ISLANDS OF CHANGE IN PALAU:
CHURCH, SCHOOL, AND ELECTED GOVERNMENT, 1891-1981

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE GRADUATE DIVISION OF THE
UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT
OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF

DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

IN EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATIONS

DECEMBER 1982

By

Donald R. Shuster

Dissertation Committee:

Ralph K. Stueber, Chairman
Robert C. Kiste
Edward R. Beauchamp
Carl J. Daeufer
Robert E. Potter

We certify that we have read this dissertation and that in our opinion it is satisfactory in scope and quality as a dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Education in Educational Foundations.

DISSERTATION COMMITTEE

Ralph Stinebrickner
Chairman

Robert C. Kate

Edward R. Beauchamp

Carl J. Dassow

Gene E. Potter

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Nearly all the research done on Palauan society since the end of the Pacific War has been anthropological in nature. It has focused on social-cultural change and has generally been written for non-Palauan audiences.

The present study, which aims at being an ethnohistory, has been written with two audiences in mind. Palauans have recently emerged from ninety years of colonial rule and are now fully engaged in the problems and challenges of building a new Pacific island micro-nation. Some members of the new government and civil service in Palau have expressed a keen interest in informed reflections of the immediacy of Palau's past and present. This group of people is one very important audience to whom this study is addressed. As the first history of the period 1947-1981, the writer hopes this study will, in time, become increasingly useful as Palauans critique it in the process of gaining a fuller knowledge of their own very fascinating history.

The second audience for this study consists of educational and Pacific historians who are curious about the nature of culture contact in Palau and how institutional arrangements are remolded in this process of reciprocal change.

The Palauan audience for this research effort was an invaluable source of data on which the study stands. Numerous informants, both Palauan and non-Palauan, guided my research and revealed new ways of understanding. Unfortunately, space allows recognition of only a few of the more prominent oral history sources. I am especially indebted to rubaks Joseph Tellei and Takeo Yano for helping me see the Japanese period in Palau more clearly.

David Ramarui, Alfonso Oiterong, Josepha Oiterong, and William Vitarelli opened my eyes to the events of the 1950s and 1960s. To them I am deeply thankful.

I benefited greatly from the sociocultural insights of Father Felix Yaoch, S.J., Father John Bizkarra, S.J., Father Richard Hoar, S.J., and Father Thomas Smith, S.J. As these priests were my teachers concerning the work of Palau's Catholic Church, Reverend Billy Kuartei and Sister Ingelore Lengning directed my inquiry into the history and contemporary work of the Palau Evangelical Church. Thank you.

The complex and fascinating world of Palauan politics both past and present was made clear to me by Roman Tmetuchl, David Ramarui, Fumio Rengiil, Leo Ruluked, Lazarus Salii, Masaharu Tmodrang, Moses Ramarui, Moses Uludong, and Bill Brophy. I am especially grateful to them for their invigorating and timely discussions.

During the five months of field research in Palau, I was welcomed into the home of Henry, Claudia and Mary Hoff. My sincere thanks to them for their companionship and interest in my research efforts.

The front row seats of the academic audience for this study are held by the members of my doctoral committee. I owe special thanks to Professor Ralph Stueber, Chairman of the committee, for his searching questions and encouragement to see things metaphorically. Professors Robert Potter, Edward Beauchamp, Carl Daeufer and Robert Kiste were unrelenting in their quest for explicitness. I am thankful for their "push" to make this study clearer for the non-specialist.

My special gratitude to William Vitarelli, Kenzi Mad and Wakako Higuchi for their warm and helpful encouragement, support, and faith that

this study is a significant contribution to the understanding of Palauan history and society.

This research was conceived and carried out under a grant from the East-West Center. I am deeply appreciative for the generous financial support provided by the Center and to Dean Sumi Makey, Open Grants, and Rose Nakamura, Program Officer, for their encouragement and patience during the long struggle to complete this study.

To Judy Seichi, my sincere thanks for the excellent typing of the final version of this study.

My deepest debt of gratitude is to my wife, Doreen, and small son, Jason, for giving up many hours of family life while I labored to understand and write about Palauan history.

--DRS

ABSTRACT

This study examined the educative impact of three foreign islands of meaning and change--church, school, and elected government--on Palauan society during the past ninety years of colonial rule, 1891-1981.

Since the beginning of the twentieth century, Palau has been inundated by sociocultural change brought about by the educational influence, sometimes unintended, of three originally foreign islands of meaning and change. In time, each of these new islands of meaning staked a claim to a part of the Palauan person. Each, in its own way, has educated the Palauan toward the construction of new islands of meaning by which act the foreign became Palauan. The various churches sought the Palauan soul; the school has attempted to instruct in the language, thought patterns, and ways of the foreigner; and political figures have campaigned to win over ballot box loyalties or conviction to cause. This study described the events of this historical change process, pointing out how Palauans have bent foreign institutions to their liking, particularly during the period of American rule.

Combining the cultural insights of the anthropologist with the rigorour examination of written and oral materials of the historian, the writer argues that the cross cultural education of Palau islander by intruding stranger has been a story of resistance and pragmatic acceptance. Both responses have been cultural ones. Resistance has resulted because of a tenacity to a Palauan world view, whereas acceptance of foreign meanings has derived from the Palauan attraction to power (both internal to Palauan

society and external vis-a-vis the stranger), prestige, and wealth expressed through competitive-manipulative behavior.

Using the method of ethnohistory, the writer also showed that the very cultural traits which have made the school and elected government such powerful educating islands around which Palauans have placed their beaches of "we", parodoxically generate social fragmentation in contemporary Palau. The writer further explained that although the island of church meaning has not yet been eagerly embraced as an educator, it builds social cohesion and a sense of community.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF MAPS

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

> When individuals of distinct
> cultures confront one another,
> the boundary which separates
> them is their mutual ignorance
> of the other's systems of meaning.
>
> Gregory Dening

Scope

This study examines the history of education in Palau from 1891 to 1981 with special emphasis given to the recent period of accelerated change under Japanese and American colonial rule, 1914-1981.

Rationale

In 1978 the three volume A History of Palau was completed by the Palau Community Action Agency (PCAA). To date those three volumes (totaling about 900 pages) are the only history of Palau. Unfortunately this first history does not cover the contemporary period (1947-1981). The present study, therefore, complements and extends the PCAA effort.

The process of rapid modernization, which began with the coming of foreigners, has generally been confusing and disorienting to Pacific Islanders. The imposition of colonial administration began new and often disruptive social arrangements which, with time, took on increasing importance in the lives of all those living in them. The emphasis on the

written word over the oral word has opened the way for history writing to provide an anchor of psychological stability. "If we have some good accounts of what has happened to us since the war, we can plan and respond intelligently instead of the shouting and blind reacting we see now."[1] This study provides Palauans with one person's account--the first on the contemporary period--of what has happened in the mutual education of islander and stranger.

Conceptual Framework

The writer has borrowed the metaphor of "islands and beaches" from Gregory M. Dening, Professor of History at the University of Melbourne and distinguished visiting professor who held the John A. Burns Chair of History, University of Hawaii, 1981. Dening writes,

> 'Islands and Beaches' is a metaphor that helps my understanding. It is not a model that makes behavior predictable. 'Islands and beaches' is a metaphor for the different ways in which human beings construct their worlds and for the boundaries that they construct between them. It is a natural metaphor for the oceanic world of the Pacific where islands are everywhere and beaches must be crossed to enter them or leave them, to make them or change them. But the islands and beaches I speak of are less physical than cultural. They are the islands men and women make by the reality they attribute to their categories, their roles, their institutions, and the beaches they put around them with their definitions of 'we' and 'they'. As we shall see, the remaking of those sorts of islands and the crossing of those sorts of beaches can be cruelly painful.[2]

---

[1] Leo Ruluked, personal interview, Honolulu, Hawaii, July 2, 1982.

[2] Gregory M. Dening, Islands and Beaches (Honolulu, Hawaii: The University Press of Hawaii, 1980), p. 3.

Since the beginning of the 20th century, Palau has been inundated by cultural change brought about by the educational influence, sometimes unintended, of three external institutions--the church, the school, and elected government--which initially were foreign islands of meaning and change. In time, each of these new islands of meaning (institutions) staked a claim to a part of the Palauan person. Each, in its own way, has educated the Palauan toward the construction of new islands of meaning by asking them to place their beach of 'we' around that island, thereby making it Palauan. The church has sought the Palauan soul; the school has attempted to instruct in the ways and thinking patterns of the foreigner; and political figures have campaigned to win over ballot box loyalties or conviction to cause. This study is a description and explanation of how strangers have attempted to educate Palauans to remake their islands of meaning, and as Dening reminds us, this process can be cruelly painful.

Definitions

The term culture has many definitions but the one most appropriate for this study is that of culture as meaning, as "a system of symbols and meanings in terms of which a particular group of people make sense of their world, communicate with each other and plan and live their lives."[3]

The term category as used in this study refers to the general ways in which time, space, knowledge, relationships of person to person,

---

[3]Joan Metge, The Maoris of New Zealand (London: Kegan & Paul, 1976), p. 45.

person to nature, and person to God are conceptualized and expressed in cultural behavior.

In contrast to Bailyn's definition of education as the transmission of culture across generations, education for the purpose of this study is broadly defined as the transmission of culture across cultural boundaries (a donor culture to a recipient culture) and then within the recipient culture. The Bailyn definition emphasizes time, whereas the above definition focuses on space. The writer's definition is one of cross cultural education because a culture is a system of categories and meanings which in many respects becomes a separate "island" of meaning shared only by those who place a "beach" of "we" around it. Such a cross cultural definition of education is especially appropriate for this study because it coincides with the view of David Ramarui, former Director of Education for the Trust Territory, who maintains that Palauans have been forced by their colonial history to educate, train and develop themselves so they can cope and compete confidently on the stage set by the foreign intruders.

Cremin has eloquently shown that all social institutions educate in that they intentionally advocate and evoke certain knowledge, attitudes, values and sensitivities.[4] But what happens in a cross cultural situation when actor-educators of one culture bring their meanings to bear on the actors of another culture? Considering what the donors offer, what is resisted, what is accepted, what is modified, and how deeply is the

---

[4]Lawrence A. Cremin, Public Education (New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1976), p. 27.

recipient socioculture changed? This study addresses these questions as ones in cross cultural education.

Thesis

The writer will argue in this study that the cross cultural education of Palau islander by intruding stranger has been a story of resistance and pragmatic acceptance. Both responses have been cultural ones. Resistance has resulted because of a tenacity to an indigenous world view; acceptance has derived from the Palauan attraction to social power (both internal to Palauan society and external vis-a-vis the stranger), prestige, and wealth expressed through competitive-manipulative behavior.

In the final chapter of this study, the writer will argue that the very cultural traits which have made the school and elected government such powerful educating islands around which Palauans have placed their beaches of "we," paradoxically generate social fragmentation in contemporary Palau. The writer will also show that although the island of church meaning has not yet been eagerly embraced as an educator, it builds social cohesion and a sense of community.

Methodology

Because culture is a constantly created "thing," it is dynamic, fluid, and open to subtle and constant re-creation. Palauans have reformed, to a degree, the introduced cultural islands of meaning in terms of indigenous values and categories. There is always, therefore, a

tension between the world as "given," as the culture that makes and controls us, and our micro-world as we re-construct it. Any culture has this dynamic interplay between the given and constructed, between structure and person, as Dening says. Participants in this process generally cannot see the order and pattern they create through their actions. They are too much of the process. If the cross cultural researcher hopes to share the fruit of his labor with those about whom he writes, he must choose metaphor over model. The two by their very nature are radically different.

> Model and metaphor are transpositions, readings of experience, products of consciousness. Their distinction lies in the fact that metaphors are understood and models are imposed. Metaphors enlarge within a closed system; models belong to an observer's perceptions. Understanding others, then, can have two meanings. It can mean entry into the experience of others in such a way that we share the metaphors that enlarge their experience. Or it can mean that we translate that experience into a model that has no actuality in the consciousness of those being observed but becomes the currency of communication amongst the observers.[5]

The historian of cross cultural education has the privilege and monumental task of untangling--if he can--what was given from what was constructed, of seeing the metaphor made by cultural actors and using it to enlarge the experience of both parties.

The ethnohistorical method is recent.[6] It combines the cultural insights of the anthropologist with the rigorous examination of written

---

[5]Dening, Islands and Beaches, p. 86.

[6]The recent work by Marshal Sahlins on Hawaii's early contact history, e.g. "Captain James Cook or the Dying God," (public lecture, University of Hawaii, July 17, 1982) and Anthony F. C. Wallace's The Death and Rebirth of the Seneca (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1970) are

and oral materials by the historian. Considering the two separate disciplines of this hybrid, "the demand which the historian makes on the ethnohistorian is that he be conscious of change, that he be sensitive to the whole range of historical sources by which he can come to describe that change."[7] The anthropologist calls on the ethnohistorian to understand the dynamics of human behavior and the power of cultural categories which comes from a wide experience with human nature in all its expressions.[8]

Given this degree of complexity, the attempt to write a history of cultural contact, or an ethnohistory, is filled with uncertainties. Island cultural values and assumptions must be recognized, but they can be in the process of transformation and they can be misread. It seems, therefore, that the ethnohistorian will inevitably commit errors. An invaluable check is the mind's eye of those he attempts to describe. For this reason draft versions of the three main chapters of this study were sent for critique and comment to both Palauans and non-Palauans who have worked many years in Palau. The responses received to date have been encouraging.[9]

---

ethnohistorical. Dening defined ethnohistory in his 1966 article "Ethnohistory in Polynesia," The Journal of Pacific History (1966), 1:23-42, and uses the method in his Islands and Beaches. He elaborated on the method in "The Concept of Culture in Historical Analysis," History 609 Seminar, University of Hawaii, 1981.

[7]Gregory M. Dening, "Ethnohistory in Polynesia," The Journal of Pacific History (1966), 1:42.

[8]Ibid.

[9]Responses have come from Alfonso Oiterong, Vice President of the Republic of Palau and former District Director of Education; David

Members of small scale societies like Palau are almost always wary of strangers who search and question. "The Palauan mind is a strange thing. Palauans just don't tell you what's in their guts. What people throw out is often superficial, especially if you're a stranger."[10] Fortunately, the writer's previous residence and work in Palau provided a reservoir of trust and friendship which turned out to be invaluable when it came to probing sensitive areas in the political and religious realms, and gaining access to unpublished documents and important people.

A crucial problem of historical inquiry is the identification and description of patterns both past and present, both within the strange and familiar cultures. This quest to find patterns must be preceded by a rigorous and exhaustive examination of written and oral sources. The worth of a historian is judged by his ability to choose the relevant from the mass of chaotic detail before him and cast the relevant detail into persuasive themes. Since Palauan culture is to a great extent an oral culture, much time was spent gathering oral history data during five months of research in Palau (October 1980 to March 1981). Many

---

Ramarui, former Palau Educational Administrator and former Director of Education for the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands and now Minister of Social Services, Republic of Palau; Leo Ruluked, Principal of Palau High School; Victor Hobson, former Assistant District Director of Education, Palau; William Vitarelli, former Director of Education and Assistant District Administrator, Palau; Moses Uludong, Senator in the Palau National Congress; Bill Brophy, former administrative assistant and consultant to Roman Tmetuchl; Father Felix Yaoch, S.J., Sacred Heart Catholic Church, Palau; Father Richard Hoar, S.J., former pastor of Koror's Sacred Heart Catholic Church, Palau; and Kenzi Mad, former Palau elementary school teacher and principal and presently program officer at the East-West Center, Hawaii.

[10]Kenzi Mad, personal interview, Honolulu, Hawaii, September 2, 1980.

quotations from oral interviews are sprinkled throughout this study. In this way Palauans have told their own story.

These oral history data were supplemented by an exhaustive examination of written sources in the Palau Museum Library, files of the Department of Education, and Sacred Heart Church records, Koror, Palau; files of the Department of Public Affairs, Office of the High Commissioner, Saipan; and the Pacific Collection, Hamilton Library, University of Hawaii.

Since Magellan's 1521 trans-Pacific voyage, the Western view of Pacific man has been dominated by three images: the ignoble savage, the noble savage, and the uncivilized but educable man. These images, it seems, tell us more about the cultural perceptions of the visitor than that of the visited. The voyager had to have some way of comprehending what he perceived as the brute, the exotic, the isolated. This could be done only in terms of cultural values and categories in the minds of the voyagers. Thus, the cultural islands and beaches voyagers found in the Pacific were, to a great extent, constructions of their own making. This pattern is clear in Palau's contact history, and, in some ways, persists to the present.

On the other side of the conceptual coin, non-Palauan anthropologists have identified intergroup and interpersonal competition and manipulation of both people and events for the accumulation of wealth and prestige as a basic theme in Palauan culture.[11] Balanced in dynamic tension with the theme of competition-manipulation is a counter theme of cooperation,

---

[11] See R.W. Force, "Leadership and Cultural Change in Palau" (Ph.D. dissertation, Stanford University, 1958), p. 69 and R.K. McKnight, "Competition in Palau" (Ph.D. dissertation, Ohio State University, 1960).

unity, and community. These two themes, in back and forth tension, have fueled social change in Palau since early contact days. The themes have been noted throughout this study and serve to focus discussion of the sociocultural impact of church, school, and elected government in the final chapter of this study.

Limitations

This study is limited to the educational impact of three originally foreign islands of meaning. Palauans have accepted other institutions, e.g., the American court and law enforcement system, entrepreneurial business arrangements, consumerism, and the professions of a civil service. The writer chose the church, school, and elected government as areas of concentration because these have been vigorous educators during Japanese and American colonial rule.

As noted in the previous section on methodology, ethnohistory by its nature is difficult to do well. The researcher must gain some insight into the meaning systems of both islander and stranger. This is difficult because Palauans are generally cautious, "retractive, and guarded in their interpersonal contacts."[12]

Language was a limitation in that the writer is not a fluent Palauan language speaker. All interviews with older Palauan informants were conducted through an interpreter with the consequent loss of some social and historical nuance. Many Palauans under forty-five years of

---

[12]Homer G. Barnett, Being a Palauan (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1960), p. 14.

age are fluent in English. Though the sharing of a common language made it possible for the writer to conduct numerous interviews, it necessitated corroborative and follow-up interviews to confirm names, dates, events and interpretations. The writer noticed that interpretations and expressions of meaning often were condensed or explained metaphorically in second language dialogue. This again necessitated corroborative interviews.

Perhaps the greatest limitation of this study is an epistemological one. To be a cultural agent is to experience one's situation in terms of certain meanings; what might be called proto-"interpretation." This way of understanding is in turn interpreted and shaped by the language and community in which the agent lives and shares these meanings. This whole is then at a third level interpreted by and through the description and explanation a writer offers for what he has learned of the second level interpretation.[13] Because of the inherent complexity of such third level interpretation in a cross cultural setting, the writer has chosen metaphor over model in his attempt to tell the Palauan story.

Overview

During the early contact period of Palauan history, as sketched in Chapter Three, foreign visitors were few and infrequent, leaving Palauan institutions, with the exception of political relations between Palau's two paramount chiefs, generally undisturbed. Nearly every voyager was

---

[13] Charles Taylor, "Interpretation and the Sciences of Man," Understanding and Social Inquiry, F.R. Dallmayr and T.A. McCarthy, editors, (Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 1977), p. 111.

invited onto the stage of Palauan politics, thus becoming involved in the political machinations and competitive struggles of the paramount chiefs. Unfortunately, foreign chroniclers tell us very little about traditional education or religion. The few glimpses they do provide portray a vibrant and dynamic--but very political--social organization. The cross-cultural education that took place during this period was mainly that of stranger learning from islander.

Chapter Four of this study traces the historical development of Christianity and Modekngei, Palau's indigenous revitalization movement of the early 20th century. In the case of Christianity, the old gods of the pre-Modekngei religion were replaced by a new one, whereas for Modekngei, Jesus Christ was incorporated into a syncretic religious system that actively opposed Japanese cultural hegemony. Although Palau's Christian churchmen have been deeply dedicated, their religious and educational efforts have not been readily accepted at present by the ambitious and materially minded majority.

Chapter Five of this study shows how the foreign culture of the book--the school--has displaced traditional Palauan education of the word. In many ways, the culture of the book is a superficial transplant. Nevertheless, Palauans have eagerly sought the knowledge, skills and values that this new island of meaning has offered. In this way Palauans have fully participated in the sociocultural change process, particularly since the early 1960s.

The intruding culture, whether Spanish, German, Japanese or American, has generally been perceived as advanced, modern, even better. Palauans have recognized that to be schooled is to be modern and such

modernism often confers power, prestige, and wealth. This has been a great attraction to the Palauan, who is generally competitive and forward looking. These themes have been traced in the development of Japanese schools and in the educational leadership of William Vitarelli, David Ramarui and Alfonso Oiterong during American administration. In 1974 a Palauan school for Palauans was founded by the Modekngei on the principles of tradition and self-sufficiency. Over the years, however, the school has become more Americanized and increasingly dependent on external financial support.

Chapter Six of this study examines the introduction of American-style elected government to Palau in 1946. This new conception of government is one of the foreign islands of meaning that Palauans have bent to their liking and in the process educated themselves in the ways of the foreigner. In 1947, Palauans elected magistrates and congressmen for the first time and thus began a process of institutional replacement: the voice of the chief would, at least on one level, be replaced by the vote of elected officials. Within a decade, Palau's first generation of elected leaders recognized the enlarged arena for political activity this change had provided. As all ambitious men do, they began using the imported institution in Palauan ways to meet Palauan purposes and thus became self-educators.

Of this first group of elected leaders, Roman Tmetuchl stands out more than any other for his ability to seize new opportunities and define new directions. Tmetuchl was the second Palauan to graduate from George Washington High School, Guam in 1948, thereby cleary demonstrating that schooling in the foreign culture of the book was perceived by

Palauans as necessary for leadership in a world defined by Palau's fourth colonial power. Tmetuchl dominated political events throughout the 1970s. During these years he and his supporters came into direct conflict with a series of local opposition groups that culminated in the constitution and election contests of 1979 and 1980. Each side tested the other and in the process engaged in political education of the most important kind. Though Tmetuchl lost the Palau Constitution fight and finished second in Palau's presidential election in November 1980, his supporters won half the seats in the Senate of the National Congress, thus establishing a power base for future maneuver characteristic of Palauan political style.

In the final chapter of this study, the writer will argue that the very cultural "reasons" for which foreign islands of meaning have been eagerly or listlessly accepted as educators have resulted in radically different social consequences.

CHAPTER II

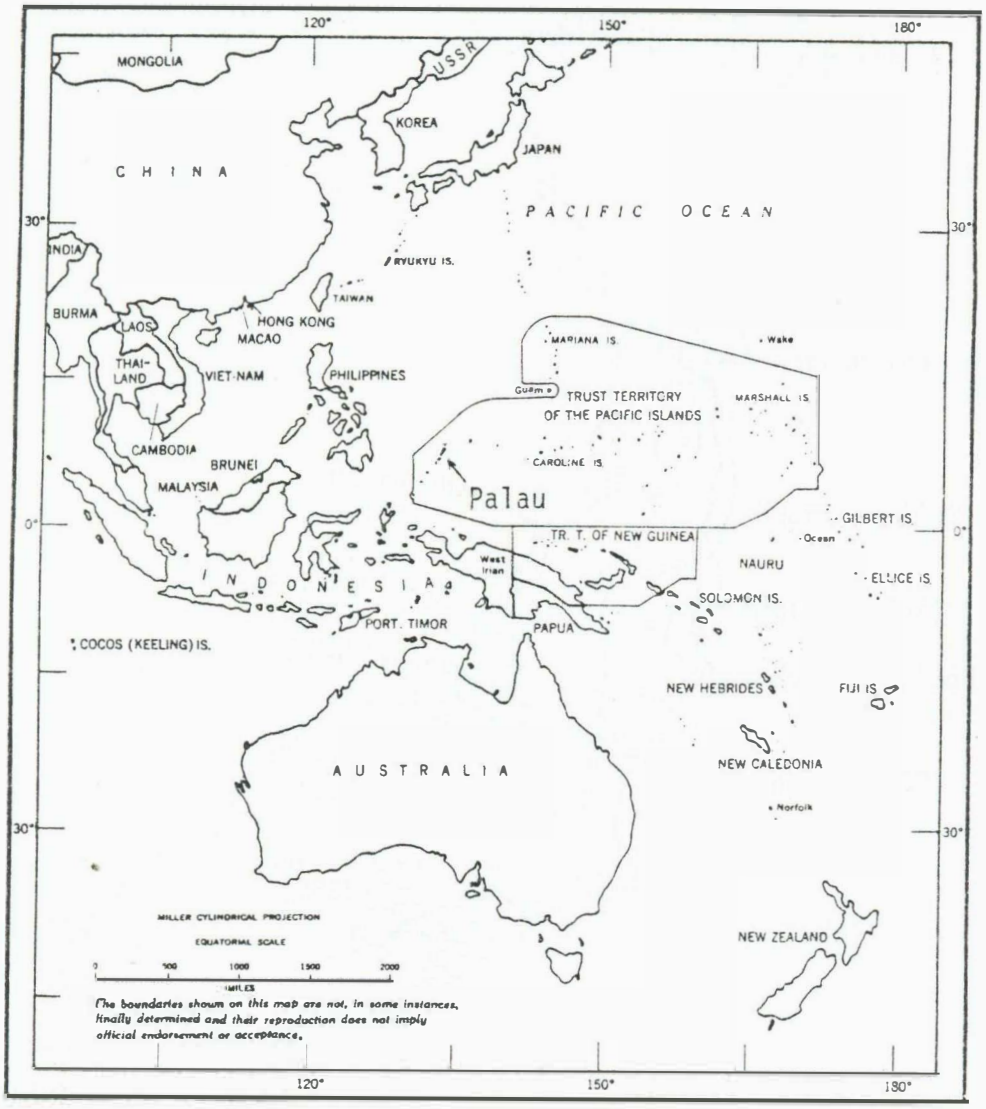
PLACE AND PEOPLE

Place

The Palau Islands (6° 53'N to 8° 12'N and 134° 8'E to 134° 44'E) are a bunched group of some 200 volcanic and limestone islands) in the western Pacific Ocean. The island group sits on the crest of the Palau-Kyushu Ridge and stretches some 100 miles in a northeast-to-southwest direction (see maps pages 16 and 17). Babeldaob, the largest of the seven main islands, has some 153 square miles of land and over a third of the present population of 14,800. This comma-shaped volcanic island is today connected by a bridge to Koror-town (3.6 square miles) which, in turn, is linked by causeway to the deep water port on Malakal island. Arakabesan, opposite Malakal, is also linked to Koror by causeway. These three small islands have together over 8,000 people and form the urban center of Palau.

Some 28 and 33 miles south of Koror lie the flat coral islands of Peleliu (4.5 square miles) and Angaur (3.3 square miles), the latter once having rich phosphate deposits which were virtually mined out during the Japanese and immediate post-war periods.

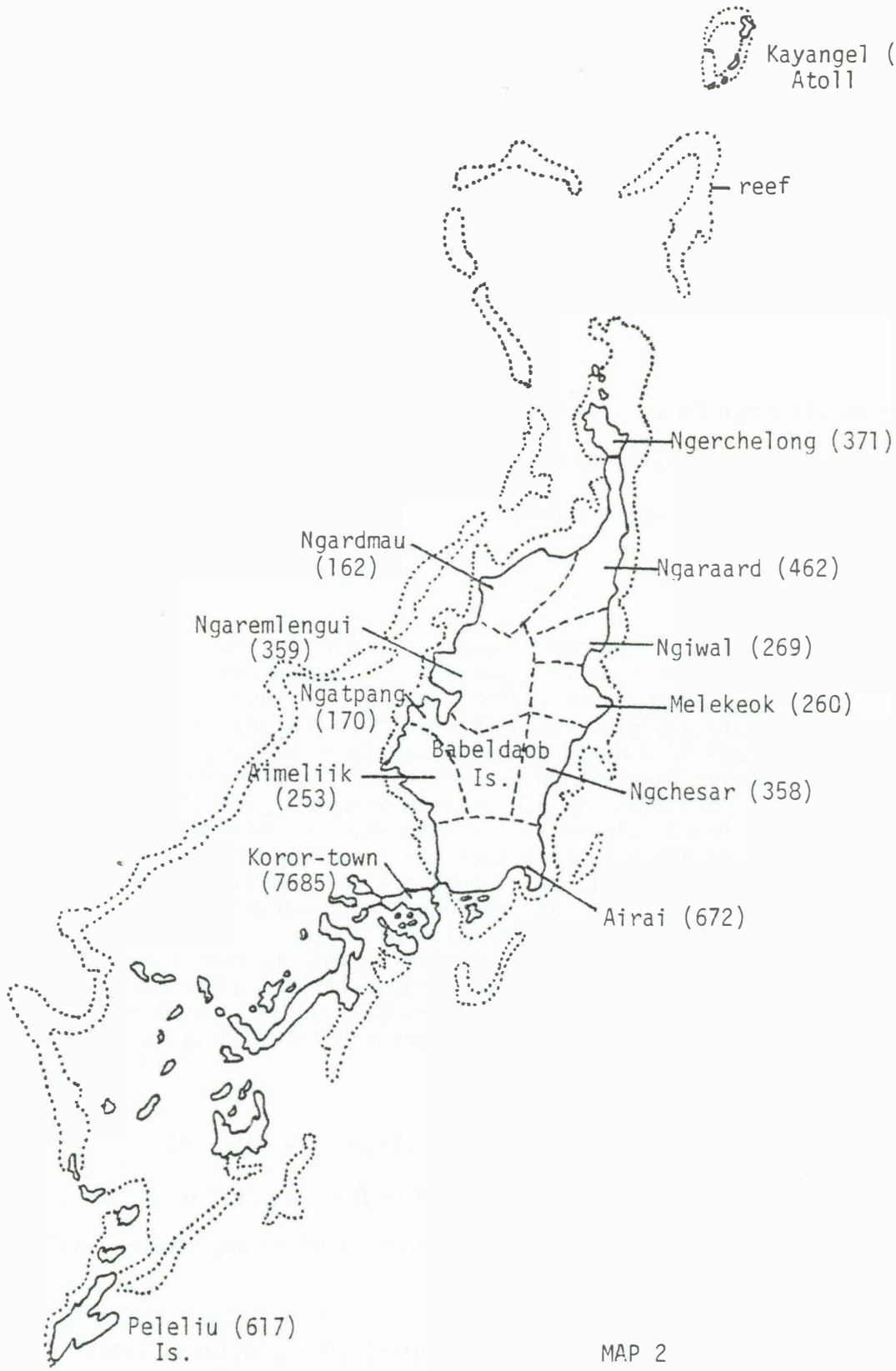
Almost as if to counterbalance southernmost Angaur, Kayangel atoll sits in the far north of the Palau chain. This balance is more than physical for while the Angaur people are committed Catholics, the Kayangelese are proudly Modekngei (an indigenous syncretic religion).



MAP 1

PALAU'S PLACE IN THE WESTERN PACIFIC

SOURCE: U.S. Department of State. Report of the United Nations on the Administration of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, 31st Annual Report. Washington, D.C.: 1978, p. 3.



MAP 2

Angaur (243)
Is.

THE REPUBLIC OF PALAU: THE STATES AND POPULATION (1980)

All the Palau islands except Kayangel and Angaur lie enclosed within a huge barrier reef which is broken on the eastern windward side but broad and continuous on the western lee side.

People

Palauans are a proud and energetic people. Until recently it seems, they conceived their island world, abundant with terrestrial and marine food resources, to be a complete universe unto itself. McKnight puts the Palauan case most eloquently:

> While older men of knowledge knew of distant places, the popular legends depict the islands as a complete, closed universe. Since this universe ended, in a popular view, somewhere beyond the horizon, there was no place else to go. The popularly conceived universe began with Ngeruangel reef in the north and ended about a hundred and twenty miles south, with the island of Angaur. In the beginning the islands were formed from the body of a fallen giant. Local deities created the forests and reefs that protected the giant's body and people emerged from his flesh. In time, various ancients sometimes appearing out of the sea, but never from some other specific place, brought to Palau the knowledge of agriculture, the proper way of family life and childbirth, and the proper economic and political practices. Thus the fabric of culture was created in Palau. It was not a borrowed set of practices, but a distinctly Palauan way of life in a closed complete universe.[1]

This small world was shaken, gently at first, by chad era ngebard--visitors from the west. The four month Palau stay in 1783 of a group of English sailors led by Captain Henry Wilson was celebrated by George

---

[1] Robert McKnight, "The Culture of Palau" in Palau and the Superport: The Development of an Ocean Ethic (San Francisco: Ocean Research and Policy Institute of the Oceanic Society, 1977), p. 35.

Keate. His idealized Account of the Pelew Islands, first published in 1788, was "a splendid yarn of danger and adventure in the South Seas."[2] The book was an instant success, receiving wide distribution in Europe and America. Palau was further popularized in The Interesting and Affecting History of Prince Lee Boo, which ran through twenty editions from 1789 to 1850.[3] Lee Boo (Lebu) was the son of the highest ranking chief of Koror, who held the title Ibedul (Abba Thule). The chief wanted his son to see the world and learn the mysteries and powers of chad era ngebard. So Lee Boo departed with the foreigners, only to die of smallpox in London some months after his arrival. Thus, the short but exciting adventures of Wilson's men in the Pacific and Lee Boo in London stamped Palau on the mental and geographical maps of the West.

Visits and intrusions by chad era ngebard continued to gently shake the Palauan self-contained universe throughout the nineteenth century. The leadership adapted, however, and indigenous institutions remained generally undisturbed; the culture of the word prevailed despite sojourns by numerous adventurers, whalers, traders, beachcombers and men-of-war captains. This theme is expounded in chapter two.

In contrast to the legendary and beautifully imaginative account concerning the origin of the Palauan people (reported by McKnight above), archeologists tell us that the ancestors of today's Palauans likely came as drift voyagers from the Celebes-Halmahera island area of Indonesia,

---

[2]Bernard W. Smith, European Vision and the South Pacific, 1768-1850 (London: Oxford University Press, 1960), p. 99.

[3]Ibid.

possibly as early as 2500 B.C.[4] Takayama's research indicates a later settlement of about A.D. 850 ± 80.[5] Regardless of the approximate date of first habitation, it is clear that Palauan culture is centuries old and that the Palauans have, as the preamble to their constitution says, an "immemorial right to be supreme" on their islands.

Ethnological research on Palauan culture began in the late nineteenth century with Johann Kubary's valuable descriptions (1873, 1883, 1888). This work was extended during German administration of Palau by Augustin Kramer, whose monumental five volume study, Palau in the series Ergebnisse der Sudsee-Expedition 1908-1910 [Results of the South Sea Expedition 1908-1910], reported on his observations during these years. Kramer's exhaustively comprehensive study examined the history, geography, cartography, demography, anthropology, language, material culture, flora and fauna, and bai (men's meeting house) art of Palau.

By the time Kramer carried out his research in Palau, the population had hit a low point of some 4,000 because of the ravages of imported diseases and firearms and was beginning to recover. The numerous terraced hills found scattered across Babeldaob and Arakabesan testify to a pre-contact population perhaps as large as 40-50,000 people. This compares with a 1982 population of 16-18,000 (including Palauans living overseas).

After short administrative rules by Spain (1891-1899) and Germany (1899-1914), Palau was governed by the Japanese (1914-1945), who did a

---

[4]George J. Gumerman, David Snyder, and Bruce Massee, "An Archeological Reconnaissance in the Palau Archipelago, West Caroline Islands, Micronesia," (Carbondale, Ill.: Center for Archaeological Investigations, Southern Illinois University, 1981), p. 12.

[5]Ibid.

great amount of research, much of it related to economic development, agricultural and marine production. Both this material and the Japanese ethnological material are unavailable to the researcher who cannot read the Japanese Language. Fortunately, the writer arranged for translation of a number of important historical documents.

After the Pacific War (1941-1945), American researchers--mainly anthropologists--tried their hand at understanding Palauan culture. John Useem's "Report on Yap, Palau, and the Lesser Islands of the Western Carolines" (1946) was the first systematic post-war description of Palau. While this study was prepared for use by the U.S. military administration, Useem's 1949 report is more valuable from the anthropological standpoint.

Homer Barnett, an anthropologist, lived in Ulimang village, Ngaraard, for nine months during 1947-48. His 240-page "Palauan Society" describes all aspects of Palauan social organization--as he came to know it--of a northern Babeldaob village. This study was the source for Barnett's monograph, Being a Palauan (1960).

The ever-fascinating and complex Palauan culture has been the source for numerous dissertations, a master's thesis and a research-based book.

Francis Mahoney was first in Palau during the war as a U.S. Naval officer. He served as a Japanese language officer and camp director on Angaur. As a University of Chicago graduate student in the late 1940's, he carried out psychological research in Melekeok and Koror using the Rorschach test and the Thematic Apperception Technique. In his M.A. thesis, "Projective Psychological Findings in Palau Personality" (University of Chicago, 1950), he concluded that the basic Palauan personality structure was characterized by inflated drive (ambition), emotional and imaginal

constriction, and a pattern of pragmatic adjustment to external pressures. Mahoney further concluded that Palauans have been able to adapt to the ways of the foreigner because they view reality as something imposed from the outside, not of one's own making, to which one must adjust quickly if it is to be manipulated.

Mahoney returned to Palau in 1951 as a Trust Territory government employee and stayed for a decade. He served as Palau's district administrator (top civilian government official) from 1959-1961, giving many of his speeches in Palauan. He once commented to the writer in a half-serious, half-joking vain that his greatest accomplishment as district administrator was getting the toilets ethnically integrated.[6]

In 1952 Arthur Vidich, an anthropologist from Harvard, conducted research on the impact of Japanese and American colonial administration on Palauan culture. Vidich described the differential response made by subgroups within Palauan society and colonial administration in terms of the nature of the impinging system, the nature of the indigenous society, and the nature of the resulting contact situation.[7] It is a very lengthy study, rarely read, but very valuable.

Roland Force, an anthropologist from Stanford University, lived for sixteen months in Palau (1955-56), spending some seven months in Ngarchelong municipality in northern Babeldaob and the rest in the crucible of change, Koror. Force's dissertation research (1958) centered on Palauan

---

[6]Francis Mahoney, personal interview, Honolulu, Hawaii, June 11, 1981. Unfortunately, Mahoney died in November 1981. Much important oral history of the war period and the 1950's was lost with his passing.

[7]Arthur J. Vidich, "The Political Impact of Colonial Administration," (Ph.D. dissertation, Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University, 1952).

leadership and cultural change in these two different settings. He concluded that the dual system of leadership, which often pitted Koror's elected leaders against rural traditional leaders, was culturally disfunctional. I have sketched the history of this disfunction from 1947 to the present in Chapter Six of this study. Force and his wife, Maryanne, returned to Palau in January 1971. On the basis of one month of intensive interviews, they compiled data on kinship and cultural change that formed the basis of an updated analysis of the Palauan kinship system.[8]

Robert McKnight worked as a district anthropologist in Palau during the late 1950's. He has published numerous excellent articles on Palau. His doctoral dissertation, completed in 1960, focused on the Palauan penchant for competitive behavior both in traditional society and in the changing scene as McKnight then observed it. He concluded that competition in Palau of the late 1950's did not find productive expression. Instead of welding individuals together toward group achievement, competition often had the effect of pushing them apart, generating distrust and insecurity.[9]

In 1972, Gary Klee, a former Peace Corps volunteer who lived in Ngermetengel village of Ngaremlengui municipality, returned to the village as a University of Oregon researcher, and spent three months with Ngiraklang (second chief) Malsol Ngiraibuuch, one of Micronesia's finest native scholars. During that time Ngiraklang explained to Klee the cyclic

---

[8]Roland W. Force and Maryanne Force, Just One House (Honolulu: Bishop Museum Press, 1972).

[9]Robert K. McKnight, "Competition in Palau," (Ph.D. dissertation, Columbus, Ohio: Ohio State University, 1960).

realities of village and the surrounding natural environment which he recorded. The heavens and phases of nature, the chief explained, functioned as clock and calendar to be read and acted on. Ngiraklang was willing to pass on this specialized knowledge to the American researcher because he realized this knowledge of the word, if it was to survive, must be recorded in the book.[10]

While he was in his 70's, Ngiraklang took Dr. Robert Johannes, a marine biologist, on many fishing expeditions. During these trips Johannes learned the Palauans' sophisticated knowledge of fish behavior and ocean environment. Ngiraklang explained that Palauan marine science is intimately linked to traditional values. Much of Palau's island science is offered for the first time to Western science in Johannes' Words of the Lagoon: Fishing and Marine Lore in the Palau District (1981).

Ngiraklang was the source for a third piece of scholarly research which is nearing completion. Richard Parmentier, a doctoral candidate from the University of Chicago, spent hundreds of hours with Ngiraklang in 1978-80. Parmentier came away with 600 cassette tape interviews of Ngiraklang's knowledge of traditional Palauan legends. It seems these are knit up into one systematic whole which few people in contemporary Palau fully understand or care about.

Ngiraklang is especially proud of these three scholarly achievements which are, in essence, transformations (culturally incomplete, of course) of knowledge of the word into knowledge of the book. This gifted indigenous scholar, a great man in Palau, believes that the three Western

---

[10] Gary A. Klee, "The Cyclic Realities of Man and Nature in a Palauan Village," (Ph.D. dissertation, Eugene, Oregon: University of Oregon, 1972.)

scholars--his students--together obtained nearly all his specialized knowledge, his "secrets," of nature's cyclic realities, Palauan fishing lore, and Palauan legends.[11]

Jernigan, in his dissertation, "Lochukle: A Palauan Art Tradition," (1973) described the changes that have taken place in Palauan art during ninety years of culture contact. The decorative art of traditional men's houses declined and then later reemerged in the story board form thanks to the encouragement of a Japanese scholar, Hisakatsu Hijikata, and tourist fascination.

In 1976 Maryanne Force completed a dissertation entitled, "The Persistence of Precolonial Exchange Patterns in Palau: A Study of Cultural Continuities." She showed that Palauans, both young and old, generally continue to accept and practice reciprocal obligations. The genius of Palau is to move money rapidly by constant borrowing and lending, thereby having it pass quickly through many hands. In this way people can purchase some of the material objects, and therefore prestige, they desire. Force argues that the persistence of Palauan exchange patterns, such as oheraol (house-buying ceremony), provide a major example of Palauan cultural continuity and identity.

DeVerne Reed Smith, an anthropologist from the University of Pennsylvania, lived in the rural capital village of Melekeok on the east coast of Babeldaob for nearly two years. Like her colleague Force, Smith was interested in exchange. Her dissertation, "The Ties that Bind: Exchange and Transactions in Kinsmen in Palau" (1977), focused on how the

---

[11]Ngiraklang Malsol Ngiraibuuch personal interview, February 19, 1981, Ngermatengel, Ngaremlengui, Palau.

dualistic nature of Palauan kin structures creates ties to distant kin or non-kin through marriage, parenthood, and adoption. Smith noted that village transactional behaviors became articulated through exchange and competition for rights to property.

The most current anthropological study is presently being conducted by Joshua Epstein, an anthropologist from the University of Hawaii, who spent some nineteen months in Palau (November 1979-May 1981). His research centers on the relationships of political leadership styles to communication. His work, when completed, should complement and amplify Chapter Six of this study which traces the historical development of electoral government in Palau, 1947-1980.

The only strictly historical study extant on Palau is the Palau Community Action Agency three volume, A History of Palau (1978). This was compiled and written by a series of Peace Corps Volunteers from all the published documents and records they could collect. It was designed to be an "outside" history and the writers therefore did not make use of oral history. While useful and comprehensive, the study has several major limitations: it has no unifying theme, tends to be dry chronology, and ends in 1947 with the formation of the Trust Territory. Thus, the contemporary period (1947-present) is unexamined.

CHAPTER III

FOREIGN GLIMPSES OF OLD ISLANDS: GOVERNMENT, RELIGION, EDUCATION

Chad era Ngebard--Men from the West

Although Portuguese, English, and Spanish ships may have entered Palauan waters prior to 1700, any extant accounts of these contacts lie buried in European archives. Probably the first European to visit Palau was Captain Don Francisco Padilla. In response to reports from Carolinians who had accidentally drifted to the Philippines, Padilla was sent in 1710 by Spanish authorities there to find the Palos islands (Western Caroline islands) and land missionaries. Padilla left two Jesuit priests, who were later killed, on Sonsorol, and sailed north. He spent two days off the Palau coast (probably Peleliu or Angaur) during which time trade was interrupted by aggressive fighting. Padilla judged the Palauans as "coarse and savage."[1]

Another early impression of Palauans was given to Father Juan Cantova by a group of twenty-four Woleaians who had drifted to Guam in 1721.[2] According to Cantova's letter of 1722, the drift voyagers described Palauans as inhuman and savage; "that both men and women were entirely naked, and fed upon human flesh . . . [that the Carolineans] looked

---

[1]Francis X. Hezel and Maria Teresa De Valle, "Early European Contact with the Western Carolines: 1525-1750," The Journal of Pacific History 7 (1972):37.

[2]Woleai is a small atoll group located some 600 nautical miles due east of Palau.

on them with horror, as enemies of mankind, and with whom they held it dangerous to have any intercourse."[3]

This short passage reveals how one group of islanders perceived another, but it also tells us more about the priest's conceptual categories than it does about Palauan culture. The image conveyed is the European notion of ignoble savage--inhuman, brutish, a throwback to civilized man's dark past. Bernard Smith, a distinguished Pacific historian, says that missionaries in particular harbored this view of isolated peoples. "To most of the early missionaries the nakedness of the savage, his clothing, rites, dances and, above all, his 'idols' were not only repulsive but, to a greater or lesser degree, diabolical."[4]

It was in reaction to this view of the islander as ignoble savage that George Keate, an arm-chair explorer, wrote An Account of the Pelew Islands based on the journals and oral history of Captain Henry Wilson whose ship, Antelope, ran aground on Palau's western reef in August 1783. Rather than seeing a degraded being, Keate recognized the Palauan as a noble savage who through good sense and good heart had "nearly attained that order, propriety and good conduct, which constitute the essence of real civilization."[5] Despite this idealization of the Palauan, Keate's account of Wilson's three months stay tells us numerous things about Palauan institutions--the given--at the time of this accidental contact.

---

[3]George Keate, Account of the Pelew Islands (London: G. Nicol Pall Mall, 1788), p. xi.

[4]Bernard Smith, European Vision and the South Pacific 1768-1850 (London: Oxford University Press, 1960), p. 243.

[5]Keate, An Account of the Pelew Islands, pp. vii-viii.

The English visitors--chad era negebard--noticed that labor was divided into men's work and women's work and that there were labor specialists. These tackelbys (labor specialists) built and decorated canoes, manufactured tortoise shell articles and made pottery.[6] Although Keate did not record anything about indigenous education or apprentice training, all cultures have ways of transmitting specialized knowledge (ethnopedagogy) and these, no doubt, existed in 18th century Palau.

During Wilson's three month stay in Palau, Ibedul (the title held by Koror's highest ranking chief, whom Wilson called "King") requested the assistance of English fire arms in confrontation with his northern rivals. Ibedul's important political competitor was the village complex of Artingall (the area today known as Melekeok State) against which he fought three victorious battles in less than ten weeks time. With the aid of English weaponry, Ibedul gained a significant advantage in political ascendancy over his main rival, thereby demonstrating his ability to grasp the important uses to which foreigners and their inventions could be put.[7] This was a departure from the given and as such was a new cultural construction.

While this kind of information is useful to the ethnohistorian, Keate's description of Ibedul's rule is presented in truly heroic terms.

---

[6] Ibid., p. 331.

[7] It is likely that the historically known competing spheres of influence--Babeldaob (north-east) and Youldaob (south-west) predate Wilson's 1783 visit. Thus, in the series of four battles--three against Artingall and one against Pelelew--Ibedul was playing out his political role (the given) but with a new ingredient which gave him a distinct advantage and a new position of prominence (the constructed).

> We see a despotic government without one shade of tyranny, and power only exercised for general happiness . . . bonds of harmony, gentleness of manners was the natural result, and fixed a brotherly and disinterested intercourse among one another.[8]

The vision of the noble savage implied here is more ethnographic commentary on the European chronicler than of the islander.

This vision affected Wilson's perceptions of Palauan moral character. He did not observe any practice or object which to him was religious. He noticed a reverence for the un-seen in the respect Palauans paid to ill omens, evil spirits and future telling. Wilson concluded that the Palauan "fixed and rooted sense of great moral duties," decency, sense of justice and delicacy were evidence of some guiding principle of religion.[9]

More Englishmen

As Keate wrote an idealized account of Wilson's three month stay in Palau, Reverend John Hockin composed a similar romanticized report of Captain John McCluer's visits of 1791 and 1793.[10]

Seven years after Lebu (Ibedul's second son) left with Wilson, McCluer arrived in Palau on the Panther with its sister ship Endeavour to bring news of Lebu's death. McCluer also presented numerous gifts,

---

[8] Keate, An Account of the Pelew Islands, p. 334.

[9] Ibid., pp. 325-329.

[10] McCluer came aboard the Panther and a Mr. Drummond captained the Endeavour. The ships were sent by the East India Company and left Bombay for Palau on August 23, 1790, seven years after Wilson's accidental visit.

including fire arms, to Ibedul from the East India Company, which felt indebted for the Chief's assistance and friendship rendered seven years earlier to the men of the wrecked Antelope. Like Keate's account, it is possible to glean bits of ethnohistorical information from Hockin's idealized report.

As with many later visitors, McCluer was impressed with the men's meeting houses (bai) and long piers. Concerning a newly constructed bai McCluer wrote,

> the floor is a perfect level . . . the planks joined so close that a pin could not pass between them . . . the beams are . . . curiously carved, and so nicely fitted to the supporters that they appear as one piece of timber . . . the thatching is a most ingenious performance.[11]

Hockin records that McCluer was impressed by the Malligoyoke (Melekeok) pier, which was twelve feet high and fifteen feet wide, extending one mile from the shore to the outer reef. It was built "entirely with coral rocks piled ingeniously upon each other."[12] For Hockin this fine structure was indicative of the great acts of construction which, "even in a state of nature [Palauans] are capable of performing, when they call forth and exert their powers."[13]

McCluer's surprise appearance of 1791 greatly pleased Ibedul. His allies were suddenly more friendly and "even his enemies the Artingalls,

---

[11]John P. Hockin, A Supplement to the Account of the Pelew Islands (compiled from the journals of the Panther and Endeavour, London: W. Bulmer and Co., 1803), pp. 20-21.

[12]Ibid., p. 40.

[13]Ibid.

would come and intreat him for peace."[14] Ibedul perceived McCluer as a distinguished leader who should be recognized as such in Palauan terms (the given). Thus, McCluer was invested with the Order of the Bone (English phrase), which involved the ceremonious placement of a bone bracelet on McCluer's wrist.[15]

Within a few weeks time, the English recognized Palau's existing power structure. They noted that the largest island in Palau, Babeldaob, consisted of numerous districts. The largest one, Artingall, had its capital in Malligoyoke (Melekeok) "where their King resides, whom they style Ericli [Reklai], and who is constantly in hostility with Abba Thulle [Ibedul]."[16] The various districts allied themselves to either Reklai or Ibedul. In English terms, Ibedul was an independent prince "generally at war with the king of Artingall to preserve that independence."[17]

These wars, as Amasa Delano, a crew member wrote, were based on rules different from those of England. Ibedul sent notice to Reklai of his intention to attack. Arriving near Melekeok early one Saturday morning, he sent a messenger with terms of accommodation and requested that his English allies fire their muskets one by one to demonstrate the power Ibedul had available. In response, a war canoe carrying four of

---

[14]Ibid., p. 26.

[15]Captain Wilson had received this honor when he left Palau in 1783. The bone used for this investiture of high rank was one of three cervical vertebrae of a large sea mammal, the dugong.

[16]Hockin, A Supplement to the Account of the Pelew Islands, p. 32.

[17]Ibid.

Reklai's chiefs came out to meet Ibedul. After a conference, beads were offered but Ibedul refused them, pointing to the boats filled with armed Englishmen. The remainder of the day was taken up with leadership consultations and negotiations, during which Ibedul made several shows of English fire power. This included the visit of a troop of English officers and seapoys (Indian soldiers in service to the East India Company) to the main Melekeok village. They displayed precise military maneuvers and gave a weapons demonstration, all to the delight of five hundred Koror warriors. One of the Reklai's generals sent an invitation to two of McCluer's officers in a clear attempt at infiltration and possible assassination. Ibedul remained with his men on the beach at Melekeok all night. The next morning he requested that English cannon and arms be landed in between discussions with Reklai's emissaries. Finally Reklai capitulated, agreeing to receive Ibedul and pay the price for peace. In silence and ceremony

> the chief [Reklai] gave into the hand of a rupack [respected elder or ranking chief] a bead, which he very carefully inclosed in his hands, and then moved slowly towards Ibedul, with his body bent, as is usual on approaching the King; he said something in a low tone of voice, that seemed to meet the approbation of the assembly; he then appeared to be in the act of presenting this bead, and Ibedul on the point of receiving it, when he suddenly drew back his hands, and asked if so rich a present did not entitle the bearer some reward; the King immediately gave him a China bead of second size; as soon as the rupack had received it, and not till then, he, with great solemnity, resigned the rich present to the hands of Ibedul, who made a motion to retire.[18]

---

[18] Ibid., p. 43.

This was an important exchange of Palauan money, which itself is of foreign origin. English arms had forced the Reklai to sue for peace. The price was his most precious piece of Palauan money, "a stone of yellow color, in length about two inches, in depth or thickness one inch or more, formed like a wedge, with two holes at the base."[19] Through an ingenious combination of negotiating skill and threat of defeat, Ibedul had won Artingall's submission and the position as "superior rupack of all Pelew islands."[20]

Concerning the indigenous religion, the English noticed that each chief had a small detached building near his house which functioned as a place of worship and that "Uckaleeth, a kind of religious man . . . held in very high esteem particularly one residing at . . . Iry (Airai)."[21] Ibedul consulted with the great prophet of Iry prior to his "war" on Artingall described above.

The Panther and Endeavour left Palau in June 1791 and returned eighteen months later. During the interim, Ibedul, whom McCluer had allied with, died. Intervillage warfare broke out again, turning Palau into a "state of oppression and mutual distrust . . . the people were gloomy and wretched."[22]

---

[19] Ibid., p. 44.

[20] Ibid.

[21] Ibid., p. 32.

[22] Amasa Delano, Narrative of Voyages and Travels as quoted in F.X. Hezel and M.L. Berg, eds., Winds of Change (Saipan, Mariana Islands: Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, 1979), p. 85.

Whalers from America

The first Americans came to Palau on the whaleship Mentor, which ran aground on shoals north of Kayangel in May 1832. The Mentor's captain, Edward C. Barnard, wrote an account of his six months stay on northern Babeldaob sometime during the period 1833-1837. Given contact of islander and voyager since 1783, any visiting foreigner was perceived by Palauans as a potential power source. It was culturally inevitable, therefore, that Barnard and his men got caught up in the political machinations of the rival Babeldaob and Youldaob confederations. The political realities of this situation, which Barnard soon recognized, together with the mistreatment and taunting the whalers experienced in getting to land, destroyed any utopian visions Barnard may have had about the Palauans.[23] Unable to speak Palauan and unfamiliar with island culture, Barnard's account, only recently re-discovered in 1979, contains some useful ethnographic type observations of Palauan institutions of the early 19th century.[24]

The only observation Barnard made of traditional education was an indirect one. He commented that "the best workmen in the nation" were set the task of building a canoe for the whaler's departure.

---

[23] Barnard knew of Keate's account of Wilson's three month stay on Palau. Edward C. Barnard, Naked and A Prisoner, edited, notes and introduction by Kenneth R. Martin (Sharon, Mass.,: The Kendall Whaling Museum, 1980), p. 9.

[24] At the time of the Mentor's grounding, there were three Englishmen living in Palau. Charles Washington befriended Barnard and his crew and served as interpreter for the Babeldaob chiefs. Washington had been in Palau for nearly thirty years. George and Dick (last names unknown), the other two Englishmen, were retained by Ibedul to serve as culture brokers during times of foreign contact. George had been in Palau since 1807 and Dick since 1822. All three men were fluent in the Palauan language.

Concerning Palauan religion, Barnard made several interesting observations.[25] He noticed that the Babeldaob chiefs never made any important decisions "without first consulting with their Priestess."[26] In the middle of the priestess' hut

> were four posts forming an oblong square about four and six feet apart. Between these she would place herself . . . a curtain of mats was drawn round to screen her from the gaze of the visitors. In about five minutes she would begin to deliver her message as she received it from her gods. At times a few questions were asked. Payment was always made on the spot, generally a glass bead or a piece of stone resembling brimstone.[27]

Barnard observed something McCluer had seen forty years earlier, "a box called Ocilath Plye, or God's house."[28] Barnard noted that Palauans had a mythology for explaining the origin of life, sun, moon, and other natural objects and phenomena. In what might have been their first experience with a Catholic priest, Palauan chiefs instructed a visiting Spanish ship's captain that the priest aboard "must quit that [evening mass] or leave the place as they [the Palauans] were about to bewitch them."[29]

Ever since English arms assisted Ibedul gain ascendency over his political rivals in Artingall, every new group of foreign visitors was

---

[25] I define religion broadly as a system of beliefs and practices concerned with un-seen forces that are assumed to enter human affairs, and containing a priesthood that mediates between the human and spiritual worlds.

[26] Barnard, Naked and A Prisoner, p. 20.

[27] Ibid.

[28] Ibid., p. 29.

[29] Ibid., p. 30.

perceived as a source of further military power. Hoping to gain some of that power or at least prevent Ibedul from acquiring more, the Babeldaob chiefs extended nearly every courtesy to the whalers keeping in reserve a promise that the whalers "should have wives . . . if they refused to go" with Ibedul's men.[30] Ibedul sent his trusted culture broker, George, to see the Babeldaob chiefs and attempt to negotiate a transfer of the whalers to Koror's jurisdiction. The chiefs, of course, refused. Barnard believed that he and his men had become but pawns in a long standing regional power struggle. "The two parties were on the eve of a war relative to us. One had us and wished to keep us; the other wished to get us. We were mere articles of barter amongst them as it soon proved."[31] Barnard did not realize it, but he and his men were far more than mere articles of barter. They were, potentially, the source of great power that could quickly alter Palau's political structure.

During these negotiations, Barnard recognized that the Babeldaob chiefs formed a hierarchy and that the Koror chief who accompanied George used the political tactic of making non-negotiable demands, a tactic, by the way, which continues to be used by Palauan negotiators today. Barnard reported that after an all day negotiating session, the Babeldaob chiefs temporarily settled the affair by making a payment of Palauan money to Koror. It is unlikely that it was such a prized piece as was paid during McCluer's time.

In exchange for six months of gracious hospitality and protection from hostile enemies extended to the whalers, the Babeldaob chiefs asked

---

[30] Ibid., p. 21.

[31] Ibid., p. 22.

for a repayment of two hundred muskets and forty boxes of powder. Captain Barnard's word was sufficient to seal the agreement. The Babeldaob chiefs knew of McCluer's 1791 gift of muskets to Ibedul so they fully expected Barnard to deliver muskets to them some time in the future. As insurance, three whalers remained in Palau and three islanders, two of whom were chiefs, left with the whalers in November 1832. Presumably, the departing chiefs were to return with the highly desired weapons.

A final and important piece of ethnohistorical information that can be extracted from Barnard's account is that of village autonomy. The Mentor's captain had to agree that the muskets be equitably divided among the eight Babeldaob villages which had contributed food, money and labor to the hosting and protection of the whalers.[32]

A 'Tricky' Trader Meets His Death

Some eleven years after the Mentor incident, Andrew Cheyne, a Scotsman, began an intermittent trading relationship with Palau that began in the early 1840s and ended tragically some twenty years later. Cheyne was part of an outburst of private trading activity, chiefly British and American, that flourished prior to European colonization. Throughout the Micronesian and Melanesian islands from Macao in China to Sydney, Australia, Cheyne traded for sandlewood, trepang (sea cucumber), tortoise shell, coral, sharks' fins and edible birds' nest, mainly for the China market. As with earlier visitors to Palau, Cheyne's first

---

[32] Ibid., p. 26.

alliance was with Ibedul of Koror. Over the years Cheyne traded away many muskets in Palau. Through this activity he became deeply involved with the chiefs of both Koror and Babeldaob and this, in the end, led to his assassination. For this reason he is an interesting figure in Palau's post-contact history.

In meetings with Ibedul during his first visit of 1843, Cheyne learned that Koror and Artingall were unfriendly rivals.[33] As an earlier Ibedul had used McCluer's firepower to win Artingall's submission in 1791, the present Ibedul invited Reklai and his chiefs to witness a nine-gun salute aboard Cheyne's ship, Naiad. They were so impressed, Cheyne wrote, that "on the sly" they offered a ship full of trepang in exchange for muskets and powder.[34] The competition for political preeminence in Palau was never ending. Intrigue, manipulation and surprise were acceptable political practices. Each confederation leader passionately desired the prestige and military power foreign guns could bestow.

Cheyne's first visit to Palau lasted nearly one month (July 18 - August 13, 1843) during which time he established trepang curing operations on Malakal and Babeldaob. He left several men to oversee these operations along with various trade goods, including forty new muskets and twenty kegs of gun powder. After a nine month trip through Micronesia

---

[33]Cheyne's interpreter was an American, John Davey, who had been shipwrecked near Palau in 1834. Cheyne does not mention either George or Dick, who served as trusted culture brokers for the Mentor's whalers some eleven years earlier. Tetens wrote that Davey married an island woman and everywhere was considered a Palauan.

[34]Dorothy Shineberg, ed., The Trading Voyages of Andrew Cheyne 1841-1844, (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1971), p. 239.

and to the Solomon islands, Cheyne returned to Palau only to find that his men had done little to advance the trepang trade. He concluded that competing traders out of Manila were the cause of this failure. The only solution was to establish a monopoly, which Cheyne did by persuading Ibedul to sell him Malakal island adjacent to the deep water port. Unfortunately Cheyne did not record what he paid Ibedul for this valuable real estate. Most likely payment involved a considerable number of muskets and powder.

After a long absence, Cheyne was back in Palau in 1859. His monopoly position had been taken by an elderly trader from Tasmania, Captain Edward Woodin, who had been trading for trepang in Palau during Cheyne's absence. To re-establish his monopoly, Cheyne prepared three documents: "A Treaty of Commerce," a "Constitution of the Pelew Islands," and a petition requesting that Britain "take the Pelew Islands under the protectorate of the crown . . . and to assist them to disarm the rebellious districts."[35] These documents, signed by the Ibedul, two of his chiefs and Cheyne, were presented to the commander of the H.M.S. Sphinx by Ibedul dressed in a Spanish naval uniform! Prior to these arrangements, Captain Woodin and his assistant, Peter Johnson, established relations with Ngabuked (at the time a powerful area north of Artingall) and provided the warriors with muskets. Ngabuked was thus able to defeat Koror in a minor battle. On this basis Cheyne was able to convince Lt. Brown of the Sphinx to assist Ibedul put down the rebels. Armed men from the Sphinx went to Ngabuked,

---

[35]From Cheyne's petition to the British Secretary of State. The full text of this petition is contained in Hezel and Berg, eds., Winds of Change, p. 343.

were fired on, and, in retaliation, burned all the houses in the area, including Woodin's property. After this incident nothing came of the cession petition. However, the hostile action of the H.M.S. Sphinx heightened the rivalry between Ngabuked and Koror. This escalation was due in no small part to Cheyne's involvement.

For the next six years Cheyne's Palauan empire waxed and waned. He had bought some ten thousand acres of land which were planted with sugar, coffee, cotton, bananas and indigo. He had a fleet of trepang collecting boats, controlled the export of this valuable resource, and owned two sea-going ships.[36] However, Cheyne never established a friendly or trusting relationship with either the men he left to supervise his activities or Ibedul and his chiefs. Cheyne was too much a businessman and not enough a culture broker to succeed in Palau for long. By 1865 he was completely disenchanted with his alliance with Ibedul and began trading with the Artingall people. It was muskets and powder for trepang. Cheyne was attempting to play off Reklai against Ibedul. In this he was bound to lose. Angered by this clear case of treachery and treasonous intrigue, the Koror chiefs plotted Cheyne's death. As soon as he returned from a trading run to Manila in early 1866, Cheyne was "lured from his house near the beach, and there strangled and beaten on the head and breast with a stone until he died."[37] Karl Semper, a German zoologist in Palau during the early 1860s, corroborates this account.[38] A different version of

---

[36] Shineberg, ed., The Trading Voyages of Andrew Cheyne 1841-1844, p.22.

[37] Ibid., p. 24.

[38] Karl G. Semper, Die Palau-Inseln im Stillen Ocean [The Palau Islands in the Quiet Ocean] (Leipzig: F.A. Brockhaus, 1873), p. 181. This book was translated by anonymous. The English language version is located in the Palau Museum Library, Koror, Palau.

Cheyne's death is provided in an oral history account by Ngiraklang Malsol, a renowned Palauan historian. According to Ngiraklang, Cheyne had taken a Palauan lover. When the woman's husband learned about the infidelity, he stole aboard Cheyne's ship and killed the trader.[39]

In contrast to all the other foreign voyagers who had remained loyal to one leader or the other, Cheyne's ambition and cultural insensitivity had brought his tragic end.

Tetens the Trader-General

While Cheyne made few observations of Palauan culture, Alfred Tetens, whom Cheyne hired in 1861 or 1862, spent many months in Palau and reported some glimpses of indigenous institutions.

In his memoirs, Tetens nearly always refers to islanders as savages. He is generally boastful and condescending in his descriptions of Palauan activities and institutions. It seems that a curious mixture of the two earlier images of island man had emerged. Islanders, in Tetens' view, existed in a simpler state "content with what Nature provided, unaware of the struggle for existence, and who had no anxiety for the coming day."[40] Tetens' "savages" were uncivilized people, non-Europeans, who occupied various stages or planes of cultural development in relation to the highest stage--European culture. The Sonsorolese, for Tetens, were "on a

---

[39]Palau Community Action Agency, A History of Palau, 3 vols. (Koror: Palau Community Action Agency, 1976-78), 2:178.

[40]Alfred Tetens, Among the Savages of the South Seas, trans. Florence Mann Spoehr (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1958), pp. 7-8.

still lower cultural plane than those of Palau or Yap as evidenced by their complete lack of clothing."[41] This 19th century view of man, what social theorists came to call the social evolutionary paradigm, was to persist for nearly a century spanning Spanish, German, Japanese and American administrations. Buttressed by the theories of Darwin and Haeckel and popularized by Herbert Spencer, this image became the "scientific" view of contemporary primitives.

Recognizing the influence of this view in Tetens' writing, it is still possible to see, through his eyes, aspects of Palauan culture. Tetens, for instance, noticed that each Palauan had

> his guardian spirit; one worships the flying fox, another the dove, and a third the snake or some particular kind of fish. He does not pray to the animals or make sacrifices to them; he may even kill them, but must never eat them.[42]

Despite the conceptual overburden of social evolution, Tetens recognized a completely different notion of religion. Further, Ibedul's sister, Toguok, was Tetens' housekeeper. She refused, Tetens wrote, to eat with knife and fork on the premise that the gods in heaven do just as the Palauans do, making it unnecessary for her to change.[43]

When Ibedul finally told Tetens about Cheyne's murder, he did so in religious terms: Kann [God] had freed us from the evil Fonoie-yann [spirit].[44]

---

[41] Ibid., p. 57.

[42] Ibid., p. 4.

[43] Ibid., p. 33.

[44] Ibid., p. 62.

Tetens noticed that Palauans were wonderfully skilled "in diving and capturing the inhabitants of the sea in numberless ways."[45] Even small boys were extremely adept at spearfishing. The transmission of important skills and knowledge was embedded in the dynamics of everyday living. Palauan education did not depend on words in books. The spoken word was sufficient. Toguok, Tetens wrote, was well informed in the history of her people and gave him "detailed explanations of their way of life."[46]

Like other voyagers before him, Tetens was impressed by the Palauan canoe . . . "graceful and slender, decorated with shells and inlays of mother-of-pearl, and painted red."[47] Not only were Palauans excellent seamen, but the design of the canoe, Tetens concluded, was among the best in the whole Pacific.[48]

Although Cheyne interfered in Palauan politics and paid his life for it, he did not become actively involved in inter-village warfare. Tetens, I believe, was tricked into assisting Ibedul in a war with his traditional enemy, Artingall. On his second visit to Palau since Cheyne's murder in 1866, Tetens was informed that nine of his friends, men who had previously worked for him, had been brutally killed or severely wounded by Artingall men. Most likely this was a fabrication or part fabrication. Ibedul and his chiefs were greatly impressed by Tetens as a determined person, but

---

[45] Ibid., p. 33.

[46] Ibid., p. 81.

[47] Ibid., p. 58.

[48] Ibid.

more so with his ship full of muskets and trade goods. Further, as the leading chief of Youldaob, the various Ibeduls had for nearly a century been using foreign arms to reaffirm and strengthen their political position vis-a-vis Babeldaob. Tetens was expected as a friend to assist even though it might take a bit of trickery to get him to realize he had a reciprocal social obligation.

Like others before him, Tetens was surprised at the "civilized" nature of Palauan warfare--notice of intent to attack was given, pre-battle negotiations were held in an attempt to work out a peaceful settlement, and there was an abhorrence of total victory through mass slaughter. Tetens misinterpreted the latter as fear and timidity. Though Ibedul's forces won the battle, Tetens left Palau with a bullet in his thigh.

Intervention by Men-of-War Captains

Prior to formal Spanish annexation of Palau in 1885, British warship captains intervened in Palauan political affairs on several occasions. About a decade after the visit of H.M.S. Sphinx noted above, Commander Stevens of the warship H.M.S. Perseus arrived in Palau in 1867 to investigate Cheyne's death. Stevens interviewed several Koror chiefs concerning the circumstances surrounding the incident and concluded Ibedul was responsible. Stevens ordered that Ibedul be executed by his own followers. A high chief was shot through the heart and killed. The record is not clear whether the executed man was in fact Ibedul or Rechucher, another chief.

One century after Captain Henry Wilson assisted Ibedul subdue his rivals in Artingall, Captain Cyprian Bridge of the British man-of-war

Espiegle came to Palau to end the most recent round of civil strife that had developed between Babeldaob and Youldaob. It began in 1880 when a trading ship belonging to David O'Keefe ran aground on the reef near Melekeok. The islanders imprisoned the sailors and the ship was stripped by Melekeok and Ngarchelong people. Ibedul paid a ransom of Palauan money to free the sailors and in 1881 and 1882 visiting warship captains attempted to settle the issue of the plundered cargo. The initial visit of the H.M.S. Lily was unsuccessful because of a secret Koror-Ngarchelong alliance that resulted in a grossly unfair fine being levied on Reklai. The Lily returned the next year in the company of a second ship, H.M.S. Comus. When captains East and Evans realized that Reklai refused to pay full damages, British sailors landed at Melekeok and Ngchesar, destroyed the villages, and dynamited fourteen grand bai.[49] The two factions were on the verge of civil war when the Espiegle arrived in August 1883. With the assistance of Johann Kubary, a European ethnologist who could speak Palauan and was familiar with the history of the latest dispute, Captain Cyprian Bridge met jointly with Ibedul and Reklai, resolved the issue and had the two chiefs sign a treaty of peace.

> We the undersigned, Chiefs of the Palao Islands, on this Eleventh day of August, A.D. 1883, do hereby solemnly agree to give up our old standing quarrels, to make peace with one another, and to preserve it for the future. We also undertake to use every effort to prevent our people from committing murders or other acts of aggression, either on each other or foreigners.[50]

---

[49] Hezel and Berg, eds., Winds of Change, p. 350.

[50] Ibid., p. 351.

Bridge and Kubary had hit on the ideal solution. Reklai's fine in agricultural and marine products was reduced to a level he could and did pay. The two chiefs had the distinction of meeting aboard the Espiegle. Ibedul had boarded at Koror, sailing to Melekeok where Reklai came aboard. This arrangement was of great symbolic importance, for while both leaders had the distinction of meeting aboard the foreign man-of-war, Ibedul appeared to have a slightly higher distinction. Further, neither chief had to pay out pieces of their much prized Palauan money and both signed the treaty of peace. Signature conferred prestige on both leaders while risking no loss. The given and constructed had merged. Debilitating conflict, which since Wilson's time had involved greater and greater use of fire arms, was finally put to an end.

Summary

Foreign glimpses of Palauan institutions during the century 1783-1883 are indeed sketchy. Nearly every voyager was invited onto the island of Palauan politics. Wilson, McCluer, the Mentor whalers, Cheyne, Tetens and man-of-war captains became involved in the political machinations of the Babeldaob and Youldaob leaders. In this dynamic of structure and person, of the given and constructed, traditional balances were upset and new relationships established, temporary though they may have been. What is outstanding about this pre-annexation period is that in the cross cultural education that took place, stranger learned from islander.

Visitors were impressed with the functional beauty of Palauan artifacts--war canoes, bai, piers--and by the exceptional skill of Palauan

fishermen. While these observers did not identify a cultural island of education as a distinct institution, 19th century Palauans no doubt had a systematic method of transmitting important skills, knowledge, and values from the older to the younger.

Foreign voyagers witnessed a Palauan island of religion exhibiting guardian spirits, ill omens, future-telling, priests and priestesses, a mythology, and a strong identification with the gods. While the numerous foreign visitors did not attempt to re-make the island of religion, this was to change with the coming of the Catholic Capuchin priests in 1891. The stranger in long robes would bring a new and foreign island of meaning. But would the Palauans accept?

CHAPTER IV

OLD GODS AND NEW: THE NEW ISLAND OF CHURCHES

> A woman I know claims to be a messenger of many gods. Jesus Christ for her is a Palauan god equal to the others. She has a small sanctuary in her home with a picture of Christ, red material, leaves and a few other things.
>
> Anonymous Palauan informant
> Koror, Palau, November 1980

Introduction

The indigenous Palauan religion described by Johann Kubary in 1883 was a systematic and pervasive world view rich in ancestral spirits and gods of nature.[1] Much of this metaphysic was synthesized in an educational-political act with Catholic symbolism and basic doctrine to form Modekngei, Palau's early 20th century revitalization movement.

Against the background of indigenous religion and in response to it, Spanish Capuchin priests labored "not only to convert the natives to the Catholic faith, but also to make Palau a real Spanish land."[2] Unlike a

---

[1]For the purpose of this study, religion is defined broadly as a system of beliefs and practices concerned with an un-seen force that is assumed to enter human affairs, and containing a priesthood that mediates between the human and spiritual worlds.

[2]Fr. Antonio de Valencia to mission superior, 1891. Quoted in F.X. Hezel, "Indigenization as a Missionary Goal in the Caroline and Marshall Islands," in Mission, Church, and Sect in Oceania, eds. J. Boutilier, D.T. Hughes and S.W. Tiffany (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1978), p. 257.

century of earlier visitors, the Capuchins were Palau's first agents of sociocultural change. In this work they met formidable cultural resistance and were ineffective as cross cultural educators because Palau's cultural boundaries functioned as barriers to the diffusion of new religious teachings.

German priests were equally unsuccessful at dismantling Palauan barriers of resistance to the new island of religious meaning. The priests, however, allied with the native chiefs and both groups supported the suppression of rebellious shamans by German police authority in 1906.

Although the Japanese colonizers made no concerted effort at winning over Palauans to Tenrikyo, Buddhism or State Shinto, Palauans, it seems, were the religious experimenters. The Modekngei, however, viewed the Japanese program of "modernization" as culturally threatening and were, in return, repressed just as the shamans had been some years earlier. During this same period, Japanese authorities followed a liberal policy concerning Christianity, allowing the Catholics, Liebenzell Lutherans and Seventh-Day Adventists to establish missions to aid in the civilizing of "backward" people.

