CHAPTER XI

THE DIVISION OF AUTHORITY

The component relations of the class system just described clearly entail inequalities of worldly power. As I mentioned in Chapter VIII, however, superiority in the religious sphere is based on different considerations; thus class stratification must further be viewed in the context of a division of types of authority, which for analytical purposes may be called temporal and spiritual or secular and religious. Van Wouden (1968) has shown this sort of division to be widespread in eastern Indonesia, while more recent studies (see, e.g. Cunningham 1965; Schulte Nordholt 1971; Fox 1968) have provided detailed descriptions of the various forms it takes in particular societies. But analogues of the system appear throughout the world (see Hocart 1970; Needham 1960a), perhaps most notably in the Hindu theory of sovereignty (see Coomaraswamy 1942; Dumézil 1948); so it is hoped that the present topic will contribute to a wider comparative framework than that derived from eastern Indonesia alone.

While a separation of two sorts of authority can be discerned in various contexts of eastern Sumbanese social and conceptual order, its clearest expression is found in a dual partition of leadership functions between lineal descent groups within the domain, the most inclusive level of political and territorial integration. Following Needham (1968:XII), then, this may be called a form of 'complementary governance' or 'dual sovereignty'. Since the pattern is rather less pronounced in Rindi than elsewhere, however, it is useful first to outline a more elaborate form that appears in the neighbouring domain of Umalulu. Indeed, certain particulars of the Rindi organization can be fully appreciated only by considering beforehand the constitution of the latter domain. Though in so doing I will refer to categories and principles of order previously discussed with specific regard to Rindi, this procedure is justified by the fact that the two domains share in
all essential respects the same culture and social institutions and
speak the same language.

1. Ratu and Maràmba

Temporal power and spiritual leadership in Umalulu are divided
between the noble rulers (maràmba) and the ratu, the highest religious
authorities. Rindi differs from this domain in that the latter office
is formally absent there. Contrary to the impression conveyed by some
earlier writings on Sumba, in Umalulu the title of ratu applies not
exclusively to a particular individual leader, but collectively to a
number of clans; and all members of these clans can be called ratu.
Another potential source of confusion is the translation of ratu as
‘priest’ (see Wielenga 1909a:307), since this word is more appropri­
ately used to designate elders (ama bokulu), of any clan, who engage
in priestly duties. As noted, unlike ratu, this is not an hereditary office
but a vocation requiring no more than age and experience. Some
writers (Lambooy 1927:233; Kapita 1976a:40), moreover, have spoken
of the Sumbanese ratu as the fourth, indeed the highest, social class,
which notion seems mainly to refer to the fact that they occupy a
special place within the domain and, in a sense, are considered superior
to the maràmba. But in secular terms at least, I found that the ratu
clans of Umalulu were spoken of as commoners; while other evidence
suggests that they were originally a type of nobility. Actually I think
the most accurate interpretation of the matter is that the ratu stand
apart from the order of classes altogether.

In Umalulu there are two maràmba clans (i.e., ruling clans that
traditionally included members of the highest noble rank), Palai
Malamba and Watu Pelitu; and four ratu clans, Watu Waya, Muru
Uma, Ongga, and Marapeti. The senior members of the two groups
are respectively Palai Malamba and Watu Waya, and it is between
these two clans that the distinction of maràmba and ratu primarily
applies. The relation of the two sorts of leaders is defined in the
myth of Umbu Endalu, the principal ancestral figure in Umalulu,
from whose many wives (fourteen in all, by one account) derive many
of the oldest clans in the domain. Umbu Endalu's first wife was the
mother of Kaluu Rihi, the ancestor of the ratu Watu Waya, while
the ancestor of the maràmba clan Palai Malamba, called Tunggu
Watu, was the son of a later wife, or according to another account
(Kapita 1976b:89), the younger son of the same wife (see Fig. 6).
The Umalulu people thus distinguish the principal *ratu* and *maràmba* as *aya* and *eri*, elder and younger brother. As van Wouden (1968:28, 50, 55-4, 62, 115) has shown, a division of spiritual and temporal authority between parties regarded as older and younger is very common in eastern Indonesia; and in this case it accords with the general identification of the oldest member of a class with (greater) spiritual power, which I have variously illustrated in previous chapters.4

The distinction of elder and younger as between the *ratu* and *maràmba* is also consistent with the order in which their apical ancestors arrived in the domain. According to myth, Umalulu was earlier occupied by Kàbalu, the ancestor of the clan Lamuru, after he had expelled an aboriginal population. He was removed in turn by Kaluu Rihi, the Watu Waya ancestor, who was the first of the present inhabitants to enter Umalulu. To accomplish this task, however, Kaluu Rihi had to summon his father, Umbu Endalu, from Haharu Malai (Cape Sasar) where the pair had earlier landed together on Sumba; and by means of a series of deceits, aimed at convincing Kàbalu that Kaluu Rihi had actually arrived in Umalulu before him, they managed to induce the earlier inhabitant to give up his claim to the land and leave the district.5 Kàbalu eventually settled in Patawangu, to the north of Umalulu.

Since Umbu Endalu’s other son, the ancestor of the noble clan Palai Malamba, is said to have accompanied his father to Umalulu, and thus also to have assisted his elder brother in wresting the domain from Kàbalu, both the principal *maràmba* clan and the *ratu* are sometimes designated together as the *mangu tanangu*, ‘owners of the land’, an office I shall describe further below. Usually, though, it is the *ratu* alone who are spoken of as the *mangu tanangu* of Umalulu; hence in ritual speech the names of the four *ratu* clans are used to refer to the domain as a whole. As I shall later elaborate, this view accords with the fact that Kaluu Rihi was the very first of the present inhabitants to occupy the land; thus the *ratu* (in this case, particularly Watu Waya) are spoken of as the ‘original people, inhabitants’ (*tau memangu*) of the domain. The idea that both the *ratu* and Palai Malamba are *mangu tanangu*, on the other hand, is consistent with the fact that removing Kàbalu required the intervention of Umbu Endalu (and Tunggu Watu), in other words a combination of both spiritual and secular power.

Considerations of descent and temporal precedence similarly account
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for the juniority of the second maràmba clan, Watu Pelitu, to Palai Malamba. Briefly, the ancestor of this clan, Lua Wuli, was the son of Ndilu Harahai, who was born of Meta Maninggalu, the ancestor of the clan Mangola in Wai Jilu, and Hendaru Mandàri, the MBD and rightful spouse of Umbu Endalu (see Fig. 6). There is not enough space to outline the circumstances of this woman’s marriage to Meta Maninggalu. Insisting on his rightful claim to her, however, Umbu Endalu later abducted and married Hendaru Mandàri; so despite his biological paternity, the Watu Pelitu ancestor is considered a legitimate grandchild of the Umalulu ancestor. That this clan is inferior to Palai Malamba, therefore, can be ascribed both to the Watu Pelitu ancestor’s being a member of a lower generation than that of the other noble clan and to the fact that his father was not a natural child of Umbu Endalu. Palai Malamba’s superiority in this respect also accords with its position as principal wife-giver of Watu Pelitu. Since Watu Pelitu first established itself on Sumba at Pariripu in Kanatangu, moreover, the clan was a somewhat later arrival in the domain. It appears, then, to have been extraneous to the original division of powers between the ratu and the maràmba (Palai Malamba), a situation which fits well with the special circumstances surrounding the birth of the Watu Pelitu ancestor.

