

## ARAPESH WARFARE

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## I

THE country of the Arapesh tribe is located in northwest New Guinea in the mandated territory of that island. Like most tribal countries of New Guinea, it can be traversed in a few days of hard walking. Parallel with the sea coast the Arapesh possess a strip of rich coastal plain running the length of a two days' walk. This plain extends inland less than a mile before the hills rise from it. Three native pads or "roads" cross the country inland over the foothills and over the main range of the Prince Alexander or Torricelli Mountains. These roads fall steeply over the main range and debouch on to a vast inland plain. The Arapesh tribe possesses only a narrow strip of this plain close to the hills, and not more than a day's walk long, parallel with the nearby Torricelli Mountains and with the more distant coast, which are themselves about two days' walk apart. The country is thus approximately two days' walk long on the coast, two days' walk in inland depth, and it narrows to one day's walk long on its inland base. A traveller encumbered with baggage and porters takes about a day longer in any direction of traverse of the country.

This tribal country is a country of a common social culture, a common religion, a common technology, and a common language, despite petty differences of culture and of dialect, and despite the soil and climatic changes from coastal plain to hills to inland plain. The country of common culture has, however, no political unity. It is segmented by many internal war frontiers. Under conditions of present culture contact, warfare is suppressed, and some consciousness of tribal unity is developing in the larger labor centres where indentured laborers from many tribes meet. In the home country, however, a consciousness of political unity corresponding to the older and pre-existing cultural unity develops very slowly.

The country of common culture, of no political unity, has some strange borders from a political viewpoint. For the borders are often exclusively cultural, and not coincident with war frontiers. These culture borders often divide a border sovereign locality into two segments of different culture and language peacefully, and without disturbance of its sovereignty. Peoples of other culture and language whose boundary meets an Arapesh culture boundary confine their warfare within their own culture, for the most part. Border sovereign units, whose members are divided in culture and in language, may be drawn as wholes into the internecine war machine of either culture, although the more aggressive culture of the two is likely to claim them the more in military matters. For example, the border village and locality of Ulupumaku contains the cultural and linguistic boundary

between the Arapesh and the Tchowash tribes set out in no uniform line between its houses. The entire sovereign locality fought sometimes against its pure Tchowash neighbors further inland from it, and sometimes against its pure Arapesh neighbors on the seaward side; but the Tchowash were, and still are, headhunters, as the Arapesh were not, and the Tchowash were more aggressive in involving border villages into their more urgent war complex. Border villages, such as Ulupumaku, are of great service in inter-tribal trade and communications. Some of their families look to one tribe for their ancestry, and some to another, but by working together under a common sovereignty within a common locality they promote trade connections between their respective tribes and between their countries proper (i.e. their cultural countries).

The Arapesh have no word in their language indicating their entire tribe or their entire country. The word *arapɛɲ* means simply friends, and it is their word for their more distant personal connections.<sup>1</sup> This word has been coined in the written form Arapesh in order to name their tribe, country, language, and culture.

The sovereign divisions of the Arapesh tribe are local land exploiting groups of agriculturalists and hunters of an average numerical strength of from two to three hundred persons to a group. Each sovereign group possesses its own separate and exclusive land, stream, and forest exploitation rights, with clearly defined frontiers. However, sovereign Arapesh localities did not dispute their respective land exploitation rights between themselves very seriously in their warfare. It is true that on occasion an outlying sago palm clump, or a bread fruit tree near a locality boundary changed hands. Where streams divide localities, fishing rights in determined sections of stream are allocated between the localities; and there exists record of past disputes over these fishing rights. But warfare was not pushed vigorously towards an objective of annexation of any extensive area of an enemy territory. Without disputing their respective land exploitation rights between them greatly, the sovereign Arapesh localities did maintain their separate and exclusive land exploitation rights, and their separate sovereignty, in warfare over a deliberate difference between them. They possessed, and still do possess a moral code, and a very high regard for the stability of the family. Nevertheless sovereign groups habitually promoted the piating of women from one another. They promoted divorces, secured the run-away women, and made the divorces absolute over men (and sometimes women) slain in the ensuing quarrel. Some per-

<sup>1</sup> In the singular form the word is *arapɛɲ*. The symbols *ɟ* and *ɲ* used in this word, and in later instances, represent *s* palatalised and fricative, and *n* palatalised.

sons were commonly taken by surprise and slain in their hamlets. Others were killed on the traditionally used battlefields which lie on the frontiers of locality territories. The victors often paid the defeated compensation for their dead in the subsequent peacemaking, a pig for a man being the rate. The victors usually lost no man, and the defeated, a few men only in each war.