After the Pacific War, the Catholics, Lutherans and Seventh-Day Adventists established schools--something Japanese authorities never allowed--and strengthened their presence in Palau. In recent years the Jehovah Witnesses and Mormons have entered Palau and claimed to be teachers of religious truth. Despite dedicated and persistent evangelization, these new churches have yet to win over very many to their version of Christianity.

Palau's Indigenous Religion

Three years prior to the 1886 visit of the Spanish war transport Manila to Palau to establish Spanish sovereignty, Jan Kubary completed a comprehensive study of the indigenous Palauan religion.[3] Kubary's work, which was completed in Melekeok in 1883, is invaluable because it describes Palauan religion prior to the coming of the Catholic priests and the later intrusive influence of foreign cultures.

Kubary's patron, Johann Godeffroy, had a passionate interest in ethnography and hired the young 24 year old political exile, Kubary, as collector and ethnologist for the Godeffroy Museum.[4] While Kubary spent nearly 25 years in Oceania, he never shook off the social evolutionary paradigm current in 19th century European thinking. The extent to which this paradigm colored Kubary's keen sense of ethnological observation is difficult to assess. He gave the theory perhaps one of its clearest statements when he wrote that Palauan religion was based on the crudest form of empiricism and rested "on the total experience of various cultures gathered from various stages of development, an experience assimilated to

---

[3]Jan S. Kubary, "Die Religion der Palauer," Allerlei aus Volks-und Menschenkunde, ed. A. Bastian (Berlin, Germany: E.S. Mittler, 1888): 3-67. This article was translated into English under the title, "The Religion of the Palauans," by the Micronesian Seminar, Woodstock College, Maryland, 1969. All further references shall be to the English translation, which is 40 pages long.

[4]Born in Warsaw of a German mother and Hungarian father, Kubary became involved in the Polish independence movement of the 1860s and was forced to flee to Germany when he broke parole. He spent most of the rest of his life in Oceania and married a Ponapean woman who bore him two children. At age 50, he committed suicide in Ponape, where he is buried.

a greater or lesser degree. If this entire store of experience were revealed to us, it would disclose the past of these peoples beyond any doubt."[5] However, having made this claim in the introductory passage, Kubary makes but two short references to it again in his description of the indigenous or pre-Modekngei Palauan religion.[6]

Kubary described a Palauan world view that was rich with gods, spirits and deities. These non-material forces which entered men's lives were ancestral spirits or gods of nature. They could be kind, mischievous or malicious. A class of religious specialists mediated between the other worldly forces and men, thereby providing means for dealing with the underlying uncertainties of daily living.

For Palauans the visible world of men was controlled, even dominated, by the invisible world of gods and spirits. Bladek were ancestral spirits who would not harm family or clan members. These spirits could be called upon through the medium of a conjurer on special occasions such as when an important decision was to be made, serious family illness, or death. Many activities at funeral ceremonies (kameldijl) concerned communication with the ancestral spirits.[7]

Adalbengel is the term used for the concept of soul in living man. Adalep is a person's spirit after death. Kubary reported that adalep

---

[5]Kubary, "The Religion of the Palauans," p. 1.

[6]Modekngei meaning "being together now in unity" developed as a resistance movement during the early Japanese (1914-1945) colonial administration in Palau. Modekngei began as a syncretic movement, as a search for a more satisfying cultural order and derived many of its basic forms, some of which will be identified later in this Chapter, from its precursor.

[7]Kubary, "The Religion of the Palauans," p. 5.

hastened at night to the invisible land of Ngadalok (Ngedloch) located at the southern most end of the island of Peleliu.[8] Kubary wrote as if adalep became bladek.

Unnatural or sudden deaths, as in childbirth or suicide, required the services of a conjurer at the burial. Otherwise the spirit would wander as an alien and disturb the living.[9] In addition to the conjurer, whose art was a business and thus intimately linked to the flow of Palauan money, ancestral spirits had a priest who was the head of the family.[10] The bladek had a dwelling place in the family house where members kept their movable (presumably valuable) possessions.

In addition to ancestral spirits, gods called chelid (kalit in the German documents) entered human affairs in myriad ways. The gods would avenge any transgression against themselves, their priests or their property (shrine). The priests (korong) or priestesses (korong el dil) spoke for their god and practiced, for compensation, the secret art of charm-making and charm-breaking. Kubary noted that chelid priests were especially active in warfare and other political affairs, as noted by McCluer and Barnard (Chapter Three). Chelid priests were expected to divine the future, particularly as regards political plans. Further, priests represented the social position of their god and as such were

---

[8]Palauans today say that Ngedloch is located on Angaur, an island some five miles south of Peleliu. If Kubary was correct in 1883, then perhaps Ngedloch was moved in response to the desecration and occupation of Peleliu by foreign armies during the Pacific War in Palau.

[9]Kubary, "The Religion of the Palauans," p. 6.

[10]Ibid.

"treated as chieftains or placed ahead of the real ones even if they themselves are not chiefs."[11]

Chelid priests judged the value of money, got a share of the booty acquired via intervillage warfare and were allowed to engage in innovative or unorthodox behavior. At the time of his research, Kubary maintained that a chelid cult or hero cult was a recent development which "did not suppress elements of the older religion but grew out of it."[12] The powerful cultural position of chelid priest would be threatened by foreign priests, administrators and doctors (see pages 62-67).

The chelids were both family and clan gods. Therefore there were as many gods as families and clans. Kubary stated that the god of a main or highest ranking clan became the principal deity of a collection of clans that formed a village. In this way a hierarchy was established. Kubary listed the principal territorial gods of some seventy-six villages in Palau. There was some duplication from village to village; for instance the male god Kwodol (Chuodel) was, according to Kubary, the chief deity of seven separate villages. The village deities were political gods whose cult formed the external social religion. The village deity guided the affairs of the village and was consulted in cases of disease or misfortune when the family gods and bladeks could not help.[13] The village god had a shrine-like house located near the chiefs' bai (meeting house):

> At certain times offerings are put into it, as when the community goes fishing and plans [ceremonies]

---

[11] Ibid.

[12] Ibid., p. 16.

[13] Ibid., p. 13.

> . . . From time to time the shrine is provided with a new roof and draped with dangling coconut leaves. Similar but somewhat smaller shrines to the family gods are usually erected close to dwellings.[14]

In addition to the professions of conjurer and priest, the pre-Modekngei Palauan religion had soothsayers, who were well paid and carefully guarded their secret knowledge. Kubary listed twenty-seven separate ways for predicting future events.

Daily life was dominated by a multiplicity of chelids inhabiting the earth, forest, hills and sea, and which were generally regarded as malicious and dangerous. Palauans believed that most diseases were caused by these gods of nature. Therefore the gods had to be appeased before a person could be cured or venture on a new activity. Appeasement was accomplished by a magician, a person who possessed specialized knowledge and magic power (golay) of certain formulas and incantations. Possession of this power was lucrative and therefore jealously guarded. It was disclosed by a practitioner only to a son or close relative shortly before the magician's death. According to Kubary, the chelids of nature were so pervasive and potent that this part of the Palauan religion had "a much more powerful influence on the disposition of the inhabitants than the political religion of the territorial gods who did not concern themselves with the details of daily life."[15]

Kubary stated that there were "countless magicians, seers, conjurers and fortune-tellers who had been peacefully accepted by the priests."[16]

---

[14] Ibid., p. 22.

[15] Ibid., p. 32.

[16] Ibid., p. 39.

These men, though not chelid priests, had specialized medical or spiritual knowledge and thus played an important role in Palauan culture prior to and even into the period of extensive foreign influence.

Spanish Catholics

Although Spanish Capuchin priests visited Palau in 1886 and 1890, it was not until their letters describing Palau as a field ripe for mission work reached Church authorities in Manila that a permanent station was authorized for Palau. At that time Spanish headquarters for the Western Caroline Islands was in Yap. Departing there in April 1891 came four Capuchin missionaries: Padre Antonio de Valencia, Padre Luis de Granada, Brother Oton de Ochovi and Brother Joaquin de Masamagrell. These men represented both the government and Church of Catholic Spain and were deeply dedicated to the destruction of Palauan paganism. Padre Luis remained in Palau for 12 years and Brother Oton for seven. In later years three other Capuchin priests and three additional brothers came, staying from two to eleven years. Ibedul of Koror welcomed the missionaries and gave them an old bai, a portion of which they made into a chapel.[17]

In contrast to beachcombers like George Washington and John Davey, who lived in Palau for many years and integrated into Palauan society making no attempt at religious or other change, Fr. de Valencia announced that the Capuchins were bringing Palauans "a new teaching, a new way of life diametrically opposed to their old way."[18] The Capuchins thus became the first

---

[17] Palau Community Action Agency, A History of Palau, 2:184.

[18] Quoted in F.X. Hezel, "Spanish Capuchins in the Carolines" (part two), Micronesian Reporter 19, no. 3 (1971):39.

of many foreign educators who brought to Palau new islands of meaning. Padre de Valencia, who wrote about his one year stay in Palau, noted that meteet (high ranking people) were generous and hospitable but insisted that their children "must always be the first to receive instruction and baptism."[19]

It seems that the first Catholic church on Babeldaob was established at the most northern village complex of Ngarchelong. The missionaries' presence and declaration that they had come to instruct Palauans "in other and better customs" resulted in mistrust and cultural resistance. In response to this statement of cultural imperialism, the mission station at Ngarchelong was destroyed by the people there.[20] The Capuchins later re-established themselves at Melekeok in 1903 during the German administration (1899-1914).[21]

Kubary noted in 1883 that the chelid priests and various other religious practitioners were then very powerful and influential. Unfortunately available Spanish records contain no reference to Palauan resistance. Padre de Valencia, who spent only one year in Palau, believed that he and his mission brothers were tolerated because they were perceived as unusually strong. When the Capuchins assisted in an influenza outbreak, Palauans

---

[19] Hezel, "Spanish Capuchins in the Carolines" (part two), p. 40.

[20] Father John Bizkarra, S.J., personal interview, Koror, Palau, January 7, 1981.

[21] Here we have a conflict of sources. Hezel has written that the Melekeok station was founded in 1893 ["Spanish Capuchins in the Carolines" (part two), p. 39], but Lopinot claimed it was established a decade later ["The Caroline Mission of the Spanish and German Capuchins 1886-1919"]. The writer has decided to accept the later date since it is based on annual reports sent from Palau to Yap and then to Rome.

noticed that the strange foreigners did not become ill. This hardiness and mysterious immunity "impressed the Palauans much more than the Capuchins' kindness in attending to the needs of the sick."[22]

Vidich claims that the Capuchins were accepted because they first made contact with Palau's most important chiefs--Ibedul of Koror and Reklai of Melekeok--and gained their trust. This enabled them to work within the Palauan social framework.[23] The relation of the chiefs and the Capuchins was, in essence, a political one according to Vidich:

> . . . the chiefs and the Catholic priests quickly appraised the new situation and realized the benefits which each could give the other. The priests identified themselves with the groups of persons holding high prestige and power which enhanced the possibility of success for them; the native chiefs identified themselves with the representatives of a new religion--in their eyes a new kind of priest who supported rather than threatened their power.[24]

Vidich goes on to argue that with the backing of Ibedul, Reklai, and an occasional visit of a Spanish warship (the last of which came in 1894), the Capuchins were able to end intervillage warfare and blolobo (institutionalized concubinage). This reduced the circulation of Palauan money, thereby altering the statuses of the chiefs, native priests and young unmarried females.

Vidich's account of the Spanish missionary influence, while interesting, is more speculative than historical. He makes no reference to any

---

[22]Hezel, "Spanish Capuchins in the Carolines" (part two), p. 40.

[23]Vidich, "The Political Impact of Colonial Administration," p. 152.

[24]Ibid.

Spanish documents, has but one quotation from an informant, and generally ignores the element of native resistance which is clearly documented by later German authorities. Furthermore, Vidich fails to recognize that from 1891 to 1898 there were only seven Capuchins working in Palau (some of the priests stayed into the German period). From my own experience as a change agent in Palau during the 1970s, it seems doubtful that such a small band of missionaries staying for short periods could have ended both intervillage warfare and blolobo as Vidich claims. A close examination of the few historical documents available does not support this claim.

Writing some eight years before the Capuchins arrived in Palau, Kubary stated that large scale warfare involving only Palauans (no foreigners) ended about 1845. The 1882 dynamiting and burning of villages in Melekeok and Ngchesar by sailors of the Lily and Comus in response to the intervillage conflict which arose over O'Keefe's wrecked ship, must have left a deep impression on the Palauans. Further, the action of Captain Bridge in forging a treaty of peace between Ibedul and Reklai was crucial, Kubary wrote, because "the awe of the natives is so great for written matters and for the Angabarths, the whites, and particularly for their omagel a kath, the steam sailing vessels, as the warships are called, that years will certainly elapse before they relax."[25]

It seems clear then that warfare ended before the Capuchins' arrival in Palau, but that institutionalized concubinage extended into the German

---

[25] J.S. Kubary, "Ethnographische Beritrage zur Kenntnis der Karolinischen Inselgruppe und Nachbarschaft, I: Die Sozialen Einrichtungen der Pelauer [Contribution to the Ethnography of the Caroline Islands and Their Neighbors: The Social Institutions of the Palauans]" (Berlin, Germany: A. Asher and Co., 1885) in and translated by Human Relations Area Files, microfilm reel 6, item 1409, p. 141 [114].

period (1899-1914). One Palauan informant, a young boy during the 1890s, recalled that the priests "did not like Palauan men and women to stay in the bai together because it could create sin."[26] A German visitor to Palau in 1906 (probably Dr. Born, M.D.) stated that institutionalized concubinage was one of the main reasons for drastically decreased population size. Infected with venereal disease, many women were unable to bear children. The government therefore suppressed the custom in 1905 after it had established a constabulary and a permanent station on Koror.[27]

Not to be unfair, Vidich does admit that the native priests did not suddenly disappear, that Catholicism was not internalized to any significant extent, and that the Capuchins did not alter the basic cultural patterns which governed the functioning of the Palauan social system. Here Vidich has agreement from an elderly Palauan, Kemedaol Ngiruosech, who claimed that the Capuchins did not attempt to stop most of the customs and traditions practiced at the turn of the century. It seems clear then, that the first foreign island of new meaning and change to intrude into Palau did not, and could not, cover over the indigenous island of religion. It endured. The Capuchins were not very effective educators. Palau's cultural boundaries were barriers to the diffusion of new religious teachings.

---

[26] Rdechor of Ngarchelong Municipality, June 23, 1970, Palau Oral History Document, Palau Community Action Agency, Microfilm 5014, Hamilton Library, Honolulu, Hawaii, 1971.

[27] Anonymous (probably Born), "Die Palau-Inseln [The Palau Islands]," Deutsches Kolonialblatt XVIII (1907), in and translated by Human Relations Area Files, microfilm reel 9, item 1457, p. 288 [5].

The Firm German Hand

The territorial losses of the once great Spanish Empire became the gains of two ambitious new empires: Germany and the United States. The costs to Spain of the 1898 war with America were enormous. She either renounced claims to or sold her island possessions in the Caribbean and Pacific. Coming late onto the colonial scene and with a "ruthlessly aggressive attitude,"[28] the militaristic and imperialistic Germany of William II eagerly snatched up the Caroline and Mariana islands for $4.5 million in 1899.[29]

It was not until 1901 that Arno Senfft, the German District Officer stationed in Yap, visited Palau. He was impressed by what he saw--"the largest and most fruitful island group of his district."[30] Senfft appointed James Gibbons, then seventy-three years old, to be Germany's representative in Palau. Senfft then established a five man native police force to assist Gibbons.[31] These policemen, several of whom were

---

[28] W.H. McNeill, A World History, 3rd edition, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1979), p. 480.

[29] In the previous decade Germany had acquired the Marshall Islands, Nauru, and parts of Western Samoa and New Guinea.

[30] Palau Community Action Agency, A History of Palau, 2:194.

[31] James Gibbons was of Jamaican-English descent who, as an English sailor, jumped ship in Palau sometime in the 1860s. Senfft probably chose Gibbons because he could speak fluently in both English and Palauan and was highly respected. James' son, William, served as Augustin Kramer's chief assistant for his monumental five volume study of Palau. James' grandson, Charlie, who at 88 is Palau's famous artist, served as a policeman during Japanese administration and as an interpreter for the U.S. Navy immediately after the Pacific War in Palau. In January 1982 the National Educational Association completed a documentary film on the life and work of Charlie Gibbons.

Palauan, were brought by Senfft from Yap where they had been trained. After much prodding, Senfft was able to get a sufficient number of Palauan recruits to go to Yap, for constabulary and administrative training. All the recruits, Senfft noted, were sons or close relatives of the Koror chiefs.[32] The socially high ranking Palauans were receptive to German education. As the Capuchins noted earlier, the meteet (elite) were quick to dominate all opportunities for acculturation, recognizing it as an important way to preserve their social preeminence.

Senfft made no mention of the five Spanish Capuchin missionaries other than as a count in his census. The latter gave a total of 3,748 native Palauans and 75 foreigners, of which there were 43 Chamorros and 23 Japanese.

That Palau was still very much dominated by traditional religious authority is evident from Senfft's announcement that he would not tolerate any form of opposition from practitioners of the traditional religion. Apparently he did not realize that there were several different types of religious practitioners, all of whom were important in Palau's economic system, because he identified only the chelid priests as particularly troublesome. Senfft "warned the sorcerers (Kalith), who exert a great influence, not to work against the administration, under threat of banishment. The Kalith extort a great deal of money from the superstitious natives."[33] Here were two radically different islands of cultural

---

[32]Arno Senfft, "Uber einen Besuch der Palau-Inseln [About a Visit to the Palau Islands]," Deutsches Kolonialblatt XIII (1902), in and translated by Human Relations Area Files, microfilm reel 9, item 1367, p. 263 [2].

[33]Ibid.

perception coming into direct confrontation, making cross cultural education difficult if not impossible. This tension was to persist through to the post-Pacific War period.

Although the German Senfft was suspicious of the chelid priests' activities, he was, on the other hand, much impressed by their decorative meeting houses (temples) which were located on the tops of hills in isolated areas of the interior. He had one such structure dismantled and shipped to Yap, from where it was sent to a museum in Germany.

While the chelid priests came under suspicion, the Capuchins expanded their mission work. Spanish workers were replaced by Germans in 1906-07. Over the period 1906-1913, seven German Capuchin priests, seven brothers and eleven Franciscan sisters came to Palau.[34] The Capuchins established a third mission station in Aimeliik to administer to the religious needs of the several hundred Sokehs rebels exiled there from Ponape by German military authorities.

The German Catholics established small schools in Koror and Melekeok. Ironically, two men, Temedad and Runguul, who were to become leaders of a syncretic local religious movement attended German school probably in Melekeok. In Koror, Aimeliik, and Melekeok, the Catholics had churches and separate houses for the priests and sisters. Mission property and quarters for teaching brothers existed in Airai and Ngiwal. Father Walleser was active in much of this construction activity. He also defined a Palauan orthography for the first time, and published the first Palauan language

---

[34]None of the German Capuchins stayed longer than six and a half years in Palau. Of the sisters, who first came in 1909, three stayed four years, which was the longest period of residence.

books--a catechism, a biblical history, a grammar, and a dictionary.[35] By 1914, Palau had 437 Catholics, 50-70 Protestants and over 4,000 heathen.[36]

These heathen continued to resist German authority. Senfft, on a visit to Palau in 1904, remarked that German authorities would, sooner or later, have to deal with "these magicians whose counsels have an influence on the population which must not be underestimated."[37]

It seems that Catholic symbolism had some impact on the chelid priests. In a visit to Ngkeklau (Angkaklau or Geklau) village in northern Babeldaob, Senfft noticed that the meeting house (temple) of a well known magician was painted red, white and black and had a cross on the front side.[38] The incorporation of the Catholic cross into the exterior decoration of a chelid temple is significant because it indicated a move toward religious syncretism. Senfft also noticed that the temple had crudely carved figures outside the windows of the second story. These, no doubt, represented the foreign intruders, for one had a high hat and "a mustache with the ends twisted up."[39] The chelid priest who owned these figures resided in Ngkeklau and was described by Senfft as having short hair and appearing uncanny.

---

[35] Rev. Callistus Lopinot, O.F.M. Cap., "The Caroline Mission of the Spanish and German Capuchins 1886-1919," (Rome: n.p., 1964), p. 38.

[36] Ibid.

[37] Arno Senfft, "Bericht Uber eine Reise nach den Palau-Inseln [Report from a Voyage to the Palau Islands]," Deutsches Kolonialblatt XVI (1905) in and translated by Human Relations Area Files, microfilm reel 6, item 1224, p. 50 [1].

[38] Ibid.

[39] Ibid.

As indicated in Chapter Three, Palauan culture is often characterized by fierce competition between rival groups. Prior to 1900, competition on the village level generally produced socially beneficial results--a new section of a stone path, a bai, and so on. This social energizing principle as well as the relation between elite-commoner and elite-korong changed in response to foreign influence.

In 1905 a German named Winkler (called Binkkelang by Palauans), a doctor, and a German Capuchin priest (three Spanish Capuchins then in Palau left in 1906 and 1907) established a permanent German presence in Palau.[40] In 1970, Winkler was still well remembered by older Palauans who experienced the German period.

> Winkler was a German who was very authoritarian so most of the Palauans were extremely afraid of him. This was due also to the fact that he was one of the very few "white skinned" persons in Palau then and the term chad era ngebard [man from the west] was synonymous with bravery and firmness.[41]

This assertive foreign authority came into direct conflict with the chelid priests. According to visiting German representatives, the chiefs were oppressive toward the commoners, the chelid priests threatened chiefly prerogatives and, finally, the chelid priests perceived the

---

[40] Winkler married a Palauan woman, Maria Ngeribongel, and remained in Palau until 1914. He died before the Second World War but Maria lived to be 85 and passed away in 1973. Her relatives in Palau held a wake for her soon after her death in October 1973.

[41] Kemedaol Ngiruosech, Palau Community Action Agency Oral History Document, microfilm 5014, Hamilton Library, Honolulu, 1971.

Germans as dangerous rivals.[42] This situation made some of the chiefs and the Germans logical allies against the chelid priests and their supporters. Indigenous religious leaders in Ngarchelong had been successful in expelling troublesome Spanish missionaries in the 1890s and it appears from two separate German accounts that they decided to overcome the foreign "devils" once again. Dr. Born, who was visiting Palau wrote:

> About Whitsuntide of the year 1906 the population of Ngarchelong, the northernmost district of Palau had been stirred up by some of the kalits. Already messengers had been dispatched to the powerful chiefs Araklai [Reklai] and Fibasule [Ibedul] to ask their permission for forceful action against the government. The spread of the movement was prevented merely by quick and energetic steps taken by the director of the station, who unexpectedly turned up in the revolutionary village and had his police force arrest the leaders of the rebels. Only the regular calls of the German cruiser and the continued jealousy of some of the clans stopped the situation from becoming serious.[43]

Winkler was able to take "quick and energetic steps" only because information of the plot was sent to him by the chief of Ngebuked, Mad (title).[44] Mad offered his men to Winkler but the German declined in order to avoid reviving old village feuds and to show that he with his native policemen could deal with the plotters.[45] Winkler destroyed the

---

[42]Born, "Die Palau-Inseln," Deutsches Kolonialblatt XVIII (1907) in and translated by Human Relations Area Files, microfilm reel 6, item 1221, p. 286 [1].

[43]Ibid.

[44]Coincidentally, when Mad was a younger man, he assisted the German zoologist Karl Semper with his research in Palau during the 1860s.

[45]Georg Fritz, Imperial District Administrator, Saipan, "Report on a Journey to Palau, Sonsorol, Tobi, 1906," p. 57, in and translated by Division of Land Management, Office of the High Commissioner, Saipan, Mariana Islands.

chelid temple, arrested the six ringleaders and exiled them to Yap.

Some months after the attempted rebellion, Georg Fritz, the Imperial District Administrator stationed at Saipan, visited Palau, investigated the incident again, and had the rebels transferred to his jurisdiction on Saipan where, he reported, they "will be occupied for some time in useful road construction and cultivation and thus, hopefully, lose soon their spiritual arrogance."[46]

Those chiefs associated with the German administration were pleased with the forceful action taken against the troublesome chelid priests. Their suppression enhanced the chiefs' position vis-a-vis both the priests and commoners. This partnership between the foreign authority and a group of local sympathizers to control indigenous religious leaders was further expanded during the Japanese period (1914-1945).

In 1906 Dr. Born, who reported on the attempted rebellion, met the well known chelid priest of Ngkeklau, Ardial (also Rdiall), whom Born described as "a brachiocephalic man with a very distinguished chiseled face, an intelligent but sly expression."[47] From a crumbling chelid temple in Ngkeklau, Dr. Born acquired several carved and painted figures. He thought the smaller dressed ones represented pregnant Palauan women and were useful in the priest's function of requesting the gods for an easy delivery. Two other figures Born acquired represented Europeans. He wrote:

---

[46] Ibid., p. 54.

[47] Anonymous (probably Born), "Die Palau-Inseln," p. 287 [5].

> The man about a meter tall was clad in a top hat, short black jacket, white trousers and large legs, while the woman's statue was naked and painted white . . . These two dolls were evidently connected with the political duty of the kalits to free Palau from the white usurpers, and they probably were used as fetishes during magic ceremonies.[48]

Unfortunately, Dr. Born did not identify the crumbling chelid temple as belonging to Ardial but Senfft saw the same carved figures two years earlier (p. 64) and described Ardial in terms very similar to those used by Born. It is highly likely, therefore, that the Germans believed the fetishes were part of Ardial's religious activities. Simply in his profession as chelid priest, he was considered a subversive individual by the Germans. His only saving grace was that he was not known to have been involved in the 1906 attempted rebellion.

Vidich reported that in about 1910 German officials, with the assistance of the missionaries (nine Capuchins and three sisters in Palau at that time) and a sympathetic Ibedul, launched a program oppressing the indigenous religion. This resulted in the destruction of shrines and temples. Furthermore, Vidich claims, "all priests and mediums were arrested and confined to jail on Yap."[49] This purge included punitive expeditions led by Ibedul against the religious leaders of Peleliu and Airai. Ardial, who had attracted a considerable following in Ngaraard, was included in this crackdown. Vidich described Ardial's following as making up a nativist political movement which was perceived as a threat

---

[48] Ibid., p. 288 [6].

[49] Vidich, "The Political Impact of Colonial Administration," p. 192.

to German authority and therefore was outlawed. Finally, Vidich claimed that this purge continued until the Germans left Palau in 1914.[50]

The German anthropologists Kramer, who was in Palau in 1907 and again during 1909-1910, and Sapper, who came later, said nothing about this program of indigenous religious oppression which, if Vidich is correct, would have taken place during Kramer's research work and shortly before Sapper's visit. Kramer in his description of Palau's indigenous religion described chelid priests as if they were active and functioning members of the community. Kramer noted that the priests had considerable political authority, attaining the rank of number one rubak (chief) in some areas and the last rank (twentieth) in other areas. On the other hand, "sometime they are not given their proper share at large distributions . . . these were attempts to check the power of the Galid."[51]

Sapper, who was in Palau after Kramer, noted that the chelid priests were both doctors and sorcerers and that religious conceptions were integral to Palauan social and political organization. Like Kramer, Sapper described the chelid priests as if they were active cultural participants. Sapper noted that "the priests know how, in an outwardly imperceptible way, just through the religious beliefs, to keep the ancient customs and habits pure and intact."[52]

---

[50] Ibid.

[51] Kramer, Palau, 3:343.

[52] Karl Sapper, et al., "Palauinseln," Deutsches Kolonial-Lexikon III (1920), in and translated by Human Relations Area Files, microfilm reel 6, item 1218, p. 4 [5].

It is apparent from these reports that the profession of chelid priest and related offices was alive and well. A number of shrines and temples may have been destroyed but Palau's indigenous religious practices prevailed despite German repression of Ngarchelong shamans in 1906. Dr. Born admitted that it was always difficult to know what the native religious leaders were doing and planning. Despite assistance from the reigning Ibedul and missionaries, it is clear from Kramer's and Sapper's reports that the German religious oppression had no significant long term impact on Palau's indigenous religious system.

Japanese Authority and *Modekngei*

The First World War provided Japan with an opportunity to expand her colonial empire beyond the Asian mainland and Formosa, and into the Pacific. After Germany refused to relinquish her hold on the Kiaochow territory in China, Japan declared war in August 1914. During the next three months Japanese forces displaced the Germans in Kiaochow and seized the German administered islands in the north west Pacific (the Marshall, Mariana and Caroline archipelagos). Thus, the first phase of Japanese rule in Micronesia was a military one. The South Seas Defense Corps, a branch of the Japanese Imperial Navy, governed the islands exclusively from 1914 to 1918 and then with civilian assistance from 1918 to 1922. In 1920 Japan gained full legal authority over the islands through a mandatory agreement with the League of Nations, in which Japan was a full member by virtue of her naval support rendered to the British Navy during the conflict.

As a Class "C" mandate, Micronesia could be administered under Japanese law as an integral part of her territory but subject to the requirements of the mandatory agreement.[53] This obligated Japan to promote the material and moral well being and social progress of the local inhabitants; to rule out slavery, traffic in arms and ammunition, and alcoholic beverages; to refrain from building fortifications and military bases; to permit freedom of worship and missionary activity; and to submit an annual report to the League of Nations.

Prior to this agreement, all German officials and Catholic missionaries had been expelled from Palau in 1915. German government property was expropriated but church property was left in the hands of a private Japanese company. The Catholics were not allowed to return until March 1921. It was during this six year interim that Palau's indigenous religion underwent a fascinating transformation which synthesized the old with the new into a new cultural construction. This syncretic belief system, Modekngei, has persisted to the present day and as such is an interesting case of cultural revitalization.

Modekngei was established by a man named Temedad.[54] He was from a high ranking clan of Chol village in northern Babeldaob, attended German

---

[53]The "C" mandated territories besides the former German islands in the North Pacific were Nauru (mandated jointly to Great Britain, Australia and New Zealand), former German New Guinea (mandated to Australia), Western Samoa (mandated to New Zealand) and South-West Africa (mandated to the Union of South Africa). The "C" designation meant that these areas were geographically isolated and regarded as economically and socially undeveloped and therefore unable to "stand by themselves under the strenuous conditions of the modern world."

[54]There are few written sources on the Modekngei. John Useem made reference to it in his 1946 report on Palau (pp. 130-133). In his 1949

school, and served in the German constabulary. Coming from a village near Ngkeklau, Temedad no doubt knew of the charismatic Ardial and his activities. Furthermore, having been associated with the Germans, Temedad was probably aware of the 1906 banishment of six chelid priests and the colonial government's policy of religious suppression.[55] Japanese expulsion of German officials and missionaries and the relatively limited number of Japanese naval personnel in 1915 perhaps served as a stimulus to indigenous religious leaders who, as pointed out above, remained integral and functioning members of Palauan society.

Sometime in 1916 Temedad went through the culturally accepted way of becoming a chelid priest. He experienced a series of seizures after which he claimed to be spokesman for the village god, Ngiromokuul.[56] In this new position as a chelid priest he claimed unprecedented powers. He abolished food taboos, re-established the prestige of Chol village by cleverly stealing a men's meeting house from a competing neighboring

---

study entitled "Palauan Society," Homer Barnett discussed Modekngei (pp. 231-240). Arthur Vidich's 1949 study, "Political Factionalism in Palau: Its Rise and Development" and his 1952 doctoral dissertation are, for all practical purposes identical on the subject of Modekngei. Father Felix Yaoch, S.J. is the only Palauan who has written on the Modekngei. His "A Reflection on Modekngei: The Palauan Pagan Religion" (1966) is a fascinating and rich study imbued with ecumenism. Sometime in the late 1970s, Machiko Aoyagi, a Japanese anthropologist, described Modekngei as as a transformation movement, "Transformation of Traditional Religion Under the Influence of Christianity" (unpublished English language manuscript. n.d.). Aoyagi claimed that Japanese court and police records concerning Modekngei activities were lost during the Pacific War.

[55]According to Charlie Gibbons, five of the six religious rebels returned to Palau during the Japanese administration. Vidich recorded that they did not get involved in the Modekngei movement.

[56]Vidich, "The Political Impact of Colonial Administration," p. 229.

village, and, reportedly, raised a woman from the dead.[57] Finally, Temedad claimed that all Palauan money had become contaminated through the presence of a new foreign culture (Japanese). He went into the business of purifying clan and family money for a commission and thereby quickly became a wealthy and respected person. He attracted three disciples, Ongesii, Wasii and Runguul who functioned as the movement's administrators and interpreters to the common people, thus acting as counterweights to Temedad's charismatic authority. Like Temedad, these disciples had come under the influence of the German (and perhaps Spanish) missionaries at their school in Melekeok. They therefore had been exposed to the basic theological principles of Christianity some of which were incorporated into the indigenous system thereby making it acceptable to others who had been similarly influenced by Catholicism. In the absence of foreign missionaries during the years 1915-1921, Modekngei leaders had, in a sense, become indigenous missionaries with a new, culturally based message. Modekngei tended toward monotheism and adopted the trinity. According to Father Felix Yaoch,"the persons are Father, the Dove, and the Mother. The founder of the religion who is a god or the messenger of the supreme god, called Ngirchomkuul (one who unites) is considered to be like Our Lord Jesus Christ."[58]

Modekngei, in contrast to the pre-Modekngei religion, discussed above (pages 51-56), concerned itself with morality. A person's offense was a

---

[57] Ibid., pp. 229-230.

[58] Felix K. Yaoch, S.J., "A Reflection on Modekngei: The Palauan Pagan Religion," TS, (Woodstock, Maryland: Woodstock College, 1966), p. 5.

disruption to harmonious relations in both the social and supernatural worlds. Modekngei followers were therefore "taught not to steal, not to quarrel, not to drink, and not to smoke. If they displease their god, they will be punished by the god who would sicken their beloved ones."[59]

Modekngei also adopted some of the outward symbolism of Christianity. Recall that the German Senfft had noticed in 1904 that a chelid priest (probably Ardial) had incorporated a cross into the external decoration of his temple. According to Aoyagi, in 1926, Temedad and Runguul erected a huge cross (24 feet tall by 6 feet wide) for the village god Ngiraomkuul on a mountain top near Chol village. During her research in Palau, Aoyagi noticed that the altar in the Modekngei church on Peleliu contained "a cross among several spears all of which are cleaned with medicinal hot water at church services."[60] At the Ibobang Modekngei church, a large picture of Jesus Christ with three angels rested on the rear of the altar.

As in any syncretic movement, the new is combined with the old to generate a unique and culturally satisfying synthesis. Modekngei leaders accomplished this but not without opposition from both the new colonizers (the Japanese) and a local group of Palauans who sympathized with the modernization plans of the foreign administration. Temedad and his followers came under attach from two sides. In a thrust against Japanese naval rule (in force from 1914 to 1920), Temedad ordered the destruction of a rural

---

[59]Machiko Aoyagi, "Transformation of Traditional Religion under the Influence of Christianity," unpublished English language manuscript, 1977, p. 5. Professor Aoyagi spent six months living in the main Modekngei village of Ibobang in the mid-1970s. Her manuscript is based on the anthropological research conducted during that period.

[60]Ibid., p. 6.

government school and the dissolution of marriages in which husbands were employed by the Japanese authorities.[61] It was these men with a stake in the foreign system who alerted the Japanese naval administrator to Temedad's growing authority. Using intelligence supplied by this anti-Modekngei faction, Japanese officials jailed Temedad, Wasii and Ongesii for three years on the island of Angaur, where the Japanese were mining phosphate.

Modekngei leaders were released in 1922 but, with Runguul, reimprisoned in 1924. Soon after, Temedad died. From the time of his release in 1925 until the third Japanese purge in 1938, Ongesii worked underground and rebuilt the power and prestige of the new religion. During those years a group of Catholic Palauans led by Joseph Tellei and Ayoka came to prominence under the Japanese. These men opposed what they perceived to be a backward and primitive orientation of the Modekngei and continued to supply Japanese authorities with intelligence on its activities.

Under Ongesii's leadership, Modekngei became more nativistic and took on a stronger anti-Japanese stance. The Japanese authorities, with the advice and assistance of the pro-foreign Palauan faction, attempted to make reforms in the valuation of Palauan money, land distribution and ownership, and reciprocity customs, all of which reforms the Modekngei vigorously resisted. Further, the nativistic movement opposed all Japanese institutions established to civilize the islanders, including the school, hospital and health care, labor conscription, and subsidized religion (all foreign religions, both Christian and Japanese, were subsidized by the South Seas

---

[61] Arthur Vidich, "Political Factionalism in Palau: Its Rise and Development," Coordinated Investigation of Micronesian Anthropology, No. 23 (Washington, D.C.: Pacific Science Board, 1949), p. 86.

Government). Ongesii proclaimed that the Palauan world and Japanese world were poles apart, "that dark-skinned Palauans were a different kind of men from the light-skinned peoples, and that their destinies must be different . . . they each walked different roads which could never meet."[62] This is the attitude of a cultural revolutionary, and it inspired a passionate following.

By 1938 these diametrically opposed systems of social control were in direct confrontation. Modekngei commanded the loyalty of many traditional leaders and was dedicated to overcoming foreign dominance. This activity reached its peak in late 1937 when every district and village chief in Palau was a Modekngei member, a fact which gave the movement "complete control of all indigenous political power in Palau."[63] This certainly is a link with the past when chelid priests, who had both political and religious authority, often outranked hereditary chiefs. The anti-Modekngei Palauans who were generally Catholics resented what they felt was a reversion to barbarism. This not only threatened their position of prominence with Japanese authority but made the colonial program of induced modernization more difficult to carry out.

Japan at this time was fully committed to war in China and was determined to make Palau an economic asset through tight control of labor, production and consumption. Deeper conflict was inevitable. Again, leading members of the pro-Japanese indigenous faction aided colonial authorities

---

[62] Barnett, Being a Palauan, p. 84.

[63] Vidich, "Political Factionalism in Palau: Its Rise and Development," p. 87.

in investigating Ongesii and twenty-eight of his followers.[64] He alone was found guilty of false prophecy and of impoverishing and demoralizing the people by directing their attention away from productive labor.[65] Ongesii was sentenced to seven years in jail and shipped off to Saipan.[66]

In November 1940 when a grand Shinto shrine was dedicated on the outskirts of Koror-town, the Modekngei had been thoroughly repressed and Japanese authority was firmly entrenched. However, throughout the Pacific War period in Palau (1944-1945), the Modekngei made yet another come back under Runguul's imaginative leadership. This exemplifies the important stabilizing role Modekngei had come to play in revitalizing a Palauan world view. Adjusting opportunistically to the new situation, Runguul, with uncanny insight, took on the function of predicting events of the war. Palauans say that he predicted U.S. entry into the war, the first bombing of Palau in March 1944, and war's end in August 1945.[67] The war was a period of great crisis in Palau. Both before and after American forces took Peleliu in September 1944, bombing raids were launched on Koror and Babeldaob to neutralize these by-passed islands, which held 25,000 fully

---

[64]This third investigation was carried out by Tellei and Yaoch both of whom were Catholics and important members in the colonial administration. In a fascinating historical connection, Yaoch's son, Felix, was ordained as a Jesuit priest in 1966. In that year he completed a preliminary study of the Modekngei, in which he suggested that an ecumenical attitude toward the religion of the "strange gods" could, in time, bring the Modekngei and Catholics together as one people of God; see Yaoch, "A Reflection on Modekngei: The Palauan Pagan Religion," p. 14.

[65]Barnett, Being A Palauan, p. 84.

[66]Vidich, "Political Factionalism in Palau: Its Rise and Development," p. 91.

[67]Ibid.

equipped Japanese troops. During this terrifying time, Japanese military executed six Catholic missionaries who were accused of spying. Modekngei resumed its activities in response to deep crisis. Positive pronouncements, accurate predictions and magical charms designed to give individuals supernatural protection and to frighten fighter planes away were concrete evidence of the efficacy of Palauan cultural continuities. The revitalized indigenous belief system provided a reassuring "psychological response to a confused and unknowable world."[68]

Most members of the anti-Modekngei faction were Catholic and held fairly influential positions in the Japanese colonial service. Men as Joseph Tellei, Bismark, Meltel, Fritz, Ngodrii and Ringang were lay leaders in the Catholic Church and, at the same time, played a prominent role as civil servants and collaborators.[69] It seems these men had turned their backs to the old religious practices no matter how they might be dressed up with Christian symbols. Modekngei did not have a universal appeal and the activities of the anti-Modekngei faction point out a truism of social change: at any given time some people "cling to the manner of life in which they grew up while others seize the new opportunities that are offered them by the creation of new situations."[70] Prior to the Pacific War years, Modekngei and their supporters clung to the revitalized old ways whereas their opponents identified with the God of Christianity and the modernization

---

[68] Ibid., p. 92.

[69] Vidich, "The Political Impact of Colonial Administration," p. 264.

[70] Lucy Mair, Anthropology and Social Change (London: Athlone Press, 1969), p. 129.

program of the Japanese colonial government. For the anti-Modekngei this offered an avenue to power, prestige and wealth not open to them in the traditional system.[71]

Although we have no evidence one way or the other, given the history of friction between the Catholic missionaries and the leaders of the indigenous religion pre 1914, it seems likely that Spanish Jesuits would have wholeheartedly supported the Palauan lay leaders in their anti-Modekngei activities.

Japanese Religious Policy

During the very twenty year period (1920-1940) that Modekngei underwent suppression, the Japanese colonial government allowed a wide diversity of foreign religions to establish missions in Palau. It seems that this policy was in line with the general liberal tendencies of the Taisho (1912-1926) and early Showa (1926-present) periods and resulted from a clear recognition of Japan's international responsibility as a member of the League of Nations with an island mandate.

Within a decade of the establishment of full civilian rule under the South Seas Bureau in 1922, six religions established themselves in Palau. The Catholics returned in 1921 and a Buddhist missionary arrived in 1926. Three years later Shrine Shinto and Tenrikyo (a Shinto sect) were

---

[71] The leaders of the anti-Modekngei faction came from either patri-lineages in the highest ranking clans of Koror and Melekeok or from high ranking lineages, either patri-lineal or matri-lineal, in the second, third, or fourth ranking clans. As such, they were ineligible for top leadership roles in the traditional hereditary system.

established and Wilhelm Laenge of the Protestant Liebenzell mission arrived from Germany. Finally in 1930 Pastor and Mrs. S. Miyake came from Japan to begin instruction in the Seventh-Day Adventist faith. Generally speaking, the eastern religions of Buddhism, Shrine Shinto and Tenrikyo ministered to the religious needs of the resident Japanese and Okinawans, while the Christian missionaries worked among the Palauans. There were some exceptions to this as will be pointed out later in this Chapter.

The Spencerian notions of social evolution had taken hold in Japan in the 1870s and it appears these influenced later colonial policy.[72] Social evolution claimed a natural and necessary progressive movement from a savage to a barbarian to a civilized state. The islands, in a state of barbarism, were therefore a ripe field for a civilizing mission be it sacred or secular. In a League of Nations report it was noted:

> Fully one half of the natives who, through their intellectual inferiority, are as yet incapable of themselves providing for a far distant future . . . need what may be termed "culture contact" for their development if the new civilization must be able to exercise its influence.[73]

Japanese policy makers noted that Catholic missionaries had done important work in civilizing the islanders during earlier colonial regimes.[74]

---

[72] George B. Sansom, The Western World and Japan (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1950), p. 433.

[73] League of Nations, Permanent Mandates Commission, Report on the Work of the Third Session of the Commission (1923), p. 281.

[74] Komatsu Shigeru, The South Sea Islands and the Catholic Mission, translated privately for the writer by Wakako Higuchi (Tokyo: Joseph Herelos, 1937), p. 34.

Furthermore, it was publicly recognized that "religion is the most appropriate and effective means of developing an only slightly-civilized people."[75] The Japanese school was also to play a role in uplifting the backward islander. Thus, in the Japanese view, the natural and necessary progress from savagery and barbarism to civilization was to be mediated by mission work, schooling, and Japanese acculturation.

Besides the general civilizing impact of missionary work, such effort was regarded by government officials as having an economic import as well:

> The tomin (islander) has no custom of working hard and persistently. These traits, however, have been inculcated by the Catholic priests. Therefore the Japanese government's economic development program has benefitted from Catholic mission work.[76]

It was against this varied background of colonial motivations that greater numbers of Palauans came under the persistent educating efforts of Christianity during the pre-war years of Japanese administration.

The Jesuit mission in Palau was considerably smaller than the German Capuchin mission had been. Of the four missionaries who came in 1921, only two stayed beyond 1924 and of the five who came later, only one stayed longer than three years. Father Marino de la Hoz, S.J., and Father Elias Fernandez, S.J., were the leaders of the Catholics during the period 1921-1944. David Ramarui remembers learning to read and write Palauan while

---

[75] League of Nations, Permanent Mandates Commission, Minutes of the Twenty-Second Session (1932), p. 108.

[76] Shigeru, The South Sea Islands and the Catholic Mission, p. 47.

studying catechism from Father Marino. This priest was exceptionally gifted. He spoke Palauan and Chamorro fluently and knew a little Japanese. He translated most of the Old Testament into Palauan (unfortunately it was never published) and prepared numerous Bible story books for Palauan children. Both Jesuits, like their Church of the day, were strict. Women were required to wear veils to church services and sat separately from the men (this public segregation of the sexes corresponded with Palauan custom). Children were caned--lightly--when they misbehaved at catechism class.

Father Marino had a social impact not only in Palau but on the people of Tobi island, nearly 200 miles southwest of the Palau archipelago. It seems he arrived on Tobi at just the time that the island leaders had rejected the indigenous religion. Unlike the founders of Modekngei who combined Christian elements with those of the indigenous system, the belief system Father Marino presented was accepted in total by the Tobians and he became a god-like figure to them.[77]

Although Japanese civil authorities encouraged missionary activity for the reasons noted above, the Catholic missionaries in Palau came under suspicion during the intense war period (March 1944-August 1945). On September 18, 1944, three days after the invasion and loss of Peleliu to American forces, six Catholic missionaries (three from Palau and three

---

[77] Peter Black, "The Teachings of Father Marino: Christianity on Tobi Atoll," in Mission, Church and Sect in Oceania, eds. J. Boutilier, D.T. Hughes and S.W. Tiffany (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1978), pp. 307-354.

from Yap) including Father Marino and Father Elias and four Chamorros of the Hondonero family were executed for allegedly acting as spies for the American forces.[78] In retrospect such activity on the part of the Spanish Jesuits seems most unlikely. The Japanese high command was probably enraged at yet another military defeat and struck out at the Spanish missionaries as representatives of hated western culture.

Japanese Religions in Palau

Tenrikyo

A large impressive marble monument stands today along side Koror's main street next to the mayor's office. It is ironic that Koror's only public monument should be dedicated to a Japanese missionary of the Tenrikyo sect of Shinto, Reverend Yoshio Shimizu. The monument's inscription reads:

> In 1929, for the purpose of missionary work and research, he ventured here alone. In midway to his goal however, he passed away. His ardent wish to spread the teaching of God the Parent was further perpetuated by fellow missionaries, and today, Tenrikyo persists world wide. In honor of his achievement in its 50th year, this monument is hereby erected on this day of July 26, 1979.
>
> Tenrikyo Heishin Grand Church
> Kobe City, Japan[79]

---

[78] Commander M.E. Currie, U.S.N.R., Letter to Reverend Vincent I Kenally, S.J., July 15, 1948.

[79] Tenrikyo monument inscription (English version) mainstreet, Koror, Palau. A much smaller monument had been erected on the same location sometime in the 1930s.

The Tenrikyo monument dedication came just three weeks after the Palau Evangelical Church's four day jubilee celebration. Both Reverend Laenge, Palau's first Protestant missionary in attendance at the celebration, and Reverend Shimizu arrived in Palau in 1929. Their missionary efforts, like their life spans, had very different outcomes. Shimizu died in 1929 and Laenge lives in retirement today in Germany.

Tenrikyo is a Christianized sect of Shinto, the polytheistic religion integral to Japanese culture. While Reverend Shimizu was probably not as enthusiastic in his evangelization amongst the Palauans as Reverend Laenge, Japanese records indicate eighty-seven converts to Tenrikyo in 1930.[80] By 1936 Tenrikyo had a church in Koror and 102 Palauans admitted they were followers of this Japanese religion. A Palauan named Ngiraked was sent to Japan for Tenrikyo priest training. While in Japan, he fell in love with a Japanese girl, who followed him to Palau. The authorities would not allow their marriage. Palauan informants generally report that Ngiraked was a superb opportunist who took advantage of the cultural naivety of the Tenrikyo missionary. Ngiraked's evangelist career was very short and it appears he converted only his parents.[81] He drowned during the war.

Another Palauan, Rhodas of Ngchesar, was to be sent by the Tenrikyo mission to Japan for religious training but the Pacific War interrupted

---

[80] South Seas Government (Japanese Mandate), Annual Report to the League of Nations on the Administration of the South Sea Islands Under Japanese Mandate for the Year 1930, (Tokyo: n.p.), p. 74.

[81] Bernardino Rdulaol, personal interview, Koror, Palau, January 20, 1981.

this effort. Unfortunately Rhodas was killed by a strafing American fighter plane sometime in 1944.[82]

Buddhism

A statue of Buddha stands quietly today in the yard of Mrs. Emaimelei Bismark, daughter of former Ibedul Mariur, who died in 1958. It is the only remnant of two Buddhist temples that were located in Koror during the Japanese period. As a young girl, Mrs. Bismark's sister would go to the Buddhist temple and steal coins which Japanese worshippers left in the Buddha's hands. Other Palauans, as told by Adelbai Remed and Antonio Marbo, went to the temples to get red and white biscuits which the monks offered on certain occasions. Although government records of 1930 indicate that some 600 Palauans had become Buddhists, the conversion was superficial. Writing in 1938, Yanaihara claims,.

> The figures given for native followers of Buddhism and Tenri-kyo are doubtful since Buddhists have done no active missionary work among the natives . . . while the Tenri-kyo sect which had been doing some work among the natives has practically ceased its activities at present since its preachers have taken to the copra trade.[83]

Yanaihara's statement regarding Tenrikyo appears to apply to Palau because it was the only area in the mandate which had a Tenrikyo mission.

---

[82]Baris (sister of Rhodas) personal interview, Koror, Palau, December 10, 1981.

[83]Tadao Yanaihara, Pacific Islands Under Japanese Mandate (Shanghai: Kelly and Walsh, Ltd., 1939), p. 238.

State Shinto

Along Koror's main road, stark and incongruously, stand two pairs of 41 year old Shinto lanterns. Equally out of context are two Shinto guardian lions which today sit next to the Sure-Save Mart, overseeing piles of imported lumber. These are the only visible reminders of the once-grand Kampei Taisha Nanyo Jinja (government-sponsored great South Seas State Shinto shrine).[84]

Beginning in the 1930s all Shinto shrines in Japan, as well as those in the South Seas, became active in promoting nationalistic aims. The theocratic state envisioned by the Meiji leaders came close to a reality in the hands of the ultra-nationalists and militarists of the 1930s. Shrines in the overseas territories were ordered to assist in the acculturation of indigenous peoples. This was obviously a new and more ambitious goal than ministering to the needs of Japanese government officials, immigrant farmers and workers. As stated in 1939 by Hidea Horie, a Shinto authority:

> Shinto is broad. It includes humanitarianism and righteousness. The Spirit of Shinto, which is the fundamental directive principle of our national life, must be utilized for the purpose of elevating the races of neighboring territories where the national relationships are complicated. Indeed, by means of this spirit of Shinto foreign peoples must also be evangelized.[85] (emphasis added)

---

[84]For a more complete discussion of the development of State Shinto in Palau see Shuster, "State Shinto in Micronesia during Japanese Rule, 1914-1945," Pacific Studies, forthcoming.

[85]Quoted in D.C. Holtom, Modern Japan and Shinto Nationalism (New York: Paragon Book Corp., 1963), p. 158.

It was this curious mix of idealism and ethnocentrism which forged a tool of significant social control in the decade leading up to the Pacific War.

Sometime in the late 1920s and early 1930s twenty-six Shinto shrines were established throughout the mandated islands, which Japan in 1938 declared a territory following her full withdrawal from the League of Nations.

The grandest shrine of all, the "mother" of all the others in the mandate, was in Palau. Beginning in the 1930s the Japanese population in Palau began to expand rapidly in response to the enormously successful exploitation of phosphate and the area's rich marine products industry. Palau was also the headquarters for the South Seas Government and therefore had the greatest number of government officials. As photographs and oral histories of older Palauans vividly attest, Koror at this time was a booming and outwardly attractive Japanese town. Its palm-fringed main street was clean and uncluttered while its stores and residential areas were tidy and peaceful. Koror-town of 1940 had its more raucous side, too, with 56 liquor dealers, 42 lower class restaurants, 77 geisha (double that of Garapan, Saipan), 155 bar maids, 93 waitresses, numerous businesses, and nearly 2,000 commercial fisherman.[86]

It was on the outskirts of this bustling town that the Kampei Taisha Nan'yo Jinja was built and officially dedicated in 1940.[87] The spirit of

---

[86] South Seas Government, South Seas Government Statistical Yearbook (Tokyo, 1938), Table 45 "Businesses, etc. Controlled by Police." In and translated by Human Relations Area Files, microfilm reel 10, item 1465.

[87] Shinto shrines were classified into seven grades. The Jingu or the Great Shrine of Ise was at the pinnacle of the hierarchy. The kampei or state shrines and the kokuhei or national shrines were ranked second and

the times is captured well by the official Japanese publication which described the event:

> It was on February 11th in the 15th year of the Showa Era (1940) on the auspicious occasion of the 2600th anniversary of our gracious and glorious imperial era, that on the Arumizu Plateau in the Palauan Archipelago there was established the Kampei Taisha Nan'yo Jinja. At this time the sun goddess, Amaterasu Omikami, was proclaimed to fulfill the yearning of our native countrymen resident there for already 30 years and surpassing 80,000, for a shrine in which to center their piety. Viewed as a step forward in the sacred task of constructing the New East Asian Order, with the importance of the south seas islands increasing all the more due to growing tensions in international relations in the Pacific in regard to the national policy of establishing the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere, the people, on receiving the imperial command that autumn, were all moved to inexpressible joy especially the officials and citizens of the locality, whereupon the Kampei Taisha Nan'yo Jinja Support Association was formed, and work began forthwith upon the construction of the shrine hall. On November 1st of that year, in the august presence of the imperial messenger, the sacred enshrinement was held.[88]

This statement is indicative of several important developments. First, it suggests that the islands were becoming Japanese in spirit as well as physical fact. Second, the very high ranking (Kampei) of the shrine was to assist in establishment of an Asian-dominated "New Order," which was a long-standing Japanese ideal and response to a half century of Western imperialism. Less obvious is the importance Japan attached to its south seas islands as part of the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere (Dai Toa

---

third respectively. The first was financed by a department within the Imperial Household and the second by the national treasury. It thus was a very significant fact that Palau, the headquarters for the South Seas territory, was chosen for a kampei level shrine. The four lesser grades of shrines supported by local communities, were less elaborate and smaller in size.

[88] Kampei Taisha Nan'yo Jinja Hosankai (Tokyo: n.p., 1941), p. 1.

Kyoeiken). The utopian vision behind this grand design was to create an economically self-sufficient sphere and raise standards of living by excluding the predatory Western powers from Asia and South East Asia. According to the plan, Japan would serve as the industrial center to process raw materials and deliver manufactured goods. She would also take the lead in cultural and linguistic affairs. This vision of Asians cooperating for their mutual benefit received wide exposure in the Japanese press during late 1941 and early 1942. Serving as a rallying ideal for the Pacific War, it captured the imagination of intellectuals and the public alike. State Shinto helped reinforce this vision by the uncritical conjunction of the ideal with the real.

Prior to the dedication of the grand Palau shrine, small shrines had been set up by Japanese farmers in the several agricultural colonies on central Babeldaob (Palau's largest island of 153 miles square). Koror-town had two small concrete shrines containing genuine portraits of the Emperor. One of these was located near the Nanyo-cho headquarters building and the other was near the Japanese student primary school.[89]

Teiichi Domoto, an important Nanyo-cho official, worked vigorously to have a high-ranking shrine established in Palau. On August 4, 1939, he attended a meeting in Tokyo with members of the Association for the Dedication of Overseas Shrines. Included were officials from the Ministry of Home Affairs, Ministry of Colonial Affairs, Imperial Household Agency, Institute of History of the Imperial Family, and priests from five

---

[89]David Ramarui, personal interview, Koror, Palau, October 26, 1980.

important shrines including Ise, Meiji, and Yasukuni.[90] The group decided that Palau, as head-quarters of the important south seas territory, should have a high-ranking jinja and suggested that a research committee be established under the direction of Mr. Yoshida Shigeru (Japan's first post-war prime minister) to decide what gods should be enshrined for protection of the territory. Shigeru's committee was guided in its work by the 1938 instructions which systematized procedures for establishing overseas shrines. It was ordered that Amaterasu Omikami be enshrined and worshipped as the chief deity, that the sanctuary buildings be constructed in a particular style, and that the priests (kannushi) be Japanese Shintoists with an understanding of national policy.[91] Concerning this last requirement, several priests destined for Palau attended a special two month school in early 1940 for overseas shrine supervision. Instruction was given by officials of the Ministry of Colonial Affairs, officers from the Navy and Hisakatsu Hijikata, an expert on Palauan culture and the Japanese living in Palau.

Kampei Taisha Nan'yo Jinja was thus seen as all important to the Japanese in Micronesia. To sanctify it a symbol of the imperial spirit possessing the invisible force was brought from Japan by an imperial messenger, Chokushi Koshyaku Ito Hakusei (meaning, person receiving a direct order from the Emperor and therefore having a very high title, Ito

---

[90] The Grand Shrine of Ise is generally regarded as standing at the apex of all shrines. The beautiful Meiji Shrine is dedicated to the Emperor Meiji and Yasukuni Jinja was established by Imperial command in 1869 for the worship of the divine spirits of those who gave their lives in the defense of Japan.

[91] D.C. Holtom, Modern Japan and Shinto Nationalism (New York: Paragon Book Corp., 1963), p. 169.

Hakusei). An account of this, though never published in English, speaks of the enshrinement of the imperial spirit and the related events of ceremony and celebration.[92]

Ito, sailing from Japan in the company of the symbol of the imperial spirit, was greeted by officials of the South Seas Government, civilians, and the resident Shinto priests at Malakal Harbor, Palau. As Chokushi, Ito was the Emperor's personal representative. A cortege of nine large, American-made black sedans transported the symbol of the imperial spirit, the imperial messenger, and the visiting dignitaries through Koror's streets where large numbers of solemn, respectful citizens lined the roads. Dogs living along Koror's main street had been exterminated by government order to prevent any disturbance during the procession.[93] Palauans who recall standing along the roadside say they saw little of the procession; their heads were bowed too low. After the cortege arrived at the shrine, the initial rites of purification, ceremonies of dedication, and other Shinto rituals were carried out by the priests in the privacy of the upper shrine sanctuary (honoden style). In the lower divine hall (haiganden style) additional rituals were performed with twenty of the most important civil and military officials in attendance. Hundreds of other officials, including Palau's native chiefs, were waiting

---

[92]The Kampei Taisha Nan'yo Jinja Hosankai photograph booklet was translated privately by Charles Dewolf formerly of the Linguistics Department, University of Hawaii. Dr. Dewolf's translation served as an outline for my description and explanation of the enshrinement events.

[93]Joseph Tellei, personal interview, Koror, Palau, November 16, 1980. Mr. Tellei, now 80 years old, was for many years chief of the Palauan Police branch during Japanese administration. He is therefore known locally as the expert on Japanese times in Palau.

outside on a lower level of the shrine compound. When the enshrinement ceremonies moved outside, a general purification rite was performed on the lower level by the officiating priests. An onlooker reported that the grandeur of the occasion was clearly written on the faces of the participants.

After this general rite, the chief priests and assistant priests moved in solemn procession back to the upper level of the shrine compound. Following them came the Minister of Colonial Affairs, the South Seas Governor, civilian and military officials in order of rank. Next, in Shinto robes, came the imperial messenger escorting the symbol of the imperial spirit and other offerings which were contained in two large sacred boxes. They were followed by eight attendants. Reaching the divine hall on the upper level, the kami,[94] associated with the imperial spirit entered the divine hall and the enshrinement events continued. The sacred boxes were opened and the South Seas Governor presented the tamagushi, the spirit force, to the chief priest. The final enshrinement ceremonies were conducted and the spirit force, the sun goddess Amaterasu Omikami, now resided in the shrine and its grounds.

With the conclusion of the enshrinement ceremonies, the Minister of Colonial Affairs read a congratulatory message, and all the assembled dignitaries, including four island chiefs, drank a toast of celebration (naorai, literally "to eat together with the kami"). The representative of the Minister of the Navy then read a final congratulatory message and the dignitaries departed.

---

[94]The most common meaning of the term "kami" is noble and sacred native deities or spirits. Implied is a sense of adoration for their virtue and authority. Kami are the objects of reverence and worship in Shinto.

Throughout the remainder of the day, members of the general public and large groups of Japanese and Palauan students made their way to the upper level of the shrine. They bowed reverently and prayed before the divine hall. These visitors, it was reported, were filled with unparalleled joy. Thus ended the first day of ceremonies.

The second day of the enshrinement of the gods at Kampei Taisha Nan'yo Jinja was devoted to ceremonies in service to the gods, solemn music, and dance. The photographic record shows only Japanese officials in attendance.

On the third day a parade of over one hundred of the faithful, in appropriate dress, escorted the sacred palanquin (mikoshi) which contained a symbol of the shrine kami. This crowd moved from the shrine over the sacred bridge and along the main road toward Koror-town. As the procession moved, it enlarged with devoted followers, some carrying smaller palanquins from each of the town's hamlets. Many onlookers stood along the roadside encouraging the procession members. Much to the delight of the island children men masked as goblins also appeared along the road. The photographic record shows that the procession became larger and larger and the participants more and more spirited. It was a great honor for them to transport the divine kami throughout the entire community for all to be honored. Even drum and flute groups joined the procession to increase the excitement of the parade. The photo record shows a few Palauans in the street celebration.

In addition to the street procession, there was an exhibition of native crafts and artifacts from all island groups of the territory and a more ominous photographic display of soldiers, war planes, battleships,

submarines, and aircraft carriers. Japan had been immersed in an undeclared war with China for three years. Reference was made on display posters to the American military presence in the Philippines. On a map of South East Asia was superimposed information on Japanese naval strength. All this gave the impression of unmatched Japanese military might; while in another assembly hall, a demonstration of martial arts--judo, sword fighting, and archery--was held for military officials, an active complement to the photographic display of armed might.

On several sports fields in Koror there were athletic competitions for adults and entertaining events for children, the majority of participants being Japanese. At the Japanese-constructed tidal swimming pool, a swimming and spearing contest was held. Some of the participants representing their villages were young Palauan men known for their athletic prowess. Baseball, introduced by enthusiastic Japanese players in the mid 1920s, had become very popular among Japanese and islanders alike. A Keio University baseball team came to Palau on an exhibition tour. However, Keio was not scheduled to play the leading Palauan team, which the Japanese regarded as unbeatable. Neither the Keio team nor the Japanese rulers could afford to lose face during the important dedication ceremony for the new state jinja.[95] Instead, Keio played a team composed of local Japanese, which was easily defeated 24 to 0.

Notwithstanding the significance of these events of 1940, Japan's cultural and political hegemony in Palau was not without indigenous

---

[95] E.J. Kahn, A Reporter in Micronesia (New York: W.W. Norton and Co., Inc., 1966), p. 278.

challenge. As described above, Modekngei under the leadership of Ongesii and Runguul actively resisted Japanese authority. The establishment of Kampei Taisha Nan'yo Jinja in November 1940 was in many ways an important symbolic statement. It culminated a program of Japanization of the indigenous people in which schooling, according to Japanese anthropologist Hatanaka, played a key role.

> In the field of education, the islanders were educated as though they were at the public schools, and the children were proud of growing up to be "Japanese" themselves. The instructors in the public schools, policemen and local officers came in contact with the islanders in daily life as leaders in the native community. It was they that promoted the islanders' modernization.[96]

Furthermore, the grand jinja was a symbol of Japan's intention to thrust deeper into the South, to use "Uchi Nanyo" (inner Pacific) as an experimental base for economic and political development of "Soto Nanyo" (outer Pacific).[97] Further evidence of the relationship between the grand jinja and a political policy of territorial expansion is clearly seen in a statement by a Japanese marine scientist based at the Research Institute of Tropical Biology, Koror.

> Presently there is a growing sense of international crisis and a national upsurge of passion for southward advancement. It seems, then, that the foundation of Nanyo Shrine has given an impetus to our

---

[96] Sachiko Hatanaka, "The Process of Cultural Change in Micronesia under the Japanese Mandate," Tokyo Daigaku Bunka-Jinruigaku Kenkyukai, no. 1 (1967), p. 120.

[97] Kenji Kiyono, "Japanese Expansion to the South Seas and Her Potentiality for Colonization," Pacific Ocean 4, no. 8 (1941). Translated privately for the writer by Mariko Iwasaki.

> endeavor of developing the South Seas islands and, moreover, extending beyond the islands. Thus, the shrine is a definite assurance of our Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere.[98]

Today the overgrown and unrecognized ruins of Micronesia's Shinto shrines are the only material witness to an uncertain evangelistic thrust into the Pacific. A 1938 photographic booklet on Nan'yo Gunto shows four separate groups of Yapese carrying palanquins during a Shinto festival celebration. The accompanying caption claims that Japanese "let Micronesians pay homage at shrines and gradually had them adopt their religion."[99] However, most older Palauans agree that while Tenrikyo actively sought converts, State Shinto remained aloof. The chieftess of Peleliu, Balang Singeo, said, "Though we were allowed to visit Kampei Taisha Nan'yo Jinja, it was for the Japanese only."[100]

Being on the outskirts of Koror-town, Kampei Taisha Nan'yo Jinja was not badly damaged by American bombing raids. The shrine's goshintai (sacred symbols) were removed in late 1944 and transported to Japan by submarine.[101] In October 1945, Commander Byrholdt, United States Navy, established his headquarters on the shrine site. A few years later

---

[98] Genji Kato, "Palau: A Base for Southward Expansion," Illustrated Magazine of Science 31, no. 1 (1942):46. Translated privately for the writer by Kazuo Hatano.

[99] Teruo Kosuge, Photographs of Micronesia's Yesterday (Guam: Guam Shimpo Sha, 1978), p. 57, (a re-publication and enlargement of South Seas Photo Album, Tokyo: Nanyo Gunto Bunka Kyokai, 1938), p. 57.

[100] Balang Toyomi Singeo, personal interview, Koror, Palau, January 28, 1981.

[101] Joseph Tellei, personal interview, Koror, Palau, July 19, 1981.

government offices were moved to the former Japanese communication station, which is now the Palau National Congress building. At that time, Mrs. Emaimelei Bismark persuaded Lieutenant Stille to let the Ngaraek Women's Club remove the jinja's two handsome guardian lions to the women's new clubhouse (Bai Raek).[102] This building, much of which was made of materials from the grand jinja, later became the Air Micronesia office. In 1978 it burned to the ground, leaving the guardian lions incongruously alone.

Enthusiastic evangelism seems to be more a Western cultural phenomenon than an Eastern one. The Japanese missionaries, unlike their Christian counterparts, were not interested in saving souls from the fires of eternal damnation.

Integral to Japanese culture, the seeds of Buddhism, Tenrikyo and State Shinto washed up on Palau's cultural beach during the immigration tide of the late 1920s, 30s and 40s. Unlike Christianity, however, these seeds did not take root in the soil of Palauan culture. Koror's Shinto lanterns and guardian lions are mere stone, empty of any symbolic significance for Palauans today.

Evangelical Lutheranism

In July 1979 the Palau Evangelical Church, Koror, celebrated its golden jubilee. On hand were Pastors Wilhelm Laenge and Wilhelm Fey who "spoke of the trials and victories of the Gospel in those early years."[103]

---

[102] In exchange for the lions, the Ngaraek Club planted flame trees along Koror's then barren main road. (Takeo Yano, personal interview, Koror, Palau, February 9, 1981.)

[103] Currents (Quarterly Publication of the Liebenzell Mission of the U.S.A.) "Jubilee," 38, no. 4 (1979):12.

Laenge had come with his wife to Palau from Truk in 1929. From his station in Ngiwal, Babeldaob, Laenge underwent many personal trials. His first daughter died in 1931, followed by his wife in 1934. After a two year absence, Laenge returned to Palau in 1937 with his second wife. A few years later she and her baby died during childbirth.

Laenge was a man of talent and energy. On Sundays his long legs carried him from Ngiwal to Melekeok and then to Ngchesar--three services in three distant villages. Laenge was "on fire for the Lord." Like the first Spanish missionaries, he had some practical medical knowledge and a keen diagnostic sense. He was welcomed in Ngiwal because the chiefs there wanted his curative powers. With Modekngei healing centers located on Kayangel (forced there by the Japanese program of oppression) and the Japanese hospital in distant Koror to the south, Laenge's mission station was the only place where east coast Palauans could get medical attention. He offered an enthusiastic mix of New Testament teaching and simple but effective medical treatment sprinkled with prayer. During these exchanges, Laenge learned enough Palauan that with the help of William Gibbons and Johanes Aigesiil, he was able to translate the New Testament, a hymn book and catechism into Palauan. According to Pastor Fey, who arrived in Palau in 1933, "Pastor Laenge was the kind of missionary who didn't care for himself, who didn't care for any compensation. He went into the villages and preached, and in less than three years we had a membership of several hundreds of dedicated people."[104]

---

[104] Wilhelm Fey, "Interview," Micronesian Reporter 20, no. 1 (1972):3.

This membership included the first twelve Palauan deacons, men who turned their backs to the indigenous belief and healing system for that of the West.

Pastor Wilhelm Fey, who established a second Lutheran mission station in Ngarchelong in 1933, claims that most converts to the "new religion" came from the Modekngei or from those without an apparent religion.[105] According to Pastor Fey, the concept of sin, once understood by Palauans, was very powerful in the conversion process.

> It was not very difficult to get Modekngei people into the church. We said, "You are a sinner; you have to come and confess your sins to get forgiveness and be a member of the church and have hope of salvation.[106]

One of the first Palauans to become a Protestant deacon was Rtechur, who held the chiefly title of Mad of Ngebukd village, Ngaraard, Babeldaob. Rtechur was renown for his courage and reputedly had taken more heads than anyone in northern Babeldaob. Under the influence of Laenge and Fey, Rtechur came to see his severed heads as sin. "My hands were full of blood. I didn't know it was sin. As the bravest man of Ngaraard, I had to become a Christian."[107] Winning over men of prestige and rank such as Rtechur, made Lutheran evangelization easier vis-a-vis Modekngei and Catholic efforts.

---

[105] Ibid.

[106] Ibid.

[107] Sister Ingelore E.A. Lengning, personal interview, Koror, Palau, February 12, 1981.

Another very strong Modekngei who was converted by the Liebenzell missionaries was Joseph, who held the chiefly title Tutii of Peleliu. He reportedly had a great knowledge of Palauan magic and with it he tried the Christian God in many ways, finally becoming convinced that the white man's God was omnipotent and the creator of all things. "Like Paul, he made a complete conversion."[108]

Laenge and Fey were joined by other Liebenzell missionaries during the Japanese period: Pastor and Mrs. Siemer (1930-1938), Ms. Hildgard Thiem (1935-1940) and Ms. Hermine Rittman (1936-1941). By 1941 there was about 1,500 Lutherans. Only Fey remained in Palau during the Pacific War years. Japanese authorities prohibited him from traveling beyond Ngarchelong so that Christians came to him for Bible study and church service in his home in Ngarchelong.

Thirty years of Japanese administration followed by the bewildering experience of war left a deep mark on the Palauan mind. Adult Palauans recognized how vulnerable their culture and land was to unsympathetic external forces. In 1947 the Lutheran deacons persuaded Pastor Fey that young Palauan men needed to be schooled in the language and ways of the fourth foreign power to intrude onto Palau's cultural beaches. To Pastor Fey the deacons said, "We will take your place and go around and preach. And it happened at that time that we had a good spirit among the congregations. It was like a revival, like a coming to senses; we had to do something, our children had to learn."[109]

---

[108] Ibid.

[109] Fey, "Interview," p. 6.

Adjusting and adapting opportunistically to the foreign culture seems to be a persistent feature of Palauan psychology. In this way Palauans are good self-educators. Fey became a teacher toward an important educational end.

Fey went to the U.S. military and received permission to take unused quonset huts from Peleliu, an island to the south on which the military had spent $18 million building a base which war's end had made unnecessary. The Protestants organized kinrohoshi (volunteer work) groups which in six months time dismantled, transported and reconstructed the military buildings to form a small but attractive Emmaus Training Home for boys. The Home included a dormitory, classrooms, a house, dining room, cow shed, helper's house, shower room, toilets, etc. So while the deacons preached the Word, Fey administered a self-supporting, disciplined training school which provided some of Palau's most prominent leaders of today with their first post-war Christian education. In the mid-1950s, Fey made arrangements for the establishment of a companion girls' school--Bethania--in Ngaraard.

The Liebenzell missionaries had been so successful in educating deacons in the Word and meaning of the Christian God that in 1952 two of these men, Johanes Aigesiil and Gottfried Ngiramedelemang, carried the Protestant message to Yap. It was felt that "this island was very much in darkness where evil spirits dominated the lives of the Yapese."[110] Aigesiil had a very sharp ear for languages. He had learned German at the school set up by the German Capuchins in Melekeok and served as

---

[110]Herbert Lange, "From Palau to Yap," Currents 38, no. 1 (1979):10.

Pastor Laenge's interpreter throughout the 1930s. While in Yap, Aigesiil learned the language so well that he was able to translate the Gospels of Luke and John and a hymn book into Yapese. Initially the Yapese showed considerable cultural resistance to the Palauan missionaries and their message. "After five years of living with the people, there was fruit. People found something in these men which they had never seen before."[111]

Another missionary with great linguistic talent was Sister Hilde Thiem who worked in both Palau and Yap. She did a great deal of translation work after the war and much of it is now just being revised and extended by first language speakers as Lydia Charles of Palau and Yilibuw of Yap.[112]

In the late 1960s and throughout the 1970s, Palauans began seeking a renewed sense of cultural identity. They recognized that foreign missionaries, for all their talents and Godly service, were culturally unable to perceive Palauan ways of aesthetic expression. In essence, church hymns were German hymns with Palauan words. None of them, Reverend Hubert Charles noted,

> had a Palauan melody or chant style. The early missionaries did not appear to have been interested in our folk songs, chants and ballads, or to have realized how these island masterpieces convey the deep feelings of island people. They apparently did not realize that Micronesian people would obtain deeper spiritual truth from a Gospel communicated in their own rhythms, than in the traditional forms of Germany.[113]

---

[111] Ibid.

[112] Hilde Thiem, "Demanding But Rewarding!" Currents 37, no. 4 (1975):4-5.

[113] Hubert Charles, "Singing--An Integral Part of Palauan Worship," Currents 37, no. 4 (1978):8.

Because the conceptualization and expression of aesthetic value varies so greatly from culture to culture and usually operates on the subconscious-unconscious level, it is not surprising that Palauans sung to German rhythms for nearly half a century.[114]

This imperialism of conceptual categories--unintended and innocent though it was--has, to a degree, been rectified. Mrs. Lydia Charles retranslated many hymns matching more closely Palauan syllables to musical notes, and the Palauan composer Imesei Ezekiel composed some new melodies, which presumably were based on indigenous Palauan musical rhythms.[115] After eight years of work, the new hymnal, Cheliteklir ar Kristiano, meaning "Songs of the Christians," was dedicated in May 1978. It contains 250 hymns, a catechism, liturgy, responsive readings and an index. Pastor Hubert Charles believes the new hymnal will revitalize and strengthen Lutheranism in Palau.[116]

In but a half century, Lutheranism has taken deep root in Palau. As warm and loving representatives of modernism, the Liebenzell missionaries have been accepted for what they could bring and to make life in Palau more satisfying--Biblical teachings and preachings, health care, schools and an amazingly successful kindergarten (examined in Chapter Seven). Through these new cultural activities, Palauans have educated themselves

---

[114] Osamu Yamaguchi, "The Taxonomy of Music in Palau," Ethnomusicology 12, no. 3 (1968):345-351.

