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Wind Nation in 2015

In September 2015, after several weeks in East Sepik Province, Smith spent two weeks in Manus, most of it in Pere village and including a day trip to Baluan. It had been over 40 years since he worked there with Schwartz, but Pere's appearance had not changed dramatically—certainly not as dramatically as it did between Mead's first visit there in 1928 and her return in 1953, by which time several Titan villages had abandoned their lagoons for a shared location on land. In 2015, Pere village stretched further along the beach in each direction than it had in 1973, petering out at the eastern end just short of a rather sprawling cemetery that in no way resembled what the ghosts had demanded during the Cemetery Cult. Many more houses were now built of manufactured materials, but they were still elevated on posts, a practical style in a hot, wet climate even if you don't live above a lagoon. To accommodate rising sea levels, where there had once been open, gently sloping beach, a thick barrier of volcanic rocks wrapped tightly in chicken wire divided land from water.

Houses were still arranged in the original New Way style, in orderly rows on either side of a wide central promenade. But the people of Pere were no longer united in their support for today's most visible face of the Movement, Wind Nation. And Wind Nation itself had changed since Schwartz last scrutinised it shortly before and after Paliau's death. The personified forces of nature—Wing's 10 soldiers—had not destroyed those who refused to accept Wing's dominion and Paliau had not returned as the corporeal vessel of Wang Jesus to put in place a Government of the Holy Spirit. Nonetheless, prophecy of such dramatic events was still part of the doctrine Wind Nation leaders espoused and some rank-and-file adherents—both old and young—still anticipated them: 'You watch',

one stern-faced older woman told Smith, ‘things are going to happen!’ But Wind Nation also had a more relaxed aspect and many of its members seemed to have accepted the possibility that salvation might not be imminent.

Wind Nation front and centre

Anyone arriving in Pere for the first time in 2015 might easily assume that Wind Nation is central to village life. It is indeed highly visible. A long, roofed marketplace delineates the lagoon-side of the large clear space in the centre of the village. On the landward side of that sandy expanse is situated Margaret Mead’s Resource Center (MMRC), built of manufactured materials on a concrete slab. Villagers built the MMRC—originally called the Margaret Mead Community Center—in the late 1970s, supported by government funds and private contributions, some from Mead’s American friends. It was refurbished in the 1990s (when it probably acquired its new name, for reasons of which we are unaware). The Wind Nation meeting house stands to one side of the MMRC, separated from it by a neatly fenced and gravelled enclosure where the Papua New Guinea (PNG) national flag flies from a modern metal flagpole. The PNG flag is diagonally divided. The south-west triangle (the hoist) displays the white stars of the Southern Cross on a black background. The north-east triangle (the fly) displays on a red background the bright yellow silhouette of a bird of paradise. Only a few steps away, the Wind Nation meeting house flies the strikingly similar Wind Nation flag. This displays on the hoist the white silhouette of a traditional feasting bowl—which some Wind Nation adherents interpret as the *kalopeu* symbol—on a red field. On the fly, the white stars of the Southern Cross are arrayed against a black background. Whether intentional or not, the similarity and proximity of these two flags appear to assert the near equivalence of Wind Nation and the nation of PNG and Pere’s allegiance to both.

Wind Nation, however, is one among at least five church congregations in Pere. The other four of which we know are the Catholic Church, the Evangelical Church of Manus, the Seventh-day Adventist Church, and the Teshuva Trumpet Worship Centre, an affiliate of the KAD-ESH Messianic Apostolic Prophetic Ministries. The Wind Nation meeting house probably enjoys pride of location because it occupies the space where the original Paliau Church (the Baluan Native Christian Church) meeting house stood when a majority of Pere people were firm Movement supporters.



Figure 14.1: The Wind Nation meeting house in the centre of Pere village, 2015.

Source: Michael French Smith.

We don't know how many Pere people are affiliated with each of these congregations or with none of them. We do have a rough idea of the number of active Wind Nation participants. In conventional Christian fashion, Wind Nation holds its major gatherings on Sunday mornings. Kumulau Paniu encouraged Smith to come to the only Sunday event during Smith's brief stay. Paniu told Wind Nation adherents that because Smith was visiting they should make it—as Paniu put it in a mixture of English and Tok Pisin—an '*amamas* full swing' (roughly: 'a full-scale celebration'). According to the official Sunday head count, 111 people attended (69 women and 42 men), out of a total Pere population of about 800. Allowing for the many possible deficiencies in these numbers, it still looks like active Wind Nation adherents do not make up even a plurality of resident villagers. But if interest in Wind Nation's brand of millenarianism is unimpressive, millenarianism itself is still popular. At least three of the alternatives to Wind Nation—all much closer to

foreign missionary roots than Wind Nation—are explicitly millenarian: the Evangelical Church of Manus, the Seventh-day Adventist Church, and the Teshuva Trumpet Worship Centre.¹

