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A historiography of research on West New Guinea's human past

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Abstract

This chapter is a historiography of research on West New Guinea's peoples and their social, biological, and material histories. It provides a synthesis of previous research undertaken on West New Guinea's human past, divided by chronological period, from Portuguese and Spanish voyages of discovery (1511–1606), Dutch economic expansion (1606–1795), European voyages of discovery and the emergence of the natural sciences (1767–1884), early ethnographic expeditions (1884–1945), the development of Netherlands New Guinea anthropology (1945–1963), and Indonesian-era archaeology and anthropology (1963–2022). Finally, the chapter reflects on the present state of cultural heritage legislation and practice in the region, which highlights how scholarship could productively engage Papuan communities in the future.

Abstrak

Bab ini menyajikan riwayat sejarah penelitian tentang kehidupan masyarakat yang berada di wilayah Papua bagian barat: sejarah sosial, biologi, dan budaya materi. Bab ini memaparkan sintesa dari penelitian sebelumnya yang dilakukan pada masa lalu di wilayah tersebut. Hal ini disajikan secara kronologis yang dimulai dengan awal kedatangan para pelancong berkebangsaan Portugis dan Spanyol (1511–1606), ekspansi ekonomi Belanda (1606–1795), pelayaran pertama yang dilakukan oleh bangsa Eropa dan kemunculan ilmu pengetahuan alam (1767–1884), eskpedisi awal etnografi (1884–1945), perkembangan antropologi Nugini-Belanda (1945–1963), dan perkembangan Ilmu arkeologi dan antropologi pada masa pemerintahan Indonesia (1963–2022). Pada bagian terakhir, tulisan ini mengulas peraturan dan praktek warisan budaya di wilayah tersebut serta menyoroti tentang pentingya pendidikan serta hal-hal yang mendukung proses tersebut sehingga menjadi prioritas masyarakat asli Papua dimasa yang akan datang.

Introduction

To situate the present state of human historical research on West New Guinea, we need to examine the ways in which anthropology, including subdisciplines like social anthropology, archaeology, material culture studies, and biological anthropology, as well as cognate fields like historical linguistics, have developed. Moreover, we need to understand how wider environmental, social, and political changes have shaped the types of questions that are asked about the region. Developing on Chapter 1, which provided an introduction to what we know about the environmental, cultural, and colonial histories of West New Guinea, this chapter explores how these events have shaped social and historical research from the mid-sixteenth century to the early twenty-first century. We subdivide these phases of documentation into the Portuguese and Spanish voyages of discovery (1511–1606), Dutch economic expansion (1606–1795), European voyages of discovery and the emergence of the natural sciences (1767–1884), early ethnographic expeditions (1884–1945), the development of Netherlands New Guinea anthropology (1945–1963), and Indonesian-era archaeology and anthropology (1963–2022). The chapter finally describes the present state of cultural heritage management in the area and provides some thoughts on future directions for human historical research in West New Guinea.

Iberian trade voyages: 1511–1606

Literature describing the people of West New Guinea began as a by-product of the Portuguese presence around Malukan Spice Islands in the early sixteenth century. Although Chinese merchant ships and east Indonesian fleets likely visited the offshore islands, the Bird's Head, and the Bomberai Peninsula earlier than the sixteenth century, there are no known written records describing these trips to New Guinea. The earliest European visits to the area were accidental and often described Papuans as savage and subhuman, establishing a racist myth that would persevere for several centuries (Wichmann 1909 provides an overview of European journeys from 1511–1606). In 1526, Jorge de Menezes, en route to take up the role as Portuguese governor of Maluku, was blown off course to 'Isla Versija',[1] which was either Warsia on the Bird's Head (Trotter 1884), the island of Waigeo (Hamy 1877, 8), or the island of Biak (Wichmann 1909, 15) (Figure 2.1). There, he waited out the monsoon season; it remains unclear whether he moored offshore or disembarked, and, if the latter, what interaction he had with locals. In 1537, the mutinous crew of Hernando de Grijalva's ship were wrecked and enslaved on an unnamed island around the north coast of New Guinea, and they provided a brief account of their experience to António Galvão, the Portuguese governor of Maluku who had ransomed them. The crew described their captors as cannibals, sorcerers, and heathens (Galvão 1944, 444–445). In 1538, Galvão sent João Fogaça to 'Ilhas dos Papuas' (the Papuan Islands, namely Raja Ampat or the Bird's Head) to enquire into Grijalva's ships and the potential for missionisation. Fogaça befriended the rajas of these islands and returned with provisions (Haga 1884, 8). This marked the start of a conceptual distinction between the peoples of the offshore islands (thought to be open to trading valuable commodities) and those of the mainland (who were thought to be more hostile). Writings by Father Marcos Prancudo in 1561, however, indicate that the Portuguese had limited knowledge of New Guinea east of Raja Ampat, despite half a century of occupation in Maluku (Wichmann 1909, 33).

1 Throughout this chapter, local language words are italicised and Papuan Malay or Indonesian words are underlined at first mention. Words from other languages (such as Dutch, Spanish, and French) are provided with single quote marks.

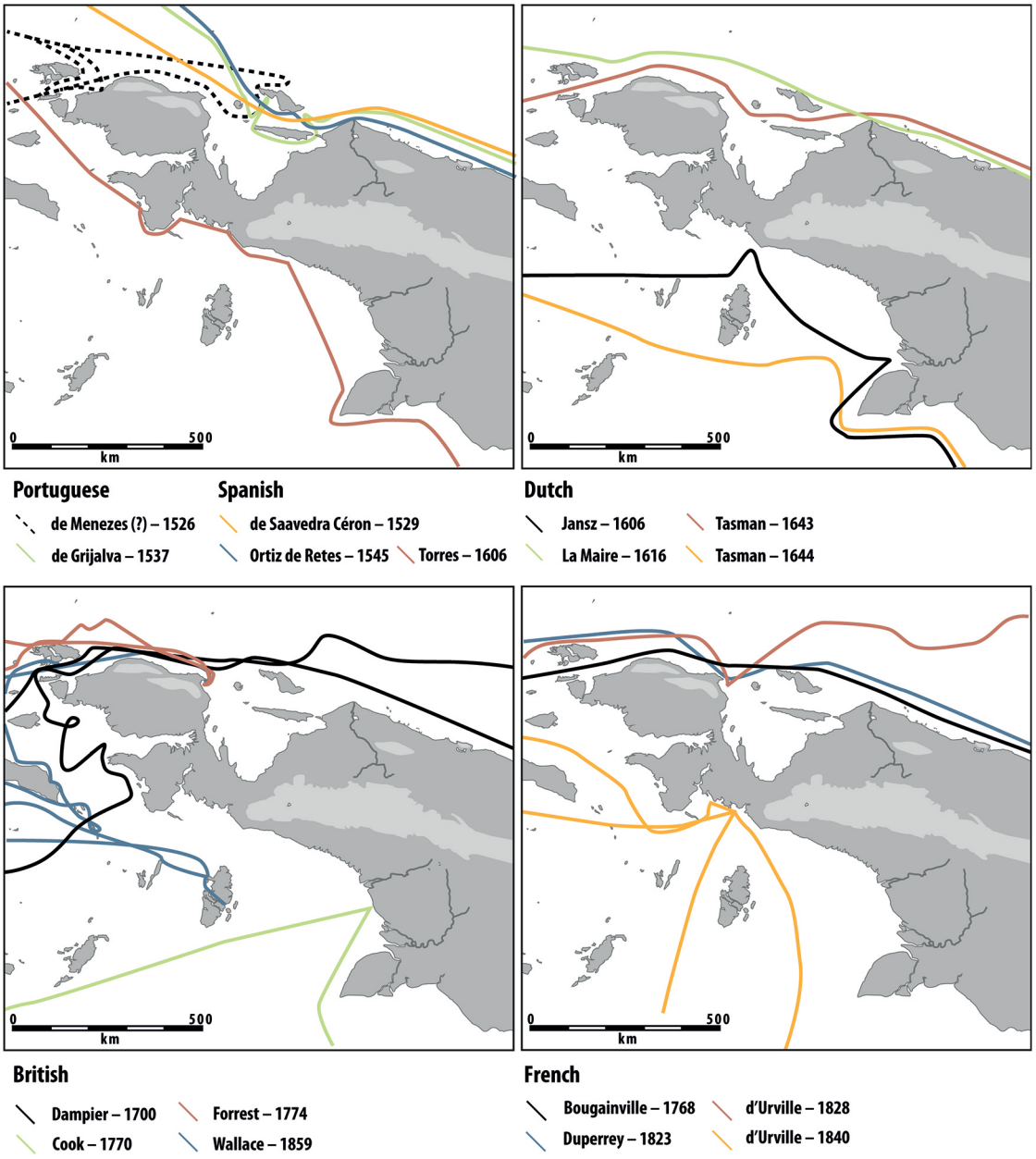

Figure 2.1: Approximate routes of a sample of early European voyages around West New Guinea.
Source: Dylan Gaffney.

Some of the earliest deliberate voyages to New Guinea stemmed from attempts to chart a safe seafaring route that could connect the Spanish colonies in the Americas with their outposts in Southeast Asia. For instance, in 1528–1529, Alvaro de Saavedra Cerón sailed from Tidore carrying three tons of cloves in two unsuccessful attempts to reach Mexico (Wright 1939). During the first attempt, his description of 'Islas de Oro' (Islands of Gold) while awaiting favourable winds helped to stimulate rumours that New Guinea was replete with gold. This was probably Cenderawasih Bay, where de Saavedra Cerón described the islanders primarily by physical type, but noted they possessed iron weapons (Douglas 2014, 59). On the second attempt, the voyage traversed a large stretch of the north coast of New Guinea, again describing the populations based on physical appearance

(dark-skinned, curly haired, unclothed). These physical characteristics continued to be noted on future voyages, and seafarers often distinguished 'Papuans' with curly hair from those in Maluku with smooth hair.

