

H2 65315

2 F

1 C

RAPPORTS DE MISSIONS

SCIENCES SOCIALES

GEOGRAPHIE

N° 1

1992

WCL? 111

Contribution de l'Equipe *Analyses et Synthèses
Régionales* à la "2^{ème} Conférence
sur les Valeurs Culturelles à l'ère
de la Technologie", Hawaii, 26-29 mai 1992

Pierre SIAPO
Gilbert DAVID

F 36 165

L'INSTITUT FRANÇAIS DE RECHERCHE SCIENTIFIQUE
POUR LE DÉVELOPPEMENT EN COOPÉRATION

CENTRE DE NOUMÉA

ORSTOM

Num 66379

RAPPORTS DE MISSIONS

2F

SCIENCES SOCIALES

1C

GEOGRAPHIE

N° 1

1992

Contribution de l'Equipe *Analyses et Synthèses Régionales*
à la "2^{ème} Conférence
sur les Valeurs Culturelles à l'ère
de la Technologie", Hawaii, 26-29 mai 1992

Pierre SIAPO
Gilbert DAVID

ORSTOM

L'INSTITUT FRANÇAIS DE RECHERCHE SCIENTIFIQUE
POUR LE DÉVELOPPEMENT EN COOPÉRATION

CENTRE DE NOUMÉA

© ORSTOM, Nouméa, 1992

/Siapo, P.
/David, G.

Contribution de l'Equipe *Analyses et Synthèses Régionales* à la "2^{ème} Conférence sur les Valeurs Culturelles à l'ère de la Technologie", Hawaii, 26-29 mai 1992

Nouméa : ORSTOM. Août 1992. 53 p.
Rapp. Missions : Sci. soc. : Géogr. ; 1

Ø95DEVEL ; Ø95FONCI

ECONOMIE ; FONCIER COUTUMIER ; AMENAGEMENT DU TERRITOIRE ; DEVELOPPEMENT
RURAL ; GRAND PROJET / NOUVELLE CALEDONIE

Imprimé par le Centre ORSTOM
de Nouméa
Août 1992

 ORSTOM Nouméa
REPROGRAPHIE

SOMMAIRE

	Page
Rapport de mission	3
Annexe 1 : Programme de la conférence	9
Annexe 2 : Texte de la communication présentée par l'équipe A.S.R. à la conférence	19



RAPPORT DE LA MISSION

Du 26 au 29 mai 1992 s'est tenue sur l'île de Maui (Hawaii) une conférence intitulée : *Terre, Culture et Développement sur le continent aquatique*. Organisée par le Kapalua Pacific Center, sous le parrainage du Congrès des Etats Unis d'Amérique, cette conférence était la seconde du genre. Elle s'inscrit dans un cycle de rencontres qui, une fois par an, réunissent décideurs politiques et scientifiques de l'ensemble du Pacifique sur le thème : "*Les valeurs culturelles à l'ère de la technologie dans le Pacifique Insulaire*", abordé chaque année selon une optique différente. L'ambition des organisateurs est de faire de ces conférences un des moments privilégiés de réflexion sur l'état présent et le devenir des petits Etats et territoires du Pacifique Insulaire.

La conférence de l'an passé avait essentiellement consisté en un échange de vues relatif aux rapports "tradition-modernité" et "culture-développement". Des communications sur ces sujets avaient été présentées par une quinzaine de pays : les îles Cook, les Etats Fédérés de Micronésie, Guam, Fidji, Kiribati, les Mariannes du Nord, les Marshall, Nauru, Palau, la Papouasie Nouvelle Guinée, les Samoa américaines, le Samoa Occidental, Tokelau, Tonga, Vanuatu. Bien que présents lors de cette première conférence, les Territoires Français d'Outre-Mer s'étaient peu manifestés.

Cette année, la Nouvelle Calédonie a eu à coeur d'accroître sa participation, en associant un jeune scientifique au décideur politique représentant le Territoire. C'est dans ce cadre que Pierre SIAPO, membre de l'équipe A.S.R. de l'ORSTOM a été invité par Mr. le Président du Congrès de Nouvelle Calédonie et a accompagné à la conférence Mr. R. PAOUTA, représentant du Congrès.

Cinq thèmes ont été abordés lors de la conférence (cf Annexe 1) :

- le foncier dans les îles du Pacifique ;
- l'articulation "foncier-développement durable" ;
- la protection de l'environnement et des ressources naturelles ;
- les cultures traditionnelles et leur préservation face à l'ouverture du Pacifique insulaire sur l'économie mondiale ;
- le rôle de l'éducation dans le respect des équilibres "tradition-modernité" et "culture-développement" et dans la sensibilisation des insulaires du Pacifique aux problèmes de l'environnement.

Chaque thème a fait l'objet d'une séance de présentation, durant laquelle les "Resource People", essentiellement des chercheurs de l'Université d'Hawaii, de l'A.N.U.¹ et de l'USP², ont dressé l'état de la situation, suivi de discussions en groupes de travail durant lesquelles scientifiques et politiques ont pu confronter leurs points de vue, à partir notamment des études de cas brièvement présentées par les représentants de chaque pays. A cette occasion, l'équipe A.S.R. avait préparé une communication intitulée "*Culture, terre et développement en Nouvelle Calédonie à l'aube du XXI Siècle : à la recherche d'un nouvel équilibre*", développant trois études de cas : la Koné-Tiwaka et l'aménagement régional qui lui est associé dans la Province Nord de la Nouvelle Calédonie ; le port de Wé et les problèmes fonciers que sa construction soulève ; l'opération Café (cf Annexe 2). Chaque étude de cas est complémentaire des deux

¹Australian National University, Canberra.

²University of South Pacific, Suva (Fidji).

autres. L'ensemble constitue un panorama qui nous a semblé pertinent des rapports entre le binôme "culture-terre" et les politiques de développement mises en oeuvre à l'échelle du Territoire ou des nouvelles régions définies à la suite des Accords de Matignon en 1988. De nombreux éléments de ce papier ont été utilisés en discussion de travail par P. Siapo ; l'intégralité de la communication sera publiée dans les Actes de la conférence.

Nous avons retenu l'exemple de la Koné-Tiwaka car il s'agit d'un projet tout à fait original, dans la mesure où sa conception est le fruit de la culture mélanésienne et les moyens mis en oeuvre pour sa réalisation viennent de l'Etat. Ce projet répond au double impératif de rééquilibrage spatial à l'échelle du territoire calédonien, en créant un pôle urbain dans la Province Nord, et de rééquilibrage spatial au sein même de cette province en créant un axe routier de grande envergure à travers la chaîne centrale, de manière à relier la côte est à la côte ouest, reprenant ainsi le tracé des anciens sentiers coutumiers. Il s'agit là du plus vaste chantier entrepris en Nouvelle Calédonie depuis une trentaine d'années. Contrairement au système occidental où l'espace s'organise autour de lieux centraux, l'organisation spatiale traditionnelle mélanésienne se structure selon des réseaux composés de noeuds d'habitat d'égale importance reliés par des itinéraires privilégiés. Le plan d'aménagement de la Province Nord s'inspire directement de cette philosophie. Le pôle urbain, qui devait structurer la province, a été éclaté en un réseau de petits centres urbains aux fonctions complémentaires. Le tout épouse la forme d'un H dont une des branches est constituée par les communes de Voh, Népoui et la conurbation Koné Pouembout sur la côte ouest, l'autre branche étant formée des communes de Touho, Poindimié et Ponerihouen sur la côte est, la barre du H reliant ces deux ensembles étant l'axe routier Koné-Tiwaka.

Le port de Wé à Lifou constitue également un des pôles majeurs du programme de développement économique à l'échelle du Territoire de Nouvelle Calédonie. C'est le principal projet de développement de la Province des Iles ; il fait de surcroît l'objet d'un grave litige foncier entre propriétaires coutumiers qui bloque à l'heure actuelle toute réalisation des travaux. Ce litige pose le problème de la mise à la disposition du Territoire ou de la Province d'une terre de réserve. Ce problème qui revêt une importance cruciale aux îles Loyauté, qui dans leur totalité sont classées comme terres de réserve, n'a encore que peu touché la Grande Terre où l'ensemble des aménagements collectifs se fait sur le domaine de l'Etat. La situation pourrait toutefois rapidement évoluer dans l'avenir avec l'aménagement de la côte est de la Grande Terre, où les terres de réserve occupent une large part de la bande littorale. L'étude du port de Wé est donc appelée à devenir en Nouvelle Calédonie un classique des litiges fonciers. C'est la raison pour laquelle nous l'avons retenue comme étude de cas. Deux questions principales dominent le débat : l'identification des propriétaires coutumiers et l'identification du nouveau statut de la terre à aménager. L'analyse de la perception du projet par la population mélanésienne et par l'Administration conduit à relever deux niveaux de réalités. D'un côté, une logique administrative soumise au rythme des échéances budgétaires et qui segmente l'espace en de multiples projets, tel le port de Wé, indépendants les uns des autres ; de l'autre côté, une logique mélanésienne marquée par le temps long des palabres et l'interconnexion des lieux géographiques, le port de Wé étant considéré ici comme partie intégrante d'un ensemble plus vaste. Dans l'état actuel des choses, il semble difficile à la société mélanésienne d'intégrer cette perception administrative. Il revient donc à l'Administration de prendre en compte la perception mélanésienne du temps et de l'espace sachant que la résolution des problèmes fonciers au sein de la société canaque prend beaucoup de temps, d'autant plus que la situation géographique du centre urbain de Wé, à cheval sur le territoire de plusieurs districts coutumiers, fait qu'aux problèmes fonciers internes à chaque district se conjuguent des problèmes fonciers inter-districts.

Depuis une soixantaine d'années, le développement de la culture du café en milieu mélanésien est présentée par les Pouvoirs Publics comme le modèle d'intégration de la société

mélanésienne à l'économie marchande. Il était donc logique que nous retenions ce thème pour notre troisième étude de cas des rapports "culture-terre-développement". L'introduction massive du café en milieu mélanésien date de 1930 ; elle a été conduite sous l'impulsion de l'Administration. Rapidement le café devient en Grande Terre l'unique source de revenus monétaires des mélanésiens. En 1966, une entreprise de restructuration et de modernisation des plantations de café est engagée. Le "boom" du nickel est largement responsable de l'échec de ce projet, les mélanésiens se détournant de l'agriculture pour les mines. La fin du "boom" du nickel entraîne le retour des salariés mélanésiens travaillant à la mine dans les tribus. L'aggravation de la situation économique et politique conduit en 1978 le Secrétariat d'Etat (Gouvernement Français) à promouvoir une politique de rattrapage des revenus en milieu rural, à travers l'opération "café soleil". 15 ans après, cette opération peut être considérée comme un échec dont les causes principales sont à rechercher dans l'inadaptation de cette opération de développement à la logique interne de la société mélanésienne.

L'après-midi du 27 mai a été consacrée à des sorties de terrain, ce qui a permis aux représentants des pays du Pacifique de se familiariser avec quelques aspects de la vie hawaïenne en rapport avec les thèmes abordés lors de la conférence. Cinq sorties ont été proposées. Deux d'entre elles concernaient la préservation du patrimoine historique ; une autre sortie avait pour thème les relations "environnement-utilisation de la terre".

Les deux autres sorties se rapportaient à la communication. C'est à une de ces dernières que la délégation calédonienne a participé ; le sujet abordé était le télé-enseignement dans les lieux isolés. La télévision n'existe encore que dans un nombre restreint de pays du Pacifique mais est probablement appelée à une rapide extension, comme le montrent les exemples des îles Cook et du Vanuatu. Les programmes de télévision scolaire sont encore plus embryonnaires et nulle part ailleurs qu'à Hawaii il n'est question de télé-enseignement où professeurs et étudiants peuvent intervenir de manière interactive. Dans les autres pays et territoires du Pacifique insulaire, les enseignements interactifs à distance se limitent actuellement à la communication orale ; c'est notamment le cas des "Extension Services" du réseau USP qui comme le télé-enseignement, utilisent la diffusion par satellite (Peacesat).

La démonstration de télé-enseignement qui a été faite lors de la conférence a fait intervenir un professeur basé au studio de télé-enseignement de Maui et deux étudiants vivant sur les îles de Lanai et de Molokai. Le télé-enseignement est certes coûteux ; mais c'est actuellement un moyen de communication extraordinaire pour les archipels formés de petites îles éloignées les unes des autres comme en comptent beaucoup la Polynésie et la Micronésie. Il permet la décentralisation des universités en de petits centres et contribue ainsi indirectement au maintien de la population dans ces îles éloignées. Le télé-enseignement est également très prisé des salariés qui, ayant dépassé largement l'âge de suivre des études universitaires sur les campus, trouvent là une seconde chance de parfaire leur formation et de s'élever dans l'échelle sociale. Ce peut être également un puissant outil pour la remise à niveau des techniciens et ingénieurs des secteurs public et privé. Un vaste espace axé sur la formation continue s'ouvre donc au télé-enseignement. Dans les TOM, nul doute qu'une demande pour le télé-enseignement existe ; la volonté d'ouverture de l'U.F.P.³ aux réalités du Pacifique pourrait se concrétiser sous cette forme.