The deliberate organization of this somewhat strange pattern for war making will be fully outlined in our account. Meanwhile we may note that the continual piracy of women, with the women's consent, across sovereign frontiers was not left to the casual play of private sexual passions. It was a highly organized social pattern undertaken by sovereign communities against one another, and partly motivated by their collective rivalries and even hatreds. There is no certain indication that the play of private sexual passions ran or runs higher amongst the Arapesh people than amongst other tribes of New Guinea. Yet a social organization of woman stealing from foreign localities prevailed amongst them, and was their traditional provocation for warfare, as head hunting, cannibal raiding, pig stealing, and revenge expeditions for sorcery are traditional provocations amongst other tribes of the area.

The especial type of provocation for Arapesh warfare made such warfare subject to women's consent, and to their sexual consent. Insofar it is unique in the New Guinea area that is known. The warfare was confined to a narrow issue. The men of different localities were frequently on an explicit offensive and defensive in regard to their exclusive rights in women. If a broader issue of exclusive rights in land exploitation was perhaps implicit beneath the overt struggle, it remained implicit, and did not become a prime objective in the warfare. Land was little disputed, but, instead, a more readily transferable goods. This broad characteristic of Arapesh warfare is not uncommon in the area. Neighboring tribes of headhunters do not directly dispute the exclusive exploitation rights to land which they maintain. Their offensive takes heads, which are also more readily transferable than land. They remain content with their accessions of enemy heads, and, for lack of an expansionist land policy, even become disgruntled if neighboring areas become depopulated of heads.

## II

The land of a sovereign Arapesh locality was subdivided into the several areas owned separately by the several clans of the locality. The land of a clan was further subdivided into land of the *bwaheinum*, descent line from senior brother; *nyumiaduwokum*, descent line from the second to senior

brother; *rabinen*, descent line from the third brother; *kwodainum*, descent line from the fourth brother, and so on; the collateral patrilineal descent lines so named taking their order of seniority from the order of seniority of the collateral brethren who founded the clan. First, second, third, and fourth descent lines own separate hamlet grounds, and each hamlet owns its own acres of ground suitable for agriculture. Most of a hamlet's acres of ground is covered in secondary growth, distinct from the great forest which has never been cleared for agriculture. The area of secondary growth appears unfenced and undivided, but actually each man of a hamlet knows the individual names of the sections of it which his fathers planted, section by section in rotation of land each year, over a cycle of rotation of about twenty years. A man, wishing to determine the exact age of a child of his, may count back named individual plots of land by plot where he has gardened, until he reaches the plot of land, and hence the year in which gardening time his child was born. The individual rights to sets of about twenty named plots each are inherited from fathers by sons. Usually a group of hamlet brethren, with or without some of their brothers-in-law, clear, fence, and plant the one fenced-off plot together. The reason why the whole agricultural area is not fenced-off permanently is that the wood fences rot and are broken by wild boar, if left; so that after a year's use the fence is used for firewood, and a fence of new wood built around the next area recleared and replanted.

Areas of the great forest, which has never been cleared for agriculture, are the hunting preserves of the men of hamlets adjoining the forest, and these preserves and the game in them are believed to be guarded against trespassers by the ghosts of the ancestors of the present owners. Most hamlets own small patches of hunting forest, having cleared most of their lands for agriculture, and the men of these hamlets do only a little hunting. A few hamlets, however, abut upon comparatively vast areas of the great forest. The men of these hamlets own vast hunting preserves, and because of their ownership of the resources, it occurs that three or four men may do most of the major hunting that is done in their entire locality. Even in former times an owner of forest preserve could traverse some square miles of it alone, in some places, without fear of hostile war parties, because even strong war parties avoided the impenetrable places where paths were unknown, where the sun was rarely visible, and where loss of direction in a strange place was easily possible.

There exists, then, division and subdivision of land for exploitation down to individual ownership. But there is also some communal use of land resources between brethren of the one family line, leading to equitable

enough subdivision of land between the children and grandchildren of brethren, if they multiply. Individual land owners subdivide the land of a descent line, as descent lines subdivide the land of a clan, and clans subdivide the lands of a sovereign locality. There exists, however, one major subdivision, intermediate between a clan and the sovereign locality. This is the unit of the dual division, a moiety, or, as it is also termed in this account, a sub-locality. Some of the clans of the sovereign locality belong to one moiety, some to the other moiety. Clans of the one and the same moiety occupy a continuous area, separate from the area settled and owned by the clans of the opposite moiety.

