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RESEARCH ARTICLE

TRIBAL PLURALITY AND CULTURAL INFLEXIBILITY IN PAPUA NEW GUINEA: A LAND OF MYSTERY AND MAGIC

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ABSTRACT

The Tribal Plurality and Cultural Inflexibility in Papua New Guinea (PNG) address a unique sense of socio-political structure indicating peculiarities of its own compared to other tribal nations. This distinctive mode of traditional tribal cultural phenomena got its prominence because of the existence of over eight hundred tribes with similar count of languages thereof in PNG. All different tribes and their diverse cultures tend to maintain their pride and distinctiveness without any compromise. That is how, this long enduring tribal plurality and cultural inflexibility influence day to day life of Papua New Guineans at large. This study would endeavor the effectiveness of the multiplicity of tribes and their rigid cultures against the waves of modern global expectations. Research under study would be dealt in using the ethnographic and anthropological methods facing the efficacy of Melanesian society and culture.

INTRODUCTION

Papua New Guinea (PNG) in her current statehood bears the testimony of rich historical antecedents for centuries. Before attaining to its democratic rules of conduct, it was basically identified as the traditional primordial tribal social structure supposedly with glorious cultural and value systems endured for time immemorial. Let us initiate our discussions with the prehistory and discovery of this wonder island nation.

Brief Prehistory of Papua New Guinea: The tribal plurality and cultural inflexibility in PNG holds an age-old factual dilemma meant for its basic features of mystery and magic'. The prehistory of PNG can be traced back to about 50,000 years. Anthropologists Summerh ayes (2010) remarks that "this is the first evidence of people at such a high altitude at the earliest of time; it is testimony to human adaptability". The inhabitants of PNG became the first people on earth to venture into agriculture activities some 10,000 years ago (Bourke& Harwood, 2009). Historically, PNG is a nation of tribal societies organized on the basis of kinship (Tivinarlik and Wanat, 2006). Prior to colonization, social relationships including trade and leadership evolved from culturally-intact societies (Chowning, 1979; Narokobi, 1983; Kulwaum, 1985).

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As societies transitioned from traditional to modern economies, through the process of colonization and independence, people were required to amalgamate their small clans and tribes into bigger communities. Also ethnographic accounts validate the observation of Summerhayes along with others (Khan, 2018; Chowning, 1979; Narokobi, 1983).

Discovery of the Island: The discovery of the island of New Guinea by Europeans (Portuguese and Spanish) navigators sailing in the South Pacific was in 1526-27. Amongst those earlier explorers was a Portuguese Maritime explorer Jorge de Menezes who accidentally reached the island in 1526-27 calling the region Ilhas dos Papuas and named it "Papuwah" means fuzzy hair in Malay language. Spanish explorer Yñigo Ortiz de Retez who navigated the northern coastline of the Pacific-Melanesian island of New Guinea, he named it as Nueva Guinea because of a seeming similarity between the islands' inhabitants and those found on the African Guinea coast.

Colonization Process Impacted Upon Tribes and Cultures: The Second World War resulted in amalgamation of the Papua and New Guinea territories previously governed by the British and German colonists. Earlier it was combined and conjointly administered by Australia in 1905. Thereafter, Australia continuously administered it separately under the Papua Act until it was invaded by the Empire of Japan in 1941. Japanese

surrendered in 1945. The surrender of the civil administration of Papua as well as New Guinea was restored. Papua New Guinea Provisional Administration Act, (1945–46), Papua and New Guinea were combined in an administrative union. After the official Independence in 1975, the region was called Independent State of Papua New Guinea. Since independence there has been continued evolution of transformation and modernization processes in PNG societies. As Zimmer-Tamakoshi (1997) states, contemporary modernization process has been shaped by a number of key influences. These mainly included colonization, Christianity and the Westminster system of governance introduced by the colonizers. Colonization has brought many changes to PNG, including relative political stability, bureaucratic control, economic competition, and uniformity of practice in the public sector. These elements were introduced during PNG's Colonial period in an attempt to embed modern management practices throughout the country. Christianity also brought social stability and played a vital role in the changing leadership and governance processes in PNG (Barker, 1985). Churches in PNG play a significant role in instilling Christian values and principles to local communities, and so guiding communities to resolve conflicts in more peaceful and harmonious ways.