En complément des sorties du mercredi après-midi ont également été organisées deux soirées culturelles. Le mercredi soir, l'ensemble des congressistes s'est rendu à l'ancienne prison de Lahaina. Le jeudi soir, chaque délégation du Pacifique insulaire a été invitée dans une famille. Les échanges ont porté essentiellement sur l'aliénation foncière d'une part, les plantations et les infrastructures touristiques, y compris les golfs, qui occupent la plus large part

³ Université Française du Pacifique, Nouméa et Papeete

des terres traditionnelles des mahoris d'Hawaii, et d'autre part sur les caractéristiques respectives des systèmes coloniaux américains, britanniques et français. Ces échanges ont été extrêmement enrichissants et pour tous les participants ce fut un grand moment de la conférence. D'une manière générale, les rencontres avec les autres délégations du Pacifique ont été très fructueuses pour les représentants de la Nouvelle Calédonie. Les TOM sont généralement peu représentés dans les conférences internationales et ateliers de travail qui réunissent les pays du Pacifique insulaire ; les océaniens sont donc toujours très curieux de rencontrer des calédoniens et les relations qui en découlent sont le plus souvent très chaleureuses.

Reste le problème de la langue. Peu d'océaniens parlent le français et hormis les réunions de la C.P.S,⁴ il est rare que des interprètes soient présents. La maîtrise de l'anglais s'avère donc indispensable. Des efforts conséquents ont été réalisés ces dernières années par l'ORSTOM dans le cadre de la formation continue pour encourager l'apprentissage et le perfectionnement de l'anglais parmi les agents du Centre de Nouméa. Si des résultats tangibles peuvent être couramment obtenus dans la pratique de la langue orale, la pratique de l'anglais écrit est toujours plus délicate. D'une manière générale, les textes rédigés directement en anglais par les chercheurs francophones sont fréquemment d'une piètre qualité rédactionnelle et se rapprochent plus d'un mauvais créole que de l'anglais écrit, ce qui nuit fortement à la bonne compréhension de l'information par le public anglophone et contribue à dévaloriser le niveau des résultats exposés. La tentation est alors forte pour le chercheur francophone du Pacifique de ne pas participer aux réunions et conférences d'intérêt régional, presque exclusivement en anglais, et de limiter ses interventions aux manifestations ayant lieu en français. Comment s'étonner ensuite que les activités scientifiques effectuées dans les TOM soient d'une manière générale peu connues de nos collègues du Pacifique ! La solution à notre avis passe par la rédaction des communications en français et ensuite par leur traduction en anglais⁵. Sont ainsi conservées toutes les subtilités de la démonstration pour peu que la traduction soit de bonne qualité et que les auteurs aient une connaissance suffisamment bonne de l'anglais pour relire et amender la traduction si le besoin s'en fait sentir, notamment en ce qui concerne les termes techniques.

En conclusion, cette conférence a été très fructueuse. Les thèmes abordés sont d'une actualité brûlante ; ils touchent l'ensemble des Etats et territoires du Pacifique Insulaire et il était passionnant d'observer la manière dont ils étaient perçus par leurs représentants et de discuter en commun des solutions apportées par chacun. Il est à souhaiter que la troisième édition de ce cycle de conférences, organisé par le Kapalua Pacific Center, soit aussi intéressante que celle de l'année 1992 et que l'équipe A.S.R. de l'ORSTOM puisse de nouveau y participer.

⁴Commission du Pacifique Sud, Nouméa.

⁵ C'est ce que nous avons fait, profitant de la chance qui nous était donnée de bénéficier sur Nouméa des services d'un traducteur compétent.

ANNEXE 1

PROGRAMME DE LA CONFERENCE

**PROGRAMME DE LA 2ème CONFERENCE SUR LES VALEURS CULTURELLES A L'ERE DE
LA TECHNOLOGIE**

Organisée par le Kapalua Pacific Center du 26 au 29 Mai 1992

Thème : Terre, Culture et Développement sur le Continent Aquatique.

Mardi 26 Mai

- 8H00 Inscrition**
- 8H45 SEANCE PLENIERE**
Cérémonie d'ouverture - Prières et Introductions des Nations
Insulaires.
- 9H45 Le Rôle des Iles du Pacifique dans l'Economie Mondiale Actuelle.**
Intervention de M. Daniel K. Inouye, Sénateur Américain.
- 10H20 Pause**
- 10H40 Terre, Culture et Développement.**
Perspective des Pays Insulaires.
Intervention de M. Ezekiel Alebua, Ancien Premier Ministre des Iles Salomon
- 11H15 Exposé Général des pratiques et problèmes fonciers dans les Iles**
du Pacifique
Intervention de Gérard Ward, Directeur du Centre de Recherche des Etudes du
Pacifique, Université Nationale d'Australie.
- 12H15 Déjeuner.**
- 13H45 SEANCE SUR LE FONCIER ET LA NOTION DE DEVELOPPEMENT**
DURABLE
Présidée par M. Stan Hosie
Directeur de la Fondation pour les Peuples du Pacifique
- Un développement durable. Concept et Réalités.**
Intervention de M. Sitiveni Halapua, Directeur du Programme de
Développement des Iles du Pacifique (PIDP) de l'East West Center.
- Un développement durable. Expériences pratiques en Papouasie**
Nouvelle Guinée.
Intervention de Kipling Uiari, Directeur Général Adjoint de la Société
OK Tedi Mining, Ltd
- 15H00 Pause**

.../...

15H15

Discussion en groupes de travail.

Groupe A. Animateur : M. Sitiveni Halapua
Thème : Problèmes relatifs à la Notion de développement durable.
Autres intervenants : Wari Iamo,
Seumanutafa Aeau Tiavolo
Rapporteur : Diane Aoki

Groupe B. Animateur : M. R. Gérard Ward
Thème : Principaux problèmes relatifs aux pratiques foncières dans les Iles du Pacifique.
Autres intervenants : Sakiusa Tuisolia,
John Enright
Rapporteur : Rex Horoi

Groupe C. Animateur : Stan Hosie
Thème : Profit et Protection : Sont-ils compatibles ?
Autres intervenants : Simon Loueckhote
Jon Jonassen
Rapporteur : Faustina Rehuher

Groupe D. Animateur : Kipklung Uiari
Thème : La Participation de la Communauté aux projets de développement .
Autres intervenants : Bob Léonard, Mike Boughton
Rapporteur : Caroline Sinavaiana

17H00

Fin des travaux

18H00

Réception. Divertissement
Organisé par la Compagnie Hawaiian Airlines

Mercredi 27 Mai

7H45

Accueil

8H00

SEANCE SUR LE FONCIER DANS LES ILES DU PACIFIQUE
Présidée par M. Gérard Ward.

Politiques et pratiques foncières à Tonga.
Intervention de Mme Fusitua, Bureau du Premier Ministre, Tonga.

8H40

Développement et Régime Foncier en Papouasie Nouvelle Guinée.
Intervention de M. Wari Iamo, Directeur de l'Institut National de Recherche de Papouasie Nouvelle Guinée.

.../...

- 9H20 **Le Foncier sur les îles coralliennes.**
Intervention de M. Uentabo Neemia, Institut d'Etudes du Pacifique,
Université du Pacifique Sud.
- 10H00 Pause.
- 10H15 **Discussion en groupes de travail.**
- Groupe A** Animateur : M. R. Gérard Ward
Autres intervenants : Rufo J. Lujan, Paul Bengo
Rapporteur : Craig Severance
- Groupe B** Animateur : M. Sitiveni Halapua
Autres intervenants : Tadashi Sakuma, Abe Aiona
Rapporteur : Vilsoni Herenkio
- Groupe C** Animateur : M. Robert Kiste
Autres intervenants : Paula Moala, Jerry Norris
Rapporteur : Uentabo Neemia
- Groupe D** Animateur : Mme Margaret Taylor
Autres intervenants : Wari Iamo, George Baniani
Rapporteur : Leba Savu
- 12H00 **Déjeuner.** Présidé par M. Mufi Hannemann, Directeur du Bureau des
Relations Internationales, Hawaï.
- Titre du discours : Un Développement pour soutenir la "manière océanienne".
Quels sont les responsables ?
Intervenant : M. Félix Wendt, Ambassadeur Samoa Occidental.
- 14H00 **Voyages sur le terrain (pour les habitants des îles du
Pacifique).**
- Quelques exemples de cas concernant l'île Maui.
- Préservation historique du Centre Ville.
 - Programmes d'Enseignement pour les lieux isolés.
 - Protection des sites historiques.
 - La considération de l'Impact sur l'Environnement dans
l'accomplissement des objectifs d'utilisation de la terre.
 - Les décisions par participation de la Communauté.
- 18H30 **Réception à l'Ancienne prison de Lahaina**
Fondation pour la Restauration de Lahaina
Divertissement organisé par le Bureau des Affaires Hawaïennes.

.../...

Jeudi 28 Mai

- 7H45 Accueil
- 8H00 **SEANCE SUR LA PROTECTION DE L'ENVIRONNEMENT ET DES RESSOURCES NATURELLES**
Présidée par Jerry Norris
Directeur du Conseil pour le Développement du bassin du Pacifique.
- 8H15 **Approche régionale des préoccupations relatives à l'environnement dans le Pacifique Sud.**
Intervention de Leba Savu, Président du Comité d'Action du Pacifique Sud pour l'Ecologie humaine et l'Environnement.
Université du Pacifique Sud.
- 8H45 **Commission. Les Problèmes de Préservation de l'Environnement.**
 . La Préservation de la forêt tropicale
 par Margaret Taylor, Ambassadeur Papouasie Nouvelle Guinée.
 . Les Droits de pêches
 par Kitty Kimonds, Directeur du Conseil de Gestion des Pêches Régionales du Pacifique Ouest.
 . Les Récifs
 par James Maragos, chercheur à l'Institut de Politique et d'Environnement, East-West Center.
- 9H30 **Débat**
- 9H45 Pause
- 10H00 **La Protection de l'Environnement. Quatre Perspectives d'avenir**
Christopher Jones et Wendy Schulz
Chercheurs Associés,
Institut de Recherche en Sciences Sociales
Université d'Hawaï à Manoa
- Discussion en groupe de travail**
Regard sur l'apparence des sociétés insulaires dans 25 ans, en matière de gestion traditionnelle ou "occidentale" des forêts, des pêcheries, et des récifs pour chaque perspective d'avenir.
Animateur : Christopher Jones, Wendy Schulz, James Dator, Ron Cannarella.
- 11H20 Rapports du groupe de travail
Synthèse des Perspectives d'avenir quant aux forêts, pêcheries, et récifs, en incluant le rôle du foncier.
- 12H00 Déjeuner
Présidé par Mark Juergensmeyer
Doyen de la Faculté d'Etudes d'Hawaï, de l'Asie et du Pacifique, Université d'Hawaï.
Intervenant : James Dator,
 Professeur en Sciences Politiques, Université d'Hawaï et
 Président de la Fédération d' Etudes des Perspectives
 d'avenir dans le Monde.

.../...

Autres intervenants : Margaret Taylor
Ambassadeur
Papouasie Nouvelle Guinée

14H00

SEANCE SUR LA PRESERVATION DES CULTURES INDIGENES

Présidée par Abe Aiona

Vice Président du Bureau des Affaires Hawaïennes

L'impact de l'évolution des politiques foncières sur les cultures traditionnelles.

Etudes de cas Hawaïens.

Introduction par Oswald Stender, Administrateur, Ecoles Kamehameha

- . Présentation générale d'Hawaï - Melody Mackenzie
- . Les Droits fonciers - Nahoia Lucas
- . Le Taro - LaFrance Kapaka Arboleda
- . Les viviers - Bill Monahan
- . Ceux qui conçoivent les politiques
Bureau des Affaires Hawaïennes
Clayton Hee, Président du Conseil
Département des Terres Hawaïennes
Mrs Hoaliku Drake, Présidente de Commission

15H00

Pause

15H15

Présentation de cas concernant les Iles du Pacifique

- . Polynésie - Félix Wendt, Ambassadeur
- . Micronésie - Dilmei Olkeriil, Ministre
- . Mélanésie - Ezékiel Alebua

16H00

Discussion en groupes de travail

Groupe A Animateur : Rep. Annelie Amaral
Thème : Les droits fonciers
Autre intervenant : Nahoia Lucas

Groupe B Animateur : Carole Paulson
Thème : La pêche
Autre intervenant : Bill Monahan

Groupe C Animateur : Donald Aweau
Thème : L'agriculture
Autre intervenant : LaFrance Kapaka Arboleda

Groupe D Animateur : Harriet O'Sullivan
Thème : La politique
Autres intervenants : Clayton Hee, Hooliku Drake

17H15

Fin des travaux

18H30

Dîner pour les participants originaires des Pays Insulaires chez des hôtes de l'île de Maui.