We have touched upon the internal constitution of the sovereign Arapesh locality in these few paragraphs in order to indicate the precise definition of Arapesh sovereignty, which resides neither in the individual, in the descent line, in the clan, or in the moiety, but in the locality. We have already noted that the sovereignty of the locality is not expressed in an expansionist land policy. The biological multiplication of the clan is, however, a definite Arapesh ideal maintained by the clan. The Arapesh express more concern for replenishing the land with children than they do for finding land for their children. "She pisses a goodly urine," they say of a woman who bears male children to replenish the clan, but "She pisses a bad urine," of a woman who bears female children only. They give a barren woman an intentionally shameful burial. The lack of anxiety on the part of clansmen for finding land for their children agrees with the non-expansionist character of the warfare fought by the locality. In this connection it is of interest to reflect that the hostilities between sovereign localities did not aim at robbing hostile territory, but did aim at robbing hostile territory of its wives of clansmen, and hence of its increase. The losses of fighting men sustained in warfare did not hinder the natural increase of the clans as much as might be supposed. Brothers took the widows of their dead brethren by levirate right as secondary wives. But women lost were absolute losses. Women gained from foreign localities by divorce and warfare were absolute additions to a locality, over and above all women who could be secured in marriage from abroad by peaceful methods. At the same time Arapesh warfare was not conducted in order to promote the natural increase of the clans of victorious localities. A balance was struck between individual values and collective values in this matter. A war was promoted by individual initiative in the first instance, when one man coveted another man's wife. All individual initiative of this character was not socially approved and finally implemented by divorce and war, however. The woman had to be a wife of a man of a foreign locality. She had first to be

seduced and to be found willing to run away from her husband. Her seducer had to possess the support of his clan, moiety, and locality in arranging for her elopement to himself. If the seducer failed to arrange the divorce and the war, the jilted woman was believed to be likely to cause his death by sending his semen to the sorcerers. This belief must have had some influence in the decisions of a locality in favor of war. It is a belief which still exists.

### III

Warfare has been suppressed in most of the Arapesh territory since the time of the German administration before 1914, and in all of the Arapesh country under the Australian administration under mandate which succeeded the German. Eye witness or participant accounts of warfare cannot be obtained from young Arapesh men. Because for many years now a superior government has welded their tribe into an administrative unit, and inexorably suppressed interlocality fighting within the unit, the old men are reticent about their time of sovereignty. They see their young men, under poll-tax and indentured labor obligation, held in a foreign grip even more firmly than themselves, and they feel estranged from their old manner of life. However, properly approached, they will discuss the matter.

A census of the war records of individual, grey-headed old men revealed the fact that approximately fifty percent of them claimed one or more war homicides each to his credit. The others disclaimed personal homicides; some without comment, some mentioning that these past twenty years and more had been passed in a foreign enforced peace. One old man, reputed to have been a coward in war, the most garrulous, in fact urged strongly his hunting tally of two hundred and fifty-six head of wild pig and tree kangaroo in extenuation of his manhood.

Warfare was good Arapesh custom. It was distinguished from the sometimes heated quarrels between the turbulent clans of a single sovereign locality by its scale, its determination, and by its traditions and conventions. Nevertheless warfare sometimes split a locality, and a clan or two of a locality sometimes carried on their grievance against others by joining a foreign enemy against them. In distinction to warfare and to clan quarrels both, a killer in his own clan, whether between *bwahainum* and *rabinen*, e.g., or whether within one of these, e.g., could only be a lone killer: aberrant, vicious, and detested.

In the two formerly sovereign localities of the Arapesh tribe most intimately known by the writer there was record of only one thoroughly vicious murderer. He had been a member of Suabyby's clan two generations ago, and his name was a re-

peat of the name of the clan founder, Suabi. This man was well recalled for having killed so close within his own clan circle that after the murder he came to the burial of the man he had slain, and was unmolested. It was recalled of him that, because of this deed, and of one other like it, he never slept within his own house at night as other men did. When he left a group of men at night it was his habit to go to his house door, withdraw and replace the log shutters of the door with a clatter, and then slink off secretly elsewhere. He went to temporary sleeping shelters he used to erect in changing places in the long grass cover off the edges of his hamlet clearing, so the report of him runs.

The clansman who secures a homicide in war is, of course, in very different social regard from a vicious wretch such as the murderer, Suabi. Why this is a fact in Arapesh society appears instantly in the further fact that Arapesh society is not cosmopolitan.