The Westminster system of representative government was adopted at independence in 1975 from colonial administration (Kulwaum, 1985). Amongst other features, this system centralizes decision making power at the national government level; and gives limited powers to provincial and rural communities, particularly in the way in which natural resources are used and governed. This system of power and decision making are now firmly woven into the structure of PNG politics and the bureaucracy (Prideaux, 2006).

Social Structure of PNG: The Island nation of Papua New Guinea is traditionally divided into four major cultural and sociopolitical regions: Momase, Highlands, Papua and New Guinea Islands. The island of New Guinea (the second largest island in the world) including Papua New Guinea that occupies eastern part and West Papua that shares western end is under the rule of republic of Indonesia. Distinctive Melanesian set of cultural values and behaviour are preconditions for family, clan and tribal identities. History suggests that Melanesians live in local groups in scattered homesteads and hamlets rather than villages (Chowning, 1979). Khan (2018) views further supports that Melanesian societies lived in detached homesteads and hamlets rather than in clustered villages. Most of these homesteads and hamlets settlers were temporary occupants until the different groups of people along these settlements track down to cultivation cycles.

It is suggested that ephemeral settlers were continuously vigilant of the danger of sudden attack by other annexing tribes. For purpose of defense and unnoticed invasion by any external enemies, they always live together even in conditions of having fleeting homes. A number of following instances bear the testimony of their geographic locational convenience facing against relatively unstable tenancies. As such, in the remote or inaccessible interior areas people normally tended to situate themselves on ridges and peaks. Similarly, in certain sites of the Sepik River area of Papua New Guinea, large villages having populations of more than 1,000 that represented also the blood-kindred descent-based clans and tribes encompassing even diverse communities.

Gender Relationships through Patriarchal and Matriarchal Lineages: Male-female relationships were polarized. Papuan coast (Marind-anim and Asmat peoples) along the southern face of the Highlands (Enga speakers and Papuan plateau peoples). The high central mountains (Mountain Ok peoples) down into the Sepik. Khan (2018) described the concept of gender relations as evolution of monogamian family structure in human society wherein exclusive male-female interactions started to be on the ground. Khan claimed that both traditional and modern societies are akin to experiencing such gender relations in some forms or the other. Holzkecht (1996) supports this idea that the gender relation in Melanesia is socio-culturally constituted. Khan (2019) argues that cultural rites and rituals pre-dominate men-women relationships based on traditionally prevalent diversified beliefs system in each individual tribe. For example, gender-oriented cultural traditions in the eastern Highlands Province of PNG comprised of folklore related legendary practices once reflecting to an ancient female power that fell into the hands of men. As such, men's initiations program, their cult rituals, use of sacred flutes, and ritualized nose-or penis-bleeding ceremonies which was ostensibly demonstrated in imitation of female menstruation cycles (Khan, 2018). Again, such complexes of "pseudo-procreative" rituals accompanied with male cult activities were observed in the Sepik region (Essacu, 2016).

PNG is commonly characterized by both the patriarchal system where descent is through the father to son and the matriarchal system with descent passing through the mother to daughter societies. Almost three quarters of the country practice patriarchal society, while the matriarchal system is largely confined to coastal provinces. In patriarchal society men are the legitimate head of the decision making process (Essacu, 2016). Women and children may contribute to discussions; but men have the final say. Patriarchal society is common in the mainland regions, the Highlands, and some coastal provinces including West New Britain, Manus and New Ireland, Central, Gulf, Western and Northern provinces. Nevertheless in matriarchal society, women take the leading role in decision-making, assuming land and properties ownership (Essacu, 2016). Referred to as 'string culture' by the Tolai peoples of East New Britain, men follow the women after marriage, as men have limited rights to land and properties. Daughters claim land ownership and sons follow the wives. Men must go with the women's tribe or clan to win the hearts of the wife's relatives. Otherwise they may not have land on which to settle. Where a woman marries into an outside culture, she is permitted to bring her husband to her land. The man remains a stranger to the land, and their children have limited rights over the land. Therefore, the decision, or priorities, will go to the man's sister, and she decides whether to provide for him to settle his family. Three provinces that encourage the matrilineal society are Bougainville, East New Britain and Milne Bay.

Cultural traditions and identities: Cultural and traditional identifies are commonplace and unique to many tribal Melanesian societies. Social cohesion and relationship building amongst the communities are interwoven through the characteristics of antique and related pedigrees. Although unique, they vary in many aspects in many region and tribes in PNG. Common variations and identities that are relevant in current times include region, totemism and Animism.

