an unfamiliar white European man may have prompted people to sell their belongings. As noted in Bühler's diary, the practice of whipping and beating of Timorese people by Portuguese officials or their delegates was widespread, which undoubtedly instilled a sense of fear and encouraged a 'willingness' to avoid further punishment by obeying the wishes of a foreigner (*malae*, T). Bühler noted in Baguia, 'The people, just like in Dili earlier, have been drilled to greet nicely (the whip and wooden instrument [*palmatori*] that looks like a ladle with holes in it to hit people on the hands are playing a big role in this)' and continued the following day by stating: 'The indigenous people are extremely obliging and call out greetings everywhere in a loud voice. It is noticeable, however, that this is done out of fear of the white man. Whipping is an important tool for education here, too'.<sup>86</sup> Were people asked or ordered by the local Portuguese officials to sell their belongings to Bühler? We can be certain only that Bühler paid cash to acquire the objects, as each accession card at the MKB records the purchase price.<sup>87</sup> Portuguese archives may shed further light on this question, for which there is presently no definitive answer.

The prices paid for the objects, as recorded by Bühler on the catalogue cards, indicate some standardisation, insofar as a price range seems to have existed for specific object types. For example, 23 incised bamboo containers (*sua noka*, M; MKB IIC 6025-IIC 6047) used for holding lime powder, tobacco or fire-making paraphernalia (*ata lasi*, M) were acquired for the sum of 20 cents each. Alternatively, a total of 25 beakers (*noka*, M; MKB IIC 6061 – MKB IIC 6085) were procured for amounts ranging from 30 cents to \$1.50, with an average price of \$1.00 per beaker. A relatively plain beaker (MKB IIC 6063) sold for 75 cents compared with a beaker featuring a shell strap (MKB IIC 6068) that fetched a price of \$2.00. This variation in price appears to have been determined based on the technical intricacy and aesthetic merits of the object, indicating that Bühler was willing to pay more for finer

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<sup>86</sup> Bühler, Tagebuchnotizen, 65.

<sup>87</sup> In List of Expenses 6, Bühler listed amounts in 'Timoresische dollars' including: *Ethnographica* \$597.15 *Auslagen f. Höhlengrabung* (expenses for cave excavation) \$2; and *Auslagen f. anthrop. Messungen* (expenses for anthropological measurements) \$4.50.

examples of each form. More expensive objects included a stone water container (MKB IIc 6127) that cost \$6.00, a lathe costing \$4.50 and a woman's handwoven skirt purchased for the sum of \$8.00, all values relative to the level of workmanship, sacredness or rarity of the object. The most expensive objects acquired were the sacred ancestral figurines, priced at \$9 and \$10.

A field collection number was ascribed to each individual object and in most instances was also inscribed on it; hand-written pencil field numbers are still visible on some objects. These numbers were recorded by either Bühler or Meyer, and remain as evidence of the moment when the status of each object transitioned from being a privately owned object in Baguia to becoming a part of an ethnographic collection owned by a public Swiss cultural institution. 'Museums of all kinds are deeply implicated in long-term processes of separating material objects from their original owners, thereby transforming personal possessions into the collective property of states, cities or local authorities.'<sup>88</sup> In this moment objects were separated from their original owners or relational networks and became absorbed into classification processes that inevitably obscured aspects of their origins.



Figure 3.8a (L): Wood-block, one in a series of 14 acquired from Baguia by Alfred Bühler, 1935, to document the process of producing wooden bowls in Baguia.

Source: Museum der Kulturen Basel, MKB IIc 5943 (recto).

Figure 3.8b (R): Base of wood-block featuring a field collection number of 1729.

Source: Museum der Kulturen Basel, MKB IIc 5943 (verso).

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<sup>88</sup> Bouquet, *Museums: A Visual Anthropology*, 152.

## Packaging and transportation of the field acquisitions

Specified in the 1935 Expedition Instructions was the requirement that the Collection be parcelled up into segments for its freight to Europe.<sup>89</sup> Bühler oversaw the packaging of 27 crates and their dispatch to Basel. A list of items within each crate was sent separately and each crate was marked 'M. V. Basel' and with a sequential number.<sup>90</sup> The objects acquired from Baguia were detailed in a 'collection list' with chronological field numbers running from 1401 to 1829, marked off with red pencil once packed.

SAMMELLISTE 3	
Ost-Timor.	
1401. Männerkain	1439. 2 Tontöpfe
1402. Sarong	1440. Tontasse
1403. Armabringe	1441. 4 Tontöpfe
1404. Silberbrenge	1442. 2 Tontöpfe
1405. do	1443. 2 Wasserkrüge
1406. 3 gewobene Tücher	1444. Wassertopf m. Untersatz
1407. 3 Sarongs	1445. 2 Kinderkreisel
1408. Spinnweberstung	1446. 2 Wasserzeuge
1409. 2 Spindeln m. Spinnmaterial	1447. Holzschale m. Beckel
1410. 2 Körbchen f. Spinnmaterial	1448. 4 Flöten
1411. 6 Speisedeckel	1449. Flöten
1412. 4 Schwörter	1450. 3 Flöten
1413. Messer m. Scheide	1451. Grabstock
1414. 4 Hörner	1452. Flöten
1415. Holzkeule	1453. 2 Glockenschindre
1416.14 Kokoslöffel	1454. Kopfkissen f. Traglasten
1417. 2 Hornlöffel	1455. Holzlarve
1418. Hornabel u.-löffel	1456. 2 Steigbügel
1419. Löffel	1457. 7 Holzschalen
1420. 3 Deckelkörbe	1458. 8 Fuchsringe
1421. 5 Tabak- u. Sirihbehälter	1459. 6 Lansenblätter
1422. Eisbehälter	1460. 3 Mann
1423. Sirihbehälter	1461. 4 Fresseln
1424. 2 Sirihbehälter	1462. 3 Fuchschilde
1425. 3 Tabakbehälter	1463. 3 Bambusbehälter
1426. Reisbehälter	1464. Wasserbehälter
1427. 3 Minnertaschen	1465. Tontopf
1428. Tragtasche	1466. 3 Wange
1429. 2 Tabakbehälter	1467. 3 Wurtdl
1430. Ee'l. Hut	1468. 4 Kokoslöffel
1431. 2 Rüte	1469. 5 Flöten
1432. Reisesack mit Inhalt	1470. 3 Flöten
1433. Wasserbehälter	1471. Flöten
1434. Eisbehälter	1472. 3 Flöten
1435. Lombokbehälter	1473. Messer m. Scheide
1436. Bambus mit Sirih. u. Messer	1474. Schwert m. Scheide
1437. 7 Sirihbehälter	1475. Kochlöffel
1438. 5 Tonnöpfe	1476. Harschmuck

Figure 3.9: 'Sammelliste 3,' 1 (Collection List 3), 1.

Source: Museum der Kulturen Basel Archives.

<sup>89</sup> Instructions to the Expedition Agreement (see point 3) that states: 'Good packing of the collection is important. The collections should be sent to Basel as soon as possible (preferably insured). It is advisable not to send too much at once so that potential losses do not become too great. A list of shipped items must be sent separately with each shipment. Each box/consignment is to be written 'M V Basel' and numbered.'

<sup>90</sup> The annotation 'M. V.', 'M. v' and 'M v' is variously used in different documents. I have used the annotation 'MV' for consistency.



Bühler had previous experience of ensuring the safe shipment of ethnological collections to Switzerland from the southern hemisphere, including sizeable objects such as an entire Malagan house from New Guinea in 1932.<sup>91</sup> It is documented from his 1932 expedition that he constructed boxes from available timbers and recycled existing containers, to ensure the safe transportation of what were sometimes cumbersome or fragile objects to Basel. He used local resources such as dry grass (*alang-alang*, I) as packing material, demonstrating his versatility and ability to surmount various practical challenges in the field.<sup>92</sup>

In Timor, similar challenges arose as Bühler noted: ‘We had the greatest difficulty to find suitable packaging material for the [C]ollection’.<sup>93</sup> One example of Bühler’s ingenuity in locating scarce packing materials in Timor is the use of a cardboard toothpaste packet to store the cotton bolls (MKB IIc 5976) for transportation. Subsequently, the bolls have remained ensconced within Bühler’s toothpaste packet for the past eight decades (see Figures 3.10 a, b and c). Such innovative packaging methods illustrate how he improvised with available materials. As the cotton bolls were accessioned together with their packaging, the box remains as material evidence of Bühler’s role as the collector. Indeed, the packing box now arguably forms a part of the object.



Figures 3.10a (L), 3.10b (C) & 3.10c (R): Cotton seed removal kit with cotton bolls acquired from Baguia by Alfred Bühler, 1935.

Source: Museum der Kulturen Basel, MKB IIc 5976.

Shipment 3, consisting of eight crates, was sent from Dili (MV 17 Basel – MV 24 Basel), though no date is listed. MV 17 Basel contained zoological specimens and coffee samples

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<sup>91</sup> The Malagan house is accessioned at the MKB as Vb 10563 with various child numbers. A group of sculptures associated with the house have the accession numbers MKB Vb 10550 – MKB Vb 10562 and MKB Vb 10566.

<sup>92</sup> Meuli, “Alfred Bühler,” 20.

<sup>93</sup> See correspondence from Bühler to the Commission dated 2 September 1935, Museum der Kulturen Basel Archives.

Bühler had collected for the commercial school where he taught. Finally, Shipment 4 was sent from Kupang on 6 September, consisting of three crates: one crate of zoological and ethnographic materials and Meyer's plates and films, one crate of wood samples for the school and one crate of private books and letters.<sup>94</sup>

## The accession, documentation and classification of the Baguia Collection, 1936–1937

Upon arrival in Basel the 1935 Expedition acquisitions were formally accessioned into the MKB Southeast Asia collection. This process included each object being attributed with a unique accession number and the prefix 'IIC', followed by a chronological number (i.e. IIC 5988).<sup>95</sup> Each object or component part was marked on the surface with a hand-written accession number, in either white paint or black ink. For textiles, a cotton tag was discreetly stitched onto a corner, upon which the accession numbers were hand-written. Many of the objects still retain a small card tag attached by string, with an accession number neatly written by Bühler.<sup>96</sup> 'By naming and marking [an object] it has become more fully owned.'<sup>97</sup> One object received special labelling: a diminutive spinning top<sup>98</sup> which now features the word 'Timor' painted across its surface – a curiously generic attribution of place (see Figure 3.11a).<sup>99</sup>

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<sup>94</sup> See *Sammulliste 4*, (Collection List 4), Museum der Kulturen Basel Archives.

<sup>95</sup> The MKB uses Roman numeral prefixes to denote geographic areas within its collection as follows:

(I) = Prehistory (after 1948 this category is European Prehistory)

(II) = Asia

(III) = Africa

(IV) = America

(V) = Oceania

(VI) = Europe

(VII) = Polar region.

The letters are subcategories: IIa = South Asia, IIb = Mainland Southeast Asia, IIC = Island Southeast Asia, IID = East Asia, IIE = West Asia. Hence the Baguia Collection bears the prefix IIC. The first object accessioned into the Baguia Collection, based on a chronological ordering of the collection, was MKB IIC 5926a–f, a wood-turning lathe, and the last object accessioned was MKB IIC 6640, a fibre raincoat.

<sup>96</sup> Richard Kunz, Curator, Southeast Asia, MKB, email communication with author, 10 May 2014. Kunz states that 'all evidence suggests' that Bühler physically accessioned the Baguia Collection himself. 'He may have had somebody who helped him, but the main tasks were obviously accomplished by himself (the handwriting on the catalogue cards but also on the object tags is Bühler's, the order the objects were catalogued is highly reminiscent of Bühler's logic, etc.)'

<sup>97</sup> Hodder, *Entangled*, 24.

<sup>98</sup> See MKB IIC 6264.

<sup>99</sup> The attribution of Timor to this spinning top is a misnomer, considering Bühler had clear provenance of the objects he acquired. This trend to annotate the provenance of objects as 'Timor' is evident in several



Figure 3.11a (L): Spinning top (*sae daene*, M) acquired from Baguia by Alfred Bühler, 1935.

Source: Museum der Kulturen Basel, MKB IIC 6264.

Figure 3.11b (R): Hand-written and illustrated Museum der Kulturen Basel accession card for MKB IIC 6264 by Alfred Bühler, circa 1936.

Source: Museum der Kulturen Basel.

The acquired objects were accessioned into the broad groupings, reflecting type, material and function. Bühler consistently acquired several objects of each ‘type’ to enable stylistic and technical comparison between the various objects. The object types are broadly listed below in the general order that they were accessioned: wood-turning tools (i.e. lathes, awls, hammers); wooden bowls as works-in-progress; wooden bowls; textile production equipment (cotton, spindles, looms containing works-in-progress); women’s woven garments; men’s woven garments; mnemonic devices for weaving textile designs; lime-powder containers; incised lime-powder containers; personal bamboo food and drink containers; ceramics, locally produced; ceramic production tools (i.e. forming stone, paddles, spatula); spoons and forks; woven textile belts/sashes; hair combs; bracelets; musical instruments; toys; body adornment (i.e. bracelets, ear-rings, headdresses, necklaces, armbands); personal accoutrements (i.e. tooth brushes, tweezers); sacred (*falun*, M; *lulik*, T) objects/talismans (i.e. shells, stones, amulets, bronze figurine); figurines; masks; clubs; swords; knives; shields; flints; tobacco pouches; horse saddlery; food covers; beakers; mortar

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other European cultural institutions whose holdings are attributed thus, in many cases banishing these objects to a form of cultural oblivion. See also Roque, *Headhunting and Colonialism*, 12. Roque refers to a cranium that was problematically labelled ‘Timorese’ in the Coimbra University collection.

and pestles; baskets with lids; weapons; domestic paraphernalia; spears and digging sticks; hats and sleeping mats. ‘One-off’ acquisitions were also obtained, suggesting that some objects were rare and thus it was more difficult for Bühler to acquire several comparative examples.<sup>100</sup>

The 1936 Annual Report for the MKB included a section entitled ‘Malay Archipelago’, which featured information about the newly accessioned collections resulting from the 1935 Expedition.<sup>101</sup> This report explains that 3,544 new accession numbers, totalling 3,710 articles (*Gegenständen*, G) or component parts, were accessioned into the permanent collection.<sup>102</sup> These figures excluded approximately 800 duplicated objects (*Doubletten*, G) that been acquired and then later removed.<sup>103</sup> As outlined in the Instructions from the Museum Commission, *doubletten* were for exchange purposes, most likely with other German ethnographic museums.<sup>104</sup> Meyer was also permitted to acquire personal *doubletten*.<sup>105</sup> These figures also excluded the archaeological findings from the expedition excavations that had occurred at Niki Niki, Dutch Timor, and Baguia, Portuguese Timor, which were accessioned into the Prehistoric Department of the MKB.

The Annual Report provided a further breakdown of the expedition acquisitions based on regional provenance, as follows: Timor – 2,406 objects, Rote – 820 objects, Flores – 283 objects, and from various other islands – 35 objects. According to the MKB accession records, a total of 691 objects were acquired from Baguia (i.e. accession numbers of parent records).

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<sup>100</sup> Examples of one-off objects in the Baguia Collection include a stone water container (MKB IIc 6127), a set of cock spurs (MKB IIc 6614), a talismanic monkey’s skull (MKB IIc 6378), an oracle piece of wood (MKB IIc 6383), a fossil shark tooth (MKB IIc 6371), an ‘angel’ grave-marker/shield (MKB IIc 6417), an incised wooden door, a pair of architectural finials (MKB IIc 6406) and a Chinese ceramic dish (MKB IIc 6121), to name a few.

<sup>101</sup> Bühler, “Malaiischer Archipel,” 13–38.

<sup>102</sup> ‘Parent and Child’ catalogue record terminology relates to objects that consist of several components but that are accessioned under one accession number. There is one parent record but there can be one or more ‘child’ records, depending on the number of components that create the entire object. The suffix of ‘a’, ‘b’, ‘c’ is used to indicate the component parts, with ‘a’ being the ‘parent’ component of an object. One example to consider is MKB IIc 6103a & b, a cup with a cover/lid that was accessioned as one object but in two parts as follows: i) MKB IIc 6103a (cup) = the parent record, and ii) MKB IIc 6103b (cover/lid) = the child record.

<sup>103</sup> Bühler, “Malaiischer Archipel,” 13.

<sup>104</sup> Instructions, point 6. Richard Kunz, Curator, Southeast Asia, MKB, email communication with author, 10 May 2014, suggested that if doubles were traded, the most likely recipients would have been other European institutions.

<sup>105</sup> See Expedition Agreement, point 9.

The Annual Report's descriptions of the collection from the 1935 Expedition were divided into eight ethnographic categories based on the general function of the objects. One exception was the category of 'technology and trade', which was more eclectic, as it referred to objects such as textiles, wooden bowls and jewellery, in relation to their technological production; a topic of particular interest to Bühler. In the instance of textiles and jewellery, objects of intra- and inter-clan trade were also included. This classification system included the following categories:

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1. <i>Nahrung</i>                                   | food  |
| 2. <i>Haus und Hausgeräte</i>                       | house and domestic appliances/equipment/accessories |
| 3. <i>Jagd und Fischerei</i>                        | hunting and fishing equipment                       |
| 4. <i>Acker und Gartenbau</i>                       | agriculture (farming) and horticulture              |
| 5. <i>Transportgeräte</i>                           | transport equipment                                 |
| 6. <i>Technik und Gewerbe</i>                       | technology and trade                                |
| 7. <i>Musik, Signal, Lärminstrumente, Spielzeug</i> | music, signal, sound instruments, toys              |
| 8. <i>Kult und Zauberei</i>                         | cult and magic.                                     |

In the Annual Report, each of these categories, their significance and general contents were described in some detail, drawing generalisations and comparisons between the various types of objects acquired from Timor, Roti and Flores, largely in relation to their materials, function and aesthetic qualities.<sup>106</sup> The objects were grouped based on Bühler's classification system, further evidence of the conceptual framework he applied to the content of the Baguia Collection.

Technical tools and equipment that illustrate 'works-in-progress' were included within the technological and trade Baguia Collection. Examples of wooden bowls in various stages of production, together with looms of partially completed weavings of women's skirts (*rabi*, M) and men's cloth wraps (*kola*, M), provide accurate examples of the technological skills of the Makasae people. The attendant tools, equipment and pattern templates used to create wooden, textile and ceramic objects were also acquired by Bühler and illustrate the various technologies and production stages used to create distinctive objects of Makasae material culture. Whilst Bühler was an exemplary documenter of technical processes, this category is

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<sup>106</sup> Bühler, "Malaiischer Archipel," 13–38.

clearly aligned with the study of technologies as a marker of the level of ‘civilisation’ a particular society or cultural group possessed, likely reflecting a racial determinist approach.

Bühler catalogued each object with a hand-written accession card. On these cards, in cursive script, are details such as the object’s accession number, its provenance (listed as ‘Timor’), its title in German (and often in Makasae or Tetun languages), and a description of any distinguishing features that Bühler chose to record (see Figure 3.11b). Although the discursive text for each object varies, typical details recorded by Bühler on each catalogue card included the materials and construction techniques used to make the object. Occasionally, he incorporated comment about the use or cultural significance of the object. Bühler also sketched illustrations and outlines of some objects, such as spoon handles and ceramic bowl forms, indicating an object’s distinguishing features or particular decorative elements. In some instances, an identification photograph was attached.

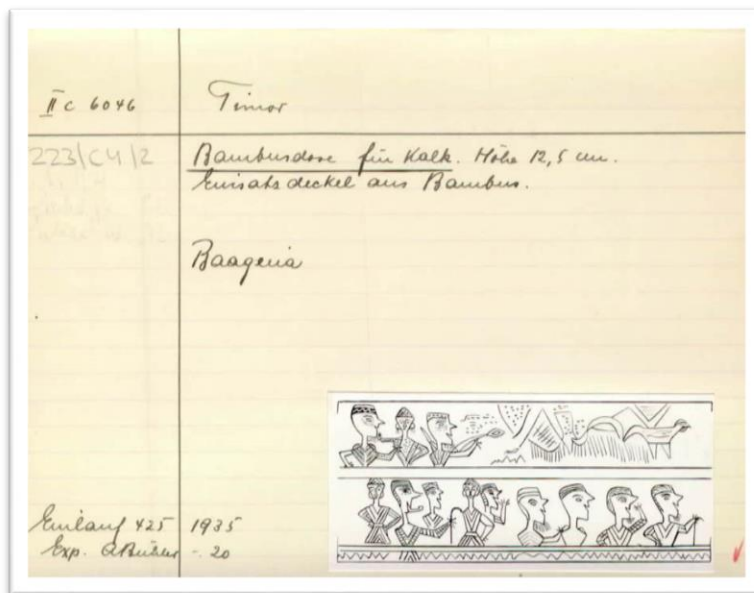
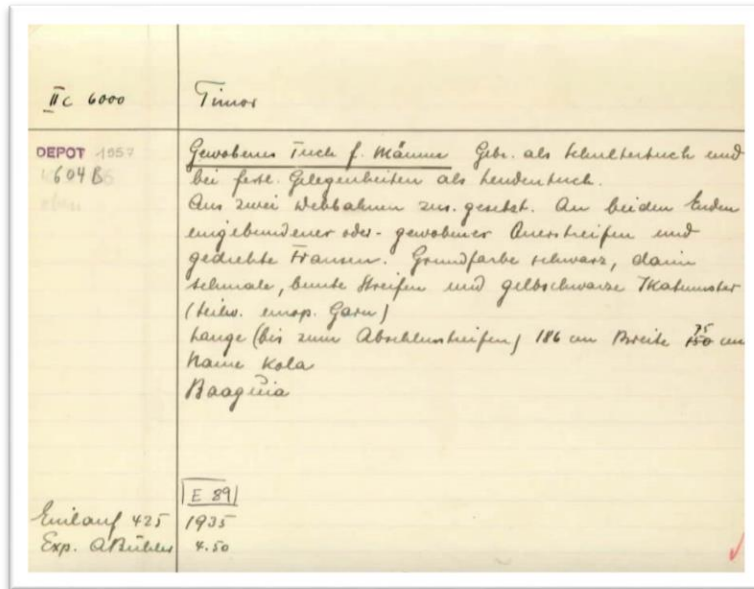
At a later date, other code systems appear on the cards, written in pen and pencil, such as ‘Depot 1957’, ‘604B’ and ‘223/4/1’, indicative of the subsequent location history of the objects in the MKB collection stores. In some instances these codes have been erased, as object movement or locations have been updated. All cards feature the phrase ‘*Einlauf* 425’: an ‘acquisition lot’ number. At the end of the discursive text the word ‘Baaguia’ [*sic*] consistently appears. Such methods of labelling objects, as Mary Bouquet notes in the context of Melanesian artefacts acquired by German explorers and their subsequent seizure in 1927 and labelling by Portuguese museum staff, can become fragments that reveal a partial biography of diasporic objects.<sup>107</sup>

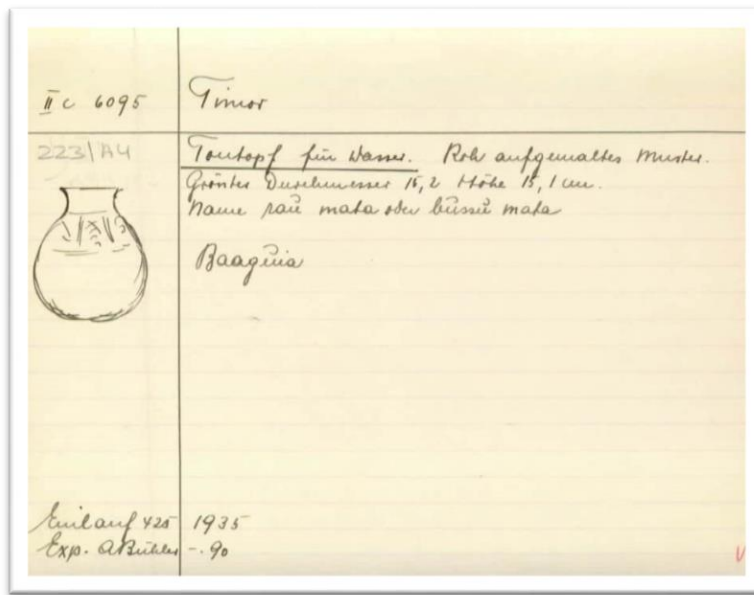
The accession cards note Bühler as the collector, the collection year, and the amount paid for the object. No record was made of the name of the person/s from whom each object was purchased. This lack of provenance information is another part of the process that marked the transition of objects from personal possessions into collective, museum property. Presumably the language barrier and sheer volume of objects being acquired prohibited the name of the vendor from being noted. Possibly, also, it was deemed to be an irrelevant detail at the time of acquisition. As the objects were given a new significance through their

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<sup>107</sup> Mary Bouquet and Jorge Freitas Branco (eds), *Artefactos Melanesios: Postmodernist Reflections* (Lisboa: Museu de Etnologia, 1988), 25–26.

acquisition, classification and later storage, preservation and display, the links back to their prior existence were severed causing their prior associations with people, families or clans to become permanently obscured.





Figures 3.12a, 3.12b & 3.12c: Hand-written and illustrated Museum der Kulturen Basel accession cards for MKB IIC 6000, MKB IIC 6046 and MKB IIC 6095 by Alfred Bühler, circa 1936.

Source: Museum der Kulturen Basel.

As the primary active agent in the acquisition of the Baguia Collection, Bühler influenced the shape and scale of the Collection based on his professional interests, aesthetics, opinions and attitudes and personal cultural perspective. Logistical and budgetary considerations also played a role in shaping the Collection. Bühler noted that some works were prohibitively expensive, whilst others were impractical to freight. The Collection was undoubtedly also shaped by the broader expedition team including Meyer, Mohammed, Achmad and the driver. The local community exerted influence over the development of the Collection as well, by determining what they were and were not prepared to sell to Bühler. Presumably they also retained authority over what they chose to divulge about particular objects and refrained from offering information that they considered sensitive or inappropriate to share with a foreigner (*malae*, T).

Bühler's interest in technical production is evident in his acquisition of not only objects but also the tools and equipment used to produce objects, such as wood-turning lathes, weaving looms and ceramic production tools. As previously discussed in Chapter 2, this expedition was instrumental in forging Bühler's enduring interest in textile production, which ultimately became the cornerstone of his work, his publications and indeed the MKB collections.



Bühler's vision for anthropological museums revolved around the role he attributed to material objects in explaining the essence and development of the cultures under scrutiny.

In his opinion the material inventory provides the most important and least adulterated form of evidence. However, the fact it cannot be compiled in its totality and that it is always linked to a people's intellectual culture may provide a serious setback ... He raised the question to what extent the products of foreign peoples can help to explain the essence and the development of the cultures in question ... it proves that the foremost task of anthropological research is to comprehend the development and essence of cultures ... especially those of primitive tribes.<sup>108</sup>

Bühler thus realised that material culture on its own did not provide a sufficient basis for forming conclusions about historical processes or cultural processes and systems.

Nonetheless, the comprehensive study of material objects such as textiles, basketry, tools and carvings, along with the technological methods of their production, also known as 'systemisation', became his 'principal method of inquiry'.<sup>109</sup> Such systematic classification procedures, applied to material culture, were based upon classificatory systems used in the natural sciences. This was reinforced by the MKB's use of the systematic cataloguing of collections developed at the RMEB (as discussed in Chapter 2).

Objects were collected, organized, and displayed to illustrate a largely progressive, evolutionary narrative, only this time the evolution was social and cultural rather than biological ... anthropologists believed that anthropological objects could function epistemologically for their discipline in roughly the same way natural history specimens functioned for the natural scientists. Provided they were collected, organized, and arranged properly, anthropological objects could convey knowledge about the people who produced them, standing in for the cultures they represented in museum

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<sup>108</sup> Bühler cited in Schmid, "Anthropology and Expeditions," 3. Bühler delivered his Habilitation lecture on 30 January 1947. A Habilitation lecture is the highest academic accolade in European academia and is equivalent to a post-doctoral lecture.

<sup>109</sup> Bühler cited by Schmid, "Anthropology and Expeditions," 3.

exhibits – a natural history of civilization, illustrated though objects gathered from all the world's 'primitive' people.<sup>110</sup>

The 1935 Expedition and the resulting acquisitions of 3,663 artefacts and 2,759 photographs exemplify how natural science classification systems were extended and absorbed into ethnographic practices with the aim of clarifying anthropological classifications, albeit under the guise of cultural difference.

In the task of preparing a written record of the Baguia Collection, it was Bühler alone who determined what aspects of each artefact were recorded, based on the available information interpreted by Mohammed and Achmad. Although he relied upon the active participation of the Baguia community, who could choose whether to divulge or withhold information, and the assistance of his interpreter/s, who would have been central to the data collection process, he selectively classified and ordered the data according to his own classificatory system. As a thorough ethnographer who 'worked in an exact and meticulous manner',<sup>111</sup> he achieved his goal and effectively created a time capsule of 1935 from Baguia. Simultaneously, Bühler placed his own imprint on the Collection, which says as much about him and his European sensibilities as it does about the Makasae people whose material culture forms the Collection.

The catalogue cards created by Bühler remain the authoritative documentation for the Baguia Collection. However, with the advent of digital collection management systems the process of selecting what information is captured on the database has created another layer of interpretation of the Collection. This is largely because the digital data is 'more fluid'; it is easier and simpler to update on a more regular basis than the hand-written cards. Changing content information on catalogue cards was rare, except for updating storage information.<sup>112</sup> Essential identification information including accession number, object name, title, medium, date of collection and country has been entered into the database. The collector and storage location information are also detailed. The dimensions and recent digital images of the objects are included, as a result of current research into the Collection. 'Timor Lorosae' is

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<sup>110</sup> Conn, *Do Museums Still Need Objects?* 30.

<sup>111</sup> Ohnemus, *An Ethnology of the Admiralty Islands*, 391.

<sup>112</sup> Richard Kunz, Curator, Southeast Asia, MKB, email correspondence with author, 16 June 2017.

listed in the category for ‘Country’, a recent addition following Timor-Leste’s independence since 2002.<sup>113</sup> In 2014 the classification terminology used in the MKB database follows:<sup>114</sup>

1. <i>Schmuck</i>	jewellery, ornaments for personal adornment
2. <i>Skulptur Holz &amp; Stein</i>	sculpture, wood and stone
3. <i>Waffen</i>	weapons, arms, instruments for use in attack or defence in combat (swords, guns, claws, etc.); any means used to fight (skill, wit, etc.)
4. <i>Textil</i>	textiles, garments
5. <i>Arbeitsprozess</i>	works-in-progress
6. <i>Musikinstrumente</i>	musical instruments
7. <i>Keramik</i>	ceramics
8. <i>Spiel</i>	games, toys

These classification categories are more closely aligned to object types than Bühler’s earlier classification system, which was based more on function. An analysis of the current database report shows that approximately 60 per cent of the Baguia Collection is not attributed to any specific category. Objects such as lime-powder containers, palm-wine beakers, and betelnut baskets, all arguably non-European objects, sat outside the 2014 standard MKB classification grouping. These changes in classification indicate that Bühler’s systematic classification system gave way to a newer system and illustrate the differing lenses used to view this Collection over time, according to changing museological trends and shifting practices. These changes reflect wider changes in the discipline of anthropology and anthropological collections over the intervening years since Bühler collected these objects from Baguia,

<sup>113</sup> This classification system has been updated again to ‘Timor-Leste’ in 2015. Richard Kunz, Curator, Southeast Asia, MKB, email correspondence with author, 17 June 2017.

<sup>114</sup> This information is based on a collection report of the Baguia Collection generated on 27 March 2014 by MKB staff. This classification system has emerged over time at MKB through a process of entering historical analogue data into a digital format. Thus the classification system used at MKB grows and changes continuously and is an ongoing ‘work-in-progress’. Richard Kunz, Curator, Southeast Asia, MKB, email correspondence with author, 16 June 2017. The current classifications systems as of 16 June 2017 are as follows: Work-in-progress (*Arbeitsprozess*, G), Film document (*Filmdokument*, G), Photography (*Fotographie*, G), Graphic (*Grafik*, G), Ceramics (*Keramik*, G), Ceramics work-in-progress (*Keramik-Arbeitsprozess*, G), Map – geographical map (*Landkarte - Karte geographisch*, G), Painting (*Malerei*, G), Musical Instrument (*Musikinstrumente*, G), Plastic, metal and bronze (*Plastik Metall und Bronze*, G), Popular picture world (*Populäre Bildwelt*, G), Jewellery (*Schmuck*, G), Sculpture, wood and stone (*Skulptur Holz und Stein*, G), Game (*Spiel*, G), Textiles (*Textil*, G), Textiles works-in-progress (*Textil-Arbeitsprozess*, G), Textile-technique (*Textil-Systematik*, G), Sound document (*Tondokument*, G), Weapons (*Waffen*, G) and Drawing (*Zeichnung*, G).

reminding us of the variability and precariousness of object classification, which alters according to the perspective of the viewer.

## The Baguia Collection and its historical photographs

Bühler was an accomplished photographer who documented the expedition extensively with his camera. The Baguia Collection includes approximately 300 photographs taken in Baguia during the period 31 July – 18 August 1935. Images include people performing daily activities such as gathering at markets, hunting and carrying water, and children at play. These photographs document explicitly the material culture used in daily life. A series of photographs documenting the ceremonial dancing on the occasion of the Administrator's visit to Baguia on 19 August 1935 serves as a useful means by which to identify the local attire of the time.<sup>115</sup>



Figure 3.13: 'Markt in Baagua' (Market in Baguia).

Source: Museum der Kulturen Basel, MKB (F)IIc 1176. Photograph by Dr Alfred Bühler, 1935.

<sup>115</sup> This event was described in Bühler's field diary as follows: 'All night people have been working to decorate Baagua for the celebrations because today the Administrator of Baucau is supposed to come and visit'. This was also the day that the expedition team departed Baguia; however, they were delayed for several hours due to mechanical problems with their car. 'During this time a huge crowd assembled in Baagua, decorated beautifully, which has been called here using drum signals over the last two days. There is nothing new for us to see.'

Due to Bühler's fascination with technological processes, he also photographed wood-turning production, textile production (namely spinning cotton and weaving), filing horn hair-combs and metal-smithing. A series of landscape images of fields, groves and rivers, which reflect Bühler's enduring interest in geography, depict the local natural environment, especially the magnificent Mount Matebian. He also photographed local architecture such as customary dwellings, ceremonial complexes, gravesites, the Baguia Fort and the Portuguese officials' residences. Details of some architectural elements were photographed, arguably as metonymic links to Bühler's fieldnotes. Whilst Bühler took these photographs to contextualise the Baguia Collection and the uses of the ethnographic objects that he acquired in Baguia, the photographs also serve as an enduring record of the people and physical landscape of the time.



Figure 3.14: 'Herstellung v. Hornkämmen' (Making/filing of horn combs), Betulari.

Source: Museum der Kulturen Basel, MKB (F)IIC 1253. Photograph by Alfred Bühler, 10 August 1935.

Other photographs provide evocative insights into the actual expedition. As noted in Chapter 2 (see Figure 2.5), close-up facial shots of Makasae people were taken for the purposes of Meyer's research. One photograph (see Figure 3.15) shows Meyer at work undertaking dental or cranial measurements of a Makasae man, including a device<sup>116</sup>, which

<sup>116</sup> Compare the implement on the wall in MKB (F)IIC 1332 with Paul Broca, "Instructions Générales pour les Recherches et Observations Anthropologiques," *Mémoires de la Société d'Anthropologie de Paris*, no. 15 (1865): Figure 8: 149 and Figure 9: 156. These figures illustrate apparatus used for the measurement of human faces

he presumably employed for this task. Photographs of the archaeological excavations undertaken by Bühler in Baguia show local Makasae men digging the loamy clay earth of the region (see Figure 3.4).



Figure 3.15: ‘Meyer beim Messen in Baguia’ (Meyer measuring in Baguia).

Source: Museum der Kulturen Basel, MKB (F)Ic 1332. Photograph by Alfred Bühler, August 1935.

Bühler shot a total of 12 rolls of 35 mm Leica film during his visit to Baguia, produced by the German optics and camera company. Each film contained a maximum of 32 images.<sup>117</sup> Upon his return to Basel, he selected images from the 12 films for printing.<sup>118</sup> The photographs Bühler chose not to print were either poorer versions of better shots or images

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and crania. It is uncertain whether a type of goniometer (an instrument used to measure facial angles) is depicted in the photograph MKB (F)Ic 1332. Also see a goniometer used by Paul Broca (1824–1880), French anatomist and anthropologist between 1862 and 1900. Science Museum, “Broca goniometer for measuring angles of the face, France, 1862–1900”.

<<http://collection.sciencemuseum.org.uk/objects/co134357/broca-goniometer-for-measuring-angles-of-the-face-france-1862-1900-goniometer>>. Accessed 20 April 2017.

<sup>117</sup> The films shot in Baguia were documented by Bühler as follows: XXXV (1–28), XXXVI (1–30), XXXVII (1–31), XXXVIII (1–29), XXXIX (1–28), XL (1–30), XLI (1–32), XLII (1–31), XLIII (1–26), XLIV (1–28), XLV (1–27) and XLVI (1–33). An additional two films, XXXIV (29–30) and XLVII (1–9), document the journey from Soe–Kupang–Baguia and the breakdown at departure for the return journey from Baguia to Dili respectively.

<sup>118</sup> From the entire Timor, Rote, Flores Expedition 1935 Bühler selected 1535 photographs to be printed, which were inventoried as follows: MKB (F)Ic 492–617, MKB (F)Ic 630–1046, MKB (F)Ic 1068–1956, MKB (F)Ic 1981–2023, MKB (F)Ic 2790–2813 and MKB (F)Ic 2831–2865. Richard Kunz, Curator, Southeast Asia, MKB, email communication with author, 5 May 2017.

of the expedition process. Plates were also shot and sent in crate MV 25 to Basel, according to the expedition packing lists. A total of 32 plates, although recorded, do not appear to have been developed or printed for the MKB Archive.<sup>119</sup> Motion picture films were also referred to in packing lists, which Bühler requested be sent to Meyer's home, because they related to Meyer's work.<sup>120</sup> As a condition listed in the Instructions, photographs were to be processed and numbered in the field and then sent to Basel. Bühler's packing and written instruction on *Sammelliste 4* regarding the films and plates suggests that they were processed back in Switzerland.<sup>121</sup>

### Accessioning the historical photographs into the MKB collection

The photographs in the MKB collection are recorded as 'Vintage print 1935 starting from original negative'.<sup>122</sup> Each vintage printed photograph is mounted on a card upon which features a hand-written heading 'K.S.I.' (Kleine Sunda Inseln / Lesser Sunda Islands) and 'Port-Ost Timor', (Portuguese East Timor), followed by specific information such as a title or short description, the location (i.e. 'Baagua'), the film and negative numbers.<sup>123</sup> A stamped accession number for each photograph appears in the top left hand corner of the card. The photographs are marked with an MKB accession prefix in the top right-hand corner – II.c.C.4.b. = Portuguese Timor. At some date after 1935 the use of (F) indicating photograph (*fotographie*, G) was introduced to differentiate between MKB collection objects (denoted by

<sup>119</sup> *Leicafilme und Platten, Liste 3*, Museum der Kulturen Archives. Platten 82–114 are listed as images of Baguia men, Baguia women, Mount Matebian, the Commandant's house, the school and the people of Baguia.

<sup>120</sup> *Sammelliste 4* (Collection List 4), Museum der Kulturen Basel Archives. A note on the list states: 'Photographer plates and films are contained of MV 25. Ask that the motion picture films are sent to the Meyer family on Heinrichsgasse. The photographer plates all must be washed, again likewise the Leicafilme'. In April 2017, WL Meyer's daughter gifted these motion pictures to the MKB. It is anticipated that they may be digitised in the future. Richard Kunz, Curator, Southeast Asia, MKB, email correspondence with author, 16 June 2017.

<sup>121</sup> Attachment: Instructions to the Expedition Agreement, point 4. It was also noted that cinematography equipment was supplied at Bühler's private expense (see point 3).

<sup>122</sup> In the MKB collection database the photographic collection is catalogued as follows:

<i>Abbildungen</i>	illustration; image, figure, reflection, picture; map,
<i>Inventarnummer</i>	inventory number / accession number
<i>Einlaufnummer</i>	intake number
<i>Andere Nr</i>	revised number
<i>Material/Technik</i>	material/technique
<i>Datierung</i>	dating
<i>Einlieferer</i>	deliverer
<i>Hersteller/Fotograf</i>	manufacturer/photographer
<i>Herk.6: Land</i>	country, nation

<sup>123</sup> The MKB photograph cards were annotated by a staff member other than Bühler, as the hand-writing differs with Bühler's on the object accession cards.

IIc) and photographs (denoted by (F)IIc). An acquisition number 134 (*Einlaufnummer* 134) has been applied to all photographs from the 1935 Expedition.

In an attempt to preserve the original black and white photographs taken by Bühler during the 1935 Expedition, the entire set of negatives was printed following his death in 1981. These were mounted and accessioned into the permanent MKB collection in 1991, using inventory numbers relating to the negative numbers.<sup>124</sup> These photographs, which included the 12 films Bühler had shot in Baguia, were printed in full, revealing a series of images that Bühler had deemed less important upon his return from the 1935 Expedition and had not printed.

The most recently printed images give glimpses into the ‘behind the scenes’ work of the expedition; for example Meyer sorting what are either natural or archaeological specimens in Niki Niki<sup>125</sup>, and Meyer eating his midday meal with the European trappings of cutlery and crockery, seated at a table covered with a tablecloth (see Figure 3.16). Other insightful moments documented include the ‘cargo vehicle’ used to transport the expedition team and the cargo-laden vehicle whilst being repaired (see Figure 3.17).



Figure 3.16: ‘Dr. W. L. Meyer verpflegt sich’ (Dr WL Meyer caters for himself).

Source: Museum der Kulturen Basel, MKB (F)IIc 19743. Photograph by Dr Alfred Bühler, August 1935.

<sup>124</sup> This set of prints produced in 1981 are numbers MKB (F)IIc 18429 – MKB (F)IIc 21187.

<sup>125</sup> See MKB (F)IIc 19252.





Figure 3.17: 'Reparatur an überladene[n] Fahrzeug, Baguia' (Repairing the overloaded vehicle, Baguia).

Source: Museum der Kulturen Basel, MKB (F)IIc 19771. Photograph by Alfred Bühler, August 1935.



Figure 3.18: 'Dr. A. Bühler bei Zwischenverpflegung' (Dr A Bühler having a snack) en route to Betulari.

Source: Museum der Kulturen Basel, MKB (F)IIc 19636. Photograph presumably taken by Wilhelm L Meyer, 10 August 1935.

The extent to which Meyer also took photographs remains uncertain, but he presumably captured the few images of Bühler whilst in Baguia, enjoying a picnic en route to Betulari (see Figure 3.18). It seems reasonable to assume that Bühler was the primary photographer and in this role he was keen to present a ‘pure’ ethnographic record devoid of his own presence or that of other expedition team members. By selecting which photographs were printed, Bühler shaped his record of the expedition, with the intention of emphasising and preserving the authenticity of his ethnographic record of ‘the other’.

No names of people appearing in the photographs were recorded, but places and in most instances the activities being undertaken were incorporated into the titles. The lack of acknowledgment of individual people’s identities indicates the limitations of the encounter between Bühler and his subjects. In discussing the concept of the ‘non-encounter’ in the context of colonial cross-cultural encounter, Thomas explains:

European and indigenous imaginings of place, self, sociality and otherness were effectively autonomous, they were introspective, they were not caught up in dialogue, they mobilized what we call ‘the other’ largely for their existing imaginative purposes. Non-encounters of this kind may be most conspicuous in early phases of colonial histories, during which contacts may be fleeting and discontinuous.<sup>126</sup>

Bühler’s contact was ‘discontinuous’ and his photographs reinforce the points of interest that he, as a European, was drawn to as a fleeting visitor to Baguia. Bühler was documenting a form of knowledge from his perspective which, once systematically ordered and categorised, would illustrate the life and culture of ‘the other’ and complement and contextualise the extraordinary Collection of material culture he amassed in Baguia.

### **The display of the Baguia Collection at the Museum der Kulturen Basel – a Swiss heritage collection?**

The display history of the Baguia Collection subsequent to its accession into the MKB permanent collection in 1936–1937 reveals its continued social life as part of the larger body of acquisitions from the 1935 Expedition, in a European museum context. Arguably, once

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<sup>126</sup> Nicholas Thomas, “Introduction,” in *Double Vision: Art Histories and Colonial Histories in the Pacific*, edited by Nicholas Thomas and Diane Losche, 1–18 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 5.

in Switzerland, the Collection has been used partially to represent ‘the other’, but its fuller use has been to represent a version of Swiss heritage. ‘Re-presentations of history cannot be escaped, and neither museums nor historians need apologize for the act of re-framing dislocated objects.’<sup>127</sup> James Clifford has suggested that the act of collecting should be viewed as ‘an important historical form of Western subjectivity; that anthropology and modern art were invented by appropriating “exotic things, facts and meanings”.’<sup>128</sup> Clifford emphasised the word appropriation ‘to make one’s own’.<sup>129</sup> Whilst an ‘[a]ppropriation of alterity [of being different; otherness] is an integral part of the humanist and historicist representations of difference encountered in ethnographic museums’<sup>130</sup>, in the examples that follow I maintain that the MKB has re-framed or appropriated the Collection to make it relevant in a Swiss context.

Once the Baguia Collection was accessioned Bühler curated an exhibition based on acquisitions from the 1935 Expedition entitled, ‘Primitive handicrafts amongst primitive peoples’ (*Primitives Handwerk bei Naturvölkern*, G), which was presented at the Museum of Applied Arts (*Gewerbemuseum Basel*) in 1937.<sup>131</sup> This alternative venue was selected due to limited gallery space at MKB at that time. The exhibition featured woven textiles and elucidated weaving techniques from eastern Indonesia and Portuguese Timor. Bühler published an accompanying eponymous catalogue as well.<sup>132</sup> In addition to the expedition report<sup>133</sup> (which was published verbatim in the Annual Report, 1936) several publications followed (refer to Appendix B for a list of publications and exhibitions that were generated as a consequence of the 1935 Expedition).<sup>134</sup>

<sup>127</sup> Prakash, “Museum Matters,” 209.

<sup>128</sup> Prakash, “Museum Matters,” 209.

<sup>129</sup> James Clifford cited in Prakash, “Museum Matters,” 209.

<sup>130</sup> Prakash, “Museum Matters,” 209.

<sup>131</sup> *Expeditions. The World in a Suitcase* was presented at MKB from 25 April to 23 May 1937.

<sup>132</sup> Meuli “Alfred Bühler,” 19 (see footnote 9) cites ‘Primitives Handwerk bei Naturvölkern. Ausstellung Gewerbemuseum Basel, 1937.’ This was an exhibition catalogue attributed to Bühler as follows: Bühler, Alfred. 1937. “Primitives Handwerk bei Naturvölkern: Sammlung Dr. Alfred Bühler”. Basel: Gewerbemuseum Basel (Ausstellung im Gewerbemuseum Basel vom 25. April bis 23. Mai 1937). [Bühler, Alfred. 1937. *Primitive Handicrafts amongst Primitive Peoples: The Collection of Dr. Alfred Bühler*. Basel: Basel Museum of Applied Arts (Exhibition in the Basel Museum of Applied Arts, 25 April to 23 May 1937)].

<sup>133</sup> Alfred Bühler, Schlussbericht. Reise nach den Kleinen Sundainseln Timor, Rote und Flores: 27 März – 18 Dezember, 1935. Unpublished Final Report, 1936. Museum der Kulturen Basel Archives, Switzerland.

<sup>134</sup> Meuli “Alfred Bühler,” 19 (see footnote 9) cites Alfred Bühler’s publications as follows:

“Bericht über die im Jahre 1935 auf Timor, Rote und Flores angelegten Sammlungen: Verhandlungen Naturforschenden Gesellschaft Basel, Bd. 48 (1937): 13–37; Die Herstellung von Ikat-tüchern auf der Insel Rote: ebda. 50 (1939): 32–97; Die Entwicklung des Handwerks bei den Naturvölkern. Vom Werkzeug der Naturvölker. Die Entwicklung des Webens bei den Naturvölkern: Ciba-Rundschau Nr. 25 (Mai 1938): 901–

Bühler continued to publish select photographs and objects from the 1935 Expedition, including examples from the Baguia Collection, in the CIBA-Rundschau publications, specifically in May 1938 and September 1941.<sup>135</sup> These articles focused on eastern Indonesian and Portuguese Timor *ikat* technique, dyes and dye processes and craft equipment and technologies. Bühler explored the origins and dissemination of the *ikat* technique in Southeast Asia, which resonated with Swiss textile cottage and manufacturing industries. Such publications, supported by the Swiss CIBA, promoted Bühler's research and contributed to furthering contemporary commercial aspirations in Basel of chemical dye production and pharmaceutical manufacturers. Undoubtedly the Swiss CIBA also reaped endorsement and respectability through alignment with international research and the MKB's enhanced collections.

Thereafter, the Baguia Collection was largely dormant until 2012 when the exhibition *Expeditions. The World in a Suitcase* (hereafter *Expeditions*) was mounted at the MKB.<sup>136</sup> This thought-provoking exhibition and accompanying catalogue presented artefacts acquired from several Swiss anthropological expeditions, each of which contributed to the growth of the MKB ethnographic collections. *Expeditions* displayed various artefacts and photographs from the Collection.<sup>137</sup> The eponymous catalogue accompanying the exhibition included an article entitled "The Timor, Rote and Flores (Indonesia and East Timor) Expedition, 1935, Alfred Bühler: Cultural Relations and Style Provinces" and included three photographs taken by Bühler in East Timor.<sup>138</sup>

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922; Vom Lebensraum der Südseevölker. Die Verbreitung der Rindenstoffe: ebd. Nr. 32 (Dezember 1938): 1162–1170.

<sup>135</sup> Alfred Bühler, "Vom Werkzeug der Naturvölker," in *Handwerk und Weben bei den Naturvölkern: Ciba-Rundschau*, Nr. 25 (May 1938): 908–912; Alfred Bühler, "Die Entwicklung des Handwerks bei den Naturvölkern," in *Handwerk und Weben bei den Naturvölkern: Ciba-Rundschau*, Nr. 25 (May 1938): 901–908; Alfred Bühler, "Die Entwicklung des Webens bei den Naturvölkern," in *Handwerk und Weben bei den Naturvölkern: Ciba-Rundschau*, Nr. 25 (May 1938): 912–924; Alfred Bühler, "Die Ikat Technik," in *Ikatten: Ciba-Rundschau*, Nr. 51 (September 1941): 1850–1860. Alfred Bühler, "Farbstoffe und Färbemethoden für Ikat-Garne," in *Ikatten: Ciba-Rundschau*, Nr. 51 (September 1941): 1861–1868; Alfred Bühler, "Vom Ursprung und von der Verbreitung der Ikat-Technik," in *Ikatten: Ciba-Rundschau*, Nr. 51 (September 1941): 1868–1876.

<sup>136</sup> MKB presented the exhibition *Expeditions. The World in a Suitcase* from 29 June 2012 until 10 April 2016.

<sup>137</sup> A total of 42 objects from the Baguia Collection were displayed in the MKB in *Expeditions* including 12 horn, bamboo, coconut shell and shell spoons; three incised bamboo lime-powder containers; two handwoven textiles; four carved ancestral sculptures; one carved door; two wood-turning lathes; ten wood-turning tools; two wooden bowls as works-in-progress; two wooden bowls; and four pieces of cotton spinning and preparation equipment.

<sup>138</sup> Kunz, *The Timor, Rote and Flores (Indonesia and East Timor) Expedition, 1935*, 16–21.