FIG. 6. Genealogical Relations among the Ancestors of the Ratu and Maràmba of Umalulu. (Wives of Umbu Endalu are numbered in accordance with relative marriage order)
As is consistent with the position of the eldest brother as the surrogate and successor of the father, the religious authority of the ratu in Umalulu derives of course from the fact that this party’s ancestor is the one most closely connected with the principal ancestor, Umbu Endalu. In Chapter VI, I noted that elder and younger brother are associated with the inside and the outside respectively. In Umalulu, this opposition is reflected in the fact that the ratu occupy the superior central section of the chief village, and the maràmba the two outer or peripheral sections. The centre of the village also contains a small, roughly made, uninhabited building called the uma nda pataungu, panongu nda pakelangu, ‘house without occupants, unsupported ladder’. Since it contains the relics consecrated to Umbu Endalu, it is regarded as the seat of this ancestor. Indeed, the house and its spiritual occupant are so closely identified that the name of the building can refer equally to both; because he is so highly revered, the ancestor’s proper name (Umbu Endalu) is hardly ever spoken. The uma nda pataungu is thus described as the uma lilingu, ‘forbidden house’. As the building is the responsibility of the ratu — who are spoken of as its guardians — the individual ancestral houses (uma marapu) of the four ratu clans are clustered around the uninhabited house in the centre of the village. While the chief village is now virtually abandoned, and the uma nda pataungu is no longer in evidence, formerly the Umalulu people would renovate the house each year just before the onset of the rains, as part of a major ceremony concerned with fertility and renewal. The ceremony was led by the ratu, and all the clans of Umalulu were required to take part.

The uma nda pataungu thus provides a particularly clear example of the association of a centre with spirit or divinity. The central part of the chief village of Umalulu also contains a vacant area surrounded by a low stone wall, now overgrown with dense bush. This is called the paoka, ‘enclosed space’, and is reputed to contain a number of very old graves. Originally, I was told, the uma nda pataungu was built inside the enclosure but was later moved outside. Like the inhabited house itself, therefore, the empty paoka calls to mind other instances of vacant or relatively unmarked centres, identified with divinity in its superordinate, otiose, and undifferentiated aspects and so conceived in opposition to more manifest and active forces located at the margins (see Chapter VI). Moreover, the pattern of the four ratu clans grouped around the superior, uninhabited house in the centre of the village is especially reminiscent of the spirits identified
with the four main house posts and the centre of the house foundation; and both arrangements call to mind the four-five pattern found elsewhere in Indonesia (see van Wouden 1968; van Ossenbruggen 1918), in which the fifth, central element generally unites symbolically the subordinate four.

In Umalulu, the unitary character of the centre of the chief village finds expression in the association of this place with the single ancestor from whom derive both the ratu and the maràmba. It thus represents the unitary source of a division of spiritual and temporal power, in which regard it is worth recalling that the words for centre, padua and kàni, connote division and apportionment (see Chapter 11). Because of their special connexion with the ancestor, however, it is the ratu who are specifically concerned with the unitary aspect of this duality. The ratu's position thus closely parallels that of the 'sacral lord' of the Atoni, whom Cunningham (1965:371) describes, in relation to the four 'secular lords' of the four great quarters of the domain (in this case Insana), as the 'unifier of the princedom', and who, like the ratu, occupies the centre of the domain, which the Atoni call the 'root' (ibid.:365). Furthermore, as among the Atoni (ibid.:373), the unity of the domain in Umalulu is principally expressed in major renewal ceremonies such as the renovation of the uma nda pataungu, in which context the maràmba are plainly subordinate to the ratu. The significance of the 'principal ruler' on Timor (generally a figure analogous to the 'sacral lord' of the Atoni), as a representative of a higher unity in which divided entities are conjoined, has also been noted by van Wouden (1968: 102, 110-13, 165). In this respect, he remarks that '... the similarity between the ruler and a deus otiosus is truly striking' (ibid.:165). It is relevant, then, that in Umalulu both the ratu (in particular the two principal ratu clans, Watu Waya and Muru Uma) and Umbu Endalu, the paramount ancestor, are called 'the one(s) with folded arms, who sit cross-legged, the quiet and the still' (na maanggu luku, mahara jawangu, na makandii na makanawa), and mahanggula, mahanganji. As I noted in Chapter V, these phrases are also used to refer to God. They further express the passive and inactive nature of the ratu's leadership in contrast to that of the maràmba, a point I shall consider just below.

Due to the abandonment of the chief village in Umalulu and the consequent neglect of customary undertakings that once required the concerted involvement of the two sorts of leaders, it is now difficult to determine what precisely were their roles in specific situations.
From what I was told, however, it seems that in general the *ratu*, by virtue of their authority and expertise in customary and religious matters, informed decisions formally taken by the two leaders together, which were then expedited by the *maràmba*. While the noble rulers might initiate projects, the prior approval of the *ratu* for any undertaking was necessary in order to secure for it the divine sanction of the ancestor (see Wielenga 1909c:371). In matters that concerned only their own particular spheres of influence, however, it seems the *maràmba* acted mostly independently of the *ratu*. Thus the secular leaders, by contrast to the spiritual leaders, can be said to represent segmentary interests.10 This, too, finds expression in spatial terms. In accordance with the superiority of Palai Malamba to Watu Pelitu, the former clan occupied the upstream (*kambata*) and the latter the downstream (*kiku, ‘tail’, see Chapter II) section of the chief village; and since all commoner clans in Umalulu (except for a group of four, which I shall mention further below) stand under the dominion of one or the other of these two noble clans, their houses, also, were located in one or the other of the two outer sections.11 Accordingly, Palai Malamba and Watu Pelitu govern respectively the upstream and downstream halves of the entire territory of the domain.

As is consistent with their separation from secular concerns, the four *ratu* clans, occupying the central section of the village, do not figure in this dual division of the territory. While they have agricultural lands outside the village, these are found in the upstream half of the domain, controlled by Palai Malamba (a fact that further indicates the close association between this noble clan and the senior *ratu* Watu Waya); so the *ratu*’s sphere of influence is confined to the chief village itself and then specifically to the centre. As accords with their occupation of the outer sections of the village, the nobles, on the other hand, are mainly concerned with external affairs, which in former times included the defence of the village, and especially the centre, against attack, and waging war on other domains. The latter activity, as I was told, was one means by which the nobles accumulated wealth in the form of slaves and goods, and so in this respect became vastly superior to the *ratu*. The *ratu* and the *maràmba* may therefore be characterized as oriented upwards and outwards respectively: the former are concerned with ‘vertical’ relations between man and spirit, and the latter with ‘horizontal’ relations among groups of men. This formulation, it should be noted, agrees with what was said in Chapter VI regarding the elder and the younger brother in general.
In accordance with the values attached to the three main parts of the village as discussed in Chapter II, therefore, the spatial arrangement of groups within the chief village of Umalulu expresses both the superiority of the *ratu* to the *maràmba* and that of the senior to the junior *maràmba* clan. The former relation, however, pertains mainly to ritual, for in terms of worldly power, the nobles, with their many slaves and clients, greatly overshadow the religious leaders. Also, since about the beginning of the last century at least, Watu Pelitu has come to exceed Palai Malamba in wealth and power; hence it was the Watu Pelitu leader who was appointed principal administrator of the Umalulu district by the Dutch. As regards secular concerns, then, the order of precedence among these groups is precisely the reverse of what obtains in the framework of spiritual values. Yet it is generally clear that for the eastern Sumbanese the spiritual is ultimately superior to the temporal — indeed, what can be called the spiritual (in this case especially the ancestor, Umbu Endalu) is the source of both sorts of powers — so it is this principle that governs the order expressed both in myth and in the arrangement of the village. The Umalulu people thus say that the *ratu* is the superior of the two sorts of leaders, and that they are the one party to whom the nobility must pay heed.