Iberian encounters with locals were often mutually stand-offish, sometimes leading to cursory exchanges of commodities for food, and other times leading to murders, abductions of women, and the stealing of resources (such as on Torres's voyage through the Torres Strait). Numerous voyages involved exchanges of arrows and gunfire. For instance, the 1545 voyage of Yñigo Ortiz de Retez, to Cenderawasih Bay and the north coast was attacked several times and musket fire was returned, although there were also examples of peaceful trade (Wichmann 1909, 22–30).

By the end of the sixteenth century, the Spanish had developed a rough outline of life in the Raja Ampat Islands, the Bird's Head, and Cenderawasih Bay. Miguel Roxo de Brito provides the most detailed description, recounting his travels with the raja of Waigeo in 1581–1582, where they observed some Papuans with golden adornments, others who held large markets that sold slaves, and more still that wore textiles and venerated their ancestors' bones (Boxer and Manguin 1979; Roxo de Brito 2016). Torres provided a similarly detailed account of people along the south coast of New Guinea in 1606 (Hilder 1980).

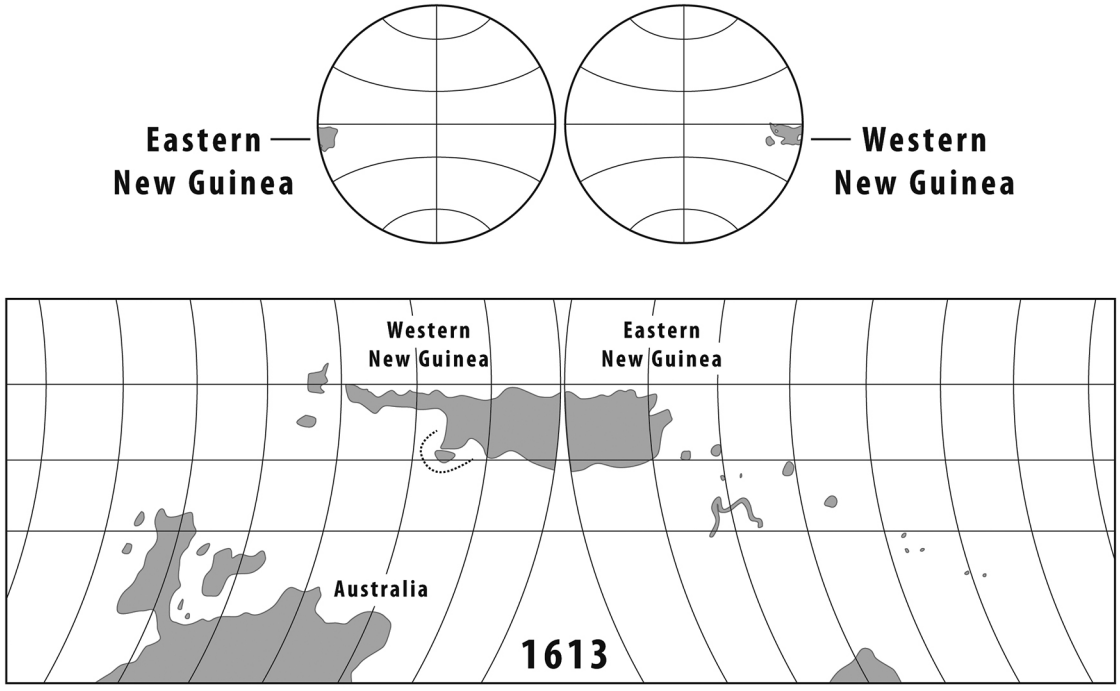

Figure 2.2: World map of 1613 by Emanuel Godinho de Erédia, a Portuguese-Bugis cartographer, showing New Guinea drawn at the extremity of the Asian and Pacific charts.

Source: Dylan Gaffney, redrawn from Hilder (1980, 138).

These explorations very slowly improved European knowledge of the region's geography. For instance, at the start of the sixteenth century, only the north-western coast of New Guinea had been charted. Until the early seventeenth century the Bird's Head was commonly thought to be one of the Papuan Islands, separated from New Guinea by Bintuni and Cenderawasih bays, and New Guinea itself was mistakenly connected with Australia. Furthermore, the conceptual separation of New Guinea into eastern and western halves traces back to these early explorations; some seafarers approached New Guinea from the west and others from the east, often considering the large island to separate the rich

trading opportunities of Indonesia from the unexplored islands of the Pacific. As such, New Guinea quite literally lay at the edge of the maps of Asia and the Pacific until the late eighteenth century (Figure 2.2). For European voyagers, New Guinea acted as a barrier between these two worlds; perhaps unwittingly, however, explorations of West New Guinea were in fact serving to connect these two regions, linking together a gradually expanding horizon for trade and mobility.

Dutch economic expansion: 1606–1795

After the discovery of a shipping route between the Americas and the Philippines that bypassed New Guinea entirely, Spanish exploration of the island ceased. By the early seventeenth century, competing interests around the Spice Islands saw the 'Vereenigde Oostindische Compagnie' (Dutch East India Company, VOC) send fact-finding voyages to the western parts of New Guinea, with the hope of discovering resources and establishing trade relations. Voyages towards New Guinea also focused on intercepting Spanish ships laden with precious metals from the Americas (Wichmann 1909, 102). As a result, the Dutch made more headway in charting the geography of New Guinea than the Spanish had. As early as 1606, Willem Janszoon (Jansz) travelled along the south-west coast of New Guinea, in 1616 La Maire and Schouten sailed along the north coast, in 1623 Carstenszoon (Carstensz) noted the snow-capped peaks of the highlands, from 1643–1644 Abel Tasman explored both the north and south coasts, and in 1662–1663 Nicolaes Vinck described the Berau Gulf. Like the earlier Iberian voyages, initial contact with locals was usually marked by mutual apprehension, suspicion, and fear. Attempts to enter trading relations with Papuans were usually opportunistic, sometimes involving locals coming aboard to exchange glass beads, textiles, and red cloth (in the case of Schouten and Tasman's voyages), other times involving confrontation resulting in deaths on both sides (as in the case of Jansz's, Carstensz's, and Vinck's voyages). Although many of these early encounters involved trade, New Guinean objects do not seem to have reached the Netherlands, or at least did not hold such value as to have entered personal collections (Veys 2018). By way of peaceable exchanges, the Dutch began to regard mainlanders as inquisitive—with racist comparisons even drawn to monkeys—and through hostile relations the Dutch perpetuated Portuguese and Spanish characterisations that these people were frightening and cannibalistic (Wichmann 1909, 51, 67). Observations were typically marked by physical appearance, the use (or not) of iron, the major components of people's diet (fish, pig, sago, and the absence of grains), and the eagerness to trade or to be hostile.

The earliest writing that expresses an interest in the architecture and archaeology of West New Guinea comes from 1664, when Burgert Pietersz of the VOC described indigenous forts around Berau Gulf, used in defence against raids from Maluku (Galis 1957c). In 1678, Johannes Keyts, a VOC captain, guided by Laku the Seram-Laut leader, observed rock art on the west coast at Namatotte, south of Fakfak, when he travelled to West New Guinea to negotiate slave and massoi bark trade agreements with rajas around Onin (Heeres and Stapel 1934, 149–157). Unfortunately, this visit was generally forgotten and did not stimulate wide interest in the history of New Guinea.

Throughout the eighteenth century, the VOC's influence declined, and it eventually collapsed in 1795; however, throughout this period it had gathered information about the people and environment of West New Guinea, in so far as it cemented their influence in the spice trade and excluded competing European powers. During this time, the British and French also began to document the area, initially as forays to scout for natural resources (including spices that could be translocated to other colonies). In 1700, British navigator and privateer William Dampier travelled from Australia to New Guinea in search of new spice islands, recording large settlements of around 500 people and making early

observations about linguistic affiliations along the coast (Dampier 1703). The British East India Company also made reconnaissance voyages to undermine Dutch control in the region, leading to early documentation in English. This included Thomas Forrest, in 1774–1775, covertly visiting the Raja Ampat Islands and Cenderawasih Bay with his Indonesian crew. Forrest (1969) described the political system of the rajas, the presence of stilted houses on the coast, treehouses in the interior, local politics and warfare, and Chinese–Papuan trade arrangements. Regarding the latter, there was a delayed system of trade involving iron, beads, sea cucumbers, tortoise, massoi, ambergris, pearls, bird-of-paradise, and slaves. Similarly, John McCluer, travelling on a British East India Company vessel, made two visits to the Bird's Head and the surrounding islands; from 1791–1792 he recorded nutmeg growing around Dore Bay leading to the establishment of Fort Coronation, and in 1794–1795 he retrieved the survivors of that failed settlement. Although written accounts of McCluer's voyages are not detailed, it is clear that the Fort Coronation settlers had been reliant on aid provided by local Papuans (Griffin 1990).

The French East India Company had similar designs for New Guinea and had successfully translocated nutmeg to their colonies in Mauritius in 1755 (Wichmann 1909, 214). In 1770 and 1772, Provoat made expeditions to Maluku where he met with envoys from the Raja Ampat Islands who were able to acquire nutmeg and cloves for him.

European voyages of discovery and natural science: 1767–1884

In the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, European scientific societies commissioned voyages to the Pacific primarily as fact-finding missions. During this period, natural history was expanding to include the science of 'man', and naturalists like Georges Cuvier (1817, 99) and George Bennett (1834, 275) were trying to ascertain whether Papuans were related to Africans, having dispersed through South Asia or the Indian Ocean (Ballard 2008, 158; Starbuck 2016, 43). Many naval officers and their crews on these voyages—which included natural historians, geographers, and illustrators—described indigenous peoples, material culture, word lists, plants and animals, topographies, and settlement locations, with the express purpose of generating knowledge that would benefit the scientific and expansionist interests of their patrons.