*Expeditions* was a ‘first, decisive step’ by the MKB in rethinking how the institution’s ethnographic collections were assembled and acquired, and exploring the relevance of its ethnographic collections in the twenty-first century. As MKB Director, Dr Anna Schmid, asserts:

On the journey to becoming a fully-fledged discipline [ethnography], anthropological expeditions played an important role. These ‘quests’ in the name of science – among other agendas – had their heyday from the end of the nineteenth century up to the Second World War.<sup>139</sup>

In a post-colonial world that no longer embraces many of the concepts that motivated the formation of ethnographic collections during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the validity of ethnographic museums is increasingly under review. *Expeditions* considered the shifting practices of museum collecting and how, in the past, ethnographic collections were assembled and acquired to ‘situate their motives and actions in a historical setting, allowing us to trace the trajectories of a tradition that we are all part of and that still informs our bearings’.<sup>140</sup> This exhibition deconstructed late nineteenth and early to mid-twentieth century Swiss ethnographic practice and, in doing so, the MKB chose to use the Collection not to represent ‘the other’, but to tell a Swiss story, the history of Swiss ethnographic collecting practice at the MKB.

Other Swiss ethnographers who undertook similar expeditions included zoologist cousins Paul and Fritz Sarasin, who travelled to Sri Lanka (Ceylon) in 1883–1886; chemist and anthropologist Felix Speiser, who visited the New Hebrides (Vanuatu) in 1910–1912; and anthropologist Paul Hinderling and travel-writer and photographer René Gardi who travelled to north Cameroon in 1953.<sup>141</sup> Each of these Swiss expeditions was initiated by the Ethnographic Commission and the Museum Commission with the aim, respectively, of

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<sup>139</sup> Schmid, “Anthropology and Expeditions,” 2–3. Schmid cites expeditions such as the Jessup North Pacific Expedition, 1897–1902, led by Franz Boas, the founder of American cultural anthropology; the Cambridge Anthropological Expedition to Torres Strait Islands, 1898, led by Alfred C Haddon; and the ‘Dakar to Djibouti’ Expedition, 1931–1933, undertaken by French anthropologists Michel Leiris and Marcel Griaule.

<sup>140</sup> Schmid, “Anthropology and Expeditions,” 3.

<sup>141</sup> The Hinderling and Gardi expedition saw another development in the approach to anthropology and the formation of ethnographic collections and research. Hinderling, a student of Bühler and Speiser, continued the practice of gathering data on artefacts and attempted to embed artefacts in their cultural context or setting with longer fieldwork periods, whilst Gardi’s photography focused on ‘creating a pictorial world on the strength of the associative power of his images’ (see Schmid, “Anthropology and Expeditions,” 3).

‘promoting science in general and their museum in particular’ as well as fostering ethnographic acquisitions.<sup>142</sup> The earlier expeditions of Paul and Fritz Sarasin and of Felix Speiser, and their broader legacies, provided a context within which Bühler’s ethnographic work was shaped; and Bühler, in turn, then influenced the work of Hinderling and Gardi.

These four expeditions shaped the MKB, its *raison d’être* and its collections. They illuminate the significant issues of the day, how knowledge about ‘others’ was acquired, collection development methodologies and anthropological discourses. *Expeditions* also explored the financial and political contexts within which expeditions operated, as well as the individuals who undertook these expeditions.<sup>143</sup> Aspects of the museum process were demystified by exhibiting accession cards, field notes and photographs of the collectors, the communities and people that they researched. *Expeditions* used collection objects, photographs and documents to interpret the expeditions. This indicates the shifting practices of ethnographic museums away from the increasingly politically sensitive use of objects to represent ‘other’ cultures and towards using their collections to tell their own heritage and history.

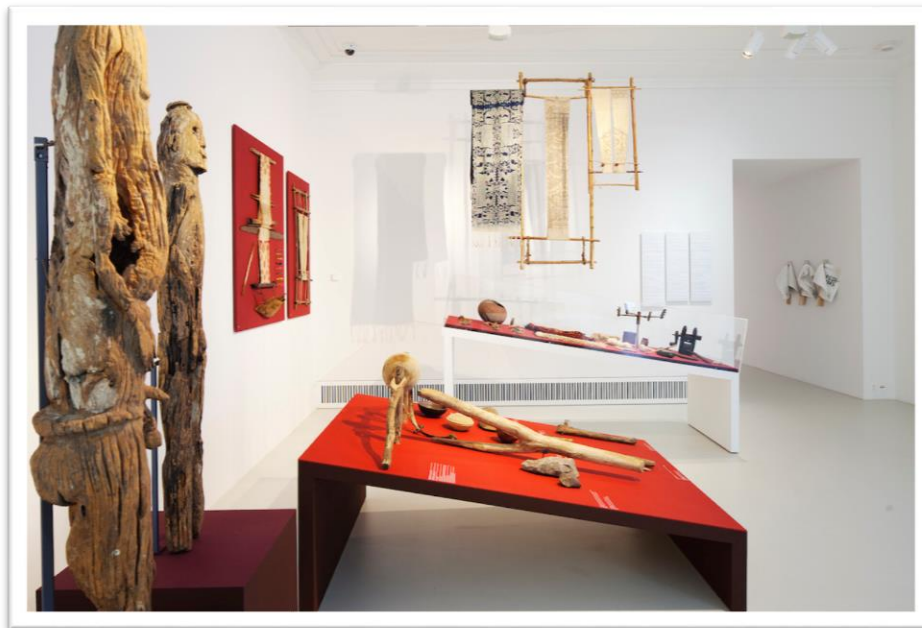


Figure 3.19: Installation of the exhibition *Expeditions. The World in a Suitcase*, Museum der Kulturen Basel, 2012, featuring artefacts acquired from Baguia by Alfred Bühler, 1935.

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<sup>142</sup> Schmid, “Anthropology and Expeditions,” 2.

<sup>143</sup> Schmid, “Anthropology and Expeditions,” 3.

Source: Museum der Kulturen Basel. Photograph by Derek Li Wan Po, 2012.

The exhibition successfully engaged with the institution's anthropological history while also incorporating extensive collection holdings. Approximately 200 objects<sup>144</sup> acquired from the 1935 Expedition were displayed, including objects from the Baguia Collection: a display of intricately carved coconut, horn and wooden spoons, carved wooden ancestral figurines and architectural elements, together with textiles and looms, wooden bowls and lathes. These objects were presented beside Bühler's travel documents, the Instructions, the itinerary of the expedition and photographs that form a narrative of the 1935 Expedition.

The Baguia Collection objects were 're-framed' to tell the story of Alfred Bühler and WL 'Willy' Meyer's expedition. This indicates that the objects' 'social lives', following their accessioning into a Swiss cultural institution, now include their association with Bühler, his reputation and achievements. Thus, the Collection has been re-interpreted to respond to shifting museological practices and the changing goals of the MKB, including how it represents itself and its history. *Expeditions* reinforces the claim that

[r]ecently there has been a small revival of interest in museums and their collections by anthropologists ... But much of that interest, in essence, is the anthropological study *of* the museum rather than the study of anthropology that happens *in* the museum. Collections have been recast, often with fascinating results, to tell stories about collectors, about the museum institution itself, and about the processes of expansion and colonialism of which these collections were a part rather than about the indigenous 'cultures' they were originally thought to represent. It is as if biologists went to the lab to study the lab itself rather than the things growing in the Petri dishes.<sup>145</sup>

The exhibition also successfully reinterpreted the relevance of MKB's collections by interpreting them through Bühler's, and the other ethologists', gaze and legacy, thus making the Makasae objects accessible and relevant to the museum's predominantly European audience.

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<sup>144</sup> MKB *Expeditions* room brochure (as of 29 June 2012).

<sup>145</sup> Conn, *Do Museums Still Need Objects?* 79.

This curatorial premise reinforces, possibly intentionally, the ‘non-encounter’ that resulted from the Baguia Collection’s development. Indeed, Schmid refers to the formation of diasporic European ethnographic collections as ‘quests – in the name of science and other agendas’.<sup>146</sup> If the exhibition depicts the ethnographer’s ‘view’, as a consequence of his brief visit to Baguia and contact with the Makasae people and culture, what would a Makasae vision of this same Collection look like? Is it possible that the Collection has become inter-cultural in nature, with layered associations applied to objects and that it has indeed become a conduit of ‘double vision’?<sup>147</sup> The potential of considering such an undertaking, of seeking a Makasae response to the Collection, is indirectly alluded to by Schmid when describing *Expeditions* as a ‘vital prerequisite “for considering our past and reflecting on the future and our mutual connectedness characterised by uncertainty and discomfort”’.<sup>148</sup>

Another recent initiative that engaged the Baguia Collection occurred in 2014, when Dr Marie-Louise Nabholz-Kartaschoff published several examples of handwoven textiles and fibre apparel from the Baguia Collection in the publication accompanying the exhibition *Textiles of Timor: Island of the Woven Sea*.<sup>149</sup> The title of Nabholz-Kartaschoff’s contribution, ‘Alfred Bühler’s collection from Baguia at the Museum Kulturen, Basel’, reinforces the manner in which this collection is inextricably linked, in Switzerland, to the identity and achievement of Alfred Bühler. It also resonates with other collections acquired by Bühler that are similarly characterised with his name.<sup>150</sup> Most recently the exhibition *Striking Patterns: Global Traces in Local Ikat Fashion Design*<sup>151</sup>, curated by Richard Kunz, Curator of Southeast Asia, MKB, and Professor Willemijn de Jong, Guest Curator, drew upon the MKB textile collections from eastern Indonesia and Timor-Leste to illuminate the development of the resist-dye (*safara*, M; *futus*, T; *ikat*, I) tradition and to illustrate how weavers from these regions have engaged with foreign influences over time and innovated in their textile designs.

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<sup>146</sup> Schmid, “Anthropology and Expeditions,” 2.

<sup>147</sup> Thomas, “Introduction,” 2; Conn, *Do Museums Still Need Objects?* 82. Conn discusses the risk of repatriation that could obscure the biographies of objects, its history, perception and value as attributed in other contexts.

<sup>148</sup> Schmid, “Anthropology and Expeditions,” 3. Schmid cites Paul Rabinow.

<sup>149</sup> Marie-Louise Nabholz-Kartaschoff, “Alfred Bühler’s Collection from Baguia at the Museum Kulturen, Basel,” in *Textiles of Timor: Island in the Woven Sea*, edited by Roy W Hamilton and Joanna Barrkman (Los Angeles: Fowler Museum at UCLA, 2014), 197–212.

<sup>150</sup> See Ohnemus, *An Ethnology of the Admiralty Islands*.

<sup>151</sup> *Striking Patterns: Global Traces in Local Ikat Fashion Design* was exhibited at the MKB from 21 October 2016 to 26 March 2017.



Although no textiles from the Baguia Collection were displayed, two ancestral figures (*atema*, M) were included in the exhibition (see Figure 5.13).<sup>152</sup>

The Baguia Collection has enjoyed a resurgence of interest and had a more active exhibition presence at the MKB in the past five years, following a hiatus of activity since the late 1930s, as new contexts for its display are identified. The materiality and presence of objects and ‘a bottom-up focus on objects’ may come to influence future displays of the Collection as museology becomes increasingly interested in the material effects of objects in tandem with, or instead of, their social texts or cultural symbolism.<sup>153</sup>

## Conclusion

The 1935 Expedition achieved its goals as set out by the Commission. The Baguia Collection remains as evidence of the European fascination during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in determining the origins and migratory patterns of the peoples of the island Southeast Asian region of Timor, Rote and Flores, and to develop the MKB’s ethnographic collections. In Bühler’s own words,

the journey was a success as far as acquisitions are concerned. The museum’s inventory has been increased significantly, which also means we can now eliminate a large number of doublets, either by sale or by exchange, which always proves worthwhile.<sup>154</sup>

In relation to the expedition goal of identifying racial typologies and boundaries, Bühler was unable to reach any definitive conclusions, let alone come into contact with the elusive ‘diminutive population of the area of “Fatumatubia”’ noted by Forbes.

The process of exchange and acquisition that took place between Bühler, the expedition team and the community of Baguia, which occurred within the legal framework of the day, is documented in the photographs and diary that Bühler created and in the object records that he wrote and illustrated, presumably with assistance and interpretations of other intermediaries, such as the expedition team members Mohammad and Achmad. The

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<sup>152</sup> *Striking Patterns* featured two *atema*, MKB IIc 6410 and MKB IIc 6411.

<sup>153</sup> Adam Bencard, “Presence in the Museum: On Metonymies, Discontinuity and History without Stories,” *Museum & Society*, vol. 12, no. 1 (March 2014): 30.

<sup>154</sup> Bühler, Final Report, III.

engagement can be considered as somewhat of a ‘non-encounter’ in light of the period of time he spent in the region, but perhaps reflecting Bühler’s collecting approach. The transition from personal property to ethnographic object left its trace on some of the objects held in the Collection in the form of hand-written pencilled field collection codes, ‘fragments’ that marked the commencement of the journey of these objects from the remote mountain village of Baguia to the storeroom of a Swiss city’s museum. This process also stripped the objects of their former ownership, but retained other important aspects of their biographies. Since arriving in Switzerland, the Baguia Collection has been accessioned, classified and stored to ensure its long-term preservation. It continues to develop a history, as a collection, within the museum context as it is re-classified, documented, exhibited and published – each of these actions adding to the unfolding ‘biography’ of this diasporic Collection.

Bühler acquired, within the existing law of the day, an extensive range of material culture, from the mundane to the majestic, which he meticulously systematically documented and catalogued, according to his interpretation of the available data. He also acquired several examples of similar types of objects to enable comparative assessment of style and form. He did not concern himself with the intellectual culture of the Makasae people and spent minimal time trying to understand why people used these objects or much about their cultural significance. By his own admission, the material inventory could never be ‘compiled in its totality’ and the fact that it was ‘always linked to a people’s intellectual culture may provide a serious setback’.<sup>155</sup> Nonetheless, for Bühler the ultimate aim of collecting remained the documentation of other cultures, ‘especially those of primitive tribes’.<sup>156</sup>

Although the Baguia Collection was exhibited during 1937 and published, in part, during 1938 and 1941, it lay dormant thereafter for more than seven decades. During that period, significant shifts occurred in the politics and practice of ethnographic collecting, interpretation and display. Issues of representation and presentation of ethnographic collections became the content of museum exhibitions themselves, as museums grappled to make diasporic and other collections garnered from earlier, out-dated collecting agendas relevant to their audiences in the early twenty-first century. The formative collecting expeditions of the MKB and Swiss ethnography now illuminate how knowledge about ‘the

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<sup>155</sup> Bühler cited in Schmid, “Anthropology and Expeditions,” 3.

<sup>156</sup> Bühler cited in Schmid, “Anthropology and Expeditions,” 3.

other' was once believed to reside within the detailed cataloguing of material culture collections, derived from classification systems used to develop knowledge of the natural world.

Exhibitions such as *Expeditions* at MKB powerfully illustrate how the intercultural and layered meanings attributed to objects are multifarious, determined primarily by the viewers and their positioned vision. In *Expeditions*, the Baguia Collection is presented through the European gaze of Alfred Bühler, thus making the Collection itself an artefact of Bühler's engagement with Baguia and its residents in 1935. From this perspective, the Collection has become embedded in the cultural heritage of Basel and Switzerland.

What now remains to be examined is whether and how the Baguia Collection holds value for the descendants of its original owners. The Collection, both its objects and photographs, exists as a time capsule of life in Baguia during 1935, capturing the technological production and skills of the Makasae people, together with aspects of their day-to-day and social worlds. What happens when this time-capsule is reunited with the Baguia community? What are the layers of meaning encoded around and enshrined within these objects from a Makasae cultural perspective in the current era? Do these objects and photographs trigger memories and the further transmission of cultural knowledge? Does the Baguia Collection have the potential to ignite collective cultural memory for the descendants of the people who made and used it, and ultimately sold it to Bühler in order that he send it to MKB, far off in Switzerland, in 1935? The next chapter begins to examine these questions and considers what happens when the Collection is re-encountered by the residents of Baguia in 2014, almost 80 years after its acquisition by Bühler and its accession into the permanent collection of the MKB.



## Chapter 4

### Engaging with Makasae objects – then and now

Museums are places where we can measure the distance between then and now. In other words, whether they mean to or not, all museums race against ‘the acceleration of history’.<sup>1</sup>

In this chapter, the question of what relevance the Baguia Collection still holds for the people of Baguia comes into focus as I document the source community’s engagement with images of the Collection. The Collection serves as a marker of a moment in time, a time capsule, which can be used to compare and contrast the shifts and developments that have occurred in Makasae society during the intervening years.

The historical nature of the Baguia Collection, now preserved at the MKB, means that at the time of my research it was located on the edge of living memory. To make comparisons between ‘then and now’ there needs to be knowledge of the objects within the society. ‘What makes an object relevant or useful ... is not just the object itself, but the knowledge involved in recognizing an object for what it is and how it can be used.’<sup>2</sup> This ability to ‘recognise’ or to be familiar with objects is a critical part of the process of the ‘regeneration and maintenance of knowledge and the construction of group identity’.<sup>3</sup> While this may seem a self-evident statement, it is a critical point for this research project. In instances where objects are unable to be recognised, the opportunity for associated knowledge or information to be triggered is lost, with only secondary resources, if they exist, to provide an interpretation.<sup>4</sup>

I begin this chapter by positioning my research within the wider context of digital access and return of cultural and archival collections to museum audiences and source communities. I proceed to an overview of the changes and continuities that have occurred in Makasae material culture between 1935 until 2014. This contextualises the discussion in relation to the Baguia Collection amassed by Bühler and highlights some of the shifts of status and value attributed to objects that have occurred during this period (as discussed in Chapter 3). It also

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<sup>1</sup> Conn, *Do Museums Still Need Objects?* 17.

<sup>2</sup> Hodder, *Entangled*, 3.

<sup>3</sup> Allen and Hamby, “Pathways to Knowledge: Research, Agency and Power Relations in the Context of Collaborations between Museums and Source Communities,” 209–229.

<sup>4</sup> In the case of the Baguia Collection, Bühler’s documentation exists in the German written notes on the accession cards.

allows an understanding of the ways in which people responded to these Collection objects when they were presented to them as images in 2014. Next, I convey how I documented the Collection *in situ* in Basel so as to ‘return’ it in digital and printed versions to Baguia in 2014. I provide some insights relating to the materiality and sensory nature of the Collection that I gained while documenting and becoming familiar with the Collection at the MKB. These insights highlight some methodological strengths and weaknesses that affected my research project and have wider implications for the digital return of cultural material to source communities.

Thereafter the discussion focuses on the methodology I employed to present the Baguia Collection to the eight communities of Baguia Sub-district – six Makasae-speaking communities and two Naueti-speaking communities. The chapter focuses on the general responses informants had to viewing the Baguia Collection objects rather than the specific information that people conveyed about particular objects, as this latter information has been captured separately on the OCCAMS database. This methodological discussion raises issues that critically informed and, in some instances, compromised the community engagement process with the Collection and, by implication, the documentation of the Collection. My discussion of the informants’ responses as a consequence of viewing the Collection objects also identifies broader underlying issues that contributed to their various readings, reactions and responses. These issues also can be extrapolated to apply more widely to the practice of digital return of cultural collections to source communities.

Following this methodological overview, I present three vignettes. Each vignette elucidates a specific response to a group of objects from the Baguia Collection by Baguia residents. These vignettes have been selected from a range of accounts, as together they illustrate some of the complex responses that the Collection objects evoked and illustrate how ‘[objects] are ... sites of human meaning-making, particularly when they are understood as associated with personal or group histories’.<sup>5</sup> I conclude by considering some of the benefits and disadvantages of engagement with historical cultural material for the Baguia community and what implications this has for the broader practice of the digital return of cultural collections to source communities.

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<sup>5</sup> Diane Hafner, “Objects, Agency and Context: Australian Aboriginal Expressions of Connection in Relation to Museum Artefacts,” *Journal of Material Culture*, vol. 18, no. 4 (2013): 355.

## The digital return of cultural and archival material

As museums and ‘the archive’ strive to become more relational in their operations with audiences and source communities, a major shift in their practice has been the digitisation of collections. Recent advances in technology have been a game-changer for museums and how they engage with audiences and communities. Access to collections is now largely deemed to be provided by museums to their audiences and communities once digitised collections are available via the World Wide Web. Museums now face the challenge of digitising their collections, which is no small matter. Such an activity can be seen as a means of providing access to collections or as ‘data sharing’.<sup>6</sup>

My research aims to distinguish the practice of digital return of cultural material as a means of connecting source communities with their cultural patrimony held in museums as a stand-alone practice, independent of notions of physical return or repatriation.<sup>7</sup> This method, though, is more than providing access or museum data sharing. Digital return of cultural material – patrimony – to source communities is a valid process for the first direct engagement between a source community and an ethnological museum collection from another era. As a methodology it has benefits and advantages for the source community and is likely to elicit varying outcomes and responses in each context where it is implemented. My research begins to extrapolate the strengths and weaknesses of this methodology, as museum workers seek ways to work more relationally and collaboratively with source communities. My research provides a detailed case study of this process with Bagaia Sub-district as the source community.

The issue of materiality of objects and how this is conveyed through digital imagery is central to the validity of the digital return of cultural material to source communities. Recent experiments and developments in museums explore how digital touch technologies can allow a distant or fragile object to be felt by a visitor.<sup>8</sup> Such technologies highlight the sensory

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<sup>6</sup> Robin Boast and Jim Enoté, “Virtual Repatriation: It is Neither Virtual nor Repatriation,” 103.

<sup>7</sup> It is possible that digital return of cultural material may lead to wider discussions, one of which may be repatriation of cultural material, but this is not its primary purpose.

<sup>8</sup> Sarah H Dudley (ed.), *Museum Materialities: Objects, Sense and Feeling* (London: Routledge, 2010); M McLaughlin, J Hespenha and G Sukhatme, *A Haptic Exhibition of Daguerreotype Cases for USC’s Fisher Gallery: Touch in Virtual Environment* (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 2001); Helen Chatterjee (ed.), *Touch in Museums: Policy and Practice in Object Handling* (Oxford: Berg, 2008); Robert Zimmer and Janis Jefferies, “Accessing Material Art through Technologies of Mediation and Immediation,” *Journal of Futures*, vol. 39, no. 10 (December 2007); Angela Geary, “Exploring Virtual Touch in Creative Arts and Conservation,” in *The Power of Touch: Handling Objects in Museum and Heritage Contexts*, edited by Elizabeth Pye, (Walnut Creek, California: Left Coast Press, 2007), 241–252; Isil Onol, “Tactile Explorations: A Tactile Interpretation of

materiality of objects, beyond the visual, often placing an emphasis on touch. My research elucidates responses to viewing digital images of the Baguia Collection objects and contributes to the wider discussion of what methods are available to museums as they seek to engage with source communities via collections.

Before presenting the responses of Makasae to the return of digital images of the Baguia Collection, I reflect on continuity and change in Makasae material culture more generally. This overview is intended to provide a wider context within which to consider the Baguia Collection amassed by Bühler and to highlight how Makasae material culture has experienced shifts in status and value over the intervening 79 years.

### **Makasae material culture: customary continuity, change and modernity**

Between 1935 and 2014 many aspects of Makasae material culture changed. As documented by Bühler, the key technologies used to produce material culture in 1935 included wood-turning, metal-smithing, textile-weaving and ceramic construction. Wood-turning employed a simple lathe for the manufacture of wooden vessels and bowls (*ate ran*, M; *baku kai*, N; *bikan ai*, T) used for serving and consuming food. The lathe was constructed from wood and animal hide. It required two people to operate it. Local woods used to produce vessels were selected based on their relatively smooth finish. Materials such as gourd, coconut shells and wood were used for the production of domestic utensils in Baguia until the early 1970s, at which time they were superseded by commercially manufactured utensils. The production of wooden bowls ceased in Baguia in 2007 due to a lack of local demand.<sup>9</sup>

The production of metal knives and swords was occurring in 1935, particularly in Osso Huna. Formerly, a range of knives required for both agricultural and domestic work was produced, including machetes (*sita*, M; *katana*, T) and paring knives (*tudik*, M). Swords (*si'i*, M; *surik*, T) were also forged in various forms: *si'i laka wa*, M, *kirisi*, M and *samurai*, M. Three types of sword – *gurnisa*, M, *biragaba*, M, and *reda*, M<sup>10</sup> – were central components of bridewealth

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Museum Exhibition through Tactile Art Works and Augmented Reality,” in *Touch in Museums: Policy and Practice in Object Handling*, edited by Helen Chatterjee (Oxford: Berg, 2008), 91–106.

<sup>9</sup> Adolfo do Rego, interview with author, Buibela, Afaloicai, Baguia Sub-distinct, 16 October 2014.

<sup>10</sup> *Gurnisa*, M, has the equivalent exchange value of four–five buffalo or approximately US \$500. Its blade is made from an iron alloy and the handle is typically made from brass (*osan mean*, T). *Biragaba*, M, has the equivalent exchange value of two horses and one buffalo or approximately US \$300. Its blade is made from an iron alloy and its handle is typically made from brass. *Reda*, M, has the equivalent exchange value of one



exchanges offered by wife-takers to wife-givers. Those weapons formerly used in Timorese war and head-hunting became associated with masculine, 'heated', sacred (*falumu*, M; *lulik*, T) power and were subsequently passed down between generations and safe-guarded as prized possessions inside ceremonial houses, where their powers are considered to be retained for the clan's benefit.<sup>11</sup>

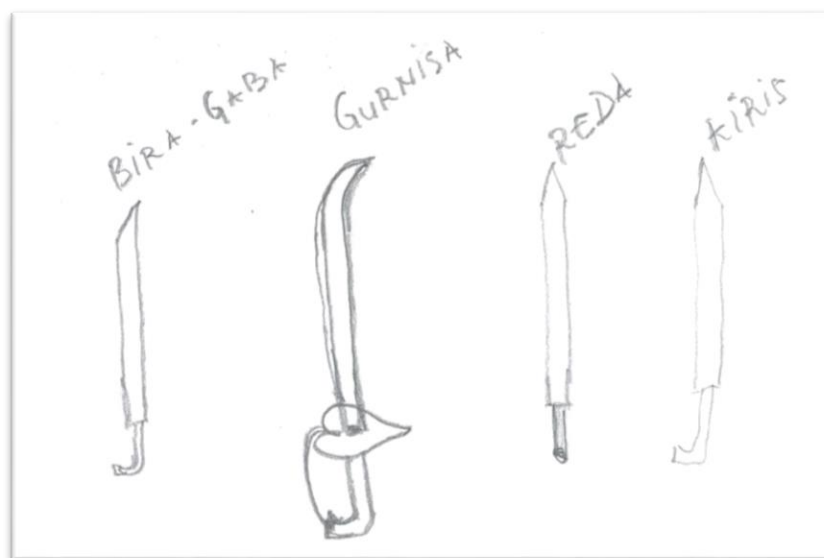


Figure 4.1: Sketch by Salustianus Fraga of the styles of sword (*si'i*, M) blades in Osso Huna.

The origins of Timorese swords are associated with the Dutch and other foreign visitors. Swords identified as *surik Makassar* originated from Makassar, Sulawesi (*parang*, I) while *giris* refer to Javanese daggers (*kris*, I). Japanese terminology such as *samurai* and *katana* became attached to particular forms of sword blades during WWII, when local accounts recall that metal became more plentiful through access to war debris from guns, cars, shells, trucks, tanks and ships. Such metals were reworked into *si'i*.

Evidence of metal-smithing<sup>12</sup> was still visible in Osso Huna in 2014 although to a much lesser extent than in 1935. *Si'i* and *sita* continued to be made for local consumption. The *sita* is an

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horse or approximately US \$200. Its blade is made from an iron alloy and the handle is typically made from buffalo horn or 'white' metal (*besi mutin*, T). Domingus da Silva, interview with author, Osso Huna, Baguia Sub-district, 7 October 2014. Also see Justino Maria Aparicio Guterres, *The Makasae of East Timor: The Structure of an Affinial Alliance System*, MA Thesis, The University of Melbourne, 1997, 55. Guterres provides similar listings of the value of swords for bridewealth exchanges.

<sup>11</sup> Christiano da Costa, Aureo da Costa and Justino Lopes (eds), cited in Janet Gunter, *Violence and 'Being in History' in East Timor: Local articulations of colonial rebellion*. Masters Thesis, University Institute of Lisbon, 2008, 68.

<sup>12</sup> Local informants indicate that metal jewellery was never made in Osso Huna, but that it was traded into Baguia from the coastal areas of Laga and Baucau.

everyday implement that is carried by male farmers into the fields and remains embedded in the local culture. *Si'i* also continued to be produced for customary bridewealth exchange although the demand for swords has declined as cash replaces them.<sup>13</sup> Discarded car wheel rims and remnant bombshells resulting from Indonesian air attacks are now a common source of metal.

In 1935, handwoven textiles (*rabi/kola*, M; *tais*, T) were produced with locally grown cotton (*Gossypium* sp., L) that was manually pressed to remove seeds<sup>14</sup> and then ginned with wooden hand-operated cotton mangles.<sup>15</sup> Cotton was then carded with a simple bamboo and string device. The cotton was then handspun with wooden drop-spindles (*kida ate*, M) weighted with shell flywheels (*diki*, M) that were spun whilst walking.<sup>16</sup> The cotton was carried in a separate woven fibre basket (*toka*, M). This method of spinning cotton remains a defining cultural feature of the Makasae peoples' Papuan origins, as the Austronesian cultures of Timor use a weighted spindle and dish spinning method.<sup>17</sup> Other weaving tools such as thread counters (*safa lale*, *esu lale*, M)<sup>18</sup>, *ikat* frames (*sabasili*, M; *ai lalae*, T)<sup>19</sup> and back-strap looms (*serum seru*, M; *ai soru*, T)<sup>20</sup> were made from wood and bamboo.

The major change in textile production since 1935 has been the replacement of handspun cotton with commercially spun and synthetically dyed cotton. This change, which the weavers link with the arrival of Indonesian occupation, has virtually eliminated the cotton growing, ginning, carding and spinning processes together with the use of natural dyes from local mud and plants. This has also impacted on the resist-dyeing technique, simplifying the complexity and reducing the frequency of dye immersions.

Lengths of woven cloth were constructed into garments or worn as loincloths (*ba*, M; *hakfolik*, T).<sup>21</sup> Alternatively, loincloths were also made from bark cloth. Handwoven *rabi/kola* have

<sup>13</sup> Salustianus Fraga, personal communication with author, Kaikasa, Baguia Sub-district, 26 August 2014.

<sup>14</sup> See MKB IIC 5975 and MKB IIC 5976.

<sup>15</sup> See MKB IIC 5982.

<sup>16</sup> See MKB IIC 5979, MKB IIC 5980, MKB IIC 5981 and MKB IIC 5977, MKB IIC 5978a&b.

<sup>17</sup> Joanna Barrkman, "Adaption and Innovation in Baguia's Textiles from 1935–2014," in *Striking Patterns Global Traces in Local Ikat Fashion*, edited by Willemijn de Jong and Richard Kunz (Basel: Museum der Kulturen Basel, 2016), 137. For examples of spindle and dish spinning implements and process see Roy W Hamilton and Joanna Barrkman (eds), *Textiles of Timor: Island in the Woven Sea* (Los Angeles: UCLA Press, 2014), 122, Figure 6.1; 183, Figure 9.2.

<sup>18</sup> See MKB IIC 5983 and MKB IIC 5984.

<sup>19</sup> See MKB IIC 5989.

<sup>20</sup> See MKB IIC 5990, MKB IIC 5991, MKB IIC 5992 and MKB IIC 5993.

<sup>21</sup> See MKB IIC 6021.

continued to serve as a central gift exchange commodity for marriage and mortuary rituals irrespective of changes to the types of materials used in their construction. Bark cloth, however, is no longer produced and loincloths are no longer worn in Baguia, although some people suggested in 2014 that Makasae farmers in nearby Quelicai Sub-district, Baucau District, still wear bark cloth. Whilst no evidence of bark cloth exists from the Baguia region, the Fataluku people, also Papuan language speakers, continued to make and use bark cloth during WWII.<sup>22</sup>

Ceramic pots (*mua busu*, M; *sanan rai*, T) were being produced in Defawasi, Baguia, in 1935, an area renowned for its clay resources. Ovoid clay pots were constructed using simple tools such as wooden paddles<sup>23</sup>, buffalo rib spatulas<sup>24</sup> and stone anvils<sup>25</sup> from this area<sup>26</sup> since an estimated 3,500 years ago.<sup>27</sup> *Mua busu* were used to carry and store water for cooking food, while frying pans (*tasu*, M, T)<sup>28</sup>, cups (*mua kaneka*, M; *kaneka rai*, T) and water jars (*buli*, T)<sup>29</sup> were used for serving liquids. *Buli* with spouts in the form of Middle Eastern and Chinese kendi are also evident, a consequence of the trade networks that existed between Timor, mainland Asia and the Middle East for approximately 2000 years.<sup>30</sup> Excavations of bronze Dongson drums, most recently in 2015 in Baucau, illustrate the flow of tradeware into Timor.<sup>31</sup> According to Bühler's diary entry in Baguia, 'Chinese and Dutch plates are common here too'<sup>32</sup>, and he acquired one Chinese Qing Dynasty glazed ceramic bowl as an example.<sup>33</sup> Furthermore, European vessels influenced ceramic forms in Baguia as two ceramic cups acquired by Bühler feature handles reminiscent of European crockery.<sup>34</sup>

<sup>22</sup> Joanna Barrkman (ed.), *Husi Bei Ala Timor Sira Nia Liman – From the Hands of Our Ancestors* (Darwin: Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, 2008), 68. See a bark tubeskirt presumed to have been made in Lautem District during the early to mid-twentieth century.

<sup>23</sup> See MKB IIc 6120.

<sup>24</sup> See MKB IIc 6119.

<sup>25</sup> See MKB IIc 6125.

<sup>26</sup> Defawasi shares a border with the Laga Sub-district where other known ceramic production centres are located, such as Laga township, Tekinomata and Waiaka.

<sup>27</sup> Jean-Christophe Galipaud and Celia Assis, *Sanan Rai, A Vanishing Tradition* (Dili: Secretaria de Estado da Arte e Cultura, Timor-Leste, 2014), 11, 15.

<sup>28</sup> See MKB IIc 6116.

<sup>29</sup> See MKB IIc 6110, MKB IIc 6111, MKB IIc 6112, MKB IIc 6113, MKB IIc 6114, MKB IIc 6115.

<sup>30</sup> A kendi is a container, most often without a handle, designed to store and pour liquid. It has an opening at the top of its neck for pouring liquid into the vessel, and a spout through which liquid is poured out. Kendi is a word of Sanskrit derivation.

<sup>31</sup> David de Mar, "Ancient Dong Son Drum Unearthed in Timor Leste," *New Historian*, 7 December 2017. <<http://www.newhistorian.com/ancient-dong-son-drum-unearthed-in-timor-leste/5543/>>. Accessed 2 May 2017.

<sup>32</sup> Bühler, *Tagebuchnotizen*, 67.

<sup>33</sup> See MKB IIc 6121.

<sup>34</sup> See MKB IIc 6102 and MKB IIc 6103a&b

In 2014 knowledge of earthenware ceramic production was retained by approximately half of the older women in Defawasi, since the daily use of locally made ceramics has been eroded by the increased use of metal and plastic domestic utensils.<sup>35</sup> Antonio Gonzaga, the *Xefe de Suco* of Defawasi, considered plastic as disposable and of inferior quality. By comparison, he noted that *mua busu* last longer, ‘for up to one hundred years because the quality of *mua busu* is higher’. He referred to *mua busu* saying ‘this is our Timorese culture’<sup>36</sup> and suggested that with support this aspect of Timorese culture could be preserved and promoted. He added that ‘although American and English cultures dominate the world’, he considered ceramics to be an important part of Timorese culture and concluded, ‘We cannot forget our Timorese culture’.<sup>37</sup>

In Defawasi ceramics are made using dried clay (*mua imi*, M), which is pounded and broken down into very fine grains. It is then mixed together with sand. Antonio Gonzaga explained that in earlier times the mud was collected from a sacred site (*fatin lulik*, T; *fatin segradu*, T) in *kenua* Rubisi. The site was considered sacred because it was near a traditional stone grave, so the clay was considered to be ‘a part of the ancestors’. Over time, people realised that clay from other local sources achieved the same results as the clay from *kenua* Rubisi, so people began to collect clay from various sites. Although this relaxing of cultural restrictions increased access to clay, this has not translated into increased ceramic production.<sup>38</sup> As production has lessened, locally produced earthenware ceramics are increasingly stored in ceremonial houses and even used in church ceremonies.<sup>39</sup>

Basketry has been more tenacious than earthenware ceramics, though this craft too was declining in 2014. Natural fibres such as lontar palm and pandanus (also known as screw palm; *Pandanus fascicularis*, L; *bedan*, M; *boro*, T) grow plentifully in Baguia and are still used to weave shoulder bags (*lode*, M)<sup>40</sup> and mats (*biti*, M)<sup>41</sup>, but the ubiquitous and durable strands from polypropylene rice bags are rapidly replacing shoulder bags made from handwoven fibres. Manufactured plastic mats are also now widely available. Carry-all baskets (*na’a*, M;

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<sup>35</sup> Galipaud and Assis, *Sanan Rai, A Vanishing Tradition*, 13, 17.

<sup>36</sup> Antonio Gonzaga, interview with author, Defawasi, Baguia Sub-district, 17 October 2014. Antonio stated, *Ida nee mak kultura Timor nian*.

<sup>37</sup> Antonio Gonzaga, interview with author, Defawasi, Baguia Sub-district, 17 October 2014. Antonio stated *Ami la bele baluba kultura Timor oan*.

<sup>38</sup> Antonio Gonzaga, interview with author, Defawasi, Baguia Sub-district, 17 October 2014.

<sup>39</sup> Salustianus Fraga, personal communication with author, Defawasi, Baguia Sub-District, 8 October 2014.

<sup>40</sup> See MKB IIc 6492, MKB IIc 6493 and MKB IIc 6494.

<sup>41</sup> See MKB IIc 6637, MKB IIc 6638 and MKB IIc 6639.

*bote*, T)<sup>42</sup> continue to be woven from palm leaves (*Corypha utan*, L; *alasa*, M; *tali taban*, T) in areas where they grow plentifully such as in Larisula, but elsewhere women commonly carry woven plastic bags imported from Indonesia. In Baguia *alasa* is uncommon and is purchased from neighbouring Laga and Uatolari at the Baguia markets. So, objects made from lontar palm such as rice-flaying baskets (*luru bere*, *kiori*, M; *lafatik*, T) and rice storage baskets (*luhu*, M) continue to be woven and used in Baguia, but smaller more intricate forms of weaving such as betelnut baskets (*boe tuka*, M), pouches (*sasoka*, M; *tiu oan*, T) and mats (*biti*, M, T) made from *alasa* have largely disappeared since 1935.

Wood-carving practices that resulted in the creation of ancestral figures (*atemaa*, M; *ai toos*, T) have weakened considerably since 1935 as only two elderly people were identified as having the skills to carve these figures in 2014. Wood-carving skills associated with architecture, such as finials, doors and windows, have also waned. Tools and materials such as electrical saws, nails, corrugated iron and concrete have revolutionised the process of constructing *oma falu*, although the essential architectural structure of ceremonial houses remains unaltered: the four stumps, the square inner chamber with a fireplace and the steep sloped roof remain consistent. Since independence there has been widespread reconstruction of ceremonial houses in the Baguia Sub-district (as discussed in Chapter 1). Although these new *oma falu* include the same architectural elements, the use of decorative carving has become less intricate compared to those examples acquired by Bühler in 1935.<sup>43</sup> Now only rudimentary emblems, derivative of older carved representations of birds, spirals and geometric patterns, are incised on contemporary architectural elements, if at all.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> See MKB IIc 6576.

<sup>43</sup> See MKB IIc 6406a&b and MKB IIc 6407a&b.

<sup>44</sup> In Makasae society it is believed that when birds circle around a house it is a warning of enemies approaching. When birds fly over the roof of the house, it signifies that visitors are approaching.

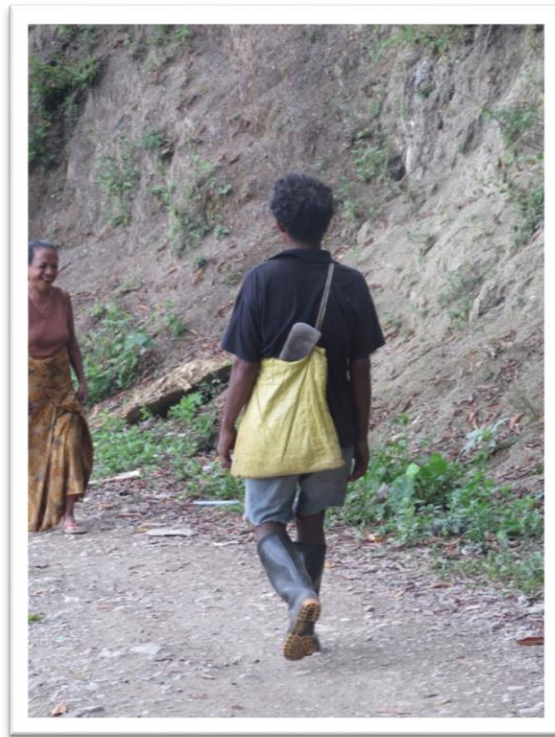


Figure 4.2: A man carries his *katana* in a shoulder bag made from a polypropylene rice bag, Baguia Sub-district, Timor-Leste, October 2014.

### **Changes and continuities in the materials used in the production of Makasae material culture**

Local natural resources – grasses, cotton, natural plant dyes, bamboo, palms, rattan, coconut shell, woods, seeds, clay and mud, stone, horn, leather, bird feather, and goat and horse hair – formed the basis of the material culture of Makasae people in 1935. Animal hair was used for arm and leg bands and even feather dusters whilst bird feathers adorned headdresses (*asanamu*, M; *manu fulun*, T).<sup>45</sup> Horn was a well-used material to produce hair combs<sup>46</sup> (*suri*, M; *sasuit*, T) and hair ornaments<sup>47</sup>, whilst buffalo hide was used to produce shields and lathes.

The nature of Makasae material culture and how it was being produced in 1935, as evidenced by the Baguia Collection, have largely been replaced by commercial manufacture and mass-produced goods. This process was ongoing in 2014. Even though objects such as textiles, swords, ceramics and baskets continued to be produced (although in reduced quantities),

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<sup>45</sup> See MKB IIC 6336, MKB IIC 6337, MKB IIC 6338, MKB IIC 6339, MKB IIC 6340, MKB IIC 6341 and MKB IIC 6342.

<sup>46</sup> See MKB IIC 6205, MKB IIC 6206, MKB IIC 6207, MKB IIC 6208 and MKB IIC 6209.

<sup>47</sup> See MKB IIC 6211, MKB IIC 6438, MKB IIC 6437 and MKB IIC 6343.

used and in some cases embedded in Makasae society, many of the objects that Bühler collected in 1935 are no longer made or used in Baguia.

In 2014 horn was rarely used, and certainly not for hair adornments such as those Bühler acquired.<sup>48</sup> The introduction of plastic and aluminium commodities in the years from 1935 until 2014 has transformed the material landscape of Baguia. Examples of these changes include the replacement of horn combs with plastic combs and the use of recycled five-litre plastic Bemoli cooking oil containers in place of ceramics formerly used to carry water.



Figure 4.3: Olandina Guterres secures her hair with a plastic hair comb, Defawasi, Baguia Sub-district, 8 October 2014.

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<sup>48</sup> Only one elderly man was said to know how to work with horn in the area, but he was too frail to meet with us.



Figure 4.4: A girl carries water in five-litre plastic Bemoli oil containers, Baguia Sub-district, Baucau District, 6 October 2014.

In Baguia, the values attributed to specific materials and objects, predominantly objects made from local materials, have also shifted and altered over time. Materials are significant in so far as they perform a practical and social role because materials ‘mean something, they embody our ideals, they give us part of our identity. These material meanings are embedded in the fabric of our world and overlap with their utility’.<sup>49</sup> Whilst locally produced objects are slowly vanishing from daily utilitarian contexts because they are considered to be ‘old-fashioned’, devalued as ‘traditional’ or derided as ‘backward’ compared to mass-produced commodities, alternatively, the same objects are becoming increasingly valued in ceremonial contexts. As their production lessens the status of these objects as markers of Makasae identity increases because they embody an overlap between their materiality, production and utility that is distinctly Makasae.

### **The shifting status and categorisation of Makasae material culture**

Irrespective of these continuities and changes, Makasae material culture continues to reflect notions of duality that permeate their culture, with objects distinguished by the categories of

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<sup>49</sup> Miodownik, *Stuff Matters* (London: Penguin Books, 2013), 246.



*falunu* and non-*falunu* (as discussed in Chapter 1). This binary description of Makasae material culture does not recognise the role of those objects which, whilst not *falunu*, are required to perform specific ceremonial activities. The status of these objects is somewhere between mundane and sacred. For example, when preparing food for feasting in the ceremonial house compound, many clans only permit wooden and coconut spoons to be used, as opposed to the ubiquitous aluminium spoons now widely used in daily contexts; others insist on using woven fibre dishes, but accept aluminium spoons. Alternatively, locally woven baskets (*boe tuka*, M) are essential to the ceremonial offering of betelnut to the ancestors and to living clan members, though the basket itself is merely utilitarian. Yet, without the basket, the act of offering betelnut would be compromised. Hence, a third category of objects has emerged, which I refer to as ‘non-*falunu* but necessary for the performance of customary practice’. Such objects have the capacity to oscillate between the inner, *falunu*, realm and the outer, non-*falunu*, realm.



Figure 4.5: The use of woven fibre dishes and a fibre mat was required for ceremonial feasting at Bubuha; however, the use of aluminium spoons was deemed acceptable. Bubuha, Larisula, Baguia Sub-district, 16 August 2014.

The shifting status of objects according to what is attributed as *falunu* or non-*falunu* is suggestive of the broader shifting dynamics between customary belief systems and newer social, religious, cultural and national identities that increasingly inform modern notions of Makasae identity. The questions remain: how will ceremonial activity be affected if the skill and

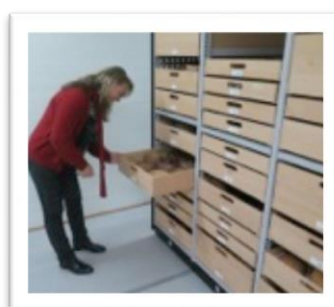
knowledge of how to make these objects disappears? Alternatively, will these objects become transmuted or usurped by other types of objects or materials?

The use of locally available materials by Makasae to produce their material culture has also declined as knowledge of these production practices has in some cases been lost or is in the process of diminishing. The exchange of objects in bridewealth exchanges has partially been replaced with cash. The status and income of those people who retain the skills to produce goods such as textiles, swords and ceramics has also risen – now they sell goods within their own community to those who no longer make these objects themselves. Nonetheless, for now, the broad contexts and practices of the Makasae people endure even as the material objects are undergoing transformation.

### Documenting the Baguia Collection at the MKB in 2014



Figures 4.6a (L), 4.6b (R): The Baguia Collection at the MKB storage facilities, 2014.



Figures 4.6c (L), 4.6d (C), 4.6e (R): The Baguia Collection at the MKB storage facilities, 2014.

Source: Photograph (4.6d) by Gernot Biersack.

In order for the Baguia Collection to be viewed in Baguia in 2014 it was necessary to digitally photograph the Collection at the MKB storage facilities.<sup>50</sup> This was the first time the Collection had been comprehensively photographed with each object individually recorded as a ‘working image’.<sup>51</sup> In some instances additional shots were taken, such as recto and verso, design details, technical details, incisions or other distinguishing features.<sup>52</sup> No scale measure was included in the images, as dimensions were recorded at the time of photography. In hindsight without a measure it was difficult to comprehend the scale of the object if the viewer was not familiar with it and its likely scale. The majority of the Collection was photographed, with the exception of those objects on display in the permanent exhibition *Expeditions*.



Figure 4.7: Richard Kunz, Curator Southeast Asia, MKB, handles a fishing net (MKB IIC 6610) acquired from Baguia by Alfred Bühler, MKB storage facilities, February 2014.

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<sup>50</sup> Between 24 and 28 February 2014 I documented the Baguia Collection at the MKB storage facilities together with Richard Kunz, Curator, Southeast Asia, MKB, and Gernot Biersack, Scientific Assistant, MKB. We retrieved each Collection object from storage, viewed it, photographed it and recorded any distinctive features. Measurements were taken for a large proportion of the objects and entered into the MKB Collection database.

<sup>51</sup> This terminology refers to a photograph that is not studio quality, but exists primarily for documentation purposes.

<sup>52</sup> Prior to this research only approximately 5% of the Baguia Collection had digital images.



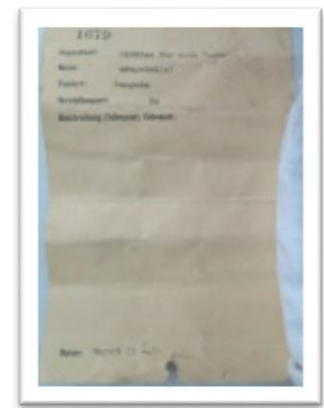
Figure 4.8: Gernot Biersack, Scientific Assistant, MKB, measures two drums (*tiba*, M; MKB IIc 6232 and MKB IIc 6230) acquired from Baguia by Alfred Bühler, MKB storage facilities, February 2014.

Whilst I was physically handling and viewing the Baguia Collection, several objects revealed sensory qualities that alluded to the time of their acquisition. Unwittingly, these objects retained sensory traces, in the form of markings, scents and contents that evoked aspects of their original use, packing and subsequent journey from Baguia to their location at the MKB store. One such evocative example was a bundle of dried plant specimens<sup>53</sup>, still contained in their original packaging material of waxed brown paper tied at either end with jute string. When opened the specimens emitted a pungent odour. An original typed field card with the field Collection number ‘1679’ was enclosed with the specimens.<sup>54</sup> This packet had remained unopened for 79 years.

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<sup>53</sup> See MKB IIc 5988.

<sup>54</sup> *Sammelliste 3*, Collection List 3, Museum der Kulturen Basel Archives. This Collection List 3 identifies objects according to field numbers 1401–1829.



Figures 4.9a (above), 4.9b (L), 4.9c (C), 4.9d (R): These 'leaves for red dye' were acquired from Baguia by Alfred Bühler in 1935. They were stored in brown wax paper tied with twine. The package included an original typed field card.

Source: Museum der Kulturen Basel, MKB IIC 5988.

Upon opening a palm-wine beaker (*noka*, M)<sup>55</sup> customarily carried by senior men in Baguia, it was found to contain dried betelnut stored inside a woven pouch, together with a small knife and woven fibre sheath (see Figures 4.10a and 4.10b). Once the *noka* was opened, the scent of betelnut was released after 79 years of confinement. For someone who was familiar with this scent, this sensory information would have aroused memories of past contexts and associations with betelnut.

<sup>55</sup> See MKB IIC 6064.



Figure 4.10a and 4.10b: Palm-wine beaker (*noka*, M) with contents of sheathed knife and woven pouch of betelnut acquired from Baguia by Alfred Bühler in 1935.

Source: Museum der Kulturen Basel, MKB IIc 6064.

Another *noka* contained flint, blade and tinder – a delicate fibrous mass, possibly a spider’s web as used in New Guinea as a tinder<sup>56</sup> – that had remained concealed and untouched inside the woven pouch.<sup>57</sup> The ‘re-discovery’ of these contents upon removing the lid immediately evoked an intimacy with the man who had handled, used and carried these personal effects in a distant and unrelated place and time, 79 years earlier. These experiences indicated the potential for particular objects to collapse time, momentarily connecting us with their former users, owners and even with Bühler.