Much of what has been said above concerning the *ratu* refers specifically or especially to the principal member, Watu Waya, and I have yet to discuss how the four *ratu* clans are distinguished among themselves. The groups comprise two pairs: Watu Waya and Muru Uma, and Ongga and Marapeti. The former pair is superior to the latter, and Watu Waya and Marapeti are the senior members of their respective pairs. I found little in myth concerning genealogical connexions among the four clans. However, while Marapeti and Ongga appear to be unrelated to the other pair and thus of external origin, the founder of Muru Uma seems to have been a patrilineal descendant of the Watu Waya ancestor, since this group, I was told, was originally a lineal segment of the principal *ratu* clan. In addition, according to myth the name Muru Uma, ‘(people of) the green house’, actually refers to the first house built in Umalulu by the ancestor of Watu Waya.

By contrast to the other two *ratu*, in ritual matters Watu Waya and Muru Uma are expected only to take decisions and to issue instructions. Since they are thus characterized as passive not only in the secular but in the ceremonial sphere as well, the passivity of the *ratu*, indicated by phrases cited above, refers specifically to these
two groups. Hence the division of active and passive between the two pairs of ratu clans replicates that between the marùmba and the ratu as a whole. The fact that Muru Uma is assigned the special task of summoning (paaungu) the other clans of the domain to attend collective rites which concern the uma nda pataungu might be taken as an indication that this clan is marginally more active than Watu Waya. But otherwise there is little difference in function between the two; and I suspect that the main reason they are distinguished is simply to effect a quadripartition of the ratu clans. The more active role in ceremonial life, therefore, is taken by the junior ratu, in particular by Marapeti; so once again, superior and inferior are contrasted as inactive and active respectively. In Chapter V, I recorded the expression matimbilu halela, mahapangu halimu, 'the one who rises lightly, and dams off with ease', as a reference, inter alia, to the clan ancestor conceived as an active intermediary spirit between man and God. Since the senior ratu are designated in the same way as is God, it is significant, then, that Marapeti, as the active religious authority, is also called by this expression.

The active role of Marapeti is most clearly shown by the duties it holds in respect of the uma nda pataungu. This clan leads the actual renovation of the building and gathers animals for slaughter from the other clans of the domain. Together with Paraina Bakulu, a prominent commoner clan affiliated with the noble clan Palai Malamba, men of Marapeti further serve as paratu, 'those who act as ratu, deputy ratu', a duty that involves completing the thatch along the roof ridge and transporting the ancestral relics to and from the house. In addition, it is the senior man of Marapeti who performs the various invocations on this occasion.

The fourth ratu clan, Ongga, which is no longer extant, formerly stood under the auspices of Marapeti. The two groups are distinguished as the hot and cool ratu (ratu mbana and ratu maringu), which in part is consistent with the fact that Marapeti holds the powers of the 'cool water' (wai maringu mànjaku, see Chapter V). That Ongga is described as hot refers to its reputed possession of witchcraft powers and the ability, deriving from its ancestor, to control a variety of malevolent spiritual forces. In times of war, therefore, the ratu would invoke the Ongga ancestor in order to bring disaster to an enemy and to render them impotent. By virtue of their excessive power, however, the Umalulu people also regarded members of Ongga, whom they speak of as witches, as a potential threat to the community itself.
Thus whenever they became too numerous, the noble rulers would have them killed or sold as slaves, an undertaking called ‘plucking off the leaves, reaping the branches’ (hâpiya na runa, mutiya na laina) and ‘dividing (or reducing) the old tubers’ (lowaru lita papandaungu, luwa papandaungu). It is from this practice that Ongga is usually known as the ratu hàpi, ‘the plucked ratu’. In order that the clan might continue, either two persons were spared or a slave couple was put in their place, in which case, I was told, their names were changed so as to identify them as witches.

With regard to Ongga’s reputation, it is useful briefly to return to myth. After several attempts to deceive Kàbalu, the earlier occupant of Umalulu, had failed, Umbu Endalu invited Kàbalu and Kaluu Rihi, the Watu Waya ancestor, each to ask the land four times who was its rightful owner. Beforehand, however, Umbu Endalu had hidden the Ongga ancestor, i Kundu i Mbala, in a crevice in the ground at the centre of the present chief village. Thus when Kàbalu called out there was no reply, but when Kaluu Rihi’s turn came he received the answer four times that the land was his. That the Ongga people are thought to be witches, then, is consistent with the association, revealed in this myth, of their ancestor with the earth. His hiding beneath the ground is particularly reminiscent of the former practice of casting the bodies of slain witches in a crevice, and the association of such places with malevolent earth spirits, which the Ongga ancestor is able to control.

At this point it is appropriate to consider the relation of spiritual and temporal leadership in Umalulu in the light of evidence which suggests that the authority of the ratu was once less confined to specifically religious concerns than is the case at present. Here we might recall again the common eastern Indonesian theme that secular power was usurped by or otherwise transferred to a younger party by an older one who then retained only spiritual authority (see van Wouden 1968:61, 75,140-1; Fox 1968:131). It is useful to begin with the phrases ina konda, ama ratu. Ina and ama are ‘mother’ and ‘father’, while konda is listed by Kapita (1974) as ‘king, sovereign’ and ‘monarch’. In Umalulu, the expression is sometimes used to refer to the paramount ancestor, Umbu Endalu, in which case it might be glossed as ‘mother and father of the nobility and the ratu’. But it is also applied specifically to the ratu; so in this context a more suitable translation would perhaps be ‘mother konda, father ratu’. The fact that the term konda, which apparently refers to the noble rulers,
should thus be used to designate the religious leaders can be ascribed
to the idea noted above, that the ratu, like the common ancestor of
the nobles and the religious leaders, represent a unity of power. This
further suggests that the ratu may in a sense be regarded as both ratu
and maràmba.17 In this connexion it is worth noting what an elderly
Rindi man had to say about the word konda. While it is generally
synonymous with maràmba, he claimed, the term refers not to the
present nobles of Umalulu (Watu Pelitu and Palai Malamba), but to
the ratu Watu Waya, whom he described as the 'oldest, elder nobility'
(maràmba mamaaya). He then added that in earlier times the ratu
and maràmba were 'united, undivided' (mbulungu) but later became
separated.

Further indications that the relation of the two sorts of authorities
has (or is thought to have) undergone major changes are to be found
in myth. Thus it is said that long ago a violent quarrel developed
between the two Umalulu noble clans concerning with which of them
a number of clans newly arrived in the domain should become
affiliated; and as a result a son of each of the founding ancestors
of the noble clans was killed. The ratu then undertook to arbitrate
the dispute, and ordered that the two victims be buried in the centre
of the village. But the Watu Pelitu nobility, interpreting certain of
the ratu's decisions as an exoneration of Palai Malamba, left the
village to return to their former settlement in Kanatangu. As there
was then no one to occupy the downstream section of the village,
it was later decided to recall them; and in order to prevent any further
strife between the two noble clans, and to ensure that the neutrality
of the ratu could not again be called into question, the latter assigned
a group of four non-aligned clans — Mamboru, Matalu, Kadumbulu,
and Ana Mawa — to occupy the manggawa, 'space between'. This is
the name of a part of the village located to one side of the central
section (kâni—padua) occupied by the ratu and close to the down­
stream section occupied by Watu Pelitu and its subject clans (see
Kapita 1976b:83). The quartet is therefore regarded as a buffer and
a mediating force between the two powerful noble clans, and in ritual
speech is designated as 'those placed between the tusks, at the divide
of the horns' (da mangiangu la manggawa uli, la paberî kadu) and
the 'left wing, right wing (kâpa kalai, kâpa kawana), referring to the
fact that their attention is divided between the two maràmba clans
located at either end of the village.