.../...

Vendredi 29 Mai

7H45

Accueil

8H00

SEANCE SUR LE ROLE DE L'EDUCATION

Présidée par Robert Kiste

Directeur du Centre d'Etudes des Iles du Pacifique

Université d'Hawaï

Présentation des thèmes :

- . Préserver les cultures Indigènes.
- . Améliorer la compréhension des méthodes de gestion du Développement pour répondre à des objectifs culturels.
- . Sélectionner des Programmes de Formation appropriés et compatibles avec des objectifs fonciers et d'environnement.
- . Développer les approches consensuelles des opportunités de développement.

Intervenants

Uentabo Neemia
Institut d'Etudes du Pacifique
Université du Pacifique Sud

Rex Horoi, Directeur du
Collège des Hautes Etudes des Iles Salomon
Iles Salomon

Faustina Rehuher
Institut de Ressources de Palau
Palau

Vilsino Hereniko
Centre d'Etudes des Iles du Pacifique
Université d'Hawaï

Diane Aoki
Centre d'Etudes des Iles du Pacifique
Université d'Hawaï

Craig Severance
Président du Département des Sciences Sociales
Université d'Hawaï à Hilo

Caroline Sinavaiana,
Directeur de l'Institut Pacifique-Asie
Pago Pago, Samoa Américaines

Asesela Ravuvu,
Directeur de l'Institut d'Etudes du Pacifique
Université du Pacifique Sud.

.../...

10H00 **Discussions en séminaires.**

12H00 **Déjeuner.**
Présidé par Albert J. Simone
Président de l'Université d'Hawaï

L'université comme facteur d'évolution

Intervenant : Hamilton McCubbin
 Vice Président des Affaires Universitaires
 Université de Hawaï

14H00 **SEANCE DE SYNTHESE**

Rapports des Groupes de Travail et Recommandations

- . Le foncier et la Notion de Développement Durable
Stan Hosie
- . Séance sur le foncier dans les Iles du Pacifique
R G Ward
- . Protection de l'Environnement et des Ressources Naturelles
Jerry Norris
- . Séance sur la Préservation des cultures Indigènes
Abe Aiona
- . Séance sur le rôle de l'Education
Robert Kiste

Résumé
Grant MacCall, Donald G. Malcolm

16H30 **Cérémonie de Clôture.**



ANNEXE 2

TEXTE DE LA COMMUNICATION
PRESENTEE PAR L'EQUIPE A.S.R. A LA CONFERENCE

CULTURE, LAND, AND DEVELOPMENT IN NEW CALEDONIA
AT THE DAWN OF THE XXIst CENTURY :
THE SEARCH FOR A NEW BALANCE.

SIAPO, P. ; DAVID, G. et M. WAGINO

Laboratoire de Géographie, ORSTOM,
BP A5 Nouméa, Nouvelle Calédonie.

INTRODUCTION

Within Melanesian society, the land and the culture are closely interlinked: the territory is the very foundation of the culture. For centuries, this relationship of land and culture had been evolving in the closed environment of the island. Now, at the dawn of the XXIst century, the island is opening up to the world. For an island-based system, development is generally considered as the main road to integration within the greater context of the modern world. In New Caledonia, much as in other parts of the Pacific, this opening up leads to confrontation between the "land-culture" concept and the development policies that are being implemented. Out of these confrontations, can we expect to see the birth of a new type of "land-culture-development" relationship ? We shall try to answer this question through the study of three examples :

The first shall concern the transversal axis from Koné to Tiwaka, in the North Province of New Caledonia, and the regional development that centers around it .

The second example concerns the Territorial project for the harbour at Wé, in the island of Lifou, which constitutes one of the main items on the economic development program for the Islands Province within the current Territorial policy of economic redistribution.

The third example deals with the development of coffee farming in the Melanesian community, a project which has been touted by the authorities for the last fifty years as a model of Melanesian integration into the Territory's economic and commercial life.

I - GEOGRAPHICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

1 - The Geography of New Caledonia

1.1. - Geographical location

New Caledonia is an archipelago located in the South-West of the Pacific Ocean. It is 1500 km East of the coast of Australia, 1800 km from New Zealand, 11000 km from California, and 7000 km from Japan.

Because of its location, it can be considered as the continuation of the Melanesian "arc" of islands. New Caledonia is made up of one large island, known as the 'Mainland' (in French, the 'Grande Terre', or Big Land), and of numerous smaller islands, the main ones being the Loyalty Islands, the Belep Islands, and the Isle of Pines. It covers a total area of 19 100 km².

1.2. - Administrative organization of the Territory

Following the 'Matignon Agreements' of 1988, New Caledonia has been divided into three Provinces : the North Province, the South Province, and the Islands Province (Fig. 1). Each Province has its own Council, which administers any business relating to its area. The members of these Provincial Councils also hold seats on the Territorial Congress. The Government Delegate (or High Commissioner) chairs this last Congress. He is also the Territory's chief executive.

New Caledonia is further divided into 32 Municipalities (communes¹), whose budgets are managed by Municipal Councils. Some of these Municipalities² are made up of reservation zones³, which are organized in custom districts⁴, and divided into 'tribes'⁵.

¹ A French administrative subdivision, which may be a town or a rural district.

² Three municipalities contain no "tribes" (see note 5): Dumbea, Farino, and Noumea.

³ Melanesian settlement territories where the land cannot be bought or sold. Through a 1898 Decree, the French government appointed High Chiefs to run districts, and Small Chiefs to run individual 'tribes'. The whole of the Loyalty islands is under reservation status.

⁴ A 'custom district' is an administrative unit created by the French government, and which regroups several 'tribes'. New Caledonia counts 57 custom districts (16 in the Loyalty Islands, 28 in the North Province, and 13 in the South Province), and 337 'tribes' (87 in the Islands, 199 in the North, and 51 in the South).

⁵ In New Caledonia, the term 'tribe' refers not so much to a human group with kinship or similar ties, but to the geographical location of their settlement. It is an administrative land division, rather than a demographic concept.

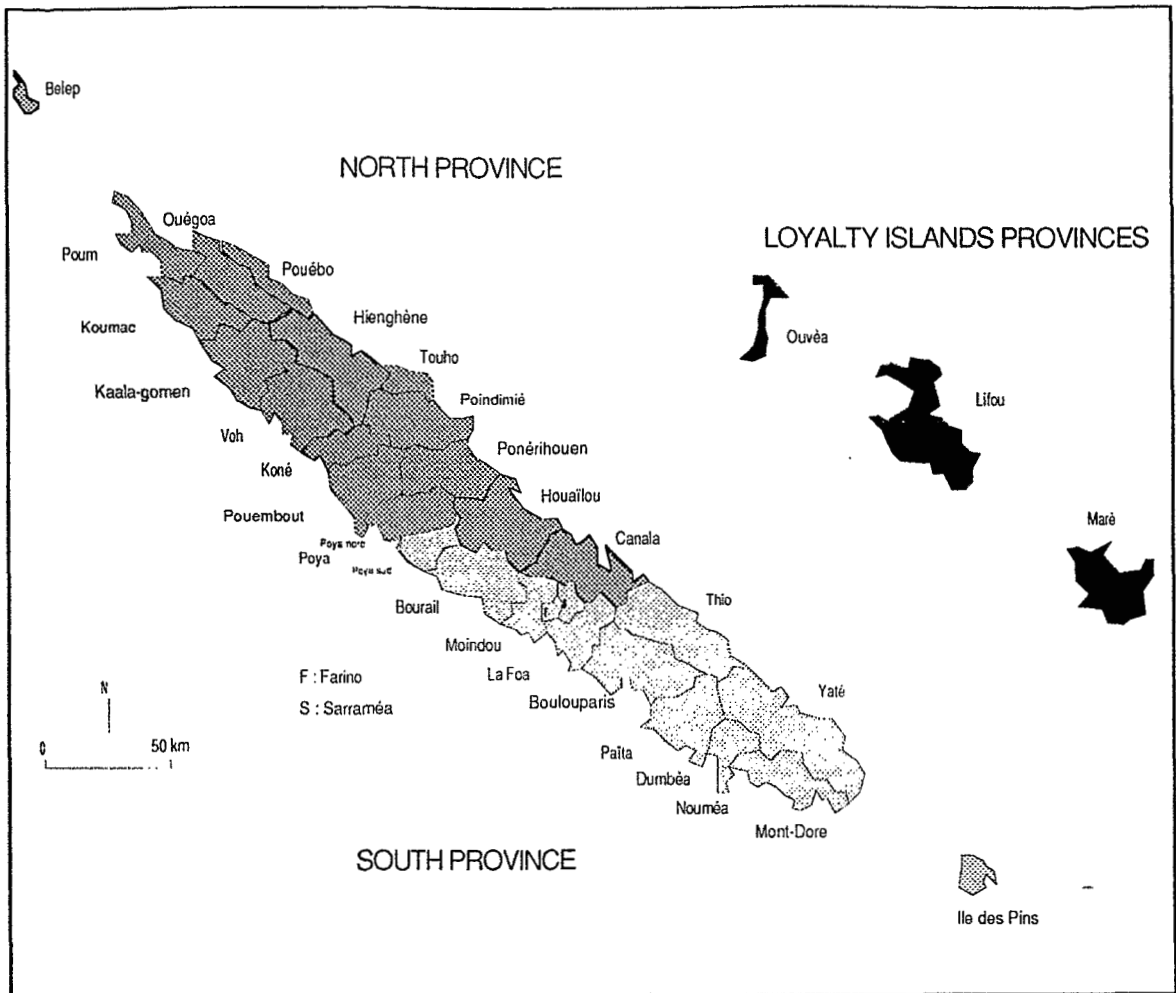


Fig n° 1 : New - Caledonian provinces and districts (communes).

1.3. - The physical setting

A mountain range dominates the New Caledonian landscape. It stretches North to South for the whole length of the Mainland. Its highest points are Mount Panié (1628 m) in the North, and Mount Humbolt (1618 m) in the South. This configuration justifies the use of such adjectives as 'rugged', or 'massive', when describing New Caledonia. The few flat lands present are found only near the seashore.

The Loyalty Islands present a different aspect. In fact, this group of islands constitutes a forward outthrust of the Mainland's range. Former coral atolls, now raised, they are characterized by a limestone plateau, dished in places, and surrounded by cliffs.

Located in the tropical belt, New Caledonia is subjected to a typical tropical climate, with two well defined seasons : the warm season, punctuated by

cyclones and tropical depressions, lasts from November to March, while the cool season, the period of the Trade Winds, extends from May to September.

1.4 - Population

In 1989, New Caledonia had 164 173 inhabitants, of which 44.8% were Melanesians, 33.6% Europeans, 8.6% Wallisians, 2.9% Tahitians, 1% Ni-vanuatu, and 4.4% came from other ethnic origins, mainly Indonesians and Vietnamese.

The distribution of the two major ethnic groups through the Territory is revealing. The Melanesians mostly occupy the islands (Belep, Isle of Pines, Ouen Island, Loyalty Islands), and the East coast of the Mainland. The Europeans have settled on the West coast of the Mainland and around greater Noumea⁶, where we also find most of the ethnic minorities.

With a population of 65 110 souls (1989), Noumea is the only true urban centre in New Caledonia. The Europeans, with 49.5% of the total population of Noumea, are by far its largest ethnic group. Next come the Melanesians (22.9%), the Wallisians (9.4%), the Tahitians (3.6%), the Vietnamese (3%), and the other minorities. The city of Noumea represents nearly 40% of the total population of New Caledonia.

In contrast to the other French overseas Territories and 'Départements'⁷, New Caledonia's population density is low : 9 inhabitants / km².

Much like other South Pacific communities, French New Caledonia's population is young : nearly 40% under the age of 20.

1.5 - Activities, Province by Province

In 1989, the segment of the population actively employed was estimated at 54 230 people. The geographical distribution of this group is interesting : 75% in the South Province, 18% in the North Province, and 7% only in the Islands Province.

Table 1 indicates the geographical, and therefore ethnic, imbalance in employment which exists in the Territory. Within the South Province, the agricultural sector has been largely neglected in favour of service and industrial activities. In the other two Provinces, on the other hand, it is agriculture which is the main occupation. This is not hard to understand when one considers that these last are the preferred areas of residence of the Melanesians, and that subsistence farming remains a very important part of their lives.

Industry plays a relatively important role in both South and North Provinces. Some municipalities, such as Tontouta, Thio or Nepoui in the

⁶ 'Greater Noumea' is understood to include the municipality of Noumea, and the suburban municipalities of Mont Dore, Dumbea, and Paita.

⁷As an example, the Indian Ocean 'département' of Réunion Island boasts a population density of 210 people/km², and Martinique (French West Indies) of 330 /km².

South, and Canala in the North, are nickel mining centres. The South Province has the lead in this field, as the only facility for the refining of nickel ore is located in Noumea.

Table 1 : Percentage of the population which is actively employed, by Province, and by type of activity.