If these experiences of handling the Baguia Collection objects were insightful and evocative for me, they would be heightened for Makasae people who would have stronger associations with the sensory information inherent in the Collection objects. The affective potency of the Collection objects, ‘in the flesh’, up-close and unmediated, together with the importance of the non-visual sensory aspects of objects, such as scent, texture and scale would unfortunately not be part of the experience as Makasae people viewed and engaged with only the images of Collection objects. ‘[A]rtifacts body forth specific “ways of sensing” and they must be approached through the senses, rather than as “texts” to be read or mere visual “signs” to be decoded. Otherwise put, things have sensory as well as social biographies.’<sup>58</sup> Arguably a critical part of each object’s ‘multi-sensory embodiments of meaning’ would be neglected by the methodology I employed.<sup>59</sup>

## **The methodology of viewing images of the Baguia Collection objects in Baguia**

Although the Baguia Collection, at 691 objects, is substantial in size, I resisted making a selection of objects to show the community in the first instance. Initially, it seemed important to enable people to see the Collection in its entirety so they could identify for themselves what was of interest to them and what was not. I therefore avoided making interventions about what would be shown in Baguia.

In order to manage the volume of digital images, I created 16 categories of Collection objects.<sup>60</sup> These categories were based on the function or form of the object, to the best of

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<sup>56</sup> Associate Professor Chris Ballard, personal communication with author, 8 December 2015.

<sup>57</sup> See MKB IIc 6449.

<sup>58</sup> Classen and Howes, “The Museum as Sensescape,” 200.

<sup>59</sup> Classen and Howes, “The Museum as Sensescape,” 201.

<sup>60</sup> See Ohnemus, *An Ethnology of the Admiralty Islands*, 391.

my knowledge in advance of fieldwork, reflecting dominant contemporary Australian museum classification practice; they are invariably based on a permutation of the dominant meta-categories of form and function.<sup>61</sup> These utilitarian categories were solely applied to facilitate the viewing of the Collection and for searching purposes. It is acknowledged that classification is an issue for curators, ‘especially in considering the impact classification has had on effectively distancing one culture from another – even, indeed, creating the very notion of “the other”’.<sup>62</sup> The digital images of the Collection were categorised for community viewing purposes as follows:

1. Amulets
2. Baskets
3. Body adornment
4. Ceramics and related production equipment
5. Domestic objects
6. Fibre – woven objects (non-basketry)
7. Horn adornment and related tools
8. Musical instruments
9. Miscellaneous objects
10. Personal objects
11. Horse saddlery
12. Sculpture
13. Textiles and related production equipment
14. Toys
15. Weapons
16. Wooden bowls and related production equipment.

These categories were fluid and as the research process unfolded objects were relocated between categories, based on information provided by informants. By the conclusion of the research period the category of ‘miscellaneous’ was significantly reduced. Cross-overs existed between various groupings, such as Body Adornment and Personal Objects, Body Adornment and Horn Adornment or Fibre/Woven Objects and Domestic Objects. As the

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<sup>61</sup> Hilary Eriksen and Ingrid Unger (eds), *The Small Museums Cataloguing Manual: A Guide to Cataloguing Object and Image Collections* (Carlton: Museums Australia, Victoria, 2009). However, some of these categories are interchangeable (i.e. a spinning top was categorised as a ‘toy’ and not a ‘sculpture’ although it had been carved; a raincoat was categorised as ‘fibre object’ as it was made of fibres, rather than categorised as a ‘personal item’, etc.).

<sup>62</sup> John Stanton, “Ethnographic Museums and Collections: From the Past into the Future,” in *Understanding Museums: Australian Museums and Museology*, edited by Des Griffin and Leon Paroissien. <[http://nma.gov.au/research/understanding-museums/JStanton\\_2011.html](http://nma.gov.au/research/understanding-museums/JStanton_2011.html)>. Accessed 4 June 2017.



research continued the Collection began to be classified by informants based on various categories such as *falunu* / non-*falunu* / not *falunu* but necessary for the performance of customary practices; what is still in use and what is no longer in use; what is still produced and what is no longer produced (other groupings of objects, based on use, become apparent in Vignette 2 below).

Images of the Baguia Collection were presented to the community members in digital projected or printed formats. The projected images were shown to community gatherings and viewings in a series of halls, open-air shelters and outdoor settings. These community viewings were all pre-planned in consultation with the *Xefes de Suco*; the interpreter/s and I visited them in advance of each viewing to explain the research project, show them the Collection images and seek their permission to hold a community viewing. All those *Xefes de Suco* we approached agreed to the Collection being shown publicly in their jurisdiction and they promoted the community viewing accordingly.

A total of ten presentations were made in Baguia and one in Dili.<sup>63</sup> On these occasions people were given the choice of which group/s of objects they wanted to view. People were vocal in asking to revisit specific images of objects, but the control over the mechanism to view the images remained either with a delegated community member who operated the ‘slideshow’ or with me. One of the interpreters and I facilitated the public viewing in collaboration with the *Xefe de Suco*. The public viewings of the Collection images were attended by between 25 and 100 people on each occasion.

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<sup>63</sup> A presentation of the Collection was also made to the *Xefes de Suco* of Baguia Sub-district and the Sub-district Administrator, 4 August 2014. Community viewings were presented in Alawa Craik, 6 August 2014; Bahatata, 7 August 2014; Alawa Leten, 11, 12 and 15 August 2014; Afaloicai, 19 August 2014; Oso Huna, 21 August 2014; and Bubuha, Larisula, 16 August 2014. One viewing occurred in Dili for the Baguia University Students Association, 28 January 2014.



Figures 4.11a and 4.11b: Viewing by *Xefes de Suco* and others at Alawa Craik, Baguia Sub-district, 4 August 2014.



Figures 4.12a, 4.12b and 4.12c: Community viewing at Afaloicai, Baguia Sub-district, 19 August 2014.

Each community viewing elicited much excitement and discussion, animated calling out of names and pointing upon recognising objects from the Baguia Collection. Community viewings lasted several hours. Following each community viewing I arranged to meet potential informants for follow-up interviews; these were usually weavers, metal-smiths, basket-makers, or other knowledgeable people, such as elders, ritual specialists and non-specialists who used rather than made objects. These interviews were usually held at the informant's home and aimed to document the objects and record people's responses to having viewed the Baguia Collection. In some instances, the interviews became more like discussions and often resulted in people giving us demonstrations of some type or another – showing us how to weave a cloth, use a cotton mangle, cut leaves to make a basket, weave a basket, etc. Sometimes these demonstrations occurred spontaneously, others were pre-arranged.<sup>64</sup> Demonstrations and interviews often morphed into group activities as Timorese households are fluid with relatives and neighbours frequently coming and going.

In addition to the interviews and demonstrations, I also filmed or recorded interviews, with the permission of the informants. In some instances, this may have affected the content of the interview, with people becoming more self-conscious, yet overall people responded positively to being recorded. Interviewees tended to speak with a gravitas that a more informal conversation may not have solicited. People were enthusiastic about their demonstrations being filmed. The camera became a popular resource in the community with people requesting me to record various local events such as rebuilding ceremonial houses, or to have their ceremony, place or home documented.

Sometimes people preferred to be interviewed in pairs. This enabled local protocols to be observed and it balanced the need for people of high local status, such as those with administrative positions, to be respected and included, while ensuring that other people who had the relevant knowledge about the objects or their production were also involved. These paired interviews worked well and encapsulated a cultural tendency for Makasae people to work collaboratively rather than singling one person out above others for her or his knowledge, skills or experience.

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<sup>64</sup> Making appointments was often impractical as people were heavily engaged in domestic activities, family commitments, tending gardens, building graves and ceremonial houses and repairing residential houses.

In Baguia, interview informants spoke either Makasae or Naueti and in some instances Tetun. One interpreter, Salustianus Fraga, spoke Makasae, Naueti and Tetun, so I communicated with him in Tetun. The other interpreter, Jacqueline MF Ximenes, spoke Makasae, Tetun and English, and I communicated with her in either English or Tetun. On those occasions when no interpreter was present, I communicated with people in Tetun. Some interviews were also conducted in Dili with government officials and other people who had associations with Baguia. These interviews occurred in either English or Tetun. My command of Tetun language improved throughout the research period but, as many older Makasae people do not speak Tetun regularly, certain conversations were mediated through an interpreter.



Figure 4.13: Jacqueline MF Ximenes and Salustianus Fraga, interpreters, Afaloicai, Baguia Sub-district, 31 July 2014.

The other advantage of filming and recording interviewees, with their permission, was that recordings could later be transcribed and translated. This process occurred with the assistance of Salustianus Fraga, who transcribed several of the field interviews and film

footage from Nauti and Makasae into Tetun. Later, a selection of transcripts was translated into English by staff at Timor Aid.<sup>65</sup>

As I had seen the Baguia Collection ‘in the flesh’ at MKB, and had also developed a working knowledge of Timorese material culture and craft practices over several years working as a curator, I was able to contribute to the process of interpreting the Collection on occasion. However, because I was interested to understand what people knew or didn’t know about the objects and to observe their responses to the Collection I generally refrained from providing comment.

For each interviewee, their engagement and responses to viewing the Collection was a unique experience; thus, through the process of documenting the Collection I could observe and understand the broader implications and diversity of responses in people’s engagement with the Collection and surmise the value they placed on it. Occasionally there were different interpretations about objects and their functions but more often than not the information provided about the Collection was consistent. Whilst this process was repetitive, it enabled me to verify previous descriptions or explanations. As the project developed community members and I became more active in selecting and curating specific groups of Collection objects for investigation and animation (as discussed in Chapter 6).

My initial limited command of Tetun, which improved over time, prevented me on occasion from interrogating certain responses. However, what this language deficiency did allow was a more self-directed approach by the informants who talked and offered their interpretations of objects from the Collection or explained their own reflections prompted by the objects. It also meant that demonstrations, rather than explanations, became a way for people to show me and teach me directly. In addition, the viewings and the camera resulted in invitations for us to visit specific sites and ceremonies. All of these approaches meant that the informants had more agency and control over the investigative process; they led the process, which I had to attend, follow, join in, observe, document and later analyse and interpret.

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<sup>65</sup> The translations staff included linguist Camilla Swack and translators Nini Marques, Uka Pinta, Sergio Marques and Jacqueline MF Ximenes. Timor Aid, a NGO based in Dili, was host organisation for my Australian Endeavour Awards Fellowship during my fieldwork period.

### Implications of the methodology

As discussed in the Introduction to this thesis, this research was not undertaken to directly repatriate the Baguia Collection, but focused on the ‘restoration of knowledge’ through the digital return of the Collection. My research interest was to identify whether this Collection remained significant to the Makasae people and, if so, how. In order to understand the implications of digitally returning the Collection and how people responded to their encounters with images of objects and photographs from the historical past, it was important to understand the implications of my methodology and how this may or may not have contributed to shaping the responses from community members.

In the case of the digital images of the Baguia Collection, these were stored both on a laptop and a tablet and were viewed either as slideshows at the community viewings in small group interviews, in paired interviews or in one-on-one interviews and discussions. The slideshow viewings were completely ephemeral and temporary, mere projections. When using the tablet or computer, after an initial viewing with me, I attempted to hand over control of the tablet/computer to the informant, so they could look at the images at their own pace. Predictably, some people viewed the images more slowly and with more attention and interest than others. Often clusters of family members and neighbours would gather around to also view the photographs. Again, using these methods, the images remained ephemeral and temporary.



Figure 4.14: Joao Fernandes, Larisula (front left), and Lourenco Fernandes, *Xefe de Suco*, Larisula (standing right), with other men at Bubuha, Larisula, Baguia Sub-district, viewing the Baguia Collection images on a tablet.

The third method used to view the Baguia Collection objects was as hard-copy printed colour A4 images, inserted into plastic sleeves, with one folder for each of the artefact categories. Although intended as a back-up in case of power failures that could have interrupted the slideshow viewings, the print-outs proved the most popular viewing method with the informants. The physical handling and access to these images enabled participants to interact more fully with objects. This more ‘tangible’ printed image, which had its own form of materiality, was highly coveted and copies were frequently requested.<sup>66</sup>



Figure 4.15: Men viewing images of Baguia Collection amulets in a folder at Baguia Villa.  
Standing L–R: Salustianus Fraga of Afaloicai, Augustino Antoni Menzes of Osso Huna, Miguel da Concicao Ximenes of Bubuha, Larisula, and Adelindu Salvador of Bahatata.  
Seated L–R: Juliao de Oliviera, Uasufa, Alawa Carik, and Joao Fernandes, Larisula.

As informants looked through the folders, it became evident that many people had never held or looked through a folder or book before. The folder of images presented its own challenges as informants looked through the photographs in a non-sequential manner, randomly turned pages and made comments, making it hard to annotate comments about specific objects. However, the materiality of the folders gave informants a greater sense of

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<sup>66</sup> Whilst responding to requests to give people copies of printed images of Baguia Collection objects presented its own challenges, I was given permission to give hard-copy images to the community members by the MKB. This was to be a critical aspect of the project and on subsequent trips to Dili, from Baguia, significant numbers of colour images of Collection objects were printed and later distributed to some informants.

control over the interview or discussion, and subsequently the account or recollection they conveyed was frequently more intimate and detailed, than when viewing images on a tablet.

## **Viewing images of the Baguia Collection objects in Baguia Sub-district**

Whether viewing objects in group viewings and/or more intimate informal interviews, ‘memory-work’ and by association the process of remembering, forgetting or selecting from memory was at play as people filtered their responses. Although not able to be measured or monitored, ‘memory-work’ underpinned the varied responses of Makasae people to the Baguia Collection as they reacquainted themselves with material cultural heritage made and used by their forebears. One informant commented that ‘it was good to see these objects to remember things I thought I had forgotten’.<sup>67</sup> Relevant to this research is the assertion that ‘while artefacts, images and landscape may each have social biographies and therefore seem to express independent agency, it is the human assignment of meaning rather than the agency within the objects themselves that leads to this perception’.<sup>68</sup>

Pre-existing knowledge or familiarity was required to identify or recognise an object.<sup>69</sup> This knowledge was not necessarily common knowledge shared equally across the community, but varied according to the age, location, experiences and family background of each viewer/informant. One common occurrence was that people actively expressed association and engagement with objects when viewing the folders of images. An example of this occurred when interviewing Ana Maria Pinto, a basket maker, from Nelu Dae, Alawa Craik. Her response to viewing a photo of a lidded basket (*kadi bna*, M)<sup>70</sup>, when she wanted to explain the technique used to weave it, was to get up to find the sharp needle-like implement that she uses when weaving baskets. With her needle in hand, she then enacted the weaving technique onto the photograph.

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<sup>67</sup> Leopoldina Joanna Guterres, personal communication with author, 13 October 2014.

<sup>68</sup> Diane Hafner, “Objects, Agency and Context,” 348.

<sup>69</sup> Hodder, *Entangled*, 3.

<sup>70</sup> See MKB IIc 6488.





Figure 4.16a and 4.16b: Ana Maria Pinto engages with photos of a basket (*kadi bua*, M; *mama fatin*, T) from the Baguia Collection (MKB IIc 6488) and uses tools and materials to convey her technical weaving knowledge.

### **Elicitation of sensory memories when viewing images of the Baguia Collection objects**

In Defawasi, when Beatriz Lopes viewed and described the folder of Baguia Collection ceramics as she reminisced about how she used to make *mua busu*, she fondly rubbed her hand in a circular motion over the photograph of the pot, suggestive of a longing to feel the texture and shape of its outer wall – an experience that would have been familiar to her as someone who once made *mua busu* and used them in her everyday life for cooking and storing water.<sup>71</sup>

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<sup>71</sup> Beatriz Lopes, interview with author, Defawasi, Baguia Sub-district, 8 October 2014.



Figures 4.17: Beatriz Lopez, Defawasi, viewing Baguia Collection ceramics. Beatrice routinely rubbed her hand in a circular motion over the photos of the *mua busu*, as if to seek the experience of the texture either from making or handling an earthenware ceramic. Defawasi, Baguia Sub-district, 8 October 2014.

When discussing body adornment and occasions when it was worn, Mama Olla Josephina Mariz, of Alawa Craik, explained the act of decorating oneself with the highly prized necklaces known as *gaba*<sup>72</sup>, *gaba metan*<sup>73</sup>, foreign trade beads<sup>74</sup> and a silver alloy pendant.<sup>75</sup> As she looked at the photos of this jewellery she rubbed her chest with the palm of her hand and repeated ‘*nirana*’, ‘*nima susi woru*’, ‘*nirana sana*’, Makasae terms that mean ‘to decorate oneself, to brighten oneself up’.<sup>76</sup> Mama Olla also commented on wearing sandalwood necklaces and again used this action of rubbing her chest, alluding to her recollection of the wood’s scent and touch on her chest – the relationship of the wearer and her jewellery.<sup>77</sup> Through these comments, it can be interpreted that Mama Olla was referring to the properties of the beads and metals and how they enhanced the wearer. This reinforces the

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<sup>72</sup> See MKB IIc 6324.

<sup>73</sup> See MKB IIc 6325.

<sup>74</sup> See MKB IIc 6327.

<sup>75</sup> See MKB IIc 6313.

<sup>76</sup> In Tetun language, this translates to *enfeita an*.

<sup>77</sup> Mama Olla Josephina Mariz, interview with author, Alawa Craik, Baguia Sub-district, 14 October 2014.

ability of images to convey aspects of an object's materiality and the varying degrees of the 'vibrant vitality' of matter.<sup>78</sup>

In these interviews, sensory memories were being aroused. People clearly related to the materiality of the object or, more accurately, upon seeing the object they remembered the physical component of their former interactions and experiences of similar objects. Through their physical and spoken reactions the physicality of the object being viewed – its texture or familiarity through the sense of touch – was conveyed. This indicated that 'images can be understood as objects with their own kind of materiality in which these same meanings may be invested'.<sup>79</sup> Although the viewer was only reading a two-dimensional print-out of the Collection objects, these images still had significant agency and had the ability to convey aspects of the vitality of the objects in question.

### **Interactive responses to viewing images of the Baguia Collection**

Other interactive responses occurred as people mimed actions and used performance techniques in response to objects from the Baguia Collection. Initially, I thought the use of these devices was to circumvent the use of language, but this performance behaviour occurred even when interviewee and interviewer spoke a common language. The use of song, sound and action animated the interviewee's memory of the object; or more accurately the image of the object acted as a mnemonic and triggered memories of song, sound and action. When looking at the musical instruments in the Collection informants responded by imitating playing the musical instruments and making their sounds. Gregorio Menzes spontaneously recited a ritual poem that he associated with a sacred hair comb.<sup>80</sup> Florentino Sarmento enacted the pushing and pulling of the bellows as they were pumped to heat the coals while forging steel and the sound of the metal being pounded, 'ding ding ding!', memories he recalled from his childhood. When discussing horse saddlery from the Collection and associated memories of journeys on his horse, Florentino added sounds of the bridle clinking<sup>81</sup> and the sound of the horse bells jangling (*gili-gili*, M, T).<sup>82</sup> Another interviewee, Luciano, imitated the sound of the ceremonial bracelet (*keke ho gili-gili*, T)<sup>83</sup> and

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<sup>78</sup> J Bennett cited in Hodder, *Entangled*, 4.

<sup>79</sup> Hafner, "Objects, Agency and Context," 357.

<sup>80</sup> Gregorio Menzes, interview with author, Afaloicai, Baguia Sub-district, 7 August 2014.

<sup>81</sup> See MKB IIc 6511.

<sup>82</sup> Florentino Sarmento, interview with author, Dili, 29 September 2014, Dili. See MKB IIc 6520.

<sup>83</sup> See MKB IIc 6287.

its tinkling as people danced the *tebe dai*. Upon seeing an image of a feather headdress<sup>84</sup> (*asa namu*, M; *manu fulun*, T) from the Collection worn by Makasae people as ceremonial attire, Luciano stood up from his seat and danced the *tebe dai* around the room as he sang the drum beat.<sup>85</sup> These experiences ‘showed that the materiality and cultural value of these artefacts still serve as a means to compress time and seamlessly to connect periods that have almost nothing in common from either the cultural or the political perspective’.<sup>86</sup>

On occasion, if the interview was occurring in an informant’s home, they would tire of talking about the Baguia Collection and wander off momentarily, only to return with an actual example of a basket, a textile, a sword, a wooden bowl or a ceramic. These displays of personally owned objects were more than a demonstration of physical ownership: they were acts of giving evidence that they had cultural ownership of these objects, similar to the ones in the Baguia Collection. This strategy to assert ‘ownership’ and to authenticate the information they were providing by producing an object akin to evidence of its provenance in Baguia also verified the person being interviewed as either an owner custodian of such objects and/or the keeper of knowledge about how such objects were made or used.

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<sup>84</sup> See MKB IIc 6339.

<sup>85</sup> Luciano Teixeira Alves of Defawasi, Baguia Sub-district, interview with author, Dili, 30 September 2014.

<sup>86</sup> Hauser-Schäublin, “Changing Contexts, Shifting Meanings,” 20–40.



Figures 4.18a and 4.18b: Maria Pinto interrupted looking at photographs of the Baguia Collection baskets to proudly show a *kadi bua*, M, that she had woven, Alawa Craik, Baguia Sub-district, 19 August 2014.

Another common occurrence was that informants would associate the photo of the Baguia Collection object with other types of objects. In this way, the Collection served as a springboard into a past time, and unlocked memories of other objects that were used in relation to one another. For example, when discussing large ceramic pots (*mua busu*, M), Beatriz also referred to bowls, cups and spoons made from coconut shell. To her these were interconnected through their shared purposes as domestic, cooking and eating utensils. The way Beatriz linked objects together – cooking vessels, eating vessels, spoons and ladles – was evidence of another potential categorisation system that might be applied to the Collection.

### **Lack of familiarity with reading digital images**

The lack of familiarity with reading digital images, which in some instances was also combined with poor eyesight, meant that photographs of the Baguia Collection objects were occasionally misinterpreted. Nonetheless, slippage in interpretation of photography can have advantages as '[g]rainy images lent themselves to more flexible interpretation of who was depicted, and perhaps opened the photos to a broader network of relationships'.<sup>87</sup> In some instances people mistook the scale of an object for something larger, rarely smaller. When I enquired about the materials that objects were made from, in some cases people responded, for example, that an object was made of metal, when it was actually made of wood. In these cases it is possible that this information flagged alternate production methods or resulted from poor eyesight and the difficulty of 'reading texture' from a digital or printed image. Yet some misinterpretations were fortuitous.<sup>88</sup> On viewing the Collection, Gregorious Alves mistook two small metal musical cymbals for heirloom pendants (*lama lebe*, M). This prompted him to go inside his house and return with a small red cloth that he opened to reveal a treasured family *lama lebe*. As Bühler had not acquired any *lama lebe*, this was a serendipitous misinterpretation as the significance of the *lama lebe* was then introduced and explained.<sup>89</sup>

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<sup>87</sup> Jamon Halvaksz, "The Photographic Assemblage: Duration, History and Photography in Papua New Guinea," *History and Anthropology*, vol. 21, no. 4 (2010): 416.

<sup>88</sup> One example was of an anvil stone (MKB IIc 6125) used for ceramic production, which was interpreted by one informant as a sacred stone (*molo*, *afa lia falu*, *mani rasa*, M) and resulted in an account of how *molo* were formerly used.

<sup>89</sup> Gunter, Violence and 'Being in History' in East Timor, 42. Gunter refers to pendants (*lama lebe*, M; *belak*, T) as being used to pay tribute to the *liurai* at the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.



Figure 4.19a and 4.19b: Gregorius Alves with an heirloom pendant (*lava lebe*, M) that he showed the author based on the misinterpretation of a pair of circular cymbals as being a pair of *lava lebe*. Daralari, Viqueque District.

Source: Photographs by Willemijn de Jong.

Gregorius explained the importance of this ritual object, which he had inherited from his ancestors. He had kept this *lava lebe* with him, even during years of upheaval when he could not live on his traditional lands due to war and resided instead in the forest of Mount Matebian. The evidence of the *lava lebe* and the reverence with which he handled it indicated that in his estimation it was an irreplaceable treasure.

### Flashbulb memories triggered by the Baguia Collection

One object from the Baguia Collection, a *palmatori* formerly used in the Portuguese era, consistently elicited ‘flashbulb memories’ from people of a certain age upwards.<sup>90</sup> The *palmatori* is a wooden paddle that was used to beat people, usually on the palm of the hand.<sup>91</sup> Upon seeing the *palmatori* people were seemingly transported to experiences from decades ago. This highly potent object unfailingly evoked memories of punishment, torture, pain, public embarrassment and shame. Flashbulb memories are printed on the mind and are ‘linked to the traumatic nature of dramatic, frightening and surprising experiences’. Events become memorable in proportion to the ‘intensity of emotion at encoding’.<sup>92</sup> Upon each viewing of this object a general ruckus occurred with people talking rapidly and calling out its name. Others turned to their neighbour to explain their memory of an encounter with a *palmatori*; most people over 40 years of age had either been struck or witnessed someone being struck with a *palmatori*. One man asked for the image of the *palmatori* and for a photograph of the Baguia Fort after one community viewing, explaining that he wanted these images so he could explain to his son the history of his parents and grandparents and how they had been beaten by the *palmatori* at the Baguia Fort when he had been his son’s age.



Figure 4.20: *Palmatori* acquired from Baguia by Alfred Bühler, 1935.

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<sup>90</sup> Francesca Cappelletto, “Long-Term Memory of Extreme Events: From Autobiography to History,” *The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, vol. 9, no. 2 (2003): 253.

<sup>91</sup> The word *palmatori* is derived from the Portuguese word for hand, *palma*.

<sup>92</sup> Cappelletto, “Long-Term Memory of Extreme Events,” 252.



Source: Museum der Kulturen Basel, MKB IIc 6597.

Another object that consistently elicited memories of delight was the spinning tops (*kai ori*, M) made from *jambua* wood and twined string, and another style of spinning top (*sei daene* M; see Figure 3.11a).<sup>93</sup> Nearly everyone who viewed the *kai ori* and the *sei daene* responded positively, presumably due to its associations with childhood play. Although such spinning tops continue to be made and used by children in Baguia, and could be considered as embedded objects, the image of the Collection spinning top from 1935 unfailingly triggered smiles, laughter and happiness whenever it was shown to informants. This object unleashed a shared, collective memory of childhood play in the region.

### Non-engagement as a response to viewing the Baguia Collection

Engagement was not always forthcoming as a result of viewing the Baguia Collection images. Apart from those people who did not attend the public viewings, whether due to lack of interest or for other reasons, some people after viewing the Collection chose not to engage further. This response reflected our entanglement between people and objects: '[o]ur dependence on things often seems to involve trying to escape from them as much as it involves identifying with them'.<sup>94</sup> Lack of interest in the Collection encapsulated a tension that exists in Makasae culture between modernity and customary practices. Some people perceived no advantage in engaging with the historic past and a material culture collection from 79 years ago. For Makasae people who aspire to a modern lifestyle, the relationship with traditional and customary objects can be ambiguous. What may be inalienable or irreplaceable to one person, family or clan may be dismissed as superstitious or outdated by another. Those people who strive for modernity and progress might consider some customary practices to be 'backward' or at best unimportant, and so they avoid them.

Lack of interest could also be due to the potential embarrassment of 'not knowing'. It also might reflect an aversion to critical memory-work, forgetfulness or an unwillingness to engage with a foreign researcher regarding cultural matters. Alternatively, their lack of interest may have actually been a strategy to avoid speaking inappropriately about sacred objects at the risk of offending their ancestors. Adherence to Catholicism also affected levels of interest. One informant explained that he felt nothing when looking at the Collection as

<sup>93</sup> See MKB IIc 6258, 6MKB IIc 6259 for examples of *kai ori* and MKB IIc 6264 and MKB IIc 6265 for examples of *sei daene*. In Makasae *sei* means 'nut, seed' and *daene* means 'to spin'.

<sup>94</sup> Hodder, *Entangled*, 21.

he was now a Christian and no longer believed in *falunu*.<sup>95</sup> Someone else dismissed an image of a ceremonial necklace (*gaba*, M; *morten*, T) from the Collection as ‘only a picture’, suggesting that this was of little value because it was not the real thing.<sup>96</sup> When one *Xefe de Suco* declined an invitation to be interviewed about the Collection he responded: ‘We don’t know about history – we just know about now’.<sup>97</sup> Although he had been interested to see the Collection initially, after one viewing his interest was satiated.

People’s reticence to discuss the Collection may have stemmed from many reasons. Would ‘not knowing’ or disclosing limited knowledge about the Collection objects undermine people’s authority? Alternatively, was heritage irrelevant compared to more pressing local community needs and politics? Did people not see the past as being relevant to the present? Had viewing the objects been an unsettling reminder of the disjuncture between the past and the present? Would discussing the objects make people more aware of what had been lost? Reasons for lack of interest in the Collection highlight the sensitive co-existence of customary practices alongside modernity and perceived or real progress in Makasae society.

Informants were selective in what they chose to reveal about specific objects. Occasionally there was a reticence to discuss sacred objects and those objects perceived to be sacred. When I enquired whether the sacred qualities of objects stored in Basel after 79 years would still be ‘intact’, the overwhelming response was that the ‘sacredness’ would no longer be active. Informants explained that if ceremonies and offerings to ‘feed’ these objects had not been performed over the intervening years, their sacred potency would have diminished. A minority of interviewees suggested that some objects could have been so powerful when they were collected in 1935 that their potency might remain intact. These divergent opinions suggest that there is no single unified stance on this topic. Due to the lack of clarity about former clan ownership, a matter unable to be determined because Bühler did not record names of the vendors of the objects, no-one was willing to be definitive in their opinion about ‘sacredness’ without authentication of clan ‘ownership’ (see Chapter 5). This reinforces the critical importance of provenance in enabling objects to be ‘reunited’ with their appropriate cultural owners. Certain types of objects, such as the *atewaa*, would be too

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<sup>95</sup> Adelindu Salvador, interview with author, Kaikasa, Bahatata, Baguia Sub-district, 5 August 2014.

<sup>96</sup> Luciano Teixeira Alves of Defawasi, Baguia Sub-district, interview with author, Dili, 30 September 2014.

<sup>97</sup> Azelmo Simoes, personal communication with author, Uasufa, Baguia Sub-district, 11 October 2014.

confronting to physically return to Baguía, as people would be confounded about how to relate to them without knowing specific clan provenance.

Interviewees were circumspect about ensuring cultural protocols were followed during interviews. In one interview, when it was apparent we were about to discuss the Baguía Collection of amulets, the informant insisted that we make an offering to the ancestors so that the conversation could be ‘opened’.<sup>98</sup> He requested a chicken, but as I had no way of arranging this at short notice, some money sufficed.<sup>99</sup> Although this interview occurred in the informant’s house, with his children seated nearby watching television, it was still necessary to observe this cultural protocol. The interview began and with the informant’s permission it was recorded. A young relative of the informant sat nearby listening intently to the discussion. At one point the informant leant over to the young man and said, as an aside, that he could not tell me everything about these objects as to say too much would ‘lead to his death’. Nonetheless, as the offering had been made ‘to open the path’ the informant shared his knowledge about the amulets, insofar as it was appropriate.

In addition to the amulets, other objects that were not discussed openly included the ancestral sculptures (*atewaa*, M; *ai toos*, T) and the ceremonial sceptres (*taru falunu*, M; *rota lulik*, T). This hesitation to discuss specific objects reflects how the concept of sacredness (*falunu*, M; *lulik*, T) shapes ‘ideas, conversations and practices across the intercultural divide’.<sup>100</sup> In some instances, an individual invited us to visit their home or ceremonial house, to show us their own, privately owned versions of these sacred objects. On these occasions we were requested to make an offering. People were more confident in discussing their own clan objects, as they were confident of their authority to do so. On other occasions people did not wish to discuss such objects.

During a visit to Daralari<sup>101</sup>, I conducted an interview at the ceremonial house site of Gregorius Alves and Pedro Lebre. Another senior man, Martinho Pintu, joined us at the site, together with other extended family. Although the site had been abandoned during the Indonesian occupation, the house had recently been refurbished. As we sat on the ancestors’ grave (*rate*, M) and began to view the digital images of the MKB weapons and the *taru falunu*

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<sup>98</sup> Juliao de Oliviera, interview with author, Uasufa, Baguía Sub-district, 12 December 2014.

<sup>99</sup> He intended to buy a chicken later with the money and slaughter it to feed his ancestors.

<sup>100</sup> Josh Trindade cited in McWilliam et al., “*Lulik* Encounters,” 318.

<sup>101</sup> Daralari is a Makasae-speaking *sucu* located in Uatocarbau Sub-district, Viqueque District, south of Baguía Sub-district.

on the tablet, Martinho commented: ‘this is heated’.<sup>102</sup> He insisted that these objects were too sacred and that we needed to observe customary protocol.<sup>103</sup> I made the necessary offering by placing some money on the *rate* and we resumed the viewing, looking at the Collection textiles instead. After much discussion about the textiles, we looked at the wooden bowl Collection. Martinho was very knowledgeable about the bowls but he became uneasy again as he indicated that wooden bowls were once used for both daily activity and ceremonial activity, but that these days they are only kept in the ceremonial house. He indicated that the bowls and the swords he had just seen from the Collection belonged inside a ceremonial house, as they were similar to the objects in his ceremonial house.

Irrespective of the explanations about the provenance of the Baguia Collection provided by the other two senior men present and by me, Martinho remained unconvinced, so we ceased the viewing. Martinho held the offering I had made in his hands and closed the meeting with a request to the ancestors to ‘close the house, close the door, close everything’.<sup>104</sup> He apologised to the ancestors if any disturbance had been caused by saying ‘apologies to that which is above, apologies to that which is below’.<sup>105</sup> After this incident Pedro commented that some people remain ‘closed to the world ... not open up to the world ... so how do they expect to have any progress?’ However, he qualified his outlook by saying: ‘But it is good to have respect for the old ways’.<sup>106</sup> This indicated a contrast in these two men’s positions and attitudes, highlighting the tensions between customary norms and values and encroaching modernity.

Other responses to the Baguia Collection objects were more obtuse in that some objects remained embedded in Makasae society, as they are still made and used regularly; including machetes (*sita*, M; *katana*, T) and drums (*tiba*, M; *babadok*, T). These objects were familiar to informants, the *tiba* being an iconic Timorese instrument. Yet in most instances it was difficult for people to comment on these objects as ‘everyday’ or iconic objects embedded in the culture; seeing images of older examples of these objects was akin to ‘taking coal to

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<sup>102</sup> He used the Tetun term, *balae manas*.

<sup>103</sup> He used the words *lisan* (T) and *adat* (I), in this instance.

<sup>104</sup> He stated in Tetun, *taka uma, taka odamatan, taka hotu*.

<sup>105</sup> He used the Tetun expression, *deskulpa iba leten, deskulpa iba okos*.

<sup>106</sup> Pedro Lebre, personal communication with author, Daralari, Utaocarbau Sub-district, Viqueque District, 19 July 2015.

Newcastle'. However, when I asked who still made *tiba* in Baguia Sub-district, no-one could cite a local maker, suggesting its continued presence may be precarious.

A few Baguia Collection objects were unfamiliar or forgotten. These objects can be considered to exist 'beyond memory'.<sup>107</sup> Only one person was able to identify the warrior shield (*abalaku*, M) and the angel 'grave-marker' shield.<sup>108</sup> Other objects on the edge of living memory remain familiar only to the elderly, but are no longer used, such as the wooden bowls, lathes, feather dusters, *palmatori*, raincoat, loincloths, ink wells, woven food and cup covers, woven storage baskets, woven pouches, toothbrushes and equipment used for making horn body ornaments. The knowledge of what an object is and what it is used for should not be assumed as constant. The meanings and significance of objects may be 'implicit, variable and even idiosyncratic'.<sup>109</sup>

The diverse ways in which informants related to the objects in the Baguia Collection indicate the complexities of discussing material cultural in a Makasae context. The use of printed and digital images met with differing responses, with a hard-copy tangible folder being preferred, due to its materiality, rather than ephemeral projections or tablet images. Memory-work associated with looking at the Collection objects, recalling both sensory and aural familiarity as well as lived experiences, was common.

The difference between sacred and non-sacred objects, or more accurately the perception of sacredness attributed to objects by different informants, also shaped and affected how people engaged with the images. The shifting status of non-*falunu* objects required for ceremonial activity has also emerged as a result of recent change in Makasae material culture. Non-engagement was also a response, through lack of interest and possible active disassociation with the past. In other instances, objects such as the *palmatori* triggered flashbulb memories of trauma, while objects, such as the spinning top, elicited joyful collective memories. While some Collection objects were 'seen' with difficulty, due to their continued use and 'embedded' status, other objects were completely unfamiliar, hovering either on the edge or beyond living memory.

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<sup>107</sup> See MKB IIc 6399, MKB IIc 6400, MKB IIc 6401, MKB IIc 6402, MKB IIc 6403 and MKB IIc 6404.

<sup>108</sup> See MKB Baguia Collection MKB IIc 6443, MKB IIc 6444, MKB IIc 6445 and MKB IIc 6446 for examples of *abalaku*.

<sup>109</sup> Howard Morphy, "Afterword," in *Museum Materialities: Objects, Engagements, Interpretations*, edited by Sandra H Dudley (London and New York: Routledge, 2010), 277.

### Three vignettes about viewing Baguia Collection objects

I'd now like to offer three vignettes that demonstrate some of the variety of responses provided by informants during one-on-one or small group interviews. The informants were (or had been) makers of the objects they discussed, thus they possessed a close knowledge and familiarity with the material and construction of the objects, as well as experience of how particular objects are used in Makasae (and Naueti) cultural contexts. The aim of presenting these vignettes is to provide insights into the heterogeneous responses that the Baguia Collection elicited and to discuss some of the issues and themes that emerged as people viewed the Collection objects.

#### **Vignette 1: Maria Alves and Alicia Ximenes interpret change through textile production in Alawa Craik and Alawa Leten**

In the courtyard to Maria Alves's home in Alawa Craik, we viewed the Baguia Collection textiles and textile production tools. Maria is respected locally for her finely woven *tais*. Although she could identify the Collection textiles and tools with ease, she interrupted the interview and went inside to find a wooden cotton mangle (*ledu kai*, M; *ai dedu*, T), similar to the one in the Collection, to show and explain to us.<sup>110</sup>

I still use this *ledu kai* because it was made by my grandfather, the father of my father Anselmo, and then it was given to me. I use this until today because this is a record [*rekordasuan*] left by our ancestors so that we can work with this to make *tais*, to wear *tais* and to give *tais* in *fetosan umane* ceremonies.<sup>111</sup>

As a memento of the skill of spinning cotton, Maria likened her cotton mangle to her children having books and pens so that when they go to school they can read and write. By her estimation, her cotton mangle represents her work as a weaver and her ability to maintain Makasae customary obligations on behalf of her family.<sup>112</sup>

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<sup>110</sup> See MKB IIc 5982 for an example of a *ledu kai*. Cotton mangles were customarily used to remove seeds from the cotton boll, prior to spinning into thread. Maria explained that the process to prepare cotton for making *tais* is as follows: 'We plant the seeds of cotton, then when it produces the fruit we pick the ripe fruit and we dry it. Then we put this cotton inside the cotton mangle and we rotate it [the mangle]. After we remove all the seeds then we spin cotton and we use it to weave *tais*'. Maria Alves, interview with author, Alawa Craik, Baguia Sub-district, 24 August 2014.

<sup>111</sup> Maria Alves, interview with author, Alawa Craik, Baguia Sub-district, 24 August 2014.

<sup>112</sup> Maria Alves, interview with author, Alawa Craik, Baguia Sub-district, 24 August 2014.

Although Maria once grew cotton, she explained that she considered it too difficult to grow cotton in Baguia now and that the process to make *tais* with handspun cotton is too time-consuming.<sup>113</sup> Instead, she buys ‘traditional cotton’ (*kabas tradisional*, T) from neighbouring Uatocarbau when it is available. She uses this cotton sparingly, specifically for the resist-dyed (*safara*, M; *futus*, T) bands of motifs; ‘we mix traditional cotton with the modern cotton so that we will produce a good *tais*. I still want to spin traditional cotton because ... it has good quality and also this reminds me of our ancestors’.<sup>114</sup> She considered the Collection textiles to be of high aesthetic, technical and cultural value, indicative of the past accomplishments of Makasae weavers and as something to strive towards, even if this quality is increasingly beyond her reach due to the lack of locally grown cotton.



Figure 4.21: Maria Alves and her granddaughter with the cotton mangle made by Maria’s paternal grandfather.

Maria offered several reasons why she likes to weave using handspun cotton, including that it is superior quality, easy to weave and warm during the cold weather. She explained the many functions of *tais* as household decoration, attire worn to welcome

<sup>113</sup> The process as explained by Maria includes growing the cotton, picking the cotton, ginning the cotton, carding the cotton, spinning the cotton, dyeing the cotton with natural plant dyes and then weaving the cotton. Maria Alves, interview with author, Alawa Craik, Baguia Sub-district, 24 August 2014.

<sup>114</sup> Maria Alves, interview with author, Alawa Craik, Baguia Sub-district, 24 August 2014.

guests, attend church and ceremonies, and as *fetosan umane* gifts. In Maria's opinion, the quality of the *tais* was superior if made from handspun cotton.<sup>115</sup>

The *tais* I am making now will be used for *fetosan*, such as bringing a man's cloth (*kola*, M; *tais mane*, T) and a woman's cloth (*rabi*, M; *tais feto*, T) together with one pig and five bags of rice, to pay the *fetosan* [wife-givers bridewealth].<sup>116</sup> In return the *umane* [wife-takers bridewealth] will give buffalo, goats and money. Some of the livestock brought by *humane* to the wife's family will be killed and eaten when the relatives of the two families come together.<sup>117</sup> In our *knuu*, when a family member passes away we have to use *tais* to cover the corpse inside the coffin, and as a tablecloth before putting it [the corpse] on the table. *Tais* is also used to cover the coffin before filling in the grave. We make a *tais* and then we will go to the house of the dead person and we bring it as a gift<sup>118</sup> to that house. If our family member passed away and we don't do all of the things mentioned above, then other people will bring the *tais* and perform these actions for the dead person. Then we are in debt to them until it is repaid ... it is to your family's disadvantage ... [p]eople will think we are lazy and they will say bad things about us. It will bring us shame, as if we have nothing inside our house.<sup>119</sup>

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<sup>115</sup> *Fetosan umane* are the bridewealth payments made by the wife-givers and the wife-takers as part of marriage negotiations.

<sup>116</sup> *Tais* are given in pairs of two, four, six, eight, ten and twelve, including a male and a female cloth, as part of bridewealth gift exchange.

<sup>117</sup> Maria Alves, interview with author, Alawa Craik, Baguia Sub-district, 24 August 2014.

<sup>118</sup> Maria noted this as a mortuary gift, which she called *lima etu*, T. It is important to note that *lima etu* differs to the Makasae mortuary gifts, which are exchanged between *omarabe* and *tufumata* and known as *bu manu taba*, M; Jose da Costa, email correspondence with author, 29 May 2017.

<sup>119</sup> Maria Alves, interview with author, Alawa Craik, Baguia Sub-district, 24 August 2014.





Figure 4.22 (L): A woman enters the ceremonial compound at Adui carrying handwoven *tais* inside baskets as part of her family's *fetosan* bridewealth payments, Adui, Larisula, Baguia Sub-district, 16 August 2014.

Figure 4.23 (R): A woman inspects the *fetosan* bridewealth payments of *tais* and rice, Mandati, Bahatata, Baguia Sub-district, 9 August 2014.

When I asked Maria what the implications for burials and marriage negotiations would be if *tais* are not made in the future she replied, 'Our daughters have to keep making *tais* as without *tais* we cannot bury people. Without *tais* we will be cursed, we will fight and even kill each other'.<sup>120</sup> In Maria's opinion a complete breakdown in Makasae

<sup>120</sup> Maria Alves, interview with author, Alawa Craik, Baguia Sub-district, 24 August 2014.

social structure would occur if *tais* were no longer produced or were unavailable for use in customary gift-exchange. Yet by her own admission the younger generation of Baguia ‘don’t know how to make *tais* because they don’t want to learn’. Increasingly, commercially spun and synthetically dyed yarns (*kabas loja*, *synthetis*, T) are sold at local shops and markets.<sup>121</sup> According to Maria, *kabas loja* is easier to use compared with handspun cotton.

Later, when the *tais* that belong to people now are damaged, there will be no *tais* in their house, as they don’t know how to make *tais*. In the future, our children will only use clothes of foreigners because they don’t know how to make *tais*.<sup>122</sup>

Maria considers the trend towards the use of commercially spun yarn as part of the demise of textile production in Baguia and its subsequent wider implications for the maintenance of Makasae cultural practices.

Another interviewee, Alicia Ximenes, a member of a women’s weaving group in Alawa Leten, also viewed the Baguia Collection textiles and whilst doing so she drew comparisons with contemporary *tais* produced in Baguia.<sup>123</sup> Alicia’s opinions were consistent with Maria’s regarding the cultural significance of *tais*, but her perspective on *tais* production differed considerably. Alicia indicated that nowadays only some women, those who had learnt from their grandmothers or mothers, are able to weave *tais* whilst the younger generation no longer learn to weave because they focus on their educations. Nonetheless, Alicia noted that all women are still obliged to bring *tais* to customary events as part of their familial obligations.

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<sup>121</sup> The terms *kabas loja* and *synthetis* are often used interchangeably; however, *synthetis* refers to commercially spun and synthetically coloured rayon, whilst *kabas loja* refers to commercially spun and synthetically dyed cotton. The Tetun term *kabas loja* literally translates to ‘shop cotton’.

<sup>122</sup> Maria Alves, interview with author, Alawa Craik, Baguia Sub-district, 24 August 2014.

<sup>123</sup> Alicia Ximenes, interview with author, Alawa Leten, Baguia Sub-district, 13 August 2014.



Figure 4.24: Women's weaving group in Alawa Leten, with Alicia Ximenes seated in the centre and pointing to the photo of a weaving loom from the Baguia Collection.

Alicia's main interest in the Baguia Collection *tais* was the opportunity to see resist-dyed designs incorporated into the textiles acquired by Bühler. She asked for copies of the Collection textiles with the aim of scrutinising and replicating the designs in her own work. Viewing the plant samples used for natural dyes in the Collection prompted Alicia to share her knowledge of natural dyes, emphasising that resist-dyeing with natural dyes was a lengthy and time-consuming process.<sup>124</sup> Alicia was knowledgeable about the annual cotton growing cycle, but explained that access to *synthetic* thread now meant that few people still bothered

<sup>124</sup> Plant specimens from the Baguia Collection, used for natural dye production, were difficult for informants in 2014 to identify. The specimens in the Collection include:

- MKB IIC 5986 was documented by Bühler as *kai na*, M. He described it as, 'Red dye-wood. Bundle of logs [or: pieces of wood]. Tied up in a palm-leaf wrapper. It is cut into small pieces and boiled [to prepare the dye]'. One informant in 2014 identified MKB IIC 5986 as *kaiseba*, M, which she explained is used to create a red dye bath. The dry bark is mixed with lime powder and heated in water and then cotton threads are submerged into the dye bath. Another informant thought that MKB IIC 5986 was *ate ninu*, M (*Morinda citrifolia*, L), which is used to dye the cotton red, mixed together with *ate gaba*, M.
- MKB IIC 5987 was documented by Bühler as *assa dala*, M. He described it as 'Yellow dye-wood. Pieces of branches tied together in a bundle.' Local informants in 2014 identified it as *ate gaba*, M, and *one kai*, M, which is pounded and added to water in an earthenware pot and threads submerged for two to three days to create the colour yellow.
- MKB IIC 5988 was acquired by Bühler and documented as *urupalélé*, M. He described it as, 'Leaves for red dye. Bundle of twigs wrapped in strips of palm leaf'. Local informants in 2014 identified it as *lalakasa*, M; (*Euphorbiaceae phyllanthus* sp. L.) leaves that are boiled and then mixed with mud in an earthenware pot or bucket. The threads are then submerged into the dye bath.

Translations of Bühler's accession cards provided by Dr Hilary Howes, 25 May 2017.

to plant cotton.<sup>125</sup> When viewing the Collection's cotton mangle and cotton spinning tools she described the process of spinning cotton in detail.<sup>126</sup> She explained that cotton mangles are still produced and used but, she disparagingly remarked, 'on the other hand, today, not many young people can use this [cotton mangle] because they just play with their phones all day and night'.<sup>127</sup>

Although her comment about the continued use of cotton mangles contradicts her remark that cotton is rarely grown in Baguia today, her statement highlighted major inter-generational shifts in knowledge about *tais* production and access to technology that have occurred in Baguia since 1935. From the world of 'traditional' cotton mangles to 'modern' mobile phone technology, Alicia implied that the broader social change that had occurred was advantageous.

Now we are very happy because we do not have to plant cotton ... spin cotton or cook mud dyes. We can just buy it [*synthetic*] from the shops. It is very sad to know that our ancestors only used their hands to weave ... Now we [have] ... the convenience of *synthetic* threads.<sup>128</sup>

She described the Baguia Collection textiles as 'old-fashioned *tais* from our ancestors' and by comparison she considered the textiles produced by her generation as superior because 'we have the advantage of [electric] light ... If we look at our ancestors' antique *tais* we feel both feelings; we feel a little bit sad and happy because they used only a few colours. It is better to weave the contemporary styles with colourful cotton'.<sup>129</sup>

Alicia's pride in the continued use and role of *tais* in her culture was obvious. To her eyes the technical and aesthetic shifts in *tais* production are practical, pragmatic modifications that served to support the continued production of *tais*. She identified the emergence of an economic market for the sale of *tais* and endorsed the contemporary *tais* as 'improved' due to being more colourful and efficient to make compared with the duller coloured, naturally

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<sup>125</sup> There was no special field for cotton planting. Cotton was planted together with other crops during the wet season (December) and harvested in the dry season (August).

<sup>126</sup> See MKB IIC 5777 and MKB IIC 5980 for examples of a small woven basket used for carrying the cotton bolls for spinning with the drop spindle (*toka*, M); see See MKB IIC 5977 and MKB IIC 5979 for examples of drop spindles (*keida ate*, M; *ti'i kabas*, T).

<sup>127</sup> Alicia Ximenes, interview with author, Alawa Leten, Baguia Sub-district, 13 August 2014.

<sup>128</sup> Alicia Ximenes, interview with author, Alawa Leten, Baguia Sub-district, 13 August 2014.

<sup>129</sup> Alicia Ximenes, interview with author, Alawa Leten, Baguia Sub-district, 13 August 2014.

dyed, labour-intensive *tais* from the Baguia Collection. Her knowledge of local plant dyes indicated her experience of using natural dyes; however, she rejected these as having no advantage over contemporary practices. Effectively, Alicia advocated for technological change, the use of new materials and efficiency in *tais* production whilst also asserting the consistent role of *tais* in Makasae society. She affirmed that contemporary *tais* are suitable for marriage negotiations, funeral ceremonies, and attire. ‘Wearing *tais* is a vital part of our culture and we, our children, and grandchildren will continue to wear it.’ Although she did not articulate what made her happy to see the Collection *tais*, she did state, ‘We wove in Portuguese times, we wove in Indonesian times and we weave now’<sup>130</sup>, suggesting that Alicia takes pride in upholding a vital aspect of Makasae culture through *tais* production and in doing so her sense of wellbeing is affirmed.

Alicia’s and Maria’s accounts reflect trends of change in local textile production in Baguia and differing perceptions towards this change. Maria’s viewing of the Baguia Collection reinforced the valuing of traditional textiles, even while she placed the cotton mangle within a modern context through her reference to school books and pens. She conceded that change was prevalent, but overall she aspired to ‘move towards’ the older materials and methods for *tais* production as they were authentic, were of higher quality (in her opinion), and were a continuation of the processes used by earlier generations. Alternatively, Alicia’s viewing of the Collection *tais* provided her with the means to ‘move away’ from ‘old-fashioned *tais*’ and instead to embrace modernity. At the same time, however, she used the viewing of the Collection to endorse her role as creating and maintaining culturally important objects. In both instances, there is a perception of the apparent durability of *tais* as a lasting and enduring form of Makasae material culture. Certainly, neither woman could imagine their society continuing to operate without *tais*.