Religion: Papua New Guinea is primarily a Christian country comprising 96 per cent of the population. Bahá'í faith and Islam are a minority in the region.

Totemism & Animism: Totemism and Animism are religious forms common to tribal regions. A totem is any species of plants or animals thought to possess supernatural powers. Each group within the society may have its own totem, including associated ceremonies. Animism is the world's oldest religion, derived from the Latin word *anima* meaning breath/spirit life is the religious belief that objects, places and creatures all possess a distinct spiritual essence.

Indigenous Customs and Traditions: The traditional Melanesian culture is rich and diverse with its cultural expression through their music, dance, weaponry, costumes, face painting, art, singing, architecture and so on. PNG is a nation of tribal societies organised on the basis of kinship (Tivinarlik and Wanat, 2006). Whiteman (1995 p: 103) notes that 'kinship is a system that prescribes how people living together should interact with one another'. PNG has several thousand communities, most with only a few hundred people. Traditionally, tribes lived for one common purpose; to defend the tribe from foreign invasion. McLaughlin (1997 p: 4) assesses that there are over 1000 tribes living in 'almost total isolation', often divided by language, customs, and tradition. As late as the 1990's at least three 'unknown' or 'lost' tribes were discovered (Waiko, 2003). Each tribe, language group, and culture acts to influence people to behave in quite distinct ways, peculiar to each individual tribe or group. Communities see themselves as 'central with other communities 'peripheral and in turn central from their own perspective' (Busse, 2005 p: 445). Divisions created by language, custom, and tradition have repeatedly resulted in on-going low scale tribal warfare with neighboring communities, as Melanesian men, particularly leaders suffer an inability to trust neighbors (Herdt, 2003). Some of these unique complexities and diversities of customs and traditions include initiation ceremony.

An initiation ceremony is one event that exemplifies customs and traditions. Initiation ceremonies, to pass leadership from big-man (Sahlins, 1963), or elders, to younger generations, are practiced in almost every PNG society. However, actual practices are not uniform across all societies. For instance, in the Sepik region, young men and women (20 years below) are not regarded as being ready to assume a leadership role until they have successfully passed through some form of initiation that signify their man and women-hoods status. Initiations are significant events that potential leaders undertake to be testified that young individuals are qualified to be matured leaders in the communities. The Yatmul people of the Sepik River for example, practice the 'skin cutting custom', requiring selected men to enter into Haus Tambaran (men's house) for between six and eight months. They fast, and are forbidden to undertake specific commandments, as determined by elders. To pass the test to be crowned with the man ship title, the elders' commandments must not be broken. Following successful completion of the Haus Tambaran period, the young men endure an initiation ceremony where crocodile tattoos are cut into their bare bodies. Tattoos identify that the young man has passed from boyhood to manhood, and is ready to assume leadership roles.

Languages in PNG: Papua New Guinea has a fascinating exotic culture that is multifaceted and complex due to its vast varied tribal groups with their own traditions, customs, languages and rituals with more than 800 languages in their traditional cultures. Waiko (2003) estimates that there are in excess of 830 distinctive mutually unintelligible languages in a country with a population of 8.5 million people. Tok Pisin, once called Neo-Melanesian (or Pidgin English) has evolved as the lingua franca - the medium through which diverse language groups are able to communicate with one another. Hiri Motu has been declining in favour of Tok Pisin. English is still the main language of government and commerce that unifies the nation of thousand tribes.

Nature of Leaderships in PNG: Traditionally in PNG leadership is largely culturally orientated, embracing traditional beliefs, norms and values (McKeown, 2001). Leadership structure at village level is constructed within the social fabric of traditional and customary values as practiced by the tribes, clans and lineages that make up the community (McKeown, 2001; Herdt, 2003). Thus, leadership is intrinsically linked with local culture and social structures. This implies that people from one community (and within one community) might have different views and perspectives to those from another community on what makes good leadership, and how their governance systems should work to meet their development needs (Ambang, 2007). In rural PNG context, people view leaders as those who can provide for their household, work hard and be ready and willing to provide assistance to the needy. They see leaders as people who have material wealth (such as gardens and pigs) and are so better able to assist others. Thus, leadership style is significantly influenced by the leader's immediate and extended family, clan, and tribe. However, there is no single or even widespread culture, embracing a common set of beliefs, values, and traditional practices. Values vary from region to region, while diversity is customary within regional and provincial areas. Traditional leadership is mainly practiced in an informal setting, at the village level, particularly where the tribe or village structure is not formalized. To gain leader status, a person must display leadership qualities, such as being a good spokesperson, have status with wealth, the number of pigs or boars tusks owned, special hunting spears, fishing nets, kina shells, land held, big food gardens, house, or other 'essentials'.