Arapesh warfare had no headhunting and no cannibal objectives, but only an objective of stealing women. The "pushers" or the promoters of Arapesh war generally employed an agent provocateur, or a secretive go-between, between them and a woman they designed to alienate from her foreign locality husband. This secret agent, called in Arapesh speech the *bera libere*, had some ties of kinship to the woman, which allowed him to visit her in her husband's place; perhaps he also had some ties of kinship to one or two other persons in the woman's husband's locality. Men related to a foreign locality through their mothers, or through their father's mothers, commonly visit their relatives. At the same time whenever an Arapesh man finds himself in a foreign locality he is interested to some extent in underhand moves, in sorcery promoted against his people by the people of his relatives' locality, or in *bera libere* work. The *bera libere* waits his opportunity for a private word with the woman. Then he boldly discloses the plans he carries. If the woman has any marks of a beating from her husband, so much the better. His proposals are then introduced by comment upon the marks of the beating. If the *bera libere's* proposals are well received by the woman, a day and a time of day are given her for her flight to the agent's principals, one of whom has seduced her previously and judged her willing. The *bera libere*, in account received from one such, was utterly cynical in describing how he had affected a soft compassion with the woman for the "unhappy" marriage she had incurred, and how he had sympathetically forwarded that view of it; but he was not cynical in describing the course of the war which his secret service had helped to promote. War promotion was his real interest, in his own account. The men of a locality can always disown a war promoter's action, and send an absconding woman back to her husband, if they do not want to fight a war.

When they choose, instead, to affirm the promoter's action and fight a war, it is because they, the locality majority, want a war. Only one of the promoters gets the woman in marriage. His comrades fight to help him stand upon his ground and his exclusive rights in it, in common with his locality.

The woman's own clansmen, that is her fathers, her brothers, and her brothers' sons are generally of a third locality. They contracted their kinswoman in marriage to her husband, and they abide by the contract. They are non-partisan.<sup>2</sup> A blood brother of the woman will not serve as *bera libere* against his brother-in-law's interest. It sometimes occurs that a remote clan "brother" of the woman may consider that he did not receive recognition in the amount of the bride price paid for her, and in its division between her clansmen. Such a disgruntled clan "brother" will shout his grievance in rage if he happens to find her husband beating his "sister," or quarrelling with her. If the husband does not compound with him, such a man may serve as *bera libere*. A woman's cross-cousin may also serve. It occurred, comparatively rarely, that the fighting group of the deserted husband did not respect the neutrality of the absconding woman's brethren, but fell upon them, before taking the fight to its customary objective against the promoters of the divorce, who had gained the woman in remarriage. When this by-path violence occurred, however, it was upon suspicion of connivance at *bera libere* work by the woman's brethren.

The deserted husband was not especially prominent in the scene that followed discovery of his wife's going. He did not have to raise the clans of his locality. The old men and the war leaders took immediate charge. The principal war leader, upon clan mobilization, addressed the clans of his locality in a set speech, conventionally used upon this occasion:

bu kwa ruwok. ulukum nubwe şalamw im. igo kwo  
Then she has run away. Heart before sago-soft it.<sup>3</sup> Done she  
nam meibili wabur. aramatoku kwo bweiy ag. pe  
went to what village? Woman she draws out it [spear]. You  
mine' nebili m wabur. meibili wabur pe na pe dak  
hear what against village.<sup>4</sup> Whatever village you go you discover

<sup>2</sup> They remain neutral even in those cases where they are not of a third locality, where marriage was intra-locality.

<sup>3</sup> The reference is to a species of sago palm with a very soft pith, and suggests the woman was lacking in moral fibre.

<sup>4</sup> I.e. "discover what village this absconding woman turns our spears against."