Paliau versus Wind Nation

To call Wind Nation the current manifestation of the Paliau Movement—rather than just the Movement’s most visible manifestation—may be misleading. A great many people in Pere feel they have long been part of the Movement, but fewer are active participants in Wind Nation. Anyone born in the 1950s or thereafter grew up in a world Paliau helped shape. Most of the Pere people Smith spoke with in 2015 expressed their admiration for Paliau and gave him credit for bringing schools and better health care to Manus and playing a major role in PNG’s progress towards independence. People praised Paliau most for forging wider unity among Manus people than they had ever known before. They also said that people were much more unified in Paliau’s time than they are now. As one man put it: ‘This movement of Paliau Maloat’s brought unity, but we lost it’.

But admiring Paliau and lamenting the loss of the unity the Movement once fostered are not the same as admiring Wind Nation. By 2015, Paliau’s loss of mass influence was apparent. Smith heard criticisms of Paliau as well as praise. A retired executive of Air Niugini (PNG’s national airline) who had returned to live in Pere, her natal village, admired Paliau greatly, but she called Wind Nation (in English) ‘a deviation’. Many others were just as critical and gave similar reasons for their disaffection. Some villagers told Smith they had fallen away from Paliau long before Wind Nation emerged because he had turned against the government.

1 Seventh-day Adventist doctrine holds that ‘Two things will happen at the end of the millennium. First, God’s city, the New Jerusalem, will descend from heaven and settle on our planet (Revelation 21:1). Second, those who rejected Jesus will be brought to life again (Revelation 20:5). However, the purpose of this resurrection is not to give them a second chance for salvation, since they will come out of the grave just as they went into it, with hearts full of hatred for God and His people ... A consuming fire will then descend on the earth and utterly destroy all those outside the city of God. From the ashes of the old earth God will create a new heaven and a new earth (see 2 Peter 3:13; Revelation 21:1) and sin will be removed for all time from the universe’ (www.adventist.org/articles/the-millennium-and-the-end-of-sin/). According to the Teshuva website: ‘We believe that Yeshua [Jesus] is coming again soon to establish His Millennial Reign in Jerusalem’. And: ‘We believe in The Fullness of the Infilling and Manifestation of The Holy Spirit, which is The Spirit of Holiness, including all the revelatory gifts, signs, wonders, and miracles and a complete, open interaction between Heaven and Earth’ (kad-esh.org/what-we-believe/). As for the Evangelical Church of Manus, its name suggests that it also rests on a millenarian doctrine.

But renouncing God and claiming to be Jesus was the decisive point for others. As one put it: ‘When Paliau got rid of God, plenty of people broke away’. A member of the village’s executive council, once a loyal member of the Baluan Native Christian Church, praised Paliau’s work prior to the Wind Nation era. But when this man returned to Pere after several years of migrant work, he was not pleased with the changes he found: ‘Why did he get rid of God? What was the meaning of that?’ He told Smith that he had asked Wind Nation adherents to explain it to him, but—he said—they just told him that they now eschewed God simply because Paliau said so. He also found worthy of mockery Paliau’s claim to be Jesus or very nearly so: ‘In the Bible, when Jesus died he came alive again. If Paliau is Jesus, why hasn’t he risen again?’

Wind Nation doctrine in 2015

Nevertheless, Movement originalists critical of Wind Nation live amicably in Pere with adherents of Paliau’s late-career claims and promises. If there is anything like an official version of Wind Nation doctrine it is probably that which Kumulau Paniu and others recite in the meeting house, much of which Paniu had recorded in a notebook labelled ‘*Las Save, Win Neisen Wol, Department Pere*’ (‘The Last Knowledge, Wind Nation World, Pere Department’). Paliau began calling his pronouncements his ‘Last Knowledge’ in the 1980s, but Paniu’s notebook is his record of Paliau’s thoughts and pronouncements in the last year or so before his death in November 1991.² Like the other records we have of Paliau’s teachings and declarations, one can shape these into a systematic doctrine only with some tinkering and interpolation. There are very few differences, however, between Paniu’s record and what Schwartz recorded and Makasol and Wind Nation published many years earlier. Most of the differences are in the general tone, Paliau’s statements about his relationship to Jesus, and Paliau’s prophecies.

Paliau’s (or, collectively, Wind Nation’s) late-career statements as recorded by Paniu are even more grandiose than those issued earlier. (Paliau was, however, entitled to call himself ‘Sir’. In addition to having been awarded an OBE in the 1970s, he was included in another

2 Paniu gives the dates (day, month, and year) on which Paliau made the statements recorded, but the first page of the notebook itself is dated 1 December 2013. Paniu either compiled his notebook from memory or compiled it from notes made on earlier occasions.