By way of this modification, then, the ratu abrogated what was
evidently a formerly more active political role in favour of these four clans, and in doing so further separated themselves from the agnatically related noble clan Palai Malamba. Thus their influence came to be focused entirely within the spiritual order, identified with the centre of the village. In addition, the ratu at this time assigned to each of the two noble clans a group of four commoner clans to serve as their special supporters (tulaku paraingu; see Section 4 below) and to take up residence with them at either end of the village. Since it is with the names of each set of four clans that each of the maràmba is designated in formal speech, their own clan names never being mentioned in this context, the two quartets thus came to take the place of the noble clans in the formal representation of the structure of the domain. In the original organization of the Umalulu chief village, I was told, besides the four ratu in the centre, Palai Malamba resided with another clan, Mbuu, in the upstream section, and Watu Pelitu with the clan Palamidu in the downstream section, thus making a total of eight groups. By means of the reorganization just described, therefore, this older configuration was transformed into a sixteen-fold division comprising the four ratu, the four clans at the manggawa, and the two sets of four tulaku paraingu representing the two maràmba. If in this latter case the käni—padua, occupied by the ratu, is counted with the manggawa, then in both arrangements the combined total of groups occupying the two outer sections is the same as that in the middle of the village, i.e., four and eight respectively. This fact might be interpreted as reflecting, symbolically, the previously-illustrated equivalence of the centre and the whole and hence the idea that the ratu symbolize the unity of the domain. As I have frequently remarked, four, eight and sixteen can equally stand for unity and completeness. Thus in both the older and the newer arrangement the constitution of the domain reflects a balance, which in the former was disrupted by the departure of Watu Pelitu. In order to restore equilibrium, however, it was necessary not only to recall Watu Pelitu, but, for political reasons, to assign a further four clans — those at the manggawa — to ensure that the balance would not again be disrupted. Yet by itself, this would not have been sufficient, for then there would have been eight clans in the middle but a total of only four at the two ends. Viewed in this light, therefore, the appointment of the two sets of four clans to represent the noble rulers acquires additional significance.

Thus far I have shown that the offices of ratu and maràmba are
distinguishable in terms of the following contrasts: religious authority/worldly power, elder/younger, centre/periphery (or inside/outside), and passive/active. As a conclusion to this section, therefore, we should consider two further symbolic oppositions which, though not so pronounced in this case, are often linked with comparable forms of dual leadership in eastern Indonesia. The first is that of masculine and feminine. As van Wouden (1968:62-3, 105, 115, 141) has shown, this contrast is commonly employed on Timor and elsewhere to distinguish political rulers from figures comparable to the *ratu*, though which power is assigned to which gender category varies from case to case. While the idea appeared not to be widely known, in eastern Sumba I was told that the *marâmba* were masculine and the *ratu* feminine, a characterization which, as among the Atoni (see Cunningham 1965:367, 371), would seem to express the respectively active and passive qualities of the two sorts of leadership. However, despite this apparent concordance, other aspects of the two offices suggest the inverse classification. Thus as was demonstrated earlier, especially with regard to the internal order of the house, in other contexts it is the spiritual that is masculine and the temporal that is feminine. Evidently, therefore, the attribution of symbolic masculinity to the noble rulers has validity only within what can be called a framework of worldly or temporal values, according to which, as was shown in Chapter I, the feminine is connected with the inside and the masculine with the outside. Expressed in another way, then, the idea that the *marâmba* are masculine appears to refer specifically to their superiority in secular and external affairs.

Another common theme in eastern Indonesia is the association of spiritual and secular leaders, or parties distinguished as older and younger, with the earth and the sky (see van Wouden 1968). That this also obtains in eastern Sumba is immediately suggested, on the one hand, by the derivation of the *marâmba* class from a woman who descended from the heavens and, on the other, by the designation of the Umalulu *ratu* as the ‘owners of the land’ (*mangu tanangu*). Another link between the *ratu* and the earth is apparent from the case of the clan Ongga. Yet as noted above, the title of *mangu tanangu* in Umalulu is sometimes applied to the *marâmba* clan Palai Malamba as well as to the *ratu*, and taking eastern Sumba as a whole one finds that this office and that of noble ruler are not always separated. A more serious difficulty, however, is that, like the opposition of masculine and feminine (which parallels that of sky and earth), the apparent
association of the *maràmba* with the above and the *ratu* with the below which this contrast suggests is not compatible with others that pertain to the two offices. Thus, as I have shown, the elder brother is associated with the centre, the inside, and the cult of the ancestor, who in turn is connected with the above, i.e., the higher sections of the house and the sky, while the younger brother is then linked with the outside and the earth (see Chapter VI). I would suggest, therefore, that the association of the nobles with the sky (and the above) refers specifically to their apical position within the hierarchy of class rather than to their opposition to the *ratu*. Here it is relevant to point out that whereas the term *maràmba* denotes both a social class and a political function, *ratu* refers to a purely hereditary office assigned to patrilineal clans that in many respects falls outside the framework of class stratification, which concerns only the distribution of temporal power. Thus while the maintenance of marriage ties with groups of like rank is crucial to the standing of the noble clans, alliance is of limited importance to the *ratu*. Though the religious leaders of Umalulu preferred to marry with *ratu* clans of other domains, it seems this has never been insisted upon; and, as I was told, the *ratu* may even take wives from among the nobles' slaves without their position being in any way compromised. The difference in the significance of matri-lateral alliance and patrilineal descent for the *ratu* and *maràmba*, then, accords with the spiritual nature of the former's office, which is based on a special relation with a patrilineal ancestor, and with the orientation of the noble rulers towards external, secular concerns, in which marital alliance, as a means of forging or consolidating links between independent domains, and in the case of Umalulu between the two halves of the domain itself, plays an important part.

2. *Mangu Tanangu*

Before turning to the division of spiritual and secular authority in Rindi it is useful to discuss the *mangu tanangu*, 'owner of the land', or in ritual speech *ina mangu tanangu, ama mangu lukungu*, 'mother (owner) of the land, father (owner) of the river', a figure comparable to the 'lord of the land' (Indonesian *tuan tanah*) found elsewhere in Indonesia. Throughout Sumba, as in eastern Indonesia generally (see van Wouden 1968:28, 49, 61, 141), the title belongs to the group that was reputedly the first to take possession of a territory; and often the office is separate and distinct from that of (political) ruler.
Within eastern Sumba alone, however, the position of the *mangu tanangu* varies considerably between domains; and while in Umalulu it is ordinarily the *ratu* who are designated as *mangu tanangu*, contrary to the generalizations of earlier writers (Wielenga 1909c:371-2; Couvreur 1917:216-17), not everywhere is this the case. Thus in Mangili, *mangu tanangu* is the collective title of the four clans Màru, Watu Bulu, Matolangu, and Wanggi Rara, whose ancestors founded the present domain. Of these, the first three are of *maràmba* rank and the first two were formerly the secular leaders; while the fourth clan, an aboriginal group that is now extinct, once held the ceremonial office of *ratu wai ndaungu*, ‘*ratu* of the year water (i.e., the rain)’, which was later assigned to a segment of the clan Marapeti, originally from Umalulu (Onvlee 1949:447; Kapita 1976b:111). In Kapunduku, to cite another variation, the title of *mangu tanangu* belongs to a clan other than that recognized as *ratu*, and both are distinct from the clan of the noble ruler (see Adams 1970:84). Thus while *mangu tanangu* always refers to the oldest group(s), clearly not everywhere is this party simultaneously or exclusively the *ratu*, nor is the *ratu* always *mangu tanangu*. Furthermore, while the office of ‘owner of the land’ appears to be based simply on temporal precedence, that of *ratu* seems to presuppose a system of diarchical leadership requiring the complementary position of *maràmba*, which, in some cases at least, is founded upon a shared agnatic connexion with a single ancestor.