In 1767, British naval officer Philip Carteret passed Mapia Atoll, both recording a map produced in chalk by Mapia Islanders who had come onboard to trade and taking a local into his company who became known as 'Joseph Freewill' (Wichmann 1909, 199). A few years later in 1770, during James Cook's first voyage, supported by the Royal Society to record the Transit of Venus, his crew landed in Asmat territory on the south-west coast of New Guinea where they exchanged spear throws with gunfire (Cook 1821, 235).

The French undertook competing voyages, beginning with that of Louis-Antoine de Bougainville who passed along the north coast in 1768. In 1794, Antoine Bruni d'Entrecasteaux and his crew had peaceful interactions with people on Waigeo and recorded notes on their culture (Labillardière 1800, 298). In 1818–1819, Louis de Freycinet also made favourable contact with people on the north coast of Waigeo, where local leaders—Srouane from Boni Island and Moro from the Ayu Islands—became regular dinner guests. De Freycinet was accompanied by his wife Rose, who circumnavigated the world disguised as a man and recorded in her diary a wide range of important ethnographic observations (de Freycinet 1996). Natural historians on the voyage, Quoy and Gaimard, also took skulls from an ossuary on nearby Rawak Island for phrenological study and even dug down below the surface to determine if the remains were related to a burial (Douglas

2014, 218). Louis-Isidore Duperrey's voyage in 1823 recorded settlements, stilt houses, and spirit houses, and collected ethnographic objects like *korwar* (wooden ancestor figurines) on Waigeo and the offshore islands of Cenderawasih Bay (Carreau 2018; Lesson 1839, 66–87). Dumont d'Urville passed north New Guinea in 1829 and was met in Cenderawasih Bay by large crowds wanting to trade. In a later excursion to south-west New Guinea in 1840, D'Urville recorded the relict foundations of Fort Du Bus, known locally as *Wama Runi* (d'Urville 1843, 141–144). During many of these French expeditions, Papuan leaders like Srouane and Moro carefully managed European activities at local villages and deliberately positioned themselves as interlocutors, actively toying with European preoccupations about indigenous curiosity, to acquire trade connections, knowledge, and political advantage (Starbuck 2016).

In 1825–1826, Dutch naval officer Dirk Hendrik Kolff scouted the south-west coast of New Guinea for British activity. This led to the first detailed description of south-west New Guinea's peoples (Kolff 1828). Kolff's mapping of the coast paved the way for the Triton Expedition of 1828, during which time the zoologist Salomon Müller showed an interest in material culture and made a small collection of clothing, tools, weapons, and ornaments that were transported to the Netherlands and later purchased by the Rijksmuseum van Oudheden (Museum of Antiquities) in Leiden (Veys 2018, 140). To our knowledge, these objects became the first New Guinean objects to enter a Dutch museum.

In 1850, an expedition to annex the north coast of New Guinea led by van den Dungen Gronovius, and involving an entourage of Malukan war canoes, resulted in a detailed account of the people of Cenderawasih Bay, produced by a lieutenant on the voyage, de Bruijn Kops (1850). Important English contributions included George Windsor Earl's translation of Kolff's monograph (Kolff and Earl 1840), and his *The Native Races of the Indian Archipelago: Papuans* (1853), which drew heavily from Kolff's and de Bruijn Kop's accounts (see Bruyns 2019). Although the latter book is essentially a racial categorisation of Papuans, preoccupied with comparing their physical characteristics with other ethnic groups that Europeans were increasingly encountering in the nineteenth century, the book also shows an interest in local customs such as scarification, septum piercing, and hair dyes, as well as types of material culture and comparative word lists. Like his contemporaries John Crawfurd and George Bennett, Earl was considered a foremost expert on New Guinea anthropology but had never visited the island himself (Ballard 2008).

The Protestant religion was brought to West New Guinea in 1855 by two German missionaries, Carl Wilhelm Ottow and Johann Gottlob Geissler, who established a mission on Mansinam at Dore Bay with the financial assistance of the Dutch committee 'De Christen Werkman' (Kamma 1977). There they met a handful of Europeans who had already begun to trade in the islands of the bay, including a merchant navy captain G.J. Fabritius and his family, who possessed some knowledge of the local languages (Pijnappel 1854). The missionaries wrote 'A brief survey of the land and people of the north-east coast of New Guinea' in German in 1857, which was later translated to Dutch and subsequently English (Ottow and Geissler 2010). Other missionaries penned extended works on the people of Cenderawasih Bay (Goudswaard 1863). A questionnaire sent to the mission in 1865 by the German Anthropological and Geographical Society was also completed by the missionaries Geissler, Jaesrich, and van Hasselt and detailed local languages, legends, religion, political organisation, land tenure, subsistence, recreation, cosmology, architecture, clothing, seafaring, trade, kinship, and so on (Gunson and Godschalk 2014). Although most missionary observations remain unpublished and untranslated, those documents that are available make clear that the missionaries had developed a working knowledge of local languages, which allowed them to interact more closely with locals—for instance, they were permitted to observe funerals and the production of ancestor figures.

In the mid-nineteenth century, the islands of New Guinea became a focus of natural history research. Alfred Russell Wallace developed his theory of evolution by travelling through the islands of Indonesia reaching West New Guinea with his Malay assistant Ali Wallace by 1859 (Wallace 1869), where he met with the missionaries Ottow and Geissler (Gunson and Godschalk 2014). His focus on the animals and plants of the region developed alongside an interest in the human population. Wallace illustrated market activity in the Aru Islands and the people and material culture of Cenderawasih Bay. He also drew a phenotypic boundary through Indonesia separating 'Malay' populations from 'Papuan' groups (Vetter 2006), which closely resembled his zoogeographic division between 'Oriental' and 'Australasian' animals now known as the Wallace Line (Ali and Heaney 2021). Other natural historians were to follow shortly after, including Germans Hermann von Rosenberg[2] (1878) in 1860, Heinrich Bernstein (1883) in 1863 and 1865, and Adolf Bernhard Meyer (1899) in 1873. Meyer, in particular, described the biological anthropology, languages, and customs of the people he worked with (Howes 2012). Conversely, the Italian Luigi Maria D'Albertis travelled up the Fly River in 1876 and 1877 (D'Albertis 1881), often taking everyday objects from houses, using guns and dynamite to intimidate and sometimes kill locals (Goode 1977).

Nicholai Miklouho-Maclay, a Russian polymath natural scientist and humanist, had been the first European anthropologist to live alongside New Guinean people for an extended period (near Madang in 1871, now in Papua New Guinea). He later spent time among the Kowiai people of Kaimana on the south-west coast in 1874, and wrote extensively about local customs, material culture, and language (Webster 1984). Although Miklouho-Maclay and his interlocuters still regarded each other with hesitation and sometimes fear (Kirksey 2010), his craniometric research in New Guinea, as well as his study of healthy intermarriages between Indonesians and Papuans, became crucial for overturning the concept of polygenism—the idea that different human groups represent different species (Levit and Hossfeld 2020).

Following in the footsteps of Keyts, it was in 1878 that Th. B. Léon travelled aboard the cargo steamer *Egeron* to visit villages and rock art around Arguni and the Onin Peninsula; this piqued public and intellectual interest in the history of West New Guinea (Dozy 1880). Léon also described marriage ceremonies, subsistence, locally grown spices and aromatics, religion, burials, and rock art hand stencils (although he mistook decorations on statues as Sanskrit inscriptions) and his visit led to a series of return visits by D.F. van Braam Morris in 1883 and H. Kühn in 1884. The combined evidence was even reported in the journal *Nature* (Metzger 1885).

Haga (1884), writing at the end of this period, provides a useful summary of the history of European activity in West New Guinea from the fourteenth to late nineteenth centuries. Similarly, Wichmann (1910) provides a history of nineteenth-century voyages to New Guinea. We finish this section in 1884, the year that the Dutch annexation of West New Guinea was recognised by competing colonial powers.

2 Von Rosenberg had been part of the Dutch-organised Etna Expedition, during which he met with A.R. Wallace at the mission on Mansinam Island. Some ethnographic objects were collected on that expedition, shipped to the 'Ethnographisch Museum Artis' in Amsterdam, now housed in the 'Tropenmuseum' (Veys 2018).

Early ethnographic expeditions: 1884–1945

As we have outlined in the preceding section, nineteenth-century scholars began to write ethnographic characterisations of West New Guinea by compiling traveller and missionary accounts. Natural scientists that spent several months living in nearby settlements developed an interest in the evolutionary history of Papuans and began to write accounts of people's customs, languages, biology, and material culture. Interest in the deep history of these groups remained limited but grew out of descriptions of coastal rock art sites. Following the international recognition that West New Guinea formed the eastern extent of the Dutch East Indies, the Netherlands began to organise larger expeditions to the island (see Wichmann 1912 for a history up to 1903). During this time, the myth of the primitive savage was increasingly replaced by one which asserted that Papuans were living in a state of nature, ready to receive conversion, study, and development aid (Pouwer 1999).

From 1887 to 1888, F.S.A. de Clercq, a civil servant in the Dutch East Indies, made four collecting trips to the north-west coast of New Guinea, at times travelling with local rajas (de Clercq 1893). De Clercq's work differed from his predecessors in that it was carefully detailed, describing life around the Raja Ampat Islands, Berau Gulf, Bintuni Bay, Cenderawasih Bay, the Mamberamo River delta, and Yos Sudarso Bay (Wichmann 1912, 426). A monograph of the material culture he collected was written up by 'Rijksmuseum voor Vulkenkunde' (now 'Wereldmuseum') curator J.D.E. Schmeltz (de Clercq and Schmeltz 1893). He also showed an interest in the region's past, visiting the historical seat of the raja on Waigeo and rock art sites around Misool and Onin.