British Commonwealth of Nations honours list not long before his death.)³ The following is translated from Tok Pisin. We have not altered punctuation or capitalisation:

TUESDAY APRIL 26, 1991
MESSAGE OF SIR PALIAU MALOAT OBE ESQ
WIND NATION WORLD
LORENGAU
MANUS PROVINCE

WIND NATION IN MANUS DECLARES TO ALL THE
COUNTRIES OF THE WORLD.

HEAD TALK: WIND NATION MESSAGE FROM
MANUS TO GO OUT TO ALL THE
COUNTRIES OF THE WORLD.

Today in the year 1991 Wind Nation declares here in Manus for all the countries of the world the following, WIND IS THE TRUE POWER OF THE WORLD. All countries of the world do not know this and today all the countries of the world are in chaos.

This message of Wind today has gone to all the countries of the world, and now it comes back to Manus Province in Papua New Guinea.

THE MESSAGE OF SIR PALIAU MALOAT OBE ESQ
WIND NATION WORLD
LORENGAU
MANUS

1. I CAN STOP THE SUN UNTIL I AM ABLE TO FINISH MY WORK.⁴
2. THERE IS NO COUNTRY THAT CAN STOP ME FROM DECLARING THE TRUE MESSAGE OF JESUS I HOLD.

3 Citizens of PNG are still included in the British honours lists, although PNG adopted its own separate set of honours in 2004. We have not investigated how Paliau came to be granted an even higher honour than the OBE on the downside of his career.

4 Asserting that one can stop the passage of the sun is not especially radical in PNG. Magic for doing so is one of many kinds of magic for controlling natural phenomena of which people in many parts of PNG claim knowledge. Like most other indigenous forms of magic, many conditions govern its use (for example, see Smith 1994: 196), but an enduring special relationship with a monotheistic creator is generally not one of them.

3. REMOVE ALL YOUR CHILDREN FROM SCHOOL WHERE THE NAME OF WANG JESUS IS NOT ON THE BLACKBOARD.
4. THE NUMBER TWO PLACE HEAVEN I HOLD IN MY RIGHT HAND.
5. THE NUMBER THREE PLACE-DOWN WORLD I HOLD IN MY LEFT HAND.
6. WHEN I AM ANGRY, WIN TOO IS ANGRY.
7. THERE IS NO GOD IN HEAVEN, AND THERE IS NO GOD IN THE PLACE-DOWN. THERE IS ONLY WIN.

There is no country or person today in the world in 1991 that has IDEA or knowledge of the message and FREEDOM of WIN the way WIND NATION declares it here in Manus.

Only Manus has WIND NATION and this knowledge and message of WIN that it can bring forth FREEDOM for the people of Manus and to go out to all the countries of the world.

Paliau is also said to have doubled-down on claims of his relationship to Jesus. Wind Nation enthusiasts in 2015 recounted to Smith stories of Paliau's miracles at the slightest provocation. Most of these referred to his power over the weather and other aspects of the non-human world. Numbers of Wind Nation adherents claimed to have witnessed his skills as a healer—sometimes via herbal medicine and sometimes via more esoteric power. But Paliau's alleged ability to walk on water may resonate the most with Pere people's knowledge of the biblical Jesus. Most accounts of Paliau's aquatic ability are second- and third-hand. But Smith heard one firsthand account from a middle-aged man who was present, he said, when a small group of Australian men took Paliau by force, tied his hands, took him out to sea, and threw him overboard to 'test him'. As the men hauled him away to their boat, Paliau told his companion to wait on the wharf (just where this happened isn't clear, but by the 1980s many villages had wharves). The boat motored far out to sea, but it wasn't long—the story goes—before Paliau returned alone, walking towards the wharf on top of the water. Not all Pere people credit this account, but some find in it ample proof that if Paliau is not Jesus he is in a similar league.

In some of Paliau's late-career teachings that Paniu recorded, he does *not* claim to be Jesus or the equivalent. Here, translated from Tok Pisin, is one example:

Six Teachings of Wang Paliau Maloat
Big Government King Nation

1. I asked Jesus to send me to you.
2. You, all the people of Manus, can accept me to watch over you and take you to Jesus.
3. Jesus himself can watch over you here in Manus, and Jesus himself can make Manus the leader of all the countries of the world.
4. You cannot go to church. [That is, Catholic, Evangelical, or other Christian churches in Manus.]
5. Follow me, I can take you and Manus to Jesus!
6. Call on Win and now I'll go to him [i.e. Win] and finish.

You must permit me to die and I will go and prepare freedom for you. When I die you can't mourn me and cry for me, I'll come at night to the [Wind Nation] meeting house [and listen to you].

