MAJURO

A Village in the Marshall Islands

ALEXANDER SPOEHR

FIELDIANA: ANTHROPOLOGY
VOLUME 39
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CHICAGO NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM
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PREFACE

My first acquaintance with the Marshall Islands, and with the village that forms the subject of this report, was made during World War II. While on active duty in the Navy, I spent six months in the Marshall group during the latter part of the war. Fortunately, the nature of my duties allowed me considerable mobility, and I was able to become thoroughly versed at first hand in the physical characteristics of the atolls of the southern Marshalls, and of Majuro in particular. At this time, I also became acquainted with Majuro village. Although it was possible then to work with Marshallese informants for short periods, and hence to gain a limited amount of information on their present-day culture, the principal value for this report of my war-time experience in the Marshalls was the knowledge acquired of the physical features of Majuro village, its local organization, and its environmental setting.

At the end of March, 1947, I returned to the Marshalls as a civilian, and conducted ethnological work at Majuro village for three and a half months, departing from the atoll the middle of July. The observations made on these two visits form the basis of this report.

The 1947 field work was undertaken as a Chicago Natural History Museum expedition. However, it also formed part of a larger program for the investigation of the Micronesian peoples. This larger program, sponsored by the Pacific Science Board of the National Research Council, and with the full support of the Navy Department, has been officially designated the Co-ordinated Investigation of Micronesian Anthropology (CIMA). The Museum's work in the Marshalls owes its success to the splendid co-operation achieved under this larger program.

I am indebted to Chicago Natural History Museum for its generous financial support of the field project in the Marshalls, and for allowing me the necessary time to undertake it. Colonel Clifford C. Gregg, Director of the Museum, has been most helpful; and Dr. Paul S. Martin, Chief Curator of the Department of Anthropology, has given his usual generous aid. Miss Lillian Ross, Associate

Editor of Scientific Publications, has efficiently seen the report through the press.

The Pacific Science Board acted as the central organizing agency for the CIMA program, handled all matters requiring liaison with the Navy Department, and provided much of the necessary financial support. I am most indebted to Dr. George P. Murdock, of Yale University and the Pacific Science Board, for the consideration he gave the Museum project in the complicated business of organizing the larger program covering the Micronesian area. I also wish to express my special thanks to Mr. Harold J. Coolidge, Executive Secretary of the Pacific Science Board, for taking care of the numberless details in connection with transportation and other matters involving relations with the Navy Department. Mr. Leonard E. Mason, of the University of Hawaii and the CIMA representative at Honolulu, gave valuable assistance in making final arrangements at Honolulu before my departure for the Marshalls. On my return from the field I spent a few days in Guam, where Mr. Loring G. Hudson, the CIMA representative, was very helpful.

The Navy Department furnished transportation from the continental United States to the field and return, and provided direct logistic support at Majuro. The officers and enlisted personnel with whom I came in contact were uniformly friendly, and I wish to acknowledge their excellent co-operation and aid. I am particularly indebted to the following officers for their assistance: the late Commodore G. A. Seitz, Commander L. M. Duke, Commander R. W. Garnett, Lieutenant Commander L. B. Libbey, Lieutenant Commander C. E. Herrick, Lieutenant Commander W. S. Waddel, Lieutenant G. H. N. Lussier, Lieutenant C. E. Smith, Lieutenant S. H. Zeigler, Lieutenant (j.g.) H. S. Jeck, and Ensign M. Griffin. In addition to their official aid, I spent a number of pleasant evenings enjoying the hospitality of these naval officers at Majuro and at Guam.

Mr. H. E. Blodgett, the representative of the United States Commercial Company at Majuro, was most co-operative. Mr. Blodgett allowed me to use his quarters and office space, furnished me with local transportation, and assisted me in numerous other ways. I am very grateful to him. Lieutenant (j.g.) E. L. Doster of the United States Coast Guard Station on Rongrong Island also gave his aid on several occasions.

Prior to leaving the continental United States, I spent several days at the School of Naval Administration at Stanford University.

Through the kind offices of Dr. Felix Keesing, I was able to obtain the latest available information regarding field conditions in the Marshalls.

During my stay at Majuro village I learned as much Marshallese as possible, but it was still necessary to use the services of interpreters. My two principal interpreters were Ajidrik N. Bien and Mary Heine Ilieu. I am especially grateful to them for their highly intelligent co-operation. Dwight Heine, an exceptionally capable Marshallese, also assisted me in clearing up a number of difficult points in Marshallese social organization.

I was the only resident American during most of my stay at Majuro village. However, near the close of my field work, Miss Margaret Chave, representing the University of Hawaii, came to the village to work on the social position of Marshallese mixed-blood individuals. In our ensuing conversations on various aspects of Marshallese life, I benefited at numerous times from Miss Chave's different perspective on the same range of ethnographic data. She has also kindly read the manuscript of this report.

Toward the end of my stay, Miss Eleanor Wilson, of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, arrived at the village for one of her periodic visits. Miss Wilson has had much experience in the Micronesian area and our occasional discussions were very fruitful.

My principal indebtedness, however, is to the kind and generous people of Majuro village. I doubt that there exists anywhere a group more receptive to ethnographic work than the Marshallese. From the time when I first took up residence in an unused quonset hut next to the dispensary, my relations with the villagers were always friendly and open. Although the entire village co-operated in the present work, I wish to mention particularly the following: Langlan, Jitiam, Aisea, Livai, Samuel, Ria, Tell, Jebwiat, Lazarus, Bartimeous, Laurennij, Frank, Nelson, Li Barbar, Li Bibi, Li Bojikrik, Lilly, Neri, Li Juear, and Li Wajka.

In compiling this report, I have tried to bring out the territorial basis of Marshallese social organization. As a tool in geographic analysis, aerial photographs can be extremely useful in making the territorial organization of community life clear and definite. Fortunately, Majuro was given excellent aerial photographic coverage during the war, and two vertical photographs of Majuro Island, on which Majuro village is located, are included in the report. They were furnished through the courtesy of the Navy Department. The

Navy also gave permission to use the weather data for Majuro included in Chapter II. I am indebted to Captain W. S. Jennings for making this material available.

The maps of Majuro Island and of the central district of the village were constructed during the course of my field work. I used a plane-table and alidade.

A word should be said as to the orthography of the few Marshallese terms used in the text. The spelling of Marshallese words is in a confused state, to say the least, not only in the literature, but in the Marshalls as well. The Marshallese language was first reduced to written form in the nineteenth century by American missionaries, who wished to give instruction to the islanders in the Bible and in associated religious subjects. The Germans then made their own modifications, and the Japanese also tried to alter the original system, although it still prevails today as the basic form. However, the greatest casualness prevails among the Marshallese in spelling the words of their own language, while the orthographic system is neither precise nor fully phonemic. In an attempt at remedying this situation while at the same time providing military government officers with a useful tool, the Navy compiled and issued a Marshallese-English dictionary, with linguistic notes, in 1945. The orthography in this dictionary is a modification of the first system of writing and is a great improvement in that it conforms more closely to the actual phonemic system of the language. I have used the Navy orthography in this report. One of the needs in the Marshalls is a greater dissemination of the Navy dictionary, for unfortunately copies are rare and hard to obtain.

In connection with linguistic matters, I am indebted to my sister, Hortense Spoehr Miller, for her valuable aid in translating Japanese source materials on the Marshalls. The translation of the characters on the Japanese monument shown in figure 1 has been done by Mrs. Miller.

Miss Agnes McNary, Departmental Secretary, completed the onerous job of typing the manuscript; and Mr. Gustaf Dahlstrom, Artist in the Department of Anthropology, made the drawings for figures 26 and 27.

Finally, I wish to acknowledge the assistance and encouragement of my wife, Anne Harding Spoehr. The graphic human figures included in the drawings are the product of her pen, and greatly enhance the interest of the report. She has also read the manuscript,

which has benefited at numerous points from her criticism. I am most grateful to her.

Although this account has been written for anthropologists, my hope is that it may prove of interest to a wider audience. With the close of World War II, the United States assumed responsibility for the administration of the Micronesian peoples in the Marshall, Caroline, Palau, and Marianas Islands, formerly under Japanese mandate. The Co-ordinated Investigation of Micronesian Anthropology, under which the 1947 field work for this report was conducted, was designed to secure basic ethnographic knowledge. The possession of such knowledge is essential to enlightened administration. Consequently, I hope that this report will be of value to those administrators charged with governing the Marshall Islands.

However, the ultimate responsibility for the future welfare of the Micronesians lies very largely with the citizens of the United States. If this modest account aids at all in the wider diffusion of knowledge of Micronesia and its peoples among interested Americans, it will have served a useful purpose. The Marshall Islanders were close to World War II. The subsequent atomic bomb tests at Bikini and Eniwetok have taken place within their island chain. They share with us and with the world an uncertain future. Democratic ideals demand that we accord them our understanding.

ALEXANDER SPOEHR

January 30, 1948

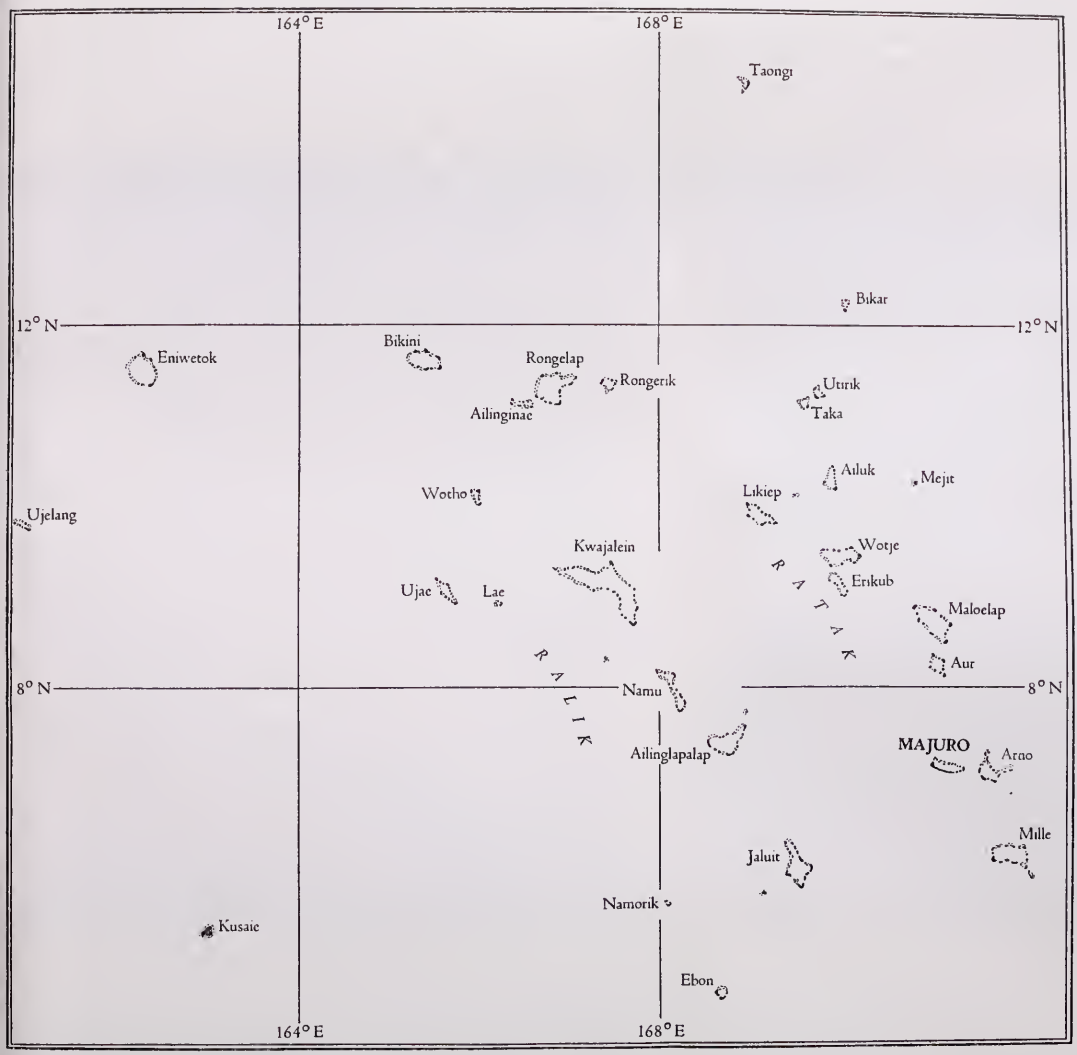
CONTENTS

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

TEXT FIGURES

MAPS

Map



MAP 1. THE MARSHALL ISLANDS. KUSAIE IS THE EASTERNMOST OF THE CAROLINE ISLANDS.

I. INTRODUCTION

The following study of a Marshallese village is an outline of the contemporary, formal social organization of an acculturated Micronesian community. Most of the peoples of the Pacific today follow ways of life much altered by recent contact with European, American, and Asiatic civilizations. To one who has but recently entered the Oceanic field, there appears to be a real need for further definition of the characteristics of these Pacific societies possessing recently modified cultures. How do they vary among themselves, and in what ways has the modification of traditional patterns followed the same course as in other parts of the world where comparable situations of contact exist? To the extent that anthropology is a comparative study, explanations of the processes of culture change require a broad range of data derived from the study of many different peoples. Likewise, to the extent that anthropology attempts to describe the peoples of the world today in all their essential diversity and unity, it cannot ignore those who possess cultures that are nevertheless much modified by recent contact. By presenting certain salient characteristics of present-day Marshallese social organization, I hope that this report will contribute to an understanding of the current social and cultural types in the Pacific, as well as in the Micronesian area alone.

The aim of this report, and of the field work on which it is based, can also be defined in part by what the report does not attempt to do. The present account is not a reconstruction of aboriginal Marshallese culture, based on a careful sifting of the statements of elderly informants, whose information is then checked against the literature. It is not an intensive acculturation study showing the details of the particular process by which present-day Marshallese culture came to be the way it is. It is not an investigation of a very limited range of data bearing on a narrowly defined theoretical problem in anthropology. Least of all can it claim to be a complete ethnographic monograph covering all the phases of Marshallese life.

What I have tried to do in the pages that follow is to show the principal characteristics of Marshallese social organization by de-

scribing the social groupings that exist within a Marshallese village, and certain of the dominant institutions that are operative in village life. Although I have attempted to outline the more significant relations that exist among the various parts of Marshallese social organization, and have also attempted to present the material against the background of historical change in Marshallese life, this account is essentially a description of the "properties" of a particular social organization. Like a number of other anthropologists, I feel that a pressing need in field research is the defining of changing relations through time within a social system, rather than the limitation of field objectives to descriptions of the relatively static characteristics of single social systems at a given point of time. Yet in an area such as the Marshalls, where data on social organization are so limited, the formulation of specific problems dealing with diachronic relationships and processes is dependent on a fuller knowledge of the people one wishes to observe. Fruitful comparative work cannot proceed without this preliminary body of observed fact. It is to contribute to this elementary but essential basis of knowledge that this account has been written.

It should further be noted that acculturated Pacific peoples are not necessarily on the verge of extinction—insignificant remnants of humanity about to pass into oblivion. The Marshallese have been much affected by contact, but they are a healthy people today. The dire predictions as to their imminent disappearance, to be found in a number of nineteenth and early twentieth century accounts, have not been fulfilled. There is every indication that the Marshallese will continue to be a healthy people.

For the field work that provided the factual material in this report I selected a single Marshallese village—that of Majuro on the atoll of the same name—for examination as a type community. This study is limited to an outline of the formal social organization of Majuro village. I have further emphasized two aspects of this formal social organization: the local or territorial groupings within the community, and the kinship system and the related features of social structure based on kinship and its extensions. There is admittedly much that is omitted, but I hope that the picture that follows of a Marshallese village will serve future investigators as a basis of comparison. The Marshall Islands are a fruitful field for anthropological research. The relation of the Marshalls to the Carolines and to the Gilberts needs further elucidation, which in turn should throw light on the historical problems of the larger Micronesian and Polynesian areas. A second series of more general comparative

problems—in social structure, acculturation and culture change, the relation of culture to the formation of modal personality types, to name but a few current interests in anthropology—can be illuminated by the Marshallese data. It is hoped that this report will assist in the definition of such problems as they refer to the peoples of Micronesia.

Majuro village was selected for study for several reasons. One was that I came to know it during the war, and needed no long period of familiarization for the field work that followed. Another was that it was relatively convenient to supplies and to communication, while still being sufficiently isolated spatially to lead a life of its own. Lastly, in the limited period of field work at my disposal in 1947, it was essential to concentrate attention at one place.

In terms of intensive anthropological field study, the Marshallese are not the subject of a large literature. The best ethnographic description of the islanders is found in the writings of A. Erdland, a German Catholic missionary who lived at Jaluit during the German regime. Erdland's material, together with the Thilenius Expedition report of Krämer and Nevermann (1938), comprises the basic materials for the period of the German occupation, though there is a considerable list of additional articles of a more circumscribed nature published in German periodicals, mostly by authors connected with the German administration.

During the Japanese period, a limited number of papers, such as those of Matsumura (1918) and Matsuoka (1927) on general ethnography and Sugiura's (1943) on kinship, were published, and no doubt unpublished material reposes in the files of the South Seas Bureau, but the Japanese output seems to have been relatively small considering the opportunities for anthropological research present in Micronesia.

Since the American occupation, an excellent report by Leonard H. Mason on the economic organization of the Marshall islanders, based on field work conducted in 1946 for the United States Commercial Company, has been prepared but remains in manuscript form. The United States Navy Military Government Handbook on the Marshall Islands, compiled under the direction of Dr. George P. Murdock and issued during the war, should also be mentioned for the useful background information it contains. By and large, the core of ethnographic literature on the Marshallese is represented by the work of Erdland, Krämer and Nevermann, and Mason; in organizing my own data for publication, I wish to acknowledge my debt to these writers.

II. THE MARSHALL ISLANDS

Lying two thousand miles west and south of Hawaii, with only minute Johnston Island to break the vast stretch of ocean between, the Marshall Islands are scattered along the eastern margin of Micronesia. During World War II, they formed the outer ramparts of the Japanese mandate in the Pacific. Invaded by American forces early in 1944, the Marshalls have since been under the administration of the United States, who today continues to bear the responsibility for governing the islands under a trusteeship agreement with the United Nations.

The Marshall group consists of twenty-nine coral atolls and five small coral islands (see map 1). These stretch in two parallel chains, running in a northwest-southeast direction. The western chain is known as the Ralik chain; the eastern chain, the Ratak chain. Although the total land area of the Marshalls is only approximately 75 square miles, the atolls are scattered over an ocean area of nearly 200,000 square miles. This discrepancy between land area and included sea zone is apparent in the very nature of the atolls themselves, for each one consists of a lagoon encircled by a narrow ring of reef and small islands, whose total land area amounts to only a few square miles. The lagoons of the larger atolls are from twenty to thirty miles long and from five to ten miles across, while Kwajalein, the largest atoll in the Marshalls, has a lagoon sixty miles in length.

Majuro is one of the atolls of the Ratak chain. Its climatic characteristics are those of the southern atolls, which differ slightly in this respect from the northern Marshalls. Further information on climate follows.

CLIMATE[1]

The Marshalls lie between 4° 30′ N. and 15° N. Lat. and hence are located in the belt of the northeast trade winds. In the absence

[1] For more detailed information on climate consult: United States Navy, Military Government Handbook (1943), and United States Hydrographic Office, Sailing Directions for the Pacific Islands, vol. 1 (1945).

of large land masses, the climate is of a tropical marine type. Although the islands lie close to the equator, the tropical heat is tempered by the trade winds, so that the climate is pleasant and salubrious.

Climatic differences exist between the northern and southern Marshalls, however, for the latter are scattered near the southern margin of the trade wind belt. This difference is most marked in rainfall and wind velocity. Rainfall averages about 160 inches a year at Jaluit and steadily decreases as one goes northward; Ujelang with only 80 inches a year has half as much as Jaluit. Majuro shares the climate of the southern Marshalls. Its abundant annual precipitation of about 115 to 120 inches reflects its position north of Jaluit. Rainfall in the southern atolls is distributed rather uniformly throughout the year, but in the northern Marshalls relatively long periods of dry weather prevail through the winter months. Rain and showers are the principal types of precipitation; drizzle is rare.

Although the northeast trades are prevalent in all months, wind velocities are higher in winter than in summer and are stronger in the north than in the south. During the summer months the equatorial front moves northward, so that the southern Marshalls always experience periods of the light variable winds characteristic of the doldrums. At Majuro, winds with velocities above 14 knots are from the northeast and east, except that during squalls or frontal passage southeast to south winds can be expected, though only for a period of a few hours or less. During the summer months, when the trade winds are much weaker and less persistent, wind direction also becomes quite variable, but these variable winds usually average only from 4 to 7 knots. This change in the nature of winds between the winter and summer months is the principal seasonal characteristic in the southern Marshalls.

The mean annual temperature in the Marshalls is 81° F. The temperature remains remarkably uniform throughout the year and even the diurnal variation is only ten or twelve degrees. Relative humidity in the southern Marshalls is high—85 per cent—and shows little monthly variation; it is slightly lower in the northern Marshalls.

Cloud cover averages approximately from five to seven tenths, with the greater percentage of clouds being middle and high clouds. Broken or scattered cumulus are common, but prolonged low overcasts are rare. Rain squalls are frequent. Visibility is good and averages from six to twelve miles, becoming restricted primarily by the passage of squalls and occasional fronts.

Weather data at Majuro were collected officially for only a short time, during the use of Majuro as an important air base. The following table, furnished through the courtesy of the United States Navy Department, gives weather data at Majuro for a one-year period from March, 1944, to February, 1945, inclusive:

Weather elements (monthly averages)	Temperature (Fahrenheit)	Wind direction and aver. velocity in knots	Cloud cover	Rainfall (inches)
March, 1944	82.4	ENE 12.4	0.52	5.23
April	83.0	NE 14.5	0.72	1.76
May	81.7	ENE 14.1	0.75	12.49
June	81.8	ENE 14.0	0.67	7.82
July	81.4	ENE 10.9	0.72	7.52
August	81.4	ENE 8.8	0.69	8.22
September	81.7	ENE 9.0	0.70	7.89
October	82.5	NE 7.9	0.72	11.09
November	81.8	ENE 10.0	0.76	15.28
December	81.4	NE 13.6	0.73	15.97
January, 1945	81.4	NE 14.2	0.78	9.19
February	81.0	NE 15.0	0.59	10.57

The Marshalls lie east of the typhoon belt, but occasional typhoons have struck the islands. In 1905 a typhoon struck Jaluit, Mille, Arno, and Majuro, and in 1918 a very severe one also hit Majuro, with considerable loss of life and great damage to property and natural resources (see fig. 1). Needless to say, occasional typhoons can be expected in the future.

SEA AND SWELL

The Marshallese are still a seafaring people. In the old days a knowledge of the sea and its distinctive swell patterns was used as a principal basis for native navigation, and even today the islanders depend on an intimate acquaintance with local sea, swell, and weather conditions for such inter-atoll trips as are still made. For this reason the following information on sea and swell conditions is included. During the war, I made a number of observations of swell characteristics in the Marshalls as seen from the air. These observations are given below, together with material from the literature.

Generally speaking, the main swell in the Marshalls area moves in the same direction as the prevailing winds, that is, from northeast to southwest. The swells are always present and even on calm days in summer, swells five feet high or more can be expected. During periods when the trade winds are strong, the height of these swells increases. Steep-crested, foam-topped swells result. In addition, a vigorous wave pattern is formed, so that the swell height

FIG. 1. Monument erected by the Japanese at Majuro to commemorate the 1918 typhoon. The inscription reads as follows (translation of Japanese characters by Hortense Spoehr Miller):

MONUMENT TO THE IMPERIAL GRACIOUSNESS

On November 8, 1918, a typhoon struck the Marshall Islands, and, especially here at Majuro, a tidal wave, accompanied by heavy seas, cast the people and their possessions adrift. There were probably about two hundred casualties. Such disastrous damage was hitherto unparalleled in the Islands. When the news reached the Emperor, His Majesty was deeply concerned, and it was on January 14, 1919, that Imperial private funds were donated. The magnificent, impartial favors of Imperial benevolence extend from afar to the South Seas; however, a response telling of deeply grateful emotion will not be desired. The Island people historically live in peace, and the teaching of the way of loyalty to the Emperor and of filial piety will well suffice forever. In accordance with the feeling of gratitude for these Imperial favors, this text on the aid to this land is carved on stone to be transmitted to future generations.

November 14, 1919

Respectfully composed by Nagata Tenjiro, Rear-Admiral of the Navy, Senior Grade Fifth Rank, Second Order of Merit, Third Class; Acting Commander, South Sea Islands Defense Forces

Respectfully inscribed by Fujino Seiki, President, Imperial Chrysanthemum Garden Institute

FIG. 2. Aerial photograph of west end of Majuro Atoll.

(United States Navy photograph)

is accentuated still further, while a choppy sea develops in the swell trough. Also, during the passage of fronts and squalls, a strong wind of 15 knots or over from the southeast quarter can be expected, though it is of short duration. This results in waves at nearly right angles to the direction of the main swell, and forms a confused sea condition.

In addition to the swells moving with the prevailing winds, there is a second, less evident, but yet pronounced series of swells that move from south to north. This second swell pattern is much gentler and has much longer troughs than the first, and from the air gives the appearance of underlying the latter. The northward-moving swells are most clearly evident from an airplane flying at an altitude of three or four thousand feet. It may be possible that these swells are the result of storms associated with the equatorial front, but their impressive length makes it more probable that they originate across the equator in the southern hemisphere. They always seem to be present, regardless of local weather conditions.

In an informative article on Marshallese navigation written at the end of the last century by a German sea captain named Winkler (1899), there is also mentioned, on the authority of native sailors, a swell from the north and one from the west. The swell from the north I was never able to detect from the air, nor was I ever really sure of a swell moving from the west. Winkler states that the swell from the north exhibits itself most strongly in the northern Marshalls; it is certainly very weak, if present at all, in the southern atolls. He further says that the western swell can be detected by unpracticed persons only with the greatest difficulty, a statement with which I heartily agree (ibid., p. 493). Yet from his account of Marshallese navigational methods, both these swell patterns must exist.

When the swells reach one of the numerous atolls, they bend around the atoll, so that the crests of the swells form a series of curved lines. In addition, the swells intersect others coming from different quarters. As a consequence of these various swells meeting one another from different directions, and because of the variations in their form introduced by the presence of atolls, a distinctive and complicated set of swell patterns is developed throughout the Marshall Islands. Through experience, the Marshallese learned the distinguishing characteristics of these swell patterns. They utilized them in navigating from atoll to atoll, and the patterns formed the basis of the Marshallese sailing charts, used essentially as aids to

memory and in training navigators (see Winkler, 1899; Krämer and Nevermann, 1938, pp. 221–226). Today much of the old navigational lore is a thing of the past, but there are still men who understand the principles of navigating by the swell patterns.

The currents in the Marshalls, varying from one-half to one and one-half knots, set westward in the northern atolls and eastward in the southern ones. Like the swells, the currents are deflected by the atolls, and they are also accelerated by them. The equatorial counter-current is said to be little felt north of Aur Atoll (U. S. Hydro. Office, 1945, vol. 1, pp. 37–39, 560).

THE PEOPLE

Although exact post-war census figures for the Marshalls are lacking, reliable estimates place the total Marshallese population at between 10,000 and 10,500. The Japanese reported that in 1939 there were 10,131 natives, and for at least the last fifty years the population has remained close to 10,000 (U.S.N. Mil. Govt. Handbk., 1943, p. 19). At the present time, however, there is an excess of births over deaths that indicates at least a temporary increase in population (U.S.N. Mil. Govt. Unit Rept., Majuro, June, 1947).

In physical type the Marshallese are closely related to the Polynesians to the east. To the observer, however, the Marshallese appear distinctly as a non-homogeneous people. Their physical characteristics indicate a mixture primarily of Mongoloid and Caucasoid elements, though in the absence of a thorough study of the physical anthropology of Micronesia, only the most general statements can be made. The Marshallese are of medium stature, with light brown skin that becomes heavily tanned through exposure to the sun. The hair is black and ranges from straight to wavy, with a few individuals having very curly hair. Eyes are dark; the epicanthic fold is rare. Nose form is variable. Perhaps the most common characteristic is a marked lateral prominence of the zygomatic arches.

Since 1885 the Marshalls have come successively under the rule of Germany, Japan, and the United States. Even before 1885, contact with westerners was not infrequent, for whaling ships, traders, and missionaries all operated in the Marshalls prior to that date. A certain number of Europeans, Americans, Chinese, and Japanese settled in the Marshalls and married island women, with the result that today there is a small but racially and socially significant group of individuals of recent mixed ancestry. This group

will be discussed further in the consideration of the population of Majuro village.

The Marshallese are essentially homogeneous in language and culture. In former times, dialectic and cultural differences existed between the Ratak and Ralik chains, but today these differences are not sufficiently marked to serve as social barriers. There are some cultural differences between individual atolls. However, except for Likiep, where the descendants of two Europeans who settled there in the nineteenth century have assumed a considerable measure of social authority and control over land resources and hence created a somewhat atypical situation, the inter-atoll differences appear to be differences of emphasis, such as the relative power of paramount chiefs and nobles in the social order, rather than basic qualitative differences in culture.

III. MAJURO ATOLL

PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS

Majuro, also formerly known as Arrowsmith, is a typical low-lying coral atoll, approximately twenty-one miles long and from three to six miles wide (map 2).[1] It contains one very long island—Majuro Island—and about sixty small ones. Figures for the total dry land area of the atoll vary from 3.14 to 3.54 square miles (Bryan, 1947, p. 9). As in the case of coral atolls generally, the islands that ring the lagoon are very narrow with the principal exception of the west end of Majuro Island. This island terminates in an enlarged triangular-shaped mass that forms the most extensive single land area on the atoll and that offers a sharp contrast to the remaining narrow stretch of island to which it is attached. A vertical aerial photograph of the western part of Majuro Island is shown in figure 2. The photograph shows clearly the contrast in land area between the long, string-like form that comprises most of the length of the island and the terminal enlargement at its west end. It is on this relatively large area on the west end of the island that Majuro village is located.

Majuro lagoon is approximately 100 square miles in extent. The east half is virtually free of coral heads and receives more protection from the prevailing northeast trade winds than the west half of the lagoon. In consequence, it provides splendid anchorage and is also one of the best natural seadromes in the Pacific. The west half of the lagoon, however, is studded with coral heads and the water is usually rougher than the eastern part, so that, except for restricted local areas, such as the lee of Rongrong Island, it does not provide a large anchorage area.

There is only one entrance into the lagoon. This passage is Calalin Channel, on the northern side of the atoll, between Iroij and Calalin Islands. Marshallese outriggers, quite as much as modern ships, use this channel in inter-atoll voyages. In departing from Majuro for another atoll, outrigger canoe crews usually camp

[1] In Marshallese orthography, Majuro should be spelled Mejro. However, the conventional spelling has been retained in this report. A great variety of additional spellings appear on charts and in the literature: Madjuro, Madschuru, Mejoro, Mejiro, Madschero, Mejuro—to name but a few.

overnight on Calalin Island, so that they can leave the atoll proper at daybreak and have the maximum amount of daylight in which to reach shelter at either nearby Arno to the east or Aur Atoll to the north.

Although during the war Majuro was the scene of a major American base, the atoll was occupied without resistance and without the usual devastating aerial and ship bombardment. As a result, though the vegetation in the base area at the eastern side of the atoll was disturbed by necessary construction activities, the native plant life on the major part of the atoll remains without much destruction. Yet the natural resources of Majuro, as of coral atolls generally, are very limited. The dry land area is small, and if the land disturbed by war-time base activities is subtracted from the total, probably not more than 2.5 square miles of land remain with natural plant resources intact. The trees of principal economic value are coconut palms, pandanus, and breadfruit, interspersed with occasional tropical hardwoods. Except for the patches of taro land on Majuro Island, the coral sand of the atoll is suited to little but the vegetation that presently grows upon it, particularly the coconut palm. The potential export items of the atoll are consequently limited to copra, to handicraft made from native plants, and to some commercial fishing. Of these, handicraft is today Majuro's principal export. Copra was important before the war, and its production will probably be resumed on a similar scale in the future. The Marshallese at Majuro have never engaged in commercial fishing for export.

DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION

The use of Majuro as a wartime American base resulted in a certain redistribution of the atoll's population. Before the war there was one main village on Majuro Island, and three other smaller villages or settlements on other parts of the atoll. These latter three were located at (1) Rongrong and Jelte Islands, at the northwest corner of the atoll; (2) Jarrej Island, at the east end of the atoll; and (3) Talab Island, also at the east end. According to my informants there were between 300 and 400 people living on Talab and Jarrej. After the occupation of Majuro by American forces, the United States Navy base was constructed at the east end of the atoll, so that it was necessary to move the Talab and Jarrej people to the main village. As a consequence, Majuro village is larger now than it was before the war.

Today the main concentration of Marshallese population on the atoll is located at Majuro village. According to the atoll scribe, the village numbered 1,214 people of both sexes and all ages on May 30, 1947. This total included the small settlement at Rongrong and Jelte, which contains about 120 people. I believe, however, that the figures of the atoll scribe are too high. I did not have sufficient time to take a head-count, but Miss Chave's census of the village in August, 1947, gave it a total of 837 persons of both sexes and all ages (Chave, 1948, p. 23). In any case, Majuro village proper probably numbered at the time of my 1947 visit in the neighborhood of 850 persons; certainly not more than 900.

In addition to the main village and the small secondary settlement at Rongrong and Jelte, a few families are scattered in Arrak, Woja, and Ajeltake, along the thin strip of Majuro Island that borders the lagoon on its southern margin. There are no families living on the northern islands between Rongrong and Jarrej.

In 1947, the wartime navy base built on the islands at the eastern end of the atoll was occupied only by a very small United States Navy Civil Government unit. Unneeded areas at the base are being returned to Marshallese hands, and a few Marshallese families are now living on Jarrej again. A small native labor force is employed by the Civil Government unit, and the training school for Marshallese teachers and the hospital are also located at the base area, though the Marshallese participating in these activities are not from Majuro alone.

In Marshallese eyes there are two main foci of interest on the atoll. These lie at the east and west ends of the atoll, respectively. At the east end is the seat of administration. It is a center of attraction because it is here that ships occasionally anchor and the weekly plane from Kwajalein lands, where movies are shown nightly, where a few trucks and jeeps are used, and where small articles can be purchased at the ship's store. Here also is the teachers' training school and the hospital. The east end of the atoll, as an administrative headquarters, represents the main point of contact with the outside world and with the news, goods, and ideas that come from the outside world. In pre-war times, the Japanese seat of government and the center for Japanese trade was at Jabor, a small town on Jaluit atoll. Jabor was completely destroyed during the war, and to a limited extent Majuro has taken its place. As the administrative center for the southern Marshalls, Majuro is a point of interest for all Marshallese in the southern atolls, as well as for those at Majuro.

The second focus of interest is at the west end of the atoll, for it is here that almost all the people live who make Majuro their home. The main center is the village. Rongrong, however, has a small United States Coast Guard station manned by an officer and about a dozen enlisted men, and this station adds to its importance. Outrigger canoes can make the trip between Rongrong and the village in an hour or less, depending on the wind, so that there is relatively frequent contact between the two islands.

During the war Majuro Island was designated, and became commonly known to military personnel, as "Laura." This name has been firmly incorporated into local Marshallese usage as a synonym for the village. The word "Rita" was used for one of the islands at the base and this word has also been incorporated into the language to mean the old base area at the east end of the atoll. Hence "Laura" and "Rita" are two principal poles of geographic interest in the eyes of the atoll people. Particularly in the summer, when the lagoon is relatively calm, there is frequent contact between the two ends of the atoll. At least once a week and sometimes oftener one or more canoes will make the trip from the village to the eastern end of the atoll. In the winter, traffic is much lighter, for the lagoon becomes too rough for any but the larger canoes. The Navy administrative officials visit the village on a regular six-week schedule and usually oftener. However, the village is in no sense tributary to the administrative unit headquarters. To the ethnologist residing at the village, it seems remarkably self-contained.

THE BACKGROUND OF CONTACT

Although the Marshall Islands were discovered by the Spaniards in the sixteenth century, Spanish colonization in Micronesia was centered in the Marianas. The Marshalls were left undisturbed by the Spanish empire in the Pacific. It was not until two centuries later that the English captains Marshall and Gilbert rediscovered the atolls in 1788, while on a roundabout voyage from Australia to China. Majuro was one of the atolls they sighted.

The first really systematic exploration in the Marshall group was undertaken by the Russian expedition of Otto von Kotzebue in the *Rurik* in 1816–17 and 1824. Kotzebue's voyages did not include Majuro, but his pilot Chramshenko later returned to the Marshalls in 1829 and 1831–32, and stopped at Mille and Majuro. Thereafter, there followed a period of intermittent contacts with seafarers and whalers, the latter being particularly active in the neighboring eastern Carolines about the middle of the century. Finally came

the first traders, who founded the beginnings of the modern copra trade. The Germans were particularly active and maintained their principal trading stations at Ebon and Jaluit.

During this early period, Protestant missionary work was also commenced in the Marshalls. The first mission station was established at Ebon in 1857, and periodic trips were made through the southern atolls by the missionaries. Mission work in the area was organized by the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, in co-operation with the Board of the Hawaiian Evangelical Association. A mission station was started at Majuro in 1869, when a native Hawaiian missionary and his wife took up residence on the atoll.

In the latter half of the nineteenth century, European imperialism finally penetrated to the Marshalls. Germany, following the energetic efforts of her traders, formally established a protectorate over the Marshalls in 1885. The German flag was officially raised at Majuro on October 21 of that year (Krämer and Nevermann, 1938, p. 10).

During the German regime, the Marshall atolls were visited regularly by traders, missionaries, and administrative officials. The basis of trade continued to be the production of copra, which was exchanged by the Marshallese for manufactured products. The Jaluit Gesellschaft, a trading company formed, shortly after the establishment of the German protectorate, by a merger of three companies that had previously operated in the area, became the principal trading concern. Its competitors were led by Burns Philp and Company, an Australian firm, that continued operations in the Marshalls throughout the German period, although the Jaluit Gesellschaft was heavily favored, first by discriminatory taxes on non-German enterprises and later by heavy subsidies.

In the political sphere, the German administration put an end to warfare in the Marshalls. Previously, the island chiefs were continually warring among themselves. As Mason has pointed out, the cessation of hostilities froze the relative social positions of the various island chiefs, as well as of their respective clans, in the island hierarchies. This involuntary peace, therefore, made for a certain inflexibility in the social system. On the other hand, it was also a factor in allowing more rapid cultural change, for the stopping of warfare removed a check to increased trading activity and to further efforts on the part of the missionaries to obtain more converts to Christianity. Mission work continued to be predominantly Protestant, although German Catholic missionaries established them-

selves at Jaluit and on a lesser scale pushed their own mission interests.

With World War I, the Japanese succeeded the Germans as the controlling power in the Marshalls. At first the Japanese navy administered the islands, but the navy was replaced by a civil administration in 1922. Whereas the Germans administered largely by means of indirect rule through the native chiefs, the Japanese shifted to a system of virtual direct rule through a new set of community officials. They also greatly expanded their administrative staff. Although the Japanese have been criticized for espousing a system of direct rule, I doubt that the German method of indirect rule through the chiefs would have been adequate for very long. The increasing range and intensity of culture contact was accelerating change to such an extent that the feudalism prevailing among the Marshallese could not have been maintained indefinitely as a system through which administration could be effectively channeled.

In the sphere of trade, the Japanese supplanted the Germans and also the Australians. The basis of trade with the Marshallese remained the same—the exchange of copra for manufactured products—but increasing efforts were made to expand copra production, which continued in Marshallese hands. The seat of administration and the center of trade remained at Jaluit. Here the small town of Jabor had grown up, and the small immigrant Japanese population who had settled there engaged in a few subsidiary enterprises such as commercial fishing.

Except for occasional friction, and strained relations before the outbreak of the second World War, missionaries do not appear to have been greatly hampered in their work by the Japanese. By this time, the initial missionary effort had already been successful. Protestant Christianity was the dominant accepted religion and the work on the atolls was carried on largely by Marshallese evangelists, supported by two resident white missionaries at Jaluit. The station at Kusaie in the eastern Carolines also continued as a training center for Marshallese students. During the German regime, Catholic missionaries had established themselves at Jaluit and extended their work to Likiep and Arno. These missionaries were German nationals and hence were evacuated at the time of World War I. Thereafter, Catholic missionary effort was never intense, though a Spanish Catholic missionary came to the islands after the close of the war and remained until his death in 1935 (U. S. N. Mil. Govt. Handbk., 1943, p. 17). The Japanese did not attempt any missionary activity.

With the approach of the American entry into World War II, the Japanese commenced the rapid fortification of the Marshall Islands, and continued their military preparations up to the invasion of the Marshalls by American forces. A small base was constructed by the Japanese at the east end of Majuro, beginning in 1940, according to Marshallese informants, but it was later reduced virtually to caretaker status and the main base-building effort concentrated elsewhere in the Ratak chain, where the principal Japanese bases were located at Wotje, Maloelap, and Mille. The increased military activity in the late 1930's and during the war also marked a change in the Marshallese attitude toward the Japanese. It is my impression that prior to that time the Japanese administration was regarded not unfavorably. When the Japanese military moved in, however, Marshallese men were conscripted to help build bases. The Japanese displayed hostility, particularly after the commencement of war, against anything stemming from America, including the church movement and the literature of the church, much of which was destroyed. At least two native pastors of mixed Marshallese and European descent, and one Protestant resident missionary of German and Australian descent, fell under Japanese suspicion and were executed. The villages were also stripped of food supplies to help support the Japanese. After the invasion of the Marshalls, the Marshallese marooned on the Japanese-held atolls were subjected to ill-treatment and in some cases their leaders were imprisoned and tortured, while they were all exposed to the additional hazard of American air raids. Fortunately, most of the Marshallese on these atolls eventually escaped on American landing craft sent to evacuate them. But the war left numerous personal tragedies among the islanders.

In World War II, the American drive through the central Pacific, initiated by the bloody capture of Tarawa Atoll in the Gilberts, gained its first real momentum with the Marshalls operation of 1944. After a terrific air and ship bombardment, American forces moved ashore on the beaches of Kwajalein and rapidly seized the atoll. Eniwetok was invaded two weeks later. Majuro was occupied without resistance on February 1, 1944, completing the American invasion. Thereafter, Eniwetok, Kwajalein, and Majuro became important air bases and fleet anchorages for the support of the front moving forward across the Pacific, and for the constant harassment by air of the Japanese forces remaining on the by-passed bases in the Marshalls; on Wake, Ocean, and Nauru Islands; and in the eastern Carolines. Thus, the destruction and activity of war ushered

in the current chapter in the checkered political history of the Marshalls.

Against this general background of the relations of the Marshallese with the western nations and with Japan, we may now examine the history of the specific contact situation on Majuro. With the exception of the first few explorers, the contact agents at Majuro have been the familiar types represented by trader, missionary, and government official. These three categories of contact agents will be discussed in turn, in so far as they have affected the lives of the residents of the atoll. Unfortunately, I have not had access to all the German and Japanese sources concerning contacts at Majuro, but the main outlines are clear.

Traders

The founding of the copra trade in the Marshalls dates from about 1860. In that year, we are told that Messrs. Stapenhorst and Hoffschlaeger of Honolulu had commenced the manufacture of coconut oil at Ebon, while in 1864 the principal personality in the early development of the copra industry in the Marshalls, a German trader named Adolf Capelle, was sent by this firm to its Ebon station (Chave, 1948, p. 53). Capelle developed the copra trade, some years later purchasing a part of Likiep Atoll for his own establishment. Other German companies were active in the islands in the 70's, Godeffroy and Sons having set up a trading station at Ebon and the Hernsheim Company a station on Jaluit. After Germany formally established a protectorate over the Marshalls in 1885, the German companies merged in 1887 to form the Jaluit Gesellschaft.

The first notice I have found of a white trader living on Majuro is in the unpublished *Log of the Schooner "Emily,"* [1] in which a white trader named Harry Burlingame is mentioned as residing on the atoll in 1871. In 1872, the *Emily* took Burlingame from Arno to Majuro, anchoring in the lagoon off his house. By 1887 there were four white men living on Majuro—two Germans, an Englishman, and a Scotchman (Moss, 1889, p. 83). The first company to maintain a regular station on the atoll seems to have been Henderson and MacFarlane of New Zealand, who located their buildings on Ejij Island. When they first came to Majuro I do not know. In 1891 a German administrator noted that there were seven foreigners at Majuro—one agent of Henderson and MacFarlane and six (independent?) traders (Brandeis, 1891–92, p. 332).

[1] In possession of Lawrence W. Jenkins, Director, Peabody Museum, Salem, Massachusetts.

A few years after the formation of the Jaluit Gesellschaft in 1887, Henderson and MacFarlane sold their interests to the Pacific Islands Company of Sydney, who continued to maintain the station at Ejij (Allen, 1920, pp. 331–332). A number of older informants at Majuro remembered the Pacific Islands Company. A store, operated by a European and said by some villagers to have been supplied by the Sydney company, was located on a piece of land called *Lotoin* on Majuro Island, at the southeast end of the village.

In January, 1888, the Jaluit Gesellschaft took over the administration of the Marshalls, under an agreement with the German government, with power to impose rates and taxes. Thereupon the Gesellschaft proceeded to give itself a favored trade position by imposing a high tax on ships operating in the area. The tax on the German company's ships of course went into their own pocket, but acted as a heavy burden on their non-German competitors. In 1902, after protest from the British government, the German government assumed direct administration of the islands, but the Jaluit Gesellschaft received a heavy subsidy. The Pacific Islands Company found it impossible to compete with the Gesellschaft and sold out their interests on Majuro to the latter in the same year (German Govt. Rept., 1902–03, p. 5310). The Jaluit Gesellschaft took over the trading station on Ejij Island, and for the remainder of the German regime was the sole trading company with a station at Majuro, though the atoll was visited periodically by a trading ship of the Australian firm of Burns Philp and Company (Allen, 1920, pp. 331–332).

In addition to the main trading station on Ejij Island, where at least one white man was in residence, the Gesellschaft also operated, or at least supplied, two small stores. The store at *Lotoin* was closed down, but another was opened in the *Lomar* district, in the northern section of Majuro village, and was run by a German trader. Another store was operated on Rongrong Island. These stores and the trading station were operated by a succession of white men. These men were not accompanied by European wives, and a number of them married Marshallese women and settled down on Majuro. Others departed after a time. Chave's account includes a full description of these wandering Europeans and Americans, but a few details obtained from the villagers concerning those white traders who are best remembered may be of interest.

"Captain Baker" (actually spelled "Becker"), a German, ran the store at *Lomar* for many years. He is buried in a small cemetery

along the main road of the village. He married a Marshallese woman and had children, but none of his descendants are left in the village. It is interesting to note that one daughter married a German and is said to have returned with her husband to Germany before World War I.

Another German, who preceded Captain Becker as storekeeper at *Lomar* is remembered only by the name of "Wasbo." He departed after a time. His common law wife remained on Majuro, where she still lives, an old woman now. There are no surviving children.

Thomas Fleming, also known as Jim Gordon, or "Jimkon Fleming," was a wandering Scotchman who first ran the early store at *Lotoin*, departed for a time, and returned permanently to Majuro. He then operated the Rongrong store and later moved to Ejij Island, where he ran the station for the Gesellschaft. He too married a Marshallese. She died at Rongrong in 1916, her grave being marked by a marble headstone brought all the way from Sydney. Fleming also died at Majuro and is said to be buried beside her. Two of Fleming's daughters were living at Majuro village during part of my stay, though one left for Likiep and the other for Arno.

Charley Tomlinson, born in Maine, was an American merchant officer accustomed to wayfaring among the Pacific islands. He finally landed in the Gilberts, and from there moved to Jaluit with a Gilbertese wife. From Jaluit he went to Arno and eventually from Arno to Majuro. At Majuro he operated the Rongrong store, and died on Rongrong. Two of his three surviving children were born on Arno and one on Jaluit; all three are now women of middle age or older, married to Marshallese men and all living today at Majuro village. None of them speaks English.

The white men that came to Majuro as traders during the German regime and just prior to it were not, therefore, all German nationals. Some, such as Fleming and Tomlinson, belonged to that class of nineteenth century wayfarers who found a congenial existence wandering among the tropical islands of the Pacific, finally to settle down on one that suited their tastes to spend the remainder of their days.