In 1892, a Catholic mission was established on the south coast and administrative posts were created at Manokwari and Fakfak in 1898, Merauke in 1902, and Hollandia (now Jayapura) in 1910 (Pouwer 1999). The presence of staging posts around the coast paved the way for large-scale, multidisciplinary expeditions to record a wider array of local communities both along the coast and inland. As an aside, the results of many of these scientific expeditions can be found in the monograph series *Nova Guinea* (1909–1936). Most of the ethnographic objects collected during these expeditions were taken to the 'Rijks Ethnographisch Museum' (now Wereldmuseum) in Leiden, but some were diverted or returned to the museum of the 'Bataviaasch Genootschap van Kunsten en Wetenschappen' (Batavian Society for the Arts and Sciences; what is today the Museum Nasional Indonesia in Jakarta). Those objects still housed in the Netherlands are now searchable through the collective 'Nationaal Museum van Wereldculturen' (National Museum of World Cultures) online databases.

The first Dutch expedition to New Guinea—the North New Guinea Expedition—took place along the north coast in 1903 focusing on Cenderawasih Bay, Yos Sudarso Bay, and Lake Sentani (Figure 2.3). The venture was led by a German geologist from the University of Utrecht, Arthur Wichmann, and funded by the 'Maatschappij ter Bevordering van het Natuurkundig Onderzoek der Nederlandsche Koloniën' (Society for the Promotion of the Physics Research of the Dutch Colonies) primarily to investigate mineral resources in the region. However, ethnographic data from the expedition were subsequently published by the team's ethnologist: the retired military doctor turned biological anthropologist Gijsbertus Adrian van der Sande (1907). Two bronze axes and a bronze globular object from Asei, a village in eastern Lake Sentani, were first reported by van der Sande during this expedition and taken back to the Netherlands by the missionary G. Schneider. Rock engravings on Sösena Island, Lake Sentani, were also reported.

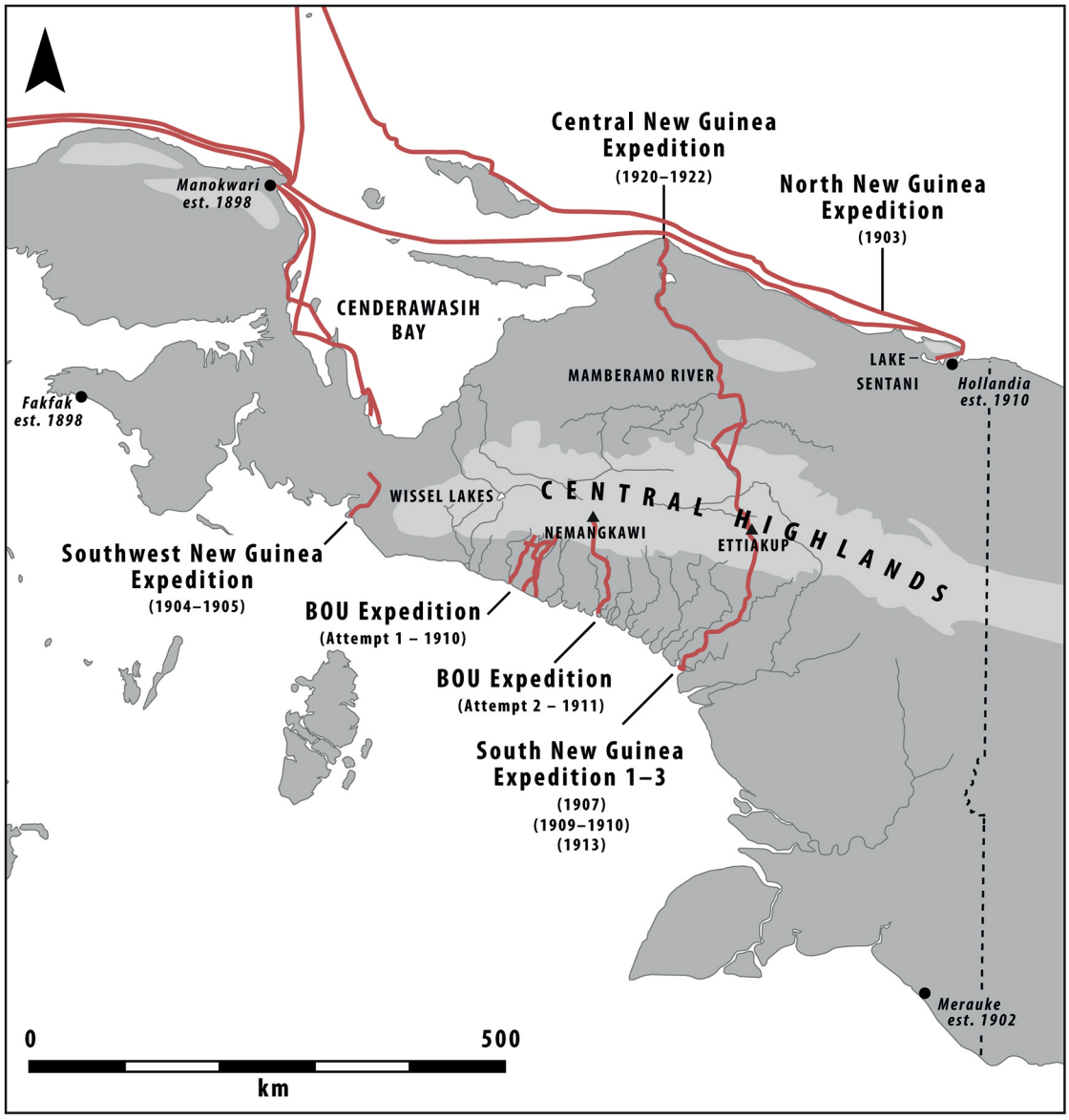

Figure 2.3: Routes of early expeditions to inland and highland ranges of West New Guinea.
Source: Dylan Gaffney, with information from Lorentz (1905), Seyne Kok and colleagues (1908), and Ploeg (1995).

In 1904–1905, the 'Koninklijk Nederlands Aardrijkskundig Genootschap' (Royal Dutch Geographic Society) organised the Southwest New Guinea Expedition, with the aim of recording the interior of West New Guinea for the first time, following the lowlands from Etna Bay on the Bird's Neck (Seyne Kok et al. 1908). The expedition leaders, Meyes and de Rochemont, were supported by scores of military personnel, convict labourers, and carriers from the Dutch East Indies. The expedition doctor, J.W.R. Koch, conducted ethnographic and biological anthropological research, which would form the data for his PhD at the University of Amsterdam (Koch 1908). The team collected hundreds of ethnographic objects and reached over 2000 m above sea level (asl), although not without the loss of numerous porters' lives (Brienen 2003).

Hendrikus Albertus Lorentz, a lawyer with an interest in biology, and a member of the North New Guinea Expedition, undertook two further journeys: the South New Guinea Expedition in 1907 and the Second South New Guinea Expedition in 1909–1910 (Lorentz 1913). These expeditions were accompanied by numerous labourers and soldiers but lacked a dedicated ethnologist (Ploeg 1995). The primary aim of these expeditions was to reach the central highlands for the first time via the south coast, following the Unir River[3] inland. The first expedition encountered mountain peoples: in one instance, hostilities ensued resulting in the death of a Papuan, for which Lorentz was severely reprimanded by the East Indies administration, but whose skeletal remains were retained and studied for biological anthropological purposes (Ploeg 1995). It was during the latter expedition that Lorentz and his team reached the perennial snowline of Ettiakup.[4] The leaders of this second expedition consciously attempted to maintain friendly interactions with the mountain people they encountered; they noted a population of about 200 'Pesegem'[5] people living in one valley system and spent three nights with them (Ploeg 1995). Fischer's (1923) *Ethnographica aus Sud- und Sudwest- Neu-Guinea* described Asmat and Mimika material culture collected by Lorentz during his expeditions.

The second expedition had been competing to reach the snowline before the British Ornithologists' Union Expeditions of 1909–1911 (Wollaston 1914, 1912). The Third South New Guinea Expedition of 1913 followed a similar route as the second and encountered the same mountain people who recalled the previous expedition members; this journey reached the summit of Ettiakup, and included military officer A. Franssen Herderschee, who carried out the ethnography, and medic G.M. Versteeg who recorded biological anthropological data (Ploeg 2022). Simultaneously, topographic mapping of many unrecorded areas was undertaken between 1907 and 1915 by large Dutch military detachments, which conducted opportunistic ethnographic and biological anthropological recording (Feuilletau de Bruyn 1947; Overweel 1998) and resulted in early documentation of the highland Mek people by 1910 (Godschalk 1999). Geological reconnaissance was also carried out both before and after World War I (WWI), primarily by the 'Kantoor voor het Mijnwezen in Nederlandsch-Indië' (Mining Office of the Dutch East Indies) (e.g. Loth 1924). The improved knowledge of New Guinea's terrain opened new possibilities for revisiting these areas for systematic fieldwork.

Perhaps the earliest long-term ethnographic research in West New Guinea was undertaken by the Swiss social anthropologist Paul Wirz, who spent 1916–1917 at Merauke with his wife Elizabeth Wirz, facilitated by missionaries there, to record the social lives, material culture, religion, and rituals of the Marind-anim (Wirz 1922a, 1922b). Many of the objects he collected during this period were donated to the 'Museum der Kulturen', Basel, and the 'Koloniaal Museum' (now Wereldmuseum), Amsterdam; other major contributions included his pioneering photography and films (Schmidt 1997). During his later work around Lake Sentani, he noted the presence of menhirs, potsherds, and possibly stone pestles or potters' anvils on the small islands within the lake (Wirz 1923).