um eʃ. pe bou aut ʃe nake u rupok. gi kwo  
 about them. You clear battlefield they come we fight. Done she  
 bweiy ag. g ietu aduk. mo u rupok  
 draws out it [spear]. It [spear] stands outside [the house]. We fight  
 be naguk ausibal. seiwa borain ʃa pwe ik lawag in negur  
 then is let blood. Before talk it stayed apart tree its branch  
 be borain ʃe pwe. modai gi tugwar in uwe.  
 and talk it stayed. Not yet snapped and broken off it not.<sup>5</sup>  
 kwa ku yapukwi sigeitoku kwa giʃer un apotohin. kwa  
 She uses a good sago palm thorn; she lances a boil. She  
 ʃeʃanu pw eʃ seiwak iʃ  
 gropes in the dark for them the ancient things [war frontiers]  
 djui yogwap. ʃa rupei ʃa rupei  
 river fishing rights and land boundary lines. They fight me, they fight me  
 be naguk. yaulip ageup djelibibak  
 it [blood] is bled. O seasoning, spice! the agum tree leaf! good seasoning  
 eup. nohot mo u rupok bien mo u  
 when tender it!<sup>6</sup> Tomorrow we fight day after tomorrow we  
 rupok wanibi yanibi uwak.  
 fight; on the third day from now, on the fourth day from now, not so.  
 numanig ehi modai ʃe nek eʃ uwe. bu kwa  
 In cold [blooded] them [days] not they do things not. Then she  
 ruwok ulukum ʃalamw im. ya uli sigabeiku.  
 has run away. Heart sago-soft it. I search for a woman's ghost.  
 lawag maduk gi ʃi yauy oku. kwo ne bweʃ-uk  
 Tree forest vine done they secrete her. She herself hides-lost  
 um male ʃe tik  
 that never they see her.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>5</sup> The reference is to secret talk not broken into action, as a tree branch stays before breaking.

<sup>6</sup> This phrase is clearly an expression of pleasure at the prospect of a fight.

<sup>7</sup> These last three lines express in fine phrases the fact that the woman has fled to enemy territory.

This war leader's speech, upon the mobilizing of the clans of the locality, acknowledges the divorce which a woman has taken under the protection of the rules of chivalry.<sup>8</sup> The Arapesh approve of divorce and promote it only in hostilities, in bloodshed against enemies, and in the honor of men slain for and against it.

The patrols of the community that had lost a woman scattered to discover what alien community was their enemy. In some cases the patrols made their discovery, and surprised an outlying plantation of the enemy locality before those working in it were advised by their own people of a state of war in existence. In these cases the patrols secured a quick and an easy killing against an unsuspecting enemy still lulled in peace. The fact that such cases occurred shows that the team work between the absconding woman, the *bera libere*, the promoters, and all the people of their sovereign locality was often defective.

An invariable ritual of mobilization on the night before battle was drummed announcement on the slitgongs of the exact number of men of the enemy who were going to be slain on the field in the morning. Each side made its prediction, and drummed it out, a slow beat for a man, following a rapid tattoo in announcement. The prediction was believed to be truly calculable in accordance with the rules of black magic. It was, and is, Arapesh dogma that no man is slain in war except his personal leavings (leavings of his food, clothing with his sweat and body dirt on it, and the like) are first in the hands of sorcerers in the pay of the enemy. A war party, on the eve of battle, ascertained how many men of the enemy had come into their power in time of peace by loss of their personal leavings to them, and announced the number to the enemy on the slitgong drums. It was rarely possible in peace time for individuals of a foreign locality to secure the personal leavings of potential enemies by their own unaided efforts; but it was possible for individuals to secure such personal leavings in peace time by playing upon quarrels within the foreign locality, and by associating themselves in these quarrels with their relatives on the maternal side and their trade partners there. Such peaceful associations were cut off at war mobilization by the drummed announcement to the enemy of the fruits of treachery secured from them.

The battles were fought on cleared grounds traditionally used, lying on the borders of localities. These fields had their proper names. Today, after many years of peace, when assemblies from two formerly hostile localities meet, the orators of either side call the names of these fields and stir quick applause with them.

<sup>8</sup> Women of the enemy are themselves enemy, and eligible for killing in less chivalrous instances.

## IV

It has been noted that conditions within the sovereign locality were such that outsiders with claims to entry could hope to procure the personal leavings of some of the locality members. Some members of a locality were frequently ready to betray some others, in a covert way, to the enemy—not in the flesh, but in the leavings of food, body dirt, and the like, which meant betrayal in the spirit, and subsequent death to those so betrayed, it was believed. Such death might be either natural death in peace, or violent death in war.

We have already given account of Arapesh repudiation of murder, of killing within the clan. We have now to give account of Arapesh repudiation of killing in interclan feuds within the sovereign locality; and we have to give account of the betrayal to the enemy in spirit, or in personal leavings, which was a general substitute for actual killing in these internal affairs.

The following account tells of one specific instance provoked by the absconding of the woman, Suau, wife of Djeguh of Suabybys clan, to a man of a neighboring clan of the same locality. Such an affair was not mediated by *bera libere* work. It did not lead to war. It did lead to faction betraying faction, in the spirit, to the enemy and his sorcerers.