Source : 1989 Census (INSEE)

%	Agriculture	Industry	Service	Total
Loyalty Is	50,8	4,7	44,6	100
North Prov	46,8	11,1	42,1	100
South Prov	3,6	22,8	73,5	100
Territory	14,3	19,6	66,1	100

The service sector (in which we include the Civil Service) is well represented in all three Provinces. In the North and Islands Provinces, jobs created by the administration help to account for the high figure for service activities. Indeed, of the 32.9% of the Territory's active population which is employed in various government occupations, 47% are posted in Koné, Wé, La Foa, and Bourail, the main administrative centres of the Territory's rural zones. In this sector, the South Province accounts for a larger share than the other two, due to the presence of Noumea, capital of New Caledonia, and home of both the Territorial government and the headquarters of all major businesses.

2 - A history of New Caledonia

History, as we understand the term, begins with the arrival of the Europeans in the XVIIIth century, the first being James Cook, "discoverer" of New Caledonia.

2.1. - Pre-colonial history

In New Caledonia, the pattern of human settlement was tightly linked to the physical environment of the Mainland. There are three ecological zones, and to each corresponds one type of activity and very specific human communities : fishermen on the foreshore, farmers on the flatlands and in valleys, hunter-gatherers in the highlands. Each of these communities had established relationships with the others, exchanges centering on food items, and goods of cultural and social importance.

Within the structured districts of the Mainland , only those areas designated for agriculture and habitation were deforested. The rest of the land was left in its natural state. In this untouched territory, the Melanesians would hunt and gather the plant material they might need. Such spaces were uninhabited, but under the control of the residents of the neighbouring villages. They formed their complementary economic space.

The cultivated areas were usually not far from the dwellings. The main crops were yams and taros. The former, which must be protected from humidity, were grown in the alluvial plains, planted in earth mounds 100m long and 7 m wide⁸, often interspersed with banana groves, more rarely with taro. The growth of the taro being greatly affected by the moisture content of the soil, they were frequently grown in the damp bottom of valleys, and on terraces where water from the nearest spring was led by irrigation chanel.

2.2. - Colonization

France took possession of New Caledonia in 1853. From that moment on, the spacial and administrative organization of the island group was directed to the benefit of the colonial power. For the Melanesians, the negative aspects of this colonization were the alienation of their ancestral lands, and the forced relocation of the inhabitants of certain districts.

In 1867, the Melanesians obtained from the French government a title of ownership of the land for certain territories which they were occupying. These territories, called "reservations", allowed the Melanesians the possibility of evolving according to their own rules. In 1898, the authorities placed the administrative responsibility for these reservations in the hands of "High Chiefs" at the district level, and of "Little Chiefs" at the village level. A consequence of this arrangement was the loss of power for the traditional chiefly lines in favour of "councils of elders", to whom the government had entrusted sole responsibility for the management of tribal affairs.

At first, New Caledonia served as a penal colony for France, as witness the penal establishments of Nou Island and the Isle of Pines. France was soon to give up this strategy, and to decide to turn New Caledonia into an agricultural colony. Many were the French colons who came to settle. But this agricultural vocation never quite became a reality. In spite of the various measures taken by the authorities in favour of agricultural development, export crops such as coffee, sugar cane, cotton or copra never got beyond the artisanal level. The labour involved in the creation of major plantations required a sizable workforce. Faced with the Melanesians' refusal to take part in this development, the government brought in "coolies" from Indochina. So, as the years went by, a diversification of the population took place as a result of this imported labour.

⁸Doumenge, J.P., : "Du terroir ...à la ville. Les Mélanésiens et leurs espaces en Nouvelle Calédonie. Travaux et Documents de Géographie Tropicale n° 46. Bordeaux. 1982. p.53.

The end of World War II meant changes for New Caledonia. The colony received a new status : "Overseas Territory" (Territoire d'Outre-Mer). The legal status of "native"⁹ was abolished. The Melanesians were now free to travel outside of the reservations. The return of some of the imported manpower to its newly independent countries of origin produced a new demographical equation in New Caledonia. The French authorities brought in Polynesian ¹⁰ workers to replace them.

The "boom" of the nickel market, between 1969 and 1971, encouraged this migration of workers. In 1992, many of these immigrants are still in New Caledonia, and consider themselves true Caledonians.

2.3. - The "troubles"

On three occasions, in 1878, 1919, and 1984, the French colony of New Caledonia was rocked by powerful uprisings on the part of its original inhabitants. The most recent of these confrontations, lasting from 1984 to 1988, brought New Caledonia in the limelight of the world scene. The situation was beginning to assume the appearance of a budding civil war. In May 1988, Michel Rocard, then French Prime Minister, managed to restore the peace by proposing the "Matignon Agreements", which were eventually signed on June 26 1988 by the delegates of the two opposing factions, led by Jacques Lafleur and Jean-Marie Tjibaou. The new status, by creating three largely autonomous provinces, endowed with considerable powers, and whose elected representatives were given widespread responsibilities, paved the way for a movement of decentralization which was to benefit the various communities representing the Territory's population, in all its cultural and economic diversity. As well as bringing back a durable peace, the Matignon Agreements offer the means of implementing a policy of co-operation with the State in a bid to redress the economic imbalance which exists between Noumea and the rest of the Territory, and to promote social and professional training projects.

3 - Culture and the ties with the land

The Melanesian population of New Caledonia results from the intermingling, over centuries, of "australoid" of groups of hunter-gatherers and of groups of agriculture-oriented "austronesian" seafarers. These contacts between seafarers and the inland inhabitants have been verified through archeological finds that date as far back as the XXIIth century. These multiple

⁹ A decree establishing the existence of a legal status of 'native' for ten years, then extended to 1923. This status placed Kanaks outside of the law applicable to other citizens.

¹⁰ They are natives of the French islands of Wallis and Futuna, and of French Polynsia.

encounters would help account for the variety of languages spoken in New Caledonia (28 different languages have been recorded). This indicates that Melanesian New Caledonia didn't possess a national unity. Each Melanesian territory had established its own set of social rules. Generally speaking, the only common trait of the Melanesian societies is identification with the land.

3.1. - The fragmentation of the cultural areas

No less than 8 cultural areas¹¹ can be defined in New Caledonia. Most of these in turn can be subdivided into several linguistic sub-areas, and it is not unusual for one linguistic sub-area to be broken up into several "custom" groups, each representing a small autonomous territory. Each territory has its own social, political and economic organization. The men of each "custom" territory are linked symbolically to each other through the existence of the men's Great House, built close to the dwelling of a Big Brother¹². According to need, consultations between men of importance are held in the men's Great House. During the initiation of an outsider into the resident group, the first man of substance who wishes to take him in does so. Then, he requests a consultation with the other landholders of the territory. Following the decision taken in the Great House, the landholders inform the Big Brother before the news is spread through the district.

3.2. - Traditional ties with the land

Melanesian ancient history is often traced through myths. These take the form of tales which the elders, keepers of this lore, can recite for days on end. Among these myths, the most important are the ones which have to do with defining the ownership right over the land by the first settler, who is also the first to clear the land. All residents of a given territory are not descended of the same group of migrants. New arrivals can be received and taken in by the original clearer of the host land. To each new arrival corresponds an extension of the original myth, so that he or she may be positioned with respect to the group. Thus the myth is perceived as the cultural link which unites the different residents of a territory. This latter is well defined around a mythical earth mound, rock, spring, or even a mountain, justifiably considered by the Melanesians as sacred. The myth defines a centripetal organization of the space comprising the village territory. Within its perimeter, the group feels secure. Once outside of the perimeter, members of the group follow pathways which were set by the ancestors, the pathways of alliance which lead to friendly communities. Beyond the territory and the

¹¹ Five are found on the Caledonian Mainland : Hot-Mmhaap, Cehmui-Païci, Ajie, Xaracu, Dumbea; the other three being in the Loyalty islands

¹² The reason for this title stems from the tradition on the part of the Melanesians of considering their leaders as their 'elders'. This appellation corresponds to the term of 'high chief' usually used by anthropologists.

familiar tracks, is the void. A void where lurks magic and dangerous spells, where it is always hazardous, and often forbidden, to venture. The traditional ties with the land are not so much the result of a conception of this land as source of the stuff of life, as that of the land as giver of security.

3.3 - Persistence of the ties with the land in modern times

In spite of the attraction presented by emigration toward the city, many Melanesians still live on the reservations. This entrenchment is the result of traditions many generations old. The land is the Melanesian's larder. It is through this land that tradition survives. The cult of the yam, called today "rite of the first fruit of the yam" (*cérémonie de l'igname de prémices*) reminds the Melanesian of the nutritional role of the yam. In order to participate in this ceremony, he must have his own yam patch, and so must work the soil. In this context, the yam is seen as the fruit of the man's labour on the land. Through this concept, the Melanesian justifies his attachment to the land.

Just as in the past, the land serves as the reference which defines the Melanesian's position within his group. In relation to the order of arrival his into a territory, and depending on available room, the original clearer of the land grants a particular social position to the new arrival accepted into the group. In this way, to mention a particular piece of land, part of a particular territory, amounts to mentioning a person. The individual's identity is indistinguishable from that of the land. Behind each individual lurks an entire cultural history.

II - THE KONE-TIWAKA AXIS, AND THE H-PATTERN DEVELOPMENT OF NEW CALEDONIA'S NORTH PROVINCE : FROM MELANESIAN CULTURE TO THE PLANNING OF A VAST DEVELOPMENT PROJECT.

1 - A major feature of New Caledonia' policy of spacial restructuring

1.1 - New Caledonia's state of economic and geographical imbalance

To emulate J.F. Gravier (1972) who wrote to criticize "Paris, and the French `desert'", one could talk of "Noumea, and the Caledonian `desert'" to emphasize the way the capital city of New Caledonia outweighs the rest of the Territory (usually referred to as `the bush') in matters of population and economy. Two thirds of the Gross Domestic Product are produced in

Noumea, where we find the majority of industrial and service activities. Fully 40% of the population is concentrated there, this figure reaching 60% if one includes the three suburban municipalities which go to make up 'Greater Noumea': Dumbéa, Mont Dore and Paita. This disproportion tends to destructure the Caledonian space, and creates a strong imbalance. The other urban centers of the Territory are nothing but big villages, lacking the population, the installations and infrastructure required to attract the commercial and service operators indispensable to a true urban growth. This problem is compounded by the very low earning power of the Melanesian population, who represents a majority in rural areas but is poorly integrated in the commercial system, and is thus often limited to production for their own consumption.

Such a state of affairs could not be allowed to continue, and a lively policy of spacial and economic redistribution for the Territory was clearly needed. The central government began to put this into effect following the Matignon Agreements of 1988, and the establishment of the Provincial system. The accent has particularly been put on the creation of an urban focus in northern Caledonia and the construction of a transversal road axis aimed at facilitating exchanges between the East and West coasts. These projects should give the North Province the possibility of attaining economic autonomy from Noumea.

1.2 - Disparities and isolation within the North Province

a) Contrasts in physical environment

The North Province is subdivided into 16 municipalities and covers 9690 km². It is a region of mountains. These are grouped in a series of well defined ranges, mostly above the 500 m line, with high points of between 1000 and 1500 m altitude. The whole amounts to a veritable 'sierra' which divides the Province lengthwise, from North-West to South East, with, particularly along the eastern side, spurs extending all the way to the sea. This configuration makes movement along the coastline difficult. The eastern side of the range is precipitous; it drops abruptly into the ocean, leaving only a narrow foreshore band, in places a mere few hundred meters wide. It is also the windward side, and so rainfall is abundant. The range is broken by numerous transversal (SW-NE) valleys, all cutting deeply into the mountain. The western slopes are more gentle, and end in a series of foothills which in turn open onto large foreshore plains, from 5 to 20 km wide, separated by hilly spurs. The narrowness of the island, 50 to 70 km, accounts for the shortness of the rivers, all of which flow perpendicular to the range. The flow in these rivers is irregular, given to short-lived but violent floods with the passage of hurricanes or tropical depressions, and to periods of near drought. On the East side, the river mouths widen to form estuaries, while on the West side they meander through the shore plains until they reach the wide bays that are a typical feature of the West coast. In the very North, the wide valley of the

Diahot river is the only one to penetrate the range in its longitudinal direction.

b) Settlement patterns, activities, urban centre network

At the time of the latest census (1989), the population of the North Province was counted at 34526 inhabitants, or 21% of the total population of the Territory. Ethnic Melanesians represented roughly three quarters of this figure. Generally speaking, human settlement in the North Province is tightly linked to the physical characteristics of the environment, and to the weight of history. The European segment of the population is in majority in the West coast foreshore plains where, since the last century, it engages in farming and intensive cattle raising. The Melanesian population is concentrated along the narrow eastern coastal strip and in the alluvial valleys, where it practices intensive traditional agriculture and a small amount of commercial farming. The central range, and its rocky outthrusts are little suited to human settlement. There, the forest is undisturbed, and arable land is scarce, being limited to the rare narrow valleys which penetrate the chain. Yet many Melanesian tribes have settled there. Most retreated to this inhospitable area following European colonization and the land policies that came with it. This disparity of population and activity between the East and West coasts is so pronounced that it appears even at the scale of the municipalities, as can be seen in Fig. 2 and 3. Out of eight East coast municipalities, any form of commercial economy is still mostly absent in five. Of these five, three have over 90% Melanesian population.