The military physician, Hendricus Johannes Tobias Bijlmer, undertook some of the earliest systematic human biological research in West New Guinea. Bijlmer had been a member of the forward party of the 1920–1922 Central New Guinea Expedition that attempted to reach Ettiakup via the Mamberamo River on the north coast and encountered the Lani in the Toli Valley[6] (Bijlmer 1922). The follow-up party to this expedition included Paul Wirz, who became the first dedicated

3 Formerly the North River and later Lorentz River.

4 Mt Wilhelmina or Puncak Trikora.

5 Probably Dani people.

6 Formerly Swart Valley.

social anthropologist to take part in one of these large expeditions (Ploeg 1997). Other expeditions like the 1926 Dutch–American Central New Guinea Expedition led by Matthew Sterling and Willem Marius Docters van Leeuwen, in which Charles Le Roux acted as ethnologist, followed the same route and sought to study 'pygmy' communities (Taylor 2006). In 1935–1936, Bijlmer then led the Mimika Expedition to undertake anthropological work in the highlands proper, accompanied by Father Herman Tillemans, the administrator S. van der Goot, along with numerous East Indies field police and porters, and Papuans from Mimika (Bijlmer 1939). The expedition especially focused on the so-called 'Tapiro Pygmies' of the Wissel Lakes, who had been reported by the British Ornithologists' Union Expedition (Ballard 2000). At that time, investigations into people of short stature in New Guinea, Southeast Asia, and Africa were incorrectly preoccupied with determining if these groups represented a relict population from an early migration of Stone Age humans (Ballard 2006).

In 1936, Frits Julius Wissel flew over the interior of West New Guinea, noting canoes around what came to be known as the Wissel Lakes (now the Paniai Lakes). Jean Victor de Bruijn was a civil servant that worked from a newly opened outpost at Enarotali around the Wissel Lakes, which became the first permanent base from which to record details about the people in the highlands. The Wissel Lake and Nassau Mountain Expedition of 1939 was hosted at this outpost and the data published by the team leader Le Roux (1948–50), by then a curator at the Rijksmuseum voor Volkenkunde (now Wereldmuseum), Leiden. The expedition was stopped prematurely owing to the threat of world war; however, de Bruijn remained at Enarotali and, during 1942–1945, led Operation Oaktree, whereby he lived with Papuans in the interior while evading the Japanese military and provided intelligence to the Allies (Rhys 1947). Similarly, the Third Archibold Expedition of 1938–1939 to the Baliem Valley (Archibold et al. 1942) and Evelyn Cheesman's entomological work in Raja Ampat, Cenderawasih Bay, and the north coast of New Guinea (Cheesman 1949, 1940), associated with important ethnographic observations, were halted for the same reason (Cheesman 1943).

Missionary ethnographies were far smaller in scale than the large expeditions organised and funded by the colonial government and scientific societies, but some were of incredibly high quality for the time. Freerk C. Kamma, a protestant missionary, wrote about the oral traditions, mythology, and material culture of Cenderawasih Bay and the Raja Ampat Islands (e.g. Kamma 1948; Kamma and Kooijman 1973). His monograph on cargo cults (Kamma 1972), which developed from his PhD thesis at Leiden University (Kamma 1954), was one of the earliest dedicated works on this phenomenon in New Guinea. At the same time, G.J. Held was undertaking linguistic recording while employed by the 'Nederlands Bijbelgenootschap' (Dutch Bible Society) (Held 1947). Many early material culture traditions were recorded, and objects collected, by missionaries from the Utrecht Missionary Society, which operated from Manokwari, and the Catholic Mission, which operated from Merauke (Corbey and Weener 2015; Jaarsma 1993). Unfortunately, some missions were more interested in the mass destruction of material culture, the banning of customary traditions, and social conversion than they were any ethnographic endeavours (Corbey 2003).

After WWI, archaeological artefacts were reported more frequently, owing to the long-term presence of administrators and missionaries in the region. In 1930, one Dong Son bronze axe was presented to District Officer Halie by a local teacher from the village of Kwadeware, on Jonokom Island in Lake Sentani, which was then sent to the 'Koninklijk Instituut voor de Tropen' (Royal Tropical Institute) in Amsterdam. Around the same time, Protestant missionary G. Schneider (who sent the van der Sande objects to Europe) was gifted a further two bronze axes, a bell, a spearhead, and a scythe-like object from the same site, although these objects were lost when he died in WWII (Tichelman 1953). Another axe was in the possession of Reverend I.S. Kijne, given to him by Schneider, but this was also lost during the war years (Galis 1956). In 1935 at Sorong, a small bronze

axe was recorded, but, according to van der Hoop who analysed the object, it was thought to be a Chinese rather than Dong Son type (Galis 1956). During WWII, George Agogino—at the time a radio operator for the Allies before becoming a celebrated Palaeoindian archaeologist—was tasked by Austrian anthropologist Robert Heine-Geldern with looking for archaeological objects while stationed in Hollandia. Agogino (1979) recorded bronze axes and green glass beads along the north coast of Lake Sentani and produced a report for Heine-Geldern.

The Frobenius Expedition initially led by Dr Ad. E. Jensen, and later by Dr H. Niggemeyer, visited Dutch New Guinea in 1937, for which Josef Röder described, and Albert Hahn painted, rock art from the Onin Peninsula between Kokas and Goras (Röder 1939). Their attention was turned to the rock art by Dutch missionaries and business owners living in Maluku (Röder 1959, 2). However, their aim was initially ethnographic, and they recorded folklore and material culture traditions too. During that visit, Dudumunir Cave was excavated by Röder on Arguni Island, spatially extending over several square metres and extending down 3.6 m (Röder 1940; van Benthem Jutting 1940). The publication of their research was delayed owing to WWII, with Hahn being conscripted and Röder moving to Bonn. The archaeological collections from Dudumunir Cave were destroyed during an air raid that hit the Frobenius Institute on 22 March 1944 (Röder 1959). Rock art images from the Röder expedition were exhibited in the Royal Tropical Institute, Amsterdam in 1954, and 'Museum voor Land- en Volkenkunde' (now Wereldmuseum), Rotterdam, in 1955 (Röder 1959, 4).

The development of Netherlands New Guinea anthropology: 1945–1963

We begin this section with the end of the Pacific War, the proclamation of Indonesian independence, and the return of the Dutch administration to West New Guinea. Prior to the war, expeditions to West New Guinea had been multidisciplinary and often included medical doctors performing the role of biological anthropologists and civil servants conducting ethnographic work (alongside hundreds of anonymous trekking specialists, porters, indentured labourers, and Papuan interpreters). Many of these expeditions sought to fill in the blanks on the map. Contemporary material culture had been collected on these trips but was often not the primary goal of the research. Archaeological material had been opportunistically recorded but only systematically investigated on one occasion (at Dudumunir Cave).

Dutch research in West New Guinea was substantially expedited after Indonesian independence was granted in 1949, when the Netherlands began to focus more resources on 'developing' its remaining territories. Although missionary scholarship continued during this period (Jaarsma 1993), social science was increasingly organised and centralised by the Netherlands New Guinea administration. Initially, research—including that on local customs, political systems, demography, language, and health—was often implemented with the strategic aim of assisting administrators to manage and develop their district. This research was written up as reports that would be reformulated as policy papers for the administration and for a yearly report for the United Nations (de Wolf and Jaarsma 1992; Jaarsma 1994, 1991). The 'Kantoor voor Bevolkingszaken' (Bureau for Native Affairs) was established in Hollandia in 1951 where colonial administrators were often trained as anthropologists, linguists, and demographers, and which increasingly hired university-trained social scientists (for bibliographies of this research, see Bureau for Native Affairs 1958; Galis 1962; Kooijman 1983; van Baal et al. 1984); much of these results were published in the journals *Nova*

Guinea (New Series: 1937–1966), *Tijdschrift Nieuw-Guinea* (1936–1956), and *Nieuw-Guinea Studien* (1957–1962). The proliferation of publicly available, Dutch-language information about the region's peoples is evident in Klein's three-volume edited collection *Nieuw-Guinea* (Klein 1954).

Although research in the mid-twentieth century was overseen by Dutch and sometimes other European scholars, their teams, and the administrative labour that supported them often came from New Guinea. After Indonesian independence, Papuans trained at the 'Opleidingsschool voor Inheemse Bestuursambtenaren' (School for Indigenous Administrators, OSIBA) in Hollandia from 1950–1962 and took up many of the administrative roles previously held by those from Maluku and further west (see oral histories presented in Visser 2012b). These Papuans often facilitated research and acted as interpreters for their Dutch colleagues in the civil service, speaking Biak as a lingua franca that would then be translated by a second interpreter into local languages (Visser 2012a).

Increased interest in long-term field ethnography was in part driven by Jan van Baal, who had written his PhD developing Wirz' data on the Marind-anim into a broader theoretical framework (van Baal 1934), and was 'Controleur' (assistant district commissioner) in Merauke in 1936–1938 before becoming governor of Dutch New Guinea between 1953–1958 (for an autobiography, see van Baal 1986, 1989). Prior to this time, anthropological research undertaken in Netherlands New Guinea was not usually taken seriously by either colonial administrators or international academics (Jaarsma 1994). However, with increasing support from the Bureau for Native Affairs under van Baal, numerous researchers conducted substantial field programs in the region: Pouwer (1955) undertook ethnographic work with the Mimika, van der Leeden (1956) with the Sarmi, Schoorl (1957) with the Muyu, and Boelaars (1958) with the Jaquj.