With World War I, the Japanese superseded the Germans, and not long afterward commenced trading at Majuro. A new set of traders—all Japanese—arrived at the atoll. Two Japanese companies started at Majuro. The Nanyo Boeki Kaisha had its main station at Jarrej Island, with a small store at Majuro village. A smaller company, Nanyo Kabushiki Kaisha(?), had its main station

at Rongrong Island, and also small stores at Majuro village and on Talab Island. Shortly after the Japanese had become established, the disastrous typhoon of 1918 struck Majuro. Trading was ruined, and both companies withdrew their personnel to Jaluit.

For the next eight years there do not seem to have been any resident Japanese traders at Majuro, though Japanese ships made periodic calls at the atoll. In 1926 a Japanese sailor came to live at the village and started a store on a very small and modest scale. With the 1930's more traders came, until by the beginning of World War II there were at Majuro village five small stores owned and operated by Japanese. Two of these were company stores—Nanyo Boeki and Kaneko—and the other three were operated as small independent enterprises. In addition, there were a number of Marshallese traders on the atoll who kept a modest stock of goods for sale in their own houses. By the end of the Japanese period, the Majuro people were very well supplied with trade goods, to which they had become accustomed and on which they depended.

Most of the Japanese who lived at Majuro apparently came as single men, though I was told that at the outbreak of war there were two Japanese wives in the village. Several of the Japanese men took common law Marshallese wives and raised families, and today a number of mixed Marshallese-Japanese children live in the village. With two exceptions that I know of, the Japanese nationals had all been evacuated from the atoll before the American occupation. One Japanese remained, but he was supposedly taken to Hawaii after the American landings; the other was actually a Korean, who died shortly after the Americans arrived.

After the American occupation of Majuro in 1944, the Navy attempted to revive trading in native handicraft in order to provide the Marshallese with a cash income. This trade in handicraft has continued to the present time in increasing volume. Copra, however, has just begun to be produced once more. Since the war there have been no civilian traders who have worked as agents for larger companies, or as small independent entrepreneurs, and who resided at Majuro village. Those officials of the Navy and of the United States Commercial Company who have supervised the trading activities have all been civilian government employees or naval personnel and have lived at the Navy headquarters.

Missionaries

In the early days, Ebon was the center of missionary work in the Marshalls. With Ebon as a base, attempts were made to en-

large the scope of mission activity by including additional atolls in the southern Marshalls. The American missionaries residing at Ebon worked in co-operation with native Hawaiian missionaries, and much of the work on atolls other than Ebon was delegated to the Hawaiians.

The earliest notice of a mission station at Majuro occurs in the 1870 annual reports of the American and the Hawaiian Boards. The first resident missionary was a native Hawaiian, Rev. H. Aea, who came to Majuro with his wife in 1869. The death of his wife and his own ill health caused him to leave in 1871. In 1872 two more Hawaiian missionaries were dropped at Majuro by the mission vessel, and one of these, Rev. S. W. Kekuewa, stayed for a number of years. Apparently these early attempts did not receive an altogether friendly response from the Majuro people, for we learn that in 1871

> Majuro is a new station. Our missionary is protected by the high chiefs. The king of the island, however, is not in favor of missionaries living on the island. The people have tried once and again to poison the family of the missionary, but thus far they have escaped. Schools have been commenced and some are desirious to learn. . . . (Am. Bd. Com. For. Miss., 1871, p. 82.)

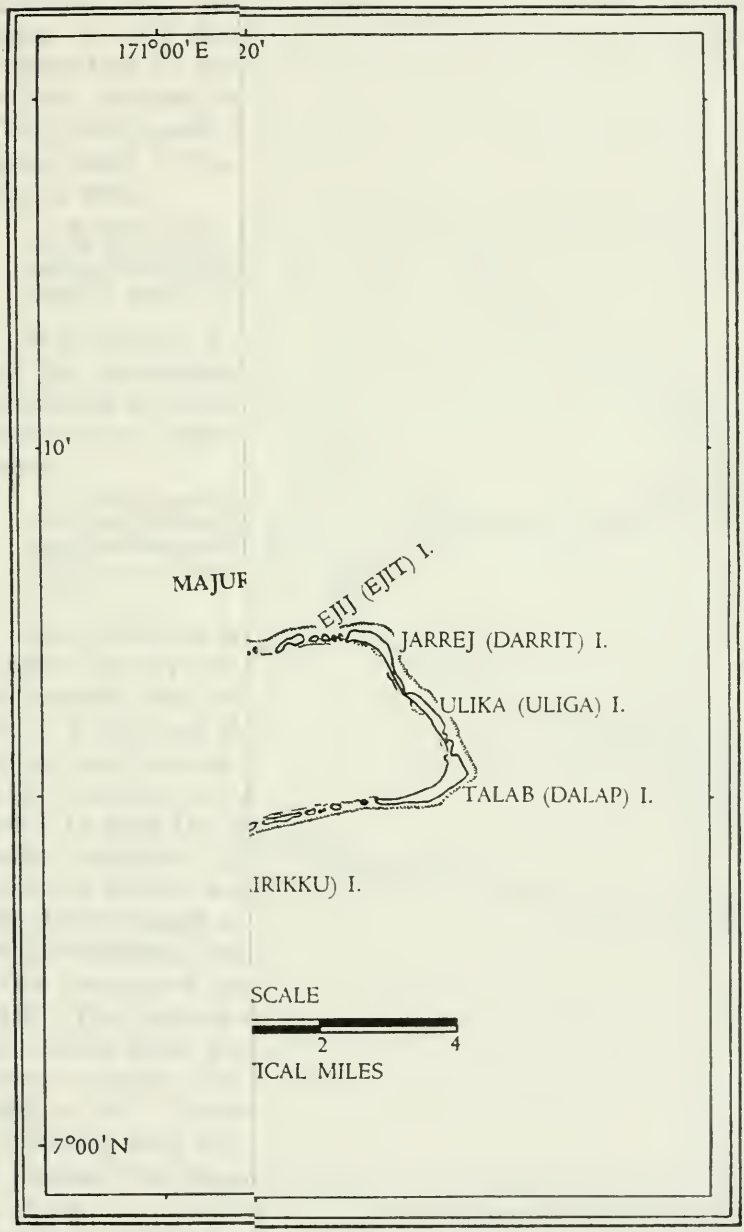
The next year, Rev. Snow wrote of Majuro that "no decided impression has been made on the people," and again in 1880 one notes:

> At Jaluit the work seems to be on the decline, the Hawaiian missionary having been compelled by ill health and loss of his wife to return to Honolulu. A similar report must be made of Arno and Majuro. . . . (Ibid., 1880, p. 86.)

In 1880 the American missionaries, together with their training school, moved from Ebon to Kusaie, in the eastern Carolines. The work in the Marshalls was not abandoned, however, for periodic trips from Kusaie were made through the southern atolls. But Majuro remained a tough nut for the missionaries to crack. A communication from one of the American missionaries at Kusaie contains the following comment:

> Majuro is an island we have occupied for ten or fifteen years and yet we have barely a foothold there. It is the hardest part of our field. There has long been a system of warfare between the chiefs of the opposite sides of the islands, each one desiring the whole. Pray for these two missionaries, and for this island which is the key to the enemy's position in the Marshall group. (Ibid., 1883, p. 88.)

For the next two decades missionary work in the Marshalls was directed from Kusaie. A program was organized in training Marshallese as native evangelists by bringing likely candidates from the Marshalls to the training school at Kusaie, and then returning them to the Marshall atolls to push the conversion of the Marshallese


171°00' E
20'
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MAJUR
EJIJ (EJIT) I.
JARREJ (DARRIT) I.
ULIKA (ULIGA) I.
TALAB (DALAP) I.
IRIKKU) I.
SCALE
2
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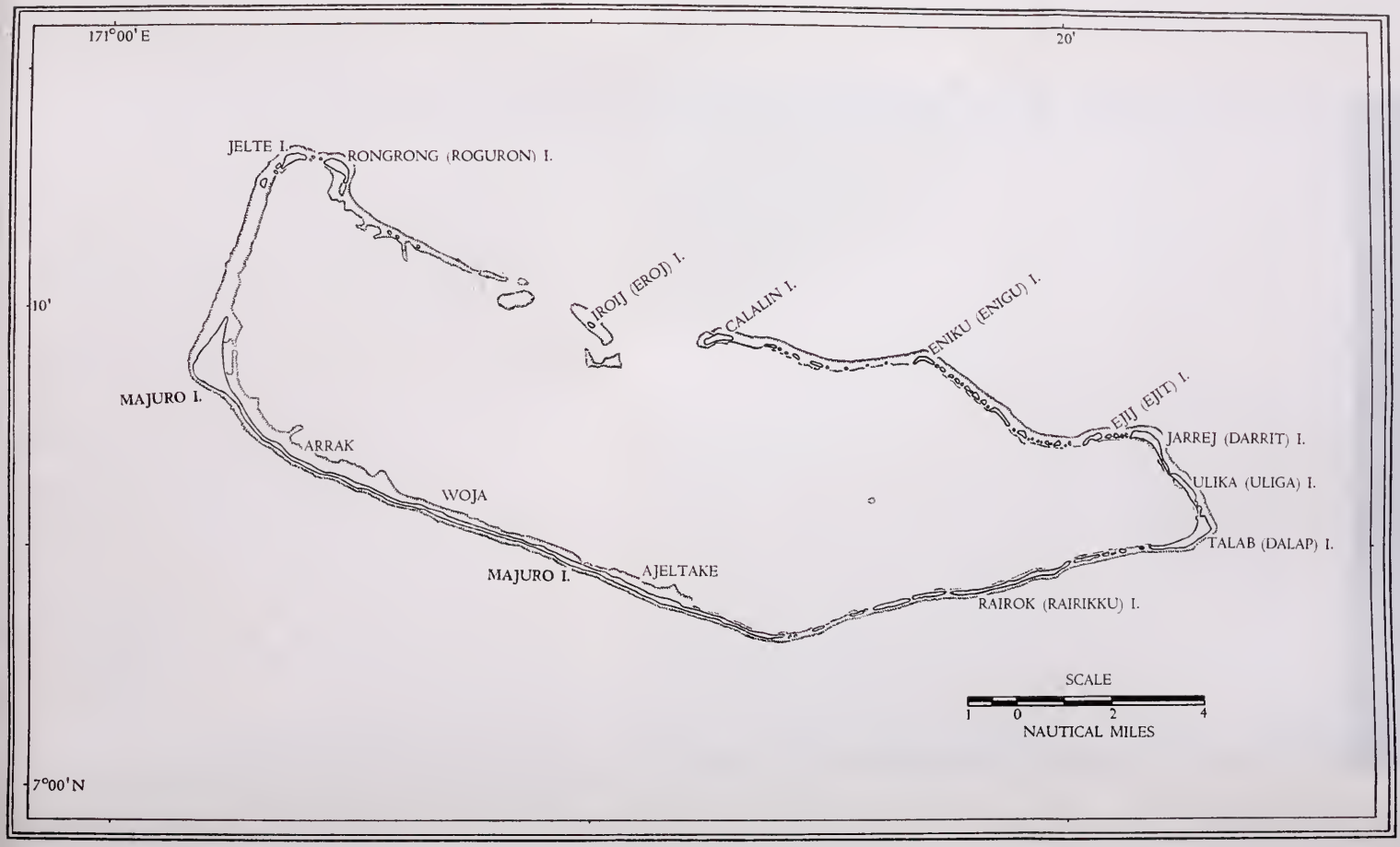


Map 2. MAJURO ATOLL

to Christianity. An annual tour by sailing vessel was made to secure students, return graduates, and give general stimulus to mission work. In 1894 the situation on Majuro was more favorable, and we note that the church had been enlarged and a school maintained with an ordained native minister in residence (ibid., 1894, p. 88). The over-all system was working, for by 1897 additional schools were being added to the mission's sphere of influence, maintained by annual visits.

> Sixteen islands on which Christian work is in progress were visited, the church members gathered and instructed, the schools visited and examined, converts and children baptized, marriages solemnized, and matters set in order for another year's work. (Ibid., 1897, p. 118.)

With the turn of the century, a high mark was reached at Majuro and the missionaries' early discouraging efforts met with success. In addition to noting with approval that more natives were wearing western style clothing, the annual report of the American Board states:

> Among these islands, Majuro presents one of the most striking records . . . . This year 735 church members are reported, of whom 130 were received this year; three schools with 142 pupils, and contributions and payments for books, $638; a record unequaled by any other island in the group. (Ibid., 1902, p. 143.)

Since 1880 the work in the Marshalls had been directed from Kusaie. However, in 1906 it was decided that such direction should be exercised from within the Marshall group itself. Accordingly, Dr. C. F. Rife and his wife were transferred from Kusaie to Majuro, where they took up residence on Rongrong Island and established a boys' school, as well as conducting a certain amount of work for girls. In 1909 Dr. Rife reported sixteen young men and four girls under instruction (ibid., 1909, p. 147). The present Marshallese pastor at Majuro and his wife both attended this school. In 1912 the Rifes returned to the United States, being replaced by another white missionary and his wife, Rev. and Mrs. C. H. Maas. The latter maintained the school at Rongrong Island on Majuro until 1918. The typhoon of that year forced the closing of the school, and at the same time the resident missionary withdrew from the mission service, as he was a German national (ibid., 1918, p. 187; 1920, p. 48). The brief period when Majuro was used as a center for mission work was ended.

During the Japanese regime an American missionary, Miss J. Hoppin, conducted a school at Jaluit and carried on mission work with the aid of Rev. Carl R. Heine, a long-time German resident married to a Marshallese and ordained by the American

Board. In 1933, Miss Hoppin moved to Kusaie, which had continued as an important mission center. Heine continued the work at Jaluit (U. S. N. Mil. Govt. Handbk., 1943, p. 16). During World War II, he fell under the suspicion of the Japanese, who imprisoned him and his son Claude, and later killed them. Today two of Carl Heine's grandchildren reside at Majuro and were very helpful in my own work at the atoll.

With the conclusion of World War II, Majuro became the administrative center for the southern Marshalls. It is probable that any missionary work attempted in the future in the southern atolls will use Majuro as a secondary base. At present there is no permanent resident missionary at Majuro village, but an American Board missionary, Miss E. Wilson, visited the village for seven months in 1946 and for three months in 1947. A conference of Marshallese pastors was held at the village in December, 1946. Modest quarters for a missionary have also been constructed on the church property at Majuro village.

Government Officials

During both the German and Japanese regimes the administrative seat of government for the Marshalls was located at Jaluit. The Germans administered the area with a staff of only four or five (U. S. N. Mil. Govt. Handbk., 1943, p. 14), and hence the contact of the Majuro villagers with German government officials was limited to periodic visits to the atoll by the latter. The same pattern of contact prevailed in Japanese times, but the Japanese greatly increased the number of their administrative officials. They also established a system of direct rule over native affairs, made efforts to expand the copra trade, and initiated limited programs in native education and medical care. In consequence, contact between villagers and government officials was more regular and more frequent in Japanese times than during the German regime.

During the Japanese administration, civil government succeeded naval rule in 1922. After that time, the typical pattern of contact between Majuro villagers and government officials consisted of regular official visits to the atoll some eight or more times a year by the latter. These visits were never long—a day or two at most. The Japanese civil government officials wore uniforms and the more important carried swords. To an American, the Japanese administrative personnel and the formal character of their relations with the villagers seem to have been more military than civilian. Aisea, the present magistrate at Majuro village, was also magistrate during

the latter part of the Japanese regime. He said that the administrative visits were usually made by a group of officials, consisting of the islands' governor or his representative, a doctor and several hospital corpsmen, a policeman, a postmaster, a tax collector, and a man to handle government purchases of handicraft. All these wore uniforms, and the more important, such as the governor's representative, demanded proper attitudes of respect, including the characteristic Japanese bow from the waist. Compared to missionaries and traders, the relations of Japanese government officials with the villagers were certainly more formal.

In 1940 the Japanese military commenced fortifying Majuro by constructing a small navy base at the east end of the atoll. However, this was never developed as a major installation and in 1941 seems to have been reduced in status. The construction work shifted to Mille, sixty miles to the south. I was told that at the time of Pearl Harbor there were not more than 100 military personnel at the east end of the atoll, and these were reduced to a mere handful at the time of the American occupation in 1944. Whatever the nature of the contact between these military personnel and the people of the atoll, it was certainly transitory.

After the occupation by United States forces, Majuro became a major American base. Relations between the villagers and military personnel, however, were strictly controlled. The two groups were at opposite sides of the atoll, so that such control was facilitated by distance alone. Contact existed, of course. Men from the village worked at the base as part of a native labor force, and others served as scouts in military operations against the Japanese on the nearby atolls. Periodic scheduled sightseeing visits to the village were permitted to base personnel and to those of transient ships. A dispensary for the Marshallese was set up at the village, staffed usually by two medical officers, a dental officer and several enlisted corpsmen. Regular relations were maintained with Navy military government officers, who also employed Marshallese interpreters.

After the conclusion of hostilities, a small Navy hospital, built of quonset huts, was erected at the village in connection with the program for Marshallese medical care (see fig. 48, lower). This hospital was commissioned on January 1, 1946, and was maintained by some four officers and fifteen enlisted men. In the latter part of 1946, the military government unit also moved to the village. However, as it became apparent that Majuro was not destined to be a peacetime base, and with the continued rapid demobilization

of naval personnel, it was decided to move both the hospital and the military government unit back to the east side of the atoll. The hospital was decommissioned in February, 1947, and all government activities removed completely from the village and concentrated at the site of the former base. When I arrived at Majuro in March, 1947, there were no longer any Americans residing at the village. The former hospital quonsets were turned over for use as a village dispensary under the supervision of the resident Marshallese medical aid; one was used as a village hall and meeting place; and several were vacant.

In addition to the traders, missionaries, and government officials who have visited or resided at Majuro, and hence acted as points of contact with alien cultures, villagers have also left Majuro for a time and returned with experience of the outside world. More will be said about this in a later chapter, but a few remarks should be accorded here to this aspect of contact. Both in German and Japanese times a few men from the village worked on German, Australian, and Japanese ships in the Pacific trade. During the Japanese administration, the experience of these Marshallese sailors was confined to the Japanese controlled area, but it included brief visits to the urban centers of Japan. A few other villagers have visited Tokyo as travellers. Numerous others had an acquaintance with pre-war Jaluit, which provided them with a modicum of sophistication not to be obtained on Majuro alone. This aspect of contact, therefore, has complemented the effects wrought by the presence of traders, missionaries, and officials.

In the light of the preceding remarks, culture contact at Majuro can be seen to have had certain distinctive features. The first of these is that the economic basis of village life on the atoll has not been shattered by foreign exploitation. Land has remained in native hands, except for the war-time occupation of the Navy base, for the most a transient phenomenon. Nor have the Marshallese been exploited as a labor force. The limited natural resources have been developed, but such development has not resulted in a shifting of ownership of resources to foreign hands. Second, the contact agents who have come in close touch with the people have been few in number. The Marshallese have not been overwhelmed by an invading population. The foreigners they have received have left their mark on the indigenous culture, but contact has not been especially disruptive to the daily pursuits of life. The marked differences in the cultural backgrounds of these foreigners have given the Marshallese a relatively high degree of sophistication.

The islanders today seem highly adaptable. They are in no sense a disorganized group with a broken culture. The course of contact has been gradual enough so that adjustments could be made without the imposition of violent and permanently disruptive strains.

MAJURO AS A TYPE COMMUNITY

The question may be raised as to what extent Majuro village is a typical Marshallese community, and to what extent it is atypical. It differs from others in that it is located on the same atoll as the present United States Navy Civil Government Unit for the southern Marshalls. It is closer therefore to a seat of American political authority and to the center of dispersion of new ideas and new things. This location near the American government unit as a factor favoring rapid acculturation was more striking during and immediately following the war than at present, however, for in the former time the base was a scene of active military operations carried on by a relatively large number of American personnel. The proximity of the village to the base also gave it a certain reflected importance, particularly as the village was visited periodically by high ranking officers. Today the factor of proximity means much less, simply because the wartime base is a thing of the past. Airplanes no longer fill the sky, ships are infrequent, and the Navy boat from the administrative headquarters makes the trip to the village only at infrequent intervals now that American naval personnel do not reside there. Yet the previous contact and the present location have given the villagers a certain sophistication they might otherwise not have had. Compared to other villagers, the Majuro people are said to show less anticipation and excitement and to be more blasé when a Navy ship or boat is seen approaching the beach.

Majuro village is also larger than other villages, which are closer to 500 than to the 850–900 inhabitants of Majuro. This characteristic of size is also partly a consequence of the war. After the American invasion of the Marshalls, large numbers of Marshallese were stranded on the by-passed Japanese-held atolls of Wotje, Maloelap, Jaluit, and Mille. Quite a number of the Marshallese at Jaluit were actually Majuro villagers who had been conscripted by the Japanese to work on military installations. Following the occupation of Majuro, the Navy conducted a series of operations whereby large numbers of Marshallese were evacuated from the Japanese-held atolls and removed to the safety of Majuro and Arno. Majuro village received so many of these war-time refugees that

the village grew to twice its present size. Since the cessation of hostilities, most of these newcomers have been returned to their home atolls, though a very few still remain. The village is noticeably quieter today than during the war.

Yet despite the proximity of the village to the wartime base, and despite its relatively larger size, my feeling is that these factors have not produced cultural effects that differentiate Majuro very radically from other Marshallese villages. The concentration of refugees from other atolls and their subsequent dispersion back to their home atolls served to diffuse knowledge of Americans and American ways, rather than to localize such knowledge at one spot. Majuro is not really so much larger than other villages that its size alone would make any radical social or cultural difference, for the economic basis and social framework remain the same. The people of Majuro village may appear to be slightly more sophisticated in American ways than those on more isolated atolls, but it is my belief that this is superficial. It may be a forerunner of more fundamental change, but I believe that this element of sophistication has not appreciably affected the present social, political, or economic organization of village life.

IV. MAJURO VILLAGE

Majuro village is reached by boat or outrigger canoe from the United States Navy Civil Government headquarters at the east end of the atoll. As one starts out for the village across the blue lagoon, flecked with whitecaps thrown up by the trade wind, the destination is merely a point on the lagoon horizon, for it is impossible to see the length of the atoll. The land along the sides of the lagoon is visible throughout the trip, however, so those who know the atoll well can measure the progress of their craft by noting the familiar islands along the sides of the atoll, as the boat passes abreast of them, and one by one leaves them astern. Finally, the low, flat line of palms at the west end of Majuro Island, where the village is located, appears on the horizon. If one is making the trip by outrigger canoe, it is probably late afternoon by now. The low sun in the west is half obscured by the ever present broken fragments of cloud. In the east, the towering cumulus is tinted pink against the deepening sky. The tillerman softly starts a Marshallese song as he sees the land ahead, and one by one the crew members join in. Before long, the curve of sand beach is visible. The canoe captain rouses himself and moves carefully to the bow of the canoe.

At the west end of the lagoon, a submerged secondary reef acts as a protective barrier for the village waterfront. The secondary reef blocks off a calm inner lagoon from the rougher water of the main lagoon outside. The village receives the full force of the trade wind blowing across the atoll, and the water in the western part of the lagoon can be very rough. The secondary reef breaks the force of the waves and is a very useful protective feature, particularly as it facilitates the launching of canoes.

A narrow passage leads into the inner lagoon. Except at high tide, the water over the secondary reef is so shallow that even the canoes use the passage. It is for this reason that the canoe captain stands at the bow of the canoe. From this vantage point he can spot the jagged coral of the reef under the surface of the water, and direct the canoe to the passage. In a moment, the craft glides through the passage into the calm stretch of water in the inner lagoon.

FIG. 3. Small sailing canoe on beach.

Picking his spot on the beach, the tillerman brings the canoe sharply into the wind. At the same moment, the crew smartly drops the billowing lateen sail. The canoe drifts slowly to the beach. We are at the village (fig. 3).

PLAN OF THE VILLAGE

The long curve of white beach bordering the lagoon is the village waterfront (fig. 4, upper). It is composed of fine coral sand and is approximately one hundred feet wide at mid-tide. Unfortunately, its natural beauty is disfigured by the wreck of a beached and abandoned landing craft, a peacetime casualty of more active Navy days; by the remains of a steel pontoon dock, now broken by the pounding of the waves; and, farther down the lagoon, by a rusty scow that drifted in one day and at present alternates between complacently sitting on the beach at low tide and placidly floating in the water at high tide.

FIG. 4. Upper: Lagoon beach at Majuro village. Lower: Gossip on the beach.

Back of the beach the ever-rustling coconut palms raise their heads into the trade wind. Here, in the shade of the trees, the villagers like to spend an idle hour in the afternoon, with the sun at their backs and the wind fresh in their faces. Sitting on the sand, or on grassy spots just behind the beach, small groups of two to four people will gather in the afternoon to chat idly or simply to watch the white triangular sail of a canoe disappear in the distance (fig. 4, lower). It is at this spot too that the canoes are drawn up above the high-water mark. An irregular succession of white canoe prows can be seen along the curve of the beach. There is very little paint to be had on the atoll, but what there is goes on the canoes.

Immediately behind the beach, a footpath winds its way parallel to the lagoon shore. The path is a convenient secondary artery of pedestrian traffic between the shoreward parts of the village and is much used by people whose homes are close to the lagoon. From the lagoon path, other narrow paths lead inland a hundred feet or so to the houses that flank the main road.

The main village road also runs parallel to the lagoon shore and stretches along the big island for a distance of two miles (fig. 5, upper). The road is narrow—twelve to fifteen feet wide. It is of clean-swept coral sand and is edged intermittently with up-ended coral rock slabs and with red-leaved shrubs said to have been introduced in German times and now planted along the road in front of the houses. The houses are usually set back a little from the road itself.

Although the houses of the villagers are dispersed along the main road, and in the interior of the island also, the village has a central district along the lagoon shore. This central district is called *Iolab*, and it is here that most of the activity goes on. In *Iolab* are located the church, a large, white, frame building with a thatch roof; the two co-operative stores; the dispensary; the town hall; the school; and the ball field. In *Iolab* the two paramount chiefs have their residences, as well as a number of nobles of lesser rank. Formerly, each paramount chief also had his family cemetery in *Iolab*, though they are no longer used. One was moved to make way for the dispensary, and evidence of its former presence is obliterated. Today all burials take place at the main cemetery at the north end of the island. Formerly there were numerous small cemeteries, often located on rises in the terrain, rather than one main cemetery (see map 3).

FIG. 5. Upper: Main village road. Lower: Secondary road in interior of island.

The road system of the island is shown in map 3. A main village road paralleling the lagoon shore is characteristic of Marshallese villages. The island on which Majuro village is located, however, is broader than most, and makes a simple system of secondary roads convenient. From a central point in *Iolab*, a secondary road penetrates into the interior of the island, then splits, and two extensions swing north and south, finally meeting the main road again (fig. 5, lower). A third extension continues across the island. These secondary roads are not quite so wide as the main road and except in the vicinity of houses are not kept free of grass. Nor are they used as much as the main road.

The secondary roads are actually of fairly recent construction, and I believe were built largely because the Japanese desired them. The first of these roads to be built was the one leading from the central part of the village across the island to the seaward side, and was constructed under the supervision of a Japanese government officer. The other roads were built later and completed in the late 1920's. Prior to the construction of this system of secondary roads, communication was maintained with the interior of the island and with its seaward side by a series of footpaths that crossed the island from the main village road to the sea. Most of these footpaths are still used, as in many cases they provide a shorter route to one's destination than does the road and are particularly convenient in getting to the taro patches in the interior of the island.

There are only a few wheeled vehicles at the village, though they are much desired and were probably somewhat more numerous in Japanese times. These vehicles are of two kinds—two or three bicycles and a few light, two-wheeled handcarts—dating from the Japanese era and well adapted to the village road system. The handcarts are particularly useful in hauling goods and copra; it was probably to facilitate bringing copra from the interior of the island to the lagoon shore by cart that the secondary roads were constructed.

The distribution of living-houses is shown in map 3. Community buildings such as church and school are included on this map, but cookhouses are not indicated. The map shows that the principal concentration of houses is along the main road paralleling the lagoon shore. This is the preferred location. It is on the windward side of the island and hence is cooler, and there are fewer flies and mosquitoes. It is also more convenient for launching sailing canoes. The houses themselves are usually small and modest structures. At

the time of my first visit during the war, thatch houses predominated. Today, the people have largely switched to frame houses with sawed lumber sides, though often retaining a thatch roof. The lumber is Navy salvage and, as it was obtained in a great variety of shapes and sizes, the houses have a certain jerry-built quality that is accentuated by the general lack of paint. Having once changed to sawed lumber houses, however, the villagers will probably never wish to return to thatch, though thatch roofs are cooler than corrugated iron or canvas and will no doubt continue in use. The thatch, made from pandanus leaves, must be replaced every three years.

Majuro village has been inhabited well beyond the memory of any of its present inhabitants. In view of the relatively large land area of the island, compared to the usual size of islands forming a Marshall atoll, the area occupied by the present village has probably supported a population as long as people have lived in the Marshalls. However, in former times there is reason to believe that more people lived farther back in the island and also along the ocean side. Old informants said that formerly many houses were built nearer the taro patches in the interior of the island. This statement is borne out by the relatively large number of coral areas marking old house yards that are scattered about a hundred yards back of the road in the central district. Some old house yards are also to be found along the ocean side in the *Lomar* district, accompanied by a number of old and long unused cemeteries. It is probable, therefore, that the pattern of house distribution was formerly slightly different than it is now. Unfortunately the dampness of the climate and the lack of non-perishable remains, such as pottery or masonry ruins, preclude profitable archaeological work, so the early history of Majuro will doubtless continue to remain unknown, except in the form of Marshallese legend and story.

TOPOGRAPHY

Figure 6 is a vertical aerial photograph of the north end of Majuro Island, on which the village is located. The submerged secondary reef and the protected inner lagoon with its long bordering strip of white sand beach can be clearly seen. On the ocean side the reef is very wide—almost 3,000 feet at the north end of the island—but tapers down toward the south. The ocean reef is completely exposed at low tide. On the broad expanse of reef at the north, a number of stone-walled fish pounds are built. Although most of the canoes, including all the larger sailing craft, are launched from the beach on the lagoon shore, fifteen to eighteen small paddle

EXPLANATION OF FIGURE 6

The lagoon is at the bottom of the photograph, the ocean at the top. North is toward the right side of the page.

Areas of coral reefs are light in shade and sometimes splotchy. Deep water is dark. The secondary reef and the small interior lagoon it encloses can be seen along the lagoon side of the island, though the passage through the secondary reef into the atoll lagoon itself is not visible in the photograph. Note the extreme width of the reef on the ocean side at the north end of the island.

The main village road can be seen as a thin white line paralleling the lagoon shore. Parts of the secondary roads can also be distinguished. House yards appear as small white areas along the main road and scattered through the island. The interior area of breadfruit can be distinguished from the surrounding zone of coconut palms. Also, the long strip along the lagoon side where the breadfruit were cut down during the Japanese regime, and where palms were planted instead, is clearly marked.

FIG. 6. Aerial photograph of village area (United States Navy photograph).

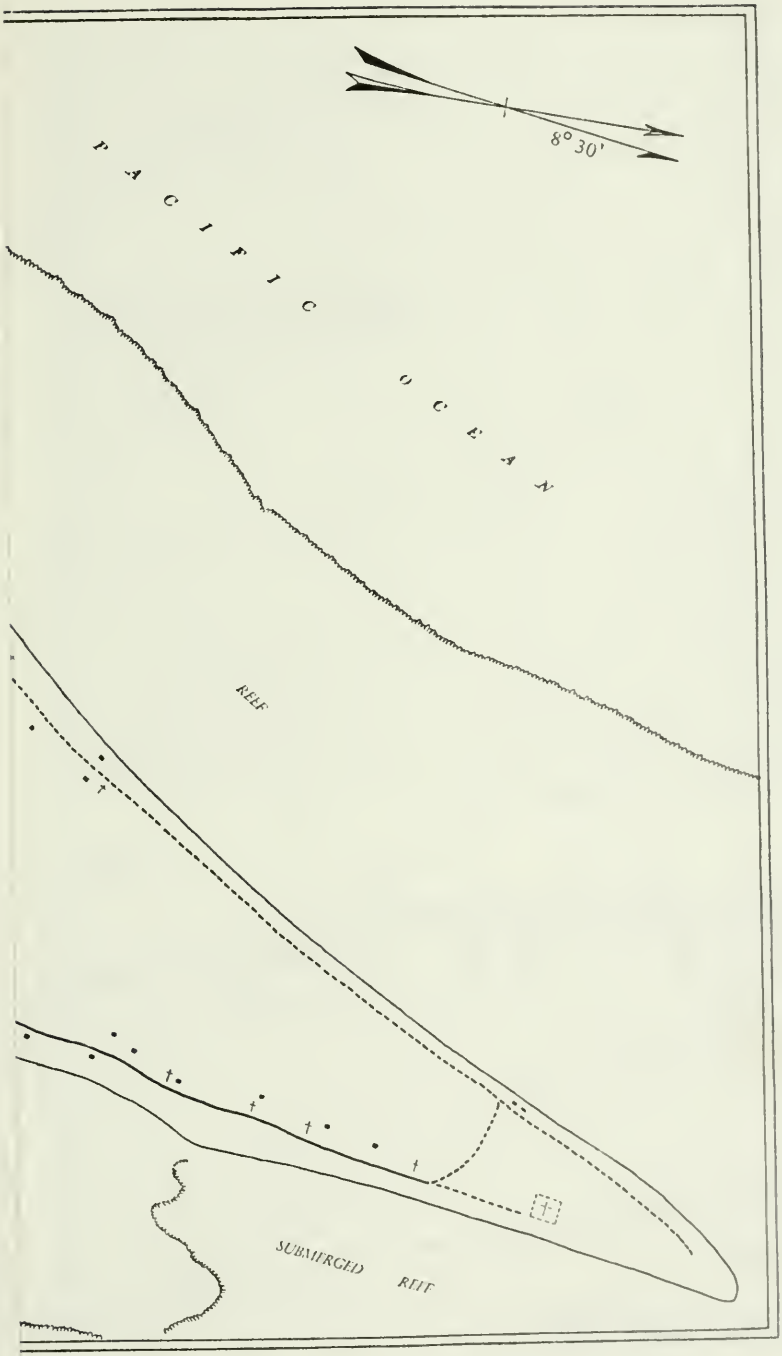
canoes are kept on the ocean side, principally at the central tip of the island where the reef is narrow. These canoes are used for fishing off the reef in the lee of the island. The lee of the island is very extensive and particularly in the summer is even calmer than the lagoon. The fishing here is excellent.

The land surface of the island nowhere reaches a high elevation. With a hand level, and by estimating mean high water for the month of June, I obtained a series of elevations above an approximation of sea level that at least serve to indicate their range, though the figures cannot be taken as exact elevations. Though the island is low, most of its surface is not flat, however it may appear from the air or from a ship offshore. Along the lagoon side and into the interior of the island the surface consists of hillocks and depressions of varying size and extent. On the ocean side the surface is relatively level. The hillocks and depressions are the result of wind action, which has formed a series of dunes as the island gradually increased in size and width on the reef. These dunes are not evident on the extreme leeward side, but are particularly apparent on the present windward side of the island. The highest elevation is formed by two knolls along the lagoon shore—one 17 and the other 20.5 feet above sea level. These elevations are unusual, however, and the dunes are generally from 6 to 9 feet above sea level. The depressions are of variable depth, from approximately 3 feet above sea level down to zero, where they have been excavated for taro patches.

A series of readings along the main village road in the central part of the village varied in elevation from 2.8 to 7 feet, with most of the area about 3.5 to 4 feet above sea level.

The subsoil throughout the island consists of white coral sand devoid of visible decomposed organic matter. The deepest soil profile I observed was 6 feet, and at this depth the underlying coral had not been reached, but presumably Majuro is no different from other atolls, where the sandy subsoil is underlain with loose coral debris or consolidated coral bedrock.

The surface soil has benefited from the heavy vegetation that has long covered the dunes. In the interior of the island, where the plant growth is heaviest, there is a respectable black humus layer, mixed with sand, that is a foot and a half or slightly more in depth. Towards the bottom of this layer the organic content as shown by the color of the soil diminishes, but the break between the dark, humus-filled surface layer and the white sandy subsoil is very sharp. Towards the ocean and lagoon sides of the island the overlay of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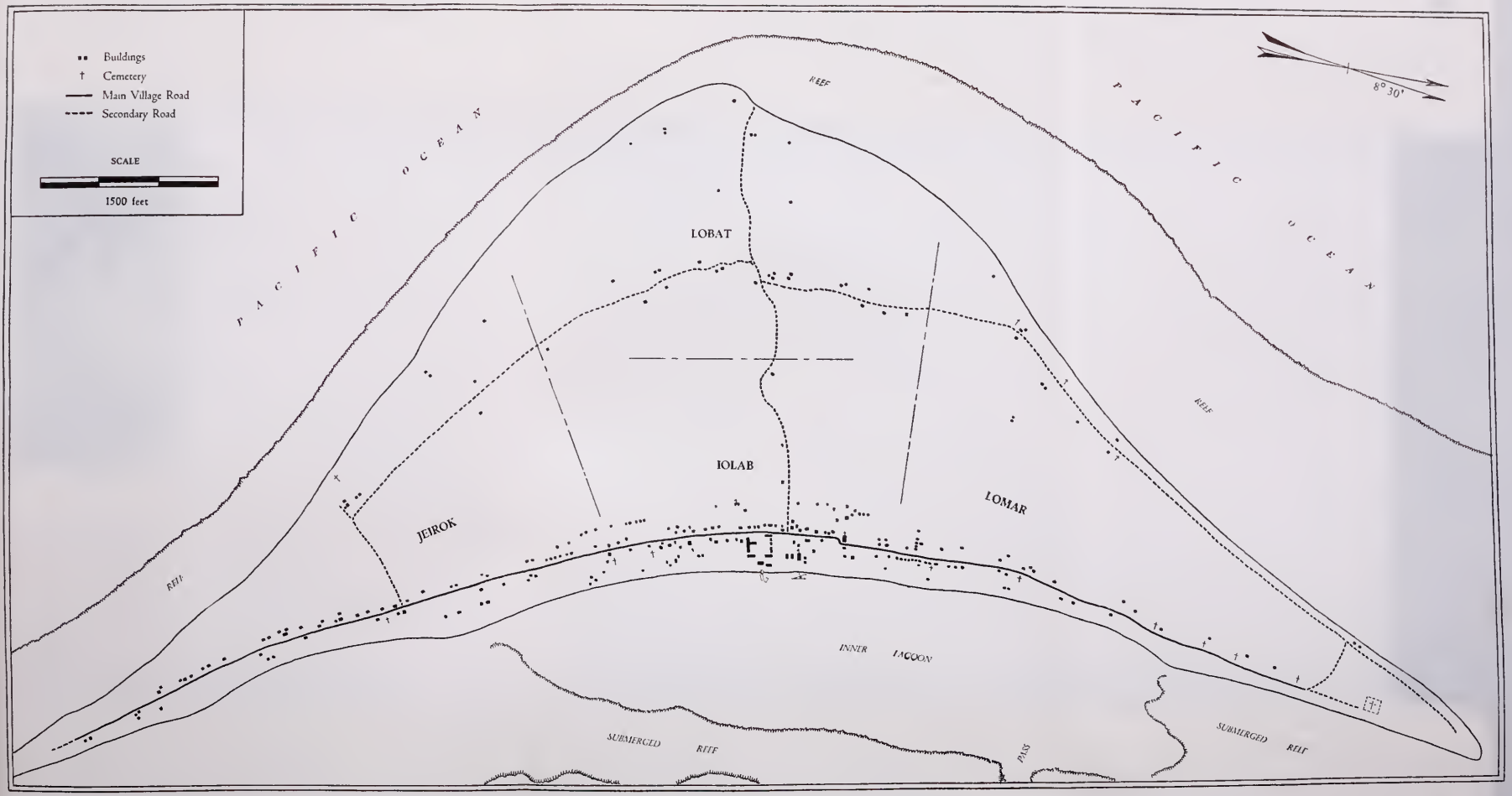

Map 3. MAJURO VILLAGE

FIG. 7. Coconut palm, showing leaves and fruits.

humus gradually becomes shallower until it disappears completely. Along the main road it is only from 4 to 6 inches deep. The humus has, of course, tended to collect in the depressions. In the interior of the island the people have through the years made extensive taro patches. These have been either enlarged from existing depressions or excavated completely by hand. Some are neatly rectangular in shape; others are more irregular. A muddy bed of black soil has developed in these taro patches.

The island supports a heavy growth of trees. These are of three principal kinds: coconut palm, pandanus, and breadfruit. The breadfruit dominate a well-defined zone in the interior of the island and are seldom to be found less than 200 feet from the lagoon shore. Their distribution is apparently controlled by the salinity of the ground water (Fosberg, 1949, pp. 91–92). Salt spray also, combined with the trade wind, tends to inhibit their growth closer to the

lagoon beach, as the wind and spray lacerate and brown the leaves. The interior zone of breadfruit may be seen in figure 6. Along the lagoon side there is a strip where the breadfruit trees have been cut down and palms planted. The Japanese desired to expand copra production as much as possible and hence initiated the cutting down of this swath of breadfruit. Coconut palms were then planted. For a brief time the Japanese also attempted a small experimental garden in this area.

The coconut palms (fig. 7) grow on both the seaward and lagoon sides and surround the interior zone of breadfruit (fig. 8, upper). Along the lagoon side it is evident from their regular spacing that many coconut palms have been recently planted, though this is not the case on the ocean side of the island. Towards the interior, palms compete with breadfruit and in the very center there are few if any palms at all. They become interspersed with breadfruit as one proceeds from the interior of the island toward either the lagoon or the ocean.

The hardy pandanus grows throughout the island. In the taro patches (fig. 8, lower) it is a nuisance, and some patches have become overgrown with pandanus. Yet, like the coconut palm and the breadfruit, it is of great economic importance and a valuable natural resource. In addition to the pandanus, the coconut palms, and the breadfruit, a few broad-leaved tropical trees are interspersed throughout the island. Creepers and shrubs flourish particularly in the interior, and tough grasses carpet open areas.

For a more detailed statement of the zonal distribution of atoll flora, the reader is referred to Fosberg's paper on the relation of salinity to the distribution of the plant life of coral atolls (Fosberg, 1949). His conclusion is an exact characterization of conditions at Majuro:

> The fresh water of an atoll islet exists in the form of a very shallow Ghyben-Herzberg lens, with its freshness directly proportional to the product of the rainfall and the distance from the beaches. The vegetation, as a result, is mesophytic in relation to the same factors, tending to be most luxuriant and arborescent toward the center of large islets in wet regions, and more sparse, desert-like, and predominantly herbaceous or dwarf-shrubby on beaches, spits, and small islets in climatically dry areas of the ocean (Fosberg, 1949, p. 92.)

THE VILLAGERS

Appearance and Dress

The visitor landing for the first time on the village beach will in all probability be greeted by the magistrate, the scribe, and at least one of the four policemen, flanked by a group of smiling adults

FIG. 8. Upper: Breadfruit on tree. Lower: Taro in small patch in interior of island.

whose curiosity has brought them to the beach. Surrounding this contingent will be a large number of healthy and extremely active children. The Marshallese are a friendly and very open-faced people. A smile and a handshake are exchanged between the visitor and the adults gathered to greet him, and the policeman obligingly seizes the visitor's gear and carries it to the latter's quarters.

As in the case of other Marshallese, the people of the village have long been accustomed to wearing western style clothing. Today the men wear blue dungarees or green cotton shirts and trousers, both regulation Navy clothing, either salvaged or issued at the base or bought new from the co-operative stores. Except on public or semi-public occasions the shirt is often omitted. The women wear dresses that are direct lineal descendants of the atrocious old Mother Hubbards that the missionaries considered to be such an essential item of Christian morality. The old style Mother Hubbards are known in the Marshalls as *wahu*, no doubt because the first resident missionaries were so often Hawaiian and introduced the unfortunate style from the island of Oahu. However, the women today have greatly improved the old Mother Hubbard by shortening the skirt, introducing a waistline, short puffed sleeves, and a more attractive neckline, and in general reducing the amount of yardage per dress. A few of the older style dresses are still occasionally seen, but the newer style is preferred. The women do very fine crocheting and are fond of crocheted hems on their slips, which are tastefully allowed to show beneath their dresses.

Both men and women usually go barefoot, but many men have taken to wearing G.I. shoes. Once or twice I saw women also wearing shoes. Because of the difficulty of controlling fungus diseases of the skin in the tropics, the introduction of shoes creates a minor health problem that will grow rather than diminish. Although shoes serve a useful purpose as protection against coral cuts and abrasions when men or women are walking on the reef, they are essentially a symbol of prestige. Wooden clogs similar to Japanese *geta* or some type of sandal are much better adapted to the tropical climate and at the same time give the necessary protection against rough coral. It is to be hoped that they will be substituted for conventional but ill-adapted American footwear in the village stores.

Marshallese men wear their hair short and occasionally shave the scalp. The women wear their hair long down the back, sometimes gathering it in a loose knot; they spend much time oiling and combing their hair, which is a source of much personal pride. Costume jewelry

in the form of combs is a favorite item. Except for plain rings, little other jewelry is worn.

Children often run naked around the house until about the age of three, though when they appear with their mothers on public occasions they are dressed in either shirts and shorts or in dresses, depending on their sex.

In the old days the Marshallese were much given to elaborate tattooing and to piercing the lobe of the ear and enlarging the resulting hole. Tattooing also was used to indicate rank and class distinctions. Neither tattooing nor enlarged holes in the ear lobes are common practices today, though probably most of the older people are tattooed on the arms and have enlarged piercings of the ear lobes.

One of the pleasanter aspects of the Marshallese people is their personal cleanliness. Frequent bathing is the rule. Soiled clothes are not often seen. Women are forever washing and ironing, and the shortage of soap has been a principal unsatisfied want since the war.

Residents from Other Atolls

Although most of the people at Majuro village are native to the atoll, individuals from other atolls are represented in the village population. Majuro and nearby Arno have always been in very close contact and the two atolls are linked by relationship ties between several of their families. A number of the villagers, including the paramount chief, Langlan, were born on Arno, although they are accepted citizens of Majuro and consider it their home.

As a result of the war the village also received refugees from the Japanese-held atolls of Wotje, Jaluit, Maloelap, and Mille. Several of these refugees were really from still other atolls and they had, for one reason or another, been stranded on the Japanese-held atolls at the time of American seizure of the Marshalls. By the time of my arrival in 1947 most of these refugees had been repatriated to their home atolls, but some still remained. A few of those who remained had taken Majuro spouses, had found relatives at the village, or for other reasons expected to make it their home. In June, 1947, these non-Majuro residents totalled 182. The atolls from which these people came are scattered in both Ralik and Ratak chains. The people at the village did their best to provide for their guests. The occasions when groups departed for their home atolls by Navy ship were emotional affairs, for during their stay of some two years the visitors had formed real attachments.

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Residents from Other Atolls

Although most of the people at Majuro village are native to the atoll, individuals from other atolls are represented in the village population. Majuro and nearby Arno have always been in very close contact and the two atolls are linked by relationship ties between several of their families. A number of the villagers, including the paramount chief, Langlan, were born on Arno, although they are accepted citizens of Majuro and consider it their home.

As a result of the war the village also received refugees from the Japanese-held atolls of Wotje, Jaluit, Maloelap, and Mille. Several of these refugees were really from still other atolls and they had, for one reason or another, been stranded on the Japanese-held atolls at the time of American seizure of the Marshalls. By the time of my arrival in 1947 most of these refugees had been repatriated to their home atolls, but some still remained. A few of those who remained had taken Majuro spouses, had found relatives at the village, or for other reasons expected to make it their home. In June, 1947, these non-Majuro residents totalled 182. The atolls from which these people came are scattered in both Ralik and Ratak chains. The people at the village did their best to provide for their guests. The occasions when groups departed for their home atolls by Navy ship were emotional affairs, for during their stay of some two years the visitors had formed real attachments.

common in many parts of the Pacific where extensive contact and miscegenation with Europeans has taken place. Chave has also shown, however, that this situation does not hold at the Navy headquarters across the lagoon, where a considerable number of mixed-blood Marshallese have sought government employment.