[115] I use the term "presumably" because the music for the national anthem of the Republic of Palau, which was composed by Imesei Ezekiel, has been criticized as being "too churchlike."

[116] Charles, "Singing--An Integral Part of Palauan Worship," p. 8.

toward a new religious identity during times of rapid and sometimes bewildering change.

The Seventh-Day Adventist Church

About the turn of the century, James Gibbons who had jumped ship in Palau in the late 1860s and, over the years, integrated fully into Palauan society, received by accident printed information from Hong Kong concerning the Seventh-Day Adventist (SDA) religion. Unattracted to the teachings of the Capuchin missionaries then in Palau, Gibbons studied his Bible and SDA tracts and instructed his son William in the Adventist faith.

Some years after his father's death, William Gibbons made efforts through Japanese ship captains to contact an SDA church in Japan. Finally, through the good offices of Mr. V.T. Armstrong, President of the Japan Union Mission, Tokyo, arrangements were made in the late 1920s for an SDA missionary to visit Palau. Pastor S. Miyake and his wife arrived in July 1930. Miyake began his Bible study classes in William Gibbons' home in Koror. Since both Pastor Miyake and Gibbons could speak English, the Palauan served as interpreter for some twenty other adults who attended Miyake's Bible classes and church services. Gibbons was the first Palauan baptised into the Adventist faith. After Miyake left Palau, Pastors V.T. Armstrong and S. Ogura came from Japan in 1932 to conduct a month of evangelistic meetings. This show of religious fervor resulted in twenty Palauan baptisms.

In 1934 Pastor J.O. Bautista came from the Philippines to establish a permanent Adventist station in Palau. William Gibbons again served as

interpreter and host. Over the years Bautista's Bible classes attracted so many Japanese who wanted to learn English that the Pastor felt the Palauans were being neglected. Bautista therefore requested that the Japan Union Mission send a second missionary, which it did in 1939.

With the arrival of Pastor K. Ochai, Bautista spent all his time ministering to the Palauans. Although he traveled all around Babeldaob, most of his missionary success was found amongst the people of Koror and Airai. With William Gibbons' help, Bautista translated numerous tracts and hymns into the Palauan language. It was during this period of active evangelization that Bautista was criticised by both German Liebenzell and Spanish Jesuit missionaries.[117] Prior to the outbreak of the Pacific War, Bautista was ordered to leave Palau. Pastor Ochai carried on the mission's work until 1943, when the military government then in control of Palau forbade him from holding Bible meetings. Soon after, Ochai was drafted into the Japanese Army and his family evacuated to Japan. It seems the missionary-turned-soldier died during the battle of Peleliu in September 1944.

In mid-1942 a second Japanese Adventist missionary, Mr. S. Yamamoto, arrived in Palau. He too was watched closely by military government officials and jailed in early 1944 for his profound religious beliefs. Guarding Yamamoto was a Palauan named Toribiong Uchel. Toribiong was so moved by the power of Yamamoto's faith that he shed his Catholicism

---

[117] Nobuo Willy, "A History of the Seventh-Day Adventist Church in Micronesia from 1932 to 1969," (M.A. thesis, Philippine Union College, Manila, 1970), p. 100.

for the Adventist faith soon after the Pacific War. In 1956 Toribiong became Palau's first ordained pastor.[118]

After the Pacific War, Pastor Bautista returned briefly to Palau to re-establish Adventism. Two American missionaries, Pastor and Mrs. J.L. Bowers, came to Palau in 1949. Under their leadership a church, parsonage and school were built in the early 1950s, when membership was less than 100. The evangelical campaign launched during this period met with Catholic and Lutheran opposition.[119]

The ten year period from Toribiong's ordination to his death at sea in March 1965 was an extraordinary time of evangelization and church growth. Toribiong worked hard on non-Adventists by holding regular Bible classes for them and setting baptismal quotas. Perhaps his most effective means of winning converts was by granting church assistance to non-Adventists in their house building and personal financial difficulties.[120] This put the faith in Palauan cultural terms, making it attractive and establishing an obligation. Toribiong was a gifted evangelist and carried on an extremely effective pastorate because of a personal charm akin to "magic." It seems Pastor Bowers recognized these traits and was preparing Toribiong for the church's top leadership post when he was tragically lost at sea.

What church members saw as religious teaching and progress was often perceived by non-Adventists as political manipulation operating under the

---

[118] Ibid., p. 102.

[119] Ibid., p. 114.

[120] Ibid., p. 116.

guise of mission work. Francis Mahoney, who was in Palau during this time (1951-1961), remembers the militancy of the Palauan SDA leadership.

> The SDA faction was trying to undermine the administration. Toribiong did not come into direct confrontation with us, but Tmetuchl seemed to seek it. I think he felt he had to "grandstand." After all, being against the Americans meant being more Palauan.[121]

Mahoney claimed that the Palauan SDA leadership formed the backbone of organization and support for the March 1952 government workers strike. According to Father McManus, a Catholic Jesuit then in Palau, the workers lost the strike but had their wages raised nonetheless. He commented that "nobody seemed to be against the strike and nobody thought the men were getting enough money."[122] Some twenty-nine years later, Tmetuchl was again the organizational genius of a government workers strike which culminated in the arson destruction of the President of Palau's office on September 8, 1981.

Much of the history of the SDA church centers around Toribiong. After his tragic loss at sea in March 1965, Pastor Solomon (Palauan) emerged as an active missionary. Although not having the charisma of Toribiong, Solomon patterned his missionary style after that of the late pastor by holding revival meetings, home visitations and public evangelism. Perhaps in response to the memory of Toribiong's leadership, a very successful vacation Bible school was held in June 1965 from which

---

[121] Francis Mahoney, personal interview, Honolulu, Hawaii, June 4, 1981.

[122] Father Edwin McManus, S.J., "The Palau Press," no. 36 (April 1952), p. 1.

sprung eleven branch Sabbath Schools. Later in 1965 ground was broken for a new and larger Koror SDA Church.

By 1970 the Seventh-Day Adventist Church had some 300 committed members. Evangelical work in Peleliu, Angaur and Ngchesar had been disappointing. Attempts had been made on Babeldaob but again the results were not encouraging except, of course, in Airai where a fine high school and church were built near the airport. The evangelical momentum of the 1950s and 1960s declined noticeably in the 1970s because of the failure of many Palauan church college graduates to take up mission work in Palau and the loss of an active and building spirit on the part of the original leadership, some of whom had become inactive in the church.

During this "dormant" period, numerous foreign missionaries came to Palau from the Philippines and U.S. to build and run the SDA high school and church in Airai. Judging from the history of the Catholic and SDA missions, which have few indigenous vocations, Palauans generally do not find full-time mission work attractive.

In the late 1970s, the SDA church became more active under the leadership of Pastors Solomon and Nobuo Willy, who worked closely with their foreign counterparts. A fine eye clinic was built near the Koror church in 1979, a mission boat was purchased for mission outreach to the rural municipalities, and an active program of revival meetings featuring visiting evangelists was very successful during 1980 and 1981 in getting a large number of conversions and baptisms.

Four Catholic Fathers

With the execution of Palau's resident Jesuit missionaries by the Japanese military in September 1944, new priests had to be found for

Palau. Many have come to Palau since the war, and of these, four have been exceptional in their compassion and depth of service to God and the Palauan people. These four are Father John Bizkarra, Father Edwin McManus, Father Richard Hoar and Father Felix Yaoch. All are alike in being Jesuits and thus having a theological uniformity but each is amazingly different in personality and approach to life and mission work in Palau.

Padre John Bizkarra, S.J.

Padre John, a Spanish Jesuit, came to Palau in December 1946. He had been assigned to the Carolines in 1938 but when he got to Japan the authorities would not allow him to enter the islands. He thus waited out the war in Japan.

The 320 people of Angaur had been influenced by the religious and communal solidarity of the Chamorros working for the Japanese phosphate mining company. In the 1920s and 1930s a large number of Angaurese and about one hundred Peleliu people had become Catholic. Shortly after his arrival in Palau, Padre John had promised the Angaurese he would come to say Christmas Mass. Rough seas delayed his visit a day and tossed him into the sea with two Palauans as their boat approached the Angaur dock. This "baptism," people said, was his punishment for not coming for Christmas as he had promised. Although this incident happened early in his career in Palau, it typifies the great importance of Christian tradition to both Padre John and the people of Angaur.

Since his accidental "baptism," Padre John has been the priest of Angaur and Peleliu. He has willingly and lovingly given the best years

of his life to deepening the Catholic Christian faith of the people of these two islands. In 1954 Padre John and the men of Angaur built Palau's only public Christian monument. The Immaculate Conception stands on a rocky point as a protector of those who come and go across the rough seas.

Padre John is deeply concerned with the rapid pace of social change in Palau. He feels the introduction of American style elected government was a great mistake. "The traditional leaders were very offended by their loss of power."[123] He feels that democracy has often been interpreted by the Palauans as license to do anything and this attitude, he feels, is at the root of the present (1981) political unrest in Palau.

For several years Padre John has been flying back and forth to Angaur. After thirty-four years of ministering to the human needs of the people there and on Peleliu, this thin, silver-haired Spanish Jesuit is being left behind by the rush of culture change. What Father McManus said in 1955 of the Spanish Jesuits of Truk and Ponape, I believe, applies to the religious giant of Angaur. Father McManus wrote:

> Their manner of dealing with the people is somewhat different from Americans, but when I look back at what they accomplished in the face of tremendous difficulties . . . I marvel at what the Spaniards accomplished, and I wonder if we Americans with all our hustle and bustle, will be able to match their record.[124]

---

[123]Padre John Bizkarra, S.J. personal interview, Koror, Palau, January 7, 1981.

[124]Father Edwin McManus, "The Palau Press," no. 48 (January 1955), p. 2.

Father Edwin McManus, S.J.

In mid 1951, Father McManus bade a proud farewell to six Mindszenty School graduates who were leaving for the Philippines to begin further schooling for the eventual priesthood and brotherhood.[125] Not an outwardly emotional man, Fr. McManus' letters, written for over twenty years to his benefactors in America, reveal a man of profound compassion and love.[126] As Fr. Mac (as he was known to most everyone in Palau) watched the ship steam away with the six young Palauans aboard, he was filled with a powerful mixture of conflicting emotions. The deepest, perhaps, was of religious joy. Later in recounting this emotion, Fr. Mac wrote:

> There went the one who will someday take my place; there went the boy whose episcopal ring I will someday kiss; there went the hands that will anoint me on my death bed.[127]

He was also moved by Catholic pride,

> I felt very proud that I am a Catholic, a member of the Church that can take the child of illiterate pagans and make him another Christ. These boys will someday stand at the Altar and speak

---

[125] Of the six, Leonardo Ruluked, William Tabelual, Gregorio Ramarui and Augusto Naruo would enter minor seminary and Louis Filibert and Yoshiharu Sugino would begin schooling for the Jesuit lay brotherhood.

[126] Copies of these letters are located in the Sacred Heart Mission rectory records, Koror, Palau. I am especially indebted to Palau's four Jesuit priests, Fr. Hoar, Fr. Felix, Fr. John and Fr. Smith for giving me a greater understanding of the Catholic Church's past and present role in Palau.

[127] Fr. Edwin McManus, S.J., "The Palau Press," no. 32 (June 1951), p. 1.

> with the voice of Christ, will some day lift the merciful hand of Christ in absolution over sinful man . . .[128]

Yet he knew the vulnerabilities such young men had, and he feared for them,

> My throat was dry with dread when I thought of the obstacles and pitfalls that lie before them. Pray for them; pray that . . . they will be priests forever according to the order of Melchisadech . . . May these boys be found worthy.[129]

Father Mac was a man of single purpose. He was incredibly efficient and energetic and had great self-discipline.[130] His twenty-one years (1948-1969) in Palau were dominated by two goals--Catholic education and a written Palauan word. Unfortunately, his dictionary was not published during his lifetime and while he had great hopes that a native clergy and a devoutly Catholic Christian Palau could come only from Catholic schools, he fully realized the formidable challenges and barriers such cultural change agents would face.

By late 1952 there were eight Palauan seminarians--four in the Philippines and four in Guam. In his September 1954 newsletter, Fr. Mac was pleased that there were so many Micronesians studying the religious vocations--seventeen boys and twenty-six girls. But he had his doubts about this enthusiasm. There was no cultural tradition for such service. Was the response a special favor from God or was it individuals' seeking

---

[128] Ibid.

[129] Ibid.

[130] Father Richard Hoar, S.J., personal interview, Koror, Palau, January 30, 1981.

to "better" themselves? Surely this was a double mystery for the young Micronesians. Father Mac did not see this because he was prompted to wonder: "How sure can I be that the boys really want to serve God, and are not just seeking higher education? Are the girls rushing to become spouses of Christ, or just fleeing the Taro Gardens?"[131] These doubts were to persist for years and forced Fr. Mac to realize that he must plant God's seed in the very young.

In 1958 Fr. Mac was able to pass on the responsibilities of superior to Fr. Rively. Fr. Mac made ambitious plans to establish a mission station on Babeldaob and continue work on his Palauan dictionary and grammar after Fr. Hoar, who arrived late in November 1958, had adjusted to life in Palau. Fr. Mac's first year or two in Palau had been extremely satisfying for him as a priest. He liked a simple uncluttered life and hoped to find it again in rural northern Babeldaob. Yet over the years he came to understand the deep cultural complexities and resistance that awaited the dedicated evangelizer.

To the great disappointment of the people of Melekeok, Fr. Mac decided to locate his station in Ngaraard because he knew there were many pagans there among whom he wanted to work.[132] He felt that "the time was ripe for a crash program on pagans."[133]

---

[131] Father Edwin McManus, "The Palau Press," no. 47 (September 1954), p. 2.

[132] Melekeok, the "Boston" of Palau had had priests and a large mission station since early German administration. Fr. Mac was, therefore, going against the cultural grain by locating his station in Ngaraard. The Melekeok people were terribly upset.

[133] Fr. Edwin McManus, "The Palau Press," no. 73 (September 1960), p. 1.

This "crash program" as Fr. Mac envisioned it included the activities of an elementary school, a convent and a new church. The Infant Jesus Elementary School (grades 1-6) opened in August 1960 after a massive all day concrete laying operation which was completed only with the help of seventy people from Koror. Fr. Mac was disappointed that only seventy-five children showed up the first day. He thought the poor turnout was due to parental resistance. He believed he might break it by teaching all the English classes himself, thereby making his school superior to the village public school, which did not have native English speakers teaching English. Culturally, Palauans are ambitious people; they recognized over the years of colonial rule that a command of the foreigner's language often opened the door to economic opportunity. Fr. Mac was hoping to play on this ambition.

The second school year (1961-62) was equally disappointing as far as attendance was concerned. Fr. Mac had located in Ngaraard because he had "hoped the school would be a means of 'cracking' the pagan parents."[134] He admitted to the readers of "The Palau Press" in 1961 that he had not made much progress in that area. But he never seemed to give up hope--at least in the early years.

After his school was built and operating, Fr. Mac began construction of a new church building--a concrete one to replace the old wooden structure. As this slowly progressed, he began plans for a convent building. However, when the Bishop visited Ngaraard in September 1961, he told Fr.

---

[134]Fr. Edwin McManus, S.J., "The Palau Press," no. 76 (September 1961), p. 1.

Mac that there was no chance sisters would be assigned to Ngaraard to take over the Infant Jesus School. The Brooklyn Jesuit reacted to this news by busying himself with yet another project--construction of a church bell tower and getting a bell.

Given Fr. Mac's religious enthusiasm for the building of Palauan religious vocations, he was very excited about the ordination of one of the six young men he had sent to the Philippines in 1951. For Fr. Mac the ordination of Gregorio Ramarui in February 1964 was the greatest thing that had ever happened in Palau. The Bishop came as did priests from every district in the mission (TTPI), and from Guam and the Philippines. The Catholic community of Palau was profoundly proud and moved to see, after the ordination, the Bishop kneel before the new Palauan priest to receive his blessing. The Palau Church was so pleased to have its own priest that Fr. Gregorio was sent to every district center in the Trust Territory "to show him off and to stimulate religious vocations by letting the other Micronesians see him."[135]

Despite the excitement and pride this event generated, Fr. Mac expressed doubts to his readers about the progress of the vocations. "I'm afraid it will be a long time before these islands cease to be a mission and become a regular diocese with its own clergy . . . I don't expect to live to see the day when foreign missionaries are not needed here."[136]

---

[135]Fr. Edwin McManus, S.J., "The Palau Press," no. 90 (August 1964), p. 1.

[136]Fr. Edwin McManus, S.J., "The Palau Press," no. 89 (March 1964), p. 1.

Beginning the seventh year of the Infant Jesus Elementary School (1966-1967), several Peace Corps Volunteer (PCV) teachers were assigned to the Ngaraard public elementary school to teach English. Their presence enriched the school's program in several other ways and thus drew students away from Fr. Mac's school. He was unable to get a PCV teacher for his own school and realized that the low enrollment might force him to close down his operation. Fortunately, Fr. Mac did not have to make this painful decision. The Bishop ordered him to close the school. Besides the low enrollment, the school had become a financial burden for the mission as the Ngaraard people, being mainly non-Catholics, had neither the desire nor means to lend a financial hand of support.[137]

Six months later, Typhoon Sally destroyed Fr. Mac's house and school at Ngaraard.[138] The priest, now nearly 59 years old, was determined to raise enough funds during his sabbatical leave to rebuild his Ngaraard rectory and school. With the help of his American benefactors who were recipients of Mac's "Palau Press" for nearly twenty years and who contributed generously to his various projects, Fr. Mac collected enough money to rebuild his station. He rebuilt his house and repaired the church but he did not reconstruct the school because three of the village's Catholic families, who supplied fifteen school children, had moved away from Ngaraard.

---

[137] Fr. Richard Hoar, S.J. personal interview, Koror, Palau, January 5, 1981.

[138] Typhoon Sally hit Palau during the early morning hours of March 1, 1967. President L.B. Johnson declared Palau a disaster area and allocated $250,000 of relief funds.

Fr. Mac was never able to "crack" the Ngaraard pagans. After nearly eight years, he had won over less than half a dozen Palauan adults to Catholicism. With PCVs in the village public school, no chance of getting sisters, and a broken down school, Fr. Mac's vision for religious education and a vibrant Catholic community in Ngaraard had, like his school building, been dashed. About this time (late 1967, early 1968), he realized that the Ngaraard experience had been a terrible mistake.[139] He turned his energies to trying to get his Palauan dictionary and grammar published and reflecting on the rapid and uncertain political and social changes then taking place in Palau.

While in the U.S. during the summer of 1967, Fr. Mac had the great consolation of seeing one of "his boys" ordained a priest. Fr. Mac had eagerly watched the educational progress of the exceptionally bright Felix Yaoch, who was ordained a Jesuit by Bishop James McNulty in Buffalo, N.Y. in June 1967.

On September 19, 1969, twenty-five years and a day after the Spanish Jesuits were executed by Japanese military somewhere in Ngatpang, Father Mac died in his sleep of a heart attack in his house in Ngaraard. He had devoted his life to the Christianization of Palau. He must have been saddened, like the Capuchins in Ngarchelong in the early 1890s, by his failure at Ngaraard. This perhaps lay at the root of his decision to continue to live in Ngaraard. He was a religiously tenacious man.

Recall that in mid 1951, Fr. Mac bade a proud farewell to six young Palauans leaving for seminary education in the Philippines. Running

---

[139] Fr. Richard Hoar, S.J., personal interview, Koror, Palau, January 5, 1981.

over with religious pride and joy, Fr. Mac had predicted that a Palauan priest would one day anoint him on his death bed. However, between that day and his death few Palauans had entered the priesthood. Father Richard Hoar anointed the body and the one Palauan priest, Father Felix Yaoch, preached the funeral Mass sermon honoring the persistent priest of Ngaraard.

Father Richard Hoar, S.J.

Within a year or so after Father Mac died, Father Hoar began ministering to the Catholics on Babeldaob. He soon realized the impracticality of operating out of a base on the big island and shifted his base to Koror.

Making the Babeldaob rounds was a new departure for Father Hoar. Since his arrival in November 1958, he had been very active in the Catholic school program. The enrollment of the Maris Stella Elementary School (grades 1-8) and Mindszenty High School grew very rapidly in the early 1960s in response to the influx of rural migrants and limited seats in Koror's one public elementary school. Fr. Hoar was assigned the task of constructing a new two story 8-classroom building for the burgeoning elementary program. The building was completed in 1965. After three or four years of Babeldaob traveling in the early 1970s, Fr. Hoar was appointed pastor of the Koror church.

In discussing the theological situation of the Catholic Church today, both in Palau and the wider world, Fr. Hoar revealed that he recently had achieved a certain degree of theological equilibrium.

> Since the tremendous changes brought to the Church by Vatican II, I had been really wondering about the nature of faith. I believe I've resolved it to a degree. I've learned to live with my uncertainties more than in finding answers. It's an incredibly difficult time now in the Church and this is all reflected in our microcosm here in Palau. The people who are hanging on now with any grace are absolute heroes.[140]

Father Hoar is first and foremost a religious teacher. In this role he faces challenges in getting his meaning across cultural and social change barriers. The enormous changes in the Church since Vatican II have added yet another dimension of complexity--a more personal one--to his work among Koror's Catholics. Father Hoar is quick to point out that of the 7,000 or so "census" Catholics in Palau less than 1,000 are sacramental, i.e., practicing committed Catholics. Attacking this situation has become, it seems to me, an all consuming drive that governs his pastorate.[141]

I had the rare privilege during early 1981 of observing a process of Catholic community building engaged in by two church groups and Fr. Hoar in preparation for Lent.[142] One group would make radio programs

---

[140] Fr. Richard Hoar, S.J., personal interview, Koror, Palau, January 1981.

[141] At the time of writing, the Palau Catholic mission had four Jesuit priests. Fr. Hoar was the pastor of Koror. Fr. Felix Yaoch was responsible for the Catholics on Babeldaob and Padre John was ministering to the Catholics of Angaur and Peleliu. Father Smith was overseeing Koror's two Catholic schools and assisting in Koror.

[142] Lent is a period of forty weekdays (including Saturdays) from Ash Wednesday to Easter Sunday which formerly was popularly understood as a period of penitence and fasting. However, in essence, Lent is now meant to be a period of personal renewal, conversion and intensification of faith.

centering on the new meaning of Lent as a time of personal and community renewal and a second group would "beat the bushes" to find and invite Catholics to small prayer groups and hopefully back to fuller participation in the life of the church.

From 1965 to 1971, a group of men had worked with Father Hoar producing Catholic radio programs.[143] These generally included a Sunday gospel reading, a bit of a sermon, some announcements, all interspersed with singing. Father Hoar told the writer that these early "programs were about what you're hearing now from the other two big churches. We actually set the pattern."[144]

The impetus for the 1981 effort was an excellent series of seminars on Catholic radio programming given during late 1980 by Father Wolbert Daniel, S.J., a media specialist.[145] The people who attended the seminars and later joined the radio group are among the brightest and most concerned people in Palau.

After Fr. Hoar gave several refresher talk-discussions on the deeper meaning of Lent as renewal, the radio group produced five programs the themes of which were choosing, being called, thirst, seeing, and life-death-life. During the process of making these programs, cultural gaps in meaning were easily bridged because everyone was fluent in English.

---

[143]This group included Sylvester Alonz, Juan Polloi, Tony Polloi, Valentine Ramarui and David Ramarui.

[144]Fr. Richard Hoar, S.J., personal interview, Koror, Palau, January 19, 1981.

[145]In planning discussions for Father Daniel's visit, the Palauans involved told Fr. Hoar that they wanted the visitor to offer a training program of some kind. This request typifies the Palauan thirst for education and desire to be "modern."

The challenge of addressing the Lenten theme of faith renewal through real urgent Palauan social situations was more formidable. Initially one script concentrated on the social problem of alcohol with incidental reference to Lent. After Fr. Hoar pointed out this rather glaring imbalance, the writer re-did the script showing more clearly the relationship of the Lenten concept of personal renewal to problem drinking. The original disbalance perhaps exemplified the intensity of concern on the part of the radio program group for Palau's problems of social change. Fr. Hoar believes that the best way to deal with these problems is through inner change, spiritual renewal and deepening of Christian faith.

The process and product of the radio program group are a fulfillment of the Catholic Churches' goals--deepening of faith, indigenization and consciousness-raising.[146] Of this connection Fr. Hoar said, "What is interesting and exciting about the radio programs is that they are Catholic programs made by Palauans for Palauans and therefore really speak to the condition of the people. They are a whole new departure and I think incredibly good."[147]

As of March 1981, the radio program group had plans of continuing to make Catholic Christian programs that emphasized true human development and consciousness-raising. Topics as nuclear free Pacific, salaries, labor unions, drug and alcohol abuse, and, what the mission priests

---

[146] Fr. Richard Hoar, S.J., "Religion in Palau Today," TS, Koror, Palau, 1976, p. 4.

[147] Fr. Richard Hoar, S.J., personal interview, Koror, Palau, March 2, 1981.

unanimously agree is the burning issue in contemporary Palau, men's liberation.[148]

For Fr. Hoar the challenges of cross cultural communications, social change, and church change vis-a-vis the second group of Catholics were more formidable than with the radio program group. The second group consisted of twenty-two older women and three or four "token" men. The women formed the nucleus of Koror-town church leadership.

Father Hoar had a double purpose for inviting people to join this second group. He wanted their participation in planning a Lenten program and, secondly, he needed a way to sooth the bruised egos of a few meteet (high family) women. It seems his showering of attention on a few non-meteet people a few weeks before Lenten planning began had made the meteet group jealous because they, as recognized social leaders, perceived themselves as being excluded. Therefore they were not in control of the church situation as they believed was their right and duty. This distinction between high ranking and low ranking people is prevalent among Palau's older generations. Fr. Hoar was groping for a way to graciously open the Lenten planning activity to all concerned and put aside the cultural distinction of social hierarchy for sake of church fellowship. In this process he also hoped to liberate the Osiaol (meeting place) from the complete control of the meteet women who had taken it over and held it for a year during Palau's constitutional storms of 1979 and 1980 (see Chapter Six).

---

[148]The priests' ideas concerning Palauan men's liberation will be discussed in the concluding chapter of this study.

The kinds of challenges presented by social change in Palau and the wider changes in Catholic theology are in many ways closely intertwined. At every meeting with the Lenten group during January and February 1981, Father Hoar felt the need to emphasize the "new" meaning of Lent. It did not mean giving up something for seven weeks but, he emphasized, it was a time to renew oneself, to revitalize oneself, to alter the whole direction of one's life. He stressed this theme because the members of the group would reach-out to those Catholics living near them who, for various reasons, were no longer active in the church.

> We want to welcome these people to partake in a renewal program for Lent. To make the invitation as unintimidating as possible, we have divorced it from reception of the sacraments. So many of our people are non-participatory and because of church law they can't receive the sacraments or won't because of the condition they are in. We want to find some way by which they can take an active part in the life of the church once again. The prayer groups and meetings are one fine way. They need a way to express their Christianity and so our outreach is very important.[149]

Vatican II (1962-1965) took place about the same time as the U.S. decision to begin pouring money into Micronesia. Thus the changes in church meanings and some of the changes in Palauan society run side by side and have created a confusing psychological situation for Catholics as well as others. Through prayer groups, some of which were four years old, and the Lenten outreach via the core planning group, Father Hoar was trying to get the committed Catholics to be the catalyst for behavior

---

[149] Fr. Richard Hoar, S.J., personal interview, Koror, Palau, January 19, 1981.

change among the uncommitted ones. This thrust was based on the theory that if a person's behavior changes then perception changes, and when perception changes, then insight results.[150] For Fr. Hoar, this insight is renewal, spiritual revitalization, the self-reflection--personal change that creates a loving and deeply committed Christian.

Fr. Hoar finds the challenges of Catholic life in Palau tremendously exciting. In a little place like Palau there is never a dull moment. "Even if I wanted to leave I would be loath to just for the excitement that's going on, in my head, if no place else, in terms of all this stuff."[151]

By all measures, Fr. Hoar has, in his own personal style, gracefully responded to the challenges to Catholicism in Palau today. And in this act he has become one of those spiritual heroes he himself described.

Father Felix Yaoch, S.J.

Pope John Paul II and dancing dolphins symbolize the essence of Father Felix's world of Church in Palau. Father Felix went to Guam in February 1981 when the Pope visited, and he was profoundly moved by the spiritual magnetism of John Paul. The Palauan priest went to Angaur in June and was thrilled by the exuberance of thousands of playful dolphins. As the Pope moved the minds and spirits of everyone in Guam, so too the dolphins boiled the waters rich with life and beauty. Father Felix was deeply moved by both occasions.

---

[150] "An Interview with Edward T. Hall," Kinesis I, no. 1, (1978):8.

[151] Fr. Richard Hoar, S.J., personal interview, Koror, Palau, January 11, 1981.

Palauans are very proud of Father Felix. In November 1978 he was by far the highest vote getter of the thirty-eight elected Palau Constitutional Convention delegates. Had he run for the presidency of Palau in November 1980, he probably would have won. Palauans respond to moral authority, and Father Felix is preeminent in this area. Like Fr. Hoar, Fr. Felix is keenly aware of the large number of Catholics who are no longer regular in the practice of their faith. In response, the church leadership has defined four areas of priority: deepening of faith, building up both church and secular leadership, reconciliation involving ecumenism and service to the world via consciousness-raising.[152]

For seven or eight years now, Fr. Felix has been making the Babeldaob rounds. This travel involves delivering the sacraments to the ten major villages along the big island's east and west coasts at least once a month. Unlike some foreign observers who focus on Palauan competitiveness and factionalism in their writings, Fr. Felix finds more forces for social cohesion than fragmentation in Palauan culture and believes that Catholicism can build on this social strength. "There exists everywhere in Palau an atmosphere of striving unto oneness and concern for others which needs only to be touched sacramentally--however gradually, however delicately--to become a living out of the Mystical Body of Christ and of supernatural charity."[153]

---

[152]Fr. Felix Yaoch, S.J., personal interview, Koror, Palau, February 29, 1981.

[153]Fr. Felix Yaoch, S.J., "Knitted Togetherness: The Palauan Family," Jesuit Missions (May 1966):27.

Father Felix defines the meaning of the term Modekngei as "having finally come together as one."[154] He sees the Christian elements in the indigenous revitalization religion as bases for ecumenism and unity. Fr. Felix has written that,

> Many say Modekngei and Catholicism are the same, except that Catholicism is for the foreigners and Modekngei for the natives. Some parents even advise their children that if they want to change their religion, they should become Catholics and not something else. The field for ecumenism and harvest is promising.[155]

Fr. Felix takes this same tolerant attitude toward Palau's Jehovah Witness and Mormon missionaries who have been active "pounding the pavement" for converts. He opposed a Constitutional Convention measure that would have, if passed, restricted religious callings to the four now dominant in Palau--Modekngei, Catholicism, Lutheranism, and Adventism.

In many ways, Fr. Felix is the conscience of Palau. He is frequently testing, probing and challenging Palau's political leadership. Bill Brophy, who worked for three years as Roman Tmetuchl's trusted assistant and consultant, claims that Fr. Felix intentionally supported three controversial articles in the Palau Constitution as a way to foil a $250 million U.S. compact of free association offer.[156] The priest's support,

---

[154]Yaoch, "A Reflection on Modekngei: The Palauan Pagan Religion," p. 13.

[155]Ibid., p. 21.

[156]The three controversial provisions concerned the unprecedented definition of territorial sea, eminent domain and nuclear and other dangerous substances. The U.S. strongly opposed the inclusion of all three articles into the constitution.

Brophy claims, was crucial to the final inclusion of all three controversial measures into the constitution.[157]

If Brophy is correct on this score, and I think he may be, than it seems that Fr. Felix used the constitutional controversy as an occasion to get the convention delegates, their supporters and their opposition to mull over the issues, debate them, reflect on them and come to a greater understanding of their consequences for Palauan society. Fr. Felix is concerned that the dizzying pace of change is straining Palau's social fabric to the breaking point. He believes that Palauans need time to adjust to, control, and think about the pace and direction of cultural change. This is what the Jesuits mean by consciousness-raising. According to Father Felix:

> The rapid pace of change makes it difficult for people to reflect. We are no longer an isolated society. Things are constantly changing and people and ideas constantly coming from the outside, drawing our attention. We need time to really sit down and reflect. We are constantly being distracted from reflective thinking.[158]

The process of ratifying the constitution became highly politicized during the months after the Con-Con (see Chapter Six) and therefore I am not sure as much reflection on the issues took place as Fr. Felix might have wanted. Nevertheless, the change-accelerating compact offer became moot when its key supporter, Roman Tmetuchl, lost the race for the

---

[157] Bill Brophy, personal interview, Honolulu, Hawaii, November 19, 1981.

[158] Fr. Felix Yaoch, S.J., personal interview, Koror, Palau, February 29, 1981.

presidency in November 1980. Fr. Felix had bought Palau a bit more time for building up its leadership through consciousness-raising.

Recall that Fr. Mac went to Ngaraard in 1959 because he felt the time was ripe for a crash program on the pagans of that area. Fr. Felix believes the time is ripe for a crash program on tunnel vision and ignorance in Palau. As a member of the Catholic clergy, he feels it is his duty to help people become more aware of themselves as human, as Palauans and as members of a changing world. This mental liberation through consciousness-raising would, he believes, allow people to deal with life in as broad a spectrum as possible, thereby valuing both the cultural given and the constructed. Everyday examples as a person's pay check, Fr. Felix believes, provide a way to value both Palauan and Western customs:

> Everyone has clan connections and a pay check can be completely eaten up by a house custom or death settlement. A person, particularly a young person, is often torn between his loyalty to clan and relatives and his desire to participate in the new life style. I believe these are not mutually exclusive. They can be integrated if one sees them both as values and tries to control the extravagances.[159]

Clearly, Fr. Felix believes that social contraries--individuality vs. community, competition vs. cooperation, elected authority vs. traditional authority--presently expressed in Palau can be collapsed and synthesized. Palauans may achieve this wisdom given enough time and through the guidance of the church and attention to cultural continuities. "We need to work within existing social-political-organizational structures.

---

[159] Ibid.

They are operative, natural and viable."[160] Fr. Felix's roots spread deep into the soil of Catholicism and Palauan culture. This soil, he believes is the source of strength and unity in the tide of on rushing change.

Modekngei Since 1945

Soon after the war, American military officials looked to Palau's two paramount chiefs, Ibedul and Reklai, for legitimizing authority. This gave the two chiefs, as well as lesser village chiefs, considerable power and prestige, far beyond what they had known under Japanese administration. This change broke the chiefs' link to the Modekngei and was the first step in the post-war decline of the movement. Unlike the Japanese, U.S. military officials did not attempt to suppress Modekngei on religious or social grounds. "The Modekngei slogan 'Palau for the Palauans' became a reality under the Americans who had no interest in colonizing"[161] at that time.

However, the military opposed Modkngei medical practices.

> The presence of Modekngei, a nativistic religion, is still working against the United States Naval Military Government. This religion practices native medicine and its followers are warned against medical treatment from the Dispensary. It also teaches a revision to pre-foreign customs of the Palaus with the accompanying recommendation that all foreigners leave these islands.[162]

---

[160] Ibid.

[161] Vidich, "The Political Impact of Colonial Administration," p. 316.

[162] U.S. Navy, Palau District Military Government Unit, "Monthly Report," March 1, 1947, section E, part 4d, unnumbered pages (personal collection of Leonard Mason, Honolulu, Hawaii).

Naval officials did not perceive Modekngei as a serious threat to government operations. In an effort at compromise, the commanding officer invited the Modekngei "shaman to enter the Navy Dispensary in an effort to enlist his support of American medical practice."[163] Despite the good intentions, this approach was destined to fail because it did not recognize the cultural importance and possible medical efficacy of the indigenous practices.

The Palauan medical practitioners continued their work and in response a naval doctor called for a local court injunction against them. Toribiong, a recent convert to Seventh-Day Adventism, served as the principal investigator for the naval government.[164] He was supported by several other "modernists"--Joseph Tellei and Indelacio Rudimch--who wanted to break the power Modekngei had by virtue of the money income generated through the delivery of indigenous medical services. This was the hidden motive of Palauans associated with the local court. In contrast, the plaintiff was concerned with denying Modekngei the right to practice medicine in Palau. Runguul was the principal defendant.[165] The court decided that Modekngei as a religion was not implicated in wrong doing but enjoined all practices of medicine by Modekngei members "which contravened the medical work of the military government and its representatives."[166] This decision obviously satisfied both the military

---

[163] Ibid.

[164] Vidich, "The Political Impact of Colonial Administration," p. 300.

[165] Ibid., p. 301.

[166] U.S. Navy, Palau District Military Government Unit, "Monthly Report," July 1, 1947, section C, part 2a, unnumbered pages (personal collection of Leonard Mason, Honolulu, Hawaii).

authorities and Palauan "modernists" and was a set back for Modekngei leadership. In this case, the foreigner's law--that traditional Palauan medicine had no value, was possibly dangerous and therefore must not be practiced--became an instrument of factional politics.

The Modekngei suffered further reversals in the early post-years. Wasiisang, who today is the paramount leader of the Modekngei, allegedly became involved in the theft of a stole and chalice from the Koror Catholic church.[167] Because of the great sensitivity of this incident, court officials intervened on an informal basis and secured the return of the objects to the church. Whether Wasiisang was implicated or not, talk of this incident weakened the social position and credibility of Modekngei.

Runguul had led Palau through the chaos of the war years. He was a wealthy man in customary terms and was thus able to practice polygamy. Reportedly he had a young and beautiful wife for prestige purposes and another wife who served as his medium for religious purposes. American law retroactively defined polygamy as illegal. Instead of hiding this fact from the foreign administration--easily done in cross cultural situations--the two paramount chiefs came forward with a name list of violators, of whom Runguul was most prominent. According to Vidich, "In June 1948 Runguul's younger wife, along with her possessions, was seen being driven home in an open-air taxicab, an event which symbolized the close of an era in Palau."[168]

---

[167] Vidich, "The Political Impact of Colonial Administration," p. 301.

[168] Ibid., p. 318.

In this collision of cultural meanings, Modekngei suffered a considerable loss of power and prestige. Some supporters left the fold and its medical specialists were forced to practice secretly. Notwithstanding these set backs at the hands of the intruding culture, Runguul and Wasiisang retained their vision of a better Palau through reliance on the old gods, and the age-old traditions and customs of Palau. The two men remained educators of the word.

In 1958 Fr. McManus described Modekngei as being very nationalistic and as having rejected Christianity as a foreign religion. The Jesuit went on to lament the power of the old gods. "The idea of a Palauan religion for Palauans, plus the great prestige of the older folk, sometimes induces the young Catholic to reconsider his position, even as much as a year after his Baptism, and leave the Church."[169]

A few years later (1963), a Palau district publication claimed that Modekngei was experiencing a revival and constituted a third of the population of Palau.[170]

In 1965 and 1966, and every two years after, Palauans elected congressmen to seats in the territory-wide Congress of Micronesia. Modekngei followers voted regularly and in a bloc. Candidates went all out to gain Modekngei support because it usually would insure victory at the polls. This politicization of religion--something very natural in Palau according

---

[169] Father Edwin McManus, S.J., "The Palau Press," no. 61 (April 1958), p. 1.

[170] Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, Palau District, Office of the District Administrator, "Palau District Description," Koror, Palau, 1963, unnumbered pages.

to Kubary--affected members of the Christian religions and was a factor in the 1963 decision to form political parties. The impact of the Western model was strong. It had forced a division between religion and medicine and with the formation of Liberal and Progressive parties attempted to divorce religion from politics. Neither schism has cut very deep.

Many non-Palauans like the Jesuit priests have noted the power of Modekngei to foster Palauan pride and identity in a sea of raging change energized by foreign cultural forces. The tone has been, "'This is ours! Catholic, Protestant, SDA, all the rest, they are foreign. This is a Palauan religion, a Palauan god for Palauans.'"[171]

The desire for a unique cultural identity is a very powerful human emotion, especially in a people who have lived under foreign colonial control. The Modekngei cannot help but notice the obvious behavioral differences between himself and a foreigner. It is very persuasive to reason, then, that the god who created a Palauan is a specialist in this task and that the god who created an American (or any other foreigner for that matter) is a different god. Separate creations by two different gods is the only answer that makes sense.[172]

The Modekngei continued to be active throughout the 1970s. Runguul passed away and Wasiisang became the paramount leader. A successful wholesale/retail cooperative was established by the Modekngei on land

---

[171] Father Richard Hoar, S.J., "Interview," Micronesian Reporter 18, no. 3 (1970):5.

[172] Kenzi Mad, personal interview, Honolulu, Hawaii, February 12, 1982.

reclaimed by hand from the sea in the "T-Dock" area of Koror. In 1974 the Modekngei, with the help of William Vitarelli, opened their own secondary school in the rural area of Ibobang, Babeldaob. The school was founded on the dual principles of strengthening Palauan identity and building self-sufficiency. The school-village complex is now the center for Modekngei activity (see Chapter Five).

True to the age-old Palauan pattern of mixing religion with politics, strong Modekngei support for Haruo Remeliik in November 1980 swung the presidential election in his favor (see Chapter Six for a further analysis). Some Modekngei have been heard to boast that they were the deciding factor in electing Palau's first president. Assumed in this claim is a degree of influence over the affairs of the new Republic's chief executive.

Christian Late Comers

The Jehovah Witnesses

The Jehovah Witnesses and Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (Mormons) have been the latest religions to register their claims on Palauan souls. As late comers, both are religiously "militant" in delivering their message and seeking converts.

The first Jehovah Witness missionaries, Amos and Leilani Daniels, came to Palau in 1967. Since that time ten others have come and gone to provide a staff of six at any one time.[173] The Witness missionaries are

---

[173]Besides the Daniels who stayed from 1967 to 1980, the other witnesses who have worked or are now working in Palau are: Leslie Hudnall, 1968-1978; Charles McMurray, 1968-1973; Mr. Murakami, 1968-1969; Roger Konno, 1973-present; Janet Senas, 1973-present; Eunice Sevanella, 1973-1976; Milton Ajimine, 1974-present. Harry and Rene Denny and Audrey Isobe came in 1976 and continue their mission work at present.

generally 28 to 40 years old and all but two were born and raised in Hawaii. They admit that their greatest problem is mastering the Palauan language. Newly arrived workers have spent 10 to 11 hours a day for three months to acquire a basic fluency. Palauans are generally very impressed with the Witnesses' conversational ability. This helps considerably in mission work.

Although the common perception in Palau is that several hundred Palauans have joined the Jehovah Witnesses, the missionaries themselves claim that only 40 have become true Witnesses. These are the people who on Saturday and Sunday go house to house with the missionaries delivering the Witness message. Weekly meetings draw seventy to eighty Palauans.

The mission is investing a great amount of energy in translating and publishing Witness materials into Palauan. Numerous issues of "Watch Tower" and two 190-page hard cover Bible study booklets have been completed and several others are being prepared.[174] Milton Ajimine has become quite adept in the translation work since his arrival in 1974 and does most of it. After the galley proofs are sent from New York, a group of three older Palauan Witnesses review the proofs, return the revision to New York and later approve the second galley. Palauans thus have full control over the orthography and semantics of the final version of all Palauan language Witness material. This is an important form of educational experience.

Nearly all of the forty Jehovah Witness converts are residents of Koror. The missionaries have their own speed boat and go to Peleliu once

---

[174]The booklets that were being prepared in early 1981 were My Book of Bible Stories and Making Your Family Life Happier.

a month. They make a sweep of Babeldaob's nine villages twice per year and find that the older east coast people are more receptive to Bible studies than people along the west coast. That is Modekngei territory, which the Witnesses at one time believed might be a potentially ripe area for mission work. Over the years the Witnesses have discovered that Modekngei is very powerful socially, economically and politically. Unlike the "militant" days of Catholicism and Protestantism when Modekngei were won over, the Witnesses have gained no converts from this group. In reply to careful Witness probes, Modekngei agree that they believe in Jesus Christ but remind the missionaries that it was white people who killed Jesus and brought the Pacific war to Palau. The tone has been, "We have grave doubts about Western Civilization and its religion."[175]

The fact that the Witnesses have won over only 40 Palauans in 14 years does not seriously concern them. "We're after quality, not quantity. We don't expect rapid growth or quick conversion."[176] This go-slow policy is a conscious and pragmatic one. The Witness missionaries do not want to bring reproach on their admittedly difficult work by the bad conduct of any of their converts. Only those people who the missionaries feel are living a life in accord with the teachings of the Bible are admitted into membership.

The Jehovah Witness missionaries put in a six day week "hitting the pavement" about 8:30 A.M. each day. Saturdays and Sundays are the busiest

---

[175]Harry Denny, Jehovah Witness missionary, personal interview, Koror, Palau, February 22, 1981.

[176]Ibid.

days when the six missionaries are joined by 30 to 40 Palauans who, together, systematically canvas Koror's hamlets talking about the Bible and arranging for future meeting with receptive families. The Witness missionaries are perceived as relating more closely to Palauan life style than the Mormons. They acquire the language, local ways and dress, walk the town, and sit and talk at greater ease than the young Mormon boys who, ironic to the Palauans, are called "elders".

The monthly expenditures for the six missionaries totals $1,000, which is paid by the Guam Headquarters.[177] Each of the six receives $60 per month for personal expenses and another $30 per month is put in the bank for each member. The missionaries are a very dedicated, close-knit group who have adjusted well to Koror life. Most speak Palauan fluently and believe they will, in time, bring a growing number of Palauan souls over to their brand of Christianity.

The Mormons

Friendly and religiously sincere young men in white shirts, dark ties and trousers riding yellow bicycles around Koror--that is the image, a very familiar one throughout the Pacific, of the Mormon missionaries in Palau. Other than one Bahai and a Baptist that are supposedly in Palau, the Mormons are the most recent religion to seek Palauan converts. Established in July 1978, there have been eleven Mormon missionaries in Palau. They claim to have won over twenty Palauans to their version of Christianity.

---

[177]Monthly expenses include house rent ($275), food ($600), electricity ($80), and miscellaneous ($50).

Elder Tuia and Elder Tie'eiki are 21 and originally come from Tonga. Elder Alberts is 20 and comes from Oregon while Elder Hanks is 19 and comes from Utah. Unlike the Jehovah Witnesses who receive full financial support from their parent church, the Mormons are fully self-supporting. As of early 1981, there were some 65 Mormon missionaries in Guam and Micronesia. Being that they are all self-supporting, it seems that the Mormon missionaries, as committed individuals, are presently making a serious evangelical thrust into Micronesia. As Elder Hanks said, "It is time for these people to hear the word."[178]

The young Mormons bring great zeal to their work of spreading what they perceive as the truth. "We let the Palauans know that we are teaching the truth."[179] On the other side, Palauans have exhibited resistance with the questioning response, "What is this?!" The Mormons have attempted to overcome adult resistance by working through the young and old.

Although Palau's newest missionaries--and very young ones at that--spend time each morning studying Palauan, they do not have a language teacher and have not learned the local language to any great extent. They realize that their work would be easier and more effective if they were fluent in Palauan.

The Mormons are looking for land on which to build a chapel. Presently they hold Sunday services in the house they rent for $250 per month. The young, generally handsome Mormon men have so far been able to

---

[178]Elder Hanks, Mormon missionary, personal interview, Koror, Palau, February 24, 1981.

[179]Elder Tuia, Mormon missionary, personal interview, Koror, Palau, February 24, 1981.

resist the considerable charms of the Palauan girls. The men put in long 10 to 12 hour days and boast that their mission is in Palau to stay. "Our dress distinguishes us and we're respected."[180] They claim that in five years they will have a hundred members. Considering the relatively short two year stay of each missionary and their inability to gain fluency in the Palauan language, such a statement is the boast of naive youth untested in the trials of Palauan cultural resistance or social-political manipulation.

Summary and Analysis

Summary

This chapter described the background fabric of Palauan religion, both pre-Modekngei and Modekngei, into which numerous foreign islands of religious meaning penetrated beginning with the Catholics in 1891. In contrast to the Christian religions, which enthusiastically evangelized and in the process discredited the indigenous gods, State Shinto, Tenrikyo and Buddhism did not gain many Palauan converts during Japanese administration. Soon after the Pacific war, Palau's Seventh-Day Adventists gained a considerable following to rival Modekngei, Catholicism, and Lutheranism as Palau's major religious callings. In the past fifteen years the Jehovah Witnesses and Mormons have brought their peculiar islands of Christian meaning to Palau. Though they have been evangelizing for some years, few Palauans have been willing to place their beach of "we" around these new religious islands.

---

[180] Ibid.

Analysis

The religion of the foreign God as taught by Spanish and German priests during the late 19th and early 20th centuries was resisted by many Palauans. The indigenous category of religious belief held sway. An attempted revolt by local shamans, who perpetuated the Palauan gods and wanted to free Palau from the white usurpers, was suppressed by German police authority in 1906. The cultural role of the Palauan shamans was a complex one and included a function of check and balance on chiefly power. The chiefs of Koror and east coast Babeldaob thus became natural allies of the foreign priests whose support made the chiefs preeminently powerful. In exchange for this added power, the foreign priests were allowed to establish stations in Koror and Melekeok and with the prestige and authority of the chiefs began a modest school program that focused mainly on religious subjects.

However, religion as taught by Spanish and German missionaries was not readily accepted by many Palauans. Padre Santibanez, who lived in Palau for nine years, lamented in 1905 that Palauans did not practice anything he taught them and that indigenization of Christianity would take time because Palauans remained attached to their customs.[181] As these early missionaries discovered, religious education across cultural boundaries faced many barriers and challenges.

Modekngei developed during the early years of Japanese administration under a Palauan named Temedad who had learned basic Catholicism from

---

[181] Padre Silvestre de Santibanez, "Condition of the Palau Mission 1891-1905," p. 2. This document is in the records of the Sacred Heart Church rectory, Koror, Palau and was translated from the Spanish by Padre Bizkarra, S.J., on January 9, 1981.

German missionaries. Modekngei was a religious transformation movement. Catholic teachings, which had been strenuously resisted since early Spanish administration, were, in part, incorporated into the indigenous religious system via an educational-political act of syncretism, thereby indicating cultural adaptability and flexibility. A new island of meaning had been defined and the Modekngei followers became a beach around that island.

However, Japanese authorities believed Modekngei to be anti-modern and anti-foreign, jailing the movement's leaders in 1919. The foreign intruders rejected Modekngei as a community educator and turned elsewhere for religious teachers. In 1921, about a year before the release of the Modekngei leaders, Japanese officials allowed the Catholics to return and, in time, permitted entry to Lutheran and Seventh-Day Adventist missionaries. Thus a greater number of Palauans came under the persistent educating efforts of Christian missionaries who aimed at redeeming pagan souls.

The religious teachings of State Shinto, Buddhism and Tenrikyo did not take root in the Palauan cultural soil. The dedication of the grand Kampei Taisha Nanyo Jinja in Koror in 1940 was not to teach pagans a better religious way, but to mobilize support for imperialistic expansion to the south. During the Pacific war period, young Palauans learned about the politics of forced expansion through visits to the grand jinja, war victory parades, resource survey trips to New Guinea, manual labor on military projects, and guerrilla training (discussed fully in Chapter Five).

Pastor Laenge, Palau's first Lutheran missionary, was accepted by the Ngiwal chiefs in 1929 for the same cultural "reason" Pastor Fey was

asked by the Palauan deacons to begin a boys' school in 1947. Palauans wanted to adapt to and benefit from the foreign culture, to learn the ways of the foreigner. Laenge provided effective medical care (of course, mixed with religion) and Fey made schooling available in the language and thought patterns of Palau's fourth colonial power. Adapting opportunistically to the foreign culture seems to be a persistent feature of Palauan psychology and to this extent Palauans are good self-educators.

For over thirty years, Palauans had sung Christian hymns written in vernacular and set to German rhythms. This shows how intentional and well-meaning educative efforts by the foreigner can violate aesthetic expression. Recently Palauans have completed re-translations and new musical arrangements in the hope of making Christian hymns more aesthetically appealing, thereby enhancing their emotive and educative impact.

Like the Palauans who recently made these hymnal changes, Pastor Toribiong was quick to recognize that the Seventh Day Adventist religious faith must be cast in the meanings of Palauan culture to be educative. Toribiong was a gifted religious teacher and organizer. He made church loans available to members and prospective members for house construction in exchange for religious dedication. In this way the SDA church appealed to both the material and spiritual needs of its following.

The religiously-militant efforts of the dedicated SDA church leadership in the 1950s and 1960s built a solid base of support in Koror and Airai. The SDAs, however, failed over the years to gain much of a following in other areas of Palau partly because many church-sponsored college graduates have been unwilling to take up mission work. Such

selfless teaching service does not provide Palauans an outlet for competitive-manipulative behavior nor an avenue to power, prestige and wealth they desire.

Although Father McManus had great hopes for an indigenous clergy when he sent six young Palauan men to the Philippines in 1951, he came to the painful understanding over the years that even the most dedicated and enthusiastic religious teacher could not persuade many Palauans to come onto the island of Catholic priesthood and brotherhood. Fr. Mac observed that there was no cultural tradition for the kind of religious service he hoped to inspire. In Father Hoar's terms, Palauans are too materialistic to take up the cross of Christ in any significant numbers.

Palau's four Jesuits believe the tide of secularism, individualism, and materialism now flooding into Palau can be turned through consciousness-raising and deepening of faith. They believe it is their duty to teach people to become more aware of themselves as human, as Palauan, and as members of a changing world. In this way, they feel, people would be able to value both the culturally given (Palauan customs and traditions) and constructed (new Palauan ways created in contact with foreigners).

All foreign missionaries from the first Capuchin fathers of the turn-of-the-century to the young Mormons of today have been religious teachers. They have sought to teach Christian values, knowledge, and sensitivities through sermons, home visitations, revival meetings and efforts at consciousness-raising. Since 1891 there has been considerable cultural resistance to these new teachings. One of the factors is the trend toward greater individualization, secularization and materialism that has evolved during the past three decades. A committed church life

does not provide avenues to power, prestige and wealth which are the hallmarks of success for Palauans.

To face this degree of cultural resistance to their educative efforts makes Palau's churchmen simultaneously great and tragic teachers. They are great because they labor with such intense love and selflessness against formidable cultural barriers to their teaching. They are tragic as educators because relatively few Palauans have been inspired to live a committed church life.[182]

In 1905 Padre Santibanez said that Palauans were not yet ready to place their beach of "we" around the new island of Christianity he and his colleagues had brought. Nearly eight decades later, Padre John Bizkarra said to the writer that Christianity was still very young in Palau. The priest was echoing those earlier words. What the writer sees as barriers to religious teaching, Palau's churchmen have consistently viewed as challenges. Although Christianity is still young in Palau, it builds social cohesion and a sense of community. It is this achievement that makes Palau's churchworkers heroes at the present time of dizzying and uncertain change.

In contrast to the reluctant and partial acceptance of the foreign island of church meaning, Palauans have eagerly embraced the foreign "culture of the book"--the school--as will be shown in the next chapter of this study.

---

[182] About a seventh of Palau's 14,800 souls could be counted as dedicated and committed to religion. This claim is based on an estimation of faithful followers: Modekngei 700 to 800, Catholicism - 700, Lutheran - 700, Seventh-Day Adventism - 400, Jehovah Witnesses - 40, Mormons - 20. Of course, the number of "census" Christians and Modekngei would be considerably larger.

CHAPTER V

WORD AND BOOK: THE NEW ISLAND OF SCHOOL

> It's good to go to college
> but our youth come back
> different. They can't live
> in the village; they're too
> Americanized. My son, for
> instance, wants me to think
> the way he thinks.
>
> Rubak N. Rengulbai
> Melekeok, Palau, February 1980

Introduction

This chapter describes the partial displacement of the indigenous culture of the word as an educating system by the foreign culture of the book--the foreign school. Traditional education in the word involved training, cultivating and strengthening memory to retain the entire knowledge stores of the culture. In the social dynamics of everyday living, Palauan youth learned the skills, knowledge, values and sensitivities appropriate to their social position.

With foreign annexation, the indigenous educative system was gradually replaced by formal instruction in the language, printed word and thought structures of the foreign culture. This began the process of sociocultural change which accelerated with each new foreign power. The indigenous word tended to be unifying and socially stabilizing, whereas the book tended to be fragmenting and disruptive. The word kept people together. The specialist in the word was the carrier of social traditions

and community meanings. On the other hand, the book and the wider cultural values it taught tended to isolate, to separate and to remove learner from group emotion and shared perspectives--"our youth come back different."

Japanese and American schools were eagerly accepted by Palauans. The book was socially and economically liberating. It provided opportunities to learn the foreign culture and the reasons for its power, which, in turn, opened avenues to greater power, prestige and wealth than was available in the indigenous cultural system. In this way a person was able to challenge structure, which, by its very nature, generated social tension.

In reaction to the socially disruptive tendencies of the culture of the book and the Americanizing values and ways it entailed, the Modekngei began their own school with the aim of inculcating a stronger sense of Palauan identity in their youth. This educational vision, like all other aspects of Palauan culture, underwent change in response to influence both from within and without.

Traditional Education

Formal schooling, the culture of the book, began in a rudimentary way in Palau under Spanish and German missionaries. Prior to extensive foreign contact, Palauan youth were educated in the culture of the spoken word. The culture's knowledge stores resided in and were transmitted by the spoken word.

General education for Palauan youth took place in village clubs. This was especially true for boys and young men who spent considerable

time in their village club houses. Through club activities the young Palauan observed the workings of village politics and learned the economic tasks appropriate to his sex: fishing, hunting and carpentry for men; taro cultivation, child rearing, and food preparation for girls.

Village men's clubs performed a variety of public services. It was during these activities that youth first learned vocational skills, loyalty to group and leader, and social responsibility. Public services included building club houses, which could take many months, constructing war canoes, sewing sails, service in war and compulsory service in all public celebrations. According to Semper:

> These were very diverse. The men were obliged to furnish a part of the necessary food and gifts on the occasion of every visit of distinguished strangers, every visit of an ambassador, celebrations of victories, burials or ceremonies held for the sick, every festival held to avert a calamity such as illness, war, etc., and every regular religious ceremony, or one ordered by the princes of the state.[1]

Village men's clubs in competition with one another built and maintained impressive public works as agricultural terraces, boulder-cobbled paths, long levees and other large stone works. The remains of these impressive cultural achievements were built when the population numbered 40,000 to 50,000. The ruins number in the hundreds and have, on occasion, caused the Palauan of today to "wonder if the work was actually done by his ancestors, or if his ancestors were gods."[2]

---

[1]Semper, The Palau Islands in the Quiet Ocean, p. 72.

[2]Robert K. McKnight, "The Structure of Competition in Palau," (typescript prepared for the Tenth Pacific Science Congress, undated), Palau Museum, Koror, Palau, p. 3.

As reported by foreign observers (Chapters Three and Four), Palau had a variety of labor specialists in medicine; fish-trap construction; knowledge of nature, gods and spirits; political philosophy; and, various types of magic. Much of this knowledge was personalized and in the possession of the meteet (socially high ranking families). The knowledge of various magic powers was the closely guarded secret of certain people who passed it on to a very close maternal relative shortly before death.[3] Great secrecy and jealousy surrounded knowledge of magic and medicine because it was powerful, lucrative and of great practical use.

Knowledge in pre-twentieth century Palau was interrelated and systematically integrated. The apprentice to a fishing master had to learn not only fishery biology but the associated religious ceremonies. An essential part of the masters trade included calling up the special godly protectors of fishing and making the appropriate sacrifice to them. Kubary wrote:

> The offerings consist of either coconut and taro, or else, as in the case of basket fishing, the kasuk offering and the flowers of the sngal tree. In addition, there are leaves, called tiakl, that are fastened together like loops and are regarded as the audout (money) of the sea gods; they are held aloft during the speech then thrown into the sea.[4]

The young apprentice had much to learn and this learning was embedded in the flux of everyday living.

---

[3]Kubary, "The Religion of the Palauans, " p. 29.

[4]Ibid., p. 31.

Girls and women, it seems, did not have such an outwardly active and diverse life as the men. Their main role was that of a provider and family stabilizing force. Village women, like the men, grouped themselves into clubs but they did not have club houses. From time to time these women's clubs would send some of their unmarried members to another village to serve as entertainment and sex hostesses in a men's club. This was the blolobel custom which the Spanish missionaries made a futile attempt to end. The custom provided both money and prestige to the young woman and her club.[5] It was, thus, deeply embedded in the Palauan cultural matrix and only German force ended its practice.

Although women had less variety and diversity in their daily lives than men, their roles have exhibited much more stability in the face of foreign induced culture change than those of the men.

Spanish and German Schools

Unfortunately there is very little documentary evidence available about the Spanish period in Palau. As pointed out in Chapter Four, the Capuchin priests, like many later visitors, were culturally and conceptually unprepared to understand Palauan culture in its own terms. The Capuchins saw Palau as a backward land to be re-made in Spanish Christian terms. Other than catechism classes conducted for some forty-eight youngsters (many of whom were Chamorros) in the Melekeok and Koror churches, there was no formal school program.[6]

---

[5]Palau Community Action Agency, A History of Palau, 1:61.

[6]Robert Q. McKinney, "Micronesia Under German Rule 1885-1914," (M.A. thesis, Stanford University, 1947), p. 83.

In keeping with German aims of economic colonization and social control, Palau's first formal school was a school for policemen. It was established in 1902 and its instructional program stressed German language--reading, writing and arithmetic.[7]

By 1906 there were two German Capuchin Mission stations, one in Koror and the other in Melekeok. As noted elsewhere, meteet (socially high ranking families) were quick to seize opportunities to learn the foreign culture. Ever since Wilson's 1783 visit, this had been an important means for retaining social prestige and economic power. As early as 1906, Ibedul had erected at his own expense a "beautiful school next to the mission for Koror's meteet children."[8] This caused a visiting German official to remark, "Even if the success of religious conversion is insignificant, Palauans want their children to learn."[9]

After the German colonial government began receiving large sums of revenue from the export of Angaur phosphate, the number of Catholic mission personnel increased. In 1910 some 4,000 marks were budgeted for the Capuchin missions in Yap and Palau. The Palau mission was greatly expanded and it was these priests, brothers and sisters who carried on Palau's first schools which began the replacement of the culture of the word with that of the book. By 1913-14 there were five mission schools attended by 361 children (Palau's total population in 1914 was approximately 4,200). The

---

[7]Palau Community Action Agency, A History of Palau, 2:195.

[8]Georg Fritz, "Report on a Journey to Palau, Sonsorol, Tobi," 1906, p. 57.

[9]Ibid.

missionaries noted that Palauan youth attended regularly and were generally talented and industrious.[10]

In late 1980, the writer talked with four of the seven elderly Palauans still alive today who attended German mission schools in either Melekeok or Koror. All four were from high ranking families. Charlie Gibbons (born 1894) remembered studying the German alphabet, geography, arithmetic and religion. Padre Raimundo was his teacher and the priest emphasized, as might be expected, religious studies. "We had German, geography and arithmetic textbooks. Bibles were precious and we didn't use them as textbooks. We had religious lessons on sheets of paper instead."[11] Charlie attended two years of German school in Yap, where his uncle worked as a blacksmith for the German colonial government, and he was the only Palauan to finish sixth and seventh years at the German public school on Saipan. A few of the exceptional graduates of this school were sent to Tsingtao, China for technical training with the German navy.[12]

Joseph Tellei (born 1901) recalled that native students, indeed, might go to Saipan and China for advanced training. Neither Tellei nor the other informants had any recollection of Palauans going to China for advanced schooling during German administration. Tellei attended the Melekeok school which, like the four other schools, had a three year program. "In school we learned to praise Germany and sing German songs,"

---

[10] Lopinot, "The Caroline Mission of the Spanish and German Capuchins 1886-1919," p. 38.

[11] Charlie Gibbons, personal interview, Koror, Palau, December 8, 1980.

[12] Robert Q. McKinney, "Micronesia Under German Rule 1885-1914," p. 128.

Tellei remembered. As at the Koror school, geography and arithmetic were included in the school program. The school had a morning and afternoon shift; the Padres and Brothers taught the boys and the Sisters taught the girls.

In early 1914, Joseph Uherbelau (born 1902), from a high ranking Angaur family, was sent to live with his relatives in Melekeok so he could attend the German school there. He had already learned some German language from the Angaur phosphate company employees and in a few months was advanced to the third year class in the Melekeok school. He recalled that most of the school program was devoted to catechism and that learning German was hard.[13]

Mrs. Emaimelei Bismark (born 1904) attended German school in Koror with thirty other Palauan girls. As a meteet child she lived with the German nuns. She fondly recalled the sisters, especially the rotund habited Hermana around whom the girls would chase. The girls kept gardens but did not cook. They learned weaving from a Ponapean woman and took a nap each day at 1:00 P.M. sharp. Mrs. Bismark has still today the beautiful penmanship of her German school days and can sing German schoolgirl songs learned more than a half century ago.

In keeping with membership in the culture of the book, the German Capuchins translated a catechism, a book of Bible stories, a grammar and

---

[13]Joseph Uherbelau, personal interview, Koror, Palau, December 30, 1980. Rubak Uherbelau reportedly kept written accounts for many years of events occurring in Palau. He had an amazingly accurate knowledge of dates and events as I have checked his oral accounts against written records. Unfortunately, he died in May 1981. Hopefully his family will preserve his diaries with the aim of sometime publishing them. They are unique and invaluable historical documents.

a 4,500 word dictionary of the Palauan language.[14] Like Father Marino, Father McManus and all the Christian missionaries after them, the German Capuchins put great faith in the book's power to change Palauan culture.

Japanese Schools for Palauans[15]

Background

With the beginning of the Great War in Europe, Japan seized the Micronesian islands late in 1914 without resistance from either German or native inhabitants. Legal authority over the islands was conferred upon the Emperor of Japan by the Versailles Peace Conference accords of 1920. As a Class "C" mandate, Micronesia could be administered under Japanese law as an integral part of her territory but subject to the requirements of the League of Nations Mandate Agreement. From 1922 to the eve of the Second World War, Japan launched economic and social programs which far exceeded efforts of the earlier Spanish and German colonial administrations. One of these programs, perhaps the most important as far as the Palauans were concerned, was an influential school system based on the foreign culture of the book.

Early Efforts and Policies

Soon after Japanese naval personnel displaced German officials in late 1914, a rudimentary program of secular schooling was introduced in place of

---

[14] Palau Community Action Agency, A History of Palau, 1:228.

[15] This section appeared in an earlier form in Educational Perspectives 18, no. 2 (May 1979):20-26, and was presented as a paper at both the Pacific Coast History of Education Society Conference, May 25, 1979; and the Fifth Annual Pacific Islands Studies Conference, April 19, 1980, University of Hawaii, Honolulu.

the German mission system. This first effort to educate the young islander was carried out by the only people then available--naval officers and officials of the Nanyo Boeki Company.[16] The modest curriculum consisted of Japanese language, singing and arithmetic.

In December 1915, military-commerical efforts were replaced by the work of six elementary schools, shogakko, one in each of the administrative stations--Jaluit, Ponape, Truk, Saipan, Yap, and Palau. The curriculum was enlarged to include ethics and the handicraft skills of weaving and carving which would be of use to the island student in his daily life.[17] The staff of these schools consisted of teachers who had earned official qualifications for teaching primary school in Japan.

In July 1918 the military administration was replaced by a civil administration which, however, was subject to the final authority of the resident naval commander. In a year's time, the new civil administration, more sensitive to cultural differences, drew a sharp line regarding schooling. On the one hand there was established an elementary school system for natives. On the other hand, with increasing numbers of Japanese children coming into the islands, facilities were established exclusively for them, and their program, for all intents and purposes, was identical to that defined by the Japanese Ministry of Education for urban homeland schools. Thus, as early as 1919 the dual policies of Japanese government finance and control of schools and the segregation of pupils had been put in place.

---

[16] Tadao Yanaihara, Pacific Islands Under Japanese Mandate, (Shanghai: Kelly and Wasch Ltd., 1939), p. 241.

[17] David Purcell, "Japanese Expansion in the South Pacific 1890-1935," (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Pennsylvania, 1967), p. 230.

The Mandate Agreement between Japan and the League of Nations contained no specific statement concerning educational provision. The closest statement to that effect was contained in Article Two of the agreement which stated:

> The Mandatory shall promote to the utmost the material and moral well-being and the social progress of the inhabitants of the territory subject to the present mandate.[18]

In accord with this responsibility and how it related to native schooling, Japan reported to the first meeting of the League of Nations Permanent Mandates Commission in 1921 that school curriculum was set with two important considerations in mind: (1) the circumstances of a particular locality; (2) the intelligence of the native, with special emphasis being placed on practical education--agriculture, colonization, and matters affecting the daily life of the native. The second consideration derived from the Spencerian social evolutionary paradigm that had taken hold in Japanese intellectual circles and found expression in colonial policy. What the colonial authority perceived as the racial character of the people--a slightly-civilized people--determined educational practice and not the reverse. Thus, practical vocational education was judged as the most appropriate form of instruction for islanders. According to the Spencerian line, islanders were primitives who, like children, were unable to generalize or abstract, to concentrate for extended periods of time, to think rationally or make distinctions. As one informant recalled:

---

[18] League of Nations, "Mandate for the German Possessions in the Pacific Lying North of the Equator," Geneva, 1920.

> The Japanese officials looked down on us Palauans but the ordinary Japanese was friendly. Yet even with them there was an unspoken distinction--they were Japanese, an advanced civilized people, and we were natives, backward and primitive. Nevertheless, they tried to maintain good friendship.[19]

Organization and Re-definition

In 1922 full civilian authority was instituted in Micronesia with the establishment of the South Seas Bureau and with this came a reorganization of the school system and new educational regulations that reaffirmed the principles of government control and pupil segregation. Elementary schools for the growing number of Japanese students consisted of a lower primary school program of six years called jinjo shogakko, and a higher primary school program of two years termed koto shogakko. Practically all Japanese children in Micronesia received eight years of primary school instruction as they would have in the urban areas of Japan. In contrast, the public schools, kogakko, for island children consisted of a basic three year program (honka), and a supplementary two year course (hoshuka), which only the more able students attended. On the elementary level then, Japanese children had a total of five--three years basic for many island children and two years supplementary for a small and select portion of that.[20]

To accompany this formal definition of existing educational principles and practices of 1922, the Japanese government in its 2nd annual report to

---

[19] Takeo Yano, personal interview, Koror, Palau, February 10, 1981.

[20] David Ramarui's 1940 edition of the student newspaper "Light of the Sun" indicated 2,623 third year students and 728 fifth year students for the entire Pacific island territory. These figures indicate that only a select portion of islanders received five years of schooling during Japanese administration.

the League of Nations clearly spelled out the objectives it had for native schooling.

> The object of natives' schools is to enable the native children to enjoy the benevolence of his Majesty the Emperor of Japan, to teach the Japanese language, to give moral training necessary to life.[21]

One could interpret this early statement of purpose as a policy of Japanization of the native through the school. When two cultures contact in a sociopolitical arrangement where one culture is subordinant and the other is dominant, this dominance soon comes to pervade many spheres of the relationship--economic, social, and psychological. Government announced goals as the enjoyment of the Emperor's benevolence, Japanese language instruction and Japanese moral training imply a degree of cultural superiority which has characterized all cultures at all times.[22] It seems to be a universal human tendency to project one's values on people of another culture. The goals of schools are designed to serve the interests of the culture group that establishes them. Thus, as Hezel points out:

> American schools are intended to Americanize; Japanese schools must Japanize. It is clearly in the best interests of the society not to allow large pockets of its people to remain

---

[21] South Seas Government (Japanese mandate), Second Annual Report to the League of Nations on the Administration of the South Sea Islands Under Japanese Mandate for the Year 1921, Appendix no. 8, (Tokyo: n.p.), p. 35.

[22] Ethnocentrism was recognized as early as the fifth century B.C. by the great Greek historian Herodotus who wrote of the Egyptians, "If one were to offer to choose out of all the customs in the world such as seemed to them the best, they would examine the whole number, and end by preferring their own; so convinced are they that their own usages surpass those of all others." The Persian Wars, Book III, Chapter 38.

> unacculturated, and the school is regarded as one of the most powerful means of effecting the socialization of 'aliens'.[23]

Akin to Americanization, this is the meaning of the terms "Japanize" and "Japanization" as used in this chapter.

The regulations which established pupil segregation, like the school policies which set up the English standard school in Hawaii in the 1920s, were based on the concept of language use. As the Japanese conceived it:

> The South Seas Bureau Primary Schools are institutions wherein common education is given to children habitually using the Japanese language.[24]

And for the islander:

> The South Seas Bureau Public Schools are institutions wherein education is given to children not habitually using the Japanese language.[25]

Officially, the rationale for separate schools was based on language use; however, language and culture are so intimately related that one could argue that the rationale for segregation was cultural as well as linguistic. Regarding the primary school statement, this implicit additional meaning may have been the reason for the inclusion of the modifier "common"--an education common to the people of Japanese culture and tradition--that is missing in the statement defining public schools.

---

[23]Francis X. Hezel, "In Search of a Home: Colonial Education in Micronesia," in Culture Learning, ed. Richard Brislin (Honolulu: University Press of Hawaii, 1977), p. 43.

[24]South Seas Government (Japanese mandate), Annual Report . . . for the Year 1934, p. 15.

[25]Ibid., p. 16.

Moral Education and Japanization

While the above statements defined the two distinct kinds of schools, the regulations of the early 1930s were more specific than the 1922 statement (p. 12) concerning the aims of each. For the Japanese:

> The fundamental object of the Primary School is the inculcation of moral education and the fundamentals of national education upon children as well as the bestowal on them of the common knowledge and capabilities essential to their livelihood, attention being simultaneously paid to their physical development.[26]

And for the native:

> The fundamental object of education in a Public School shall be the bestowal on children of moral education as well as of such knowledge and capabilities as are indispensable to the advancement and improvement of their lives, attention being simultaneously paid to their physical development.[27]

The fundamental purposes agreed on the importance of moral education--as it turned out, Japanese moral education--as outlined in the shushin ethics curriculum. This curriculum emphasized the divinity of the Emperor, pride in nation and numerous important social virtues.[28] Note, however, that primary schooling for the Japanese child was to inculcate the fundamentals of national education, an objective not included for the native. National education referred to the four elements of the national curriculum

---

[26] Ibid., p. 46.

[27] Ibid., p. 52.

[28] For a comprehensive analysis of Shushin (Japan's prewar moral education curriculum) see Robert K. Hall, Shushin: The Ethics of a Defeated Nation (New York: Teachers College Columbia University, 1949).

for all Japanese primary schools both overseas and in the homeland--citizenship, science, physical training, and arts--which received major attention.

Another striking difference in the two statements is that the primary school was to bestow on the Japanese child knowledge and skills essential for his livelihood--possibly an economic purpose consonant with the growing economic development and commercialism then taking place in the islands. On the other hand, the knowledge and capabilities the native student was to learn were to advance and improve his life. This possibly could mean economic advancement and material improvement, but in practice it tended to mean, according to David Ramarui who attended school during Japanese administration, a definite value orientation:

> The basic aim of the Japanese school system was the indoctrination of the natives with Japanese ideas and was characterized by the emphasis on Japanese language and ethics. It was designed to make Micronesians understand the Japanese and obey their orders.[29]

Such a value orientation corresponds with Passin's claim regarding pre-war Japanese schools that "except for the totalitarian states, no modern nation has used the schools so systematically for purposes of political indoctrination as Japan."[30] It also corresponds to the 1922 statement

---

[29] David Ramarui, "Education in Micronesia," Micronesian Reporter 14, no. 1 (1976): p. 10. Mr. Ramarui is the only Micronesian I have found who has written about his experiences during Japanese administration. There is thus a great need for oral history work on all phases of the Japanese period in Micronesia before those with memories of the past fade from the scene.