Other fields of anthropology saw renewed emphasis in the mid-twentieth century. A.W. Voors undertook detailed developmental biology work around Lake Sentani (Voors and Metselaar 1958), J.P. Kleiweg de Zwaan (1956) published a survey of biometric data from West New Guinea, and L.E. Nijenhuis and colleagues collected early blood group data from several survey locations (Nijenhuis 1961). P. Drabbe (1950), H.K. Cowan (1952), and J.C. Anceaux (1953), among several others, undertook pioneering linguistic work (see Voorhoeve 1975). During the late 1950s and 1960s, West New Guinea's social sciences began to contribute in important ways to global theory, especially through the work of van Baal, Pouwer, and van der Leeden.

Early surveys of West New Guinea art and design were compiled in the 1950s, based on large collections housed in ethnographic museums (e.g. Gerbrands 1951; Kooijman 1955). In 1961, the Harvard–Peabody Expedition to the Baliem Valley collected large numbers of art objects and included the filmmaker Robert Gardner who produced *Dead Birds* (1963), a film which furnished the international imagination about the interior of the island. The expedition was supported by the Rockefeller family and the Netherlands New Guinea administration; Michael Rockefeller, who was part of the expedition, later generated widespread international attention after his disappearance in the Asmat region three months after leaving Baliem. Adriaan Gerbrands, the deputy director of the Rijksmuseum voor Volkenkunde (now Wereldmuseum) in Leiden, who had already begun his own fieldwork on the south coast, produced important research on Asmat objects collected by Rockefeller (Gerbrands 1961).

Following the Pacific War, archaeology did not feature seriously in the Netherlands New Guinea research agenda. The publication of Alphonse Riesenfeld's *The Megalithic Culture of Melanesia* (1950)—a racial history that sought to establish when light- and dark-skinned people entered the region—did draw attention to Yos Sudarso Bay and Lake Sentani. However, the scant mention of West New Guinea in that volume demonstrates that the territory remained peripheral to the developing

narrative of the Asia-Pacific's deep past. By contrast, systematic archaeological research during the 1950s–1960s in the Australian-administered Papua New Guinea would go on to revolutionise scholarship on the antiquity of the island and the wider region (Golson 2016; Summerhayes 2021).

At this time, interest in the archaeology of West New Guinea was localised and driven by individuals—often ethnographers who had spent a long time in New Guinea and developed a curiosity for local history. For instance, some incidental archaeological finds were made in areas formerly cleared by the Japanese, such as pottery-bearing middens around Hollandia that were excavated quickly but systematically by visiting American archaeologist Carl F. Miller, despite most of the material being lost before it could be analysed (Miller 1950).

Bronze, pottery, and megaliths from a grave mound called *Marweri Urang*, at Kwadeware in Sentani, were further reported by J.V. de Bruyn (1959, 1962), who investigated the area in 1958, undertaking a one-day excavation to 40 cm deep. Systematic excavations were not carried out owing to a lack of expertise; the administration banned fossicking and asked locals to help protect the site. De Bruyn notes that these sites were sacred and only the *ondoafi* (clan leader) could visit them. Perhaps owing to their experience as ethnographers, people like de Bruyn were relatively sensitive to local customs (de Bruyn mentions consulting the ondoafi that he might contact the group's ancestors before commencing work).

One colonial administrator—Klaas Wilhelm Galis—had a particular interest in the history of New Guinea's peoples. Galis had trained in Indology at Leiden, before becoming assistant district commissioner in Manokwari and Fakfak, and later an official in the Bureau for Native Affairs. He wrote his PhD based on his ethnographic work around Yos Sudarso Bay (Galis 1955) and was responsible for some of the earliest archaeological work around West New Guinea, undertaking rock art recording at Guwaimit Cave, Pinfelu Cave south of Hollandia (Galis 1957a, 1957b; see also Fairyo, this volume), and surveys of indigenous forts at Foe-oem on an island off the coast of the Onin Peninsula (Galis 1957c) and at Yembekaki on Batanta in the Raja Ampat Islands (Galis 1960; Galis and Kamma 1958; see also Gaffney et al., this volume). Galis also communicated with Gustav Heinrich Ralph von Koenigswald at the University of Utrecht—then considered a pre-eminent expert on Indonesian archaeology and palaeontology—sending New Guinea artefacts to him for analysis (von Koenigswald 1968).

Indonesian-era anthropology and archaeology: 1963–2022

This section starts in 1963, the date that West New Guinea was officially ceded to Indonesia. In this new period of Indonesian administration, and without access to the field, many Dutch scholars and government officials relocated to universities in the Netherlands and explored the available anthropological evidence at a theoretical and cross-comparative level (e.g. chapters in Ploeg 1970). Papuan civil servants and research assistants who had worked alongside the Dutch often remained in service; however, many were marginalised as Indonesian administrators moved to the region, their working lingua franca changed from Dutch and Biak to Bahasa Indonesia, and their reports were relayed from Jayapura to Jakarta (Visser 2012a). The continuity in social science and historical research between Dutch- and Indonesian-era administrations—and especially the role played by Papuans—remains unexplored.

The functions of the Bureau of Native Affairs, including the collection of ethnographic data and facilitation of research programs, were largely subsumed by the Departamen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan (Department of Education and Culture) in Jakarta and Universitas Negeri Tjenderawasih (Bird-of-Paradise State University, now Universitas Cenderawasih) in Jayapura. Universitas Negeri Tjenderawasih was established in 1962 by a special presidential decree from Sukarno, initially teaching constitutional law and administration, and education (Wolfers 1969). The Abepura campus, which housed law and administration, was established in the former OSIBA headquarters, included 12 lecturers who had relocated from western Indonesia, and contained a research-only Institute of Anthropology. A museum to house ethnographic material culture, the Museum Loka Budaya (Cultural Centre Museum), was later opened at the university in 1970 with the support of the East–West Center at the University of Hawai'i and the Rockefeller Foundation. The Museum Kebudayaan dan Kemajuan Asmat (Museum of Asmat Culture and Development) in Agats was established in 1973 by the Catholic diocese. During this time, West New Guinea material culture was reformulated as a remote expression of a broader Indonesian collective.

In 1973, anthropology was named one of two key subjects in Universitas Cenderawasih's Pola Ilmiah Pokok (Primary Scientific Plan) because, alongside agriculture, it was considered to be key to the development of West New Guinea. Until 1981, the subject was taught out of a joint department for anthropology and linguistics as training in local languages was seen to go hand-in-hand with ethnographic observation. At this time, histories about the territory were usually written from outside West New Guinea and focused on biographies, memoirs, and government accounts, including autobiographies documenting political imprisonment by the Dutch (Ballard 1999).

Large research programs administered by the Department of Education and Culture included the Proyek Inventarisasi dan Dokumentasi Kebudayaan Daerah (Regional Cultural Inventory and Documentation Project), which grew from the Proyek Penelitian dan Pencatatan Kebudayaan Daerah (Irian Jaya Regional Cultural Research and Recording Project) (e.g. Suwondo and Yunus 1978), with the aim of recording the cultural diversity of the newly acquired territory as a way to make sense of the emerging nation-state, and in an attempt to preserve cultural elements that were thought to be at risk of disappearing. Much of this Indonesian-language research was published in 1972 in the journal *Irian: Bulletin of West Irian Development*, renamed shortly after as *Irian: Bulletin of Irian Jaya Development.* In 1981, the journal changed its focus from development to culture and language, resulting in a further name change to become *Irian: Bulletin of Irian Jaya*. By the late 1980s, the Irian Jaya Study Centre (IJSC) in Jayapura formed a home for research on the people of West New Guinea.

The 1970s–1980s saw the training of several prominent Papuan scholars, initially by Malcolm Walker who was part of the Fund of the United Nations for the Development of West Irian (FUNDWI) project, tasked with advising the new Rektor of Universitas Cenderawasih and providing teaching in the Institute of Anthropology at a time when funding was almost non-existent and Indonesian scrutiny of international academics was at its peak (Ballard 1998). These scholars especially included social anthropologists and linguists, although fewer human biologists and no archaeologists. One of these scholars was Johsz Mansoben who undertook work around Asmat and Raja Ampat before training for his PhD at Leiden University, compiling a comparative study of political systems across West New Guinea, which remains the most detailed description of the territory's broad-scale social and cultural patterns (Mansoben 1995). Another was Arnold Ap, curator at the Museum for Local Culture, ethnomusicologist, and founding member of the folk band Mambesak, who was later detained and shot by the military (Suryawan 2015). Ap had been central to bringing Papuans together to celebrate local culture and artistic expression. Sam Kapissa, a colleague and bandmate of

Ap (Figure 2.4), was an expert in Biak carving, using Dutch sources as well as his own knowledge of the island's ethnography to inform his work (Rutherford 2001). Don Flassy trained in linguistics in Java and the Netherlands, producing seminal studies on the languages of the Bird's Head and Bomberai Peninsula (e.g. Flassy 1981). An early example of local history (with a strong development focus) was produced in 1978 by F. and B. Mambrasar (1978), who wrote on the history of Kofiau Island in the Raja Ampat archipelago; in other areas, local historians have produced documents in Bahasa Indonesia and local languages too, although these are rarely available in published form (e.g. Mambrasar n.d.).

A small number of international expeditions were carried out in the 1960s–1980s. This included the Kyoto University West Irian Scientific Expedition of 1963–1964, in the Nassau Mountains (Kyoto University Biological Society 1977); however, the objectives were primarily zoological (Yamashina 1970). The Carstensz Glaciers Expeditions of 1971–1972 to record the environment of Nemangkawi also resulted in a provisional description of the people that moved around the mountains and involved sampling exposed sediments with archaeological remains at Mapala and Hamid rock shelters (Hope and Hope 1976). Mapala had been frequented by humans over 5000 years ago, providing the first evidence for very high-altitude hunting on New Guinea at about 4000 m asl. Additionally, a large German project among the Eipo of the Star Mountains, which began in 1974 and continued for several decades, focused on a wide range of anthropological topics including indigenous medicine, human ethology, and ethnomusicology (e.g. Schiefenhövel 1979). Ploeg (2004) provides an overview of the Eipo expeditions and describes how the anthropologists sometimes emphasised the 'simple' nature of Eipo material culture, but also acknowledged the creativity involved in making this simplicity work to their advantage.