The pattern of settlement implies four main types of habitat :

- a Melanesian habitat of the East coast foreshore tribes,
- a Melanesian habitat of the hill tribes,
- a European dispersed habitat, in the form of small cattle-raising holdings scattered through the large shore plains of the West coast, and
- a European concentrated habitat, in the form of urban centres. These urban centres either are the descendants of the early military outposts, or evolved together with the development of mining operations. In both cases, their existence derives from the deliberate policies of the public authorities. They were designed to support and structure economic development : should this development be slow in coming, or should the government's presence wane, these small towns tend to stagnate or die.

These urban centres are the administrative headquarters of the municipalities, of which the Province counts sixteen. They don't all have the same importance, in population, installations or services. We can distinguish three major poles of settlement :

- the twin settlements of Koumac - Kaala Gomen, to the North of the island,
- the complex Koné-Pouembout-Voh in the south-western part of the Province, and

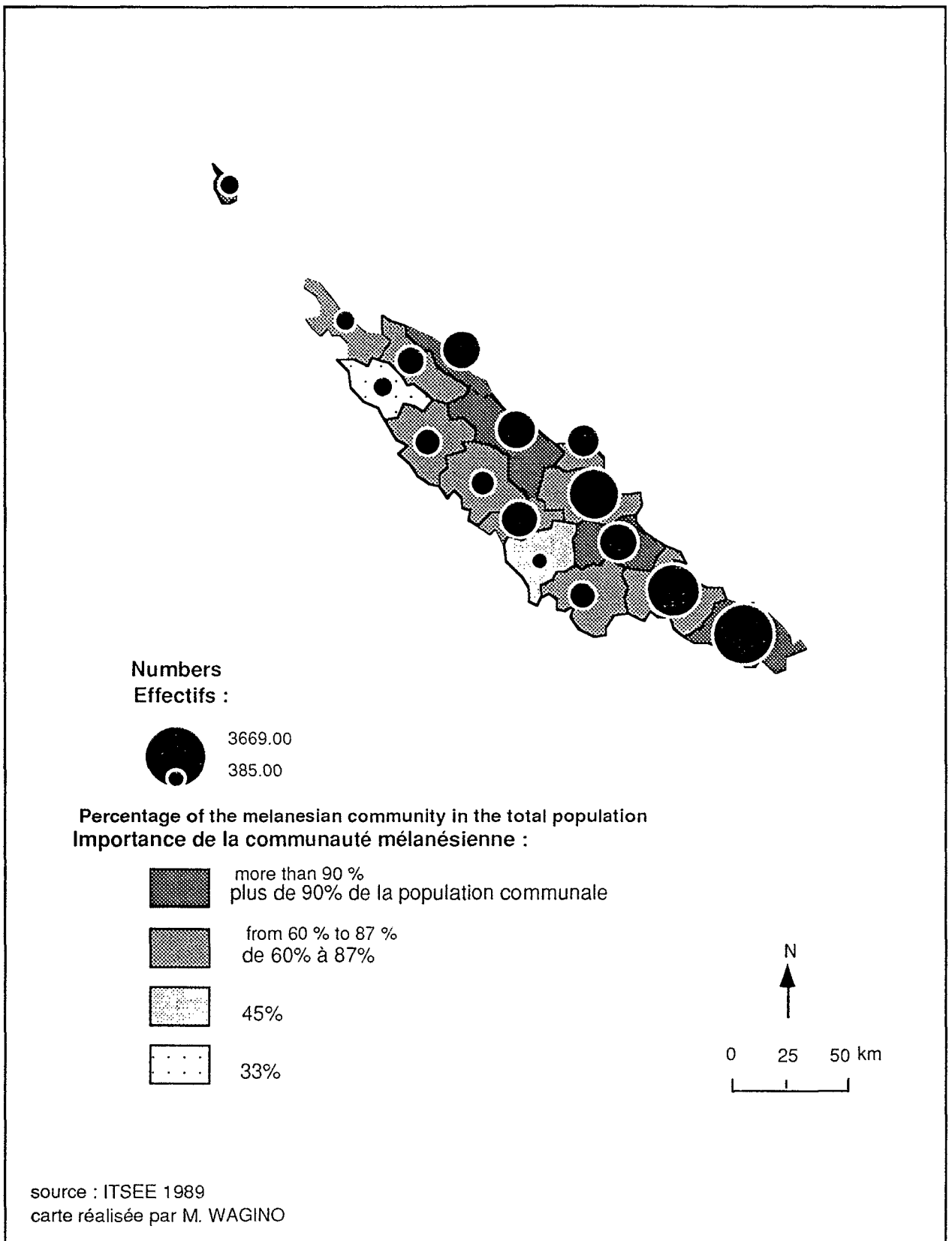


Figure 2 : The melanesian population in the North Province.

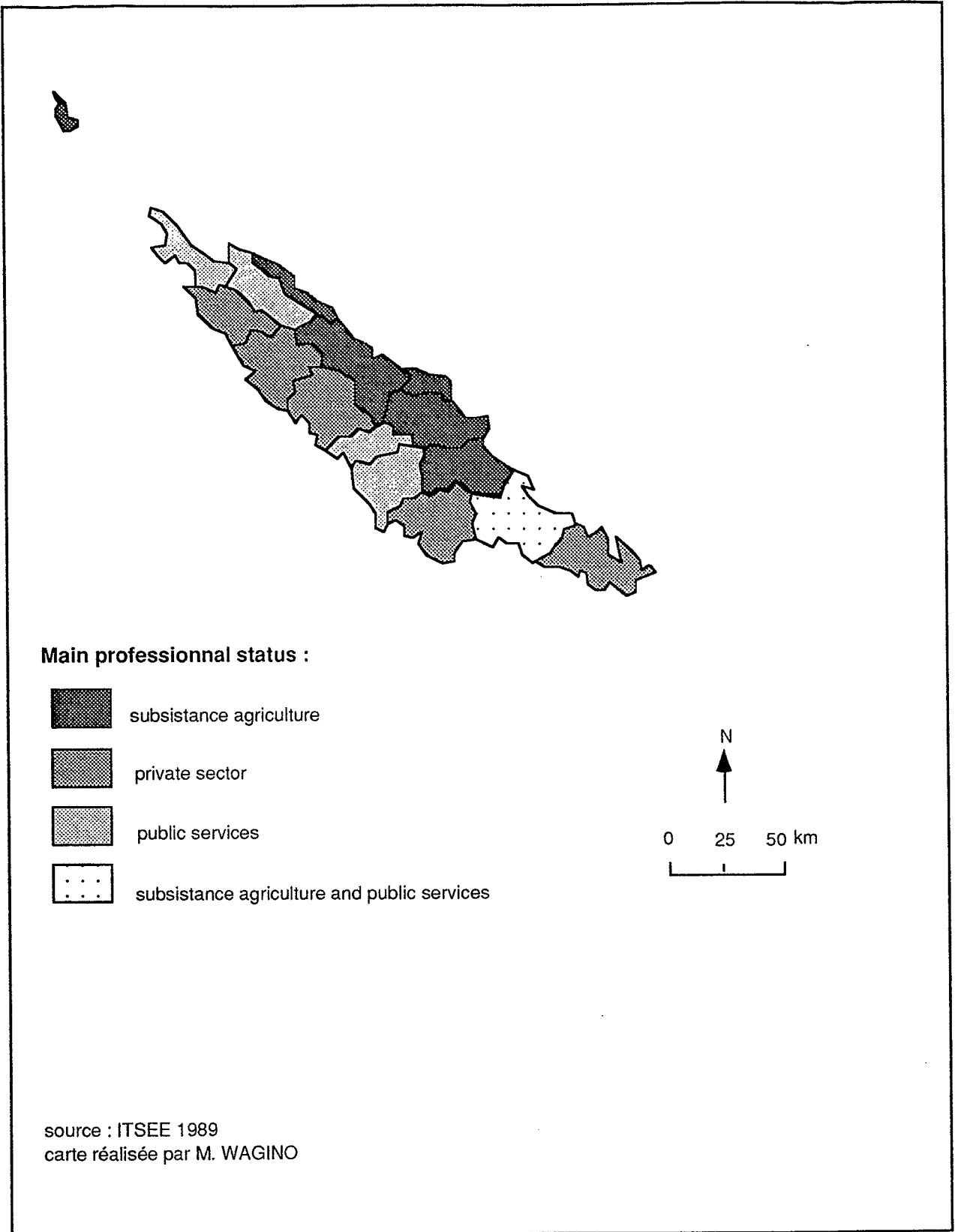


Figure 3 : Professionnal status of working population.

- the complex Poindimié-Ponérihouen-Touho, opposite to the former on the East coast.

Koné (population 2919), Poindimié (population 3590), and Koumac (population 2194), are therefore the three urban poles of the North Province. The installations and municipal services available there are 10% over the average for the rest of the Province, but their predominance is mostly seen in the activities that they promote. Indeed, manufacturing and service operations are twice as numerous there than in the other municipalities of the Province. Yet, not any singly one of the three has sufficient population, nor economic and commercial get-up-and-go, to provide the framework for the creation of an economic environment that could challenge Noumea's influence in the North Province. So, it was up to the public authorities to promote the creation of an urban focus sufficiently important to become the region's motive force.

c) Road network and transportation

In the North Province, roads and highways are the responsibility of either the Provincial or municipal governments. At this time, 68% of roads are blacktopped, compared to 45% in 1976. The secondary network has been improved : the majority of the inhabited valleys are serviced by well made gravel roads, complete with bridges and culverts at creek crossings. Because of the ruggedness of the terrain and the scattering of the settlements, road construction and maintenance in New Caledonia have always been a costly exercise for the community, particularly considering that they only carry a small volume of traffic. But it is the highway that can break the isolation, allow the transport of goods, and foster exchanges between people. The North Province road network is based on two major axes which form its skeleton : the former Territorial Highway n°1, which follows the shoreline of the West coast from Noumea to Poum, and the former Territorial Highway n°3, which follows the eastern coastline from Thio to Pouebo. The only cross-access between these two major highways are the Koumac-Pouebo road through the Amos pass in the very North of the Province, and the Bourail-Houailou road through the Roussettes pass at the southern end of the Province. In practice, the drive between Koné and Poindimié, two urban centres that are merely 70 km distant as the crow flies, takes over three hours, whether one chooses the Amos or the Roussettes routes. The first of these two alternatives is 296 km long, and the second 231 km. These mileage figures alone express perfectly the major problem that the East coast communities have to face : isolation. Thus the pressing need for a transversal access to be constructed between Koné and Poindimié, half-way between the the Amos Pass and the Roussettes Pass routes.

2. - The Melanesian parameters of the Project

When it was created, in 1988, the North Province found itself facing a fundamental dilemma : how to reconcile the planned spacial redistribution of New Caledonia, which implied the creation of a regional urban centre of national stature able to give the Province its economic independence from Noumea, and the economic redistribution within the Province itself , which implied breaking the land-locked status of the East coast. Considering that the population was split into two groups separated by a major mountain range, how were the planners to achieve the necessary regrouping of population and economic activities without penalizing a whole segment of this same population ?

The concept of an organization articulated around a single economic centre could not be entertained, since this would have prevented the fair distribution of development among all the components of the Province. The Province's elected representatives decided to adopt an original principle consisting of creating a linear network of development which would link the settlements of Voh, Koné, Pouembout and Poya on the West coast, and those of Touho, Poindimié and Ponérihouen on the East coast. The whole network would become H-shaped, with the cross-bar represented by the projected transversal axis "Koné-Tiwaka", a new highway designed to link the East coast 'capital', Poindimié, to the projected urban centre of Koné-Pouembout, now promoted to the rank of 'capital' of the North Province.

2.1. - The "Koné-Tikawa" transversal highway

The new Koné-Tiwaka highway is the largest public construction project undertaken in the Territory for the last thirty years. The cost is estimated at 6.3 billion Pacific Francs, or 63 million US\$ (Wagino, 1991). The president of the North Province's development commission said : "Politically speaking, this road has a history", thus expressing the desire of the Province's elected representatives to carry on the work started by Jean-Marie Tjibaou, who had seen in the Koné-Tiwaka axis one of the fundamental elements of the policy of redistribution for New Caledonia. The new highway follows the traditional exchange routes between the East and West coasts among the Cemuhi and Paici cultural groups.