All land, whether or not in use, falls within the jurisdiction of a *mangu tanangu*. In Umalulu it was this party, the *ratu*, who first divided the lands among the ancestors of the clans earliest established in the region. Within their respective territories, these other clans are also called *mangu tanangu*, although the *ratu* are regarded as *mangu tanangu* of the entire domain. Each of the smaller territories is then shared with a number of tenant groups, more recently settled in the domain. Since the rights of the *mangu tanangu* in eastern Sumba are no longer recognized by the government, however, their traditional role is now largely defunct. Moreover, it seems that this decline is not entirely of recent origin; for Roos, in his report of 1872 (pp. 4-5), states that while permission should be obtained from the *mangu tanangu* before land is used, the obligation is seldom observed.

The position of the *mangu tanangu* in Rindi is rather different from that found in Umalulu. Parts of the present territory were previously held by the Umalulu clans Palamidu and Pakilungu, and
XI The Division of Authority

so formally still fall within the jurisdiction of the ratu of that district. The largest and more central area of the domain, however, is divided between the two mangu tanangu clans Rindi and Dai Ndipi, which traditionally, I was told, were not subject to Umalulu. The original possessor of the combined territories of the two clans was Rindi, which later ceded a portion of its territory to the ancestor of Dai Ndipi, when he arrived from Savu. The present territory of the clan Rindi comprises the lands on both sides of the river Rindi from the estuary to just past Parai Yawangu. Although this clan is now locally extinct, and the Ana Mburungu nobility to all intents and purposes exercise rights to the land they occupy in this vicinity independently of any other group, the clan Rindi is still spoken of as the mangu tanangu of this region. The land of Dai Ndipi, on the other hand, lies further upstream and extends southwards towards Mangili. The most important difference between the mangu tanangu in Rindi and their counterparts in Umalulu, however, is that neither the clan Rindi nor Dai Ndipi bears the title of ratu or occupies any other special position within the domain as it is presently constituted. Probably due mainly to the fact that the present inhabitants moved into this region only relatively recently, moreover, the mangu tanangu clans of Rindi formally ceded lands to none of the clans that subsequently settled there. Thus all of the latter can be called tenants.

Concerning the traditional rights of these tenants I received the following information. A payment of two horses and two metal pendants with chains established a tenant clan’s hereditary right permanently to occupy and use an area of land. Since the name of this prestation, huluku pahàpa, ‘offering and chewing ingredients’, also denotes a prestation given to another clan whose ancestor is invoked for some ritual purpose (see Chapter V), evidently it was primarily intended to secure the patronage of the landowning clan’s ancestor, the marapu mangu tanangu. A similar payment was required when a new village was founded or a large gravestone quarried. The mangu tanangu had also to be notified before large trees were cut for house posts, but this seems not to have required any compensation. An area of agricultural land given over to a tenant was only loosely defined, and with the mangu tanangu’s consent fields could later be laid elsewhere as the group expanded, provided no other party had established a prior usufruct. While the tenant clan had first to give its consent if a third party wished to borrow a plot, I was told that the permission of the mangu tanangu was not required in this case.
When the land was later abandoned, the usufruct reverted to the tenant. Nowadays such matters are referred to the elected village (desa) and district (kecamatan) officials.

In return for land use, tenants were obliged to surrender annually to the mangu tanangu a small portion of produce, called the kandau tana, kapuka rumba, 'residue of the land, tip of the grass'. I was unable to ascertain whether this was owed by individual cultivators or by entire clans. Though one small basket of rice was mentioned as typical, the amount varied with the yield, and in a poor year it could be dispensed with altogether. The kandau tana was collected after the dry rice harvest in May or June, and the mangu tanangu would then offer a portion to their ancestor in order to request a good harvest in the following year. The rite concerned this clan alone.

Some of the rice was also offered at the first fruits ceremony (ngangu uhu) held by the mangu tanangu clan, for which undertaking they could further require tenants to provide animals for slaughter, a right that falls under the previously mentioned category of mangapapangu. But since the first fruits ceremony is performed by all clans individually, this too cannot properly be called a communal rite. The mangu tanangu clan does not regulate the agricultural calendar, nor does it lead or play any part in minor agricultural rites that specifically concern the fields of individual tenants.

Although the use to which lands were put was mostly left to the tenants themselves, in the ways indicated above the prior, albeit largely passive, regulation of land use lay with the mangu tanangu. This party also defined which areas could be turned into fields and settlements and which could not, especially those proscribed as ‘hot land’ (tana mbana). The mangu tanangu's authority in this respect derives from the group's recognized superior esoteric knowledge of the ways of the land, which, of course, is a function of their having occupied the territory the longest. The mangu tanangu was thus entitled to exact compensation for breaches of custom concerning the land. It is forbidden, for example, to produce salt or lime during the rainy season, as this would cause drought and crop failure. Since these activities are carried out at the estuary and on the coast, in Rindi it was the clan of that name, as mangu tanangu of this region, which enforced the rule. They would confiscate the salt or lime, and, in the case of a second offence, could demand a fine, paid in horses and metal goods. In Umalulu, the rule is enforced by the ratu, in particular by the clan Marapeti.
The traditional authority of the *mangu tanangu* thus concerns only matters relating to the use and well-being of the land, and they are not in any sense political rulers.\(^{26}\) As elsewhere in eastern Indonesia, therefore, it seems the office is primarily of a spiritual or religious nature, which is consistent both with their being the oldest occupants of the land, and with the combination, in some districts, of the office of *mangu tanangu* with that of *ratu*. Several expressions applied to the *mangu tanangu* indicate an especially close relation with the land. Among these are the phrases *na matanangu na tana*, *na malukungu na luku*, which, though difficult to translate exactly, convey the sense of ‘(those) who make (made) the land and river what they are’ or ‘(those) who have (or use) the land as land, etc.’.\(^{27}\) It is important to note, however, that all such designations, and indeed the title *mangu tanangu* itself, refer as much to the ancestor as to the living members of the clan, since it is this personage who forms the essentially mystical link between the clan and the land. Thus while the office of *mangu tanangu* has virtually disappeared in Rindi, when tenants perform a variety of agricultural rites they always dedicate a fowl to the ancestor of this clan in order to ensure the success of the crop. The fact that payments made by tenants are, as I have shown, more in the nature of offerings to this deity than of tribute or rent to an overlord further suggests the spiritual character of the *mangu tanangu*. Accordingly, although this party’s right to the payment called *kandau tana* need no longer be honoured, I was told in Rindi that some cultivators in the territory of Dai Ndipi still give it on a voluntary basis. The only conceivable reason for their doing so, then, is to secure the prosperity of the land and the crop from the *mangu tanangu* clan’s ancestor.