At dawn Suau cooked yams in haste and gave her children one each. She also gave one to Madjeke, who noticed that it was not thoroughly cooked. She and her young daughter, Keiyamos, then went to gather firewood. Keiyamos missed her mother, and called out for several times without securing a call in reply. Madjeke also called in vain. Suau had gone to Watiam of Aŕekehebybys clan.

Madjeke went to Watiam and threatened him at the spear's point, but Watiam had hidden Suau well, and pretended to know nothing of her. So Madjeke and the deserted husband, Djeguh, hid near by and spied. They heard the father of Watiam scold, "Send the woman back, or we'll all be killed." They heard Watiam fasten his house door, and go towards Suapali village. They returned home. At approaching dawn they heard from Suapali village the slitgong challenge to war.<sup>9</sup>

They went to Suapali neighborhood and abused the absconders obscenely, calling out that the deserted children had wept all night over a matter of a strange penis in the vulva of the mother, calling out, "While you were copulating all night your children were crying for you all night." Every day they went to Suapali with the same abuse.

Then Suapali cleared a battle field, and said, "Come tomorrow again, and we'll fight." But they only cleared half of a battlefield, leaving half uncleared. In a house of ours a Mogahin man cooked the wild ginger for war magic. Next day we went.

<sup>9</sup> Watiam had gone for shelter and help against a neighbor clan of his own locality to a foreign locality, Suapali. Normally Suapali was friendly with both these clans. In this instance it took Watiam's part.

But they ran away off their battlefield back to Suapali village. So we followed and gave them more obscenity. Then Djeguh and Nyegak and then Luluai went inside the village, and Djeguh drew an arrow on Watiam, but missed. Then stones, fire-sticks, spears, and arrows from Suapali came on us; then Luluai got shot in the thigh and we fell back and came home. But the quarrel stayed with us all.

At a later date Watiam and his Aŕekehebybys clansmen gave up their Suapali protection, and returned to their home, adjoining ours. There were Watiam, Manidobur, Wapidua, Towo, and Siukaru. We saw them come.

We went against them now. Wabigeli threw his *lamah* spear at Watiam at close range, but Watiam dodged it. Djeguh got Wapidua in the back with an arrow. Towo, from his house threshold, was about to shoot down on Wabigeli, when Wabigeli got him in the knee that he knelt on. They ran, Towo with them. Madjeke chased them, but they wounded him in the leg. As they ran, Manidobur ran close to Djeguh, but Djeguh deliberately did not shoot. He spoke instead, saying to Manidobur (the husband of his sister), "O my sister, pay for the head of my pig, my gift to you, now." So Manidobur, his sister's husband, was ashamed as he ran off.

There was no more fighting. But Madjeke took arm rings to pay for secret sorcery to be done against them now. First Watiam's father died. Madjeke and all of us went to the burial. Watiam, suspecting us of sorcery procured, called for some of our food to try us by ordeal. He ate of our food in our sight, and did not contain it, but vomited it, showing our guilt. The ordeal verdict being against us, Watiam charged us with sorcery. Madjeke said, "Yes, it's true; only I commissioned the sorcerer to procure the death of one of your Suapali supporters; he evidently made a small mistake."

However we also accounted for the wife of Towo, the wife of Leshuwan of Suapali, the wife of Kaibi of Suapali, and the man Pogigu by sorcery. They, by sorcery, did to death in return our sister's son, Dadauik, and also the father of Suau. Watiam went to live in Suapali. After these many deaths, Djeguh was cold now. Watiam returned to his home, gave a pig as a gift to Djeguh, and so "fastened the door" of Djeguh. Then Djeguh gave a gift of a pig to Watiam. Now, as you see, they are good neighbors, and sit down well.

In the above instance all the deaths claimed by the factions were procured in the spirit only. They were natural deaths. Realistically considered the instance is one of no fatal consequence whatever. The brawling with spears that took place was restrained. We may note especially the case of Djeguh, the deserted husband, finding himself in one incident opposite his sister's husband Manidobur, who was on the opposite side. Djeguh did not shoot, but deliberately reproached his sister's husband instead with intent to shame him. In general it is true that the many deep and intimate associations between locality members have a restraining influence in factional quarrels.

This general restraint upon violent action turns into secretive and constrained sorcery. Sorcery is believed to be death dealing, but the fact remains that it is substituted for effective physical violence.