### **Vignette 2:**

#### **Aurelia Martinha Ximenes, Olandina Guterres and Ernestina Guterres demonstrate ceramic production in Defawasi**

Baguia Sub-district’s ceramic-making centre is Defawasi, which shares a border with Laga Sub-district, also known for its hand-built ceramics. It is presumed that most of ceramics acquired by Bühler in Alawa Craik and Alawa Leten were produced in Defawasi or Laga. Informants who viewed the Baguia Collection ceramics identified some ceramics as

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<sup>130</sup> Alicia Ximenes, interview with author, Alawa Leten, Baguia Sub-district, 13 August 2014.

originating from Laga and others as originating from Defawasi. Three kendi (*mua buli*, *mua buli tali ena*, M; *buli*, T)<sup>131</sup> were identified as originating from Manatuto, based on their style and clay colour.<sup>132</sup> These three ceramics had presumably been traded into Baguia before being acquired by Bühler.

Following an initial viewing of the images of the Baguia Collection ceramics at Aurelia's house<sup>133</sup>, the three ceramicist informants offered to demonstrate the process of making a small clay pot (*mua busu*, M). Olandina Guterres, the eldest of the three women, resides in Uarou, Defawasi, together with her daughter-in-law Aurelia Martinha Ximenes and their extended family. Aurelia originates from Laga Sub-district. The third informant was Ernestina Guterres, Olandina's relative. All three women are Makasae speakers. Although there appeared to be no dedicated place for making ceramics in the house compound, Ernestina and Aurelia rallied round and found the necessary materials and equipment with which to make a pot.

While observing Ernestina and Aurelia making a small *mua busu*, their collaboration was the most striking feature of the production process. Together the pot moved between their hands, at times with both of them holding and forming it simultaneously. As the next phase of the pot's production approached, Aurelia would arrange the requisite materials or equipment while Ernestina, the master ceramicist, finessed the current stage of production. Whilst this collaboration may have been a result of their eagerness to display their skills, it seemed more likely that the women had worked together previously. Their seamless ability to work together to form the pot alludes to the likelihood that ceramic production has always been a collaborative and collective endeavour in Defawasi, based on a process of transmitting knowledge from master to apprentice.<sup>134</sup>

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<sup>131</sup> Bühler documented the Makasae name of these kendi as *usu mata*.

<sup>132</sup> Manatuto is a town located in Manatuto District where a distinctive style of earthenware ceramics is produced in the Holou *aldeia* by members of Sanggar Matan. See MKB IIc 6112, MKB IIc 6113 and MKB IIc 6114 for examples of Manatuto-style *buli*.

<sup>133</sup> The MKB Baguia Collection of ceramics consists predominantly of hand-built earthenware ceramics and ceramic production tools.

<sup>134</sup> Aurelia indicated that she can now make clay cups and plates on her own but even though 'I already know how to make the *mua busu*, when I want to make it I always work together with my mother-in-law'. Aurelia Martinha Ximenes, interview with author, Defawasi, Baguia Sub-district, Timor-Leste, 8 October 2014.



Figure 4.25: Aurelia and Ernestina making a pot together at Defawasi, Baguia Sub-district, 8 October 2014.



Figure 4.26: A small *mua busu* is constructed by Aurelia and Ernestina using the pinch pot method and the support of a coconut shell to give it form. Defawasi, Baguia Sub-district, 8 October 2014.



Figure 4.27: Aurelia presents the pot once it is constructed, before it is set to dry. Defawasi, Baguia Sub-district, 8 October 2014.

The women then looked at the Baguia Collection ceramics and identified them. Aurelia explained that she began to learn the skill of making ceramics from her mother-in-law in 1992.<sup>135</sup> She emphasised that the use of ceramic *mua busu* and ceramic plates (*mua rau*, M) for ceremonial activity was ‘like building a ceremonial house and building a grave because we should use these objects forever/always [*nafatin*] ... we continue to make and continue to learn how to make these objects because this is our culture’.<sup>136</sup> She also commented that ceramics are used in the local church nowadays as part of Communion rituals involving holy water.

Aurelia explained that during Portuguese times her ancestors used ceramic vessels predominantly in domestic contexts. In some instances, a woven fibre food-cover (*teru luru*, *tere luru falunu*, M; *lubu*, *lubu lulik*, T) was placed on top of the earthenware plate to protect the food served to guests.<sup>137</sup> As food was often served on the floor – Aurelia explained that few people owned tables then – the ceramic dishes of food were placed on top of woven fibre mats (*biti*, *biti renda*, M, T) on which people sat to eat meals.<sup>138</sup> Some of the ceramics in the Baguia Collection are accompanied by a woven basket (*soloko*, M), which operated as a base to stabilise the pot. Aurelia explained that the *soloko* prevented the pot from toppling over.<sup>139</sup> Through these comments about the inter-relationship between various types of objects, such as the pots, the food-covers, the mats and *soloko*, Aurelia was making apparent her own system for classifying the objects based on use.

Aurelia also referred to the use of foreign stoneware plates (*afo afa’a*, M; *bikan fatuk*, T) by the ‘monarchy’ in earlier times, stating that people of wealth and high status could afford to purchase these foreign plates, whilst ‘for those who did not have money, they just used the clay plate to eat’.<sup>140</sup> This indicated that locally produced earthenware ceramic plates and vessels were associated with the less affluent and wider society. In addition to using earthenware plates for eating, the large ovoid *mua busu*, with the curled lip and wide mouth, was used either to draw and carry water or to cook food. Such utilitarian pots were rarely decorated but occasionally they were painted with ochres featuring designs according to the

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<sup>135</sup> Aurelia Martinha Ximenes, interview with author, Defawasi, Baguia Sub-district, 8 October 2014.

<sup>136</sup> Aurelia Martinha Ximenes, interview with author, Defawasi, Baguia Sub-district, 8 October 2014.

<sup>137</sup> See MKB IIc 6536, MKB IIc 6537, MKB IIc 6538, MKB IIc 6539 and MKB IIc 6540.

<sup>138</sup> See MKB IIc 6637, MKB IIc 6638 and MKB IIc 6639.

<sup>139</sup> See MKB IIc 6099a&b and MKB IIc 6100a&b.

<sup>140</sup> The informant used the Tetun term *ema monachia*, which I have interpreted as ‘monarchy’.



preference of the individual maker.<sup>141</sup> Aurelia noted that *kaneka rai* were used to serve coffee and tea to visitors. She referred to the Qing bowl as a ‘Portuguese plate’, and made the further distinction that people ‘like the Administrator’ once used this type of ceramic. These comments highlight the status attributed to foreign or foreign-inspired ceramics and, by comparison, the lower status attributed to locally produced ceramics and forms, such as the *mua busu*.

Aurelia commented on the significance of the ceramics:

The *mua busu* is very important because we use it in cultural ceremonies, same as the *tais*, so we cannot let go of or forget it because it is our culture, the Timorese tradition ... Also, when we want to enter the sacred house ... [i]t is prohibited for Timorese to use the aluminium cooking pot in cultural ceremonies because the pot that we use, once we have finished with it, should be tied with rope and hung inside the ceremonial house. The *mua busu* that hangs inside the sacred house is used to cook sacred *lulik* rice and we mention the name of the *matebian bei ala* [deceased ancestors] and that is why after eating from it we hang the pot inside the ceremonial house and do not use it in the common house.

According to Aurelia the use of ceramics in cultural ceremonies has created a niche market and demand for the sale of ceramics. ‘Even if the *mua busu* has an expensive price people are forced to buy it because they do not know how to make it but they are obliged by their culture, it forces them to need it.’ Aurelia recognised that many people do not know how to make the pots and that they don’t want to learn because now they have access to aluminium pots, ‘but the impact for them is that they need to buy ceramics from other people when they have cultural ceremonies’. With their knowledge and access to the necessary tools and materials to produce *mua busu*, the women have cornered a small local market, providing them with a meagre livelihood.

The role of ceramics has shifted significantly from serving utilitarian functions of carrying water, and preparing and storing food to becoming relegated to use only in ceremonial

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<sup>141</sup> Aurelia Martinha Ximenes, interview with author, Defawasi, Baguia Sub-district, 8 October 2014.

houses and churches.<sup>142</sup> Whilst in earlier times *mua busu* were also used in the ceremonial house as containers for sacred water and food for offering to the ancestors, today these are the primary functions they serve. Thus, they exemplify the movement of this once ubiquitous object into the sacred domain, as it becomes increasingly rare due to decreased levels of production.

### **Vignette 3: Adolfo do Rego remembers wooden bowl production in Afaloicai**

During a community viewing of the Baguia Collection in Afaloicai, Adolfo do Rego's knowledge about wooden plates (*ate rau*, M; *haku kai*, N; *bikan ai*, T)<sup>143</sup> became evident. He agreed to be informally interviewed about the wood-turning equipment in the Collection, which consists of two lathes<sup>144</sup>, various woodworking tools<sup>145</sup>, partially completed wooden bowls<sup>146</sup> and a total of 11 completed bowls, some with lids.<sup>147</sup> The interview took place at his home.

Adolfo is a Naueti speaker and the chief of Buibela, Afaloicai, Baguia Sub-district. As he looked at printed images of wooden bowls and wood-turning equipment, he recalled aspects of his earlier experiences as a wood-turner explaining that wooden bowl production in Afaloicai had ceased since 2007.<sup>148</sup> Throughout his self-directed explanation in Tetun, which was prompted by occasional questions from me, he consistently used the expression 'in earlier times' and he commented that wooden bowls 'belonged to the past'. A synthesis of Adolfo's comments follows.

<sup>142</sup> Aurelia explained that *mua busu* were also used in former times to store the placenta of the baby inside the ceremonial house and later it was hung on a tree branch, but nowadays, she said, 'we are modern, so people just dispose of the placenta in the toilet'. Aurelia Martinha Ximenes, interview with author, Defawasi, Baguia Sub-district, Timor-Leste, 8 October 2014.

<sup>143</sup> The terms wooden plates and wooden bowls are used interchangeably. The Baguia Collection of wood-turned vessels includes wooden bowls, wooden plates/dishes with a foot, wooden bowls with lids and chilli paste containers with raised foot and lid.

<sup>144</sup> See MKB IIc 5926a–f; MKB IIc 5927a–d; MKB IIc 5956.

<sup>145</sup> See MKB IIc 5929 IIc 5941, MKB IIc 5942 and MKB IIc 5941, including a chisel (*kai mamu*, N), an awl (*kai hala*, N), an axe (*sabili*, N) and a saw (*kado*, N).

<sup>146</sup> See MKB IIc 5942 – MKB IIc 5955 and MKB IIc 5957 – MKB IIc 5958. These objects document the phases of the production of a wooden bowl.

<sup>147</sup> See MKB IIc 5969a&b, MKB IIc 5970a&b and MKB IIc 5971a&b.

<sup>148</sup> A group of local men had produced a set of wooden bowls for an event in Dili in 2007, but none had sold. Without a market for the sale of these handcrafted wooden bowls, people had ceased to make bowls in Afaloicai.



Figure 4.28: Adolfo do Rego views wood-turning tools used in the earlier production of wooden bowls, Buibela, Afaloicai, Baguia Sub-district, 16 October 2014.

Adolfo learnt to make wooden plates when he was 18 years old, by assisting his father and uncle ‘so that we could ... have money for food and taxes’.<sup>149</sup> The plates were a vital source of income ‘at a time when we were in hunger’. Wooden plates were manufactured and sold to buy animals such as goats, pigs, chickens, buffalo and horses. Ten wooden plates could be exchanged for one pig or goat. Before selling the plates, a chicken was slaughtered and the ancestors were asked: are these plates able to be sold?<sup>150</sup> He worked with three other men and together they carried the bowls to the markets of Quelicai and Uatolari in a large net (*redi*, M).<sup>151</sup> A small bowl cost three *escudos*, an average-sized bowl six *escudos*, and a large bowl ten *escudos*. ‘When 100 wooden plates were completed, we sold them in the market; then we made more to sell again.’<sup>152</sup>

Wooden plates were used in the ceremonial house as well as at home for everyday use. During the pre-harvest ceremony for corn and rice, when offerings of goat, chicken and buffalo were sacrificed to the ancestors, wooden vessels were used together with woven fibre

<sup>149</sup> This places Adolfo at an approximate age of 12–15 circa 1954–1957, when he was learning this craft.

<sup>150</sup> Adolfo recalled: ‘We held the dead chicken by its feet and cut its liver for inspection. If its liver was healthy, then we would sell the plates, but if the chicken’s liver was diseased, we would not go to sell the plates, as no-one would come and buy them. This is the ritual ceremony that my elder brother and uncles did in the past’. Adolfo do Rego, interview with author, Buibela, Afaloicai, Baguia Sub-district, 16 October 2014.

<sup>151</sup> See MKB IIc 6613 for an example of a *redi*. Quelicai is located in Baucau District and Uatolari is located in Viqueque District.

<sup>152</sup> Adolfo do Rego, interview with author, Buibela, Afaloicai, Baguia Sub-district, 16 October 2014.

plates to serve ‘sacred meat’ and rice to guests and family members in the ceremonial house compound.<sup>153</sup> Such plates were stored inside the ceremonial house, reserved specifically for this use.<sup>154</sup>

He recalled that in earlier times they did not have ‘modern’ eating utensils and that wooden vessels were commonly used.

When the foreigners began to come to our land, we also started to buy ceramic plates to keep for the guests, but usually we used wood plates to eat ... When the *liurai* (traditional Timorese ruler, T) came to our house we would not serve them food unless we had a modern plate, because we were ashamed if we used the wooden plate to serve food.<sup>155</sup>

The arrival of foreign eating utensils and plates caused the locally produced wooden bowls to become stigmatised.<sup>156</sup> ‘Modern plates’ is a term Adolfo used to refer to foreign Chinese porcelain and stoneware goods and European ceramics.<sup>157</sup> The prestige of foreign ceramics was assured as objects from foreign, rare and ‘outer’ dominions that also entered clan treasuries across Timor.<sup>158</sup> Adolfo recalled that from 1960 onwards, people ‘sold their buffalo to buy modern plates, but not everyone could afford to buy them’, indicating the high status attributed to foreign ceramic plates. Adolfo recalled that modern plates were used by elites

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<sup>153</sup> Adolfo related that in the past wooden plates and palm-fibre plates were used by the people in Quelicai, Uatolari and Baguia for cultural ceremonial activity.

<sup>154</sup> Adolfo do Rego, interview with author, Buibela, Afaloicai, Baguia Sub-district, 16 October 2014.

<sup>155</sup> Adolfo added that ‘The *liurai* would come to visit us and they called us slaves of the soldiers [*asuliar morodoro*] if we did not participate in the ceremony to greet him and they would strike us with buffalo skin and a *palmatori* [see MKB IIc 6597]. The slaves had to bring what they have, such as chickens or eggs to the king’s house for him to eat because he was our leader’. Adolfo do Rego, interview with author, Buibela, Afaloicai, Baguia Sub-district, 16 October 2014.

<sup>156</sup> Wooden plates have been relegated to the past, according to another informant, Josh Trindade. ‘Before when we use this material [wooden bowls] they look at us as being backward if you did not use the ceramic materials. Then they [Naueti people] threw away all these things ... and then I think, ‘Shit!’ Why did you throw that all away! ... I use some of them [wooden plates] but again they think you are uncivilised eating with this sort of plate ... yeah, I remember that ... So they don’t produce these [wooden plates] any more, which is a pity ... but people still have the knowledge ... I want to encourage people to produce it for craft ... to sell it to tourists. I was asking my brother to find me people who can produce it in my village. I want to encourage people to produce these wooden bowls.’ Josh Trindade, interview with author, Dili, 2 December 2014.

<sup>157</sup> An active trade in Maastricht stencil-ware ceramics occurred in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries between The Netherlands and Java. See MKB IIc 6121 for an example of a Chinese Qing Dynasty stoneware glazed ceramic.

<sup>158</sup> Joanna Barrkman, *Reaffirming the Kemak Culture of Marobo: Now and Then* (Dili: Timor Aid, 2013), 28.

such as *postu* staff, the *liurai* and military officers (*kornel*, T), while ordinary people used either clay plates made in Quelicai or wooden plates made in Afaloicai.<sup>159</sup>

‘During 1975 some people still used wooden plates and even made them during war-time [Indonesian occupation] ... and sold them to buy food for survival.’ In 1980, the opening-up of Portuguese Timor to Indonesian and Chinese traders with mass-produced Chinese goods occurred.<sup>160</sup> As people returned from refuge in Mount Matebian, plastic plates and cups, and aluminium cutlery and ladles were readily available, replacing wooden, coconut and shell utensils. ‘Modern plates are now even used for traditional ceremony because everything has changed; therefore, the old objects have also changed to [or been replaced with] modern objects.’<sup>161</sup>

As Adolfo reflected on the process of making wooden plates he explained that much time and effort was required. In advance of felling a tree for plate production, customary protocols were followed:

When our ancestors wanted to make wooden plates, first they had to make a ritual ceremony ... they would bring a chicken and rice [as offerings] to ask permission [from their ancestors] before they cut the tree. If they cut the tree before asking permission the wooden plate would break ... After the tree was cut we had to keep a circle of trimmed bamboo underneath the tree to indicate that we had asked permission. Some people paid with a *lama lebe* to cut the trees.<sup>162</sup>

Adolfo felled banyan and *unnati*, N, trees using a large axe and a crowbar.<sup>163</sup> One tree was split into four sections and could make approximately 100 wooden plates. A small axe (*sabilai*, N)<sup>164</sup> was used to trim the softer inner wood used for the plate or bowl after it had been turned on the lathe. Adolfo reflected that now it should be easier to

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<sup>159</sup> Adolfo described the process of making the clay plates by the people of Quelicai as follows: ‘squeeze the red soil as a ball then they made it as a plate from it; then they used Casuarina leaves and its branches to bake it until it dries and then it could be tapped and if it sounded like tapping metal it meant that the clay plate was ready to be used’. Adolfo do Rego, interview with author, Afaloicai, Baguia Sub-district, 16 October 2014. Quelicai Sub-district shares a border with Baguia Sub-district, near Afaloicai. Due to geographic proximity ceramics in Afaloicai were acquired in earlier times from Quelicai and not Defawasi.

<sup>160</sup> Pedro Lebre, interview with author, Dili, 18 October 2014.

<sup>161</sup> Adolfo do Rego, interview with author, Buibela, Afaloicai, Baguia Sub-district, 16 October 2014.

<sup>162</sup> Adolfo do Rego, interview with author, Buibela, Afaloicai, Baguia Sub-district, 16 October 2014.

<sup>163</sup> I was unable to identify a Latin name for this tree.

<sup>164</sup> See MKB IIc 5934.

make wooden plates because people use chainsaws and the process is faster, but that, even so, no-one makes wooden plates any longer.

Adolfo himself indicated that he prefers to use modern plates to the wooden plates as they take too much time to make. Yet, he articulated that both individual creativity and technical skill were required to create wooden bowls, indicative of the positive value and appreciation he placed on the hand-crafted bowls. His comments indicated an anti-hegemonic stance against the mass-produced objects that have now replaced hand-turned wooden bowls.

I am very happy when I see these photos because I know exactly how to make wooden plates ... [b]ut when I see these objects again I am surprised because this job was mine and I made them with my own hands; therefore, I am very happy, by seeing these photos they remind me about my past ... [and] show us the origin of our objects that we made and sold for our daily necessities.<sup>165</sup>

Ultimately, Adolfo's happiness at seeing these objects and remembering his past skills and craft was palpable. He asserted that wooden bowls were a source of technical skill and creative ingenuity and were once central to his daily life, for his family's survival as well as for use at customary feasts and sacrifices. He did not express a sense of loss or sadness that wooden bowls are no longer produced in Afaloicai, although he may have felt this. Upon concluding the interview, he asked to keep two images of wooden bowls 'as a memory'.

The Collection photographs enabled Adolfo to remember aspects of his past experiences. The form of the materials used to retrieve memory is critical as

the work of remembering and constructing the past is a complex one, for ... much depends on the form of the materials that feed native memory, in the elaboration of content. It is not sufficient to idealize or modify the past, it is also necessary to find images capable of expressing and reviving it.<sup>166</sup>

In the instance of viewing wood-turning tools and wooden bowls in the Baguia Collection, albeit as printed images, they evoked the materiality of the objects' construction sufficiently

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<sup>165</sup> Adolfo do Rego, interview with author, Buibela, Afaloicai, Baguia Sub-district, 16 October 2014.

<sup>166</sup> Serge Gruzinski, "Mutilated Memory: Reconstruction of the Past and the Mechanisms of Memory among 17<sup>th</sup> century Otomis," *History and Anthropology Journal*, vol. 2, no. 2 (1986): 344.

to prompt Adolfo to remember his knowledge of using and creating wooden bowls, unleashing feelings of happiness and pride. The experience revived his interest in this craft as he concluded the interview by offering to make me a set of wooden bowls.

### **Summary of the vignettes**

These three vignettes showcase various responses to segments of the Baguia Collection, illustrating that a community's engagement with a Collection can be as diverse as its component parts. In each vignette, the Baguia Collection objects were considered to be expressions of Makasae cultural identity. Such claims were often linked with statements about the importance of preserving or continuing these forms. These vignettes also contextualise earlier claims about how objects in the informant's possession were used to relate information, such as the cotton mangle, and how viewing the Collection ceramics inspired a demonstration of how to make a small *mua busu*. The pride associated with these assertions of cultural ownership – be it through demonstration of skill, showing similar objects or merely knowing what the object was used for or how it was made – were palpable.

In the three vignettes, including the wooden bowls that 'belong to the past'<sup>167</sup> and are no longer produced, there remained the potential for much cultural and technical knowledge with personal and life experience to be elicited and recollected. The objects clearly enabled the interviewees to recall and remember, drawing on their memories, which re-connected the past to the present. How are such experiences of triggering memories, sharing past experiences and knowledge and feelings of happiness, pride and wellbeing, together with loss and change, to be understood? One benefit of engaging with digital images of the Baguia Collection for community members in Baguia, as they negotiate post-trauma healing and social reconstruction, may be to provide a sense of continuity of identity in their rapidly changing post-independence world.

### **Conclusion**

In this chapter, I set out to consider what relevance the Baguia Collection still holds for the Baguia community, as it sits on the edge of living memory. The Collection enabled a comparison between the 'then and now' of Makasae material culture, how it has endured and

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<sup>167</sup> Whilst Adolfo considered that wooden bowls 'belong to the past', in Daralari I was informed that wooden bowls are now only stored in the *oma falu*, reserved especially for ceremonial use, but that in earlier days they were used for everyday (*bain-bain*, T) as well as ceremonial activity.

altered according to the vicissitudes of time or the ‘acceleration of history’ between 1935 and 2014. The potential of this diasporic Collection to foster a reconstitution or restitution of knowledge, through its temporary digital return to Baguia, was identified. With wider access, this potential could be further realised. Furthermore, I have explored how the digital and ephemeral methods used to return the Collection to Baguia circumnavigated the materiality and denied many of the sensory aspects of the objects, to be re-encountered and re-experienced by the Makasae in this way. This methodological limitation undoubtedly shaped informants’ responses to and experiences of viewing the images of the Collection. Nonetheless, I have also established that working with images rather than actual objects still conveyed the ‘vitality’ of the objects, to a degree, and elicited tactile and mnemonic responses from the informants.

These methodological characteristics notwithstanding, evidence suggests that familiarity with the Baguia Collection objects was age-dependent and that participants aged approximately 35 years and over were much more familiar with Collection objects than those who were younger. At the time of the research, such familiarity enabled the temporary digital return of the images of the Baguia Collection to foster ‘memory-work’ and remembering by those people who engage with them. Others engaged directly with the images of objects as if they were the objects themselves, and through performative actions they expressed memories and lived experiences in which similar objects were present. In this way, the objects bridged an historical past with the immediate present. The Collection objects operated as triggers of memories, whether these were memories of similar objects, flashbulb memories or as a springboard into broader recollections of places, people and lived experiences in which similar objects were entwined. People affirmed their connection to the Collection through the presentation of similar objects in their possession as a means of authenticating the objects’ association with Baguia, their role as custodians of similar objects and their associated knowledge about the objects.

The responses to the Baguia Collection objects also highlight tensions in contemporary Makasae culture between customary practices and modernisation. Some material objects have remained constant while other types of objects are ‘falling away’ and others again are being replaced or transformed with modern materials and methods. Within this spectrum of change and continuity the status of certain objects has become affected. A steady decline in the production of some objects is causing them to become rare and by implication more



precious. They are being accorded a new status, additional to either *falunu* or non-*falunu* categories, as they become ‘non-*falunu* objects that are necessary for the performance of customary ceremony’. As production of such objects decreases and they become more valued and continue to move between the inner sacred realm and the outer mundane realm, they reflect the broader shifting dynamics affecting Makasae society in the current era.

As ceramics, coconut spoons, wooden bowls and woven baskets become less widespread, as they have been replaced by mass-produced goods, their ‘everyday’ or even ‘lowly’ status shifts as they become desirable markers of Makasae or Timorese identity. Other objects, such as the *tiba*, remain embedded in the culture. Whether the knowledge about how to produce them in the future will exist remains unclear. For now, the broader social contexts and customary practices of the Makasae continue (as discussed in Chapter 1) although the material culture of the Makasae undergoes transformation. Whether customary practices will continue to be performed into the future may be partly dependent on the capacity of objects, such as *taiis*, to stabilise Makasae daily life, while also undergoing change.

The participants in the research ensured that Makasae cultural protocols were followed when discussing the Baguia Collection objects. They identified some objects as being *falunu*. In some instances, sensitivities about sacred objects within the Baguia Collection, especially *atevaa* and *tarnu*, were identified. The lack of information about the original clan of ownership from which the *atevaa* were acquired in 1935 has interrupted the scope for them to be re-linked to their clan of origin, relegating them to anonymity from a Makasae perspective, unable to be appropriately customarily ‘fed’ and potentially causing imbalance. Informants also withheld information, underscoring the significance of certain objects, their potency and association with cultural knowledge and cultural identity. How, when and by whom such knowledge is transmitted needs to be determined by Makasae people. This in turn supports the assertion that the potential of this Collection in Baguia is the restitution of knowledge and the inter-generational transmission of that knowledge to ensure longer-term cultural maintenance and development. Time is a crucial factor in this process, as the Collection resides on the edge of living memory, and its ability to be recalled and recollected will diminish – or most certainly alter and vary – as time transpires.

Not all responses to viewing the Baguia Collection objects can be construed as positive and affirming pride and identity. Some people moved away from rather than engaged with the Collection, which may reflect their preference for advancement and modernity over the past

and tradition. However, in the same ways that wellbeing could not be measured as a consequence of viewing the Collection, so too a confronting sense of loss and sadness for what has changed and been lost was rarely commented upon, but possibly felt. For some people, the past, as represented by the Collection objects, was considered as a revered time and, when compared to contemporary life, it possibly made people feel as if their current lives were in some respects diminished.

One broader insight from this case study is the recognition that the digital return of images of objects by museums and their staff is a valid process in its own right, enabling a source community to engage and enter a process of restitution of its knowledge. Digital images of objects can link the past to the present but this process is largely dependent on past association and relative familiarity with the objects concerned. Such images can convey the ‘vitality’ of objects, enabling viewers to then relate to digital images as they recall the materiality or sensory experiences with similar objects.

Digital images foster forms of memory-work, remembering and forgetting. Associated performative actions can also be triggered by images of objects. Researchers need to be aware of the potential emotional reactions that images and memories can bring forth, as loss and past traumas may be revisited. Importantly, cultural protocols must always be given acknowledgment and priority to shape the processes around such cultural material is viewed, suggesting that source communities need to be leaders and managers of such processes, rather than mere participants. Finally, the environment of the source community itself becomes a resource through which people interpret and respond to images of objects – be that locating a similar object or indicating how it is made or used – reminding us that it is the holistic combination of tangible and intangible heritage – including the person who carries the intangible knowledge as well as their habitus and habitat<sup>168</sup> – that is critical to ‘re-placing’ or ‘re-contextualising’ ‘objects of ethnography’ within their source communities.

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<sup>168</sup> Pierre Bourdieu, “Structures and the Habitus,” in *Outline of a Theory of Practice* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977), 72–95. Of habitus, Bourdieu states: “The structures constitutive of a particular type of environment (e.g. the material conditions of existence characteristic of a class condition) produce *habitus*, systems of durable, transposable dispositions, structured structures predisposed to function as structuring structure, that is, as principles of the generation and structuring practices and representations which can be objectively “regulated” and “regular” without in any way being the product of obedience to rules, objectively adapted to their goals without presupposing a conscious aiming at ends or an express mastery of the operations necessary to attain them and, being all this, collectively orchestrated without being the product of the orchestrating action of a conductor’, 72. He goes on to explain that ‘habitus is the product of the work of

Tensions between past and present, tradition and modernity, remembering and forgetting were highlighted by the various engagements the people of Baguia had with the Baguia Collection objects. The next chapter continues to explore these issues by considering the responses of Baguia residents to the historical photographs taken by Bühler, and further highlights the complexities and varied responses to the Collection as both affirming and ambiguous.

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inculcation and appropriation necessary in order for those products of collective history, the objective structures (e.g. language, economy, etc.) to succeed in reproducing themselves more or less completely, in the form of durable dispositions, in the organisms (which one can, if one wishes, call individuals) lastingly subjected to the same conditionings, and hence placed in the same material conditions of existence', 85. Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, "Intangible Heritage as Metacultural Production," 53.



## Chapter 5

# Engaging with historical photographs in the Baguia Collection

If a photo is a reproduction of truth and ‘the photograph album historicises memory’, what is the significance of historical photographs taken by Bühler in 1935 for Makasae people in 2014?<sup>1</sup> The historical photographs in the Baguia Collection sit on the edge of living memory of the Makasae people, who have little to no experience of creating or seeing photographic records of their heritage or their forebears.<sup>2</sup> The use of photography in Baguia is a relatively new medium for people to engage with and from which to derive a sense of a collective past.

In the last chapter, I examined Makasae peoples’ reactions to material culture objects from the Baguia Collection and how, once returned as digital images, they enabled community engagement that led to the restitution of cultural knowledge and skills. This chapter considers the significance of the historical photographs in the Baguia Collection. The discussion speculates about what motivated Bühler to take these photographs and the factors that influenced his choice of photographic subject matter. I argue that Bühler’s photographs exist, on one hand, as an enduring record of his ethnographic practice, and, on the other, as a valuable cultural heritage resource for the people of Baguia. As such, I argue that they embody a ‘double vision’<sup>3</sup> and operate as ‘a site of intersecting histories’.<sup>4</sup>

This chapter recounts the process of the Makasae residents of Baguia viewing Bühler’s MKB photographs during my research. It considers how people engaged with and responded to these photographs as projected digital images or hard-copy prints, both when viewing them

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<sup>1</sup> Tessa Morris-Suzuki, “Shadows on the Lens: Memory as Photography,” in *The Past within Us: Media, Memory, History* (London and New York: Verso, 2005), 88–89. Morris-Suzuki states: ‘Events are now no longer remembered only from within – from interior experience – but are also objectified. We see ourselves from the outside, and superimpose this objective and fixed image of ourselves in the photographs into the interior memories of the delight or pain or confusion that infused particular moments of our lives. In the process we come to observe ourselves and our families as part of a constant transformation. For it is only when we look at our own face in the fading photograph that we understand how much we, and the world we live in, has altered with the passing of the years. The photograph album historicizes memory’.

<sup>2</sup> Whilst Makasae society does not have a strong photographic record, it does have an enduring tradition of creating carved wooden figurines (*atewaa*, *atevaal*, M) to memorialise the deceased. In Larisula the term *atevaal* is used rather than *atewaa* but I have retained the more widely used Makasae spelling of *atewaa* for simplicity.

<sup>3</sup> Nicholas Thomas, “Introduction,” in *Double Vision: Art Histories and Colonial Histories in the Pacific*, edited by Nicholas Thomas and Diane Losche (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 1–18.

<sup>4</sup> Elizabeth Edwards, “Introduction: Talking Visual Histories / Locked in the Archive,” in *Museums and Source Communities, A Routledge Reader*, edited by Laura Peers and Alison K Brown (London and New York: Routledge, 2003), 83.

directly and in other reactions that became apparent thereafter. The methodology used to show the Collection photographs to the Baguia community members will be explored to highlight some of the issues and complexities that I observed during the community viewings in response to the ‘photo elicitation’<sup>5</sup> of the Collection photographs. Emphasis will be given to the way photographic images hold multiple meanings and elicit a range of responses from viewers.

Thereafter, three vignettes provide detailed evidence of the different ways in which people engaged with the Baguia Collection historical photographs. I will argue that people actively sought to position the photographs in time and history in relation to their own lived experience and that in doing so they reactivated the Collection photographs by asserting their cultural authority over them. My concluding comments extrapolate some insights from this case study that have wider application for the digital return of historic photograph collections to source communities.

### **Alfred Bühler – an ethnographic photographer**

Bühler was an accomplished photographer who photographed extensively during the 1935 Expedition. Although Bühler’s purpose in taking these photographs was not articulated in his diary, the photographs served as evidence of his expedition and a record of his presence in distant Timor. These photographs formed part of his principal method of enquiry – systematisation: the comprehensive study of material items, from technologies to finished products, generating an ‘inventory of the material culture and comparing the data for the purpose of establishing evidence of cultural relations and migrations between southeast Asia and Melanesia’.<sup>6</sup> The photographs undoubtedly assisted Bühler to recall what he and Meyer observed and encountered in the field, complemented the expedition’s material culture acquisitions and provided visual documentation of the Makasae people, their lifestyle and landscape.

The photographs contextualised the objects Bühler collected, the people who made these objects and their place in the world. The photographs were destined to become absorbed

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<sup>5</sup> Joshua A Bell, “Promiscuous Things: Perspectives on Cultural Property through Photographs in the Purari Delta of Papua New Guinea,” *International Journal of Cultural Property*, vol. 15 (2008): 125. Bell uses the terms ‘visual repatriation’ and ‘photo elicitation’ interchangeably. I will use the term ‘photo elicitation’ as a method used in the digital return of museum collections.

<sup>6</sup> Schmid, “Anthropology and Expeditions,” 3.

into the 'museum's representational systems'.<sup>7</sup> Photographs provided evidence and constructed a 'cultural region'.<sup>8</sup> The camera was a 'salvage collecting' tool par excellence. The medium of photography served to capture a moment in time and hold it frozen as a fragment of timelessness.<sup>9</sup> In this way the photographs share the quality of 'timelessness' with the Collection objects.<sup>10</sup>

The photographic record that accompanied the development of material culture collections in the late nineteenth century was intended to provide 'context' for museum collections. As noted by Elizabeth Edwards, the process of collecting both photographs and objects creates a 'relationship that is at once dense and nuanced and, more importantly ... is central to the processes of collecting objects and to the way meanings are constructed around objects in the course of these processes'.<sup>11</sup> Such processes continued in ethnographic practices well into the twentieth century. Joshua Bell has written extensively on the 'promiscuity' of photographs. The nature of photography is that ultimately photographs enable the past to be seen in the present, thus giving them a 'dispersed' nature and 'atemporal quality'.<sup>12</sup> The concept of the 'photographic assemblage', according to Jamon Halvaksz, incorporates 'the agency of the person represented [, which] is actually impressed on the representation indexing the actions of the photographic subject. Photographer, photographed and the photo itself form an assemblage whose emergent qualities are made even more complex by the gaze of others'.<sup>13</sup>

The Baguia Collection, as a photographic record of 'a moment in time', tells us as much about Bühler as it does about the subjects of the photographs. Bühler created his own visual narrative of the expedition through this photographic record of the Makasae people and their landscape, as he encountered them. Viewed in sequence, the photographs enable us to see

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<sup>7</sup> Elizabeth, Edwards, "Surveying Culture: Photography, Collecting and Material Culture in British New Guinea, 1898," in *Hunting the Gatherers: Ethnographic Collectors, Agents and Agency in Melanesia, 1870s–1930s*, edited by Michael O'Hanlon and Robert L Welsch (New York, Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2000), 121.

<sup>8</sup> Reference to the work of Haddon who used photographs of material culture to construct a 'cultural region'; see Edwards, "Surveying Culture," 104.

<sup>9</sup> Edwards, "Surveying Culture," 112.

<sup>10</sup> Stocking, "Essays on Museums and Material Culture," 4.

<sup>11</sup> Edwards, "Surveying Culture," 104. Edwards made this comment in relation to an expedition that was undertaken by Haddon, Ray, Seligmann and Wilkin. They visited the south New Guinea coast from Hood Bay to Cape Possession and the Fly River Delta. Approximately 250 photographs were taken as part of this expedition.

<sup>12</sup> Bell, "Promiscuous Things," 123–139.

<sup>13</sup> Halvaksz, "The Photographic Assemblage," 102.

Baguia through Bühler's eyes as the 1935 Expedition unfolded.<sup>14</sup> His fascination with portrait shots, although no accompanying names were recorded, was symptomatic of his and Meyer's mission to determine racial boundaries and migration patterns. Bühler's other interest was the geographic landscape. As a trained geographer, his photographic record illustrates his appreciation of the mountainous landscape that he noted en route to Betulari: 'The view ... at 1000m was unrivalled, the landscape extraordinarily picturesque with its steep rocky cliffs and magnificent views'.<sup>15</sup> He was meticulous in providing location and place names for photographs of scenic locations.

Most of the photographs appear to have been taken by Bühler in public spaces with the one exception of a series of images that occurred inside a family compound.<sup>16</sup> In the compound shots the subject, a man, appears disconcerted by the presence of either the camera, the photographer or his companions. Some photographs may have been shot with people seemingly unaware of Bühler's lens directed towards them<sup>17</sup>, whilst others, although not posed, appear to have agreed to being photographed. This raises the unanswerable question of how people felt about being photographed. To what degree did the subjects of the photographs consider this an opportunity for them to shape the photographic record according to their agendas? The agency of those being photographed contributed to the photographic record produced by Bühler in the field, particularly if people declined to be photographed.<sup>18</sup>

Bühler's focus included textile weaving, metal smelting, and the production of wooden bowls and horn adornments, as discussed in Chapter 3. In keeping with the aims of the 1935 Expedition, Bühler documented the material culture of the Makasae photographically, first and foremost.<sup>19</sup> However, some aspects of material culture were not documented, such as

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<sup>14</sup> Alexander Freund and Alistair Thomson, "Introduction: Oral History and Photography," in *Oral History and Photography*, edited by Alexander Freund and Alistair Thomson (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 5.

<sup>15</sup> Bühler, *Tagenbuchnotizen*, 77.

<sup>16</sup> See MKB (F)IIc 19446, MKB (F)IIc 19451, MKB (F)IIc 1142 and MKB (F)IIc 1143.

<sup>17</sup> See MKB (F)IIc 1164, MKB (F)IIc 1165, MKB (F)IIc 1167 and MKB (F)IIc 1171.

<sup>18</sup> Jane Lydon, "Introduction," in *Calling the Shots: Aboriginal Photography*, edited by Jane Lydon (Canberra: Aboriginal Studies Press, 2014), 1–6; Niessen, "More to It Than Meets the Eye," 420–421.

<sup>19</sup> No ceremonial activity was photographed, even though ritual slaughter and the process of house construction are common activities during the dry season months. Bühler noted the rehearsal on 18 August 1935 in his diary for the performance to celebrate the District Administrator's visit on 19 August. He commented on aspects of the attire worn and the use of swords, flags and drums. This lack of photographic documentation of Makasae cultural practices is consistent with the MKB Commission's instructions to focus on the material culture and not the intellectual culture of the people they encountered during the 1935 Expedition.



basket weaving and ceramic production. Domestic interiors, farming and agricultural practices and ritual ceremonies also went undocumented. Bühler's attentive eye is apparent in his images of people using objects, such as women wearing hair combs, men carrying spears, women carrying water in ceramic and bamboo containers and children playing with toys.

Bühler used a naturalistic, non-interventionist style of photography that became the 'dominant truth value' in anthropological photography by the end of the nineteenth century.<sup>20</sup> His use of the camera was tantamount to creating a form of scientific truth rather than a controlled interventionist scientific approach, designed to show 'facts'. Bühler's encounter in Baguia may have in fact been a 'non-encounter':

[t]hat is, European and indigenous imaginings of place, self, sociality and otherness were effectively autonomous, they were introspective, they were not caught up in dialogue, they mobilized what we call 'the other' largely for their existing imaginative purposes. Non-encounters can be defined by being 'fleeting and discontinuous'.<sup>21</sup>

Bühler's encounters in Baguia were fleeting and discontinuous. The photographs taken there were useful when he returned to Basel following the expedition and continued his career, publishing his photographs as a way of presenting 'the other' to wider European audiences and accessioning them as a lasting record into the MKB collections.

## Theoretical and methodological discussion

According to Bell, when '[u]sed productively to re-engage indigenous communities, visual repatriation can generate counter-narratives to the once monolithic, colonial and disciplinary histories that the photographs themselves often helped to create and sustain'.<sup>22</sup> In activating aspects of the 'social lives'<sup>23</sup> of the photographs, various methods have been employed to

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<sup>20</sup> Elizabeth, "Surveying Culture," 105.

<sup>21</sup> Thomas, "Introduction," 5.

<sup>22</sup> Joshua A Bell, "Looking to See: Reflections on Visual Repatriation in the Purari Delta, Gulf Province, Papua New Guinea," in *Museums and Source Communities: A Routledge Reader*, edited by Laura Peers and Alison Brown (London and New York: Routledge Press, 2003), 111.

<sup>23</sup> Igor Kopytoff, "The Cultural Biography of Things," in *The Social Life of Things*, edited by Arjun Appadurai, 65–91 (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1986); Arjun Appadurai, *The Social Life of Things* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1986).

return photographs to source communities.<sup>24</sup> Bell proposes that '[u]sing photographs with communities, alternatively described as "photo-elicitation" or "visual repatriation", creates space for an understanding of the locally situated and dynamic materialities that are often obscured by a photograph's life within a museum and with the preoccupation of what a photograph visually represents ... visual repatriation allows other ways of seeing'.<sup>25</sup> However, both the process and the responses to visual repatriation are complex, with methodological challenges and diverse and often conflicted responses resulting, as '[p]hotographs are promiscuous, with meanings that shift and blur depending on the viewer, context and temporal field'.<sup>26</sup> While the Baguia Collection photographs are a potential resource for Makasae people to rediscover and interpret their own heritage, my research suggests that the complexities surrounding the process of digital return of Collection historic photographs require consideration.

Photographs are 'containers of history'<sup>27</sup> and 'the mutability of [photographs]' meaning[s] contain their own future, because of the near-infinite possibilities of new meanings to be absorbed'.<sup>28</sup> Writing of his work in the Purari Delta of Gulf Province in Papua New Guinea, Bell argues that photographs have the capacity to 'revitalize inter-generational communication by giving aspects of the past a new *presence*. In doing so museum collections have become new loci for the transmission of stories, traditions and life histories'.<sup>29</sup> Bell concluded that:

photographs have become sites through which traditions were revisited, contested and publicly discussed, thus giving elders a chance to share unspoken aspects of their

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<sup>24</sup> Bell, "Looking to See," 111–121; Judith Binney and Gillian Chaplin, "Taking the Photographs Home: the Recovery of a Maori History," in *Museums and Source Communities: A Routledge Reader*, edited by Laura Peers and Alison K Brown, 100–110 (London and New York: Routledge, 2003); Elizabeth Bonshek, "Making Museum Objects: A Silent Performance of Connection and Loss in Solomon Islands," in *Beyond Memory: Silence and the Aesthetics of Remembrance*, edited by Alexandre Dessingué and Jay Winter, 31–52 (London and New York: Routledge, 2015); Siobhan Campbell, "Anthony Forge in Bali: The Making of a Museum Collection," in *Visual Anthropology*, vol. 27, no. 3 (2014): 248–275; Halvaksz, "The Photographic Assemblage," 411–429; Niessen, "More to It Than Meets the Eye," 415–430; Emilie Wellfelt, "Returning to Alor: Retrospective Documentation of the Cora Du Bois Collection at the Museum of World Culture, Gothenburg, Sweden," *Indonesia and the Malay World*, vol. 37, no. 108 (2009): 183–202.

<sup>25</sup> Bell, "Promiscuous Things," 125.

<sup>26</sup> Bell, "Promiscuous Things," 124; Bell "Looking to See," 111–121; Freund and Thomson, "Introduction," 5; Niessen, "More to It Than Meets the Eye," 415–430.

<sup>27</sup> Bell, "Looking to See," 118.

<sup>28</sup> Bell, "Looking to See," 112. Bell cites Elizabeth Edwards, *Raw Histories: Photographs, Anthropology and Museums* (Oxford: Berg, 2001), 6.

<sup>29</sup> Bell, "Looking to See," 112.

individual and collective histories. With their ability to inscribe landscapes, architecture, people and portable objects, the collections preserve these otherwise transient forms of historical inscriptions. Through giving the past a new presence, the collections have illuminated realms of experience that in the current environment may have otherwise gone unmentioned.<sup>30</sup>

According to Douglas Harper, photo-elicitation<sup>31</sup> is a methodology that can provide direct analysis as well as being the basis of indirect analysis. Informants can identify places, people, processes and activities from the direct analysis of photographs, providing an ‘inside viewpoint’. In terms of indirect analysis, ‘the richest returns from photo elicitation often have little connection to the details of the images, which may serve only to release vivid memories, emotions, thoughts and insights’ and be a source for stories that contain important information.<sup>32</sup> Photo-elicitation

mines deeper shafts into a different part of human consciousness than do words-alone interviews. It is partly due to how remembering is enlarged by photographs and partly due to the particular quality of the photograph itself. Photographs appear to capture the impossible: a person gone; an event past. That extraordinary sense of seeming to retrieve something that has disappeared belongs alone to the photograph, and it leads to deep and interesting talk.<sup>33</sup>

The photo-elicitation process also ensures that the exchange between interviewer and interviewee is based in an image, or set of images, that are mutually understood, to varying degrees, by both parties.<sup>34</sup> Photo-elicitation is a ‘post-modern dialogue based on the authority of the subject rather than the researcher’.<sup>35</sup>

The question of whether photo-elicitation is a valid research process for the Baguia Collection, which is situated on the edge of living memory, is debatable. Harper suggests that

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<sup>30</sup> Bell, “Looking to See,” 119.

<sup>31</sup> Malcolm Collier, “Approaches to Analysis in Visual Anthropology,” in *The Handbook of Visual Analysis*, edited by Theo van Leeuwen and Carey Jewitt, 35–60 (Thousand Oaks, London: Sage, 2001); Bell “Looking to See,” 111–121; Niessen, “More to It Than Meets the Eye,” 415–430.

<sup>32</sup> Collier, “Approaches to Analysis in Visual Anthropology,” 45–46.

<sup>33</sup> Douglas Harper, “Talking About Pictures: A Case for Photo-Elicitation,” *Visual Studies*, vol. 17, no. 1 (2002): 22–23.

<sup>34</sup> Harper, “Talking About Pictures,” 19.

<sup>35</sup> Harper, “Talking About Pictures,” 15.

the potential for photos to trigger mnemonic connections is based on an experiential connection of some kind. In this sense, the photographs cannot be more than 60 or 70 years old in order to elicit memory-based responses.<sup>36</sup> However, the counter point to this claim is that ‘images may connect an individual to experiences or eras even if the images do not reflect the research subject’s actual life’.<sup>37</sup>

Sandra Niessen’s exploration of photo-elicitation as a ‘salvage anthropology’ methodology in her work with photographs of Batak textiles from European museum collections is instructive for my research. As Niessen documented photographs with Batak of Sumatra ‘before it was too late’, she became conscious of the various assumptions underlying the photo-elicitation method, leaving her to conclude that this technique has considerable limitations in how it can filter the ‘interactional morass’ between researchers and informants in the field.<sup>38</sup> Niessen’s experiences led her to state that ‘Obviously the predilection to depict from our own perspective and convince ourselves that it is the truth, is one we share with “the other”. And that ostensibly realistic medium, the photograph, is not exempt from similar biases’.<sup>39</sup>

Acts of remembering and forgetting triggered by viewing digital historic photographs, also known as ‘memory work’, can be interwoven with ‘non-speech acts’ such as forms of silence, performative responses and remembrances.

[E]ach act of cultural or collective remembrance can be considered as influenced by former acts of remembrance in different contexts, underlining ... the inter-mediality of language and memory considered as dynamic and changing phenomena. Thus the multidirectionality of memory has to be regarded as both interdirectional because cultural memories influence each other; and intradirectional because cultural memories have a potentiality of being regenerated; they don’t have a fixed material meaning, nor do words.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> Harper, “Talking About Pictures,” 17.

<sup>37</sup> Harper, “Talking About Pictures,” 13.

<sup>38</sup> Niessen, “More to It Than Meets the Eye,” 429.

<sup>39</sup> Niessen, “More to It Than Meets the Eye,” 418.

<sup>40</sup> Alexandre Dessingué and Jay Winter (eds). “Introduction,” in *Beyond Memory: Silence and the Aesthetics of Remembrance*, edited by Alexandre Dessingué and Jay Winter (London and New York: Routledge, 2016), 2-3.

As will become evident, there were multiple responses to viewing the Baguia Collection historical photographs, including silences, remembering, forgetting and not knowing.

### **The Makasae image canon**

While the Makasae do not have extensive experience of viewing printed geographic maps, historical photographs, drawings and films of people or places that document their heritage and history, they do nonetheless possess a ‘visual culture’. In this context it is important to discuss the concept of an ‘image canon of cultural memory’.<sup>41</sup> According to WJT Mitchell, ‘[t]o live in any culture whatsoever is to live in a visual culture, except for those rare instances of societies of the blind’.<sup>42</sup>

The Makasae possess a sharp eye for detail, including the ability to retain visual information, as exemplified by textile weavers who memorise and replicate intricate geometrical patterning in their weavings. Their visual memory is formed through lived experiences, such as facial and landscape recognition. As a predominantly oral culture, the Makasae have a rich narrative and performance tradition, with knowledge memorised and conveyed through customary chants, recitation and story-telling. However, ‘[t]he ability to interpret photographs is critically important’ to photo-elicitation methods:

There are two major issues involved in an enterprise like gathering information photographs elicit. First is how we as ethnographers interpret photographs and what we consequently do with them. Second is how they as informants interpret the photographs. Between the two lie inconsistencies which shed light on our own enterprise, on their enterprise and on the potentialities of photographs as a fieldwork medium.<sup>43</sup>

The curation of historical photographs is not overtly evident as a practice in Baguia, with the exception of photographic portraits, usually of deceased senior family members, hung on sitting-room walls. This practice of displaying family portraits was introduced by Portuguese colonialists. Other photographs on living room walls document marriages and graduations. In most instances, this trend is practised by the more affluent members of Makasae society.

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<sup>41</sup> Freund and Thomson, “Introduction,” 8.

<sup>42</sup> WJT Mitchell, *What Do Pictures Want: The Lives and Loves of Images* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2005), 349

<sup>43</sup> Niessen, “More to It Than Meets the Eye,” 419.

During my fieldwork only one informant showed me photographs of his family members (pre-1970s), suggesting that few people have historical family photographs. Such items, if they had existed earlier, were lost or destroyed during the war. Nowadays, images of family and friends are stored on mobile phones.

Other sources of visual imagery are derived from newspapers, books or television programs, but these are relatively recent forms of visual communication and remain largely inaccessible to most Baguia residents. Religious imagery proliferates by way of calendars, prayer books and posters. The advent of access to the World Wide Web and mobile phone technology in Baguia has rapidly enlarged the local visual culture, albeit within a more globalised framework.<sup>44</sup> As the word about the opportunity to see the Baguia Collection of historical photographs circulated around the community, the interest and excitement in seeing them mounted.

### **The methodology of community viewings of the Baguia Collection historical photographs**

For the purposes of my research I undertook a process of ‘visual repatriation’ in both an ephemeral projected image form and with A4 folders of hard-copy printed photographs. I scanned Bühler’s original photographs mounted on cards, with permission from MKB, so that they could be shown to people in Baguia during my fieldwork. I also scanned some of those photographs printed in 1981, which Bühler himself had not selected for printing in 1936. For the purposes of presenting the images to the Baguia community, I cropped the card and the various coding annotations so that people could focus on the image content.