There is one further point worth making in this regard. Eastern Sumbanese traditional history reveals instances where ceding land to an immigrant clan coincided with this group becoming a wife-taker of the *mangu tanangu* clan or one of its associates. In this context, therefore, land might be viewed as one of the feminine goods provided by a wife-giver (see Chapter XIII), the more so as the payment initially given to the land-owning clan by a tenant consisted of goods of the sort used as bridewealth. As I shall later illustrate, moreover, a wife-giver’s superiority is not of a secular or political kind, but is represented mainly in terms of spiritual values. So in this respect too, the relation of the *mangu tanangu* and later arrivals on the land parallels that of the two sorts of affines.
3. Dual Leadership in Rindi

As noted above, an important difference between Umalulu and Rindi is that the office of *ratu* is formally absent in the latter domain. Indeed, the *maràmba* of Rindi adduce this fact as evidence of their superiority to noble clans elsewhere, for unlike these, they say, there is no one to whom they must listen. This does not mean, however, that there is no separation of secular and religious authority in Rindi, but only that it is differently expressed. Specifically, the division is manifest within the Rindi noble clan itself, between the lineages Uma Penji and Uma Jangga. The former, which is the highest ranking of the six noble lineages of Ana Mburungu, is the secular leader both within the clan and throughout the domain; thus men of Uma Penji were appointed as the district administrators by the Dutch. As regards ceremonial concerns, on the other hand, greater authority is accorded to Uma Jangga, whose members are in general considered to belong to the lower nobility (*maràmba kudu*).

The apical ancestors of Uma Jangga and Uma Penji were both sons of Umbu Nggala Lili, the common forbear of all noble members of Ana Mburungu (see Fig. 7). Uma Jangga, however, descends from the eldest son of Nggala Lili’s first wife, a woman from the Umalulu noble clan Palai Malamba, while the Uma Penji ancestor was a child of a later wife, a noblewoman from Tabundungu. The difference in rank between Uma Penji and Uma Jangga ultimately derives from the fact that the second wife was of somewhat higher standing than the first. (The especial prestige attaching to marriage with Tabundungu noblewomen was noted in the previous chapter.) As their ancestors are distinguished as elder and younger and, in terms of class, as lower and higher, therefore, the relation between these two lineages is precisely the same as that between Watu Waya and Palai Malamba, the principal *ratu* and *maràmba* in Umalulu. Perhaps what we encounter in Rindi, then, is a nascent form of the more developed pattern of dual leadership found in longer established domains.

In its capacity as the ceremonial authority, Uma Jangga is called ‘the red jar, the green urn’ (*mbàlu rara, kihi muru*). The phrases also refer to the group’s spokesman. Traditionally this was the most senior man, but it has more recently become the practice among the nobles to appoint someone of Uma Jangga (or the derivative lineage, Uma Kopi) to fill the position by virtue of his individual ability and knowledge of custom. At present this person is ordinarily known as the
kapala huri, ‘ceremonial leader’ (kapala is borrowed from the Indonesian kepala, ‘head, leader, chief’). It is he who presides over all major ritual undertakings that concern the noble clan (and hence, often, the domain as a whole), and meetings at which preparations for these are discussed take place in Uma Jangga’s principal house. Significantly, the only meaning I could find for the phrases ‘red jar’ and ‘green urn’ was as a reference to two vessels kept in the uma nda pataungu, the house consecrated to Umbu Endalu in Umalulu; the latter container, I was told, holds the relics of this ancestor. Since the vessels clearly represent a source or focus of spiritual power, it seems therefore that the position of the ceremonial authority in Rindi, while different in certain respects, is conceived analogously to that of the Umalulu ratu.

As in Umalulu, the separation of secular and ceremonial authority in Rindi is reflected in the spatial organization of the chief village. In this respect, though, there are significant differences to be noted between the two domains. In the centre of the Rindi chief village, on the principal side of the settlement, are found two named houses, Uma Bokulu (also called Uma Haparuna) and Uma Ndewa (see Fig. 3). The former of these, which was the first to be built in Parai Yawangu, is the common ancestral house and clan temple for all lineages of Ana Mburungu. As the extensive renovation of this large building begun in the last decade has yet to be completed, the house now stands empty. But it seems that for some considerable time prior to this, as well, Uma Bokulu was occupied only by slaves; thus while most ceremonies that concern the clan as a whole are centred in this house, the various noble lineages have for a long time kept residence in separate houses of their own. In a way analogous to what is found in Umalulu, therefore, the oldest house, located in the superior central section of the village, represents the common derivation of leaders distinguished in terms of spiritual and temporal authority.

Although the Rindi have no house identical to the Umalulu uma nda pataungu, they sometimes claim the Uma Ndewa, reputedly the second house to be built in the chief village, to be its local counterpart. Indeed, in addition to the fact that both are located in the central sections of their respective villages, the two buildings are similar in that Uma Ndewa, too, is not a residential house and may only be entered when rites are held there. Formerly, the building was occupied and attended by a single woman of slave rank, while at present it stands empty. Though the Uma Ndewa is now built to the
same size as the senior houses of some other clans, in one respect the construction is simpler, and in the past, I was told, it was made smaller and ruder, so that it might regularly be renovated as part of a major ceremony similar to that which accompanied the renovation of the *uma nda pataungu*. Yet the Uma Ndewa differs from the latter in that it is principally used for major rites that concern the powers of *ndewa-pahomba* (see Chapter IV), thus indicating an association with a more diffuse and amorphous representation of divinity than that associated with the Umalulu house. It is worth mentioning, however, that some informants connected (albeit rather vaguely) the relics kept in the Uma Ndewa with the father of the noble clan's founding ancestor, whose place is in the Uma Bokulu. This suggests, then, that this figure and the common ancestor of the *ratu* and *maràmba* of Umalulu are not entirely dissimilar.

The house of Uma Penji, the temporal leader in Rindi, is found at the upstream end of the village, while that of Uma Jangga, the ceremonial authority, is placed at the downstream end, both in the principal row of houses (see Chapter II). That the ceremonial authority should apparently occupy the inferior of the two outer sections thus suggests an important difference between the organization of the chief villages in Rindi and Umalulu; and it is in accordance with this that Uma Jangga is not recognized as ultimately superior to Uma Penji in the same way as the Umalulu *ratu* are regarded as superior to the *maràmba*. The organization of Parai Yawangu seems therefore to reflect more the order of temporal precedence, based on the distinction of rank, between the constituent lineages of the noble clan. But there is another way in which this arrangement might be interpreted. As noted, the lineage most closely identified with the downstream extremity of the settlement (in part because it is the one responsible for the gate altar placed at this end of the village) is not Uma Jangga but Uma Wara (see footnote to Section 2 above), which, appropriately, is the lowest ranking of all the six noble lineages. In this respect, the distinction of the two sides of the village is relevant, since the house of Uma Wara is located in the inferior row (the one facing the sunset), thus opposite that of Uma Jangga. The house of Uma Jangga, moreover, stands right next to the Uma Bokulu; so its position could alternatively be viewed as an expression of the special relation between this group, as the ceremonial leader, and the clan temple, rather than in opposition to the location of the house of Uma Penji. Uma Penji appears to have been the first lineage to leave the clan’s senior house;
and even before it founded its own residential house, I was told, the nobility of this group dwelt not in the Uma Bokulu but in the nearby hamlet of Kulu. Significantly, then, the lineage vested with the highest worldly authority was the earliest to separate itself from the house that is the main focus of the clan's religious life.