THE VILLAGE AS A SOCIAL UNIT

One of the advantages in working with a small island community is that the surrounding ocean sets the community off so sharply as a distinct local group. The population of a Marshall Islands atoll is a well-defined unit simply because the vast stretches of sea surrounding the atoll separate its population spatially from similar populations on other atolls. Contacts between the atoll and the outside world are limited, and the field worker can keep track of these contacts without too much difficulty. Small island groups are indeed convenient units for study.

Within Majuro atoll, the village is also set off as a distinct local group from the remainder of the atoll population by the land form of the area the village occupies. The enlarged triangular land mass on which the village is built is bounded by water or reef on all sides, except at the point where it is connected to the string-like remainder of Majuro Island. Contact with the rest of the atoll is maintained primarily by canoe. Land form is a basic factor, therefore, in marking off the village as a distinct local unit.

The northwest end of Majuro Island is the largest single land area on the atoll; of all the larger islands this area has the greatest width. Majuro village is the largest single concentration of population on the atoll. The village is therefore built on the atoll's largest single land area. This fact may seem too obvious for comment, but I believe that there is a basic geographic factor contributing to the association between the two. The northwest end of the island has the greatest food resources on the atoll. Here the breadfruit grow in greatest abundance and there are relatively extensive taro patches, the only ones on the atoll. The lee of the island provides excellent ocean fishing, while the wide reef on the ocean side is a productive location for fish pounds (fig. 9), and the submerged reef on the lagoon side is a favorable area for setting out fish traps. Natural food resources are at an optimum.

The Marshallese possess techniques for drying and preserving food—principally breadfruit, pandanus, and arrowroot—but their usual practice is to collect fresh vegetable and fish food just before

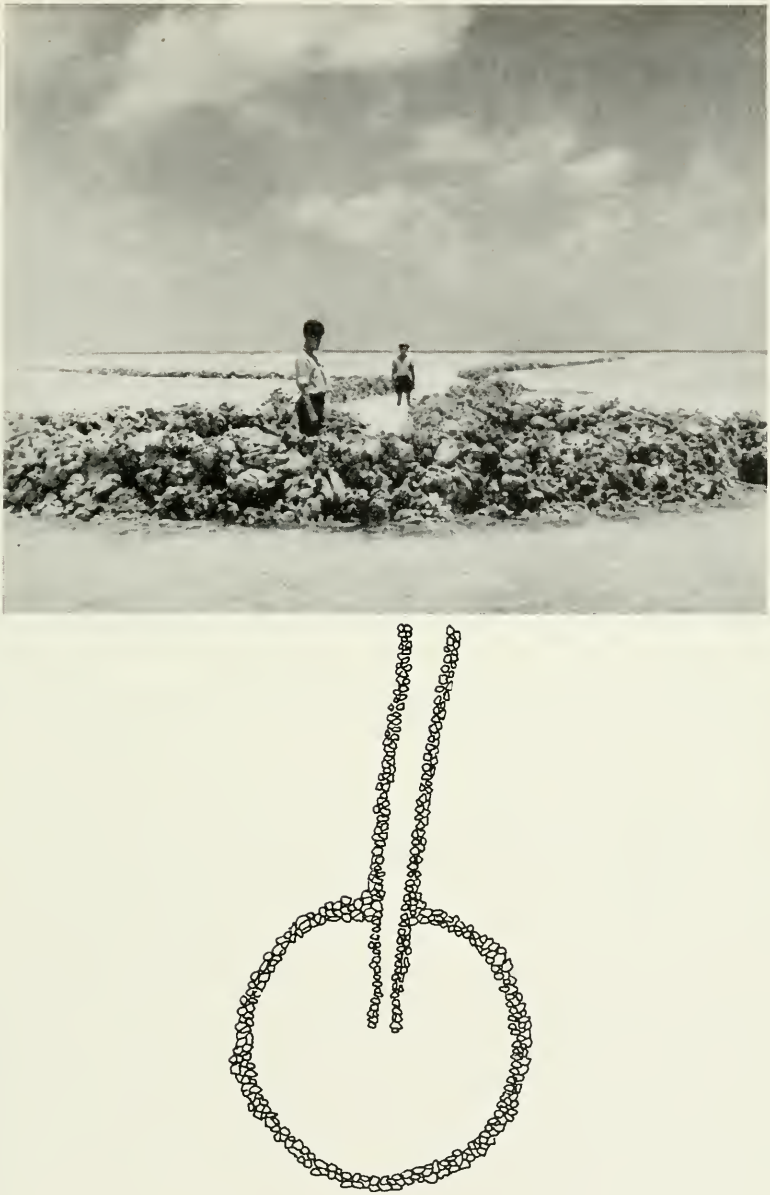


FIG. 9. Upper: Fish pound on reef on ocean side of island. Lower: Sketch of fish pound shown in photograph above. Full extent of two arms of pound not shown in drawing. The two arms branch out laterally for a distance of several hundred feet.

they eat it. Given this cultural practice, and in the absence of modifying factors, it is more desirable to live close to the main source of food than to disperse along the atoll. In the latter case, the people would have to make frequent trips to the source of supply—not entirely practical during the winter when the lagoon is often very rough—and spend more time preserving food. Although the desirability of living close to the main source of food may not rise to the level of consciousness among the villagers, I believe that it has been one factor in determining the location at Majuro Island of the main concentration of population on the atoll.

Land form and the structure of the atoll also bear a relation to the settlement pattern of the village. In map 3 it can be seen that most of the houses are strung out along the lagoon or windward side of the island. The lagoon side is cooler and has fewer flies and mosquitoes, but these are not the only factors, because on other islands native houses are built along the lagoon shore regardless of the direction of the prevailing winds. The principal reason lies in the fact that the lagoon is a seaway. It is the avenue of communication with and transportation to other parts of the atoll. On one day, there were 53 canoes along the lagoon shore of the village. This number is not a complete count, as some canoes were in use on the lagoon at the time of the count.

Canoe parties go from the village on fishing trips to other parts of the lagoon or to distant sections of reef; they go to collect food or to make copra on other islands in the atoll; they go on personal business to the government administrative headquarters; or they simply go to visit friends. In turn, supplies from the government headquarters are brought to the lagoon shore of the village, and it is this spot that first receives news of happenings elsewhere on the atoll, in the Marshalls, or in the world. The importance of the lagoon as a seaway is therefore related to the pattern of settlement. The long main road in the village itself is a supplementary feature to this pattern of settlement, for the road is simply the natural development of a path connecting the village households strung out along the lagoon shore.

The fact that some families live in the interior of the island or on the ocean side must also be explained. The usual reason given is that a family must live where it has land rights, and not everyone in the village has land rights on the lagoon. I was not able to check all the interior households, but the few that I investigated did not have land rights on the lagoon. However, I suspect other

factors are involved. In the old days, commoners were often relegated to locations on the ocean side, and the present pattern of settlement may be related to this early practice. Other cultural factors that I did not unearth may also be involved.

Although the village is a distinct local group, I was unable to learn of a Marshallese word that specifically describes the concept of a village. Villages in the southern Marshalls are generally referred to by the names of the islands on which they are built, and this practice is encountered at Majuro village. Also, the villagers themselves often use the war-time Navy designation, "Laura," to mean the village as a whole. The term *jikin kwelok*, sometimes given as the equivalent of village, means "place of assembly," and actually refers more to the central district of the village, and in a limited sense to the meeting place in that district, rather than to the entire community.

Although the Marshallese recognize that the village in its entirety is a distinct grouping, its component districts receive the principal conceptual recognition in the native language. The village is composed of four districts. The district is called a *bukon*, and each of the four districts has a name. The names are as follows:

Iolab, or *bukon in Iolab*. The "middle" district. This is the central district along the lagoon.

Lomar, or *bukon in Lomar*. The "bushy" district. This is the northern district, so named because there are many shrubs in this area.

Lobat, or *bukon in Lobat*. The "swampy" district. This district bounds *Iolab* on the west and runs to the ocean side. It includes the area in the interior where the black humus-filled surface soil is deepest, and where many of the taro patches are located. Hence the district's name.

Jeirök, or *bukon in Jeirök*. The "southern" district. This district bounds *Iolab* on the south.

These four districts are shown in map 3. Aside from being a convenient local division, useful in describing directions and locations in everyday speech, the district also receives recognition as a social division in ceremonial affairs. The best example is at Christmas, probably the biggest occasion of the year. On Christmas day the villagers gather at the church and each district puts on a pageant, with accompanying songs. The preparation and rehearsal of each pageant requires much practice by the people of each district, and serves to re-enforce local ties. At a Fourth of July celebration I witnessed, part of the performance was put on by the individual districts. It is in the organization of sacred and secular entertainment that the district is used as a convenient basis of division.

In other aspects of village life the district does not receive as much recognition as one might expect. I was told that in Japanese

times work groups were organized in at least one district—*Lobat*—to help the families of *Lobat* build one another's houses, or plant taro, or similar activities; but I observed no such district work groups during my stay. There are four policemen in the village, but they are not associated particularly with the four districts. The districts do not seem to serve as important bases in the organization of village political and economic activities.

Yet the district rather than the village is probably the older form of local unit. The district is conceptualized and a name, *bukon*, given the concept, which is not the case of the village. Also the remainder of the atoll has districts similar to those at the village. Apparently there has been a gradual growth of communal activities involving the larger unit of the village as a whole rather than its component districts taken separately. The village now overshadows the district, and the latter has become incorporated into the village organization.

Those early sources with which I am acquainted do not describe the local organization in the Marshalls in sufficient detail to document a trend toward the greater importance of the village as against the district, but there are a few suggestive references in the literature. An example is the statement by Gulick, an early missionary in Micronesia, who contrasted the villages of the Gilberts with house distribution in other parts of Micronesia with which he was familiar:

> In almost every other part of Micronesia the houses are scattered, and if there are what may be termed villages, they are but small collections of houses and in no very close proximity to each other, while here [in the Gilberts] the habit is to congregate in towns, where the houses are in nearly as close relation to each other as possible (Gulick, 1862, pp. 409–410).

Village activities involving the church, the dispensary, the stores, the school, and the town hall concern the entire village regardless of district. Furthermore, these activities are concentrated in the central district, *Iolab*. *Iolab* is traditionally the home of the paramount chief, so as a district it was no doubt always a focus of interest, but the village activities here mentioned are associated with institutions introduced during the contact period, another reason for inferring the recency of the village as a closely knit unit. It is this concentration of village activities in the central district, yet involving all four districts, that integrates village life in its territorial aspects. This centralizing factor makes the settlement a village, instead of simply four contiguous districts. The central district, *Iolab*, is the hub of the village, for it contains the tangible material expressions of village institutions, such as church and dispensary, in which the villagers as a whole are interested.

The village activities, centering in *Iolab*, that serve as a basis of village integration can be listed as follows:

(*a*) The purchase of consumer's goods at the two village stores, which are themselves co-operatives.
(*b*) The sale of handicraft, which takes place either at the stores, or, for one group, at the residence of its paramount chief. Also the sale of copra.
(*c*) Political activities, centering around the town hall and the residences of the two paramount chiefs.
(*d*) Ceremonial activities, carried on at the village church.
(*e*) Medical care, provided at the dispensary.
(*f*) Formal education of children, at the village school, together with baseball games at the playfield.
(*g*) Occasions of village secular celebrations, at the playfield, town hall, or church.
(*h*) Circulation of news, rumor, and gossip wherever people congregate—stores, the church, the dispensary, etc.
(*i*) Meetings with government officials and American visitors, at the town hall, dispensary, residences of the paramount chiefs, and the church.

In the following chapters, certain of the activities listed above will be discussed in greater detail. As they take place in *Iolab*, we shall now select *Iolab* from the four districts of the village, and describe briefly the centers of interest where such activities are localized. These are the rallying points of village life. (See map 4 and explanation, p. 70.)

In addition to the four districts or *bukons* comprising the village, the atoll contains additional districts. The names of these are *Arrak, Woja, Ajeltake, Rairok, Talab, Jarrej-Ulika,* and *Rongrong.*

Arrak, Woja, and *Ajeltake* districts divide the remainder of Majuro Island. *Rairok, Talab,* and *Jarrej-Ulika* lie at the east end of the atoll. *Rongrong* includes not only Rongrong Island itself, but the entire cluster of islands in the northwest corner of the atoll.

I am not entirely certain to what extent a district is considered to be only a local grouping of people or to what extent it is only a division of land. *Rongrong* district includes a few small islands that are not inhabited. On the other hand, I was told that before the 1918 typhoon Calalin Island also formed a district because people lived there, but that today no one lives there and it is not considered a district. On the whole, it is my impression that to qualify as a district a given land area must have inhabitants and that the term designates essentially a limited and well-defined land area containing a local division of population.

Of the districts listed above, *Rongrong* is the only one with a sizable population. *Arrak, Woja,* and *Ajeltake* together do not have more than thirty-five or forty residents. The districts at the east

end of the atoll represent a survival in native thought of the local division of the pre-war distribution of population on the atoll rather than the present reality, for the war-time base was built in these districts. Unused areas are being returned by the government, however, and in the future these districts may resume something of their pre-war status. Today a few families are living on Jarrej again. The string of islands between Iroij and Jarrej is uninhabited and is not considered as forming a district.

FLOW OF LIFE IN THE VILLAGE

The people of the village are westernized in many ways, but they remain a small community closely adjusted to their natural environment. For one thing, their principal food resources lie on their own atoll and are exploited directly in a daily round of food-getting activity. Purchases of food in the two small stores are supplementary to that collected or produced by the people themselves, and do not form their primary food source. In the characteristic way of folk peoples, the villagers are still close to nature. Yet nature does not demand any radical adjustment in their lives to sharply changing seasons, because seasonal variation is slight and there are few accompanying changes in the even tenor of village life. It flows on from day to day in its leisurely course, with no highly differentiated cycles of economic or ceremonial activity based on a strongly marked climatic rhythm.

There is one seasonal climatic variation, however, that is reflected in village life. This is the change in the nature of the winds between winter and summer. Usually in May the northeast trade wind declines in velocity. By midsummer it is much lighter, and Majuro then experiences periods of light and variable winds. In November the trade wind strengthens again and remains constant and strong through the winter months. The winter is thus a season of strong, constant wind from the northeast; the summer is a season of lighter wind from the northeast, interrupted by periods of light, variable winds ranging from northeast to south. Correspondingly, during the winter months the lagoon can be very rough for a protected body of water but in the summer it is much calmer.

Probably the majority of the sailing canoes at the village are too small to weather rough water on the lagoon during the winter, and sailing at this time is restricted for the most part to a few larger canoes (fig. 10). In the calmer days of summer, on the other hand, there is much canoe traffic. The villagers travel by canoe to other

FIG. 10. Sailing canoe on beach.

islands of the atoll to collect breadfruit and to make copra. There is more fishing, and in addition fish traps can safely be sunk along the secondary reef in front of the village. Visiting by canoe is more frequent, and young men and boys race sailing canoes on the inner lagoon. The seasonal change in wind velocity, with calmer days in summer, results in heightened activity on the lagoon.

The seasons are also marked by the ripening of certain vegetable foods, principally the breadfruit, which begins to ripen in May and is harvested through the summer until September. It is the most important seasonal crop and the best-liked of the vegetable foods. In the latter part of the summer it is made into *bwiro* and *jankwin*, preserved forms that are eaten after the season is over, particularly in the period from March to May, when food is not so plentiful. In October the pandanus nuts begin to mature, and they provide a principal article of diet until March; pandanus too is processed into a preserved food called *mökön*. In the winter, arrowroot also ripens

EXPLANATION OF MAP 4

Roads and Paths. The main village road and the path along the beach parallel the lagoon, with side paths connecting the two. The secondary road to *Lobat* leads off from the main road near the center of the district. Paths penetrate into the interior of the island from individual house groups.

Church. A large, white, frame building at the north end of the district. Across from the church is the pastor's house and two small buildings for the use of a missionary, when one is in residence. The church and these associated buildings are on a piece of land given to the church by a former paramount chief, Jebrik.

Stores. The two stores are housed in Japanese-built structures. Store One is in the northern part of the district, Store Two in the southern. Store One is owned and operated primarily by the adherents of Jitiam, one of the two paramount chiefs, and Store Two by the adherents of Langlan, the other paramount chief.

Town Hall. The present town or village hall is located in an unused quonset, formerly part of the main ward of the hospital. Here village council meetings are held. The old town hall, now unused as such, was built by the Japanese. Today children play games on its smooth cement floor; occasionally a visiting family uses it as shelter for the night; and sometimes it is used during village celebrations.

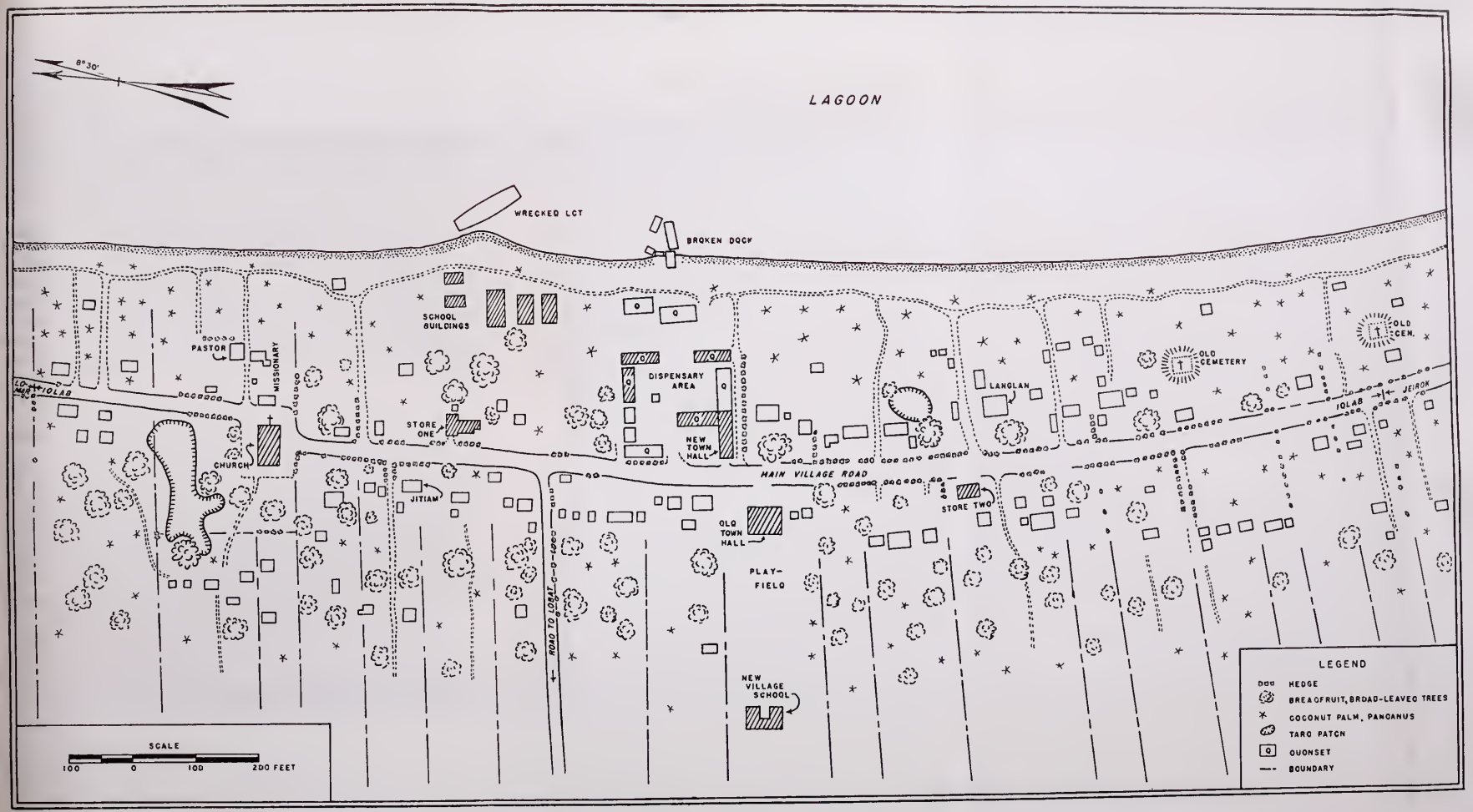
School. There are two sets of school buildings in the village. The group near the beach was built by the Navy after the war to house the Marshallese teachers' training school during the brief period in 1946 when the government unit was located at the village. The training school was then moved across the lagoon to the old base, and the buildings were taken over by the village elementary school. When the thatch on these buildings started to disintegrate it was decided to erect a new village school at the site indicated on the map. Between this new school and the old town hall is the village ball ground.

Dispensary. The dispensary occupies four of the old hospital quonsets, indicated by hatching on the map. One other quonset is used by the Marshallese medical aid in charge of the dispensary; another is used periodically by visiting administrative officers on field trips; the remainder are vacant.

Residences of the Paramount Chiefs. The houses of Langlan and Jitiam, the two paramount chiefs, are at opposite ends of the district. The old cemetery nearest Langlan's house belongs to his lineage.

Miscellaneous. The island is divided into lots that consist of strips of land running across the island. Land boundaries are indicated on the map as broken lines. The boundaries extend to the lagoon, though the extensions are not shown on the map.

The overall picture of tree types is indicated, but locations of trees are not exact. This point is made because trees are sometimes used to mark boundaries, which are often in dispute, and I do not wish this report to cause additional complication of any existing dispute.



MAP 4. THE CENTRAL DISTRICT OF MAJURO VILLAGE

and is made into flour by a process of grinding, leaching, and drying. Taro can be eaten the year around, but in summer it is little used because breadfruit is preferred. At other times of the year it assumes a more important position, especially in spring and fall, between the breadfruit and pandanus seasons. In summary, therefore, seasonal changes in the ripening of vegetable foods result in corresponding variations in food-producing and -collecting, in the processing of vegetable foods into preserved forms, and in the pattern of food consumption.

In the village there is no yearly ceremonial round adjusted to seasonal variation and the ripening of important crops such as the breadfruit. The old Marshallese ceremonial and ritual organization is a thing of the past. Instead, the present ceremonial life of the village reflects the long influence of the missionary. The church is the center of religious celebrations, and by far the most important of these is Christmas. Unlike other events such as communion services, this is an event participated in by both church members and non-members. The preparations take from two weeks to a month, and Christmas is a high point in the year for the village as a whole.

The remainder of the year is punctuated by a number of secular occasions for celebration and entertainment, involving the village generally. Most of these occasions are culture borrowings from the nation currently holding political control of the Marshalls. During the Japanese regime, the village celebrated New Year's day, the Emperor's birthday (April 29), Old People's day (August 9), and Meiji Day (November 3). These holidays were imposed from above, but nevertheless became part of village life. I was told that sometimes Japanese officials were present, but that more often they were not. Festivities included speeches appropriate to the occasion; athletic events such as baseball, foot races, and canoe races; singing; and a common partaking of food prepared for the holiday.

With the possible exception of New Year's day, these Japanese holidays are no longer celebrated. American counterparts are taking their place, but the pattern is not yet stabilized. For one thing, American officials have not wished to fix arbitrarily a given number of compulsory holidays. The leading villagers themselves recognize that the national holiday is a characteristic trait of both Japanese and American culture. They enjoy a celebration both for its own sake and because they like to conform to American custom, but they remain uncertain as to what holidays to celebrate. Concerning

FIG. 11. Upper: Stick dance held on Fourth of July. Lower: Village hall used in Japanese times. Dance was performed in open area in front of hall.

the Fourth of July, however, they have no doubt and it is today a principal event (fig. 11). A ceremonial flag-raising, speeches by village officials and by visiting Americans, a sumptuous repast for the latter and for village officials, the two paramount chiefs, and ranking members of the upper class, and Marshallese dancing and singing comprised the program on July 4, 1947. February 1 is also celebrated as the anniversary of the replacement of the Japanese regime by the American. In time, other holidays will no doubt be added and the pattern crystallized.

A few additional occasions are village events. My arrival at the village coincided with a school celebration at which the school children performed in the village church before an audience of their elders. When the teachers of the four elementary schools went to the training school at the administration headquarters their departure was likewise the occasion of a party. A large part of the village also gathered to thatch the roof of the new schoolhouse, though this was a communal work day rather than a holiday.

Despite the holidays noted above, life is much the same in the village from day to day, and from week to week. It is but gently modified by seasonal variation in climate and by the successive ripening of plant foods. Within the week, Sunday is always a day of rest, combined with church-going by regular church members and such others as feel inclined. Every month there is a council meeting, and approximately every two or three weeks the United States Commercial Company employees purchase handicraft. Otherwise, there is little that disturbs the even flow of days on Majuro.

V. CLASS STRUCTURE AND POLITICAL ORGANIZATION

In pre-contact times, the Marshallese maintained a rigid class structure of nobles and commoners. This structure continues to exist, albeit in a restricted and much modified form. Political authority was formerly distributed among paramount chiefs and other nobles. Since the over-all assumption of political control first by Germany, then by Japan, and finally by the United States, the political position of the paramount and lesser chiefs has steadily weakened. Today a set of Marshallese atoll and village officials, together with a council, acts as intermediary between American authority and the people, and the administration of the local affairs of the village is theoretically conducted by the Marshallese officials and council. Actually, however, the paramount chiefs and higher nobility still influence the course of local political life, so that the old form of class structure remains an important factor in the atoll and village political organization. An adjustment between the class structure and the village and atoll administration has developed, and it is for this reason that discussion of both the class structure and the local political organization is combined in the same chapter.

CLASS STRUCTURE

There are two main divisions in village society: commoners and nobility. Membership in these two classes is hereditary and follows the maternal line, but the two classes today are not endogamous and do not form a rigid caste system, although it was formerly customary for at least the paramount chiefs to marry within their own class. The two main classes are further divided into subclasses, so that a fairly complicated system results, although it has been undergoing a process of simplification.

Within the noble class there are traditionally the following divisions: (1) *iroij*, (2) *bwirak*, and (3) *jib*. The *iroij* are the true nobility and are at the top of the social scale. The theoretically senior lineage among the *iroij* provides the paramount chief (*iroij labalab*), whose office is hereditary and descends in the maternal line. The

heads of the remaining *iroij* lineages are *iroij erik*, or lesser chiefs. Next to these *iroij* lineages come the *bwirak*, and below the *bwirak* stand the *jib*. Mason (1947, pp. 53–54) aptly calls the *iroij* "royalty"; the *bwirak* "nobility"; and the *jib* "fringes of nobility"—a good assessment of the system. At Majuro village, however, the hierarchical distinctions among the subclasses are becoming blurred.

The paramount chief (*iroij labalab*) and his lineage are clearly at the top of the social ladder. However, some of the *bwirak* are tending to be incorporated among the *iroij*. I found several heads of *bwirak* lineages considered to be *iroij erik* by many of the villagers and holding comparable privileges. The theoretical distinction between *iroij* and *bwirak* is known, but in terms of popular attitudes there is a tendency to merge the more prominent *bwirak* with the *iroij*.

The *jib* are in a much more anomalous position than the *bwirak*. In terms of the attitudes of the villagers and in terms of land rights, the *jib* have lost their grip on the skirts of the nobility and have been relegated to commoner status. A few are accorded a modicum of prestige, but I found no members of the *jib* holding land rights comparable to the *iroij erik*.

On the whole, the stratification within the nobility is in process of simplification. The old structure is theoretically still clearly formulated, but actually social distinctions are blurred. The *iroij*, together with the more influential *bwirak*, have tended to merge as a single group, and are still accorded very considerable prestige. The *jib* are being sloughed off into the commoner group. The reason for this simplification is that the sub-classes have largely lost their social functions. New criteria of status are emerging from the culture contact situation, and these criteria lie outside the traditional class system. As a result, in the day-to-day life of the village the stratification within the nobility does not have its former significance, while the entire hierarchical system of nobles and commoners is much weakened.

The commoners are all *kajur*. Within the commoner class, the head of each maternal lineage is called the *alab*. The *alabs* are not a sub-class in themselves, but rather represent a special status group within the commoner class. An *alab* succeeds to his position on the death of the previous *alab* in his lineage. The basis of selection of a new *alab* is a combination of birth-order, maternal descent, and ability, but the *alabs* together do not form a hereditary sub-class that they enter at birth.

Another group within the commoner class does, or rather formerly did have the status of a sub-class. These people are the *atok*. They are virtually extinct and it is appropriate to speak of them in the past tense. The *atok* were originally men of the commoner class whose special talents and abilities, particularly as warriors, navigators, and medicine-men, received recognition by the paramount chief, who designated such men as *atok*. The *atok* were a special group within the commoner class. Their opinions were invited and respected by the nobility, and to judge from Erdland's account they were a sort of councilor. They were also allowed more than one wife (Krämer and Nevermann, 1938, p. 198). Furthermore, the designation as *atok* became hereditary, so they properly were a subclass within the commoner group (Erdland, 1914, p. 101). At Majuro today, there are a number of *atoks*, but the distinction is of no real significance. Since purely inter-Marshallese war is a thing of the past, and new *atoks* are no longer appointed by the paramount chiefs, this small sub-group has lost its social importance, except as a traditional ethnographic item.

The old Marshallese class structure is based on hereditary distinctions. Membership in any given class is determined by birth. A man or woman is *iroij* if his or her mother is *iroij*, regardless of the rank of the father. On the other hand, if the mother is a commoner or a *jib* and the father is *iroij*, account is taken of the superior rank of the father and the offspring are *bwirak*, or lesser nobility, until the father's death, when they become *kajur* (Erdland, 1914, p. 101). The children of *iroij* men are therefore *iroij* themselves only if their mothers belonged to the *iroij* group. Otherwise they are temporarily *bwirak*, the class just below *iroij*. However, in at least one case in the village, the temporary nature of noble status obtained through the father has become permanent.

The permanent *bwirak* consist of those whose mothers are *bwirak*. A qualification must be entered here, however, for one informant did say that if the mother were *bwirak*, the children would be *jib*. The traditional rule, however, seems to be that the children would be *bwirak*.

The commoner class are those whose mothers were commoners and whose fathers were no higher than *jib*. However, I must emphasize again that the primary social contrast today is between the *iroij labalab* and the other members of the *iroij* class (who are incorporating *bwirak*) on one hand, and the commoners (who are tending to incorporate the *jib*) on the other.

The commoners far outnumber the nobility. Although I did not take a complete census, there are probably no more than 100 members of the noble class at the village.

In former times, the social distinctions that underlay this class system were very real indeed. The paramount chief was possessed of autocratic powers that were shared to a lesser extent by the nobility. The paramount chief and his nobles were the leaders in war and in sailing expeditions. They controlled the land and the fruits thereof. They provided the primary leadership of the community, and in turn enjoyed the privilege of being fed and supported by the commoners.

Of the noble class, the paramount chief himself was accorded the greatest respect. His position involved the hereditary acquisition of magical power, somewhat similar to Polynesian *mana*. He was approached only in the most deferential manner; in his presence persons walked stooped over, or moved on their knees. Of all the members of the community he was supposed to command the best information on the affairs of the Marshallese world. In recompense for his inherited responsibility, he received the best of the food produced on the land or caught in the sea. He lived in the most favored location. His lineage had its own cemetery. No restrictions were placed on the number of his wives and he had access to all commoner women. Over his people he exercised autocratic powers.

The commoners were the workers of the land, the fishermen, the sailors, and the ordinary fighting men. With the possible exception of the *alabs*—the heads of the commoner lineages—the commoner class were the workers (*ri-jerbal*) in every sense of the word. Their tribute supported the nobility. Their houses were built in less favorable parts of the island. Nor were they permitted the distinctive tattooing and the finer dress of the nobility.

Although the despotic nature of chiefly rule and the arbitrary character of the punishment handed out by the paramount chiefs to the commoners is emphasized in the early accounts, one suspects that the picture of the political structure is by no means complete. Erdland, for instance, mentions the devotion of the followers to their chief (Erdland, 1914, p. 109), and undoubtedly the majority of the commoners supported the traditional class system. Matsuoka, in reviewing the documentary material on the class system in relation to the native administration of justice, also doubted that the political structure had been adequately portrayed (Matsuoka, 1927, p. 341). Unfortunately, its true nature lies pretty well buried

in the past, though much could still be learned from elderly Marshallese.

Today the outward distinctions of the old class system have largely disappeared. Nobility and commoners dress alike and eat much the same food. Tattooing is no longer practiced. Tribute from commoners to nobility and the paramount chiefs is occasional rather than regular, probably more voluntary than obligatory. Extreme attitudes of respect are no longer mandatory. Commoners and nobility (though not the paramount chiefs) may work side by side. Intermarriage between the two classes is not unusual. And yet, as Mason has observed for the Marshallese as a whole, although superficially there is a minimum of class difference, the old hierarchy still has surprising vigor (Mason, 1947, p. 53). From what sources does this hierarchical class system draw its strength today?

From my observations at Majuro, I believe that there are two main bases of the old class system at the present time. The first of these is the close relation of the class structure to the system of land tenure. The second is a holdover from the past, and consists of the traditional prestige of the nobility, and particularly of the paramount chiefs.

All the land on the atoll is divided into lots. In each lot or piece of land, there are usually three groups who hold rights. The first of these is the paramount chief, who theoretically "owns" the land and in former times the fruits of the land as well. The second is a noble and his lineage, who have a claim to the produce of the land. The third is an *alab* and his commoner lineage, who also have a claim to the produce.

According to the old system, the commoners worked the land, and the produce they raised supported not only themselves but the nobles and paramount chief as well. The fruits of the land were distributed among the three parties according to a fixed system, whereby the rights of each in a given piece of land and in its fruits were reasonably well defined. Today the rights of paramount chief, nobles, and commoners are in a state of flux and transition, with the consequence that the system of land tenure is most complex. In the last few years the commoners have greatly strengthened their relative position. They are no longer obliged to send a continuous stream of food to nobles and paramount chief, nor can they be dispossessed at the whim of the paramount chief. The position of nobles and paramount chief has been correspondingly weakened, though the paramount chief is still regarded as having the primary claim

to the land itself. He also collects a share of the proceeds from the sale of copra on all land in his domain.

Although the system of rights to the land and to its produce is undergoing change, it still retains enough of its native characteristics to act as a source of support for the class structure. The paramount chief, a noble lineage, and a commoner lineage are all regarded as having legitimate claims in a given piece of land. It is from this close relation to the system of rights and obligations with regard to land use and practices that the hierarchical class system draws much of its strength.

The second principal basis of the class system lies in the traditional prestige and authority of the paramount chiefs and nobility. This is particularly true of the paramount chiefs, and is manifest in a number of ways and on different occasions. Certain of these are described below.

Having exercised leadership and authority in the past, the paramount chiefs and the more able of the nobility are still looked to for leadership in the present. This is not an invariable rule, but a tendency—a result of the continuing force of tradition. It is here that the link is made with the present administrative system of council and village officials. It is no coincidence that the present magistrate at Majuro, although elected by the people, is also the sister's son and heir apparent of a paramount chief. The magistrate is the most important of all the village and atoll officials. At Majuro he is the principal representative of the village in official dealings with the American government. It is my impression that the present magistrate holds his position partly because the people feel that the magistrate's social status in the old class system should be commensurate with his importance as the leading village official.

Another attitude related to the traditional prestige of the paramount chiefs and nobles is that they have, or should have, superior knowledge of Marshallese affairs and custom. While working with village informants, I was several times told to "see ——; he is *iroij* and knows better than I." By no means all the villagers expressed this sentiment, but I encountered it often enough to be able to state that there is still a certain deference to the real or supposed superior knowledge of the nobility.

The class structure is revealed most clearly during a secular festivity. If it is a village affair, special places of honor are reserved for the paramount chiefs—Majuro is distinguished by having two of them—the leading members of the nobility, and honored guests,

such as visiting American officials. At such times it is also usual to have a common partaking of food, and a special table is set up for these dignitaries, who are served before the others present have eaten. A number of examples follow:

(1) Shortly after my arrival at Majuro, the village school, in conjunction with the small elementary schools at Rongrong and the Navy headquarters, put on an all-day program of school exercises. These were held in the village church and consisted of singing and recitation by the school children. The program commenced about ten in the morning. At noon there was a break for a mid-day meal and afterwards the exercises were completed. At the noon meal eleven persons were invited to sit at a special table in the schoolhouse: six Marshallese, including one paramount chief (the other was absent from the village), all of whom were of the highest nobility; two Marshallese interpreters, both commoners; the Marshallese medical aid, a commoner; and two American guests. No one else was served in the schoolhouse. The presence of the two interpreters and the medical practitioner is an example of how a new status group based on the possession of special knowledge is rising in the social system.

(2) In June, the school principal and his three assistants were notified that they were eligible for refresher training at the teachers' training school at the base. They all were happy to go. A large party was immediately organized in honor of the departing teachers. The party was held in the evening in the main schoolhouse, and was supposedly organized by the older students, although the departing school principal did much of the work. A number of tables were set up, and at these tables the guests of honor sat. Here they were served food by the students and viewed the entertainment, which consisted largely of singing. The tables were occupied by the paramount chiefs and nobility, American guests, and a few other Marshallese such as the medical practitioner, the pastor, two interpreters, and the school teachers. The students, together with a number of adults, spread baskets of food on the floor, where they made themselves comfortable while eating.

(3) A third instance was the Fourth of July celebration. On this day the villagers gathered at the playfield by the old town hall. The seating arrangements were instructive. At one side of a hollow square were several rows of chairs and benches for American officials and their families, who came to visit the village for the day. At the opposite side of the hollow square were similar rows of chairs

FIG. 12. The paramount chiefs of Majuro. Upper: Langlan. Lower: Jitiam.

and benches for the two paramount chiefs and the leading nobility. The remainder of the village squatted at their ease on the ground along the third side of the square. At the fourth side of the square was a flag pole on which the American flag was raised in a brief ceremony, and where speakers stood to deliver the speeches that followed.

Later in the day, a special table was set up in the old town hall. Here the paramount chiefs, nobility, American visitors, interpreters, and a few others, who, though commoners, have superior status in the village, were served a Marshallese meal. A program of Marshallese dances was then performed in the area in front of the town hall.

Although the nobility as a whole certainly do not enjoy the privilege and authority they once possessed, the two paramount chiefs in particular still retain very considerable prestige. The homes of both are in a favored location in the central district of the village. The yards of their homes serve as meeting places for their followers and as rallying points for discussion and consultation. Although the two paramount chiefs are not village officials, they are always accorded places of honor on ceremonial occasions when the village as a whole gathers. American administrative officials recognize the two paramount chiefs as the ranking personages in the village, which indeed they are.

PARAMOUNT CHIEFS AND CLEAVAGE IN VILLAGE SOCIETY

There are two paramount chiefs at Majuro (fig. 12), both of whom reside in the village. The presence of these two chiefs is important sociologically, not so much because there happen to be two men of equal rank in the same village, but rather because the village is divided into two groups, each group centering around its respective paramount chief.

The older of the two paramount chiefs is Langlan, a Marshallese close to eighty years of age. The younger is Jitiam, also an elderly man. Langlan commands a larger number of followers than Jitiam, but Jitiam's people are more effectively organized. Actually this split in the village is of old standing, and first appeared many years ago. Versions obtained in the village as to how the original situation came about do not entirely jibe, but there is enough agreement to make the outlines sufficiently clear. Mason (1947, pp. 153–164) has given a concise account of the political vicissitudes of the chiefs of the Ratak chain, and my own data in the main corroborate that part

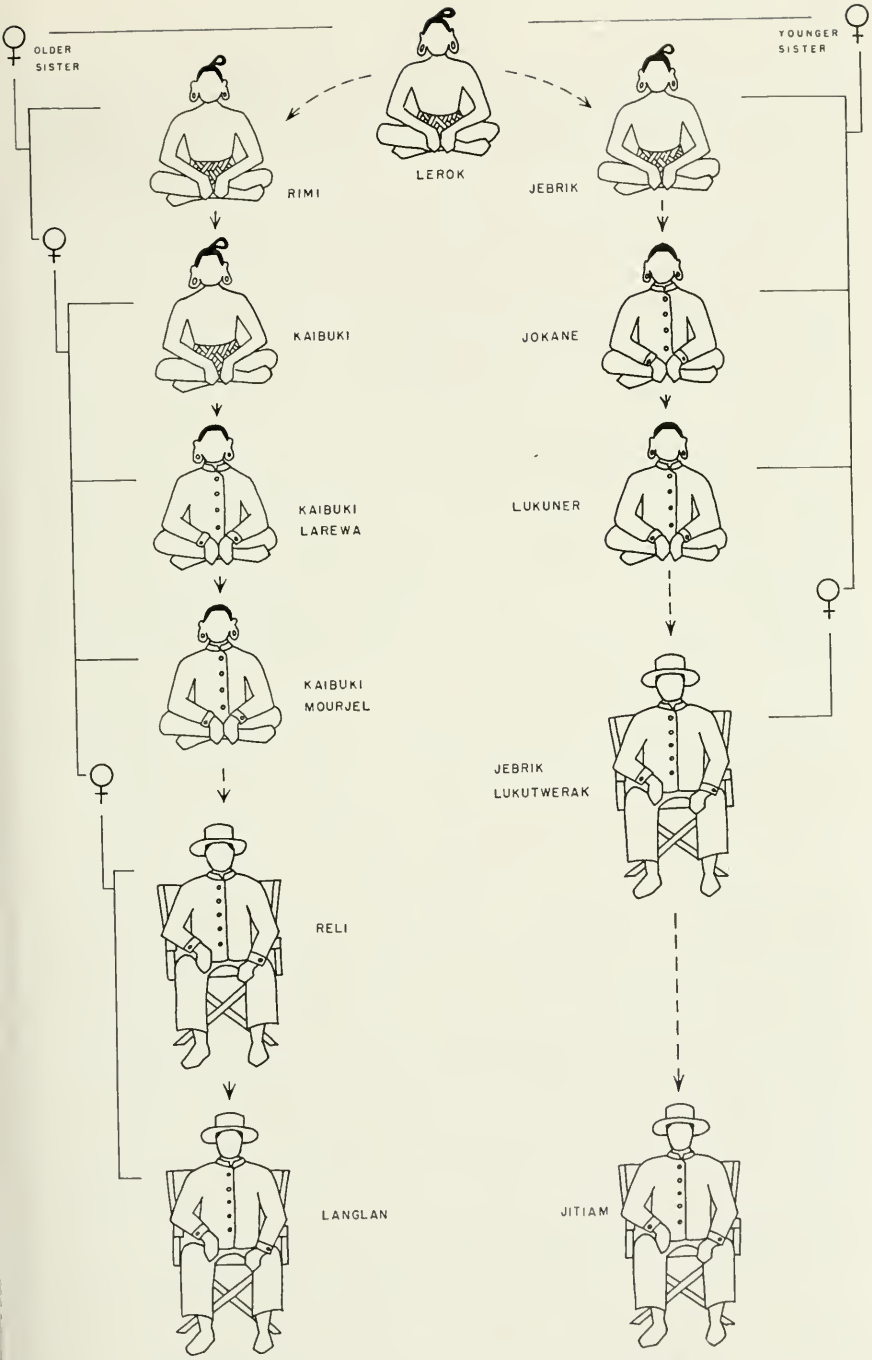


FIG. 13. Succession of the paramount chiefs of Majuro.

of his material that deals with Majuro, so the historical aspects of the split between the paramount chiefs have a relatively sound basis in native testimony. My information was obtained primarily from Langlan and Jitiam, and from the lesser chiefs, Jakeo, Jebwat, and Aisea.

A few years before the Germans seized political control of the Marshalls, the entire atoll of Majuro was under the domination of a single paramount chief named Lerok (fig. 13). Lerok had two nephews, Rimi and Jebrik, who assisted Lerok as *iroij erik*. Rimi and Jebrik did not have the same mother, but were the sons of Lerok's sisters. Rimi was the son of the elder sister, and Jebrik of the younger. According to the Marshallese principle of descent, the chieftainship normally would have passed from Lerok to the older sister's son, which in this case was Rimi. Lerok, however, indicated that on his death the atoll was to be divided between Rimi and Jebrik. When Lerok died, a struggle broke out between the two heirs for control of the atoll. Apparently Rimi himself was not aggressive as a leader, for by the time this struggle reached the stage of armed conflict, Rimi's nephew, Kaibuki, assumed active leadership (Moss, 1889, p. 123).

Between Kaibuki and Jebrik hostility was prolonged and bitter, culminating in what is known locally as the last "war" on Majuro. At this time Kaibuki lived and reigned at the west end of the atoll, and Jebrik at the east end (Biermann, 1891, pp. 321–322; Moss, 1889, p. 123). Jebrik is said to have had the upper hand in the battle between the two chiefs (Moss, 1889, p. 123), but the question of deciding on a single paramount chief for the atoll was certainly not settled, and the schism in atoll society was passed on to the heirs of both chiefs. A German administrator noted that on a visit to Majuro in September, 1890, he approved the choice of a chief to succeed Jebrik, who had recently died. At that time, the two sides expressed a wish to exchange land in order to restore the conditions that prevailed before the fight, when each side lived at opposite ends of the atoll (Biermann, 1891, pp. 321–322). Presumably the exchange of land did not take place, for the two groups do not live separately today. In any case, the Germans had by this time effectively stopped local wars in the Marshalls, so the opposition between the two sides did not again break out into armed conflict.

Following Kaibuki came successively his younger brother Kaibuki Larewa, the next younger brother Kaibuki Mourjel, and finally Reli, the sister's son of Kaibuki Mourjel. When Reli died about 1926, his younger brother Langlan assumed the chieftainship. Langlan

still rules, although he is in his declining years. The present magistrate, Aisea, is Langlan's sister's son and actually takes care of many of Langlan's interests. Aisea has an older brother who theoretically is the heir apparent, but he is a cripple and Aisea will undoubtedly succeed to the chieftainship on Langlan's death. Today, therefore, Langlan represents the last chief in an unbroken succession from Lerok.

On the other side, Jebrik, also known as Kapele, or Jebrik Kapele, was followed by his brother Jokane. (I was told by Jitiam that Jebrik took the name Kapele because of his friendship with Adolph Capelle, the German trader at Likiep.) Jokane was in turn followed by another brother Lukuner. The next chief was Lukuner's sister's son, Jebrik Lukutwerak. Lukutwerak died in 1919 without an heir, thereby ending the line of succession. For approximately the next twenty years, this side of the village had no paramount chief. It is difficult to determine today to what extent there was a shift over to the side of Reli and his successor, Langlan, during this period. Some of the villagers changed their allegiance, but on the whole Lukutwerak's group seems to have maintained its identity pretty well, so that the cleavage in the village continued. After considerable investigation, the Japanese civil government administration left the question of selecting a new paramount chief entirely to the Marshallese themselves. This was eventually done. The *iroij erik* on Lukutwerak's side selected Jitiam, an *iroij erik* himself, to be Lukutwerak's successor.[1]

Jitiam himself is not in the direct line of succession from Lerok. For this reason, Langlan's followers are inclined to say that there is really only one paramount chief on Majuro, namely, Langlan. It is very probable, however, that in Marshallese history a paramount chief's line has died out before and that a new paramount chief has had to be selected from another lineage. There is also some question as to when Jitiam was selected a paramount chief. Some villagers say it was not until the American occupation and that Jitiam's side "put over" the idea with American military government officials that there were two paramount chiefs when there really was only one. On the other hand, Jitiam's followers say he was chosen to lead them in late 1938 or early 1939. Objective judgment favors Jitiam's side. However, he leaves no successor himself and with his death the question of succession will again be opened.

[1] Jitiam died in 1947, shortly after I left the village. For the sake of simplicity the account is written as though he were still alive.

In any case, controversy and rivalry continue between the two groups. It is this long-standing cleavage of the atoll population that is really important, regardless of whether or not one side was without a paramount chief for a time. When the land of the atoll was first divided between Lerok's nephews, Rimi and Jebrik, the people were divided too, for the commoners at least went with the land. So far as I could tell, land tenure was the fundamental factor in determining the composition of the original opposing groups.

Today all the Marshallese-held land on the atoll is divided between Langlan and Jitiam. This division does not follow a neat pattern when mapped. It is true that the northern part of *Iolab*, the central district in the village, is Jitiam's and most of the southern part is Langlan's, but there is a checkerboard effect in the other districts, with one land lot belonging to Langlan, the adjoining one to Jitiam, and the next to either one—the whole forming an irregular pattern of chiefly land rights. Of the total land area, Langlan holds more than Jitiam.