The community viewings of the Baguia Collection historical photographs occurred in tandem with the viewing of the Collection objects, as outlined in Chapter 4. The public viewings of the Collection took place during evenings in local halls, schools or ceremonial compounds. People gathered in clusters with the children sitting at the front on the floor close to the screen, the elders and adults in the centre of the room and the teenagers gathered

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<sup>44</sup> As of 2015, 13.4 per cent of Timor-Leste’s population were connected to the internet with the vast majority of users using cellular internet. According to Timor Telcom, which offers Global System for Mobile communication services for 94 per cent of the population enabling them to access cellular phone and internet services. International Telecommunications Union. Uploaded 4 June 2017. “Percentage of Individuals using the Internet,” *Statistics*. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Telecommunications\\_in\\_East\\_Timor](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Telecommunications_in_East_Timor). Accessed 7 July 2017.

at the back of the venue. The exception to this was in Afaloicai when the men sat on one side of the hall and the women on the other side. No limits were placed on the ages or number of people in attendance. Once an audience had arrived, the *Xefe de Suco* welcomed them and introduced the research team. As each of the *Xefes* had seen some of the Collection images earlier in an initial project briefing, they often referred during their introduction to the significance of the photographs and the objects, as ‘being from their ancestors’.

The photographs were presented as a ‘slideshow’ in the chronological order in which Bühler had taken them. I decided not to select specific images to present, as I had no way of knowing which images might be of interest to the community.<sup>45</sup> The large number of photographs in the Collection prohibited them all being shown at any single viewing. In Alawa Leten, we re-grouped on three occasions, at the request of the community, so that the entire Collection of photographs could be viewed. In other locations, such as Osso Huna (near Betulari) and at Bubuha, Larisula (near Adui), we looked at the first 20 to 30 photos in chronological order before focusing on viewing the photographs that Bühler had taken during his excursions in those areas.<sup>46</sup>

This process of returning – or, more accurately, giving the community temporary access to – the Baguia Collection photographs was predominantly a digital process. Most people viewed the photographs as large-scale projections on a white sheet. Some hard-copies of photographs were eventually given to particular individuals, groups and community organisations, as described later in this chapter and chapters 4 and 6, but at the community viewings of the photographs were ephemeral. Visually, the photographs retained their overall integrity, although some were grainy images that made them difficult to decipher. As discussed in this chapter, grainy images can lead to flexible interpretation of who or what was depicted, and perhaps opened those photographs to be associated with a broader network of relationships.<sup>47</sup>

### **Community viewings of the Baguia Collection historical photographs**

Although each community viewing began by looking at photographs of the Baguia Collection objects, as discussed in Chapter 4, there was the anticipation that the historical photographs

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<sup>45</sup> Elizabeth Edwards cited in Bell, “Looking to See,” 113.

<sup>46</sup> Bühler and Meyer undertook two excursions on horseback with their interpreter, Mohammed, to Adui, in Larisula near Bubuha, on 9 August 1935 and to Betulari near Osso Huna on 10 August 1935.

<sup>47</sup> Halvaksz, “The Photographic Assemblage,” 416.

would soon be seen. The objects were the ‘curtain-raiser’ to the main act. The preference to viewing photographs as compared with viewing objects has been commented on and attributed to the likelihood that in some contexts ‘people are able to socialize images more easily than artefacts’.<sup>48</sup> Once the slideshow of the historical photographs began there was a cacophony of audible responses; chattering and discussion erupted in the audience.

I describe the varied responses in more detail below, but suffice to say that seeing the photographs was a memorable and unique participant experience for those in attendance. At the end of each community viewing, which typically lasted for up to three hours (longer in some cases), there was a ‘wrap-up’ session in which people were invited to comment on what they had seen. Informal interviews were then arranged for the following days to elicit more personal and detailed responses from individual participants.

The first roll of film that Bühler shot was of the archaeological excavation in Baguia. These photos show men wearing loincloths (*ba*, M) as they laboured and dug as part of the excavation. Upon seeing these images people were audibly shocked, gasping and tittering at seeing images of men wearing this now obsolete style of attire. Young people looked on in disbelief and several snickered at the photographs. Similar responses by teenagers have been recorded in comparable situations.<sup>49</sup> After the initial shock of seeing the photographs, the slideshows continued and elicited intense concentration from the audiences. People were fascinated to see photographs of their predecessors, prompting them to physically ‘lean in’ to focus more intently on the images. This ‘sensory embrace of images, the bodily

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<sup>48</sup> Hafner, “Objects, Agency and Context,” 363. For other scholars who have commented on the preference of viewing photographs over objects see Ohnemus, *An Ethnology of the Admiralty Islands*, 3. “The photographs met with a great deal of interest, and the readiness of the local people to assist was such that I was able to gather a large amount of additional data”; Bolton, “The Object in View,” 47. Bolton relates accounts of Indigenous Australians in Wadeye and Bathurst Island being most interested in photographs rather than the collection objects.

<sup>49</sup> As described by Niessen, “More to It Than Meets the Eye,” 420, Elisabeth Stohr returned photos to the Batak in the 1970s that had been taken by her parents, who were missionaries in Sumatra in the early twentieth century. ‘They were horrified by the “primitives” they saw in what they now regard as their messy appearance, the appearance of heathens! – precisely what they take pride in not being. Their initial response was that the photographs must have been taken of Bataks in the more remote, still “heathen” (from their perspective) regions, and were quite nonplussed by the geographical facts.’ Also see Joshua A Bell, “Out of the Mouth of Crocodiles: Eliciting Histories in Photographs and String-Figures,” *History and Anthropology*, vol. 21, no. 4 (December 2010): 360.



engagement that people have' with the photograph emphasises the internal emotional sensory responses that the photographs elicited.<sup>50</sup>

After viewing the photographs for approximately ten to 15 minutes another phenomenon occurred. A silence descended over the audience. This reaction could be likened to a 'pulling away', as if to place distance between oneself and the projected images. Following the initial novelty of seeing and connecting with the people in the photographs, the audience members realised that they were unable to identify the people in the photographs. Although the people were clearly Makasae ancestors, the people in the photographs were anonymous. The ensuing silence could be attributed in different ways to the audience, which tended to react in two distinctive ways according to age.

For the older audience members who had lived during the pre-WWII era, aspects of the landscape, built environment, attire and material culture were still familiar. Only one very elderly woman in her mid-80s attended a viewing at Alawa Leten and claimed she could remember the markets and the area around the time the photographs were taken. For the majority of older audience members, their apparent 'remembering' was a silent, internal process. As noted by Alexander Freund and Alistair Thomson, 'photography evoked memories come as often with silences as with words'.<sup>51</sup> For the younger members of the viewing audience, who formed the majority of those present, the photographs contained new information that needed to be absorbed. As they processed the information recorded in the projected photographs they were also wondering if it was true that the photographs were from Baguia. This uncertainty was expressed as younger people questioned their elders, seeking their confirmation. As noted by Tessa Morris-Suzuki, a photograph's 'graphic presence seems to confront us with the substance of the past itself. This sense of reality has a special power to stir our imagination ... we also feel profoundly cheated if we discover that our emotions have been roused by an image which is not what it appears to be'.<sup>52</sup> Nonetheless, concentration on the photographs was constant and intense.

The next group of photographs shown (in the chronological order in which Bühler had shot them) featured a series of landscapes. The viewing audience's focus shifted again, leaning in

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<sup>50</sup> Christopher Pinney, "Piercing the Skin of the Idol," in *Beyond Aesthetics: Art and the Technologies of Enchantment*, edited by Christopher Pinney and Nicholas Thomas (Oxford: Berg Publishers, 2001), 158.

<sup>51</sup> Freund and Thomson, "Introduction," 6; Dessingué and Winter, "Introduction," 4.

<sup>52</sup> Morris-Suzuki, "Shadows on the Lens," 78.

once more to engage with the places documented in the photographs. The landscapes and identifiable features such as the textiles (*rabi/kola*, M), the dwellings and the Baguia Fort were evidence that the photographs had been taken in Baguia. Some of the locations were easily identified as they featured well-known local landmarks, whilst other landscapes recorded in the photographs were less obvious to people. This lack of clarity can be partly explained by the re-routing of the road into Baguia since 1935 and because some of Bühler's photographs were taken from vantage points that are no longer accessible or traversed. There has also been significant environmental change in the areas that Bühler photographed, due to the loamy clay earth that causes major landslides, literally reshaping the landscape and rendering some locations difficult to recognise.

Even if at times difficult to recognise, the landscape photographs were of deep interest to the viewers. Discussions evolved over identifying areas captured in each photograph. This engagement occurred spontaneously and organically on several occasions, with the senior men becoming the main participants as they took turns to identify the geographic features and built features captured in each photograph. Local knowledge of the landscape enabled people to identify small dwellings and *oma falu* in vast scenes. One man would stand up and directly engage with the projection of the photo, thus giving the effect that he was 'entering the landscape' (see Figure 5.1). Then another man would follow and offer his interpretation, either supporting or refuting the previous speaker with a different interpretation.



Figure 5.1: Adolfo de Rego indicates a local site as a landscape photograph, MKB (F)IIC 1286, taken by Alfred Bühler is projected at a community viewing of the Baguia Collection at Afaloicai, 19 August 2014.

Each person had his turn to identify each ridge, peak, ceremonial house or feature of the landscape, as he perceived it. On some occasions, up to five men actively joined the discussion, standing in front of the projected image conducting a highly animated debate about which areas were captured in the photograph. Other viewers called out information, interjections or comments from their seats. Although the women were less active in this process they participated by calling out and discussing their opinions in their seated clusters. In Alawa Leten, where we viewed the Collection over three nights, this system of identifying the landscape photographs became increasingly commonplace and collaborative.

A collective discussion and process of recognition, identification and verification of landscape occurred organically. No individual view or opinion was accepted as absolute truth and sometimes discussion over one photo would last up to 20 minutes. An agreed version was negotiated collectively over time. This process confirms that ‘two people standing side by side, looking at identical objects see different things. When a photo is made of that shared view, the differences in perception can be defined, compared and eventually understood to be socially constructed by both parties’.<sup>53</sup>

This process of negotiating the identification of sites enabled members of each group to assert their knowledge and claim over each area, and by implication each photograph. Not everyone necessarily agreed with the final analysis, as some people remained outside this negotiation, just listening and observing. Undoubtedly there were local power politics, social hierarchies, age and gender roles influencing who had the authority, the right or the confidence to speak at any given time. However, irrespective of these dynamics, everyone heard all the offered interpretations. The landscape images enabled people to engage with the photographs on their own terms. The viewing of these photographs also activated the viewers’ intimate knowledge, in a collective, inclusive and culturally appropriate manner, of the landscape that they inhabit. Viewing and commenting upon the landscape photographs was done with confidence and assertion compared with the viewing of photographs of ancestors, which initially caused great interest, followed by unease, due to the ancestors’ anonymity.

Another phenomenon occurred at several of the community viewings of the photographs. The viewers began to make associations between the Baguia Collection material culture

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<sup>53</sup> Harper, “Talking About Pictures,” 22.

objects that they had seen during the earlier part of the evening's slideshow and the objects people were wearing and using in the historical photographs. The historical photographs brought the Collection material objects to life for people. Possibly this response was enhanced because people shifted their attention away from 'not knowing people in photos' to becoming more engaged with and placing emphasis on the objects used by the people in the photographs. It was apparent that by viewing the material culture and the historical photograph Collection in tandem, the viewers immediately made connections between the photos and objects, producing a cross-current of seeing and cross-referencing between photographs. Having seen close-up details of the objects earlier in the evening, the audience had become sensitised to identifying similar objects in different photographs. On such occasions, we navigated between projections of historical photographs and particular objects, with people calling out 'basket' (*lode*, M), 'earthenware pot' (*mua busu*, M), 'sacred sword' (*si'i falunu*, M), by way of identifying the objects used by people within a particular photograph.

This cross-referencing between Bühler's photographs and objects he acquired illustrates how the community embraced the photographs as records that enabled them to contextualise the Baguia Collection *in situ*. It is aligned to the process that Edwards noted of the relationship between objects and photographs that had been created by ethnographers such as Bühler, which was now being identified and interpreted by the community of origin.<sup>54</sup> It was also an organic method of providing additional information about the objects by deconstructing the photographs. In this way, the viewings also became a process for the younger people in the audience to learn about their cultural heritage.

### **Responses to seeing the photographs**

The audience 'wrap-up' to each community viewing became an occasion for people to convey their responses to seeing the Baguia Collection historical photographs. Certain local protocols dictated that more senior community members spoke initially, but thereafter the opportunity was available to whoever wished to speak. After each viewing, during the wrap-up session, several people always spoke, whilst others shared their responses in individual interviews that occurred in the days following the community viewings.

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<sup>54</sup> Edwards, "Surveying Culture," 104.

Consistently, people indicated the dual experiences of being both 'happy and sad' at viewing the Baguia Collection historical photographs. People regularly told me how happy they were to 'meet' their ancestors but also how sad they felt not to be able to know or identify the people in the photographs. One older informant confided to me that she felt scared seeing so many dead people that she did not know.<sup>55</sup> Mixed emotions were associated with this new and strange experience of encountering images of their ancestors, but without any means by which to identify them. This response reflects the Makasae epistemologies that emphasis the maintenance of connections between people and ancestors and the continued knowing and communing with ancestors through the performance of sacrifices and offerings. So when people were confronted with the strange experience of seeing photographs of their ancestors, who they couldn't recognise, they became confused and fearful.

This contrasting response also permeated other responses to the photographs. As people reflected about the loincloths, *rabi* and *kola* worn in the photographs, for some this attire represented a symbol of hardship, poverty and even backwardness, whilst others were proud to see these customary forms of attire being worn and valued the beauty of such cloths, expressing admiration for their ancestors who had the skills and resourcefulness to make such intricate textiles.

On the one hand people expressed remorse and sadness at the material and physical hardship that they perceived their ancestors had endured, judging by the living conditions seen in the photographs. For them the past was a time of difficulty that made life today seem improved by comparison. This response affirms the sense of incremental improvements in life today in Baguia. For these people, the photographs provided a yardstick by which to measure their own social progress, development and advancement. For others, their sadness was due to the loss of past ways, customs and values. Some revered the past, causing them to consider contemporary life as being diminished and 'less than before'. Thus, the photographs elicited responses regarding social change as a process of either gain or loss, depending on the values and perspectives of each informant. Recognising that people's responses were not always absolute, these conflicting responses at times were expressed by the same individuals.

These reactions to the Baguia Collection historical photographs are consistent with a continuum applied to 'photo-elicitation' that commences with scientific visual inventories of

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<sup>55</sup> Ana Maria Pinto, interview with author, Alawa Craik, Baguia Sub-district, 6 August 2014.

objects, people and artefacts. At the centre of the continuum are images that depict collective or institutional pasts that can ‘connect an individual to experiences or eras even if the images do not reflect the research subjects’ actual lives’.<sup>56</sup> The far end of the continuum consists of photographs that portray intimate aspects of oneself or one’s family or social group. These photographs potentially elicit ‘core definitions of the self to society, culture and history’.<sup>57</sup>

In the wrap-up sessions, many people expressed their gratitude at seeing the slide shows of the Baguia Collection objects and photographs. Some people thanked Bühler and Meyer for considering Baguia to be worthy of their interest in 1935. Thanks was also extended to Bühler’s family. Pride that the Collection existed in a European museum was expressed. Praise such as ‘What a good thing he did!’ was articulated, with another informant offering to pray for Bühler and Meyer ‘so that they will sit beside God in the afterlife’.<sup>58</sup> One informant reflected that if Bühler had not acquired the Collection, none of it would remain today. Such comments convey the depth of gratitude felt by residents of Baguia for the opportunity to encounter this Collection of their heritage.

Some audience members commented during the wrap-up that they had no comment to make. One man in Osso Huna eloquently stated that because he did not know the people in the photographs he was at a loss about what to say. Other people did not respond at all. People who did not respond may have been experiencing various emotions and thoughts, but chose not to express those feelings; their silence was their response. The importance of non-verbal responses to photographic images is also critical to understanding the complexity of memory or non-memory elicited by the Baguia Collection photographs, as ‘silence should also be considered as an active process within remembering and forgetting, as “a third dimension” rather than a mere consequence of these processes’.<sup>59</sup> Silences, like remembering and forgetting, have to be considered as ‘changing and performative elements in the way we reconstruct the past’.<sup>60</sup>

Requests for access to the photographs were another common response that followed the viewings. These requests, when made by middle-aged or older people, were invariably

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<sup>56</sup> Harper, “Talking About Pictures,” 13.

<sup>57</sup> Harper, “Talking About Pictures,” 13.

<sup>58</sup> Participant at Alawa Leten community viewing, 16 August 2014.

<sup>59</sup> Dessingué and Winter, “Introduction,” 4.

<sup>60</sup> Dessingué and Winter, “Introduction,” 4.

followed by comments that indicated how important it was for young people to learn about the past. Such requests posed a practical issue for me. Firstly, I had to seek permission from MKB to distribute images of the Collection, which they granted; however, it was their preference that I distribute hard-copy printed images rather than electronic copies.<sup>61</sup> Although I eventually arranged some photocopies in Dili, it was impractical to respond to all requests I received for copies. Other people requested that a book be published, so that the photos could be viewed in their own homes.

I consistently explained that it was not possible at that time to distribute the photographs in full, but that with the permission of MKB it was anticipated to make the Collection available via the password controlled OCCAMS database in the future. People accepted this explanation with good grace, but even so access via virtual platforms would be limited for older people who are unlikely to have access to devices and/or to be able to navigate such a database. The desire for people to have access to the photographs in printed form in the privacy of their homes was often expressed. These requests illustrate that intimate contexts are ideal for viewing the Baguia Collection photographs so that people can experience remembering, inter-generational discussion and transmission of knowledge on their own terms. On the occasions I interviewed people in the privacy of their homes, the pace of viewing the images and the flow and content of the discussion were controlled by the informant, and they were also able to convey their comments and recollections directly to other family members.

These requests to have access to the Collection photographs highlighted that it is often the people closest to us, such as our families, who are the intermediaries between individual memories and communal memories. ‘The transition of individual memory to collective memory is one of the links between memory and history’ and this process begins in intimate familial contexts.<sup>62</sup> Ricoeur states:

It is, therefore, not with the single hypothesis of the polarity between individual memory and collective memory that we enter into the field of

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<sup>61</sup> Richard Kunz, Curator, Southeast Asia, MKB, email correspondence with author, 17 September 2014.

<sup>62</sup> Charles Regan, “Reflections on Paul Ricoeur's Memory, History, Forgetting,” *Philosophy Today*, vol. 49, no. 3 (2005): 310–316.

history, but with the hypothesis of the three fold attribution of memory: to oneself, to one's close relations, and to others.<sup>63</sup>

On occasion, individuals approached me upon leaving the slideshow venues. On one evening, a man named Ernesto Guterres, aged around 50 years, and his son, aged around 20, stopped me. Ernesto explained that he wanted to look at the images again with his son, as many of the photographs had brought back memories of his parents and their life. It was particularly important to him to see the image of the *palmatori* again (see Figure 4.20).<sup>64</sup> He told me that the photographs of the Baguia Fort reminded him of how his parents were beaten by officials using a *palmatori* when they could not pay their taxes. He was visibly upset and kept repeating, 'I want to explain this history (*istoria*, T) to my son so that he can understand'.<sup>65</sup> He also indicated that he did not want to talk about these things in front of everyone in the hall at the community viewing, as for him this was a private family matter.

Ernesto's response to the historical photographs from the Baguia Collection clarified that although most people had not been alive in 1935 when Bühler took the photographs, the photographs still had the potential to trigger and shape memories. In this way, the *palmatori* and the Baguia Fort photographs were prompts that caused Ernesto to remember his parents' history and stories. They were a form of evidence that enabled him to verify these claims to his son. By telling his son his family history he was also bearing witness to the experiences of his parents and his memories of them, while at the same time shaping his son's memories. In this way '[p]hotographs not only trigger but also shape memory and [how] photographs are in turn seen or read through memory ... thus they are more than social documents and mnemonic devices'.<sup>66</sup> This account of Ernesto and his son also illustrates the potential for these Collection photographs to trigger the transmission of memories that make a new relationship with the past possible, as a form of 'prosthetic memory'.<sup>67</sup> As noted by Dessingué and Winter, the concept of prosthetic memory is as a type of 'mediated aesthetic memory ... which affects those who know only representations of an event [or object]'.<sup>68</sup> In

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<sup>63</sup> Paul Ricoeur cited in Regan, "Reflections on Paul Ricoeur's Memory, History, Forgetting," 311.

<sup>64</sup> See MKB IIc 6597.

<sup>65</sup> Ernesto Guterres, personal communication with author, Bahatata, Baguia Sub-district, 7 August 2014. The Tetun word *istoria* can be translated as either 'story' or 'history'.

<sup>66</sup> Freund and Thomson, "Introduction," 6.

<sup>67</sup> Alison Landsberg, *Prosthetic Memory: The Transformation of American Remembrance in the Age of Mass Culture* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004), 47.

<sup>68</sup> Dessingué and Winter, "Introduction," 3.



such instances, a memory, triggered by a photograph, can become grafted onto another individual's memory, even though the event depicted in the photograph was not part of their direct lived experience.

Requests to see the Baguia Collection historical photographs were made in several other contexts as well. One evening during a viewing, a man of approximately 25 years of age asked if I could put the images on a website. This request alerted me to a younger generation of Baguia residents, now routinely engaged with internet technology via their mobile phones. On another occasion at Larisula a young man introduced himself as a university student in Dili. He was adamant that he should have a copy of the photographs, indicating that this was his heritage. Arguably, he saw the photographic archive as a means by which to have 'connectedness to the past'.<sup>69</sup>

Fielding requests for longer-term access to the Baguia Collection raised the issue of my role as the intermediary of these photographs. My presence contributed to the dynamics of the viewings as well as the broader public nature of these gatherings. As the bearer of these Collection photographs I was in a position of power. I arrived with considerable cultural capital stored in my computer and printed in folders. This influenced how people perceived me; as summed up by Niessen, 'I had the edge over them, even in their own culture. I was ignorant of much of it, yet in possession of it. I commanded new respect, but new distrust. I was intimately involved with them, more so than just through the interview, but nonetheless an outsider. I possessed power'.<sup>70</sup>

I had intentionally promoted the community viewings as 'open' events, stating that all comers were welcome. The District Administrator and the various *Xefes de Suco* had given me their approval to show the Baguia Collection, with the Sub-district Administrator expressly emphasising that it was important for 'as many people as possible' to see the Collection, both young people as well as elders. While I saw wide virtual dissemination of the Collection as essential both for my research and as an ethical approach to engagement with the community, this openness of presentation was not without its problems. At one viewing a senior man became visibly disturbed and had a severe outburst of anger at the laughter and comments made by young children in response to the Collection photographs. Afterwards he explained

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<sup>69</sup> Morris-Suzuki, "Shadows on the Lens," 87.

<sup>70</sup> Niessen, "More to It Than Meets the Eye," 423.

to me that seeing these images was serious and an important opportunity to him. He considered the children's behaviour and presence to be disrespectful. He questioned why children were present at the viewing but I defended their attendance by reiterating that everyone was welcome. This incident reinforced the highly personal and emotive experiences that resulted as a consequence of people seeing the photographs.

The following three vignettes explore and reveal more of the nuanced and diverse responses to the Baquia Collection historical photographs in Baquia. These vignettes indicate that it was the Collection photographs that elicited the responses, and not me as the interviewer.<sup>71</sup> Responses were spontaneous, based on the viewing of the Collection material. This led me to become more a recipient of information, an observer and recorder. The information expressed during these responses was an active attempt by the informants to make sense of the significance of the Collection from their perspective, to position themselves in relation to the Collection and only secondarily to communicate this to me. Beyond my presentation of the images, their responses to the historical photographs were self-initiated and self-directed.

**Vignette 1:  
Visiting Larigua ceremonial house with Ernesto DC Dias**



Figure 5.2: 'Weiler bei Baquia' (Hamlet in Baquia).

Source: Museum der Kulturen Basel, MKB (F)Ic 1117. Photograph by Alfred Bühler, Baquia, 1935.

<sup>71</sup> Niessen, "More to It Than Meets the Eye," 425.

One of the Baguia Collection photographs, entitled ‘Hamlet in Baguia’ (see Figure 5.2), caused much debate and discussion when presented at the Alawa Leten slideshow. Various people took turns to comment on and identify the features in the photograph, including two ceremonial houses that were identified, after much debate, as Oma Falu Sae Lari and Oma Falu Kewa Gua. During this process of identification, Mr Ernesto DC Dias, a Makasae speaker, became a vocal and active participant. Ernesto had been interviewed earlier in the project about the Collection amulets and it was at one of the three slideshows in Alawa Leten that he saw the ‘Hamlet in Baguia’. Having seen photographs of virtually the entire Baguia Collection at the three Alawa Leten slideshows, Ernesto invited me to visit Lalegua, his *oma falu*. He advised me that it was located near the hamlet identified in the photograph (F)IIC 1117.

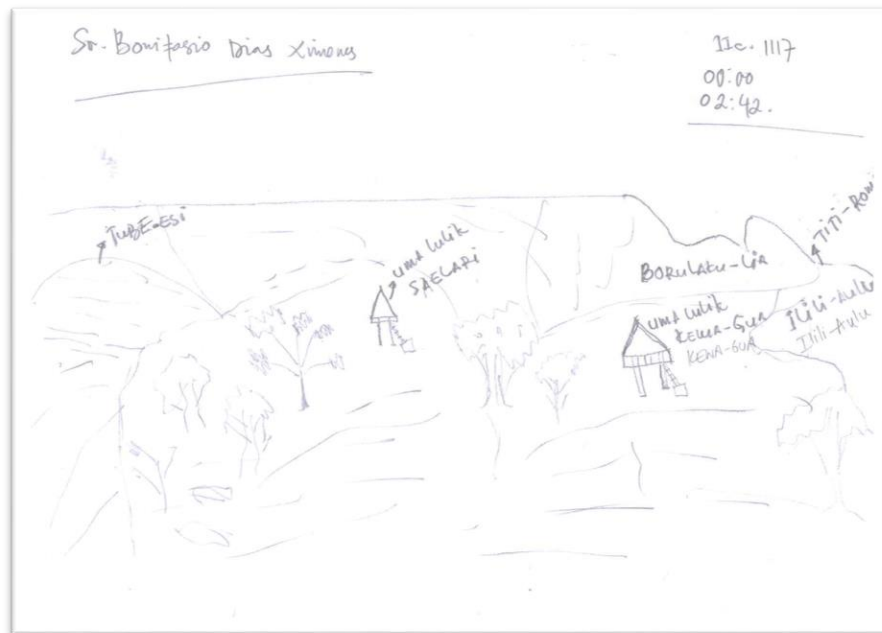


Figure 5.3: Diagram indicating the geographic and built features identified at a public viewing at Alawa Leten from the photograph MKB (F)IIC 1117, taken by Alfred Bühler in Baguia, 1935.

A few days later we set off along the steep path that led to Ernesto’s *kenua*, through fields of cassava, up into the mountains of sheer cliff faces of clay and rock. Upon arriving Ernesto formally welcomed us at the stone gravesite of his ancestors, and he explained that he was a ‘son of the sacred house Larigua’.<sup>72</sup> There he pointed out a bamboo structure (*se rafa*, M), akin to a ladder, that is considered to be how the ancestors descend into the *kenua* (see Figure

<sup>72</sup> He used the Tetun phrase *oan mane busi uma lulik Lalegua*, T.

1.22). Ernesto explained that the *se rafa* is routinely and ritually ‘fed’ to ensure fecundity, longevity and wellbeing of the new generation. Located nearby were the clan’s stone graves and a rock outcrop, which Ernesto explained contained a sacred stone (*afa fahu*, M) that his family worships. He showed us where chips of stone had been taken from it, as he explained, for use as protective amulets, similar to the ones he had identified in the Baguia Collection.<sup>73</sup> People still carry them for protection during war and conflict, according to Ernesto.

He led us to another larger sacred stone (see Figure 5.6) that he attributed with the ability to protect many people during war or hardship, and he used the examples of the periods of Indonesian occupation (1975–1999) and the nation’s civil unrest (2006), indicating that his family had survived both crises. He explained that the stone is the guardian stone for Larigua, with the ability to disorient people who enter without permission, causing them to become lost in the mountains. Ernesto referred to the stone as the ‘secure stone’ or ‘guardian stone’ (*afa watakoru*, M; *fatuk seguru*, T). Annually the stone is ritually fed and worshipped to ensure its protective qualities continue.<sup>74</sup> By chipping off a small section of the stone and then sacrificing a chicken to consecrate it, the stone becomes an amulet that provides protection to its carrier.

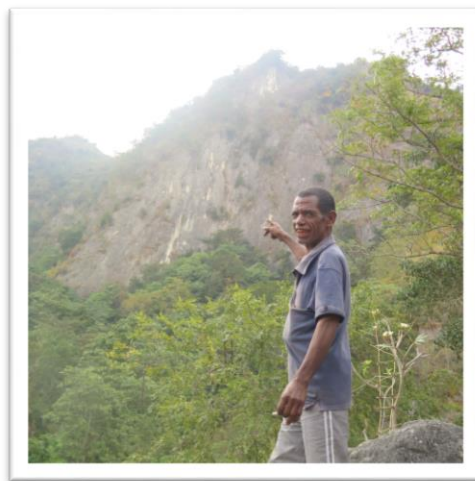


Figure 5.4: Ernesto Dias at the rock outcrop at Larigua, Baguia Sub-district, 25 August 2014.

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<sup>73</sup> See *mollo*, *afa fahu*, M, stone amulets, MKB IIc 6376, MKB IIc 6374 and MKB IIc 6373.

<sup>74</sup> Ernesto used the Tetun word *adora*, derived from the Latin word *adora*, which means ‘to adore’, to describe the stone. In this context I interpret the word *adora* to mean ‘to worship’.



Figure 5.5: Ernesto Dias with family members at the stone gravesite of his ancestors, Larigua, Baguia Sub-district, 25 August 2014.



Figure 5.6: Ernesto Dias explains the significance of the ‘guardian stone’ that protects the entrance to Larigua, Baguia Sub-district, 25 August 2014.

Next, we were escorted to Ernesto’s *oma falu* where he pointed out that, although his ceremonial house did not currently have any finials (*lakasoru*, M; *kakuluk*, T), they had been used to decorate the ceremonial house in the past. He told us that he planned to make some *lakasoru* for Larigua after the harvest so that it would be ‘the same as before’. His recent viewing of the Baguia Collection *lakasoru* images may have triggered memories of such objects and caused him to aspire to restore his *oma falu* to its former glory.<sup>75</sup>

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<sup>75</sup> See MKB IIc 6406a&b and MKB IIc 6407a&b.



Figure 5.7: Larigua *oma falu*, Baguia Sub-district, 25 August 2014.

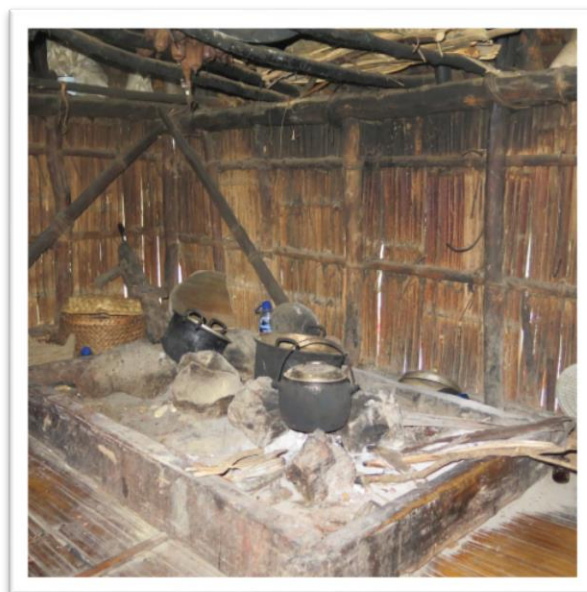


Figure 5.8: Cooking area inside Larigua *oma falu* used to prepare food to ritually feed the ancestors.

Once inside the *oma falu* Ernesto pointed out the cooking place used to prepare food to feed the ancestors, together with the other sacred objects. These objects included a woven shoulder bag (*lode*, M), which contained three *gaba* beads and a bamboo container (*suanoka*, M) filled with hair (*daesa*, M) and nail clippings (*tana uli*, M) from the ancestors. Sacred swords (*si'i falu*, M; *surik lulik*, T) were also shown, with a ceramic container (*buli*, T) and a coconut

shell container (*tau falunu*, M; *nu'u kakun lulik*, T) used for drinking sacred water by clan members when gathered together.

Also inside the house, sacred corncobs (*teli falu*, M; *batar lulik*, T) were suspended from the rafters and had been placed there the previous year during the *sau batar* ceremony (the first eating of the harvest). At the next *sau batar* ceremony Ernesto explained that these corn-cobs would be replaced with newly harvested ones before 'feeding' the ancestors again. He reinforced the importance of this practice by saying that 'if we go against this rule we will either become sick or have an accident as this is our culture since the time of our ancestors'. He stated that the objects stored in the *oma falu* continue to be worshipped by the current generation 'in the same way our ancestors did'.<sup>76</sup>



Figure 5.9: Ernesto takes sacred corncobs (*teli falu*, M) and a basket (*lode*, M) from the rafters inside Larigua *oma falu*, Baguia Sub-district, 25 August 2014.

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<sup>76</sup> Ernesto DC Dias, interview with author, Alawa Leten, Baguia Sub-district, 25 August 2014.



Figure 5.10: Ernesto reveals the contents of the basket (*lode*, M) rested on top of rice-flaying baskets (*koiri*, M; *lafatik*, T) inside Larigua *oma falu*, Baguia Sub-district, 25 August 2014.



Figure 5.11: Ernesto presents the kendi sacred water container (*buli*, M, T) used at Larigua *oma falu*, Baguia Sub-district, 24 August 2014.





Figure 5.12: Ernesto displays the sacred swords (*si'i falu*, M) stored inside Larigua *oma falu*, Baguia Sub-district, 24 August 2014.

For Ernesto, seeing the photographs of Baguia Collection objects such as the amulet stones (*mollo*, *afa falu*, M), the finials (*lakasoru*, M; *kakuluk*, T), swords (*si'i*, M; *surik*, T), ceramics (*buli*, M, T) and necklaces (*gaba*, M; *morten*, T), together with the historical photograph (F)IIC 1117, prompted him to invite us to visit his *kenua* and *oma falu*. There his display of ownership of objects similar to those he had sighted at the Baguia Collection slideshows was intended to convey to us the continued existence of the *oma falu* in the landscape captured by Bühler in his photograph. Ernesto had not only identified the landscape, he had revealed to us its potency as home to sacred sites and the Larigua *oma falu* and he had demonstrated his connection to the landscape, sites and rituals performed there – thus proving to us his connection to place and his resulting authority and knowledge.

Ernesto's actions conveyed his knowledge about his clan's sacred objects and their relevance and significance to his clan's life and maintenance.<sup>77</sup> He affirmed his authority and relationship to his *kenua*'s customary objects and emphasised their 'living' and 'active' nature as conduits to the ancestors. He indicated that the objects in his possession differed to those acquired by Bühler because the Larigua objects had continued to be fed. He considered the objects at the MKB to have become impotent, since they had not been ritually fed since leaving Baguia in 1935.

Ernesto encouraged me to photograph him with his clan's sacred objects, the sacred stones and the *se rafa*, to record and film him explaining their significance (see Figures 1.22 and 5.6). Having introduced himself by stating his cultural affiliation in the 'presence' of his ancestors at their gravesite, Ernesto had seized the opportunity to place himself on record as the

<sup>77</sup> Bonshek, "Making Museum Objects," 31–52.

legitimate ‘owner’ of these resources – ancestral graves, ceremonial rocks, his *oma falu* and the objects within, and his culture (*kulutura*, T) more generally. In Niessen’s words, ‘He was expressing his power through my camera. He was creating a reality which he wished me to see’.<sup>78</sup> However, Ernesto’s motivation was broader.

Ernesto expressed the importance of his knowledge and its transmission to the next generation. His performative actions emphasised the continuing relevance of these objects and their sites of origin as part of a broader living Makasae culture, not as objects relegated to an historical past. The photographs prompted a ‘folding of the past into the present’ as locations and objects from the past were linked to objects and activities in the present, thus according the photographs and the past a value in the present.<sup>79</sup> His final comments revealed part of his ulterior motivation in taking and showing us his *kenua* and clan’s ceremonial regalia: ‘I also want to tell you that the objects that exist abroad [in the Baguia Collection] were from our *kenua* because I can see in the photographs objects that are the same’.<sup>80</sup> This was Ernesto’s way of laying a claim, not for ownership but of cultural authority, over the Baguia Collection.

### **Vignette 2: Viewing images of the Adui ceremonial compound and ancestral figurines from Larisula**

This vignette revolves around the historic photographs of Adui ceremonial compound and the *atevaa* ancestral sculptures in the Baguia Collection (see Figure 5.13). The provenance attributed to the *atevaa* was ‘verified’ by photographs that Bühler took at the Adui ceremonial house compound during a day-long excursion to Larisula on 9 August 1935.<sup>81</sup> During his visit to Adui hamlet Bühler photographed *atevaa* and documented the local architecture through a series of sketches and photographs. He also photographed a weaver and a woman collecting indigo for dyeing cotton. A map he sketched of the Adui ceremonial compound indicated the location of a male *atevaa* (see Figure 3.5).<sup>82</sup>

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<sup>78</sup> Niessen, “More to It Than Meets the Eye,” 424.

<sup>79</sup> Halvaksz, “The Photographic Assemblage,” 424–425.

<sup>80</sup> Ernesto Dias, interview with author, Alawa Leten, Baguia Sub-district, 25 August 2014.

<sup>81</sup> See MKB (F)IIC 1215, MKB (F)IIC 1239 and MKB (F)IIC 1240.

<sup>82</sup> Bühler, Tagebuchnotizen, 70.



Figure 5.13: Two *atewaa* acquired from Baguia by Alfred Bühler, 1935.

Source: Museum der Kulturen Basel, MKB IIc 6410 (L) and MKB IIc 6411 (R). Photograph provided by Museum der Kulturen Basel. Photograph by Derek Li Wan Po, 2012.

It is unknown precisely where Bühler acquired the *atewaa* in the Baguia Collection. He sighted ‘Large wooden statues very worn, male and female’<sup>83</sup> in Alawa Craik before visiting Larisula. He recognised the cultural significance of the sculptures after his visit to Adui:

Two small wooden figures that are called ‘father’ by the owner. They probably mean ancestor. But it is also possible that such statues are made when a relative died. At least that is what the people said so it is possible that they see the real image of a dead person in these figures which they keep for the protection of the house.<sup>84</sup>

The following account illustrates that in 2014 the men considered the *atewaa* in the Baguia Collection, due to the evidence of the Collection historical photograph, to have originated

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<sup>83</sup> Bühler, Tagebuchnotizen, 67.

<sup>84</sup> Bühler, Tagebuchnotizen, 87.

from Larisula, an area widely attributed in Baguia Sub-district as the centre for the continued production and worship of *atwaa*.



Figure 5.14: 'In Adui' (In Adui). A group of men and an *atwaa*, in situ, at Adui.

Source: Museum der Kulturen Basel, MKB (F)IIC 1215. Photograph by Alfred Bühler, 9 August 1935.



Figure 5.15: 'Geschlitzte Holzfigur inmitten von Wohnhäusern' (Carved wooden figure in the midst of residential houses), Adui.

Source: Museum der Kulturen Basel, MKB (F)IIC 19580. Photograph by Alfred Bühler, 9 August 1935.

The community viewing of the Baguia Collection occurred at Bubuha, Larisula, Baguia Sub-district on 16 August 2014. The extended clan gathered for the placement of the pillars for the reconstruction of the Mandati Bubuha ‘older brother’ *oma falu*, which is considered an auspicious occasion in Makasae culture and involved the clan’s men constructing the building and slaughtering a buffalo, along with preparation of food by the women for ceremonial feasting (see Figures 1.13a, 1.13b and 1.13c). We participated in the day’s activities, after which we presented the Baguia Collection slideshow in the evening to about 80 people.

The slideshow began with a PowerPoint presentation about Bühler, the MKB and the 1935 Expedition. Next, we viewed the baskets in the Baguia Collection, as Larisula is locally recognised for its skilled basket weavers, due to an abundance of *Corypha utan* palms (*alasa*, M; *tali taban*, T). The images of the baskets provoked much chatting and conviviality. Women and men identified the betelnut containers (*bu’a malu*, *bu’a kerek*, M), baskets (*lode*, *na’a*, *ke waka* M; *bote*, T) and woven food covers (*tere luru*, M; *raga*, T) and mats (*biti*, M, T). Then, as the figurines (*atenvaa*, M) and architectural finials (*lakasoru*, M) were viewed, silence descended. Little comment was made about these objects, which was consistent with the response to these objects at other viewings in Alawa Leten and Alawa Craik.

Next, we viewed the historical photographs taken by Bühler, beginning with the first 30 he took in Baguia. Thereafter, we concentrated on the photographs Bühler took at Adui.<sup>85</sup> As the viewing of the sites and people from Adui progressed, much excitement and discussion erupted. We were told that Adui was located nearby, further up the mountain, and that it was a younger brother *oma falu* to the Bubuha *oma falu*. People expressed surprise at seeing the photographs of Adui and it was commented, ‘although we know this is our land we don’t recognise the people’, followed by ‘everyone is dead now’.<sup>86</sup> People commented that it was auspicious to see these photographs on the same day they were celebrating the reconstruction of the Bubuha *oma falu*. Upon the conclusion of the slideshow, several hours of ceremonial dancing occurred, which commemorated both the construction of the ceremonial house and the sighting of the photographs of Adui.

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<sup>85</sup> See MKB (F)IIc 1204 – MKB (F)IIc 1248.

<sup>86</sup> Jose Fernandes of *knua* Merluru, Tirifalo, Larisula, Baguia Sub-district, 16 August 2014. He was described as a sacred person (*anu falu*, M).



Figures 5.16a and 5.16b: Viewing the Baguia Collection slideshow at Bubuha, Larisula, Baguia Sub-district, 16 August 2014.

The following day, before we left, a group of elder men invited us to return to Bubuha to meet and discuss the Baguia Collection images of the *atewaa* and Adui compound. This invitation underscored the importance attributed to these photographs by these senior men. A planned meeting would enable relevant stakeholders to attend, such as the *lian nain* from Adui and the *Xefe de Suco* of Larisula, so that the appropriate cultural protocols could be followed. An invitation was also extended for us to visit the actual Adui compound and take photographs to compare with those taken by Bühler.

We returned to Bubuha for the scheduled meeting on 29 October 2014 and congregated beneath the Mandati Bubuha *oma falu*. The meeting began with the customary sharing of betelnut. This location and customary act underscored the gravitas that our hosts placed on the discussion about to unfold. As the conversation began, the informants deferred to two men from Adui, one being the Bubuha *Xefe de Aldeia*, Thomas Magno Ximenes, the other being his relative Miguel Magno Ximenes. This lack of engagement by the entire group was appropriate, as in some instances people are not able to speak about particular objects such as sculptures, due to lack of authority to do so.<sup>87</sup>

Following the initial formalities, the *atewaa* were discussed as the men flipped through a folder of images I had given them. They described the *atewaa* as ‘coming from Larisula’. They named the hardwood that the figurines were made from as *ate lebuk* (M), which ‘lasts for over 30 years’.<sup>88</sup> By all accounts *atewaa* continue to be made by local makers (*badain*, T) in Larisula, either when a child is ill or when someone dies. They also confirmed that there are *atewaa* in situ at Adui. The *atewaa* serve as a source of fertility and fecundity for the clan ‘to give more children to the sons and grandsons of that house’.<sup>89</sup> *Atewaa* are worshipped and ceremonially ‘fed’ in Larisula. Thomas explained that ‘some of the carvings we recognise and some we don’t ... but I won’t say more’.<sup>90</sup>

Thomas Magno Ximenes was not willing to discuss the *atewaa* in greater detail with me, stating that to do so it was necessary ‘to open the road and close the road’.<sup>91</sup> This is a metaphor for creating a ceremonially ‘heated’ environment for the discussion. Without sacrificing livestock and seeking the consent of his ancestors (i.e. ‘opening the road’) he was concerned that discussion about the significance of the *atewaa* might cause harm to his clan, near or far. Thus, he declined to discuss the *atewaa* further because, as he said, he was scared. In all likelihood, it was also confronting for him to articulate the significance of these objects

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<sup>87</sup> See Kreps, *Liberating Culture*, 32–33. Kreps discusses Ngaju-Dayak culture in which certain objects such as sculptures (*karubei*, Ngaju-Dayak) and knowledge about them is not widely disseminated in the public domain. Kreps explains that the knowledge, ownership rights and how such objects are interpreted in a museum context have been the sole preserve of a ritual specialist (*basir*, Ngaju-Dayak) or other select members of the society, because of the objects’ sacred nature.

<sup>88</sup> It was suggested during the discussion that the diminutive copper alloy (bronze) figurines in the Baguia Collection, such as MKB IIc 6396, came from the coast.

<sup>89</sup> Jose Fernandes, personal communication with author, Bubuha, Larisula, Baguia Sub-district, 29 October 2014.

<sup>90</sup> Thomas Magno Ximenes, interview with author, Bubuha, Baguia Sub-district, 29 October 2014.

<sup>91</sup> The Tetun phrase used was *loke dalan no taka dalan*.

in conversation, as his experience of *atewaa* has revolved around the performance of actions, such as making offerings and sacrifices, not verbal discussion about them.

Thomas' comments illustrated the perceived potency of the *atewaa*, and the notion of clan relationships and the omnipresent protection afforded the clan members in relation to the clan house, irrespective of their physical presence or distance. This resonates with the importance attributed to sharing betelnut in the ceremonial house context. This act metaphorically binds the clan together and in doing so offers individuals the protection of their clan house and, by association, the protection of their ancestors to ensure equilibrium.<sup>92</sup> Even if people are not physically present to partake in ceremonies, the act of imbibing sanctified betelnut ensures the clan link is renewed and retained. Thomas Magno Ximenes' comments reflected that he was cautious not to disturb the invisible and dispersed clan relationships, which extend to include the *atewaa* and deceased ancestors in the photographs and form the 'membrane' of relationships that link people and their ancestors.

Furthermore, as representations and embodiments of deceased persons, *atewaa* are potent objects considered to hold the power invested in them by sacrificial offerings made by the living, via the *atewaa*, to the ancestor.<sup>93</sup> These sacrifices and acts of worship garnered favour and protection from the unseen ancestors for the benefit of the living. It is unlikely that *atewaa* were ever intended to have a public 'face'. Instead, *atewaa* were installed in the inner domain of sanctified sites such as ceremonial house compounds or places where they offered protection. Even if *atewaa* were visible in outdoor locations, the site itself was considered *lulik* and therefore not to be entered. Thus, the arrival of the Collection photographs of the *atewaa* was interpreted as laden with invisible powers and networks of relationships that could not be fully 'located' and connected to living clan members. This issue was further complicated by the 'evidence' that Bühler had visited Adui as verified by the photographs in the Collection. The claim that Thomas 'recognised' some of the *atewaa*, was his assertion that the figurines originated from Adui and/or Larisula more generally. But without clear provenance the *atewaa* were in a state of limbo, unable to be relocated.

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<sup>92</sup> Celestino Guterres, personal communication with author, Bahatata, Baguia Sub-district, 7 October 2014.

<sup>93</sup> Bonifacio Guterres Ximenes, interview with author, Alawa Leten, Baguia Sub-district, 21 October 2014.



For Thomas, the *atewaa* were potentially ‘dangerous’ in this limbo state and he exhibited due caution and respect, even as he encountered these objects as images.<sup>94</sup> Dangerous heritage results because the agency of the object itself is further complicated by the lack of ability to relocate the object back into a cultural context where its agency is able to take effect.<sup>95</sup> Furthermore, because *atewaa* were created with the intention that over time they would naturally disintegrate, their stasis in a museum collection where they are removed from ‘lived time’ due to preventive conservation storage approaches is counter-intuitive to their original intent to represent the dead and to control the living.<sup>96</sup>

Our visit to Adui compound never eventuated. The reason given for this postponement was that the Adui ceremonial house was in a state of disrepair. Whilst both the elder brother (*mane*, T) and younger brother (*alin*, T) ceremonial houses at Mandati Bubuha had been reconstructed, the Adui ceremonial house was yet to be rebuilt. The men were concerned that the condition of the Adui ceremonial house was no longer similar to that when it was recorded by Bühler and that to escort visitors to the clan house and to photograph it in its poor condition was a potential threat to the clan’s honour and stability. It was also felt that the discussion about the Collection *atewaa* could occur only once Adui *oma falu* was fully reinstated. Only then would it be possible to discuss the *atewaa* in a manner that ensured the appropriate safeguards were in place. ‘We can only do things at one stage to the next, as taught by our ancestors; to do it otherwise and mix up this order is dangerous.’<sup>97</sup>

Thomas was confused to learn that Bühler had acquired *atewaa* for the Baguia Collection. By his own admission some of the sculptures came from Larisula, a claim supported by the Collection historical photographs, but he wanted to reject this idea. He was in part ‘cornered by the truth’ of the photographs and the objects.<sup>98</sup> His disbelief was reflected in comments such as ‘We never heard that he came here ... We only know of Indonesians that came here and took statues ... actually it was Timorese who stole *atewaa* and took them to Indonesia

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<sup>94</sup> Sean Kingston, “Dangerous Heritage: Southern New Ireland, the Museum and the Display of the Past,” in *Museum Studies: An Anthology of Contexts*, edited by Bettina Messias Carbonell (Malden: Blackwell Publishing Ltd., 2012), 383–396; Were, “Digital Heritage, Knowledge Networks, and Source Communities,” 136–138.

<sup>95</sup> See Were, “Digital Heritage, Knowledge Networks, and Source Communities,” 137. Were discusses similar issues of ‘dangerous heritage’ with the Nalik people of Papua New Guinea and their responses to objects with unclear provenance.

<sup>96</sup> Kingston, “Dangerous Heritage,” 387.

<sup>97</sup> Thomas Magno Ximenes, interview with author, Bubuha, Larisula, Baguia Sub-district, 29 October 2014.

<sup>98</sup> Niessen, “More to It Than Meets the Eye,” 421.

... but later their family became sick and died, so they returned the statues'.<sup>99</sup> Refusing to believe that the *atewaa* had been sold to Bühler, the men explained that to sell such objects ran the risk of severe consequences such as death, infertility or the death of one's children. 'These *atewaa* are sacred and were never sold!'<sup>100</sup> They also affirmed the significance of the architectural finials (*lakasoru*, M), suggesting that to have sold such items was another major transgression: '*Lakasoru* are like a gift from God ... they cannot be sold'.<sup>101</sup> Jose Fernandes, the 'sacred elder' (*anu falu*, M) and oldest man present, asserted that the *atewaa* had been taken without payment.

Fernandes integrated this new information about Bühler's visit and the impact of the removal of the sculptures by suggesting that the act of removing the *atewaa* had resulted in hardship in Timor since that time. He attributed major turbulent events such as WWII and the Japanese occupation, the 1959 uprising in Uatolari and Baguia and the Indonesian occupation of 1975–1999 as consequences of the removal of the sacred figurines and finials to Switzerland. The men were challenged by the Collection photographs of Adui as a 'reproduction of truth'<sup>102</sup> and attempted to reconcile the photographs as a form of evidence with their lived experiences.

The men sought further information in an attempt to understand the process that led to the *atewaa* and *lakasoru* being acquired by Bühler. They asked: had the *atewaa* been purchased or taken? Did Bühler record who sold the sculptures to him? What did Bühler pay for each sculpture? If drought and a poor harvest had been prevalent in 1935, the demand for cash to buy food would have been high. Excessive rain was reported in eastern Indonesia, including coastal Irian Jaya, between July and September 1935, which may have resulted in food shortages in Baguia.<sup>103</sup> However, Bühler did not make any comment about famine in his diary.<sup>104</sup> The men at Bubuha suggested that the Administrator had ordered people to give

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<sup>99</sup> Thomas Magno Ximenes, personal communication with author, Bubuha, Larisula, Baguia Sub-district, 29 October 2014.