4. Tulaku Paraingu and Mbapa Tunu Manahu

The office of *tulaku paraingu, lindiku maràda*, 'supports of the chief village, props for the plain', or, as it is also designated, *ai ngaru pindu, watu la hanamba*, 'posts of the gateway, stones at the house front', was mentioned briefly in Section 1 above. In Rindi, the title is held by four (or rather two pairs of) commoner clans — Kihi, Kaburu, Katinahu, and Mahora — whose traditional function was to support the nobles in a variety of undertakings, and thereby to consolidate their power and standing both within and without the domain. At present at any rate, however, this function seems to be more symbolic than practical. Throughout eastern Sumba it is the practice in formal speech to employ the names of four such clans to denote the noble clan with which they are linked. Thus, since only clans which include *maràmba* of the highest rank (*maràmba bokulu*) have the right to be designated in this way, the existence of the four clans is in itself sufficient to exalt the noble clan in question; and it now seems to be largely to this fact that the notions of support and consolidation expressed in the title of the office refer. In Rindi, the names of the four *tulaku paraingu* are also used to denote the domain as a whole. Omlee (1949:447) describes a similar pattern in Mangili. This, then, provides another instance of the identification of the domain with its ruling nobility.

Noble clans are so closely identified with their *tulaku paraingu* that in Rindi I often found the actual clan name of a noble affine could not be recalled, but only those of the associated quartet. Elderly men would also sometimes refer to a noble clan with the name of just one of these four, usually the first mentioned in the series. These practices therefore accord with the general principle whereby a highly revered entity is designated or addressed indirectly through a subordinate or mediator. The relation of the *tulaku paraingu* and the formally anonymous noble clan also reveals an instance of the previously-illustrated configuration in which four peripheral elements are subordinated to one occupying a centre. As this case shows, the
relation between the central element and the peripheral four is one of equivalence and identity, the latter being simply an immediate and articulated representation of the former. Accordingly, with this pattern there is no mention of the number five; the one and the four are equally expressions of unity.

This instance of quadripartition, however, must further be seen in relation to the more general practice in formal speech whereby any single clan is designated with a set of names comprising its own and those of three others (see Chapter XII). Such a quartet is more accurately described as two pairs, and while four names is considered the complete form, often only the pair which includes the clan’s own name is used. Thus it was explained to me that, strictly speaking, the title *tulaku paraingu* applies only to the senior pair of this quartet, Mahora and Katinahu, and then specifically to Mahora — Kihi and Kaburu being little more than ‘paired terms’ (*ndekilu*) whose names are added simply to complete the quartet. Indeed, other than in a nominal sense, these latter two clans do not maintain any particular relation with the nobles, whereas Mahora, and by association Katinahu, are substantially connected with them. Both include members of higher commoner rank and, apart from the noble clan itself, are the most prominent, and among the wealthiest, clans in the domain. Mahora in particular provides the nobility with accomplished ritual speakers (*wunangu*), and because by tradition its members are knowledgeable in customary matters, they also serve them as ceremonial advisors. Mahora is thus especially linked with Uma Jangga, the noble ceremonial leader, in relation to whom the clan is called the ‘pole onto which to grasp, plank on which to lean’ (*punduku paapa, kapapa ai haria*).

The present relation of Ana Mburungu and Mahora is reflected in myth. It was the ancestor of the latter (an expert ritual speaker, part of whose name, Tarangu Langu, means ‘clear speech’) who obtained the wife of the noble clan’s ancestor for him. Since the Mahora ancestor holds the power of the ‘cool water’ (*wai maringu manjkaku*), moreover, a childless forbear of Uma Penji once ritually invoked the patronage of this ancestor in order that his wife might bear children. This, then, is an instance of the institution of *paatangu wiki*, ‘to subordinate oneself’, mentioned in Chapter V. Although the two groups are not related by marriage, it is worth noting here that this sort of service is often provided by a wife-giver. After moving to Mahora’s ancestral house, the nobleman’s wife gave birth to a son. Further
to secure the auspices of the Mahora ancestor, Uma Penji then placed a portion of the relics consecrated to this personage in their present principal house, which was founded about this time; so all invocations performed in this building at present are addressed to the Mahora ancestor. By virtue of this arrangement, the Mahora people now claim that they (which is to say, their ancestor) ‘made (makes)’ (pandoi) and ‘created (creates)’ (wulu) the noble lineage. In this respect, therefore, Mahora is recognized by the nobility as a group which possesses superior spiritual power.

The above remarks illuminate Mahora’s private — and somewhat irregular — claim that they are the ratu of Rindi. (At the same time, however, they recognize that the position they assume is different from that of the ratu in Umalulu.) While the nobles deny their claim to this title, I was moreover told by various informants that shortly after the present chief village was founded, the Ana Mburungu nobility requested Mahora, who were already present in the district at the time, to join them there and to fill the office of ratu. Reputedly from fear of becoming too dependent on the nobles, however, they declined, and so moved from their earlier settlement at Mau Wunga, a short distance from Parai Yawangu, to their present village at Kanoru, about four kilometres upstream. It was apparently in connexion with their refusing the office of ratu that Mahora was then included among the four tulaku paraingu.

To complete this description of the present constitution of Rindi I should also mention the office of mbapa tunu manahu, the ‘partners in roasting and cooking’, or ‘ceremonial partners’, of the nobility. The title is given to a group of six clans: 33 Maritu, Ana Kapu, Karindingu, Mbara Papa, Mburu Pala, and Marada Witu. As I shall elaborate in the next chapter, the relation between these clans and the Rindi noble clan is consistent with a putative agnatic connexion between their apical ancestors. I was also told that the first four members of this group were the original tulaku paraingu of Ana Mburungu before the latter established itself as the ruling clan in Rindi, whereupon they were replaced by Kihi, Kaburu, Katinahu, and Mahora. At present, the function of the mbapa tunu manahu is a purely ceremonial one. The headmen of each of these clans, elaborately adorned in the finest textiles and jewelry, must guard the relics of the noble houses Uma Bokulu and Uma Ndewa, which are placed in a small hut, when one of these buildings is renovated. Just after the old thatch is removed and again before the new thatch is tied in
place, they also ascend to the roof of the house, where they remain seated for a while at the foot of the peak. In this way, then, they appear symbolically to replace the thatch as something that covers and protects the relics (and thus, in a sense, the ancestor) which are normally kept in this part of the building. The Rindi commonly refer to the *mbapa tunu manahu* as *paratu*, ‘those who act as *ratu*’. As noted, this title is also found in Umalulu; and although there it has a slightly different import, referring to the *ratu* clan Marapeti and one of the *tulaku paraingu* of Palai Malamba, the functions of the *paratu* in the two cases, since both concern the renovation of spiritually important buildings, are thus essentially similar.

There are some grounds, then, for distinguishing the *mbapa tunu manahu* and *tulaku paraingu* as ceremonial and secular offices respectively. Consistent with this is the fact that whereas the latter represent the noble rulers, the former complement them, and so resemble the *ratu* elsewhere. In this regard, it is interesting that the Rindi nobility denied that the *mbapa tunu manahu* clans were properly called *paratu*; for this contention was shown to be motivated by the close resemblance between this title and that of *ratu*, the latter being an office the Rindi nobility do not recognize. What one apparently encounters in Rindi, therefore, is a domain which, in contrast to others, is dominated by its ruling nobility to the exclusion of independent groups that can claim religious or ceremonial authority in their own right.

5. Authority within the Village and Clan

The instances of dual leadership discussed so far all concern the domain as a whole. In this final section, therefore, I shall consider religious and secular authority within the individual village (*kotaku*) and clan. (I refer here of course not to the noble clan but to the commoner clans in Rindi.)