But, as we described in the previous chapter, Paniu also recorded far less ambiguous statements, including one in the Baluan language that Paniu translated into Tok Pisin as '*Mi tasol i Yesus*'—that is, 'I am Jesus', or, more literally, 'Only I am Jesus'. As noted above, although identifying himself with Jesus may have excited some of Paliau's followers, it alienated others.

Paliau rarely committed to a schedule in his prophecies. He came closest to it in the following (translated here from Paniu's Tok Pisin version):

The leader of this movement Sir Paliau Maloat from 1984 to 1990 spoke of his seven years. Now he says that these seven years will be his last seven years in the world. These seven years are for him to show us the LAST KNOWLEDGE of the world. He says to us that after 1990 and beyond many bad things will happen in the world and the world must choose between two roads. Is God true or is Win true? Just as Noah's ship saved man, this knowledge will save us.

But those who did not accept Win as saviour were not destroyed, nor—recalling Paliau Lukas's letter to Schwartz—did refusing to accept Paliau as the world's saviour lead to mass catastrophe. Of course, the Wind Nation rank and file weren't necessarily aware of the pronouncements Paliau and his core supporters issued in writing in the late 1980s, so Paliau's prophetic failures may have passed with little notice. People who did know of them and took them seriously might have been relieved when they misfired.

In any event, aside from what he found in Paniu's notebook, Smith saw no signs that Wind Nation adherents in Pere were worrying about a coming apocalypse.

Late in life, Paliau is also said to have prophesied his resurrection. According to Paniu: 'Sir Paliau Maloat said I will die but I will come back again to meet you in the number three place-down [that is, the earth, the mundane human abode] here in the world'. Smith heard even some Wind Nation adherents argue about whether Paliau really had said this, but some adherents found it plausible and inspiring. Apparently, however, Paliau had not committed to a schedule for his resurrection. Instead, he had told people to watch for three signs that he would soon return: they would see things they had never seen before, hear things they had never heard before, and say things they had never said before.⁵

People eager for salvation might not find mystical imprecision entirely satisfying, but it has a long history as a way to simultaneously sustain and restrain millennial hopes. Landes (2011: 30) refers to a letter Pope Gregory the Great sent to Æthelbert, the ruler of Kent (in what is now the United Kingdom), in 601. 'It shows', writes Landes, 'the importance of apocalyptic rhetoric as a motivator, as well as the necessary distance any responsible public figure needs to take from a foolish and easily disprovable stance'. In the letter, Gregory assures Æthelbert that the great things predicted in Scripture are at hand, but refrains from committing to any but a very cautious calendar of events. Landes quotes from the Pope's letter: 'the kingdom of the saints ... is at hand. But as the end of the world draws near, many things are to come upon us which were not before, to wit, changes in the air, and terrors from heaven, and tempests out of the order of the seasons, wars, famines, pestilences, earthquakes in divers places; which things will not, nevertheless all happen in our days, but will follow after our days'.

The Manus people who courted the Noise in the 1940s or prepared their cemeteries diligently in the 1950s would have found such an indefinite—and scary—prospect unattractive. Yet neither Paniu's notebook nor Smith's conversations with hopeful adherents shed much light on what

5 Tok Pisin speakers will probably appreciate seeing Paniu's original Tok Pisin version of these enigmatic phrases:

1. *Wanem samting yupela i no save lukim bifo na nau bai yupela i lukim.*
2. *Wanem samting yupela i no save harim bifo na nau bai yupela i harim.*
3. *Wanem samting yupela i no save tokim bifo na nau bai yupela i tokim.*

Paliau's return would entail. One could assume that earlier Wind Nation declarations still applied: Paliau's followers would be free from illness, ageing, and death and be able to bend the elements to their will. Or his return might herald the coming of a new world of a kind unimaginable in the 1940s, 1950s, or even the 1980s. The only prophecy Smith came across in 2015 that he had never encountered before fit that description. Inscribed in Panui's book, it reads:

Sir Paliau Maloat OBE ESQ Last Prophet of the World Wind
Nation Prophecies these things on 11 July 1990:

Manus Province will become the world commercial centre.
Manus Province will become the world communication centre.⁶

We do not know how many of those who consider themselves Paliau's followers, or how many within the smaller group who consider themselves adherents of Wind Nation, are aware of these prophecies. One young Wind Nation enthusiast told Smith (in English) that Paliau had said that Manus would one day be the world's 'commercial and communications centre'. But despite the much higher levels of literacy and experience beyond the village of today's Manus people, there are surely many who would find it hard to form a concrete image of what a world commercial and communication centre is and how they would benefit from it. One also has to wonder what this might mean concretely to Wind Nation adherents who have taken to heart their leaders' condemnation of mundane business transactions as the wrong way to pursue wealth. But the move from prophesying the imminent arrival of cargo to advising people to wait for hazy signs of a Second Coming is much more dramatic than a changing position on the morality of commerce.⁷

6 This is translated from Tok Pisin, but the Tok Pisin rendering of the key terms is so close to English that translation is superfluous. What we render in English as commercial centre Panui renders as *comesal senta*, and what we render in English as communications centre Panui renders as *communikasen senta*.