<sup>100</sup> Jose Fernandes, personal communication with author, Larisula, Baguia Sub-district, 29 October 2014.

<sup>101</sup> Jose Fernandes, personal communication with author, Larisula, Baguia Sub-district, 29 October 2014.

<sup>102</sup> Morris-Suzuki, "Shadows on the Lens," 75.

<sup>103</sup> Bryant Allen, Harold Brookfield and Yvonne Brown, "Frost and Drought through Time and Space, Part II: The Written, Oral and Proxy Records and their Meaning," *Mountain Research and Development*, vol. 9, no. 3 (Aug 1989): 290–291. This article documents a famine due to excessive rain in the Tari Basin, Southern Highlands of New Guinea, between May and December 1935.

<sup>104</sup> 1935 is listed as a neutral year with a Southern Oscillation Index reading of 2.82%. Queensland Government, The Long Paddock, "ENSO Year Classification"

Bühler their sacred *atewaa* and that in turn Bühler had paid the Administrator, as ‘In Portuguese times the government got the money, not the people’.<sup>105</sup> The men’s final question also doubled as a realisation: ‘How can we identify the former owners of the *atewaa* as it was such a long time ago?’

I assured the men that Bühler had paid for the *atewaa* by showing images of the MKB inventory cards, which record the prices he paid for each figurine. Although Bühler paid for the sculptures, the question of whether other forces were exerted to make these acquisitions possible, such as pressure from a powerful third party or the role of intermediaries, remains unanswered. The *atewaa* and the finials were by far the most expensive items acquired by Bühler, who paid nine Swiss Francs and ten Swiss Francs for them respectively, which reinforces the value attributed to the sculptures by both Bühler and their vendors. I also showed the men the formal Letter of Recommendation that Bühler had from the Consul of Portugal to confirm that he had official endorsement to visit Baguia and acquire objects (see Figure. 3.1).

The opinion of the men from Larisula was that the photographs taken by Bühler at Adui compound authenticated that this was where the *atewaa* came from. It was only because of the visual evidence of the Adui compound photographs that the men at Bubuha Mandati *oma fahu* cautiously accepted that these sculptures originated from that general area. Hence, the inter-relationship between the Baguia Collection photographs became a critical form of evidence – a cross-reference – to authenticate and contextualise the Collection objects in the men’s estimations of a site of origin.

However, not being able to establish a direct familial line of ownership to the *atewaa* was problematic, akin to the ancestors being ‘adrift in a no man’s land’ and ‘dislocated’.<sup>106</sup> With little or no provenance, the men’s reluctance to engage with and discuss the *atewaa* increased. As unidentified ancestors, both in the form of the historical photographs and the *atewaa*, their presence was connected and intertwined and experienced by the men as being simultaneously affirming and confronting. The men’s perception of the *atewaa* and their unrecognised ancestors as having the ability to permeate their worlds in various forms,

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<<https://www.longpaddock.qld.gov.au/products/australiasvariableclimate/ensoyearclassification.html>>. Accessed 12 June 2017.

<sup>105</sup> Jose Fernandes, personal communication with the author, Larisula, Baguia Sub-district, 29 October 2014.

<sup>106</sup> Carl Hoffman, *Savage Harvest* (New York: Harpers Collins, 2014). This is comparable to the Asmat having souls floating in Saffan, a middle land, until they are revenged.

malevolently and benevolently, caused consternation about their wider dispersed significance and influence.

The Adui photographs and the *atewaa* could not answer these various questions posed by the men as photographs cannot tell stories. Photographs can

only provide evidence of stories, and evidence is mute; it demands investigation and interpretation. Looked at in this way, as evidence of something beyond itself, a photograph can best be understood not as an answer or an end to inquiry, but as an invitation to look more closely, and to ask questions.<sup>107</sup>

The questions that the *atewaa* triggered from the men were their attempts to rationalise and understand what was inexplicable to them. As they processed the information available to them, they relied on established cultural practices to guide them in a manner they perceived as being safe and respectful towards both their living clan members and their ancestors. Without the photographs of Adui it is unlikely that they would have believed that the *atewaa* originated from their general area.

The men sought copies of the photographs of both Adui and the *atewaa*.<sup>108</sup> All the wooden sculptures were deemed to be important and they asked that a book be created to document the *atewaa*. They asked, ‘Will these *atewaa* be returned to Timor, or not, in the future? It is better to put the *atewaa* in Timor-Leste so that the new generation can learn about their own culture ... this is our history ... although we cannot recognise the people’.<sup>109</sup> This comment, although ambiguous as to whether ‘the people’ applied to both the *atewaa* and the photographs of ancestors, highlights that the *atewaa* and those ‘anonymous’ ancestors captured in the photographs still retain a strong ability, in the estimation of the men, to act upon their world. The men explained that although the power of the *atewaa* was certainly diminished because they had not been ritually ‘fed’ since their removal from Baguia, they still retained potency. Hence, by seeking future encounters with the historical photographs and

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<sup>107</sup> Phillip Gourevitch and Errol Morris cited in Jennifer Tucker, “Entwined Practices: Engagements with Photography in Historical Enquiry,” *History and Theory*, vol. 48 (December 2009): 1.

<sup>108</sup> Three copies of printed images of the Baguia Collection *atewaa* and *lakasoru* were given to Thomas Magno Ximenes (the Adui *lian nain*), Lorenzo Fernandes (the *Xefe de Suco*) and Jose Fernandes, (the *anu fali*) in December 2014.

<sup>109</sup> Jose Fernandes, personal communication with author, Larisula, Baguia Sub-district, 29 October 2014.

the actual objects in the Collection the men sought to place them ‘back into a world of meaningful interconnections’.<sup>110</sup>

The men asserted their cultural authority over the Baguia Collection photographs and objects by choosing what to disclose and what not to disclose and by denying us access to the Adui compound. Thus their ‘non-response’ was actually an active attempt to quell any further imbalance that this disconcerting reappearance of ancestors, in the form of *atemaa* and photographs, may potentially have caused. They asserted their cultural protocols over the *atemaa* and photographs by advocating for a staged process of engagement, based on knowledge inherited from their ancestors, such as not discussing the *atemaa* until after the Adui ceremonial house is rebuilt and only when the correct clan representatives are present. By asserting this authority, they sought to preserve the equilibrium of the Adui clan.

### **Vignette 3:**

#### **A photographic assemblage reunites Bernardo Magno Ximenes with his ancestors at Taneti Guarda Betulari Luhale ceremonial house**

During an excursion by Bühler and Meyer to the Naueti-speaking area of Betulari, Osso Huna, on 11 August 1935, a series of photographs was taken.<sup>111</sup> These photographs feature buildings at a ceremonial house compound, stone gravesites, and people silver-smithing, wood-turning and manufacturing horn implements. During a community viewing of the Baguia Collection photographs at Osso Huna community hall on 21 August 2014, these photographs were seen and discussed by the local residents.

Bernardo Magno Ximenes, a senior resident of Osso Huna, recognised the photographs as having been taken at his *knua*’s ceremonial house, Taneti Guarda Betulari Luhale. Upon the completion of the slideshow, Bernardo requested copies of the photographs that featured his relatives at their ceremonial compound. In time, I reproduced the images and delivered them to his house. As Bernardo was out tending his garden I left the copies of the photographs with his daughter. When I finally met him the following day he declared,

When I came home yesterday I was re-united with my grandfather! I danced the *tebe dai*! No-one was here, but I was so happy I danced alone – inside the house, outside and in the street! Thank you because today I can see my

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<sup>110</sup> Bell, “Out of the Mouth of Crocodiles,” 345.

<sup>111</sup> See MKB (F)Ic 1249 – MKB (F)Ic 1293.

ancestors' picture. I am very happy because in the past when I was born in 1942 my father just told me their names are Boruono and Nauono [Bernardo's grandfather and great-uncle], but I don't recognise<sup>112</sup> them until today. Now I can recognise them as my ancestors.<sup>113</sup>

Bühler's photographs provided Bernardo with a relationship to people and place. Bernardo articulated the 'dispersive' qualities of the photographs within his past, present and future networks:

I see [through the photographs] that my family had a difficult life in the past. They suffered, but I am happy because I live a better life now. I have clothes and good food, unlike during my grandparents' time. Through these photographs that I have received, I will show the lifestyle of my grandparents to my grandchildren. In the future, my grandchildren will be happy and discuss me, their grandfather. They will remember that when I, Bernardo, was alive that I found these photographs of our ancestors. When I die they will be happy to look at these pictures and feel the way I do now. They will know that these were their great-great-grandfathers and this was their life in the past and we need to continue those things [*buat*] which they left for us.<sup>114</sup>

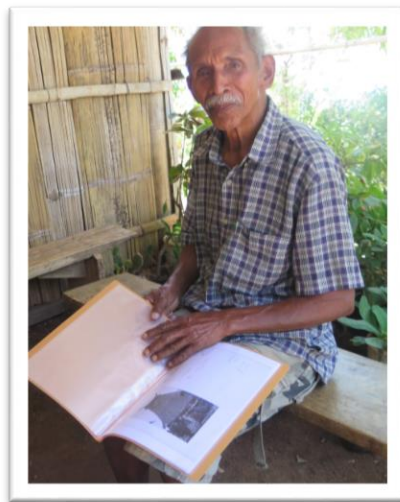


Figure 5.17: Bernardo Magno Ximenes views MKB (F)IIC 1258, a photograph of his ancestors at the Taneti Guarda Betulari Luhale ceremonial house and gravesite, Osso Huna, Baguia Sub-district, 10 October 2014.

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<sup>112</sup> The Tetun word *konyese*, which means 'to know', has been translated here as 'to recognise'.

<sup>113</sup> Bernardo Magno Ximenes, personal communication with author, Osso Huna, Baguia Sub-district, 10 October 2014.

<sup>114</sup> Bernardo Magno Ximenes, interview with author, Osso Huna, Baguia Sub-district, 10 October 2014.

According to Halvaksz, the '[p]hotographer, photographed and the photo itself form an assemblage, whose emergent qualities are made even more complex by the gaze of others'. The assemblage, according to Alfred Gell is also 'made out of time'.<sup>115</sup> The 'multiple agencies' of the photographic assemblage grow as it is seen and accumulates relationships.<sup>116</sup> This is reflected in Bernardo's statement regarding the significance of the photographs to himself and future generations.

Nonetheless, Bernardo's personal comments reveal a contradiction. On the one hand, the photographs are a marker of how life has changed and improved since 1935. Alternatively, the photographs exist as an heirloom that documents the continuity of his clan and as reminders of the clan house as an inheritance. Thus, the photographs have a distributed relevance as an emblem of both past and future continuation, especially as represented through the physicality of the clan house. While recognising lifestyle changes and improvements, Bernardo is also seeking to activate these images as a 'call to action' for his descendants to continue and maintain aspects of customary practices.

My role as the conduit through which the photographs reached Bernardo was significant for him. He compared his grandfather Nauono and his encounter with Bühler with his own relationship to me in Osso Huna during 2014. He requested my photograph as he wanted to be able to tell the story of the 'return of his grandfather' and I had become an active agent in this process. Thus, Bernardo sought to establish and activate the multiple relationships that the photographic assemblage and its attendant 'agentive components' (the photographer, the subject, the viewer, the photograph itself) had spread over time and across different networks of persons, places and things.<sup>117</sup> For Bernardo the photographs reunited the past with the present and ancestors with living people, thus multiplying the scope and scale of their, and his, networks.

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<sup>115</sup> Alfred Gell, *Art and Agency: An Anthropological Theory* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998), 236.

<sup>116</sup> Halvaksz, "The Photographic Assemblage," 416.

<sup>117</sup> Halvaksz, "The Photographic Assemblage," 415–416.



Figure 5.18: Bernardo Magno Ximenes en route to Taneti Guarda Betulari Luhale ceremonial house, 16 October 2014.

Another way that Bernardo extended these networks was to invite Salustianus and me to visit Taneti Guarda Betulari Luhale ceremonial house. He had the authority to escort us to the compound. He also requested that I film and photograph him there. Once there he orchestrated which shots he wanted me to take and where to take them. He also used the folder of photographs I had given him to explain to his relatives at the compound the story of Bühler's 1935 visit and to 'introduce' them to their ancestors depicted in those photographs. My presence and role in Bernardo's 'reunification with his grandfather' was also explained to them. Bernardo traversed the compound with his folder of photographs and my laptop, as he identified the location in which Bühler had stood to take each shot, for the benefit of himself, his relatives and me.





Figure 5.19: Bernardo Magno Ximenes shows his relatives photographs taken by Bühler at the Taneti Guarda Betulari Luhale ceremonial house in 1935, at Taneti Guarda Betulari Luhale, 16 October 2014.

At Taneti Guarda Betulari Luhale Bernardo explained the various parts of the compound, naming each building and gravesite. He directed me to take his photograph and film him speaking in the exact location that his grandfather had been photographed by Bühler in 1935, which he described as the ‘gravesite beside the second *maun* [elder brother] ceremonial house’.<sup>118</sup> This was an active way in which he linked himself to both his grandfather Nauono and the gravesite (and by extension to his uncle Boruono and other ancestors). Bernardo arranged to be photographed in a location to which he asserts ownership rights. In some photographs he held the photo taken by Bühler, so that his relationship with Nauono would be explicit for future generations. His intention was that his photograph could be viewed by subsequent generations, in the same way that he could now view his grandfather in the photograph taken by Bühler.<sup>119</sup>

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<sup>118</sup> He indicated that the first gravesite (*rate*, M) was visible behind the grave his grandfather is seated upon.

<sup>119</sup> Halvaksz, “The Photographic Assemblage,” 420.



Figure 5.20: ‘Gräber im Betulari’ (Graves in Betulari). Nauono sits on the stone grave (*rate*, M) at Taneti Guarda Betulari Luhale, Osso Huna, Baguia Sub-district.

Source: Museum der Kulturen Basel, MKB (F)IIC 1263. Photograph by Alfred Bühler, 10 August 1935.



Figure 5.21: Bernardo Magno Ximenes sits on the stone grave (*rate*, M) at Taneti Guarda Betulari Luhale, 16 October 2014.

He also proudly pointed out the site of the metal-smithing pit that appears in photographs by Bühler. Bernardo recalled, presumably based on information he had been told by his father, how Nauono had worked as a blacksmith, making swords used in bridewealth

exchange.<sup>120</sup> He explained that the pit had not been used since 1963. Bernardo descended into the pit and began to enact the process of working the bellows, demonstrating his knowledge of this craft, which he had learnt from his father as a young man. He also began singing a song that metalsmiths once sang to accompany their work: ‘hit it, hit it, hit it faster to sell it so that we can sell it and get money ... pull it, pull it, pull it faster so that we can get money!’

The photographs of his ancestors in the pit, together with the disused site, triggered Bernardo’s memory; he responded in a performative manner which suggests that his encounter with the historical photographs folded and collapsed time and place into one another.<sup>121</sup> Bernardo was ‘using video footage [and photography] for promoting familiarity between people and places ... [t]his work can be understood as contributing to processes that fold histories back on themselves, thus regenerating collective life, reconnecting families and places’.<sup>122</sup>

Although Bernardo acknowledged that the skill of producing swords had been handed down from his grandfather through his father to himself, he rationalised the discontinuation of this craft by stating: ‘Now we are modern we don’t do it anymore. We just quit for a while’<sup>123</sup>, leaving the possibility open for the family to return to this craft in the future.

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<sup>120</sup> Bernardo was able to recount how Nauono had made three swords, *surik boboroan*, *surik nabakadalia* and *surik sakalai*, which were used as bridewealth for the wife of his brother, Boruono.

<sup>121</sup> Halvaksz, “The Photographic Assemblage,” 412.

<sup>122</sup> Verran and Christie, “Using/Designing Digital Technologies of Representation in Aboriginal Australian Knowledge Practices,” 217.

<sup>123</sup> Bernardo Magno Ximenes, interview with author, Osso Huna, Baguia Sub-district, 9 October 2016.

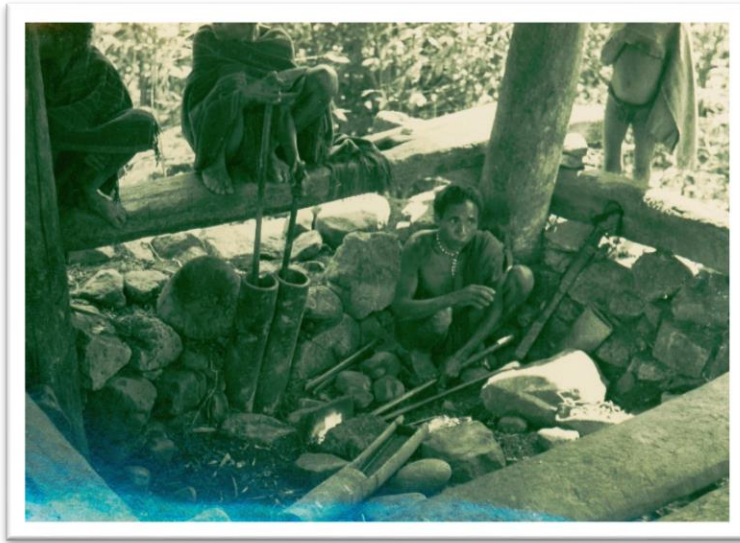


Figure 5.22: ‘Schmiede im Betulari’ (Smith in Betulari).

Source: Museum der Kulturen Basel, MKB (F)IIC 1267. Photograph by Alfred Bühler, 10 August 1935.



Figure 5.23: Bernardo Magno Ximenes re-enacts the use of the bellows to produce metal swords and knives in the forging pit at Taneti Guarda Betulari Luhale, 16 October 2014.

## Conclusion

This chapter set out to explore what the significance of the historic photographs taken by Bühler in 1935 held for the Baguia community in 2014, when they were temporarily digitally returned. I outlined how Bühler took photographs to contextualise the Baguia Collection objects that he acquired in Baguia. He also took photographs to document the production

methods and uses of the same objects in Baguia with the intention that they would be viewed by a European audience as a record of a disappearing people and culture. These photographs serve as an enduring record of the people and physical landscape of the time. However, the engagement of Makasae (and Nauti) people with these historical photographs in 2014 revealed another aspect of their significance, one which Bühler possibly never imagined or intended. Other ways of seeing and additional layers of significance were attributed to the Collection by the Baguia residents and a shared history and ‘double vision’ emerged once it was accessed by its source community.

The methodologies of photo-elicitation and digital return are productive even when a collection sits on the edge of living memory. Although suitable for the direct analysis of photographs, this methodology was more relevant to enabling the indirect analysis of the broader significance within the community that the Collection unleashed. In this way the historic photographs revived memories and experiences that were fading or in a state of evanescence.

Although there are obvious limitations to this photo-elicitation method, such as the inability to name and recognise people and the associated emotional discomfort this may have caused, the recognition of landscape, architecture and objects *in situ* provided important reference points for recall, remembering and memory-work. ‘Photos are material evidence of connectedness to what is now “past”. The more photos connect, the more they are valued. Photos are stories about connections through time, affirming the existence and significance of the past in the present’.<sup>124</sup> The ability of the photographs to trigger memories and the extent of this memory-work undoubtedly increased as wider access to the Collection occurred. The ability of the photographs to trigger prosthetic memories is central to their significance and potential as a resource to foster inter-generational transmission of knowledge and discourse. The photographs provided a new presence in the present.

As outlined in the three vignettes, the photographs authenticated living cultural practices and people actively sought opportunities to assert their cultural knowledge and authority over the Baguia Collection. Ernesto DC Dias demonstrated possession of similar objects by his clan that led him to assert that part of the Baguia Collection came from his clan, a means of

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<sup>124</sup> Gaynor Macdonald, “Photos in Wiradjuri Biscuit Tins: Negotiating Relatedness and Validating Colonial Histories,” *Oceania*, vol. 73, no. 4 (2003): 236.

‘laying claim’ – not to ownership, but to his authority over the Collection objects and photographs. In responding to the digital return of the *atemaa*, the elders considered the Collection photographs to be evidence of the origins of the *atemaa* from Larisula. This illustrates how the Collection photographs played a role in reinforcing the provenance and complementing the significance of the material culture objects in the Collection. The experience of being ‘cornered by the truth’ in the case study of Larisula also illustrates the confrontational aspects of the digital return of historic photograph collections and the challenges this method may present to source communities. Yet the digital return of the *atemaa* enabled the elders to engage with potentially ‘dangerous heritage’ in a way that was less potent, enabling them time to consider the implications and issues of such sensitive material. The elders also observed their inherited cultural protocols as they were cautious not to disrupt the dispersed relationships and complicated networks of their clan’s present and future existence. Ultimately, the desire for the *atemaa* to be returned to Timor-Leste was expressed by some of the elders, for the prosperity of future generations and with the intention of rectifying the ‘invisible relationships’ they believed had been upset by the sale and removal of the sculptures in 1935.

The photographs reunited Bernardo Magno Ximenes with his grandfather, again giving the past a new presence in the present. He actively sought to insert himself into these photographs by creating a contemporary re-enactment of the photograph taken by Bühler of his grandfather seated at the gravesite in the clan’s ceremonial compound. He also had his photo taken in the forging pit, as an ‘updated’ version of Bühler’s 1935 photo of the same site. In doing so, Bernardo contemporised and extended the inter-generational relevance of the photographs. He seized the opportunity to enhance his continued authority within his clan by having me photograph him so that he will be known to future generations, in the same way his grandfather had been photographed by Bühler and was now known to Bernardo. In this way Bernardo placed the photograph of his grandfather back into a world of meaningful connections while also reinvigorating and extending the networks with his own photograph.

The digital return of the Baguia Collection historical photographs in Baguia caused diverse and sometimes competing and conflicting responses. These responses reflect the tensions between customary practices and modernity and the extent of social change that has occurred in Baguia over the intervening 79 years since the Collection was acquired by Bühler. These

multiple responses also indicate the social values that inform the lens through which people viewed the historical photographs. What for some people was symbolic of loss of culture was interpreted by others as 'backwardness'. In other instances, the photographic record was interpreted as an indicator of the progress achieved in the intervening years. This is consistent with the suggestion that we bring our own perspective and biases to how we interpret photographs.

The intimate and personal affirmations of clan, identity and sites of significance asserted by Makasae (and Nauti) people in 2014 when viewing the Baguia Collection photographs can only partially be filtered through the memory work that is a consequence of photo-elicitation methods and expressed as an 'interactional morass'.<sup>125</sup> Whilst the capacity to document aspects of the Collection was at times fluid and nebulous, the memory work that was a product of viewing the Collection of historic photographs prompts recollections while simultaneously reconfiguring individual and social memory. As Tessa Morris-Suzuki observes, 'Photographs influence the way people remember and understand the past; but the way we take, see and respond to photographs is in turn also shaped by social forces'.<sup>126</sup> In light of the rapid social changes, dislocation and disjuncture experienced in Baguia over recent decades, the capacity of the Collection photographs to be containers of history, a yardstick of change and to give the past a presence is incalculable, even if at times definitive information about the people and context is lost or unknown.

Notwithstanding these limitations, the Baguia Collection historical photographs provided a source of deep interest and fascination amongst those clans and individuals whose engagement with the images authenticated their clan, landscape, sites and other aspects of their culture. As triggers of prosthetic memory, if not actual memory, the potential of this Collection of historical photographs to activate pride, connections to people and places, and a sense of continuity and progress was, and remains, inestimable. With appropriate access, the photographs bear witness and provide evidence and shape to individual, family and the collective social memories – and, by implication, to core definitions of identity, society and history.

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<sup>125</sup> Niessen, "More to It Than Meets the Eye," 429.

<sup>126</sup> Morris-Suzuki, "Shadows on the Lens," 82–83.

From this research, it is possible to extrapolate some key issues that are relevant to researchers and museums as they work to return photographic collections to source communities. The popularity of viewing photographs can complement understanding of material culture collections and provide a more meaningful context to elicit intangible knowledge relating to objects. Whether such information is shared with the researcher remains at the discretion of the informant and is constrained by various cultural protocols.

Photographic collections, when returned to source communities, will undoubtedly contribute other layers of meaning and ‘double visions’ will emerge. This is what occurs when photographs that were ‘produced and controlled through sites of authority of the collecting society ... [whose] interests have been privileged in the way in which photographs have been curated, displayed and published, creating specific regimes of truth to the exclusion of others’ are made available to members of the source community and opened up to their regimes of truth.<sup>127</sup>

Those new truths or visions might be actual memory of the period that the photograph was taken, but in the case of photographs on the edge of living memory, they could trigger prosthetic memories, which are equally valid. Finally, my research also confirms that digitisation of photographs and their return to source communities can ‘enliven’ photographs and enable them to enter new spaces,

spaces where the material continues to resonate despite the appearances of dematerialisation. Reproducibility has always been a key characteristic of photograph[s] and indeed one which shaped the social desires and expectations of the medium, as it carries their information through various transmutations of material form ... arguably photographs maintain an integrity of their own as images which can be spread across multiple forms.<sup>128</sup>

Thus, the Baguia Collection, when digitally returned temporarily, was positioned to be a vital resource in the contemporary construction of Makasae identity. With further longer-term access it holds the potential for enabling Makasae people to discover, assert and refer to their past heritage as a platform from which to maintain cultural practices and identity as they

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<sup>127</sup> Edwards, “Introduction,” 83.

<sup>128</sup> Elizabeth Edwards, “Photographs and History: Emotion and Materiality” in *Museum Materialities: Objects, Engagements, Interpretations*, edited by Sandra H Dudley (London, New York: Routledge, 2010), 31.



evolve in the present and future. Further access to the Baguia Collection or indeed any collection of historical photographs ideally needs to be unmediated and provided in a way that allows people to view it in the privacy of their homes and with their family members. In more intimate contexts what may be silences or unexpressed memories in public viewings can become articulated, expressed and shared.

The following chapter provides insights into how the source community animated and ‘reactivated’ the Baguia Collection during the final stage of my research project in Baguia, to serve their own aspirations and interests. It sheds light on the potential of the Collection to inform and contribute to the construction of a revitalised Makasae sense of identity by illustrating possible models used by community members and leaders.



## Chapter 6

### Animating the Baguia Collection to shape the future

[T]angible heritage, without intangible heritage, is a mere husk or inert matter. As for intangible heritage, it is not only embodied, but also inseparable from the material and social worlds of persons.<sup>1</sup>

The strengths and weaknesses of the digital-return methodology in its application when returning the Baguia Collection to the Baguia community in 2014 were identified in chapters 4 and 5. I have established the validity of the digital-return and photo-elicitation processes in relation to community members viewing images of the Collection objects and their ability to trigger memory and remembering, which can lead to the restitution of knowledge. I have also shown how the community members engaged with the historic photographs of the Collection and the varied responses to these images. Importantly, I established the manner in which various community members asserted their authority over the historical photographs and objects in the Collection.

This chapter outlines the ways in which the Baguia community engaged with and acted upon the Baguia Collection ‘in the social world of persons’ to meet their own agendas in their local context. I argue that these animations of the Collection largely oriented the past as a resource with which to evoke a ‘capacity to aspire’ and to shape the future.<sup>2</sup> Presentations, participatory workshops, student research and small group discussions were instigated by community members as a consequence of earlier exposure to the Collection through community viewings, as discussed in chapters 4 and 5.

The findings of this chapter are based on a combination of participant observation and interviews conducted over the final month of my research in Baguia. Three main questions were posed during this phase of my research: how does a source community respond to and animate a preserved ‘time capsule’ of its heritage? Why does a community of origin re-animate historical objects once removed as ‘objects of ethnography’<sup>3</sup> that have been ‘virtually’

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<sup>1</sup> Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, “Intangible Heritage as Metacultural Production,” 60.

<sup>2</sup> Appadurai, “The Capacity to Aspire”.

<sup>3</sup> Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, “Objects of Ethnography,” 387. Kirshenblatt-Gimblett describes objects of ethnography as follows: ‘Ethnographic artifacts are objects of ethnography. They are artifacts created by ethnographers. Objects become ethnographic by virtue of being defined, segmented, detached, and carried

returned to their source community and original location? What approaches and methods were employed by the community to explore and gain insights into the value of the Collection in the current era?

How the Makasae ‘put to work’ the images of the Baguia Collection objects and historical photographs reveals the potential usefulness of the collection in the current era. The Collection was activated by various community elders and leaders, and the importance of social relationships in this process becomes evident throughout this chapter. These animations illustrate the usefulness of digital return of museum collections to source communities and the potential of museum collections to stimulate contemporary inter-generational exchange and transmission of intangible heritage. As evidenced throughout the course of this chapter: ‘In contrast with the tangible heritage protected in the museum, intangible heritage consists of cultural manifestations (knowledge, skills, performance) that are inextricably linked to persons’.<sup>4</sup> I argue that it is in the inter-personal exchanges activated when a collection is returned to a source community that we see the core value of the collection revealed.

These animations can also be construed as ‘acts of transfer’ and as part of a wider ‘repertoire’ that is reiterated and ‘performed’ in order to transmit social and cultural knowledge and skills, collective memory, social behaviours and a sense of identity. As Kirshenblatt-Gimblett reminds us,

the repertoire is always embodied and is always manifested in performance, in action and in doing. The repertoire is passed on through performance. This is different from recording and preserving the repertoire as document in the archive. The repertoire is about embodied knowledge and the social relations for its creation, enactment, transmission and reproduction.<sup>5</sup>

In this way performance functions as an epistemology that makes manifest the intangible knowledge embodied in objects and people.<sup>6</sup> These creative enactments provide a type of

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away by ethnographers. Such objects are ethnographic by virtue of the manner in which they have been detached, for disciplines make their objects and in the process make themselves’.

<sup>4</sup> Boast and Enoté, “Neocolonial Collaboration,” 58.

<sup>5</sup> Diana Taylor cited in Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, “Intangible Heritage as Metacultural Production,” 60.

<sup>6</sup> Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, “Intangible Heritage as Metacultural Production,” 60.

feedback loop between general principles and more specific goals, which aim to ensure that the past informs the future.<sup>7</sup>

These enterprises, instigated by the Baguia community, can also be likened to interactions in the contact zone, albeit not within the physical museum walls but in the zone of the virtual museum/collection in the remote location of Baguia. In this context, these interactions test whether access to the Baguia Collection provides

not only an arena of investigation of the past but the means to reflect upon possibilities for the future. It also proffers the possibility of an extension of the role of preservation into the village in a manner which takes advantage of networks of connection and entangled circumstances to preserve social practices and in doing so create material objects.<sup>8</sup>

Alternatively, the ‘engagement zone’ concept can be applied to these encounters, which acknowledges and ‘emphasize[s] the agency of participants and the potential for power fluctuation despite inequalities in power relations’.<sup>9</sup> Such activations and animations of the Baguia Collection are in keeping with values associated with the indigenous and community-based museological movement, which advocates the importance of

giving people control over their cultural heritage and its preservation as part of how they maintain, reinforce and construct their identity. The approach acknowledges the importance of preserving not only resources that represent a community’s past, but also vital elements of its living culture and its continuing development. Cultural heritage consists of people’s material culture as well as their collective memory, oral traditions, personal histories, and everyday experiences.<sup>10</sup>

Kreps argues that new museology is ‘a people-centred, bottom-up approach to cultural heritage preservation’<sup>11</sup>, which promotes the idea that ‘each society needs to assess the nature and precariousness of its heritage resources in its own terms and determine contemporary

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<sup>7</sup> Appadurai, “The Capacity to Aspire,” 80.

<sup>8</sup> Bonshek, “Making Museum Objects,” 35.

<sup>9</sup> Onciul, “Community Engagement, Curatorial Practice, and Museum Ethos in Alberta, Canada,” 83.

<sup>10</sup> Kreps, *Liberating Culture*, 10.

<sup>11</sup> Kreps, *Liberating Culture*, 11.

uses it wishes to make of them, not in a spirit of nostalgia but in the spirit of development'.<sup>12</sup> This is precisely what the Baguia community has done. Furthermore, they have utilised their habitus and habitat – local, social and physical environments – as critical elements in this development process.

In this chapter, I begin by presenting some observations and comments drawn from presentations given by Domingas Guterres, a Makasae elder, and by Mr Martinho Amaral, a Naueti elder who is a long-standing resident of Alawa Craik. Both elders visited three schools in Baguia to address students about the Baguia Collection. These presentations were instigated following several requests made to me from teachers keen that their school students see the Collection. These presentations became an opportunity for the elders to interpret the Collection for the younger generation. Various perspectives and uses of the Collection became evident through these engagements that I observed.

In advance of their school visits and presentations, Domingas Guterres and Martinho Amaral looked at the digital images of the Baguia Collection with me and selected images of objects and historical photographs based on their personal preferences to use in their respective presentations to the students. I then developed PowerPoint presentations for their use at their presentations, based on their selections. Domingas and Martinho were invited to speak about the images they had selected (both objects and historical photographs) from their own personal experiences. Following these presentations by the elders, various follow-on activities were programmed for the students, designed primarily by the teachers with some minor input from me. These activities provided the opportunity for students of various ages to engage more closely with the Collection. Accounts of these student activities are also included in this chapter.

I then reflect upon comments made by school principals and teachers from the Baguia schools that offer insights into how the Baguia Collection is perceived and valued, and its potential future relevance. Finally, I consider the responses of local artisans to the Collection, with particular reference to the way in which one local metal-smith, Domingos da Costa,

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<sup>12</sup> UNESCO cited in Kreps, *Liberating Culture*, 11.

engaged with the Collection as a resource to inform his contemporary creative production and rectify an imbalance within his ceremonial house.

The animations presented in this chapter exclude one other attempt to document the Baguia Collection with students at the Baguia Secondary School. Whilst there was apparent enthusiasm for the project from the students and staff, the final session reporting back about the research activity given to the students following the presentation by Martinho Amaral on 28 October 2014 was unable to be scheduled due to school examination schedules and holidays. It would be misleading to suggest that every student and teacher was equally engaged in the process of working with the Collection, but it was widely viewed in a highly positive manner in Baguia due to its local relevance.

Through these accounts of how the Makasae animated the Baguia Collection objects and photographs, I illustrate how social capital in the form of people-centred relationships was activated so that the inter- and intra-generational transmission of intangible heritage was ensured. The knowledge shared and exchanged through these animations is specific to the temporality of these engagements and highlights the fluidity of such animations into the future. What follows are animations of the Collection specific to the time in which they occurred in 2014.

### **Martinho Amaral animates memory and history with the Baguia Collection**

As a Naueti man who has resided in the Makasae area of Alawa Leten, Baguia, with his Makasae wife for several decades, Martinho Amaral speaks Naueti, Makasae and Tetun languages fluently. He first viewed images of the Baguia Collection in his own home. He willingly accepted the invitation to address the students about the Collection objects and historical photographs at the EBC Sao Jose Junior High School on 23 October and the Baguia Secondary School on 28 October 2014. The following comments are drawn from his presentation to approximately 40 students at the Baguia Secondary School.



Figures 6.1a and 6.1b: Martinho Amaral gives a presentation about the Baguia Collection at Baguia Secondary School, Alawa Craik, Baguia Sub-district, 28 October 2014.

Martinho began his presentation with images of the Baguia Fort, a site where he once worked as a clerk.<sup>13</sup> His familiarity with the site enabled him to explain the functions of the three Fort buildings as being: the house for the *guardafins*, the administration office and the Administrator's residency. He peppered his talk with anecdotes and commented that the orange trees that once lined the front of the Fort 'could not be picked and eaten by just anyone ... because at that time the *morador* [soldiers] looked after it, so only the Portuguese were allowed to eat the oranges'.<sup>14</sup> (See Figure 6.3 and note the orange tree on the right-hand

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<sup>13</sup> See historical photographs selected by Martinho Amaral for his presentation: MKB (F)IIC 1151, MKB (F)IIC 1175, MKB (F)IIC 1185, MKB (F)IIC 1199, MKB (F)IIC 1181, MKB (F)IIC 1196, MKB (F)IIC 1126, MKB (F)IIC 1127 and MKB (F)IIC 1163.

<sup>14</sup> Presentation by Martinho Amaral, Naueti elder, Baguia Secondary School, Alawa Leten, Baguia Sub-district, 28 October 2014.



side of the photograph.) Although the orange trees no longer exist, Martinho drew comparisons between past and present behaviours and also between the former glory of the Fort and its current state of disrepair, which he attributed to the period of Indonesian occupation when, by his account, it became damaged and neglected.

His explanation about the Baguia Fort included an historical overview of why the Portuguese chose to locate the Fort in Baguia – namely, because it was a central point between the mountains and the plains, adding that the land upon which the fort was built was owned by *Kekodae'e* clan. He added that 2018 would mark the fort's centenary, an occasion that he considered worthy of celebration. Although the fort is a heritage site in the centre of Baguia it was apparent from the questions posed by the students to Martinho that they had not previously heard about its history, pre-1980s.



Figure 6.2: Martinho Amaral explains the features of the Baguia Fort, including the orange trees, 28 October 2014, based on a projection of the photograph MKB (F)IIC 19524.



Figure 6.3: ‘Einheimische vor dem Haus des portugiesischen Postenchefs’ (Locals in front of the house of the Portuguese Administrator).

Source: Museum der Kulturen Basel, MKB (F)IIc 19524. Photograph by Alfred Bühler, August 1935.

Photographs taken by Bühler of the weekly market, which was held in front of the Baguia Fort during 1935, allowed Martinho to observe that today a small store stands on the same old market site. Such information allowed the students to re-imagine the actual site and draw their own comparisons. Martinho recalled visiting the market during his youth and he made comparisons between the attire worn then and that worn today by explaining:

When we came to the traditional market, we just wore *hakfolik* [loincloth; *ba, M*] ... but in your times the clothes should be washed and ironed ... When we took the sacrament of Baptism we just wore a *hakfolik*, because in 1942 and 1945 there were no clothes yet. Now people need to find the good shoes, new pants to wear.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>15</sup> Presentation by Martinho Amaral, Naueti elder, Baguia Secondary School, Alawa Craik, Baguia Sub-district, 28 October 2014.



Figure 6.4: Martinho Amaral explains the photograph ‘Markt in Baagua’ (Market in Baguia), MKB (F)IIC 1196), including attire such as the loincloth (*ba*, M) and the use of objects such as the shoulder bag (*lode*, M).

Martinho’s explanations elucidated material culture objects documented within Bühler’s photographs, as the following example demonstrated:

In this photograph we see people covered their body with *tais*, and the children follow baskets when they went to traditional market, and the men carry the *lode* [woven fibre shoulder bag] to put areca nut and betel vine and eat it on their way. *Lode* that our ancestors used in the past ... and until now we still use it to go to the traditional market, to put things inside, and for those who always eat the betelnut [they] use it to put the areca nut and betel vine.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Presentation by Martinho Amaral, Naueti elder, Baguia Secondary School, Alawa Craik, Baguia Sub-district, 28 October 2014.

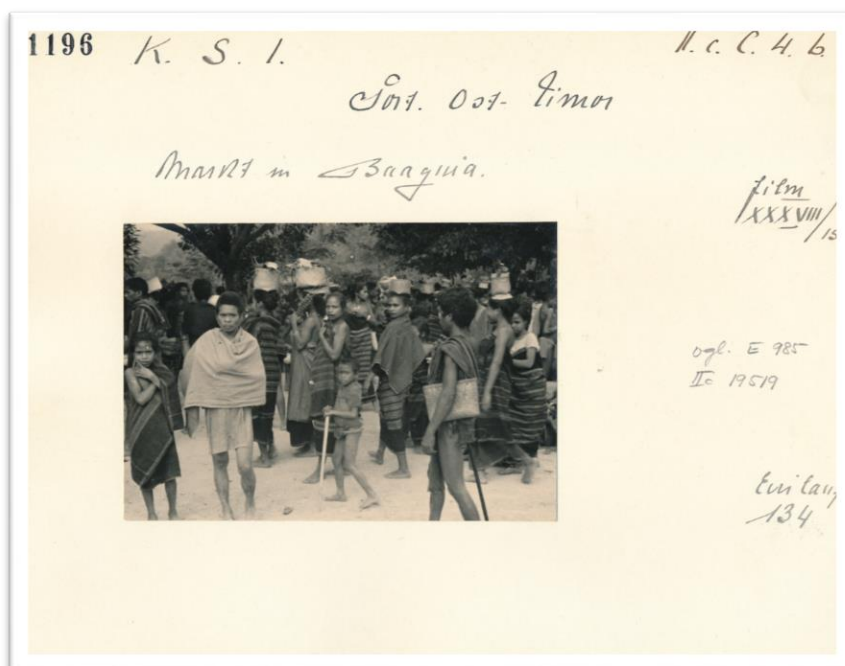


Figure 6.5: 'Markt in Baaguia' (Market in Bauguia).

Source: Museum der Kulturen Basel, (F)IIc 1196. Photograph by Alfred Bühler, August 1935.

Another photograph depicts a man with a spear or lance (*oro*, M; *diman*, T), which prompted Martinho to comment on the uses, past and present, of such objects.<sup>17</sup> He indicated that spears are still made in Bauguia today, and used predominantly for killing animals. He explained to the students:

In the past when there was a war in Manufahi District, people used spears to fight against the foreign enemy who had heavy artillery and guns; that is why our ancestors were killed because they used spears to fight against people with guns.<sup>18</sup>

The image of the *oro* triggered Martinho's knowledge of history and the Manufahi war of 1912. His account recalled aspects of oral history that he would have heard as a young man from his elders. His knowledge enabled him to draw links between this object and a war that occurred over 100 years ago.

<sup>17</sup> See MKB (F)IIc 1122 and MKB IIc 6587.

<sup>18</sup> Presentation by Martinho Amaral, Naueti elder, Bauguia Secondary School, Alawa Craik, Bauguia Sub-district, 28 October 2014.

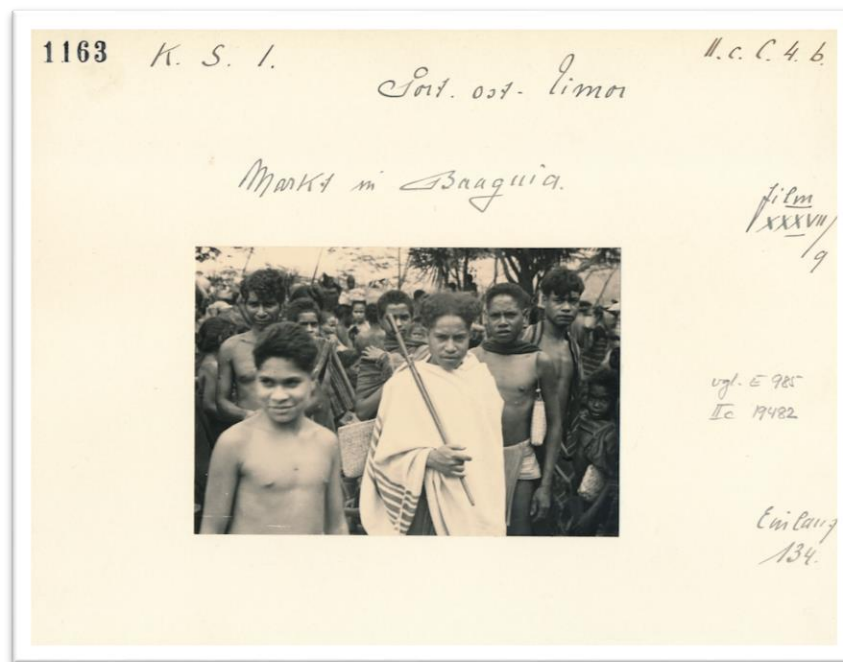


Figure 6.6: ‘Markt in Baagua’ (Market in Baagua). This photograph depicts a young man carrying a sacred sceptre (*taru falu*, M, *rota lulik*, T).

Source: Museum der Kulturen Basel, MKB (F)IIc 1163. Photograph by Alfred Bühler, August 1935.



Figure 6.7: Martinho Amaral explains the significance to the students of the sacred club (*taru falu*, M; *rota lulik*, T) in the projected photograph MKB (F)IIc 1163.

One photograph taken by Bühler (Figure 6.6) led Martinho to identify a revered object in Makasae culture, the sacred sceptre (*taru falu*, M; *rota lulik*, T), and to elucidate an important customary and political practice in Timorese society. “The people who held the *taru falu* also

wore a white blanket. Formerly, the *liurai* used the *taru falu* as a means of control over the people.’<sup>19</sup> He gave examples of ‘the past generation or ancestors’ who went to get the *taru falu* in Luka (Viqueque District) and in Vermasse (Baucau District) and how they passed it onto their sons and grandchildren to ensure that they would retain ‘control to rule the people’.<sup>20</sup> He explained that possession of the *taru falu* validated the owner’s role as *liurai*. If the *liurai* gave an order that was ignored, he would insult and abuse people based on the oral tradition (*uma-tala-fu’u*, M; *lisan*, T) of the *taru falu*. It was believed that those who disregarded the *liurai*, the *uma-tala-fu’u* and the *taru falu* would become sick or cursed, so consequently people followed orders. Ownership of the *taru falu* was a symbol of authority, leadership and control,

but today people do not trust and respect each other so we choose the leader by having an election, using a democratic process ... Nowadays, people lack respect for the leader, but in the past ... people just trusted the *taru falu* and because there was a monarchy system the person who received the *taru falu* from his ancestors was considered to be the best to lead the people. In the past a ruler had control over his people by holding the *taru falu* because they trusted each other, not like now.<sup>21</sup>

Martinho’s comments highlight the agency attributed to objects passed down inter-generationally, emphasising the potency of the *taru falu* that was formerly central to the political organisation of the ruling elite of Baguia and neighbouring areas. Comparable to a mace or a crown in a western context, the *taru falu* is an object of immense value. Other community leaders, younger than Martinho, reinforced his comments by indicating that this photograph was unique. ‘We have only heard about it [the *taru falu*] but we have never seen what it looks like and the design is very different, so it is very surprising [to see].’<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> Presentation by Martinho Amaral, Naueti elder, Baguia Secondary School, Alawa Craik, Baguia Sub-district, 28 October 2014.

<sup>20</sup> Presentation by Martinho Amaral, Naueti elder, Baguia Secondary School, Alawa Craik, Baguia Sub-district, 28 October 2014.

<sup>21</sup> Presentation by Martinho Amaral, Naueti elder, Baguia Secondary School, Alawa Craik, Baguia Sub-district, 28 October 2014.

<sup>22</sup> Francisco Aparicio Guterres, Principal, Baguia Secondary School, personal communication with author, Baguia Secondary School, Alawa Craik, Baguia Sub-district, 28 October 2014.

Martinho animated Bühler's photographs and the Collection objects as mediums through which he expressed his memories, knowledge of local history and lived experiences to the students and to me. His comments linked objects to history and by doing so he contextualised the objects and elucidated their significance. He also articulated past political practices and made the significant links between sacred objects and clan origin narratives. He used the occasion as an opportunity to draw comparisons and offer his own opinions, as he did when he concluded his presentation:

We have seen that what our ancestors made in the past continues up until today. Comparison between the past and the present shows differences ... So I ask you all to measure and look at life before and know that your grandparents and ancestors suffered in the past, but we also learn how to live through their past, so now in the present we need to work hard to find a life better than before.<sup>23</sup>

Martinho animated the Baguia Collection objects and photographs by drawing on memories, histories and anecdotes as part of his presentation, despite the fact that he had not been alive at the time the Collection was acquired in 1935. His accounts were from his life experiences during and after WWII, and contributed towards encouraging a sense of place in Baguia, due to its distinctive built heritage. In discussing the history of the Baguia Fort, Martinho envisaged commemorating its 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary in the foreseeable future. He identified the significance of the *taru falu*, and in doing so related aspects of the past and how they relate to the present. Martinho also used the historical photographs to provide a deeper understanding of the Collection objects. His presentation illustrated how the Collection can be animated by people who were born after its acquisition through a form of prosthetic memory. By discussing the past as a yardstick of change, a notion of continuity became apparent to the students, which implicitly suggested the likelihood of a future.

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<sup>23</sup> Presentation by Martinho Amaral, Naueti elder, Baguia Secondary School, Alawa Craik, Baguia Sub-district, 28 October 2014.

## **‘Examples to follow for living and work’: a presentation by Domingas Guterres**

On 21 October 2014, Domingas Guterres, a resident of Alawa Leten and the mother of Bonifacio Guterres, Principal at EBF Haudere Primary School, encouraged the students to study the photographs by stating:

In earlier times everything was difficult. The old *tais* were stitched together and given to our ancestors to wear. When you see them in the picture you may think they are poor, but they are not – it is just that they don’t have clothes to wear and it makes them look poor ... You have to think about the *bakfolik*. Would you like to study or to wear *bakfolik* and go into the forest? Which is good for the future? In the earlier times life was in the darkness and every life followed in that condition.<sup>24</sup> Nowadays you have good clothes. In my time we just wore a piece of cloth, slept on betelnut sheath and were covered by an old *tais*.<sup>25</sup>

Domingas discussed *tais* and making cloth with hand-spun yarn, dyed and woven in a similar style to now, ‘but it is better now because people can buy yarn in the store so it helps them to weave faster than in the past when women spun yarn’.<sup>26</sup> The photograph of a spindle, cotton and baskets<sup>27</sup> prompted Domingas to pull out her own spindle from her bag and provide a cotton-spinning demonstration for the students. ‘Watch me! I spin the cotton so you can follow it [the process] later.’<sup>28</sup> She explained that in earlier days *rabi* and *kola* were woven in red, black and green stripes. Natural dyes, such as turmeric dug from the ground and wild bean leaves pounded together were used to make green dyes. Mango tree bark and indigo leaves were used to create black dyes. She implored the children to go and ask their parents about these processes. ‘Once you have done it [woven a *kola/rabi*] you will

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<sup>24</sup> Presentation by Domingas Guterres, Makasae elder, EBF Haudere Primary School, Alawa Leten, Baguia Sub-district, 21 October 2014. The Makasae term ‘*metana mutu lafi*’ has been translated to mean ‘in the darkness’.

<sup>25</sup> She used the Tetun term ‘*tais bosan*’ which literally means ‘bored cloth’ which I interpret to mean ‘worn out, old cloth’.

<sup>26</sup> Presentation by Domingas Guterres, Makasae elder, EBF Haudere Primary School, Alawa Leten, Baguia Sub-district, 21 October 2014.

<sup>27</sup> See MKB IIc 5977a-b.

<sup>28</sup> Presentation by Domingas Guterres, Makasae elder, EBF Haudere Primary School, Alawa Leten, Baguia Sub-district, 21 October 2014.



remember!’ She reiterated this sentiment when she saw the photograph of the *lode* basket, commenting ‘That was made by the ancestors! You should go home and learn to weave a *lode* like this one!’<sup>29</sup>



Figure 6.8: Domingas Guterres explains the basket (*toka*, M; MKB IIc 5980) used for storing cotton in the spinning process.

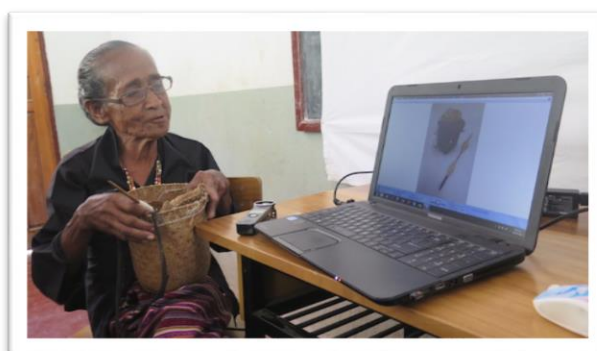


Figure 6.9: Domingas Guterres explains the use of a spindle (MKB IIc 5977a&b).