Most of the commoners and nobility who hold rights in Langlan's land are supporters of Langlan, and most of those who hold rights in Jitiam's land are supporters of Jitiam. However, there are some lineages who hold rights to pieces of land recognized as belonging to Langlan, and at the same time hold rights to other pieces belonging to Jitiam. This has resulted from intermarriage between the two groups since the original split. In such cases, the lineage either makes a choice to support one or the other paramount chief, or "rides the fence." If it makes a choice to support Langlan, for instance, all its holdings are not thereby transferred to Langlan. Those belonging to Jitiam are still legally his. It is rather that the political support of the lineage is thrown to Langlan's side.

It is interesting to note that a number of important lineages holding land rights under both paramount chiefs do not throw their entire support to one or the other, but attempt to get along well with both. They do this by consciously splitting their members so that some participate in the activities of one group, while others participate in those of the other group, with the lineage as a whole supporting policies of moderation in cases of controversy. An example is that of the two co-operative stores, each run by one of the groups. A lineage such as the one just mentioned will see to it that some of its members hold shares in one store and the other members hold shares in the second store. Or if a village festivity is organized so that the two sides participate separately, the lineage

FIG. 14. Village officials. Upper: Aisea, the magistrate. Lower: Lazarus, the scribe.

will contribute support to both sides. Several of the socially prominent families in the community follow this practice.

Let us now examine the manifestations in village life of this split between the two groups. To the outsider, the occasion when the cleavage between Langlan and Jitiam first becomes obvious is in the reception and entertainment of strangers. Visitors, official or otherwise, call on Langlan and Jitiam separately. Such calls are usually on the formal side. Each chief receives guests in company with one or more of his nobles, and conversation tends to be in moderated tones and mutually respectful. Visitors are also entertained separately. If one dines at Jitiam's house—usually under a giant breadfruit tree that shades the coral-strewn yard—one will not find Langlan or his group present. Conversely, a dinner party at Langlan's will be marked by the absence of Jitiam or his nobles.

As a corollary, both chiefs and their groups expressed a combined yet separate interest in my welfare during my stay in the village. On my having to return once to the base on short notice, a canoe was provided with a crew of four. Two of the crew members were from Langlan's side, two were from Jitiam's. In addition, the two chiefs tended to match each other in generous gifts of food during my period of field work.

In the case of village secular festivities such as the Fourth of July celebration previously mentioned, the entertainment is apt to be organized so that one part of the program is given by Langlan's group and the other part by Jitiam's group. Prior to the Fourth of July there was much discussion at the village because Langlan's group, headed by the magistrate and scribe (fig. 14), wished to arrange the program so that each district in the village would be responsible for a part of the entertainment. Jitiam's people demurred and stated that they wished to be responsible as a group for their own section of the program. Although they are in the minority, they are able to exercise considerable strength through the threat of non-co-operation—a sort of Gandhi-like technique. As a result, part of the program was given by Langlan's group organized according to district, and another part by Jitiam's group alone. A third part consisted of several specialty numbers organized on still another basis by a few individuals known to be particularly good composers and performers of songs and dances.

Another village occasion when the two groups acted separately occurred at the building of the new schoolhouse. The framework

of the building was constructed by a group of men appointed by the council without regard to their chiefly affiliation, assisted by the school teachers and the older students. The flooring and the thatching, however, was done by the two groups, who divided the work. Meeting on a previously appointed day, each group put in the floor and made and secured the thatch for its own part of the building. The women made the thatch and the men put it on the roof.

These two instances are described to show that on occasions when the village meets as a whole, whether to work on a communal project such as a new schoolhouse, or to participate in a secular festivity, there is always a tendency to base such activity on the division between Langlan and Jitiam.

Another facet of the division between the two paramount chiefs is found in the organization of the two stores (see chap. IX). Each group also sells its handicraft and copra separately to the government. Copra production was still so small during my period of work at the village that its sale is not a good example. However, handicraft production was booming. When the village was visited, as it was every few weeks, by the Marshallese buyers for the United States Commercial Company, these buyers would purchase handicraft from one group on one day, and from the other group on the following day. The purchases from Jitiam's group were made at the group's store; from Langlan's group in Langlan's front yard.

The two village stores are organized importing agencies for procuring trade goods from the western world. The sale of handicraft represents the other side of the picture, the marketing of exports. Together, the stores and the organized sale of handicraft represent the greater part of the economic relations of the village with the outside world. In this relation, the division of the village around its two paramount chiefs finds expression.

Although the cleavage between the two groups pervades much of village life, there are some aspects of contemporary social organization not greatly affected by the division. The church, for instance, does not reflect the dichotomy. There is also but one school in the village to serve the needs of the people as a whole. There is only one village dispensary, although Jitiam's group once unsuccessfully campaigned for a separate dispensary, probably because the present medical aid in charge of the dispensary is an adherent of Langlan's group, though impartial in the treatment of his patients.

Rivalry between the two groups is always present in at least latent form. Such rivalry, however, never degenerates into out-

breaks of physical violence. Young men from one side never hold free-for-all fights with those from the other. The Marshallese generally do not engage in physical violence among themselves, and it is conspicuously absent in the life of the village. Individuals may argue loud and long and at times with apparent anger, but such arguments do not end in violence. The two paramount chiefs, although they associate little with each other, are on perfectly good speaking terms and may occasionally visit with each other in informal fashion on the beach. The village is never in danger of separating physically into two parts.

The absence of physical violence in Marshallese life is a distinctive characteristic of the culture. It is not due to lack of personal courage, for during the war a number of Marshallese volunteered as scouts in operations against the Japanese-held atolls and risked their lives on several occasions. In the period prior to German political control, the Marshallese paramount chiefs were constantly waging war against one another, but today the absence of overt physical aggression is noticeable.

There are several characteristics that differentiate Langlan's and Jitiam's groups and that remain to be mentioned. The atmosphere of the households of the two chiefs is itself different. Langlan's ménage reflects some of the old-time sacred respect accorded a paramount chief. Actually Langlan is no longer active and spends considerable time at Rongrong Island, leaving a large part of his affairs in the hands of his nephew; but he still commands a certain degree of that extreme attitude of respect once obligatory for commoners. On one occasion he and his nephew were sitting on the porch of their house during a time when the United States Commercial Company was purchasing handicraft from the members of his group. The Marshallese company employees had their table set up in a different part of the porch and were purchasing handicraft from individuals in turn. Commoner women bringing things to sell approached the table from the top of the stairs on their knees, not from any reverence for the United States Commercial Company buyers, but as a mark of respect for the house and presence of the paramount chief; men also walked with a stooped posture. In these small ways respect for their paramount chief is still shown. On the other hand, Langlan has at times been criticized for attempting high-handed action in altering land rights among his people. In the old days his social position would have supported such action. Today it does not, and as an old man he does not have the youthful energy to reinforce his traditional prerogatives. The respect shown

him thus tends to fall primarily in the realm of good manners toward a chief, tinged with a survival of the old respect for the sacred qualities of a chief's personality.

Jitiam, by contrast, is not a lineal descendant of the old paramount chief, Lerok, and his person does not have the degree of sacredness that Langlan is accorded. This very fact acts as a help rather than a hindrance, for Jitiam is respected more as the leader of a co-operative group, which functions as an organized association of commoners and nobles together. In terms of accomplishing given ends, Jitiam's followers get things done more expeditiously than Langlan's. They are always ahead of Langlan's group in thinking up projects for social welfare; for example, they set aside a certain number of breadfruit and coconut trees, the fruit of which was to be used for the teachers' training school when it was located at the village. In the summer of 1947, they dispatched seven canoes loaded with food for the patients at the hospital across the lagoon at the former base. Their co-operative store got off to a much better start and is kept cleaner and neater. In other ways, they have exhibited well-knit, cohesive action.

Jitiam's people have developed a sort of executive committee, called the "Twenty-Twenty Group," composed of twenty men and twenty women. This is the one association in the village formed on a political basis. It is the "Twenty-Twenty Group," rather than Jitiam alone, that is the driving force in co-operative action among his people. The group consists of both commoners and nobles. In age, they are all over thirty-five, several being elderly but active, physically and mentally. Their purpose is to decide on worth-while ends for co-operative action and to organize such action. They represent a form of co-operation that is characteristic of Jitiam's people in contrast to the working of the old feudal system, more characteristic of Langlan's group. This co-operation is the strength of Jitiam's group, which, though in the minority, is more effectively organized.

NEW CRITERIA OF STATUS

The old class structure of Marshallese society has suffered a gradual decline for at least the past fifty years. In all probability, this process will continue. The basis for this trend lies in the changing roles of commoners and nobility and in the breakdown of reciprocal obligations between the two classes, as well as in the overall assumption of political power by a succession of outside nations. The nobles and paramount chiefs were the leaders of the community

and were at least theoretically possessed of superior knowledge, backed by sacred, magical power. The commoners provided the manpower, and their efforts comprised the economic backbone of Marshallese life.

Increasing contacts with European nations, the United States, and Japan, brought a changing social milieu. The Marshalls, remote though they may be, have more and more become part of a larger social order. The social horizon of the Marshallese has expanded beyond their own chain of islands, and beyond the neighboring Carolines and Gilberts. In spatial terms their cultural ties now extend at least to the continental rim bordering the Pacific basin.

From the situation of cultural contact existing in the Marshalls, new criteria of status are emerging within the island society. These criteria are directly related to the flow of culture content from the west that has in turn affected the value system of Marshallese culture. The people of Majuro village today accept, desire, and are dependent on the trade goods of industrialized nations, and wish to promote the system of exchange that makes the acquisition of trade goods possible; they wish more and better medical care; they have by and large accepted the Christian religion; they are eager to acquire technical knowledge and skills, as well as a knowledge of the language of the superior political power—formerly Japanese, now English; and they also wish a general knowledge of the world about them.

Because the Marshallese value these things, they accord individuals who have acquired this type of knowledge an enhanced status in the community. The medical aid who has demonstrated his worth in curing the sick, the man who knows the mechanics of trade and who can thereby increase his worldly wealth, the person with a knowledge of English, are all accorded a higher status than if they did not possess this knowledge. This springs partly from the worth of these individuals to the community, partly from the demonstrated ability of such individuals to prosper. But in any case, the prestige is there.

Examples of the improved status of individuals acquiring new types of knowledge are apparent in village life. Almost all festive occasions are opened with a prayer and a benediction by the Marshallese pastor of the church, whether the people participating are active church members or not. The pastor, although a commoner, is furthermore often included with other honored guests at the special table where they are served food. On occasions of village festivities the medical aid, also a commoner, is always seated with the para-

mount chiefs and nobles. Interpreters likewise are highly regarded for their knowledge of English. Storekeepers are men used to the mechanics of trade and are therefore respected.

The native Marshallese class system does not really provide for improvements in individual status through the acquisition of these new skills and types of knowledge. One cannot be a medical aid merely by being born to chief's rank. Under the old system a proficient medical aid could not acquire the social status commensurate with his importance to the community. Through culture contact, new categories of experience have been introduced into Marshallese life, and for the exercise of leadership in these categories special knowledge and skills are necessary. Proficiency in acquiring such knowledge and skills forms a new set of criteria in a status system that lies outside the old feudalistic class system. The new status system, largely one of achieved status, is competing with the old system, one of ascribed status, and the old system is giving way to the new.

The American administration has an active program for training Marshallese medical practitioners and schoolteachers. In this way it is strengthening these new criteria of status. At the present time, the bright young men of the village are being attracted primarily to the teachers' training schools and to the school for medical practitioners. By employing Marshallese, the United States Commercial Company is furthering the diffusion of knowledge of trade practices, which, with the administration's encouragement of cooperative stores, is strengthening the status of the storekeeper.

The church is also an introduced institution, and the role of pastor is an important one in the village. The church, however, is not attracting younger men in the village in a manner at all comparable to the teachers' and the medical practitioner's schools. The reasons are various. The program of the mission society is not as active as that of the government, for its resources are of course not comparable. At the time of my visit, the plans for training native pastors and establishing schools were still in the formative stage. A second reason, however, is probably that the personal rewards are not so immediately apparent. A third reason lies in the less universal appeal of the church, for the church membership by no means includes the entire village.

These new criteria of status relate to medical practitioners, schoolteachers, interpreters, pastors, storekeepers, and persons with general knowledge of English and western trade practices. In one sphere,

however, neither the American government nor the church is active. That is in the sphere of political leadership.[1]

The government schools for medical aids and teachers strengthen and enlarge values relating to modern medicine and formal scholastic training. In the sphere of local politics, however, formal training does not exist, nor have new standards for judging competence developed in comparable fashion. As a result, the tendency to look to the nobility for leadership is most apparent at Majuro in the political field. Also, medical aids, teachers, interpreters, pastors, and storekeepers are relatively specialized. Magistrates need more general talents. At Majuro, the community tends to look to the old class system for this type of leadership. To what extent this will continue is a question for the future.

An interesting aspect of leadership in the village is the maturity of the leaders. Regardless of their particular sphere of leadership, none of the men who exercise it are under thirty, and most of them are considerably older. One gains the impression that young people in their twenties are positively frivolous, and that leadership as a quality exercised in pursuits for the social welfare of the community does not develop until relatively late. I suspect this stems from an old condition, for persons in authority, be they paramount chiefs, nobles, or commoners, were always heads of lineages and as such were usually of the older generation. And although today the majority of the students in the government teachers' training and medical programs are in their late teens or early twenties, they are not necessarily the best students.

In time, however, the age level of effective leaders in the village will probably drop, for in a few years the graduates of government schools will command a greater degree of influence. To what extent a trend toward younger leadership will in itself accelerate the decline of the old class system remains to be seen. By and large, it is the older people in the village who favor preserving the social distinctions that characterize the hereditary class system, and the younger who are least interested in such distinctions. It is the latter group who are most affected by the changing criteria of status emerging from the contact situation, and who aspire to leadership and higher status in newly developed fields. If this emerging group also tends to assume political leadership, the hereditary class system will probably undergo an accelerated decline. Likewise, the cleavage between Jitiam's and Langlan's groups will either become progres-

[1] I am indebted to Miss Margaret Chave for first pointing out this contrast.

sively less important, or the basis of the split between the two will become purely political in character.

LOCAL ADMINISTRATIVE ORGANIZATION

During their regime, the Japanese established a system of village officials for purposes of local administration. These officials were all Marshallese. They were paid a small salary by the Japanese, and on official occasions wore white coat, trousers, and cap with distinctive insignia denoting their respective positions. The Marshallese officials consisted of an atoll magistrate (*soncho*), an atoll scribe (*shoki*), a village headman (*buraku sodai*), one or more policemen (*shinke*), and a medical practitioner (see Mason, 1947, p. 46). Evidently the political organization of rural Japan influenced the Japanese administrative system in the Marshalls. The rural administrative unit in Kyushu is called a *mura;* the headman of the *mura* is called *soncho,* the same term as that applied to the atoll magistrate. The Japanese *buraku* is a unit smaller than the *mura,* and consists of a group of some twenty households; historically, it is the primary social and economic unit in rural Japan. It too has its own headman. His counterpart in the Marshalls was the *buraku sodai,* or village headman. The *mura* also has a village office, where the records are kept. In the Marshalls, this function was performed by the atoll scribe. (For the political organization of a Japanese rural community, see Embree, 1939, pp. 12–78.)

It is difficult to determine to what extent the Marshallese selected their own officials and to what extent the Japanese arbitrarily appointed them. Mason (1947, p. 46) states that the officials were appointed by the Japanese government. On the other hand, testimony of the villagers indicated that they had a voice in selecting their own officials. Aisea, the present magistrate, who was also the magistrate during the latter part of the Japanese period, said that they were elected by the people. Probably a combination of elective and appointive techniques prevailed, with the Japanese giving a final appointive approval to a man they knew had the backing of the village. From time to time the official positions in the village changed hands, and the Japanese encouraged a certain amount of rotation of the several official posts. There were one former atoll magistrate and at least two former scribes living in the village during my stay. This rotation of positions also has similarities in rural life in Japan.

The Japanese initiated the keeping of a limited number of official records, most of which were the responsibility of the atoll scribe.

Among the more significant of these were the records of lineages within the community. Official copies of all the lineages were kept by the scribe and were of importance in settling land disputes. In addition, he made periodic reports on atoll population, births, deaths, marriages, divorces, departures and arrivals of people from other atolls, wills, and violations of existing laws, with punishments. Copies of these reports were housed in a town hall, a modest structure erected by the Japanese but paid for by the village. Unfortunately, these village records were said to have been destroyed by American forces during the occupation of the atoll. How complete and exact the records were is therefore difficult to determine. In some cases they seem to have been very carefully kept; the few duplicate copies of lineage records that are still extant are carefully prepared. The medical records were also no doubt handled well, judging from the ability of the present medical aid, who also held his position under the Japanese.

The Japanese likewise established formal civil and criminal codes. The more serious crimes, such as homicide, assault, arson, and thefts of large amounts of money, were supposed to be referred to the Japanese civil government officials. However, there is no record that the peaceful citizens of Majuro ever committed such crimes. Violations of the Japanese codes were minor, involving things such as cleanliness of household surroundings, occasional small thefts, and violations of the curfew. For these, reprimands and fines were imposed by the magistrate and enforced by the policemen. In addition, there was, as there is now, a considerable number of disputes over land rights, succession to *alab*ships, and boundary disputes—all involving land tenure in some way. These civil cases were settled by the magistrate, unless he felt they should be referred to the Japanese civil government officer.

The American pattern of local officials follows largely the Japanese pattern, with certain modifications and additions. There are an atoll magistrate (*ri-til-ailiŋ*), an atoll scribe (*ri-jeje*), a village headman (*ri-til-bukon*), several policemen (*bolijman*), and a village council. In addition, there are at the village a school principal with several assistants, and a medical aid. An atoll court completes the administrative machinery. The decision to follow the Japanese set of officials, with modifications, rather than attempt to return to a form of indirect rule through the paramount chiefs, was a wise one. The people were used to the Japanese structure of officialdom, and any attempt to return to the old Marshallese class system would have seemed a step backward.

Both the present atoll magistrate and the atoll scribe reside at the village. Both are elected to their offices by the people. The principal modification in the Japanese administrative system is the addition of a council. This is composed of the magistrate, scribe, village headman, and the heads of the lineages present on the atoll, including both nobles and commoners; the lineage, rather than an areal unit of population, is the unit of representation. This is entirely consonant with local custom. The heads of commoner lineages, *alabs*, exerted the authority of the chiefs among the commoners. At present, on the occasion of a council meeting the *alab* of a particular lineage may not be present, but he will send a representative of the lineage to take his place. According to Aisea, there are 135 members of the council. Of these only 14 are *iroij*.

The court consists of at least three and not more than five members. The magistrate is the presiding officer of the court and appoints the other members of the court from the membership of the council.

The policemen are appointed by the council. There were four policemen in the village during my stay. The other appointive officials are the medical aid and the school teachers, who are selected by the United States Navy civil government administration on the basis of their professional qualifications.

The American administration has further set forth the duties and functions of the various officials, of the council, and of the court, and has established a set of both criminal and civil regulations.

The magistrate is the principal atoll official, and, as he resides at the village, he is also the principal village official. He provides, as in Japanese times, a main point of contact between the government authorities and the villagers. He presides at the council meetings and at meetings of the court. His position requires a very considerable amount of tact, for not only must he deal with American officials but he also has a village at his back that is itself divided into two political parties by the cleavage between the two paramount chiefs. The job of magistrate at Majuro requires considerable ability in the art of effective compromise.

American authorities are continuing the effort initiated by the Japanese to have a limited number of records kept by the local officials. The Marshallese are actually literate in their own language, though they lack an indigenous written literature. Consequently, such a program is a relatively logical attempt at having the Marshallese keep records on their own vital statistics and matters of related

importance. However, the Marshallese are also a folk people among whom oral tradition is important, and whose interest in written accounts is often casual. Record-keeping is not yet a completely accepted cultural trait, and the variation from individual to individual is accordingly great. Certain of the village records, such as the medical records, are carefully kept; others receive casual rather than regular attention.

Atoll council meetings are held regularly once a month. Special sessions of the council are also held at the time the civil government officer makes his periodic visits, if he has business to bring before the council. At those council meetings at which I was present, the attendance did not include more than half of the total council membership, but it did include most of the active leaders of the village entitled to sit on the council. The absence of so many members was due to one or more of the following: disinterestedness; the feeling that they would be informed eventually anyway; a passive acceptance of leaving village administration in the hands of the more influential leaders; and difficulties in getting to the village from other parts of the atoll.

The council meetings are held in a quonset hut formerly used by the hospital. The magistrate and scribe sit at a small table. The remaining members of the council sit on stools, benches, or chairs, which they usually bring, or make themselves comfortable on the floor. At least half a dozen women *alabs* are always present. The atmosphere is relatively informal. The following accounts of meetings are typical.

(1) Meeting of May 26, 1947. The meeting was brought to order by the magistrate and was then opened with a prayer led by a council member who is also an elder of the church. In his prayer he asked for guidance and wisdom in the deliberations of the council. Unfinished business was then discussed. This consisted of reports on progress in increased planting of food crops, particularly bananas. The scribe said he needed more information to pass on to the civil government officials. Several *alabs* said they were working on the problem and would report later.

New business was then discussed. An influential *bwirak* rose and wanted to know why the construction of the new school building was so slow. The council member supposed to be in charge had made no visible progress for months. The latter asked the pardon of those present and promised progress in the future. Discussion then shifted to problems concerned with copra production. This

took up the remainder of the meeting. The difference between kilos (the measure of weight used in Japanese times) and pounds (the weight used at present) was explained to several members who wished to know. Next the division of the proceeds was brought up. Previously it had been decided that division of copra should be one-quarter to the *iroij labalab*, one-eighth to the *alab*, and five-eighths to the *ri-jerbal*, the actual workers. This was talked about at some length, particularly as to what the *iroij labalab* should do with his share. The villagers felt that one-quarter of his share should go to a village welfare fund, one-half to the *iroij erik*, and one-quarter to himself alone. The ramifications of these divisions were discussed at length. Next, the best manner of collecting copra at pick-up points was brought up, and it was decided to ask civil government for more information on its own plans for the collection of copra. The meeting then adjourned.

(2) Meeting of June 23, 1947. This meeting followed the same pattern as the one described above. It was devoted entirely to plans for the Fourth of July celebration. Subjects included in the discussion were organization of the program; preparation of gifts to be presented to visiting officials; and the clean-up of the village for the holiday. It was decided that individuals should clean up around their homes and their sections of the road in front of their houses from June 24 on; that the beach should be cleaned on June 30; and that the hospital and town hall area should be cleaned on July 2 and 3, just before the day of the celebration.

(3) Meeting of June 6, 1947. This was a special meeting called because the naval civil government officer was on an official visit and wished to have a meeting. The meeting centered entirely around subjects brought up by the officer. The procedure was the same as the other meetings, although the officer dominated the meeting. The officer had had previous experience and handled the meeting well. The first subject he brought up was the need for better village sanitation. He suggested that setting aside one day a week for clean-up and tree-planting might prove effective, as another atoll had started this practice and it had worked well. He then announced that two Marshallese carpenters were needed at the base in case anyone was interested in such a job, and that the village teachers were eligible for an advanced course of training at the base, starting the next month. He then wished to know what court cases had arisen and any decisions the court had made. Finally, the discussion turned on the subject of copra collection. The village officials presented the views of the council and the

officer said he would have further information on his next visit. The meeting then adjourned.

These examples serve to indicate the procedure of council meetings and the range of subjects considered. In such meetings, the Marshallese never reach a decision in haste and never move without full discussion. These qualities of Marshallese deliberations often pass unnoticed or are ignored by inexperienced civil government officers, and on the other hand are well utilized by experienced ones. The Marshallese, as is apparently true of other Micronesian societies, have developed through the years of political domination by outside nations a set of patterned responses to the administrators with whom they must deal. These responses, however unconsciously they have been formed, nevertheless serve as a technique for preserving those things the Marshallese value in their own culture, while at the same time ensuring agreeable relations with the administrators. The pattern of these responses emphasizes elasticity and ready outward agreement.

A field officer who pushes programs too fast with a village council will find ready agreement on the part of the council, but the latter will make no co-ordinated move until the proposed program has been thoroughly discussed among themselves, and, if there is a large segment of negative opinion, probably no real action will be taken at all. I observed that the more experienced field officers allowed as much time as possible for discussion at council meetings. In this way they learned more of possible objections; were consequently able to adapt their proposals to such objections; and in the end accomplished much more than their more inexperienced, hurried, and impatient colleagues. As Useem (1947, p. 6) has pointed out, this established pattern of relations between the local communities and administrators demands penetrating examination if administration is to be successful. I regret that my information is not more complete on this aspect of Majuro village life.

Mention should also be made of the working of the atoll court. Cases are first discussed in council meeting and if no settlement or decision can be reached are then referred to the court. The court actually does not handle more than a few cases a year. In the first six months of 1947, court cases consisted of the following: a dispute about payment for repairs to an outrigger canoe; a dispute over payment for breadfruit trees allegedly cut down without permission of the owner; a violation of village sanitary regulations; a violation of the prohibition against the manufacture of distilled liquor; and a dispute over the adoption of a child.

In both structure and concept, Marshallese law is represented only partly by the council and court, and by the set of criminal and civil regulations promulgated by the civil government authorities. The court is an innovation of American rule and is still somewhat of an extraneous element in the organization of village life. The fact that court cases are first discussed in the council indicates that the latter is in a sense a more bona fide legal body for deliberation than the court. In the old days, the paramount chief, his nobles, and his *alabs* met for discussion on important matters, even if it tended to be a one-way discussion from chiefs and nobility to commoners. The village council is closer to this older, informal gathering than the newly instituted court, and hence it is in the village council that cases are first discussed and a settlement attempted.

Probably most of the legal controversy and dispute in village life is over land use and ownership. Such disputes for the most lie outside the body of regulations set up by the civil government administration. Inasmuch as the class system is so closely tied to the system of land use and ownership, settlement of disputes of this type is largely effected by the paramount chiefs and their own people acting independently of village council and court. Thus the organized legal sanctions operating in the community are functions both of the court and council and also of the surviving class organization; and the sources of dispute that lead to the imposition of sanctions are to be observed not merely in the cases decided by the court, but also by the instances of settlements reached outside the court and within the framework of the class system.

The relation of the Marshallese class structure of chiefs, nobles, and commoners to the local administrative organization can be summarized as follows:

(1) Although the local administrative system of Marshallese officials has been imposed from above, enough time has elapsed since the Japanese first set up such a system for it to become imbedded in village and atoll social organization. The principle of administration through these local officials and the village council rather than through the paramount chiefs is accepted by the Marshallese community.

(2) There is a tendency at Majuro for political leadership to be exercised by the nobility. This is manifest by the fact that the atoll magistrate is the successor of one of the paramount chiefs, that the more important members of the nobility regularly attend

the council meetings, and that within Jitiam's and Langlan's groups active leaders include prominent members of the nobility. There is still a tendency to look to the nobility for leadership in political affairs.

(3) On the other hand, in newly introduced professions—medical aids, teachers, interpreters, pastors, storekeepers—leadership does not gravitate to the nobility. A new status system is forming on the basis of skills and knowledge introduced since contact with the western nations and Japan. In time this system will probably supplant the hereditary class structure, and political leadership will be exercised by persons with a superior position in this newly formed status system rather than by the nobility.

(4) The division in the village between Langlan's and Jitiam's groups is reflected in the local administration. The principal village officials are elected. The magistrate, scribe, and village headman belong to Langlan's side, which is the majority group. Opinion within the council also tends to form according to this line of cleavage. However, the fact that Langlan's group is in the majority and that both magistrate and scribe are aligned with Langlan does not give his group complete domination of the village. The superior organization of Jitiam's followers makes it possible for them to maintain a certain political balance between the two groups.

VI. HOUSEHOLD AND FAMILY

In presenting this outline of Marshallese social organization, I have described a number of progressively smaller local groupings of population, starting with the atoll unit, proceeding to the village, and then passing to the less inclusive district. The household is the last and the smallest of these territorially defined groups. However, the household also is based on a kinship unit—the family—and hence possesses a certain duality in its nature. The purpose of this chapter is to indicate the essential structure and function of household and family, and to state the character of the relation between the two.

The Marshallese household as it exists at Majuro consists of all those individuals who reside together and who consume food in common. The household varies considerably in size. In the larger households, several elementary families are represented. (The term "elementary family" as used here means the small biological unit of parents and children.) These families may actually eat their food apart from one another and sleep in separate, though adjacent, houses, but they prepare food in common at a single cookhouse and they contribute to the common food supply. The household is therefore a consumption unit, with the cookhouse a sort of symbol of household unity. The household is defined by this common use of a single cookhouse.

SIZE OF HOUSEHOLDS

Time did not permit a complete census of all the households at the village, but a careful check was made of 30 households, numbering 264 individuals, about one-quarter of the village population. The sample was drawn from all four districts of the village. I feel that the sample gives a representative picture of household composition at Majuro. The data are given in the accompanying table, which shows the very considerable range in the size of Majuro households. No one in the village lives alone, but small households are not uncommon. On the other hand, there are also a number of very large households. On the basis of the figures given in the table,

the average size of the household is 8.8 persons per household, although 70 per cent of the persons counted resided in households containing 9 or more individuals. It should also be noted that in the village there is continuous visiting around, particularly of children and young people, so that a second census of the same households would differ slightly from the first count, although I believe the over-all picture would remain the same.

SIZE OF HOUSEHOLD AT MAJURO VILLAGE

(Based on sample of thirty households)

No. of persons in household	Frequency of occurrence	Average no. of persons over 15 years of age	Average no. of persons under 15 years of age	Total no. of persons
3	2	3.0	0.0	6
4	4	2.75	1.25	16
5	4	3.5	1.5	20
6	1	3.0	3.0	6
7	2	6.0	1.0	14
8	2	5.0	3.0	16
9	2	5.5	3.5	18
10	5	5.6	4.4	50
11	2	8.0	3.0	22
12	.	....	...	..
13	2	10.5	2.5	26
14	.	....	...	..
15	.	....	...	..
16	2	8.5	7.5	32
17	1	13.0	4.0	17
18	.	....	...	..
19	.	....	...	..
20	.	....	...	..
21	1	14.0	7.0	21
Total	30			264

In the table, the household members were also divided according to whether they were over or under 15 years of age in order to give an idea of the relative number of children and adults in the sample. These figures are shown as a set of arithmetical averages. They show that the larger households do not owe their increased size merely to a relatively higher proportion of children.

THE HOUSE-GROUP

Each household possesses one or more living-houses, a cookhouse, and a miscellaneous array of associated architectural features. For want of a better term, I shall call these related material appurtenances of the household unit a house-group.

Majuro house-groups are not elaborate nor are they noteworthy in an esthetic sense. In the pleasant climate of the Marshalls the need for shelter can be met easily, and hardly requires more than a

FIG. 15. Old-style thatch living-house, with floor at ground level. All-thatch houses are now uncommon.

simple lean-to. The people spend a great deal of time out of doors. But the house-groups are nevertheless important for the description of social organization, because so much of Marshallese life goes on in and around them. The house-group is first of all a place where food is prepared and eaten, and where shelter and a place to sleep are provided. It is the milieu in which handicraft production is carried on by the women, and where they and the men do a variety of household chores. It is naturally the place where small children spend most of their time. It is also a general meeting place for both the members of the household and for family visitors. Apart from the house-group, there are only a few places in the village where the people gather for informal discussion and gossip. The two stores, the village beach, occasionally the residences of the paramount chiefs, and the church on Sundays, virtually exhaust the list of places where people casually chat and pass the time of day with friends. The house-group remains important as a place for the leisurely ex-

FIG. 16. Living-house with thatch roof and sawed lumber sides. Floor approximately three and one-half feet above the ground. The trees and plants around the house consist of coconut palms, breadfruit, and bananas, with a few ornamental shrubs.

change of news and opinion among the members of the household and family visitors.

The Living-House

The living-house (fig. 15) is the principal structure in the house-group. As mentioned previously, the houses at Majuro today are largely frame houses with sawed lumber rather than thatch walls, although all except a few houses have thatch roofs (fig. 16). In addition, salvaged canvas is occasionally used for walls or roofs. Marshallese houses never seem to have been very elaborate, and they are not today. The living-houses are usually modest structures which fill well enough their essential function of providing shelter. The larger houses are often raised high enough on the house-posts so that there is a space about four feet high under the floor of the

FIG. 17. Living-houses.

house (fig. 17). This area under the house is spread with mats and used as a work space by the women, or it may also be used as sleeping quarters.

Observers during the German period noted that Marshallese houses were never built parallel to the road or to each other, but invariably at oblique angles (Erdland, 1914, p. 13; Krämer and Nevermann, 1938, p. 169). Since then, a change in house-building has occurred in that the houses are always squared with the road.

The number of living-houses per household varies not only with the number of persons in the household, but also with the size of the house. In the sample of thirty households, the number of living-houses varied from one to five. Where the household is small, one living-house suffices. In the larger households, there are more living-houses, or, if there is not an increase in the number of living-houses, they are larger and more commodious.

The architecture of the living-houses has been greatly affected by contact with the west (fig. 18), and is probably more European than Marshallese. A rectangular, single-story house with gabled roof is the common form. Some houses are raised above the ground; in others the floor is either on, or only slightly above, the earth. Shutters or canvas tarpaulins rather than windows are the rule, although a very few of the most pretentious houses, such as those belonging to the two paramount chiefs, boast glass windows of pre-war vintage. On newer houses, open porches are preferred.

House interiors are simply furnished. Generally houses have one or two rooms, or a single room with a partition. The floors are covered, at least in part, with undecorated pandanus mats. Most people sleep on additional mats unrolled at night on the floor; these sleeping mats are rolled up during the day and put out of the way. Since the war some cots and a larger number of mattresses have found their way to the village. Mosquito nets for sleeping are in general use. Cotton-covered, down-filled pillows are common. The women are expert at embroidery, and sew colorful flowered patterns on the pillow slips.

Furniture is scant, for it is unnecessary if one sits on the floor, as most people do. Shoes are left at the door on entering the house, and a bucket of water is kept at the door to rinse off sandy feet. A few wood and canvas or folding metal chairs and occasionally a table are found in most houses, however. Many women own a wooden chest in which they keep clothing, needles, sewing material, and their more valued personal possessions. Some of these chests

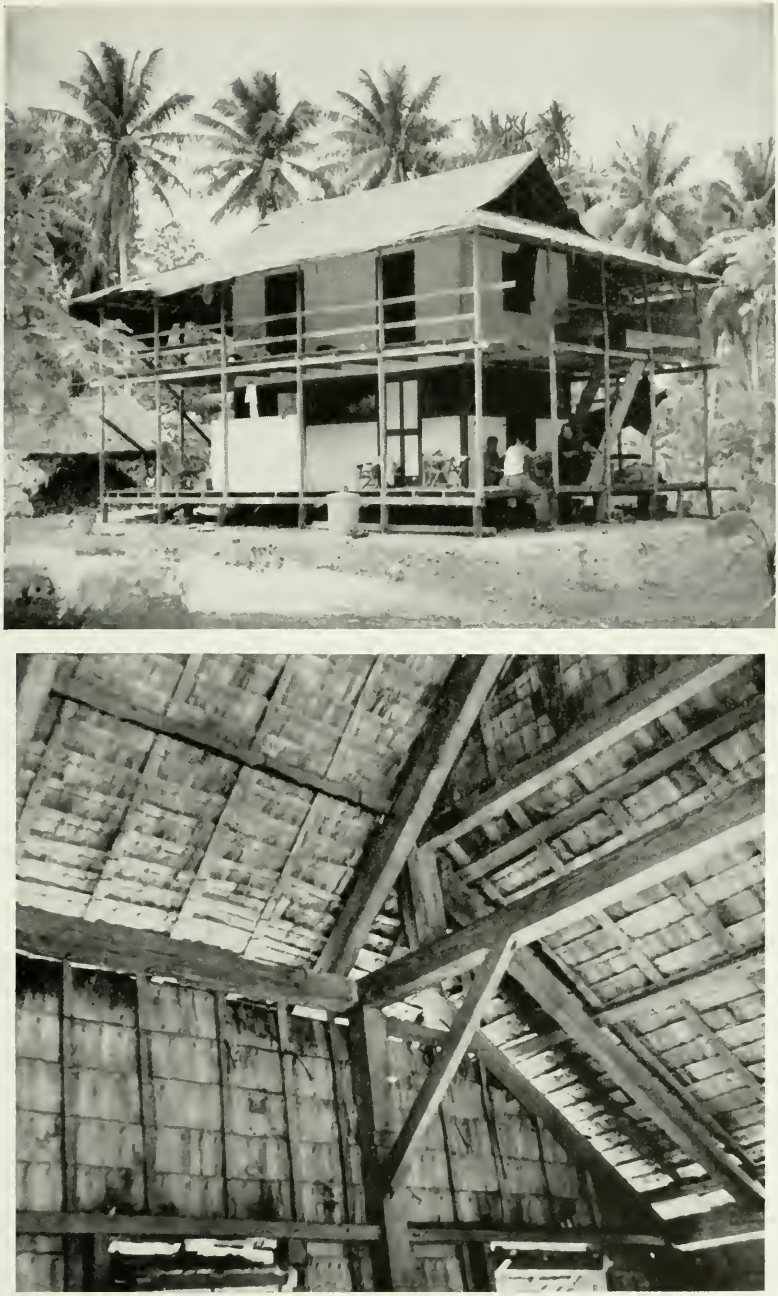


FIG. 18. Upper: A new item in village architecture. Two-story house under construction. Lower: Interior of a thatch house, showing construction of roof and wall.

FIG. 19. A cookhouse. The cooking is always done over an open fire on the ground, or in an earth oven. The cookhouse contains a miscellaneous array of utensils, baskets, and firewood. In the photograph, the husked coconut halves lying on the ground in front of the cookhouse are being dried in the sun, part of the process of copra-making.

are brassbound German models at least fifty years old. The more well-to-do households also possess sewing machines, of either German or Japanese make, which are owned by the women and cared for meticulously.

The Cookhouse

For each household there is one cookhouse (fig. 19). These vary considerably, though they are all of simple construction. The cooking is all done on a fire on the ground or in an earth oven, and the whole purpose of the cookhouse is to protect the fire from wind and rain. The simplest cookhouses are small lean-tos, or a shed roof supported by four posts; somewhat larger ones have a gabled roof and open sides and have sufficient room to store a plentiful supply of coconut husks and wood, both used for fuel; a few of the most

pretentious have one or more walls, with part of the structure used as a separate room for eating.

Cooking utensils are few, largely because the practice of baking in an earth oven makes them unnecessary. Food to be baked is wrapped in leaves and placed in a bed of red hot coral pebbles which have previously been heated in the fire. More pebbles and coals are added to cover the food, which is then baked. Open roasting on hot coals is also common. When food is fried or boiled over an open fire it is necessary to use frying pans, and pots and five-gallon tins for boiling. Coffeepots are frequently to be seen, though on the whole tea is preferred to coffee.

Water Supply and Bath-Houses

At Majuro, fresh water for drinking, cooking, and bathing is obtained from concrete cisterns or other forms of catchment of rain water, or from shallow wells. These are located within the house-group area. During the Japanese period a considerable number of concrete cisterns were built, but today a large number of these have fallen into disuse. Instead, empty petroleum drums are used for collecting rain water, and an increasing number of shallow wells have been dug. The wells are lined with petroleum drums whose ends have been removed, with the drums laid vertically end to end. The wells are only ten feet deep at a maximum, and the water tends to be brackish. From the standpoint of health, clean cisterns are probably safer than the shallow wells. However, for drinking, the Marshallese rely primarily on the milk of green coconuts.

A small bath-house, large enough for one person at a time, is often built adjacent to the living-house. A bath is part of the day's routine, for the Marshallese are personally a cleanly people. Water for the bath is obtained from cisterns or wells.

Sanitation

Sanitation is a weak point in the village. The one-hole, "Chick Sales" latrine has been generally adopted, but is seldom maintained. Each house-group has a latrine, which is located well away from the houses toward the ocean side of the island. The old Marshallese practice was to use the ocean reef for defecation, a satisfactory arrangement, and some of the house-groups near the ocean still utilize this method. However, the island is so wide that most of the villagers, who live along the lagoon shore, have probably never used the old system, but have rather used the interior of the island for defecation.

Trash and refuse are thrown into rectangular pits dug in the sandy soil at the edge of the yard. If possible, the refuse is then burned. When the pit is nearly filled it is covered with sand.

Yards

The houses are set back from the road, and around each living-house is a yard strewn with coral pebbles. Old house sites, where the houses have long since disappeared, can still be identified by the coral yards. At high tide, the lagoon beach is strewn with white coral pebbles thrown up by the waves. When the tide recedes, the women go to the beach with hand-made coconut-leaf baskets, collect the pebbles, and use them to cover the yards. It is a time-consuming job, and just after high tide there are always women gathering pebbles on the beach and carrying them to the houses. However, the coral yards are functional as well as attractive in appearance. The coral prevents the yards from becoming muddy during rain storms. Freshly washed clothes are laid on the coral to dry, and sleeping mats are spread out and given a good sunning in the morning.

Miscellaneous

A variety of miscellaneous features completes the picture of the house-group. Most houses have bananas, and sometimes papayas, planted nearby. Some have small sweet-potato gardens in the rear of the living-house. Toward the rear or near one side of the house there may also be a small wire enclosure for chickens, though the village was stripped of pigs and chickens by the Japanese during the war and there are few chickens today. Pigs are also scarce, though increasing. At the village they are kept in small pens away from the houses.

On the outside wall of a house a throw-net for fishing may be seen drying, and the long-handled scoop nets for catching flying fish are common sights. Pandanus and coconut scrapers, shell pounders, metal buckets, and a variety of half empty glass bottles—mostly Japanese soy sauce bottles—are to be found around the yards and houses. The glass bottles, each with a coconut line handle secured around the neck, are used to collect coconut palm sap and to contain fresh water—both used for drinking. Freshly washed clothing hung or laid out to dry is always in evidence. Materials for making mats and other handicraft are usually to be seen.

This is the setting for the daily life of the household.

Canoe Houses, Puberty and Menstrual Huts

Neither of these two types of structures is built today.

COMPOSITION OF THE HOUSEHOLD

The composition of the Marshallese household is not easy to describe, because it does not conform to rigid principles of formation. Residence after marriage can be patrilocal or matrilocal, or a couple can set up a separate household. Matrilineal lineages receive formal recognition in the social organization of the community, but the households are not generally organized around such lineages. Patrilineal ties exert contrasting pressure, while there is also present a feeling for bilaterality. With the possible exception of the old class system, Marshallese social organization as a whole is not highly formalized. Like the people themselves, it has a casual quality. The composition of the household is not rigidly defined by custom and is flexible and varying.

The household groups of Majuro can best be described in terms of change in composition through time, as new generations are born and added to the household unit and old generations die and are subtracted from it. This change in composition through time provides a typical series of stages of household growth. The various Majuro households can be allocated to some stage in this series, from the point of view of size as well as character of organization.

Stage 1: A man and woman marry, establish an independent household and have children. This is the elementary family unit, the smallest household group found at the village.

Stage 2: The children of this couple reach maturity and marry. When they marry they may leave the parental home or they and their newly acquired spouses may remain. There is no hard and fast rule about who should stay and who should leave. On marriage, daughters may leave or sons may leave or one or both may stay. If either or both stay, there is then a group consisting of the original parental pair, plus one or more adult children, plus the spouses of these children.

Stage 3: These married children in turn have children, and the original parental pair become grandparents. The household now spans three generations. Eventually the grandparents die, and the group then consists of several siblings of the same or different sex, together with their spouses and children.

Stage 4: The children grow to maturity and marry. They may either leave or stay, with their new spouses. Some of the siblings

in the older generation may die, so that the household may then consist of several cousins, cross or parallel, with their spouses and children, plus one or two old aunts or uncles.

Stage 5: Eventually the older generation dies, so that the household consists of cousins, plus their spouses and children. The children marry, either leaving or bringing their new spouses. This seems to be as far as the process goes before the household splits into component family groups and the process begins all over again.

Most of the Majuro households can be fitted somewhere into this schematically described series. However, certain qualifications need to be introduced:

(1) At any stage in the process an elementary family unit may break off and start its own household. There are also other limiting factors to household size. Deaths occur, some people remain unmarried or have no children, or children are adopted out of the household.

(2) Some households contain individuals more distantly related than first cousins. In particular, there are a number of cases of remotely related older individuals contained in the household group. In the village, no one lives alone, and old people are looked after by younger kinfolk, even if distantly related.

The working of a bilateral principle occasionally results in the addition of affinal relatives of a member of the household to a household group. Thus the domestic unit may be enlarged by the addition of a new spouse of one of the household members. In time, some of this spouse's own kin, such as a sibling and his or her spouse and children, may also join the household. A type of bilateral extended family is the result.

(3) In two households, kin by virtue of clan relationship to the oldest adult in the household are present. In one case this is a matter of hospitality to war refugees from another atoll. The other case I am unable to explain, other than on the basis of personal congeniality among those concerned.

(4) In four households, completely unrelated individuals, with or without their spouses and children, are present. The households of both paramount chiefs contain unrelated people of this type. Again this is partly the result of extending hospitality to war refugees from other atolls. In the paramount chiefs' households, however, these people do not have status equal to that of the other household members and they perform a large share of the household tasks, though they are not considered merely as household servants. I

found four additional individuals whose home is Majuro, however, living in three households (those of the two paramount chiefs, and one noble) and definitely occupying a menial status, though by no means a hard one. Yet it cannot be said that the domestic servant is at all typical of Marshallese households of higher status. The paid domestic servant, occupying a definite and well-defined social position relative to the rest of the household, is absent from the social scene at Majuro village.

In working on household composition, I paid particular attention to any indication that households were formed around either a paternal or a maternal lineage. Several cases apparently showed formation around such a lineage, but further examination disclosed these to be chance occurrences, resulting primarily from the fact that the living kinfolk in each case happened to fall into a lineage pattern. Taking the households as a whole at Majuro, I found that a unilateral lineage basis is not a generally accepted form for household organization. In a later, independent census of twenty-five households, Chave came to a similar conclusion (Chave, 1948, pp. 30–38).

In the absence of rigid rules of residence after marriage, coupled with an absence of emphasis on lineage as the basis of the household organization, there is no bar to siblings of either sex remaining in the household after they have taken a spouse. In describing the series of stages of household growth and change, I attempted to show how siblings of the same or opposite sex often continued to remain at home after marriage. Obviously, however, not all siblings of every family in the village could remain in their own households after marriage, for the household would then lack permanently resident spouses altogether, a situation which does not occur in the village.

In a given house-group at Majuro, the living-house (or houses) are individually owned, either by men or by women or sometimes by husband and wife together, although many houses are so modest that in such case the feeling of house ownership does not seem to be strongly developed. House owners build their houses on land in which they possess a right, be they commoners or nobility. I recorded six exceptions to this rule, but I believe there are no additional ones, and these can be explained by special circumstances. One case is that of the medical aid, who lives in a government quonset hut. The other five cases are those of families who came to the village from other atolls during the war, who have no land

rights in the village, and who have been given permission to build on land not legally theirs. In at least three cases, the builders paid money to have scrap lumber hauled to the house site and the house built, as they lacked close relatives at the village to assist them. On leaving to return to their home atolls, they are free to sell the house for lumber, but not to sell the right of occupancy of the house site.

In my sample census of Majuro households, I attempted to determine the number of adults in each household who had a land right in the land on which the particular house-group was built. Two cases out of the total of thirty are excluded, one being that of the medical practitioner and the other that of a family in the village as war refugees, for both represent special cases just described. Of the remainder, in seventeen households the majority of adults in each household possessed rights in the piece of land on which the house-group was built; in eight cases a minority had such rights; and in three cases the adult members were evenly divided between those who had and those who did not have such rights. In this same sample of households, I also classified the marriages where both spouses were living and normally residing together, according to whether the couple were residing on the husband's land (23 cases); on the wife's land (18 cases); on land belonging to the husband's relatives in the household, though he himself did not have a right in the land (6 cases); or on land belonging to the wife's relatives in the household, though she did not have a right in the land (3 cases). This indicates a very considerable flexibility in the relation of household composition to land rights and residence after marriage.