Figure 2.4: Arnold Ap (left) and Sam Kapissa (right) with korwar figure.
Source: Constantinopel Ruhukail. Published courtesy of Museum Loka Budaya.

William G. Solheim and R.P. Soejono attempted to establish a systematic archaeological project on West New Guinea but met with difficulty for a variety of political reasons (Solheim 2006). Soejono completed a review of West New Guinea's archaeology at the time of the Indonesian takeover and, influenced by Riesenfeld, concluded that the island had received almost all its cultural influences from Indonesia to the west (Soejono 1963). Solheim, at first working independently of Soejono, initially obtained from German-Dutch archaeologist von Koenigswald several potsherds deriving from Yos Sudarso Bay and collected by Galis (Solheim 1958). He later became involved via the University of Hawai'i links to the Cultural Centre Museum and spent his sabbatical of 1975–1976 surveying the north coast of West New Guinea (Solheim 1978). Solheim, alongside Arnold Ap, made a visit to Padwa on Biak Island and recorded caves as well as *korwar* (wooden ancestor figurine) manufacture, and later visited Waigeo and Gag in the Raja Ampat Islands, noting burial caves and charred coconut shell eroding out of an exposed section (Solheim 1979). Owing to the rapid nature of these trips, however, the team was only able to describe above-ground details like rock art (Souza and Solheim 1976) and surface artefacts, many of which were collected for the Cultural Centre Museum. By contrast, Solheim's work at Makbon was more substantial and involved the excavation and description of archaeological pottery at a manufacturing site on the Bird's Head (Solheim 1998). Alongside Solheim, Mansoben and Ap were the first to undertake ethnographic observations of pottery making for the purposes of archaeological comparison in West New Guinea (Solheim and Ap 1977; Solheim and Mansoben 1977).

This tradition of using West New Guinea as a source for ethnoarchaeology has been followed, more extensively, by researchers in the 1980s–1990s. Ethnoarchaeological work was carried out most notably by Anne-Marie and Pierre Pétrequin, who described ceramic traditions and axe-adze making from 1984 to 2005 (Pétrequin and Pétrequin 1993, 1999, 2006). Collecting went alongside description, with these objects now stored, and in 2006–2008 exhibited, in the 'Musée d'Archéologie Nationale' (National Museum of Archaeology), Paris (Musée d'Archéologie Nationale 2006). The explicit drive behind this work was an ethnological comparison, especially between stilt houses around Lake Sentani and the Neolithic structures of the French Jura, based around lakeshores (Pétrequin et al. 2001, 2006; Pétrequin 1994). The Pétrequins' research followed on from the ethnographic and petrographic work of geoarchaeologist Erik Gonthier in the early 1980s around Lake Sentani and in the Baliem Valley (e.g. Gonthier and Schubnel 1981). From American universities, Bud Hampton (1999) undertook ethnographic work among Dani axe-adze makers between 1982 and 1993 for his PhD research, and in 1999 Dietrich Stout also conducted ethnographic work nearby, related to axe-adze making around the Ey River (Stout 2002).

Although some Dutch academic and missionary researchers continued to do important linguistic and anthropological data collection throughout the 1970s–1980s, these studies became increasingly rare (e.g. Van Enk and De Vries 1997; Voorhoeve 1971). Large-scale Dutch–Indonesian collaborations, however, did resume at the end of the twentieth century. The Upgrading of Irianese Scholars in the Field of Irian Jaya Studies (IRIS) program began in the 1980s, a collaboration between the Department of Languages and Cultures of Southeast Asia and Oceania (DSALCUL) at Leiden University, the IJSC in Jayapura, and the Lembaga Ilmu Pengetahuan Indonesia (Indonesian Institute of Sciences, LIPI) in Jakarta. From 1993 to 2001, 'Irian Jaya Studies: A Programme for Interdisciplinary Research' (ISIR) was initiated as part of this collaboration with the aim of generating new knowledge about West New Guinea using archival material in the Netherlands and Indonesia. To increase the impact of funding stemming from the Netherlands Foundation for the Advancement of Tropical Research (WOTRO), the initiative focused primarily on the Bird's Head region. This initiative published several proceedings, as well as the monographs *Studies in Irian Languages* (Reesink 1996, 2000), *Bird's Head Approaches* (Bartstra 1998), *Perspectives on the*

Bird's Head of Irian Jaya, Indonesia (Miedema et al. 1998), *One Head Many Faces* (Miedema and Reesink 2004), and the *Irian Jaya Source Materials* series. Introductions to these volumes expose the sometimes-conflicting agendas driving research in West New Guinea (Masinambow 1998), and tensions between international and Indonesian researchers; international researchers were interested in undertaking theoretical anthropological research to generate knowledge about the region and Indonesian academics wanted to conduct applied research with a focus on development, of a similar kind promoted under Dutch administration, such as agronomy, demography, and economics. What is missing from these discourses in the 1990s, however, is how international and Indonesian researchers interrelated with indigenous Papuan stakeholders, experts, and scholars.

Part of the ISIR's mandate was to investigate the cultural history of West New Guinea. As part of this project, a survey was undertaken in the interior of the Bird's Head in 1993, and in 1995 Johan Jelsma excavated Toé Cave and Juliette Pasveer excavated Kria Cave. These were the first systematic excavations in West New Guinea since Röder's work in Arguni Bay (Pasveer 2007, 2004; Pasveer et al. 2002). The radiocarbon dating of the Toé sequence pushed the evidence for human occupation in West New Guinea back to about 31,000–30,000 years ago, while Kria provided a sequence of intensive wallaby hunting when climates warmed in the Holocene. Wright and colleagues (2013) reviewed all previous archaeological research in West New Guinea and noted that these have remained the only two sites that have been published with chronostratigraphic sequences from this large region. Essentially the archaeology of West New Guinea has been built exclusively from these two sites for the past three decades, supplemented by palaeoecological data for forest burning obtained from the central highlands (Haberle et al. 1991, 2001).

New directions emerged in the early twenty-first century, following the end of the Suharto era in 1998 and the often-patchily implemented Special Autonomy law of 2001 (recently revised in 2021). Universitas Papua (University of Papua) was founded at Manokwari in 2000, developing out of an agricultural campus of Universitas Cenderawasih, which had in turn been the tropical agriculture research station operated by the Dutch (Wolfers 1969). The university now provides an opportunity for further education outside of Jayapura, providing subjects such as language and cultural studies, economics, and natural science. Both at Universitas Cenderawasih and Universitas Papua, a new generation of Papuan scholars are asking different types of questions of their own communities and those elsewhere in the region. For instance, Marlina Flassy, the first Papuan to become dean of the Faculty of Social and Political Sciences at Universitas Cenderawasih, has investigated the medical anthropology of disease around her home communities on the Bird's Head, and has used this information to provide recommendations for public health interventions (Flassy 2018, 2019). Others, like Benny Giay, continue to examine the role that religion and nonviolent action can play in peace processes (Giay 1995, 2005). Bernarda Meteray (2012) has researched the shifting history of Papuan national ideologies. Adolf Ronsumbre and Marlon Arthur Huwae have examined customary land ownership (Ronsumbre and Huwae 2022). Naffi Sanggenafa and Michael Howard have studied contemporary changes to society and material culture in the context of recent migrations into West New Guinea (Howard and Sanggenafa 2005). At the Cultural Centre Museum, curators and staff, such as Enrico Yori, undertake ethnographic and material culture research around West New Guinea, and those based at several newly established Balai Pelestarian Kebudayaan Wilayah (Regional Cultural Heritage Centres) support local customary practices and cultural events.

Balai Arkeologi Jayapura (Jayapura Centre of Archaeology) was established in 1996 and later renamed Balai Arkeologi Papua (Papua Centre of Archaeology). As an Indonesian government organisation funded by the Ministry of Education and Culture, the office was responsible for archaeological research in the West New Guinea region, initially carrying out small-scale archaeological surveys and

test excavations throughout the 2000s. This fieldwork was mainly concentrated around the coast, with little undertaken in the highlands owing to military violence in many administrative areas and prohibitive costs in others. Later fieldwork conducted by the Papua Centre of Archaeology in the 2010s expanded on the initial period of research, with larger-scale excavations being undertaken especially around Lake Sentani, Jayapura, and the Bomberai Peninsula (see Djami 2020; Mene, this volume; Suroto, this volume). By 2020, preliminary reconnaissance surveys had covered about 25 per cent of the territory. In 2022 the research centre became part of the Badan Riset dan Inovasi Nasional (National Research and Innovation Agency, BRIN). At the Indonesia-wide level, the Organisation of Archaeology is divided into three research centres including Prehistoric and Historical Archaeology; Environmental, Maritime, and Sustainable Cultural Archaeology; and Archaeometry, with the intention being to bring regional centres of archaeology into a wider Indonesian national research framework.

Most archaeological studies so far have focused on documenting aspects of 'traditional' culture and examining evidence for the history of these practices. This research is still in the early stages of preliminary data gathering. Projects involving excavation have recovered hundreds to thousands of material findings like pottery and stone artefacts, which predispose publications to be primarily descriptive in nature. The archaeometric tools required to tackle emerging questions in archaeology are not available locally. This includes radiocarbon dating, which has been limited owing to funding shortages. Much of the Indonesian-language research produced within West New Guinea is now published in the archaeology journal *Papua: Jurnal Penelitian Arkeologi* and the anthropology journal *Cenderawasih: Jurnal Antropologi Papua*.