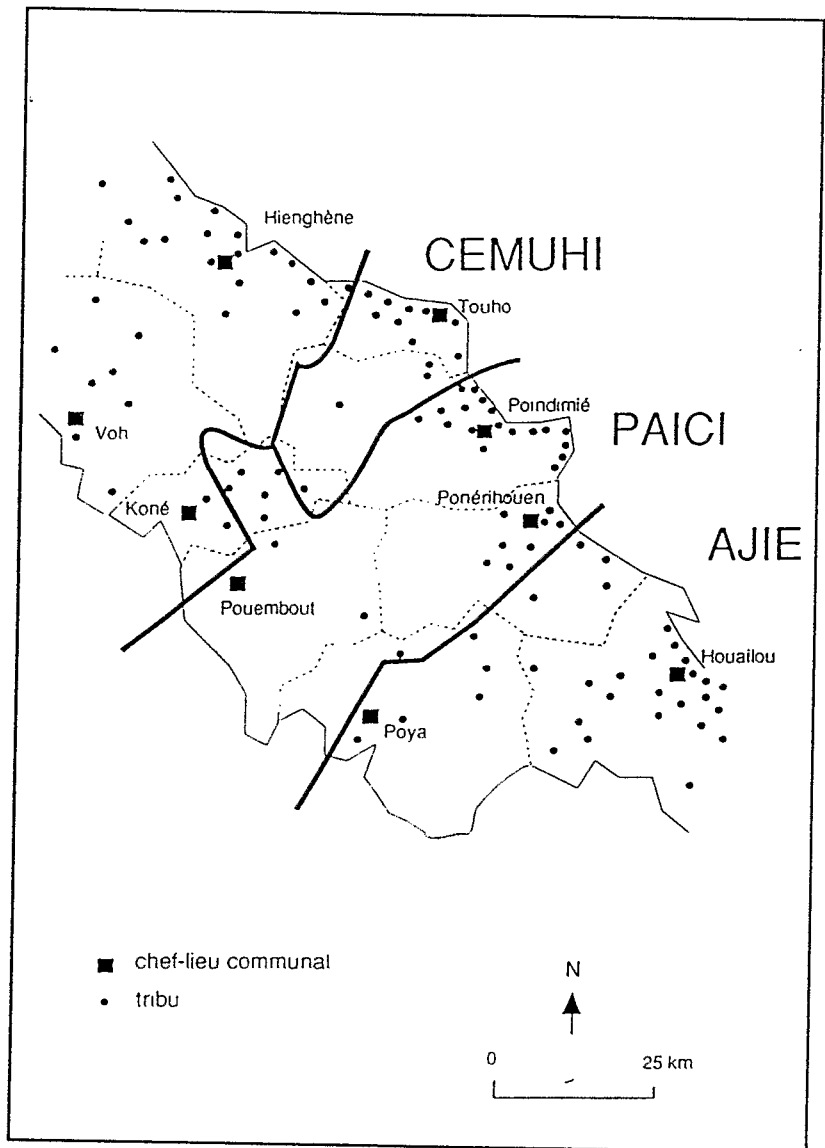


Figure 4 : The cultural areas of the H region.

2.2 - The organization of an urban network around the new cross-access.

By connecting directly the four communities of the West coast and the three of the East coast in an "H" pattern, the new cross-road will simplify the movement of people and goods, and give mobility to the workforce. In order for this network to become operational and come to life, the Province has been encouraging each municipality and their administrative centres to adopt a certain specialization, based on the existing facilities and orientations. The emphasis was put on taking advantage of local natural resources and economic potential. The network will hinge around the two urban centres of Koné-Pouembout and Poindimié which will mostly concentrate on service activities. On the East coast, Touho is expected to turn toward tourism, an activity that it may share with the adjacent municipality of Hienghène with the development of a Club Méditerranée. Ponerihouen will continue its orientation toward the farming and processing of coffee, a cash crop that has already been locally exploited for many years. On the West coast, Voh would concentrate on fishing activities and on aquaculture, with a large prawn-farming operation under construction at this time. The Nepoui urban centre, with its industrial, commercial and marine orientation, will supply the network with an opening to the outside world through its deep-water harbour. This policy of specialization of the urban centres is to be matched with the construction of major public facilities, particularly in the field of education (Pouembout agricultural school, Poindimié high-school, Touho technical school), and of public health care (Poindimié Hospital). These installations are necessary to the success of the desired economic redistribution away from Noumea. They will also fulfill an important social function : that of boosting solidarity among the people of the North Province.

III - HARBOUR INSTALLATIONS AT WE : AN ASSET FOR ECONOMIC REDISTRIBUTION IN THE ISLANDS PROVINCE.

1 - Installations that are indispensable to development in the Loyalty Islands

The Islands Province is made up of three major islands, Ouvéa, Maré and Lifou (Fig 5), and of one smaller island, Tiga. This group of islands is under administrative control of the Main Island of New Caledonia. Because of this situation, the economic viability of the Province depends to a large extent on a network of transport and communication. Future development in the Loyalty Islands, whether conceived locally or in Noumea, requires a

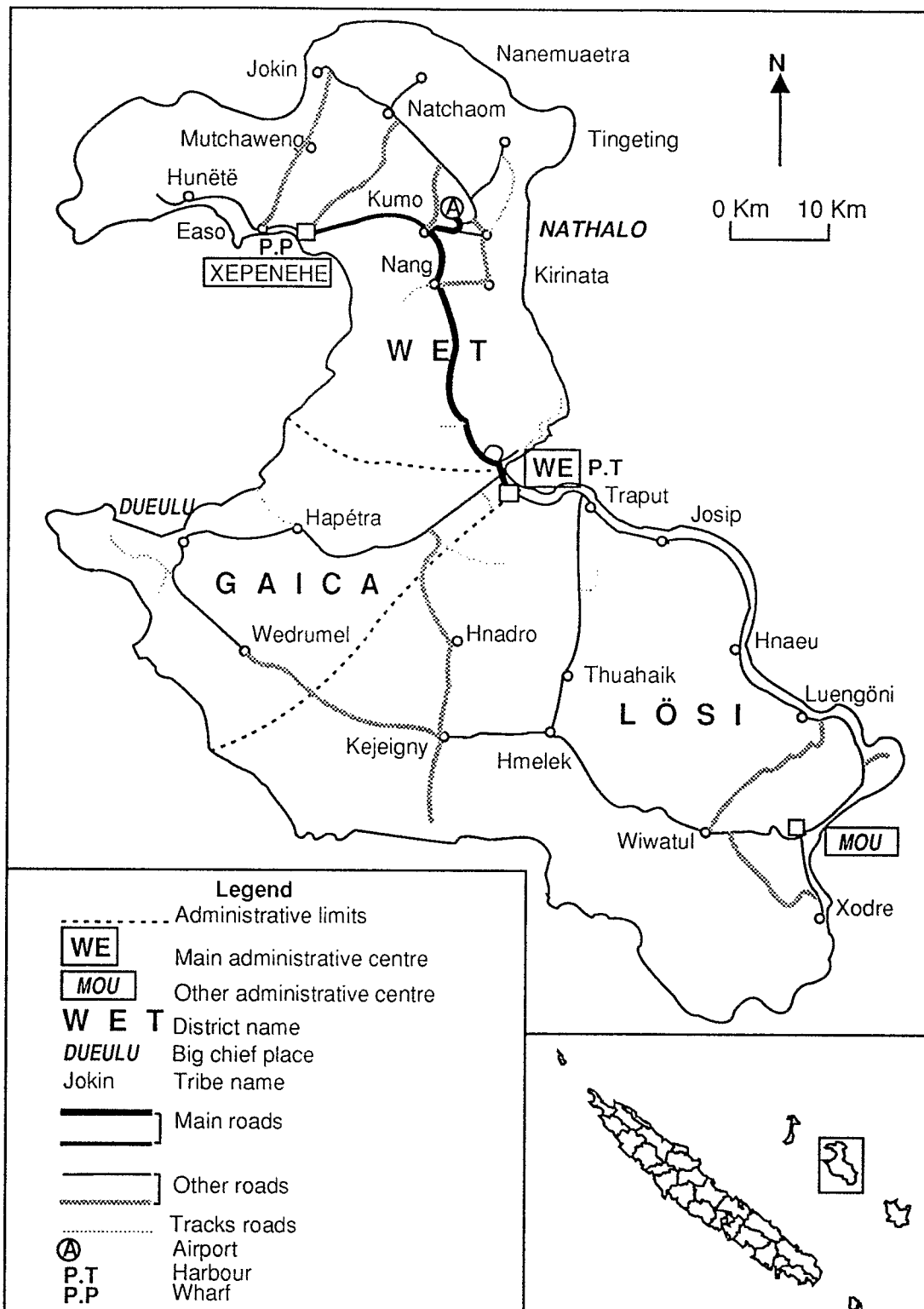


Fig 5 : Lifou Island in 1990.

supporting framework. The harbour and airport installations at Ouvéa, Lifou and Maré are therefore the economic lungs of the Province.

Goods are mostly transported by sea. In 1988, inter-island shipping within the Loyalty group, and between the group and Noumea, amounted to 49 500 tonnes of freight, representing 99% of the total transport of merchandise. By contrast, the part played by ships in passenger transport is very slight : only 6% of all passengers in 1988. Out of 100 000 passengers in and out of the Loyalties, 94 000 preferred to fly in spite of the much greater cost. This imbalance in favour of air transport is essentially due to the scarcity of adequate facilities for maritime passenger transport. What little service exists is provided by small coasters which are mostly geared for freight, and can only accomodate a small number of passengers; furthermore, the inter-island shipping schedules are somewhat erratic and subject to weather and sea conditions. Ships are often unable to dock on account of high seas, particularly at Wé, the harbour on Lifou, which is very exposed to the prevailing swell.

Yet there is a high potential demand for sea passenger transport. Airfares are very expensive, particularly since direct inter-island flights are rare, and the "spiderweb" configuration of the New Caledonian air network often forces transit through Noumea. This economic handicap greatly limits the participation of the inhabitants of Ouvéa, Lifou and Maré in the major events of traditional Melanesian life, and in such economic exchanges as trade and agricultural fairs, when these take place in an other island of the group. As a result, cultural exchanges between the inland communities, which used to flourish in the past, have been much reduced.

So there is a need for a better maritime passenger service, as well as an improvement in freight facilities. In both cases, this improvement is closely related to an increase in the Province's harbour installations, with better shelter for the wharves. None of the existing wharves offer any protection from the prevailing ocean swells. Only during the rare periods of calm weather can ships dock at the current installations, particularly at Tadine (Maré) and at Wé (Lifou) where the absence of a lagoon means full exposure to the swell. It is not unusual to see two or three weeks go by between visits by the local coastal steamers which are supposed to come on a weekly schedule. These delays are often enough to create shortages of important staples such as rice, sugar, etc...

In order to remedy this situation, highly detrimental to the development of the Province, the authorities have decided to go ahead with the construction of a new harbour at Wé to replace the existing wharf. This is the Province's most prominent public development project aimed at redressing the current economic imbalance. Its implementation should allow the islands to have direct access to the outside world, without having to transit through the harbour at Noumea. The concept of exchanges between the islands, between them and the Caledonian Mainland, and with certain countries of the Pacific region, is fundamental to their economic and cultural well-being. The harbour used to be, and will again be, a place of meetings and exchange.

2 - Perception of the project : *two levels of reality*

2.1. - Background of the project

For the Territorial government, main sponsor of the project, the harbour at Wé is considered essential to decentralization, as well as to the satisfactory interaction of the components of the Territory. The cost of the installations is estimated at 600 million Pacific Francs. Financing has been set up on a three year schedule (Three Year Plan 1990-1992). The costs are to be shared, proportionately, between the Central and the Provincial governments. The Central government will provide 390 million, while the Province will contribute 210 million : a total of 100 million in 1990, 407 million in 1991, and 93 million in 1992.

2.2. - The Project

The project intends to extend the existing wharf at Wé. This will involve a large landfill platform reclaimed from the sea, and two adjacent wharves which will allow vessels up to 70 m in length to dock, whether of the classic freighter type, or of the ferry type (bow loading). The whole is to be protected by a breakwater nearly 200 meters long, curving at its end to avoid creating swell diffraction problems . This breakwater is designed to withstand the most extreme hurricane conditions, and should make the harbour useable in all weathers.

The first phase of the operation was scheduled to start in January 1990, the initial work consisting in pinpointing the site and in preparing a feasibility study. The second half of the same year was to see the beginning of the actual construction work, with construction expected to last two years. Unfortunately, due to unforeseen setbacks, the start of the work was delayed. Most of these setbacks were attributable the fact that the complexity of traditional ways and protocols had been underestimated in the planning stages. To start with, it appeared that the landfill operations for the building of the breakwater and the platform required the use of a quarry which was not a part of the original harbour property. There followed long and difficult negotiations regarding the use of the quarry land between the title holders and the project authorities. These were complicated by the fact that two separate groups were claiming to be the rightful holders of the title to the land on which the new harbour was to stand. Recently, a "palaver", jointly signed by the Big Brother (and a title-holder group) and the General Secretary of the Territory, led everyone to think that this problem was resolved, and that work might begin at last. But this optimism overlooked an other difficulty, having to do with the very lateness in beginning construction that had been caused by all the "custom" palavering. The terms of the contract signed in 1990 between the main contractor and the project's promoter, in this case the

Territorial government, might have to be modified after the two year interval. The transportation costs of the necessary equipment between Noumea and Lifou, among other things, have considerably increased, and the contractor is insisting on a renegotiation of his contract. The project, which had been estimated at 600 million in 1990, may well cost much more today. Is the Territorial government, who is in charge of the project, prepared to agree to such a renegotiation ?