Leadership dynamics in contemporary PNG: Leadership in contemporary PNG is shifting profoundly to adopt the changing world. Martin's (2013) observations and descriptions of the 'death' of the 'Big Man' model of leadership, and the rise of the 'Big Shot' model demonstrate the shifting modes of leadership in PNG. Martin suggests that the traditional obligations expected of Big Men to serve their people are overtaken, in the case of the Big Shot, by his pursuit to join the ranks of emerging socio-economic elite. This example illustrates the dynamic state of leadership in PNG. Sahlins (1963) and Chowning (1979) describe the common types of traditional leadership in PNG into two categories: 'big-men' and chieftain systems. The 'big-men' system is practiced predominantly in the Highlands region, and in some other parts of mainland of PNG, and the chieftain systems is found especially in the New Guinea Islands, Papua and some coastal islands of mainland New Guinea (McKeown 2001). However, the systems of leadership varies greatly between communities (Tivinarlik et al.2006); and the definitions of these leadership

system become ambiguous (Zimmer-Tamakoshi, 1997: 108-111; Martin, 2013: 176-186).

Big Man system: Big-man leadership is based on the individual's status in the community in terms of wealth and money. Man having numerous wives, pigs, gardens, or businesses, the community recognizes him as a leader. Big-man methods to develop leaders and to preserve the passing of leadership from father to son, family to family, or clan to clan are commonplace in PNG. The success of a 'Big Man' depends on his ability to organize important ceremonial events and exchanges of partnership trades and gifts through reciprocal feasts and activities Sahlin (1963). Zimmer-Tamakoshi (1997) also observed that the status of Big Man is achieved through making good things happen for others as well as for themselves. Zimmer-Tamakoshi (ibid) notes that an important part of the Big Man's responsibilities is to raise their names with others in their communities by providing assistance to those who are in need - for example, by sharing the surplus of his wealth and assets (to pay for school fees for other children in his community, paying compensation to settle disputes between two rival clans). A Big Man's involvement in such activities builds his reputation, and acquires respect and commands attention from the community and at the same time establishes his support-base.

The term Big Man is not only commonly used amongst Papua New Guineans, but has been long the most recognizable figure in Melanesian anthropology (Martin 2013), helping to define ethnographical culture by virtue of his perceived contrast as a leader with Polynesian Chiefs (Sahlin 1963:285). One important characteristic of a Big Man are that he is self-made, and does not inherit or even assume a fixed office, but is constantly having to prove his suitability as an organizer of social relations (Sahlin 1963:289).

Tribal Chieftain System: The Chieftain system is characterized by inheritance of powers from male lineages. Prideaux (2007) described the role of chief as to control the resources and activities of the society. The Chief makes decisions for the society according to its existing traditional legal system and advises his chief of councils, who are usually clan leaders, to inform the community. The attainment of the title of Chieftain is through accumulation of wealth by way of ownership of land, pigs, wives, money, or as a wise warrior. For some cultural and social reasons, chieftain titles are accorded only to men; to maintain respect, peace and harmony within the community, its members have to follow the decisions made by the chief (Prideaux 2007).

Emerging System of Bigshots and Grand Chiefs: As Martin (2013) pointed out, 'Big Shot' is an emerging form of leadership in PNG and Melanesia. The 'Big Shot' identifies people who see themselves as they have placed themselves outside of their moral obligations to others, and instead behave as business managers of their own. While in many respects, PNG communities have not deviated from their traditional sense of communalism, the changing circumstances allow for some people to take advantage of their opportunities to partially deny basic mutual obligations. In this sense, the Big Shot is now seen as an undesirable form of modern leadership. Dom (2015) noted a parallel model of leadership to Big Shot that he calls liptimapim leadership. In PNG Tok Pisin, 'liptimapim means 'lift' and is equivalent to adulatory behavior, almost akin to idolatry and cult worship. An example