The statement by Roos (1872:5) that there are no village chiefs on Sumba agrees with the situation in Rindi insofar as a village lacks any formal office of secular leader. When several clans share a single settlement, however, the oldest of these, i.e., the village founder, is specified as the *mangu kotakungu*, ‘possessor of the village’,.* Since this party’s primary task is to organize, though not necessarily to officiate in, collective rites that concern the village altars, it is also called the *mangu katodangu*, ‘possessor of the altar(s)’, referring
especially to the yard altar, which usually stands before the oldest house. As the pre-eminence of this group is expressed in the ceremonial sphere, its position within the village is thus analogous to that of the *mangu tanangu* within the wider territory. With regard to worldly affairs, on the other hand, the village founder can claim no special authority, and often other resident clans are more influential in this respect. But since this is not invariably or necessarily the case, we must conclude that there is no formal division of religious and secular authority between distinct resident descent groups within single villages in Rindi.

The exclusively ceremonial nature of the responsibilities of the oldest clan is largely a function of the fact that matters that equally concern all members of a village are mostly of a ritual nature. Secular affairs, on the other hand, tend more often to be the concern of individual clans. As with regard to the domain as a whole, therefore, it can generally be said that religious or ceremonial activities involve larger groups than do purely secular ones; and, as I shall demonstrate in the next chapter, this principle applies also to members of a single clan.

As with regard to different clans that occupy the same village, religious and secular powers are not formally divided between different component groups of single (commoner) clans in Rindi. Nevertheless, it is useful to describe the factors that determine how authority is allocated in this context. First, matters that corporately concern all clan members are discussed, and decisions are taken, ideally on the basis of consensus, by the mature men (or male elders, *ama bokulu*) in council. Membership of this group is thus simply a question of age (and sex). Among these elders, however, those belonging to the clan's senior line and, in particular, the eldest man of that line, are accorded the greatest influence; so it is possible to speak of a clan headman who assumes the position of a *primus inter pares* and, in relation to other clans, that of group spokesman. Though the office has no formal title, the headman can be distinguished as the 'seniormost elder' (*ama bokulu mamaayya*) or simply 'the elder' of the clan. His position, therefore, is based first of all on seniority of descent; and while there were exceptions (as, for example, when the senior line did not include men of sufficient maturity or when the eldest member of this group was considered personally unfit), the majority of persons recognized as clan headmen in Rindi were indeed the eldest men of the senior line, even when there were older men in the clan at large. Age, then, is a secondary factor in this regard.
By contrast to the pattern found among different clans inhabiting a single village, therefore, the clan leader, i.e., the headman and in a wider sense the senior line, exercises greater authority in both secular and religious affairs. The headman's religious prominence is of course consistent with the fact that the senior — or oldest — line is the one longest and most closely connected with the clan's ancestral house; thus he is the person chiefly responsible for the cult of the ancestor, and in ceremonies that concern the entire clan, it is he, specifically, who is designated as the 'principal' (mangu pingingu, 'possessor of the trunk, source'). With regard to secular activities, on the other hand, the headman's position seems less clearly defined; for as previously shown, in this sphere class standing (and wealth) is of greater importance than is lineal seniority. But we should also recall that the distinction of rank between members of the commoner class (i.e., that between 

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kabihu bokulu and kabihu kudu
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) carries rather less weight than that between higher and lower nobility; and in any case, within commoner clans in Rindi the senior line is generally not of lower rank than junior ones, where there is a formal difference of class.

However, since contingently at least, the clan headman is superior to other members in terms of both class and seniority of descent, it is relevant that some facts suggest a tendency for the headman to separate himself from certain specifically religious concerns. Thus, while it is held that the headman should be capable of acting as priest on behalf of the clan, it often happens that he will regularly delegate priestly duties to another clan member or, perhaps more commonly, to someone from another clan, frequently an accomplished priest whose services are widely employed in several villages. As the role of priest normally requires that a person be of an advanced age, apparently this was sometimes done because the headman was still relatively young; but in some cases the priest was not in fact older than the headman. What this seems to involve, then, is specifically a separation of secular leadership or higher rank from direct participation in religious activities, rather than a positive association, within the clan, of religious authority with greater age or with juniority of descent or lower rank. Here, we should again recall that the nobles in Rindi, regardless of age, never themselves act as priests but always have slaves or commoners do this for them. A similar arrangement is suggested by the fact that, while the clan headman is formally in charge of the clan's ancestral house, in several cases he and other
members of the senior group normally resided in another building, and often in another village, thus leaving the oldest house in the daily care of a more junior group.39

Nevertheless, I did come across one context in which a clan religious function was apparently assigned purely on the basis of age. This concerned a rite carried out by a certain clan before removing the relics from their ancestral house prior to renovating the building. Though unfortunately I missed this performance, I was later told that a particular member of the clan was assigned the important ceremonial task of actually carrying the relics; and this turned out to be not the clan headman but the oldest living male member of the clan, the elder of the two men older than the headman, who thus belonged to a junior line.

As with regard to the performance of priestly duties, with which this task seems to be comparable, however, it is important to distinguish here between authorities and functionaries. Thus, while another person may act as a priest for the clan, and therefore exercise a good deal of de facto influence in the execution of rites, it is yet the headman who, owing to the special relation between the senior line and the clan ancestor, is formally the principal authority in the clan's ceremonial life; and he is able to remain the final say in how rites should be carried out. In other words, while age, not lineal authority, is the significant factor regarding whether someone is qualified to serve as a priest, this relates first of all to individual age rather than the agnatic framework of relations within a single clan.

6. Summary Remarks on Bases of Authority

We are now in a position to draw several general conclusions from the topics discussed in this and the previous chapter. First, the relative importance of the three factors that affect the allocation of authority — age, seniority of descent, and class — varies with the type of authority concerned. Thus, while for spiritual matters one can abstract the order: age > lineal seniority > class, in respect of secular activities the reverse order obtains. In both series, therefore, lineal seniority occupies the medial position, and whether this variable implies religious or secular authority depends on whether it is contextually opposed to class or to age. When it stands in opposition to class, the significant attribute of lineal seniority appears to be its ultimate derivation from a difference of age, whereas when it is opposed to
age it is evidently its formal resemblance to and frequent combination with class superiority that are its relevant qualities. It is also worth pointing out that while in the religious sphere, class (and in some cases lineal seniority) is at best unimportant, in the secular sphere lineal seniority and age are still significant in respect of finer distinctions within categories. Thus among the maràmba bokulu, the class of political rulers in Rindi, for example, greater power is accorded to the senior lineage of this section of the noble clan and then to the eldest member of this lineage. Clearly, therefore, age, especially, carries influence in both spheres, while class, it seems, pertains only to secular power. Finally, it should be noted that the dualistic character of authority, particularly the extent to which it is divided between discrete groups, is the more pronounced the higher the structural level in question. It is thus most marked in the relation of ratu and maràmba, somewhat less so between the lineages of the noble clan in Rindi, and formally absent within Rindi commoner clans (which, with one exception, are not segmented into named lineages). A corollary, then, is that authority is the more unitary, and concentrated in the senior member of a group to the exclusion of juniors, the lower the structural level in question. Thus, to cite the extreme case, among full siblings the eldest is pre-eminent in all respects. With this example in mind, it should further be noted that aya, 'elder', and eri, 'younger', the eastern Sumbanese equivalents of the relative age terms found throughout Indonesia, are in varying degrees applied in Rindi to distinctions that derive from all three of the variables discussed above, namely to elder and younger siblings (or persons), senior and junior descent lines, and to higher and lower ranks.