The lack of a household organization at Majuro based on a strongly formalized lineage principle of organization may possibly be due to the fact that the household is in a period of transition. The society may be changing from matrilocal to patrilocal residence. Instances of both types of residence occur, as well as neolocal residence. Unfortunately there is insufficient evidence from earlier periods to determine the point. During the German period Marshallese households are said to have varied in size, some consisting of single elementary families, others consisting of several such families living together (Senfft, 1903, p. 430). The existence of extended families is thus documented, but details as to their exact composition are lacking. Senfft (ibid., p. 433) notes, however, that there was at this time no established rule regarding a wife's residence after marriage. Nor is there any tradition among the villagers of

permanent matrilocal residence and the maternal lineage as the basis of the household group. There is a tradition of cross-cousin marriage, but I have been unable to find a clearly documented account as to how this was related to residence after marriage. For this reason, I doubt that the present structure of the Marshallese household can be explained by the assumption that it is changing from matrilocal to patrilocal residence, and I am equally doubtful that the family organization was ever highly formalized around a maternal lineage.

In summary, we note the following points concerning household composition at Majuro.

(1) Variation in size. Smaller households tend to consist of single elementary families. Larger households tend to consist of extended families, defined by their common use of a single cookhouse. In the larger households, component elementary families have their own living-houses, or use well-defined parts of a larger living-house for their sleeping quarters.

(2) Flexibility in the composition of extended families as household groups. Their organization is not strictly matrilocal or patrilocal or rigidly formed around a lineage, but is flexible and expresses bilateral as well as unilateral tendencies.

The composition and housing arrangements of four Majuro households are shown in figures 20–23 and maps 5–8.

HOUSEHOLD ROUTINE

The Majuro household rises early, and by daybreak its members are usually up and about. There are two clocks in the village—one in the church and one in the present town hall—and a number of villagers possess watches and alarm clocks, but the routine of daily life is not regulated by any strict adherence to the passage of particular hours and minutes. The clocks in the church and town hall are kept carefully wound, but as one runs fast and the other slow they have a habit of disagreeing by any amount up to three hours. Periodically they are both corrected when someone with a watch and the correct time arrives from the Navy headquarters at the other end of the atoll. The clock and the watch have become accepted among the Marshallese as desirable things to have—a part of the body of superior mechanical appliances of Western culture—but there is no compelling reason why daily life at Majuro should become chained to the clock, and the villagers have made no attempt to regulate their lives by a timepiece.

EXPLANATION OF FIGURE 20 AND MAP 5

In figure 20, regular household members are shown in silhouette. The outline figures represent relatives who are dead, divorced, or absent from the household. Parallel lines indicate a marriage; parallel lines with a cross-bar indicate a marriage and subsequent divorce. A dotted line designates an adopted child. Small figures indicate individuals under fifteen years of age.

The land on which this house-group is built belongs to *2* and her lineage. She is a commoner, but there is no lesser chief who has rights to this land lot. *1* and *2* are both elderly. They live in House A.

3 and *4* have adopted *12*, who is the son of *3*'s brother. They are shown as absent from the household because they were living in another district, where they have land rights and a house. However, during a part of the year they usually reside in this household. House C belongs to them.

6, with her children and granddaughter, lives in House D. Her husband, *5*, was killed by the Japanese during the war. *13* is absent, in a training school on Guam.

7, *8*, and *20* live in House B.

11 and three of her children, *23*, *24*, and *25*, live with her parents in House A. *11*'s son, *22*, is regularly absent, working at the United States Navy headquarters across the lagoon.

House E is vacant. It belongs to a son of *1* and *2*, who once lived in the house with his wife and two children. For some time, however, he and his family have been living across the lagoon, as he works for the Navy. These relatives are not shown in figure 20.

House F belongs to Household II.

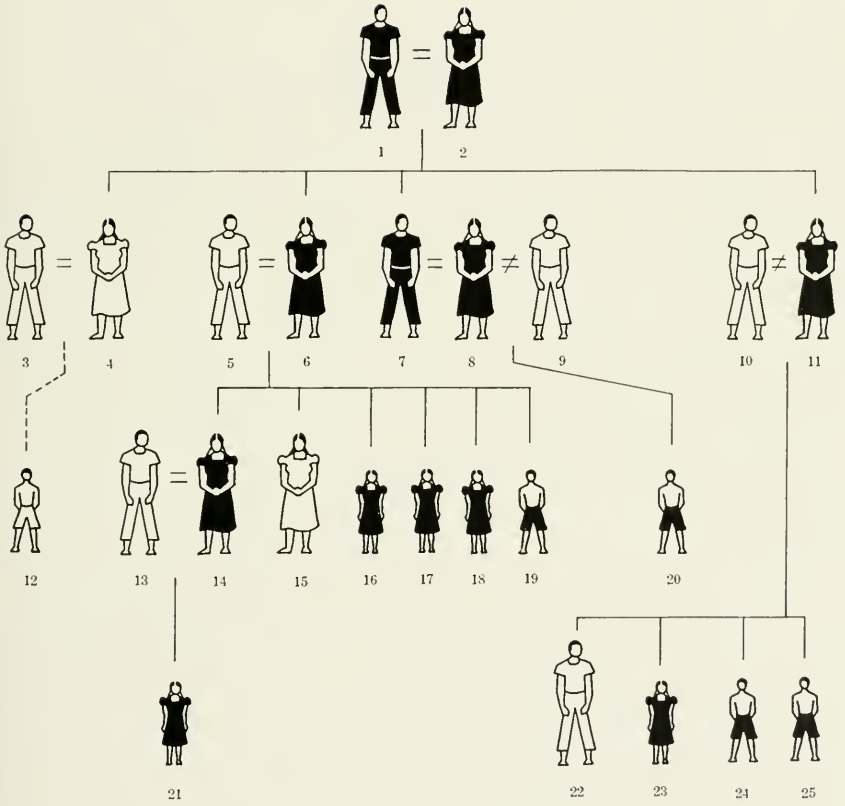
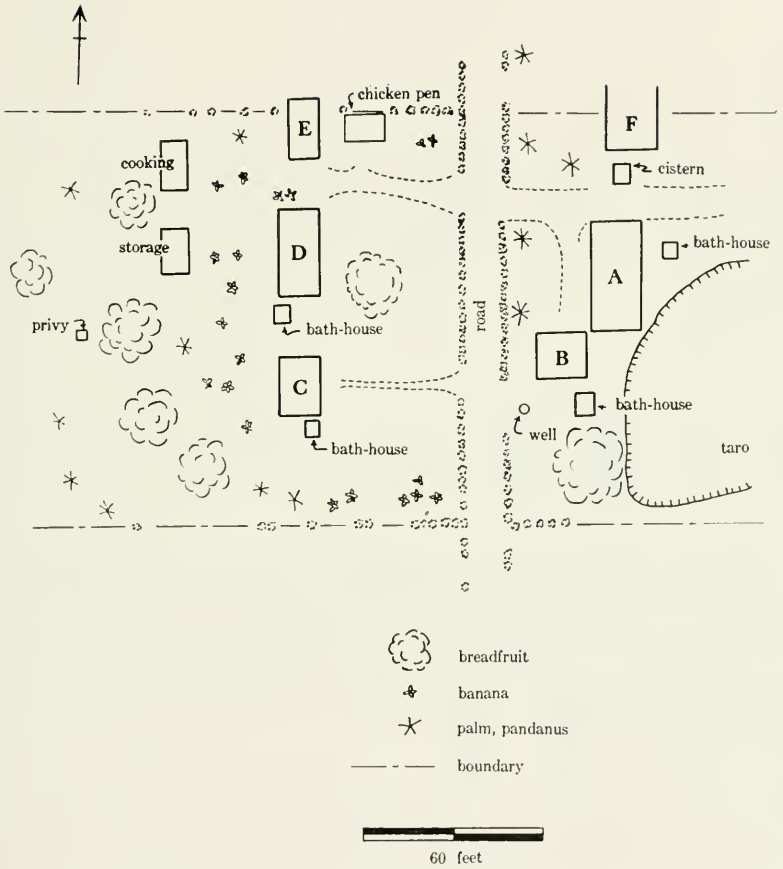


FIG. 20. Composition of Household I.



MAP 5. Household I. Ground plan of house-group.

EXPLANATION OF FIGURE 21 AND MAP 6

In figure 21, the same graphic symbols are used as in figure 20.

1 and *2*, with their children and grandchild, live in House A. House A is the same as House F in Map 5. It is built directly over a boundary line, an unusual occurrence in the village. The land under the south half of the house belongs to *1* and his lineage. The land under the north part belongs to *2* and her lineage. *1* is a commoner, and *2* is a noble. No commoner lineage has land rights on the north land lot.

12 comes from Jaluit. During the war he befriended *1* when the Japanese conscripted him for service on Jaluit. *12* and *1* escaped from Jaluit and both came to Majuro. *13* is a Majuro woman, who has been twice married before. *12*, *13*, *16*, and *20* live in House B. The friendship between *1* and *12* seems to be the principal reason why *12* and his family live here. *17* has been adopted by a relative.

21 and *22* live under House A, which is raised above the ground. They are both middle-aged commoners. *22* is said to be distantly related to *2*, but the relationship is so remote that no one could tell precisely what it was. Both *21* and *22* perform domestic tasks around the house-group.

23 is a youth. He is a commoner, and distantly related to *2*. His home is on Maloelap Atoll, where large sections were devastated by bombing during the war. The native inhabitants escaped or were evacuated during hostilities, and *23* was among them.

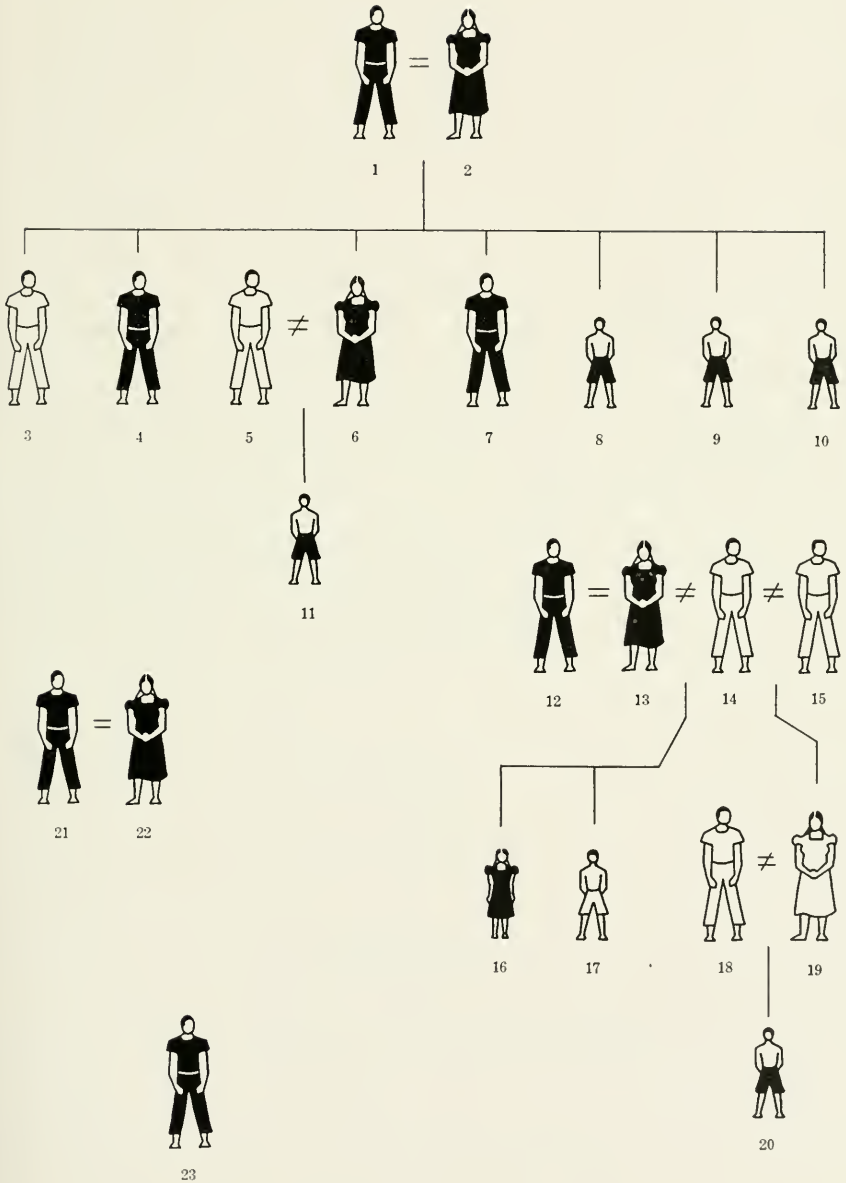
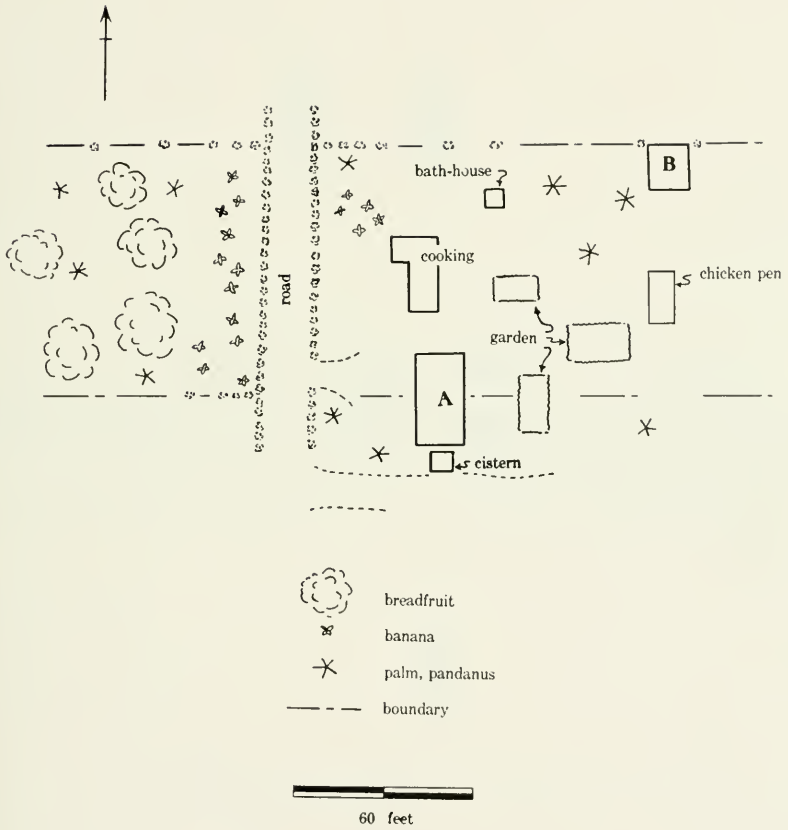


FIG. 21. Composition of Household II.



MAP 6. Household II. Ground plan of house-group.

EXPLANATION OF FIGURE 22 AND MAP 7

Graphic symbols are the same as those used in figure 20.

The entire household lives in House A. They are commoners. *1*'s lineage holds rights to the land on which the house-group is built; his older brother is the *alab*. *2*'s father was a Yankee merchant marine officer from Maine who settled on Majuro. She speaks no English, however. She has land rights in the village acquired through her mother.

There is neither well nor cistern in this house-group. Rain water is collected in drums.

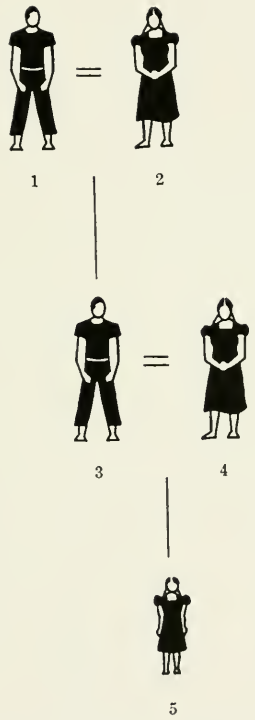
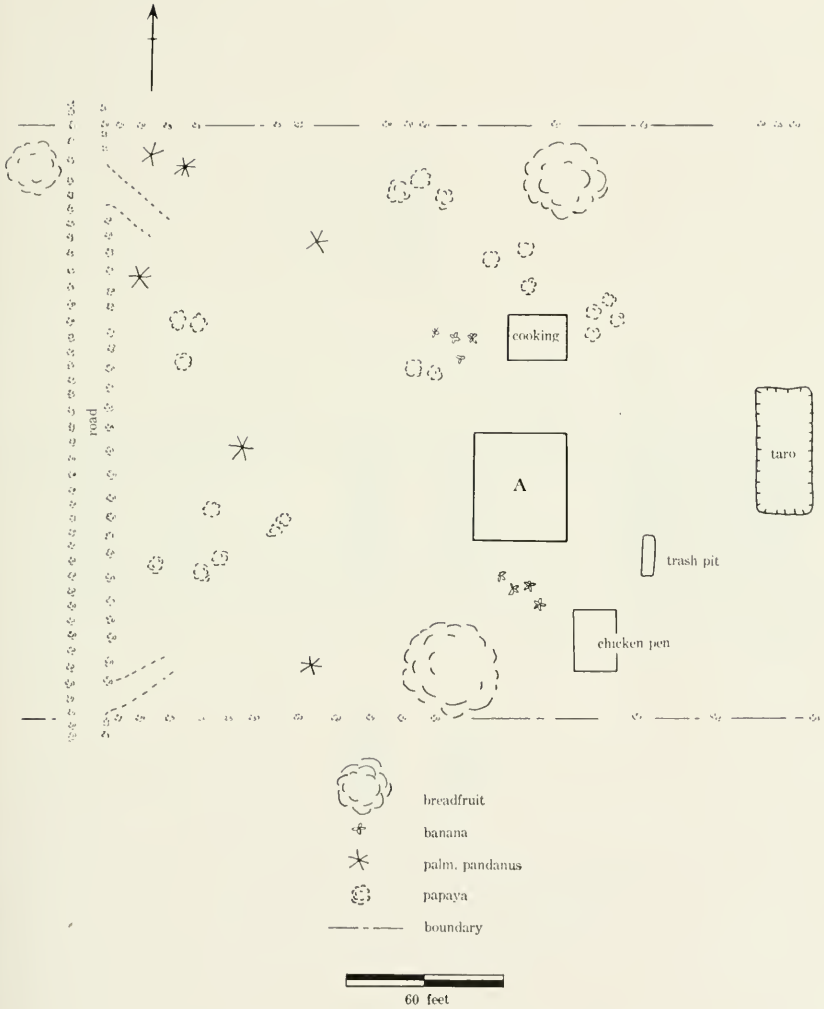


FIG. 22. Composition of Household III.



MAP 7. Household III. Ground plan of house-group.

EXPLANATION OF FIGURE 23 AND MAP 8

Graphic symbols are the same as those used in figure 20.

This household lives on the ocean side of *Lomar* district. The house-group is built on land in which *2*'s lineage has rights. *2* is an elderly commoner, and the *alab* of her lineage.

3 and *4* are frequent visitors, but they live regularly in *Iolab* district.

6 and *7* are from Arno. *5* has adopted *9*, and *6* has adopted *10*. *2*, *5*, *6*, *9*, and *10* live in House A. *7* and *8*, who is a Majuro woman, live in House B.

As in Household III, there is neither well nor cistern. Rain water is collected in drums.

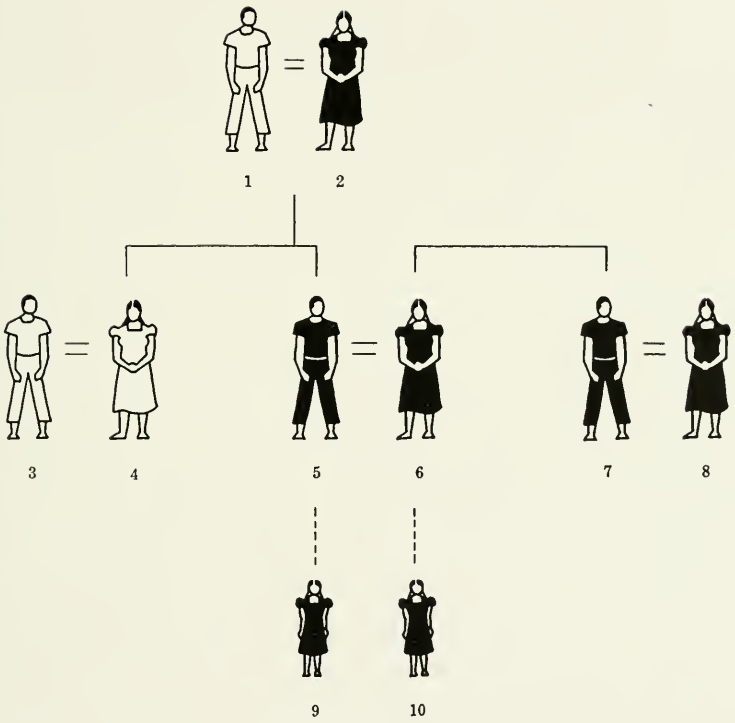
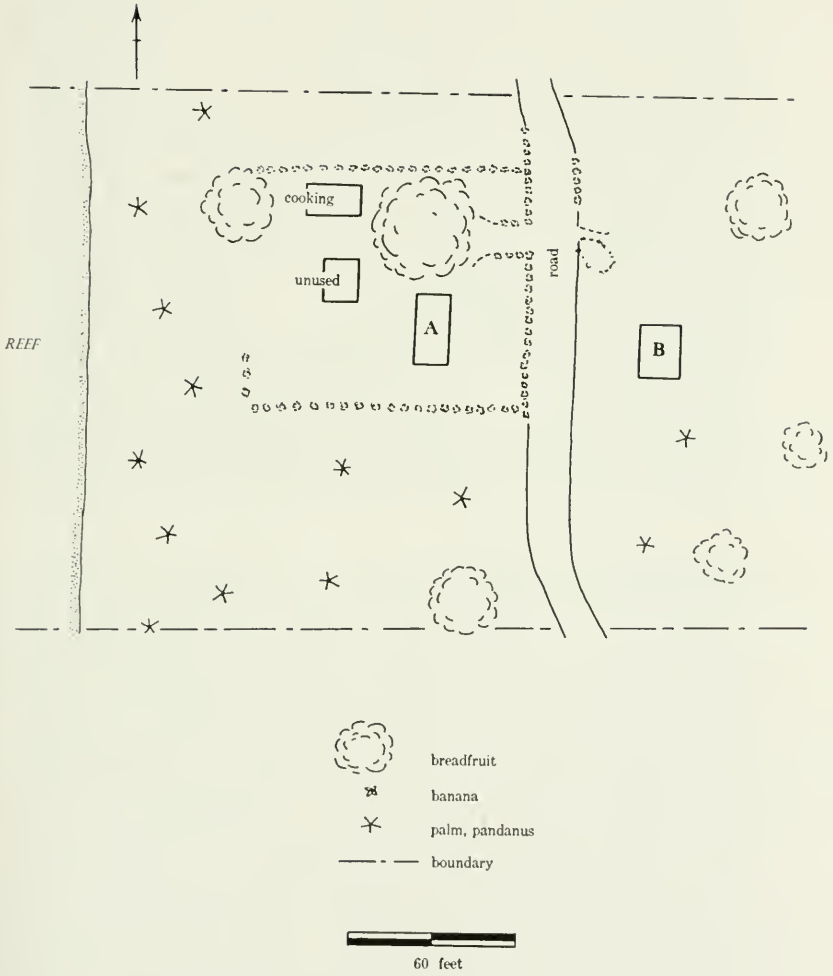


FIG. 23. Composition of Household IV.



Map 8. Household IV. Ground plan of house-group.

Mealtimes tend to be irregular, but a meal is usually eaten in the morning after rising and another in the early evening. In their eating habits I believe the Marshallese have changed little from earlier times. The German accounts note that the Marshallese have no very regular meal times, but do like to have a morning and evening meal (Finsch, 1893, p. 149; Erdland, 1914, p. 44). Erdland states that for the morning meal the people usually eat food left over from the night before, broil small fish caught during the night, or bake fresh breadfruit in season (Erdland, 1914, p. 44). The same condition holds today. There is never an over-abundance of food, and the menu for ordinary daily meals is always simple. In addition to the items noted above, the breakfast menu also may include milk of young coconuts and fresh *jekaro*, the sap of the coconut tree.

Men, women, and children eat together. Although the food is prepared in the cookhouse, it is often taken to the living-house to be consumed. In large households, the people living in separate living-houses may thus eat separately. But Marshallese practice in this respect is highly flexible and informal, in keeping with the irregularity of meal hours.

A good deal of food is eaten cold, for the Marshallese do not follow the custom of warming left-overs. Fingers are still used for eating, though knives, forks, and spoons are now making their appearance and are used on formal occasions.

It is the business of the men to provide raw vegetable and fish food, which the women cook. For the morning meal, if there is no food remaining from the night before, the men collect breadfruit and coconuts early in the morning. The women then bake the breadfruit for breakfast. After the morning meal, men and women go about their separate tasks.

There is no fixed routine about daily work in the village. The men are away from the house-group somewhat more than the women, as fishing, collecting breadfruit and coconuts, and working in the taro patches take them away from the house-area. If the men have heavy work to do, they prefer to perform such labor in the early morning hours before the sun is high. Both men and women always work in shady spots if they can, and avoid working in the sun.

If the morning is clear, one of the women's first tasks is to spread the sleeping mats on the coral yards for a good sunning. Thereafter the women proceed with a variety of jobs, whether it be washing clothes, sewing, making handicraft, gathering fuel, or whatever

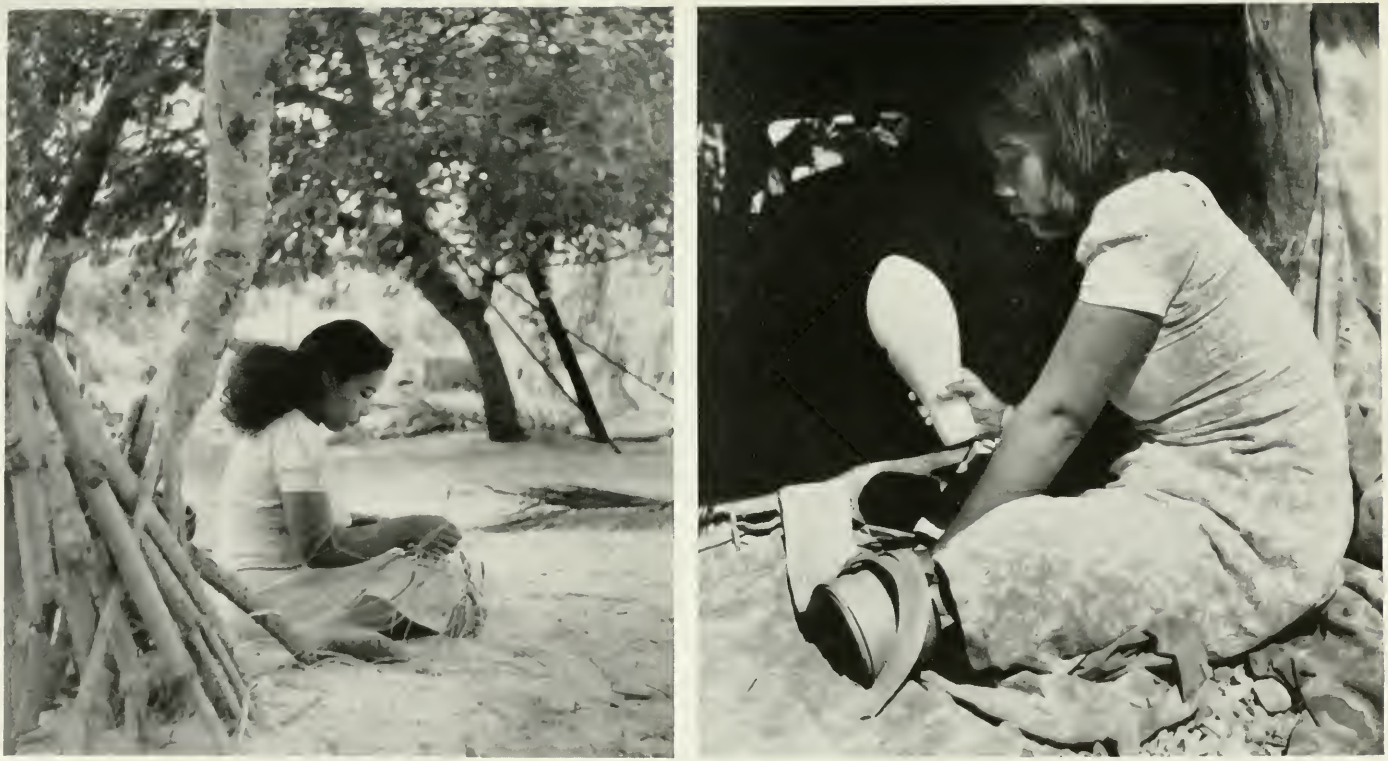
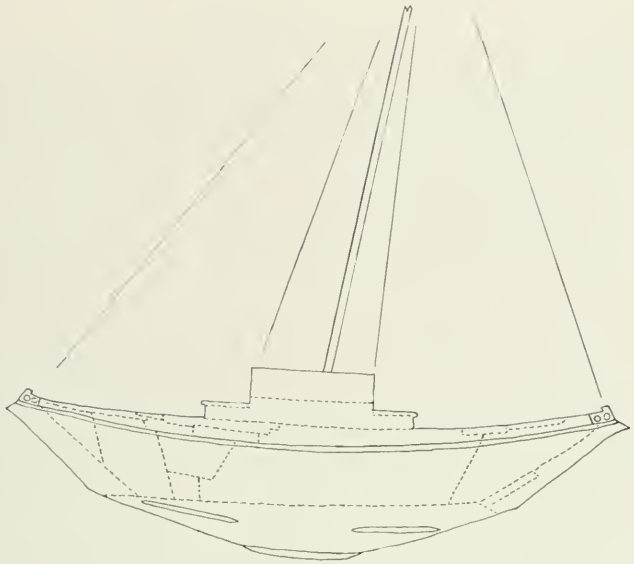


FIG. 24. Woman's work. Left: Making a small table mat, an export item. Right: Pounding pandanus leaves with a shell pounder to make the leaves soft and pliable for use in weaving.

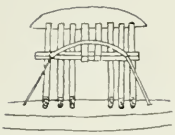
FIG. 25. Drawing water from a shallow well. The small house in the background is a bath-house. The grating around the well is Marston matting salvaged from the Navy base.

seems most pressing in their sphere of activity (figs. 24 and 25). On the whole, the women seem to be busier than the men, although they do not follow an invariable routine of work. The young children play about the house-group area, with occasional forays to the lagoon shore or down the village road. Older children walk to the village school, return at noon for an hour, and then go back to the school for the afternoon.

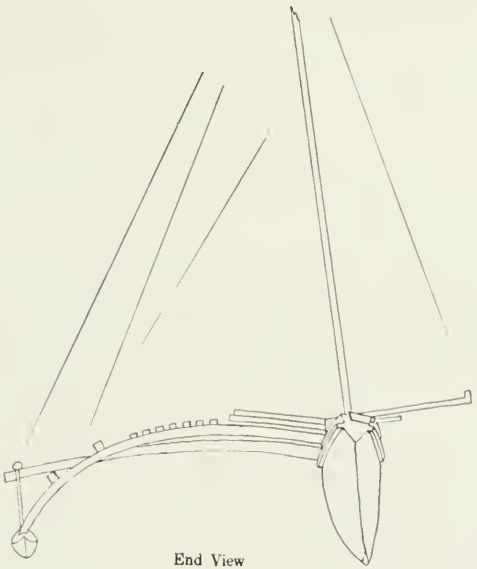
Activity slackens during the warm mid-day period, when many people take a short rest. Children generally get a bite to eat, but a noonday meal for adults is more often than not omitted. Afternoons are inclined to be leisurely, depending on the work on hand. Time is often found to gossip with a friend on the beach, pay a visit to the store, or visit another household. In the afternoon, the men collect vegetable food for the evening meal, and complete any hard manual labor.



Side View



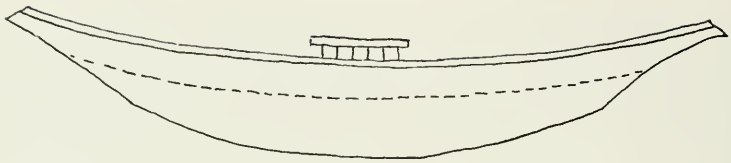
Outrigger Attachment



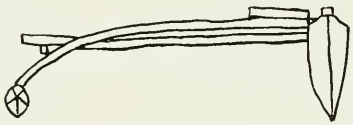
End View

12 feet

FIG. 26. Scale drawing of sailing canoe. In the side view, the dotted lines indicate the planks of which the near side of the hull is composed. The planks are secured together with coconut line lashings. The seams and lashing holes are caulked and the entire hull is painted.



Side View



End View

8 feet

FIG. 27. Scale drawing of paddle canoe. There is no decking in this canoe, and a sail is not used.

In the late afternoon and early evening, after the men have brought in the food, the women prepare the evening meal. Cook fires are lighted and earth ovens prepared. At dusk, as one walks down the village road, the fires from the cookhouses show as fitful spots of light half-obscured by trees and houses. Smoke from the fires mingles with the palms and breadfruit overhead and is occasionally blown across the road when there is a sudden gust of wind.

After the evening meal people talk and visit in the living-houses. Every household has at least one kerosene lantern, kept burning throughout the night to ward off the malevolent influence of the dangerous ghosts of the dead. In the evening the village is very quiet. There is ordinarily no public entertainment, no center where people congregate. Social intercourse is simply a matter of inter-household visiting. By nine-thirty, probably most of the village has retired and is asleep, except for the old people, who sleep less, and the young people, busy with their amours.

Sundays differ from week-days in that the Marshallese scrupulously observe Sunday as a day of rest. Church services are held in the morning and afternoon. Otherwise, the village is more than usually quiet. During the early years of the war, the Japanese attempted to impress the villagers with the importance of working seven days a week, largely to increase food and copra production. So far as I could tell, the Japanese effort met with stubborn resistance and no success.

DIVISION OF LABOR BETWEEN THE SEXES

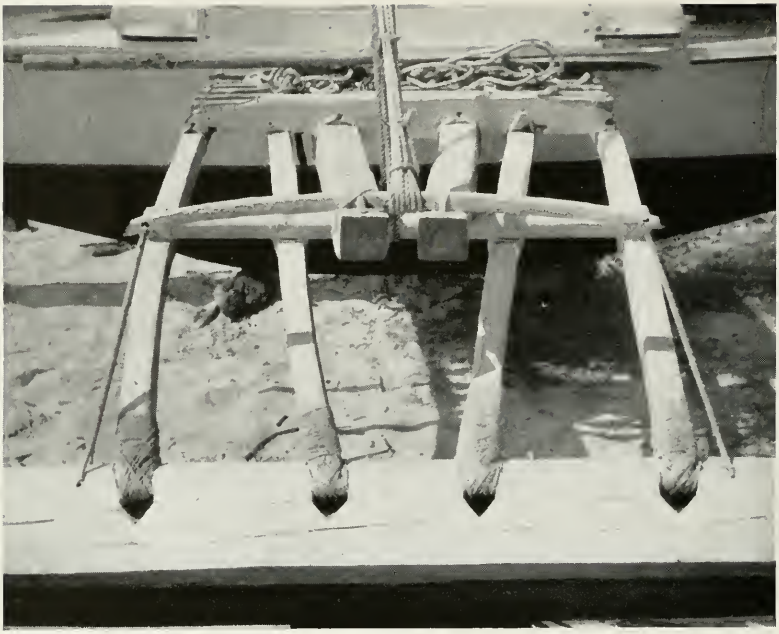
There is a clear differentiation made between women's work and men's work, reflected in the performance of household tasks. Most Marshallese work is directly connected with the household, either because it is performed to support the household unit or because it takes place in the house-group area. For this reason, the division of labor between the sexes is here briefly described in connection with the household. The work of the men will be considered first.

The men build the houses. They fell the trees, cut the necessary beams, posts, and other structural members, and erect the framework, walls, floors, and roof. If the roofs or walls are thatch, the women make the thatch but the men secure it in place. Housebuilding is primarily a man's job.

This statement can be broadened to include all woodworking. Aside from housebuilding, the most important woodworking activity is the building of outrigger canoes. The Marshallese canoe (figs. 26–30) is the finest surviving example of a native Marshallese craft. Most canoes are constructed from breadfruit, though plank-built canoes made from imported lumber can also be seen. A suitable breadfruit tree is selected and cut. Then the logs are roughly shaped and hauled to or near the house-group area, where the remainder of the construction takes place.

Additional wood articles made by the men include paddles and canoe-bailers, bowls for crushing breadfruit (fig. 32, upper), and coconut and pandanus scrapers. These are made from breadfruit. In addition, mauls and pestles are carved from a very heavy tropical hardwood known as *kuyi*, or ironwood.

Canoe-sailing and fishing are men's tasks. Women understand sailing techniques, but on only one occasion did I see a woman sail a canoe. Fishing techniques belong essentially to the men, although women and children may collect shellfish and small fish on the reef. Nets, lines, and fish traps are made by the men (fig. 31).



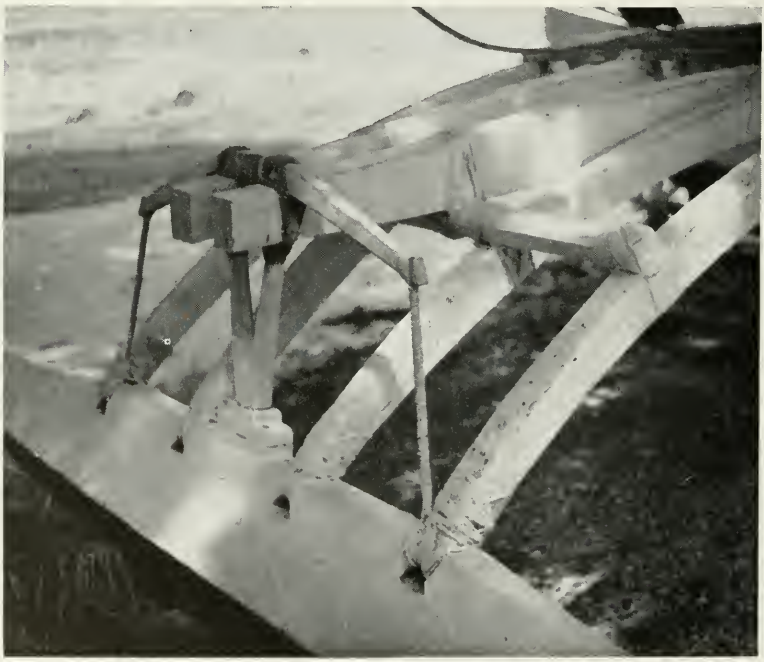


FIG. 28. Outrigger attachments.

FIG. 29. Upper: The sailmaker. Lower: Bow view of canoe, showing asymmetry of hull.

FIG. 30. Old canoe model. Present-day canoes lack the projections at the ends of the canoe, but otherwise details of construction are much the same. Model collected about 1900 (Cat. No. 91421–1).

The men are expected to obtain the food, although they do not cook it. They collect coconuts and breadfruit, cultivate the taro patches, plant bananas, papayas, and one species of breadfruit, and care for small gardens of sweet potatoes. However, if the men of the household happen to be absent, the women do not hesitate to collect coconuts and breadfruit. I have seen young women climb a coconut tree with quite as much agility as the men display.

A liquid food of great importance in the Marshallese diet is *jekaro*. *Jekaro* is obtained by cutting off the efflorescence of the

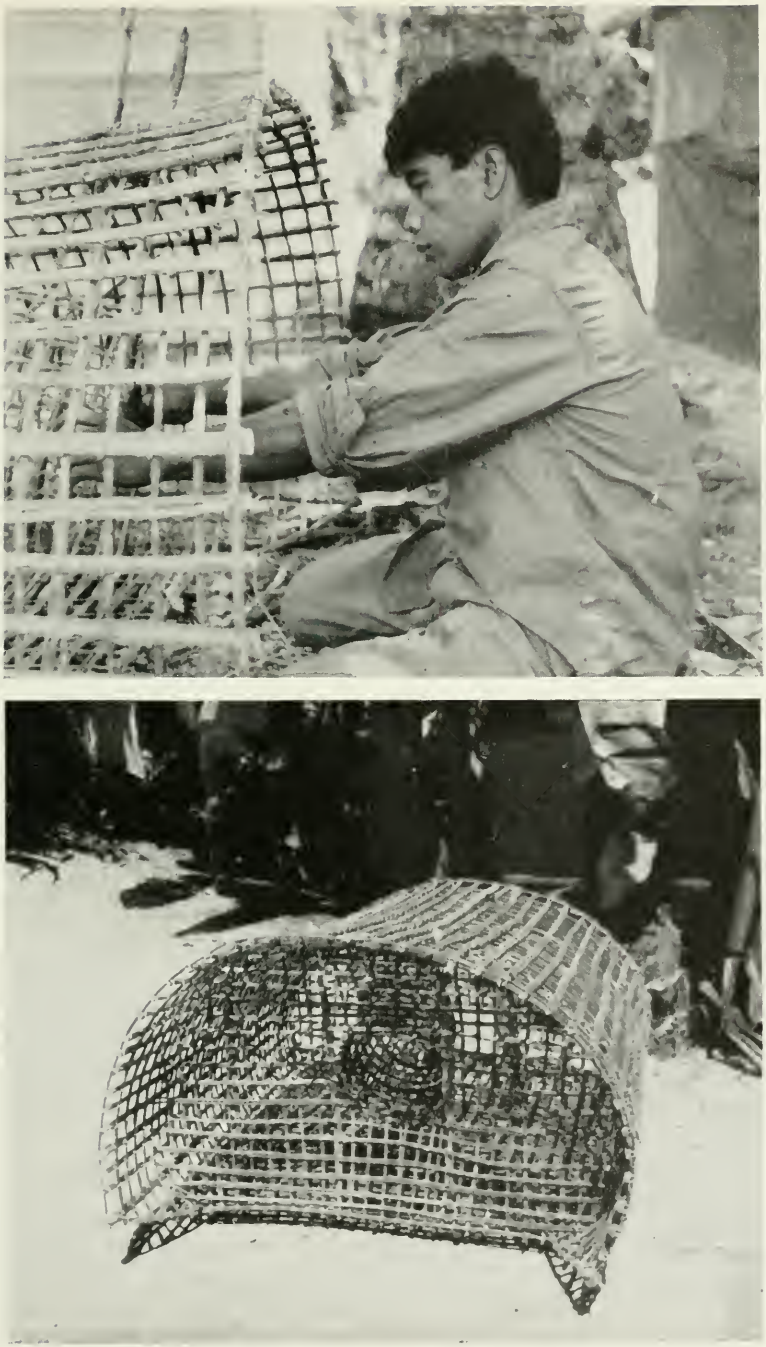


FIG. 31. Man's work. Upper: Making fish trap. Lower: Completed trap.

coconut palm and collecting into a glass bottle the liquid that drains from the cut. Every household has a number of coconut trees tapped in this way, and it is the job of the men to change the bottles at daybreak and at nightfall. The liquid collected in the bottles is usually diluted with water before it is drunk. *Jekaro* ferments easily and is occasionally distilled, though such distillation is illegal. As a matter of fact the Marshallese are not given to drinking alcoholic beverages. *Jekaro* can also be boiled down to form a sweet syrup called *jekamai*, used in sweetening foods.

In summary, the men's sphere of activity includes the heavy labor such as house-building and canoe-making. It includes all woodworking. Men spin the coconut husk line used in canoe-lashings and net bags (fig. 32, lower), the latter being a product of men's manufacture. Men are the sailors. Men do the fishing and make fish traps and pounds. They collect the vegetable food and work in the taro patches. Aside from these manual tasks, men have also assumed the primary responsibility in the working of cultural institutions borrowed from without. The local village officials are all men; the pastor, medical aid, school principal, and storekeepers are also men.

We may now turn to the women's sphere of activity. Women are the cooks, and it is their job to prepare the food. They also collect the fuel for the cook fires. Coconut husks are a principal fuel, and every hard-working housewife has a good store of husks, as well as kindling wood, under the protecting roof of her cookhouse. Women also take over the dominant share of the work of preserving foods, such as breadfruit, pandanus, and arrowroot.

Keeping the house and yard clean is a task for the women. They also have the job of raking the section of village street in front of their houses. Associated with the task of caring for house and yard is that of bringing basket-loads of coral pebbles from the beach and spreading them around the yard until the house-area is covered with a thick layer of coral.

The women are the weavers of the village. They must first cut and prepare the pandanus and coconut leaves before these materials can be used for the varieties of woven mats (figs. 33 and 34), baskets (fig. 35), and handicraft that the women make. Handicraft is the principal export of the village, so that the women have expanded this sphere of their activity beyond the requirements of their own households. Their needlecraft is of excellent quality.

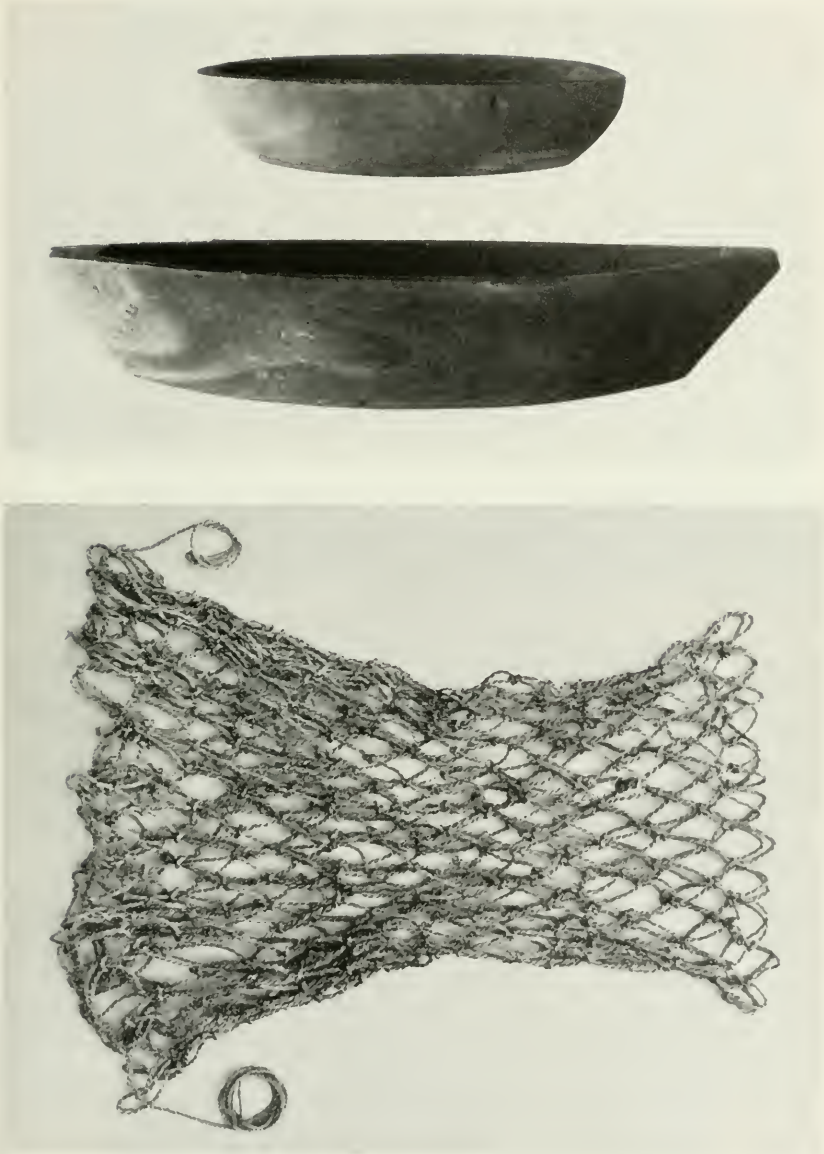


FIG. 32. Upper: Wooden bowls used in crushing breadfruit (Cat. Nos. 107945, 107946). Lower: Net bag of coconut fiber used to hold breadfruit while it is being soaked in the lagoon, preparatory to preserving the fruit (Cat. No. 107957–2). Both specimens collected in 1947.