[30] Herbert Passin, Society and Education in Japan (New York: Teachers College Press, 1965), p. 149.

of objectives and their elaboration contained in later regulations quoted earlier. From these official statements it seems that the main goal of school was to educate the native to the general outlines of Japanese language and culture. In this regard regulations for both primary and public schools required the following:

> On Kigensetsu (the anniversary of the founding of Japan), on the Imperial Birthday, Emperor Meiji Day and on January 1 the staff and pupils of a school shall assemble at the school and conduct ceremonies according to the following order:
>
> 1. Singing in chorus of the Japanese national anthem by the staff and pupils.
> 2. Lecture by the Principal of the school concerning that particular holiday.
> 3. Singing in chorus by the staff and pupils of songs appropriate to the occasion.[31]

It seems then that Japanese government schools for Palauan students introduced new behavioral regularities of obedience and respect for Japanese authority and basic fluency in the Japanese language. A photographic essay book published in 1938 contained a photo of Kamada Sensei (teacher) instructing the fifth year class at the Koror Public School. The photo caption claims that acquisition of a written language by island people would enlighten them.[32] The nature of the colonial relationship mandates the replacement of the indigenous "word" by the foreign "book." Such transformation is rarely accomplished in a colonial situation because

---

[31] South Sea Government (Japanese mandate), Annual Report . . . for the Year 1934, pp. 48-49.

[32] Kosuge, Photographs of Micronesia's Yesterday, p. 50.

language embodies all aspects of culture some of which fiercely resist change. Perhaps the most effective means of colonization is through language replacement because embedded in language are the myths, legends, meanings, and thought frameworks that form the unconscious substructure of culture, particularly an oral culture. Thus, the school is an all important institution to the colonizer.

As noted in the preceeding chapter, Japan of the 1930s and 1940s was controlled by a group of ultra-nationalists and militarists. This political orientation found expression throughout the island territory. Palauan public school students marched monthly to the grand Kampei Taisha Nanyo Jinja and paraded with lanterns and national flags to celebrate Japanese military victories such as the sinking of the Prince of Wales and Repulse and the fall of Singapore in December 1941.[33] The undeclared war in China was well publicized in Palau and students learned of the great Japanese victories over the Chinese (1894-1895) and Russians (1904-1905) in their school history courses. After Pearl Harbor students at the apprentice carpenters school were urged to learn their lessons well because they might soon be going to the Philippines or Indonesia as colonists. "During the war we were encouraged by some of our teachers who really believed that natives could learn."[34] It seems from this example then, that the vision of a Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere (Dai Toa Kyoeiken) affected Japanese perception of the native.

---

[33]Ibid., p. 121.

[34]Lawrence Ierago, personal interview, Echang, Palau, November 15, 1980.

Growth, Curriculum and Incentives

The growth pattern of the schools followed that of the general population, both foreign and indigenous. In 1922 there were three primary schools for Japanese children--one each in Saipan, Palau, and Truk--four teachers and 138 students. On the other hand there were seventeen public schools--two in Saipan, two in Yap, four in Palau, two in Truk, four in Ponape, two in Jaluit--for native children, thirty-six Japanese teachers, eighteen native assistant teachers and 2,539 students, boys outnumbering girls by about three to one. The percentage of school age native children in school varied. A 1927 survey showed Palau with the highest at 86 percent and Truk with the lowest at 14 percent, with the average for the mandate being 43 percent.[35] This variation was explained in 1928 by the Japanese representative to the League of Nations Permanent Mandates Commission as, ". . . owing to the fact that the islands were distributed over a wide area and that the degree of civilization of the inhabitants was low."[36]

To keep pace with the expanding immigrant population and children born to immigrants who arrived in the late 1920s, the Japanese primary school system had grown significantly by 1936 from three to twenty-three schools, from four to 131 teachers, and from 128 students to 8,637. The native public school system had grown also, but by a much smaller amount--from seventeen to twenty-four schools, from thirty-six to sixty Japanese teachers, from seventeen to twenty-four native assistants, and from 2,539 to 3,079

---

[35] Yanaihara, Pacific Islands Under Japanese Mandate, p. 243.

[36] League of Nations, Permanent Mandates Commission Minutes of the Sixteenth Session (1929), p. 54.

pupils (2,448 in the regular course and 649 in the supplementary course).[37] In terms of numbers of students and fully qualified teachers, by 1936 the school system for Japanese children was more than twice the size of the system for native children.

The rapid rate of growth of the Japanese school system corresponded with the expanding Japanese population, more children required more schools. The native system of schooling showed a smaller growth trend which paralleled the general demographic situation. Micronesia was fast becoming a Japanese land. League of Nations census figures for 1936 indicated a population of 50,534 islanders and 56,496 Japanese.[38] By 1940 when the Kampei Taisha Nanyo Jinja was dedicated, there were over 84,000 Japanese nationals in the south sea islands.[39]

The curriculum of the native public school, although theoretically similar to the Japanese primary school, emphasized Japanese language. In the regular three year school course, one-half the total school hours were devoted to Japanese language learning. This heavy emphasis on language was questioned by the League of Nation's Permanent Mandates Commission members. They felt it left too little time for other subjects, and neglected the vernacular language and popular traditions.[40] Indirectly the Commission members were saying that vernacular and popular traditions--the culture of

---

[37] Yanaihara, Pacific Islands Under Japanese Mandate, p. 241.

[38] League of Nations, The Mandates System, (Geneva: 1945), p. 106.

[39] The Japan Yearbook 1943-44 (Tokyo: The Foreign Affairs Association of Japan, 1943), p. 946.

[40] League of Nations, Permanent Mandates Commission Minutes of the Fourteenth Session (1928), p. 203.

the word--had an important place in the life of the young islander. However, the members did not consider whether indigenous culture can be taught in a foreign formal school setting. In defense of the government's curriculum decision, the Japanese representative to the Commission stated that language teaching included not only grammar but reading in the various subject areas of geography, history and science. This claim appears questionable given the fact that the basic public school program was but three years in duration, that there were no textbooks except for language readers, and that students resorted to their native tongue once outside the classroom.

Regarding knowledge of written Japanese, Yanaihara reported in 1939 that "the large majority of the graduates have no chance for further study and soon forget what they have learned--the hira-gana characters--when they return to their homes."[41] After the Pacific War Fischer reported from Truk that few native students "could be said to be literate in Japanese to the extent of being able to read a newspaper by the end of the fifth grade. Certainly none could read the regulations promulgated by the South Seas Government Office."[42] To this one could retort, "Could fifth grade Japanese students read the newspaper and regulations?" Probably yes, given language reinforcement at home, the strong tradition of learning characteristic of Japanese, and a richer and more intense school instructional program. The culture of the book as unfolded in the Japanese public schools had serious limitations for the young Palauan. Coming from an oral tradition, Palauans

---

[41] Yanaihara, Pacific Islands Under Japanese Mandate, p. 246.

[42] John L. Fischer, "The Japanese Schools for the Natives of Truk, Caroline Islands," Human Organization 20, no. 2 (1961):85.

learned spoken Japanese fairly well, but the written language was not mastered to any appreciable degree.

Although knowledge of written Chinese characters incorporated into the Japanese language was generally lacking, many Micronesians with five years of schooling knew some of the simpler syllabic characters. In spite of poor command of written Japanese, many islanders had good spoken Japanese. Kodama, in her research on Saipan in 1977, found one Chamorro woman whose spoken Japanese was so good that she was conducting Japanese tourists on trips about the island.[43] Kodama also found a half dozen other informants who spoke beautiful Japanese--and this was more than thirty years after formal instruction! During the Japanese occupation of Guam this group of Saipanese Chamorros served as the language liaison between the Guam Chamorros and the Japanese military authorities.[44]

In Ponape and Yap where in 1977 Japanese tourists were rare, Kodama was sought out by older islanders who wanted to converse with the visiting "daughter of Japan."[45] Similarly the older generations of Palauans who attended Japanese public school have a spoken fluency in Japanese. On isolated Kosrae (formerly Kusaie), islanders were given three years of schooling and acquired basic fluency in Japanese.[46] Kiste reports that one older Bikinian (living on Kili Island) who had attended Japanese school on Ebon,

---

[43]Michiko Kodama, personal interview, Honolulu, Hawaii, May 19, 1979.

[44]Ibid.

[45]Ibid.

[46]Naime Salik (Kosraen), personal interview, Honolulu, Hawaii, March 12, 1979.

remembered enough language in 1964 to be able to converse with passing Japanese fishermen.[47]

These examples provide some evidence of the effectiveness of the Japanese public schools. This achievement is understandable given the essential aim of language teaching as recorded in public school regulations reported in the 1934 *Annual Report to the League of Nations:*

> . . . the essential aim shall be to teach ordinary words, characters in daily use and easy written language; to make the pupils fluent in the practical application of what they have been taught; to foster in them the ability to express themselves correctly in the language, especially to enable them to acquire such degree of mastery as will enable them to experience no hindrance in using the language in daily life, special stress being laid on practice; as well as to develop their intellectual and moral capabilities.
>
> In teaching the Japanese language, easy and simple spoken language, correct pronunciation and intonation, and the reading and writing of Kana characters and composition in them should be taught to begin with. Subsequently Chinese characters in daily use and easy spoken language should be taught with special attention to practical use of ordinary words.[48]

Although it appears that these educational objectives were achieved to a surprisingly high degree, perhaps a more effective language teacher than the classroom sensei was the Japanese housewife. Nearly all fourth and fifth year students of the Koror Public School were assigned as houseboys or housegirls to Japanese families. Palauan youth thus learned to converse with Japanese housewives while carrying out numerous domestic

---

[47]Robert Kiste, personal interview, Honolulu, Hawaii, May 17, 1979.

[48]South Sea Government (Japanese mandate), Annual Report . . . for the Year 1934, p. 54.

chores. "Working as a houseboy was good because I learned to speak Japanese and how to clean. We got five to ten sen per day."[49] The Japanese home environment became an extension of the school and in such a relaxed atmosphere Palauan youth probably learned the Japanese language and associated cultural nuances far more quickly and effectively than in the rather rigid climate of the classroom.

What, we may ask, were the native schools like? David Ramarui, a student during Japanese administration, offers a first-hand account of the teaching methods and flavor of the native school:

> Classes were big, up to more than 80 students in one class in the fourth and fifth grade levels, with one teacher teaching all subjects: Japanese, world history, geography, science, arts, handicrafts, arithmetics, gardening or agriculture and physical education. Vernacular was completely eliminated from the curriculum. Students were punished if they spoke their native tongue. Most subjects were taught by rote-memorizing. Group reading was a common way of teaching reading. Corporal punishment was the usual way of discipline and school children were slapped or hit on the head with the fist or bamboo if they misbehaved.[50]

Japanese school authorities encouraged and recognized academic achievement through a system of awards. Upon the occasion of the marriage of the Emperor of Japan in 1924, a grant of 2,000 yen matched by a similar amount from the South Sea Government established the Imperial Bounty Foundation for the Encouragement of Study. This foundation gave yearly awards such as the Asahi medal, to students with outstanding academic records from both the Japanese and native schools. Awards were also given to students who had

---

[49] Florintine Yangilmau, personal interview, Echang, Palau, November 16, 1980.

[50] Ramarui, "Education in Micronesia," p. 10.

distinguished themselves in health and sport. The Foundation also made contributions to school libraries and several times a year sent a free magazine, Light of the Sun, to native school leavers. The magazine was also given to fourth and fifth year students soon after New Year day. The 1940 issue printed in Koror had a half dozen short articles by Palauan students, a set of school statistics for the entire Pacific territory and the names of the prime minister and his twelve cabinet officers.

Limited Schooling, Economics, and War

The Japanese school age population was a growing one both in age and numbers. As students finished the higher primary course, those belonging to the official class and of high economic status returned to Japan for secondary and tertiary education. Children of working class backgrounds could enter the Saipan Business School that was established in 1933 and offered a two-year course, or they could attend the Saipan Vocational School which offered a three-year course. The aim of these schools was to prepare successful colonists through the imparting of knowledge and skills necessary for commerce and industry.[51]

This hierarchical system duplicated that of the homeland. Neither of these schools, or schools in Japan, were open to the native. There were a few exceptions to this, as when a student had a Japanese parent or was adopted by a Japanese family. For example, Franz Polloi and Oikang Sebastian from Palau, attended high school in Japan under the sponsorship

---

[51] South Sea Government (Japanese mandate), Annual Report . . . for the Year 1935, p. 52.

of a very high ranking government official, Mr. Mishima Tsuyo. In contrast to the Spencerian notion that primitive peoples were mentally inferior to "civilized" peoples, Mishima wanted to exhibit the mental ability of people from tropical areas.[52] He was not disappointed. The two Palauans did well during their three years in Japan and served both the Japanese colonial and military governments from the date of their return in 1937 to late 1944. Another Palauan who went to Japan under private sponsorship was Alfonso Oiterong (presently the Vice President of the Republic of Palau). From 1939 to 1942 he attended vocational school in electronics and mechanics. Returning to Palau on a cargo ship after Doolittle's surprise attack on Tokyo, Oiterong began teaching at the prestigious Japanese vocational school for natives (Mokko Totei Yoseijo) in Koror. He was the first and only Palauan to be considered a fully qualified teacher during 30 years of Japanese administration.

The only local schooling available to islanders beyond the five year public school course was that of the Mokko Totei Yoseijo, or school for cultivating apprentice carpenters, located in Koror. This school was a territory-wide two year school established in 1926. Yearly enrollment was limited to a select group of about twenty students. Instruction was shared between a small staff of technical experts and the academic staff of Koror Public School. All were fully qualified teachers from Japan.

As the apprentice-woodworker students had already completed five years of public school with excellent records, less time was needed for

---

[52]Oikang Sebastian, personal interview, Koror, Palau, November 28, 1980.

language instruction and more time could be spent on the theory and practice of woodworking. The curriculum consisted of thirty-six hours of work per week divided among the various subjects as shown in Table 1.

TABLE 1

CURRICULUM OF THE APPRENTICE-WOODWORKERS SCHOOL

SUBJECT	HRS/ WK	FIRST YEAR CLASS	HRS/ WK	SECOND YEAR CLASS
Ethics.....	1	Essential points of ethics.	1	Essential points of ethics.
Japanese Language.	5	Reading and writing of Chinese characters in daily use; reading of ordinary sentences; composition.	5	Reading and writing of Chinese characters in daily use; reading of ordinary sentences; composition.
Arithmetic.....	4	Integral numbers, decimals and equations (addition and subtraction with abacus).	4	Fractions, percent and proportions, all four operations with abacus
Drawing.....	2	Simple drawing and instrumental drawing.	2	Instrumental drawing and cartography.
Gymnastics.....	1	Drill, gymnastics and sports.	1	Drill, gymnastics and sports.
Architecture.....	5		5	
Material.....	(1)	Building material.	(1)	Building material.
Building.....	(2)	Outline of Construction.	(2)	Outline of Construction
Workmanship....	(2)	Tools and workmanship.	(2)	Workmanship, colouring and designing.
Practice.....	18	Practical work.	18	Practical work.
Total.....	36		36	

N.B. The Principal may increase the number of hours for practical lessons not exceeding an hour per day.

SOURCE: South Sea Government (Japanese mandate, Annual Report . . . for the Year 1935, pp. 52-53.

Considering the objectives of the carpentry school, the curriculum was well designed and the emotional climate appropriate for producing competent and motivated carpenters some of whom today practice their trade.[53]

Given the favorable economic conditions of the time and the growing numbers of Japanese and Okinawan immigrants which were pouring into Saipan and Palau throughout the late 1920s, 30s, and early 40s, houses and buildings were in great demand. Of the fifty-nine total Micronesian graduates of the carpentry school by 1932, some thirty-two were employed as carpenters, five as assistant teachers in the public schools, three in the post office or hospital, and one as a post graduate in the school.[54] The carpentry school, though open to only a very select minority of islanders, assured its graduates a job and a place in the growing money economy. For those few students this was a dramatic personal change which won them the prestige and respect of their family and peers. Kenzi Mad, a very young boy prior to the onset of the Pacific war, recalls the great pride his family took in the positions of several of its members in the Japanese civil service. Dressing up and wearing government whites was an occasion of distinction.[55]

In either 1940 or 1941 mechanics, including blacksmithing, and surveying were added to the school program. This was consonant with the

---

[53]Mesubed Michael, Elibosang Eungel, and Antonio Marbou are three men I know who were trained at the Palau Apprentice-Woodworkers School in the 1930s. The former two today teach carpentry and construction skills at Palau High School, while Antonio Marbou did repair and carpentry work on the school campus prior to his death in 1978.

[54]Yanaihara, Pacific Islands Under Japanese Mandate, p. 245.

[55]Kenzi Mad, personal interview, Honolulu, Hawaii, May 29, 1978.

southward expansionist plans of the Japanese military government. Alfonso Oiterong returned from Japan in 1942 and began assisting in the mechanics course. Surveying was never started because the ship carrying the equipment was destroyed by a prowling American submarine.

The Japanese military pressed Mokko students into service building storage sheds and barracks on Babeldaob near the Airai airstrip and in Ngatpang. Alfonso Oiterong served as an agricultural work supervisor as did Oikang Sebastian. Some of the Mokko graduates as David Ramarui, Katsumi Inabo, Jonas Olkeriil, and Lawrence Ierago joined an eight month guerilla training program that started in 1944. The Japanese military government established two guerilla training centers at Melekeok on the east coast of Babeldaob and Ngardmau on the west coast. The Melekeok center had some forty Palauan youth who learned marshal arts, signaling, the use of rifles, bayonets, knives and grenades. Known as kirikomitai, the first guerilla "graduates" returned to their villages to supervise agricultural work and train young men there in the arts of modern war.[56] Fortunately these young Palauans never had to use their hastily learned combat skills as U.S. forces by-passed Babeldaob.

In addition to training in woodworking, graduates of the public school supplementary course could apply for agricultural training at agricultural research stations in Ponape, Saipan and Palau. The Palau station was located in the Mizuho farming area on southern Babeldaob. The Japanese community there was large enough to have its own Elementary School for Japanese children and a police sub-station. The farmers grew

---

[56]David Ramarui, personal interview, Koror, Palau, February 10, 1981.

a great variety of vegetables for the nearby Koror market. In the late 1930s agricultural training for young island men was centralized and systematized in the Mizuho area under a program known to Palauans today as kunrenjio. The one year program was a joint venture between the colonial government and the Nantak Company which operated two other large plantation areas on Babeldaob.

The twenty or so Palauan boys spent half a day learning mathematics, surveying theory and animal husbandry theory. The heart of the program was field work. All the tools were hand tools and the students were apprenticed to the very successful and energetic Japanese commercial farmers. According to Palauans who attended kunrenjio, the aim of agricultural training was to increase production for the needs of the military. The leavers were generally placed in their home village areas with instructions to "teach their skills to other Palauans so Palau could become a farming community."[57] A small group of perhaps sixty young Palauan men were exposed to a self-sufficient farming economy. The Pacific war interrupted this effort and it was not followed-up by the American administrators in the post war period.

While agricultural training was neither as long nor as prestigious as carpentry training, it provided a few more opportunities for the young native to acquire the language fluency, work-skills and social behavior needed to operate effectively in the Japanese cultural and economic world.

---

[57]Adelbai Remed, personal interview, Koror, Palau, November 24, 1980.

Review

Japan ruled Micronesia as a League of Nations mandate from 1920-1938 and after this as a territorial possession. Under the mandate agreement the island areas were ruled as an integral part of the administering power. Japan took full advantage of this authority by implementing ambitious economic and social programs. The system of schooling established for Palauan youth was, I believe, designed in accordance with Spencerian notions of cultural evolution--the colonizer was advanced and civilized whereas the islander was primitive and backward. Thus, racial character determined school curriculum--"simple calculation, simple drawing, simple singing, easy spoken sentences, manufacture of simple articles."[58] The primitive was child, simple tasks and vocational education were deemed most appropriate. This outlook apparently underwent change only in response to Japanese plans for southward expansion.

While Spencerian notions formed the bedrock of a subtle and perhaps unconscious educational "philosophy," the social and moral aims of Japanese public schools for natives were clear. Public schools were designed to socialize relatively large numbers of youth to the general outlines of Japanese language and culture and produce an obedient and ethically educated citizenry. A small group of the brightest young Palauans were more fully introduced to Japanese cultural mores and patterns as well as marketable skills. These youth became part of the Japanese world as carpenters,

---

[58]These statements come from "Native Public School Curriculum" of the regular (honka) and supplementary (hoshuka) courses as found in South Sea Government (Japanese mandate), Annual Report . . . for the Year 1935, pp. 48-49.

assistant teachers, assistant policemen, clerks, and agriculturalists much to the esteem of their family and peers. These Palauans had, at least outwardly, accepted the culture of the book because it defined a place for them in the micro-world defined by the colonial intruder. On this new cultural island, the indigenous "word" had little relevance.

Palau's Japanese world was extinguished in less than a year's time. American forces took Peleliu and Angaur in September 1944, bombed Koror and Babeldaob and repatriated all Japanese soon after the war. In one swift stroke, Japanese cultural dominance of Palau was swept aside only to be replaced by an occidental culture. Palauans were to experience another three and a half decades of colonial rule distinctively different from what they had known under the previous foreign rulers.

American Schools for Palauans

Background

The Pacific War which over-flowed into Palau in late 1944 was a crisis period for all Palauans. The people of Peleliu and Angaur were uprooted and transported to Northern Babeldaob by the Japanese military. Those eight hundred or so Palauans residing in Koror moved to Ngerdobotar, a hilly area in Aimeliik. Japanese public schools, offices and businesses were closed and many Palauan male youth were drafted to build airstrips, storage facilities and military camps in preparation for an American invasion.

After the bombs began falling in March 1944, many Palauans ran away from their assigned tasks and hid in caves and tunnels on Babeldaob. When

Peleliu and Angaur were taken in September 1944, Palauans soon learned the schedule of the Peleliu based American fighter planes and began farming and fishing between day-time raids and at night. Palauans who remained loyal to the Japanese worked as military assistants, messengers, agricultural work supervisors, and fishermen (e.g. Indalecio Rudimch, Roman Tmetuchl, Jonathan O. Emul and George Ngirarsaol). As noted earlier in this chapter, perhaps as many as eighty Palauan young men underwent guerilla training in centers at Melekeok and Ngardmau. Another group, the Palau Teishintai, went to New Guinea in 1943 to assist in resource surveys and to prepare defenses. A few never returned and others were left on New Guinea not returning to Palau until after the war.

Spencerian notions of cultural evolution, we have noted, crept into Japanese colonial policy. These same notions had an impact on the general American intellectual climate as well. No where is this influence clearer than in the pre-war writings of American visitors to Micronesia. Walter B. Harris, an American academic who traveled throughout the mandate for six weeks in 1932, came away from the experience with a powerful mix of Spencerian dogma, ethnocentrism and racism. Harris wrote:

> The native races represented in the islands are of a very primitive order and often of a degraded type. They are, generally speaking, idle, sensual, unintelligent and slovenly--in short, essentially savages . . . Unconscious of the passage of time and indifferent to progress, they pluck and devour the wild fruits of the forest and continue the quite unnecessary propagation of their race.[59]

---

[59] Walter B. Harris, "The South Sea Islands Under Japanese Mandate," Foreign Affairs 10, no. 4 (1932):697.

Writing in the Honolulu Star-Bulletin, Alexander-Hume Ford, Director of the Pan-Pacific Union came to a similar though much less racist view of islanders after his 1933 visit. Ford wrote:

> The natives will soon pass on to silence and pathetic dust. They are not breeding, but those that are existant [sic] are charming in manner, quick in action and altogether a lovable, simple childlike people. In other words they are going down before the efficients.[60]

The efficients in this case were the hardworking Japanese, Okinawan and Korean immigrants. By the late 1920s the mandate--especially Palau and the northern Mariana Islands--had become a positive economic asset for Japan. This productive capitalistic economy was built with imported Japanese capital, labor and entrepreneurial skills with only marginal benefits going to the indigenous inhabitants. Palau had an active local vegetable and fish economy. Exports included phosphate, fish, copra, and pineapple. Japanese statistics for the mandate showed that from 1924 to 1938 exports exceeded imports in growing amounts.[61] Bert Ogata, an agricultural specialist for the Trust Territory for over 20 years, claimed that the tax revenue on the Marianas sugar exports paid over half the Nanyo-cho (South Sea government) budget.[62]

---

[60] Alexander-Hume Ford, "Tourists for Mandate Area Wish of Japan," Honolulu Star-Bulletin, December 9, 1933, pp. 1, 6.

[61] Kosuge, Photographs of Micronesia's Yesterday, p. 211.

[62] Bert Ogata, personal interview, Saipan, Mariana Islands, February 8, 1981.

Early Efforts

In contrast to the resource poor Japanese homeland economy, the post-war American economy had little interest in or need for Micronesia's distant and limited resources. This was the conclusion of a Honolulu Chamber of Commerce study commissioned in 1945 by the House Naval Affairs Committee. Therefore from 1945 until 1962, when John Kennedy forced the Soviets to remove their missiles from Cuba, Micronesia was to a great extent forgotten by the American government despite its trustee obligations to promote the social, political, economic and educational advancement of the inhabitants. The vast watery Pacific area was salted-away in the form of a strategic United Nations trust at a time when America's economic and military power dominated the world scene. In contrast to front page war stories featuring Kwajalein, Saipan and Peleliu, the Micronesian islands became for Americans tiny forgotten "dots in the vast oceanic area presumably inhabited by strange races."[63] It is in this context that the writer examines the beginnings of yet another culture of the book--American schools in Palau.

At war's end there were only two Palauans who could speak English. Both Indalecio Rudimch and Charlie Gibbons were employed by the American military rulers as translators. In early 1946 Rudimch was appointed as the first superintendent of schools. He traveled around Palau recruiting a group of men to begin teacher training at the U.S. naval headquarters

---

[63]Dorothy E. Richard, United States Naval Administration of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, 3 vols. (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Office of Naval Operations, 1957), 1:vii.

in Ngermid, Koror.[64] Ironically the headquarters was established in the Kampei Taisha Nanyo Jinja buildings which had not been badly damaged by bombing. The symbolism of this act was obvious to the Palauans who acted meek, retiring, deferential. After five months of intensive English language instruction under Lt. Ebling, who was fluent in Japanese as were all the trainees, and Mrs. Anderson, the trainees began teaching at Koror Elementary School. At the time this school was located in the old Japanese hospital main building which today contains the administrative offices of Micronesian Occupational College.

This was a small beginning. Rural village schools were not fully operational because there were no English speaking teachers to conduct them. Commander Anderson and Lt. Ebling met with Rudimch and the traditional chiefs and proposed bringing English speaking Guamanian teachers to Palau. The chiefs were adamant, "No, Guamanians are native islanders just like us. We want Americans."[65] A compromise was struck by sending a small group of Palauans to Guam in 1947 for advanced teacher training at the newly organized Marianas Area Teacher Training School (MATTS), which became the Pacific Islands Teacher Training School (PITTS) when the program was transferred to Moen, Truk in September 1948.

Ever since a group of six Palauan women went to Guam for nurses training in 1946, the male teacher trainees had repeatedly petitioned the

---

[64]These trainees included Eusebio Termeteet, David Ramarui, Roman Tmetuchl, Sadang Silmai, Tatsuo Adachi, Katsumi Inabo, Oikang Sebastian, Alfonso Oiterong, Ichiro Dingelius, Maidesil and several women whose names are unknown to the writer. These trainees had adapted to the Japanese culture and most of the men are important and respected leaders in Palau today.

[65]David Ramarui, personal interview, Koror, Palau, February 11, 1981.

military government that they too deserved off-island advanced schooling.[66] Indicative of Palauan drive and ambition, the men wanted every opportunity possible for social mobility in the new cultural system then unfolding. With a change in military personnel, they got their wish.[67] Of the eleven men who went to Guam only two, Taksen Chin and Roman Tmetuchl, remained there to take advantage of additional schooling at Guam's public high school. Chin dropped out of PITTS after six months to attend George Washington High School while Tmetuchl, not wanting to fall behind, followed after completing PITTS. These two men thus became Palau's first graduates of an American high school. Today Chin practices medicine in the U.S. and Tmetuchl has become a very successful political figure and businessman. He has been, as will be shown in Chapter Six, the dominant force on the Palauan political-economic scene of the 1970s and 1980s.

Soon after Rudimch recruited teacher trainees, he organized a system of village elementary schools. As there had been only four elementary schools during Japanese administration, each autonomous village-complex lobbied to have its own school. This seemed reasonable; Americans were

---

[66]David Ramarui, personal interview, Koror, Palau, February 10, 1981.

[67]The first group that left in March 1947 included David Ramarui, Alfonso Oiterong, Roman Tmetuchl, Katsumi Policarbo, Taksen Chin, Francisco Morei and Ichiro Dingelius. Later in 1947 Sadang Silmai, Wilhelm Rengiil, Jonathan Emul and John Tellei followed. Rudimch had already visited Guam to meet with Mr. Simon Sanches, Superintendent of Schools, and Commander I.K. Vandom, Trust Territory Director of Education, to make the necessary arrangements in Guam to accommodate the trainees. They went through a two phase training course. The first six month phase consisted of three hours of class instruction in English and three hours of agricultural work and camp maintenance. After a vacation trip home, students returned for a nine month course that included English, social studies, science and mathematics, education and teaching methods, handicraft and industrial arts, and physical education.

generous. As stated in a 1948 report, "School, without a doubt, is the most important civil function there is in the eyes of the Palauans. Every hamlet wants a bigger, better school, more and better trained teachers."[68] In an amazing exhibition of village pride, cooperation, and self-reliance, nine new school buildings were constructed in 1946 at minimal cost. As reported by the Honolulu Advertiser:

> Under a unique contract between Navy military government officials and Palau chiefs, the total cost of each school to the United States was $35. Payment was made by the transfer of 350 cartons of cigarettes, 560 pounds of candles and 1,683 pounds of soap to native stocks. All the buildings were constructed as village enterprises by native craftsmen, using local materials.[69]

This interesting arrangement, no doubt negotiated by Rudimch, illustrates several important elements of Palauan culture--the thirst for foreign schooling and the social advantage it often confers, the desire for foreign consumer goods, and, most important, the socially productive cooperative-competitive principle which, when followed, gets things done in Palau.

Leo Ruluked, an eleven-year old in 1946, recalled participating in kinrohoshi (volunteer work) with his village age mates. They assisted the older men construct school buildings in Ngchesar, Melekeok, Ngiwal,

---

[68] Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, Palau District, Office of the Civil Administration, "Report No. 3-1948," (April - June 1948), p. 21.

[69] "Palau Natives Go to Schools Built for Cigarette Pay," Honolulu Advertiser, April 16, 1946, p. 5.

and Ngarchelong. Many of the Japanese structures not destroyed during the war, such as at the Shimizu farming area, were dismantled, moved and used. "We gathered timbers, tins, nails, papers, anything that was useful. Everyone was involved and enjoyed working together. This mutual help unified the east coast villages."[70]

As there were no English speaking teachers yet and given the chiefs had refused Guamanians, Rudimch staffed the village schools with knowledgeable and respected adults who had come up through the Japanese school system. Being older village people, these individuals represented cultural continuity--a fact of great importance after a frightening war and sudden changeover to a new colonial ruler. The writer believes, therefore, that it is appropriate to recognize these pioneering individuals in this study (see Table 2 on page 184).

Within a few months after their return from Guam in the fall of 1948, the teacher trainees established an intermediate school (grades 7, 8 at first and 9 in 1950) which included plans for a vocational shop program--a continuity from the Japanese period. The intermediate school took on an interesting and inevitable Japanese flavor. Mrs. Toyomi Singeo, who had attended school in Japan and worked for Nanyo-cho (South Sea government) remembers guiding her teaching according to the shushin philosophy. "I taught shushin. I pushed it and gave it to the early leaders such as Thomas Remengesau and Jacob Sawaichi. After I left, shushin was disregarded."[71]

---

[70] Leo Ruluked, personal interview, Koror, Palau, February 26, 1981.

[71] Ms. Toyomi Singeo, personal interview, Koror, Palau, January 3, 1981. Mrs. Singeo recalled the shushin virtues: bravery, loyalty, duty, honesty, thrift, diligence, benevolence, gratitude, etiquette, order, patience, calm, self-confidence, scientific attitude, habit. The final end product was to be a good Japanese.

TABLE 2

PALAU'S FIRST POST-WAR ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TEACHERS

Melekeok:	Rengulbai Ngeburch,* Maech, Skang, Minor Olkeriil*
Ngarchelong:	Rehuher, Towai, Salvador, Oikang Sebastian, Ngetiungel
Ngaraard:	Ringang,* Subris, Besebes, Yemesai, Ichikawa
Ngiwal:	Ongklungel, Tulmau, Kebtot, Marino Joshua
Ngchesar:	Ngiraitpang,* Anastasio, Ngirur, Emesiochel, Ruduk
Airai:	Ngirucheldab, Ngemelas, Olkeriil Sasao, Teriong
Ngardmau:	Rechuher, Taro, Arang, Ngiraiwet
Ngaremlengui:	Telechalb, Otobed, Rekemesik, Olebangel, Kimiko Kyota
Aimeliik:	Rebes, Meruk
Peleliu:	John Tellei, Kulas S., Wenty T., Akiwo Ngirutoi
Angaur:	Louis Tsungio, Teiko Uyehara
Koror:	Polloi, Belechel, Ichikawa, Maria Gibbons, Ngordrii Santos, Melwat

SOURCE: David Ramarui, personal interview, Koror, Palau, February 11, 1981.

* Assistant teacher during Japanese administration.

Vocational instruction was started in the early 1950s and was vintage Japanese. The Palauans began with what they knew best--carpentry. According to Alfonso Oiterong who was active in school administration at that time, Palauans

> knew there was a future in carpentry because sooner or later economic conditions would boom again. The whole program was Japanese oriented. The teachers were those educated under the Japanese. We just switched the measurement units. The teachers taught in Palauan but the lessons were Japanese in style and content.[72]

[72] Alfonso Oiterong, personal interview, Honolulu, Hawaii, May 19, 1976.

Boatbuilding and mechanics were added in later years. Both the Mokko Totei Yoseijo and the Palau Vocational School were direct ancestors of the Micronesian Occupational College (previously Center) which was established in 1969 and is now a prominent institution in Palau.[73]

These two examples--Mrs. Singeo's shushin and Japanese style carpentry instruction--illustrate the influence of the Japanese model on Palauan thinking. More than anything, the concept of school for the Palauan was then and is today synonymous with employment, social advancement and being modern. The more schooling one had the better.

Rudimch was followed by Ronald Sakuma (1947-1948) and Toribiong Uchel (1948-1949) as superintendents of the elementary school system. During these early years Palauans generally perceived American institutions in Palauan terms, which did not segment social functions into separate and distinct categories. Thus Sakuma used his position to advocate his economic and political ideas, which called for a return to Japanese style business and industrial development (see Chapter Six). This upset the paramount chiefs, who had Sakuma dismissed. Toribiong was similarly released because he used government resources to spread the Seventh-Day Adventist message (see Chapter Four).

From 1949 to the present, there have been six elementary school superintendents: Alfonso Oiterong (1949-50 and 1952-57), David Ramarui (1950-52), Sadang Silmai (1957-62), Masami Siksei (1962-69), Tosiwo

---

[73]The College is fully accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges and was granted land-grant status in 1982. For a detailed review of the college's entire program see "Micronesian Occupational College Self Study Report January 1982." This report was researched and written by Donald R. Shuster.

Nakamura (1969-79) and Emil Ramarui (1980-present). Except for Emil Ramarui, who holds a chiefly title in Ngaraard, all these men have held or now hold important positions in elected government.[74] Advanced schooling, which qualified these men for the superintendent position, has proven to be an important means of social mobility in Palauan culture and has connected the educational with the political. Two of Palau's early college graduates, David Ramarui (graduated University of Hawaii in 1958) and Lazarus Salii (graduated University of Hawaii in 1961) agree that their degrees conferred considerable prestige and respect and greatly influenced their political careers (see Chapter Six). Ramarui noted that "Palauans are competitive and know the avenue to wealth and culture is through education."[75]

Given the Palauan hunger for schooling, the intermediate school graduates had three options for additional experience in the culture of the book. The first was to go to high school on Guam, the second was to attend Xavier, an academically vigorous Jesuit high school in Truk, and the last was to enter the Pacific Islands Teacher Training School (PITTS later PICS).[76]

---

[74]Alfonso Oiterong served in the Seventh Legislature and is now the Vice President of the Republic of Palau. David Ramarui is the Minister of Social Services in the President of Palau's cabinet and was a senator in the Congress of Micronesia 1966-70. Sadang Silmai was speaker of the Sixth Palau Legislature 1975-79. Masami Siksei is presently a senator in the Palau National Congress and Tosiwo Nakamura was speaker of the Seventh Palau Legislature 1980-81.

[75]David Ramarui, personal interview, Koror, Palau, February 11, 1981.

[76]PITTS was first established in Guam as the Marianas Area Teacher Training School (MATTS). After the creation of the Trust Territory in July 1947, the name was changed to PITTS and in September 1948 the school

Entrance to PITTS was restricted to the best six or eight intermediate school graduates (one student per 1,000 persons) as determined by a rigorous end-of-the-year examination. Kenzi Mad finished first among the 1955 intermediate school graduates and remains, after twenty-seven years, proud of this achievement. Acceptance to PITTS (PICS) was perceived by some graduates as the most prestigious of the three options opened to the ninth grade leavers. It was the Trust Territory's first scholarship program and highly esteemed by Palauans. According to one proud PICS graduate:

> PICS was perceived as better than either Guam or Xavier. It was a government school where everything was provided. The general feeling was that if you went to PICS your future was guaranteed. You could go on to college as some of us did or you could easily get a job as PICS graduates were in high demand. This was a good feeling and really motivated us.[77]

From 1948 to 1964, over 125 Palauans graduated from PICS. A comprehensive 1961 survey showed that nearly all the ninety-six graduates were

---

was moved to Moen, Truk. At that time the program was extended to two years. In 1949 and 1950 specialty areas of communications and general studies were added to the curriculum. In 1952 teacher training became a district function and PITTS was renamed Pacific Islands Central Schools (PICS) at which time it emphasized academic instruction. The program was extended to a third year in 1956 and the campus moved to Ponape in 1959. By 1965 each district had its own public high school and PICS became Ponape's high school. Under a contract with the University of Hawaii, teacher training was continued in Ponape at the Micronesian Teacher Education Center (MTEC), which became the Community College of Micronesia (CCM) in 1969. This college is one of the three units of the umbrella institution, College of Micronesia, along with the School of Nursing (Saipan and soon-to-be Majuro) and Micronesian Occupational College (koror, Palau).

[77] Rosemary Mersai, personal interview, Koror, Palau, December 10, 1980.

employed, the overwhelming majority with the Trust Territory government. As the statement above reveals, Palauans were quick to realize that advanced education was the surest ticket to prestige, respect, and a place in the growing money economy. Because enrollment to PICS was limited, many ninth grade graduates preferred to go to Guam, believing life there held out more promise for eventual educational success. William Vitarelli, Palau's Educational Administrator from 1949 to 1954, was very influential in getting Palauans into Guam's George Washington High School and finding them sponsors, all to the consternation of Robert Gibson, Trust Territory Director of Education. Thus, as early as December 1951, there were thirty-two Palauans in school on Guam compared to twenty-one at PICS. At this same time, Palauans were eagerly seeking experience in the culture of the book elsewhere. Twelve were at the Fiji Medical School, seven in seminary in the Philippines, ten in the nunnery in Ponape, and three in college on the U.S. mainland. Competitive and ambitious Palauans, it seems, were "made" for the school. Because the foreign culture of the book opened opportunities for wealth and prestige, it had won out over the indigenous culture of the word which was ignored as irrelevant, pre-modern, restricting.

Vitarelli's Impact

In late 1949 William V. Vitarelli strode onto the Palauan educational stage big with enthusiasm and compelling ideas. His huge conceptual steps were those of a visionary. He conceived the school as a productive and exciting experience intimately linked to and a part of Palauan village

and Koror-town culture, thus representing a conjunction of the cultures of the word and book. An academic school (as PICS or Xavier) or a labor intensive school as the Japanese kunrenjio, were insufficient; the two, he felt, must be combined into a community school. Some months prior to his arrival in Palau, Vitarelli had completed a Ph.D. dissertation (Columbia University, 1949) on the organization and administration of community centered schools. He quickly realized that the Palau situation was ideal for the Dewey learn-by-doing type school. This vision was enormously creative and fueled Vitarelli's involvement in Palauan affairs for over twenty-five years.

Dr. William Vitarelli was Palau's first educational administrator, a position he held from 1951 to 1954, when the long arm of McCarthyism nabbed him in distant Palau. From his arrival in late 1949 to his sudden departure five years later, he worked closely with David Ramarui and Alfonso Oiterong. Vitarelli won the trust and confidence of these Palauan educators but, I believe, not their complete enthusiasm for his concept of community school because it would not prepare Palauans sufficiently well to deal with Americans on their cultural terms.

Nevertheless, Vitarelli was amazingly successful at implementing his concept of community school because the situation was ripe for it. U.S. government grants were small and policy at that time called for self-reliance, self-sufficiency, and self-government.[78] More importantly perhaps, Palauans were open to new ideas which they thought would improve

---

[78]Annual appropriations for the TTPI for the period 1947-1951 averaged $1 million and $5 million for the next decade till the funding bonanza of the Kennedy and subsequent administrations.

their schools. They had faith in American educational leaders as proponents of a more liberal, open and extensive school system than Palauans had known during Japanese administration.

Yet, this had another aspect. The American, like the Japanese before him, was perceived as superior, advanced, modern, and he often acted according to expectations. Vitarelli recalled:

> I went to Micronesia with an ambitious notion that as a professor I could teach the people of Palau how to develop and become rich, how to make money and how to build up their community, as the phrase went, come into the twentieth century.[79]

This was a benign form of the Spencerian notion of cultural evolution colored as it was by American values and history. It said, "Yes, the Palauans were backward but they can easily enter the twentieth century with the assistance of American generosity and the entrepreneurial spirit of growth and progress." The five-fold Trust Territory budgetary increase in 1951 exemplified America's post-war mission of "saving the world for democracy by the purposeful sharing of American know-how, American education, American resources, and American dollars, with the remote and underdeveloped parts of the world."[80] Vitarelli was an expression of this mission but he was also much more. He brought a cultural sensitivity and imagination that were unparalleled and in direct contrast

---

[79]William Vitarelli, personal interview, Honolulu, Hawaii, August 1, 1980.

[80]Daniel J. Boorstin, The Americans: The Democratic Experience (New York: Vintage Books, 1974), p. 577.

to the condescending attitude exhibited by U.S. Navy and former Navy officials. Vitarelli's creative effort and projects in building a school-community system that Palauans took pride in earned him the respect and gratitude of nearly every Palauan who knew him.

Over a two year period (1951-53), Vitarelli wrote three little booklets that outlined his philosophy and practice of community schools.[81] He had visited Palau's rural elementary schools on field trips and immediately recognized the rigidity of the Japanese model. It was, however, the only model for schools the teacher knew. Vitarelli's teacher trainer, Jack Coale, characterized the Palauan elementary schools as having only the formality and not the substance of the Japanese model. Vitarelli's response to the rigidity of the three R's on the one hand and the High Commissioner's policy directives on the other was a community school.

> This means coordinating the school program with the every-day process of making a living, keeping healthy, learning democracy by practicing it in the schools, and gaining a true respect for the many wonderful things in Palauan culture.[82]

Vitarelli believed that various types of projects which combined mind and hand would provide the link between school and community, between book and word. He himself was gifted in art, woodworking, printing

---

[81] These were, "Education in Palau," April 1951; "An Interpretation of Official Directives as they Apply to the Education Program of Palau," February 1952 and "Education in Palau," revised edition, April 1953. All of these are in the Pacific Collection of Hamilton Library, University of Hawaii, Honolulu, Hawaii.

[82] William V. Vitarelli, "Education in Palau," (Koror, Palau: Department of Education, 1951), p. 8.

and bookmaking, and he found Palauans with similar skills. Vitarelli's enthusiasm was contagious. He wanted to show, he wrote, how knowledge could be applied in solving every-day problems of the community."[83] With the support of Alfonso Oiterong, David Ramarui and others, a series of community related projects were either started or extended. They included:

1. A weekly market. Produce came in from the rural areas to Palau Intermediate School whose students conducted the market.

2. A carpentry and house building service. This service had been in the planning stage prior to Vitarelli's arrival. Working closely with David Ramarui, Alfonso Oiterong, and others, the service was soon established. All those involved hoped to see the program expand to become an employment agency.

3. A boat building program. Initially nearly all the wood came from local sources and was sawed at a mill, built by Palauan men. In the 60's and 70's plywood replaced local lumber, at least for speedboats.

4. The intermediate school garden. Adelbai Remed, an expert agriculturist trained during Japanese administration, worked closely over the years with American agriculture teachers in developing an agriculture program. Besides the program's theory and practice, the garden's produce supplemented the boarding students' diet.

5. A weekly fishing trip. Fish caught by students went both to the dormitory table and the market shelf.

6. The Annual Spring Fair. Started in 1951 by Vitarelli, the fair engaged everyone's effort and creativity and became an extremely popular yearly event. Produce, handicraft and people came to Koror from the rural areas. Students managed food and game booths. Competition in baseball, swimming, sailing, and dancing was held during the fair. All of this had a parallel in the taikuday of pre-war Japanese administration.

---

[83] Vitarelli, "Education in Palau," p. 6.

While these activities soon became fairly well established, Vitarelli began experimenting with various test projects in brick and pottery making, a school museum, compiling a book of Palauan legends and songs, a Palauan language primer for Americans, and publishing educational bulletins and teaching materials.[84] Prior to his sudden departure in April 1954, Vitarelli made the most progress in getting educational bulletins and teaching materials printed--expressions of the culture of the word.

At least nine bulletins were completed. Two of the most important were David Ramarui's "Geography of Micronesia" (February 1953) and Alfonso Oiterong's "Teacher's Guide in Developing Good Citizenship" (October 1953). These home made booklets were important for two reasons: they were useful teaching guides and, more significantly, they gave Palauan educators and teachers confidence that they too could compose materials of value, that they too could move in the culture of the book with some ease and self-assurance.

After Vitarelli

After Vitarelli's abrupt departure, Daniel Peacock took over as educational administrator (1954-58). He was followed by Heinz Meyer (1958-62). Some of Vitarelli's programs were continued but the special zest he brought for community schools was gone. Peacock inherited an expanding school system which, by its nature, fostered rising expectations. The elementary school program remained somewhat rigid but the intermediate school, which

---

[84] Ibid., p. 9.

offered good academic and vocation programs, became a launching pad to further schooling for growing numbers of students, most of whom went to Guam.

Alarmed by talk of exploitation by sponsors of Palauan students on Guam, High Commissioner Nucker had Peacock conduct a survey of Guam's Palauan students to assess the state-of-affairs. In 1955 Peacock interviewed all eighty-one Palauan students on Guam and found that a few were being exploited by their sponsors. Steps were taken to remedy the situation.

Peacock's report contained a number of interesting observations. Palauans, it seems, were not attracted to the vocational programs offered by George Washington High School. The students felt that academic learning was in itself a fine thing and a good investment in the future.[85] Many students took business subjects because they felt such subjects would provide a "stepping stone to professional careers."[86]

Heinz Meyer was similarly impressed by the Palauan thirst for schooling. His 1958 survey showed 105 students in Guam's high schools, five Palauan men at the pastor's school on Ponape and nineteen women in the Catholic convent there, twenty-five young men at Xavier in Truk, and six students in the College of Guam.

Ever since the intermediate school started in 1948, parents regularly sent baskets of food to the school galley. This supplemented the meager

---

[85]Daniel J. Peacock, "Survey of Palauan Students Studying on the Island of Guam," June 24, 1955, p. 3. Located in the Pacific Collection, Hamilton Library, University of Hawaii, Honolulu.

[86]Ibid., p. 6.

food budget and insured parental support. While the intermediate school was then less a community school in the Vitarelli sense, student participation in galley work was, Meyer argued, an important form of education which went beyond the three R's in the classroom.

> Our students in three year's time, learn how to bake bread, rolls, cake, cookies, donuts and cinamon rolls. They actually participate in weighing out and measuring the various ingredients. They learn to use and understand pounds and ounces and how to compute them in making out daily records. They learn to keep records. They learn how to clean fish, cook and prepare it in quantity. They learn how to serve food so that each student gets an equal share. They learn how to cook and prepare other foods. They learn how to use soaps, detergents, and disinfectants properly. They learn how to wash dishes clean and why, and they get practice. They learn the necessity for work in proper food preparation and handling, and, above all, they learn to take pride in their work when a job is praised as being well done.[87]

Unfortunately we have no evidence of whether Palauans agreed with Meyer on this definition of education. Nevertheless, Meyer was a keen observer and good organizer. He constantly moved around to see what was going on in the schools imbued as he was with the American penchant for improving things and moving on to new challenges.[88] He assisted in the improvement of the elementary and intermediate school programs and acquired standardized textbooks. To this extent he fostered the culture of the book and thus unwittingly widened the gap between the "word" and the "book."

---

[87]Heinz E. Meyer, Memorandum to the Director of Education, Saipan, M. Is., September 30, 1959, p. 3. Department of Education Files, Koror, Palau.

[88]This same attitude generally characterized the work of Donald Shuster, who served as vice principal of Palau High School, 1972-1976.

World Events Cause Change

It now seems ironic that in 1963-1964 the elementary school on Kayangel (Palau's only atoll) and the Palau High School "Blue Lagoon" yearbook were both dedicated to the memory of President John F. Kennedy. Most people saw only the gloss and glitter of the Kennedy style but the record shows he "charted his course by the star of empire and generated the confidence that sustained interventionist momentum."[89] This same logic stimulated fundamental changes in U.S. policy vis-a-vis the Trust Territory.

The year 1963 was a turning point for the sprawling Pacific territory. The fruits of a Kennedy Administration decision to dramatically accelerate change in the area came in the form of tens of millions of aid dollars. This decision did not flow out of some stream of virtuous beneficience but was, I shall argue, a response to foreign policy crises.[90]

Just three months after taking office, President Kennedy approved the Bay of Pigs invasion. This attempt of mid-April 1961 to topple Cuba's Fidel Castro failed miserably. The new President was both angered and dismayed. American prestige had been damaged and Kennedy concluded "that he had to recover the lost ground to avoid losing power at home."[91]

---

[89] William A. Williams, The Tragedy of American Diplomacy (New York: Dell Publishing Co., 1972), p. 300.

[90] McHenry maintains that the critical 1961 U.N. Visiting Mission Report and Kennedy Administration sensitivity to growing anti-colonial feelings were the key factors that stimulated a policy change regarding the Trust Territory. See Donald F. McHenry, Micronesia: Trust Betrayed, (New York: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1975), pp. 13-14. I believe these were factors in the decision equation but not the most important ones.

[91] William A. Williams, The Tragedy of American Diplomacy, p. 301.

However, four months later Kennedy lost more political ground in the eyes of many when the Soviets cut Berlin in half with a snake-like wall and when Kennedy announced the resumption of atmospheric testing of nuclear weapons in March 1962.

Some of this lost ground was regained in October 1962 when Kennedy brought the world to the brink of nuclear war and forced Khrushchev to withdraw Soviet missiles from Cuba. The American president won both the appearance and substance of victory and Khrushchev was publicly humiliated.[92]

It was between the embarrassment of the Bay of Pigs and the triumph of the Cuban Missile crisis that President Kennedy decided to accelerate development in the Trust Territory. America's hold on the vast strategic area had to be consolidated in an era of decolonization and rising nationalism.

In July 1962 Kennedy signed Senate bill 2775. When it was passed and signed, it became Public Law 87-541 and authorized substantial increases in funding for the Trust Territory. In his accompanying statement the President referred to "fundamental changes taking place in the outlook of the people."[93] These changes, if indeed they were real, were perceived as a challenge to be met commensurate with America's responsibility of stewardship. In this mission Kennedy placed special emphasis on education (meaning schooling) declaring:

---

[92] Lawrence Wittner, Cold War America, (New York: Holt, Rinehard and Winston, 1978), p. 221.

[93] Public Papers of the President of the United States John F. Kennedy. January 1 - December 31, 1962, (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1963), p. 565.

> The accelerated program that is contemplated will place great emphasis upon education for, in our opinion, education is the key to all further progress--political, economic and social . . . It is our hope to strikingly improve education at all levels . . . upgrading education to a level which has been taken for granted in the United States for decades.[94]

Implied here are the goals of modernization, Americanization and assimilation wrapped up in an aura of mission, progress and financial beneficience.

Within a year of this act the Trust Territory budget was nearly tripled from $6.1 million to $17 million. Assistant Secretary of State for Economic Affairs Anthony Solomon was dispatched to the territory to survey the situation and "make recommendations leading to the formulation of programs and policies for an accelerated rate of development so that the people may make an informed and free choice as to their future, in accordance with U.S. responsibilities under the Trusteeship Agreement."[95] This statement of purpose contained the seeds of benign Spencerian thinking skewed to political ends. Consonant with non-colonial imperial expansion, this new brand of Spencerianism said: "Micronesians are backward. Their rate of development compared to the industrialized, modernized, capitalistic West had somehow been retarded. Enlightened programs and policies, particularly those in education, could accelerate development to a level where Micronesians would opt for a permanent political association with the U.S." This was a subtle form of cultural imperialism and as such an educative force of considerable influence.

---

[94] Ibid.

[95] McHenry, Micronesia: Trust Betrayed, p. 16.

Ramarui's Leadership

The period 1962 to 1980 was a time when Americans and their dollars poured into Palau. These years were dominated by two Palauan educators--David Ramarui and Alfonso Oiterong--and numerous events. The events, almost revolutionary in nature compared to the "poverty period," included the establishment of a public high school program and the inflow of two dozen American contract teachers, who were followed later by a deluge of Peace Corps Volunteers (PCVs). These innovations were common place by the 1970s, when federal dollars for innumerable education programs built a large educational bureaucracy in Palau. All of these changes in their combined impact created a school system that propelled increasingly larger numbers of Palauan youth to U.S. colleges. All this seemed to fit in nicely with what many Palauans perceived as the proper goal of an education in the wider culture of the book.

In mid-1962 David Ramarui became the first Palauan educational administrator. This event coincided with President Kennedy's decision to accelerate development in the Trust Territory. For seven years until his departure for full-time work with the Congress of Micronesia Senate in early 1969, David steered a course for Palau's schools in a sea of turbulent change.[96]

---

[96]Prior to American Administration, Palauans generally went by one name. In keeping with American practice, Palauans have taken a last name which is often the first name of their father or uncle. To avoid confusion, and because David Ramarui and Alfonso Oiterong are widely known in Palau and the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands by their first names, I will use these names when referring to them throughout this chapter. This same practice will be used in subsequent chapters of this study.

The first change was the establishment of a public high school in September 1962 when the intermediate school ninth graders went on to the tenth grade. Dr. William Young, whom the Palauan teachers came to fear, was hired along with four American high school teachers. All were disciples of the culture of the book and were paid through increases mandated by the Kennedy administration.[97] A group of Palauan teachers, some of whom had extensive overseas exposure to the culture of the written word, including Leo Ruluked, Ermas Ngirachelbaed, Inez Santos, Moses Sam, Franz Reksid, Yoichi Rengiil, and Joe Isaol, worked with the new Americans. By the next school year the high school faculty was half Palauan and half American. Considering the lack of cross cultural sophistication on the part of the Americans, the new high school program generally ran smoothly. David was pleased with its development. "Although our high school has not yet reached the maximum standard . . . we are proud that we have been able to accomplish many things."[98]

One of David's most persistent problems during his tenure as educational administrator was that of schooling for the twenty or so dependent children of Americans employed in Palau. An American Dependent School was set up in 1952 by American parents who provided materials and paid the teacher. In 1961 the new High Commissioner, Wilfred Goding who was a Kennedy appointee, made $35,000 available for American dependent schools in the territory.

---

[97] The Kennedy dollars also built ten American style concrete houses on Serib Hill in Koror. These were typhoon proof structures that set the style for similar Palauan houses that began popping up from 1964 on.

[98] David Ramarui, "Blue Lagoon" (Palau High School Yearbook, Koror, Palau, 1964-65), p. 1.

Initially David regarded the English Speaking School--as the Dependent School was officially designated in 1961--as a training and scholarship program for an aspiring Palauan teacher. The American Parents Association school board had proposed that the $10/month/student tuition fee be used both to pay the Palauan teacher and to provide a scholarship grant for the teacher at the end of the school year.[99] Unfortunately this plan, well intended but misguided, did not take into account the financial structure of the Trust Territory government. The entire financial plan was rather bluntly rejected, and Palau's District Administrator, Manuel Godinez, had to eat humble pie.[100]

Godinez had to eat humble pie over another issue which had the curious mark of William Vitarelli, who had returned to Palau in 1961 and served as Deputy District Administrator.[101] Although the written correspondence

---

[99] Veronica McKnight, Secretary-Treasurer, Palau American Parents Association, Memorandum to the High Commissioner, Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, September 5, 1962. Department of Education Dependent School File, Koror, Palau.

[100] Jose A. Benitez, Deputy High Commissioner, Memorandum to Manuel Godinez, Palau District Administrator, February 1, 1963. Department of Education Dependent School File, Koror, Palau.

[101] As noted earlier, Vitarelli was nabbed by the long arm of McCarthyism in 1954. Although Senator McCarthy himself had, by 1954, lost the strength he wielded a few years earlier, there were those who sprang up in his wake eager, as historian Richard Hofstadter has written, "to bully librarians over books written by dissenting authors or harass professors who harbored unconventional ideas." Vitarelli was in the latter category and he was accused of fellow-traveling. He fought his case all the way to the Supreme Court and won. In 1958 he was re-instated to the U.S. Civil Service and re-assigned to the Trust Territory Government. He returned to Palau in 1961 as deputy district administrator under Manuel Godinez. While Godinez spent most of his time fishing, carousing or womanizing, Vitarelli was active running the Palau District Government, which eventually upset certain influential people in the High Commissioner's Office.

available is incomplete. Vitarelli was concerned about the elitist aura surrounding the English Speaking School. It had the appearance of being exclusive; American children were transported by government taxi, had their own special school building, an American teacher, and an abundance of materials. At the request of American parents and the school teacher, David inquired about Godinez's memorandum announcing the discontinuation of taxi service. The District Administrator replied by memorandum that taxi service for American children had indeed been discontinued as announced in his first memorandum. The American parents complained immediately to Godinez, who, clearly embarrassed, issued a memorandum re-instating taxi service.

While the scholarship and taxi issues generated interesting rumor, they were insignificant compared to the confusion and uncertainty that developed over the High Commissioner's call for integration of the American English Speaking School. The motives for this were mixed. David pointed out in 1966 that the push to integrate Palauan children into American student classrooms seemed to derive from a desire on the part of the Trust Territory (TT) government to avoid U.N. criticism.[102] Also the whole issue of school integration had become a very emotional one in America. Despite a host of Supreme Court and lower court decisions, the schools in America's deep South were still fully segregated in 1960. The Kennedy Administration was concerned that segregation not become a problem in the Pacific territory.

---

[102]David Ramarui, Educational Administrator, Palau, Memorandum to Assistant Commissioner, Community Services, Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, May 23, 1966. Department of Education Dependent School Files, Koror, Palau.

In March 1963 a conference of Palauan teachers recommended the integration of American children into the existing Palauan public school system. It is likely that the teachers saw this change as a way to add variety and rejuvenate the public system with external ideas and energy. A few American teachers were already teaching at Koror Elementary School and in the Intermediate School. Palauan educators noticed what these newcomers were doing and wanted more such activities. On the other hand, the American parents, viewing things from their perspective, became concerned that integration would erode the school's quality, which they had worked so hard to build.

Come the new school year 1963, Phil Swayne, an American teacher-supervisor hired by Vitarelli alerted David that "to weaken English instruction in any way could very easily do irreparable harm to the personal morale and inevitably to the entire American staff in Palau."[103] Clearly, the issue had become an emotional one on which the High Commissioner took a firm stand. He wanted the English Speaking School either integrated with qualified Palauan students or dissolved.[104] Vitarelli was pleased with this decision and perhaps David was too. It cleared the air as to what needed to be done.

The issue, however, needed an element of ambiguity to keep emotions in check. Vitarelli supplied this by describing the integration process

---

[103]Philip Swayne, teacher-supervisor, Memorandum to David Ramarui, Palau Educational Administrator, September 25, 1963. Department of Education Dependent School Files, Koror, Palau.

[104]M.W. Goding, High Commissioner, Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, Memorandum to Manuel Goding, Palau District Administrator, November 20, 1963. Department of Education Dependent School File, Koror, Palau.

as one of "inviting qualified Palauans to enroll in the English Speaking School" and, at the same time, "inducting all American employee children into the public school system."[105] The first was clear but the second sounded as if the American students would leave their exclusive schoolroom for Palauan elementary classrooms. Both took place but separated by eighteen months.

In January 1964 six Palauan students joined the seventeen Americans in the re-named Central Elementary School, which was later demoted to an annex of Koror Elementary School to supposedly symbolize complete integration.

Toward the end of this first semester of integration, David assigned Phil Swayne, one of the Education Department's two teacher supervisors, to work out a plan for the next school year (1964-65) that would maximize the use of English language in the integrated classrooms and have Palauan teacher trainees work alongside certified American teachers.

For Swayne, the integration plans became more and more complex, trying as he did to reconcile the American parents' demand for quality classroom instruction in the English language for their children with the requirement to add larger numbers of Palauan students to these classes. American parents invariably complained and came to see the situation in terms of a fight to give their youngsters an adequate education and a

---

[105] Manuel Godinez, Palau District Administrator, Memorandum to High Commissioner, Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, December 3, 1963. Department of Education Dependent School File, Koror, Palau.

fight to resist negative influences on their children of disliked Palauan habits.[106]

The uncertainties and frustrations of a sizable number of vocal and often ethnocentric American teachers emerged in the form of regular Wednesday meetings. The teachers invited David to attend. He declined, asserting that as educational administrator his door was always open to those who needed to find answers or let off steam. David had learned to move confidently in the culture of the book. His memoranda were always carefully written, open, and designed to defuse tense emotions.

After two years of experimenting with various arrangements of integrated classes, Phil Swayne concluded it had been a failure, particularly for the American students. Language difficulties were compounded by cultural differences. Swayne prepared a memorandum for the Assistant Commissioner, Community Services, for David's signature. In this memorandum Swayne rejected the notion that having a separate school for American children in Palau was a matter of racial segregation. He claimed this was "a myth designed to take necessary funds away from the education of American children."[107] The issue, deeply felt, had come full circle. Swayne and the American parents wanted a return to a separate school. It

---

[106]"Committee Report Regarding the Present Education of American Children in Koror," by Philip Swayne, Jeanne Tudong, Nancy Shippe, Marietta Schug, and Mariam Young, November 6, 1964. Department of Education Dependent School File, Koror, Palau.

[107]David Ramarui, Palau Educational Administrator, Memorandum to Assistant Commissioner, Community Services, Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, April 28, 1966. This memorandum was written by Philip Swayne and while it is in the Palau Department of Education Dependent School file, it was neither signed by David Ramarui nor sent to the Assistant Commissioner.

never happened even though David supported re-establishment of such a school for American children.[108] Palauan elementary school students were learning English from contract teachers, who were soon replaced by a flood of active and enthusiastic Peace Corps Volunteers. David probably reasoned that the American parents could have their separate school if they wanted. The two integrated classes survived into the early 1970s and then disappeared. There were too few American children any longer to warrant such special classes.

As the debate over integration waxed and waned, David had to monitor the construction of classrooms and American style houses in Koror and Palau's rural villages. The Accelerated Elementary School Construction Program (AESCP) funded by Kennedy Administration appropriations would build some thirty houses and eighty classrooms. This represented the inflow of hundreds of thousands of dollars in materials and labor. Palauans knew America was rich and wondered if AESCP might be the beginning of a massive physical development program similar to what they had experienced under the Japanese in the 1930s.

William Vitarelli, who had returned to Palau in 1961, felt strongly that Palauans could and should do most of the AESCP work. He had his opponents in the High Commissioner's Office who diffused the thrust of a Palau Legislature resolution opposing the award of the entire construction contract by the Trust Territory government to Jones and Guerrero (J and G) Construction Company of Guam. Nevertheless the resolution had an impact

---

[108] David Ramarui, Palau Educational Administrator, Memorandum to Assistant Commissioner, Community Services, Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, May 23, 1966. Department of Education Dependent School File, Koror, Palau.

on High Commissioner Goding who compromised. J and G got the more lucrative teacher house contract, and private Palauan firms got the classroom contract. The Legislature had won a partial victory, which generally was interpreted as a total victory. Goding apparently was unhappy with Vitarelli's enthusiastic administration in Palau and transferred him to Saipan where he would be less of an embarrassment to the Goding administration.[109]

The teacher houses and classrooms were built during 1962-1964. As Assistant District Administrator, Vitarelli was the force behind local construction of the new classrooms. Working closely with David, Vitarelli traveled to every one of Palau's fourteen villages to survey school sites, procure land and commitments for labor and local materials. The first AESCP school in the Trust Territory was completed by Kayangel and was named John F. Kennedy Elementary School at the request of High Commissioner Goding. Because of the very reasonable cost of local labor and materials, the Kayangel school was completed at one-third the cost budgeted by the Trust Territory government planners.[110]

With the houses and classrooms complete, a dozen American teachers were recruited and relocated in Palau's rural villages. Considering that they had practically no preparation for the rigors of cross cultural rural living, most of the Americans adjusted well. A few were very unhappy.

---

[109]Numerous Palauan leaders including David Ramarui, Roman Tmetuchl, and Lazarus Salii wrote to the High Commissioner explaining that Vitarelli had nothing to do with the Legislature's resolution. They requested that Vitarelli be allowed to remain in Palau. Goding was unmoved. Vitarelli was forced to leave.

[110]William Vitarelli, written response to writer's draft manuscript, June 28, 1982.

The chad era ngebard (men from the West) brought America to village Palau. This was a revolutionary change. In school, Palauan children entered a new world--the culture of the book. Elsewhere they lived in the culture of the word.

This dichotomy was to widen during the following years as Peace Corps Volunteers (PCVs) in 1967-1970 flooded into Palau to replace contract teachers. The volunteers were generally different in kind from their predecessors. They were younger, idealistic and more enthusiastic. Palauans were particularly pleased that young Americans were struggling to speak the local language. This was an unbelievable change that taught both peoples something extraordinarily important. Assertive and talkative Americans learned to be humble, to be quiet, to listen and learn from Palauans who, in turn, realized they were people deserving of the respect and esteem of the foreigner. This was an enormously important lesson in cross-cultural education by which both peoples were enriched. It had never happened before and for this reason the pages of Didil A Chais often carried messages of thank you and farewell to PCVs departing for home. For example:

> Kent Frey, PCV, who bears the title Ngwald of Ngebuked, Ngaraard, is going home after two years in Palau . . . He was sensitive and responsive to the native way of life, native customs, and Palauan way of thinking. He knew responsibility and obligation to his Palauan family and to Ngaraard municipality . . . of all the PCVs who came to Palau, Kent was the best in Palauan language.[111]

---

[111] Didil A Chais, vol. 1, no. 8, July 1968, p. 11.

The Peace Corps came to Palau about the time David Ramarui left for a four year term (1966-1970) in the Senate of the Congress of Micronesia. While in the Senate he chaired the Congressional Joint Committee on Education that studied Micronesia's schools and issued two reports that are, I believe, excellent commentary on David's perception of the meeting of the culture of the word with the culture of the book.[112]

In addition to the normal concerns of shortage of classrooms, inadequate pay and training for Micronesian teachers, and the education inflation of too many graduates chasing too few jobs, David and his Committee were seriously concerned with what they felt was the propensity on the part of American officials in Saipan and Washington to be guided by the "leave them alone" philosophy. The Committee concluded that education for the Micronesian citizen was being retarded by limited secondary enrollment and emphasis on Teaching English as a Second Language (TESL) method. Between the lines of the 1968 report one senses a disquieting mood: "Trust Territory Government philosophy and policies are limiting our horizons of understanding which, in turn, fosters psychological dependency." This mood was generally absent from the 1969 report which concentrated on solvable problems that the Congress of Micronesia could tackle with appropriate legislation.

Recognizing fully the importance of vocational education and "Micronesianizing" school curricula, David defined in 1979 what might be

---

[112]The first report was issued in July 1968 and the second in August 1969. Assisting David on the Committee were Congress members Luke Tman, Andon Amaraich, Daro Weital, Petrus Tun and Chutomu Nimues. Some Americans working in the Department of Education, Saipan, also assisted the Joint Committee.

termed a control theory of education. This theory has emerged as a response to the "leave them alone" philosophy, educational elitism, and the paradoxes of cross cultural relationships David experienced while growing up during Japanese administration and later as Educational Administrator in Palau; and, then as Director of Education for the Trust Territory.[113]

David's control theory of education is based on the fact of pervasive, even seductive, cultural intrusion. He maintains:

> Constant intrusions by external forces into Micronesia in terms of social, economic, political and military exploitation and their impact upon Micronesia are so significantly great that Micronesians must educate, train, develop, and prepare themselves to be able to cope with the impact of such external forces befalling their lives and to be able to compete with outside intruders if they are to survive and to keep up with the pace and momentum of would-be development and progress.[114]

The historical record shows clearly that islanders are vulnerable to external forces whether they be physical, biological, cultural or psychological. David's control theory of education says that because the foreign culture is so overwhelmingly powerful in its intrusive and change capacities, Micronesians must become fully educated in full cultural context of the foreign culture of the book in order to control or deal with its agents confidently and without being exploited. In addition to the opportunities

---

[113]David chose not to run for a second term in the Congress of Micronesia in November 1970. In 1971 he became the Deputy Director of Education for the Trust Territory and two years later became the first Micronesian Director. He held the position until 1981 when he returned to Palau to become Minister of Social Services in the Cabinet of the President of the Republic of Palau, Haruo Remeliik.

[114]David Ramarui, "Putting Educational Critiques into Perspective," Micronesian Reporter 27, no. 1 (1979), p. 3.

for wealth and prestige advanced schooling often provides, such an education in the foreign culture of the book is a strong drive for the Palauan to acquire as much schooling as possible. Foreign schooling and the related cultural experiences so provided are the only ways to learn the language, cultural complexities and nuances of the intruding system. Knowledge of and appropriate culture behavior in the foreign system have given Palauans the tools for dealing with the agents of the foreign culture on their terms.

Oiterong's Leadership and Acceleration of Change

About the time David Ramarui became Deputy Director of Education, TTPI, Alfonso Oiterong returned to Palau and replaced an American as Palau's District Director of Education.[115] From 1971 until his election first to the Seventh Palau Legislature (in session for the 1980 calendar year) and then to the Vice Presidency of the Republic of Palau (1981-1984), Oiterong put his unique stamp on Palau's school system.

After Alfonso returned from two years of schooling in Hawaii, he worked closely with Vitarelli during the 1952-54 period. The Hawaii experience had been an important one for Oiterong because it helped him develop a philosophy of education--American in many respects--and an understanding of Vitarelli's community-school concept. This is revealed in a thirty-eight

---

[115]After David left for the Congress of Micronesia in 1967, his position was taken by Norman Smith who was followed by Richard Grivell. Victor Hobson replaced Grivell and served as acting District Director of Education until Alfonso Oiterong was hired in 1971. During the period 1963-1971, Oiterong worked first on Guam, where he earned a masters degree in education, and then on Saipan.

page bilingual booklet "Teacher's Guide in Developing Good Citizenship" that Oiterong wrote in 1953. The booklet explained democracy, listed values and attitudes teachers should inculcate, emphasized the community-school concept, stressed the importance of visual aids and offered useful tips on teaching the Palauan and English languages.

As Superintendent of Elementary Schools, Alfonso produced a number of such booklets often with co-workers. With David Ramarui and Toribiong Uchel, Alfonso translated Two Island Boys into Palauan for use as an elementary school language reader. He also prepared a number of English language skits to be used at graduation time. Alfonso seemed to believe that the culture of the word could be expressed through the culture of the book and to this end he prepared numerous booklets on Palauan language teaching, Tekoi er Belau (1956), and legends: Eight Palauan Legends (1957) and The Coconut Crab and the Hermit Crab (1962). These booklets were an important contribution to the school program coming as they did during a period of very limited resources. They were locally printed and illustrated and, thus, were an expression of self-reliance. "Vitarelli and I had the same philosophy--to work hard, to do our own thing and to prepare our own materials."[116] This do-it-yourself, financially careful approach characterized Oiterong's years as district director of education (DDE) even during the years of abundant federal dollars and, thus, made him appear much more educationally conservative than he actually was.

During Alfonso's tenure as Palau's district director of education (DDE) from 1971-1980, U.S. federal support for educational programs expanded

---

[116]Alfonso Oiterong, personal interview. Koror, Palau, January 13, 1981.

enormously. This support began as a trickle in 1966 but throughout the late 1970s expanded to an almost uncontrollable torrent. Most of the initial funding proposals and early extensions were written by Vic Hobson who became amazingly adept at the task. Hobson had known the lean years of the early 1960s and came to see federal programs as an important way to improve the quality and quantity of school materials and activities. "My attitude," he said, "was let's get the money, use it the best way we can and then justify it."[117] Hobson was convinced that students learned more effectively in a pleasant environment rich with materials.

In 1978 Palau received $357,200 in federal dollars for sixteen different programs ranging from cultural awareness to agriculture to old age to food services.[118] The amount more than doubled for fiscal year 1979 to $841,300 and expanded to over one million dollars for fiscal 1980.

Alfonso tended to remain aloof from the details and problems of federal programs as if uncertain of their value and cultural impact. The program coordinators also developed ambivalent feelings concerning the impact the endless source of dollars was having on Palauan values and psychology. As one program coordinator put it:

> Most of us see federal programs as a game which says if you follow the rules and regulations you can get the money and then use it as you choose. We don't work hard to get the money and then we spend it wildly without careful planning. Some coordinators

---

[117] Victor Hobson, personal interview, Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, October 15, 1980.

[118] See Appendix A for a detailed list of the sixteen federally supported projects and funding levels, 1978-1980.

> manipulate the money to support valuable programs while others use it for their own benefit. In either case it's money we didn't work for. In this way federal support is more a curse than a blessing.[119]

Everyone in the Department of Education realizes that federal programs are designed to enhance and enrich already established on-going programs. But just the opposite seems to be happening. The federal program becomes the program and whatever on-going program that existed previously fades away.[120]

Those coordinators in the skill areas of vocational education believe, like President Remeliik, that federal funds can, in some mysterious way, help Palau achieve a measure of economic self-reliance. The Palauan President stated, "We will have to use dependency to achieve self-sufficiency. This may sound strange but this is what we can and must do."[121] Yet at the same time the coordinators recognize that federal support is presently creating more educational and economic dependency than self-reliance. However, the coordinators cling like drowing men to the idea that if the programs were well planned, reinforced the right values and attitudes, and involved able, motivated people, self-reliance would be an achievable goal. This is a curious and comfortable logic which justifies the federal "game"

---

[119] Romana Anastasio, Coordinator of Language Programs, personal interview, Koror, Palau, February 26, 1981.

[120] Leo Ruluked, Principal Palau High School, personal interview, Koror, Palau, February 26, 1981.

