

The Circle / Triangle Story

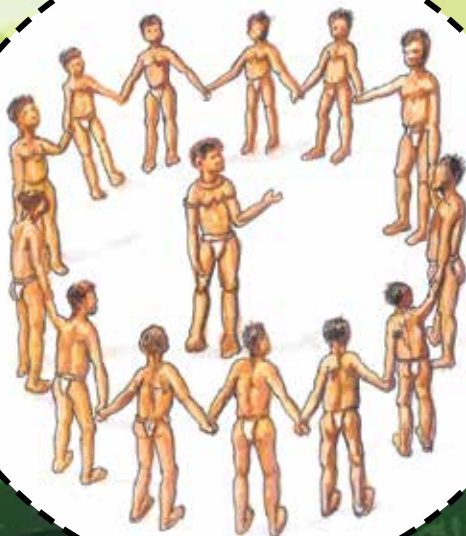


**How outsiders destroy
communities and steal our land**

Story by Aminio David

Illustrated by Apa Tengere

1.

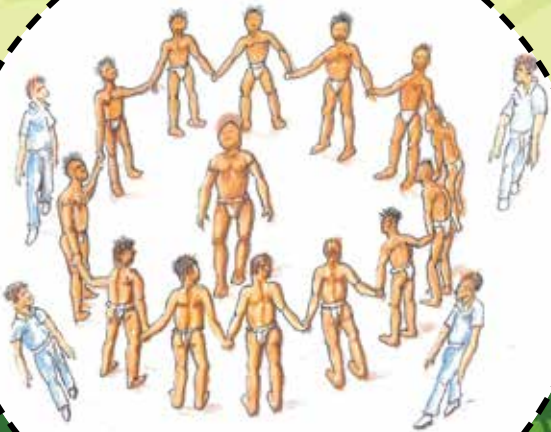


In the traditional Circle System everyone stands together, facing the chief who stands in the centre. Everyone is united in traditional values and customary processes and practice.

Issues are discussed and decisions about all aspects of the community are made collectively and by consensus.

People's livelihood is based around utilising customary land and sharing.

2.



The Outsider arrives with his economic system of unrestrained greed.

He tries to penetrate the circle so he can get control of LAND to increase his own wealth.

He finds it difficult, because the people have strong bonds and are focused on the chief, in the centre. People are single-minded and are satisfied with their traditional 'PNG way' of doing things.

3.



The Outsider decides that it is no use trying to break the circle by force, because he is viewed with suspicion and faces strong opposition.

He decides instead to approach individual MEN in the circle and offer them “alternatives” to their “primitive” ways.

He walks around the circle trying to entice one man after another.

4.

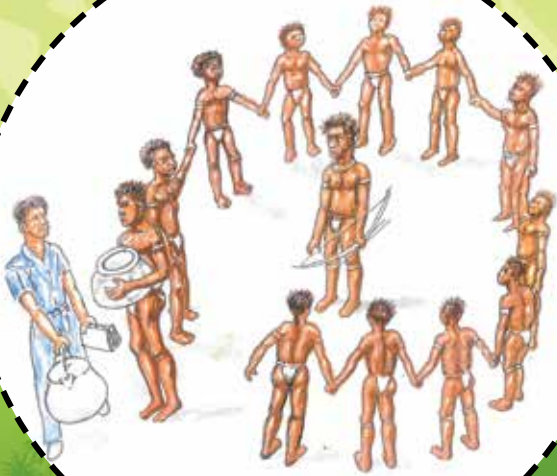


To the first man, he shows a steel axe and how to use it, saying it is more effective than a stone axe.

He tries to convince the man, telling him he has more steel tools in his homeland. He asks the man if he would like to go to the Outsider's home.

The man lets go of the hands he has always held and turns his back on the chief.

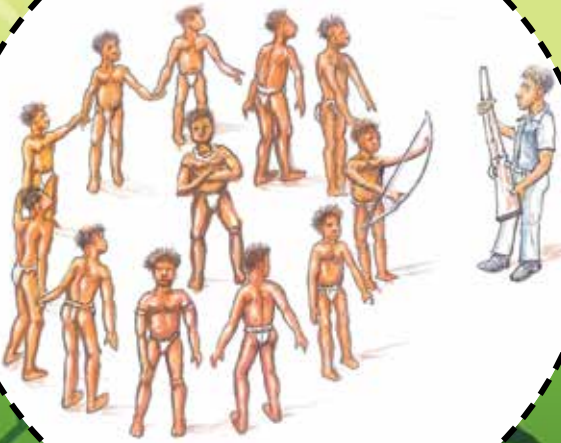
5.