## V

The following is an account of a war between the localities of Nyauia and Suapali, both on the Dugong road, the eastern inland-seawards road in the Arapesh country. The war took place after the country was in contact with the German administration, but before pacification—possibly as late as the year 1910. The informant is of Suabybys clan of Liwo locality, on the Death Adder road, the central inland-seawards road in Arapesh country.

All our fathers went to help Suapali. A woman named Wudjimari had absconded from her Nyauia husband, named Keyamas, to a man of Suapali named Suabi. Suapali were keen to hold her and to fight. They said, "No, we'll not send her back to her husband; we'll fight; give her the banana."<sup>10</sup>

Minio of our party was newly returned from indentured labor service at Pitu. By night he pulled his blanket over him to sleep. Black magic was being done by the enemy upon his personal leavings. He was to be slain tomorrow.

As the Suapali war lines went out on the road in the dawn they shot a pigeon still asleep. It was an act in breach of a taboo; but they did not consider that, or that they were shooting a man of their own in the spirit. They arrived on the field, and took possession of their end of it.

Madjeke and Shootman of ours hid themselves beside the road Nyauia and their Hamasuk allies were expected to come on, to their end of the field. They stayed. They saw Eimas come up leading the enemy line, then a man in white paint, then a man with a cassowary plume in his hair, then a man with a flower in his hair, then a man wearing the beak of a hornbill, then a man wearing a pandanus matting rain covering, then a man wearing a white cotton singlet. Then Madjeke shot at the next man in the line. Hamaleba and Shootman shot at the next man again. Two men of the enemy went down wounded. Madjeke and Shootman and Hamaleba, trying to make their get-away, heard them now on all sides, but succeeded in working through the undergrowth to their own end of the cleared field. Hega, following Madjeke hard, shot him in the upper thigh. Minio took a spear full in the chest, fell, and died.

All Nyauia were now on the *neitip* road [i.e. charging through undergrowth and cover on the side of the cleared field to engage the enemy at close quarters at their end of the cleared field]. Madjeke dodged a spear that grazed his shoulder. A trailing vine took his bow and arrows out of his hands. Djeguh and Wodjeuh stood to receive the *neitip* charge. Djeguh put his spear full into Manigowa, shouting, "Child, you feel it now." Djeguh and Wodjeuh were both wounded in several places. The *neitip* charge halted a moment. Madjeke turned Minio over to see his face, and saw that he was dead.

<sup>10</sup> Euphemism for the male member.

Then they fell back and away and down off the field, crossing a fallen tree trunk over a watercourse. The tree trunk broke under their feet. They heard Nyauia and Hamasuk in possession of the field, singing on the field. The victors had Manigowa of theirs carried off in a litter. Later his kindred sent payments to the sorcerers who had his personal leavings, and he did not die of his wound.

Madjeke was angry at his party. He said [to his juniors], "You go back and recover my bow and arrows, or there'll be scornful talk at our expense later." Suabi and some others went back, waited their opportunity, and got the bow and arrows, and Minio's corpse also and came away with them.

The above account touches most upon the acts of Madjeke, Shootman, and others who were all of Liwo, fathers of the informant, allies of Suapali. What Suapali men were doing in the fight is not mentioned. They were probably active, however.

The Suapali-Nyauia battle field was a traditional one, on ground named Nuberum-Mugueruhunum. Fights on this field were not gentle, although, as is common in New Guinea warfare, a loss of a man or two might be held sufficiently decisive to justify a flight of a losing party.

The account above omitted one significant item, which was mentioned as an afterthought. Suapali were not all mobilized and prepared to receive the woman Wudjimari on the moment when she absconded from Nyauia, and fled to Suapali. Nyauia had missed the woman, mobilized rapidly, and their patrols found Uduyebys hamlet of Suapali locality, outlying other hamlets of that locality, unprepared and unadvised of the incident. The Nyauia patrols killed two men, Atabig and Kufaumin by name, and one woman (all three of Uduyebys hamlet) with ease and by surprise. The battlefield meeting described above followed the day after this preliminary incident. In all, Nyauia locality lost one absconding wife, had one man wounded seriously and others less seriously, but secured in all a victory of four kills to none in revenge.

The use of surprise or of ambush killing, under cover of apparent peace, before open battle is joined, is a characteristic of New Guinea warfare generally. It is in no way peculiar to Arapesh warfare.

We have now covered:

- (a) Arapesh repudiation of murder, of killing within the clan.
- (b) Restraint upon killing in the flesh in factional disputes between clans of the one locality, and the general use of sorcery instead.
- (c) Warfare between sovereign localities.