7 The prophecy of Manus communications and commercial ascendancy sounds suspiciously like something one of Paliau's younger, urban followers might have concocted. But whatever its source, it is consistent with softening Wind Nation's apocalyptic stance by substituting an indefinite Second Coming for an imminent catastrophe.

Wind Nation International

In 1990, Kisokau Pochapon made Wind Nation sound at least somewhat like a cargo cult, promising that through Win the Creator people could get telephones, boats, and whatever other manufactured goods they wanted. But the promise of True Freedom—freedom from all of life's ills, including death—is much grander. In its grandeur it is so much like the promises of millenarian movements throughout the world that the only thing typically Melanesian about it may be its history. It also may be more interesting that—although some Wind Nation adherents hoped for Paliau's return—some seemed almost as enthusiastic about building a permanent bureaucratic organisation as they were about the Second Coming.

In the 1980s, the name Wind Nation International sounded beyond quixotic. Yet in 2015, Wind Nation was actually forging international ties. Two striking instances are Wind Nation relationships with international conservation organisations.⁸ In 2012, the Nature Conservancy worked with organisations in Manus to mount a voyage by sail canoe throughout the Bismarck Archipelago, demonstrating the feasibility of travelling by sail and publicising the problem of climate change. A Nature Conservancy website billed the enterprise as 'voyaging around the Pacific connecting culture, conservation and climate change'.⁹ Young men from Pere were members of the crew and one of them explained to Smith that the voyage also had another purpose: 'The other part is to show that we can control nature'. That is, they would show that the Wind Nation adherents on the crew could ensure that conditions for sailing stayed favourable. They did not hide this agenda from the Nature Conservancy. The website devoted to the voyage provides information on the crew, including their reasons for joining the voyage. One Pere crew member stated: '[I want] to share ideas and the knowledge I have concerning climate change with other Pacific neighbours, demonstrate my culture and tradition and to tell the world that WIN is the SUPER POWER!' Another said: 'To promote canoe culture and to showcase Win Neisen faith connected to nature'.¹⁰

8 Paliau, of course, had been forging international ties at least since he first met Schwartz, Shargo, and Mead, and continued to do so with every visiting anthropologist or tourist he met.

9 climatechallengervoyage.wordpress.com/about/.

10 climatechallengervoyage.wordpress.com/meet-the-crew/.

A second example of Wind Nation forging ties with international conservation organisations involves the World Wildlife Fund (WWF). In 2010, a WWF team visited Mbukey Island in connection with the organisation's Western Melanesia Programme. A member of the WWF team reported on WWF's Coral Triangle Blog:

It was a most enlightening trip. The people were so eloquent ... They surprised us with their wisdom of the most unexpected sort and ... we found out they were people of the Wind Nation ... It was their religion and majority of the people of M'bukey Islands belong to the Wind Nation. The Wind Nation believes in total freedom. Freedom from hardship, hunger, old age and disease. They believe in ... an ongoing life that has no end. [A village leader] said: 'The Wind is the creator. Without air, no living thing will live. This is the reason why the Wind is the creator. Wind is the creator's name, not what he is. The Wind is what everything revolves around in. The Wind creates and the Wind can take away'.

Wind Nation's Five Fundamentals to Total Freedom:

1. To live a life, you must like people. To be accepted, you must accept people.
2. You can joke a happy joke—not one that creates anger. While joking, it must not be insulting.
3. You should be happy and smile. Be playful.
4. Be honest.
5. Get together as a community through rituals—discuss things that will answer all objectives to create total freedom.¹¹

We loved our short stay here as [another team member] and I deeply share the Fundamentals of Total Freedom.¹²

Paliau's civic legacy

While there is considerable disagreement among Pere people about the likelihood of Paliau's resurrection or of achieving freedom for themselves from illness, ageing, and death, Smith found considerable agreement that

11 Readers will recognise the 'Five Fundamentals' as a version of the Five Rules Wind Nation leaders promulgated in the 1980s, described in Chapter 13.

12 coraltriangle.blogs.panda.org/coral-reefs/the-amazing-people-of-mbuke-island-manus-papua-new-guinea.