International anthropologists (usually operating as lone fieldworkers) are increasingly exploring the possible futures of West New Guinea, writing on topics such as the historicity of culture (Harple 2000), religious transformation (Timmer 2000), reproduction and morality (van Oosterhout 2002), health and stigma (Butt 2005), visual identities (Cookson 2008), mutable perceptions of otherness (Stasch 2009), intercultural encounters (de Hontheim 2011), nation-building (Rutherford 2012), resource extraction (Kirksey 2012), devolution of governance (Powell Davies 2021), and major ecological transformations (Chao 2022). The publication of large quantities of archival information and photographs is also reconceptualising the period of Dutch administration and missionisation (Corbey 2017, 2019). Basic linguistic data continue to be gathered and compiled into grammars and dictionaries, especially important given the growing number of endangered languages in the region (see Arnold, this volume). Large collaborative archaeological projects, although rare owing to a long period of exclusion in West New Guinea, are beginning to be undertaken involving teams from Europe, Australasia, Indonesia, and West New Guinea itself (e.g. Boesl et al. this volume; Gaffney et al. this volume).

We finish this section in 2022, the year that West New Guinea was subdivided into a series of smaller administrative provinces. The following section now uses these historiographical insights from 1511–2022 to generate ideas about future ways that research on the human histories of West New Guinea might be conducted.

Future prospects for the study of the human past in West New Guinea

The narrative so far has been overwhelmingly one of external observations on local subjects. The politics of this process are particularly palpable given the history of racialisation and violence, touched upon in the previous sections, which makes it clear that future research must reflect on and

address these issues in practice. What is sorely needed now are narratives focused on the deep and ongoing histories of Papuans themselves. As Kusuma and colleagues (this volume) explain for their genetic work, and Arnold (this volume) describes for linguistics, mutualistic research producing knowledge for both researchers and local participants must be the minimal standard. Although social anthropological and some linguistic studies have involved extended fieldwork and return visits to communities, most archaeological and biological anthropological work has not yet built these ongoing commitments. In the future, research produced with Papuan involvement and leadership certainly has the capacity to challenge and rewrite our understanding of New Guinea's past in unforeseen and meaningful ways.

Scholars face a combination of challenges, however. These challenges include finding ways to genuinely engage local communities in research. Because there is substantial variation in how Papuans perceive their history and their heritage places, some communities are rightfully protective of their sites and stories about their past, whereas others are open to archaeological research. Outreach activities that explain clearly what archaeology (or a related discipline) aims to achieve, how the subject produces data, and how those data can be used to produce historical narratives, are one way to promote engagement. For instance, the Papua Centre of Archaeology undertook regular outreach activities around schools in Jayapura and Lake Sentani to describe what can be learned from heritage places, with booklets and field trip activities designed for pupils.

Several research projects administered by the Papua Centre of Archaeology also encountered issues about the legality of archaeological fieldwork. Under Indonesian law, a permit from both the local government and the landowner needs to be obtained prior to fieldwork. However, in several cases, fieldwork has been stopped owing to protests from the listed landowner's relatives. In many parts of West New Guinea, families are large and disparate, with land rights administered by clan leaders and councils of elders, meaning that a single representative cannot always grant legitimate access to places for survey and excavation. As such, the imposition of state-level administration of cultural heritage sites is often at odds with local political processes. As a minimal standard, all research should only proceed following community consultation to establish which groups hold authority to grant access to archaeological areas, and whether they want the work to be undertaken.

Lately, several steps have been implemented by local governments and their partner organisations to promote the protection of archaeological sites and heritage places. The Ministry of Education and Culture of Indonesia has designed programs to be delivered to indigenous Papuans in an attempt to preserve, celebrate, and promote cultural heritage based on locally specific knowledge and perceptions about historical places. Again, the programs aim to emphasise to young people the value of protecting heritage places. However, the growing number of institutions attempting to develop such heritage programs means that these initiatives are sometimes patchily implemented and with a variable long-term financial commitment to the communities or their heritage places. To improve this situation, there must be effective coordination between stakeholders at the community and government level as well as genuine appraisal of the interests of the local community in maintaining and managing their heritage landscapes.

Excavated material remains, and data produced about these remains, also need careful consideration. Currently, several collections are housed overseas (e.g. the Toé and Kria collections are based at The Australian National University) and the BRIN facilities in Jayapura provide the only dedicated space to house archaeological remains in West New Guinea. As such, material is often removed from local communities and stored elsewhere without attention given to the long-term preservation of these specimens, or whether storage outside of the local area is appropriate. Moreover, the illegal removal of antiquities from archaeological sites for sale on the private market is ongoing. Since the

period of Dutch administration, and continuing today, archaeological and ethnographic material culture has been exported overseas for private sale, at times driven by the tourist sector. It is therefore important to increase awareness about the damage that this trade does to locally finite cultural objects. Alternative incomes might include the production and sale of replica objects or modern craft products.

Regarding ethnographic material culture, apart from the Cultural Centre Museum administered by Universitas Cenderawasih, and Museum Negeri Provinsi Papua (State Museum of Papua Province) in Jayapura, and the Museum of Asmat Culture and Development in Agats, provincial centres in West New Guinea do not have dedicated museums to conserve and display objects. Building capacity for such museums, including storage facilitates as well as specialist knowledge, would be one way to exhibit the cultural diversity that characterises New Guinea. In the three abovementioned museums, the conservation of their collections and the expansion of these collections with present-day material culture is crucial. The inclusion of archaeological material, as well as human, biological, and linguistic information in these museums would help to provide a historical context to the ethnographic artefacts on display, emphasising that New Guinea was a place of dramatic cultural change, rather than stasis (challenging Stone Age stereotypes which abound within Indonesia and internationally). Supporting such museum infrastructure would encourage requests for the repatriation of ethnographic and archaeological objects: although museums internationally, and especially in the Netherlands, are making their West New Guinea photographs, videos, and material objects available for online study, most early collections relating to the pre-Indonesian era remain overseas and beyond reach for Papuans.

Lastly, in terms of tertiary education, there has been systematic underinvestment in the facilities and specialist knowledge relating to West New Guinea's human past. For instance, in order to undertake archaeological research in West New Guinea, Indonesian law requires practitioners to hold a university degree in archaeology and obtain permission from a designated government institution (formerly the Papua Centre of Archaeology and currently BRIN). However, at the time of writing, there are no archaeology programs at Universitas Cenderawasih or Universitas Papua. Although some Papuan scholars have successfully trained in anthropology at Universitas Cenderawasih and later transitioned to archaeology, most researchers train in archaeology in western and central Indonesia—at Universitas Gadjah Mada and Universitas Indonesia in Java, Universitas Udayana in Bali, and Universitas Hasanuddin in Sulawesi—and relocate to Jayapura. For Papuans to participate in archaeological interpretation and cultural heritage preservation, communities and especially young people must have access to higher education, field experience, and laboratory facilities in West New Guinea itself.

Conclusion

Understanding the history of research on the human past in West New Guinea is important for contextualising research practice in the present and envisioning possible futures for scholarship. Chance encounters led to the first written description of Papuan people by Iberian mariners in the sixteenth century. These descriptions generally characterised Papuans based on their appearance and developed a series of racist misconceptions about the area that continued to characterise Dutch voyages around the island in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. During this time, a small number of mariners expressed an interest in the human history of New Guinea, recording rock art and local architecture. English and French voyages of discovery during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries paid greater attention to describing local peoples and making small collections

of ethnographic objects for museums. During the mid-nineteenth century, permanent Dutch outposts were established from which missionaries began to interact with Papuans across longer time periods. This period was characterised by a transition in the European imagination, which moved from describing Papuans as heathens and cannibals to noble savages. It also saw a small but growing interest in the history of New Guinea's peoples, with rock art sites revisited by several Dutch explorers.

At the start of the twentieth century, large-scale multidisciplinary scientific expeditions were sent by the Dutch administration along the coast and then into the interior, even reaching several groups of people living in the highlands. These expeditions resulted in a wealth of ethnographic, human biological, and linguistic data as well as the export of material culture to European museums on a colossal scale. Archaeological material was recorded opportunistically, the exception being a large-scale excavation by a German team around the Bomberai Peninsula. At this time, the deep history of West New Guinea's peoples remained a peripheral topic, except in so far as it could address the question of whether small-statured highland peoples represented a relict lineage of humanity. Following the Pacific War, ethnographic material from early expeditions was synthesised and began to contribute important insights to global anthropological theory, which stimulated further systematic recording across the territory. Chance archaeological discoveries were made by interested social anthropologists around West New Guinea, but these generally did not contribute to emerging narratives about 'Melanesian prehistory'.

Following the handover of West New Guinea to Indonesia in 1963, Dutch scholars lost access to the field and began to revisit the existing ethnographic evidence from afar. Tertiary institutions were established in Jayapura to support Indonesian scholars and, although the territory remained peripheral to the developing perception of national identity, some large-scale recording and documentation was undertaken to gather information about communities around West New Guinea. The latter twentieth century saw the training of several prominent Papuan anthropologists and linguists, although the deep human history of the region was strategically understudied. Today, although there are strong social anthropology and linguistics programs in West New Guinean universities, there are no opportunities for Papuan students to study archaeology or biological anthropology locally. The contentious recent history of the area brings the ethics of fieldwork in West New Guinea into sharp focus. Future research must actively address these concerns in practice by involving local communities in decision-making and provide opportunities for the mutual exchange of knowledge: generating capacity for archaeological research and cultural heritage management within West New Guinea will enable local people to guide and eventually lead such projects.

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