2.3. - The Melanesian perception of the project

Much like churches, soccer fields and clinics, the harbour project falls within the category of "public utility" facilities. Putting land at the disposal of the authorities for such projects is something that the Melanesians have been used to doing for generations. The realization of these public facilities is often the result of lengthy palavers between the groups that have title to the land. Representatives from each group meet in the Great House to elaborate a common strategy regarding the proposed development. Consultation with the residents of the land concerned is essential, so that various members of the community realize the finality of the decisions taken. Usually, before the process is successfully completed, the consensus of opinion among the land holders is presented to the Big Brother (i.e. the traditional High Chief), who then approves the decision if he considers that the project does not threaten the harmony of the group.

The harbour project at Wé is perceived by the Melanesians of Lifou as a disrupting factor to the group's harmony. The catalyst of this social unrest is the emergence of the notion of private interest and gain within Melanesian society, whose values were traditionally based purely on ideals of community interest. The signed palaver's decision grants to the title-holding group the right to short-term employment for the construction of the harbour, and of long-term jobs in the maintenance and use of the facilities. This seems logical from the point of view of the authorities, but the Melanesian community as a whole does not see it this way. They perceive the harbour at Wé as community project, which to them means that the entire community is entitled to employment on the scheme. This approach is already common within the municipality of Lifou. Although the municipal headquarters are at Wé, the 60 municipal employees have been selected in a manner that sees all the island's tribes equitably represented. This approach demonstrates that the municipal apparatus belongs to the entire community, and that it is up to the whole community to look after its smooth running. Failure to take this philosophy into account in the planning of the Wé harbour project resulted in the conflict, described earlier, between the two groups residing within the project area. This conflict rapidly escalated and spread to the whole of the Wé "custom" district. It became impossible to begin construction on schedule.

3 - The lessons of this confrontation

Today, in 1992, construction of the harbour at Wé is still waiting to start. The delay is the result of a head-on confrontation between the authorities' logic with the logic of traditional values, based on a different conception of time, and a different approach to decision making. We see here an essential aspect of the new relationship between tradition and modernism, particularly when it comes to land-related development, and an example of the general attitude of Melanesians regarding inputs of external origin. This type of difficulty regarding land-oriented negotiations is not limited to Lifou, or to the Loyalty Islands, but applies to all land within "custom" districts.

The whole of Lifou has been classified as reservation land ever since France took possession of the island. Very little affected by colonization, the island was able to retain its cultural traditions. Unlike the Mainland, there were few forced resettlements of groups of inhabitants. The high chiefs are Big Brothers as established by Melanesian tradition, and their authority is accepted. Today, we see a rebirth of the traditional ceremonies centered around the yam. They represent a way, many times repeated, to remind the Melanesian community of its heritage. The hierarchy of society is defined, and redefined, through rites of the yam. This means that any decision concerning the Melanesian community of a district must pass through the traditional process if it wants to have a chance of succeeding. This process requires time, and numerous discussions before a final consensus is reached.

Yet, time is precisely what the administration is most short of. Their priorities are controlled by budget imperatives. The Territory voted a three-year financing plan for the completion of the harbour at Wé, a decision which was validated by an agreement between the French government and the Territory of New Caledonia. So, the government is committed to completing the project within this three-year time frame. In view of this deadline, decisions must be taken quickly, which automatically rules out any in-depth discussions with the Melanesian community, which operates under different values and which puts community harmony ahead of speed in decision making. Similarly, a "no" from the Melanesian community to a development project doesn't necessarily mean a categorical refusal. It might simply mean an insistence on the project going through the traditional channels for it to be on solid foundations. The administration must accept this perception of things on the part of the Melanesians, and must give priority to communicating with the traditional chain of command in an attempt to reconcile modern technology with Melanesian culture.

This confrontation between tradition¹³ and the modern world¹⁴, particularly where it touches on development matters relating to land, is not typical of Lifou or of the Loyalty Islands, but applies to all areas subject to "custom" control. The example of the harbour at Wé shows that the growing participation of the Melanesian community in development projects creates an urgent need for negotiations at the highest level between the Provinces and the traditional holders of authority in order to define a set of guidelines for the handling of such affairs, as these are becoming increasingly common. A few basic rules should come out of these negotiations :

- the interests of the community must be given priority;
- it is important to determine without possible doubt or contestation the identity of those who have title to the land on which any project is to be developed;
- finally, it is highly desirable to make the groups involved accept that all compensations must be turned over to benefit the whole community, as it is represented by the Big Brother whose responsibility it would be to see that this financial manna was used in the most equitable and sensible manner.

IV - "OPERATION SUNSHINE COFFEE" : A PROJECT AIMED AT THE INTEGRATION OF MELANESIAN SOCIETY IN THE MARKET ECONOMY.

In New Caledonia, particularly within the reservations, one usually finds only two types of cash crops : coconut plantations, and coffee plantations. While the former, although first exploited commercially by the Europeans, have long been a part of the Caledonian landscape, the latter are a more recent arrival in the islands. They are a product of colonization. The introduction of coffee in the reservation lands, encouraged by the missionaries, dates back to the beginning of the XXth century. However, coffee didn't become widespread among Melanesian communities much before the thirties, at which time the authorities made its planting compulsory. Fifty years later, these same authorities were to attempt to promote a rebirth of the coffee production through the project "Operation Sunshine Coffee".

¹³ Tradition is symbolized by the concept of common interest of Melanesian society as a basis for social harmony. It has survived to our time, and is called today "cultural values".

¹⁴ Symbolized by the Wé harbour project. It means the penetration of new ideas and values into the fabric of Melanesian society in Lifou : the interest of the individual, and the need to respect timetables.

1 - Fifty years of coffee growing in New Caledonia's "Mainland"

1.1 - Coffee farming by the Melanesians

Coffee farming was mostly developed on the Canala, Ponérihouen and Hienghène reservations on the East coast, the Koné and Pouembout reservations on the West coast, the La Foa, Yaté and Isle of Pines in the South, and in the Loyalty Islands. Two types of terrain are suitable for coffee growing : the slopes of the high valleys in the central range for the 'Arabica' variety, and rich soils of the lower reaches of the alluvial valleys for the 'Canephora' variety, better known as 'Robusta'.

Coffee grows best in the shade, and coffee farming requires the planting of trees selected for their ability to allow just the right amount of sunlight to filter through to the coffee bushes. Ideally this light will be insufficient for the growth of undesirable weeds and creepers, which will facilitate the upkeep of the plantation. The farming techniques for growing coffee under shade offer the advantage of being simple and of requiring little labour, which accounts for their popularity with the Melanesian communities, and for a long time they were their only source of cash income.

The plantations are usually small in extent. They seldom exceed one hectare for private plantations, and three hectares for community farms. The most noticeable feature of coffee farming as done by the Melanesians is this scattering of tiny holdings. Each plantation is often made up of several little plots, of one half to one hectare, a size that is considerably larger than the average for the yam gardens which constitute the basis of subsistence agriculture in New Caledonia. The Melanesians have therefore a tendency to view coffee farming as a pursuit requiring vast amounts of land.

At the time of the birth of the "Sunshine Coffee" project (1978), only three municipalities, all on the East coast, still contained coffee plantations : Canala, Ponérihouen and Hienghène. All the West coast plantations had been abandoned, and all the ones in the South and the Loyalty Islands had been converted to other crops, or to cattle pasture.

1.2 - Early development of Melanesian-owned plantations

The year 1911 saw the appearance of the plant disease 'Hemilia Vastatrix' which devastated the Arabica coffee plantations, and put an end to the first phase of the spreading of coffee farming among Melanesian communities.

The second phase began in 1932. The government was trying to implement a policy of integration of the Melanesians within commercial economy, and each head of a household was compelled to plant 500 coffee trees for every member of his household (Saussol, 1979). The planting was done using the 'Robusta' variety, newly introduced in New Caledonia and featuring 30 to 50% better output than the 'Arabica'. In spite of this encouragement to the

development of coffee farming among Melanesians, the European farmers remained the primary producers of coffee as a cash crop, these latter making use of more efficient, although more labour intensive, methods than the Melanesians. However, this situation was soon to change. The growing shortage of manpower encountered by the European farm owners as a result of the abolition of the status of 'native' and the special code of laws that went with it, when compounded (in 1940) with the massive damages wreaked on the crops by a severe epidemic of a very active plant parasite called 'phanoderes hampei', resulted in a drastic reduction of the European coffee farming effort. Thus, in the twenty years between 1955 and 1975, while the European-owned plantations regressed from 3200 to 900 hectares, the Melanesian operations decreased only from 3100 to 2100 ha (Doumenge, 1982). From then on, coffee farming became essentially a Melanesian pursuit. However, as the majority of the coffee plants were getting to be over 25 years old, age beyond which their productivity declines sharply, coffee farming became less and less profitable. In fact, the gradual overtaking of the Europeans by the Melanesians in the field of coffee growing during this period reflects not so much a deliberate policy of intensifying coffee production on the part of the Melanesians as a gradual withdrawal from this field by the Europeans. Had the Melanesians had a genuine interest in coffee farming, this would have been evidenced by a consolidation of the small holdings and an effort of replanting of the aging coffee bushes. Instead, coffee gradually lost its place in the economy, its contribution to the family income becoming increasingly marginal and being replaced by employment in the mine fields and in sporadic urban jobs which, by the year 1979, had taken precedence in the economy of the tribes. In a 1974 study of the coffee-producing region of Canala on the East coast, J.P. Doumenge found that such extraneous income, coupled to family allowances, could account for up to 95% of a tribe's total cash income.

2 - The "Sunshine Coffee" operation : A new beginning ?

The aim of the "Sunshine Coffee" project was to help the economic development of New Caledonia's rural districts through a better integration of Melanesians into a commercial economy (Pillon and Kohler, 1984). The project was based on the introduction of a new and particularly productive variety of coffee among the Melanesian communities. This new type of coffee plant has the advantage that it can be grown in full sunlight, and hence has been dubbed "Sunshine Coffee" by the Melanesian planters. "Operation Sunshine Coffee" was conceived by the local authorities in answer to a political objective of the central French government. The planners didn't belong to the Melanesian community, and were mostly unaware of its

agricultural and cultural traditions. This ignorance of Melanesian reality was to be disastrous for the future of the project.

When "Operation Sunshine Coffee" was first conceived (1978), New Caledonia was fully under the impact of the international economic crisis. The period of euphoria that had accompanied the nickel "boom" of 1969 to 1971 was definitely over, and the Melanesians who had been working in the nickel mining operations were losing their jobs and either returning to their reservations or migrating to Noumea in search of other employment. This economic crisis was paralleled by a severe political one, characterized by a general awakening of the Melanesians to their cultural identity, and by growing demands for greater economic and political autonomy for the Kanak people. In 1977, for the first time, the concept of independence was discussed. For the central French government, it became essential to regain control of the political situation. The visit of P. Dijoud¹⁵ to the Territory in 1978 symbolized the State's renewed interest in the Melanesian community. A "long-term social and economic development plan for New Caledonia" was proposed. One of the plan's major concerns was the creation of jobs in rural areas in order to stem the growing alienation of the Melanesian population, source of political unrest, as well as to encourage a majority of Melanesians to remain on the reservations and thus avoid a massive exodus of the rural population toward Noumea. To this effect, the plan focused on the upgrading of rural incomes. Coffee being the major cash crop of the Melanesians, it was natural that the authorities should turn their attention in this direction, and target their efforts to making coffee farming the mainstay of rural economic development.

The Operation was based on experiments performed since 1966 by the Territorial government and the "Institut Français du Café et du Cacao" on the possible introduction in New Caledonia of a new type of "Robusta", capable of flourishing in full sunlight and far more productive than the shade variety. Indeed they were aiming at a productivity of 1500 kg/ha versus 300 to 400 kg/ha for the older type grown under shade (Kohler and Pillon, 1986). To obtain such high yields, it is necessary to make use of fertilizers, of pesticides, and to maintain a careful weeding of the plantations. To some extent, this amounted to proposing a revolution in his agricultural methods to the Melanesian farmer, since switching to the new and more productive type involved the introduction of wholly new techniques, especially the use of added (bought) products.