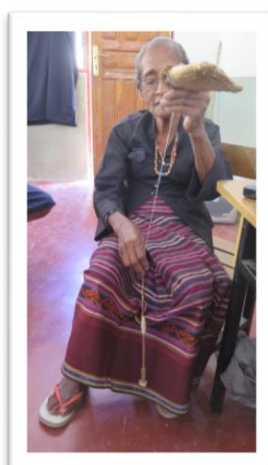


Figure 6.10: Domingas Guterres demonstrates spinning cotton at EBF Haudere Primary School.

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<sup>29</sup> See MKB IIc 6493.

Upon seeing the image of the *gaba* necklace (see Figure 6.11) in the Baguia Collection, Domingas told us how the role of *gaba* necklaces and their use had altered over her lifetime from being a sacred object to increasingly becoming a bridewealth exchange gift. She automatically referred to her own *gaba* necklace that she happened to be wearing, claiming that they were sacred (*falunu*, M) and had once been taken to the ceremonial compound where they were used to ‘feed the ancestors’ together with offerings of betelnut. She continued by saying to us:

These objects that are kept in Switzerland, such as this *gaba*, are sacred. If you have *gaba*, tell your parents to keep it nicely, so as to avoid illness. Do not destroy *gaba* or *belak* because they are sacred.<sup>30</sup> You should take it to the sacred house, because it is sacred. Kill a goat or pig and serve it with betelnut and cooked rice (*katupa*, T) at the sacred house.<sup>31</sup>



Figure 6.11: String of beads (*gaba*, *gaba barae falu*, *barae lulina*, M) acquired from Baguia by Alfred Bühler, 1935.

Source: Museum der Kulturen Basel, MKB Ic 6328).

<sup>30</sup> *Belak* are metal disc-like pendants, which were worn by warriors as evidence of their fighting prowess. There is one small *belak* in the Baguia Collection, attached to a wood necklace (see MKB Ic 6231).

<sup>31</sup> Presentation by Domingas Guterres, Makasae elder, EBF Haudere Primary School, Alawa Leten, Baguia Sub-district, 21 October 2014.

<sup>31</sup> See MKB Ic 6493.



Figures 6.12a and 6.12b: Domingas Guterres explains the significance of a customary necklace (*gaba*, M) to students during her presentation at EBF Haudere Primary School.

The image of another object from the Baguia Collection, a water container (*loe teba*, M) made from gourd (also known as *loe teba*), enabled Domingas to recall:<sup>32</sup>

I once used one [*loe teba*] to collect water until I broke it one day. I was young and on the way I dropped it on the rock and it broke. My grandfather hit my neck until I bled. He had collected the *loe teba* from far away.<sup>33</sup> It was used for storing and carrying cool water. Now, it's modern. Now, you are lucky. There are many things to replace *loe teba* now such as buckets, jerry cans and basins. There are many ceramic and plastic plates, forks, spoons which we use. You all will use many of them, students! I am your grandmother, I will just use a

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<sup>32</sup> See MKB IIc 6541.

<sup>33</sup> Domingas explained that *loe teba* were acquired in Luka, Viqueque, during the Portuguese era, as they do not grow in Baguia. She commented that she too had visited Viqueque with a woman's cloth, *rabi*, that she exchanged for tobacco, which she resold later in Baguia. With the money Domingas made she recalled that she purchased yarn for weaving.

little! In the past we kept *teba* nicely and worship as God, because we put water in the *loe teba* to bring to the garden for our thirst. Inside my sacred house we have a *loe teba* that was made during my ancestor's time.<sup>34</sup>



Figure 6.13: Gourd water container (*loe teba*, M) acquired from Baguia by Alfred Bühler, 1935.

Source: Museum der Kulturen Basel, MKB IIc 6541.

During her presentation, Domingas re-iterated the need for the students to learn skills. She asked them to look carefully and to think about ‘What will serve you best into the future?’ In this way Domingas was positioning the Baguia Collection as an important resource through which to activate existing social networks and transfers of knowledge. The Baguia Collection objects and photographs prompted Domingas to encourage the students to hold onto and preserve past cultural practices and to familiarise themselves with these practices by asking their relatives about their knowledge. She promoted respect of past cultural practices and encouraged the students to interrogate their families and local networks to learn skills for their future.

Domingas proposed that the value of the Baguia Collection was as a stimulus for acts of transfer, as indicated by her suggestion that the students should relate to the Collection objects as implements, ‘examples to follow, for living and working’.<sup>35</sup> She animated the

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<sup>34</sup> Presentation by Domingas Guterres, Makasae elder, EBF Haudere Primary School, Alawa Leten, Baguia Sub-district, 21 October 2014.

<sup>35</sup> Presentation by Domingas Guterres, Makasae elder, EBF Haudere Primary School, Alawa Leten, Baguia Sub-district, 21 October 2014.

objects with her cultural knowledge and practical life skills and encouraged the students to actively learn the intangible knowledge associated with these objects, such as spinning yarn, making dyes, weaving cloths and baskets. This was reinforced by giving her own demonstrations or ‘performances’ using objects in her possession, such as the cotton basket and spindle and the *gaba* that she was coincidentally wearing. These assertions of authority were enhanced when she mentioned that her family stored a *loe teba* in their ceremonial house. Her cultural capacity or ‘voice’ was ‘expressed in terms of actions and performances which have local cultural force’.<sup>36</sup>

As a living interpreter of the Baguia Collection, she not only asserted her cultural authority over the Collection, but also used it to encourage continuity by caring for sacred objects and remembering the past significance of objects in a changing world. Domingas was enacting the repertoire of her culture. She alluded to the acts of caring for and preserving not only the objects themselves, but also the cultural practices that these objects were used for. She endorsed the generative and productive qualities of customary practice in fostering feelings of connectedness, consensus decision-making and participation in wider Makasae social norms.<sup>37</sup> Although by her own admission ‘modernity’ had improved daily life, Domingas’ message was that instead of discarding the past, the students should consider what might be useful from it for their future.

### **‘Do you know how to make this musical instrument?’: a workshop by Bonifacio Guterres Ximenes with the Baguia Collection**

Bonifacio Guterres Ximenes delivered a workshop based on Baguia Collection musical instruments with a small group of Year 5 and 6 students, aged between 9 and 10 years on 22 October 2014.<sup>38</sup> Although he thought some of the children knew how to play some traditional instruments, Bonifacio instigated the workshop because they did not know how to make or construct them. According to him, the art of instrument-making had almost disappeared in Baguia. His enthusiasm to teach the children about customary instruments and their construction was spurred on by his colleague in a nearby school at Lebenei, who

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<sup>36</sup> Appadurai, “Capacity to Aspire,” 67.

<sup>37</sup> Appadurai, “Capacity to Aspire,” 81.

<sup>38</sup> The Baguia Collection contains a total of 30 musical instruments, including four horns, four drums, four whistles, six flutes and pipes, nine flutes, one guitar, one mouth harp and one pair of cymbals.

had identified an elder who knew how to make and play the bamboo pipe (*keko*, M) and flute (*kinu*, M). Bonifacio told me that he hoped to invite this man to teach the students at EBF Haudere Primary School how to make *keko* and *kinu*. He told me that his encounter with the Collection's musical instruments, which included several *keko* and *kinu*, added impetus to his idea.<sup>39</sup> The workshop was envisaged by Bonifacio as a first step in engaging the students in making *keko* and, potentially, other instruments.



Figure 6.14: Bonifacio Guterres Ximenes explains the Baguia Collection musical instruments to students at EBF Haudere Primary School.

Bonifacio began the workshop by leading a discussion with the students, based on each type of musical instrument from the Baguia Collection. As he showed the students an image of each instrument from a folder that I had compiled, he solicited their comments about whether they were familiar with each type. 'Do you know this instrument's name? Have you ever heard that type of instrument being played? If so, where, when and by whom? Do you know how to make this musical instrument? Do you know how to play it?'<sup>40</sup> Sometimes the students were not familiar with the instruments (e.g. *titi*, *kinu*, *keko*, *nagu*) while they recognised other instruments (e.g. *tiba*, *arabou soru*, *dadili*, *viloa*). When I asked whether the

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<sup>39</sup> The following instruments were identified as *keko*: MKB IIc 6272, MKB IIc 6273, MKB IIc 6274, MKB IIc 6275 and MKB IIc 6279. The following instruments were identified as *kinu*: MKB IIc 6243, MKB IIc 6244, MKB IIc 6246, MKB IIc 6247 and MKB IIc 6277.

<sup>40</sup> Presentation by Bonifacio Guterres Ximenes, Principal, EBF Haudere Primary School, Alawa Leten, Baguia Sub-district, 22 October 2014.

children had ever played or made any of the instruments documented in the Collection it became evident that they had not.

Bonifacio continued the workshop by providing explanations about the types of occasions when each instrument was customarily played. This information was based on his life experience.<sup>41</sup> He explained to us that the buffalo horn (*arabou soru*, M), which is blown as a horn, was customarily used to receive guests, to announce the arrival of wood for the construction of the ceremonial house, and for the burial of the *liurai*. He also added that nowadays the *arabou soru* has been incorporated into local Catholic church ceremonies. Bonifacio explained to the students that the *kinu* was used to herd livestock and was played as a pastime by people in their fields, to accompany traditional songs. In this manner, he provided explanations for each type of instrument represented in the Collection.

The task that followed involved the students selecting two images of musical instruments from the Baguia Collection, one an instrument they had not seen before and the other their favourite from the Collection. Once the students had made their selections we gave them paper and pencils with which to draw the instruments. This task required the students to study their selected instruments carefully and to look closely at the materials and how the instruments were constructed. Their illustrations were extremely accurate.

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<sup>41</sup> Bonifacio Guterres Ximenes was born in 1968.



Figure 6.15: Mauzinho Pedro da Silva and his illustration of a mouth harp (*nagu*, M).

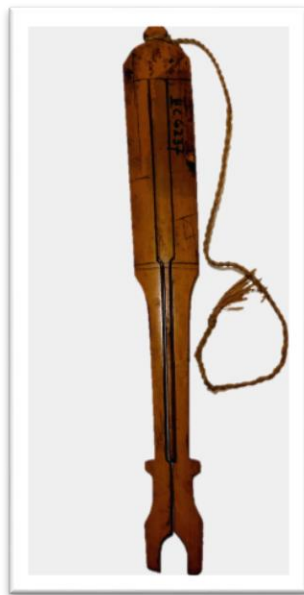


Figure 6.16: Mouth harp (*nagu*, M) acquired from Baguia by Alfred Bühler, 1935.

Source: Museum der Kulturen Basel, MKB IIc 6237.





Figure 6.17: Students at EBF Haudere Primary School, Baguia Sub-district, draw musical instruments from the Baguia Collection, 2014.

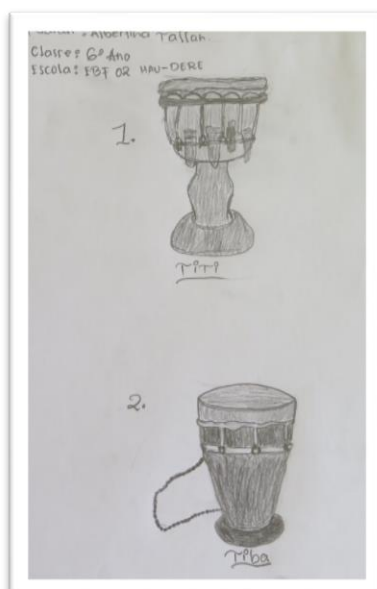


Figure 6.18: Illustrations by Albertina Tassan of the drums (*titi*, M; MKB IIc 6232, and *tiba*, M; MKB IIc 6233) at EBF Haudere Primary School, Baguia Sub-district, 2014.

According to Bonifacio the Baguia Collection was useful as a teaching resource to illustrate to his students that musical instruments can be made by using local materials and ingenuity. He emphasised that they did not need to have money to make musical instruments. Access to the images of the Collection musical instruments enabled him to encourage the students to reflect on Makasae customary instruments, even if some had almost fallen into disuse. One example he gave was the *tiba*, a small traditional drum rarely made in Baguia in 2014. Bonifacio commented that people now play the modern drum (*bobokasa*, T; *tambor*, P) as part of Makasae funeral ceremonies and not the *tiba*, as they did during his childhood.



Figure 6.19: Drum (*tiba*, M) acquired from Baguia by Alfred Bühler, 1935.

Source: Museum der Kulturen Basel, MKB IIc 6232.



Figure 6.20: Boys playing the drums (*bobokasa*, M; *tambor*, P), Alawa Leten, Baguia Sub-district, 25 August 2014.

Bonifacio saw potential benefits for the students if they could learn to play and make instruments. He told me following the workshop that the Baguia Collection enabled students to reflect on the past and develop awareness about how instruments were made and used with the purpose of reviving some musical instruments for use in the future. He said that if the students could learn to make instruments, they could potentially sell them to other *suco*

because, '[n]o-one now learns how to make instruments from the older generation'.<sup>42</sup> Bonifacio's interest in inviting an elder to visit the school to teach the students how to make the *kino* and *koko* was underscored by his belief that the students would enjoy learning how to make these instruments as well as playing them.<sup>43</sup>

The Baguia Collection in its entirety was considered by Bonifacio to be a vast educational resource that teachers could use to instruct their students regarding various culturally relevant topics. He thought the Collection was useful 'to encourage teachers to learn', alluding to the value of the Collection to the generation of middle-aged adults as well as to the lack of culturally relevant teaching materials at the disposal of teachers in Baguia.<sup>44</sup> He reinforced the relevance of local elders who could interpret the Collection objects and photographs so that the teachers and students could all learn about aspects of Makasae social practices and local history; he also saw opportunities to provide enjoyment, develop practical skills, and strengthen networks with possible economic returns.

For Bonifacio, the paramount value and potential role of the Baguia Collection was its capacity to 'inspire creativity' and reactivate indigenous technologies and ideas. He was not under the illusion that the students could 'recreate the past', but he stressed the capacity of the Collection to enhance the present through an awareness of the past. The digital return of the Collection assisted students to make comparisons between 'the earlier situation and the current situation and how they differ'.<sup>45</sup> In the context of a newly established national independence, Bonifacio sought resources to inspire and revive Makasae creativity and ingenuity, tapping into appropriate knowledge and materials based on preference rather than force of circumstances. He commented that in the colonial era people were forced to work and do what was demanded of them, whereas '[n]ow we do what we want depending on our interest'. For the teachers, the digital return of the Collection represented access to a resource

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<sup>42</sup> Bonifacio Guterres Ximenes, personal communication with author, Alawa Leten, Baguia Sub-district, 22 October 2014.

<sup>43</sup> A *keko* is a wind instrument made from a coiled fibre palm leaf and a hollow section of bamboo. See Ros Dunlop, *Lian Husi Klamar – Sounds of the Soul: The Traditional Music of East Timor* (Rozelle, Sydney: Tekee Media Inc., 2012), 90–91.

<sup>44</sup> Bonifacio Guterres Ximenes, personal communication with author, Alawa Leten, Baguia Sub-district, 22 October 2014.

<sup>45</sup> Bonifacio Guterres Ximenes, personal communication with author, Alawa Leten, Baguia Sub-district, 22 October 2014. This translation is based on the comment in Tetun that '*situasaun uluk no situasaun agora la hanesan*'.

that empowered them to teach from their own knowledge and experience base, to develop creativity and to reinvigorate Makasae knowledge.

### **‘There is value in knowing how to make things’: Leopoldina Guterres’ student workshop with the Baguia Collection objects**

Another initiative that drew on the Baguia Collection was conducted at the EBC Sao Jose Junior High School, Alawa Craik, on 23 October 2014, under the direction of the Principal, Leopoldina Joana Guterres. She had requested that I prepare for her a PowerPoint presentation featuring the 19 Collection objects made from coconut shell (*wata tau*, *wata koru*, M; *nu’u kuku*, T), including spoons, ladles, forks, candlestick holders, cups, bowls, spice containers and a strainer used for making a popular Timorese sweet, *koirambu*, T.<sup>46</sup>

The presentation was delivered to approximately 120 students in Tetun and Makasae languages by Leopoldina who interpreted each object, explaining its name, function and design features. She commented to the students that discarded coconut shells are widespread in Baguia and promoted the economic benefits of using a natural, locally available resource to make spoons rather than purchasing aluminium spoons from local vendors for \$2–\$3 each. The students reacted with surprise and interest as they viewed the array of coconut shell objects from the Collection. At the conclusion of the presentation I left three folders of printed images of the 19 coconut shell objects at the school for use as references by the students.

Two weeks later I returned to EBC Sao Jose Junior High School and Leopoldina proudly explained to me that the students had made approximately 150 coconut shell spoons based on the images from the Baguia Collection. These spoons, for eating and cooking, were made in various styles and dimensions. Teachers had also made coconut shell spoons at home. During a school assembly Leopoldina explained to the students that, henceforth, the use of aluminium spoons was forbidden to eat the midday meal at school because now coconut shell spoons could be used instead. She asked the students to go home and tell their families that they were now making and using coconut shell spoons at school. ‘Encourage them to

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<sup>46</sup> The 19 objects made from coconut shell from the Baguia Collection used for this activity were MKB IIc 6148, MKB IIc 6149, MKB IIc 6150, MKB IIc 6152, MKB IIc 6154, MKB IIc 6155, MKB IIc 6159, MKB IIc 6164, MKB IIc 6220, MKB IIc 6221, MKB IIc 6222, MKB IIc 6455, MKB IIc 6544, MKB IIc 6545, MKB IIc 6547, MKB IIc 6548, MKB IIc 6555, MKB IIc 6558 and MKB IIc 6559.

also make and use them. Even if we tell one person each this will help each household [to make savings].<sup>47</sup>

Leopoldina affirmed to the students the economic sense of using locally available resources as well as stating that it was important that the students not forget how to make things. She reiterated that this activity of making and using coconut shell utensils was reviving (*bamoris*, T) an aspect of Makasae culture. She regarded this as an act of industriousness and identity-building of which the students, the teachers and she were proud. To date the school has continued to make and use coconut shell spoons.<sup>48</sup>



Figure 6.21: Coconut shell spoons made by students and staff of EBC Sao Jose Junior High School, 2014.

Leopoldina encouraged her students to consider the Baguia Collection as a resource with which to promote local small-scale craft production that would utilise local materials, skills and knowledge. In her comments to the students and to me she was motivated by both the potential economic and socio-cultural gains, such as pride in cultural identity and ‘knowing how to make things’ that could result if people revisited local making practices. She commented that the Collection contained exemplary locally made domestic objects such as mats, food-covers, baskets, and serving trays that could be revived, in the same way as the spoons. The sale of locally produced domestic objects, in Leopoldina’s opinion, could

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<sup>47</sup> Presentation by Leopoldina Guterres, Principal, EBC Sao Jose Junior High School, Alawa Craik, Baguia Sub-district, 23 October 2014.

<sup>48</sup> Leopoldina Guterres sent images of coconut spoons that were made during 2016 by EBC Sao Jose Junior High School students to me via email correspondence, 11 October 2016.

generate income for the makers as they would undercut the sale of plastic mass-produced commodities. In this way household savings could also be made. Leopoldina's actions and comments can also be interpreted as acts of transfer.

Leopoldina attributed value to the Baguia Collection as a resource to reinforce cultural identity and to retrieve local production skills that might contribute to sustainable local economic development. This suggests that much more could be explored through the digital return of the Collection and its potential to stimulate local craft practices, whether as a form of revival, retrieval or as a resource to inspire new creativity. Importantly, such developments have the capacity to contribute to local small-scale economic development and to link into harnessing locally available sustainable materials that arguably would manifest in stronger, healthier communities.

### **'A form of evidence': Leopoldina Guterres facilitates a student research activity based on the Baguia Collection**

Another activity instigated at the EBC Sao Jose Junior High School involved a group of students who volunteered to research, as independent study, one of ten objects from the Baguia Collection. Leopoldina Guterres and I selected the objects for this exercise with the intention of choosing a diverse cross-section of objects.<sup>49</sup> Each student was given a worksheet with photographs of the ten selected objects and asked to identify them (refer to Appendix C). Then each student chose one object from the worksheet to research in detail and was assigned the task of interviewing a senior family member or neighbour about the object, based on a series of questions provided to them in Tetun.<sup>50</sup> When I returned to the school on 10 December 2014, the students each presented their research findings to their classmates, Leopoldina and me. Some examples of their comments follow.

Livio Guterres de Almeida provided an account of the fire flint (*ata lasi*, M).<sup>51</sup> At the outset of the research activity, he did not know its name or function, but he showed the photograph

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<sup>49</sup> The ten selected objects were as follows: sword (*surik*, M; MKB IIc 6430), sculptural figurine (*atevaa*, M; MKB IIc 6410), lime-powder container (*sua noka*, M; MKB IIc 6044), bracelet with bell (*keke bua giligili*, M; MKB IIc 6287), ceramic in basket (*busu mua*, M; MKB IIc 6099a&b), headdress (*assa ula*, M; MKB IIc 6336), drum (*tiba*, M; MKB IIc 6229), headdress (*uru soru, lava suri tai*, M; MKB IIc 6315), food-cover (*teru luru*, M; *raga* T; MKB IIc 6540) and flint (*ata lasi*, M; MKB IIc 6448a-c).

<sup>50</sup> These questions were created by the author in English and translated into Tetun by Leopoldina Guterres.

<sup>51</sup> See MKB IIc 6488a-c, flint (*ata lasi*, M).

of the *ata lasi* to his father, a local subsistence farmer, who identified it and explained its function to him. Livio's father clarified that the flint consisted of three components (see Figure 6.22): the metal flint (*ata lasi*, M; *besi rohan*, T), a red stone (*afa kai*, M), and the pouch (*sasoka*, M; *tiu oan*, T) woven from *Corypha utan* palms, in which flint and stone were stored. A fourth element, not included in the photograph but described by his father, is the outer bark of the *Borassus flabellifer* tree (*keuma*, M; *tua metan nia kaskado*, T).



Figure 6.22: Flint kit (*ata lasi*, M) acquired from Baguia by Alfred Bühler, 1935.

Source: Museum der Kulturen Basel, MKB IIc 6448 a–c.

Livio proudly stated that his father remembered how to use an *ata lasi*. Together they had found the component parts and then his father demonstrated how to use a flint so that Livio could understand and learn the process of igniting fire. He explained that the *ata lasi* had been used in the ‘era of the ancestors’, to create fire for cooking and other purposes, but that *ata lasi* are no longer used because ‘we have modern things such as lighters and matches’. During Livio’s presentation his pride was partly in having learnt this skill and knowledge and partly related to his father, who had become the ‘expert’ about the *ata lasi* and had transferred his knowledge to his son. Once Livio finished his presentation, Leopoldina added to his account of the *ata lasi* with her own personal anecdote:

When we were young, we also used many of these objects. If we don’t have this [*ata lasi*] we could not make fire so then we had to find the fire from a long way away. Sometimes we walked down to Haudere [Alawa Leten] and

when we saw a house with some smoke we went in and asked for some fire. Then we brought the fire back from there. We carried the burning husk of the coconut skin or shell to our house so that we could use it because if there is no fire we cannot cook, even if we want to, as we do not have fire. So these are important things.<sup>52</sup>

Another student, Elisa Joanna Gusmao from Hae Coni, researched a rice cover (*tere luru*, M; *raga*, T) from the Baguia Collection with her mother.<sup>53</sup> Elisa had learnt that this cover, woven from gebang palm (*Corypha utan*, L; *alasa*, M; *tali taban*, T), was to be placed over a plate of food. She explained that people no longer use this style of *raga* because ‘modern objects’ have become ‘dominant’ and replaced the woven food covers, but she indicated that seeing the Collection objects had made her want to ‘strive [*bakaas-an*] to use locally produced objects such as the woven *tere luru* as well as spoons and bowls that are made from coconut shell’.<sup>54</sup>

Elisa’s comments indicate that the process of researching the food cover reinforced her interest and inclination to consider local and customary objects as having continuing relevance and value. A confidence or a sense of pride in the attempt to revive their use was apparent in her report. Rather than aspiring to ‘modern’ mass-produced, plastic domestic products, she saw merit in promoting objects that drew on local knowledge, skills and material resources.

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<sup>52</sup> Presentation by Leopoldina Guterres, Principal, EBC Sao Jose Junior High School, Alawa Craik, Baguia Sub-district, 10 December 2014.

<sup>53</sup> See MKB IIc 6540.

<sup>54</sup> Presentation by Elisa Joanna Gusmao, student, EBC Sao Jose Junior High School, Alawa Craik, Baguia Sub-district, 10 December 2014.





Figure 6.23: Woven food cover (*tere luru*, M) acquired from Baguia by Alfred Bühler, 1935.

Source: Museum der Kulturen Basel, MKB IIc 6540.

The sword (*si'i*, M; *surik*, T) from the Baguia Collection was researched by Herlinda Menezes de Oliveira, who described it as

following the oral history of Timor. It was made for the purpose of bridewealth (*folin feto*, T) which was paid with the sword. It is also considered to be a sacred object that is stored inside the *oma falu*, in the same way that *taru*<sup>55</sup> are stored. *Taru* were used to rule from generation to generation and the *moradores* [soldiers] also used them to receive and lead in the ceremonial house.<sup>56</sup>

Herlinda had learnt that the *si'i*, which had been ‘made by the ancestors’, was made from metal, wood, and horse hair, but that only a few people now possess the skill and knowledge to make *si'i* because the process is so difficult. ‘*Si'i* have been used

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<sup>55</sup> The wooden clubs listed as MKB IIc 6422, MKB IIc 6423 and MKB IIc 6424 were identified by Baguia residents in 2014 as sceptres, often with sacred attributes (*taru*, *taru falumu*, M; *rota*, *rota lulik*, T).

<sup>56</sup> Presentation by Herlinda Menezes de Oliveira, student, EBC Sao Jose Junior High School, Alawa Craik, Baguia Sub-district, 10 December 2014.

continually until now because this is the culture of the Timorese people. We continue to use *si'i* when needed and for ceremonial purposes.<sup>57</sup>

Herlinda's comments reflect the continued presence of the *si'i* in Timorese and by implication Makasae culture, and its significance as both a 'sacred' object and an item used for bridewealth exchange. Although not expressly stated, she suggests that *si'i* are also still used as weapons. The *si'i* also led her to learn about the *taru*, and the association of these highly prized objects with the ceremonial house in Makasae culture. The specialised skills and knowledge required to make *si'i*, which continue to exist locally, were also emphasised. These factors, and the association of the *si'i* as 'having been made by the ancestors', reinforced its sacred, heirloom value in the local context.

The research activity into the Baguia Collection objects by the students resulted in young people seeking out their elders to learn about the intangible aspects of these objects. The Collection served as a form of evidence with the potential to reconnect the younger generation with their cultural heritage through engagement with elders, as interpreters, in the present. Thus, the Collection was instrumental in animating various local social relationships that enabled the students to develop reinvigorated perspectives on their own local culture while also reinforcing aspects of their Makasae identity.

The activity also enabled students to make links between different objects in the Collection, such as the *si'i* and the *rota*, both of which were commonly stored in the ceremonial house. Another student who had researched a drum made the link between this instrument and the attire worn for ceremonial dances such as the *kola* and *rabi*, *kaibauk* and feather headdresses, and the use of swords. This linking together of objects illustrates another example of local classification groups that could be applied to the Collection objects based on their use. Such groupings or classifications became apparent as the students learnt more from their family informants about the Collection objects they researched.

The inter-generational discussion and transmission of knowledge that resulted from the students' research also alerted the students to alternative forms of material culture that could be produced with ingenuity and creativity. Additionally, it reinforced respect for the presence

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<sup>57</sup> Presentation by Herlinda Menezes de Oliveira, student, EBC Sao Jose Junior High School, Alawa Craik, Baguia Sub-district, 10 December 2014.

of local artisan knowledge used to make these objects and highlighted the use of locally available materials. Upon completion of the activity, some comments made by the students included:

I liked to learn about my culture and objects from the past.<sup>58</sup>

This activity reminded me of the work that our ancestors did in the past.<sup>59</sup>

I am proud of my ancestors because even though they did not go to school they had the ability to create objects.<sup>60</sup>

It is important to me to learn about what was used in the past.<sup>61</sup>

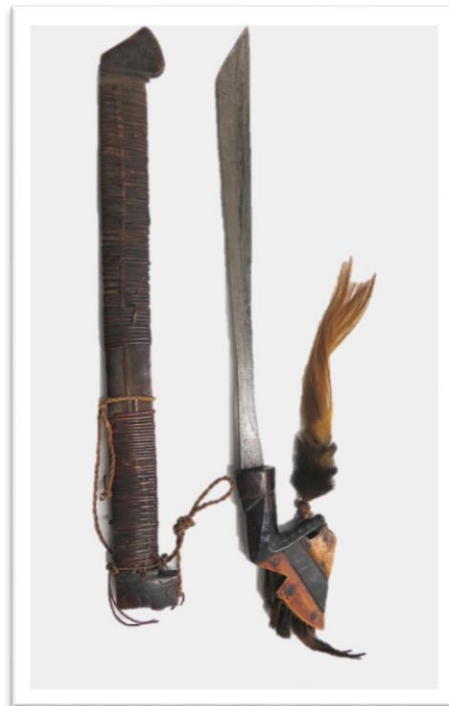


Figure 6.24: Sword (*s'z*, M) and sheath acquired from Baguia by Alfred Bühler, 1935.

Source: Museum der Kulturen Basel, MIB IIc 6430.

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<sup>58</sup> Presentation by Livio Guterres de Almedia, student, EBC Sao Jose Junior High School, Alawa Craik, Baguia Sub-district, 10 December 2014.

<sup>59</sup> Presentation by Rudolfo Mariz, student, EBC Sao Jose Junior High School, Alawa Craik, Baguia Sub-district, 10 December 2014.

<sup>60</sup> Presentation by Meriana Esperanca Pinto, student, EBC Sao Junior High School, Alawa Craik, Baguia Sub-district, 10 December 2014.

<sup>61</sup> Presentation by Remigia Pereira Guterres, student, EBC Sao Junior High School, Alawa Craik, Baguia Sub-district, 10 December 2014.

The students developed an appreciation of the way of life of their ancestors and also identified local ‘experts’ and ‘authorities’ within their existing social networks who provided them with new insights, experiences and perspectives. Local skills, knowledge and materials became resources from which creativity, cultural identity, knowledge and confidence could be derived, giving the students the tools with which to re-create or re-imagine present and future ways of being. In this manner, the Collection serves as an anti-hegemonic resource, by providing a culturally relevant alternative and encourages fresh, new, innovative or revived substitutes to dominant and ubiquitous mass-produced objects.

To conclude the student presentations, Leopoldina addressed the group as follows:

I want to thank the students who did this independent research activity. You wanted to learn something about our [Makasae] daily life in the past. I commend you all on your ability to find someone ... to interview and that you learnt to listen to them and also to one another as you gave your presentations. This is a good opportunity for you to learn about things from the past that the *bei ala* [ancestors] used. Before [the research] you said some objects you do not recognise ... sometimes we have told you about these things before, but you thought that we lied but now these pictures show you [the younger generation]. After you see the photographs you now think ‘right, maybe it is true’.



Figure 6.25: Students at EBC Sao Jose Junior High School completing worksheets as part of workshop to identify objects from the Baguia Collection.

The digital return of the Baguia Collection enabled Leopoldina and her students to animate local social networks for the retrieval and exchange of knowledge and the strengthening of local cultural identity. In doing so these networks were revitalised or strengthened. Leopoldina alluded to the value of the Collection as a form of evidence to assert a Makasae cultural identity. Furthermore, this activity illustrates the wider potential of animation of ethnographic collections by source communities to deliver knowledge and information that augments contemporary documentation of museum objects and collections.

### **‘Learn more deeply about our culture’: schoolteachers’ perspectives about the Baguia Collection**

Mr Sico, a teacher at Baguia Secondary School, believed that the Baguia Collection was important to the people of Baguia ‘because it shows us old objects and this new generation don’t know about these objects, many of which are starting to disappear’.<sup>62</sup> He requested copies of the photographs for use at the school as a teaching resource. In his opinion, the overarching value of the object images was that ‘these photos show the culture of Baguia and let the students know that even though our great-grandparents were not [formally] educated they had the ability to make these beautiful objects’. He considered that current levels of creativity in Baguia had ‘dramatically decreased’ compared with earlier generations, because ‘the people of Baguia have not promoted creativity very well, so it has fallen away’. When I asked what was the most important thing to be learnt from the Collection in an educational setting, Mr Sico responded:

I think the most important thing is the creativity, because it is [a form of] Baguia’s wealth and this creativity could also attract the tourists. So, it is important for us to continue this creativity not only for today but also for the future ... the most important thing is not to eliminate this creativity but to strengthen it for the future. It is also good if the students from primary to secondary school be taught about Timor-Leste’s cultures, especially the culture of Baguia, so they can see and know about their culture.<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>62</sup> Mr Sico, teacher, Baguia Secondary School, interview with author, Alawa Craik, Baguia Sub-district, 28 October 2014.

<sup>63</sup> Mr Sico, teacher, Baguia Secondary School, interview with author, Alawa Craik, Baguia Sub-district, 28 October 2014.

He indicated that the teachers could explain the function of only some of the Baguia Collection objects. He requested access to the Collection in the form of a book ‘so we can use it as a subject to teach in the school. We can show the photos and explain them clearly through a book and everybody will be able to access it, because not many people have access to the internet’. His concluding comments frame the Baguia Collection as a form of cultural capital that has the potential to trigger a remembering and preservation of a disappearing past:

I know it is difficult to bring the old objects here ... but it will be great if we can see this Collection, especially for Baguia people to see, because it is starting to disappear and if we see it, we will be reminded of our wealth that we had before so that our generation can keep it in our minds.<sup>64</sup>

The school principal, Francisco Aparicio Guterres expressed gratitude and appreciation by saying:

we are lucky that these objects are kept safely in Switzerland, [because] they can show the culture of Baguia ... especially for the future of the children and for this third generation, because ... the first and the second generations have known clearly about these objects but this generation has not known them very well; they might only know these objects through a story but they have not seen them directly, so it is important for the students to see these objects and know their history, so that they will not forget their culture in the future ... we have to save them as instruments or objects of Baguia in order to keep it as a history of Timor-Leste and for them to show to the next generation that this is the culture of Timor-Leste.<sup>65</sup>

When I enquired about the significance of the Baguia Collection he indicated that its value was in enabling the students to learn ‘more deeply about our culture’. He acknowledged that the functions of various objects had changed, even in his lifetime, but insisted that it was valuable for young people to know how their great-grandparents had used these materials

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<sup>64</sup> Mr Sico, teacher, Baguia Secondary School, interview with author, Alawa Craik, Baguia Sub-district, 28 October 2014.

<sup>65</sup> Francisco Aparicio Guterres, Principal, Baguia Secondary School, interview with author, Alawa Craik, Baguia Sub-district, 28 October 2014.

and objects. One example he gave was swords, (*si'i*, M; *surik*, T) which were formerly used as fighting weapons but today are widely regarded as a form of bridewealth. Similarly, metal pendant disks (*lawa lebe*, M; *belak*, T) were also previously used as part of warfare paraphernalia but now are more closely associated with funerals and marriage exchanges.

It is crucial to know about all these objects before they disappear. If these photos were given to us, we have to discuss them with our grandparents who know the history of these objects clearly and we have to research about these objects ... so that we can explain them to the students. Although my generation is familiar with these objects we don't know the history of them such as what they were made with, when they were made, how they were used and what they were used for.<sup>66</sup>

By way of example, Francisco suggested the value of research into the diverse local traditions relating to the decoration of roof finials (*lakasoru*, M; *kakuluk*, T) on *oma falu* in Baguia.<sup>67</sup> Whilst some clans use *lakasoru*, others do not; in addition, the design used on the finials varies from clan to clan. He suggested this as a suitable topic of research for his students and that they could ask their parents, grandparents or custodians of ceremonial houses, in order to uncover the different styles of *lakasoru*, their meaning, and why they are used.

Learning more deeply about Makasae culture was a value Mr Sico attributed to the digital return of the Baguia Collection. The capacity to retrieve and exchange knowledge inter-generationally was clearly associated with temporality and the Collection's current location on the edge of living memory. As Makasae generations pass, the nature of the knowledge capable of being retrieved will differ. Hence, time is a critical factor in regard to the digital return of the Collection if the existing depth of knowledge and experience is to be recalled and conveyed before it passes.

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<sup>66</sup> Francisco Aparicio Guterres, Principal, Baguia Secondary School, interview with author, Alawa Craik, Baguia Sub-district, 28 October 2014.

<sup>67</sup> Finials on Makasae *oma falu* are variously decorated with geometric patterns, moons, stars, birds or buffalo horns, in keeping with the heritage of each clan.

## **The Baguia Collection as a resource for local artisans to revive and create objects, designs and techniques**

In the final section of this chapter I examine how the Baguia Collection was seen and used by local artisans as a resource from which to derive inspiration for the creation of new objects based on revived styles and techniques.<sup>68</sup> The wood-turner, Adolfo do Rego, enquired whether I would like him to make a set of wooden bowls at the conclusion of his interview of his recollections of making wooden plates in earlier times, as discussed in Chapter 5.<sup>69</sup> The response of the ceramicists in Defawasi to viewing the photographs of the Collection's ceramics was to demonstrate their skills and knowledge by making ceramics, rather than just discussing the images. Various weavers in Baguia on several occasions requested images of the textiles from the Collection, as they wished to 'study' patterns and design structure of some of the resist-dyed textiles. Others demonstrated basket-weaving as a response to viewing the baskets in the Collection, affirming their ability to create such objects. On one occasion, two days following a community viewing of the Collection slideshow that had included the toys, I was greeted by children who had made bamboo swords, based on those they had seen earlier at the community viewing. In varying degrees, these examples indicate how the community members, young and old alike, responded to the Collection as a resource to be mined for future local material culture production.

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<sup>68</sup> These examples were limited, largely due to the constraints of my time in Baguia compared with the lengthy processes of producing handwoven textiles, hand-turned wooden bowls or hand-built ceramics.

<sup>69</sup> As the monsoon was imminent and I was due to depart from Baguia I did not pursue Adolfo do Rego's offer to make some wooden bowls for me, but I am confident he would have delivered on his offer if an opportunity to revisit him during the following dry season had arisen.





Figure 6.26: Domingos da Costa views a folder of images of swords from the Bagaia Collection. His private sword collection leans against his chair with the newly made *samurai* enclosed with its wooden sheath, Osso Huna, 2014.

One significant outcome followed a community viewing and subsequent interview with local metal-smith Domingos da Costa on 11 August 2014. Domingos had viewed the swords in the Bagaia Collection with deep interest at his house. He was able to name each sword and all its component parts and features, as well as explaining the swords' technical attributes and cultural relevance. He responded to the photographs by bringing out his own collection of swords to show me. Upon completing the interview Domingos requested a printed image of a sword (*samurai*, M; MKB IIc 6433) which I gave him.<sup>70</sup> He explained that this sword was stylistically similar to one that had once been kept and worshipped inside his clan's ceremonial house and involved in customary ritual use, which he described as *adat*.<sup>71</sup> He explained that *samurai* were no longer made in Bagaia and he stated that his generation needed to 'put it back in place'.<sup>72</sup>

When I next returned to Domingos' house on 14 October 2014 he showed me a *samurai* sword he had made based on the image of MKB IIc 6433. Although he had hand-smithed the blade, he attached a handle that he owned from the 'Portuguese era'. He had made a

<sup>70</sup> See MKB IIc 6433. The term *samurai* is derived from the Japanese word, which entered use in the region during WWII, when Timor was occupied by the Japanese military.

<sup>71</sup> *Adat* is a Bahasa Indonesian word that refers to cultural, customary law and practices.

<sup>72</sup> Domingos da Costa, interview with author, Osso Huna, Bagaia Sub-district, 11 August 2014.

guava wood sheath. By creating the modern *samurai* Domingos had demonstrated how the Baguia Collection could be used to reconstruct a missing element in his clan's regalia and to restore a sense of equilibrium in his clan house. In doing so, he ensured that his clan's ancestors were suitably honoured through the presence of the *samurai*. Presumably inherent in this act was a sense of him contributing to his clan's prestige either now or into the future, with the value of the *samurai* largely attributed to the fact that it was made by him, a member of the clan. Additionally, it was auspicious that Domingos had reclaimed this style of *samurai* and thus expanded his sword-making repertoire. His actions affirmed the value of his increasingly rare metal-smithing abilities and in doing so repositioned him as an agent of contemporary and active craft. Such positioning could ultimately lead to an increase in social and/or economic benefits.

Domingos did not ever enquire about the ownership of the Baguia Collection swords, but he did request a folder of their images for his own reference, which I duly gave him. His interest was not in the ownership of the Collection objects themselves, but in how they could be used as a resource with which to expand his creative repertoire, repositioning himself and revitalising his 'traditional craft' as contemporary and relevant. Ultimately, to have a new *samurai* in his clan house, known to have been forged by a metal-smith with affiliations to the clan, was of more relevance to him and his clan than the ownership of MKB IIc 6433, a *samurai* made by an ancestor, now unable to be identified.

Again the potential for creative rejuvenation and assertion of Makasae cultural identity is evident in this personalised animation of the Baguia Collection. Domingos' actions show how the digital return of the Collection also enabled the preservation of objects and the observance of customary practices to continue as 'things are put back' in place, enabling an increased sense of wellbeing following decades of dislocation and upheaval.



Figure 6.27: Sword (*samurai, si'i, M*) and sheath acquired from Baguia by Alfred Bühler, 1935.

Source: Museum der Kulturen Basel, MKB IIc 6433.



Figure 6.28: Sword (*samurai, si'i, M*) and sheath produced by Domingos da Costa, Osso Huna, based on an image of a Baguia Collection samurai sword, MKB IIc 6433, November 2014.

## Conclusion

The animations of the Baguia Collection described in this chapter provide strong evidence of its potential, when digitally returned to its source community, to trigger metacultural

production and to become an invaluable resource for Makasae cultural renewal. The prospective value of the digital return of the Collection to its source community came into focus through these animations, reinforcing the claim that '[t]he dialogue forged by contact with museums [and collections] triggers their significance'.<sup>73</sup>

The residents of Baguia chose to re-animate the digitally returned Baguia Collection historical photographs and objects that had been removed as 'objects of ethnography'<sup>74</sup> in-1935 because these animations increased contemporary understandings of local heritage and a sense of wellbeing through the enhancement of Makasae identity. By and large though, the community explored the opportunity of its temporary digital return to animate the Collection to reimagine their own cultural capital in the present for the future. Viewed from the perspective of indigenous curation practices, the approach used by the community aligned the Collection with their local development aspirations, whether educational, creative income generation, tourism or customary practices.

The Baguia community relied upon and set in motion their available social capital – local resources of people, knowledge, skills, materials, habitus and habitat and social networks – to animate the Baguia Collection and reveal the Makasae cultural capital embedded within the objects and historical photographs. Social networks in the form of people-centred relationships, families, clan groups, schools and craft co-operatives became conduits and contexts for ensuring inter- and intra-generational transmission of intangible heritage. At times this inter-generational transmission occurred across as many as four generations. In these ways, the community simultaneously strengthened and revitalised its cultural and social capital.

One of the key potentialities identified for the Baguia Collection was its role as an educational tool – both formally and informally – for the younger generations. In these contexts, knowledge of history and heritage, together with a respect for the past, were valued and relevant as an assertion of a collective Makasae identity. As evidence of the past, the

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<sup>73</sup> Croke, *Museums and Community*, 133–134.

<sup>74</sup> Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, "Objects of Ethnography," 387. Kirshenblatt-Gimblett describes objects of ethnography as follows: 'Ethnographic artifacts are objects of ethnography. They are arefacts created by ethnographers. Objects become ethnographic by virtue of being defined, segmented, detached, and carried away by ethnographers. Such objects are ethnographic by virtue of the manner in which they have been detached, for disciplines make their objects and in the process make themselves'.

Collection affirmed a sense of past that was valued for encouraging ongoing Makasae cultural maintenance, innovation, creativity and ingenuity, especially for the younger Makasae generations. The remembering of the past, as triggered by the Collection, validated and brought to the surface the circumstances for an individual and broad collective remembering that would otherwise be at risk of diminishing. If ‘culture is a dialogue between aspirations and sediment traditions’<sup>75</sup>, such remembering illustrates how a sense of past is a vital component of generating a sense of future.

The Baguia Collection prompted elders to perform acts of transfer for the benefit of younger people so that they could learn or remember and ‘know how to make things’. ‘Performances function as acts of transfer, transmitting social knowledge, memory, and a sense of identity through reiterated ... twice-behaved behaviours.’<sup>76</sup> These cultural acts or performances highlighted the role of ‘performers’ as critical for the interpretation of the Collection and intangible heritage, and its transfer, between generations. The elders reinforced that ‘the material world is not just a display of our technology and culture, it is part of us. We invented it, we made it and in turn it makes us who we are’.<sup>77</sup> As living interpreters the elders made use of their accumulated knowledge, skills, recollections and lived experiences to elucidate the significance of the Collection for the benefit of younger generations. Irrespective of the fact that the perspectives and recollections conveyed by the elders were from after 1935, their presentations and demonstrations of intangible cultural heritage, elicited by the Collection images, established meaningful links between the past and the present and emphasised change and continuity. These performances brought the past into the present so that it could ultimately inform the future.

The Baguia Collection also inspired artisans to reinvigorate local craft practices. Artisans expressed their interest to engage more fully with the Collection, as it encouraged them to aspire to revive locally handmade objects: baskets, textiles, swords, musical instruments and ceramics. These objects, if they continued to be produced, might find local or regional

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<sup>75</sup> Appadurai, “The Capacity to Aspire,” 84.

<sup>76</sup> Diane Taylor, “Acts of Transfer,” in *The Archive and the Repertoire: Performing Cultural Memory in the Americas* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003), 2–3.

<sup>77</sup> Miodownik, *Stuff Matters*, 5.

markets, uses and ongoing relevance, such as sustaining or rejuvenating particular cultural practices that rely upon them.<sup>78</sup>

These engagements by elders, as interpreters, and artisans affirmed that artefacts are objectifications of cultural processes.

How people make and use artifacts is part of culture; the artifacts themselves are cultural data but not culture ... It is the relationship between artifact and user, the pattern of significance of artifacts that is cultural, not the artifacts as such.<sup>79</sup>

The knowledge and concepts that underpin the ways in which objects are animated is ultimately what gets transferred between generations; by comparison, objects themselves are relatively ephemeral in a Makasae context, unless preserved in the *oma falu* due to their association with the ancestors or ‘outsiders’, or frozen in time as ‘objects of ethnography’ in a museum context.

Although these animations by the Baguia community were tentative, due to time constraints, it is conceivable that with further exposure to the Baguia Collection an iterative increase, restitution and strengthening of cultural and social capital would occur amongst the community and its members over time, heightening the sense of connection, identity, pride and wellbeing in individual, family or collective contexts. With prolonged exposure, a more widespread remembering could occur, and a deeper appreciation of the significance and value of the Collection might coalesce and emerge.

As my research indicates, further engagement by the source community with the Baguia Collection would undoubtedly occur in alignment with the community’s own development agendas. Through appropriate access, familiarity and appreciation of the potential significance of the Collection, the community would be better positioned to explore and exchange ideas with the MKB regarding future collaboration and shared custodianship

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<sup>78</sup> One example of the centrality of specific objects to customary practices is the use of handwoven containers (*bua malu*, M; *mama fatin*, T) to offer betel, cigarettes and money to the guests and ancestors at ceremonies. As *bua malu* become less commonly made, and if they become unavailable in the future, it is possible that the enactment of this practice may become compromised.

<sup>79</sup> Alfred Kroeber and Clyde Kluckhohn, *Culture: A Critical Review of Concepts and Definitions* (New York: Vintage Books, 1952), 3.

models regarding the Collection. In this way the community can affect the ‘contact/engagement zone’ as it occurs in their own environment. However, it should not be assumed that such access, engagements, animations and dialogue would necessarily result in requests for the physical return of the Collection; in time, the value of the Collection may rest primarily in its ability to regenerate and reinvigorate intangible heritage and foster the conditions for metacultural production in the present and future. For now, access to the Collection by the source community, as a digitised or published resource, remains paramount.

With further access, how people engage and animate the Baguia Collection for acts of transfer or otherwise into the future has the potential to regenerate contemporary culture because, as Kirshenblatt-Gimblett reminds us

all heritage interventions – like the globalizing pressures they are trying to counteract – change the relationship of people to what they do. They change how people understand their culture and themselves. They change the fundamental conditions for cultural production and reproduction. Change is intrinsic to culture, and measures intended to preserve, conserve, safeguard, and sustain particular cultural practices are caught between freezing the practice and addressing the inherently processual nature of culture.<sup>80</sup>

The issue of time remains critical: ‘Central to the metacultural nature of heritage is time’.<sup>81</sup> The differential temporalities between things, people and events will create and shape the understandings of the Baguia Collection. As the older generation declines in numbers so too will their knowledge and experience relating to the Collection dissipate. Their recollections as prosthetic memories triggered by the Collection provide a depth of understanding unlikely to be replicated by following generations. This is not to suggest that following generations do not have a role to play in interpreting the Collection, for they do; however, the issue of temporality adds to the urgency for sustained digital return of the Collection to occur sooner rather than later.

If Appadurai’s assertion is correct that ‘culture is central to how collective horizons are shaped and of how they constitute the basis for collective aspirations’, then the strengthening

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<sup>80</sup> Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, “Intangible Heritage as Metacultural Production,” 58.

<sup>81</sup> Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, “Intangible Heritage as Metacultural Production,” 59.

of cultural and social capital, as a result of engagement with the Baguia Collection, will significantly enhance the Baguia community's capacity to collectively aspire to, and achieve, a future of its own making.



## Conclusion

At a time when it is no longer valid for ethnographic collections to be exhibited or documented as encyclopaedic representations of the exotic ‘other’, museums are seeking new ways to make sense of their extensive ethnographic holdings, acquired at the height of colonial and European salvage collecting practices. This case study contributes to museum theory and practice within the broader context of identifying ‘emergent processes’ that aim to position museums as increasingly ‘relational entities that foster dynamic relations between persons and things, as well as generating them’.<sup>1</sup> It contributes to understandings of comparative museology, specifically in the context of Timor-Leste.

This conclusion addresses two key areas. Firstly, it summarises findings from this specific case study: the digital return of the Baguia Collection to Baguia and the community’s responses to the Collection, including how it was animated, reappropriated and valued. These research conclusions relate to photo-elicitation methods and issues that can arise in source communities when they are reunited with collections of their cultural heritage located on the edge of living memory. The conclusion also flags some possible future developments if this preliminary stage of digital return of the Collection to Baguia were to be built upon. By agreeing to the digital return of the Baguia Collection to the Baguia community, the MKB was clearly receptive to the possibility of other values being identified in relation to the Collection. Furthermore, in July 2015 I accompanied Richard Kunz, Curator, Southeast Asia, MKB, to Baguia where he met representatives from the community, following on from my research in 2014.<sup>2</sup> During this visit Richard Kunz and I met with Cecilia Assis, Director General, State Secretariat of Tourism, Art and Culture, thus establishing contact between the MKB and SETAC. This meeting bodes well for future engagements between these stakeholders.

The second part of this conclusion reflects on implications from this case study that might inform broader museological practice when working with source communities. I elucidate the advantages that diasporic collections may hold for source communities, specifically

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<sup>1</sup> Bell, “Museums as Relational Entities,” 70.

<sup>2</sup> Richard Kunz and Professor Willemijn de Jong visited Baguia as a side trip from their wider fieldwork visit to Eastern Indonesia where they were researching and acquiring textiles for the MKB collection as part of the exhibition development of *Striking Patterns: Global Traces in Local Ikat Fashion Design*.

partnerships and exchanges. Consideration is also given to the implications of museums acknowledging shared authority in relation to collections and how objects could mediate relationships that provide foundations for joint custodianship. Ethical and moral challenges relating to future directions for the digitisation of museum collections and their return to source communities are briefly discussed, as these have far-reaching implications for the structure and role of museums into the future.