The Outsider now repeats the process, approaching different men in the circle and offering them 'gifts'.

He offers the bible in place of spiritual relationships and bonding with Nature. He offers metal pots, plates and cutlery in place of clay pots and wooden bowls and spoons.

6.



The Outsider offers guns in place of bows and arrows. He offers knitted clothing in place of grass skirts and bark/tapa cloth. He offers beer and alcoholic spirits in place of Kava. He offers canned food in place of fresh vegetables, meat and fish.

7.



Every man the White Man bribes, lets go of the hands of the other people in his community circle and turns his back on the chief.

The men now stands facing outwards, towards the White Man.

8.



The Outsider can now enter the circle through the gaps left by the men he has bribed. He approaches the CHIEF and entices him with 'gifts'. Once the chief receives the gifts the Outsider asks him for LAND.

The Chief gives him the land in exchange for trips to the Outsider's home.

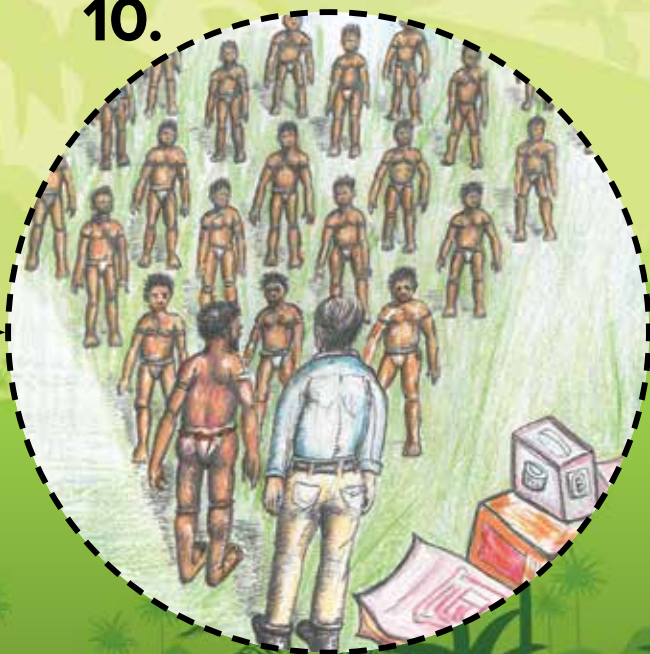
9.



Now there are gaps in the circle and there is no longer a strong reinforcement holding everyone together.

Only the women are left standing, defenceless, and vulnerable, facing the chief.

10.

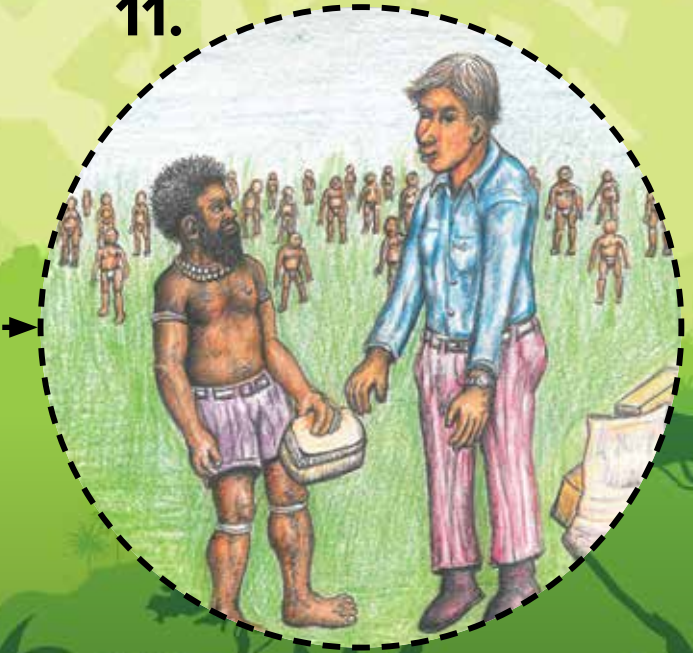


The Outsider goes back to his land and returns with more 'gifts'".

He dismantles the CIRCLE, takes the Chief from the centre and forms the foreign governance system in the shape of a TRIANGLE.

He places the chief and his associate at the peak of the triangle and everyone one else in a descending order to the bottom.

11.



The Outsider now has everyone's LAND in his control. He hands out gifts to the chief from time to time, but the wealth is accumulated at the top of the triangle and never trickles down to everyone else.

Most of the community are left watching from a distance.