Five hundred hectares had been scheduled for planting over a period of ten years, as the first phase of the operation. The Secretary of State's visit gave the project a new dimension. The objective was revised up to 2000 ha of "sunshine" coffee for the same ten years, roughly 3 ha per individual farmer. Two thirds of the total area replanted was to be on the East coast of the Mainland. The actual planting and staking of the new bushes was to be the responsibility of the individual farmers, but the government was prepared to

¹⁵ French Secretary of State for Overseas Territories.

take full charge of soil preparation and ploughing of the plantations, supply the saplings, provide all "technical" work and monitoring required, and the training of the farmers for the new techniques and methods required for the successful growing of "sunshine coffee". Considering an average yield of 1.5 tonnes/ha, annual production was estimated to be capable of reaching 3000 tonnes after a few years. Total cost of the operation was estimated at over two billion Pacific Francs¹⁶. For the Melanesian farmer, switching to intensive growing of "sunshine coffee" was to generate an average monthly income of 50000 Pacific Francs¹⁷, as long as he cultivated the three hectares recommended by the government. This would have been considerably more than he had been getting out of growing the old type of coffee under shade, and was thought by the authorities to provide sufficient incentive to guarantee the enthusiastic participation of the Melanesian community.

Thrilled with these new and glowing prospects, "Operation Sunshine Coffee" was launched in 1979.

3 - Development and the burden of history

3.1 - A fresh failure.

Nearly fifteen years after it began, "Operation Sunshine Coffee" can be considered a failure, in spite of a few spectacular results at the time of the first harvest, where some growers who had gone in for intensive farming of the new variety saw their production multiplied by a factor of four. Out of the 2000 hectares planned for, only 666 were actually planted, of which 360 are in production today and 366 have since been abandoned. When we say "abandoned", this doesn't necessarily mean that the plantation has been totally allowed to revert to the jungle, but rather that the agricultural methods that are applied there no longer correspond to the model of rational and efficient farming preached by the authorities. In particular, these "abandoned" plantations no longer take advantage of the technical help and advice of the government's Agriculture Department. From the Melanesian point of view, the plantation still exists; it has simply reverted back to the traditional system of farming, and is treated in the same way as a yam garden would be. The schedule of events is irregular, with periods of high activity when the Melanesian will take care of his garden, alternating with periods of neglect, particularly during the time prior to harvesting, when the farmer

¹⁶ The legal currency of New Caledonia (and other French Pacific territories). Its value is set at 0.055 French Francs, or roughly 1 American cent. Two billion Pacific Francs equal approximately 20 million US\$.

¹⁷ An income higher than the official Minimum Wage for workers in New Caledonia at the time.

will seek some kind of paid short-term job. This evolution of the "sunshine coffee" operation certainly doesn't reflect the administration's optimistic forecasts of fifteen years ago. But it doesn't come as a complete surprise; it fits in within the internal logic of Melanesian society, and mirrors what had happened to the earlier "shade coffee" experiment of just after World War Two (Pillon, 1987). Thus, with great consistency and after an interval of thirty years, the Melanesian community has caused the death of two projects essential to the administration's goal of inserting them into the market economy through an integration of coffee growing in the framework of existing subsistence farming : such is the burden of history.

3.2 - The reasons for failure

They are to be found in a poor adjustment of the objectives of the project to the powerful limitations that the social, economic and cultural context of Melanesian society imposed upon it.

One of the finest examples of such misunderstandings of Melanesian reality on the part of the administration, is to have believed that coffee was necessarily perceived as a privileged crop because it meant income and access to modern ways. At the beginning of "Operation Sunshine Coffee" in 1979, coffee farming among Melanesian communities had been allowed to fall into decrepitude by western standards. What was left of the old plantations was not very different from fields left fallow, or at best was maintained in the same way as traditional subsistence crops are maintained. Come harvest time, the Melanesians were content to gather whatever was there to harvest.

There are two reasons which may explain this lack of concern on the part of the Melanesians for a cash crop which might have brought them a substantial income :

- The first concerns the age of the coffee plants. The men who had planted them were dead, and it was their children who had inherited the task of tending the plantations. For them, the plantations were seen as a legacy of their elders, which it would have been improper to alter by tearing out the trees and replanting. So, coffee plantations that were once productive, profitable, a symbol of modern progress, were gradually ossified into monuments to the past, and integrated into the traditional heritage.

- The other reason has to do with the spread of paid employment among Melanesians, in the mining sector but also occasionally in the form of short-term jobs in town. By comparison, the income that could be expected from an aging coffee plantation seemed marginal at best. So, in the early seventies, many small farmers decided to try their luck with the mines or in the city. At the start of "Operation Sunshine Coffee", many of these farmers-gone-workers were back on their reservations. They had acquired a taste for a standard of living much higher than the one usual on the reservation, and were considering their return home more as a transition period, while waiting for a new job with the mine "when the nickel gets going again", than as a permanent situation. With this in mind, participation in "Operation

Sunshine Coffee" was seen as a temporary way of earning a living, with no long-term importance, something to fill the gap until a better paid job outside the reservation turned up. So, it isn't surprising that they didn't put a lot of effort into this new coffee operation, far more time consuming than the older type of planting in the shade, and requiring the trouble of learning complicated new techniques. Having to weed the plantation was considered particularly objectionable.

In order to control weeds and creepers, and to provide a supply of nitrogen-rich compost, a leguminous plant (*Pueraria Javanica*) needs to be planted between the rows of coffee bushes. This ground-cover plant eventually dies off for lack of sunlight when the bushes attain full growth. But, for the first three to five years following planting of the coffee bushes, it is essential to control the growth of this particularly prolific plant, and to prevent it from smothering the young coffee trees. The labour of weeding is estimated to represent 80 hours (8 to 12 days) per hectare and per month during the first two years, decreasing to 20 to 30 hours (3 to 5 days) during the third year. Thus the upkeep of a 3 hectare plantation (the size recommended by the authorities) represents a full time job for the farmer for the first three years, the very period during which he can expect no income for his pains, as the first harvest comes at the end of the third year. Few are the farmers willing to put up with this situation. As heads of household, they have many responsibilities and obligations imposed by tradition, particularly the care of the family yam gardens. They find it difficult to fulfil these obligations when they undertake to farm intensively for coffee.

So the new type of coffee farming was considered by Melanesian reservation society as a disruptive factor to their traditional economic organization. The project revolved around a type of logic that the Melanesians had difficulty fitting into their way of life.

The social relationships which structure contemporary Melanesian society are to a large extent inherited from the pre-colonial period. They are founded on a system of exchanges, favours and services which is non commercial in nature, and which benefits the whole community. In yam gardens, for instance, all the blood relatives take part in caring for the crop until harvest time, yet the garden is the personal property of only one member of the group. Once chores have been done on one garden, the whole group moves on to work on an other member's garden. This is repeated until every garden has been looked after.

The thinking of the Agriculture Department, sponsor of "Operation Sunshine Coffee", went against the traditional system based on mutual help when they encouraged the Melanesian community to make the switch to intensive coffee growing. They expected new relationships to be established, based on individual property and paid labour, and they found normal that the owner of a plot of land lacking the time to care for it alone should hire his relatives for the work, and pay them wages for their effort. This goes completely against the traditional approach to the labour of the land. It

implies that the relationships between the farmer and members of his family be no longer based on a principle of mutual assistance, and of sharing of the fruits of the work, but derive from a new and alien hierarchy among workers. This amounts to introducing at the same time the notion of subordination between two members of the same family, and that of individual profit from the income of the sale of the produce, to the detriment of the rest of the community.

These new methods are too alien to Melanesian society to hope that they will be adopted quickly. So it doesn't come as a surprise that a majority of the Melanesians who took part in "Operation Sunshine Coffee" should have somewhat missed its main objectives. Instead of providing intensive upkeep work during the two or three years prior to the first harvest, which was seen as a waste of time, they preferred to go about their usual pursuits, and to treat the coffee plantations in the same way they were treating their food gardens. They were encouraged in this direction by the fact that the Operation never enjoyed the support it was supposed to get in term of availability of new farming land. The plan had been for a sizable number of the new plantations to be established on the outside periphery of the traditional reservations, as part of a program of enlargement of the reservations organised by the authorities. This was to forget the considerable importance of land in Melanesian society. Any enlargement of the reservation domain is considered the property of the community as a whole, and as such must benefit the whole of the group. To grant new land to a small number of individuals for the purpose of private speculation and profit, without this profit being shared by the community was unthinkable. So the plantations of the new "sunshine coffee" were established on the existing reservation lands, where they never found the breathing space necessary for their development. Instead of the 3 hectares recommended by the authorities, they never exceeded an average of half an hectare each. This confining of the sunshine coffee operation to the reservation lands further identified it in the eyes of the Melanesians to the older shade variety, and fostered its assimilation into the general system and methods of the old subsistence food gardens.

CONCLUSION

As illustrated by the three examples we have just seen, the land occupies a central place in Melanesian culture. The relationships between land, culture and society find their expression in the land perceived as a living entity, the group's territory, which in New Caledonia, is represented by the reservation.

In view of the island's colonial history, characterized for the Kanak by land dispossession, the reservation is perceived by the Melanesian population as a sanctuary, where life proceeds according to the rhythms of tradition, of a lifestyle going back to ancient, pre-colonial times. This reservation "sanctuary" is surrounded by an environment which is at the same time frightening and fascinating for the Kanaks, the environment of modernism, linked to the world economy, and where life pulses according to rhythms dictated by the authorities.

The Melanesian who wishes to join this modern world leaves his reservation to enter the commercial system. This leave-taking is never irrevocable. The ties of blood and culture are forever woven between the Melanesian and his territory. Disillusioned by the western world, or driven away by the loss of his job, he will always return there to refresh his spirit. This is the system, the powerful tendency, which has been dictating the behaviour of the Melanesian community for the last several decades. The authorities have always attempted to get this "reservation-sanctuary" to join the modern world. The succession of coffee-farming projects over the last fifty years shows how difficult this can be, and brings to light the resistance of Melanesian society to any development project conceived by the administration. For any reservation development project to succeed, it has got to be accepted first by the Melanesian population. So it is essential that the planning of the project take into account the social, economic and cultural realities of this population, and that the planners take the time to discuss at length the benefits of the project and all its particulars with the traditional chiefly authorities and the actual people likely to be affected.

With the birth of the Provincial system, and the newly acquired access for Melanesians to the decision making process, a new phenomenon is emerging : the introduction of the Melanesian system of values in the planning of development projects, even outside of reservation lands. The building of the Koné-Tiwaka highway and the "H"-pattern development of the the North Province are among the most significant examples of this new trend.

REFERENCES

DOUMENGE J.P. , 1974 - Paysans mélanésiens en pays Canala. *CEGET (CNRS), Trav. Doc. Géog. trop.*, 17 : 220 p.

DOUMENGE J.P., 1982 - Du terroir à la ville, les Mélanésiens et leurs espaces en Nouvelle Calédonie. *CEGET (CNRS), Trav. Doc. Géogr. trop.*, 46 : 488 p.

ITSEE, 1990 - *Recensement 1989 de la population de Nouvelle Calédonie.*

KOHLER J.M., PILLON P., 1986 - *Economie domestique mélanésienne et développement : l'opération Café.* Nouméa : OCSTC-ORSTOM. 195 p.

PILLON P., 1987. Développement et enjeux sociaux en Nouvelle-Calédonie : l'opération Café. Nouméa : ORSTOM. *Rapp. sci. tech.: Sci. soc. : Sociol.*, 1 : 44 p., multigr.

SAUSSOL A., 1967. Le café en Nouvelle Calédonie. Grandeur et vicissitude d'une colonisation. *Cah. Outre Mer*, XX : 275-305.

SAUSSOL A., 1979. L'héritage, essai sur le problème foncier mélanésien en Nouvelle-Calédonie. *Publ. Soc. Océanistes, Paris*, 40 : 498 p.

WAGINO M., 1991. *Le H du Nord, la stratégie d'aménagement de la Province Nord (Nouvelle Calédonie).* DEA : Univ. Bordeaux III. 50 p.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I - GEOGRAPHICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND.....	22
1 - The Geography of New Caledonia.....	22
2 - A history of New Caledonia.....	25
3 - Culture and the ties with the land.....	27
II - THE KONÉ-TIWAKA AXIS, AND THE H-PATTERN DEVELOPMENT OF NEW CALEDONIA'S NORTH PROVINCE : <i>FROM MELANESIAN CULTURE TO THE PLANNING OF A VAST DEVELOPMENT PROJECT</i>	29
1 - A major feature of New Caledonia' policy of spacial restructuring.....	29
2 - The Melanesian parameters of the Project.....	35
III - HARBOUR INSTALLATIONS AT WE : <i>AN ASSET FOR ECONOMIC REDISTRIBUTION IN THE ISLANDS PROVINCE</i>	37
1 - Installations that are indispensable to development in the Loyalty Islands.....	37
2 - Perception of the project : two levels of reality.....	40
3 - The lessons of this confrontation.....	42
IV - "OPERATION SUNSHINE COFFEE" : <i>A PROJECT AIMED AT THE INTEGRATION OF MELANESIAN SOCIETY IN THE MARKET ECONOMY</i>	43
1 - Fifty years of coffee growing in New Caledonia's "Mainland".....	44
2 - The "Sunshine Coffee" operation : A new beginning ?.....	45
3 - Development and the burden of history.....	47
CONCLUSION.....	51
REFERENCES.....	52