### **A shared heritage collection**

This research has exposed the dual significance of the Baguia Collection to the Makasae of Baguia and to the Swiss of Basel, establishing its status as a shared heritage collection. It was necessary to understand the Collection's fuller biography and historiography in order to return it to its source community, so that its significance could be considered from the community's perspective. An analysis of the formation of the Baguia Collection suggests that Bühler's visit to Baguia in 1935 was a 'non-encounter' between him and the Baguia community.<sup>3</sup> Although his three-week visit enabled Bühler to meet the goals of the 1935 Expedition, no lasting knowledge of his visit or ongoing contact between him or the MKB and the community resulted.<sup>4</sup>

The motivations behind the establishment of the Baguia Collection and its biography reveal that the Collection exists as a reflection of out-dated notions of racial delineation and the desire to document what were considered, in 1935, to be disappearing cultures. The Collection is significant in a Swiss context as part of the MKB's history: mounting international expeditions, participation in transnational knowledge creation, development of collections, exhibitions and publications, evidence of Bühler's central role in developing an exemplary Swiss ethnographic museum, and its wider contribution to twentieth-century European salvage ethnography. Known at MKB as the 'Bühler Collection', it has recently been positioned to tell a Swiss story of museological history and practice in *Expeditions*. Although Bühler created 'objects of ethnography', the museum now interprets these objects to reflect on ethnographic practice itself. By turning the spotlight onto itself MKB has undertaken a process of self-examination and self-representation.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Thomas, "Introduction," 5.

<sup>4</sup> During my research in 2014 no-one in Baguia recalled knowledge of Bühler's visit to the area in 1935.

<sup>5</sup> Conn, *Do Museums Still Need Objects?* 79.

*Expeditions* highlights the MKB's move away from the representation of other cultures towards employing its vast ethnographic collections to reflect critically upon specific concepts, such as, in this instance, its own role in the creation of salvage ethnography as a discipline and its execution during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Through critical analysis of its own history, the MKB positions itself as a reflexive cultural institution grappling with contemporary museological questions and issues of representation that are central to the institution's continued relevance to local audiences in Basel and beyond. In this way the heritage significance of the Baguia Collection, as part of the wider Bühler Collection, has been established in a Swiss context.

But what of the other part of the vision held within the Baguia Collection? Once 'untethered' from the MKB<sup>6</sup> and returned to its source community in Baguia, a parallel, but largely unrelated, double vision was unveiled by community members who opened up these objects through reappraisal of their histories, experiences and identities. The Collection objects unleashed and recalled intangible heritage as Makasae attributed their interpretations and perspectives to the Collection. The community was positioned as the contact/engagement zone, into which 'objects of ethnography' were returned, albeit temporarily.

The digital return of the Baguia Collection to Baguia enabled it to re-enter its original cultural, socio-political and physical setting, which indelibly affected the research process and its outcomes. The community employed its social capital, habitat and habitus to enable the process of remembering and the restitution of knowledge through diverse and textured readings of the Collection. People responded to, read, understood, explained and valued the Collection by referring to family histories, local landscapes and sites, as well as heirloom objects in their own possession. Local materials were easily identified. Social networks were activated and arguably strengthened during the process of engaging with and animating the Collection. The contact or engagement zone that emerged in the process of digital return was of paramount importance as it enabled the source community to both engage with the Collection and amongst itself in diverse ways and 'in its own terms'.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Basu, "Object Diasporas, Resourcing Communities," 28. I acknowledge the use of Basu's term 'untethered' in the context of enabling collection objects to be digitised and to move outside of the museum's wall, in this case to be returned to their source community.

<sup>7</sup> UNESCO cited in Kreps, *Liberating Culture*, 11.

## **Responses to the Baguia Collection**

This case study has illustrated how the Baguia Collection exists as an historical record that measures the distance between 2014 and 1935, ‘now’ and then. As a yardstick of change, the Collection measured advancement, development and improvement for some people, whilst others saw it as emblematic of the loss of cultural practices and disappearance of aesthetically superior material objects and skills. Yet no-one appeared to harbour the illusion that the Collection could be used to return to a ‘glorified’ past. It was difficult to ascertain ambivalence or disinterest towards the Collection as an active form of non-engagement, but it is possible to speculate that some people chose not to engage with the Collection as they associated it with backwardness. Their non-engagement could thus be read as an endorsement of modern rather than past expressions of Makasae or national identity.

The overriding response to viewing the Collection was one of fascination and gratitude for the experience of seeing this unique and extensive record of a Makasae past. The responses of those who engaged with the Baguia Collection were often conflicted. These mixed responses, expressed at public viewings and in intimate settings, involved expressions of happiness at meeting their ancestors, but also sadness at being unable to identify them. The potential for the Baguia Collection to emotionally upset people and cause them to recall painful memories was ever present. ‘Not knowing’ was an uncomfortable experience for many community members as well, but it was combined with a curiosity and genuine interest to know about their past.

## **Implications of working with digital images of objects and historical photographs**

The Baguia Collection objects played a significant role in eliciting knowledge, including recollections of circumstances in which similar objects were used, prompting remembrances of people and lived experiences, and recollections of songs and actions, as well as revival of methods and technologies used in object production. Makasae artisans identified the images of Collection objects as a valuable resource and inspiration for the revival of specific Makasae objects. The Collection of historical photographs enabled viewers to contextualise the Collection objects and recall how certain objects had been used in the past. Viewing the photographs was a popular activity because they were accessible due to familiar landscape and locations. By comparison, some objects were less familiar as stand-alone images,

especially for younger community members. As elders offered explanations of the photographs, this helped younger viewers to 'see' the objects more clearly.

The Baguia Collection historical photographs gave the past a presence in the present, furnishing them with a dispersed nature and atemporal quality. Viewing the Collection's historical photographs folded time into itself or, more accurately, collapsed the past into the present. This phenomenon of compressing time enabled people to assert their authority over the Collection's historical photographs and objects, based on their lived experiences. Assertions of authority by community members affirmed and activated networks, past and present, with the intention of endorsing their contemporary clan status and influencing future networks.

These public assertions of authority in response to the Baguia Collection constituted an endorsement of collective Makasae identity and affirmed its continuity. Collective responses and public accounts of memories were expressed, negotiated and debated according to cultural protocols until a consensual resolution was achieved. This occurred most frequently as local topogenies and sites of significance were articulated. Negotiations occurred in clan contexts as people asserted their cultural authority over the Collection objects and photographs. A preference for paired or small group conversations over individual interviews suggested the importance of collective cohesive responses and reflected the value of sociality and consensus in Makasae society.

### **Memory-work and prosthetic memory with digital images**

Encounters with the digital images of the Baguia Collection stimulated memory, enabling memory-work and the production of prosthetic memory. Memories were retrieved and remembrances recalled from a past that had been dislocated by change, war and social and cultural disruption. These recollections were at times flashbulb memories of past trauma, at other times positive collective memories. The articulation of these 'recollections' of lived experiences, events, practices and places enabled the restitution of knowledge and intangible heritage to occur and subsequently to be transmitted inter-generationally. This function of the Collection can be construed as acts of 're-membering' the family and community; connecting the past with the present.

One methodological drawback of the Baguia Collection being returned as printed or ephemeral digital images was that sensory stimuli relating to the objects were absent, with

the exception of their visuality. The objects' materiality – dimension, weight, texture and scent – was not conveyed via the digital images, and the sound of objects such as musical instruments was absent. The ability to identify the scale and size of objects from an image was at times compromised.<sup>8</sup> It was apparent that digital-return methods were open to interpretation and lent themselves to different readings.

Yet this research suggests there were still advantages to viewing the Bagaia Collection in a visual digital form. One finding was that people activated visual interplay with the Collection (as exemplified by Mr Bonifacio's workshop with the students drawing the musical instruments, thus relying on their observation skills to analyse how objects are constructed). Another finding was that people engaged with images of objects as if they too possessed a materiality and vitality.<sup>9</sup> The way people engaged with Collection images related directly to their former tactile intimacy with the objects in question. As Were notes, 'digital images need to be taken seriously'<sup>10</sup> because '[t]hey possess and can convey the attributes of their material counterparts'.<sup>11</sup> My research asserts that digital return of a diasporic collection and photo-elicitation are valid methods of engagement as a preliminary stage of return and re-encounter by source communities with their heritage.

The community initially had to see the Collection's contents to consider what was sensitive or 'dangerous', what was familiar and remained embedded in daily life, and what was increasingly rare, no longer used or even unrecognisable. My research suggests that the applicability of this first-stage engagement process lies in the capacity of a community to be familiar with, to recognise and make sense of a collection. The memories triggered by the Bagaia Collection were largely prosthetic as they were not directly associated with the time period from which the objects and photographs came. Nonetheless, the Collection reactivated knowledge and intangible heritage that was in a state of evanescence. It created a

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<sup>8</sup> This more often than not led to mistaken identifications and the interpretation of objects not held in the Collection, which was also fortuitous because it elicited knowledge and experiences that otherwise might not have been articulated. Photographing objects alongside a familiar object, such as a matchbox, would allow a visual idea of their scale to be conveyed.

<sup>9</sup> Instances of people stroking the bulbous ceramic image as if they were handling it, and the basket maker who applied her metal needle to the image of a woven basket to indicate her weaving technique suggest that the memory of objects with which people were once intimate evoked the physicality of the objects themselves.

<sup>10</sup> Graeme Were, "Imagining Digital Lives," *Journal of Material Culture*, vol. 18, no. 3 (2013): 213–222.

<sup>11</sup> Graeme Were, "Out of Touch? Digital Technologies, Ethnographic Objects and Sensory Orders," in *Touch in Museums: Policy and Practice in Object Handling* (Oxford: Berg, 2008), 121.

bridge between the past and contemporary Makasae society. The purpose of giving ‘objects of ethnography’ a presence in the present, as heritage, enabled community members to identify, in their own terms, what relevance they hold for them in the current era.

### **Shifting categorisation and the dynamic aspects of sacredness**

The categorisation of Baguia Collection objects as sacred or non-sacred in 2014 was shifting and dynamic, reflecting the material changes being experienced in Makasae society. The community identified two sets of categories, ‘sacred or not sacred’ and ‘still produced locally or no longer produced locally’, into which they located Collection objects. Objects were attributed with a higher and at times a sacred status as they became less commonly made and disappeared from day-to-day use. Heightened status was attributed to those objects deemed critical for core practices of Makasae culture: the performance of ritual ceremony in the ceremonial house, honouring and feeding the ancestors, and the enactment of gift exchanges. Other Makasae objects, now associated with the performance of Christian rites, also retained their status. Such classifications affirm the capacity of objects to set the context for ritual and cultural practice.<sup>12</sup> This research also identified a link between those objects that are no longer made and their increased status towards becoming *falumu* or highly valued for the performance of ritual activity, notwithstanding individual clan attributions of sacredness. These shifts in status suggest that the re-classification of objects remains fluid in Makasae society according to changing social and material norms.

Community members speculated about the current status of objects in the Baguia Collection. Those objects identified as sensitive and sacred<sup>13</sup> were also considered to be dangerous, because without specific knowledge of former clan ownership such objects were unable to be restituted within existing cultural frameworks or unable to be fed by the appropriate descendants of the clan within which they originated. Although the majority of informants suggested that the potency of those sacred objects would have diminished since they were taken from Baguia to Switzerland where they were not ritually fed to nourish their inherent power, some disagreed, suggesting that once sacred the objects would always be potent. These dangerous objects, attributed with the ability to cause a cosmic imbalance and bring

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<sup>12</sup> Morphy and Perkins, *The Anthropology of Art*, 22.

<sup>13</sup> Such sacred or potent objects, more often than not, included the wooden carved figurines (*atevaa*, M), masks (*atevaa asukai*, M), ceremonial house roof finials (*lakasoru*, M), talismanic amulets (*mani rasa*, M), coral necklaces (*gaba*, M), sceptres (*rota*, M) and swords (*si’i*, M).

down the wrath of their ancestors, presented community members with a conundrum that translated into wariness, just in case.<sup>14</sup>

The initial encounter with sensitive objects from the Collection as two-dimensional, digital, ephemeral images was advantageous, as encountering these sacred and highly prized objects in their physical form would otherwise be extremely confronting to Makasae.<sup>15</sup> Even the images of objects identified as sacred elicited ambivalent responses and were cautiously encountered with the utmost respect. Digital images can enable source communities to safely discern, discuss and process the existence of sensitive objects in museum collections and consider implications, appropriateness and strategies for engaging with them in the future.

### **Dialogical viewings of images**

Displays of privately owned objects in homes and collectively owned heirlooms in ceremonial houses demonstrated the contemporary ownership of objects similar to those in the Baguia Collection. Such displays can be interpreted as providing evidence of cultural ownership of the Collection objects. This assertion of ‘ownership’ doubled to authenticate information community members provided about the Collection, verifying people as owners, custodians, makers or users of such objects.

Such demonstrations of ownership and assertions of authority are what Chris Ballard has described as ‘dialogic viewings of images’, which emphasise the performative aspects of engagement with objects and photographs. Dialogic viewings of images can be regarded as events whereby ‘attention [is given] to the evolving nature of the collaborative relationship between ethnographer and community’.<sup>16</sup> Arguably, the Makasae were seeking to foster a collaborative relationship and dialogue between themselves and the Collection and its physical custodians, the MKB, whom I inadvertently represented in a de-facto capacity. My role in these dialogic viewings was therefore relevant.

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<sup>14</sup> Were, “Digital Heritage, Knowledge Networks, and Source Communities,” 135.

<sup>15</sup> Were, “Digital Heritage, Knowledge Networks, and Source Communities,” 136–138. Were discusses ‘dangerous heritage’ in relation to the Naliki community of northern New Ireland and artefacts from museum collections. Also see Bolton, “The Object in View,” 50. Bolton discusses similar issues in relation to Kanak people.

<sup>16</sup> Chris Ballard, “The Return of the Past: On Drawing and Dialogic History,” *The Asia Pacific Journal of Anthropology*, vol. 14, no. 2 (2013): 145.



As an external presence, I witnessed people's accounts of their lived experiences, histories, memories, expressions of ownership and assertions of authority. I was perceived as a conduit back to the MKB. Using the methods of community viewings, small group discussions and one-on-one interviews, as well as site visits and the documentation of artefact production, my presence as 'recorder' of notes, audio or film was seized upon as an opportunity to put things on the record. This undoubtedly affected the content, formality and gravitas of expression used by interviewed community members.

People 'performed their culture' for my benefit and the benefit of the research. On occasion, I was invited to participate in Makasae ceremonies and rituals in order that certain topics could be discussed. At times, I too was invited to 'perform' Makasae culture; at other times I was ancillary to such performances. Sometimes I was deliberately denied access to sites or information because it was inappropriate to share these with an outsider. Occasionally I was attributed as an actor in the process. People's responses to my presence – offering to show me technologies, methods and materials used in the production of local material culture and/or inviting me to attend local ceremonies, events and sites – ensured that I was sufficiently exposed to their culture to be literate enough (in this cross-cultural context) to interpret their responses. Through these strategies the community members asserted their authority over me, as well as over the Collection.

Performing culture was more appropriate for the Makasae than discussing culture: 'Knowledge is performance: it is embodied in practice, not something we have, nor even something we can name consistently'.<sup>17</sup> These dialogical viewings and performances were in keeping with Makasae culture, which aligns knowledge and its expression with socially constructed consensual collective expressions, rather than individual interpretations of culture, opinion and emotion. The agency of the Makasae in this process extended to them strategically orienting and positioning me, the researcher, through the performance of their culture, so I would understand, appreciate and bear witness to their assertions of cultural ownership and authority.

These dialogical viewings, performances and positionings indicate the active engagement of the Baguia community in a wider discourse about the Baguia Collection. They suggest the

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<sup>17</sup> Ramesh Srinivasan et al., "Critical and Reflective Uses of New Media Technologies in Tribal Museums," 2.

stepped nature of digital return of ethnographic museum collections to source communities – even as a preliminary process of engagement. Evidence suggests that during this case study the Baguia community created a strongly relational focus between themselves, the Collection and me as researcher, with an eye towards developing a future relationship with the MKB. Such relationships provide a basis for future staged exchanges.

One obvious next stage of conversation and collaboration could occur regarding the desirability of digitisation of the Baguia Collection and its dissemination on the World Wide Web. The Baguia community and MKB could decide together if this is feasible and appropriate. This process would also enable stakeholders to appreciate one another's concepts of ownership of cultural material, to prioritise objects for photography and access as well as to identify those objects preferred not to be circulated publicly and to identify metadata fields and options for interactivity with such a website. The relational processes entailed in the development of a database would engender discussions and understanding with the longer-term potential to encompass various social and wider relationships.<sup>18</sup> Such an activity and relationship between the Baguia community and MKB, mediated by objects and a database, were they to occur, might lead to other forms of mutually beneficial engagements around the Baguia Collection.

### **Tentative animations of the Baguia Collection**

The Baguia community implemented tentative animations of the Baguia Collection in the limited time available, indicating its potential uses to them. These animations identified the Collection as a resource that fostered acts of transfer performed inter-generationally. These acts of transfer encouraged the reinforcement of past cultural practices through learning, demonstration and replication. Additionally, they fostered the creation of new practices based on earlier traditions. The transfer of cultural, technical or ritual knowledge was emphasised. Learning how to make things as a 'performance of culture' was inspired through engagement with the Collection. This was deemed important because objects play an important role in the performance of Makasae culture (gift exchange, offerings to ancestors, preservation of treasures); objects and artefacts create the context for the continuation of ritual practices.<sup>19</sup> These animations can be construed as acts of indigenous curation applied

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<sup>18</sup> Geismar and Mohns, "Social Relationships and Digital Relationships," S152.

<sup>19</sup> Morphy and Perkins (eds), *The Anthropology of Art*, 22.

to the Collection within and by the community – with the primary purpose of advancing local internal development agendas, rather than to represent Makasae culture or identity to an external audience.

These animations involved local elders informing younger generations about their past experiences; artisans utilising local materials, technology and skills to create objects in response to the Collection; and schools instigating explorations of the Collection as a culturally relevant teaching and learning resource. The community drew upon its available social capital to interrogate the Collection and to develop its future cultural capital. Arguably, these animations also had the benefit of strengthening local social capital and affirming, or even extending, existing social networks.

The Baguia Collection was also valued as a culturally relevant source of inspiration for creativity and the subsequent maintenance and assertion of cultural identity. Whether reviving technologies or encouraging the use and value of local materials, skills, knowledge and ingenuity, the potential for the maintenance and assertion of cultural identity was identified. The Collection was valued as a form of evidence of a Makasae past, through which history, heritage and ultimately a distinctly Makasae identity could be gleaned, reappropriated, recreated or reasserted. Thus, the Collection's embodiment of the past makes it a critical resource with which to reinforce Makasae identity in the present and project it into the future through contemporary creative means.

With longer-term and wider access, the community may increasingly value the Collection as a resource through which to represent themselves to a wider audience. Its potential value for cultural, tourism, social and economic development implicitly suggests that images of the Collection might be employed to represent Makasae culture, foster identity, cultivate pride in culture and awareness of local history, while at the same time achieving much-needed economic outcomes for the community. Such local development aspirations allude to the value of the Collection as a stimulus for local metacultural production with economic benefits, which in turn supports the community's wellbeing and culture.

### **Case study conclusion: longer-term engagement**

Only with longer-term and more considered engagement will the Baguia community identify the fuller values of the Collection to them. Nonetheless, this case study highlights how the residents of Baguia engaged positively in 2014 with the opportunity to view the Collection

digitally. This engagement did not translate to immediate requests to view or return the actual physical Collection objects and photographs.<sup>20</sup> It became apparent that the community's concern was 'not to reclaim museum objects but to re-own the knowledge and experiences that objects embody'.<sup>21</sup> With longer-term engagement this response might alter and access to the physical Collection may be sought, but for now the primary value of the Collection is perceived to be for the internal development of Makasae society.

The Baguia Collection's position on the edge of living memory was an important consideration for the community. Familiarity with the objects was a pre-requisite to enable community residents to interpret them and make apparent the associated intangible knowledge they embodied. The Baguia community's ability to respond to the Collection will alter over time. As the materiality of Makasae society changes, fewer people will have the same familiarity with Collection objects as that of current living elders. The community reinforced this point by requesting continued access to the Collection before living knowledge dissipates. Although the passage of time will influence interpretations of the Collection, following generations will have capacity to apply their own interpretations, as long as a form of sustained access is ensured soon.

With access to the Baguia Collection, this process of interpretation of the Collection by the residents of Baguia will enable ongoing 'modern re-collection' – a phenomenon that James Clifford notes in his discussion about moving beyond the ethnographic salvage paradigm.<sup>22</sup> As 'authenticity is something produced, not salvaged', it is possible that residents of Baguia may find new 'traditional' meaning in the 'context of a present-becoming-future'.<sup>23</sup> Although this research project did not expressly undertake salvage collection of material culture, in the manner in which Bühler proceeded in 1935, it has arguably been an intervention at a time when generational memory that relates directly to the Baguia Collection is diminishing and located on the edge of living memory. Reconnection with the Collection by the community has affirmed memory, knowledge, information and in some instances skills, which I suggest has been predominantly a creative undertaking in a present-becoming-future trajectory,

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<sup>20</sup> Bolton, "The Object in View," 53. Bolton concluded a similar outcome in relation to Indigenous Australians, arguing that they were more interested in 'objects in museums in the context of their present concerns. They are not necessarily interested in the objects in and of themselves'.

<sup>21</sup> Peers and Brown, *Museums and Source Communities*, 39.

<sup>22</sup> James Clifford, "The others: Beyond the 'salvage' paradigm," *Third Text*, vol. 3, no. 6, (2008), 75.

<sup>23</sup> Clifford, "The others," 76, 75.

rather than research conducted primarily with salvage in mind. Although I have been privy to many aspects of these expressions and in some instances have documented them, this intervention has focused on the capacity of the community to produce their own history and authenticity, with the Collection as one resource available to them.

Families within the community expressed desires for longer-term access to the digital images of the Baguia Collection so that they could relate stories, histories and lived experiences in intimate family contexts. These requests highlight the fact that remembering and its interpretation is a personal, emotional and sometimes sensitive process. The three-fold memory that constructs historiographies and collective memory – one’s own memory, one’s and one’s family’s memory, both extending out to form collective memories – suggests the importance of being able to view cultural material in intimate, familial contexts.<sup>24</sup>

Although further digital access to the Baguia Collection might be negotiated via the World Wide Web and the OCCAMS database, for now many Makasae do not have access to these platforms. This raises questions around how to appropriately distribute images of the Collection in Baguia, either as hard-copies or in digital format, a topic best discussed between the community and MKB directly if a next-step phase of engagement is initiated. Publication of the Collection remains one option in tandem with its dissemination in digital form.

In the larger context of destruction, loss, change and vulnerability, as experienced in Timor-Leste during the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries, the relevance of the Baguia Collection is that it gave the past a presence in the present. By reuniting Makasae with their lived past, it illuminated realms of experience that might have otherwise gone unmentioned.<sup>25</sup> This preliminary engagement provided evidence that the methods of digital return and photo-elicitation created a ‘post-modern dialogue based on the authority of the subject rather than the researcher’.<sup>26</sup> It provided evidence of both continuity and change in Makasae society, at a time of momentous transition.

As the material world of the Makasae has continued to change and external influences have been incorporated, they have, against the odds, maintained a continuous deeply-rooted culture, exemplified by the revival phenomenon of the *oma falu* since independence. The

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<sup>24</sup> Ricoeur, *Memory, History, Forgetting*, 132.

<sup>25</sup> Bell, “Looking to See”, 119.

<sup>26</sup> Harper, “Talking About Pictures,” 15.

Baguia Collection remains as a form of cultural capital – a treasury that bears witness to the resilience of the Makasae people of Baguia, with the longer-term potential to strengthen their social and cultural capital into the future. With appropriate access, the dynamic nature of Makasae society will ensure the incorporation and animation of this Collection into its evolving, living culture, and as a tool for cultural transmission through acts of transfer and metacultural production. With wider sustained access, the Collection will enhance Makasae identity, wellbeing and capacity to aspire.

The broader national significance of the Baguia Collection, as the most comprehensive and best documented, extant material culture collection outside of Timor-Leste, must not be underestimated. As cultural institutions are established and collections grow in Timor-Leste and mark the modernity and progress of this new nation, will there be a role envisaged for the Baguia Collection? Just as the significance of objects in a ceremonial house reflects previous ownership and connection to the house, it would seem likely that this Collection could become a relevant resource for nation-building enterprises in Timor-Leste.

As a container of history and evidence of the life of the ancestors, the Baguia Collection has potential to frame the past, present and future, both within the nation amongst its citizens, and as part of how the nation articulates its history and identity to the wider world. As a non-renewable resource, will it be desirable to explore shared custodianship arrangements of the Baguia Collection into the future, in either virtual or physical form? What is certain is that as a non-renewable cultural resource the Baguia Collection would benefit in the future from the custodianship and care of all its stakeholders, including its source community, so that it in turn can benefit them.

## **Future directions between museums and source communities**

[W]ith visual repatriation, in the interchange that transpires as we meet to look and talk, in the process we are learning to see ... the wider sets of relationships not only within local communities between people, landscape and objects, but also the relationships that bind together the institutions we represent with the host communities with which we work. Visual repatriation enables the re-

visioning of these relationships, their histories and, as such, the future directions of their partnership.<sup>27</sup>

It is now possible to reflect on what implications this case study might have for shaping a broader re-visioning of museological practices and future directions between museums and source communities. What role might diasporic collections play in mediating equitable transnational relationality and responsibility between museums and source communities? Can relationships between people and objects accommodate and respect various stakeholder rights? Will the implementation of new and appropriate museology principles in the global museumscape foster shared authority and joint custodianship arrangements? How might reciprocal, responsible, dialogic, pro-technological relationships between museums and source communities affect and influence the roles of museums into the twenty-first century? Finally, who might benefit from such arrangements?

### **Diasporic collections as a resource for source communities**

In less developed nations or communities, particularly those recovering from economic crisis, conflict or war, the resources to care for cultural patrimony are often overshadowed by other pressing priorities and demands. Where culture and heritage remain low priorities, the capacity to ensure the preservation and care of significant heritage collections may be compromised and result in them becoming vulnerable or contribute to their eventual demise. Alternatively, efforts may be underway in such nations or communities to develop capacity to care for heritage collections, but such infrastructure development and the establishment or revitalisation of institutions can often be slow and lengthy processes. Although in such circumstances the underlying principles of repatriation of cultural collections remain relevant as a basic human right, diasporic collections have the foundational elements to create positive new collaborative relationships and partnerships that can be sustained into the future or until alternate relationships or arrangements emerge, such as requests for reciprocation, return, restitution or repatriation.

Reactivation of past connections between source communities and museums can lead to multiple benefits for stakeholders. By positioning museum collections as diasporic collections that are resources for communities, and arguably also for museums, multiple

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<sup>27</sup> Bell, "Looking to See," 120.

## Conclusion

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values and benefits including a 'hybrid space of future possibilities' become apparent.<sup>28</sup> One major benefit available from collections of cultural material residing in museums overseas includes transnational collaborations and knowledge exchange initiatives. As objects and collections mediate across different worlds that are encompassed in their biographies of 'roots and routes'<sup>29</sup>, the histories and politics implicit in each object, acquired in one place and then transplanted elsewhere, need to be made apparent. Objects have the capacity to 'articulate between and across disparate cultural histories and the cultural zones of others'.<sup>30</sup> With deeper understandings of collections, in all their social, spatial and temporal dimensions, improved contemporary documentation of collections will flow. Such diverse readings of collections will enable museums and communities to interpret objects with increased egalitarianism and democratisation. Through articulating diverse and even conflicting opinions, the role of the museum as an agent for social activism, inclusivity and responsibility and provocateur becomes evident.

Partnerships between source communities and museums have the potential to translate into capacity building and training support. Exchanges of knowledge and expertise from the museum sector can enhance capacity in source communities to foster the care, preservation, interpretation and display of their local heritage with the outcome of benefiting community strategies for the development of cultural capital, possibly with economic and educational returns as well. The reciprocation of indigenous knowledge and expertise about culturally appropriate methods of storage, care, handling, preservation, conservation and display of collection objects can flow between communities and museums.

Benefits from the wider transnational context of collections can extend the reach of potential sponsorship opportunities, thus harnessing valuable financial and in-kind support for development, cultural or otherwise, in source communities.<sup>31</sup> National and cultural identities can be forged in international contexts, creating positive transglobal profiles that potentially lead to economic benefits through cultural tourism and aligned cultural industries. Implicit in these benefits facilitated by the location of the diasporic collections – such as knowledge

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<sup>28</sup> Ron Eyerman and Paul Gilroy cited in Basu, "Object Diasporas, Resourcing Communities," 30.

<sup>29</sup> Basu, "Object Diasporas, Resourcing Communities," 29. Basu attributes the terms 'roots and routes' to James Clifford (ed.), *Routes: Travel and Translation in the late Twentieth Century* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1997) and Paul Gilroy, *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness* (London: Verso, 1993).

<sup>30</sup> Peffer, "Africa's Diasporas of Images," 339–340.

<sup>31</sup> Basu, "Object Diasporas, Resourcing Communities," 37.



exchange, expertise collaboration and sponsorship partnerships – is the support of living culture. ‘The extent to which a museum can implement the broadest spectrum of engagements with intangible heritage is ... the most ethical position to take.’<sup>32</sup> In these ways diasporic collections enable the wider mission of new museology to be pursued, as the work of museums increasingly extends beyond their walls, supporting living cultures, intangible knowledge and appropriate museology *in situ*. Such a re-visioning of the museum’s role has far-reaching implications for its operations, function and sphere of influence that require a radical rethink of the museum’s agenda. Not least is the need for the

symbolic space of the museum-as-contact zone [to] be understood as the political space of encounter between adversaries, where the power relations which structure these encounters are brought to the fore, creating a liberating effect for museums and their [source] community partners.<sup>33</sup>

These new directions have implications for the role of curators as well. Curators increasingly need to be proficient facilitators of processes in cross-cultural contexts as their work moves into the community as a contact/engagement zone. In these contexts curators become visitors who need to uphold the attendant protocols that position entails. Bearing witness to and being trusted recipients of information, knowledge and experiences that source communities offer to them, curators will come to consider this information as a privilege, not a right. The source community invests in the curator as a conduit between themselves and the museum, ensuring a two-way exchange. At times the curator becomes an advocate for the community as much as for the museum, which may occasionally lead to various ethical dilemmas. The curators’ ability to be accountable, transparent and trustworthy in their undertakings and decision-making to all stakeholders will be paramount.

### **Ownership of cultural property or shared authority and joint custodianship?**

Possibly the most challenging operational direction and moral realignment that museums will experience during the twenty-first century is the recognition of shared authority and the creation of joint custodianship models for cultural collections. In recognition of the shared heritage values of collections and the fluid and contingent relationships between objects and

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<sup>32</sup> P Welch cited in Marstine, *A Routledge Companion to Museum Ethics*, 30.

<sup>33</sup> Lynch, ‘Collaboration, Contestation, and Creative Conflict,’ 155.

experiences in the museum, including digital return of collections to source communities, a corresponding shift from the attitude of possession to that of relationship is underway. As Marstine notes, ‘the concept of guardianship is a means toward respecting the dynamic, experiential and contingent quality of heritage and towards sharing in new ways the rights and responsibilities of this heritage’.<sup>34</sup> By placing an increased value on the experiential aspects of collections, new directions for the ethical care and sharing of heritage become apparent.

Shared authority highlights and acknowledges the agency of diverse forms of cultural, experiential and conceptual authority and advocates for egalitarian exchange between distinct types of knowledge and expertise. It also has the merit of valuing interactivity between these types of knowledge and experiences, making the attributes of response and initiation critical to sharing authority and joint custodianship.<sup>35</sup> As new relationships based on shared authority emerge between museums and source communities, they have the potential to lay the foundations for joint custody partnerships of cultural collections. To ensure the future care and efficacy of ethnographic collections, the museum sector needs to radically review traditional values of ownership, and embrace the notion of ‘property as a relationship rather than an object ... which acknowledges the political and social relations that objects are enmeshed within as vital to their identities’.<sup>36</sup> Such relationships require ongoing nurture and negotiation.

Additionally, the primacy of the object may not always be as important to the source community as is often assumed by the museum. Often it is the intangible knowledge unveiled by objects that is of paramount importance to the source communities. Thus, it should not be assumed that physical access to objects would always be a source community’s priority. With the establishment of joint custodianship arrangements whereby the rights and responsibilities of both the museum and source communities are acknowledged and respected, the recognition of the museum as an appropriate storehouse and display venue can follow.<sup>37</sup> Such models promote environments conducive to collaborative and indigenous curation, enhanced methods for care and preservation of collections as a non-renewable

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<sup>34</sup> Marstine, *A Routledge Companion to Museum Ethics*, 32.

<sup>35</sup> Hutchinson, “Shared Authority”, 145–146.

<sup>36</sup> Geismar, “Cultural Property, Museums and the Pacific”, 114–115; Heumann Gurian, “What is the Object of This Exercise?” 279.

<sup>37</sup> Geismar, “Cultural Property, Museums and the Pacific”, 115; Batty, “White Redemption Rituals,” 62.

resource, and the identification of appropriate methods of access to collections, digitally or otherwise, for the enactment and enhancement of living culture.

Possibilities of joint custodianship do not preclude eventual requests for repatriation because joint custodianship does not oppose or negate repatriation – it emphasises the strengthening of relationships that the return of cultural property inspires.<sup>38</sup> Even repatriation requires ‘consideration of wider issues concerning ownership, rights and identity’.<sup>39</sup> Repatriation ‘involves agreements and partnerships with customary owners, including the owners of intangible heritage’.<sup>40</sup> Perhaps the only consistent aspect of repatriation of museum collections to source communities, I suggest, is that repatriation needs to be considered on a case-by-case basis.<sup>41</sup> So that stakeholders can begin to identify these contingent factors, museums are morally obliged to ‘relinquish traditional authoritarian roles in favour of new responsibilities as both resources and facilitators of dialogue about those things that matter most to people’.<sup>42</sup> In fostering dialogical relationships, the digital return of collections to source communities presents a preliminary platform for engagement, discourse and dialogue from which to begin to navigate a respectful, collaborative, reciprocal future.

### **Ethical implications for the digitisation and distribution of museum collections**

As museums seek to form increasingly collaborative and reciprocal relationships with source communities, reflexivity and responsible practice need to be applied to the issues surrounding the digitisation of museum collections. Whilst digitisation and Web 2.0 technologies provide inordinate opportunities for engagement, creative exchanges and the establishment of dialogical relationships, they also raise ethical dilemmas that museums need to manage. Increasingly museums need to collaborate and communicate with source communities, exceeding the requirements of copyright law to include the development of

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<sup>38</sup> Singh and Blake, “The Digitisation of Pacific Cultural Collections,” 7; Marstine, “The Contingent Nature of the New Museum Ethics,” 34.

<sup>39</sup> Nick Stanley cited in Marstine, “The Contingent Nature of the New Museum Ethics,” 34.

<sup>40</sup> Marstine, “The Contingent Nature of the New Museum Ethics,” 34.

<sup>41</sup> Batty, “White Redemption Rituals,” 58, 60. Each situation will have specific contingent factors regarding the context of the collection’s ‘roots and routes’ – its formation, content, condition, documentation, and biography. Additionally, the characteristics and complexities of each source community – their local political and social environments, their internal cohesion or differentiation, their resource capacity to house and care for a heritage collection, their responses to the sensitivity of the collections and how this affects custodianship responsibilities, storage and housing – are some of the factors that constitute the unique conditions that affect and determine what may be appropriate pathways for the repatriation of cultural material.

<sup>42</sup> Robert R Archibald cited in Marstine, “The Contingent Nature of the New Museum Ethics,” 28.

digitised collections on Web 2.0 platforms, to enable source communities to clarify what can and cannot be included, and what controls are required to protect images from modification and theft.

Digital access to museum collections can promote bottom-up approaches to indigenous curation and the restitution of knowledge, including its transmission through acts of transfer, as demonstrated in the case study presented in this thesis. Source communities are interested in how such access to cultural collections can inform cultural revival in the present. Digital return and the viewing of collection images are best undertaken in intimate contexts. From the self and one's family and relatives, memory is incorporated into wider social groups and enters collective memory. This has implications for the dissemination of digital images and their access in communities where people live on the other side of the digital divide. Further research is required into the development of interactive platforms that enable source communities to engage, on their own terms, with collections of relevance to them.

As three-dimensional imagery and touch-oriented technologies develop, virtual platforms will increasingly gain currency and be adapted to the specific requirements of source communities and museums. As digital design evolves through its implementation and use, technologies will be appropriated by source communities as 'technologies of representation' and 'technologies of witness'. These platforms and their interactability are especially relevant for source communities where knowledge is performative rather than representational, and where information is exchanged verbally rather than in written form.<sup>43</sup> However, at this time, even with limited digital access, requests for copies of images are likely outcomes from engagement with digital collections – either in printed or virtual formats. Such requests highlight the issue of who has the right to determine who can and cannot have access to digital images of museum collections<sup>44</sup> What level of access can be provided to a source community and what ethical challenges confront researchers when facilitating the return of digitised cultural material to source communities? These challenges also imply that museums, together with source communities, need to rethink the scope for images to be circulated – or not – based on informed discussion and respectful relationships.

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<sup>43</sup> Verran and Christie, "Using/Designing Digital Technologies of Representation in Aboriginal Australian Knowledge Practices," 214–227.

<sup>44</sup> Hennessy, "Virtual Repatriation and Digital Cultural Heritage," 5–6.

The concept of joint custodianship combined with digitisation of collections could inspire the formation of consortiums and hubs. Such initiatives make use of, pool and distribute resources in the global museumscape in ways that promote public access to collections, locally, regionally and internationally. From a moral standpoint, the concept of shared guardianship prioritises shared access to collections above individual institutional positioning.<sup>45</sup> It also has the benefit of creating secure futures for collections, enabling them to be accessed, interpreted, exhibited, animated and preserved for posterity.

### **Long-term view**

The final implication of this research for museological practice and source communities is that engagement between museums and source communities requires sustained, long-term staged approaches, with each stage unfolding from and being informed by the previous stage of engagement. The unique case-by-case characteristics of work between source communities and museums, as mediated by cultural collections, suggest that no prescriptive approach is appropriate or desirable. Each source community will have its own dynamics, issues, sensitivities and agendas. Each ethnographic museum collection will have its own history of acquisition, content, condition, documentation, display and interpretation. Hence, each engagement will be nuanced by these contingent factors and determined by their unique characteristics. However, without the establishment of respectful, dialogical and reciprocal relationships, ethnographic museum collections, especially those on the edge of living memory, will indefinitely remain partially silenced, unable to serve as forms of evidence to their source communities. If that situation continues, it will be a perpetuation of the power imbalance that resulted in their initial acquisition.

Relationships between source communities and museums, whilst not without their challenges, present opportunities for new forms of engagement, revitalisation of ethnographic collections and their reappropriation in ways never before envisaged by museums. Possible future outcomes from such engagements and relationships, mediated by the digital return of museum collections to source communities, may also lead to the ongoing development of museums as reflective, relational, socially active and responsible agents, in virtual and physical domains, within and beyond museum walls. Simultaneously, by sharing resources with source communities, in the form of cultural collections and relationships,

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<sup>45</sup> Marstine, "The Contingent Nature of the New Museum Ethics", 34.

## Conclusion

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museums will enable source communities to harness these resources towards the achievement of their own aspirations.

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Dias, Ernesto. Resident of Baguia Sub-district. Interview with author, Alawa Leten, Baguia Sub-district, 25 August 2014.

Fernandes, Jose. Resident of Baguia Sub-district. Interview with author, Larisula, Baguia Sub-district, 16 August 2014.

Gonzaga, Antonio. Resident of Baguia Sub-district. Interview with author, Defawasi, Baguia Sub-district, 17 October 2014.

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Lopez, Beatriz. Resident of Baguia Sub-district. Interview with author, Defawasi, Baguia Sub-district, 8 October 2014.

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Miranda, Flavio. Architect, Office of the Secretariat of Tourism, Art and Culture, Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste. Interview with author, Dili, 2 October 2014.

de Olivera, Julião. *Xefe de Aldeia*. Interview with author, Uasufa, Alawa Craik, Baguia-Sub-district, 27 August 2014.

de Olivera, Julião. *Xefe de Aldeia*. Interview with author, Uasufa, Alawa Craik, Baguia Sub-district, 12 December 2014. Pinto, Ana Maria. Resident of Baguia Sub-district. Interview with author, Alawa Craik, Baguia Sub-district, 6 August 2014.

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Ximenes, Bernardo Magno. Resident of Baguia Sub-district. Interview with author, Osso Huna, Baguia Sub-district, 10 October 2014.

Ximenes, Miguel. Resident of Baguia Sub-district. Interview with author, Bubuha, Larisula, Baguia Sub-district, 16 August 2014.

Ximenes, Thomas Magno. Resident of Baguia Sub-district. Interview with author, Bubuha, Larisula, Baguia Sub-district, 29 October 2014.

## List of presentations

### Presentations by community members

Amaral, Martinho. Naueti elder. EBC Sao Jose Junior High School, Alawa Craik, Baguia Sub-district, 23 October 2014.

Amaral, Martinho. Naueti elder. Baguia Secondary School, Alawa Craik, Baguia Sub-district, 28 October 2014.

Guterres, Domingas. Makasae elder. EBF Haudere Primary School, Alawa Leten, Baguia Sub-district, 21 October 2014.

Guterres, Leopoldina Joana. Principal, EBC Sao Jose Junior High School. Alawa Craik, Baguia Sub-District, 23 October 2014.

Guterres, Leopoldina Joana. Principal, EBC Sao Jose Junior High School, Alawa Craik, Baguia Sub-District, 10 December 2014.

Guterres de Almeida, Livio. Student, EBC Sao Jose Junior High School, Alawa Craik, Baguia Sub-district, 10 December 2014.

Guterres Ximenes, Bonifcaio. Principal. EBF Haudere Primary School, Alawa Leten, Baguia Sub-district, 22 October 2014.

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Menezes de Oliveira, Herlinda. Student, EBC Sao Jose Junior High School, Alawa Craik, Baguia Sub-District, 10 December 2014.

Pereira Guterres, Remigia. Student, EBC Sao Jose Junior High School, Alawa Craik, Baguia Sub-District, 10 December 2014.

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Pinto, Meriana Esperasna. Student, EBC Sao Jose Junior High School, Alawa Craik, Baguia Sub-District, 10 December 2014.

### **Other presentations**

Kreps, Christina F. “From Colonial to Appropriate Museology.” A presentation at the *Museum of Our Own* conference, Gadjah Mada University, Yogyakarta, 18–20 November 2014.

Neale, Margo. “If It’s Mine Can I Take It Back Please?” An AIATSIS Seminar Series Presentation, Mabo Room, Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, Canberra, 2 September 2013.

Simith, Virgilio. “Husi Bei Ala Timor Sira Nia Liman – From the Hands of Our Ancestors.” A presentation at the Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin, 10 September 2008.

### **Presentations by the author**

Barrkman, Joanna. Baguia Collection presentation to the Baguia University Students’ Association, Dili, 28 January 2014.

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Barrkman, Joanna. Baguia Collection presentation to the community, Afaloicai, Baguia Sub-district, 19 August 2014.

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## Appendix A: Online Cultural Collections Analysis Management System (OCCAMS) - The Baguia Collection

The Online Cultural Collections Analysis Management System (OCCAMS) hosts a database of the Baguia Collection.<sup>1</sup> This work-in-progress database is under development as an outcome of the research process into the Collection undertaken in 2014. Whilst reading this thesis the objects and photographs from the Baguia Collection that are referred to by accession numbers can be sighted in the Baguia Collection on OCCAMS.

It is intended that this database will be made available to the community of Baguia, once permission has been finalised with the Museum der Kulturen Basel (MKB). The MKB are supportive of this initiative and granted permission for the Collection and the identifications provided by the community members of Baguia in 2014 to be included in this database as part of this research project.

The digital photographs used in the database were taken by Joanna Barrkman in 2014 at the MKB and were subsequently used during her research into the Baguia Collection in 2014 in Baguia Sub-district, Baucau District, Timor-Leste. They are working images only.

For access to The Baguia Collection on OCCAMS please follow these steps:

Step 1: Recommended web browser: latest version of Firefox.

Step 2: Enter url: [https://dhhdev.anu.edu.au/occams\\_v1c/](https://dhhdev.anu.edu.au/occams_v1c/)

Step 3: After opening the link please accept security exception in advanced option.

Step 4: Log-in for read-only access using the following details (choose one set of username and password):

Username: Baguia\_EXXX      Password: E4X@wAt3

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<sup>1</sup> For further information about OCCAMS: <http://cdhr.anu.edu.au/occams>

Access the OCCAMS manual at: [http://dhhdev.anu.edu.au/docs/occams/user\\_guide\\_2014/](http://dhhdev.anu.edu.au/docs/occams/user_guide_2014/)

Username Baguia\_EYYY Password: r%Y94Grv

Step 5: Please select Project Workspace (PWS).

Step 6: Under 'My Projects' on left-hand menu select 'The Baguia Collection.'

Step 7: To search for an object (i.e. MKB IIc 5999) enter 5999 and press 'Search'. An image of the object will appear. Please click on this image to access the full object record.

Step 8: To return to the Search function use arrow-back on the web-browser top menu OR to return click onto 'The Baguia Collection' under 'My Projects' on left-hand menu.

If any assistance is required in order to access the OCCAMS database, please contact:

Examinations, Graduations and Prizes Office

Division of Student Administration

Melville Hall (Building 12)

1 Ellery Cres, Australian National University, ACT, AUSTRALIA

Phone: +61 (0)2 6125 2266; +61 (0)2 6125 2202

Email: [researchthesis.enq@anu.edu.au](mailto:researchthesis.enq@anu.edu.au)

Website: [www.anu.edu.au](http://www.anu.edu.au)

## Appendix B: Publications related to the 1935 Expedition produced by MKB

Source: Compiled by the Museum der Kulturen Basel

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### Publications directly related to the Expedition:

Bühler, Alfred. 1937. "Bericht über die im Jahre 1935 auf Timor Rote und Flores angelegten ethnographischen Sammlungen im Jahresbericht des Basler Museum für Völkerkunde 1936." In: *Verhandlungen der Naturforschenden Gesellschaft in Basel*, Bd. 48 (1937) S. 13–38

Bühler, Alfred. 1937. "Primitives Schmieden". In: *Werkzeitung der schweizerischen Industrie*, Nr. 3 (März 1937), S. 40ff

Bühler, Alfred. 1937. "Primitives Giessen." In: *Werkzeitung der schweizerischen Industrie*, Nr. 4 (April 1937), S. 56ff

Bühler, Alfred. 1937. "Primitives Handwerk bei Naturvölkern: Sammlung Dr. Alfred Bühler". Basel: Gewerbemuseum Basel (Ausstellung im Gewerbemuseum Basel vom 25. April bis 23. Mai 1937)

Bühler, Alfred. 1938/39. "Handwerk und Weben bei den Naturvölkern." In: *Ciba-Rundschau*. Basel. Jg. 3 (1938/1939), Nr. 25, S. 901–922

Bühler, Alfred. 1939. "Die Herstellung von Ikattüchern auf der Insel Rote." In: *Verhandlungen der Naturforschenden Gesellschaft in Basel*, Bd. 50 (1939), S. 32–97

Bühler, Alfred. 1940. "Rotenesian Hats." In: *Ciba Zeitschrift*. Basel, Jg. 7, Nr. 75 (1940), S. 1276–1278

Meyer, WL. *Anthropologische und odontologische Untersuchungen auf den kleinen Sunda-Inseln Timor und Rote. Sonderdruck aus der Festschrift der Odontologischen Gesellschaft Basel.* Zürich: Buchdruckerei Berichthaus, 1936

Sarasin, Fritz. 1936. "Beiträge zur Prähistorie der Inseln Timor und Roti." In: *Verhandlungen der Naturforschenden Gesellschaft in Basel*, Bd. 47 (1936), S. 1–59. Mit einem einleitenden Grabungs- und Fundbericht von Alfred Bühler

Sarasin, Fritz. 1938. "Ueber Spuren einer früheren weddiden Bevölkerung auf der Insel Roti oder Rote bei Timor." In: *Zeitschrift für Rassenkunde*<sup>1</sup>. Stuttgart: Enke, Bd. 7 oder 8

### **Publications indirectly related to the Expedition**

Bühler, Alfred. 1938/1939. "Vom Lebensraum der Südseevölker: Die Verbreitung der Rindenstoffe." In: *Ciba-Rundschau*. Basel, Jg. 3 (1938/1939), Nr. 32, S. 1162–1170

Bühler, Alfred. 1941/1943. "Ikatten." In: *Ciba-Rundschau*. Basel, Jg. 5 (1941/1943), Nr. 51, S. 1850–1887

Bühler, Alfred. 1939/1941. "Türkischrot-Färberei in Süd- und Südostasien." In: *Ciba-Rundschau*. Basel, Jg. 4 (1939/1941), Nr. 47, S. 1739–1741

Bühler, Alfred. 1947. "Indonesische Gewebe." Basel: Gewerbemuseum Basel (Ausstellung im Gewerbemuseum Basel vom 7. September bis 5. Oktober 1947) [Bühler, Alfred. 1947. *Indonesian Textiles*. Basel: Basel Museum of Applied Arts

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<sup>1</sup> Die "Zeitschrift für Rassenkunde und die gesamte Forschung am Menschen" erschien von 1935 bis 1944, bis 1939 jeweils zwei Bände jährlich, ab 1940 nur noch einer. Der Herausgeber Egon Freiherr von Eickstedt (1892-1965) war ein deutscher Anthropologe und Rassentheoretiker. In Bezug auf den Nationalsozialismus war er eine massgebliche Grösse der Rassenkunde. Seine Theorie der Gliederung der Menschheit in drei "Grossrassen" blieb noch bis ins späte 20. Jahrhundert in der Anthropologie tonangebend. Nach dem 2. Weltkrieg übernahm er eine Professur in Mainz. 1949 gründete von Eickstedt die "Zeitschrift für Rassenkunde" unter dem Namen "Homo. Zeitschrift für die vergleichende Biologie des Menschen" neu. The *Zeitschrift für Rassenkunde und die gesamte Forschung am Menschen* (Journal of Racial Science and Research on Humans in General) was published from 1935 to 1944; two volumes a year appeared until 1939, then only one from 1940 onwards. The editor, Egon Freiherr von Eickstedt (1892–1965), was a German anthropologist and racial theorist. With regard to National Socialism (Nazism), he was a leading luminary of racial science. His theory of the division of humankind into three 'Great Races' remained predominant in anthropology until the late 20<sup>th</sup> century. After the Second World War he took up a professorship in Mainz. In 1949, von Eickstedt re-founded the *Zeitschrift für Rassenkunde* (Journal of Racial Science) under the title *Homo. Zeitschrift für die vergleichende Biologie des Menschen* (Homo. Journal of the Comparative Biology of Man). (Translated by Dr Hilary Howes, 14 July 2017.)

### **Exhibition catalogues**

*Primitives Handwerk bei Naturvölkern: Sammlung Dr. Alfred Bübler.* Ausstellung im Gewerbemuseum Basel vom 25. April bis 23. Mai 1937.

*Indonesische Gewebe.* Ausstellung im Gewerbemuseum Basel vom 7. September bis 5. Oktober 1947.





## Appendix C: Worksheet used at EBC Sao Jose Junior High School

OBJECTU TRADITIONAL HUSI BAGUIA, 1935  
KOLEKSAUN MUSEUM DER KULTUREN, BASEL, SWITZERLAND



1. MKB Ilc 6430



2. MKB Ilc 6410



3. MKB Ilc 6044



4. MKB Ilc 6287



5. MKB Ilc 6099

1. ....
2. ....
3. ....
4. ....
5. ....



6. MKB Ilc 6336



7. MKB Ilc 6229



8 MKB Ilc 6315



9. MKB Ilc 6540

6. ....
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- 10.



10. MKB Ilc 64