Paliau helped Manus people overcome their defensive mutual hostility and combine in larger groups for mutual benefit. Both Paliau's very real contribution in this sphere and contemporary Manus people's recognition of it are highly significant aspects of Paliau's legacy. One might even say that those who act in the spirit of this legacy are continuing the Movement, even though they may not hold with the doctrines of Wind Nation.

There is good evidence that Paliau left a legacy of self-help through collective institutions that is stronger than the legacy of his millenarian ideas. Otto (1991: 282), speaking of the 1980s, writes:

Most people who lived in villages affected by the Movement agreed that the early years of change were generally a very good time. It was a period of peaceful coexistence between the ethnic groups, of unequaled cooperation and sharing, of new achievements and progress. This view was equally held by believers and by those who never belonged to the Paliau church. Only staunch opponents were reluctant to ascribe the positive changes to the Paliau Movement and would point to independent developments elsewhere.

Dalsgaard (2009: 305) writes that Paliau is still given credit in much of Manus for 'bringing clinics, schools, cooperative societies and, most important, local government councils into the hands of Manus people'. He also argues that 'the general perception among Manus people today is that *gavman* [Tok Pisin for government] was first introduced by the Germans, but some people will add that it was given to Manusians as "theirs" by Paliau' (Dalsgaard 2009: 85). Based on his recent research in Manus, Rasmussen (2015: 131) concludes 'it is likely that the idea of social organization at a higher level than that of kinship, clan or specific alliances has strong roots in the Paliau Movement', and has fostered new ideas about Mbukei as a 'community'. There is, he says, disagreement about the 'scope and responsibility of "the community"', especially pertaining to ceremonial exchange obligations (Rasmussen 2015: 121). But simply to have spurred an ongoing debate on a topic so vital to the course of change in PNG is a considerable accomplishment.¹³

13 Dalsgaard and Rasmussen were Ton Otto's students. Their work builds on his research on Baluan in original and insightful ways and, like Otto's, it is essential to any more comprehensive review of Paliau's legacy.

Paliau's millenarian legacy

Paliau's less secular legacy may be most on view in the Lipan section of Lipan-Mok village on Baluan Island. Lipan-Mok, the only village of any size on Baluan, is itself a legacy of the early Movement, when the Titan people who lived just offshore from the tiny island of Mok moved to the Baluan mainland to settle alongside Paliau's home village of Lipan. As in Pere, not everyone on Baluan is a Wind Nation adherent, but Wind Nation as an institution is on dramatic display.

The house in which Paliau died is a modern one by rural PNG standards, built of manufactured materials on a European plan—that is, divided into special purpose rooms connected by hallways. Except for a narrow strip along the shore, all of Lipan-Mok village is built on land that rises quickly up the side of the mountainous island. Paliau's house sits higher on the slope than most of the village and it has become a shrine. He is buried among flower beds and gravel paths in front of the house, as is Martin Thompson Poposui. Each grave is roofed to protect it from the elements and marked by a substantial granite monument, professionally inscribed.

Most of the interior of the house is plain. On entering, one encounters a display of photographs of Paliau at many stages of his career, emphasising the days when as an elected official he and Lady Teresia hobnobbed with national and international dignitaries, Paliau always in white shirt and tie and Teresia in an attractive dress.

The room in which Paliau died stands out from the others. Colourful faux-oriental carpets cover the floor. A photograph of Paliau and a collection of Paliau memorabilia are carefully arranged on a wide table among bunches of both real and plastic flowers. Conspicuous in the centre of the table is Paliau's battered brown fedora.



Figure 14.2: Paliau's grave in Lipan-Mok village, Baluan Island, 2015.
Source: Michael French Smith.



Figure 14.3: In 2015, Smith visited Paliau’s house in Lipan-Mok village, Baluan Island, with (from left to right) Kumulau Paniu, Lady Teresa Maloat (Paliau’s widow), and Kisokau Pochapon.

There is a visitors’ book in the front room of the house, in which the party stands, and a shrine to Paliau in the room in which he died.

Source: An unidentified Lipan-Mok man took the picture using Smith’s camera.



Figure 14.4: The shrine to Paliau in the room in which he died, 2015.

Source: Michael French Smith.

Also conspicuous is a hardwood carving of the Three Wise Monkeys that looks like the work of a local wood carver. This image is a staple of tourist kitsch for sale in souvenir shops in the Chinatowns of many Western cities, but it is derived from a Japanese temple decoration. It allegedly represents the virtues of seeing no evil, hearing no evil, and speaking no evil—one monkey is covering its eyes, one is covering its ears, and one is covering its mouth. In the last phase of his career, Paliau (either on his own or at an acolyte's suggestion) adopted the three monkeys image—sometimes using it in his Lorengau preaching—to illustrate what Wind Nation adherents have described to us as the proper behaviour of Wing's followers. That is, believers in Wing should see, hear, or speak nothing that would delay the coming of Wing's dominion over the world (cf. Gustafsson 1995: 73–4). Paliau also used the image to describe attributes of Wing, Wang, and Wong, saying that they respectively see, hear, and speak no evil. Being unable to see or hear evil seems incompatible with Wing's and Wang's supreme power, but perhaps Paliau simply wanted to say that Wing, Wang, and Wong were untainted with evil.