[121] "Interview: President Haruo Remeliik, Republic of Belau," The New Pacific Magazine, July-August 1981, p. 67. (This interview was conducted by Donald R. Shuster on March 1, 1981).

no matter how badly played. As one coordinator cynically put it, "Right now we're just playing with money and I'm part of it."

Federal programs are a creation of the culture of the book and were designed to assist the disadvantaged and poor segments of American society. Although these programs are Palauanized in the sense of being administered by Palauans and in some cases designed to specifically reinforce traditional Palauan values, they increase economic dependency, provide an opportunity for petty corruption and fragment Palauan society into pockets of social function defined by Washington, D.C. bureaucrats. To this extent the writer believes that federal programs tend to erode the cohesive power of the culture of the word.

The explosion in the number of Palauan high school graduates going off to U.S. colleges coincided with the ever larger inflow of federal dollars. Both increased together. Ever since Lebu left with Captain Wilson for England in 1783, Palauans have greatly valued the "education" that comes from travel and formal schooling in a foreign culture. As David Ramarui has pointed out, foreign schooling reduces personal and cultural vulnerabilities. It also confers a degree of prestige and economic security. The desire for these serves as a powerful drive in the Palauan to seek higher education. Some parents pressure their youngsters to go on to school without understanding the difficulty students have of choosing an appropriate field of study or meeting escalating college costs. As one Palauan educator said, "Parents don't care what their kids study they just want them to go outside of Palau where they can learn many things. Parents tell their kids, 'If you stay, you'll be just like us.'"[122]

---

[122]Anonymous Palauan informant, personal interview, Koror, Palau, February 27, 1981.

These social forces are enormous. Over 75 percent of Palau's high school graduates leave each year to pursue college careers, often abbreviated. Department of Education figures for 1980 showed that 528 students were then overseas. The true figure is no doubt larger since few students are graduating proportional to the numbers overseas.[123] College drop-outs are finding ways to remain in the U.S. They form little communities and work in restaurants, gas stations and at other unskilled jobs. It is a disgrace to come home with no degree in hand. These students therefore live as self-imposed exiles, but generally enjoying themselves. Those students who do return with a degree are finding re-adjustment difficult. They have imbibed many of the values and sensitivities of the foreign culture. Two different value systems abutt one another. The culture of the word expects youth to be quiet, to know its place, to respect elders, to be satisfied with a subordinate role and to accept Palau as it is. The new college returnees often act just the opposite, thus violating expectations and creating social tensions. They gradually adjust or leave. Most Palauans who are concerned with this problem have concluded that some type of re-integration program is needed. "How can we ensure the continuation of a Palauan way of life in the modern world given so many foreign and changing influences on our youth?"[124]

This dilemma troubled Alfonso Oiterong. It was as if an educational nightmare had come home to haunt him. Throughout the 1950s and 60s Palauan

---

[123]The Education Department's figures on Palauan college students form a pyramid: 242 freshmen, 142 sophomores, 68 juniors, 32 seniors and 37 graduate students.

[124]"Palau Country Paper" presented at the 21st Annual Meeting of the Seminar of South Pacific Women, Tahiti, French Polynesia by the Palau Delegation, July 1981, p. 4.

college graduates were welcomed home to government jobs and adjusted well. Suddenly it seemed the situation turned sour. There were few jobs to be had, people were resentful of unorthodox behavior, boasts about one's degree, and outspokenness of the college returnees. In 1978 the Sixth Palau Legislature attempted to halt the outflow of high school graduates but failed. Critics maintained that the schools did not educate for the market. Alfonso rightly retorted, "Where's the market?"

A Palauan School for Palauans: The *Modekngei* School

In 1974 when the problems of sociocultural change were clearly evident, the Modekngei and William Vitarelli launched an interesting educational experiment which they hoped would break the momentum leading toward greater social disorganization and political-economic dependence. The social tone that encouraged this new departure had to a great extent been set by an older group of college returnees imbued with a vision of a better Palau.

The early 1970s was a time of nationalist fervor and educational idealism in Palau. Francisco and Moses Uludong imported the basics of American style student protest they had learned as college students in Hawaii. At Palau High School a small group of Marxist-Maoists became disproportionally influential. They taught socialism in their classes, demanded that three Americans in the school's administration return to the classroom, and pushed for a restructuring of the curriculum around self-sufficiency projects in fishing, agriculture and construction trades. Moses Uludong, Anghenio Olkeriil, Tony Bells and their colleagues actively

advocated this type of educational change.[125] The Tia Belaud party platform called for a "relevant education," which meant one oriented toward learning activities that would promote self-reliance and self-sufficiency.[126]

This group of "radicals" also organized anti-U.S. military marches and demonstrations in 1972 and 1973 (see Chapter Six). This very un-Palauan behavior caught everyone's attention. Passionate talk of economic self-sufficiency, capitalist exploitation, socialism and political independence was very much in the air. That aspect of Palauan culture which emphasizes cooperation, sharing and community was attempting to forge a renewed sense of Palauan identity.

This Zeitgeist apparently influenced the Modekngei rubaks (respected leading elder men) who, at meetings on Saipan and Guam in 1972, declared boldly in a unanimous voice that Palau should opt for political independence and that the Modekngei should establish its own school.[127] When this decision was made public in mid 1972, all the Modekngei youth attended Palau High School and the rubaks were alarmed with what they perceived as the corrupting influences of Koror-town life. Ironically, one of those influences was just the same political activism and nationalism which apparently stimulated the rubaks to make their unprecedented decision. The rubaks felt that students at a rural school which emphasized Modekngei

---

[125] Some of the others included Bill and Bernie Keldermans, Griff Nelson, and a Peace Corps Volunteer couple assigned to Palau High School.

[126] Tia Belau, vol. 1, no. 7, December 14, 1972, p. 17.

[127] Tia Belau, vol. 1, no. 3, August 1, 1972, p. 3.

religious values and Palauan traditions would produce more disciplined young adults and a more orderly Palau.[128]

At this same time William Vitarelli was a vice president for research at the University of Guam. He convinced the officials there that a community school oriented toward self-sufficiency and located on Babeldaob would be an excellent research project. Vitarelli remembered the great educational successes he had stimulated in Palau in the early 1950s when U.S. government policy of necessity advocated self-sufficiency. Since that time he had become ecologically minded and was convinced that economic self-sufficiency was a fundamental prerequisite to political independence. He had proved the viability of small scale self-sufficiency projects through his Koror Print Shop and Ngersuul Pottery, both of which started with seed money from the Janss Foundation of California. Vitarelli fully recognized that the course of events since the big budgets of the Kennedy Administration and its successors was leading Palau to greater and greater economic dependency which, he believed, was destroying a people and culture he loved very much.

---

[128]Religious schools began in Palau about the time the public intermediate school was started in 1948. Pastor Fey began his Emmaus Boys Training Home in that year and Father McManus started Mindszenty School in 1949 on the conviction that a native clergy could come only from Catholic schools. In an undated "Report on Palau," Father McManus wrote, "There are Palauan boys and girls anxious to become priests and nuns, but they're not yet ready for seminar and novitiate." Both Emmaus and Mindszenty began as intermediate level (grades 7, 8, 9) schools. The Seventh-Day Adventists began their school program in 1953 and two years later the Lutherans launched a companion school to Emmaus: Bethania Girls School in Ngaraard. It soon became a high school. All the intermediate programs developed into high schools in the early 1960s as the demand for further schooling in Palau gained momentum. By the 1970s it was clear that the only religious group without its own high school was the Modekngei. They were determined to catch up so as not to appear as backward or unsophisticated in the "modern" ways.

It was this passion and vision which Vitarelli again brought to Palau, this time joining forces with the Modekngei. They wanted a school like the other religions, the foreign religions, had; Vitarelli wanted to assist Palauans in learning that they could achieve a high degree of ecologically balanced self-sufficiency through a project oriented curriculum of a learning center. Two powerful forces had come together. With $50,000 seed money from the School of the Pacific Islands (Janss Foundation grant) which Vitarelli had arranged for and Modekngei in-kind labor of twice that amount, a school campus was started in a fantastic burst of religious enthusiasm.[129]

Ground was broken in the Ibobang area of Ngatpang Municipality on January 12, 1974 and in nine months of intense and devoted labor an impressive 90 acre campus was completed.[130] Vitarelli, an architect and craftsman himself, was in his element and things went smoothly during this initial stage. Palauans love to build things so the two energies complemented and reinforced one another. They triumphed together in the creation of a beautiful school campus.

---

[129] Edwin Janss was apparently so impressed by the idealistic force of the project that he wanted to give a half million dollars to begin the school. Vitarelli refused because he felt it was simply too much. "Such an amount would have killed the idea, so we agreed on a $50,000 seed." (William Vitarelli, personal interview via telephone, April 15, 1982).

[130] Indicative of the tension of human forces that often characterize Palauan culture, John O. Ngiraked a Progressive Party leader, attempted to halt the building project by contesting ownership of the school's land. The case generated great interest in Palau and was finally resolved when Emesiochel, a Modekngei elder and traditional land "owner," withdrew his claim. The Ngatpang Municipal Council then agreed to grant the land and signed a lease with the School of the Pacific. The Modekngei were assisted in this case by Johnson Toribiong, a lawyer and nephew of Roman Tmetuchl (Tia Belau, vol. 2, no. 8, July 1974, p. 18). Thus, the Modekngei school began and today remains intwined in Palauan politics.

During this triumph Vitarelli compromised with the rubaks on the design and materials of the main school building giving in to a more western form. At the grand opening of the school in October 1974, the Modekngei leaders and numerous local dignitaries gave long and impressive speeches. Not to steal the limelight and almost as an after thought, Vitarelli gave a very short and quiet speech. He praised and thanked the teachers and parents who had worked so very hard and then he told the visitors, "You watch us, watch what we're doing."

In his mind Vitarelli had a clear and strongly held conception of a project-centered community school similar to what he had seen flourish in Palau in the early 1950s. He believed that a project-oriented learning center, as he conceived the school to be, would not only surpass traditional academics in terms of educational philosophy and learning psychology but could, with the hard work and dedication of the Modekngei, achieve economic self-sufficiency as well. Vitarelli held tight reigns on the school budget--something the Board of Advisors later resented--and planned to reduce Janss Foundation support 10 percent per year for ten years (1974-1984) until the school was fully self-supporting. He envisioned a number of learning centers scattered throughout Palau which, when fully functioning, would provide Palau an economic base for eventual political independence. This was Vitarelli's vision, one he clung to tenaciously. It was a basic political-economic ideology not deeply shared by very many Modekngei and which in its execution, became Vitarelli's undoing.

Vitarelli left the Palau Modekngei School in 1976 for reasons to be discussed later. Between that time and April 1982, the school had six principals--Kodep Klouechad, Yoichi Rengiil, Otobed, Harry Klouechad,

Browny Salvador and Valentino Emesiochel--and a reorientation away from Vitarelli's project-centered curriculum to a three day per week (MWF) in-class academic program with a two day per week (TTh) work-project arrangement.

This drift away from Vitarelli's model was inevitable. The political idealism of the early 1970s had dissipated and the religious enthusiasm had waned as well. The school was built and functioning. Palauans could rest. Furthermore, most teachers at the school did not understand how knowledge could possibly flow from work activities. The other religions in Palau had good academic schools, whose graduates did well in U.S. colleges. The Modekngei wanted a good academic school, not a collection of money making work activities no matter how innovative they might be. As noted by Ostrowski in an evaluation report:

> Apparently the students and Board of Advisors (rubaks) want something that "looks" more like schooling, feeling that academic classes as presently constituted are not sufficient, and that too much time is spent "working" rather than "schooling."[131]

The Modekngei parents had the Japanese model of school in their minds. This is what they experienced and understood. They wanted their students to be smart and do well in college like the graduates from the other religious schools. They did not want to be perceived by others in Palau as backward looking or unsophisticated. A good school would give them a good image and provide their youth with a sense of Palauan order and discipline.

---

[131] Bernard Ostrowski, "The Belau Modekngei Learning Center," first Evaluation Report, April 1975, p. III-2. Located in the Pacific Collection, Hamilton Library, University of Hawaii, Honolulu.

There was unusually strong resistance to Vitarelli's idea of a project-oriented curriculum--of gaining knowledge in the context of real life problems (John Dewey come to Palau). This resistance is best interpreted in terms of how Palauans relate to the world and conceptualize knowledge. Palauans generally do not analyze or theorize about everyday events. Watching a group of visiting Japanese listen attentively hour after hour to speeches about Palau's culture, economy and politics, Moses Ramarui was amazed by the intellectual discipline displayed by the visitors. "We Palauans don't do that. We talk seriously for a little while, then we bull-shit for hours." In the pre-Modekngei Palauan religion, a class of specialists existed which mediated between other-worldly forces and men, thereby providing practical means for dealing with the underlying uncertainties of daily living. Palauans, like most people, relate to the world practically--what should be done about this or that problem. To speculate on theoretical problems, problems that concern the nature of some item in the world, is not the Palauan way. Therefore, the Palauan teachers just could not conceptualize how knowledge could flow out of practical problems. Furthermore, that is not how they gained knowledge. Knowledge came out of books, it was a possession of the culture of the book, of the school. According to Ostrowski:

> Students apparently studied basic arithmetic facts in the classroom but "left them there" when they went to "work" on the projects, i.e., they were not encouraged to "reflect" on cubic yards of dirt they were depositing at the land fill near the dock; they were not encouraged to "reflect on the possibility of using mathematics to determine how long it should take to finish the job.[132]

---

[132] Ibid., p. III-9.

Browny Salvadore, a teacher at the school since its beginning, expressed the difference in the way knowledge was conceived by Vitarelli on the one side and the Palauan teachers on the other by means of a beautiful metaphor. "It's as if Vitarelli wants to get to some far away place . . . he gets there . . . and sends us back a message telling us to 'come along' . . . but he doesn't tell us how."[133]

Salvadore left the Palau Modekngei School after the 1979-80 school year. Taurengel Otobed, a highly respected rubak, replaced Salvadore as principal for the next school year. Otobed became ill during that year and was replaced by Valentino Emesiochl for the remainder of that year and the next (1981-82).

Ever since Vitarelli left the Modekngei School in 1976, communications between the Palauan Board of Advisors and the Board of Trustees in California had not been good, despite the employment by the Trustees of a few Americans who were sometimes seen as "spies" by the Palauan school leaders. The Trustees grant some $100,000-125,000 yearly to the school through the School of the Pacific Islands foundation. Concerned about unsolicited reports that the school was being badly run, three of the California Trustees paid a surprise visit to the campus in early February 1982. Their trip report showed clearly that the school was out of control. Academics were listless, self-sufficiency projects were practically defunct, the campus was dirty and in disrepair, morale was low and there were signs of paranoia among the three American staff. Further, enrollment fell from

---

[133] Ostrowski, "The Belau Modekngei Learning Center," second Evaluation Report, April 1976, p. IV-25.

200 to 60, and there was lack of consensus on school goals and direction.[134] Moreover, the school was rife with political maneuvering and cliques. The American vice-principal claimed that the school had been taken over by a powerful family that resided in the nearby village and had nine of its members on the school staff.

Perhaps the best way to understand the Modekngei village-school situation is to think of it as a variation of a cargo cult realized.[135] The Modekngei residing in the village adjacent to the school seem to believe that they have come into control of a large, important and prestige-giving resource (the yearly Janss grant). It is as if this resource has fallen from the gods. It therefore must be protected at all costs. Anyone who challenges the correctness of the present order will be driven away. Trustees from California will be treated with great respect because they mediate in some mysterious way the flow of abundant "cargo." The Trustees' suggestion in early 1982 that an American be appointed as executive director (principal), no doubt, was an embarrassment to those controlling the school. The Modekngei leadership accepted it in order to insure the continual flow of "cargo."[136]

---

[134]Stephen Davenport, "Report of the Visit to Belau Modekngei School - February 1-5, 1982 by Lawrence Janss, Joseph Leggett and Stephen Davenport," p. 1. Located in the writer's private collection.

[135]Cargo cults are religiopolitical movements that sprouted up in the islands of Melanesia touched by the Pacific War. At that time tremendous outflows of war material suddenly appeared and disappeared. Such cults have therefore been characterized by the messianic expectation of the return of ancestors in ships or planes carrying cargoes of products of modern civilization that will suffice for all the native needs, render work unnecessary and free the islanders from white control.

[136]The Trustees' suggestion was made more acceptable to the Modekngei leaders when the Palauan trustee, Otoichi Besebes, proposed that a training

The Modekngei School is basically a western institution, inherently the culture of the book, and the present powers-that-be have failed miserably in its administration. This is a tragedy because the Modekngei have made such great efforts since American administration began to reverse the prevalent image non-Modekngei have of them as backward looking and unreasonably tied to custom (Chapter Four, pp. 129-434). The very act of beginning their own school and accepting western style vocational education is an attempt at secular syncretism, of combining traditional values with the new "education" to create both a more satisfying culture and an image of being "modern."

Another tragedy, an earlier one, was the vote of no-confidence Vitarelli received in late 1975 from the Modekngei rubaks. Any American schoolman who takes over as executive director of the school must understand why this happened.

Sometime in late 1975 prior to a two month absence from the school, Vitarelli met with the Modekngei leaders to discuss school goals and direction. This was one of many meetings at which Vitarelli tried to persuade the rubaks of the wisdom of a project-centered curriculum, economic self-sufficiency and their relation to political independence. Otoichi Besebes, a Palauan member of the Board of Trustees, served as translator. He recalled recently that during an intense exchange Vitarelli went up to the

---

program be set up called the Executive Director Training Program. The purpose of the program would be for an experienced American schoolman to revitalize the entire school operation and train a Palauan to run it competently. This was a masterful compromise as it met the basic needs of both sides and embarrassed no one any further. The "cargo" would continue to flow.

chalkboard, drew a motor boat and said, "I am the driver, I am the leader."[137] The rubaks, deeply religious men, interpreted this statement in religious terms. Vitarelli, it suddenly seemed to them, was trying to usurp Wasisang's position. The term "leader" for the Modekngei rubaks meant something far different than it meant for Vitarelli. Otoichi said that the moment Vitarelli claimed to be leader the rubaks reacted immediately in a negative way. "They suddenly resented him. I didn't know what to do. I was caught between these two powerful forces."[138]

Vitarelli, like Otoichi Besebes, recently recalled the events of this meeting. In correspondence with the writer he gave a contrasting interpretation of his chalkboard drawing and related comments. He said that he went to the chalkboard and drew

> a distant goal that the rubaks and I had agreed upon; a goal of economic independence and eventual political independence. I showed that to reach that goal we would have to go through troubled waters and that if we continued to be dependent on Janss money or government money, we would be taking the easy route that did not lead through troubled waters to our goal.[139]

Vitarelli recalled saying to the rubaks that he was an educational navigator who could "help guide them through troubled waters via more hard work."[140]

---

[137] Otoichi Besebes, personal interview, Los Angeles, California, April 19, 1982.

[138] Ibid.

[139] William V. Vitarelli, written response to writer's draft manuscript, June 28, 1982.

[140] Ibid.

It is clear from these reports nearly seven years after the fact that a tragedy of cross cultural mis-interpretation had taken place. Vitarelli was in no way claiming to be the Modekngei leader in place of Wasisang. Vitarelli was a leader of educational ideas, of ways toward self-sufficiency through the school, of ways to mobilize people and resources to produce wealth in and for Palau. This is what he meant, but his words were interpreted, as they had to be given the audience, in religious terms. Further, Vitarelli insisted at the same meeting that the rubaks uphold an earlier agreement that the school accept ten percent less money each year from the Janss foundation until the school was self-sufficient in ten or twelve years time. The rubaks, however, perceived the Janss money in two ways. First, it came mysteriously as if from the gods, and second, it gave the Modekngei leaders an aura of power, prestige and wealth. After all, the "gods" in California were millionaires.

As pointed out in the previous chapter, Modekngei began as a revitalization movement in response to foreign cultural pressure. In Palau the past is present and so for the rubaks Vitarelli suddenly became a new oppressor, a threat to newly discovered and godly ordained Modekngei power. The logic of the situation meant that Vitarelli had to be resisted and expelled. Paradoxically, this had to be done in a friendly, even cordial, way so as not to reveal the underlying motive of the desire to keep the cargo coming.

This attitude was clear in all the relationships between Vitarelli and the Modekngei leaders that followed this fateful meeting. Vitarelli was indirectly accused of misusing $5,000 earned from the successful Dance Festival. In a meeting in early 1976, his educational philosophy of

project-centered curriculum and self-sufficiency was completely rejected.

Vitarelli: It's obvious that what I've tried to do is not acceptable . . . I think it's fruitless to continue. I don't think I can be of help anymore . . . I think the Modekngei have done a miracle here . . . I have some feeling of accomplishment . . . I think the school can survive and will be a good one . . . but not the kind I had in mind . . . but I want to continue my efforts in a different way than the Board wants to do . . . I'm taking the option to leave and try again some other place . . . If the Board wants me to stay to help finish the tank, the craft shop, etc. OK . . . but I'm not giving any more advice . . . because it's not being accepted . . . I would advise the Board to draw up a new proposal to submit to Janss for funding for next year . . . I leave with a feeling of accomplishment . . . but not complete . . . There's lots to do in Palau . . . I'll put my effort where I think it's acceptable . . .[141]

Yoichi Rengiil: There wasn't any compromise . . . They want 50 percent academics and you want 20 percent . . . The Board is expressing Modekngei and Palauan values and perspectives . . .

Vitarelli: I know . . . that's why I'm quitting . . . because I can't go along with that . . . I think it's (i.e. moving away from self-sufficiency and toward "formal" academics) wrong. I may be wrong . . . but I can't function and be effective moving in that direction.

Rubak Emesiochel: You're steering us away from being Palauan . . .

---

[141] Ostrowski, "The Belau Modekngei Learning Center," second Evaluation Report, April 1976, p. IV-18. Ostrowski, who did four evaluations of the Modekngei School covering the years 1974-1978, took notes at this meeting when Vitarelli resigned. His second report contains four and a half pages (IV-14 to IV-18) of partial transcript from which the five statements quoted above come. This transcript shows clearly that throughout the meeting Vitarelli's ideas were totally rejected. The rubaks had decided that it was time for Vitarelli to leave.

Vitarelli: No . . . You are steering away from being Palauan . . . everything you suggest is the American way, e.g. grades, government jobs, etc. . .

This was the end of a vision. Palauan attraction to the culture of the book, California cargo and the trappings of "modernism" overwhelmed Vitarelli's call for doing things in what he believed was the Palauan way. The Modekngei leaders had become captivated by the possibility of a cargo cult come true. Vitarelli retired to Maui, Hawaii and developed his own self-sufficient extended family "village" unencumbered by the clash of cultural meanings. He left in his wake an indelible and creative mark on Palau that will not soon be forgotten.

Summary and Analysis

Summary

In this chapter the writer has showed how the foreign culture of "the book"--the school--has largely displaced traditional Palauan education of "the word." Spanish and German missionaries were Palau's first teachers and it was mainly meteet children who attended these early catechist schools.

Although the Germans had a small school to train Palauan policemen, wide scale secular education began under Japanese administration. With large numbers of Japanese immigrant children coming into Palau, schools were segregated. Those for the islander emphasized Japanese language and ethics and aimed at civilizing what the Japanese considered a backward people. The sixty or so Palauans who attended the prestigious government sponsored carpentry school gained entry into the Japanese economy. With

this came greater power, prestige and wealth than was available in the indigenous cultural system.

Palauans learned unintended lessons about the politics of forced expansion during the Pacific War period. They visited the grand jinja, marched in war victory parades, worked on military projects and underwent guerrilla training. This was education in the broad meaning of the term, namely: the transmission of culture across cultural boundaries.

Except for the small American Dependents' School (later the English Speaking School), elementary schooling under American administration was, in contrast to the Japanese period, universal and unsegregated. William Vitarelli, Palau's first civilian Director of Education, brought an energy and vision that created a highly successful community school system for a brief period 1950-1954. The sociopolitical circumstances were ripe for this effort. Economic self-sufficiency was a U.S. government policy and Palauans willingly worked and contributed their efforts to building a largely self-supporting school system.

At this time nearly all teachers were Palauans, most of whom had come up through the Japanese system. From 1962 on, educational leadership was mainly in Palauan hands, those of David Ramarui and Alfonso Oiterong. During the tenure of these two men, both the society and school in Palau experienced wide scale change. The school system was expanded through the construction of additional classrooms and development of a high school program. Americans brought the culture of the book to village Palau first as government employees and later as Peace Corps Volunteers. Beginning in the 1970s, U.S. Federal funds were welcomed in Palau and used to create a host of educational programs which have increased economic dependency and

tended to fragment Palauan society. Throughout the 1970s and into the 80s, increasingly larger numbers of Palauan high school graduates found their way to U.S. colleges and a deeper immersion into American culture with all its attendant fascinations. All of these changes involved the transmission of American cultural meanings to the Palauan setting.

With the assistance of William Vitarelli and the Janss Foundation, the Modekngei began their own rural high school in the mid-1970s. The original inspiration was to create an island of economic and cultural self-sufficiency where teachers and elders could perpetuate Palauan values and traditions. This vision, like all other things in Palau, underwent change in response to cultural influence both from within and without.

Analysis

Although the foreign culture of the book--the school--has displaced Palauan education of "the word," the transplant is in several ways superficial. Palauans are not avid readers nor are they comfortable writing. Palau does not yet have a bookstore nor a newspaper; the spoken word predominates as the main means of communication. This is a source of strength, a stabilizer amid turbulent times because embedded in language are the shared experiences, meanings and thought patterns that form the unconscious substructure of culture, particularly an oral culture.

Unlike the unenthusiastic response to the island of church meaning, Palauans have eagerly placed their beach of "we" around the foreign island of school. They have done this for two pragmatic reasons. First, both the Japanese and American school, but particularly the latter, have provided Palauans an avenue to greater power, prestige and wealth in the form

of respected title and sizable paycheck of a civil servant. Second, the school has been the only way for Palauans to learn the language and cultural subtleties of the foreigner, thereby reducing Palauan vulnerability to foreign cultural exploitation. The school has, indeed, been an educator. During the American period, Palauans have learned to confront, to speak out, to debate, and to challenge the stranger on his own cultural turf. This has been fundamental in overcoming a deep sense of inferiority implanted during the Japanese period.[142] This assertive tendency was displayed eloquently at the most recent session of the South Pacific Women's Seminar held in Tahiti in July 1981. Palauan women were warmly complimented for their sharp ideas and spoken tenacity to principle by many Melanesian and Polynesian women. "We were really surprised at the timidity of Pacific women who have lived under English and French colonial rule. I really value my American education now because I learned to speak out and defend my ideas."[143] This freedom of speech is an American historical-cultural trait and Palauans have learned well their lessons in cross cultural education.

For Palauans the intruding culture whether Spanish, German, Japanese or American has generally been perceived as advanced, modern, even better. Because learning the foreign culture through the school opened new opportunities for power, prestige and wealth, it won out over the indigenous

---

[142] Concerning this sense of inferiority, I quote Barnett, "To some extent all foreigners have contributed to Palauan debasement, but the Japanese were the most explicit and systematic in reinforcing it. They taught school children that they were congenitally inferior to the Japanese and could never hope to match them in spirit or intelligence." Barnett, Being a Palauan, p. 16.

[143] Emy Kohama, personal interview, Koror, Palau, July 20, 1981.

culture of the word which was often ignored as irrelevant, pre-modern, restricting. However, as pointed out earlier, Palau is still very much an oral culture. This co-existence of the new and the old displays an underlying principle of tension between given and constructed, between structure and person.

Thus, even among the strongly traditional Modekngei, we witness a great thirst for formal schooling. Today in Palau the elderly are still socially powerful, particularly in the rural areas. Yet, in the case of the Modekngei, it appears they have been willing to attempt a synthesis of traditional values of the culture of the word with the new education of "the book." Innis tells us that the Greeks tried a similar synthesis and succeeded until the growth of writing and individualism destroyed their culture in the latter part of the fifth century A.D.[144] It seems Palauans presently resist writing but not individualism. However, the fact that both David Ramarui and Alfonso Oiterong, Palau's two great contemporary educational leaders, combine in their persons writing skills in the culture of the book with concern for community and sophistication in the culture of the word suggests that Palau need not follow the Greek example.

The next chapter of this study will examine the extent to which Palauans have placed their beach of "we" around the foreign island of elected government as an educator and the implications this has had in the process of sociocultural change.

---

[144] Harold Innis, The Bias of Communication (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1964), p. 136.

CHAPTER VI

VOICE AND VOTE: THE NEW ISLAND OF ELECTED GOVERNMENT

> We in Palau don't do our own thing. Even boys talk politics but they don't produce anything. They have no business, no house, and therefore no social substance. Who are they!?
>
> Roman Tmetuchl
> Koror, Palau, February 27, 1981

The Post War Period

Introduction

Palauans have experienced the yoke of four different colonial powers during the past century.[1] This has left its mark on the evolution of Palauan political structures, but at no time has that mark been more emphatic than during American rule.

After the Pacific War, U.S. Navy officials introduced a new island of meaning to Palau, that of elected government. This chapter will describe how and why Palauans have placed their beach of "we" around that new island. The chapter will also document the educative influence of four

---

[1] Spanish colonial rule began nominally in 1885 followed by the Germans in 1899. The Japanese Navy expelled German colonists at the beginning of World War I only to lose their vast Micronesian holdings to the Americans during the Pacific War, 1941-1945. After some ninety years of colonial rule, Palau began semi-self government on January 1, 1981 under a constitution written nearly two years earlier.

legislative bodies beginning in 1947 with the advisory Palau Congress (1947-1955) and ending in 1980 with the election of Palau's first constitutionally defined executive and legislative branches of government.

During the late 1950s and into the 1960s, elected Palauan officials gained progressively more authority in their home affairs. In 1955 the Palau Congress re-wrote its charter to form the Olbiil Era Kelulau Era Belau (literally, Palau's congress of whispered decisions). In 1963 two very significant events took place: the Palau Legislature was formed to replace the OEKEB and two political parties were formed. These developments deepened the schism between traditional and elected authority, between structure and person, and provided a significantly wider arena in which Palau's first generation of elected leaders could cut their political "teeth." A decade later, a second generation of potential leaders emerged. Beginning in the mid-1970s, these two groups vied for political pre-eminence and in the process functioned as political educators both for themselves and the wider Palau society.

In the early 1970s, Roman Tmetuchl emerged as Palau's dominant political leader and it was in response to his politics that events turned in Palau. Tmetuchl, through word and deed, functioned as a political educator. He learned important lessons himself and his detractors gained greater political sophistication over the years in mounting opposition to his initiatives. This heightened political competition culminated in the writing of a national constitution in 1979 that established a presidential form of government, which was elected to office in November. These two events in many ways were educative events. They are examined in their ethnohistorical context in the final sections of this chapter.

The table on page 238 lists Palau's four legislative bodies mentioned above, their structure and legal authority.

Traditional Government and Change

One of Palau's most important but nearly forgotten legends explains that Palauan political theory and structure came from the snake god Mesaod Ngerel. Known as the "Mouth That Explains," Mesaod Ngerel traveled throughout Palau during antiquity teaching kelulau, the nature of politics, and kebliil, the nature of clan.[2]

Accordingly, the autonomous villages and village-complexes of Palau were ruled by a village council (klobak) generally composed of ten clan leaders. These clans were ranked hierarchically based on an affinity to the founding clans of ancient days. The leading elder of the highest clan served as village chief. He ruled through persuasion and consensus rather than force and dictation because there were numerous checks on his authority, the two most important being the second ranking chief with his faction and village religious authorities. In their attempts to manipulate the chiefs, these priests of the local gods were especially troublesome to both German and Japanese administrators.[3] Although overt political leadership was men's business, Palauan women exerted behind-the scenes influence on decisions that affected land, title, and Palauan money (and now American money as well).

---

[2]Robert K. McKnight, "The Mouth That Explains: Mesaod Ngerel An Allegory in Palauan Political Lore," Koror, Palau: Palau Museum Publication No. 2, 1961.

[3]Vidich, "Political Factionalism in Palau," p. 60.

TABLE 3

PALAU'S FOUR LEGISLATIVE BODIES

MEMBERSHIP	PALAU CONGRESS (1947-1955)	OLBIIL ERA KEKULAU / ERA BELAU (1955-1963)	PALAU LEGISLATURE (1963-1980)	OLBIIL ERA KEKULAU 1981-
Palau paramount chiefs, Ibedul and Reklai	No	Yes	Yes	No
Fourteen highest ranking village chiefs	No	Yes	Yes	No
Sixteen elected magistrates	Yes	Yes	No	No
Elected Members	Yes (31)	Yes (37)	Yes (28)	Yes (34)
Advisory-liaison body	Palau Administrative Council of 14 Members	Tebechelel Olbiil of 14-20 advisors	None	None
Legal authority	Purely advisory to Civil Administrator	- power of resolution - power to receive and administer property - power to levy taxes and disburse funds	- power to write bills and resolutions - power to override veto of district administrator to high commissioner - power to conduct investigations	Twenty-one specific powers as outlined in the Constitution of the Republic of Palau, Article IX, Section 5.

Since both Spanish (1891-1899) and German (1899-1914) rules were relatively short and characterized by few colonists, traditional political structures were not extensively modified by culture contact. However, during Japanese rule (1914-1944) the indigenous political system was either used via direct rule or modified--with the aid of a collaborationist Palauan faction--to suit the ambitious political and economic goals of the foreigner. Even today older Palauans joke in a half satirical way about the periodic yes-conferences held for top-ranking chiefs to rubber stamp various Japanese programs of social change. Nevertheless, the chiefs were important functionaries, so much so that "the Japanese administration was keenly interested in who was who and who did what among hereditary leaders."[4]

Although Japanese political authority (in contrast to force) broke down during the fifteen months of war between Japanese and American forces in Palau, an alliance between hereditary chiefs and Modekngei religious leaders provided social and psychological stability during a confused and dark period. Vidich claims that local control in the various districts became the rule and that Modekngei leaders assumed a central role in directing Palau through the war crisis.[5] This is a clear example of the resurgence of indigenous political authority colored though it was by the dominance of Modekngei religious leadership (see pages 70-79 above).

---

[4]Robert K. McKnight, "Rigid Models and Ridiculous Boundaries: Political Development and Practice in Palau, circa 1955-1964" in Political Development in Micronesia, eds. Daniel T. Hughes and Sherwood G. Lingenfelter (Columbus, Ohio: Ohio State University Press, 1974), p. 43.

[5]Vidich, "Political Factionalism in Palau," p. 92.

U.S. Navy Plans

Toward the end of the Pacific war, American naval authorities prepared five comprehensive plans for civil administration of the several groups of Pacific islands taken in conquest. Two days after Japan's surrender a "Proposed Plan for Civil Government by the Navy of Certain Pacific Islands Areas Under United States Control" was completed.[6] Given considerations of military security, the political objectives of this plan called for:

1. The adaptation of introduced government to the life and needs of the islanders.
2. The incorporation and maximum use of indigenous institutions into introduced government.
3. The preparation of islanders for self-government by filling governmental positions with islanders whenever possible.
4. The execution of government on a cooperative and consultative basis at all times.

and finally and most curiously,

5. The eventual granting of United States citizenship should be considered when these peoples are capable of assuming such responsibilities.[7]

These objectives--excluding number 5--defined a policy for the evolution of self-government, as conceived by naval authorities, within a framework of native institutions. This policy was more fully elaborated in Admiral Spruance's directive of December 12, 1945. Known as the

---

[6]Richard, United States Naval Administration, 2:74.

[7]Ibid.

"Pacific Charter," this statement assumed a period of direct military government during which the islanders would "be granted the highest degree of self-government that they are capable of assimilating"[8] and that "local governments . . . should be patterned on the politico-social institutions which the inhabitants had evolved for themselves."[9]

In response to such an underlying political philosophy and unaware of its deep cross-cultural complexities, U.S. Naval military rulers in Palau turned to the traditional chiefs for leadership and legitimizing authority. This move rejuvenated indigenous authority which had little power or influence during Japanese rule. This change temporarily undercut the political base of the former collaborationist group which had so successfully mediated between the indigenous and Japanese systems. The change also stimulated the emergence of a very small group of radicals led by Ronald Sakuma, who had spent the years 1939-1946 at a Seventh-Day Adventist college in Japan.[10] He was joined by Takeo Yano, who had also attended school in Japan during the pre-war years. Sakuma's ideas, with which Yano generally sympathized, envisioned Palau rebuilding its pre-war commercial economy, relying on an elite trained during Japanese administration. Further, ascribed status would be replaced by achieved status and, finally, modifications would be made to Palau's social system to eliminate numerous exchange customs that were regarded as inhibiting development of a robust commercial economy.[11] All this would open new avenues to greater

---

[8]Ibid., p. 307.

[9]Ibid.

[10]Vidich, "Political Factionalism in Palau," p. 109.

[11]Ibid., pp. 111-112.

power, prestige and wealth for these social change agents and, in turn, threaten chiefly prerogatives.

This ambitious program matched neither the plans of the U.S. military government nor those of the chiefs. The latter, in fact, regarded Sakuma's Japanese-style modernization program as a serious threat to their newly-regained political status and therefore they rejected it. The former had no plans for reviving the vigorous Japanese development program. The U.S. military had neither the talent nor resources for this. Sakuma's ambitions thus withered on the vine.

Palau Municipality

Even before Sakuma had pushed his modernization plans very far, the U.S. Navy had started to implement programs in infrastructure reconstruction, health, self-government, economic development, and education according to the guidelines of Admiral R.A. Spruance's "Pacific Charter." Commander Anderson, the Military Governor at the time, called upon the Palauans to establish a Palau Government. Two energetic men, who had been educated in Japan--Ronald Sakuma and Takeo Yano--were assigned this task by the older Palauan leaders. Sakuma and Yano, then in their late 20s, had been educated in the culture of the book. They acquired some Japanese books on governmental theory and structure and began making a plan.[12] They recognized that the ad hoc Palau Administrative Office previously established by the military had no source of revenue and therefore would have very little political power. Their plan called for a

---

[12]Takeo Yano, personal interview, Koror, Palau, February 10, 1981.

representative form of government with legislative, executive and judicial functions. The legislative function would be carried out by a congress composed of elected representatives who would have tax-levying powers. The executive function would be carried out jointly by the naval authorities and the Palauans with the latter administering and staffing departments of education, finance, industry, general affairs, judiciary, and police. This plan did not include a role for the hereditary leaders who then had the ear of the military governor.[13]

The hereditary leaders rejected most of the Sakuma-Yano plan. The older Palauans, however, approved submission of the executive section to Commander Anderson. He accepted this section with the proviso that the six department heads be elected by those Palauans already employed by the military to carry out civilian functions. Even though only six department head offices--rather limited in scope under military rule--were open, the military governor ordered government by election. Anderson's decision followed a predictable logic, operating as he was out of the liberalism of the "Pacific Charter's" call for democratic self-government. Thus, Palau's first election under American rule took place in October 1946. Forty-six people then employed by naval authority voted, electing Joseph Tellei as head of General Affairs, Indalecio Rudimch assisted by Sakuma as head of education, Lomisang for Industry, Ngoriakl as head of police, Takeo Yano as finance head and Pablo Ringang as head of the

---

[13]Reflecting on this plan in July 1981, Takeo Yano said, "At that time I didn't fully realize the role and power of the chiefs even though my grandfather was the reigning Ibedul." Personal interview, Koror, Palau, July 6, 1981.

judiciary. All of these men had had experience during Japanese administration in the kinds of work they were newly elected to head up.

In April and May 1947, two contradictory directives concerning governance were issued by the top military brass. "The Joint Chiefs of Staff Interim Directive for Military Government," which was issued in April 1947, called for training and employing qualified islanders; creating local legislative, administrative and judicial institutions conducive to growth of democratic self government; and promoting the use of popular elections.[14]

The May directive which, according to military historian Richard, astounded military government personnel in the field, was a specific plan for the establishment of local municipal government "to provide for a system of taxation to make municipalities self-supporting."[15] This, it seems, was in anticipation of sharp budgetary reductions that would accompany departure of military forces and establishment of the area as a United Nations trust territory administered by the U.S. Navy in conjunction with civilian personnel. The directive stipulated that local municipal (or village) governments be headed by an elected magistrate assisted by a treasurer who could be either elected or appointed. Besides the collection and expenditure of tax revenues, the municipal government, as an arm of the American administrator, would be responsible for carrying out local enforcement of his orders, particularly as regards police affairs, sanitation, and education. Terms of office and affairs of the municipal government were

---

[14]Richard, United States Naval Administration, 2:311.

[15]Ibid., 2:312.

subject to approval, termination, or change by military government authority.[16] This was hardly the makings of democratic self government so often proclaimed in earlier military statements. It was this sudden change in policy direction that astounded military government personnel in the field.

The military governor title was changed to civil administrator with the formation of the U.N. trusteeship in July 1947. Commander Ball, Palau's first civil administrator, took action on the first directive which resulted in the rejuvenation of the Sakuma-Yano plan offered a year earlier. According to a revised version of this plan, a Palau municipal government consisting of a Palau Administrative Council, a Palau Congress, and a Palau Court was proposed as Palau's central government. Unlike the earlier plan, which the hereditary leaders had rejected, the revised plan recognized chiefly power by including these leaders as part of the 14-member Palau Administrative Council.

This plan was accepted by the military authorities. It seems in hindsight that the new governmental structure was, in many ways, Palauan conceived and administered, sensitive to indigenous institutions, and democratic in a way Palauan leadership understood that concept. As noted earlier, Admiral Spruance's "Pacific Charter" maintained that island peoples be granted the highest degree of self-government possible, that they assume the management and conduct of their own government, and that "local governments be patterned on the politico-social institutions which

---

[16] Ibid.

the inhabitants had evolved for themselves."[17] The Palauan plan for a centralized municipal government met the general conditions of both the "Pacific Charter" and the April 1947 directive and thus merited full implementation.

The membership of the Palau Congress, as conceived by Sakuma and Yano, involved a concession by the chiefs in that the congress was to be composed only of elected leaders. The historical record is not clear on this issue but the military governor's report of July 1, 1947 indicates that he was losing confidence in the administrative abilities of the chiefs.

> Most of the Chiefs have had little or no experience in administration under the Japanese . . . The anachronistic practice of previous Military Government Officers in installing the hereditary offices, instead of electing or appointing trained Palauan administrators has caused reverses to the democratic ideal and created new stresses within the native society. The Palauans who have attended school disrespect the chiefs, and there is much complaint that the youngers do not hear the voice of the chief.[18]

Clearly, the military administration at this time favored elected leaders over hereditary ones.

Furthermore, before the Palau Congress was formed, the military governor sent Joseph Tellei and Charlie Gibbons, two older and highly respected leaders, to Guam for a legislative workshop. Returning, Tellei

---

[17]Admiral R.A. Spruance, Commander-in-Chief of the Pacific Ocean Area, Serial 52855, 12 December 1945. Quoted partially in Richard, United States Naval Administration, 2:307, and fully in Appendix 8, pp. 516-519.

[18]U.S. Navy, Military Government Unit Report, Palau, July 1, 1947, Summary, Section C-3.

and Gibbons persuaded high chiefs Ibedul and Reklai that a congress could serve as a unifying force in Palau, that it should include elected members to please the American overlords, and that the chiefs would have significant power in holding ten of the fourteen seats of the Palau Council,[19] which, in its essential features, was the main link to the foreign administration because the congress would meet for only a few days each year. In this act of political persuasion, Tellei and Gibbons had become educators, teaching the chiefs the strangers' way of government. In Guam, Tellei and Gibbons learned what a legislature was and having served in important positions during Japanese administration they recognized the importance of accepting foreign innovations. The two men thus became transmitters of the new island of elected government to Palau.

A congressional convention was held in May 1947 and the first Palau Congress assembled on July 4, 1947. Palau's second election (the first was held in October 1946) under American rule was held during June 1947. Thirty-one congressmen were elected. They sat together with sixteen hereditary chiefs, who by charter had no role in the Congress but by virtue of their social rank, knowledge, and prestige wielded great influence on the body. The Congress itself functioned in a purely advisory capacity vis-a-vis the U.S. civil administrator, who replaced the naval military governor in 1947.

So that the Palauans might not mis-interpret their new roles as congressmen, the Deputy High Commissioner, reminded them that the Palau

---

[19]Joseph Tellei, personal interview, Koror, Palau, December 21, 1980.

Congress was an advisory body and that "their government was in no sense an independent nation, but part of the government of the Trust Territory . . ."[20]

Sixteen Municipalities from One

The development of a Palau Municipality, made up of a hereditary leader dominated administrative council, a Congress dominated by elected leaders, and a court was carried out by indigenous leaders under the more flexible April 1947 military directive.

In its 1948 report, the U.S. Navy noted that the Palau Municipality in its brief period of operation had worked well. "The considerable revival of the power of the hereditary chiefs, which is involved in its operation, is tempered by the elective system relating to congressmen and district officials."[21]

With the change-over in mid-1947 from military government to civil administration, there was a significant funding reduction. Thus pressure was exerted by the High Commissioner's Office in late 1947 and early 1948 during the transition to trustee status to have the more specific May 1947 directive implemented. This directive called for the establishment of numerous self-supporting local municipal governments headed by elected magistrates for the purpose of carrying out executive orders. This abrupt

---

[20] Quoted in Richard, United States Naval Administration, 3:398-399.

[21] *Stanford University, School of Naval Administration, Handbook on the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, Washington, D.C.: Navy Department, Office of the Chief of Naval Operations, 1948, p. 104.*

change in direction set up tensions between the Palauan-created central system and the foreign dominated decentralized system. In May 1948 the Deputy High Commissioner, Rear Admiral Carlton Wright, informed the Civil Administrator in Palau, Commander C.M. Hardison, that the Palauan-created centralized system "interfered with the development of self-government on a community level."[22] Hardison's third quarterly report (covering April, May, June 1948) clearly indicated that the centralized system was being disbanded in favor of a decentralized system of sixteen municipalities. Hardison and his staff met with the Palauan leaders who, he said, "professed to understand what they had to do at the meeting but [that] there have been constant rumblings from them since . . . as to how and why."[23]

Despite "constant rumblings," the Palauan leadership adjusted to the newly imposed system of governance. A year after the June 1947 congressional election, fourteen of Palau's sixteen municipalities elected magistrates for one year terms.[24] These elections were held under the auspices of the civil administration during field trip inspections to rural villages on Babeldaob, Kayangel, Peleliu and Angaur. These elections were political education into the meaning of the new island of elected government.

---

[22]Richard, United States Naval Administration, 3:391.

[23]Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, Palau District, Office of the Civil Administration, "Report No. 3-48," 1948, Enclosure (A), p. 10.

[24]Because a field trip vessel was not available to serve the southwest islands of Sonsoral and Tobi, and because the whole concept of election was culturally very foreign, Chief Nestor and Chief Marino served as magistrates of those areas. Taro was elected magistrate of Sonsoral the following year but Marino wasn't elected until late 1950 or early 1951.

The second round of elections for magistrate was held during July 1949 when two parties of administrative officials led by Lieutenants H.L. Stille and C.L. Frink toured the municipalities.[25] As might be expected, voter turnout in the municipalities varied, ranging from 50 percent to 90 percent, depending on the social rank of the favorite candidates. The position of magistrate did not pay very much. The monthly salary (paid by municipal tax revenues) of the first group ranged from a low of $3 to a high of $50. In essence the position was that of a messenger for the foreign administration. Since it carried neither very much pay, prestige or authority, the elections of magistrates were generally dull affairs from their beginning in 1948 to the present. Perhaps one of the few exceptions was the 1978 Koror mayorial (the magistrate of Koror is called major) race in which Ibedul Gibbons defeated three challengers in a competitive election that pitted ambitious youth against established older leaders.

The position of magistrate will gradually disappear in the next few years as Palau's municipalities reorganize themselves into states according to constitutions that the inhabitants will write during municipal constitutional conventions.[26] After thirty-five years, the military

---

[25]Palauans who made these trips were high chiefs, Ibedul Mariur and Reklai Brel; Charlie Gibbons, Eusevio Termeteet, Calarbai and Damaso as interpreters; Benjamin Mersai and Takeo Yano as auditors; Hildelbul and Martin as sanitation inspectors; and Blesam, Vicente, Bolis and Yoshita as boatcrew men.

[26]As of January 25, 1981, Airai municipality had become Airai State under the leadership of Governor Roman Tmetuchl. The system of state government defined by the Airai Constitution is a mixed parliamentary-traditional Palauan system which is controlled to a great extent by Tmetuchl and his Airai colleagues. During 1981 the municipalities of

rhetoric of self-government and indigenous definition of political structures are finally becoming substance in Palau, the latter taking on its own peculiar local color in the process.

A New Legislature

The Palau Congress had no legislative power to speak of; it met for only four or five days per year in a purely advisory capacity. Recognizing its powerlessness, the Congress repeatedly registered its wish "to assume more responsibility in the administration of the District."[27]

Joseph Tellei and Rubasch Fritz, then leading members of the Palau Council, worked in 1954-55 with the district government's Island Affairs Officer, Sidney Siskind, to define the structure and function of a new and more powerful legislative body.[28] Although Palau's two paramount chiefs (Ibedul and Reklai) were members of the influential Palau Council, neither they nor the fourteen other top-ranking village chiefs were official members of the Palau Congress.[29] However, the hereditary leaders

---

Koror, Ngchesar, Melekeok, Ngatpang, Ngarchelong, Ngaraard and Ngaremlengui held constitutional conventions.

[27] Palau Congress Resolution No. 9-53 in Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, Resources and Development Division of Land Management, "Palau District Legislature Acts and Resolutions, 1953-1965," Saipan, Mariana Islands, 1953.

[28] Takeo Yano, Koror, Palau, February 25, 1981, and Thomas Remegesau, Saipan, Mariana Islands, August 6, 1981, personal interviews.

[29] The southwest island areas of Sonsoral and Tobi are linguistically and culturally different from Palau. However, the hereditary leaders of these two islands, both titled Tamor, have been nominally included with the fourteen Palauan chiefs on a co-equal basis. For all practical purposes, however, they generally defer to the Palau chiefs.

had been influential in Congress affairs and this influence continued into the new body, officially chartered as Olbiil Era Kelulau Era Belau (literally, Palau's place for important decisions). Thus Joseph Tellei claims that both the Palau Congress and Olbiil Era Kelulau Era Belau (OEKEB) "were houses controlled mainly by the chiefs."[30] The hereditary leaders determined who was elected congressman, who became magistrate of their village domain and what was acceptable legislation.

Structurally the OEKEB consisted of the sixteen hereditary leaders, Rubekul Belau; sixteen magistrates, and some thirty-seven Chadal Olbiil (elected representatives), one of whom was chosen by his colleagues to be Bedul Olbiil or president (see Table 3 on page 238). This officer had a group of advisors, Tebechelel Olbiil whom he appointed with the approval of the OEKEB and the American district administrator.[31] This twenty person advisory group consisted mainly of meteet (socially high ranking people) who were generally employed in the district government administration. It was Siskind, sensitive to the importance of cultural categories, who insisted that Palauan names be used for the various offices.

Role of Hereditary Leaders

Functionally the OEKEB had considerable more authority than the Palau Congress. The new body could collect taxes and make expenditures,

---

[30] Joseph Tellei, personal interview, Koror, Palau, December 21, 1980.

[31] The Tebechelel Olbiil was a continuation of the Palau Administrative Council whose members had been appointed by the American district administrator. Though the membership did not change substantially from the old group to the new, the locus of appointment authority moved from American to Palauan hands. This was of significant symbolic importance.

receive and administer real and personal property, and legislate by resolution. Although all members could propose resolutions, only the Chadal Olbiil (elected members) could vote on their passage. McKnight maintains that this denial of voting privilege was a slight to traditional authority, putting it in "a back seat structurally" and inhibiting indigenous modernization.[32] Given that hereditary leaders by weight of their influence controlled who won seats to the OEKEB, McKnight's claim seems premature.[33] Further, reports issued by Francis B. Mahoney (Island Affairs Officer, Assistant District Administrator and District Administrator, 1951-1961, and a trained anthropologist) indicate no serious cleavages between the hereditary and elected members during the years 1954-1960. In his 1956-57 report Mahoney wrote,

> Palau's present leaders are anxious for progress as much as possible within the traditional framework as witness the Olbiil era Kelulau's concern for salaries not only for elected officials but for hereditary chiefs.[34]

The hereditary leaders it seems had not yet given up their mantle of leadership to the elected group. The chiefs remained powerful leaders, particularly in Palau's rural areas.

---

[32]Robert K. McKnight, "Rigid Models and Ridiculous Boundaries," p. 44.

[33]McKnight himself maintains that nominees for the position of magistrate "were those who were approved by the traditional leadership because they would cooperate . . . or might enhance the position of the chief." ("Rigid Models and Ridiculous Boundaries," p. 49.)

[34]Francis B. Mahoney, "Summary Report of Political Activities, Palau District," Koror, Palau: April 1, 1956 - March 31, 1957, p. 6. Contained in the files of the Office of Public Affairs, Office of the High Commissioner Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, Saipan, Mariana Islands.

Elected Leadership

New Leaders

Throughout the eight year life of the OEKEB (1955-1963) a new group of younger men, most of whom were born between 1920 and 1926, emerged into the political limelight. The second Bedul Olbiil (president) of the OEKEB was Roman Tmetuchl, then, just 30 years old. Toribiong Uchel, Tmetuchl's older brother, had been the last president of the Palau Congress and the first president of the OEKEB. Following Tmetuchl as president were Takeo Yano, Jonathan O. Emul, Thomas Remengesau, and David Ramarui. All these men had attended Japanese school before the war and had had post war educational experience overseas in either Guam, Hawaii or the Philippines.

Returning with English language fluency, ideas and energy, and the prestige of a world traveler, these elected leaders began making a mark on the Koror political scene. Beginning in the early 1960s, these men and their followers recognized that with the establishment of the American system of elected government, Palau's arena for political maneuvering was suddenly much larger than had existed under the traditional system or during Japanese administration. Franchise broadened the leadership base far beyond that of the hierarchical traditional system. "This is one of the implications of the word democracy that is most congenial to men with ambitions. New fields are open for the attainment and exercise of power, and new men enter them--people who see how to take advantage of a new situation."[35]

---

35 Lucy Mair, Anthropology and Social Change (London: Athlone Press, 1969), p. 133.

Given this new enlarged political arena and the Palauan tendency for competitive-manipulative behavior, the political situation soon became fluid and dynamic. These changes would insure the decline sooner or later, of hereditary authority.

Changes in the relationship between the younger elected leadership and the older hereditary leadership became evident in new attitudes on the part of the former. A segment of the new acculturated leaders developed a disdainful attitude "toward out-of-town leaders who 'couldn't read English and didn't understand democracy.'"[36] The people of the book were disparaging the people of the word. This culminated in 1961 with a decision by the chiefs to withdraw from the OEKEB. They felt they were being rudely ignored by the younger elected leadership. Unlike the political style of the bai (traditional men's meeting house) where only elder titled men spoke in whispers and through messengers, the legislative halls were dominated by outspoken and sometimes abrasive younger men as Roman Tmetuchl and Jonas Olkeriil.[37] These men were familiar with legislative procedures and sometimes used the meetings as a stage for maneuver and strategy characteristic of traditional Palauan political style.[38] In essence, the OEKEB was turned into a modified version of a

---

[36]Francis B. Mahoney, Koror, Palau: "Annual Summary of Political Activities, Palau District," April 1, 1957 - March 31, 1958," p. 6. Contained in the files of the Office of Public Affairs, Office of the High Commissioner, Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, Saipan, Mariana Islands.

[37]Tmetuchl had been a member of the Palau Congress since 1953 when he returned from legal and sociological training in the Philippines. Jonas Olkeriil won election to the OEKEB in either 1960 or 1961 and was famous at the time for his outspoken and unorthodox behavior.

[38]McKnight has described seven Palauan political strategies. See "Proverbs of Palau," Journal of American Folklore 81, no. 319 (1968):29-31.

young men's club house which traditionally had served as a training ground for future community leaders.

David Ramarui was Bedul Olbiil at the time of the chiefs' threatened walkout. He succeeded in persuading the hereditary leaders to remain by saying to them that their advice and sanction were absolutely essential to the proper conduct of legislative deliberations.[39] The chiefs agreed to stay.

Seven years later, however, the chiefs, in a dramatic move, walked out of the Palau Legislature. Again they felt their authority was being ignored. Commenting on the walkout, Reklai Lomisang said, "We allowed the creation of the present legislative body. Although we are not able to vote, we are still the rulers of Palau."[40]

A New Legislature and Political Parties

In 1963 two important events happened in Palau, both of which were stimulated by the younger generation of political leaders. In that year political parties were formed, and the Palau Legislature was established.

A New Legislature

With sixteen chiefs, sixteen magistrates, thirty-seven elected members and the beginning of an ideological cleavage, the OEKEB was too unwieldly to get much important political or practical work done. In eight

---

[39] David Ramarui, personal interview, Koror, Palau, July 24, 1981.

[40] "Chiefs Walk Out," Didil A Chais, vol. 1, no. 16, October 21, 1968, p. 5.

years of deliberation it passed less than seventy resolutions. The younger elected members agitated for a streamlined organization. As noted above, in 1961 the hereditary leaders dissatisfied with the "new ways" gave notice of their intent to withdraw from the legislature. Also in 1961, the younger membership engineered the passage of a bill to eliminate the magistrates on the ground that they were part of the executive administration. The High Commissioner disapproved this action. Other amendments to the OEKEB charter were proposed, however, and this drive for change culminated in a new charter.[41]

The new document was written mainly by Lazarus Salii, then a fresh University of Hawaii political science graduate. It carried Roman Tmetuchl's signature as the last OEKEB president. Since 1955, Koror's representation in the OEKEB had increased from five to nine members. Besides Tmetuchl, the others were David Ramarui, Jonas Olkeriil, Lazarus Salii, Minoru Ueki, Moses Mokoll, Toribiong Uchel, Benjamin Mersai and Indalecio Rudimch. These men were anxious for change. Their assertiveness prevailed in that the charter reduced elected membership to twenty-eight by omission of the magistrates. The hereditary leaders, however, retained their position as non-voting members. "They were too well-entrenched to be rooted out," recalled Lazarus Salii.[42] The term of office

---

[41] The charters for the Palau Council (1948), Palau Congress (1948), Olbiil Era Kelulau Era Belau (1955), and the Palau Legislature (1963) are contained in Normal Meller's The Congress of Micronesia, (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1969), pp. 426-438.

[42] Lazarus Salii, personal interview, Koror, Palau, July 21, 1981.

previously two years, was extended to four. The charter called for redefined electoral districts and a mechanism for reapportionment every ten years. Legal authority included all those powers of the OEKEB and was extended to include the power to override a veto by the district administrator (an American until 1970 when Thomas Remengesau became Palau's first and last Palauan district administrator) and to restrict his veto authority on appropriation bills to individual items. Further, the Tebechelel Olbiil was abolished because it was perceived as working too closely with the American dominated district government administration.[43] Four standing committees were formed in place of this council of advisors and the local flavor of the OEKEB was eliminated in two ways. Siskind's Palauan titles were dropped in favor of English ones, and compensation, instead of being determined by a legislator's local constituency, was established by law, i.e., by the legislators themselves.

Since the coming of the Americans, elected government had evolved from a purely advisory Palau Congress (1947-1955) to a large and cumbersome OEKEB (1955-1963). The latter was the political arena in which Palau's first generation of elected leaders cut their political "teeth." And then to the Palau Legislature (1963-1980), which over the years became a powerful force on the local scene.

Political Parties

In anticipation of the October election for seats in the first Palau Legislature, political parties were formed in May 1963. Traditionally,

---

[43] Meller, The Congress of Micronesia, p. 80.

Palauan political activity took place in a bipolar arena making competitive dualism a dominant feature of Palauan culture. Thus, the founding of two political parties "nicely satisfied traditional American norms and neatly coincided with the parallel structuring of competition traditional to Palauan life."[44] It also began an interesting experiment in political education.

Manuel Godinez, a Kennedy Administration selection for the position of Palau district administrator, gathered Palau's major political figures together in May 1963. They agreed on organizing themselves into two political parties. From his experience in Puerto Rican politics in the late 1950s, Godinez suggested the names liberal and progressive. Indalecio Rudimch, assisted by David Ramarui, agreed to head up the Progressive Party and Benjamin Mersai, assisted by Toribiong Uchel, accepted chairmanship of the Liberals. Rudimch and Mersai had been politically active since the establishment of the Palau Congress in 1947. In his June 11, 1963 monthly report, Godinez expressed pride in this achievement. He perceived it in American terms. For him the parties had solidified themselves around a dominant issue--that of future political status. "The Liberal Party, under the chairmanship of Benjamin Mersai, champions independence for Micronesia; the Progressive Party under the chairmanship of David Ramarui, prefers commonwealth status for Micronesia."[45]

---

[44] Ibid., p. 263.

[45] Manuel Godinez, "Palau District Monthly Report for May 1963" (dated June 11, 1963), p. 4. This document is located in the files of the Office of Public Affairs, Office of the High Commissioner of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, Saipan, Mariana Islands.

Godinez spent more time fishing and enjoying himself than he did at his government duties and thus was often ignorant of the true state of affairs prevailing in Palau (not unusual in a cross cultural situation). The day to day work as well as basic policy formation to deal with new problems were often carried out by William Vitarelli, Lazarus Salii, and Takeo Yano. Thus, in the passage quoted above, Godinez was wrong on two basic points. First, the Liberals favored greater self-government but saw independence as an achievable status "sometime in the future."[46] Second, David Ramarui assisted Indalecio Rudimch, who was the first chairman of the Progressive Party.[47]

Numerous other personal factors hovered in the background of the decision on party formation. As a political science student at the University of Hawaii, Lazarus Salii had campaigned for John F. Kennedy and Patsy Mink in 1960. Salii and David Ramarui were the only two college graduates active in politics at the time and they were brimming over with ideas and political models. "I wanted to practice what I had learned in the 1960 presidential campaign," Salii said when reflecting back on this period.[48]

Besides this enthusiasm for active political campaigning, political leadership was the force that attracted loyalties. John O. Ngiraked

---

[46]Meller, The Congress of Micronesia, p. 263.

[47]As a 1958 University of Hawaii graduate in anthropology, Ramarui was sensitive to the decline of hereditary leadership and the clash of old and new political models. Recall that it was Ramarui who persuaded the traditional chiefs not to walk out of the OEKEB in 1961.

[48]Lazarus Salii, personal interview, Koror, Palau, July 21, 1981.

recalled that Palau's two parties originally were formed around personalities and not ideologies. "Those with Rudimch represented one type of personality and those with Mersai and Toribiong another."[49] Initially the parties were loose configurations built around key individuals rather than around carefully worked out political platforms.[50] Also, parties provided an outlet for political energies that previously found expression in church activity. The Seventh Day Adventist group of which Mersai, Toribiong, and Tmetuchl were members was very active throughout the 1950s and early 1960s. During this period the Adventists consolidated a strong following and built an elementary school and large church near the site of the first Palau Congress building. Party activity provided an avenue for taking politics out of religion and religion out of politics. "The feeling was that if we wanted to play politics, than we ought to play in political parties rather than involving the various religious groups."[51]

Urban Interests and Issues

As noted already, the Palau Legislature had twenty-eight members. The charter's population formula favored Koror-town, which in reality had ten representatives.[52] Each of the rural municipalities which previously

---

[49] John Olbedabel Ngiraked, personal interview, Koror, Palau, January 23, 1981.

[50] Meller, The Congress of Micronesia, p. 263.

[51] Lazarus Salii, personal interview, Koror, Palau, February 28, 1981.

[52] By population size, Koror-town was entitled to five representatives but all five at-large members who were elected in 1963 were Koror residents, namely Mersai, Rudimch, Toribiong, Baules, and Sakuma. Generally, they represented Koror-town interests over rural interests.

had two or three representatives, lost one, leaving them with one or two. This reduced rural representation from a total of twenty-nine in the OEKEB to a total of eighteen. This anti-rural bias has persisted up to 1981 so that of the thirty-four members of the present bicameral Olbiil Era Kelulau, nearly all are permanent Koror residents. Given this heavy urban bias in representative government, it should be no surprise that Palau's rural areas have been stagnating for twenty years and show little indication at present of becoming economically productive beyond local production of taro, cassava and fish.

Elections for the Palau Legislature were held in September of 1963, 1967, 1971, 1975 and 1979. Although in the first election all but one of the candidates ran under the banner of one or the other of the two parties, the enthusiasm for party affiliation was essentially a Koror-town phenomenon; it did not filter out to the rural areas to any great extent. The dominant issue of the 1963 campaign was the future political status of Micronesia. The Progressive Party at this time supported commonwealth status for the Trust Territory whereas the Liberal Party advocated the status quo.[53] The question of future political status was a recurrent one in the two subsequent elections of 1967 and 1971. But in 1975, the superport debate--a very heated one that was soon to gain world-wide attention--dominated election rhetoric.[54] In 1979 Palau's draft constitution was the

---

[53]Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands. Office of the District Administrator. Palau District Description, Koror, Palau, 1963. Unpaginated.

[54]According to the grandest design of the superport plan, Palau would be industrialized in a decade with huge crude oil storage basins, an oil refinery, a thermal power plant, and a petro-chemical plant, all built on barrier reef. See Kenneth Brower, "To Tempt a Pacific Eden, One Large Oily Apple," Audubon 78 (September 1976):56-91.

all consuming issue. Unlike earlier elections where party ideology--to the extent it existed--was weak in the rural areas, everyone had a position on the constitution in 1979. This issue neatly divided people into pro- and anti- constitution groups, thereby ensuring heavy referendum turnouts. The issue of the constitution also largely determined the results of the 1979 legislative elective election (see pp. 332-333).

Liberal Party Control

Control of the Palau Legislature had been in the hands of the Liberals since 1963 and they gradually consolidated greater power over the years. Since 1975 the socialist Tia Belau newspaper[55] had been consistently critical of the Liberal leadership as stubborn and arrogant.[56] The paper celebrated the fact that in the 1975 election the Progressives and Independents gained a few seats at the expense of the Liberals.[57] By the time of the 1979 election, support for Liberal party causes had eroded completely as will be noted in a later section of this chapter (pp. 339-340).

---

[55]Launched in June 1972, Tia Belau was the ideological successor of Didil A Chais which was published by the Palau Community Action Agency until April 1970 when then High Commissioner Edward Johnson forced its closure. Johnson maintained that the federal dollars which supported PCAA could not "fund a newspaper that criticizes the government" (Didil A Chais, April 24, 1970, p. 2). Charles Freedman who worked as a Peace Corps Volunteer advisor to Didil A Chais said that the paper had become a very controversial topic among top Saipan bureaucrats and that High Commissioner Johnson, a Nixon appointee, found most issues of the paper unacceptable because of the highly critical stance they took, especially via political cartoon, of American leadership in Saipan and Washington, D.C.

[56]*Tia Belau, vol. 3, no. 3, November 24, 1975, p. 4.*

[57]Tia Belau in its November 24, 1975 issue broke down the Sixth Palau Legislature into thirteen liberals, nine Progressives and six independents.

Campaigning Palauan Style

Being a small scale society, direct confrontation and overt frankness are culturally unacceptable in Palau. Modesty and even self-depreciation are esteemed values. Such mores directly contradict American campaign practice, where the goal is to sell oneself as the best candidate. Palauans, like people of any small scale society, are culturally more oriented toward personalities than issues. Voting emphasizes kin relationships and candidate personality rather than political-economic problems and issues.[58] Successful political figures in Palau use family and clan connections to garner votes. Party members campaign for each other by noting the other man's accomplishments, qualifications, and dedication. One never does this for oneself. That would be bad form indeed. A good candidate acquires the support of influential people from large clans. These people then campaign on the candidate's behalf.

For the early Congress of Micronesia elections, Meller writes that Palauans used an abundance of campaign techniques--road banners, posters, pamphlets, public rallies with food and entertainment, radio speeches and house-to-house electioneering. "Candidates tended toward 'soft-sell,' stressing the abilities of their party's team rather than emphasizing their own qualifications for congressional posts."[59] As noted above, the "soft-sell" is mandated by the norms of Palauan culture.

---

[58] Leonard Mason, "Popular Participation in the Development of Trust Territory Self-Government," in Political Modernization of Micronesia, Center for South Pacific Studies, University of California Santa Cruz, March 1969.

[59] Meller, The Congress of Micronesia, p. 264.

As in politics anywhere, gifts at election time attract votes. Gift giving allows a candidate in Palau to practice omchar a reng (buying the heart). This is one of seven Palauan political strategies, according to which the practitioner is generous in favors, gifts, and praise.[60] Though candidates usually claim they do not "buy" votes, omchar a reng is used extensively at election time as a major campaign strategy.

Going to Congress

With the formation of the Congress of Micronesia by Secretarial Order 2882 (September 1964), the arena for political competition and maneuver expanded. Congressional offices were perceived by Palauans as having greater power, prestige, and authority than those of the Palau Legislature.[61] Palau's best and most assertive politicians ran for Congress seats. From 1965 to 1978 when Palau and the Marshall Islands withdrew from the Congress, Palau's two senate seats were held mainly by Roman Tmetuchl (1st, 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th Senate and 3rd House) and Lazarus Salii (1st, 2nd House; and 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th Senate), both Liberals. Tmetuchl and Salii were the only Palauans to serve in both House and Senate of the Congress of Micronesia. Tmetuchl relied on the force of personality and largess of pocket to win votes whereas Salii depended on his performance as the

---

[60] The six other political strategies are outlined in McKnight, "Proverbs of Palau," pp. 29-31.

[61] I follow Dowd's definition of these three important terms: "Power means the ability to decide, to influence, to control; prestige, both a source and consequence of power, refers to the deference received by those who possess power in a society; authority resides in those who have the weight of law, of custom, and of society's deepest values vested in them." Douglas F. Dowd, The Twisted Dream (Cambridge, Mass.: Winthrop Publishers, 1974), p. 58.

Congresses' political status negotiator and his reputation as a knowledgable and thoughful person. Three other prominent Palauans served in the senate: David Ramarui (one term), Kaleb Udui (one term) and John Olbedabel (one term).

Ramarui was the only man to defeat Tmetuchl in a one-on-one election fight. The November 1966 senate race was a close one in which Ramarui finished ahead of Tmetuchl by ninety-three votes. Tmetuchl alleged that there had been all forms of election irregularities and brought suit against Ramarui. The loser was attempting to use his legal expertise to regain his senate seat. High Court Justice E.P. Furber dismissed Tmetuchl's appeal on the ground that there was no legislative basis either for Tmetuchl's appeal or for Palau District Court jurisdiction on the matter. Furber held that the Congress of Micronesia was the sole judge of elections and qualifications of its members.[62]

John Olbedabel served in the first and second Congresses. In the very first senate race of January 1965, he defeated his Progressive Party colleague, David Ramarui, by just eighteen votes. Olbedabel ran for the senate again in 1968 but lost badly to Salii.[63] Although doing better in 1970, Olbedabel lost again, this time to Tmetuchl.[64] Two years later, he challenged Salii for a second time but finished 400 votes behind. In 1974

---

[62]"Liberal Party of Palau, Plaintiff vs. Election Commissioner, Palau, Defendant," civil action no. 389, Trial Division of the High Court, Palau District, September 12, 1967, Report of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, 3 (1965-1968):293-296.

[63]Salii finished with 2,293 votes to 1,233 for Olbedabel.

[64]Just 88 votes separated the two. Tmetuchl finished with 2,275 votes and Olbedabel with 2,197.

Olbedabel tried for the last time to win a senate seat. In this final race he lost again to Tmetuchl.[65] Despite his reputation as a "loser," Olbedabel gained valuable campaign experience during these senate races, experience that paid off in the 1980 presidential race, in which he finished a distant but respectable fourth in a five candidate field. These four senators--Tmetuchl, Salii, Ramarui and Olbedabel--political heavyweights on the Palauan scene, would figure prominently in Palau's 1980 presidential election.

Palau's three House seats in the Congress of Micronesia were held at various times by ten different Palauans--Lazarus Salii, Sadang Silmai, Jacob Sawaichi, Polycarp Basilius, Dr. Minoru Ueki, Roman Tmetuchl, Timothy Olkeriil, Tarkong Pedro, Isidoro Rudimch, and Kuniwo Nakamura. The terms of office of Palau's senators and representatives are listed in Table 4 on page 268. Of these ten representatives, Basilius was, by far, the most successful campaigner of the lot. His first three races, however, were very tight ones in which he finished just twenty to thirty votes ahead of the opposition. But in 1972, 1974 and 1976 he easily defeated his challengers by several hundred vote margins. Of the ten former congressional representatives, only Basilius and Olkeriil have dropped out of active politics to concentrate on business. Both men seem to believe that political influence grows with the size of one's bank roll. All the other former congressmen, except Dr. Ueki who directs the Palau Hospital and Tarkong Pedro who died in 1979, ran in Palau's constitutional election in 1980.

---

[65] Olbedabel finished 597 votes behind Tmetuchl. The totals were 2,355 for Tmetuchl and 1,758 for Olbedabel.

TABLE 4

PALAUAN REPRESENTATION IN THE CONGRESS OF MICRONESIA

Senate (4 Year Term)

Election Year	1965	1966	1968	1970	1972	1974	1976
	R. Tmetuchl (L)	D. Ramarui (P) →		R. Tmetuchl (L) →		R. Tmetuchl (L) →	
	J. Olbedabel (P) →		L. Salii (L) →		L. Salii (L) →		K. Udui* (L)

House (2 Year Term)

Election Year	1965	1966	1968	1971**	1972	1974	1976
	L. Salii (L)	L. Salii* (L)	R. Tmetuchl (L)	T. Olkeriil (L)	T. Olkeriil (L)	K. Nakamura (P)	K. Nakamura (P)
	S. Ngiraeherang (I)	P. Basilius (P)	P. Basilius (P)	P. Basilius (P)	P. Basilius (P)	P. Basilius (P)	P. Basilius (P)
	J. Sawaichi (P)	J. Sawaichi* (P)	M. Ueki (L)	T. Pedro (L)	T. Pedro (L)	I. Rudimch (P)	I. Rudimch (P)

L = Liberal Party P = Progressive Party I = Independent

* = Uncontested election.

** = The credentials of the three candidates elected in November 1970 were rejected by the House of Representatives of the Congress of Micronesia. A special election was held on March 30, 1971 and the House accepted the credentials of those elected, namely, T. Olkeriil, P. Basilius, and T. Pedro.

A Second Generation of Political Leaders

In 1972 a new force began pushing its way into Palauan politics. As in the late 1950s and early 1960s, it was youth again asserting itself into the Palauan political arena. And like the earlier push of Toribiong, Tmetuchl, Ramarui and others, Francisco and Moses Uludong met resistance but much greater than the first generation of young leaders. The Uludong's too used tactics which were culturally unacceptable for the time but unlike their "radical" predecessors, who now became "conservative" antagonists, the Uludongs and their followers oriented themselves more toward issues and causes--an American political style they had learned as university students in Hawaii.

Both Francisco and Moses Uludong attended Xavier High School, an elite Jesuit school in Truk. "From the Jesuits I learned tenacity to principle," Moses recalled. From reading Frantz Fanon, Mao, Julius Nyerere, and Kwame Nkrumah, the Uludongs learned about colonialism, racism and exploitation. From fasts, testimony before the U.S. Trusteeship Council and involvement in anti-Vietnam student protest movements in Hawaii they learned the tactics of mass demonstration as the most effective way of shaking up intrenched authority. Armed with Marxist-socialist rhetoric and effective organizational skills, the Uludongs carved out a new island of influence on the Palauan political scene, but not without some cost. Like the first generation of political leaders, the Uludongs became community educators of issues and new political techniques.