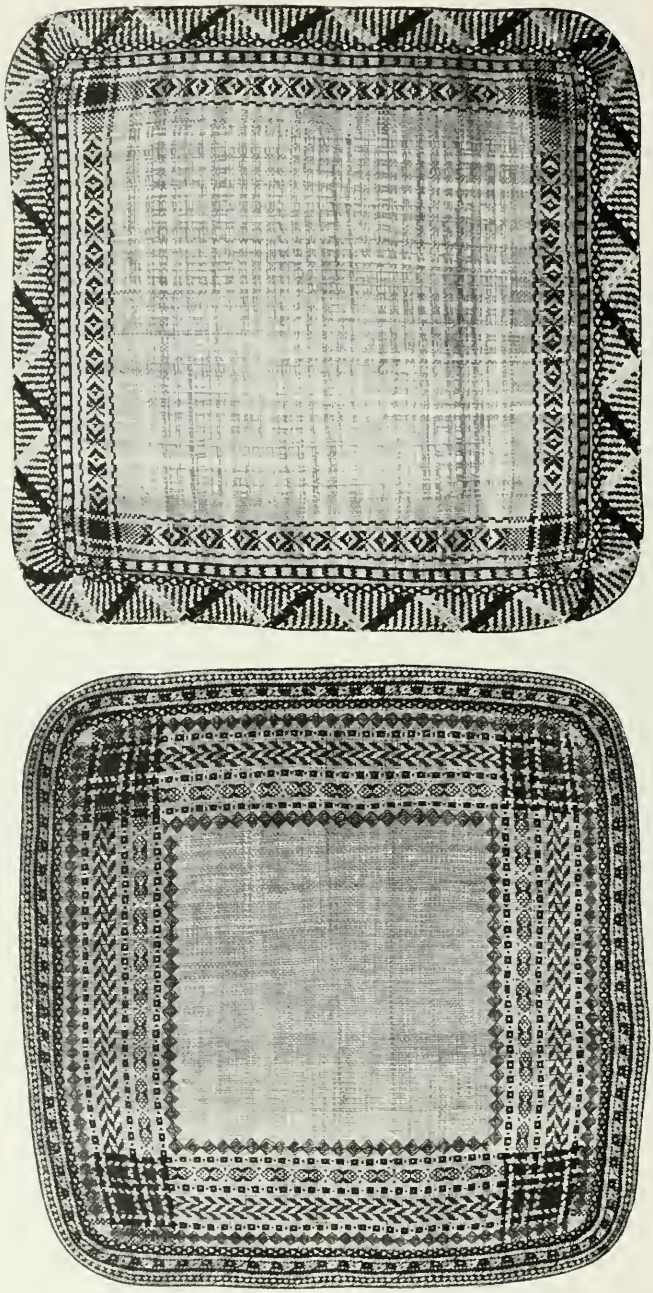


FIG. 33. Woven mats (Upper: Cat. No. 107968. Lower: Cat. No. 107964). Formerly these were used for women's skirts. Today they are used as infants' sleeping mats and as an export trade item. Both specimens collected in 1947.

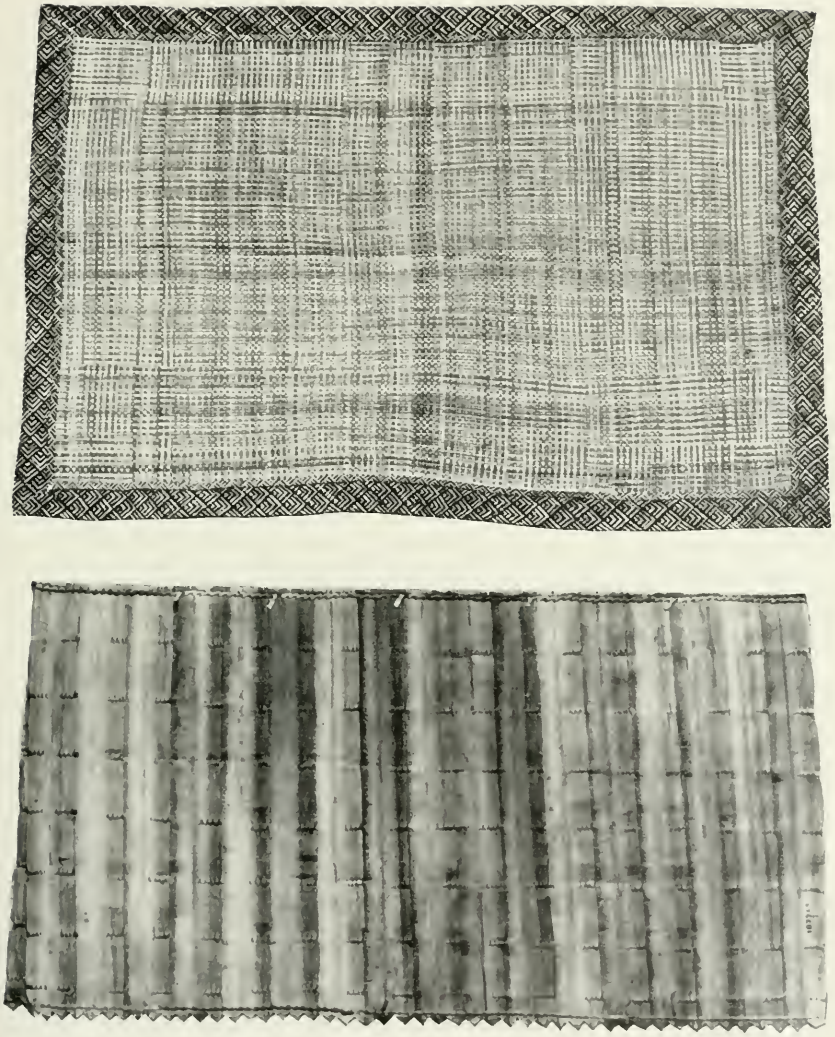


FIG. 34. Woven mats. Upper: Sleeping mat (Cat. No. 107971). Lower: Utility mat, used by women (Cat. No. 107963–1). Both specimens collected in 1947.

They buy at the stores the yard goods from which they make their own dresses as well as shirts and trousers for men and boys.

The women spend a great amount of time in washing clothes, seemingly a never-ending process. In washing, the women use a wood beater, and the "thwack" of a beater against wet clothing is a constant accompaniment of daily life around the house-group. Clothes are spread flat or hung out to dry in the hot tropical sun. They are then ironed with a charcoal-burning iron, the charcoal being obtained from coconut husks.

Finally, the care of infants and young children falls to the women. The respective duties and obligations of relatives in the care of children will be considered in more detail in the next chapter.

In certain types of work the men and women co-operate on the same job. One part of the job may be done by the women and another by the men, or both sexes may work together throughout the process. An example of the first type of work is the thatching of houses. The women cut and prepare the pandanus leaves, and make the thatch; the men then put the thatch on the houses. The second type of work is to be found in the periodic general cleanup of the village beach and the area around the dispensary and town hall. Here the men and women work together, cleaning out weeds, grass, and debris, and burning or burying the collected refuse. In making *bwiro* (preserved breadfruit), men and women also work together.

In a few types of work, men or women may be equally proficient. Thus sewing is essentially a woman's task, but often men too can handle a sewing machine expertly. I know at least two good men tailors in the village, though they work only on shirts and trousers and not on dresses. Men also understand how mats are woven, even if they do not do the weaving themselves, and on several occasions I observed men helping their wives by beating pandanus leaves with the heavy shell pounders to make the leaves pliable for weaving.

The preparation of copra for export was very important before World War II, but had not yet been resumed, except on a very small scale, at the time of my residence at the village. In the preparation of copra, the men and women also co-operate, although I did not observe any extensive copra-making. The men do the harder work of husking the coconuts and the women do much of the tedious process of cutting and drying the copra meat. The meat is then sacked and hauled to the copra sheds by the men.

THE HOUSEHOLD AND ITS FOOD

As the household is set off from others by its common use of a single cookhouse and as a food-consuming unit, it becomes relevant to inquire further into the sources of its food supply and the kinds of food it consumes.

The major share of the household's food is derived directly from the land in which its members have rights, and from the sea. The village as a whole depends primarily on local food resources. During my stay at the village the principal food items in the diet of every household with which I was acquainted were breadfruit, coconuts, *jekaro*, and fish. As breadfruit is seasonal, in the winter it is supplanted primarily by pandanus and arrowroot. Taro occupies a secondary role, but this is partly because the village was largely stripped of taro by the Japanese during the war. Of all the vegetable foods, breadfruit is the most liked by the villagers. Coconuts are a staple food throughout the year, so the villagers' liking for coconuts relative to other foods is difficult to determine. Coconuts are largely taken for granted.

Vegetable foods are gathered daily, and no large supply is stored in the houses. The male members of the household, particularly the younger men and older boys, who can more easily climb trees, collect this vegetable food from the several pieces of land in which the household members have rights. Commoners always collect their own food. Members of the nobility may also collect their own food, or at least part of it, the rest being supplied by occasional food gifts from commoners. The paramount chiefs and their immediate families are supplied with vegetable food by the commoners, or the commoner members of their households collect it.

Krämer and Nevermann (1938, p. 107) list pandanus as the most important vegetable food, with breadfruit next. This statement does not agree with my own observations. The reason is probably because the German authors' observations were made in the winter months, when pandanus nuts supplant breadfruit as a principal vegetable food. At the village, however, fresh breadfruit is certainly liked better than pandanus.

Every man in the village is acquainted with fishing techniques and at least occasionally goes fishing. But some men fish more than others and tend to specialize in fishing, selling their fish surplus in the village for cash money. As a result, some households may buy more fish than its members catch, and may eat fish only once or twice a week. Also, more fish are said to be caught in the calmer

summer months than in the winter, when the lagoon and the outside sea are rougher. During a three-week period in June, I kept a careful watch on the food consumption of seven households. On the average, four days out of the week these households ate fish as a principal item of diet.

Bananas, limes, and papayas are procured locally. Bananas are usually saved for special occasions. Frequently they are given to the village visitors, particularly American administrative personnel. There are a few lime trees in the village, and limes are eaten occasionally. Papayas are fairly common, but the Marshallese have not cultivated a taste for them; they are eaten occasionally, principally by children. Papayas are also given as food gifts to American visitors.

Shellfish collected on the reef, mostly by women and children, also supplement the diet at intervals, but not regularly. The principal kinds of shellfish gathered for food consist of the following species:[1]

Nerita (*Amphinerita*) *polita antiquata* Recluz (Marshallese *karrol*).
Gafrarium (*Gafrarium*) *pectinatum* Linnaeus (Marshallese *jiberul*).
Mesodesma (*Actactodea*) *striatum* Gmelin (Marshallese *kelibuk*).
Canarium (*Conomurex*) *luhuanum luhuanum* Linnaeus (Marshallese *lakerr*).
Turbo (*Marmarostoma*) *argyrostomus argyrostomus* Linnaeus (Marshallese *jirul*).
Asaphis (*Asaphis*) *deflorata* Linnaeus (Marshallese *jukwe*).

There are also a few pigs and chickens in the village. The stock of these domestic animals virtually vanished during the war, and is only now being built up again. Cooked chicken and pork are delicacies reserved for special occasions.

Canned meat, canned fish, flour, rice, sugar, biscuits, tea, and coffee are purchased at the two village stores. These articles, however, exist only in limited quantity at the present time and supplement the native diet. They do not form the principal articles of diet. However, in the case of store-bought foods, the important factor is the limited quantity available, rather than the villagers' appetite for them, for the latter far exceeds the former. By the end of the Japanese period, the Marshallese were buying more and more food in the Japanese trade stores at the village, obtaining the necessary money primarily through the sale of copra. The Japanese were in need of copra, and generally wished to stimulate trade, so that the trend toward greater consumption of store food was encouraged

[1] Identified by Dr. Fritz Haas, Curator, Lower Invertebrates, Chicago Natural History Museum.

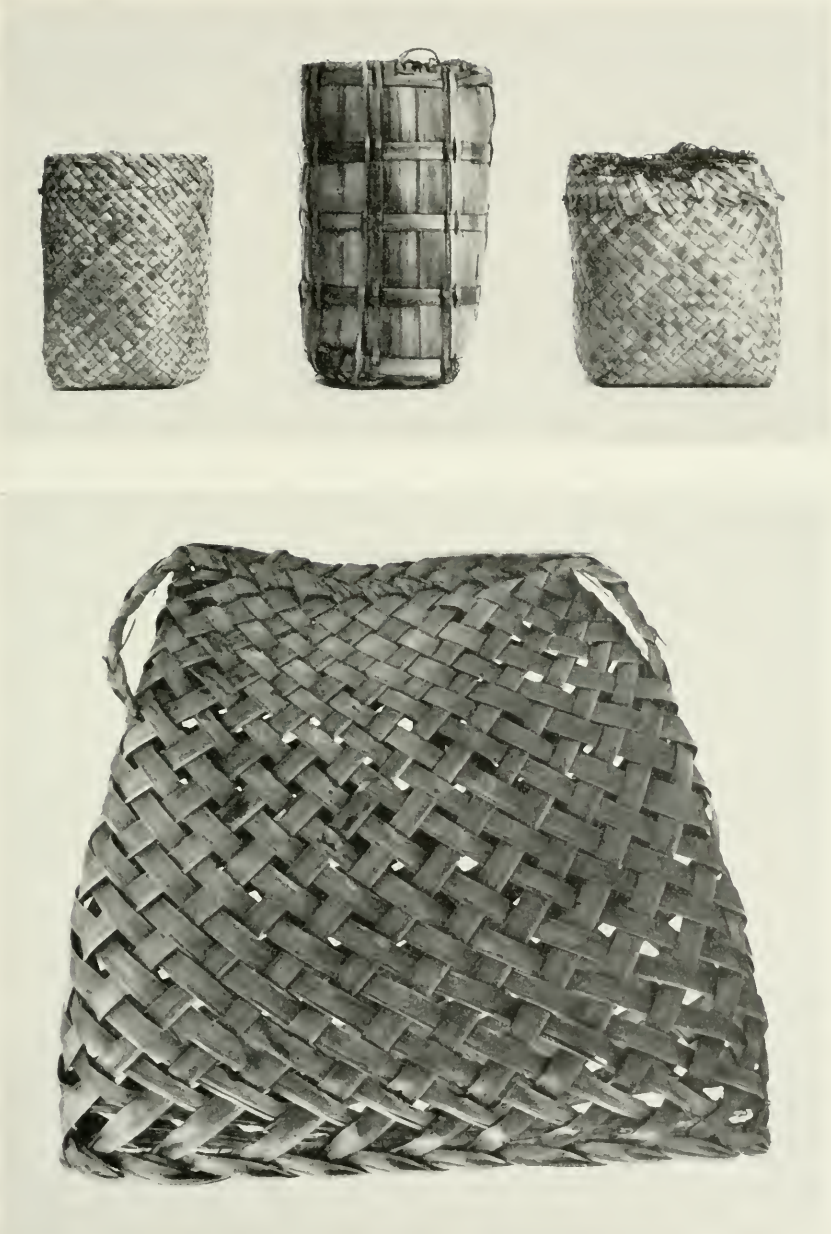


FIG. 35. Upper: Baskets made of pandanus and used to hold arrowroot flour (left to right, Cat. Nos. 107961–2, 107962, 107961–1). Lower: Fish basket made of coconut leaves (Cat. No. 107960). All baskets collected in 1947.

by the expansion of trading activity. The villagers acquired a great liking in particular for polished rice and sugar, both of which were plentiful and relatively cheap in Japanese times. This liking continues to the present day.

An indication of the trend toward consumption of imported foods is found in the presence of beriberi in the village in Japanese times. Actual figures are lacking, but both the medical aid and the magistrate remembered several cases of beriberi in the village in the Japanese period. Beriberi would not occur if the villagers were limited to their native diet, and its presence is an indication that the cultivated liking for polished rice, sugar, biscuits, and white flour had progressed to an extreme degree. Since the war, circumstances have forced the villagers to reverse the trend and rely more heavily again on their native foods. But the liking for store foods remains, and if they increase in quantity in the stores and the villagers can obtain enough cash income to procure them, the trend toward greater consumption of store food relative to locally produced food may well be resumed. A further possible result may be a reappearance of deficiency diseases such as beriberi and a deterioration in the general health of the village, if imported foods supplant instead of supplement the native diet.

In the aerial photograph of the village, a zone of coconut trees is visible along the lagoon side of the island, sharply differentiated from the adjoining interior area of breadfruit. This zone of coconuts was planted in Japanese times. Previously, it was a breadfruit area, but the Japanese wished to increase copra production and so either encouraged or ordered the cutting down of the breadfruit. The resulting decrease in the local food resources was certainly not advantageous to the health of the village, in view of the presence of beriberi and the trend toward the increased consumption of polished rice, white flour, and sugar.

The villagers have a great love of sugar and consume an awesome amount with a single cup of tea or coffee. Sugar, however, is necessarily rationed at the stores. In contrast to this love of sugar, the people consume little or no refined salt. This indifference to salt has been pointed out by observers ever since Chamisso's time in the first part of the nineteenth century (Hager, 1886, p. 64; Steinbach, 1895, p. 473). Presumably the villagers obtain enough salt for their needs through drinking brackish well water, and eating fish and other food boiled in sea water.

In order to show the extent to which local food resources are still being utilized, figures on food consumption in seven households for

a three-week period are given below in tabular form. One of these households is noble (No. IV), while the others are commoner. There is a negligible difference between noble and commoner in the ordinary food consumption patterns of daily life. The data shown in the table are limited, but they serve to indicate the continuing importance of native foods in household consumption at Majuro. For the period considered, breadfruit, coconuts, fish, and *jekaro* were the mainstays on which all households relied.

TOTAL FOOD CONSUMPTION BY HOUSEHOLD
(June 9–29, 1947)

Household	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII
No. of persons per household	11	8	8	12	8	6	5
Food Items							
Breadfruit	206	85	86	130	152	81	85
Coconuts							
Green	195	61	198	97	145	46	179
Ripe	11	24	24	13	10	11	69
Fish (lbs.)							
Fresh	67	17	60	153	62	55	66
Salt	...	5	10	1	11	..	5
Canned	1	1	3	2	3	..	2
Shellfish (clams, etc.)	...	20	300	...	...	..	200
Jekaro (qts.)	133	53	14	213	152	..	42
Meat, canned (lbs.)	16	10	16	10	24	..	...
Rice (lbs.)	20	19	32	5	18	7	18
Flour (lbs.)	16	7	24	1	2	1	4
Sugar (lbs.)	11	9	9	...	8	5	3
Taro (6 in. roots)	...	..	...	...	...	12	14
Biscuits (1 lb. box)	1	..	1	3	...	..	1
Tea (large pots)	14	3	17	...	4	7	9
Coffee (large pots)	...	4	2	...	6	7	11
Chicken	...	1	...	...	...	..	...
Bananas	60	..	...	50	10	..	...
Limes	...	18	38	...	69	..	11
Milk (6 oz. can)	...	17	...	...	...	..	...
Pineapple, canned (lbs.)	2	..	...	...	...	..	...
Pumpkin	3	..	...	...	...	..	...

Food has great social importance in village life. A special study of the usages surrounding it would throw much light on the social structure of Marshallese society and reveal fundamental aspects of the value system of Marshallese culture, but such a study is beyond the limits of this report. Certain manifestations of the importance of food, however, are indicated below:

(1) The common preparation and consumption of food is a fundamental basis of household organization.

(2) Food is the principal form of tribute of commoners to the nobility and paramount chiefs. The system of tribute, though much weakened compared to its former state, is nevertheless an indication of the character of the class

system. It is also a mechanism for the distribution of subsistence, as against money, income.

(3) Food is always used in establishing or re-establishing personal relations with strangers or visitors. This varies from offering a fresh, green coconut to a passer-by to the more formal meal served to visitors who have been long absent from the village.

(4) At all social occasions of special importance—the first birthday of a child, a funeral feast, Christmas, or special celebrations like the Fourth of July—the common consumption of food by those present is a dominant theme of the occasion and an expression of the social solidarity of the group that has gathered together for the event.

VII. LINEAGE AND CLAN

In the last chapter it was pointed out that the domestic family unit, as represented by the household, is not organized on the basis of matrilocal residence and the maternal lineage. Marshallese society is matrilineal, however, with respect to two formally recognized social units: the lineage and the clan.

THE LINEAGE

The Marshallese word for lineage is *bwij*. *Bwij* is usually translated by interpreters as meaning "family" (literally, "navel"). As in the case of the English word "family," the Marshallese *bwij* has several shades of meaning in denoting particular relatives and is often used in just as indefinite a manner as the English word. Some informants included the *alab's* children, or sometimes even the father and his close relatives, in speaking of their *bwij*. Others tended to include spouses of members of the lineage. One informant, Dwight Heine, noted that one is "half in his father's *bwij*." But all informants agreed that in the narrow sense, and especially in relation to land tenure and succession to rank and title, the word *bwij* refers strictly to a maternal lineage (see Mason, 1947, pp. 23–26).

The maternal lineage at Majuro is composed of all those individuals related through the maternal line to a known ancestor to whom an actual genealogical relation can be traced. As this ancestor is usually dead, it may happen that the *bwij* really consists of two or more sub-lineages connected through descent from ancestors no longer living. Thus two sisters may leave a string of descendants, each string forming a sub-lineage. When the sisters die, the sub-lineages may remain together, however, and are called the "younger" and "older" halves of the *bwij*, depending on the respective ages of the sisters from whom they are descended. My informants agreed that two such sub-lineages would tend to become completely independent of each other as the living members became increasingly separated in time from the original pair of sisters. Undoubtedly this has happened in the past and is the normal way in which new lineages have been formed. Actual instances of lineage formation

are difficult to collect. With the exception of the paramount chiefs and nobility, the villagers are not pre-occupied with a correct remembrance of genealogies beyond about one or two ancestral generations. For nearly fifty years the Marshallese population has been almost stationary, while prior to that time there was a period of decline, so that there has not been a steady multiplication of lineages resulting from a natural increase in population. It is easier to collect instances of lineages that are dying out than to find examples of the formation of new ones.

Sometimes it happens that sub-lineages within a *bwij* will become independent and then re-unite. I learned of one such case, where a *bwij* had split into two independent lineages. They divided the lineage land and each new lineage had its own head. But after a time there were so few people in each lineage that it was considered desirable to merge; so the surviving members of each lineage combined their lands and again put themselves under the authority of a single lineage head.

As the lineage is maternal, everyone belongs to the lineage of his mother. Spouses of members of the lineage do not belong to the lineage. Mason (1947, p. 25) also notes that adopted children of members of the lineage do not belong to the lineage by virtue of adoption alone. My own data are corroborative of this statement.

Every lineage in the village, noble or commoner, has a head. The head of the royal lineage is the *iroij labalab*, or paramount chief. The heads of the other *iroij* lineages are the *iroij erik*, or lesser chiefs. The head of a commoner lineage is called the *alab*. The *alabs* are the representatives of the commoners on the village council. They form the majority of the council and are an important group.

The lineage heads represent the lineage in all matters that concern it as a whole. Traditionally, the system of political authority was a hierarchical one of paramount chief, lesser chiefs, and *alabs*, all of whom possessed authority in turn over their respective lineages. It was the *alab* of a commoner lineage who was responsible for seeing that the members of his lineage procured food supplies as tribute (*ekan*) for the nobility. This food tribute was presented by the *alab* to the *iroij erik*, or lesser chief, who in turn passed it on, or at least the best part of it, to the *iroij labalab*, or paramount chief. Although the *ekan* system is much weakened, this is still the procedure used.

The *alab* of a commoner lineage is theoretically the oldest member of the lineage. *Alabs* retain their position until they die, when the

office then descends to the next oldest sibling, regardless of sex. The position never passes from a father to his child, for the child is not in the father's lineage. If an *alab* dies, and there are none of his or her siblings alive, the office then passes to the oldest living child of the oldest female in the dead *alab's* generation in the lineage. If the dead *alab* was a woman and was also the oldest female in her generation in the lineage, the office will pass to her oldest child, male or female. Thus the rule of succession to the lineage headship combines considerations both of generation and of relative age within a single generation. This is true of noble as well as of commoner lineages.

The lineage head may be either a man or a woman (see fig. 36). However, if the head is a woman, she may often delegate her authority to her brother, or other oldest or most able man in her lineage. There are always some women *alabs* present at council meetings, but there are also usually a number of men representing women *alabs*, the latter having delegated authority to the men because they feel that the men are in a better position to represent the lineage. Also I do not know whether a woman would be accepted as *iroij labalab*, or paramount chief. Particularly in the pre-German period, when war was continually being waged with the paramount chiefs as leaders, I suspect a woman's claim to the paramount chieftainship would be set aside in favor of her brother.

The system of succession to lineage headship is also sufficiently flexible so that the incompetent or incapacitated can be by-passed. Normally the succession follows the rules of generation and age as just described, but occasionally an *alab* dies whose successor is physically disabled, incompetent, or otherwise unable to carry out the responsibilities of his office. In such case, the successor may recognize his incapacity and voluntarily give up his claim in favor of the next in line. On the other hand, an incompetent successor may not recognize his own shortcomings and insist on being *alab* regardless. The other members of the lineage may then object and refuse to recognize him as their *alab*. A dispute over the lineage headship results. In the old days such a dispute seems to have been settled by the lesser or paramount chief to whom the lineage owed allegiance. Today, the authority of the chiefs is weakened, the individual commoners have more to say, and such disputes can go on indefinitely. Two examples involving deviations from the normal succession of lineage headship are given below. One refers to a noble, the other to a commoner, lineage.

The oldest son of the oldest sister of one of the paramount chiefs is so seriously crippled that he must be carried from place to place and is a complete invalid, taking no part in village affairs. He is the successor of the paramount chief, but there appears to be no doubt that the chieftainship will pass to his brother instead, who has an extensive knowledge of events in the Marshallese world and takes an active part in village politics.

A is the oldest member of the "older half" of a commoner lineage. *Z* is the oldest member of the "younger half" of the lineage. *A* is also the only surviving member of his half of the lineage, whereas the "younger" half has a number of members. *A* is old and, in the eyes of the younger half, incompetent. In any society, he would be considered ineffective. *Z* is a vigorous, intelligent man of middle age. *A* recognizes Langlan as his paramount chief; the younger half of the lineage recognizes Jitiam. *A* proclaims himself as *alab* of this lineage, but the remainder of the lineages refuse to recognize him as such and recognize *Z* instead. *A* formerly lived at the east end of the atoll, but his land there was taken by the naval base during the war, and when he moved to the village he was taken care of by Langlan rather than by his lineage. *Z* and the other members of the lineage have land on Majuro Island. For all intents and purposes, *A* has been by-passed by the lineage, who recognize *Z* as their *alab*. The dispute continues, however, and will probably only be settled when *A* dies.

The lineage is first and foremost a land-holding group. With certain exceptions, the right to the use and to the produce of a given land plot is vested in a lineage rather than in an individual. It is the land-holding function of the lineage that stands out as its dominant characteristic. Its relation to land tenure is described in the next section.

The lineage also determines the ascribed status of an individual in the old class system. The succession to paramount chieftainship follows the royal lineage of the *iroij labalab*. The lesser chiefs pass on their titles within their own lineages. The commoners remain commoners by virtue of their membership in commoner lineages. Lineages are designated as *bwij in iroij*, *bwij in bwirak*, or *bwij in kajur*, and an individual's position within the old class system is defined by his membership in a lineage of one of these classes.

The lineage is also a basic feature of political organization. The lineage head is the political representative of his lineage. The majority of the village council consists of the *alabs*, as representatives of the commoner lineages. This feature of present administrative organization is grounded in native custom, for in the old days the paramount and lesser chiefs operated through their subordinate *alabs*. It was through the *alabs* that the authority of the chiefs was funnelled and made effective among the commoners.

Lastly, the lineage is a co-operating kinship unit. Although marriage is very brittle in the Marshalls, an established marriage involves a relation not merely between the individual partners to a marriage, but their respective lineages as well. On special family occasions, such as the first birthday of a child or a death in the

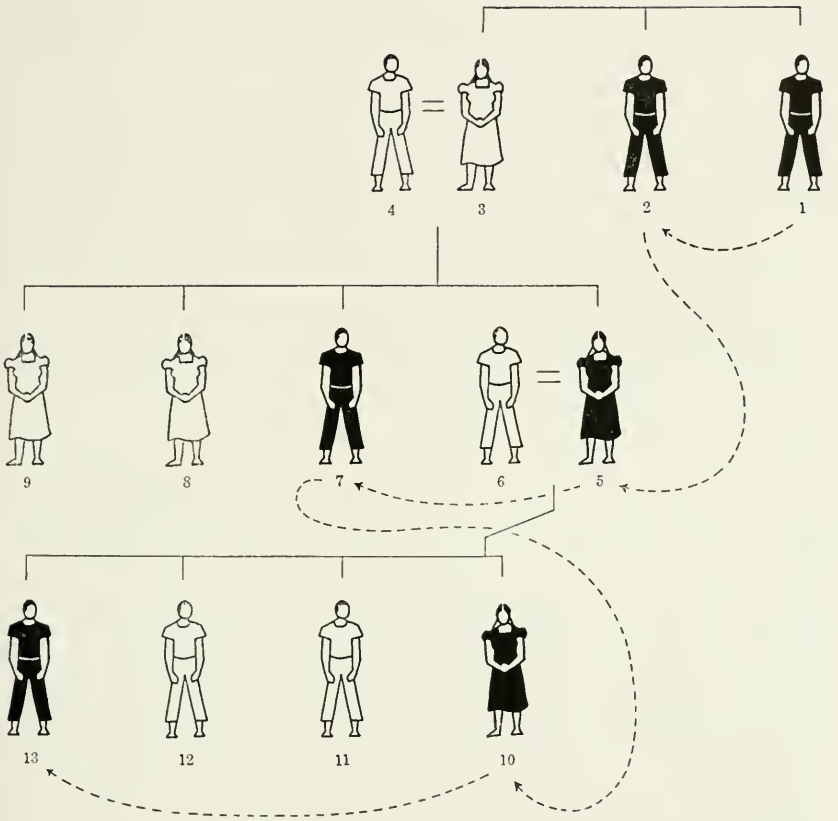


FIG. 36. Succession to *alabship* in one lineage.

The present *alab*, or lineage head, and his predecessors in office are shown by the figures in silhouette. The line of succession is indicated by dotted lines and arrows.

13 is the present head of this lineage, while *1* is the earliest *alab* shown on the chart. On *1*'s death his younger brother *2* became the *alab*. *3* died before *2*, so the headship went to *5*, the oldest sibling in her generation. On her death, *7* became *alab*, as he was the next oldest living sibling. *8* and *9* were younger sisters, who died before *7*, so neither ever became head of the lineage. On *7*'s death, the lineage headship passed to the oldest child of the oldest sister. This person was *10*. When *10* died, *13* became the *alab*. *11* and *12* were both older than *13*, but they died before *10*. On *13*'s death, the headship will pass to *10*'s oldest child.

family, the lineages of both a man and his wife gather together for the event. In telling of cases of divorce, informants would often say "the lineages separated" to describe the situation. Also, as a determining factor limiting the range of the kinship system, the lineage stands out more clearly than the clan.

A few remarks should be accorded the relation of lineage to the domestic family. The lineage and the domestic family at Majuro are not the same and should not be considered as synonymous. It is true that a small number of lineages consist of only a few individuals, who do reside together. But most lineages are spread among a number of households. The domestic family has been shown to vary in composition from elementary to extended family groups. It is a residence unit—a household—and serves different purposes in the social organization than does the maternal lineage.

LAND TENURE AND THE LINEAGE

The importance of the lineage in regard to land leads us to inquire into land tenure in general, and into the relation of land tenure to the lineage in particular.

At Majuro, as on all atolls, land is a limited resource. All the land on the atoll is claimed by someone, either an individual or a kin group. There is no open, free, or unclaimed land, nor is there land held and used communally by the village or atoll population as a whole, without regard to someone's rights. It is true that the school and dispensary are used by the community as a group, but the villagers are quite aware of the various persons who have claims to the land on which school and dispensary are built. It is also true that during the war the Navy took all the land at the east end of the atoll for military purposes. Eventually most of this area will no doubt be returned to Marshallese hands, though unfortunately much of it is greatly reduced in economic value, as so many coconut palms, breadfruit, and pandanus were destroyed in base construction. The United States Coast Guard occupies a small tract on Rongrong Island also. Yet the land rights of individuals to this government-occupied land are by no means forgotten by the Marshallese.

At the village, there is one exception in the case of the small tract of land on which the church is built. According to the people, this tract was given either to the local church group or to the mission society by Jebrik, a paramount chief, during the nineteenth century. At that time the paramount chief still had autocratic rights to land under his control, and the sole right to the church tract was trans-

ferred to the church. Today no one that I know of contests the exclusive right of the latter to this land.

All the land on each of the islands forming the atoll is divided into strips that run across the island from lagoon to ocean. Each of these strips is called a *wäto*. The central section of the village area, comprised by the two districts *Iolab* and *Lobat*, is so deep and the land strips so long, that the latter have been further divided transversely into two, three, or even four individual lots. Each of these individual lots is called a *la*. Except for this land in *Iolab* and *Lobat*, the *la* and the *wäto* coincide, and actually the latter term is more commonly used in referring to a land lot. Each lot also has a proper name by which it is known. Boundaries are marked by plantings of red-leaved shrubs or lilies, or by breadfruit trees or coconut palms. Not all boundary lines are established to the satisfaction of interested persons. Land disputes involve boundaries of individual tracts as well as conflicting claims to the tracts themselves.

The various land lots are not uniform in size. Except in the special case of *Iolab* and *Lobat* districts, the length of the lot varies according to the width of the island on which it lies. The width of the lot also varies. In *Iolab* district, as shown on map 4, the width of individual lots ranges from approximately 65 to 190 feet, while they run up to 1,000 feet in length. Taking the atoll as a whole, one can say that single lots vary in size from approximately one to five acres. This agrees with Mason's statement for the Marshalls as a whole (Mason, 1947, p. 146).

Land rights are never bought or sold among the villagers. Rights to land are inherited, or received as a gift, but they cannot be purchased. Nor is it customary to divide land. In the long history of Majuro, land lots probably have been divided on occasion, particularly as adjacent lots sometimes bear the same name but are differentiated according to direction. Thus *Arnböko north* and *Arnböko south* are two adjacent lots that may once have been a single piece, but it is not customary today to divide land lots.

The various single lots do not possess equal plant resources, for breadfruit and coconut trees are not evenly distributed over the atoll, and taro patches occur only on Majuro Island, in the interior of the village area. Thus there is considerable variation in the quality and quantity of natural resources of land lots, according to their location on the atoll.

Land tenure at Majuro is intimately related both to the lineage and to the class structure. The importance of the latter with respect

to land rights has been touched upon in Chapter V. At this point it is desirable to recapitulate what has been said, and to include additional information.

The Marshallese do not recognize exclusive individual ownership of land. Instead, in a single land lot, a series of individuals and lineage groups holds rights that entitle them to separate shares in the produce of that lot, as well as to residence rights on the land in question. As the system works today, the two paramount chiefs hold the primary right to the land. All the land tracts on the atoll, with the exception of the church land, are divided between Langlan and Jitiam, the two paramount chiefs. To my knowledge, there is no land, except the small church tract, in which one of these chiefs does not claim a right.

Ranking below the paramount chiefs in the class structure come the *iroij erik*, or lesser chiefs. Members of this group hold rights in the same land in which the two paramount chiefs hold a primary right. The right of a lesser chief is merely subordinate to the right of a paramount chief. This does not mean that two or more lesser chiefs hold rights in the same lot, but that the various lots on the atoll are divided among the lesser chiefs, each of whom holds sole rights within his class to a number of lots under his name.

Next come the commoners. The *alabs*, the heads of the commoner lineages, also hold land rights in the same land in which the paramount and lesser chiefs hold rights, but the commoner's rights are theoretically subordinate to all chiefly rights. As in the case of the lesser chiefs, more than one *alab* does not hold rights in a single lot; the various lots are divided among the various *alabs*, who represent their respective lineages.

Therefore, in a given piece of land, a paramount chief, a lesser chief, and an *alab* all hold rights. The *alab's* family and lineage are the *ri-jerbal*, or workers of the land, and it is they who collect the produce. In a few cases the right of *ri-jerbal* has been given as a separate right to a fourth person—always a commoner—who works the land with his family. In such cases there are four distinct rights, each allocated to a different party, the whole series being closely adjusted to the class structure.

A qualification must be introduced in that for a few lots the rights of paramount chief, lesser chief, and *alab* are not all represented. There are some instances of lots in which only a paramount chief and a lesser chief have rights and a few other cases where only a paramount chief and an *alab* have rights. In other words, it

occasionally happens that one right—either that of an *alab* or a lesser chief—is missing. I was told that there are also a very few lots in which only a paramount chief holds rights, but I did not investigate such land sufficiently to be entirely certain of the point.

We may now inquire more closely into the nature of these various rights to land. First of all, how are they related to the authority of the chiefs?

The documentary material and the testimony of old informants indicates that under pre-contact conditions the authority of the paramount chief was very great. He had power to dispossess commoners of their land rights at will, and he also controlled the allocation of rights among the lesser chiefs. The commoners worked the land and collected its fruits under the eyes of the *alabs*. The lesser chiefs supervised the *alabs*. The commoners and their *alabs* were thus responsible to the lesser chiefs, who in turn were responsible to the paramount chief. The primary right both to the land itself and to its fruits was held by the latter.

With the assumption of political control of the Marshalls by Germany and later by Japan, the relative positions of paramount chief, lesser chief, and *alab* and commoners have been changing with respect to land rights. The authority of the paramount chief has steadily diminished. Under the Japanese an attitude developed that the land belonged to the paramount chief, but the trees and products of the land belonged to the commoners. Where the lesser chiefs fitted in is not quite certain, though they seemed to have been lumped with the paramount chiefs as nobility. Today, concepts regarding the nature of land rights are decidedly in a state of flux. Several villagers remarked that the people themselves are not sure of the extent of the rights of chiefs and commoners.

An important facet of shifting concepts with regard to land rights is the diminishing power of the paramount chief to dispossess lesser chiefs and especially commoners of their rights to particular lots. By the end of the Japanese regime, the authority of the paramount chief had been modified to the extent that he was no longer an autocrat who could move commoners off their land at his whim. The Japanese, however, allowed a paramount chief to dispossess a commoner of a piece of land if the latter repeatedly refused to pay taxes or to keep his land clean of bush below the coconut trees. Today at Majuro the situation has changed still further. It is highly doubtful that a paramount chief could dispossess an *alab* and his lineage at all of land rights to which they

held undisputed title. The rights of commoners as a class have steadily strengthened, a trend that will no doubt continue.

How the lesser chiefs stand in this changing situation is not quite clear from the data I was able to obtain. Like the commoners they are no longer so subject to the whims of the paramount chief. On the other hand, they are grouped with the paramount chief as nobility, and the authority of the lesser chiefs over the *alabs* on their respective lands has also been weakened. Two instances are instructive:

> Several months before my arrival, one of the paramount chiefs took away the rights of *M*, as lesser chief in nine land lots. These rights the paramount chief then gave to his sister's daughter. It was purely a case of nepotism. However, *M* belongs to a socially prominent lineage, which was able to exert enough pressure so that the paramount chief restored the rights to *M*.
>
> *L* attempted to dispossess *P*, an *alab*, of his rights to a lot where *L* has rights as a lesser chief. The reason *L* gave for this action was that *P* did not give *L* food tribute, but instead gave it to *Q*, who is a sister of *L*. It happens that on this lot *L* has sole individual rights as a lesser chief, and his lineage (including *Q*) is not involved. *P* resisted *L*'s attempt, and brought the case before the village council, who decided that *L* did not have the right to dispossess *P*. *L* then dropped the attempt.

The lesser chiefs are not a large group and they lack the force of numbers to oppose the growing strength of the commoners, while the fact that, although they are nobility, they are subject to the paramount chief makes it difficult for them to oppose the latter. It is my feeling that they are in the least advantageous position of all the parties traditionally holding rights to land, but comparison with other atolls is necessary to determine their position in the Marshalls as a whole.

Other considerations also enter the picture. An important one is the length of time a commoner lineage has held rights in a given piece of land. My informants agreed that where a commoner lineage has held a piece of land since *irto* (long ago), they certainly could not be dispossessed by the lesser chief, nor would the paramount chief try to remove them.

It should also be remembered that at Majuro, there is no large group who have no land rights at all. I learned of only one small lineage who claim Majuro as their home, but who possess no land rights of any sort, and even they have been given permission to collect food from a land lot by those controlling it. The commoners may once have been serfs, but at the present time they in no way comprise a large, landless class of peons. As far as local food resources go, the commoners are closest to the land, and actually take first claim on the food they collect. The paramount chiefs and their

immediate families still stand on their dignity and are largely dependent on the commoners' food tribute, which is by no means as regular or as bountiful as it once was.

Marshallese concepts regarding the respective land rights of nobility and commoners are hence in a process of change. The direction of this change, in so far as it represents a gradual weakening of the position of the paramount chief and a strengthening of that of the commoners, is relatively clear, but the process requires further elucidation through additional field work.

We come now to the role played by the lineage. I have stated that the lineage is the important land-holding group. However, questions arise that demand examination. One is the relation of the lineage head to the rest of the lineage with respect to control of land rights. Is it the lineage, or actually only the lineage head, who holds land rights? Is the lineage head required to consult other members of the lineage in matters regarding land, or is he free to act entirely on his own initiative without regard to the wishes of the other lineage members? Is the lineage, after all, only a convenient mechanism for determining succession to the lineage headship?

These questions refer to two related aspects of land tenure: first, how land rights are held, that is, group as against individual control; and second, how they are transmitted from generation to generation. The land rights of commoners will first be examined with these two aspects of land tenure in mind.

The question as to whether it is the lineage head or the lineage as a whole that holds land rights is not an easy one to decide, and in view of the changing concepts regarding land tenure a clear-cut answer is probably not possible. However, the villagers distinguish land rights controlled by an individual and transmitted to another individual without regard to his lineage, from land rights in which a whole lineage has an interest. The great majority of commoner land rights on the atoll are of the latter variety. In the case of land rights in which an entire lineage has an interest, the *alab* or lineage head acts as the lineage representative in dealings with others. But the lineage head is not a free agent, and in disputes with other lineages over land rights and boundaries, the *alab* will consult other members of his own lineage, and they will usually display a lively interest in the dispute. In casual conversation, each member of the lineage will refer to the lands in which his lineage has an interest as "my land" whether he is an *alab* or not. Nor can the *alab* give

away any of the lineage land rights. He cannot even give away the right of *ri-jerbal* or worker on a lineage land lot without consulting and obtaining the agreement of his lineage. I believe it is safe to say that it is the lineage rather than the *alab* alone who holds land rights.

Nevertheless, there is variation among lineages as to the extent to which the *alab* assumes control of lineage interests as the lineage representative. If the lineage is small, as many are, and the *alab* a commanding personality, he will exercise greater influence than in the case of larger lineages and *alabs* of less forceful character. There is also an important historical factor involved. To judge from conversations with the villagers, lineage heads formerly had more power to follow their own wishes than they do at present. In describing this modification of the lineage head's authority one Marshallese said: "Today the *alabs* have to follow Marshallese custom and consult the other members of the lineage. I think the reason for this is that the Japanese always went by Marshallese custom and insisted that the *bwij* as a whole had rights to their land."

The "custom" referred to in this statement is evidently a Japanese interpretation of Marshallese land tenure that has become generally accepted and is now in fact a custom. "Custom" formerly involved a greater degree of authority of the lineage head. I was told that at one time an *alab* could give away sole rights as *ri-jerbal* in a lineage land lot to his son without consulting the rest of the lineage.

Land rights held by the lineage are inherited from generation to generation within the lineage framework. On the death of an *alab*, the lineage land rights are not divided among the members of the lineage. The rights are kept intact, and a new *alab* assumes the lineage headship.

Although among commoners most land rights are held by lineages in the manner just described, some rights are held by individuals. These individuals have received such rights by gift or inheritance. The rights are classified by the Marshallese according to the particular manner in which they are transmitted. At Majuro the principal types of rights of this nature are described below.

(1) Rights received *in ninnin*. This term is applied to land rights bestowed by a father on his children, either before or after his death. These rights belong to the children as individuals, and not to their lineage. This type of transfer of land rights may take place in several ways. Probably the most common form is one whereby an *alab* gives his son the right of *ri-jerbal* or worker on a

lot held by the *alab* and the *alab's* lineage. I was told that "in the old days the *alab* did not have to obtain his lineage's permission to do this, but that today the lineage must consent." Having obtained the right of *ri-jerbal* as an individual, the son may then pass on this right to his own son without consulting his own lineage, although he must consult the *alab* and lesser chief on the particular land. In other words, individual rights can be passed on largely as the individual sees fit.

However, this form of award of rights as *ri-jerbal* by an *alab* to his son may be the source of dispute between the *alab* and his son on the one hand and the *alab's* lineage on the other. Some of the latter may claim that they were not consulted about the son's taking over rights as *ri-jerbal*, or other members may renege a previous agreement and deny they were ever a party to it. The resulting complications can be endless. In order to avoid dispute, occasionally wills are made in writing by the man who is going to bequeath land rights *in ninnin*. A copy is given for safekeeping to the magistrate, who had five such wills in his possession in 1947. The practice of making a will is not general, however, nor are written deeds to land rights kept by the villagers.

A second form of transfer of rights *in ninnin* occurs when only one male adult is left in a lineage. This person is free to bequeath his rights as *alab*—not merely as *ri-jerbal*—to his son or daughter. There is of course no one in the father's lineage to dispute the inheritance. The son or daughter in turn may pass on the rights to his or her own child, or may incorporate the newly acquired rights with those of his lineage. In the latter case, the lineage obtains new land rights, and all members of the lineage assume an interest in the newly gotten land.

The practice of gift or bequest of land rights from individual to individual in the paternal line is in sharp contrast to the more usual method of holding land rights within a maternal lineage. The former usage may also be interpreted as a reflection of an inherent conflict of interest within the kinship system. A man naturally has an interest in the welfare of his own children and develops strong ties of affection for them. His land rights usually lie with his maternal lineage, however, and if he is an *alab* it is his younger sibling or his sister's son, and not his own son, who will succeed him as lineage head. Yet if he is an *alab* his position may be strong enough so that he can at least see that his children receive a separate right as *ri-jerbal* on part of the lineage lands. The custom of trans-

ference of land rights *in ninnin* is thus related to opposing forces in the kinship system—the tie of a man with his children as against the tie with the sister's children and his own lineage.

(2) Rights transferred *in tutu*. In this form of transfer, a commoner adopts a child of a paramount or lesser chief, and in return receives individual rights to a tract of land from the chief. Unfortunately, I was not able to obtain details of actual cases of this type of land tenure. It is not a common form today, a fact that may be related to the diminishing authority of the nobility. Adoption is frequently practiced at present, as in the past. It virtually always takes place between relatives, so this form of land transfer may well have been a means of consolidating kinship ties between a chief and commoner relatives through the latter's adopting the chief's son or daughter.

(3) Rights transferred by *kalotlot*. In this case an old *alab*, the last member of his lineage, is too old or feeble or ill to collect food and care for himself. A younger person, not a relative, offers to care for the old *alab*. The latter then states that when he dies, the younger person will inherit the land rights of the *alab*. The younger person will possess such rights as an individual, without regard to his lineage.

(4) Individual rights bestowed by a paramount chief. In former days, the paramount chief at times bestowed land rights on a commoner for a specially meritorious act. This type of acquisition of land rights was classed according to the nature of the act that formed the basis of the award. Bravery in war, courage and skill exercised at sea, and skill as a diviner are examples of such meritorious acts. Today intra-Marshallese war and the exceptionally long sailing voyages are no longer conducted, and elaborate magical techniques are on the decline. The occasions for bestowing special rights consequently lie in the past, and this type of award of rights is no longer made. It is not clear whether a special award of this sort by the paramount chief meant that someone else was dispossessed in order to allow the award to be made. If some other commoner was dispossessed, another reason exists for the cessation of the paramount chief's awarding special rights, as today the commoner threatened with dispossession would no doubt challenge the chief's right to dispossess him.

(5) Miscellaneous. A number of other forms of transference of land rights where the recipient receives such rights as an individual are either no longer current practices or occur rarely. These include

land rights taken by conquest; rights given by one man to another in compensation for the former's stealing the latter's wife; rights given by a husband or wife to the spouse; rights to the tabooed land where a paramount chief's wife customarily took her bath, such rights going to the chief's wife's daughters. In one case noted above—that of rights given by a husband or wife to the spouse—an instance was found.