Figure 14.5: Paliau explaining Wing, Wang, and Wong to Schwartz in the late 1980s.

One of the young, formally educated followers Paliau had begun to attract is holding a painting representing the three entities in imaginary corporeal form and duplicating the three monkeys pose. Note that Wong (the Holy Spirit) is depicted as a woman. The smaller figure in front of Wing, Wang, and Wong is an angel.

Source: Theodore Schwartz. Digital copy courtesy of the Melanesian Archive, University of California, San Diego.

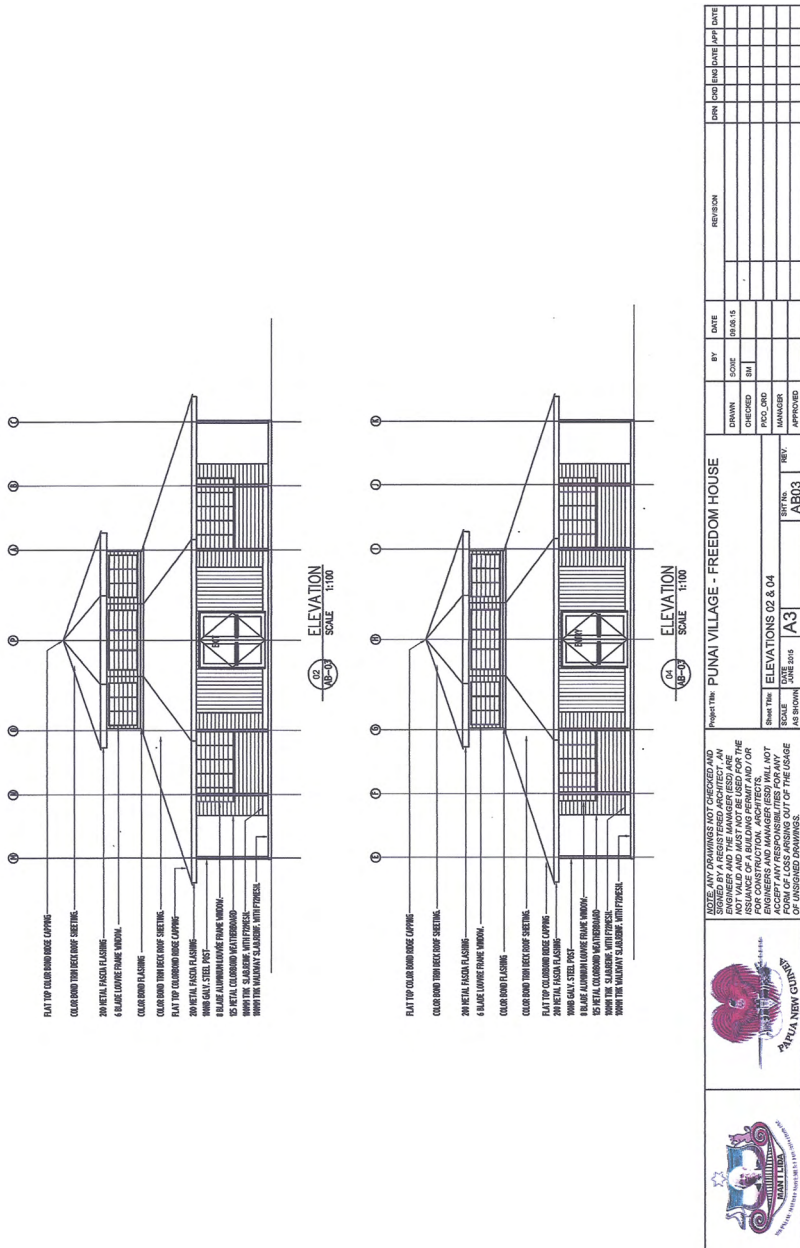


Figure 14.6: This page of the plan for Freedom House shows double doors on opposite sides of the octagon.

Visitors will enter on one side, ascend a ramp to the platform on which the throne of King David will sit, and exit on the opposite side.

Source: The plans, dated June 2015, are not signed.

Smith's few hours in Lipan-Mok included a visit with Kisokau Pochapon. He and Kumulau Panu were eager for Smith to see Freedom House, under construction a short walk from the Paliau house. They explained that Freedom House is to be the 'spiritual centre' of Wind Nation International. Work was well underway, with most of the framing already completed. The octagonal building sits on a reinforced concrete slab on a base of compacted fill, it has an octagonal cupola, and when finished it will be surrounded by a covered porch. The plans show that louvred windows will provide full cross ventilation and they specify a full range of modern construction materials, such as 'colourbond trim deck roof sheeting'.