Shortly after his return to Palau in July 1971, Moses Uludong was arrested and jailed by local police for allegedly plotting to assassinate

Haydn Williams, the American ambassador for status negotiations, who was then visiting Palau on a negotiating trip. Both Moses and Francisco had been leaders of a Micronesian student independence movement during their college days in Hawaii. Moses believes his arrest in Palau was a way those in authority used to "get" him for his assertive political activity. "That experience was the turning in my life."[66] To be arrested and jailed in his own land by Palauan police officers crashed down on Uludong more than all his readings on colonialism that something was very wrong in Micronesia's relations with the U.S.

One of the first political activities the Uludongs became involved in was a protest strike by Palau High School dormitory students on January 17, 1972. The boys were housed in dirty, broken-down Pacific war quonset huts. The dorm boys had no recreation program or facilities and they were being bullied by a few older Trukese students then attending Micronesian Occupational Center (MOC). MOC was located adjacent to Palau High School (PHS) and was then the pride of enthusiastic vocational educators. The Center boasted two new concrete dormitories, a huge cafetorium (supposedly a joint use facility to be shared by both MOC and PHS students), and a large staff that included counselors and recreation specialists. To the PHS students and their sympathizers the situation was intolerable. The dorm students boycotted classes to carry signs listing their grievances. Their activities attracted the attention of the entire student body thereby disrupting the school schedule. About 9 A.M. that day the Uludong's led the students in a take-over of the cafetorium and then marched them to the

---

[66]Moses Uludong, personal interview, Koror, Palau, July 24, 1981.

nearby Palau Legislature parking lot where they met with Senators Tmetuchl and Salii, who promised to intervene on the students' behalf. In this mass student demonstration--the first of its kind in Palau--the Uludongs had clearly exhibited their concern for issues and skill at mobilizing people--political education in its most potent form. During the next five years, Moses organized numerous protest demonstrations because he believed that there were crucial issues the established leaders either refused to recognize or discuss openly. Culturally and politically the Tia Belaud group (as the Uludongs and their followers came to be known) was going against the grain. "We became a target of public criticism and ridicule which made things very difficult for us personally. There were times when we felt that maybe we should quit. Our families disowned us, we were physically assaulted and some other messy incidents happened."[67]

Nevertheless, the energy that derived from a successful challenge of established authority was invested in a newspaper, Tia Belau (literally, our Palaû) which was first issued in June 1972 under the editorship of Moses Uludong. With some initial financial assistance from the Janss Foundation of California, the goals of the paper were to transmit news and information, and to discuss, criticize and take stands on issues for the betterment of Palau.[68] In the act of publishing a newspaper, Uludong would make issues and opinion on them public and thereby educate the community.

In its four years of reporting, Tia Belau became adept at analysis of local political happenings. For instance, in a December 1972 article,

---

[67] Ibid.

[68] Tia Belau, vol. 1, no. 1, June 28, 1972, p. 2.

"Corruption in Our Politics," it was reported that the omchar a reng political strategy had been carried to extreme during that year's congressional election. "The dominant Liberal Party spent more than $10,000 while the Progressive Party spent over $7,000."[69] The paper reported that free beer and food were available at the hot spots in Koror-town and that rural villagers were given cigarettes, sugar and rice. "Some people were getting pay-offs to get others to vote star or fish, the insignia of the two parties."[70] Traditionally, food and money were the key elements in numerous kinds of exchange relationships from bride buying to war reparations. With the coming of elected government, the use of food and money in exchange for votes was, culturally, an easy and effective pattern to establish. This did not bother the Uludong group so much as the ineffectual nature of the dominant political parties which, to them, had become "tools of the big guys and alienated from the masses."

Third Parties

In response to the closed nature of the Liberal and Progressive Parties, two third parties were formed during the 1972 Congress of Micronesia campaign. The Tia Belaud party was established to support Joshua Koshiba in his bid for a Congress of Micronesia House seat.[71]

---

[69] Tia Belau, vol. 1, no. 7, December 14, 1972, p. 6.

[70] Ibid.

[71] Joshua Koshiba, then twenty-nine years old, had attracted a political following among teachers at Palau High School for his outspoken leadership on important issues. This support, transferred to a wider Koror-town

Koshiba had been asked to leave the Liberal party because of his refusal to support its candidate. Under Tia Belaud's banner, Koshiba challenged the dominant party candidates and finished a respectable third.[72]

Tia Belaud manifested a growing nationalism and ethnic pride and further reflected a growing dissatisfaction with the two entrenched parties "which were dominated by established local leaders and upper-strata traditional clans and families in Palau."[73] Clearly, the arena for political maneuver had become crowded and those with recognized stakes would not give up any of their territory without a fight. Cleavages followed personality, clan, age, and issue lines, making for two fundamentally different islands of understanding. The Tia Belaud group was more community concerned, whereas its opponents tended to be more small group and individually oriented. These differences are discussed more fully in Chapter Seven.

The Tia Belaud Party disbanded during the 1978-1980 period when the political scene became so intensely dominated by Roman Tmetuchl. He brought the issue of unity with, or separation from, the other areas in

---

base, won him a seat in the Fifth Palau Legislature election of September 1971. He was re-elected to the Sixth Legislature in which he served as Vice Speaker and member of Tmetuchl's influential Palau Political Status Commission.

[72]Tarkong Pedro of the Liberal Party won the 1972 election with 597 votes. Isidoro Rudimch, a Progressive, came second with 480 votes and Koshiba finished a surprising third with 430 votes. This was indicative of both Koshiba's popularity and Tia Belaud's ability to win support so quickly among Koror-town voters. Ideologically however, the two were poles apart as later events would reveal. After this short flirtation with the "radicals," Koshiba went back to the Liberals who supported him in the 1975 Sixth Palau Legislature election.

[73]Tia Belau, vol. 1, no. 7, December 14, 1972, p. 17.

the Trust Territory to the forefront of political activity, and established the legal groundwork for a Palau constitutional convention, which became an event of high political drama and competition in Palau. People were forced to one side or the other in a clearly bi-polar situation on these two issues. With the cooling of political passions, the party has recently emerged.[74]

The other political party formed in 1972 was the Unity Action Party, a creation of a group of Peleliu Municipality people who were dissatisfied with candidates from the dominant parties. Unity Action supported Mitsuo Solang, on leave from his position as Palau District Director of Public Affairs. Solang finished a distant third in the 1972 Congress campaign behind two other Peleliu people who had support from the well established parties.

Although Unity Action had a platform and a board of officers, it was the creation of a burst of political energy which waned soon after the cast of the last ballot. Unlike Tia Belaud, Unity Action never made a strong political comeback. A small scale society of 14,000 people, even as faction ridden as Palau is, has just so much room for political parties. When issues become intense as during the 1978-1980 period in Palau, the alternatives that third parties bring get squeezed out in the press of two dominant forces.

---

[74]A core group of Tia Belaud members met several times in July 1981 to reflect on the events of the past two years and why the group had fragmented. The group planned to revise their platform and re-establish the Tia Belau newspaper but under a new name. Many of the party core membership now hold influential positions in government service.

The Tmetuchl Era

Palau and the Micronesian Constitution

The United Nations Visiting Missions of 1970 and 1973 were particularly interested in Micronesia's governmental structure and how it might be modified to achieve a new political status. Both missions suggested that a constitution written by Micronesians themselves "would play an important part in the Trust Territory's advancement towards self-determination and independence."[75] The 1973 Mission noted that the Congress of Micronesia had proposed holding a constitutional conference in 1972 and 1973 but that action had been deferred both times.

However, early in 1974 the time was ripe. Senate bill thirty-eight was signed by High Commissioner Edward Johnson as public law no. 5-60, which set forth procedures for establishing a Micronesian Constitutional Convention (Con-Con).

At about this same time, Roman Tmetuchl, perhaps influenced by the long standing desire by the Mariana Islands for a separate status, sensed that political power would be shifting back to the individual Micronesian administrative areas (districts).[76] As leader of the Palau Legislature's Select Committee on Development, Tmetuchl advocated the principle of loose

---

[75] United Nations, Trusteeship Council, Report of the U.N. Visiting Mission to the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, New York, 1973, p. 35.

[76] Known as districts, these areas are Palau, the Northern Mariana Islands, Yap, Truk, Ponape, Kosrae, and the Marshall Islands. During the period 1978-1980, these areas coalesced into four separate political entities: (1) the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, (2) the Federated States of Micronesia (Ponape, Truk, Yap, Kosrae), (3) the Government of the Marshall Islands, and (4) the Republic of Palau.

federation as the only acceptable way for associating with the other Micronesian ethnic areas.[77] The Liberal Party of which Tmetuchl was a leading member had long maintained that Palauan identity must not be lost in a wider Micronesian association.[78] Also, he believed that an administration centered in Truk or Ponape would be considerably poorer in quality and unresponsive to Palau's needs than the American dominated administration he had known since the end of the Pacific War. Thus, Tmetuchl had advocated separate status talks for Palau as early as April 1973.[79]

So as Palauans went to the polls on June 4, 1974 to select their representatives to the Micronesian constitutional convention, District Administrator Thomas Remengesau was approving a Tmetuchl sponsored Palau constitutional convention bill. Remengesau had vetoed a similar bill a year earlier on the grounds that Palau was not a sovereign state and therefore did not have the right to form its own government. Tmetuchl and his group got around this veto by passing a resolution directing the Legislature's Select Committee on Development to conduct and organize a constitutional convention, conduct a political education campaign and hold a referendum. The first mentioned charge resulted in the Legislature's

---

[77]The Select Committee on Development was formed by the Fifth Palau Legislature to determine the most appropriate directions for Palauan political and economic development. In July and August 1973 the Committee traveled extensively throughout the Pacific island nations and territories and were greatly impressed by what they saw. This experience seemingly reinforced Tmetuchl's separatist inclinations.

[78]Meller, The Congress of Micronesia, p. 263.

[79]Tia Belau, vol. 2, no. 4, May 8, 1973, p. 2.

bill no. 317, which was signed into law as public law no. 5-6-16. Tmetuchl was convinced that the Palauan delegates to the Micronesian constitutional convention ought to have a very clear Palauan position to present to their Micronesian colleagues. If the principles, standards and conditions of the draft Palau Constitution "shall not be accepted by the Micronesian Con-Con, then the draft constitution or constitutions shall constitute the general basis of the future government of Palau outside the political family of Micronesia."[80]

Although the 1974 Palau Con-Con members were appointed,[81] the Micronesian Con-Con delegates were elected on June 4, 1974. In Palau nineteen candidates vied for five seats. Tia Belau reported that campaigning in the northern villages of Babeldaob centered more on local gossip than on debate or discussion of issues between candidates and general public.[82] The Progressives won three seats to the Liberals two, but the former received only 18 percent of the vote. This occurred because of a highly irregular districting formula that was clearly undemocratic. Nevertheless, two new developments emerged which would be of future importance. First,

---

[80]Palau Public Law No. 5-6-16, Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, Laws and Resolutions, Fifth Palau Legislature, Sixth Regular Session, 1974 (Saipan, Mariana Islands: Office of the High Commissioner, 1980), p. 29.

[81]Public Law No. 5-6-16 called for a convention of twenty-eight members, seven to be appointed by the Palau Legislature from among its membership; four traditional chiefs to be selected from among the sixteen chiefs of Palau; five members of the Palau delegation to the Congress of Micronesia; five delegates elected to the Micronesian Con-Con; two representatives to be appointed by the District Administrator; two members chosen from the Legislature's Select Committee on Development; one representative from each of the three officially registered political parties: Liberal, Progressive, and Unity Action.

[82]Tia Belau, vol. 2, no. 8, July 1974, p. 13.

Johnson Toribiong, son of Toribiong Uchel and nephew of Roman Tmetuchl, ran for the first time. With his uncle campaigning for him, he won easily as the top vote-getter of all nineteen candidates. Second, the two dominant parties appeared less attractive to voters as 35 percent of the electorate voted for independent candidates.

Despite divisions on the local scene, Palau's delegation to the Micronesian Con-Con presented a united front. With their small population yet intense competitive tendencies, the Palauan delegates felt they must have certain guarantees before they could commit Palau to Micronesian unity. These guarantees were framed as seven non-negotiable terms which were applauded by representatives of smaller areas in Micronesia but criticized by those from more highly populated areas.[83] The Palauan initiative stimulated some compromise that otherwise might not have been made, but it also gave notice that Palau was leaning strongly toward separation. The Palau delegation expounded the Tmetuchl line despite all the grandiose calls for unity.

What Status is Best?

Just a few days before the beginning of the Micronesian Con-Con, a Trust Territory-wide referendum sponsored and designed by the Congress of Micronesia was held on July 8, 1975 to determine people's opinion on the

---

[83]The seven terms were elaborated in a three-page "Palau Delegation Micronesian Constitutional Convention Outline of Position." This document is reprinted as Appendix H in Situation Report of the Palau Political Status Commission, Sixth Palau Legislature, Koror, Palau, October 15, 1976.

various status options--independence, commonwealth, free association, statehood, and status quo--and on the question of Micronesian unity. Voter turnout was generally low throughout Micronesia despite efforts by the Education for Self-Government program. In Palau the turnout was less than 50 percent. Certain leaders had spoken out against participation in the referendum, others in favor of it.[84] Tia Belau in its July 1975 issue listed thirteen reasons why Palauans should not vote in the upcoming referendum. Nearly all the reasons derived from a strong anti-U.S. colonial position that had characterized the Uludong group since its emergence in 1972.[85]

Notwithstanding this press discouragement, 2,486 Palauans went to the polls[86] to register their preference on each of the status options. Statehood and commonwealth were strongly rejected as unattractive political futures. For independence, 455 Palauans voted yes but 869 voted no. Some 1,120 Palauans voted yes on free association as compared to 1,288 who did so for the status quo option. The no-votes were 526 and 370 respectively.

Since the ballot did not ask voters to prioritize the status preferences and given the low voter turn out, the referendum results are of dubious value. What seems clear is that those political options Palauans knew most about--status quo and free association--received the greatest

---

[84]"Ngiraked For Referendum" Tia Belau, vol. 3, no. 1, June 1, 1975, p. 4.

[85]"Thirteen Reasons Why We Should Not Vote in the July 8 TT Referendum," Tia Belau, vol. 3, no. 2, July 1-15, 1975, p. 4.

[86]At this time Palau had 5,880 registered voters.

number of affirmative votes and, proportionally, the least number of negative votes vis-a-vis the other status options. It seems Tia Belau was correct in its pre-referendum analysis that the Palau electorate was not fully aware of the implications of the five status alternatives and therefore people were uncertain as to the best choice.[87] This may explain why voter turn-out was so low (42 percent).

Voter preference on the question of Micronesian unit was clearer. Palauans voted three to one in favor of unity.

Even though voter turn-out in Palau was low, Roman Tmetuchl and his supporters (the separatist group) did not find the referendum results of July 8, 1975 encouraging. Prior to this advisory referendum, the Tmetuchl group in the Fifth Palau Legislature had passed resolution no. 75 (1)-2 creating an eleven member Palau Political Status Commission (PPSC).[88] Its purpose was to establish contacts and conduct negotiations with the U.S. or any other nation on the future status of Palau and to enter into preliminary status agreements pending final approval of the Palau Legislature and people of Palau.[89]

Tmetuchl's Momentum

With a solid political base in the Palau Legislature, Tmetuchl began to build momentum in favor of a separate political status. He did this by

---

[87] "Commonwealth for Palau?" Tia Belau, vol. 3, no. 2, July 1-15, 1975, p. 7.

[88] Tia Belau, vol. 3, no. 1, June 1, 1975, p. 1.

[89] Initially, the Commission members were Roman Tmetuchl (chairman), Dr. Minoru Ueki (vice chairman), Fr. Felix K. Yaoch, S.J., Sadang Silmai, Haruo Remeliik, Kuniwo Nakamura, George Ngirarsaol, Joshua Koshiba, Shiro Kyoto, Tarkong Pedro, and Santos Olikong.

writing to Ambassador Haydn Williams inviting the U.S. negotiator to establish a formal dialogue concerning Palau's future status and switching his status preference from independence to one "similar in nature to that of the Northern Mariana Islands," i.e. commonwealth.[90] In an interview with reporter Joan King of the Pacific Daily News, Tmetuchl said that a majority of Palauans were not interested in unity with the other Micronesians and that Palau had nothing to lose by negotiating separately with the U.S. Always assertive and astute at seeing advantage, Tmetuchl claimed that since Palau was strong and self-reliant, it was in a good bargaining position for separate talks because of strong U.S. military interest in Palauan land.[91]

Characteristic of Tmetuchl's personal style, his use of the ideuekl chemaidechedui strategy[92] in regard to the status question was totally unexpected. Lazarus Salii and the Palauans working in Saipan were completely surprised and confused by Tmetuchl's swift initiative. Salii seemed unaware of the dominating influence Tmetuchl wielded in the Palau Legislature but he quickly recognized a logical connection between Tmetuchl's request for separate status talks based on a commonwealth position and a pro-supertanker port stance.[93]

---

[90] "PPSC Chairman Requests Separate Talks," Tia Belau, vol. 3, no. 2, July 1-15, 1975, p. 5.

[91] Joan King, "Senator's Letter Brings 'Surprise,'" Pacific Daily News, June 27, 1975, p. 4.

[92] Perhaps the most effective of the seven traditional Palauan strategies, ideuekl chemaidechedui, meaning concealment of the lizard, relies on tactics that surprise and confuse the opposition by maximizing the unexpected.

[93] Joan King, "Senator's Letter Brings 'Surprise,'" Pacific Daily News, June 27, 1975, p. 4. As events were to turn out, Salii was correct in this claim.

Tia Belau was also surprised by the suddeness of Tmetuchl's change of political direction. The paper claimed that Speaker Luii's appointments of status commission members clearly indicated that Tmetuchl's Liberal Party had become exclusive and believed that it alone should run Palau. Then, the paper maintained, for the new commission to request separate status talks based on a status similar in nature to that of the Northern Marianas "is out of tune with the people of Palau and does not represent even a minority of the people."[94] Written prior to the July 8 referendum, Tia Belau had correctly sensed that the Palauan mood was more in favor of status quo than it was for commonwealth. The July 8 referendum results, as inclusive as they were, showed that Palauans were unattracted by the commonwealth option. "We are Palauans not Americans!" said one determined voter.

True to the age-old Palauan political pattern, two forces had emerged: Tmetuchl and his separatist faction which dominated the Palau Legislature and an anti-Tmetuchl coalition group that favored Micronesian unity. These two groups were to clash numerous times at the ballot box over the next five years.

Recall that the Legislature's Select Committee on Development was charged with the responsibility of carrying out a campaign of political education, a Palau Con-Con, and a referendum. With control of both the Select Committee on Development and the Palau Political Status Commission, Tmetuchl could use the mandate of one to promote the power of the other. The Palau Con-Con had completed its work on two draft constitutions--

---

[94] "Commonwealth for Palau?" Tia Belau, vol. 3, no. 2, July 1-15, 1975, p. 7.

alternative I and alternative II--dated May 30, 1975. They were submitted to both the Legislature and District Administrator but were never voted on by the Palauan electorate. The historical record is not clear on this point but it seems that the Tmetuchl group concluded sometime in mid-1975 that Palau's status and political position (whether to negotiate Palau's future political status with the U.S. separately from or jointly with the other Micronesian districts) took precedence over the issue of a constitution for Palau. Important and perhaps fundamental to this decision was the dream of some influential Palauans that the grandiose superport plan would become a reality. Another factor important in this decision was the U.S. position to allow the Northern Mariana Islands to separate from the other Micronesian districts and become a commonwealth of the U.S. (official only when the trusteeship agreement ends).

With separation from the other Micronesian districts Tmetuchl's main goal, the Sixth Palau Legislature passed resolution 687 in April 1976 requesting the United States to recognize the desires of the elected and traditional leaders of Palau for a separate political status based on an agreement similar in nature to the Northern Marianas commonwealth agreement. Given this bold statement and a previous charge to carry out a referendum, Tmetuchl recognized that the U.S. administration was generally impressed by ballot box decisions and could therefore be persuaded to accept separate talks if the Palauan electorate declared this to be its will.

To determine the will of the Palauan electorate, a referendum was held on September 24, 1976 under the exclusive sponsorship of the Sixth Palau Legislature. It was ignored by representatives of the U.S., U.N. and

Trust Territory government.[95] The results gave Tmetuchl exactly what he wanted. Some 88 percent of those Palauans who cast ballots voted in favor of separation. Tmetuchl was enthusiastic over the result. "We've got a very good mandate from the people."[96] He claimed the U.S. would "think twice" about trying to force the Palauans to unify with the other Micronesians.

On one level the issue had become emotionally charged because to vote for Micronesian unity (a no-vote) was to deny one's Palauan-ness. For Palauans, unity with the rest of Micronesia meant a "reduction of control over their lives, land and destiny."[97] That the referendum had become a situation of ethnic identity rather than a political issue of unity or separation is evident in results from Guam, Yap and Saipan. Identifying strongly with their culture, Palauans living away from home favored separation 406 to 18. The referendum had deep emotional and ethnic overtones which strongly biased people's vote in favor of separation. To vote for unity was to be un-Palauan. Tmetuchl had the deck stacked in his favor.

On another level, Tmetuchl's opposition, which was weak and unorganized, campaigned for unity--a no-vote. The opposition believed that a yes-vote on separation was a yes-vote for the proposed superport project

---

[95] Joseph C. Murphy, "Palauans Vote 88% for Separate Talk," Pacific Daily News, September 28, 1976, p. 1.

[96] Ibid.

[97] Roman Tmetuchl's cover letter to Acting High Commissioner Peter T. Coleman. This letter dated October 1, 1976 contained the official results of the September 24, 1976 referendum. The letter and results are contained in Palau Political Status Commission, Situation Report, Koror, Palau, October 15, 1976, pp. 11-12.

which had become an exciting and persistent issue ever since its exposure on the front page of the Pacific Daily News on January 27, 1975.[98] Tia Belau and a Palauan group of environmentalists came out strongly against the proposed superport. Convinced that the Palau Legislature was "defaulting in its duty to protect the interests of the Palauan people," the two groups formed the Save Palau Committee in February 1976.[99]

And this was not too soon for just a month later on March 15, 1976, Roman Tmetuchl and Sadang Silmai (speaker of the Sixth Palau Legislature) were in Tehran, Iran meeting with officials of the National Iranian Tanker Company and Nissho-Iwai Co. Ltd., a large Japanese trading conglomerate. The two elected Palauan leaders assured the Iranians and Japanese that they would be able "to secure land, reefs, shoals and water area for port purposes" and that "they had recently petitioned the U.S. for direct Commonwealth status . . . to assure economic and strategic support and protection of the island group."[100]

---

[98] In a small scale society like Palau, secrets are, for the most part, non-existent. Despite efforts to keep the superport project a secret, there had been rumors of it current in Palau throughout the latter half of 1974.

[99] "Save Palau Group Is Formed," Tia Belau, vol. 4, no. 3, February 4, 1976, p. 2.

[100] "Minutes of the 2nd Coordinating Committee Meeting for the Palau Project," March 15, 1976 contained in United States, Congress, Senate, Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, Palau Deepwater Port: Hearing before the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, United States Senate, Ninety-fifth Congress first session on the location of a superport in the Palau District of the Trust Territory (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1977), p. 599.

Youth and Tradition Ally

Palauan culture has traditionally been characterized by overlapping alliances and shifting coalitions that make for an ever dynamic factionalism. Although Roman Tmetuchl has been the dominant force in Palauan politics since the early 1960s, he has never had the political arena exclusively to himself. There has always been opposition of one form or another. What changed with the introduction of representative government in 1947 was the size of the arena for political maneuver. This arena became much larger than traditionally was the case, and the new role of elected official, as in all societies having elected government, has been interpreted in Palau in a manner calculated by office holders to maintain their authority and maximize their power.

The assertiveness of the Tmetuchl group of elected leaders disturbed many of the hereditary leaders and the Uludong group as well. Recall that in a 1968 session of the legislature, the chiefs had walked out on the elected leaders. The chiefs boycotted again in 1973 and 1976. In the first instance they were affronted by the elected leaders' refusal to seat the duly elected Ngchesar legislator, Anastacio Ngiraiwelenguul, who had legally won the legislative seat and had the support of the Ngchesar chief. Presenting a petition of secession, Ngirakebou (the chief of Ngchesar) unilaterally abolished the village's seat in the Legislature.

The Ngchesar issue acted as a catalyst that fused an alliance between the chiefs and the Uludong group. The younger, issue oriented men prepared a discussion paper, "Declaration of Concern and Position of the Traditional Hereditary Chiefs of Palau District" that was presented to High Commissioner Edward Johnson during a May 1973 meeting in Saipan. The position paper

maintained that the elected leaders had "deliberately and defiantly excluded the traditional hereditary chiefs from effective deliberation, participation, and active involvement in the work of the Legislature . . . by reliance on legal technicalities, parliamentary maneuvers, strategy sessions and specious legal arguments."[101] For the chiefs to regain their rightful role in legislative government, they proposed that the High Commissioner amend the Legislature's charter to incorporate the following fundamental changes:

1. That section 2, article 1 of the charter be clarified as to the locus of authority for determining the legitimacy of a chiefly title. By tradition this authority is vested in the women of the clans concerned and not with elected leaders.

2. Elimination of the election of at-large members of the Palau Legislature (invariably the men elected to these seats favored the interests of the urban areas over those of the rural based hereditary leaders).

3. That the Legislature be reorganized on a bicameral basis with an upper house of hereditary chiefs and a lower house of elected members and that certain substantive legislative matters be the legal prerogative of the chiefs.

4. That the chiefs have full voting powers (previously denied to them by the 1963 Charter) and be eligible to hold office in the Legislature.

5. That provisions be instituted to insure public hearings on all proposed laws.

6. That political parties be eliminated by statute or regulated by stringent requirements.

7. That the management and expenditure of public moneys be more tightly controlled.[102]

---

[101] "Declaration of Concern and Position of the Traditional Hereditary Chiefs of Palau District," (Koror, Palau: 1973). This document is located in the files of the Office of Public Affairs, Office of the High Commissioner, Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, Saipan, Mariana Islands.

[102] Ibid.

Clearly the Uludong group recognized the tendency toward insensitive rule that comes with total political control. The call for a bicameral legislature and full voting privileges for the chiefs was a way of giving legislative force to the chiefs' voices so often ignored. The radical proposal that political parties be abolished or rigidly regulated shows that party activities tended to create more social conflict than competitive cohesion.

Boycotters

The hereditary leaders were not the only legislature members to use boycott as a means of political protest. The elected members of the Sixth Palau Legislature (in office Oct. 1975 - Dec. 1979) divided into two factions--the majority Tmetuchl faction and a minority faction which generally allied with Ibedul and Reklai. Just three days into the first session of the Sixth Legislature (Nov. 1975), the minority faction of twelve members boycotted the meetings thereby leaving the remainder of the legislators without a quorum. On November 24, 1975 the boycotters, led by John Olbedabel and Tosiwo Nakamura, demanded that they be assigned at least two of the four committee chairmanships. Speaker Sadang Silmai refused to yield on the issue and appealed to both the chiefs and District Administrator, Thomas Remengesau, for assistance. In response to this lack of compromise, the boycotters escalated their position by calling for a total reorganization of the legislature. Silmai reacted by declaring the at-large seats of Olbedabel and Nakamura vacant. Remengesau replied that this solution was inappropriate for the speaker because the problem was an

internal political one for which the Legislature's charter made no provision. Therefore, Remengesau advised that the "Legislature should resolve the problem itself without turning to the District Administrator, High Commissioner or High Court."[103] Eventually the problem was resolved but not after the minority faction gave notice that it was willing to use boycott as a way of asserting its political position. Several years later, this same tactic would be used very effectively in the fight to put the draft Palau Constitution to a referendum (see pp. 327-330).

In March 1976 the chiefs boycotted again during a special session of the Legislature. Ibedul Gibbons had introduced a resolution establishing voting franchise for the chiefs but it was defeated by the elected members, thereby creating a legislative crisis. Recall that the chiefs had traveled to Saipan in 1973 and petitioned High Commissioner Johnson to amend the Legislature's charter in seven specific ways.[104] (see above) Soon after, a committee investigated the dispute but no effective action was taken.[105]

Peter T. Coleman, then Deputy High Commissioner, became the intermediary in the rejuvenated dispute between the two leadership groups. After exhaustive meetings with both sides, he issued a new charter in April 1976

---

[103] Thomas O. Remengesau, Letter to Sadang Silmai, November 30, 1975. This document is located in the Office of Public Affairs, Office of the High Commissioner, Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, Saipan, Mariana Islands.

[104] "Declaration of Concern and Position of the Traditional Hereditary Chiefs of Palau District," (Koror, Palau: 1973).

[105] High Commissioner Edward Johnson appointed a 4-man committee (Mr. Strik Yoma, Director of Public Affairs; Thomas Remengesau, District Administrator; Mamoru Nakamura, Deputy Attorney General; and Mr. Boyd Mackenzie, Special Assistant for District Affairs, to study the Chiefs' proposal and recommend changes. The committee made a fact-finding trip to Palau on June 30, 1973.

establishing a bicameral legislature, containing a House of Elected Members and a House of Chiefs. Despite this change the chiefs still had very little legislative authority.

They could vote their concurrence or non-concurrence on legislation initiated by the elected members but, in essence, the chiefs had no authority to amend or veto work coming from the House of Elected Members. All they could do was initiate resolutions. The new charter, like the old, clearly favored elected leadership over hereditary leadership. Furthermore, few of the changes requested in the 1973 petition were incorporated into the new charter.

The chiefs had lost. They sat alone in their own house separated from the elected members by chasms of authority and outlook. While on the same floor with the elected members, the hereditary leaders had, by voice and look, some considerable influence on the doings of the elected members.[106] Sitting apart, this pressure, subtle to be sure, was gone. The chiefs had their own house but less authority on legislative matters since the creation of the Palau Congress in 1947. The establishment of the House of Chiefs was the beginning of the end for the chiefs as effective legislative leaders.

Superport Politics

The boycotts by hereditary and elected leaders in 1973, 1975 and 1976 showed that control of the Palauan political arena by Roman Tmetuchl was

---

[106]Yoichi Singeo, personal interview, Koror, Palau, January 10, 1981. Mr. Singeo was a member of the Sixth Palau Legislature.

going to be actively challenged by one group or another. One such confronting group was the Save Palau Organization. Led by Ibedul Gibbons and Moses Uludong, the group campaigned vigorously throughout Palau against the superport.[107] The efforts of this group in raising Palauan consciousness to the potential environmental and social dangers of construction and operation of a crude oil transhipment station were community education in the truest sense of the term. More than anything else, the superport issue governed events in Palau from 1975 to early 1977.

Tia Belaud took a strong stand against the proposed superport in its convention in February 1977. A month later five Iranians from the National Iranian Tanker Company visited several possible port sites on Palau's barrier reef as guests of the Palau Legislature. The Iranians met with members of the Legislature's port authority to discuss the sites and status of the proposed port project. After the meetings the Iranians officials traveled with three legislators to Saipan to brief Palauans there on steps being taken in regard to the proposed superport.[108] Some thirty-eight Palauans holding top positions in the Trust Territory administration strongly supported the port concept as evidenced by their letter to Speaker Silmai a year earlier.[109]

---

[107] The Save Palau Organization was especially active throughout Palau in 1976 and early 1977. During that time it traveled numerous times to thirteen of Palau's fifteen rural municipalities. At these meetings the Organization showed films of oil pollution and reef distruction from sedimentation. The young activists talked with villagers, who they found had no prior understanding of the ambitious superport concept.

[108] The three legislators were Ngiratkel Etipson (Koror), Masaichi Etiterengil (Ngiwal), and House of Chiefs representative, Emil Ramarui.

[109] This two and a half page letter of support dated January 19, 1976 is contained in U.S. Congress, Senate, Palau Deepwater Port Hearing, pp. 78-81.

In late March 1977, a group of Palauans went to Washington, D.C. to testify before the United States Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources. Committee chairman Henry Jackson invited both pro- and anti-superport groups to attend. Robert Panero, who conceived the ambitious Palau port idea, generally spoke in favor of the idea in his oral testimony. He indicated that as of 1977 Japan had sufficient transhipment capacity at its Kagoshima and Okinawa deep water ports to make the Palau port unnecessary. He further indicated that there was ambivalence within the Japanese government concerning the port concept. Some government leaders said to him that they thought the idea should be pursued, whereas others said that such a port would disrupt Japan's relationship with the major oil companies.[110]

Johnson Toribiong, floor leader of the Palau Legislature and chairman of the Legislature's Port Authority Committee, presented the Legislature's position in the Senate hearing. Toribiong said that Palau's lawmakers were open to the concept as one having economic development potential but that "environmental impact studies must precede and condition all economic and technical feasibility studies . . .[111]

Ibedul Gibbons, Moses Uludong and Father Felix Yaoch, S.J., spoke against the superport concept. Numerous other anti-port people had their testimony entered into the official record as there was not sufficient time for oral presentations. Some people felt that lack of time for the anti-port speakers biased the hearing in favor of the pro-port groups.

---

[110] Ibid., p. 6.

[111] Ibid., pp. 61-64.

Of the anti-port written testimony, Father Yaoch's was especially biting. He rigorously challenged every point of the Palau Legislature's resolution of April 1976, which requested U.S. government assistance "in reviewing, developing, and if desirable, promoting and executing the energy-industry-complex known as Port Pacific at Palau."[112] Fr. Yaoch stated that the secrecy surrounding the superport made it "immoral and unjust for the people whose lives would be affected by it."[113] He concluded by stating that there was serious opposition to the port proposal from the people of Palau.

The visit of Tmetuchl and Silmai to Iran in March 1976 (see p. 285), the Legislature's April resolution, and Fr. Yaoch's critical evaluation of the port concept and Palauan leadership involvement in it, indicated that as of mid-1976 Palau's top leader had become fascinated by the superport idea. The August 1976 prefeasibility study on the superport plan by Van Houten Associates, New York, stated that the "political and commercial leadership of Palau is favorably disposed towards this type of development."[114]

Both Palau's senators to the Congress of Micronesia had been involved in superport planning meetings with Japanese and Iranian officials. Lazarus Salii withdrew his active participation in May 1975 and Roman Tmetuchl did so about the time of Jimmy Carter's election in November 1976. At that time Bill Brophy, who became Tmetuchl's trusted assistant, persuaded Tmetuchl

---

[112] Ibid., p. 74.

[113] Ibid., p. 40.

[114] Ibid., p. 495.

that the superport concept was incompatible with Palau's political separation from the other Micronesian areas.[115] With keen political insight, Tmetuchl had decided to fight for Palau's separation from the other Micronesian areas. It seems that in late 1976 or early 1977, Tmetuchl learned from his close contacts in Japan that the Japanese government and the major promoters, Nissho-Iwai Co. Ltd. and the Industrial Bank of Japan were reluctant to carry the plan to implementation. This was a sudden change.

The major factors in this change on the part of the Japanese seem to have been: (1) opposition to the plan by the major oil companies which controlled most of the world's oil traffic, and (2) opposition by some U.S. congressmen, specifically, Philip Burton, chairman of the Subcommittee on Territorial and Insular Affairs. Also, there was strong anti-port pressure exerted by fourteen conservation organizations.[116] These groups banded together and hired Dr. Julian Gresser, a Harvard specialist in environmental law, to petition the Japanese Diet. With Gresser's assistance, the Consumer's Union of Japan similarly petitioned six Japanese political parties, the U.S. Congress and the U.N. Trusteeship Council. The force of the petitions' legal arguments was very compelling.[117]

---

[115] Bill Brophy, personal interview, Honolulu, Hawaii, August 16, 1982.

[116] These organizations were: Save Palau Organization; Tia Belaud; Natural Resources Defense Council; Environmental Defense Fund; The Sierra Club; Friends of the Earth; Friends of the Earth International, Inc.; The World Worldlife Fund-United States Appeal; Pacific Science Association; Micronesia Support Committee; National Wildlife Federation; International Union for the Conservation of Nature.

[117] For a review of Gresser's Diet petition, see Julian Gresser, Koichiro Fujikura, and Akio Morishima, Environmental Law in Japan, (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1981), pp. 355-368.

In retrospect, available evidence appears to warrant five conclusions concerning the grandiose Palau superport concept:

First, the concept was seriously entertained by top business and government leaders in Japan and Palau from mid-1974 to about late 1976.

Second, information about the concept was kept secret or restricted until a vigorous protest movement developed.

Third, both Lazarus Salii and Roman Tmetuchl were intimately involved in the concept as Palau's coordinators. To their credit, Salii withdrew in May 1975, and Tmetuchl in late 1976. In a letter to the speaker of the Palau Legislature, Itelbang Luii, and Palau's District Administrator, Thomas Remengesau, Salii stated that he was concerned about "criticism of the whole concept within our population" and "the fact that very little information is available" about the port concept.[118] After a twelve to eighteen month adventure with the superport idea, Tmetuchl also rejected it. As noted above, he was convinced by Brophy that the idea was incompatible with Palau's political separation. Brophy maintains that the port idea was even "traded" for Palau's separation.[119] Besides this pragmatic reason, Tmetuchl, as a nationalist, realized that a superport would leave Palauans a minority in their own land. A concentration of energy at a port in Palau would certainly be controlled by the U.S. Navy and Japanese industrial interests which would render Tmetuchl, or any other Palauan leader, politically impotent. Tmetuchl made public his rejection of the superport concept in his testimony before the U.N. Trusteeship Council in May 1978 and on several other occasions.

Fourth, the grandiose superport idea, like yeast, inflated Palauans' images of the motivations of individuals involved and the cultural-environmental implications of the port concept. In many ways the idea had become a "shouting scarecrow." Long after the Japanese and Iranians had dropped the idea, anti-Tmetuchl and pro-Tmetuchl groups kept the idea alive in newspaper stories and endless debate. Both sides attempted to gain

---

[118] Lazarus Salii, Letter to Itelbang Luii, Speaker Palau District Legislature and Thomas O. Remengesau, District Administrator, Palau, May 9, 1975. Pacific Collection, Hamilton Library, University of Hawaii, Honolulu, Hawaii.

[119] Bill Brophy, personal interview, Honolulu, Hawaii, August 19, 1982.

as much political leverage from the issue as possible. A side benefit of all this activity was that the larger community gained a greater understanding of the ambitious port concept.

Finally, growing social-political unrest in Iran seemed to have prevented the port concept from gaining serious consideration at the highest levels of government in that nation. In Japan, however, the port issue became a volatile one. Gresser suggests that the conservative Liberal Democratic Party became concerned that the Palau port idea might become a cause celebre and was therefore politically too risky to pursue.[120] Apparently this view was transmitted to the port's promoters, Nissho-Iwai and the Industrial Bank of Japan, who suddenly lost interest in the concept.

Despite Tmetuchl's rejection of the superport concept, a segment of his supporters continued to pursue the idea. In December 1977 the Palau Legislature through its Special Committee on the Palau Port Authority made a last ditch attempt to save the port concept. Trying to defuse criticism both local and international, the Port Authority Committee went on record favoring construction of the superport according to an eight point plan. Curiously, the plan called for legislative missions to Japan for the purpose of persuading Nissho-Iwai "to immediately conduct the feasibility studies for the oil facility."[121] The Japanese promoters, however, had lost interest.

Two Forces Collide

As 1977 was the year of the superport's fall, 1978 was an intensely political year in Palau. In late 1976 and early 1977 Roman Tmetuchl

---

[120] Gresser, Environmental Law in Japan, p. 368.

[121] "Superport Supported by the Legislature," Micronesian Independent, vol. 8, no. 29, December 23, 1977, p. 7.

acquired several American advisors. Stuart Beck, a New York lawyer, was hired as legal counsel to the Palau Political Status Commission; William Brophy became Tmetuchl's highly trusted political advisor; and Thomas Gladwin, an anthropologist, served as an unpaid consultant. Gladwin had been associated with Tmetuchl while he was a member of the Congress of Micronesia. They developed "a lasting friendship based on shared trust, respect, and style of humor." The prestigious name of John Kenneth Galbraith was added to the list of advisors in January 1978 when the Harvard professor agreed to serve as an unpaid advisor to the Commission. While Galbraith and Gladwin were intermittent advisors, Brophy and Beck, it seems, had considerable influence on Tmetuchl's political plans and activities, especially as regards political status negotiations with the U.S. Tmetuchl had high regard for both men, terming Brophy "a genius."[122] The two Americans left Palau a short time before Tmetuchl lost his place of political preeminence in late 1979. Since that time Brophy has become a successful Honolulu real estate businessman and keeps abreast of events happening in Palau. Stuart Beck continues his law practice in New York City.

The solidarity and perceived success the anti-superport faction experienced in 1977 now focused its attention on building opposition to Tmetuchl through a Micronesian unity campaign. The Save Palau Organization

---

[122]Concerning his close relationship with Tmetuchl, Brophy characterized his role as being Tmetuchl's voice in English and American political dialogue. "I was his staff man. I gave him options and research and was good at it. His wife joked that I knew his political positions better than she did because in a real way I was his alter ego." Bill Brophy, personal interview, Honolulu, Hawaii, November 19, 1981.

faded away to be replaced by the Concerned Citizens of Palau organization (a new issue called for a new organization) which was extremely active promoting opposition to Tmetuchl through unity for Palau with the other Micronesian districts. This group consisted of John O. Ngiraked and younger Palauans (25-40 years old) who were seeking a political identity outside the Liberal and Progressive parties.[123] They also sought some ground they could call their own in the crowded Palau political arena.

One of the first steps this group took was to send a letter of protest to the Congress of Micronesia concerning Senator Roman Tmetuchl and Congressman Polycarp Basilius. The thirty-two concerned citizens expressed their displeasure that the

> absence from congressional sessions of the spokesmen for separation is a calculated attempt to weaken the cause of Micronesian Unity. By their absence the Palauan delegation is rendered ineffective in using the Congress of Micronesia as an appropriate forum from which to achieve the just aspiration of the majority of the Palauan people to unite with their brethren Micronesian people.[124]

Several other petitions were sent to Senate President Nakayama on February 20, 1978. One of these, signed by ninety-nine Palauans, urged the Senate to expel and remove Tmetuchl from his senate seat. "Instead of attending Senate sessions he devotes the time trying to persuade people

---

[123] John Ngiraked in testimony before the United Nations Trusteeship Council, Verbatim Record, Forty-fifth Session, 1473rd meeting, May 18, 1978, p. 51.

[124] "Palau Citizens Protest Congress Absentees," Micronesian Independent, vol. 9, no. 4, February 17, 1978, p. 5.

in Palau to go to . . . political war with our Micronesian brothers and sisters."[125] Paramount chiefs Ibedul and Reklai cabled their full support for the Senate's pending resolution of censure and expulsion. The chiefs' message in particular had a significant impact on the ten senators because it was a clear statement that the hereditary leaders had no confidence in Tmetuchl's leadership.[126] Given the Micronesian tendency to keep censure private, these petitions must have struck a responsive chord in the senators for on February 25, 1978 they voted eight to two in favor of Tmetuchl's censure and expulsion from the Senate of the Congress of Micronesia.[127] Tmetuchl had by this time become an ardent separatist, making the vote foreordained.

The news of this unprecedented decision made front page copy in the Guam and Majuro papers and the editorial page of the Honolulu Star Bulletin, which claimed that Palauans were deeply divided over the question of Micronesian unity. As with the superport issue, Tmetuchl again was the

---

[125]"Palau Petition Against Tmetuchl," Micronesian Independent, vol. 9, no. 5, March 5, 1978, p. 8.

[126]"Tmetuchl Expelled from Senate," Micronesian Independent, vol. 9, no. 5, March 5, 1978, p. 8.

[127]Special Committee Report 7-7 dated February 25, 1978 of the Senate of the Congress of Micronesia found that "Senator Tmetuchl had neglected his obligations as a member of the Senate by his persistent and continuous failure to attend sessions and by his failure to participate in the work of the Senate during the Seventh Congress thereby dishonoring the Senate and the people of Micronesia . . ." See Journal of the Senate of the Congress of Micronesia, Second Regular Session, Seventh Congress, January-February 1978, p. 484. On the basis of this report the Senate passed resolution no. 7-5 censuring and expelling Tmetuchl. Senator Kaleb Udui of Palau, a Tmetuchl supporter, and Senator Wilfred Kendall of the Marshall Islands cast the only two negative votes. Senator Kabua of the Marshall Islands was absent from the session.

center of attention. But unlike that grandiose vision, which quietly died away, Tmetuchl's strong separatist position made him a fair target for all his political enemies, most of whom supported unity with the other ethnic areas in Micronesia.

Two months after the Carter administration took office, Tmetuchl visited Washington, D.C. with Brophy and a retinue of top Palauan political leaders to see Congressman Philip Burton.[128] At the time Burton was chairman of the House of Representative's Subcommittee on Territorial and Insular Affairs of the Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs. The visitors from Palau gave Burton a draft of a Declaration of Intent which outlined Palau's intentions for pursuing a political status separate from the other Trust Territory districts. After some discussion with the Palau delegation, Burton announced that Palau's case for separation "looked alright." In effect the powerful chairman of the Subcommittee on Territorial and Insular Affairs was saying that if Tmetuchl wanted Palau's political separation, he could have it as long as he was willing to oppose the superport and see the case through to the end. For Burton this new departure would be a matter of Palauan self-determination rather than U.S. policy. For the U.S. to sanction separation would be unacceptable at the United Nations. Since this important Washington meeting in early 1977, Tmetuchl, with the assistance of Beck and Brophy, had been laying

---

[128]Bill Brophy had been the seat mate of Philip Burton's younger brother, John Burton, when they were members of the California State Legislature. Brophy therefore knew the older Burton and had arranged for the important Washington meeting at which Palau sold its case for separation. Bill Brophy, personal interview, Honolulu, Hawaii, November 19, 1981.

the groundwork for the Hilo Principles which Tmetuchl signed just six weeks after his expulsion from the Senate of the Congress of Micronesia. The Washington meeting with Burton made Tmetuchl's course clear. According to Burton, Palau's political separation from the other Micronesian districts would be based on Tmetuchl's rejection of the superport and his determination. Tmetuchl was ready and willing to work hard for separation because he passionately believed it was in Palau's best interest.

The Concerned Citizens allied with the two paramount chiefs and a minority of elected leaders on the one side, and the Tmetuchl group on the other, were consolidating their positions, thus making the situation a clear bipolar one of good against evil, black versus white. Fueling this political fire was the entanglement of the two factions in the strike of Palau's Continental Hotel workers who walked off their jobs on December 10, 1977. John O Ngiraked, a legal advisor for the strikers and chairman of Palau's delegation to the 1975 Micronesian Con-Con, claimed that Tmetuchl and Remengesau (Palau's District Administrator) were attempting to muzzle him for his outspoken position supporting Micronesian unity and his assistance to the strikers. Olbedabel further claimed that the two "bosses" would install a dictatorship once Palau was politically separate from the other five districts of Micronesia.[129]

While Olbedabel was making headlines in the Guam and Majuro papers in support of Micronesian unity, Ibedul Gibbons won the March 1978 race for the Koror mayorship against an unusually strong challenge from Santos

---

[129]"Dictatorship in Palau Warned," Micronesian Independent, vol. 9, no. 6, March 24, 1978, p. 1.

Olikong who reportedly had the support of Tmetuchl's Liberal Party.[130] Ibedul, paramount chief of Palau's southern confederation,[131] supported unity as much as an anti-Tmetuchl position as one of important long range political-cultural merit. Ibedul and Reklai (paramount chief of the northern confederation) announced their support for Micronesian unity and for the Micronesian Constitution (both were delegates to the 1975 Con-Con) before the U.N. Trusteeship Council on May 18, 1978.[132] While this U.N. announcement made only subtle and brief reference to Palau's deep internal feud, the chiefs decided in Guam to make public their often privately expressed fear that Palau's hereditary leaders would "become mere figure-heads in a separate Palau ruled by Roman Tmetuchl and his separatist supporters."[133] The hereditary leaders, in decline since the early 1960s, were once again attempting to gain ascendency through opposition to the majority faction of elected leaders.

---

[130] As a possible indicator of the July 1978 referendum on the Micronesian Constitution and unity, Koror's 1978 mayoral race drew 75 percent of the town's 3,758 voters to the polls on March 30. The official count showed Ibedul Gibbons winning with 1,062 votes, Santos Olikong with 812 votes, Itelbang Luii with 487 votes and Martin Orrukem with 341 votes. This was perceived a victory by the unity forces.

[131] The southern (also western) confederation was traditionally composed of the following village-complexes: Koror, half of Airai, Ngaremlengui, Aimeliik, Ngatpang, Ngardmau, Peleliu, and Angaur.

[132] The chiefs' support for unity was contained in an eloquent speech made by John Olbedabel Ngiraked. See United Nations, Trusteeship Council, Verbatim Record, pp. 26-37. This trip to the U.N. by Palau's unity proponents was paid for by the Congress of Micronesia.

[133] Cisco Uludong, "Palau Chiefs Support Unity," Pacific Daily News, May 23, 1978, p. 4.

The Micronesian Constitution Fight

However, this quest by the chiefs to regain a voice in Palau's political affairs would not be easy because the House of Chiefs, like the House of Elected Members, was a divided house. This was evident in two resolutions the chiefs issued in April 1978.

Ten days after Roman Tmetuchl signed the "Statement of Agreed Principles for Free Association" in Hilo, Hawaii,[134] the paramount chief faction (those chiefs aligning with Ibedul and Reklai) of the House of Chiefs castigated Tmetuchl for this unilateral action. The chiefs' resolution claimed that Tmetuchl "acted outside the ambit of his authority and responsibility" and that his act represented "a violation of good faith and understanding between him and the Palau District Legislature and Leadership of Palau."[135]

In response, the Tmetuchl supporters in both houses passed a joint resolution five days later which made a bold assertion. The resolution claimed to express "the will of the people of Palau through their traditional and elected representatives in the Palau Legislature, that they abide by the decision reached on the September 24, 1976 Referendum."[136]

---

[134]Negotiations concerning the post-trusteeship political status of the TTPI started in 1969 but were stalled in 1976. The talks resumed in July 1977 when the U.S. proposed that negotiations be conducted on both multilateral and bilateral tiers toward a political status of free association. The eight "Hilo Principles" defining free association were signed by the heads of the four negotiating parties--the U.S., the Marshall Islands, Palau, and the Federated States of Micronesia--on April 9, 1978 in Hilo, Hawaii.

[135]"House of Chiefs Resolution No. 103," Sixth Palau Legislature, Sixth Regular Session, April 19, 1978.

[136]"House of Chiefs Joint Resolution No. 100," Sixth Palau Legislature, Sixth Regular Session, April 24, 1978.

The results of that referendum showed that 88 percent of those who voted favored the position that Palau negotiate separately with the U.S. on the question of political status rather than jointly with the other five Micronesian districts.[137] As noted above, Tmetuchl's separatist group succeeded in identifying Micronesian unity with Palauan cultural subordination and separation with Palauan ascendency. Thus the issue was highly emotionally charged. Furthermore, the resolution's main thrust was to claim that separate negotiations with the U.S., which began in July 1977, could continue only if Palauans rejected the Micronesian constitution in a referendum scheduled for July 12, 1978.[138] Tmetuchl had become committed to separate negotiations as early as 1973 and had been working on this basis ever since his visit to see Congressman Philip Burton in early 1977. Furthermore, in July 1977, Tmetuchl agreed to abide by the results of the referendum on the Micronesian constitution.[139] Since that

---

[137] Tmetuchl claimed that approximately 65 to 70 percent of the electorate turned out to vote. This is true only after combining the 2,559 "official" yes votes with the 683 "unofficial" yes votes. This distinction between official and unofficial votes is unusual. Generally ballots are either valid or invalid. With 5,880 registered voters, the total yes votes represent 55 percent of that total.

[138] This date is Micronesia Day, a public holiday honoring the establishment of the Congress of Micronesia and, by implication, Micronesian unity. The very choice of this date indicated a bias in favor of the Micronesian constitution.

[139] At the resumption of the Micronesian status talks in July 1977 in Guam, representatives of all six districts and the Congress of Micronesia agreed that the most appropriate negotiating format would be for each district legislature to make its own decision on which commission it desired to have represent it in the negotiations. However, this decision, it was agreed, would be contingent upon the outcome of the Micronesian constitutional referendum to be held on July 12, 1978. See Peter R. Rosenblatt, United Nations, Trusteeship Council, Verbatim Record, p. 41.

agreement, he had been expelled from the Congress of Micronesia in February 1978 and had rejected the superport in testimony before the U.N. in May of that same year. Also, he had to face a vocal opposition in Palau which was then campaigning vigorously for Micronesian unity. Many of Palau's 1,300 government workers opposed political separation on the grounds that the U.S. did not want it and would therefore withdraw its funding support from a separate Palau. People were afraid they would lose their jobs as a result.

In this situation, pressure was mounting. The two sides had crystallized their positions. More than any other time in his political career, Tmetuchl's leadership hung in the balance of the July 12 referendum.

Nearly all Palauans had a position on the Micronesian constitution, thus neatly dividing the society into two opposing factions and forcing third parties like Tia Belau to choose sides.[140] Numerous forces were at work bombarding Palauans with information and petitions to vote one way or the other. The Trust Territory government's Education for Self-Government (ESG) program was active explaining the content and meaning of the Micronesian Constitution. The Congress of Micronesia sent a multi-culture group of traditional leaders to Palau to promote unity and a yes-vote on July 12. This visit stimulated the House of Chiefs joint resolution (discussed above) calling for a no-vote. It also stimulated the

---

[140]The 1978 referendum caused a deep split in the Tia Belaud party. Moses Uludong and part of the party opposed Micronesian unity and the constitution because they believed that there was no viable pan-Micronesian organization to sustain and nurture unity. Other Tia Belaud members, fearful of Tmetuchl, felt such an organization could, in time, be built and therefore they strongly favored Micronesian unity.

Palau Legislature to fund an education program which resulted in a profusion of colorful posters, radio and TV programs, rallies and meetings to explain why the Micronesian constitution should be rejected by the voters.

With much experience at and a gift for organizing people, Moses Uludong gathered the Continental Hotel strikers and their sympathizers to campaign actively for a no-vote. For once, Uludong and Tmetuchl sought the same end--defeat of the Micronesian Constitution--but for different reasons. Their talents were mutually reinforcing. Though Uludong was threatened by the unity forces as being a turncoat, his behind-the-scenes organizational work complemented Tmetuchl's determination and financial resources both personal and through the Legislature. The no-group was shuttled around Koror in colorfully decorated pick-up trucks. Although Tmetuchl gave several rousing speeches against Micronesian unity, he generally kept a low profile because he believed there existed a ground swell of support for separation.[141] After all, he believed he had a "mandate" from the September 24, 1976 referendum.

The unity forces were led by Ibedul Gibbons and John Olbedabel.[142] Lazarus Salii, a long time supporter of Micronesian unity and natural leader for the cause, decided, much to the disappointment of the people

---

[141] Victor Vierra, former chief of police in Palau (1977-1979), personal interview (telephone), Honolulu, Hawaii, October 22, 1981; and Cisco Uludong, "TT Braces for Constitutional Vote," Pacific Daily News, July 11, 1978, p. 1.

[142] The Progressive Party also split. Some members as John Olbedabel favored unity. Other members as Polycarp Basilius and Jacob Sawaichi supported separation.

supporting unity, to remain aloof from the hotly contested campaign. As a top official in the High Commissioner's Office, Salii had to remain neutral. "The issues," he said, "are clear to the voters. It is their turn to decide and do without undue influence by anyone."[143]

To match the Uludong group, the unity workers consisted of Concerned Citizens of Palau who worked in the Department of Education and at Palau High School. They too painted and posted large colorful signs, made radio programs and campaigned house to house for unity.

Although the stakes were high and each side was determined to win, the social situation in many ways became carnival-like. Colorfully decorated pick-up trucks sporting huge signs ran up and down Koror's dusty roads as campaigners made last minute contacts. Both yes and no groups were predicting victory and feeling good about it. By 7 P.M. on July 12, over 93 percent of Palau's registered voters had gone to the polls. Both sides had exhausted their resources, for never before had such a high percentage of voters cast ballots.[144] Some 55 percent (3,339 no-votes) voted for separation as against 45 percent (2,720 yes-votes) who wanted the Micronesian Constitution and unity. Tmetuchl had gained a very narrow victory. His "mandate" of September 24, 1976 had vanished and the opposition gave notice of its power and determination.

---

[143]"Salii Says No One Ordered Him Silent," Pacific Daily News, July 7, 1978, p. 4.

[144]Of the five other voting areas in the Trust Territory, Kosrae had a turnout of 83 percent, Truk 79 percent, Marshall Islands 78 percent, Yap 76 percent and Ponape 72 percent. Thus the Palauans lived up to their reputation as Micronesia's most political people.

With such a close vote, the unity side went to Ponape to petition the Congress of Micronesia, the sole judge of the referendum results, to investigate irregularities which allegedly occurred during the July 12 vote. Acting High Chief Reklai Termeteet and John Ngiraked charged that the Tmetuchl group had resorted to bribery, intimidation, blackmail, and misuse of public funds.[145]

While the Reklai and Ibedul were away in Ponape and Guam, the separatist chiefs met unannounced and voted to remove the two paramount chiefs from their chairmanship positions in the House of Chiefs.[146] However, the House did not have a quorum as required by the Legislature's charter and thus the act was illegal. In a letter to the editor of the Pacific Daily News, Ibedul and Reklai characterized the attempted ouster as one inspired by "some local self-serving and power-hungry politicians who never hesitate to exploit our people and our culture for their selfish ends."[147]

The United Nations had sent a team of referendum observers to Palau and they reported no serious irregularities. Palau's chief of police, an American on leave from his position with the Honolulu Police Department, had taken special precautions to insure the inviolability of ballot boxes

---

[145] Cisco Uludong, "Palau referendum charges are detailed," Pacific Daily News, September 13, 1978, p. 3.

[146] Ibedul claimed that separatists in the House of Elected Members arranged the special session of the House of Chiefs for the sole purpose of discrediting the two traditional leaders. See Bob Perez, "Chief calls ouster 'dirty politics,'" Pacific Daily News, 15 September 1978, p. 7.

[147] Ibedul and Reklai Letter to the editor, Pacific Daily News, September 18, 1978, p. 15.

and absentee ballots.[148] Given that the separatists had an edge in the issue, it seems unlikely they would engage in any irregularities because it would jeopardize their expected victory. For the one side to falsely claim serious irregularities and for the other to illegally attempt to oust the two paramount chiefs, clearly indicated the competitive nature of Palauan society and that the two groups remained strongly opposed to one another.

Electing Con-Con Delegates

Having rejected the Micronesian Constitution, Palau could continue separate negotiations with the U.S. but was obliged to draft its own constitution, which in time would require ratification by the people.

In August 1978 while the unity faction made plans to challenge the July 12 referendum results, the Palau Legislature met in special session to enact legislation calling for a Palau constitutional convention. Public law 6-5S-1 prescribed its powers, duties and functions.[149] Unlike the earlier convention of 1974, the thirty-eight delegates would be elected by popular vote on November 28, 1978. Hereditary leaders were not included as privileged members as was the case at the 1975 Micronesian Con-Con. This, it seems, was a sign that the written word held sway over the spoken word, that the chiefs were but curiosities for small children, old men and visiting anthropologists.

---

[148] Victor Vierra, personal interview (telephone), Honolulu, Hawaii, October 22, 1981.

[149] This legislation was signed into law by Palau District Administrator, Thomas O. Remengesau on September 26, 1978.

Public Law 6-5S-1 required that the Con-Con draft a constitution "for the future Government of the sovereign State of Palau that should make allowance for the establishment of free association with the U.S."[150] This was, as events would show, a crucial qualification which Tmetuchl, perhaps against his keen political sense, stood by steadfastly.

On November 28, 1978 Palauans went to the polls for the second time in four months. Some eighty-nine candidates ran for thirty-eight seats. Six of Palau's seven lawyers had their names on the ballot as did a wide spectrum of Palau's professional talent from both Palau and Saipan. It seems that many voters and candidates were unsure what a Con-Con meant, given the bitterly fought July 12 referendum. A Con-Con would be a very different experience; one that would call for cooperation, hard work and deep concentration. According to Father Yaoch, S.J., cooperation and sharing continue to be strong features of Palauan culture; a balance to the competitive drive.

Prior to the convening of the Palau Con-Con in early 1979, two important events occurred in late 1978. Under Secretarial Order 3027, Palau was legislatively separated from the Congress of Micronesia. Palau's five congressmen became at-large members of the Palau Legislature increasing its membership to thirty-three. Secondly, Tmetuchl and his American advisors went to work on a government reorganization plan.

---

[150] This qualification was the work of Johnson Toribiong and Joshua Koshiba, members of the Tmetuchl faction. They believed that with input from astute Palauans living on Saipan the Con-Con could write a constitution compatible with a very good compact of free association which was then being worked out by the PPSC and the U.S. Bill Brophy, personal interview, Honolulu, Hawaii, December 1, 1981.

A Bold Move

With separation official, Tmetuchl moved to establish a transition government by which to consolidate control and coordination over Palau's political affairs. Legislation passed in October 1978 without public hearings or committee deliberation called for a re-organization of the Palau Political Status Commission into a Commission on Status and Transition, of which all twenty-one members would be appointed by Speaker Silmai of the House of Elected Members. The new commission would conduct status negotiations with the U.S., negotiate agreements with foreign governments for generating revenue, produce an economic master plan, and serve as Palau's public information agency. The bill also called for the creation of a three member Palau Government Council composed of Tmetuchl, Silmai and District Administrator Remengesau.[151]

Given Tmetuchl's vision, persuasive skill and determination, his views would prevail in the Council's decisions on transition matters. In addition, the bill called for an Office of Legal Council which would coordinate and meet the legal needs of the Legislature, status and transition

---

[151] According to Bill Brophy, this wide-sweeping reorganization plan was the work of Tmetuchl, Brophy and lawyers Beck and Tom Silk. "We put it together in an intensive five day session and it was the best piece of work any of us had ever done before. Yes, it was a highly centralized and non-democratic organization but we had to have maximum cooperation and coordination with our strongest man [Roman Tmetuchl] out front. We thought it was the most effective vehicle for Palau to gain the best transition to self-government and be in the strongest position to continue the compact negotiations which were going very well for Palau. At the time the Con-Con was of no great concern because I thought we were going to control it. After all, we had promised in Hilo to write a constitution which wouldn't conflict with the compact's basic premises. Roman signed the Hilo Principles and they were approved by the Sixth Legislature." Bill Brophy, personal interview, Honolulu, Hawaii, December 1, 1981.

commission, government council, Palau Con-Con, and Palau Public Land Authority. Finally, $450,000 was called for to fund the work of these new agencies. The money would be spent by the chairman of the Commission on Status and Transition.[152]

This re-organizational plan was both revolutionary and audacious. Corresponding with the trend of political affairs over the last fifteen years, the plan ignored the House of Chiefs and would concentrate power in the hands of one man--Roman Tmetuchl. This plan to centralize and control all decision making authority had the approval of the dominant Tmetuchl faction in the Sixth Palau Legislature and the polish of his American advisors. The plan, however, was vetoed by High Commissioner Adrian Winkel. His veto message questioned nearly every aspect of the plan. Indirectly he expressed the conviction that the transition act concentrated too much power in the hands of too few people. Winkel referred to the American ideals of the democracy of knowledge, popular participation, and representation in government decisions. He maintained that these principles were no where present in the proposed legislation. Here was a clear contrast between two fundamentally different theories of government.[153]

---

[152]Cisco Uludong, "Winkel explains Palau veto," Pacific Daily News, December 6, 1978, p. 6.

[153]High Commissioner Winkel had consulted with Palauans holding top leadership positions in the Trust Territory government in Saipan. They all recommended disapproval of the reorganization plan because it gave Tmetuchl too much power. According to Bill Brophy, another reason Winkel disapproved the plan was because he would not welcome the kind of top-down pressure John K. Galbraith and astute lawyers could assert through Washington. "They would ask too many embarrassing questions about America's dismal administrative record in the Trust Territory." Bill Brophy, personal interview, Honolulu, Hawaii, December 1, 1981.

The attempt by the Tmetuchl faction to gain control of Palau's internal and external affairs had failed.[154] Winkel's veto message and the results of the Palau Con-Con election came at about the same time. They were not good omens for Tmetuchl's leadership.

Unlike the earlier Con-Con of 1974, which was a "stacked" convention, the 1979 convention would be composed of thirty-eight popularly elected delegates.[155] Bill Brophy, Tmetuchl's close political consultant and assistant, advised against a fully elected Con-Con because he felt the Tmetuchl faction might not gain an effective voice in such a diverse group.[156] Anticipating this situation, Brophy drafted a bill calling for a forty delegate convention, ten members of whom would be appointed by Speaker Silmai and the rest elected. However, when Brophy was away from Palau, Johnson Toribiong and Joshua Koshiba convinced Tmetuchl that the convention could indeed be persuaded to write a constitution compatible with the development philosophy underlying the evolving compact of free association. This, they felt could be done in two ways. First, Palauans

---

[154] A few weeks after Winkel's veto, the PPSC submitted a revision of their first plan. Among other things, it separated the Con-Con from transitional affairs as Winkel wanted. The High Commissioner approved this revised plan and its $450,000 budget.

[155] The 1974 Con-Con was convened for the purpose of forming a Palauan position which would be presented at the 1975 Micronesian Con-Con, Saipan. The 1974 Palau Con-Con was "stacked" because none of its members were popularly elected for the sole purpose of the convention. Of the twenty-eight members, seven came from the Legislature, four from among the hereditary chiefs, Palau's five members to the Congress of Micronesia were to be members, one member from each of the three political parties, the five elected delegates to the Micronesian Con-Con, two members from the Legislature's Select Committee on Development, and two members were appointed by the District Administrator.

[156] Bill Brophy, personal interview, Honolulu, Hawaii November 19, 1981.

working in Saipan who favored continuing Western-style modernization and infrastructure construction could be encouraged to run for Con-Con seats. Tmetuchl reportedly pulled out some of his local supporters so as to give the Saipan Palauans a better chance at winning.[157] Although this was a good move in theory, it backfired in practice because all of the eight so called "Saipan Mafia" (Palauans holding top positions in Saipan) signed a constitution that was incompatible with Tmetuchl's compact negotiating position.

The second way Toribiong and Koshiba devised for insuring a pro-compact constitution was by including a requirement in the Con-Con enabling legislation that stipulated that the convention draft a document which would make allowances for the establishment of free association with the United States. This proved to be the more important method of the two for "controlling" the Con-Con. However, it too led to totally unexpected consequences.

New Directions

Palauans Write Their Constitution[158]

It was evident from the beginning of Palau's Constitutional Convention that some delegates recognized that whoever controlled the convention would most probably control Palau's future government. Although

---

[157] Ibid.

[158] An earlier version of this section entitled, "Palau's Constitutional Tangle" appeared in The Journal of Pacific History XV, Part 2 (April 1980):74-82.

cooperation and consensus generally characterized the Con-Con's work, two factions emerged. Roman Tmetuchl was the leader of one group, though not a convention delegate himself. The second group, led by Lazarus Salii, was made up of convention delegates holding important jobs in the Trust Territory administration in Saipan and Palau. Two morally influential delegates, uncommitted to either of these sides, were Father Felix Yaoch, S.J., and Reverend Billy Kuartei. Along with one or two delegates associated with the Modekngei, a religio-political-traditionalist group, these men by their action and attitude could, if they chose, affect the sympathies of many Palauan voters. Father Felix was the highest vote getter amongst the thirty-eight elected delegates and in his quiet and unobtrusive way wielded great influence on the convention.[159]

The convention delegates submitted nearly 500 constitutional proposals. Tmetuchl's group offered a complete constitution calling for a parliamentary system of government. The Saipan block countered with a constitution similar to that adopted by the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM). The Ngatpang delegate, closely associated with the Modekngei, offered a minimal

---

[159]Bill Brophy claims that Father Felix dominated the convention to the extent that he maneuvered to have retained articles in the draft constitution which he knew were fundamentally inconsistent with a $250 million compact offer then being finalized by the U.S. and PPSC. Father Felix and Roman Tmetuchl, though closely related, have conflicting views on the pace and direction of change appropriate for Palau. Father Felix opposes continued rapid social change that accompanies large scale infrastructure development, foreign investment and expansion of the money economy. He was the most eloquent opponent of the proposed superport. Fr. Felix seems to think that the rapid pace of change Palau has been experiencing for two decades distracts people away from just the kind of reflective thinking required at such a time. He believes change is inevitable but that its pace must be slowed so that its direction can be charted.

number of proposals initially but gave the impression that his group could be a force in the final acceptance or rejection of a constitution, as, of course, could both the Catholic and Protestant groups. These religious groups, particularly the Modekngei, are known for their solidarity, and can influence the direction of a considerable portion of Palau's 7,000 registered voters.

Every polity has had to face the ageless human dilemma of group rights versus individual rights. For three readings of the draft Constitution, Palauan delegates emphasized group rights in the form of a clause concerned with emergency situations. The clause, in its original wording, would have given the President wide powers to restrict individual rights in favor of the public good. However, on the last reading, and partly in response to local criticism and U.S. official concerns, the delegates changed this provision. The final version defined "emergency" as war, external aggression, civil rebellion, or natural catastrophe which "threatens life and property of a significant number of people in Palau."[160] A declaration of emergency would require the executive to obtain advice and consent of the Olbiil Era Kelulau (national congress). As a further safeguard, the chief executive would have to obtain continuing consent of the Olbiil Era Kelulau to exercise emergency powers for more than ten days. Another crucial change, one urged by U.S. and several Palauan lawyers, was made on third reading. Fundamental rights were extended to all persons in Palau whether citizens or not.

---

[160] Constitution of the Republic of Palau, Article VIII, Section 14, (Koror, Palau: Palau Constitutional Convention, 1979). This document is housed in the Pacific Collection, Hamilton Library, University of Hawaii, Honolulu, Hawaii, 96826.

Several features of the thirty-seven page Draft Constitution, which would establish a presidential system, are unusual. The press would have wide freedom. The government could not require a bona fide reporter to divulge information obtained in the course of a professional investigation. Citizens would have the right to examine any government document or observe any official deliberation. Support for this right reflected the concern and influence of a journalist-delegate on this issue and, also, was possibly a reaction to the initial secrecy that surrounded the proposal for a superport in Palau.

Palauans feel very strongly about the social danger of guns and wrote into their constitution a prohibition against the possession of firearms (except for law enforcement officers). Violation of this provision would be punishable by a mandatory prison sentence of at least fifteen years. The delegates felt this was preferable to capital punishment.

Finally, the president, vice president, or member of the Olbiil Era Kekulau could be removed from office by recall. Such recall power has its analogue in Palauan history. According to McKnight, Palauan tradition held that a chief could be deposed for cause by the village council and could be exiled. Also, assassinations of candidates and incumbents had occurred in some villages.[161]

The present period in Palau is one of great political competition and change. A Con-Con was seen by some political figures as a way to further enlarge Palau's political arena. The Palau Legislature, which for so many years took a back seat to the Trust Territory district administration,

---

[161] McKnight, "Competition in Palau," p. 90.

in 1975 appointed the Palau Political Status Commission (PPSC) and authorized the establishment of a constitutional convention via popular election. The Commission, headed by Tmetuchl, has been negotiating a new political status with the U.S. on the basis of the "Hilo Principles." This statement of eight principles was agreed to and signed at Hilo, Hawaii on April 9, 1978 by the three negotiating commissions--Palau, Marshalls, and FSM--and the U.S. and defines a unique political relationship known as Free Association. For the Micronesian states this relationship would establish full internal self-government and control of their foreign affairs including marine resources. The U.S. would assume full authority for security and provide economic assistance. As envisioned, U.S. defense and economic aid obligations would be either renegotiated or terminated after fifteen years as mutually agreed. Unilateral termination would be possible at any time on the initiative of either party. If termination were mutual or initiated by the U.S., both defense and economic obligations by the U.S. would continue for the balance of the 15-year term. If a Micronesian state terminated the relationship prior to the end of the agreement, U.S. defense and security authority would continue but the U.S. would, according to the Hilo Principles, "no longer be obligated to provide the same amounts of economic assistance for the remainder of the term initially agreed."[162]

Other bases for negotiation, such as independence, are not precluded by the Hilo Principles, but that issue has not been explored to date.

---

[162] "Statement of Agreed Principles for Free Association," (Hilo Principles), April 9, 1978, in U.S. Department of State, Report to the United Nations on the Administration of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands (31st Annual), Washington, D.C., 1978, p. 24.

Given the pitiful lack of economic development during U.S. administration and the heavy dependence on American financial generosity in other sectors, it is doubtful any Palauan is serious about negotiating immediate independence at this time despite occasional rhetoric to the contrary.[163]

During the January 1979 round of political status talks with the U.S. in Saipan, the PPSC complained that the Palau district administration was not cooperating fully with the Palau Legislature in sharing records, information, and decision-making authority. At that time of sensitive political balance, it was more than coincidence that the Palauan District Administrator, Thomas Remengesau, was transferred to Saipan by the authority of High Commissioner Winkel and replaced by an American, Kim Batcheller.

The Constitutional Convention lasted from January to April, 1979. The delegates apparently were aware of the Hilo Principles and believed they were writing a constitution consistent with a future relationship of Free Association with the U.S. With the Convention half over, the Status Commission requested the U.S. to submit its views on the draft document. The U.S. negotiator, Ambassador Peter Rosenblatt, raised serious questions concerning seven or eight provisions, some of which the delegates then changed. However, three of these provisions were not revised to accord with U.S.

---

[163]Palau's socialist Tia Belaud Party in its 1974 platform called for self-government in preparation for immediate independence. The party consistently supported separation from the FSM but now supports free association with the U.S. as an intermediate stage to future political independendence. The Party's leader, Moses Uludong, served as advisor to High Chief Ibedul and was elected to the Seventh Legislature in September 1979. Uludong campaigned vigorously for Haruo Remeliik who won the presidency of Palau. In the same election, Uludong, won a senate seat in the new Olbiil Era Kelulau. Over the years his political views have moderated as he has faced the day-to-day problems of effective government.

concerns, and it became clear that two different socio-political views were soon to emerge among the Palauans.

Despite the Legislature's charge to write a Constitution consistent with a future political relationship of free association with the U.S., the majority of the convention delegates perceived their mission, as expressed in the emerging documents, in terms of unconditional sovereignty, self-determination, and national identity. The convention had ignited a feeling of cultural revitalization that manifested both ethnic and nationalistic elements.[164] As one convention member said, "All in all, this constitution was formulated for the Palauan people. The delegates were thinking about Palau and what is good for the people, not what might happen with the status negotiations or the free association compact."[165] For the first time in nearly a century of foreign rule, Palauans felt as though they were taking control of their own destiny. This euphoria was expressed in demonstration marches and in a surprisingly one-sided nine to one vote approving the Constitution in the referendum of July 9, 1979. This vote in effect repudiated the anti-constitution leadership of the dominant group in the Palau Legislature which supported the views of PPSC Chairman Tmetuchl.

---

[164]The Palauan Historical Preservation Office, a Cultural Awareness Week, a Palau High School Cultural Heritage Program, improvement of the Palau Museum collections, construction of two traditional war canoes in Ngchesar and Airai, troops of traditional dancers and participation in the South Pacific Festival of Arts (1980) have been steps taken recently to create an awareness of and pride in Palau's rich cultural heritage.

[165]Frank Quimby, "Palau Constitutional campaign launched despite limited funds," Pacific Daily News, Agana, Guam, May 8, 1979, p. 6.