of 'liptimapim' is the throne-carrying of elected Members of Parliament when they visit local communities (Dom 2015). This has no precedent in PNG culture. However, it has become a norm in the recent years in the PNG political context. Dom (2015) observed that a liptimapim approach is used by the traditional communities to initiate elected politicians and bestow them with various traditional titles such as Grand Chief of various tribes. The emergence of Grand Chief Titles has become both common and contested in the last two decades in PNG political spheres, in terms of who should attain such a title and on what basis. The title of chief and the encompassing role of a leader in PNG communities have a more fundamental basis in society than simply the person who received most votes (Dom, 2015). Those playing Big Shot and Grand Chief roles in contemporary PNG society are also leaders of whom people from their communities have knowledge, a lifetime of experience, and whom they trust. This means the Big Shot and Grand Chiefs have reciprocally, the moral obligations to speak the right words, to solve disputes, to create peace and maintain harmony amongst the communities (Martin 2013; Dom 2015). The emergence of Big Shot and Grand Chief Models of leadership are indicative of how leadership models in PNG are shifting from more traditional modes to various hybrid forms.

Systems of Governance: The literature on PNG governance systems identifies both modern and traditional forms of governance systems (Narokobi 1980:1983). Kulwaum (1985) and Tivinarlik and Wanat (2006) suggest that the 'modern governance system' in PNG refers to power structures, rules and formalities of appointing leaders based on modern democratic values and principles. In contrast, the traditional governance system is that which operates at a community level, and is based on indigenous customary values and social structures (Ambang, 2007). Under the contemporary governance systems in PNG, councilors, who are elected by people through formal elections, maintain political leadership status at the local level. Elected councilors are also the agents of government at the local level. They are embedded in PNG's formal governance system, which has three levels: national, provincial and local. The PNG National Government is the central decision making body, with each of the 22 provincial governments responsible for provincial affairs, and the local government for delivery of basic public services at the community level. At the time of independence, the creation of a three tier system was considered important for promoting the decentralization of powers from national government to provinces and local communities (Kulwaum, 1985).

Reflection on Regional and Tribal Politics: The regional and tribal politics are predominant in both modern and economic political and bureaucratic system societies (Prideaux, 2007). There exist a wide spread of corruptions, mismanagement, cronyism and wantokism in modern governance systems of politics and administration. Prideaux (2007) notes that due to the complexities and diversities in PNG, and forty years after independence, PNG continues to demonstrate strong rationalistic patriotism. Prior to independence, the public sector in the provinces was composed of people from across the country. With the adoption of the provincial governing system following independence, public sector employment reverted to a practice of employing people from the district or province in preference to those from other provinces or regions. The catch cry was 'Enga for Enga', 'Sepik for Sepik', Simbus for Simbus; for example.

This practice is firmly entrenched in organizational and government politics, adversely impacting on the delivery of goods and services, and effective government. 'Corruption and fraud is easily covered up, largely ignored, and often condoned by leaders and employees alike.

Ethnic conflict and violence in Papua New Guinea: A starting point for any discussion on conflict and violence in PNG is the literature on traditional forms of wars. While there are obviously many differences in terms of nature and process of conflicts and their resolution across the varied societies in the region, there are some broad generalizations that are widely applicable. First conflicts in PNG are typically embedded in the everyday politics and history of the society. It would be a rare case, if a particular dispute or conflict had no 'history' or was unconnected to past events in some way. A second key characteristic derives from an adage that conflict in PNG particularly in the Highlands of PNG are always concern with women, pigs and land. Land is seen as an element of social milieu as it is a material external to the social setting.

Conflict in any sense requires considerable attention, as it is an inevitable phenomenon in human life, and it arises when two parties have opposing views. It ranges from personal to inter-group to community-wide conflicts (Kehatsin, 2015). At the micro-level, such as the village setting in PNG, conflicts arise when one tribe claims dominance or ownership over land rights and another tribe believes they are the legitimate owners. It may also arise within two members of the same tribe having opposing ideas over same piece of land and properties (Martin, 2013). Such micro-level conflicts have the potential to scale-up and feed into large-scale armed conflicts, such as those that occurred in PNG on Bougainville Island. Hundreds of people are killed every year in tribal fights in Papua New Guinea. The nature of ethnic conflict between these groups is traditionally played out locally, often via intertribal fighting. Than as part of an ethno-nationalist quest or a competition for regional or national hegemony. Ethnic conflict is an integral part of life in most parts of PNG communities, and is not seen as intrinsically negative. Researchers such as Kehatsin (2004) maintain that conflicts are regularly used, encouraged and seen as legitimate way of dealing with disputes and seeking justice and restitution for perceived wrong-doings. Whilst the country has several hundred different ethno-linguistic groups, traditionally, in PNG, the issues that have been fought over are 'land, women and pigs'- and forms that conflict takes, appear to be very similar across the country. Conflicts have traditionally taken place between neighboring clans and tribes, but can also take place within clan units, and even with families. The high levels of connectivity between many neighboring clans in PNG through inter-marriage, trade, and lineage could mean that rather than being static, groups engaging in conflicts are constantly shifting their boundaries. Tribal fights are owned by tribal heads and the disputants involved vary from conflicts to conflicts, depending on the issue as interests and allegiance are easily shifted based on the issue at hand and the way in which an individual, family or group chooses to identify itself during a given dispute.