A number of years ago a paramount chief gave a lot to *F*, a woman, who came to Majuro with her husband from another atoll. They had no land rights on Majuro. The paramount chief said that *F* was to be *alab* on this land. *F*, however, gave the land rights to her husband to be *alab*, with the understanding that on his death the rights would pass to their children.

The foregoing discussion refers to commoners. Among the noble lineages, transmission of land rights is also largely within the lineage framework. The relative authority of the lineage head vis-à-vis the rest of the lineage is more difficult to determine, simply because there are so few noble lineages in contrast with the commoners. The paramount chiefs hold the paramount claim to all land as individuals. This claim descends in the maternal lineage of the paramount chief, but the lineage is primarily the mechanism for determining succession to paramount chieftainship. Hence the primary land rights of the paramount chief never stray from his lineage, unless the lineage dies out, or, as happened frequently enough in the old days, a paramount chief was defeated in war and driven from his lands. It is the chief himself who holds the land rights. He may in turn designate other members of his lineage as lesser chiefs, or they may inherit land rights as lesser chiefs.

Among noble lineages other than that of the paramount chief, there is considerable variation at Majuro as to the authority of the lesser chief in comparison with the other members of the lineage. The latter generally play a supporting role. In the noble lineage with which I was best acquainted, the lesser chief was an elderly woman. Both her daughter and her daughter's eldest son assisted her in looking after her land rights and consulted with her on land matters. They definitely considered that they had an interest in these rights and that such rights were the concern of the lineage and not only of the lineage head.

Among lesser chiefs, land rights as a lesser chief may be transferred to an individual noble rather than to his lineage by the same mechanisms as hold for commoners. A number of cases exist where

lesser chiefs have received land rights from their fathers. Traditionally, however, rights as a lesser chief can only be held by someone of noble birth. Here a problem in culture change arises. As the authority of the nobility has declined and the class structure has grown less rigid, can a lesser chief who holds land rights as an individual give or bequeath those rights to his son, who may be a commoner? My information is not definitive on this point and I raise it primarily to show how closely land tenure is tied with the other facets of social organization in the changing situation at Majuro.

As an example of the mechanics of land tenure at Majuro, the following case is illuminating, for it illustrates several different methods of transfer and inheritance of land rights.

> In the nineteenth century the paramount chief Kaibuki gave rights in a land lot to *M*, a lesser chief, for his bravery in war against Jebrik (see p. 84). *M* held these rights as an individual. *M* in turn gave the rights as lesser chief in this land *in ninnin* to one of his daughters, *P*. *P* is still living and is an elderly woman. She has indicated that she will turn over these rights to her lineage. The rights will then be incorporated with the other rights of the lineage. Although *M* was a noble, *P* is a commoner. However, there was and is no separate *alab* on this land, and today it is not entirely clear whether *P*'s rights are those of an *alab* or a lesser chief, though no one seems troubled by the fact.

Taro Patches

Taro patches form a special case and are here considered separately in this discussion of land tenure. Most of the taro patches are concentrated in the interior of the island, although a few small ones are to be found near the windward side. As noted previously, they all appear to have been excavated, at least partially. They range from irregularly shaped depressions to rather neat rectangular plots. A section of taro patches in the interior of the island in *Lobat* district is shown in map 9. Here the taro patches are fairly regular in shape.

As a whole, the taro patches are by no means producing to full capacity. Many are well kept and in good condition. Some are in good condition, but the taro does not fill the plot. In a fairly large number of other cases, pandanus and bush have invaded the patch and it is not cultivated at all.

The patches are not producing to full capacity partly because the Japanese removed a great deal of taro as food for their own forces in the early part of the war, partly because the villagers do not feel the pinch of want sufficiently to cultivate taro, and partly because some patches appear to be unsuitable for growing the taro plant.

MAP 9. Taro patch area in the interior of Majuro Island, in *Lobat* district. The patches are 5 or 6 feet below the ground surface.

EXPLANATION OF MAP 10 AND FIGURE 37

In figure 37, living relatives are shown in silhouette and dead relatives are indicated by outline figures.

The two taro patches lie on land in which *H*'s lineage holds commoner land rights. *H* is *alab* of the lineage. The preceding *alabs* were *A* and *B*. Either *A* or *B* gave the use of these individual plots to the persons shown, who claim them today. It should be noted that neither *G* nor *I* is a member of the lineage, yet both hold rights to separate plots. *G* received his plot from *A* on the occasion of *G*'s marriage to *H*. *H* has in turn received a taro plot on land on which *G*'s lineage holds rights. *I* took over a plot that belonged to his father, *C*, with the agreement of *C*'s *alab* and lineage. *B*'s plot reverted to the lineage as a whole on her death. It has not yet been re-assigned. Neither has the unmarked plot on map 10. This latter plot is in poor condition and is overgrown with pandanus.

The men do all the necessary cultivating of the taro patches. I saw no women working in the plots. *H*'s plot is cared for by her husband, her brother, and her sons. The men help each other in cultivating their individual plots.

The two taro patches shown in map 10 actually extend on to adjoining lots, in which other lineages hold the land rights. Only that part of the patch located on the land of *H*'s lineage is shown in map 10.

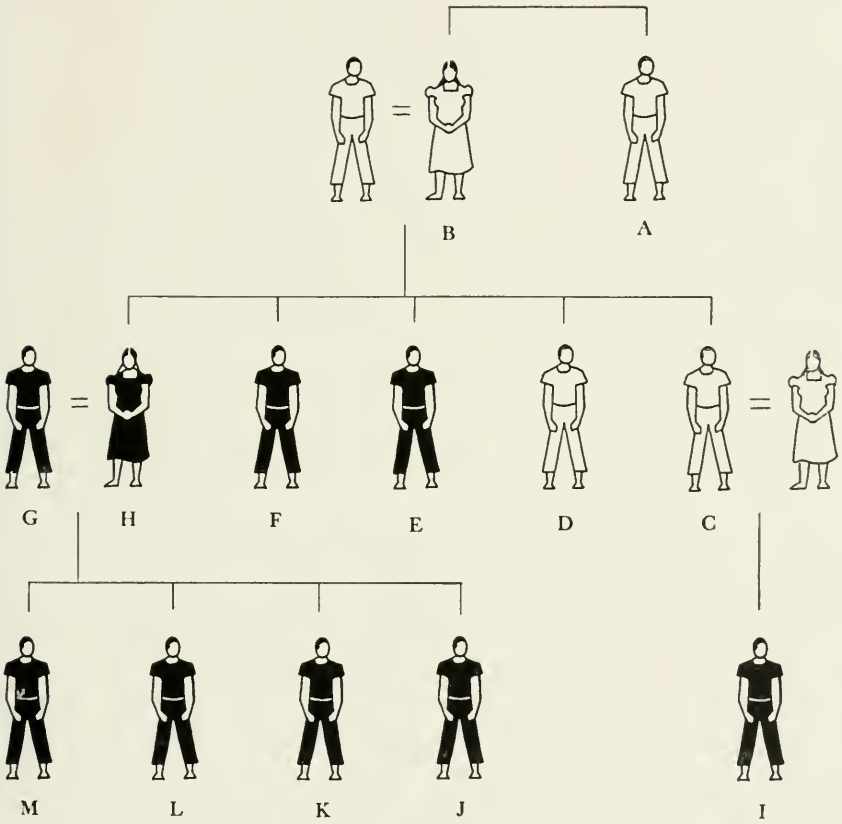
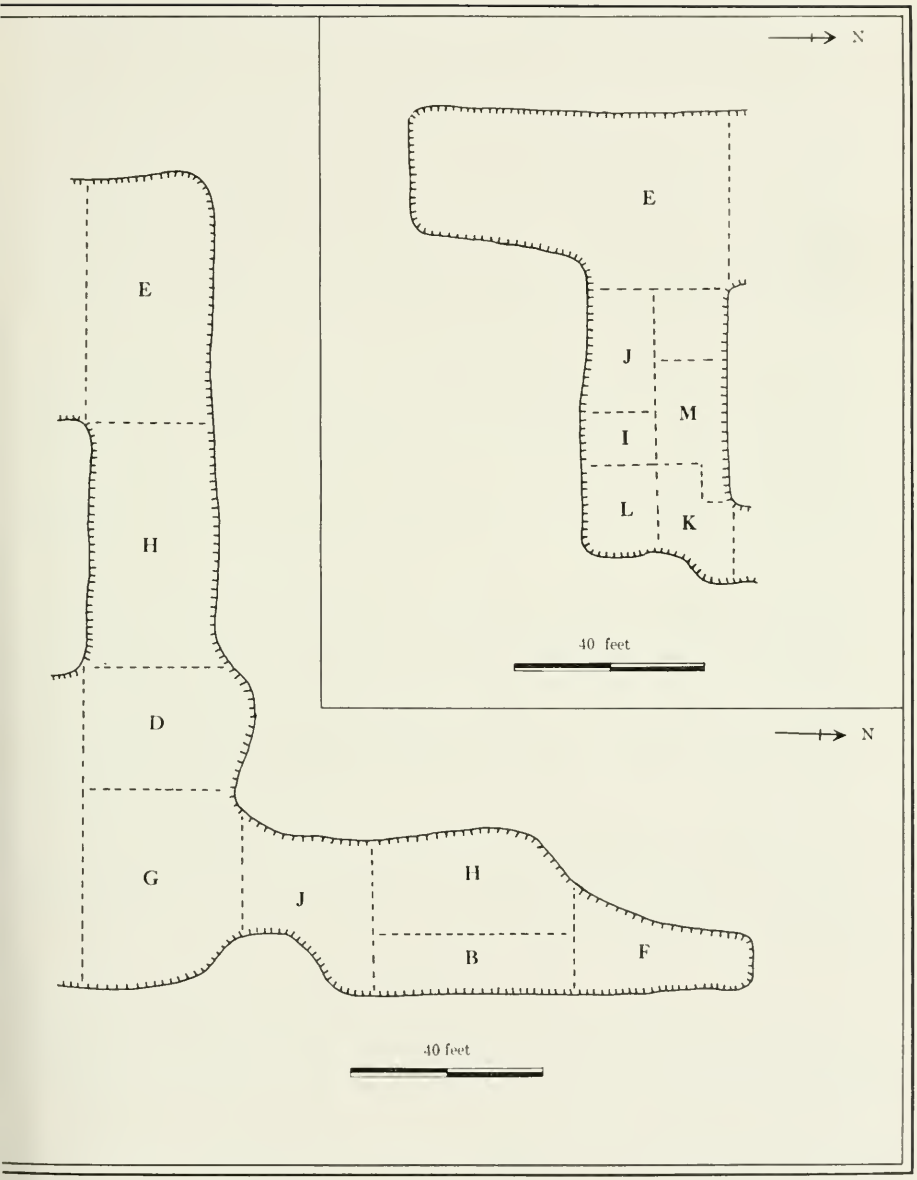


FIG. 37. Relationships of persons claiming rights in the two taro patches shown in map 10.



MAP 10. Two taro patches, showing individual plots into which they are divided. The tters refer to the persons shown on the chart in figure 37.

The larger patches are divided into small plots by shallow ditches. These small plots are cultivated, and the mature taro is harvested, by individuals. The individuals may be commoners or nobles, and they may or may not belong to the lineages holding rights in the land on which the patch is located. The right to work and collect the fruits of a taro patch is essentially a right of usufruct. If the individual holding such a right dies without making arrangements for passing on his right to a relative, the patch reverts to the lineage claiming the rights to the land where the patch is located, and the *alab* of the lineage re-assigns the patch either to a relative or non-relative, or lets it lie uncultivated.

Map 10 is a sketch map of two taro patches, and, with figure 37, shows the various individual rights of usufruct to the several component plots. Although it has been stated that the plots are worked by individuals, sometimes a plot will be worked by a family as a whole. The taro from such a plot will be used to provide food tribute to chiefs, and as food for special occasions, such as birthdays or wakes.

Land tenure is one of the most complicated aspects of Marshallese culture. The old system of sub-infeudation is involved enough, but the complexity has been increased as concepts regarding land use and tenure have changed during the contact period. The preceding remarks by no means exhaust the subject. I hope they have at least served to show the close relation of land tenure to the class structure on one hand and the kinship system on the other. This relation is the principal reason why a future intensive study of land tenure, covering a number of atolls, is one of the most promising leads to a fuller understanding of modern change in Marshallese social and economic organization.

THE CLAN

The Marshallese are divided into matrilineal, exogamous clans (*jowi* or *jou*). Those clans that I found to be present at Majuro are listed below:

rarno	*jowa*	*ri-luut*
raur	*jejer*	*ri-tabal*
rokoro	*jelablab*	*ri-matolen*
raij	*lok*	*ri-mae*
rebrib	*ri-meijor*	*ri-lotobo*
makauliej	*ri-loujien namu*	*ri-malel*
jerikrik	*ri-bikarij*	*ri-bit*
jekublik	*ri-kibilo*	

With the exception of *ri-kibilo* and *ri-matolen*, Mason (1947, p. 35) gives the same list of Majuro clans. A shorter list of Marshallese clans is also included in Krämer and Nevermann's report (1938, p. 69), and in Erdland (1914, p. 343).

In his discussion of Marshallese clans, Mason notes that some clans are regarded as sub-clans of others, and lists the sub-clans of *makauliej* and *ri-bikarij* as well as those of the Ralik clan, *iroja*. In this connection, I found it difficult to obtain agreement between informants on which clans were sub-clans and which were not. The system evidently has long been breaking down, and, I suspect, may never have been uniform from atoll to atoll. According to Mason, the sub-clans of a single clan varied in status, and at one time the higher class sub-clans enjoyed privileges denied to lower class sub-clans, though these differentials have disappeared today (Mason, 1947, pp. 35–36). At Majuro village, it would be very difficult to generalize on informants' testimony as to sub-clans. There is a fair consensus that *raij* is subordinate to *rokoro*, and that *ri-kibilo* and *ri-bikarij* are subordinate to *jerikrik*, but there seems to be little real feeling of importance attached to any traditional subordination or inclusion of one clan under another. The clans listed are all regarded as exogamous, matrilineal units, each in his own right. I was told that in pre-contact days two clans that were in a subordinate-superordinate relation, such as *rokoro* and *raij*, were not supposed to allow intermarriage, nor were clans that were considered to be sub-clans of a more important one. Today this is not the case.

The clans listed at the village are not confined to Majuro, but are also found at other atolls. On the other hand, the same clans are not to be found at every atoll. As may be expected, the clans vary in size within the village, and also from atoll to atoll. Some of the clans at the village are very small; others, such as *ri-bit*, *rokoro*, and *ri-luut*, are large.

The clan names are not the names of plants or animals. Instead, many are known to be local designations, with which the various clans are related either as places of supposed origin or onetime residence. The prefix *ri* means "people"; clan names including this prefix generally indicate a local place. The clan names *rarno* and *raur* are contractions of *ri-arno* and *ri-aur* and mean respectively "people of Arno" and "people of Aur."

There are a large number of legends connected with the origin of the various clans, though this legendary material is in a rather

fragmentary state. A common legend concerning the origin of clans relates to two blocks or pillars of stone (basalt?), one of which is at Namu atoll and the other at Aur. According to Aisea, the magistrate, two sisters once journeyed from the mythical land of Eb eastward to the Marshalls. The younger sister, named Luatonmur, stayed on Namu in the Ralik chain; the older sister, named Liribribju, remained on Aur in the Ratak group. Both turned into pillars of stone. From one sister came the clans of the Ralik chain; from the other the clans of the Ratak chain. Similar versions of this legend are to be found in Erdland (1914, p. 345) and Mason (1947, p. 32). Additional legends exist concerning the origin of individual clans, though such mythological material is known only by the older people.

It was Erdland's belief that the Marshallese clans were totemic. The word he gives for totem is *wunenak* and he gives one or two examples of plants as individual totems, as well as citing the block of stone at Namu from which the Ralik clans are thought to have come as an example of a totem. He also notes that at the time of his residence the belief in totemism was already dying out (Erdland, 1914, pp. 116–117, 345). In my opinion the material that Erdland gives is hardly sufficient to show that the Marshallese clans are totemic, in the sense that a special relation is maintained between a clan and a natural species, involving the totem as the emblem of the clan, or the object of ritual, or as entering into such usages as food taboos. It is of course possible that the Marshallese clans were once totemic, but I do not feel that Erdland's material is extensive enough to demonstrate the former existence of totemism as a characteristic of the clan.

The members of a clan regard themselves as related, even though no actual genealogical relation can be shown. I believe it is correct to say that the Majuro people consider the clan as a group of related lineages, rather than as merely an aggregate of individuals. The feeling of kinship is stronger within the lineage where an actual genealogical relationship can be shown than it is within the clan, where the kinship feeling has been extended in a much more diffuse and diluted form. Erdland does not discuss the relation of lineage to clan and apparently was unaware of their separateness. In at least one place, he considers them synonymous (Erdland, 1914, p. 343). Needless to say, they are not.

Although the clan is exogamous and marriages are made outside the clan, there is one exception to this rule in the village today.

A man of the *rokoro* clan is married to a woman of the same clan. The marriage is of long standing and the couple have several children. I was told that when they first married, a number of the villagers talked to them and tried to dissuade them from making such a break with custom, but to no avail. Apparently no drastic sanctions were applied to the couple. They certainly are not ostracized at the present time.

Theoretically, sexual intercourse is prohibited to members of the same clan. I was told that if a boy and girl of the same clan had sexual intercourse and the fact became known, the father of the girl would give her a whipping and that the father of the boy would do the same to him. But this is purely hypothetical, and I learned of no examples to substantiate or refute the statement. There undoubtedly is a strong feeling against sexual intercourse or marriage within the clan, but it is my impression that the clan as a social unit is declining in importance. At some point in this process, exogamy and the prohibition against sexual intercourse within the clan starts to break down, and although I do not believe the Marshallese clan system has reached this point, my data are not extensive enough to make a definitive statement. The matter is important, however, with regard to the general problem of incest prohibitions. In societies where a clan system is breaking down, incest prohibitions tend to retract in range, and an examination of the process of such retraction should be of comparative value in studying the fundamental social and psychological nature of incest regulations.

As the members of a single clan are related, they bear certain obligations of aid to one another. One of these obligations is hospitality to visiting clansmen. During and immediately following the war, Majuro received from other atolls numerous Marshallese, with whom the villagers shared their food resources. When a stranger comes to a Marshallese atoll, it is customary for his clansmen on the atoll, if he has any, to bring him food and offer him hospitality, and such instances were common at the village during and immediately after the war. A stranger to Majuro told me: "I came to Majuro just after the end of the war. Shortly after I arrived, an elderly man came to me, bringing several baskets of food. I did not know him and had never seen him before. He did not belong to my lineage and was not a close relative. But he said he was my clansman. There are few people in my clan here."

It is also interesting to note that although Majuro is an acculturated community, magic still survives, and occasionally black

magic is suspected in cases of peculiar illness. In this connection, several old informants said that if a man made black magic against another person in the same clan, both people would be harmed. As an example, one man cited his own and another lineage. His own lineage has almost died out and the other is extinct. A member of the latter once made black magic against a member of his own lineage. Both lineages belonged to the same clan and both are believed to have been irreparably harmed.

As in the case of the lineage, the clan is also related to the hereditary transmission of status. At Majuro, the two paramount chiefs and all members of the *iroij*, or top noble class, belong to a single clan, *rarno*. *Rarno* is the clan par excellence of the nobility. On the other hand, not all members of *rarno* are *iroij;* some commoner lineages also belong to *rarno*. The remaining clans at Majuro are all commoner clans, except that some contain *bwirak* lineages and individuals.

The present situation at Majuro is the end product of years of warfare among the Marshallese in pre-German times. In the Ratak chain, Mason states that *rarno*, *ri-meijor*, *jerikrik*, and *raur* clans are the ones from which the chiefs are drawn, depending on the atoll (Mason, 1947, p. 33). These clans were the successful leaders in the Marshalls at the time the Germans put a stop to warfare. It is not at all certain that they were always on top. At some time in the past, other clans may have been more successful in war and provided the leaders of noble status. From the fact that so many clan names are local designations, the clan may once have been a local group, and then spread out to several atolls through migration, while its position in the status system may have been more flexible than is apparent from modern conditions and may have varied according to the fortunes of war.

At the present time, the clan is not a local group, however, for the same clan may be found on several atolls. On Majuro atoll alone the clan members are not localized, for the members of a single clan are scattered about the several populated districts. Nor does each clan have its own set of chiefs. There is no concept of the system of chieftainship as consisting of a paramount chief, with a set of lesser chiefs drawn from each clan. In this sense, clan chiefs do not exist at Majuro. The relation of chieftainship to the clan is expressed by the fact that the two paramount chiefs and all the other members of the *iroij* class belong to a single clan, *rarno*, but not even this fact of common clanship has prevented or

diminished the long-standing rivalry on Majuro between Jitiam's and Langlan's groups.

Both lineage and clan are to be distinguished from the domestic family at Majuro. In their formal organization, lineage and clan represent an emphasis on lineality. The Marshallese domestic family as a residence unit does not express this characteristic, but gives greater play to bilaterality. The manner in which lineage, clan, and family are related and the relative strength of lineal and bilateral emphases, will be considered more fully in the next chapter on kinship.

VIII. KINSHIP SYSTEM

TERMINOLOGICAL SYSTEM

The Marshallese terminological system is a variation of the Hawaiian type, and exhibits the strong emphasis on generation that is characteristic of many Polynesian systems. Brief accounts of the Marshallese relationship terms, with a varying amount of material as to their application, appear in Erdland (1914, p. 114), Krämer and Nevermann (1938, p. 181), Sugiura (1943, pp. 340–349), and Mason (1947, pp. 28–30). My own data on referential terms are given below. The Marshallese terms include the possessive suffix "my."

MARSHALLESE RELATIONSHIP TERMS WITH ENGLISH EQUIVALENTS

father	*jemä*
mother	*jinö*
mother's brother	*wulebö*
grandfather	*jimma*
grandmother, grandchild	*jibö*
older brother, older sister	*jeö*
younger brother, younger sister	*jatö*
child	*nejö*
sister's child	*mangorö*
spouse	*belö*
wife's brother	*au mamman*
cross-cousin of opposite sex	*relikö*

These terms are the core of the terminology and it is essentially with this short list that the system operates. However, certain of these terms are qualified to denote the sex of the person referred to by adding either *emman* (male) or *körä* (female). This occurs in the case of the terms for grandmother, grandchild, child, sister's child, brother, and sister, where sex qualifiers are added to the relationship terms. To indicate whether a sibling of the parent is older or younger than the parent, *elab* (older) or *erik* (younger) is added as a qualifying adjective to the relationship term.

In addition, certain supplementary terms are used in a referential context:

inö (sister). Used only by a man for a real or classificatory sister.
manö (brother). Used only by a woman for a real or classificatory brother.

jimjän jimjätön (sibling). Used by either sex for a sibling, real or classificatory, of either sex. One informant said, however, that in strict conservative usage, the term should not be used to refer to a real sibling of opposite sex or a parallel cousin of opposite sex, but that *inö* or *manö* should be used instead.

nukin. A general term meaning "relative."

The application of consanguine terms is shown in figures 38 and 39. Certain dominant characteristics of the terminological system should be noted:

(1) Within ego's generation, brothers and sisters are differentiated through the use of a sex qualifier to the sibling term. Parallel cousins are classed as siblings. Cross-cousins are classed as siblings in the vocative terminology, but in the referential terminology a special term is applied to the cross-cousin of opposite sex.

A distinction is also made between older and younger brothers, and older and younger sisters. This distinction is based on whether the particular sibling referred to is older or younger than ego, not merely on differences of age between two of ego's siblings.

Supplementary terms are used by a man to refer to a sister, real or classificatory, and by a woman to refer to a brother, real or classificatory. A general term for sibling, regardless of sex, is also used.

(2) In the first ascending generation, the term for father is applied to the father, his brothers, the husband of the father's sister, and the husband of the mother's sister. A special term (*wulebö*) is used for the mother's brother. Erdland (1914, p. 114) states that this term is applied to the father's brother, but this is incorrect.

(3) In the second ascending generation, only two terms are used, one for grandfather and the other for grandmother, and these are extended to all relatives in this generation.

(4) In the first and usually also the second descending generations, a qualifying term is used to distinguish the sex of the person referred to by the speaker.

When ego is female, all persons in the first descending generation are classed together as "child," with an added qualifying term to distinguish sex. When ego is male, the sister's children are separated from ego's children and from ego's brother's children through the application of a nepotic term. The extension of this nepotic term is interesting. Apparently it is applied only to the sister's children and to the mother's sister's daughter's children. The children of other classificatory sisters are referred to by the "child" term. In other words, the maternal lineage is singled out from the body of

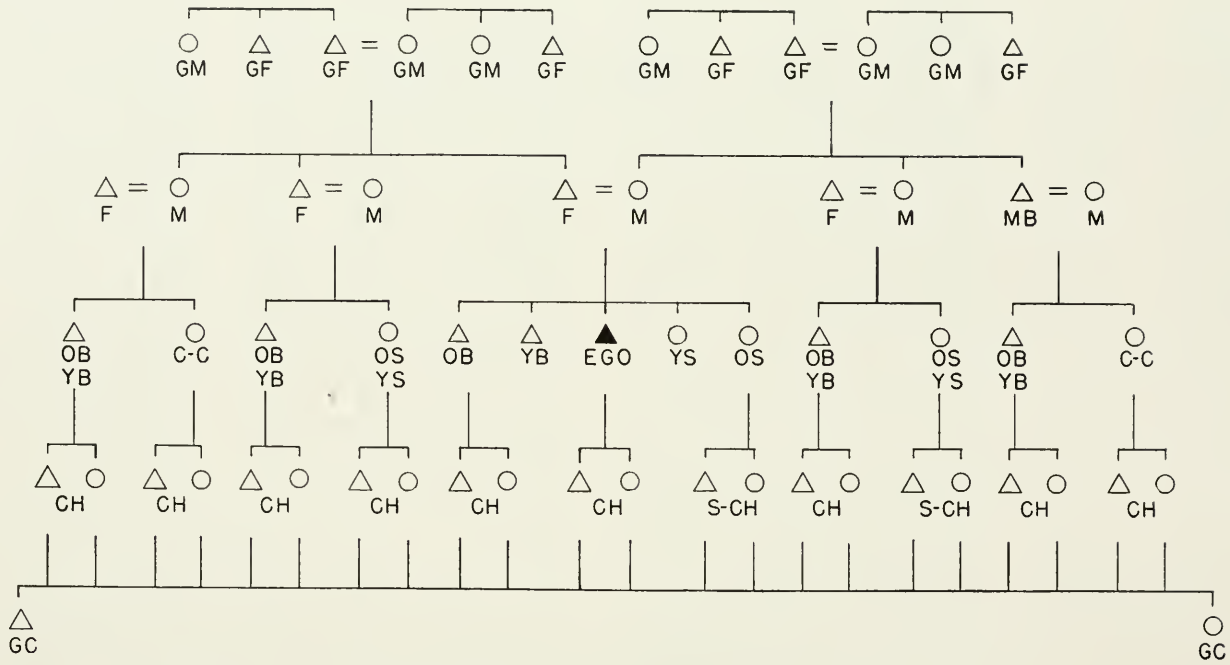


FIG. 38. Marshallese terminological structure, showing consanguine terms used in reference. Ego is male. Abbreviations on the chart are as follows: *F* = father; *M* = mother; *MB* = mother's brother; *GF* = grandfather; *GM* = grandmother; *OB* = older brother; *YB* = younger brother; *OS* = older sister; *YS* = younger sister; *C-C* = cross-cousin of opposite sex; *CH* = child; *S-CH* = sister's child; *GC* = grandchild. For the Marshallese terms, refer to page 182.

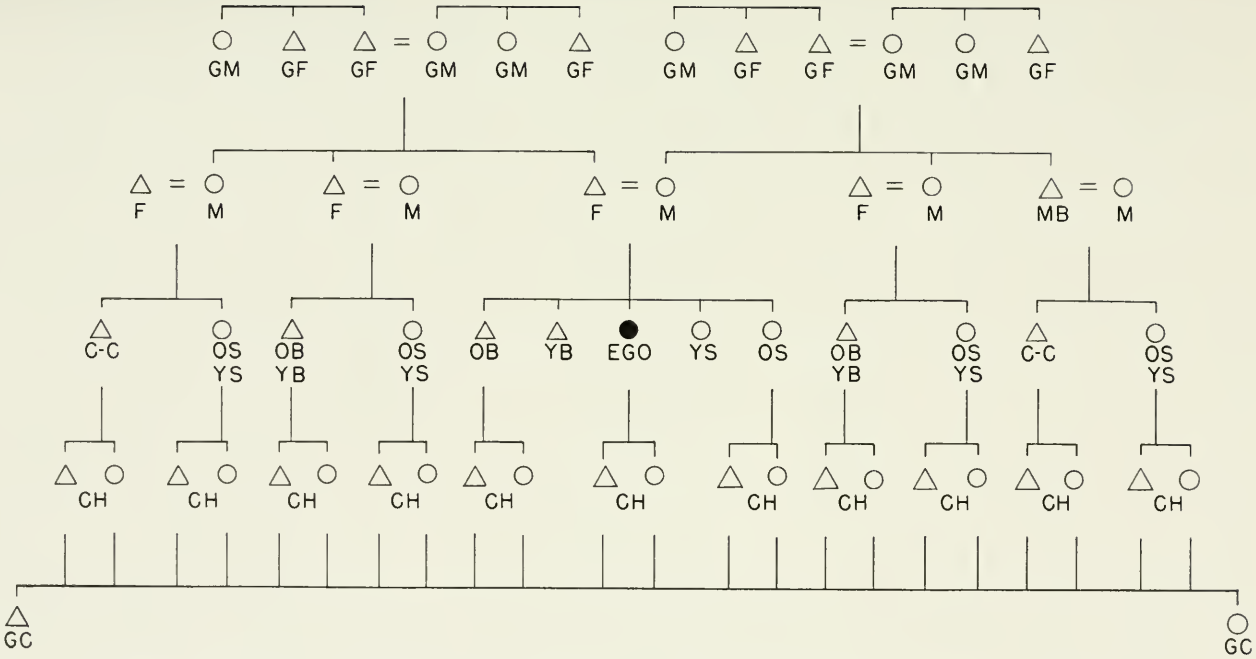


FIG. 39. Marshallese terminological structure, showing consanguine terms used in reference. Ego is female. Abbreviations on the chart are as follows: *F* = father; *M* = mother; *MB* = mother's brother; *GF* = grandfather; *GM* = grandmother; *OB* = older brother; *YB* = younger brother; *OS* = older sister; *YS* = younger sister; *C-C* = cross-cousin of opposite sex; *CH* = child; *GC* = grandchild. For the Marshallese terms, refer to page 182.

consanguine kin, and special nepotic terms are used for the first descending generation members of this lineage. Unfortunately, I did not fully recognize this feature of the terminology until just before my departure, and my information is not as complete as it should be on this point. In one genealogy I obtained, the nepotic term is extended more widely, but this is the only exception. The day before leaving, I discussed the matter at length with Dwight Heine, a very knowledgeable Marshallese, and he was positive that the nepotic terms are restricted in their application, as shown in figure 38. This may of course be one point where the system is commencing to change.

(5) In the second descending generation, all persons are classed as grandchild, with a qualifying term denoting their sex. Reciprocal terms are used between grandmother (but not grandfather) and grandchildren.

In the consanguine terminological system, there is only one basic difference between the usage of terms when ego is male as against the usage when ego is female. This is that women do not use nepotic terms, but instead class all members of the first descending generation as children, differentiating them according to sex. This is, of course, related to the fact that the maternal uncle is the only relative in the first ascending generation who is not classed with either the father or the mother.

In the Marshallese terminological system, the primary basis used in the grouping of relatives is that of age and generation differences. This gives the kinship pattern its first and foremost distinguishing characteristic. A second influence is also apparent, and consists of a lineal modification in the terminology. It is evidenced by the special term used for the maternal uncle, and in the use of nepotic terms for the sister's children by a male ego. Furthermore, if the nepotic terms are restricted to ego's own sister's children and to the mother's sister's daughter's children, this lineal influence is confined to ego's maternal lineage. Thus the lineage emphasis expressed in the terminological system is a modification of a basic generation pattern. The lineage emphasis has not become the predominant feature of the terminology, as in the case of the Trukese system (Murdock and Goodenough, 1947, p. 340). Rather it appears as a sort of overlay, a secondary manifestation of the presence of the maternal lineage in Marshallese social structure.

A third distinguishing characteristic of the terminology is related to the existence of cross-cousin marriage, and appears in the use

of a special referential term to indicate the cross-cousin of opposite sex.

A special kinship designation is also occasionally used for kinfolk related through the paternal line. Mason notes that the term *wutwut in bwij* refers to relatives whose fathers belong to ego's lineage (Mason, 1947, p. 25). My own data agree. The usage can also be extended to clans. If ego's father belongs to the clan *ri-meijor*, for instance, then ego is *wutwut in ri-meijor*. One informant said that the usage could be extended still further to the relationship between ego and the father's father's and mother's father's clans, but other villagers did not concur. Actually the term does not seem to be in common use at Majuro and may be becoming obsolete.

AFFINAL TERMINOLOGY

The application of affinal terms is given in figures 40 and 41. The principal characteristics of the affinal terminological system are as follows:

(1) (When ego is male.) The wife's sister is classed with the sister, and her children are classed with ego's. The husband of the wife's sister is called *jemin jö*, or "father of the child." The wife's brother has a special term meaning "my man," or better, "my comrade." His wife is often called by name rather than by a kinship term; if a term is applied, she is classed with the sister or as a child. The children of the wife's brother are classed with ego's children.

The sister's husband is called *jemö lallab*, or "big father."

The parents of the wife are referred to as father and mother, and this is extended to their siblings.

(2) (When ego is female.) The wife refers to her husband by the same term as he uses for her. Ego classes the husband's brother with her own, and his children with her children. The wife of the husband's brother is usually called "mother of the child," though some informants said she could also be classed as a sister. The husband's sister is classed as a mother (or sometimes as a sister), her husband as "big father" (or sometimes as a brother), and their children with ego's children.

The brother's wife is classed as a child (or sometimes as a sister), as are her children. The sister's husband is referred to as a brother. The husband's parents and their siblings are classed with the father or mother, depending on sex.

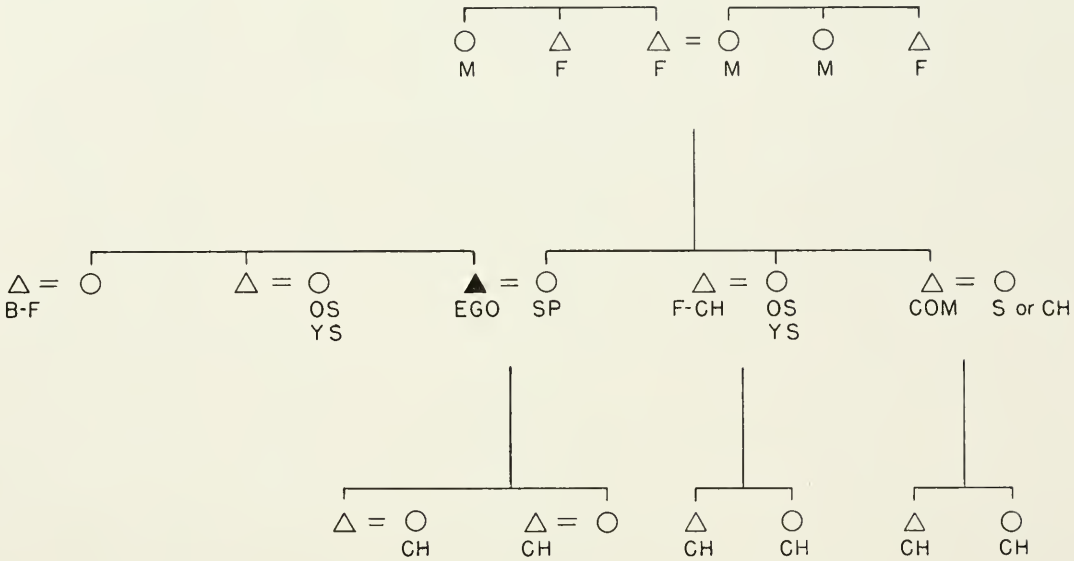


FIG. 40. Marshallese terminological structure, showing affinal terms used in reference. Ego is male. Abbreviations on the chart are as follows: *SP* = spouse; *OS* = older sister; *YS* = younger sister; *B-F* = big father; *F-CH* = father of the child; *COM* = comrade; *S* = sister; *F* = father; *M* = mother; *CH* = child. For the Marshallese terms, refer to pages 182, 187.

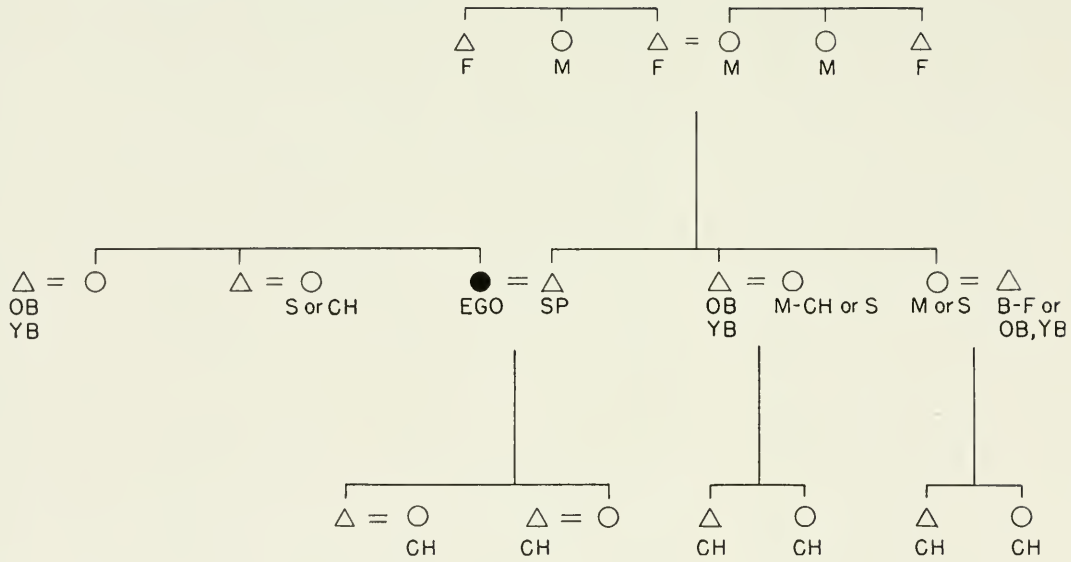


FIG. 41. Marshallese terminological structure, showing affinal terms used in reference. Ego is female. Abbreviations on the chart are as follows: *SP* = spouse; *S* = sister; *OB* = older brother; *YB* = younger brother; *M-CH* = mother of the child; *B-F* = big father; *F* = father; *M* = mother; *CH* = child. For the Marshallese terms refer to pages 182, 187.

In the Marshallese terminological system, if cross-cousin marriage occurs, there is a change in the referential terms applied to the spouse's sibling of opposite sex. If a man marries his mother's brother's daughter, before marriage he refers to her brother as "brother," but after marriage he refers to her brother as "*au mam-man*" or "my comrade." The wife's brother reciprocates with a new term, "big father." I looked for a case where a brother and sister married a sister and a brother to determine how the two men would decide which of these two terms each would use for the other, but was unable to find an instance. Aisea, the magistrate, said that in such case, either term could be used by each man. "The terms really mean the same thing," Aisea said, and went on to explain that the relationship between the two men was a strict respect relation and that both terms carried this feeling of respect and hence were similar.

In case of cross-cousin marriage, a woman also changes terms for her husband's sibling of opposite sex. If she marries her mother's brother's son, before marriage she refers to her husband's sister as her own sister, but after marriage classes her as a mother. The husband's sister reciprocates by referring to ego as a child. This is said to be the "old" way. I observed that today many women use "sister" for the husband's sister or the brother's wife.

The practice of a man's referring to his sister's husband as a "big father" can be related, I believe, to the fact that the sister's husband is the father of a man's nephews and nieces. The latter are a man's heirs to his position, and will in time be the principal guardians of the land rights of the maternal lineage. The father of these nephews and nieces is by virtue of his paternal relation to a man's heirs a very important person. The "father" term is applied out of consideration of the sister's husband as father of a man's heirs, not as a special sort of "father" to ego. Conversely, ego's wife's brother is the head of the wife's lineage and eventually this headship will pass to ego's children. So for the sake of his children and his relation to their lineage, a man treats his wife's brother with due consideration and applies a special term to him.

In the case of a female ego, I am not certain why she calls her husband's sister and her brother's wife by special terms. She uses the same term for her husband's sister's husband as her own husband does, and perhaps it is merely to make the system consistent that she refers to her husband's sister as a mother, with the latter referring to her as a child. There probably is a more satisfactory explanation,

but I was not able to discern it in the present-day social conditions at Majuro. The alternate use of the sister term for the husband's sister could be derived from cross-cousin marriage.

VOCATIVE TERMS

In direct address, the parents are called by the referential kin terms. Either kin terms or personal names are used for grandparents, maternal uncles, and the other siblings of the parents. For other relatives, however, personal names are almost always used. Personal names are also substituted extensively in place of the referential kinship terminology, so that personal names in a sense compete with kinship terminology in the speech habits of the villagers. In the use of names in direct address, a suffix "i" is often added to the name (see Mason, 1947, p. 28).

Certain referential terms do not appear in direct address and it is considered bad form to use them vocatively. These terms are *belö* (spouse), *inö* (sister, male speaking), *manö* (brother, female speaking), *relikö* (cross-cousin of opposite sex), *jimjän jimjätön* (sibling). It should be noted that in the vocative system sibling terms are extended to both parallel and cross-cousins.

Two kinship terms borrowed from English are also in extensive use in direct address. These are "papa" and "mama," with the "i" suffix generally added. These terms are used by children for their parents. However, they are also extended to other relatives. I have heard the word *papai* applied not only to the father, but to the father's brother, the mother's brother, and the grandfather, and the word *mamai* used for the mother's sister, the father's sister, the mother's brother's wife, and the grandmother. So far as I could tell, children are apt to use the words *papai* and *mamai* for any older relative of the parental and grandparental generation with whom they are on close and intimate terms. The extensions of these two borrowed terms have not become channelized to form a definite terminological pattern.

RANGE OF KINSHIP SYSTEM

The extensive use of personal names and the generally casual and informal behavior of the Marshallese make it difficult to determine the range of the kinship system. So far as I could tell, the range of the system is not fixed and limited with any degree of sharpness in the minds of the villagers. My own observations indicate that the following factors determine the range of the system.

(1) Kinship is extended bilaterally among both mother's and father's kin to those individuals within the community to whom an actual genealogical relation is known. However, such relationships are not traced through more than one or two deceased ancestral generations.

(2) In the extension of kinship, there is a distinct tendency to consider whether different lineages—rather than clans—have relationship ties with ego. The father's lineage, the mother's lineage, and the spouse's lineage all fall clearly within the range of the kinship system. Kinship is furthermore extended to all the members of ego's clan, albeit in a more diluted form; but it is not necessarily extended to all the members of the father's clan or the spouse's clan. At least one informant said that he considered that his father's clan were all kinfolk, but among those people I knew best, the father's lineage, but not the father's entire clan, fell within the range of the system. The lineage rather than the clan forms a structural framework for the extension of kinship terminology and behavior. It is only in the case of ego's own clan that kinship is always extended to the entire clan. As far as referential terminology goes, the extension is made to clan members on a generation basis: the second ascending generation is classed as grandparents; the first ascending generation as mothers or uncles; ego's generation as brothers or sisters; the first descending generation as nephews or nieces or children; and the second descending generation as grandchildren. In actual practice, however, personal names rather than kinship terms are used among clan-mates, even in a referential context.

(3) The mother's father and his siblings, and the father's father and his siblings are all considered kin, and this tends to be extended to the lineages, but not the clans, of each. Here a great deal depends on whether the individuals involved fall within the normal sphere of ego's personal contacts.

(4) The spouse's lineage and close blood relatives are considered as affinal kin, but affinal terminology is not extended widely and does not include the entire clan of the spouse.

Majuro village may be larger than the average Marshallese village, but it is still a small community. Within the village, personal rather than impersonal relations predominate. Almost everyone knows everyone else by sight and by name. An individual does not have a circle of relatives with whom he maintains personal relations and a sharply differentiated outside group of relatively strange non-kin with whom he maintains formally impersonal rela-

tions. It is rather that there is a core of kinfolk and that the feeling of kin intimacy shades off in feelings of relative degrees of friendliness and closeness of contact among the rest of the community.

The importance of bilateral ties as against unilateral ones alone is apparent in household composition. In addition to the household, there is a larger, un-named, and rather ill-defined grouping of kin based on bilateral descent. It is doubtful to what extent it is considered a formal unit at all by the people themselves. Larger than the lineage and smaller than the clan, it is this bilateral group of relatives that co-operates to give the important *kemem* celebration at the first birthday of a child. Likewise, one feels free to call on one of its members for help in a daily task. This bilateral grouping is important in any discussion of the range of kinship in that it marks off a series of relatives beyond which the obligations of kinship rapidly diminish in intensity. Variable in size, the bilateral kindred is perhaps better described in terms of intensity of kin bond rather than of a formal, well-delimited kin unit. Unfortunately, my data are here deficient, and the relation of the kindred to unilateral descent groups and to the effective range of the kinship system needs additional field study.

Factors of common residence and relative propinquity also obviously affect the feeling of kin intimacy and solidarity. An individual comes in contact most often with the other members of his household. Outside of his household, there is a circle of relatives, on his mother's, father's, and spouse's sides whom he sees less often because they are farther removed spatially from him. The lineage organization cuts across this spatial distribution of relatives because the members of a lineage usually occupy more than one house-group. In the extension of kinship, relative propinquity can be contrasted with the lineage bond, as well as with bilateral ties. These factors combined determine the core of an individual's kin relationships and the extent to which kinship terminology and behavior are extended beyond this core of close relatives.

Although the clan represents an extension of lineage ties, this extension can be much modified by the residence factor. Two lineages whose component households are built close together and whose members get along well with one another may belong to different clans but may have a much greater mutual feeling of friendliness and intimacy than either lineage will have toward another more distantly removed lineage of the same clan. Common membership in the same clan is not by itself sufficient to draw its

component lineages together into well-knit, cohesive kin groups separated socially from other such groups. (Chave [1948] has made a similar observation, and my own data are in every way confirmatory.)

KINSHIP BEHAVIOR

At Majuro there are only a few kin relationships in which behavor tends to be highly formalized, yet kinship behavior as a whole falls into patterns that can be rather easily discerned in the flow of village life. The following description is arranged according to the series of reciprocal relations that exist within the kinship system. Consanguinal relationship within the circle of closely related kin are described first, followed by an account of affinal behavior.

Parents–Children

The relation of parents to children is an informal one among the Marshallese, and, with the possible exception of the father–eldest son relationship, parental respect takes no extreme forms. In disciplining young children, parents will occasionally administer a slap on the hand or in serious cases even a whipping, but the Marshallese seldom resort to corporal punishment. Nor does the mother's brother enter the family circle as a strong disciplinarian. Nevertheless, the relation of a child to his parents is one of respect. The parent's name is not used by a child in direct address. Although as the boy or girl grows older he may joke with his parents, reference to sexual subjects is carefully avoided. The Marshallese have always been known to allow great pre-marital sexual freedom, but to my knowledge the parents take little or no active part in the sex education of their children.

Erdland mentions the privileges exercised by the first-born child among the Marshallese over the parents' younger siblings, but this is certainly not noticeable today. The oldest child in a family does exercise a degree of authority over his own siblings, if for no other reason than that he is very early assigned to take care of younger brothers or sisters. There is also a distinctly heightened respect relation between a father and his eldest son. Even when the son has reached maturity, they seldom indulge in joking. In ordinary conversation mention of sexual or excretory functions is carefully avoided. One informant went so far as to describe this relation as very "sacred," and emphasized the mutual regard and respect between a father and his eldest son.

Children observe a respect relation to the mother, but, for girls who have grown up, there is a certain relaxation of the avoidance of sexual subjects in conversation with their mothers. On the whole, respect relations are not so formalized between women only, in contrast to those between men only, or between men and women.