If Palau desires a political relationship of free association with the U.S., which now seems unquestionably to be the case, then sovereignty--as initially expressed by the convention delegates--appears to be conditional. The Palauan Draft Constitution, as interpreted by the U.S., would subordinate essential U.S. strategic and defense needs to the will of the Palauan electorate. According to the Palauan document (Article XIII, section 6), approval by three-fourths of the Palauan voters would be required before harmful substances as nuclear, chemical or biological weapons, or nuclear wastes could be stored, tested or disposed of in Palau.[166] As interpreted by the U.S., this provision would prevent the U.S. Government from carrying out its defense and security obligations as outlined in the eight principles mutually accepted at Hilo. It is fundamental U.S. policy to neither confirm nor deny the presence or absence of

---

[166]Some Micronesians were concerned about radioactive spent nuclear fuel disposal when Dr. T. Greenwood, a senior White House scientific adviser under President Carter, said that Micronesia was being considered as a site for the storage of spent nuclear fuel from plants in Asia (Pacific Islands Monthly, August 1978, p. 5, September 1978, p. 12). The U.S. later designated Wake, Midway, and Palmyra Islands, all outside Micronesia, as possible future storage sites for spent nuclear fuels. Before this announcement, the U.S. specifically declared that no part of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands was being considered for such storage, thus reversing the Greenwood statement. The Carter administration hoped that isolated island storage would remove possible use of spent fuels for nuclear weapons production by Asian nations having such fuels. The South Pacific Forum denounced the U.S. plan to use these islands for such storage. The reputable Science magazine reported that nuclear scientists had been studying the feasibility of nuclear repositories beneath the sea floor (Science, vol. 24, May 11, 1979, pp. 603-606). Further, at the 1980 and 1981 meetings of Association of Chief Executives of the Pacific Basin, Japanese plans to dump low level wastes into the Pacific 600 miles northwest of the Northern Mariana Islands were strongly rejected. However, President Amata Kabua of the Marshall Islands attempted to persuade his fellow chief executives to agree to allow Japanese nuclear waste storage facilities on radioactive polluted islands in the Bikini and Enewetok atolls. His colleagues refused.

nuclear weapons in any given place. The Palauan Constitution would require the U.S. to breach this policy. This problem arose because Palau was speaking with two voices, that of the PPSC on the one hand and that of the Con-Con on the other. The Con-Con's work was in direct conflict with Tmetuchl's compact negotiating efforts.

Since the dangerous substances safeguard does not allow for the transit of nuclear powered warships or nuclear armed warplanes, some people might argue that it is short-sighted because it does not recognize the growing presence of Soviet naval forces in the western Pacific. Japan is already responding to this threat by increasing its defense spending.[167] Palauans, it seems, are victims of their geographical location and, unfortunately, may not be permitted to ignore the wider world of superpower politics which lock all the islands, Palau perhaps more than others, into relationship with Pacific rim countries.

The U.S. objected to two other provisions in the Draft Constitution. The first of these provisions used the archipelago theory to define Palau's territory. The Draft Constitution claimed territorial waters extending out 200 nautical miles from straight baselines connecting the outermost reef and island points of the archipelago. Such a definition, a measure of the temper of the Convention, showed how islanders conceptualized the greatest possible extension of their limited land. This broad assertion of Palau's sovereignty and jurisdiction was, the U.S. felt, incompatible with the internationally accepted definition of territorial waters. Such

---

[167] "Japan Warns of Soviet Dominance in Pacific," Honolulu Star-Bulletin, July 24, 1979, p. 1, and "Japan is Nervous," Editorial, Pacific Daily News, July 31, 1979, p. 23.

waters are usually defined as extending up to twelve miles from land. Thus, the U.S. firmly objected to such a definition because it would establish a 200-mile territorial sea outward from archipelagic base lines which at points would be 100 or more miles from the nearest land.

The other provision which the U.S. was unwilling to accept insured private land owners that the government would not expropriate land for use by a foreign power. This was interpreted by the U.S. as contrary to the Principles of Free Association because it created an ambiguity as to whether the future government of Palau would have clear authority to enter into present and future land use agreements with the U.S.

During the third and fourth readings, the Con-Con delegates did not substantially change these provisions in spite of the concerns expressed by the U.S. negotiator. The delegates either did not agree with the U.S. position on these issues, or did not realize the intensity of the U.S. concerns and how such opposition might endanger the fate of the Draft Constitution. They also seemed to believe that the U.S. would not stand firm in its opposition to these three provisions. This, in retrospect, proved to be a miscalculation. Furthermore, most of the delegates were at the time committed both emotionally and intellectually to the three controversial provisions as written.

In an effort to clarify the U.S. position vis-a-vis the Constitution, and knowing full well that a serious rift was developing between the majority faction in the Palau Legislature on the one side and the Con-Con on the other, President Carter's personal representative in the political status negotiations, Ambassador Peter Rosenblatt, met with the leadership of both factions on April 30, 1979 in Palau. He had been invited by Roman

Tmetuchl, who hoped the American negotiator could unravel the constitution-compact tangle. Rosenblatt said the Constitution as written was incompatible with the Hilo Principles defining free association. The provisions on territorial waters, dangerous substances, and eminent domain were unacceptable to the U.S., and would make a long-term political and economic relationship with the U.S. impossible.[168]

"We've come to the point of choice," Ambassador Rosenblatt said, "You can have an agreement of free association along the lines which your Political Status Commission and we have negotiated or you can have the Constitution in its present form."[169] He was calling on the Palauan leaders to understand the specific consequences entailed in the meaning of their Constitution as interpreted by the U.S. The Ambassador said, if necessary, America was willing to negotiate independence, but the fifteen-year special economic package tied to free association would then be replaced by economic assistance in the form of foreign aid appropriated yearly by the U.S. Congress. This was meant, Rosenblatt said, to be a statement of how the U.S. Congress functioned, and not a political threat.

Having been caught up in the nationalistic-ethnic feeling generated by the Convention process, the pro-Constitution leaders were confused and

---

[168]Principle number five of the Hilo Principles gives the U.S. "full authority and responsibility for security and defense matters in or relating to Micronesia, including the establishment of necessary military facilities and the exercise of appropriate operating rights." The U.S., therefore, firmly believed it was necessary for it to be consulted before any provisions were written into a constitution which would limit choice of weapons, tactical limits, etc.

[169]Frank Quimby, "Rosenblatt lays the problems squarely on the line," Pacific Daily News, Agana, Guam, May 8, 1979, p. 7.

upset. Such U.S. firmness was unexpected. The delegates felt their efforts at nation building were being rejected. One delegate asked Rosenblatt if it would be possible to ratify the constitution and then amend it consistent with U.S. needs. The Ambassador replied that this would be impossible and thereby implied that the compact of free association took precedence over the newly written Palau Constitution. In protest, Con-Con president Haruo Remeliik and several other delegates walked out of the meeting with the American Ambassador. Rosenblatt's visit was popularly interpreted as interference into internal Palauan politics. Along with growing disenchantment with the Tmetuchl faction in the Legislature, the Ambassador's statements had the effect of uniting many people behind the pro-Constitution cause. The radical political division of the 1978 Micronesian unity-separation fight more fully emerged. The Tmetuchl group was soon to face a kind of confusion and determined resistance it had never seen before.

The Tmetuchl group was now in direct conflict with the pro-Constitution block which numbered thirty-four of the thirty-eight Con-Con delegates. The latter group combined with the minority in the Palau Legislature in late May 1979 to form the People's Committee for the Constitution. With former Con-Con delegate and Palau District Director of Education, Alfonso Oiterong, as Chairman, the new Committee campaigned actively for acceptance of the Constitution. Because the majority faction in the Legislature refused to appropriate funds for the purpose of political education and for conducting the July 9 referendum on the new constitution, the People's Committee solicited both funds and moral support. During the period May 19 to July 11, 1979 the Committee raised a total of $20,324

through contributions and fund raising meetings. Of this sum, it spent $18,802 on an energetic campaign urging Palauans to vote yes on July 9.[170] The Palauan nationalistic passions Tmetuchl had so effectively tapped into for his September 1976 and July 1978 victories were being drained away by the People's Committee.

As already noted, the Tmetuchl group dominated the Palau Legislature which had created the Con-Con in the first place. Two weeks before the July 9 referendum, the Legislature passed Bill 1140 repealing the Con-Con enabling legislation, intending thereby to void the Constitution.[171] This action was defended on the grounds that the Con-Con had not carried out the Legislature's mandate of writing a constitution consistent with a political status of free association with the U.S. The Con-Con, of course, believed it had in fact done so.

The several days during which Bill 1140 was introduced, debated and passed, some 400 Palauans protested peacefully outside the Legislative chambers. Criticized in the early 1970s as being un-Palauan, peaceful demonstrations have since become an accepted mode of political expression in Palau and, as such, a community educator. As evidence of this rapid change in values, a group of 200 mechas (old women of leading clans) joined the demonstration in support of thel Constitution.

The People's Committee then responded with a lawsuit calling for an injunction of the Legislature's action on Bill 1140. It had been passes

---

[170] United Nations, Trusteeship Council, Report of the United Nations Visiting Mission to Observe the Referendum in Palau, Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, July 1979, (New York: 1980), p. 25.

[171] "Palau Constitution officially dead now," Pacific Daily News, Agana, Guam, July 31, 1979, p. 6.

by a simple majority quorum. The Legislature's charter required a three-quarters quorum, and ten of the thirty-three legislators, those identified with the pro-Constitution cause, had boycotted the sessions.

Bill 1140 was sent to High Commissioner Adrian Winkel who delayed action on the bill. He was awaiting a decision by Judge Harold Burnett of the Trust Territory High court on the People's Committee request to enjoin Bill 1140. Burnett, in turn, had not been informed that the situation had reached emergency proportions. As a result, he too took no action prior to the July 9, 1979 referendum.

Amid this political maneuvering and executive-judicial inaction, sixty-three percent of Palau's registered voters turned out for the referendum, which was observed by a U.N. team, and overwhelmingly accepted the Constitution by a nine to one margin. In an attempt to swing voters his way, Tmetuchl went on television (private station WALU) a few days before the July 9 referendum to announce a compact financial aid package of $250 million then being offered to Palau by the U.S. Tmetuchl emphasized on TV that a yes-vote on July 9 would doom this attractive offer.[172]

In response, voter turnout was down thirty percent from that of the hotly contested constitutional referendum of July 1978, when Palauans rejected incorporation into a Micronesian federation by a fifty-five percent to forty-five percent vote margin. In this earlier referendum both separatist (Tmetuchl) and unity groups campaigned actively to get voters out, but for the July 9 referendum the anti-constitution group is reported to

---

[172] John Kenneth Galbraith reviewed and recommended this offer in June 1979. See Frank Quimby, "U.S. Offers Palau $250 million package," Pacific Daily News, July 7, 1979, p. 1.

have advised their supporters to stay home. Despite the very impressive U.S. financial aid offer and with less than 400 no-votes, Tmetuchl's anti-Constitution group was in deep political trouble. The political momentum had shifted to the People's Committee.

However, two weeks later, the referendum victory of the pro-Constitution group was negated by Judge Burnett, who ruled that the Legislature had acted properly in conducting business on Bill 1140 with a simple majority quorum. This decision was based on the fact that when Palau had earlier rejected incorporation into the FSM, an order issued by the U.S. Secretary of the Interior then accorded the Palau Legislature the same authority with respect to Palau as the Congress of Micronesia had possessed with respect to the states later incorporated as the FSM. The Congress had operated under a simple majority quorum rule and it was now judged that the Palau Legislature could do the same. The Constitution's supporters perceived this legal technicality as jeopardizing their considerable efforts in writing a constitution and remolding the self-perception of a people who had experienced nearly a century of colonial rule. The People's Committee immediately filed an appeal with the Appellate Division of the High Court.[173]

Palauans at the University of Hawaii were profoundly disturbed when they heard that the Legislature had been upheld in its action to nullify the Con-Con draft. Their shock of disbelief was followed by intense anger

---

[173]According to judicial procedure, Judge Burnett, having heard the case in the Trial Division of the Trust Territory High Court, was thereby disqualified to sit on the appeal case in the Appellate Division.

and then by despair. Constitutional supporters in Palau experienced this same depth of emotion. However, there soon emerged a resolve to fight back. "We'll sweep the house clean," one woman said referring to the Legislative elections scheduled for September, according to the Palau Legislature Charter.

Having lost the referendum contest and aware that their political leadership was being challenged by the People's Committee, the Legislature, still operating on a majority quorum, called for cancellation of the September elections. The members needed time to mend political fences. They submitted the bill for cancellation to the High Commissioner at a special Guam meeting the latter had called in early August to attempt a reconciliation of the two groups. Ambassador Rosenblatt also attended this meeting on Guam and met bilaterally with each faction. He succeeded in getting the People's Committee to agree that the Constitution needed to be amended to respond to U.S. concerns and permit a negotiated Compact of Free Association. The Committee opposed the cancellation bill and claimed a victory because Ambassador Rosenblatt had agreed to talk directly with them, thus according them a de facto recognition they did not have previously. This, in turn, angered the majority faction in the Legislature which claimed sole legal authority to negotiate for Palau.

Palauans are adept at using third party foreigners to their political advantage. Ambassador Rosenblatt, however, attempted to avoid entanglement in the web of internal Palauan politics. Thus, he was identified by one Palauan as the only winner in the week-end meetings on Guam. This improved his reputation, which had been tarnished in the eyes of many Palauans by his seemingly partisan statements made on the occasion of his April 30 visit to Palau.

One week after the Guam talks, the High Commissioner vetoed the election cancellation bill. The Palau Legislature majority then passed a bill requesting postponement of the September elections. This too was vetoed. The ranking members of the Legislature majority deliberately had not filed for re-election, possibly in an attempt to persuade the High Commissioner to rule in their favor. They charged that an election would waste public funds and confuse people. Nevertheless, the People's Committee had the political momentum and wanted an election show-down.

Beginning on July 31, 1979 a nine-member Constitutional Drafting Commission under the chairmanship of Bonifacio Basilius undertook the task of revising the original constitution to make it compatible with the Hilo Principles for Free Association and thus respond to U.S. concerns.[174] The Commission rewrote the controversial provisions, and five others as well, to make a "new" draft document, which was then accepted by the Legislature on August 23, 1979.[175] In this "new" Constitution, Palau's territorial claims were defined less specifically, leaving it to the Olbiil Era Kelulau to establish whatever baseline it might choose for the 200-mile exclusive economic zone. The provision concerning harmful substances, as rewritten, accommodated limited U.S. interests for the right

---

[174]Bill no. 1143 establishing this Commission (to meet from July 31 to August 21, 1979) was passed by the majority quorum and thus was included in the pro-Constitution forces' appeal to the High Court. By mid-October 1979, the appellants had missed three deadlines for pursuing their appeal. The Legislature thus moved for dismissal of the appeal.

[175]A six-member United Nations team had observed the July 9, 1979 referendum on the original constitution to the chagrin of the majority Legislature group. The U.N. thus informally recognized the original constitution as adopted. The Legislature invited the U.N. to observe a second referendum, scheduled for October 23rd, but an observation team was not sent.

of ship transit and aircraft overflight within Palauan jurisdiction. However, the "use or storage of harmful substances such as radioactive, toxic chemical or biological materials intended for use in warfare . . . are prohibited . . . within the jurisdiction of Palau."[176] Whether this would be an infringement on U.S. security-defense rights and responsibilities as defined in principle five of the Hilo Principles remained to be seen. The revised Constitution also allowed the future Palauan government the power of eminent domain for the purpose of meeting its commitments under Free Association.[177] The Constitutional Drafting Commission informed the U.S. of its proposed changes to the constitution just prior to their adoption and the Commission's endorsement to the people through the Legislature. "The U.S. was not given an opportunity to submit its comments on the changes to the Drafting Commission prior to their adoption. These changes, like the original constitution itself, therefore lacked U.S. endorsement."[178]

The Commission made some other changes. The amendment procedure was liberalized and the article defining state government was rewritten to ensure direct participation of traditional chiefs in state governments. Concerning citizenship, the original Constitution had called for overseas Palauans, numbering nearly 3,000, to declare their citizenship--either

---

[176] Constitution of the Republic of Palau, amended, Article XIII, Section 9, p. 29.

[177] "Report to the Palau Legislature from the Palau Constitutional Drafting Commission," August 21, 1979. This report is located in the Pacific Collection, Hamilton Library, University of Hawaii, Honolulu, Hawaii, 96822.

[178] U.S. Office for Micronesian Status Negotiations, Fact Sheet: "Constitutional Development in Palau," July 18, 1980, p. 3.

Palauan or foreign--within three years of effective data of the constitution, or at age eighteen. Dual citizenship was thus precluded. The revised Constitution eliminated this provision, leaving the definition of citizenship somewhat ambiguous for--and to the liking of--overseas Palauans.

Most of the members of the People's Committee group opposed these changes not so much on the basis of substance as on method. They rejected both the way the changes were made and Tmetuchl's leadership. While recognizing that the original document needed amending to incorporate U.S. concerns, the Committee felt that such changes should be made in accordance with the Constitution's own amendment procedure, after it was accepted in a popular referendum. At the root of much of the controversy was the constant struggle for political power within Palau between the Tmetuchl and anti-Tmetuchl groups.

Elections for the Palau Legislature were held as scheduled on September 4, 1979 and the People's Committee broom swept very clean. Of the twenty-three anti-Constitution legislators, only seven filed for re-election and four of these withdrew. They recognized, as did those who chose not to run, that the political winds had left their sails slack. Only one was re-elected and two were defeated. In comparison, the pro-Constitution forces won twenty-two of the twenty-eight seats for an overwhelming victory.[179] This new group of political leaders took office on

---

[179]The five Legislature seats held by the former Congress of Micronesia members, all but one of whom opposed the original Constitution, terminated in January 1980, thereby returning the Legislature to the twenty-eight seats originally specified in its charter.

January 3, 1980 to the dismay of the present Legislature, which in effect forfeited its seats by not running. However, the Legislature majority faction was confident that the revised Constitution would be accepted in a referendum on October 23, 1979.[180]

Although the months since conflict over the Constitution first emerged were charged with considerable political activity, the pace and tension accelerated in September and October 1979 leading up to a second referendum scheduled for October 23, 1979--one day before U.N. Day, Palau's most important secular holiday. This date, wisely chosen by the Legislature majority, would itself insure a good voter turn out. The Legislature's Commission on Political Education had U.S. $125,000 with which to carry out a program of political education.[181] The Commission established a paid Task Force of 200 people and used Koror's three year old privately owned television system (WALU) to make known the merits of the revised Constitution. In contrast, the People's Committee relying on donations, had only scant resources and depended on the political idealism and dedication of its followers to "spread the word." Both groups campaigned vigorously going from house to house in Koror-town (population

---

[180]After approval of the Constitutional Drafting Commission's eight proposals, the Legislature set October 23, 1979 for a referendum on the "new" Draft Constitution.

[181]This Commission consisting of sixteen members appointed by the Speaker of the Legislature with advice and consent of the Chairman of the House of Chiefs was established on August 31, 1979 for the purpose of informing and educating the public on the "contents, effects, and implications of the revised Constitution." Some 200 educators were hired. Bill Brophy claims that the grant of $125,000, which funded this educational effort, was sponsored by the Office of President Carter's National Security Advisor, Dr. Zbigniew Brzezinski. Bill Brophy, personal interview, Honolulu, Hawaii, November 19, 1981.

8,000) and village to village on the outer islands of Babeldaob, Peleliu, and Angaur during September and October 1979.

Extensive contact with the electorate during these months gave each side a reading of where each stood vis-a-vis the revised Constitution. Under the leadership of Lazarus Salii, a move was then made by the two sides to work out a compromise. The Legislative majority finally realized that the revised Constitution had little chance of approval while the People's Committee saw an opportunity to revive the original Constitution to which it was strongly committed. This compromise, however, broke down as referendum day approached.

The mandate given on October 23, 1979 was unmistakable. Nearly ninety percent of Palau's registered voters turned out and rejected the revised Constitution by a wide 70 to 30 margin. For the third time in four months the Tmetuchl faction in the Legislature lost an important vote. Public support was solidly behind the People's Committee members, and U.N. Day was indeed a happy holiday for them.

The Seventh Palau Legislature

On January 3, 1980 the Seventh Palau Legislature convened amid feelings of hope and confidence. The constitution's villains in the Sixth Legislature had been turned out of office in one fell swoop at the ballot box. It was time for a new group of elected leaders to try their hand at running Palau's affairs. This new group consisted almost exclusively of People's Committee members and half the membership of the new

legislature had been Con-Con delegates.[182] Indeed, the new legislature enjoyed a clear mandate from the electorate. Palauan politics had never before witnessed such a radical and rapid change of leadership.

Though the Seventh Palau Legislature held office for only one year, this short tenure did not dampen the members' enthusiasm or motivation. Meeting nearly everyday of the year, the legislators considered some 325 bills and resolutions of which over 100 were passed. This concentrated four years of work into one, which must be a record of sorts in the annals of Micronesian governance.

The Seventh Legislature was an open and active one. It was the only legislature to publish a regular newsletter.[183] Its committees carried on negotiations with Japanese and American fishing associations, completed and initialed a controversial draft compact of free association with the U.S., revived the original constitution (as written by the Con-Con), and established rules and procedures for Palau's first constitutional election.

Ambassador Peter Rosenblatt met with the newly elected Palauan leadership in December 1979 and January 1980 in Hawaii to discuss both the general thrust and details of the draft compact negotiated under Roman Tmetuchl's leadership. Between the January meeting and the first round of

---

[182] One of these fourteen, Baules Sechelong, a close ally of Roman Tmetuchl, had not signed the Palau Constitution. All the other former Con-Con delegates, who were newly elected legislators, had done so.

[183] Six issues of the Palau Legislature Newsletter were published between April and September 1980. Printed on the Micronesian Occupational College presses, the eight-page newsletter contained articles on all important legislature business. The newsletter was distributed both locally and overseas and was a serious effort at educating the reading Palauan public.

full negotiations in June 1980, the Seventh Legislature revived the original constitution and set July 9, 1980 as referendum day. The constitution's dates were amended whereby a new constitutional government would be elected on November 4, 1980 (the same date as the U.S. presidential election) and installed into office on January 1, 1981, the effective date of the constitution. The Legislature also created a new negotiating commission to replace Tmetuchl's PPSC.

The Palau Commission on Status and Transition (PCST) was created by Public Law 7-1-10 for the purpose of representing "the people of Palau in negotiations on the Draft Compact of Free Association with the United States and to the extent necessary to bring it into conformity with the Constitution . . ."[184]

The chairmanship of this commission would be a prestigious and influential position (stepping into Tmetuchl's shoes). John Olbedabel, a boycotting member of the Sixth Legislature, a People's Committee member, and a member of the Seventh Legislature had hoped to get the PCST chairmanship. He had served as acting chairman of the Palau observer delegation which met with Ambassador Rosenblatt in January 1980. Unfortunately, Olbedabel did not carry enough influence with the Commission's membership and lost the chairmanship to Haruo Remeliik nine votes to six.[185] After this loss, Olbedabel became an inactive member of the PCST. He ran unsuccessfully in Palau's presidential election and later campaigned

---

[184]Seventh Palau Legislature, Public Law No. 7-1-10 approved by High Commissioner Adrian P. Winkel, March 7, 1980, p. 3.

[185]John Olbedabel, personal interview, Koror, Palau, January 23, 1981.

vigorously against the Draft Compact of Free Association after it was initialed by Remeliik in November 1980 (at the time Remeliik was President-elect of Palau).

The long, passionate and politically tortuous path to a constitution had taken Palauans through a Con-Con, legal battles, two earlier referenda and a legislative election that put an entirely new group of leaders into office, finally came to an end. On July 9, 1980--exactly one year after the controversial referendum the results of which were voided by the Sixth Palau Legislature--some fifty-five percent of Palau's registered voters ratified the constitution written by the Palau Con-Con.[186] Compared to the two earlier politically crucial referenda, the 1980 vote was unexciting. Its result was a vote of confidence for those holding legislative authority. The opposition was in no mood for confrontation. The logic of events had evolved to the point where the opposition welcomed ratification because the constitutional elections of November 4, 1980 would offer them an avenue back into the ever explosive and unpredictable arena of Palauan politics which had become, by definition, even larger under the new constitution.

---

[186]The September 1980 issue of the Palau Legislature Newsletter stated that no complaints or irregularities concerning the referendum were reported. The official results show that of the 4,899 votes cast, 78 percent voted approval, 19 percent disapproval and 3 percent of the ballots were invalid. With 7,082 registered voters, voter turnout was 69 percent.

Palau's First Constitutional Election[187]

Introduction

After the Pacific War, western style elected government was introduced into Palau by U.S. Navy government officials (see pp. 235-251). Through the slow evolution of four legislative bodies beginning in 1947 with the Palau Congress (1947-1955), elected Palauan officials gained progressively more authority in their affairs. In 1955 the Palau Congress re-wrote its charter to form the Olbiil Era Kelulau Era Belau (literally, Palau's congress of whispered decisions). In 1963 two very significant events took place: the Palau Legislature and the Liberal and Progressive parties were formed. This development deepened the schism between traditional and elected authority and provided a wide political arena for Palau's first generation of westernized political leaders. These changes culminated in the writing of a constitution in 1979 that established a presidential form of government which was legally installed into office on January 1, 1981. The government of the Republic of Palau consists of an elected president and vice president, a sixteen-member advisory council of traditional chiefs, and an appointed four member cabinet. The Olbiil Era Kelulau (national congress) consists of an eighteen-member Senate whose representation is based on population size and a sixteen-member House of Delegates based on equal representation. Both the executive and legislative branches are elected for four year terms. The judiciary branch was established according to the Palau Constitution in mid-1981.

---

[187] This section (pp. 338-364) will appear as a chapter in Pacific Island Elections, ed. Steven Levine, (Honolulu: University Press of Hawaii, forthcoming).

Parties

The two political parties which began in 1963 and flourished during the seven Congress of Micronesia elections (1965-1976) disintengrated in the meat-grinder of Palauan political passions that reached a fever pitch in 1978. This was the year when 93 percent of Palau's registered voters turned out to defeat the Micronesian Constitution and political federation in a close 55 percent no to 45 percent yes split.[188] The Liberal, Progressive and Tia Belaud (formed in 1972) parties fragmented over the issue of Palau's separation from the five other Micronesian island groups. All was in disarray making the time ripe for people to shift loyalties and form new alliances.

Loyalties and alliances solidified in 1979 and early 1980 during the tangle of events surrounding the Palau Constitution (described in previous section pp. 314-338). After it became clear that the majority faction in the Sixth Palau Legislature opposed the document drafted by the Palau Constitutional Convention (Con-Con), a new group called the People's Committee for the Constitution emerged under the chairmanship of Alfonso Oiterong. Made up of former Con-Con delegates and members of the minority faction in the Legislature who supported the draft constitution, this group welded together Liberals, Progressives, Tia Belaud members, and independents. Because the constitutional writing process and subsequent events had

---

[188]The Micronesian Constitution written in 1975 envisioned a self-governing federation of the districts then composing the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands (TTPI). The Northern Mariana Islands dropped out of the planned federation later in 1975. In 1978 Palau and the Marshall islands followed, leaving the island groups of Yap, Truk, Ponape and Kosrae as the four states of the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM).

generated such excitement in Palau, the People's Committee enjoyed a large and passionate grass roots following. The Committee was enormously successful in its opposition to the Tmetuchl group that vehemently opposed the draft constitution. The Committee swept into control of the legislature in September 1979, defeated the out-going majority faction's revised constitution in October that year, and finally succeeded in getting the original constitution approved in a referendum vote in July 1980. After this final accomplishment, control of the People's Committee momentarily became a political issue as three presidential and two vice presidential candidates emerged from its ranks, all of whom requested Committee support. A one-issue coalition group was suddenly transformed into a political party which chose to support Lazarus Salii and Alfonso Oiterong as its presidential and vice presidential candidates. With Roman Tmetuchl in control of the remnants of the Liberal Party, campaigning for Palau's two prestigious offices began amid political fragmentation.

This situation was further exacerbated by a crucial October 1980 decision of the Seventh Palau Legislature to amend section ten of Public Law No. 7-3-22. This law, passed months before the crowded field of presidential candidates had emerged, called for the election of a president and vice-president by majority vote. However, with five candidates entered on both the presidential and vice-presidential tickets, the push of political passions necessitated adoption of a plurality rule.[189] This is

---

[189]The amendment to P.L. No. 7-3-22 calling for a plurality rule was introduced on the floor of the legislature by Victor Uherbelau, Kuniwo Nakamura, Santos Olikong and George Ngirarsaol. It was considered by the Committee on Judiciary and Government Affairs which recommended its

a clear example of how Palauans modify procedures to fit their immediate political needs. In public hearings on October 11, 1980,

> several candidates for president and vice-president presented their views. Other candidates sent personal representatives. Although it was the general feeling of all witnesses that the best policy was to require that a candidate for these offices receive the vote of a majority . . . to win the election, it was acknowledged that whatever Constitutional requirements exist must be met.[190]

Election to high political office has been the epitome of power, prestige and influence in Palau since the beginning of the Congress of Micronesia in 1965. With five determined and ambitious candidates for each of the two top offices, accommodation had to be made and it became convenient to follow the intent of the Constitution's writers who, it seems, did not oppose a plurality rule. It could be argued, however, that this intent was itself politically motivated. Seeing the great likelihood of a crowded presidential field, the Con-Con's Committee on the Executive decided the following:

> Your Committee is concerned about the cost of elections, so we did not require that the chief executive be elected by a majority of the votes cast. This avoids the possible necessity of a run-off election.

---

passage (three of the Committee's members did not sign the final report). The Seventh Legislature passed the amendment on October 11, 1980 less than one month before the election.

[190] Seventh Palau Legislature, "Judiciary and Government Affairs Committee Report No. 203 regarding Bill No. 7-0267, DI," October 11, 1980, p. 1. This report was signed by legislators Victor Uherbelau, Demei Otobed, Herman Rodas, and Moses Uludong. Committee members John Olbedabel Ngiraked, L. Ulechong and Carlos Salii did not sign the report.

> However, if several candidates run in the election, a president might be elected by a minority of votes cast.[191]

The Convention as a whole adopted this position without amendment. Only on the next-to-last day of the Con-Con did Delegate Johnson Toribiong express doubts about the plurality rule that the Con-Con had implicitly approved. The fact that the Seventh Palau Legislature had explicitly endorsed and legalized the plurality rule sanctioned a wide open fight for the presidential and vice-presidential seats and insured the election of Palau's two top executives by a minority of voters.

Candidates

The Palau Constitution, patterned in many ways after the American document, defines a presidential system of separate executive, legislative and judicial branches of government. Eighty-five Palauans, all men except for four women, ran for the thirty-four National Congress seats. All members of the Seventh Palau Legislature ran as did nearly three-quarters of the formerly discredited Sixth Legislature. A few of the delegates from the Con-Con who had not won seats in the Seventh Legislature had their names on the ballots in the hope that their connection to the recently ratified constitution would sweep them into office. Only two of these candidates--John Tarkong and Masami Siksei--succeeded in winning senate seats. Four others failed. The best combination of previous experience was to have been both a member of the Con-Con and of the Sixth

---

[191] Palau Constitutional Convention, "Committee on the Executive, Report No. 14 concerning proposal number 486," February 24, 1979, p. 2.

and/or Seventh Palau Legislature. Of eleven such candidates for the national congress, only two--Sadang Silmai and Victor Uherbelau--did not win office.

There were a few surprises in the run for senate seats. Thomas Remengesau, who had been Palau's district administrator for nine years, ran a distant third in his senatorial district. Three brothers--Kaleb Udui, Moses Uludong, and Edobo Temengil--all won seats, surprisingly, in the Koror senatorial district. Temengil, who had lived and worked outside of Palau for many years, was a true dark horse who emerged out of obscurity. Many of the legislature old timers who ran and lost--Jacob Sawaichi, Itelbank Luii, Sadang Silmai, Masaichi Etiterngel, Jonas Olkeriil, and Shiro Kyota--gave evidence that a younger generation of men had come to prominence through success at the polls.

Of the four women who ran, only Akiko Sugiyama, a member of both the Sixth and Seventh Legislatures, won. Gloria Littler, who holds the highest woman's title in Koror (Bilung), did poorly. She was criticized by some for tainting god-given hereditary authority with the marks of back-room political maneuvering. Salvadora Katosang, an outspoken Palau School teacher, did poorly because she ran against the wishes of a politically powerful close relative. This was to have a parallel in the presidential race. The fourth lady, Kekereldil Anson, ran last for the Airai delegate seat. The political powers of that area--Roman Tmetuchl and Baules Sechelong--had chosen a male relative to carry their cause. With only four female candidates out of eighty-five and only one of the four winning a congress seat, it is clear that the role of elected leader in Palau is predominantly one for men.

Of the five candidates vying for the presidency, all except Haruo Remeliik had served in the Congress of Micronesia. Three of the five--David Ramarui, John Olbedabel and Remeliik--had been early members of the Progressive Party. Similarly, Roman Tmetuchl and Lazarus Salii had joined the Liberal Party when it was formed in 1963. In this election, however, former party affiliations counted for nothing. The parties had disintegrated two years earlier during the push and pull of the Micronesian Constitution referendum, so it was every man for himself in November 1980. Nevertheless, Salii had succeeded in getting the endorsement of the People's Committee but the transformation of a one-issue coalition group into a political party, which had to take a stand on candidates, fragmented the group in mid-1980. Those members who supported and/or were related to Remeliik and Olbedabel left the fold and formed campaign groups of their own. These circumstances in a sense "forced" the Seventh Legislature's move from a majority to a plurality vote.

Lined up against these candidates was the charismatic and unpredictable Roman Tmetuchl. Amazingly successful at business and in forging political separation from the other Micronesian areas, Tmetuchl's leadership had been repudiated during the 1979 Palau Constitution fight. It was the Tmetuchl faction that had been turned out of the legislature in the September 1979 election. However, both Tmetuchl and his supporters were determined to make a comeback and gain their share of the political power, prestige and authority which the arena of elected government opens to all who run for office.

The fifth presidential candidate, David Ramarui, was the only man to ever defeat Tmetuchl in a one-on-one election.[192] However, in 1970 Ramarui left the Congress of Micronesia and lived for ten years in Saipan where he served as Director of Education for the Trust Territory. Of the five candidates, Ramarui was the only one without a firm political base. Unfortunately, many of his politically active and astute relatives had made previous campaign commitments to another candidate which they felt overrode kin connections. This in itself was a significant and highly atypical political change, but one which Ramarui accepted with grace.

Of the five presidential candidates, Remeliik, Salii and Tmetuchl were clearly front runners, Olbedabel a possible threat because of his high social rank and astute campaign strategy. Unfortunately, Ramarui was perceived as having come "too late" to build much of a support base. Each of the five candidates felt that with luck and the right turn of events he could win the presidency of the new republic.

In the race for vice president, there were also five candidates--Alfonso Oiterong, Tosiwo Nakamura, Isidoro Rudimch, Raymond Ulochong and Haruo Willter. None of them claimed overt association with any one particular presidential candidate. "They are all good and I could work with any of them," was the vice presidential campaign rhetoric. Because political party affiliation had essentially disintegrated and competition for the top offices so keen, the political dynamics of the situation did not allow for publicly announced joint tickets. Nevertheless, there were two natural

---

[192] This was the 1966 election to the Congress of Micronesia Senate. In a close race, Ramarui defeated Tmetuchl 1,777 votes to 1,687.

but unspoken alliances: Salii with Oiterong (People's Committee candidates) and Tmetuchl with Rudimch as businessmen in the tattered Liberal Party. Oiterong and Nakamura appeared to be the strongest vice presidential candidates because they had been leading members of the People's Committee and gained additional political support through their election to and work in the Seventh Legislature.

Businessman and former Congress of Micronesia member Isidoro Rudimch remained a threat for the vice presidency because of his considerable financial resource and political connections. Relative unknowns Ray Ulochong and Haruo Willter had been members of Palau's Con-Con but, having been away from Palau for many years, had weak political bases. Like the presidential candidates, each vice presidential runner believed that with the right throw of the die, he could come up a winner. This was to be Palau's first constitutional election. No precedents had been established. Why not gamble?

The 1980 Campaign

The campaign for the thirty-six seats in Palau's new constitutional government was the most colorful, interesting and expensive in the island's thirty-seven year history of elected office. During the campaign, Koror-town (population 8,000) was decorated like a political Christmas tree with nearly 200 multicolored campaign billboards bunched along the main road. With five candidates on each of the presidential and vice presidential tickets there was endless talk of vote splits, campaign strategy and political momentum.

Politics is big business in Palau and nearly always generates enthusiastic dialogue and debate. At least one anthropologist has claimed that

Palau's social structure "both takes into account and tends to support or encourage competitive expression."[193] In no place in contemporary Palauan society is this clearer than in the striving for elected office.

In the senate and house races, candidates visited most families in their districts. This is possible in Palau because rural villages are relatively small, varying in size from twelve to one hundred twenty-three households. Most house to house campaigning was not on issues, however. "People in rural Palau don't respond to most issues; it's personality that counts," said one successful candidate. Candidates especially if they were younger men, had to "sell" themselves in a particular culturally accepted way. According to Palauan social mores, a candidate never boasts his accomplishments or qualifications. That should be done by a third party. Good campaign style follows social mores which call for self-effacing behavior, self-sacrifice, and concern for community.

Despite the fact that Palau has experienced the rule of four colonial powers and the impact of Catholic (since 1891) and Protestant (since 1929) missionaries, some non-material cultural continuities still persist. In 1966 a social researcher maintained that interest in strange supernatural portents and events was then still strong in Palau.[194] In the November 1980 election most candidates used what might be called Palauan magic. This took the form of appeals to, and shows of respect for, the traditional gods of village and clan in the hope that their help would insure victory at the

---

[193] McKnight, "Competition in Palau," p. 20.

[194] Anne Leonard, "Trance and 'Mediums' in the Palau Islands," 1966, TS, p. 28. This manuscript is located in the Palau Museum files, Koror, Palau.

polls. It was reported that all the traditional gods who are remembered were consulted during the campaign. It was reported that a few candidates in Koror used Yapese magic which is reputed to be negatively very powerful. Seeking out a practitioner of black magic to cast a spell (melengesakl) on a rival candidate seems to be an accepted but semi-secret political practice in Palau. Use of such magic on an opponent might defeat him by undermining his confidence.

A related form of "magic" was the use of future tellers, both solicited and unsolicited. One future teller went to Mrs. Alfonso Oiterong and predicted that Salii and her husband would win. Another predicted Remeliik and her husband as victors. Candidates consulted the locally famous female future tellers of Melekeok and Kayangel. Also a Koror lady recognized as a medium was sought out. "Her eyes became huge, her voice low and she tells all about your past life and makes predictions about the future."[195]

In addition to indigenous "magic" presidential and vice presidential candidates used American campaign "magic" as well--TV appearances, radio talks, colorful billboards, persuasive campaign brochures, stickers, gifts, tee-shirts and large glossy pictures. Although Palauans display a cultural layer of modernism and sophistication, Palau is still very much an oral culture where kinship is the tie that binds and forms the basis for voter decisions. Therefore the foreign "magic" was more effective in Koror-town

---

[195]When speaking to foreigners about sensitive matters as politics and indigenous religious beliefs, Palauans prefer to remain anonymous. Thus, this information was reported to the writer by an anonymous Palauan source, personal interview, Koror, Palau, November 17, 1980.

than in the rural areas. In Koror, people are more open to issues and the written message, but in the village they respond to personality.

The campaign strategies of Salii and Olbedabel were radically different in their use of foreign "magic" and led one astute local political observer to characterize the Olbedabel strategy as "very Palauan" and the Salii strategy as "very American." Salii had a main road campaign headquarters; Olbedabel had no headquarters. Salii used colorful billboards, stickers, pictures, tee-shirts and long verbose brochures noting his accomplishments, knowledge of the issues and future plans. Olbedabel on the other hand had no billboards, stickers or pictures posted in Koror or in the rural areas. Both of his brochures were pictorial and concise, and thereby attuned to the fact that Palau is predominantly an oral culture. One of Olbedabel's brochures portrayed him as a distinguished and effective leader--appropriate for his high social rank.[196] The other was controlled political criticism. It showed a large American flag covering half of Babeldaob, Palau's largest island north of Koror. This symbolized that the compact of free association agreements negotiated by Salii (1976), Tmetuchl (1979) and Remeliik (1980) foolishly sacrificed too much Palauan land for too little financial compensation and thus indicated poor political leadership.

Another significant difference in campaigning between the two men was Olbedabel's adept use of house to house visitations, where he met with

---

[196] Olbedabel is a member of the Udes clan and is in line for the title of Reklai. Presently he allies with Acting Reklai Eusevio Termeteet who took the title from Lomisang, who after a long illness, died in April 1982. This competition for the Reklai title, a long established focus of political competition which continues, has split Melekeok into two bitter factions.

clan and family heads. Salii preferred large public gatherings and did little house to house campaigning. He had the support of Koror's traditional leaders--High Chief Ibedul and Chieftess Bilung Gloria Littler. With a network of club and association contacts throughout Koror, Ibedul and Bilung were very effective at selling the Salii candidacy. Furthermore, Salii's Palauan colleagues from Saipan, who had come home for the big election, were pushing his candidacy. The combination of traditional support, heavy use of the media, active friends, and attention to issues would, it seemed, give Salii the edge in the race for Koror's 2,100 votes.[197]

The Tmetuchl campaign resembled Olbedabel's more than it did Salii's. Tmetuchl relied on a loyal group of relatives, friends and business associates for support. His billboards were small and simple, his brochures few. He sponsored a meeting place for young men in the hope of marshalling the efforts--and votes--of this depressed segment of Koror society. Despite Tmetuchl's loss of political power during the 1979 constitutional fight, he had a vision of an economically vibrant Palau and had decided to base his political comeback on this issue. Economic development was the center-piece of Tmetuchl's Pacific Daily News campaign advertisement which, to be sensitive to Palauan mores, was written in the third person. The advertisement mentioned Professor John K. Galbraith and former President John F. Kennedy as if the renown of these men should find a parallel in

---

[197]According to election supervisor, Daiziro Nakamura, Koror had some 3,600 registered voters in past elections and referenda. The decrease of 1,500 for the November election resulted from the re-registration of Koror residents back to their municipalities of origin. This was encouraged by house and senate candidates who hoped to gain more votes in their home areas.

Tmetuchl's political career. Tmetuchl had been the target of a failed assassination attempt years earlier and was the only presidential candidate to wear a knife and travel with a body guard. This is very unusual for a small scale society like Palau but points out the love-hate response that some Palauans have for Tmetuchl.

The Ramarui candidacy was handicapped by the lack of a support base. While he traveled around Palau as much and perhaps more than any of the other presidential candidates, this effort, unlike the old days when Ramarui was one of Palau's most effective campaigners, bore little fruit. As one of Ramarui's relatives said, "David was an excellent political player in the old days, but he's out of practice and can't make it."[198]

As far as the presidential campaign is concerned, Haruo Remeliik was the right man at the right time. The general political circumstances, it seemed, favored his candidacy. He had been president of the Palau Con-Con, a member of the People's Committee, chairman of the Palau Commission on Status and Transition, and Palau's deputy district administrator. Despite his unassuming and even disarming personal style, he was heir to considerable political momentum. Besides being associated with all the right groups, Remeliik had the strong support of the Modekngei, a religious-political-traditionalist group dedicated to the preservation of a Palauan identity. In his position as deputy district administrator, Remeliik, over the years, cultivated a close relationship with the Modekngei. This undoubtedly was to be the most important factor in his November 4 victory.

---

[198]Anonymous source in conversation with the writer, personal interview, Koror, Palau, July 5, 1981.

Unlike the other candidates, Remeliik attracted a group of six or eight younger political activists who carefully planned and orchestrated his campaign on Koror, Babeldaob and Peleliu (the largest and most populated of the four south islands).[199] These men in their late twenties and early thirties believed that Remeliik, because of his political momentum, was the only man who could defeat Tmetuchl. About mid-1980 the group petitioned the People's Committee for support but it had already bowed to the Salii candidacy. This split the Committee and made the Remeliik supporters all the more determined to win.

Throughout the campaign the issue of Babeldaob (north) vs. Youldaob (south) was a recurring and divisive campaign issue. Remeliik's roots are in Peleliu, an island in the Youldaob sphere. Palau's local geographical prejudice maintained that Peleliu and Angaur people are of low social rank and therefore less culturally sophisticated and able than Babeldaob people.

Among Remeliik's group of dedicated campaign assistants, two men were outstanding in their energy and political savvy. Antonio Bells worked as Remeliik's campaign coordinator and Moses Ramarui was his grass roots organizer. Together with the other assistants they crafted an unusually effective campaign. Coming from Babeldaob themselves, both Bells and Ramarui were passionately aware of the vital importance of having Remeliik spend as much time as possible in the rural villages. As Ramarui said, "Early in the campaign we realized the need to discuss issues according to village interest and rhythm. We therefore couldn't just go for a short

---

[199] Included in this group were Moses Ramarui, Tony Bells, Moses Uludong, Francis Matsutaro, Yoichi, Singichi and Singeru Singeo, and Jackson Ngiraingas.

time, give people food and booze and then leave."[200] This was perhaps the most important sociological discovery made during the 1980 campaign. For the Koror-town visitors to show genuine respect for and interest in village views and to enjoy what the village offered, won many votes there.

Another important element in the Remeliik campaign was recognition by the assistants of their candidate's strengths and weaknesses. Remeliik's quiet and unpretentious personality did not lend itself to vigorous debate or rapid delivery--styles enjoyed by the other candidates. Not only was the Remeliik style inappropriate for this form of presentation but the assistants believed it was a poor way of communicating. Large rallies did not promote dialogue and long discussion. Such long and apparently unstructured discussion--interrupted by relaxing betel-nut chews--are the hallmark of village social interaction. Therefore the campaign organizers passed up several Koror mass appearances, always sending best wishes and apologies, to concentrate on small group sessions that fostered communication and commitment. This approach was successful on both Koror and Babeldaob.

Another advantage Remeliik had was his extensive knowledge of and participation in Palauan wealth exchange customs. These customs are still very strong in Palau and serve to spread wealth among clans and families. Remeliik was respected for his generosity and long involvement in custom.[201]

---

[200] Moses Ramarui, personal interview, Koror, Palau, March 1, 1981.

[201] Remeliik is reputed to have the record for oheraol (house buying custom) of some $U.S. 80,000. According to Palauan custom, a generous man will, in turn, receive generosity.

The campaign was also an occasion for Remeliik to display his extensive knowledge of the hierarchy of village personages and leadership titles. Together with a courteous "go-a-meeting" approach, Remeliik was perhaps the most effective presidential campaigner in Palau's rural village areas.

Two of the vice presidential candidates--Alfonso Oiterong and Tosiwo Nakamura--had been very active People's Committee members. They both won election to the Seventh Palau Legislature where Nakamura served as speaker. Clearly they were the favorite vice presidential candidates. Being from Peleliu, Nakamura would have trouble getting Babeldaob votes. For this same reason a Remeliik-Nakamura ticket was unacceptable to Babeldaob people. Unlike Remeliik, Nakamura did not have astute campaign assistants who could remedy this geographical disadvantage, nor support from Modekngei on Babeldaob's west coast. Nevertheless, as speaker of the legislature, former superintendent of elementary education, and with covert support from presidential candidate John Olbedabel, the Nakamura candidacy was a strong one.

The only person to rival the Nakamura candidacy would be Alfonso Oiterong who had been a Palau Con-Con member and chairman of the popular and influential People's Committee. Like Remeliik, Oiterong was a quiet and unassuming person and these same qualities made him an excellent house to house campaigner and solid candidate.

Again, like Remeliik, Oiterong was the right man at the right time. He gained the support of the People's Committee and thus became the unofficial and unspoken running mate of Lazarus Salii. With support from Koror's traditional leaders, Oiterong would do well in Koror-town. Also, though Oiterong comes from the Babeldaob village of Aimeliik, he is related

to both Remeliik and Salii. So where these presidential candidates might split kin votes, Oiterong would benefit from both sides. Nevertheless, Oiterong made two campaign trips to Peleliu with the hope of gaining some votes in an area heavy with Nakamura supporters.

Perhaps the most energetic and sincere non-candidate campaigner was Oiterong's wife, Josepha. A very warm and friendly woman, she campaigned house to house in Koror's Ngerbeched hamlet which was populated with many Peleliu people who supported Nakamura. Palauan cultural mores require that visitors to one's home be treated with great courtesy. Thus Josepha got more promises than votes during her gentle forays into Nakamura territory.

Oiterong was the only candidate who campaigned in the mangrove-swamp area of Dngeronger hamlet, Koror. The people there were pleasantly surprised, remarking that Oiterong was the first candidate to visit them in many years. This effort was worth its time because Oiterong received more votes from the "swamp" people than any other candidate. Despite the fact that Oiterong did not have a campaign manager, his efforts were systematic and complete. Just four days before the election, Oiterong wrote to his relatives on Guam asking them to campaign there and on Saipan for him. This last minute effort paid dividends because Oiterong received more absentee votes than the other vice presidential candidates. Finally, the Oiterong campaign got an unexpected boost a week before election day. The Remeliik group began covertly campaigning for Oiterong during their village meetings.

Results

On November 4, 1980--the same day as national elections in the U.S.--80 percent of Palau's registered voters turned out to elect the first constitutional government of the soon-to-be Republic of Palau. That day vice presidential and national congress candidates paced the road in front of the central poll at Palau High School shaking hands and remembering themselves to voters making for the polls. In the shade of the school's ironwood trees were camped five or six tally keepers all of whom were in one political camp or another. They had long voter registration lists of people in their hamlet and had been dispatching cars since early morning to pick up voters. In a small scale society where everyone knows everyone, it is easy to keep tally of who has and who hasn't voted. When the keepers noticed that someone sharing their political persuasion from their clan or hamlet had not turned up, a car was sent to fetch the person in question. This technique has always insured a very high voter turnout in Palau.

Nearly every seat in the House and Senate was being contested by two or three candidates. Of the six candidates running for two seats in the Fifth senatorial district (west coast Babeldaob), four had official vote totals of 339, 311, 310 and 308, thus indicating no clear consensus. In the Eighth senatorial district, the two south-west islander candidates split their vote and lost to a high ranking man from Angaur.[202] As a result, Palau's only indigenous minority ethnic group lost its opportunity for representation in the senate.

---

[202]The people of Palau's south-west islands (the two southern most islands in Palau) of Sonsoral and Tobi are culturally and linguistically different from the Palauans. In the senate race Esteban Augustine and Flavian Carlos each finished with 118 votes to Angaur candidate Abel Suzuki who won with 135 votes.

In the house there were two very close races. The Aimeliik delegate seat was decided by a slim four vote margin--113 to 109--and in Melekeok the winner and loser were separated by only six votes--142 to 136. With such small constituencies whose loyalties are based primarily on kin connections, the winner often comes from a larger clan or higher social rank than the loser.

The two men with the greatest amount of identification with Palau's recent grass-roots causes won the presidency and vice presidency of Palau. They were the right men at the right time. Haruo Remeliik and Alfonso Oiterong had been members of both the Palau Con-Con and People's Committee. While Remeliik was not a member of the Seventh Palau Legislature with Oiterong, he had been chosen chairman of the Legislature's influential Commission on Status and Transition which negotiated a revised compact of free association with the U.S. negotiator in 1980. After the election, Remeliik as President-elect of Palau initialed this compact in Washington, D.C. on November 17, 1981.

In the presidential race the pattern of results from area to area clearly showed the effect of campaign style and political connections (see Table 5 of voting results on page 359). Salii, as expected, did best in Koror where he had the full support of the town's traditional leaders, Ibedul and Bilung, People's Committee members, and where his image was widely scattered by poster, billboard, tee-shirt, and leaflet. Running just 130 votes behind Salii, Remeliik did fairly well in Koror. He overwhelmed his opposition in the Modekngei areas on Babeldaob's north and west coasts. His 665 votes from those areas were more than double that of his closest rival, Tmetuchl who obtained 326 votes. Although Remeliik won 435

votes to Salii's 317 in the southern islands, the huge block of Modekngei votes gave him the election. Since the election there has been rumor that the Modekngei wanted the distinction of having elected Palau's first president.

As expected, John Olbedabel did very well on his home ground of east coast Babeldaob, taking 541 votes to Tmetuchl's 384. In his home area of Airai, Tmetuchl took the vast majority of votes (229) and ran a distant second behind Remeliik in the Modekngei areas. In past elections to the Congress of Micronesia, Tmetuchl nearly always received strong support from the Modekngei. Had he maintained that support in the 1980 election, he probably would have won despite his weak showing in the south (fifty-eight votes). Another factor that hurt the Tmetuchl candidacy was the large field. The change from a majority rule to a plurality rule helped Remeliik but no doubt hurt Tmetuchl. In a two man race, he probably would have picked up enough votes in Koror and on east coast Babeldaob to off-set most of Remeliik's strength in the Modekngei areas and in the south.

Comparison of results in the two executive races show some interesting relationships which were generally hidden during the campaign. Oiterong did well in those areas where Salii and Remeliik were strong, viz., Koror and the Modekngei areas. Oiterong thus benefitted from both the support of the People's Committee "party" and that of the Remeliik campaign "machine" in the last week before the election. The latter plus Oiterong's own considerable efforts surprisingly earned him more votes from the Modekngei areas on Babeldaob than Remeliik (730 votes to 665).

Nakamura, Oiterong's chief rival, did unexpectedly well on east coast Babeldaob. Being from the south he should not have done well there. He

TABLE 5

VOTING RESULTS
PRESIDENTIAL AND VICE PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES
PALAU, NOVEMBER 4, 1980

PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE	Number of Votes by Area Babeldaob Island							
	Koror-town	North	West Coast	East Coast	Airai	Southern Islands	Total	% of Total
David Ramarui	60	28	26	135	0	9	258	4.2%
Haruo Remeliik	558	343	322	240	57	435	1,955	31.2%
John Olbedabel	213	105	102	541	13	18	922	15.8%
Lazarus Salii	681	93	161	179	22	317	1,453	23.1%
Roman Tmetuchl	611	101	225	384	229	58	1,608	25.6%
							6,266	99.9%

VICE PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE	Number of Votes by Area Babeldaob Island							
	Koror-town	North	West Coast	East Coast	Airai	Southern Islands	Total	% of Total
Alfonso Oiterong	624	312	418	292	81	226	1,953	31.8%
Haruo Willter	189	57	170	80	10	38	544	8.9%
Isidoro Rudimch	590	121	102	306	188	57	1,364	22.2%
Raymond Ulochong	100	46	21	375	5	20	567	9.2%
Tosiwo Nakamura	515	121	136	431	25	478	1,706	27.8%
							6,134	99.9%

Total Registered Voters: 8,032
Total Votes Cast: 6,425--(80 percent of total)
Void, Blank, Rejected Votes: 159

NOTE: The totals are official. The area subtotals were compiled from announcements made over Palau's government radio station, WSZB, and are therefore unofficial but very close to the official totals which were unavailable to the writer.

thus had the covert support of presidential candidate, John Olbedabel. Even the east coast's "favorite son," Raymond Ulochong, ran 125 votes behind Nakamura. While Nakamura got the lion's share of the southern island votes (478), Oiterong gained enough (226) to maintain the lead he had built up on Koror and Babeldaob.

One other hidden alliance is revealed in the voting results from Airai. While vice presidential candidate Isidoro Rudimch has kin there, he also benefited from a Tmetuchl endorsement and thus took nearly two-thirds of the Airai vote (188 of 309).

In both executive races the vote was fragmented as expected, with the result that the election of each of Palau's two top executives was by minorities. Remeliik took 31.2 percent of the presidential vote while Oiterong got 31.8 percent on the vice presidential side. In retrospect, the decision by the Seventh Palau Legislature to allow election to the presidency and vice presidency by a plurality vote was an unfortunate one. It was made in response to strong political pressures and has come home to haunt the new executive.

Implications

The Republic of Palau's impressive installation and inauguration ceremonies in January 1981 briefly masked a deep sense of discontentment and unrest.[203] The new national congress broke up into three fluid factions: one generally loyal to President Remeliik and Vice President

---

[203] A report of the inauguration of the new government of the Republic of Palau, "Belau: New Nation, Old Politics," by Donald R. Shuster, is contained in the 1981 March/April issue of The New Pacific Magazine, p. 10.

Oiterong, a second responded to the Tmetuchl beat, and a third small group floated back and forth between the two. The post election political situation inspired one long-time political participant to speak of it as one of "two doe surrounded by a hungry lion and tiger." The two stalking cats were, of course, Tmetuchl and Olbedabel. The Seventh Legislature's plurality rule had thrust two men into the executive who had formidable opposition which refused to fade away.

During his 1980 campaign, John Olbedabel strongly criticized the draft compact of free association negotiated with the U.S. under Remeliik's leadership. Among other things, this document calls for U.S. military options on Palauan land in return for $U.S. 5.5 million. Olbedabel believes that this is very inadequate and has been urging a strong states' (municipality) rights position on eminent domain as a way to shake more money loose and thereby improve his own political reputation. He is fully justified in his position because the Constitution of the Republic of Palau unambiguously asserts that the national government shall not take state (municipality) land without prior consultation with the state government in question.[204] Further, the national government shall not use this power for the benefit of a foreign nation.[205] However, this important constitutional power will be suspended by signature of a subsidiary agreement to the compact of free association. This agreement outlines U.S. military land use and operating rights and was initialed by Remeliik

---

[204] Constitution of the Republic of Palau, (Koror, Palau: Palau Constitutional Convention, 1979), Article XIII, Section 7.

[205] Ibid.

as chairman of Palau's negotiating commission (and President-elect) in November 1980.

Despite this suspension, it may be that Palau's fourteen municipalities which are in the process of preparing constitutions for statehood (a new and hopefully more dynamic form of political-economic organization), will remain supreme regarding the question of state land as the framers of the national constitution believed was proper.[206] In the near future this issue will be a bone of contention between the various state governments, particularly those Olbedabel had a hand in forming, and the national government of President Remeliik. It appears that Remeliik's government has the responsibility but not clear constitutional authority for making land available for U.S. military options. The long tradition of fiercely autonomous village complexes lies at the crux of this issue, making for a very ambiguous situation concerning the question of land. Olbedabel plans to make the most of this ambiguity and may, in turn, be able to hold up final approval of any compact of free association for years while a states' rights fight is waged to determine where final authority for eminent domain resides. All this could enlarge Olbedabel's political power in Palau.

Nearly half the Senate (total membership of eighteen) of the Palau national congress can be counted as Tmetuchl supporters and Tmetuchl's opposition to the Remeliik government has generally been expressed

---

[206]For a description and analysis of the recent process of state (formerly municipality) constitution writing, see Donald R. Shuster, "The Constitution Writers of Palau," Pacific Magazine, January/February 1982, pp. 23-25.

through this group. The Tmetuchl faction in the Senate held up confirmation of President Remeliik's cabinet appointments for a half year. The faction has been pushing for a liberal law concerning a state's right to borrow money. Tmetuchl, as governor of Airai State, is determined to acquire foreign capital for the development and improvement of his state and thereby make it an exemplar of dynamic and farsighted leadership.

Joined to Koror by a huge cantilever bridge, Airai supplies Kororstown with most of its piped fresh water. Tmetuchl has let it be known that he could close the valves at any time.

Such a naked display of power was evident on September 8, 1981 when President Remeliik's office was bombed and completely destroyed. This violence climaxed a two week effort by government employees seeking an unrealistic 100 percent pay increase. Tmetuchl was the spokesman for government petitioners. Negotiations on a mutually agreeable and financially realistic pay increase broke down on Thursday, September 3. The following Monday (September 7, Labor Day holiday) two hundred disgruntled employees, some of whom were partly drunk, met and decided to take drastic action which escalated into the destruction of the small, but expensively re-modeled, executive office building early the next morning. While there was no loss of life, the Remeliik leadership was publicly embarrassed by a show of violence unprecedented in recent Palauan history.

A year after the November 1980 first constitutional election, the Palauan cauldron of political passions is still aboiling. The two main actors--Remeliik and Tmetuchl--are a study in contrasts. Where Remeliik is quiet and deliberative, Tmetuchl is active and charismatic. Remeliik's

caution is Tmetuchl's adventure, and where Tmetuchl is dynamic in decision, Remeliik is slow in his approach. Paradoxically, the very qualities that made Remeliik a winning campaigner make him a weak presidential leader. In many ways Remeliik and Tmetuchl represent opposite faces of the same Palauan personality coin. Together with John Olbedabel, Alfonso Oiterong, and the leadership of the national congress, these forces will set the political and emotional tone in Palau for the foreseeable future.

Summary and Analysis

Summary

Several themes have dominated the evolution of elected government in Palau since the end of the Pacific War. The most obvious and far reaching has been the decline of hereditary leadership. Voice has been largely displaced by vote and in the process Palauans placed their beach of "we" around the island of elected government. Where the chiefs once charted the course of Palauan political affairs, elected politicians have taken over. In 1968 when Reklai Lomisang announced that though the chiefs did not vote in the legislature they were still the rulers of Palau, he was reciting the political teachings given to Palauans by the ancient snake-god, Mesaod Ngerel. Elected leaders, however, have chosen to ignore these teachings because the political structure they created was too constraining for ambitious young men. Of this first group of leaders, Roman Tmetuchl stands out more than any for his ability to seize new opportunities and define new directions made possible by the widened political arena of elected office.

Despite the prestige and enlarged arena for political maneuver which elected government provided, most of the political power and authority over Palau's affairs was held by the American High Commissioner's Office. In 1947 the Deputy High Commissioner reminded the newly elected members of the Palau Congress that they were "in no sense an independent nation." And in 1973 District Administrator Remengesau vetoed the legislature's first constitutional convention bill on the grounds that Palau was not a sovereign nation and did not have the right to form its own government. This heavy American hand was put aside with the beginning of the Carter Presidency. At this time Tmetuchl and his supporters came into direct political conflict with a series of opposition groups which were composed of a second generation of young leaders who allied with Palau's paramount chiefs, Ibedul and Reklai. The Save Palau Organization battled Tmetuchl over the proposed superport and won. After that, Tmetuchl pushed for Palau separatism against the Concerned Citizens of Palau, who favored Palauan inclusion into a Micronesian federation. Tmetuchl won a close victory and most Palauans now say, in hindsight, that Tmetuchl was right all along. The final round of the 1970s pitted Tmetuchl and his followers against the People's Committee for the Constitution. This group successfully won popular ratification of a constitution that was incompatible with the principles of free association which Tmetuchl signed in Hilo in 1978. This constitutional fight tapped into a deep well of Palauan nationalism which thrust a new group of elected leaders into control of Palauan affairs. Though Tmetuchl finished second to Haruo Remeliik in Palau's first constitutional election (November 1980), his backers won half the seats in the National Congress, thus establishing a power base

for future maneuver characteristic of Palauan political style. An indication of that power surfaced during September 1981 when a violent government workers strike threatened the viability of constitutional government which had been established only nine months earlier.

Since the U.S. Navy's introduction of elected government in 1946, vote had largely replaced voice, transforming a foreign institution into a Palauan one. Two generations of elected leaders in creative tension with each other have forged this transformation. Whether this new cultural artifact will survive the age old Palauan drive for political ascendency is for the Palauans of the 1980s to determine.

Analysis

Palauans have eagerly placed their beach of "we" around the new island of elected government. Franchise greatly enlarged the political arena beyond the hierarchical indigenous system, thereby providing ambitious young men an avenue to power, prestige and wealth. Two generations of elected leaders have sought office with these goals in mind.

Palau's hereditary leaders have generally scorned the foreign system as incompatible with age-old traditions and customs. The chiefs' mood has been that it is improper for "the votes of rubaks and community leaders to be counted as equal to those considered as social outcasts and undesirables."[207] Despite opposition from hereditary leaders, the island

---

[207] John Olbedabel Ngiraked, personal interview, Koror, Palau, January 13, 1981.

of elected government introduced in 1946 by the American strangers has, in many ways, functioned as a community educator.

This education was effective because post-war leaders like Joseph Tellei and Charlie Gibbons defined the new system of government in Palauan terms, thereby making it understandable and acceptable to the hereditary leaders. Both Tellei and Gibbons were influential men during Japanese administration. They learned the structure of the foreign system and how to use it from time to time to achieve Palauan ends. In 1947 the two men went to Guam to learn the complexities of elected government. They returned and persuaded Ibedul and Reklai that the foreign system of government could be instituted and controlled. Thus the Palau Congress was born. Though the chiefs had no legal standing in the Congress, they dominated its affairs.

This domination continued into the eight year life of the Olbiil Era Kelulau Era Belau (OEKEB) which was the successor of the Palau Congress. During this time some of Palau's first generation of elected leaders grew restless, particularly those as Indalecio Rudimch, Benjamin Mersai, Toribiong Uchel, Roman Tmetuchl, David Ramarui and Lazarus Salii. Most of these men had experienced some immersion in the foreign culture of the book--the school. Like Tellei and Gibbons before them, they discovered that the foreign cultural system could be learned, used and controlled to achieve community and personal ends.

In 1963 this group of ambitious elected leaders transformed the large and unwieldly OEKEB into a streamlined twenty-eight member Palau Legislature. They also formed the Liberal and Progressive Parties. This was the beginning of a fascinating experiment in political education that

culminated in the 1980 constitutional election. The first group of elected leaders took the position that they were skilled and knowledgeable in the ways of the new governmental system and they could therefore teach these ways to the community through participation in representative government.

Some of the first generation of elected leaders received wider exposure to the subtleties of the American form of government through election to and membership in the Congress of Micronesia. For Palauans, holding a congress seat was the epitome of power, prestige and wealth.

While Palau's first generation of elected leaders were learning the complexities of their trade in the Palau Legislature and Congress of Micronesia, a second generation of potential elected leaders returned to Palau dedicated to an ideology of protest learned on Hawaii campuses during the rebellious student days of the late 1960s. Through protest demonstrations (a totally new and culturally unwelcomed form of political expression), articles in the Tia Belau newspaper and activities of the Tia Belaud Party, Moses Uludong, Francisco Uludong and their followers attacked what they perceived as entrenched neo-colonialism whether internal to Palau or external in Saipan or Washington, D.C. Imbued with socialist and Marxist ideas, this group of Palauan "radicals"--products of the culture of the book--had a mission. They argued that Palauan community interests must be placed above U.S. interests or personal ones of power, prestige and wealth. In this act they were exhibiting the cooperation-unity-community theme which, in dynamic tension, balances the Palauan propensity for competition-accumulation-manipulation. Also in this act they were implicitly claiming to be educators on crucial issues and new

political techniques. They were people of the book because they believed that enlightenment and liberation came from the power of ideas found in books. Ironically, in an alliance with Ibedul and Reklai, these young men of the book attempted to use their political and writing skills to regain some of the voice lost by the chiefs since the rise of elected leaders in 1963. The new group of protestors recognized the fragmenting impact local style elected government was having on Palauan society. Through word and deed they attempted to reverse this erosive trend and in this act became community educators.

Within two years of its emergence, this new group of leaders became involved in an exciting series of election and referendum clashes, which, in the end, catapulted some of them into positions of power, prestige and wealth.

This series of fourteen ballot box contests spanned just six years time (see Appendix B), 1974-1980, and culminated in Palauan awareness of, and education into, the subtleties, complexities and limitations of elected government.

A number of these contests centered on the question of Palau's political unity with or separation from the other ethnic areas in the Trust Territory. The referenda results of July 1975 were ambiguous on the question of Palau's future political status. But in the 1976 vote sponsored by the Palau Legislature, Roman Tmetuchl felt the Palau electorate mandated him as chairman of the Palau Political Status Commission to achieve political separation from the other Micronesian districts. From this time to his 1980 election defeat, Tmetuchl surrounded himself with a group of foreign advisors and consultants. Ever since he worked for the Japanese

military police during the Pacific War, Tmetuchl learned that a leader in a cross cultural situation must master the foreign system if he is to use and benefit from it. This lesson was reaffirmed for Tmetuchl during his involvement with the superport. At that time he rubbed elbows with top government and business leaders from Iran, the U.S. and Japan. Soon after the exciting superport issue faded, Tmetuchl hired or obtained gratis the services of Americans as Bill Brophy, Stuart Beck, Thomas Gladwin and John Kenneth Galbraith. These men had full knowledge of the complexities and workings of the U.S. political-economic system and assisted Tmetuchl chart a course through these rough waters. In an important way, Tmetuchl exploited the talents of these advisors to further his cause of political separation and a favorable free association compact for Palau. This was education in two senses. For Tmetuchl and his followers it was self-education into how Palau's political system might best articulate with the U.S. system. It was community education in that Tmetuchl's efforts inspired vigorous political opposition.

Beginning with the Carter Administration, both Tmetuchl and his opposition sensed that American influence would no longer be exerted in the local political arena, leaving the power, prestige and associated wealth to anyone who could seize it through acceptable political means. Through numerous ballot box contests, petitions, resolutions, U.S. speeches and letters to the editor during 1977-79, the Tmetuchl and anti-Tmetuchl groups learned how far they could push each other and the U.N. within the rules of elected government.

In early 1978 the Palauans favoring Micronesian unity were influential in the decision by the Senate of the Congress of Micronesia to expell

Tmetuchl. But later that year, Tmetuchl won Palau's separation from the other Micronesian districts in a referendum fight that brought out ninety-three percent of the Palauan electorate. This was an important form of political education because everyone had a position on the issue of separation or unity.

In early 1979, thirty-eight elected constitutional convention delegates learned about the nature of a constitution, how to write one, and what the exercise meant to building a national identity. The Con-Con was an experience in community education because the thirty-eight delegates had to wrestle with the fundamental issues of elected government and how such a form of government related to traditional Palauan ways of political decision-making. The Constitution of the Republic of Palau is a wide beach of "we" that Palauans have placed around the island of elected government.

Palauans became passionately attached to the constitution written by their thirty-eight elected delegates. The document was the first act of sovereign will Palauans had taken in nearly ninety years of colonial rule. On July 9, 1979 sixty-three percent of Palau's voters overwhelmingly ratified the Con-Con's document which Tmetuchl opposed. This was the first of three crushing defeats Tmetuchl and his followers experienced in 1979. In an attempt to prevent this first loss, Tmetuchl went on WALU, Koror's private television station, to announce a U.S. financial aid compact offer of $250 million he had negotiated with the U.S. Tmetuchl stated that a yes - vote on July 9 would doom the offer. In this act Tmetuchl was appealing to the materialistic and accumulative tendency of Palauans. He miscalculated. In an unprecedented show of unity and community spirit, many

Palauans chose the constitution over the multi-million dollar U.S. compact offer. The constitution proved to be a better community educator than the compact.

Tmetuchl and his supporters succeeded in voiding the Palau Con-Con document on the ground that it did not make allowances for a free association agreement with the U.S. as mandated by the Sixth Palau Legislature. The original document was revised and $125,000 granted from the U.S. National Security Advisor's office for an education campaign. Nearly two hundred Palauan educators were hired to explain the merits of the new document. Most Palauans, however, were committed to the original document. An education program, no matter how richly funded, could not change the issue. Recognizing a good thing, Palauans took the money and voted their conscience--a defeat for Tmetuchl's revised constitution and U.S. interests.

A month before this defeat, the members of the Sixth Legislature, who were Tmetuchl supporters and who opposed the original constitution, were turned out of office. The transition of political power from the Sixth to Seventh Palau Legislature was painful for the former but accomplished without violence. This peaceful transition of power demonstrated the strength of Palau's island of elected government and how, in some instances, it fostered cooperation, at least for the moment.

Although Tmetuchl lost in his run for the presidency of Palau in November 1980, a tenuous sense of community prevailed as Palau's first constitutional government took office in January 1981. The festive spirit of installation and inauguration masked deep political unrest which suddenly burst forth just nine months after the establishment of constitutional

government. The Tmetuchl forces, impatient with what they perceived as executive incompetence, gave leadership support to a group of disgruntled government employees. Half drunk and angry at the executive's failure to negotiate higher salary levels, the employees destroyed the President's office. The competitive-manipulative tendency of the Tmetuchl group combined with the rage of the employees led to an act of violence unprecedented in recent Palauan history.

This political act served as a community educator. It showed Palauans how tenuous and fragile their new island of constitutional government was. A poet-observer of the executive office destruction eloquently described how unchecked passions can generate incomprehensible acts of political violence.

Palauan Poem[208]

Sun rays, filtered by morning clouds,
struck my face sharply, as I
stood in the corner to watch.
Never did I make out a face in the
crowd.
nor did I see a familiar shadow. Only
because of the young coconut trees,
growing nearby, did I know where I
was,
what I was watching . . .
A scene that has never entered my
simple mind.
My heart burst at the sound of the
blast;
for heaven's sake, this is our land,
our anchor, our newly born government.
Tears, slowly came, as I saw the
flame,

---

[208] Pacific Daily News, September 21, 1981, p. 15.

red in rage, angry for the injustice
done.
Did our ancestors ever know what
makes us tick?
What has made us ignite in fire?
Now, came tears, warm tears, I never
knew
I had, I couldn't hold back
as I stood there
unable to move, paralyzed with fear,
hating myself, letting the flag fly
halfway in the sky; an anchor of
courage,
a sign of pride, a treasure left to us by
our ancestors, now flaming in anger,
red with rage.
Then, so quickly over, so many
broken hearts
only for that moment, now the moment's
gone, too fast,
for my simple mind to grasp.
I stood there and watched,
with only the young coconut trees
to remind me where I was.

Ceta Ngirmang

Roman Tmetuchl, spokesman for the enraged strikers, learned how far he could push Palau's sociopolitical organization. "Roman wanted to test U.S. reaction. Next time he says he can overthrow the government."[209]

Like the school, the island of elected government has been eagerly embraced by Palauans even though its basic premises may be shaken to the roots occasionally. This is the human condition. What is fascinating about the Palauan micro-world is that we can see close up the passions, plans, follies and greatness that fuel social change and, in the process, provide grist for the historians' mill. The Palauan penchant for competition-accumulation-manipulation balanced against cooperation-unity-community

---

[209]Moses Uludong, personal interview, Honolulu, Hawaii, May 18, 1982.

has been the harder of the two cultural millstones in the grinding out of events in the arena of elected government. Whether this penchant will erode away the beach of "we" Palauans have placed around the island of elected government during the past thirty-five years remains yet to be seen.

CHAPTER VII

ISLANDS OF CHANGE IN CONTEMPORARY PALAU

> Today in Palau we have a lot
> of emptiness, a lot of searching
> without finding anything.
>
> Reverend Billy Kuartei
> Koror, Palau, February 1981

Two Themes

Much of the contemporary Palauan scene can be summed up in a brief analysis of the events of two recent days.

On December 31, 1980, the Seventh Palau Legislature met for the last time. Attending that session, I was struck by the contrasting styles of the farewell speeches of two legislators who had failed to regain their seats in the November election. Victorio Ucherbelau, a serious and reflective man trained in law in the U.S., read his speech in English. He concentrated on issues and personal commitment in his final remarks. In contrast, Fumio Rengiil began his speech with a joke and then spoke extemporaneously and persuasively in Palauan. His speech appealed to the emotions and good will of his fellow legislators. He called for cooperation and dedication from those members who would become part of the new constitutional government in one day's time. Ucherbelau's speech read in English followed immediately by Rengiil's spoken Palauan speech revealed a harmonious synthesis of American and Palauan ways. The two speeches both exemplified and called for cooperation, unity and community.

However, one day later, January 1, 1981, the Senate-elect of the Olbiil Era Kelulau (National Congress) got entangled in a floor fight over the credentials of one of its members. Like good politicians anywhere, the senators-elect attempted to disguise a deep ideological division, especially since a large crowd of visitors had assembled in the Senate chambers to witness the installation of Palau's first constitutional government. Although the debate centered on one member's qualifications, the deeper issue was over who would control the Senate leadership. The eighteen members were evenly divided between nine who made up the Baules faction (those identifying with the discredited Sixth Legislature) and nine members of the Nakamura faction (those identifying with the popular Seventh Legislature). If the former could force out one member of the latter, the Baules group would have a majority of one and could easily elect their people to the presidency, vice presidency and floor leader positions. This would give their political-economic views full rèign.