Witchcraft, Sorcery/Sanguma: Sorcery practice is prevalent in PNG. Sorcery affects people at all levels of society, bringing fear to people's hearts and minds. It still remains a common practice to kill suspected sorcerers in the highlands, with sorcery suspected where small businesses fail. The recent work of Khan (2018) suggests that sorcery or 'sanguma' is an evil

practice indicating to fear of body, minds and hearts in the form of traditional magic demonstration and alike. As the traditional modes of cultures and values are endangered by external influences, the practice of sorcery seems to be increasing cumulatively. To note, the efficacy of the exercise of sorcery distresses people at all levels of society having a sort of hypnotic fear to people's hearts and minds. Over and above, the religious practice has not been so operational in changing or disregarding the fear transported through the practice of sorcery. Even today, it vestiges a communal practice to kill suspected sorcerers especially in the highlands. To take disciplinary actions against sorcery or Sanguma could be very difficult because, people in both the public and private sector are habitually fearful. All in all, it indicates the lacuna of effective leadership in the contemporary tribal societies. Therefore, people's willingness to seek positions of leadership could be deemed as passive. The belief in sorcery and witchcraft in Papua New Guinea is widely spread and has an important weight in most of the spheres of public and private life. According to a research carried out by Oxfam in 2009, most of the population of PNG do not accept natural causes in case of illness or death of relatives and friends. The belief that sorcerers and witches have deliberately used their supernatural powers in order to harm other people is a common conviction and, the relatives of the victims adopt retaliation measures against the supposed witches, such as murder, torture, destruction of their property or exile. Police reports present cases of victims that have been buried alive, beheaded, pushed from high cliffs, electrocuted, forced to drink petroleum, stoned to death and shot.

Before the publicized deaths of Kepari Leniata and Helen Rumbali at the beginning of 2013, much research had already been done in "sanguma" (witchcraft) and the violence arising from sanguma accusations. However, after these horrific killings showed to the World through the social networks, the international community turned its focus towards PNG and urged the government of the Pacific country to take immediate action. These two murders also triggered the rise on the media discourse focusing on witchcraft and sorcery related violence. Across the world, the name of PNG was associated to scenes of extreme violence, accompanied by sensationalist headings that strongly blamed and criminalized Papua New Guinea's culture.

Conclusion

The facts and figures relating to tribal plurality and cultural inflexibility provided in this paper revealed both basic and super structure of the PNG society. The traditional customs and cultural practices in multiple tribes surfaced for centuries dating back from prehistory to colonization through to the assumption of sovereignty in 1975. What social dynamics could be apprehended based on such plurality and inflexibility? If we look into the contemporary PNG socio-political environment we do not observe much of a change for several decades even in the formation of our democratic governance. While observing the roles of bigmen, tribal chieftains, bigshots and grandchiefs, we tend to arrive at the conclusion that respective roles of the above influential persona did not provide any optimistic picture of change in our society. Because, the domineering roles of the leaders are politically motivated to achieve their personal objectives instead of community welfare, wherein the traditional tribal values essentially remained static.

Given such a backdrop, it would not be an oversimplification to regard PNG as a land of mystery and magic. This can well be substantiated by the explanations of witchcraft, sorcery or sanguma (spirit that sorcerer calls to kill) as sources of beliefs and magic. In addition, the reality factor is that tribal groups and communities are more inclined to myths than practical scenarios they experience in their day to day lives. Just in order to uphold the spirit of mystical and magical beliefs, the people used to condone their materialistic viewpoints. With the global warming all around, the PNG society also takes its sway for a kind of social dynamism against tribal presumptions. Therefore, a state of change that has taken place in PNG society and culture should be comprehended in a restricted sense.

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