Colour versions of the Wind Nation '*Man i Lida*' logo and the PNG national emblem (a Raggiana bird of paradise perched atop a spear and an hourglass-shaped drum—a *kundu* in Tok Pisin), appear in the lower left-hand corner of each page. The plans show provision for wheelchair access but very little space for people to gather. Rather, in the centre of the building, directly beneath the cupola, there is a low platform on which, one of the builders told Smith (because it is not stated on the plan), the throne of King David will sit. Presumably, Paliau will occupy the throne on his return as the rejuvenated vessel for the incorporeal Wang Jesus.

Freedom House is built to last, perhaps to endure long after Wang Jesus takes the throne. Or perhaps it is built to last because Wind Nation leaders are resigned to waiting indefinitely for Paliau's return as Wang Jesus. In the latter case, building Freedom House is the opposite of throwing all your valuables into the sea and destroying your canoes. It is a statement of the intention to abide; it is not a final, desperate plea.

There are other signs too that some Wind Nation activists are planning for what may be a long organisational future as opposed to an apocalyptic end of time. For instance, anthropologist Andrew Lattas (personal communication, May 2019) reports that in the late 1990s some of the better-educated leaders of Wind Nation met more than once with leaders of the Pomio Kivung Movement, which is active in PNG's East New Britain Province (Bailoenakia and Koimanrea 1983; Lattas 1998). The object was, in Lattas's words, to 'start a dialogue between movements ... [regarding] developing a Melanesian theology, a Melanesian civilization'.

A seminar sponsored by the Melanesian Institute for Pastoral and Socio-Economic Service, an organisation founded in PNG by Catholic missionaries, helped bring these leaders together.¹⁴

Wind Nation may be gradually weaning itself from relying on Paliau's charismatic authority and creating a more stable organisation that nevertheless maintains a millenarian doctrine; that is, it may be following the path of what sociologist Max Weber called the routinisation of charisma. Some strong supporters of the Movement and of Wind Nation have suggested that it is indeed planning for the long term. Kais (1998: Chapter 3) spends several pages assessing the factors that might hinder the Movement's 'survival and expansion' and concludes that 'it appears to have the environment and conditions in which to exist and thrive'. Citing Pochapon, among others, as a source of his information, Kais also states that 'as far as it relates to Manus, the Movement stands ever ready to assist in the administration of the new provincial government system and the implementation of development activities'. On the final page of his article, Kais notes the other names under which the Movement has operated in years past but concludes optimistically: 'the name Win Neisen may in fact be the last name as the people prepare for the coming of the new and perfect government under the kingship of Jesus. Until the coming of that awaited day, the Movement adherents have the responsibility of character building and living in a way that symbolizes the perfect blissful life of abundance that will be established not in heaven, but here on earth' (ibid.).

In 2015, many years had passed since Kais's assessment, apparently without any dramatic efforts reminiscent of the Noise or the Cemetery Cult to accelerate the 'coming of the new and perfect government'. Yet some adherents may be losing patience. Regarding the timing of salvation in today's Wind Nation, Smith regrets not being in Manus long enough to investigate a Wind Nation splinter group. A man who allegedly calls himself Paliau's 'spiritual messenger' has attracted a handful of followers. This group calls itself the National Kastam Tumbuna Government but the members consider themselves part of Wind Nation and they fly the Wind Nation flag in front of the house in Pere where they meet. The group's leader was not in Pere during Smith's visit and he gleaned little of how his message differs from the doctrines of mainstream Wind Nation. Smith

14 Both Paliau Lukas (1983) and Pomio Kivung leaders Philip Bailoenakia and Francis Koimanrea have published in Melanesian Institute journals (Bailoenakia and Koimanrea 1983).

did speak at length with two members of the group, one of whom told him that their leader had come to the people of Manus to—as she put it in English—‘top up’ (that is, add to, or—perhaps—bring up to date) Paliau’s teaching. One Pere detractor called the group, in English, a ‘cult’, and complained in Tok Pisin that *‘ol i laik ariap long Tru Fridom*. That is, ‘they want to hurry to True Freedom’. This seems an odd complaint coming from a fellow millenarian, but it suggests the difference between the followers of a recently minted prophet and the members of an organisation seeking stability.

We think, however, that no matter how resigned to the long haul many adherents appear to be, it is almost invariably too soon to assume that any adherents of Wind Nation’s millenarian doctrine have abandoned all hopes of imminent salvation. A wider effort to ‘hurry to True Freedom’ and new prophets may yet emerge.

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