The Baules group identified with the politics and economic development policies of Roman Tmetuchl. These congressmen wanted foreign investment, infrastructure projects, job opportunities for Palauan youth, and avenues to greater wealth for themselves. This faction generally advocated a smaller government than was created by the Palau Constitution and it also distrusted democratic methods as unpredictable and unsuitable for Palau.

On the other hand, the Nakamura faction tended to be more concerned with community issues than was generally the case with the Baules group. The more outspoken members of the Nakamura group advocated a direction

and pace of development that would spread wealth more evenly than was taking place and thus be less socially disruptive than the "fast" economic development ideas advocated by the Baules group. The Nakamura faction felt that democratic methods were the only way to prevent domination by the rich and influential Koror businessmen as Tmetuchl, Baules and Etpison. These two factions then differed fundamentally in their economic, political and social views. In general terms, they could be characterized as the socially unconcerned Baules faction on the one side and the socially concerned Nakamura group on the other. This is a broad characterization, of course, and does not strictly apply to all members of either group.

The floor fight over which faction would dominate the Senate came to an end after an hour of debate. The questionable credentials were finally accepted. The senators-elect were beginning to sense the impatience of the growing crowd. As one member of the audience later remarked, "So this is how we'll begin our new government!"[1]

After several days of debate and haggling during which each side tested the will and ability of the other, the Senate elected its leadership. The Baules faction gained the presidency and floor leadership while the Nakamura faction took the vice presidency. This was a compromise, but one that favored the socially unconcerned faction.

These two events of late 1980 and early 1981 illustrate a balance of forces that dominates Palauan culture. Although both speeches of the 31st, though clearly different in style and delivery, called for

---

[1]Lorenza Pedro, personal interview, Koror, Palau, January 1, 1981.

cooperation, dedication and concern for the common good, the centrifugal tendencies of competition, manipulation and accumulation were evident in the Senate floor fight of New Year's Day 1981. These two cultural forces exist in dynamic tension.

In contemporary Palau, especially Koror-town, the competition-accumulation-manipulation theme tends to move society toward greater individualism and social fragmentation. This is a very significant change because at the turn of the century this theme, played out through the fabric of society not yet deeply torn by intrusive foreign cultural influences, generated social cohesion. The other theme in the dynamic, that of cooperation-sharing-community, produces social stability and unity. It was this aspect of Palauan culture that fascinated William Vitarelli and it is just this force that gets things done in Palau. This dialectic of forces, of cooperation-unity-community on the one side and competition-accumulation-manipulation on the other, create a back and forth tension which fuels social change in Palau. This tension of themes takes a number of specific forms in contemporary Palau:

traditional authority vs. elected authority
the old vs. the young
concern for community vs. concern for individual
privilege vs. equality
the word vs. the book

Recent events in Palau tend to tip the balance of these specific dualities toward the right column in the above list, thereby generating disbalance within Palauan social organization.

In this final chapter I will explain that the working out of the cultural themes of competition and cooperation has had two dramatic and unexpected results. Both the school and elected government as educators

have provided avenues to power (both internal and external), prestige and wealth far beyond what was available to most Palauans in the indigenous cultural system. For this reason these new islands of meaning have been eagerly embraced. Yet this cultural incorporation, this beach of "we" Palauans have placed around these cultural imports, has had the unintended consequence of increasing social fragmentation.

On the other hand, Palauans have not been so eager to place their beach of "we" around the island of church because it generally does not provide an avenue to greater power, prestige and wealth. Yet, paradoxically, the educative efforts of Palau's churches reinforce and build a sense of community and social cohesion; in Father Felix's words: "a striving toward oneness and concern for others."

Elected Government

Chapter Six traced the replacement of the chiefs' voices by elected members' votes and the tremendous political competition that dominated Palau during the 1970s. As noted in the preceding chapter, the Olbiil Era Kelulau is composed of thirty-four members, sixteen in the House of Delegates and eighteen in the Senate. These men (one woman member in the House) are, in many ways, the new chiefs of Palau. They have a significant amount of power, prestige and wealth ($21,000/year for four 25-day sessions). Therefore, nearly every man in Palau, it seems, aspires to join the new chieftainship. It is perceived as the epitome of power, prestige and success. For one hundred days each year, legislators sit and talk, debate, maneuver, and eventually pass laws which they expect

the executive to carry out in quick order. This is well paid chiefs' work and thus highly desired.

And what has happened to the old chiefs, the hereditary leaders? They have become the victims of change.

> The turn of events since the November 1980 election has been an astounding defeat for traditional authority. I'm amazed at the speed and intensity of desire to shove aside traditional leaders. This will be a big source of future trouble.[2]

As shown in the early sections of Chapter Six (pp. 256-268), this change began in earnest with the formation of the Palau Legislature and political parties in 1963. Furthermore, the writers of the Constitution of the Republic of Palau defined the place of traditional authority to be the rural municipalities. As a result, the old chiefs lost their chambers (House of Chiefs), their furniture and their generous monthly compensation. This was, in retrospect, shocking, even humiliating. The traditional leaders were being shoved aside like old men whose time had long passed. The old chiefs, however, are strong and respected leaders in the rural areas. Some of them have taken control of state constitutional conventions to insure a "book" that will fully recognize their privileges, responsibilities and powers. The assertiveness of the traditional leaders on the municipal (state) level is a healthy departure from the dominant trend of the 1947-1981 period to replace traditional authority by elected authority.[3]

---

[2]John Olbedabel Ngiraked, personal interview, Koror, Palau, January 22, 1981.

[3]For a description of state (formerly municipality) constitution writing, see Donald R. Shuster, "The Constitution Writers of Palau,"

In Koror, some of the new chiefs are looking to carve out personal empires of wealth and influence through business and foreign connections. Elected office is seen by many congressmen as a spring board to greater wealth. "We elected officials have two choices. We can use our office to gain personal benefits, or we can work to assist the community."[4] Presently in the OEK, the norm seems to be the former, and the individual who opposes is neutralized by cultural forces that stress conformity to the norm. The Baules faction, for instance, has a tactic of subtle obfuscation which, according to Senator Moses Uludong, is very effective:

> They are masters at confusing and coloring situations, at using rumors, exaggeration and manipulation. It's a Palauan political tactic and they use it extremely well to defuse our initiatives. Sometimes I don't know how to respond. I think the only way is to inform people on the issues.[5]

Some of the energy and vision of the socially concerned members in the Senate and House derive, either directly or indirectly, from the Tia Belaud Party (see Chapter Six, pp. 368-369) which has recently revived itself. The core leadership of Tia Belaud, whose president, Moses Uludong, is a member of the Senate, say that wealth is not a measure of success for them as they claim it is for the Baules faction. This group further says that its aims are to build a self-reliant economy, inspire

---

Pacific Magazine, January-February 1982, 23-25. A longer version of this article was presented at the "Evolving Political Cultures in the Pacific Islands" conference held at the Institute of Polynesian Studies of Brigham Young University, Hawaii Campus, February 4, 1982.

[4]Moses Uludong, personal interview, Koror, Palau, August 4, 1981.

[5]Ibid.

pride in being Palauan, and oppose U.S. hegemony which has taken the form of a fifty year military denial position in negotiations on a draft compact of free association between Palau and the U.S.[6] The Tia Belaud members, in their 30s, are the lonely visionaries of Palau.

They are lonely because they are surrounded by a rising tide of individualism and materialism which militate against their social concerns. Pastor Billy Kuartei sees enthusiastic acceptance of the money economy as the root cause of these socially fragmenting tendencies.

> We've accepted the money economy and we're becoming individualized instead of group oriented. We're suffering as a result.[7]

Leo Ruluked, Principal of Palau High School, feels that the practice of American-style democracy and freedom have eroded traditional authority and social cohesion.

> Maybe democracy and freedom aren't right for us. People are becoming more individualized than community oriented. Our cultural controls are breaking apart. Before, everything was centralized and people just knew what to do.[8]

---

[6]See "Memorandum from Chairman, Palau Commission on Status and Transition to Speaker, Palau Legislature," pp. 3-4, dated December 3, 1980. The fifty year denial concept which would give the U.S. the right to deny access by foreign military powers to Palauan lands and waters came up late in the last round of negotiations under the Carter Administration. This session was held in Washington, D.C., in November 1980 and it was at that time that President-elect Remeliik initialed the Draft Compact of Free Association and its three subsidiary agreements.

[7]Reverend Billy Kuartei, personal interview, Koror, Palau, February 13, 1981.

[8]Leo Ruluked, personal interview, Koror, Palau, February 26, 1981.

Like Reverend Kuartei, Rubak Otobed of Ngatpang believes that the Palauan thirst for money is a recent and disturbing phenomenon.

> Palau developed for many years without foreign money. Now we're quarreling and scrambling for money. We just sit. We have not earned the $35,000 which the new government says our municipality will get. If we would just work, we wouldn't have any trouble. We like the money, even love it, because we don't have to work for it.[9]

Bernie Keldermans, a strong nationalist and active women's leader in Koror, blames the television for accentuating materialism.

> TV is generally having a bad effect on Palau. People are more thing minded and think the junk programs of American culture represent the modern and therefore good way. The TV is so powerful because it expresses itself in Palauan terms: oral and visual.[10]

The heightened level of materialism and individualism which Kuartei, Ruluked, Otobed and Keldermans see on the wider social scene gets amplified in the halls of elected government. The congressmen have political leverage to work their will and the reinforcement of each other's conduct confirms the correctness of their actions. At the same time, the legislators provide an example of how best to succeed in the world of the vote. The norm which guides some of the prominent legislators--get as much as you can as fast as you can--reinforces this trend in the larger society and vice versa. The result is that the competition-accumulation-

---

[9]Rubak Otobed, personal interview, Koror, Palau, February 19, 1981.

[10]Bernie Keldermans, personal interview, Koror, Palau, November 23, 1981.

manipulation theme, which fostered pockets of solidarity just two generations ago, now generates social fragmentation.

The School

Chapter Five of this study showed how the culture of the book, the school, has become a powerful institution in Palauan society. It has largely replaced traditional education, the culture of the word. Palauans have recognized that to be schooled is to be modern and it is this modernism that often confers social prestige and wealth.

> Parents urge their youngsters to go to school, especially college, knowing full well Palauan values and perspectives may be lost. People complain about this, yet when it's their child they say, 'Go!' Of course there is a value conflict but people seem to believe that having a wage is better in the long run. Besides, we have a saying in Palau: 'Western ways are like the incoming tide. You can't hold them back, so flow with the tide.'[11]

With over 700 students, Palau High School sends more graduates to U.S. colleges than any other secondary school in Palau. For the past five years seventy to eighty percent of each year's graduating class have departed for further experience in the culture of the book with all its attendant fascinations. Palau's other high schools--Mindszenty (Catholic), Emmaus and Bethania (Lutheran), Palau Mission Academy (Seventh-Day Adventist) and the Palau Modekngei School--have student bodies numbering eighty to one hundred fifty. They are heavily academic (excepting the

---

[11] David Ramarui, personal interview, Koror, Palau, February 11, 1981.

Modekngei school) and like PHS see a large percentage of their graduates go on to U.S. college. All the private religious schools, except the Modekngei school, charge tuition, but many parents favor them over Palau High School because of their discipline, explicit value orientation and higher academic standards. The faculties of these schools generally have more energy and dedication than the public school teachers, though no more academic training.

Leo Ruluked, Principal of Palau High School, recalled the days of the early 1960s when PHS was a small school of two hundred students. The teachers were more committed then; they were enthusiastic, cooperative and had a sense of community. Today Ruluked admits that the emotional atmosphere is very different. The teachers do a lot of complaining now; they lack enthusiasm, commitment and spirit. Leo has attempted, with limited success, to reverse this attitude through periodic campus activities, projects and luncheons. One recent big event he organized was the school's ten year anniversary celebration during which kinrohoshi (volunteer work activity) involved all the male teachers. They removed a large tree, erected a flag pole in its place, built rock walls and beautified the campus. Unfortunately these exercises in group solidarity are too few and far between to regenerate much of the spirit and dedication of the school's founding years. One of the clearest statements of the school's spiritual malaise was made by the Registrar of PHS.

> There is something lacking in us. I find I'm not using my mind. I'm not creative. Our teachers only know the textbook and then only chapter by chapter. We don't seem to utilize our knowledge and experience to make kids see things clearly and get them intellectually excited. We only copy.

> We need to create things so we can feel good about ourselves. A few of us talk and energize each other but we need to do this as a whole school.[12]

A similar spiritual malaise affects the Catholic school teachers. A strong drift toward secularism on the part of these teachers has troubled Palau's Catholic priests. The lay teachers, all of whom are Catholic, are very reluctant to involve themselves in religious education.[13] They feel this way because they are not sacramental in their personal religious lives. Father Hoar, pastor of the Koror Church until July 1981, had strong views on this issue. He said he would rather close the schools--Mindszenty High School and Maris Stella Elementary School--than to have so many publicly unsacramental Catholic teachers.

The director of the schools, Father Smith, felt it was better to keep the schools open in the hopes of improving the spiritual situation of the teachers. Thus, there was a tension of views. Father Hoar, though believing the schools should be closed, nevertheless was pushing to get teachers involved in at least the information aspect of religious education. The spiritual portion of the schools' curriculum could be handled by the priests and nuns.

To help meet some of the religious needs of the teachers, Father Francis Hezel, S.J., came to Palau in mid-January 1981 with the Micronesian principals of Xavier High School, Truk and Ponape Agriculture and Trades School to conduct a three day colloquium. The goal of the gathering

---

[12]Rosemary Mersai, personal interview, Koror, Palau, February 27, 1981.

[13]Father Richard Hoar, S.J., personal interview, Koror, Palau, January 5, 1981.

was spiritual revitalization. The Jesuits felt it was a time to deepen individual faith and renew the idea of teaching as a religious service.

Father Smith was as concerned as Father Hoar about the lack of involvement by the lay teachers in religious education and what the priests perceived as the instability of the teachers' individual religious lives. Father Smith was optimistic; he felt the lay teachers were improving. Through the colloquium and their personal efforts, the priests were attempting to re-awaken religious vision and spiritual values. The Jesuits believed that teachers with an invigorated sense of Catholicism would begin reshaping the value dimension of the school and home communities.

> We hope the colloquium will help the teachers see who they are and motivate them a little more in their own Christian lives, help them examine their values and maybe make some decisions in terms of changes.[15]

These efforts at spiritual revitalization reveal a deep concern about a trend in Palau toward secularism and its attendant values of materialism and individualism. This trend troubles Palau's Jesuits and they work to reverse it. Their efforts will be discussed more fully in a later section of this chapter.

While religious education was not as vigorously pursued at Koror's Catholic schools as the priests desired, at least some efforts in Christian value instruction were being made. The same was true of the

---

[15]Father Richard Hoar, S.J., personal interview, Koror, Palau, January 5, 1981.

other religious schools. Pastor Billy Kuartei justified the existence of Emmaus High School in value terms. "We provide stability in various important social values."[16]

Though the Palau Modekngei School is presently floundering (see pp. 217-232 of Chapter Five), its entire thrust has been to implant Palauan values and perspectives as exemplified and taught by the elders. The Seventh-Day Adventist elementary and high schools attempt to provide their students with a firm foundation of Christian love and understanding.[17]

In contrast to the efforts and value orientation of these religious schools, Palau High School has no explicit value orientation. This is a great weakness, particularly at a time of rapid social change. As noted above, many of the PHS staff of fifty teachers apparently lack enthusiasm, commitment and spirit. Through their attitude and performance, they generally appear unexcited about teaching or learning. This value tone is contagious and affects the student body. Thus teachers complain that students are undisciplined, disrespectful and lack motivation. As one retired teacher said, "Kids today don't care. They are not responsible nor do they work hard. This is very different from Palau before."[18]

Obviously, such spiritlessness affects the quality and quantity of learning. "I'm sad about the general situation in our schools. Even when students graduate with As and Bs, it seems they haven't learned anything.

---

[16]Reverend Billy Kuartei, personal interview, Koror, Palau, February 12, 1981.

[17]Eldukl, yearbook of the Palau Mission Academy, Airai, Palau, 1975, p. 4.

[18]Balang Toyomi Singeo, personal interview, Koror, Palau, February 28, 1981.

They even seem to lack common sense and are confused by slight variations in patterns."[19]

At root, these statements reveal value conflict. Palauans in their 40s and older are astounded by the behavior and attitude of Palau High School students. The older people claim that students lack direction and a socially accepted value orientation. On the other hand, many teachers appear ambiguous toward or uncommitted to any specific value position. Thus they are unable to clarify lines of relationship or exemplify important social values. The uncertainty of the value situation on one side reinforces that of the other and vice versa. It was just this drift that the Modekngei elders wanted to break when they established their school in 1974.

One of the founding principles of the Modekngei school is to implant Palauan values as the elders know them. With regard to Modekngei school graduates leaving for U.S. colleges, Rubak Otobed, former principal of the school, stated, "I believe the school of the word is better than the school of the book. With the word, one identifies oneself before seeing the outside world. Only after knowing yourself well can you go outside."[20] Otobed has revealed the crux of the dilemma. It is the conflict between the values of the word--the values of the older Palauans--and the values of the book, i.e., American values.

Palauans attending U.S. colleges get a deeper immersion in the culture of the book and even though they may be Modekngei, their American

---

[19]Rosemary Mersai, personal interview, Koror, Palau, December 10, 1980.

[20]Rubak Otobed, personal interview, Koror, Palau, February 20, 1981.

value orientation when they return to Palau is both obvious and disturbing to the elders. For this reason the Modekngei elders have recently begun sending a few of their graduates to Japan for higher education. Memories are selective and the elders recall the rule, discipline and order of Japanese administered schools and society. The parents believe their youngsters will learn these values in Japan as the elders themselves did forty years ago in Japanese dominated Palau.

As mentioned in Chapter Five, the contemporary situation in Palau is one where two different value systems abut one another. The culture of the word expects youth to be quiet, to know its place, to respect elders, to be satisfied with a subordinate social role and to accept Palau as it is. The new college returnees, however, often act just the opposite, violating expectations and creating family and community tensions. Unorthodox behavior, boasts about one's degree, and outspokeness are resented and even ridiculed. The forces for conformity descend on the returnees, and they often experience frustration and despair.

> The college returnee, degree in hand, expects and wants to change things in Palau. Forgetting how their culture works, they immediately meet tremendous resistence and become frustrated. Some returnees, however, work through this and become social contributors. It is then that their academic training becomes of great value.[21]

Like the speeches of Ucherbelau and Rengiil on the last day of 1980, some of the college returnees come to terms with two sets of values. They fuse the old and the new within their persons and become bicultural in the

---

[21] Kempis Mad, personal interview, Koror, Palau, November 26, 1981.

process. They can work smoothly in either world. Father Felix has eloquently described this experience.

> The two sets of values are not mutually exclusive. The person who integrates them can become a very rich person because he accepts the vertical without destroying the horizontal and the horizontal without destroying the vertical. You are enriched when you can do that.[22]

Value conflict can be resolved but it is not easy. Older Palauans, especially, are confused and uncertain. As Palau becomes more Westernized, the older people become more alienated. It seems they do not have the conceptual tools for understanding the how and why of value conflict. The old often respond by asserting their authority. They feel better after doing this but it sometimes increases tension between themselves and the younger "Americanized" people. It is in this conflict of values and perspectives where Palau's churches are making an important contribution.

The Churches

As noted in Chapter Four, Palau's older and more established churches have intensified their efforts at making religion more meaningful to Palauans today. Caught up in a rip-tide of change themselves, the churches are, in their unique ways, throwing out anchors of stability to their followers. The Modekngei offer the anchor of traditional values. The

---

[22] Father Felix Yaoch, S.J., personal interview, Koror, Palau, February 29, 1981.

Seventh-Day Adventists cast the anchor of revival. The anchor the Lutherans offer is the Bible and faith. The Catholic priests feel the best anchor is a fusion of faith and consciousness-raising. I will briefly sketch some of the work of the Lutherans and Catholics in their attempts to calm the turbulent waters of value conflict.

Besides the efforts of the Emmaus and Bethania high schools to inculcate Christian values, the young leadership of Palau's Evangelical Church has turned its attention to the elderly and the very young.

The church's deacon program is an old and successful one. The younger seminary trained pastors see the deacons (older respected men of deep faith) as an important source of strength and direction. Rotating from village center to village center throughout Palau, deacon conferences have been held every two months for the past eight years. The two generations of leaders complement one another. The deacons are the "chiefs" of the church who make decisions on organization and doctrines to be taught and point out church problems to be discussed. The younger pastors conduct Bible seminars, do personal evangelism, and operate the schools. They are the workers and do-ers.

> These two types of leadership are very much needed in the Palauan churches today. The congregation accepts the teaching and exposition of the new leaders; but in decision-making they like the older men with more evangelistic and pastoral experience. Today a young leader needs to learn the Palauan art of ceremonial and courteous communication and the Palauan form of leadership from the older leaders . . . As long as the people of the congregation . . . are undergoing cultural change, two kinds of ministry will be called for.[23]

---

[23]Reverend Charles Hubert, Currents (Quarterly Publication of the Liebenzell Mission), Vol. 37, No. 3, July-September 1978, 12.

Clearly, the Evangelical Church leaders have been able to integrate the old with the young, the word with the book, the Palauan-trained with the American-trained, the socially vertical with the socially horizontal. Everyone is enriched, as Father Felix says, in the process. The enthusiasm of the young gets tempered by the wisdom of the old. As Reverend Billy Kuartei puts it:

> In a time of such rapid change we have to be careful. I need the elders to keep me balanced so I don't run wild with what I think might be a good idea. I have to get the elders to grasp it and accept it. If I don't get their support, nothing happens.[24]

Both Reverend Billy Kuartei and Reverend Charles Hubert recognize the great value of the deacons who, in many ways, function as their teachers; teachers of the culture of the word to those who grew up in the culture of the book. This relationship is a beautiful synthesis of talents and personal histories. It creates social unity, community and direction which Palauans seem to crave at this time in their history.

The Evangelical Church Gospel Kindergarten is extremely popular among Palauan parents because it inculcates orderly behavior, the fundamentals of religion, and discipline. A group of Palauan church ladies got the idea for a kindergarten from the Palau Evangelical Church, Guam. The Palauan pastors "got all on fire" for the idea and the deacons threw in their full support. The idea generated tremendous enthusiasm. This was in 1965. In September 1966 the first group of eighteen children

---

[24]Reverend Billy Kuartei, personal interview, Koror, Palau, February 13, 1981.

was registered. The Kindergarten has been growing larger and more popular every year. By early 1981 nearly two hundred children were enrolled. The Kindergarten has its own beautifully equipped, large concrete building, a fine bus and a dedicated staff of thirteen women.

The matriarch of the Gospel Kindergarten is Sister Ingelore Lengning, originally from Germany. She has been in Palau since 1955, speaks Palauan fluently and now considers Palau her home. She is a gifted organizer and musician who enjoys creating surprises. For instance, the first performance of kindergarten children on Christmas day 1966 amazed the adults, and they continue to be impressed by the achievements of the little children. Moses Sam, chairman of the inauguration committee, brought the Gospel Kindergarten children to the OEK in mid-January 1981. Their presence, songs, homemade hats, and gifts of New Testaments melted stout political hearts and shook loose funds for Sam's national inauguration program.

Kindergarten graduates display values and behaviors which Palauan adults feel are of fundamental social importance. The Evangelical congregations in Peleliu, Ngiwal and Ngarchelong have called for kindergarten programs for their churches. Parents complain that the Palau Community Action Agency Headstart program is inappropriate because children are allowed to do as they please. The Evangelical Church Gospel Kindergarten program, however, implants rudiments of religious faith, discipline, respectful behavior, and a sense of work.[25] The Kindergarten was started

---

[25]Sister Ingelore, Lengning, personal interview, Koror, Palau, February 23, 1981.

nearly seventeen years ago through vision, love and sacrifice. It inspires enormous pride in teachers and parents alike and together with the values it imparts, pushes the Palauan social dynamic in the direction of cooperation, sharing and community.

The Evangelical Church Sunday Program is a similar social force. Established in Koror by Sister Elizabeth Reumann in 1976, it has spread to nineteen villages throughout Palau. Bethania Girls' School graduates, married and living in their home villages, serve as volunteer teachers, thereby keeping the overhead costs of the program low. All the materials are produced locally in Palauan language, and the program appears to be gaining a solid religious foothold for the Evangelical Church's brand of Christianity.

The Catholic Church has a sisterhood which carries out work similar to the Gospel Kindergarten in the Maris Stella Elementary School, Koror. However, the sisterhood has only four members at present and is no match for the Evangelical Church's staff, which has no elementary school teaching duties and spends full time on its kindergarten and Sunday school programs. Furthermore, the Catholics do not have an effective network of dedicated school graduates to teach Sunday school in the rural villages but must rely on monthly visits by Koror's priests for religious services.

Palau's four Jesuits realize that they physically cannot offer daily mass in all fourteen rural village centers. For both theoretical and practical reasons, the Jesuits have decided against a deacons program which, as noted above, is so effective in the Palau Evangelical Church. The Jesuits recognize their efforts are weak in the rural areas. Nevertheless, their goal is to develop Christian communities there that would

be self-governing and self-educating. Until they make some progress on this formidable front, the rural field remains open to the missionaries from the other religions--Lutherans, Modekngei, Jehovah Witnesses, and the Mormons--with the Lutherans being the most active via their regular Sunday school program and minister resident in Melekeok on the east coast of Babeldaob.

Much of the effort of Palau's Jesuit priests--Father Felix, Father Smith, Father John and Father Hoar (Fr. Hoar left Palau permanently in July 1981)--is concentrated in Koror. It is here, the crucible of change, where the value tension is the greatest. The priests are unanimous in their opinion that a program of men's liberation is desperately needed. As Father Hoar said, "When you get out of twenty-five morning joggers only two men, who needs liberation?"[26]

Historically in Palau there has been much more erosion of men's roles than women's as a result of culture contact. Women continue to garden, cook, bear and look after children. They work very hard at these tasks much as they did in pre-colonial days. On the other hand, the men, particularly those in Koror, have little to do if not employed. Warfare and village club life as institutions disappeared during the late 19th century. Expertise in fishing or carpentry does not gain a man prestige as it once did. There are few avenues to prestige and wealth open to men in what remains of the traditional system. As a result, men turn to the foreign cultural system. Young Palauans have been joining the U.S. armed services in growing numbers, seek admission to U.S. colleges and,

---

[26]Father Richard Hoar, S.J., personal interview, Koror, Palau, March 2, 1981.

when they return--if they return--strive, in time, to enter the ranks of the new chiefs. Yet, the power of the women, especially the older women, over the men is considerable. The priests see men's liberation as the burning issue in contemporary Palau.[27]

Father Hoar hoped to encourage the radio program group to make a series of programs on men's liberation consonant with the Church's goal of consciousness-raising. Father Felix agreed that raising people's awareness of what is happening to them and around them is the great challenge to the Palauan Catholic Church today. Consciousness-raising means "not answering basic questions for people but helping them raise questions and issues themselves, helping them gain awareness of what's happening. It's not that we priests have all the answers, but we can help clarify the issues and get people to think."[28]

While the Jesuits clearly believe that faith must be supported by cognition (consciousness-raising) in order to define a more satisfying cultural order, the other religions seem to operate on the assumption that faith and traditional values are sufficient. It appears at the present time that only the Catholic Church is strongly committed to the goal of consciousness-raising. Given the traditional Palauan conception of knowledge--that it is the rightful possession of those in authority and of high social rank--a program of consciousness-raising will, by its very nature, be difficult to carry out.

---

[27] Ibid.

[28] Father Felix Yaoch, S.J., personal interview, Koror, Palau, February 29, 1981.

Be that as it may, both the Jesuit priests and the seminary trained Evangelical pastors strongly believe Palauan church goers need to creatively express their faith in the symbols of their culture.[29] German administrators in the early part of the century noted that the pre-Modekngei shamans did this, but in the reverse. They apparently used Christian symbols to express indigenous religious conceptions. Father Felix feels Palauans need only look to their past, to the impressive bai platforms, stone paths and docks, for inspiration. Past accomplishments, he feels, can inspire vision and energy. "It is the responsibility of our leadership to generate vision. They must put emphasis on people not money."[30]

On January 11, 1981, Father Hoar blessed an area along the causeway connecting Koror and Malakal where two young people were killed in an auto accident. Father Hoar decided to use a grand ritual of exorcism in the hopes of inspiring people to begin to create religious symbols and new meanings for all things important in their lives.

> The spirit is in them. They are church! What we are hoping to do is to liberate people to feel that they have a right to do the things they want to do; to construct rites and prayers for stuff that's important to them.[31]

---

[29] Reverend Billy Kuartei, "Palau Evangelical Church's Expectation of Missionaries," unpublished manuscript, 1976, p. 4.

[30] Father Felix Yaoch, S.J., personal interview, Melekeok, Palau, July 20, 1981.

[31] Father Richard Hoar, S.J., personal interview, Koror, Palau, January 11, 1981.

The creation of new culturally contexted religious meanings and symbols is a tremendously exciting aspect of church work in contemporary Palau. This is education in its richest and fullest sense. If it takes hold, and Palauans begin constructing their own religious symbols and meanings as Africans have been doing, a greater sense of cooperation, sharing and community will emerge and the dialectical process of tension between two major themes in Palauan culture will go on, invigorated and renewed by religious vision.

Conclusion

Since the arrival of Catholicism with Spanish Capuchin priests in 1891, other strangers from Germany, Japan and America have, in their persons and actions, brought new islands of meaning and change to Palau. This study has described and explained how Palauans have responded to three originally foreign islands of meaning--church, school, and elected government. Initially, Palauan response was one of resistance, but in time it changed to one of pragmatic acceptance as the three institutions educated Palauans in the cultural meanings and complexities of the powerful strangers. To one degree or another, Palauans have therefore placed their cultural beach of "we" around the islands of church, school, and elected government, thereby incorporating them into the Palauan socio-cultural system.

Palauan attraction to the new islands of cultural meaning has resulted from the discovery that acceptance of the new provided Palauans with opportunities to learn the language and culture of the intruding

system. Armed with some of the basic values, attitudes and knowledge of the stranger--cross cultural education in its broadest sense--Palauans gained a degree of social power and were thus able to move with a surer foot on the cultural stage set by contact of islander with stranger.

In this process of cross cultural education, Palauans have more eagerly embraced the islands of school and elected government than that of church. The former two provide avenues to greater power, prestige and wealth gained through the Palauan penchant for competitive-manipulative behavior. This complex leads to social fragmentation via emphasis on individualism and materialism. This is especially true in Koror-town, Palau's crucible of change, where attraction to new ways and lack of concern for community are so evident.

> . . .
> But my Goreor [Koror], do your children care?
> I heartily weep,
> for all your true sons and daughters,
> fading, giving way to a new generation,
> Awakening to new ideas, unfiltered,
> taking all.
>
> So much in a hurry, making money,
> digesting all.
> Only rarely rendering, to you,
> My Goreor, unselfish service,
> a loving care, your childhood home deserves.[32]

Rendering unselfish service is the mission of Palau's churchmen. Although Palauans have reluctantly placed their beach of "we" around the cultural island of church meaning, this island, paradoxically, has been

---

[32]"To my Beloved 'Goreor'" a poem by Ceta Ngirmang printed in Koror State Government Newsletter, vol. 1, no. 2, p. 19.

a great stabilizer during turbulent times. While the school and elected government give vent to the material aspect of Palauan culture, the church touches another, perhaps stronger aspect--that of "striving to oneness and concern for others."[33] It is this cooperation-unity-community theme that inspires social cohesion and a Palauan identity.

That the sociocultural consequences of eager acceptance of the school and elected government as educators lead to social fragmentation on the one hand, while reluctant acceptance of the church as educator leads to social cohesion on the other, indicate that the Palauan socio-cultural system is incredibly resilient and adaptable to the carrying of cultural "excess baggage." After ninety years of external cultural influence, Palauans have learned foreign ways and in the process changed these ways and themselves. The tension of given and constructed, of structure and person have been played out on the stage of Palauan cultural values and categories. This has taken place through the acceptance and re-molding, however incomplete, of Christianity, American-type schooling and elected government. Palauans seek to be "modern" and modernism is identified as a pragmatic acceptance and refashioning of foreign islands of meaning in personally and culturally satisfying ways.

---

[33]Yaoch, "Knitted Togetherness: The Palauan Family," Jesuit Mission, p. 27.

APPENDIX A

FEDERALLY FUNDED PROGRAMS UNDER VARIOUS TITLES

The following is a breakdown of the various federally funded projects under the ESEA Title I Program, and other titles and Public Laws:

	Present No. of Personnel	Budget		
		FY'78	FY'79	FY'80
Supportive Service	2	-0-	$ 20,735.00	$ 24,837.00
Cultural Awareness	4	$ 25,940.00	44,993.00	49,074.00
Environmental Awareness	3	21,400.00	37,830.00	32,867.00
Mathematics	2	14,170.00	29,142.00	29,577.00
Agriculture	3	25,166.00	35,170.00	48,434.00
Learning Improvement	3	22,203.00	36,978.00	39,543.00
Special Education (Title I & VI)	13	115,930.00	112,692.00	140,753.00
Adult Basic Education (Title III)	5	22,847.26	26,956.28	28,435.54
Cultural Heritage Center (Title IV)	2	15,705.00	24,848.00	25,858.00
Library (Title IV)	1	Headquarters Funding		
Old Age (Title V)	15	---	---	31,189.00
Bilingual (Title VII)	14	---	125,732.00	138,890.00
Palau English Project	8	---	74,006.00	101,147.00
Palau Right to Read	-	---	21,882.00	66,487.00
Vocational Rehab. Services (PL-93-113)	3	75,215.00	62,550.00	62,550.00
Vocational Education (PL-94-482)	-	18,639.00	18,740.00	18,740.00
Food Services	68	---	169,112.84	218,355.00
TOTAL	155	$357,215.26	$841,367.12	$1,056,736.54

Source: Alfonso Oiterong, "The Condition of Education in Palau District," Koror, Palau: Department of Education, 1979, p. 62.

APPENDIX B

IMPORTANT POLITICAL EVENTS IN PALAU 1974-1982

1974: 1. Election of Palau's five delegates to the Micronesian Constitutional Convention (June)

2. Congress of Micronesia Election (November)

1975: 3. Congress of Micronesia Status Referendum (July)

Micronesian Con-Con Delegates write a constitution in Saipan, July-September.

4. Election of Sixth Palau Legislature

1976: 5. Palau Legislature Status Referendum (September)

6. Congress of Micronesia Election (November)

1977: U.S. Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources Hearing on Palau Deepwater Port. Both pro- and anti-groups testify.

1978: 7. Koror Mayor's Election (March)

8. Referendum on Micronesian Constitution--Palau rejects 55 percent against to 45 percent for, Tmetuchl achieves separation (July 12)

9. Election of thirty-eight Palau Constitutional Convention Delegates (November)

1979: Palauan Con-Con Delegates write a constitution (January-April)

10. First Referendum on Constitution (July 9)

11. Election of Seventh Palau Legislature (People's Committee assumes control)

12. Second Referendum on Revised Constitution (October 23)

1980: 13. Third Referendum on Original Constitution (July 9)

14. Palau's First Constitutional Election (November 4) President-elect Remeliik initials Compact of Free Association in Washington, D.C. on November 17.

1981: Destruction of President's Office by angry strikers (September 8)

1982: Second Government Workers' Strike of six hours (March 22)

Ambassadors Zeder (U.S.) and Salii (Palau) sign Compact of Free Association agreement which grants Palau $1 billion over 50-years in exchange for U.S. rights to build military installations (August).

APPENDIX C

GLOSSARY OF FOREIGN TERMS

Palauan Terms

adalbengel, soul of a living man.

adalep, a person's spirit after death.

bai, village meeting house.

bladek, ancestral spirits.

blolobo, institutionalized concubinage.

chad era ngebard, men from the west; foreigner.

chelid, god or deity of nature.

ideuekl chemaidechedui, a Palauan political strategy that relies on tactics that surprise and confuse the opposition by maximizing the unexpected.

kameldijl, funeral ceremony.

korong, priest in the Palauan pre-Modekngei polythesistic religion.

korong el dil, priestess.

Mesaod Ngerel, the legendary snake god who traveled throughout Palau in the ancient days teaching the nature of clan and politics to the Palauan people.

meteet, socially high ranking people.

Modekngei, Palau's nativistic religious movement.

Ngedloch, place on Angaur island where human spirits gather after death.

Ngiromokuul, the chief god of Chol village. Temedad, the founder of Modekngei became the spokesman for this god.

oheraol, money-raising party.

Olbiil Era Kelulau, Palau's National Congress defined by the Palau Constitution and sworn into office for the first time on January 1, 1981.

Olbiil Era Kelulau Era Belau, the Palau Congress of the years 1955-1963.

rubak, respected elder, or chief.

Tia Belau, name given to a newspaper written and published in Palau by Moses Uludong during the years 1972-1976.

Tia Belaud, name given to the political party formed by Moses Uludong and his supporters in 1974.

Japanese Terms

chokushi koshyaku, title given to a person receiving a direct order from the Emperor of Japan.

Dai Toa Kyoeiken, Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere.

honka, basic three year public school program for the Micronesian islanders.

hoshuka, the supplementary two year public school program for selected graduates of the honka course.

kami, noble and sacred native deities or spirits which are the objects of reverence and worship in Shinto.

Kampei Taisha Nanyo Jinja, title for the grand State Shinto shrine dedicated on the outskirts of Koror in 1940.

kannushi, State Shinto priests.

kinrohoshi, volunteer work group.

kirikomitai, a group of Palauans that was trained in guerilla tactics in 1944-45.

kogakko, the Japanese public school for Micronesian islanders.

kunrenjio, the Japanese agricultural training school established in Airai, Palau prior to the Pacific War.

Mokko Totei Yoseijo (also *Mokko),* the prestigious Japanese vocational school for Micronesian islanders that was established in Koror, Palau in 1926.

Nanyo-cho, south sea government.

Nanyo-gunto, south sea land.

Seinen Dan, young men's associations; in Palau applied to both young men's and young women's age-grade societies.

sensei, teacher.

Showa, the name given to the period of Japanese history spanning the years 1926 to the present during which Hirohito has been Emperor of Japan.

shushin, Japan's pre-Pacific War curriculum of moral education.

taikuday, the annual all-Palau fair held in Koror during Japanese administration.

taishintai, a group of Palauans who were drafted by the Japanese military for service in New Guinea. The Palauans assisted in resource surveys and preparation of defenses.

Taisho, the name given to the period of Japanese history spanning the years 1912-1926 when Emperor Taisho ruled Japan.

Tenrikyo, a Christianized sect of Shinto that proclaims monotheism.

tomin, a term of negative connotation applied to Micronesian islanders during Japanese colonial rule.

APPENDIX D

PERSONAL INTERVIEWS

Unless otherwise noted, all of the following oral history interviews were conducted during five months of research in Palau, October 17, 1980 to March 2, 1981. The people interviewed provided the writer with many rich glimpses into the inner workings of contemporary Palauan society.

Person	Date
Masayuki Adelbai former Vice Principal Palau High School	October 28, 1980
Romana Anastasio Language Coordinator Palau Department of Education	February 26, 1981 July 5, 1981
Kim Batcheller former District Administrator Palau	February 3, 1981
Tony Bells Director Palau Parks and Recreation	November 13, 1980
Ngiraikelau Beouch Magistrate of Ngaremlengui (Moses Ramarui, translator)	February 18, 1981
Emaimelei Bismark Koror Women's leader (Francisca Bismark, translator)	December 19, 1980
John Bizkarra, S.J. Priest of Angaur, Palau	October 20, 1980 January 7, 8, 9, 1981
Bion Blunt former Principal Palau High School	October 15, 1980 August 5, 1981 Saipan, M.I.
Bill Brophy former consultant and administrative assistant to Roman Tmetuchl	November 11, 19, and December 1, 1981. March 2, August 16, 1982 Honolulu

Person	Date
Harold Crouch Federal Programs Coordinator Saipan	March 5, 1981 Saipan, M.I.
Harry Denny Jehovah Witness Missionary Palau	February 22, 1981
Masa-Aki Emesiochel Educational Specialist Saipan	October 15, 1980 March 4, 1981 Saipan, M.I.
Ngiratkel Etpison Businessman Koror, Palau (Liliana Isao, translator)	July 27, 1981
Elibosang Eungel teacher, Palau High School (Paulus Wong, translator)	November 20, and December 11, 1980.
Rubasech Fritz former Mayor of Koror (Harry Fritz and Willy Sasao, translators)	December 17, 1980 January 6, 1981
Charlie Gibbons artist (Norma Ulechong and Willy Sasao, translators)	September 19, 1979 December 8, 9, 1980
Gloria Gibbons Bilung of Koror	February 12, 1981
Francis X. Hezel, S.J. Director, Micronesian Seminar	January 16, 1981
Richard Hoar, S.J. Pastor, Sacred Heart Church	Dec. 28, 1980; Jan. 5, 6, 11, 19; Feb. 1, 15, 22, Mar. 2, 1981.
Victor Hobson former Assistant District Director of Education, Palau	October 15, 16, 17, 1980 Saipan, M.I.
Sister Loretta Marie Hoffman former Principal, Mindszenty High School	March 1, 1982 Honolulu

Person	Date
Shingei Higa Micronesian Occupational College	July 23, 1981
Katsosang (Salvadora Katosang, interpreter)	January 6, 1981
Salvadora Katosang teacher, Palau High School	November 19, 1980
Bernie Keldermans Science Specialist Palau Department of Education	October 20, 1980 January 8, 1981
William Keldermans Belau Transfer Company	November 23, 1980
Kathy Kesolei Director Palau Community Action Agency	January 8, 1981 February 23, 1981 July 16, 1981
Renguul Kloulchad teacher, Palau High School (Pascual Ikerdeu, translator)	December 5, 1980
Vernoica Kloulchad teacher, Belau Modekngei School	July 22, 1981
Joshua Koshiba Senator, Olbiil Era Kelulau	July 31, 1981
Ken Koskelin former Dean of Students, Micronesian Occupational College	July 28, 1981
Billy Kuartei Pastor Palau Evangelical Church	February 12, 13 and 24, 1981
Haruo Kuartei Educational Specialist Saipan	October 14, 1980 Saipan, M.I.
Lawrence Ierago Head, Immigration Office	November 15, 1980
Benjamin Imperial Principal, Mindszenty High School	January 20, 1981
Tamael Iyong Agriculturalist (Herman Franscio, translator)	December 4, 1980

Person	Date
Sister Ingelore Lengning Emmaus Lutheran Mission Koror, Palau	February 12, 23, 24, 1981
Reklai Killian Lomisang Paramount Chief	August 4, 1981
Kempis Mad Researcher, Palau Museum	October 28, November 26, December 6, 1980; January 5, August 3, 1981
Kenzi Mad Program Officer East-West Center	April 2, 1979, September 2, 1980; January 29, March 3, April 2, 1982 Honolulu
Francis Mahoney former Island Affairs Officer, and District Administrator, Palau 1951-1961	June 4, 1981 Honolulu
Francis Matsutaro teacher, Micronesian Occupational College	December 14, 1980 and July 19, 1981
Rosemary Mersai Registrar, Palau High School	December 10, 1980 February 27, 1981
Michael Mesubed teacher, Palau High School (Paulus Wong, translator)	November 19, 1980
Leo Migvar former teacher, Palau Intermediate School	April 4, 1982 Honolulu
Mormon Missionaries: Elders Alberts, Fieeiki, Hanks, and Tuia Koror, Palau	February 24, 1981
Malsol Ngiraibuuch Ngirklang of Ngaremlengui (Moses Ramarui, translator)	February 19, 1981
Ignacio Ngiraiwet Principal Ngardmau Elementary School	December 10, 1980
John Olbedabel Ngiraked Director, Palau Land Authority	January 13, 22, 1981

Person	Date
George Ngirarsaol Vice President, Senate, Olbiil Era Kelulau	July 12, 31, 1981
Bert Ogata Agriculturalist Saipan	February 8, 1981 Saipan, M.I.
Alfonso Oiterong former District Director of Education presently Vice President of the Republic of Palau	May 19, 1976; December 26, 1980, January 13, 1981
Josepha Oiterong Women's leader, Koror, Palau	November 27, December 8, 1980; February 12, 1981
Santos Olikong Delegate, Olbiil Era Kelulau	December 31, 1980
Anghenio Olkeriil former teacher, Palau High School	February 28, August 4, 1981
Jonas Olkeriil Palau Manager Micronesian Industrial Corp.	January 26, February 19, 1981
Taurengel Otobed Rubak of Ngatpang (Masami Siksei, translator)	February 19, 20, 1981
Maria Otto Language Specialist	November 9, 1981 Honolulu
Tosh Paulis Fisheries Specialist	December 14, 1980
Daniel J. Peacock former Educational Administrator, Palau	April 6, 1982 Honolulu
Lorenza Pedro teacher, Palau High School	January 1, 26, 1981
Juan Polloi Planner, Palau Government	February 28, 1981 August 2, 1981
Kalistus Polloi Agriculturalist (Herman Fransico, translator)	December 5, 1980

Person	Date
Ivan Propost former elementary school teacher Palau	October 16, 1980 Saipan, M.I.
Augusta Ramarui Women's leader, Koror	February 15, 1981
David Ramarui former Director of Education, TTPI, presently Minister for Social Services, Republic of Palau	November 6, 1980 February 10, 11, and July 24, 28, 1981
Emil Ramarui Supervisor of Elementary Schools	November 24, 1980 February 26, 1981
Moses Ramarui Special Assistant to the President Republic of Palau	November 12, 1980 February 6, 20, 26, and 29 March 1, 1981
Bernardino Rdulaol Artist and Musician (Lorenza Pedro, translator)	January 20, 21, 1981
Adelina Polloi Rechesengel nurse	January 3, 11, 1981
Ngerburch Rengulbai former teacher, Palau High School	February 18, 1981
Teruo Rengulbai Agriculture Coordinator Department of Education	February 26, 1981
Adelbai Remed former Agriculture teacher, Palau High School (Masayuki Adelbai, translator)	November 24, December 19, 1980
Thomas Remengesau former District Administrator Palau	August 6, 1981 Saipan, M.I.
Fumio Rengiil former Chief of the Palau Police	December 29, 30, 31, 1980 August 1, 1981
Kiyoko K. Rengiil nurse, Palau Hospital	January 7, 8, 1981

Person	Date
Wilhelm Rengiil President, Micronesian Occupational College	February 20, 1981
Sister Elizabeth Reumann Palau Evangelical Church	January 20, 1981
Peter Rosenblatt former Ambassador	August 7, 1979 March 10, 1980 Honolulu
Leo Ruluked Principal, Palau High School	November 12, 19; December 3, 23, 1980; February 9, 24, 26, and August 4, 1981
Lazarus Salii former Senator, Congress of Micronesia	September 9, 1980 February 28, July 21, 1981
Browny Salvador former teacher, Belau Modekngei School	November 26, 1980 July 28, 1981
Riosang Salvadore Social Studies Specialist	February 27, 1981
Inez Santos teacher, Palau High School	December 21, 1980 February 26, 1981
Oikang Sebastian Principal, Ollei Elementary School	November 28, 1980 December 28, 1980
Harson Shiro Ulimang, Ngaraard	February 17, 1981
Masami Siksei Senator, Olbiil Era Kelulau	December 18, 1980 February 20, 1981
Sadang Silmai former Speaker, Palau Legislature	February 29, 1981
Tyomi Singeo Balang of Peleliu (Lorenza Pedro, translator)	January 3, 26, 28, and February 3, 27, 28, 1981
Singichi Singeo Public Affairs	September 26, 1980 November 7, 1980 July 28, 1981
Yoichi Singeo former Legislator	December 22, 1980 January 10, 1981

Person	Date
Thomas Smith, S.J. Director of Catholic Schools Palau	February 22, 25, 1981
Isaac Soaladaob former Legislator	November 15, 1980
Martin Sokau Vocational Education Coordinator	February 26, 1981
Ronald Stock District Attorney Palau	August 3, 1981
Peter Sugiyama Senator, Olbiil Era Kelulau	November 10, 1980
Isabella Sumang Old Age Program	November 6, 1980
William Tabelual Director of Education	November 20, 1980
Remoket Tarimel Public Works	July 26, 1981
Joseph Tellei Head of Palauan Police during Japanese administration of Palau; important political figure in the post-war years (Willy Sasao and Wakako Higuchi, translators)	November 16, and December 21, 1980; July 19, 27, 1981
Eusevio Termeteet Acting Reklai	February 21, 1981
Roman Tmetuchl former Chairman, Palau Political Status Commission	February 27, July 27, August 2, 1981
Masaharu Tmodrang Business Manager Department of Education	October 25, 1979 November 16, 1979 August 24, 1979 Honolulu
Takeo Towai Recreation Specialist	February 27, 1981
Dr. Minoru Ueki Director, Palau Hospital	January 24, July 29, August 1, 1981

Person	Date
Joseph Uherbelau Chief of Angaur (Willy Sasao and Lorenza Pedro, translators)	December 30, 1980 January 5, February 25, 1981
Norma Ulochong Administrative Assistant Palau Museum	November 17, 1980
Moses Uludong Senator, Olbiil Era Kelulau	July 12, 24, August 4, 1981 Palau May 18, 1982--Honolulu
Victor Vierra former Chief of Police, Palau	October 22, 1981 Honolulu
William V. Vitarelli former Director of Education, Assistant District Administrator, and former Director of the Modekngei School, Palau	July 31, 1980; August 1, 1980; June 28, 1982 Honolulu
Florintine Yangilmau Public Works	November 16, 1980
Takeo Yano former Assistant District Administrator, and Assistant to the Mayor, Koror, Palau	October 20, 1980 February 9, 10, 25, 1981 July 6, 1981
Joe Yasol Peace Corps Director	July 21, 1981
Felix K. Yaoch, S.J. Pastor, Babeldaob	February 29, 1981 July 20, 1981
Siang Yuji teacher, Seventh-Day Adventist Elementary School	February 24, 1981

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Unpublished Sources

Memoranda and Letters

Benitez, Jose A. Memorandum to Manuel Godinez, Palau District Administrator. February 1, 1963. Department of Education Dependent School File, Koror, Palau.

Currie, M.E. Letter to Reverend V.I. Kenally, S.J. July 15, 1948. Sacred Heart Church rectory records, Koror, Palau.

Goding, M.W. Memorandum to Manuel Godinez, Palau District Administrator. November 20, 1963. Department of Education Dependent School File, Koror, Palau.

Godinez, Manuel. Memorandum to High Commissioner, M.W. Goding, Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands. December 3, 1963. Department of Education Dependent School File, Koror, Palau.

McKnight, Veronica. Memorandum to High Commissioner, M.W. Goding, Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands. September 5, 1962. Department of Education Dependent School File, Koror, Palau.

Meyer, Heinz E. Memorandum to Director of Education, Robert Gibson, September 30, 1959. Intermediate School Feeding Program File, Koror, Palau.

Ngiruosech, Kemedaol. Oral history interview. Palau Oral History Document microfilm 5014, University of Hawaii, n.d.

Ramarui, David. Memorandum, unsigned, to Assistant Commissioner, Community Services, Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands. April 28, 1966. This document was originated by Philip Swayne and is located in the Department of Education Dependent School File, Koror, Palau.

_____. Memorandum to Assistant Commissioner, Community Services, Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands. May 23, 1966. Department of Education Dependent School File, Koror, Palau.

Rdechor of Ngerchelong. Oral history interview. Palau Oral History Document microfilm 5014, University of Hawaii, n.d.

Remengesau, Thomas O. Letter to Sadang Silmai. November 17, 1975. This document is located in the files of the Office of Public Affairs, Office of the High Commissioner, Saipan, Mariana Islands.

Salii, Lazarus. Memorandum to Itelbang Luii, Speaker, Palau Legislature and to Thomas O. Remengesau, District Administrator, Palau. May 9, 1975.

Swayne, Philip. Memorandum to David Ramarui, Palau Educational Administrator. September 25, 1963. Department of Education Dependent School File, Koror, Palau.

Dissertations and Theses

Force, Roland W. "Leadership and Cultural Change in Palau." Ph.D. dissertation, Stanford University, 1958.

Force, Maryanne T. "The Persistence of Precolonial Exchange Patterns in Palau: A Study of Cultural Continuities." Ph.D. dissertation, Walden University, 1976.

Jernigan, Earl W. "Lochukle: A Palauan Art Tradition." Ph.D. dissertation, The University of Arizona, 1973.

Klee, Gary A. "The Cyclic Realities of Man and Nature in a Palauan Village." Ph.D. dissertation, University of Oregon, 1972.

McKinney, Robert Q. "Micronesia Under German Rule 1885-1914." M.A. thesis, Stanford University, 1947.

McKnight, Robert K. "Competition in Palau." Ph.D. dissertation, Ohio State University, 1960.

Purcell, David. "Japanese Expansion in the South Pacific 1890-1935." Ph.D. dissertation, University of Pennsylvania, 1967.

Smith, DeVerne R. "The Ties that Bind: Exchange and Transaction in Kinsmen in Palau." Ph.D. dissertation, Bryn Mawr College, 1977.

Stumpf, Margaret K. "Palauan Value Orientations and Education." Ph.D. dissertation, Columbia University, 1970.

Vidich, Arthur J. "The Political Impact of Colonial Administration [in Palau]." Ph.D. dissertation, Harvard University, 1952.

Willy, Nobuo. "A History of the Seventh-Day Adventist Church in Micronesia from 1932 to 1969." M.A. thesis, Philippine Union College, Manila, 1970.

Articles, Reports and Serials

Aoyagi, Machiko. "Transformation of Traditional Religion under the Influence of Christianity." TS, 1977 (?).

"Blue Lagoon." (Palau High School Yearbook.) Koror, Palau: Palau High School, 1965.

Charles, Hubert E. "Church and Society--Government and Nationalism." Koror, Palau, 1980.

Cheyne, Andrew. "Petition of the chiefs of Koror, May 7, 1961," enclosure in Stevens, "Report of Proceedings at the Pellew Islands," Public Record Office, London. Quoted in F.X. Hezel and M.L. Berg, eds., Winds of Change, Saipan, Mariana Islands: Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, 1979.

Davenport, Steven. "Report of the Visit to Belau Modekngei School - February 1-5, 1982 by Lawrence Janss, Joseph Leggett and Steven Davenport." This document is located in the writer's private collection.

"Declaration of Concern and Position of the Traditional Hereditary Chiefs of Palau District." Koror, Palau, 1973. This document is located in the files of the Office of Public Affairs, Office of the High Commissioner, Saipan, Mariana Islands.

Dening, Gregory M. "The Concept of Culture in Historical Analysis." Honolulu, 1981. (Photocopy)

de Santibanez, Silvestre. "Conditions of the Palau Mission 1891-1905," Palau, 1906 (?). This document is located in the Sacred Heart Church rectory records, Koror, Palau.

Fritz, Georg. "Report on a Journey to Palau, Sonsorol, Tobi, 1906." (Photocopy) Translation held by Division of Land Management, Office of the High Commissioner, Saipan, Mariana Islands.

Godinez, Manuel. "Palau District Monthly Report for May 1963." Koror, Palau, June 1963. This document is located in the files of the Office of Public Affairs, Office of the High Commissioner, Saipan, Mariana Islands.

"House of Chiefs Resolution Numbers 100 and 103." Sixth Palau Legislature, Sixth Regular Session, April 1978.

Hoar, Richard, S.J. "Religion in Palau Today." Koror, Palau, 1976. (Photocopy)

Kuartei, Billy. "Palau Evangelical Church's Expectations of Missionaries." Koror, Palau, 1976. (Photocopy)

Leonard, Anne. "Trance and 'Mediums' in the Palau Islands." Koror, Palau, 1966. (Photocopy)

Lopinot, Callistus. "The Caroline Mission of the Spanish and German Capuchins 1886-1919." Rome, 1964. (Photocopy)

Mahoney, Francis B. "Annual Summary of Political Activities, Palau District." Koror, Palau, 1957-58. This document is located in the Office of Public Affairs, Office of the High Commissioner, Saipan, Mariana Islands.

Mahoney, Francis B. "Summary Report of Political Activities, Palau District." Koror, Palau, 1956-57. This document is located in the Office of Public Affairs of the High Commissioner, Saipan, Mariana Islands.

McKnight, Robert K. "The Structure of Competition in Palau." TS. Palau Museum, Koror, Palau, 1964 (?).

McManus, Edwin, S.J. "The Palau Press" 1948?-1969. A private newsletter written from Palau and mimeographed first in Koror than later in New York. Located in the Sacred Heart Church rectory records, Koror, Palau.

Oiterong, Alfonso. "The Condition of Education in Palau District." Koror, Palau: n.p., 1979.

Ostrowski, Bernard. "The Belau Modekngei Learning Center." Evaluation reports 1975-1978, Honolulu: B. Ostrowski.

Palau Constitutional Convention. "Committee on the Executive, Report No. 14 concerning proposal number 486." Koror, Palau, February 24, 1979.

"Palau Country Paper." Presented at the 21st Annual Meeting of Seminar of South Pacific Women, Tahiti, French Polynesia by the Palau Delegation, July 1981.

Palau District. Education Department. "Education in Palau." Koror, Palau: Education Department, 1963.

Palau District. Education Department. "Education in Palau." Koror, Palau: Education Department, 1958.

"Palau Vocational School Bulletin." Koror, Palau: Palau Vocational School, 1962-1964.

Peacock, Daniel J. "Survey of Palauan Students Studying on the Island of Guam." Koror, Palau, 1955. Located in the Pacific Collection, Hamilton Library, University of Hawaii, Honolulu.

Rengulbai, Ngerburch; Ruluked, Leonardo; and Tmodrang, Masaharu. "Customs of Palau." Koror, Palau: Palau High School, 1972. (Photocopy)

"Report to the Palau Legislature from the Palau Constitutional Drafting Commission." Koror, Palau, 1979. This document is in the writer's private collection.

Ruluked, Leonardo and Shuster, Donald. "Palau High School Teacher Handbook 1976-1978." Koror, Palau, 1976.

Seventh Palau Legislature. "Judiciary and Government Affairs Committee Report No. 203 regarding Bill No. 7-0267, DI," October 11, 1980. This document is in the writer's private collection.

Seventh Palau Legislature. Public Law No. 7-1-10, Koror, Palau, 1979. This document is in the writer's private collection.

Shewman, Richard D. "Ethnic Institutions and Identity: The Palauan Migrants on Guam." Guam, 1978.

Swayne, Philip; Tudong, J.; Shippe, N.; Schug, M.; and Young, M. "Committee Report Regarding the Present Education of American Children in Koror," November 6, 1964. Department of Education Dependent School File, Koror, Palau.

U.S. Office of Micronesian Status Negotiations. "Fact Sheet: Constitutional Development in Palau." Washington, D.C., 1980.

Vitarelli, Margo. "A Pacific Island Migration Study: Palauans in Hawaii." A research paper prepared for Geography 365, University of Hawaii, 1981.

Vitarelli, William V. "Education in Palau." Koror, Palau, Department of Education, 1951. (Mimeographed)

_____. "An Interpretation of Official Directives as they Apply to the Education Program of Palau." Koror, Palau, Department of Education, 1952. (Mimeographed)

_____. "Schools of the Pacific Islands," (Report of Proposed Community School for Palau) for the Janss Foundation. n.p., 1973.

_____. "Education in Palau," (revised edition). Koror, Palau, Department of Education, 1953. (Mimeographed)

Yaoch, Felix Father. "A Reflection on Modekngei: The Palauan Pagan Religion." TS. Woodstock, Maryland: Woodstock College, 1966.

Published Sources

Articles, Reports, and Journals

Ballendorf, Dirk A. "Coming Full Circle: A New School for Micronesia," British Journal of Educational Technology 5, no. 2 (May 1974):81-87.

Born. "Die Palau-Inseln." Deutsches Kolonialblatt XVIII (1907):286-89. Translated in Human Relations Area Files, microfilm reel 6, item 1221.

Brower, Kenneth. "To Tempt a Pacific Eden, One Large Oily Apple." Audubon 78 (September 1976):56-91.

Charles, Hubert. "Singing--An Integral Part of Palauan Worship." Currents 37, no. 4 (1978):8.

Dening, Gregory M. "Ethnology in Polynesia," The Journal of Pacific History 1 (1966):23-42.

Didil A Chais (Koror, Palau), July; October 21, 1968.

Fey, Wilhelm. "Interview." Micronesian Reporter 20, no. 1 (1972):2-8.

Fischer, John L. "The Japanese Schools for the Natives of Truk, Caroline Islands." Human Organization 20, no. 2 (1961):83-88.

Ford, Alexander-Hume. "Tourists for Mandate Area Wish of Japan." Honolulu Star-Bulletin, December 9, 1933, p. 1, 6.

Gumerman, George J.; Snyder, David and Masse, B.W. An Archeological Reconnaissance in the Palau Archipelago, West Caroline Islands, Micronesia. Carbondale, Ill.: Center for Archaeological Investigations, Southern Illinois University, 1981.

Hall, Edward T. "An Interview with Edward T. Hall," by Martha Davis. Kinesis 1, no. 1 (1978):6-15.

Harris, Walter B. "The South Sea Islands under Japanese Mandate." Foreign Affairs 10, no. 4 (1932):691-697.

Hatanaka, Sachiko. "The Process of Culture Change in Micronesia under the Japanese Mandate." Tokyo: Tokyo Daigaku Bunka-Jinruigaku Kenkyukai no. 1 (1967):65-124.

Hezel, Francis X., S.J. "Spanish Capuchins in the Carolines (part two). Micronesian Reporter 19, no. 3 (1971):36-42.

Hezel, Francis X. and DeValle, Maria Teresa. "Early European Contact with the Western Carolines: 1525-1750." The Journal of Pacific History 7 (1972):26-44.

Hoar, Richard, S.J. "Interview." Micronesian Reporter 18, no. 3 (1970): 2-9.

Honolulu Star-Bulletin, July 24, 1979, p. 1.

"Interview: President Haruo Remeliik, Republic of Belau." The New Pacific Magazine, July/August 1981, pp. 63-73.

"Jubilee." Currents 38, no. 4 (1979):12-13.

Kato, Genji. "Palau: A Base for Southward Expansion." Illustrated Magazine of Science 31, no. 1 (1942):45-58. Translated privately by Kazuo Hatano.

Kiyono, Kenji. "Japanese Expansion to the South Seas and Her Potentiality for Colonization." Pacific Ocean 4, no. 8 (1941):31-52. Translated privately by Mariko Iwasaki.

Kubary, Jan. "Ethnographische Beitrage zur Kenntnis der Karolinischen Inselgruppe und Nachbraschaft, I: Die Sozialen Einrichtungen der Pelauer" [Contribution to the Ethnography of the Caroline Islands and their Neighbors: The Social Institutions of the Palauans]. Berlin: A. Asher and Co., 1885. Translated in Human Relations Area Files, microfilm reel 6, item 1409.

_____. "Die Palau-Inseln in der Sudsee: [The Palau Islands in the South Sea]. Journal des Museum Godeffroy I (1873), 181-238.

Lange, Herbert. "From Palau to Yap." Currents 38, no. 1 (1979):10.

League of Nations. "Mandate for the German Possessions in the Pacific Lying North of the Equator." Geneva: League of Nations, 1920.

_____. Permanent Mandates Commission. "Minutes of the Meetings." Geneva, 1921-1939.

_____. Permanent Mandates Commission. Report on the Work of the Third Session of the Commission. Geneva, 1923.

McKnight, Robert K. "Proverbs of Palau." Journal of American Folklore 81, no. 319 (1968):3-33.

_____. "The Mouth that Explains: Mesaod Ngerel An Allegory in Palauan Political Lore." Koror, Palau: Palau Museum Publication no. 2, 1961.

Micronesian Independent (Majuro, Marshall Islands), August 19 and December 23, 1977; February 17, March 4 and 24, 1978.

Oiterong, Alfonso. "Community Cooperation Builds New School at Ngeremlengui," Micronesian Monthly 3, no. 3 (June 1954), pp. 4-5.

Pacific Daily News (Agana, Guam), June 27, 1975; September 28, 1976; May 23, July 7, 11, September 13, 15, 18, December 6, 1978; May 8, July 7, 31, 1979; September 21, 1981.

Palau Political Status Commission. Declaration of Intent. Koror, Palau: Sixth Palau Legislature, 1977.

_____. Report to the Palau Legislature. Koror, Palau: Sixth Palau Legislature, 1977.

_____. The Roundtable Conferences: Honolulu, May 1977; Guam, July 1977. Koror, Palau: Sixth Palau Legislature, 1977.

_____. Situation Report. Koror, Palau: Sixth Palau Legislature, 1976.

Palau Legislature. Newsletter (nos. 1-7). Koror, Palau, 1979-1980.

Palau. Olbiil Era Kelulau. Senate. Journal of the Senate 1st Regular Session (January-September 1981). Koror, Republic of Palau: Olbiil Era Kelulau, 1981-.

"Palau Natives Go to Schools Built for Cigarette Pay." Honolulu Advertiser, April 16, 1946, p. 5.

Ramarui, David. "Education in Micronesia: Its Past, Present and Future." Micronesian Reporter 14, no. 1 (1976):9-20.

_____. "Putting Educational Critiques into Perspective." Micronesian Reporter 27, no. 1 (1979):2-7.

Sapper, Karl et al. "Palauinseln." Deutsches Kolonial-Lexikon III (1920); 3-7. Translated in Human Relations Area Files, microfilm reel 6, item 1218.

Semper, Karl. Die Palau-Inseln im Stillen Ocean [The Palau Islands in the Quiet Ocean]. Leipzig: F.A. Brockhaus, 1873.

Senfft, Arno. "Uber einen Besuch der Palau-Inseln" [About a Visit to the Palau Islands]. Deutsches Kolonialblatt XIII (1902):263-264. Translated in Human Relations Area Files, microfilm reel 9, item 1367.

_____. "Bericht Uber eine Reise nach den Palau-Inseln" [Report from a Voyage to the Palau Islands]. Deutsches Kolonialblatt XVI (1905):49-52. Translated in Human Relations Area Files, microfilm reel 6, item 1224.

Shuster, Donald R. "The Constitution Writers of Palau." Pacific Magazine, January/February 1982, pp. 23-25.

_____. "Belau: New Nation, Old Politics." New Pacific Magazine, March/April 1981, p. 10.

_____. "Palau's Constitutional Tangle." The Journal of Pacific History XV, Part 2 (April 1980):74-82.

_____. "Schooling in Micronesia During Japanese Mandate Rule." Educational Perspectives 18, no. 2 (May 1979):20-26.

South Sea Government (Japanese Mandate). Annual Report to the League of Nations on the Administration of the South Sea Islands under Japanese Mandate. Tokyo: n.p., 1921-1938.

Thiem, Hilde. "Demanding But Rewarding!" Currents 37, no. 4 (1975):4-5.

Tia Belau (Koror, Palau), June 28, August 1, December 14, 1974; May 8, 1973; July 1974; June 1, July 1-15, November 24, 1975; Feburary 4, 1976.

Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands. Palau District. Laws and Resolutions. Saipan, Mariana Islands: Office of the High Commissioner, 1963-1980.

Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands. Congress of Micronesia. Senate. Journal. Saipan, Mariana Islands, 1978.

Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands. Resources and Development, Division of Land Management. "Palau District Legislature Acts and Resolutions, 1953-1965." Saipan, Mariana Islands, 1965.

Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands. Palau District. Office of the District Administrator. Palau District Description, Koror, Palau, 1963.

Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands. Palau District. Office of the Civil Administrator. Quarterly Report, 1947-1951, Koror, Palau.

United Nations. Trusteeship Council. Verbatim Record. New York, 1978.

_____. Report of the United Nations Visiting Mission to Observe the Referendum in Palau, Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, July, 1979. New York, 1980.

_____. Report of the U.N. Visiting Mission to the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands. New York, 1973.

Useem, John. "Report on Palau." Madison, Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin, 1949.

_____, "Report on Yap, Palau, and the Lesser Islands of the Western Carolines." Honolulu: U.S. Commercial Company, 1946.

U.S. Navy. Military Government Unit Palau. "Monthly Report," 1945-1947.

U.S. Congress. Senate. Committee on Energy and Natural Resources. "Palau Deepwater Port: Hearing before the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources." Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1977.

U.S. Department of State. Report to the United Nations on the Administration of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, 31st Annual Report. Washington, D.C.: 1978.

Vidich, Arthur J. "Political Factionalism in Palau: Its Rise and Development." Washington, D.C.: Pacific Science Board, National Research Council, 1949.

Yamaguchi, Osamu. "The Taxonomy of Music in Palau." Ethnomusicology 12, no. 3 (1968):345-351.

Yaoch, Felix, S.J. "Knitted Togetherness: The Palauan Family." Jesuit Missions (May 1966):24-27.

Books

Barnard, Edward C. Naked and A Prisoner. Edited, notes and introduction by Kenneth R. Martin. Sharon, Mass.: The Kendall Whaling Museum, 1980.

Barnett, Homer G. Palauan Society. Eugene, Oregon: University of Oregon Publications, 1949.

_____. Being a Palauan. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1960.

Black, Peter. "The Teachings of Father Marino: Christianity on Tobi Atoll." In Mission, Church and Sect in Oceania. Eds. J. Boutilier, D.T. Hughes, and S.W. Tiffany. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1978, pp. 307-354.

Boorstin, Daniel J. The Americans: The Democratic Experience. New York: Vintage Books, 1974.

Constitution of the Republic of Palau. Koror, Palau: Palau Constitutional Convention, 1979.

Cremin, Lawrence A. Public Education. New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1976.

Delano, Amasa. "Narrative of Voyages and Travels," quoted in F.X. Hezel and M.L. Berg, eds., Winds of Change, Saipan, Mariana Islands: Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, 1979, pp. 84-85.

Dening, Gregory M. Islands and Beaches. Honolulu: The University Press of Hawaii, 1980.

Dowd, Douglas F. The Twisted Dream. Cambridge, Mass.: Winthrop Publishers, 1974.

Force, Roland W. and Force, Maryanne. Just One House. Honolulu: Bishop Museum Press, 1972.

Gresser, Julian; Fujikura, Koichiro and Morishima, Akio. Environmental Law in Japan. Cambridge, Massachusetts, The MIT Press, 1981.

Hezel, Francis X. and Berg, M.L. eds. Winds of Change. Saipan: Omnibus Program for Social Studies-Cultural Heritage, Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, 1979.

Hezel, Francis X., S.J. "In Search of a Home: Colonial Education in Micronesia." In Topics in Culture Learning. Ed. Richard W. Brislin. Honolulu: East-West Center, 1975, 125-131.

_____. "Indigenization as a Missionary Goal in the Caroline and Marshall Islands." In Mission, Church and Sect in Oceania. Eds. J. Boutilier, D.T. Hughes and S.W. Tiffany. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1978, pp. 251-273.

Hockin, John P. A Supplement to the Account of the Pelew Islands. London: W. Bulmer and Co., 1803.

Holtom, D.C. Modern Japan and Shinto Nationalism. New York: Paragon Book Corp., 1963.

Innis, Harold. The Bias of Communication. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1964.

The Japan Yearbook 1943-44. Tokyo: The Foreign Affairs Association of Japan, 1943.

Johannes, Robert E. Words of the Lagoon: Fishing and Marine Lore in the Palau District of Micronesia. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1981.

Kahn, E.J. A Reporter in Micronesia. New York: W.W. Norton and Co., Inc., 1966.

Kampei Taisha Nanyo Jinja Hosankai. Tokyo: n.p., 1941.

Keate, George. An Account of the Pelew Islands, situated in the Western part of the Pacific Ocean composed from the Journals and Communication of Captain Henry Wilson, and some of his Officers, who, in August 1783, were there Shipwrecked, in the Antelope, a Packet belonging to the Honorable East India Company. London: G. Nicol, 1788.

Kosuge, Teruo. Photographs of Micronesia's Yesterday. Guam: Guam Shimpo Sha, 1978. (A republication and enlargement of South Sea Photo Album. Tokyo: Nanyo Gunto Bunka Kyokai, 1938).

Kramer, Augustin F. Palau. In G. Thilenius, ed., Ergebnisse der Sudsee-Expedition 1908-1910. Hamburg: L. Friederischsen and Co., 1917-1929.

Kubary, Jan S. "The Religion of the Palauans." Woodstock, Maryland: Micronesian Seminar, Woodstock College, 1969. A translation of Kubary's "Die Religion der Pelauer," as found in A. Bastian, ed., Allerlei aus Volksund Menschenkunde. Berlin: E.S. Mittler, 1888.

League of Nations. The Mandates System. Geneva, 1945.

"Liberal Party of Palau, Plaintiff vs. Election Commissioner, Palau, Defendant," Report of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands 3 (1967), pp. 293-296.

Mair, Lucy. Anthropology and Social Change. London: Athlone Press, 1969.

Mason, Leonard. "Popular Participation in the Development of Trust Territory Self-Government." In Political Modernization of Micronesia, Santa Cruz, California: Center for South Pacific Studies, University of California Santa Cruz, 1969, pp. 1-6.

McHenry, Donald F. Micronesia: Trust Betrayed. New York: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1975.

McKnight, Robert K. "The Culture [of Palau]." In Palau and the Superport: The Development of an Ocean Ethic. Michael J. Herz, ed., San Francisco: Ocean Research and Policy Institute of the Oceanic Society, 1977, pp. 33-40.

_____. "Rigid Models and Ridiculous Boundaries: Political Development and Practice in Palau, circa 1955-1964." In Political Development in Micronesia. Eds. Daniel T. Hughes and S.G. Lingenfelter. Columbus, Ohio: Ohio University Press, 1974, pp. 37-53.

McNeill, William H. A World History, Third edition. New York: Oxford University Press, 1979.

Meller, Norman. The Congress of Micronesia. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1969.

Metge, Joan. The Maoris of New Zealand. London: Kegan and Paul, 1976.

Osborne, Douglas. The Archaeology of the Palau Islands. Honolulu: Bishop Museum Press, 1966.

Palau Community Action Agency. A History of Palau. Koror, Palau: Palau Community Action Agency, 1976-1978. 3 vols.

Passin, Herbert. Society and Education in Japan. New York: Teachers College Press, 1965.

Public Papers of the President of the United States John F. Kennedy. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1961-1963. 3 vols.

Richard, Dorothy E. United States Naval Administration of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Office of Naval Operations, 1957. 3 vols.

Sansom, George B. The Western World and Japan. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1950.

Shigeru, Komatsu. The South Sea Islands and the Catholic Mission. Tokyo: Joseph Herelos, 1937. (Trans. from the Japanese by Wakako Higuchi.)

Shineberg, Dorothy, ed. The Trading Voyages of Andrew Cheyne 1841-1844. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1971.

Shuster, Donald R. "Palau's First Constitutional Election." In Pacific Islands Elections. Ed. Stephen Levine. Honolulu: University Press of Hawaii, forthcoming.

Smith, Bernard W. European Vision and the South Pacific. London: Oxford University Press, 1960.

South Sea Government (Japanese Mandate). South Seas Government Statistical Yearbook. Tokyo, 1938. Translated in Human Relations Area Files, microfilm reel 10, item 1465.

Stanford University. School of Naval Administration. Handbook of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands. Washington, D.C.: Navy Department, Office of the Chief of Naval Operations, 1948.

Taylor, Charles. "Interpretation and the Sciences of Man." In Understanding and Social Inquiry. Eds. F.R. Dallmayr and T.A. McCarthy. Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 1977, pp. 101-131.

Tetens, Alfred. Among the Savages of the South Seas. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1958. (Trans. from the German by Florence Mann Spoehr.)

Wallace, Anthony F.C. The Death and Rebirth of the Seneca. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1970.

Williams, William A. The Tragedy of American Diplomacy. New York: Dell Publishing Co., 1972.

Wittner, Lawrence S. Cold War America. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1978.

Yanaihara, Tadao. Pacific Islands under Japanese Mandate. Shanghai: Kelly and Wasch Ltd., 1939.