The close observer may have noticed that some of the same men concerned in the account of factional dispute were also mentioned in the account of warfare. For instance in the factional dispute within his own

locality, the man Djeguh had lost his wife. He made no serious effort to kill any one of his opponents. In one case he is said to have held his hand deliberately in order to shame an opponent who was also his sister's husband. Watiam, who had taken his wife, had at first sought shelter in a foreign locality Suapali, which was normally on friendly terms both with Djeguh's clan and Watiam's clan, and all of their moiety of Liwo locality alike.

In the war between Suapali locality and Nyauia locality, Djeguh is mentioned (with his clansmen) helping Suapali. Here Djeguh has not suffered any personal loss. But determination to kill, not restraint from killing, obtains very clearly. Djeguh is recounted as standing to receive a *neitip* charge (close quarters charge) of Nyauia locality, and planting his spear into a man named Manigowa, saying, "Child, you feel it now."

## VI

It is not an easy task to view Arapesh social culture in its entire sweep. A theory has been advanced that this social culture "works, selecting one temperament, or a combination of related and congruent types, as desirable, and embodying this choice in every thread of the social fabric." According to this theory the entire Arapesh social culture has selected a *maternal* temperament, placid and domestic in its implications, both for men and women.<sup>11</sup>

The theory has been applied to the cultural analysis of Arapesh warfare, and has led to conclusions that "Warfare is practically unknown among the Arapesh—the feeling towards a murderer and that towards a man who kills in battle are not essentially different—abductions of women are not unfriendly acts on the part of the next community."<sup>12</sup> These conclusions we, of course, must reject on the basis of our preceding evidence.

As far as we know, the Arapesh do not expect a similar temperament in both sexes, moreover. In this connection we may cite the proverb, *aramumip ulukwip nahaiya; aramagowep ulukwip nahaiya*, "Men's hearts are different; women's hearts are different," and also the existence of a class of men called *aramagowem*, "women male," or effeminate men. The class of *aramagowem* is a definitely assigned class, with definite functions, given inferior food at feasts and special subordinate place. The man, Djeguh, mentioned in our accounts of faction feud and of war, was, for example, an *aramatokwin*, "woman male" (the singular form of *aramagowem*). He was never suspected of cowardice in war. He was, however,

<sup>11</sup> Margaret Mead, *Sex and Temperament in Three Primitive Societies* (New York, 1935).

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 23.

without ability in men's dances, oratory, economic leadership, and in his understanding. He was found by the writer to be very reticent and quiet.

There is no socially organized class of masculine women. A few cases are told of women who intervened actively in warfare, and there is record of one such who was buried by the men's secret society, with all a warrior's honors. (Ordinarily the sacred flutes, secret in the initiated men's society, are kept severely away from women and used to honor men's burials only.) Of such a woman it is said, in praise, *kw ar aramanum ulukum*, "She had in her a man's heart."

The view of the operation of Arapesh sorcery given under the hypothesis of uniform cultural temperament of a maternal character is also misleading,<sup>13</sup> and a more accurate view has been briefly stated in this paper.

Although the theory of Arapesh social culture having the one, uniform tendency, so called maternal, remains a hypothetical creation, it is not proper to assume that the Arapesh must be conceived either in terms of that hypothesis, or in terms of alternative hypothesis. It is better to make no hypotheses. Without hypothesis, it is clear that Arapesh culture did not promote warfare to any very vicious extreme. Warfare was made dependent upon women's sexual consent in extramarital liaisons outside locality borders, and it was regarded with considerable distaste. The chances for domestic peace, and for consequent peace abroad, were very high, and compare more than favorably with the chances for peace in other societies. We may now document the Arapesh distaste for strife with some of the traditional speeches of the old men on family and on sexual matters. These speeches tell heavily against polygamy, against the character of secondary wives, and against extramarital sexual intercourse. They tell strongly in favor of the character of first wives and of marriages peacefully contracted between children.

Nearly all Arapesh youths are provided with a first wife, and all girls are provided with a first husband. The marriages between boy grooms and girl brides are arranged by agreement between the fathers of the families concerned. The girl bride-to-be is usually adopted into her future husband's parents' household before she is pubescent. The youth, the groom-to-be, is warned not to make his affianced bride pregnant before her full growth is attained, or else he will have the shame of a half developed and broken wife for the rest of his days. The couple are not allowed material cohabitation. Otherwise the pair are allowed to consort freely and to make a garden together, pending their full growth, the girl's menstruation ceremonies, the boy's initiation, and their subsequent marriage ceremony and cohabitation.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 136-37, for example, but *passim*.