Brother–Sister

Between a brother and a sister there is a marked respect relation that is inculcated at an early age. By the age of five or six, children of different sex play separately and are encouraged to do so by their elders. "It doesn't look right to see a boy playing games with girls," I was repeatedly told. This separation of the sexes in early childhood is one expression of the brother-sister respect relation. Speaking of small children, a mother once remarked, "Taking care of young children is the mother's duty. She must teach them what they should do and what they should not do. A girl must not have her bath where her brother can see her. She must not go to the latrine if her brother is with her. She must not undress in her brother's presence. She should not quarrel with her brother, but should show she respects her brother. Mostly it is a mother who teaches her daughter these things." Conversely, a boy is taught to be very careful in similar ways in his behavior toward his sister.

In adolescence, the separation between boys and girls is modified by the commencement of pre-marital sex relations with other young people outside the circle of close relatives. If anything, this serves to accentuate the respect relation between brother and sister in regard to the avoidance of sexual matters in conversation or in overt behavior generally. Also by the time of adolescence, unmarried brothers and sisters sleep in different parts of the house, or even in separate though adjacent houses. They are seldom if ever seen in public together.

Siblings of the Same Sex

Between brothers alone, or between sisters alone, a relation of easy familiarity prevails, tempered by a certain feeling of respect for an older sibling. Among children, the older brother is often delegated by the parents to look after his younger brother, or the older daughter to look after little children of either sex. The younger siblings are supposed to obey their older brothers or sisters. The older sibling will naturally come into the lineage headship before the younger sibling, and, as a potential or actual lineage head, the older sibling commands a certain amount of respect. The relation

between siblings of the same sex does not appear to be very strongly patterned, however, and is characterized chiefly by a marked lessening of the restraints placed on the relations between brother and sister.

Parallel Cousins and Cross-Cousins

Parallel cousins call each other by sibling terms, and the same type of behavior that holds among siblings is extended to parallel cousins. The same holds true of the cross-cousins of the same sex. Cross-cousins of opposite sex, however, apply a special term, *relikö*, to each other and the behavior differs markedly from that between brother and sister. Cross-cousin marriage is encouraged, and the relation between cross-cousins of opposite sex is one of familiarity. Joking on sexual subjects is taken as a matter of course, while cross-cousins can and do have pre-marital sexual intercourse. The relation between cross-cousins of opposite sex is one of privileged familiarity.

Even though a man and a woman who stand in the cross-cousin relation do not marry each other, their children are considered as classificatory siblings. Children of cross-cousins cannot marry each other, or joke on obscene subjects. They apply sibling terms to each other.

Father's Brother–Brother's Child, Mother's Sister–Sister's Child

The child-parent respect behavior is extended to the brothers of the father and the sisters of the mother, and to their respective spouses. The terminological system is classificatory in that the father and his brothers are classed together and the mother and her sisters are classed together. The behavior parallels the terminology. Needless to say, real parents are nevertheless differentiated from classificatory fathers and mothers by the relative strength of the kin bond.

Mother's Brother–Sister's Child

The mother's brother is singled out from the other members of the parental generation through the application of a special term. The terminological distinction is correlated with the fact that the mother's brother is often the head of the maternal lineage. Even if his sister is the legal *alab*, the mother's brother very often acts in her place in matters that affect the lineage as a whole. The lineage head is treated with respect by the members of the lineage, hence it follows that the mother's brother is treated with respect

by his sister's children. Personality differences of course affect individual behavior in this as in all other kinship relations, but it is safe to say that nephews, even as adults, joke little with their mother's brothers, and nieces still less.

The sister's child will eventually inherit the mother's brother's position as lineage head. As the lineage is so intimately related to the system of land tenure, it is not surprising to find that the mother's brother takes an interest in seeing that his sister's child is taught customary law relating to land use and practices, as well as the particular land rights the lineage holds. On the other hand, within the family there is no sharp allocation of function to the mother's brother in the education of the latter's sister's children. With the possible exception of knowledge regarding the lineage's land rights, the father is apparently more important in teaching the moral code and general custom to his children; but, as one informant put it, "the mother's brother is always there if the father is lacking in knowledge, or in interest in his children."

Grandparents–Grandchildren

This is indeed a relation of easy familiarity. Joking between grandparents and grandchildren is frequent and such jokes are often *kajak enana;* that is, they have a sexual reference. Theoretically, it is also permitted for grandparents and grandchildren, real or classificatory, to marry if they are not of the same lineage. I collected one instance of a grandfather marrying a classificatory granddaughter, but they both are almost of the same age. The familiarity of this relation permits the grandparents to pass on information regarding the sex functions to their grandchildren, whereas the parents do not do so. "My grandparents told me about girls," one young man said, as a preface to a more complete exposition of the subject. The difference between the relations with parental as against grandparental generations in regard to joking, banter, and the mention of subjects with a sexual reference is marked.

On the other hand, the fact that the relation of the grandparent-grandchild is one of familiarity does not also mean that it is one of disrespect. Although Majuro is an acculturated community and cultural change has been considerable in the past fifty years, the superior knowledge that many old people possess in matters such as canoe-making, medicine and magic, and general custom, still enables them to elicit the respect of young people. The maternal grandmother and her siblings, if they are still alive, are the oldest

members of the lineage and one of them is its head. Hence they are treated with marked respect that qualifies the usual familiarity relationship between alternating generations at Majuro.

Husband–Wife

In some ways, the husband-wife relation resembles the usages of rural Japan (see Embree, 1939) and it is an open question as to the extent to which this relation in Marshallese society has been affected by the long period of Japanese political domination. Husband and wife are seen in public together, but in walking down the village street the husband is always in the lead, the wife following. Sometimes the two may be seen carrying a basket of food slung on a pole between them on their way to a party; here again the husband always leads. If both attend church on a Sunday morning, they may often proceed from home to church separately and are under no social compulsion to go together.

Displays of emotion between husband and wife are avoided in public. Kissing is not indulged in between adults, and even after being separated for a long time, reunion may be casual, to say the least. During my stay at the village, one of the more important men at the village arrived on one of three canoes from an atoll several hundred miles distant. It was a difficult trip and he had been gone for some months. A crowd gathered at the beach to welcome the canoes, and after beaching the canoes two circles formed, one of men, the other of women, both sitting on the sand. Food was brought and eaten, and there was much conversation. Only after eating and completing his reunion with the men did the returned voyager greet his wife, and then casually. Yet they have long been married and there is a strong bond of affection between the two.

Within the home, however, a more informal attitude of equality prevails. I have seen men helping their wives prepare pandanus for handicraft, and a man and his wife may tailor clothes together for their children. There certainly is no marked differentiation in eating or in entertaining visitors. Marshallese women as a whole are not subdued, submissive creatures, though they may be somewhat shyer in the presence of strangers than men are. On the whole, the relation between husband and wife within the household is easy and informal.

Wife's Sister–Sister's Husband; Brother's Wife–Husband's Brother

Among the Marshallese, the levirate and sororate both prevail, particularly if a dead spouse is survived by young children. Levirate

and sororate are not compulsory, however; it is rather that they are regarded with favor. Paralleling this practice, the relation of a man to his wife's sister is one of familiarity.

If cross-cousin marriage were universal among the Marshallese, a man's wife's sister would be referred to as *relikö*, or "cross-cousin of opposite sex." As *relikö* and wife's sister both involve familiarity relations, the terminology and behavior would be consistent. However, cross-cousin marriage is not universal, and a man usually refers to his wife's sister as a "sister," while she refers to him as "brother." Despite the terminology, their behavior is still a familiar one, and an inconsistency between terminology and behavior is thereby introduced into the sytem.

Between a man and his wife's sister there is much joking and teasing. No restriction is placed on jokes with a sexual reference. Whether this familiarity extends to sexual intercourse is difficult to say. On several occasions, young men said that custom allowed them to sleep with the unmarried sisters of their wives. "My wife would get angry, though," one man remarked. After a pause, and with an amused smile, he added, "Though if I wanted to sleep with my wife's sister, I don't think that would stop me." Erdland (1914, p. 115) notes that a man may have sexual intercourse with his wife's sisters. I am even uncertain as to whether sexual intercourse with the wife's sister is considered adultery. Among church members, sexual intercourse with anyone other than the spouse is theoretically considered adultery, but Marshallese sex practices are very flexible when it comes to formal rules of behavior imposed by the church.

The relation of a man with his brother's wife is also a familiar one, similar to that prevailing with the wife's sister. The possible jealousy and anger of a brother, however, seems to be a stronger brake on extending familiarity to sexual relations than is the anger of a wife over sexual relations with her sister. I know of no cases where two brothers have shared the favors of the wife of one of them. Nevertheless, Senfft (1903, p. 450) notes that the older brother has the right to sleep with the younger brother's wife, and instances may possibly occur today.

Parents-in-Law–Children-in-Law

A man treats both of his parents-in-law in very much the same way as he treats his own parents. The same is true of a woman. There is no attempt at avoidance. The pattern of behavior in this relation seems to be a type of transference from the parent-child relation,

for the two behavior patterns are very similar. It should be noted that if a man marries his maternal cross-cousin, his mother's brother becomes his father-in-law. There is no shift in terminology for the mother's brother, however. In case of marriage to either the paternal or maternal cross-cousin, a new type of behavior pattern towards the parents-in-law does not thereby develop, for both before and after marriage the relation is one of mutual respect.

Wife's Brother–Sister's Husband

Although the character of this relation is changing, it is still the most formalized respect relation in Marshallese society. A man calls his wife's brother *au mamman* (my comrade) and the wife's brother calls him *jemä lällab* (my big father). In this relation, there is a strict avoidance of joking. No mention of sexual or excretory functions is countenanced. The men cannot uncover their bodies in each other's presence or be seen relieving themselves. They would never openly quarrel or disagree with each other. The relation is further extended to the spouse of each. In older days, a man could not be alone with his wife's brother's wife at any time. They did not talk together, but communicated through relatives, and avoided any meeting where the two of them might be alone. If this respect relation were disregarded, I was told that a man's wife's brother would immediately divorce his wife, or the wife would divorce the man, or both. Today the restrictions on conduct in this relation are more relaxed, but it is still formalized, and deviations make the persons concerned in the relation most uncomfortable. Two instances are given below:

> *C* was working at the dispensary as a medical trainee. As he speaks English fairly well, he accompanied a visiting Navy physician to see a man who was ill in the village. The man was *C*'s wife's brother. During the medical examination, *C* acted as interpreter. His wife's brother was very embarrassed during the examination at having to uncover his body in *C*'s presence and at having to reply to questions concerning bowel movements. *C* was likewise somewhat embarrassed. He would have begged off acting as interpreter, but there was no one else available at the time.
>
> *P* is more acculturated than most Marshallese and the restriction on joking in the wife's brother–sister's husband relation does not weigh heavily upon him. One day he tried to joke with *K*, his sister's husband, and tried to banter with *K* about their relationship. *K* said nothing, but walked away. *K* told his wife to tell *P*'s wife to tell *P* to stop trying to joke with him. By this roundabout method, *P* was duly informed. *P* no longer tries to joke with *K*. They remain on the best of terms.

If before his marriage a man was on terms of familiarity with his wife's brother, this relation changes its character immediately following the marriage. Joking is no longer permitted, and the strongly marked respect behavior appropriate to the relation with

the wife's brother prevails. Terminological change also may occur. If a man marries his cross-cousin, he then calls his wife's brother "comrade" instead of "brother," and the latter substitutes "big father" for "brother." If a divorce occurs, the terminology shifts back again, and familiarity is resumed.

Husband's Sister–Brother's Wife

This is theoretically also a relation of strict respect, and its character is probably derived from the wife's brother–sister's husband relation. However, I believe this former relation is changing, for on two occasions I saw the respect relation disregarded, and was told by women informants that it no longer is considered bad form for women in this relation to joke, even with a sexual reference. However, on one of the observed occasions when two young women in this relation were joking with each other, an older woman overheard them. She upbraided the two young women, and said that it was not right, and that in the old days their husbands would have divorced them for such conduct.

CONCLUSIONS REGARDING THE KINSHIP SYSTEM

Indefiniteness of Range

In the extension of terminology and behavior, probably most kinship systems fade off in a somewhat indefinite manner at the outer margins of the system. In working on Marshallese kinship, however, I gained the distinct impression of a lack of sharp definition in the range of the system. The lineages of father, mother, and spouse as well as other closely related kinfolk clearly fall within the range of the system; but there is individual variation in the degree to which extensions of terminology and behavior are made, and the outer limits of the system are very ill-defined. Perhaps this is a characteristic of generation type systems where the clan organization is not highly developed. On the other hand, it may be the result of kinship change, whereby the range of the system is retracting. Although kinship certainly forms a highly important basis for the whole social structure at Majuro and is widely extended, an individual does not extend the kinship bond to include all the members of the community. The situation may be different in smaller communities on other atolls. This is a point to be decided in future field work.

Generation and Lineage as Expressed in the System

The terminological system is a variation of a generation type in that the maternal lineage is recognized in the terminology, although

the system as a whole expresses generation features. As mentioned previously, the terminology gives the impression of an overlay of lineage features on a generation base.

In behavior patterns, differentiation on a generation basis is dominant. Even with lineage modifications in the terminology, there is no resulting serious inconsistency introduced into the patterns of behavior. In consanguinal terminology, the principle of respect between adjacent generations and familiarity between alternate generations holds, with only the possible modification that more respect is shown relatives in the second ascending generation within ego's lineage than with other relatives in this generation.

Within the same generation, respect tinges the relations of younger to older siblings; but this is not as important as the sex difference between siblings of opposite sex as a determinant of behavior.

The lineage principle operates in the respect behavior of nephew and niece toward the mother's brother. Here, however, the behavior corresponds with a generation principle of respect between adjacent generations in relations calling for authority on the part of the older generation.

One of the most marked mutual respect relations lies in the affinal part of the system and consists of the relation between a man and his wife's brother. The social function of this sharply marked respect relation seems to be to prevent or minimize conflict between two lineages that have established a close link through the marriage bond. The fact that a man also extends the feeling of respect to include the wife's brother's wife further minimizes the possibility of conflict. In a similar way, the heightened respect relation between a father and his eldest son, who is the heir to the headship of the mother's lineage, is another manifestation of the same attempt to minimize any open conflict between lineages that are closely linked by a marriage bond and whose members live in the same household. I believe this is the key to the social function of these respect relations.

In an article on the Cheyenne and Arapaho kinship system, Eggan (1937) examined several highly formalized respect and joking relationships in regard to the social situations in which they occur. These situations are centered largely around the extended household based on matrilocal residence, and a number of them involve the possibility of conflict between the relatives concerned. Thus Eggan suggests that the marked respect obtaining between a mother-in-law and her son-in-law is a means of suppressing conflict in situations

where conflict is very likely to occur. Again, he points out that a man must work closely with his wife's brother, "yet since a husband has control over his wife and a brother over his sister, conflict is almost inevitable." (Eggan, p. 78.) The relation between a man and his wife's brother is one of extreme obligatory joking, rather than extreme respect, but the joking is also a device for solving a conflict situation. In this relationship, Eggan (p. 79) states that "respect as a device for suppressing these conflicts is not possible, since there are no generational differences involved . . . but obligatory joking seems to serve quite well. Essentially it seems to be a device for organizing hostility in socially desirable ways; such relationships not only make an adjustment to an ambivalent situation but create a definite bond between the relatives as well."

In the Marshalls the marked respect relation between a man and his wife's brother contrasts with the extreme joking in this same relationship among the Cheyenne. In both cases, the highly formalized behavior seems to be a mechanism for either regulating or suppressing conflict. The two instances support the hypothesis that in kinship relationships where there is a relatively continuous threat of conflict, extreme forms of either respect or joking will develop. In the Cheyenne case, Eggan suggests that the lack of generation difference tips the scales in favor of extreme joking. The Marshallese instance, with marked respect obtaining between brothers-in-law, lays this proposition open to further examination. It is true, however, that the household and social organization of the two peoples are certainly not identical, and the conditions under which either respect or joking will occur are probably to be found in the character of the household and in that part of the social organization most closely related to it. The whole subject of respect and joking relations in connection with the social situations in which they are operative needs further comparative analysis (see Radcliffe-Brown, 1940). The high degree of cultural patterning that the more extreme forms of joking and respect exhibit makes them particularly amenable to field study.

Sex Differentiation

Sex differences are expressed in the terminology through the use of qualifying terms, as well as through different root words. Sex is also a primary basis in the differentiation of behavior patterns. With regard to the use of sex as an organizing factor in the system, however, there is at least one glaring inconsistency between terminology and behavior. This is that the wife's sister is called by a

sister term but treated with the utmost familiarity, whereas other sisters are treated with respect. The answer is that the behavioral system is constructed on the assumption that the cross-cousin of opposite sex is to be treated familiarly, classed separately in the terminology, and always selected as a mate. Unfortunately for the neat consistency of the kinship system, this theoretical premise is not an actuality, for cross-cousin marriages are not frequent.

The marked respect relation between brother and sister, with the avoidance of sex references in conversation and in overt behavior generally, is most plausibly explained as a manifestation of the incest prohibition between siblings.

Preferential Marriage

Cross-cousin marriage, the sororate, and the levirate are all encouraged and favored by the society, but they are not mandatory. Cross-cousin marriage is reflected in the system by the use of a special referential term for the cross-cousin of opposite sex and the special pattern of privileged familiarity between these relatives. It is also reflected in the fact that children of cross-cousins of opposite sex use brother-sister terminology and cannot marry, even though their parents are not married to each other. The familiarity expressed between a man and his wife's sister or his brother's wife can also be viewed as a reflection of cross-cousin marriage, the levirate, and the sororate. The joker in this argument is that these preferential types of marriage are not compulsory and do not even make up the majority of marriages. An earlier student of kinship would no doubt say that we have here a survival of marriage types that were once more widespread in the Marshalls than they are now, but this view cannot be documented with adequate figures. About all one can say is that these preferential marriages are favored by the Marshallese and that privileged familiarity prevails between the potential spouses determined by these marriage types.

Kinship Change

There are certain indications that the Marshallese system is undergoing change in its structure. These indications seem to be more apparent in the system of affinal rather than consanguineal relationships. They are as follows:

(1) A male ego may refer to his wife's brother's wife as "sister" and his sister's husband as "brother" instead of by the traditional terminology. A number of informants said they

used only personal names for these relatives. The strong respect relation amounting almost to avoidance is being modified in that men will now converse directly with the wife of the wife's brother. Apparently less significance is being attached to these relationships.

(2) A female ego may refer to her brother's wife, her husband's brother's wife, and her husband's sister as "sister" instead of by the traditional terms for these relatives. Some women also tend to joke with the brother's wife and the husband's sister where formerly they did not.

(3) I have listed one instance where a man attempted to joke with his sister's husband. The former is an acculturated Marshallese; in old times I think the attempt to joke would never have been made.

(4) The English terms "papa" and "mama" have come into use in the vocative terminology. I found no other borrowed terms incorporated in the terminological system.

In comparing present Marshallese usages with the documentary record, we may also note:

(1) Krämer and Nevermann (1938, pp. 182–183) state that a special term was applied to the mother's brother's wife and that there was a prohibition against speaking with her. Today the mother's brother's wife is classed with the mother. I learned of no extreme avoidance relation expressed toward her.

(2) Erdland (1914, p. 115) emphasizes the great respect accorded the first-born child, even by the younger siblings of the parents. This is certainly much modified today. Even allowing for the limitations of my own observations, I believe it is safe to say that a first-born child is accorded nominal but not extreme respect, and that the parents' younger siblings do not place him in a very special category.

It seems to me that the most reasonable explanation for these changes lies in a very gradual weakening of the social importance of the lineage, brought about in turn by the decline of the class system. The lineage head, or *alab*, exercised immediate authority over the members of his lineage and ensured that a steady flow of food tribute supported the nobility. Testimony of old informants indicated that the lineage heads held greater authority in the early part of the present century over their lineages than they do now. Today, food tribute is more voluntary than mandatory, and an *alab*

cannot ride roughshod over the other members of his lineage and demand their ready co-operation with any expectation of getting it. Likewise, the new criteria of status discussed in Chapter V have raised certain individuals without regard to their position in their own lineages or in the old class structure. I believe the over-all effect has been a weakening in the authority and prominence of the lineage head, through which many aspects of the class structure worked, and that the social importance of the lineage has declined, with correlated effects in the kinship system. This is a hypothesis only, and future work in the Marshalls on the details of the acculturation process may reveal more sharply the trends in kinship change.

KINSHIP AND CUSTOMS RELATING TO LIFE CYCLE

The purpose of this section is not to describe fully the manner in which an individual gradually assumes full participation in his culture, but rather to give a certain background to the kinship system by relating it to a number of events in the life cycle.

Pregnancy and Birth

Pregnant women are not under special social disabilities at Majuro. They are not isolated nor is their condition thought to be dangerous to men. So far as I could tell, they observe no food taboos, and such selectiveness as they display with regard to food can be explained to a large extent by the physiological fact of their pregnancy. Most women do follow certain precautions that are basically magical in nature. Pregnant women are thought to be particularly susceptible to illness caused by the ghosts of the dead. They are careful, therefore, to keep a lantern burning at night, and a woman relative usually sleeps close by in the same room. Erdland (1914, p. 338) noted that pregnant women are not allowed to leave the house after dark, probably for this reason. At the present time, pregnant women venture out at night, but those I saw were always accompanied by another adult.

Pregnant women, and particularly their unborn babes, are also considered to be especially susceptible to a disease called *kijunkan*. This disease apparently takes several forms, but the cases that were described to me involved the child after it was born. The new-born baby became affected by skin disease, and weakness and general debility. To guard against this, the mother drinks a medicine made from plants and prepared by an older woman versed in this type of magical preparation.

When labor pains commence, the mother, with her husband and usually several other relatives of the household as well, walks to the dispensary. The medical aid keeps a record of the pregnant women and of their condition and has his schedule of expected births well in mind; so he is prepared for the event. Today all babies in the village are born at the dispensary. There are several old women in the village who can act as midwives, but during my stay only the medical aid delivered babies.

After the birth, the mother and child stay in the dispensary four or five days. Beds and sheets are provided, but food is brought from home daily by relatives of the mother. On leaving the dispensary, the mother walks back to her house, with her husband or a relative carrying the child, wrapped in a cotton blanket.

Babies are always breast-fed. It is believed that the mother's eating plenty of fish will increase the supply of milk, and so fish is an important item of post-natal diet. In nursing, either the child nurses in the mother's arms, or the mother stretches out and gives the baby the breast while both are lying down. Breast-feeding is kept up for about a year. Erdland (1914, p. 126) states that women nurse their babies two or three years, but at the village today the period is shorter. Babies are usually weaned after approximately a year. When the mother is weaning her child, she sometimes places on her breasts the crushed and bitter leaves of a plant called *kuŋut*, to discourage the child.

Supplementary feeding is often commenced when the child is three or four months old, depending on the mother's own supply of milk. If the supply is insufficient, the baby may be nursed by another mother whose supply is more abundant. The first supplementary foods given the child are *jekaro*—the unfermented sap of the coconut tree—and the milk of green coconuts. If it is available, canned milk is also used for feeding infants. The canned milk is mixed with *jekaro* and given by bottle and rubber nipple. There are not many bottles and nipples in the village, however, so they are not used regularly. In view of the lack of sterilization facilities, this is perhaps fortunate. When about nine months of age, the child is introduced to a thin mixture of boiled arrowroot flour and water and, a little later, to a soup containing rice or mashed breadfruit. At about a year, a species of soft-fleshed fish may be added to the diet. By the time it is weaned, the baby is given an adult diet as rapidly as he or she wishes to take it, though these supplementary foods are still given to the child.

According to Erdland, and to Krämer and Nevermann, a husband has intercourse with his wife soon after confinement. This conflicts with my own information. I was told by numerous villagers that for at least a year after the birth of a child no sexual relations between husband and wife are permitted. Several people were visibly shocked when I suggested that such a long period was unnecessary. The ban on sexual intercourse is considered essential to the health and well-being of the child. I was told that several years prior to my arrival, a couple did have sexual relations about six months after the birth of the first child; the wife became pregnant, and the second child died soon after birth. This incident was described as entirely caused by the refusal of the husband and his wife to observe the year's ban on sexual intercourse. The health of the child does not depend on the husband's remaining continent. If he commits adultery, the child will not be harmed, though the wife may be outraged at her philandering husband.

A single name is given to a new-born child within several weeks after birth. Two types of personal names are in use in the village today. The first are Marshallese names, and the second are usually Biblical. There are a few Japanese names and, since the war, a growing number of American ones, together with a few indicating a special event associated with the child. A small boy at the village was named "LCI" because he was evacuated as an infant from Wotje atoll in an American landing craft of this type.

An individual has only one name, and a woman does not assume her husband's name at marriage. The prefix "Li" for women and "La" for men is included with the name as a mark of respect. It is also becoming common for men to add their father's name to their own. Thus, a friend of mine was known as Nelson, but there was another Nelson in the village and my friend was distinguished from the other Nelson in conversation, by calling him Nelson Zedechiah, Zedechiah being the name of his father. I believe this is a relatively recent innovation and reflects an introduced patrilineal emphasis in the kinship system.

The First Birthday

The most important early event in a child's life is the occasion of his first birthday. The Marshallese use the word *kemem* to mean the celebration at the completion of an event of importance. *Kemems* are held when a house is built, or a large canoe completed, or—most important of all—when a child has his first birthday.

The first birthday is a family celebration, to which distant relatives and friends are also invited. Several months before the birthday, the close relatives of the child's father and mother gather together to decide how much food should be prepared and what gifts to bring and the general organization of the party. On the day of the event these close relatives again assemble, bringing baskets of food and gifts of handicraft. As the relatives come to the house, those of the wife put their food at one place and those of the husband at another place. More distant relatives and friends, the pastor, the paramount chief, the noble (if the lineages holding the event are commoners), or the *alabs* (if the lineages are noble) of the lands held by the family, and often the medical practitioner are also invited. They do not have to bring food, but many usually do. When everyone is assembled, the food is put together and is then divided among those present. The handicraft is also put together in one place.

A special basket of the choicest food may also be given by the husband and his relatives to his wife and her relatives. The wife and her kin reciprocate by presenting a similar food gift to the husband and his relatives. I was told that this was often omitted if the husband and wife were cross-cousins or fairly closely related.

After the food has been divided, the pastor rises and offers thanks to God and gives a short prayer. The people then eat. About the same time, the gifts of handicraft are divided also; they are taken by the more distant relatives and friends who were invited as guests. The year-old baby is then paraded and exhibited among the company by the mother or father, who holds the unblinking, dark-eyed youngster in her or his arms. Although the celebration usually starts in the afternoon, it continues usually until well after dark. After everyone has eaten, there is often singing and sometimes Marshallese dancing for the amusement of the guests. The number of people at a *kemem* varies. A small party may have only twenty or thirty; a *kemem* given by a prominent family with many relatives may include two hundred. At the conclusion of the celebration, the host will rise and make a self-deprecatory speech. "This is all there is," he will say. "I am sorry the food wasn't better. It wasn't much of a *kemem*, but it was the best we could do."

The *kemem* is an expression of family solidarity, and serves publicly to unite the kinfolk of husband and wife in celebrating the first birthday of the child. It also marks the first socially recognized step in the child's growth toward adulthood. Before the *kemem*, a

child cannot be separated from its mother through adoption out of the family. After the *kemem*, it may leave the household by being adopted into another family.

The organization of a *kemem* gives an indication of the range of the kinship system. The close relatives who co-operate in giving the *kemem* are differentiated from the more distant relatives and friends who are invited to the party and who act as an appreciative audience, but who do not give the party. The former are a bilateral grouping, a kindred, to which reference was made in the discussion of the range of the kinship system.

> When *B* was several months old, her parents and the close adult relatives of both mother and father held the first of several meetings to decide how the *kemem* should be organized. It was decided that each two people should provide one large, two-handled basket of food, as well as some mats and other handicraft. It was also decided that at the time of the *kemem* the food was to be put together and divided evenly, and that baskets of food should be sent to the two paramount chiefs, the pastor, the sick people at the dispensary, and strangers from other atolls. The *kemem* itself was larger than average, with some two hundred people attending.

Adoption

Adoption is very common at Majuro, as elsewhere in the Marshalls. To my knowledge, only children are adopted and I learned of no cases where adults were adopted by other older adults. Another characteristic of Marshallese adoption is that the child and his adopter are related. An uncle or aunt will adopt his or her nephew or niece, or a sibling of the grandparent adopt the grandchild. I recorded only one case where the adoption did not involve relatives. There is an old Marshallese saying that unless the adoption is between relatives, there will be trouble between the two families. In the one case I recorded of a proposed adoption between non-relatives, there was indeed trouble, which was still going on when I left the atoll:

> Shortly after *A* had her baby, a woman friend asked to adopt the child, and *A* gave her consent. The child is now eight months old, but cannot be taken from its mother until after it has been weaned. At present, however, *A* has decided she will not give up the baby, and her friend has decided she does not want the baby after all. In the past months, *A*'s friend has given her soap and clothes for the baby, and she wishes to be compensated for the expense in purchasing these items. *A* refuses to offer compensation, and there is hard feeling between the two women.

The immediate reasons for adoption are various. The Marshallese are extremely fond of children and, if a household lacks young faces, one of the adult members will adopt a youngster or two. On the giving side, if a family is large, the parents can spare a child easily enough. In cases of divorce, or illegitimacy, or death of a

parent, the children may be adopted by relatives. It must also be remembered that adoption is within the community, so except in special circumstances the child is not removed entirely from his parents' household. Adoption serves to spread out the available food resources more evenly among the hungry youngsters.

Although a man or woman may reach an agreement with the parents of a child for the latter's adoption, the child never leaves its parents' home until after the first birthday or until after it has been weaned, if the weaning falls after the first birthday. Parents may also refuse an offer of adoption. Inasmuch as the adopter and the child are related, the adoption itself is essentially a transfer of a child from one elementary family unit to another related unit. From the adopter's point of view, the adoption brings the child from a more remote circle of relatives into a closer circle of relatives, thereby intensifying the responsibilities of kinship.

An adopted child calls his foster parents by parental kinship terms. He does not, however, sever his kinship relations with his real parents, and he is brought up to remember who his real parents are, and often visits them for extended periods. If a man or woman adopts a child, the child does not thereby share in the land rights of the adopter's lineage. The child's land rights are still those of his own lineage. In some cases, it is true that an individual rather than his lineage may have a right to a piece of land; in such case he may pass this right on to his children, or to an adopted child; but the adopted child does not acquire rights held by the entire lineage of his adoptor.

The adopter feeds and cares for the child and has a distinct responsibility for his welfare. If he shirks this responsibility, the real parents of the child are free to demand and take their child back. The adopted child, in turn, develops a responsibility toward the adopter. When the latter becomes old and weak, it is then the child's turn to care for him.

From the point of view of the kinship system as a whole, the frequent adoptions at Majuro serve to intensify the personal nature of the kin bond among a widely ramifying circle of relatives. Adoption becomes a solidifier of the kinship system.

Childhood and Adolescence

Childhood at the village is an active, free, and relatively unrestrained period. The mild climate allows children to spend most of their time out-of-doors, and the extremely active play of children

contrasts sharply with the leisurely movements of adults. It is true that an older brother is given the job of looking after a younger one, or an older sister looks after a smaller girl, but a mother does not consciously unload continuous full responsibility for keeping track of younger children on their older brothers or sisters.

As noted previously, boys and girls early develop separate interests and play their own games apart from each other. At the same time an informal age-grading develops quite early. The informal group of age-mates, not necessarily related, is an important factor in the Marshallese educational system, for probably most of the knowledge a boy or girl acquires is absorbed rather than formally learned, and this process of absorption is partly a matter of common interaction among age-mates in learning new things, such as canoe-sailing, swimming, and fishing.

In addition to learning as a member of an informal age-group, boys and girls also are taught skills by their parents and older relatives. These skills follow the sexual division of labor. A boy learns about house-building, canoe-making, taro cultivation, and fishing from men; a girl learns about household tasks and the making of handicraft such as mats from her mother and other women. The process of learning here also is largely one of imitation and absorption rather than formal instruction. The only really formal instruction is that given in the school, and the subjects taught at school really refer to non-Marshallese culture, with the exception of learning Marshallese songs and written Marshallese.

Children, adolescents, and young men and women are all fond of games and a number are always being played in the village. In the late afternoons the area around the old town hall is used by children and young people for games. Boys and young men are very fond of baseball, which was evidently introduced in Japanese times. They also play a Marshallese game called *anirib*. In this game the young men or boys form a small circle and try to keep a ball made of rolled pandanus in the air by kicking it back and forth with their feet. The object of the game is to see how long they can keep the ball in the air without letting it touch the ground. A rhythm is clapped with the hands while the game is in progress.

In playing games the sexes do not mix, and girls have their own games. Small girls play jacks with coral pebbles and a rubber ball. Girls from the age of eight to fifteen or sixteen are very fond of a team game somewhat similar to baseball. Girls are also frequent spectators at the older boys' baseball games.

I never observed married women and young men older than their early twenties playing games requiring physical exertion. A form of checkers has been played by all ages since German times, and playing cards are in use. Solitaire and a variety of poker(?) that I did not attempt to master are fairly common in the village.

With the exception of *anirib*, these games are all culture borrowings. My assumption is that in pre-contact and early contact times, Marshallese ceremonies and dances filled a function similar to that served by introduced games.

With the coming of puberty, the spheres of activity of boys and girls tend to become less sharply differentiated. Sexual relations between boys and girls commence after puberty. Love-making and pre-marital sexual intercourse are concomitants of adolescence and the sex behavior of adolescents is subject to no rigid controls and restrictions except for those associated with incest prohibitions. Sex education is very largely a matter of learning with an age group. Except for some instruction from grandparents, there seems to be no formal instruction on sex matters. The puberty hut and associated rites for girls are things of the past.

In the love affairs of adolescents, as well as of adults, a go-between is often used. The term for go-between is *ri-maitil*, and from the testimony of older informants it is apparently an institution that antedates the Japanese regime in the Marshalls. The function of a go-between is to initiate the first meetings between a couple. The go-between carries messages and small gifts from one partner to another, and is especially useful if the girl of a young man's choice stays around her home a great deal and it is difficult to arrange first meetings with her. After the young people have become well acquainted the go-between fades out of the picture.

The use of a go-between is related to the Marshallese sensitivity to ridicule and the desire to avoid uncomfortable situations. When two men compete for the affections of one girl, or two girls for a single man, the competing persons seldom if ever speak to each other and often tend to avoid each other. The Marshallese steer clear of open personal friction in embarrassing situations. This sensitivity is also at the root of occasional instances of magic, used "to make a person like you," which is not a form of simple love magic. An instance follows:

> *K* alienated the affections of *M*, the wife of *K*'s friend, *D*. *M* divorced *D* and married *K*. However, *K* and *D* are still good friends. The reason is that *K* secretly made a "spell" on *D* so that *D* would not become angry with him, and so that their friendship would not be broken.

Marriage and Divorce

Marriages are entered into early at Majuro. Girls marry at seventeen or eighteen and sometimes earlier. I know of at least one sixteen-year-old wife in the village. Boys marry somewhat later, at about twenty. There are certain marriage rules connected with incest prohibitions. One should not marry within one's own clan, though as previously mentioned there is one intra-clan marriage at the village. One should not marry a parallel cousin or any closely related classificatory sibling. I found one exception to this rule also. A couple from Wotje residing at the village are the children of real brothers; this marriage is frowned upon, but the couple are not ostracized.

It was noted in the section on kinship terminology that the referential terminology is adjusted to cross-cousin marriage, which is regarded with favor. The incidence of cross-cousin marriage, however, is low. Out of a sample of 120 marriages, I recorded only seven between cross-cousins, and three of these were between real cross-cousins and four between classificatory cross-cousins. It may well be that cross-cousin marriage was more frequent formerly than now, but unfortunately it is impossible to document such a trend with actual figures from the literature.

There are two kinds of marriage in the village: In the first kind the ceremony is performed in the church by the pastor, and/or registered formally with the magistrate as a civil marriage. This type of marriage is infrequent. In most cases a socially recognized union is entered into with no formality whatsoever between a young man and woman. The girl's parents are usually consulted beforehand, though not always. This is the common form of marriage arrangement in the village and stems from Marshallese tradition.

Marriage is also easily dissolved. Unfortunately, I do not consider that my figures are adequate. Out of a sample of 120 marriages that were currently existing during my stay, I know that forty-eight of the partners had been married before; but this figure would have been higher had I been able to get around to investigating all the partners thoroughly, a task which I did not have time to do. Marriage is considered to be very brittle by the villagers; it is stated to be so in the German accounts, and undoubtedly this ease of divorce is the condition today. I believe that the general pattern is that in their youth men and women may be married one or more times before settling down to a more permanent marriage. The line between a pre-marital love affair and a married status is also some-

times difficult to determine. Yet stable unions do exist, and extreme promiscuity, either before or after marriage, is frowned upon.

The cause for divorce is either incompatibility or adultery, but adultery is not automatically cause for divorce. Minimal figures for adultery are found in the number of people ousted each month from the church. The actual figure is probably much larger, and adultery is relatively frequent now, as it was in former times (cf. Erdland, 1914, p. 120; Krämer and Nevermann, 1938, p. 186). But unless one partner to the marriage demands a divorce, adultery usually results only in a marital fight.

The sororate and the levirate should also be mentioned in this section. Both these types of marriage are limited to the sibling of the deceased spouse. The levirate does not include marriage with either the mother's brother's wife or the sister's son's wife. Sororate and levirate are both regarded with favor. They are said to be particularly good if there are small children of the deceased spouse to be considered. I was told that sororate and levirate particularly held among chiefly families and was not so common among commoners. Whatever the custom once was, the incidence of sororate and levirate is far from high today. I was able to record only three cases of the sororate and none of the levirate existing among current marriages, although I made special inquiry on this particular point.

In cases of divorce, Erdland (1914, p. 120) stated that the wife takes the children. This may have been the custom in Erdland's day, but modern practice at Majuro is different in that the children, if not grown, are more often divided between husband and wife than assigned to the wife alone. They are also frequently adopted by a relative. Their land rights lie with the mother's side, and this fact tends to strengthen the bond with the mother. In any case, children are never to my knowledge left adrift through their parents' divorce. The same is true of illegitimate children. Even though girls marry early, illegitimate children are not too uncommon, and my genealogies show eight under three years of age. No stigma whatsoever attaches to the child or the mother, whose chances of future marriage are not thereby badly damaged. The Marshallese love of children, the widely ramifying bonds of kinship, and the widespread custom of adoption take care of the community's children, regardless of the circumstances of their birth or the divorce of their parents.

Institutionalized Friendship

This was once important in the Marshalls. Two women or two men might decide to become friends. The relation was institution-

alized, and the two friends would use sibling terms for each other and undertake a series of reciprocal obligations (Wedgewood, 1942, pp. 4–7). Today this form of institutionalized friendship is no longer practiced at Majuro.

Old Age and Death

There is a decided feeling in the village that the aged, having given service, are entitled to service in return. Old people are cared for by relatives, either their children or grandchildren, or, if none of these exist, by more remotely related relatives, usually but not always of the same lineage. There is a very considerable number of old people in the village, evidence of healthy living conditions on the atoll.

When death comes, the rites that take place show the effects of culture contact. The several funerals that I observed at the village all conformed to the same pattern, the principal characteristics of which can be made clear by describing the funeral of *K*.

K, a young man, died suddenly at the Navy headquarters, and his body was brought back immediately to the village for burial. It was late afternoon when the boat bringing the body arrived at the village. The coffin was taken to the church and laid across several benches near the front of the church. The lid of the coffin was removed and benches were set next to the coffin. The body was wrapped in a sheet, with the face exposed, and the coffin lined with Marshallese mats. (Sometimes, I was told, a coffin is not used and the body is wrapped in mats for burial.) Wreaths and flowers were placed on the body by friends and relatives.

Throughout the entire night, a vigil was kept by relatives and friends. *K*'s mother and his wife sat next to the coffin. His father was dead. His mother never left her spot near the head of the coffin. Her head rested on her arms, which lay across the edge of the open coffin, and she kept up a low moan that was interspersed with weeping. From time to time other close relatives would sit by the coffin, sobbing and crying. *K*'s wife also wept, but quietly and without moaning. Other women took turns sitting by the coffin, quietly fanning the corpse with breadfruit leaves to keep the flies away. Except for the mourners by the coffin, the church was still. On benches around the church about forty other people sat—villagers who would come for several hours and then leave again. Three lanterns were placed about the church. They cast long shadows among the mourners and threw into relief the high-cheeked,

FIG. 42. Village cemetery.

black-haired women sitting by the open coffin. Sometimes a cloth would be spread over the body and various people in the church would rise and place coins on the cloth. These would then be placed on the bench next to the mother. Gifts of soap and other small presents would also be put in a basket next to the dead man's mother. Throughout the night the wailing mother, the weeping, sad-eyed wife and a succession of villagers stayed in the church beside the body.

In the morning, a short funeral service was conducted in the church by the pastor, and a collection was taken and given to the relatives of the dead man. Then the pallbearers—all young men—took the coffin and walked to the cemetery (fig. 42) at the end of the island, followed by those who had attended the funeral service. When the procession arrived at the cemetery the coffin was placed next to the grave and the lid was placed on the coffin but not nailed.

The mother resumed her weeping. Each pallbearer in turn put a dollar bill on the coffin. There was a pause and the people assembled sat around quietly. There were about a hundred in all. They were waiting for the arrival of *K*'s daughter, a young married woman who had been delayed in getting from Rongrong, where she lived. Finally she arrived with a small party. She was met by *K*'s wife, her own mother, who talked angrily to her, snapped at her with her handkerchief, and tried to strike her. The daughter wailed and fell to the ground and her mother broke out into loud weeping. Two men picked up the daughter and half-carried her to the coffin, at the same time protecting her from her angry and weeping mother. The lid was then nailed on the coffin and the body lowered into the grave. Every man in turn then put a shovelful of earth in the grave; the women tossed a handful of earth into the grave. Then the pallbearers finished the job and the burial was completed. In true Marshallese fashion, no one hurried home. The day was cool, and the trade wind rustled the palms growing around the cemetery. People sat quietly for a time and then drifted away. There was an atmosphere of peace and calm about the proceeding. Finally, only a little group of a half-dozen immediate relatives of the dead man sat alone around the grave, each in quiet contemplation. Eventually they too rose and walked slowly homeward.

In the funeral ceremony, certain points may be brought out. Institutionalized weeping, probably an ancient custom, prevailed among the close relatives of the deceased. The women played the predominant role in the mourning through the night-long vigil at the church. *K*'s wife's anger at her daughter and her attempt to strike the latter illustrate a time when overt aggression is permitted and expected. I was told that relatives arriving late at a funeral are always thus greeted, even if they hurried as fast as they could. The survivors of the dead man's own household are angry with relatives coming from afar because they were not there when he died, and because they had not spent more time with the deceased before his death. I am not sure of the interpretation to be placed on this occasion when overt aggression and violent feeling, so rare in Marshallese life, are expected.

Six days after *K*'s death, his relatives and friends again gathered at the cemetery. This occasion was a formal spreading of coral pebbles on the grave. Each friend and relative brought a basket of coral pebbles and a gift for the family—soap, or a new shirt, or a piece of cloth. A male relative of *K*'s started the proceedings by rising and saying, "We did not expect that many people would come

FIG. 43. Display of food at a wake. The elderly woman seated in the background is the mother of the deceased.

with us here. We appreciate that you have come. Before, we were very sad; your being here makes us less sad. I thank you for coming, and for your gifts." Then he stepped forward and spread the first basket of coral on the grave. He was followed by others, until a thick bed of white coral topped the grave. There was no institutionalized weeping, though many people had tears in their eyes. As in the case of the burial, people slowly drifted away.

Later in the day relatives and close friends gathered at *K*'s house to eat a final large meal together, the food being brought by those present and displayed in the house yard before the meal (fig. 43). The people were still solemn, and it was not a time of gaiety. This concluded the death rites.

In the inheritance of the personal property of the deceased there is an obvious source of potential conflict between the surviving spouse

(and her children, if the husband died) and the dead person's lineage. Personal possessions, however, are not numerous. I was told that if a man dies, his widow asks his relatives to come and divide his possessions. They may take a token gift, but leave the remainder to the widow. A woman's most prized possessions—her shell pandanus pounder, a sewing machine if she has one, her chest for personal belongings—usually pass to her daughters on her death. A man's children, I was told, have a claim to his canoe prior to that of his lineage. The house of a couple stays where it is on the death of one of the partners. In this case, if the surviving partner does not have a land right in the land on which the house stands, he or she will often move to land belonging to his or her own lineage.

IX. INTRODUCED INSTITUTIONS IN VILLAGE LIFE

The church, the stores, the dispensary, and the village school are all non-indigenous institutions that have been introduced among the Marshallese at various times in the history of contact with the western nations and Japan. In this section we shall consider briefly the organization of these institutions and their place in village life.

THE CHURCH

The church is the center of the religious life of the village. There is no competing group at Majuro that clings to non-Christian religious practices revolving around the performance of old Marshallese ceremonials. These have disappeared into the past. The ceremonial organization of pre-contact times no longer survives. In its place is a single church, strongly reflecting the theological predilections of the early Protestant missionaries to Micronesia.

However, not everyone is an active church member. In April, 1947, there were 186 members in the church, according to the pastor's figures. The remainder of the village population consisted of people who go to church occasionally, people who seldom if ever go, except at Christmas time, and children too young to qualify as members. There are also a few Catholics in the village—people who were reared on Likiep or Arno, where the Catholic church was active during the German regime. I did not see these Catholics attend church services, but there is no animosity between Protestant and Catholic in the village. To most villagers, I believe the chief difference recognized between the two religions is that the Catholics may smoke tobacco, whereas the Protestant church members may not. Nor are there competing Protestant faiths. The village so far has been spared the disruption that can follow missionary competition.

There is also a certain revolving quality about the membership of the church. Church members may not smoke, drink alcoholic liquors, commit adultery, or dance. These are the most prominent of the local sins, in the approximate order of importance. Few church members have trouble with smoking or drinking alcoholic

liquors, but the sex practices of the Marshallese are one of the most deeply rooted aspects of their culture, and have survived with little change. These practices involve premarital sex freedom, a relatively brittle marriage tie in early adult years, and a considerable amount of leeway in regard to post-marital chastity. As a result, there is a rather continuous flow of members who are ousted from the church for adultery, and who may be re-admitted after a proper period of repentance. Thus, for the two-month period of March and April, 1947, sixteen members were ejected, all for adultery, while twelve were re-admitted to good standing after having been ousted for committing the same offense. On a purely mathematical basis, the membership rotates out of and into the church again every few years. However, this is not actually the case, for some of the church members are more prone to fall from grace than others and account for the turnover.

Regular meetings of the church are held on Thursday, Friday, and Sunday. The Thursday meeting is an afternoon service for women only and is organized largely by the pastor's wife. The Friday meeting is a brief morning service. On Sunday, a regular service is held in the morning, and a Christian Endeavor meeting is held in the afternoon. On the first Tuesday of each month a special morning meeting is held, and each church member is required to be present in order to attest to his good faith as a practicing Christian. Communion services are held four times a year, and special services are held at Christmas and Easter. Christmas is the high point of the year in the church calendar.

Marshallese church meetings are always relaxed and leisurely. Nothing starts or ends in a hurry at Majuro. On Sunday morning at approximately nine o'clock the pastor's wife vigorously strikes a ship's bell that serves to call the people (fig. 44, lower). The word is relayed down the mile-long length of road in either direction from the church by a series of empty, metal fire-extinguishers placed a few hundred yards apart and each near a house, whose owner obligingly beats the fire-extinguisher with a metal tool or object and hence passes the word on down the line. The people, dressed in clean, freshly pressed clothes, slowly make their way churchward, many carrying a Bible or a hymn book wrapped in a kerchief. In about half an hour the pastor's wife strikes the bell again and the service commences. The church may be only a quarter full but it gradually fills up as the service proceeds. The attendance on Sundays usually runs from 130 to 185 people. Men and women sit on separate

FIG. 44. Upper: Laurennij, the village pastor. Lower: Lilly, the pastor's wife, ringing the church bell to summon the people to the Sunday morning service.

FIG. 45. Upper: People leaving the church after a service. Lower: The pastor's house.

sides of the church and enter and leave by separate doors. There are a number of benches toward the front of the church, but those for whom there are no benches make themselves perfectly comfortable on the floor. Some men bring folding canvas stools. Babies play around their mothers, who like to sit in the rear of the church where their youngsters will disturb the proceedings as little as possible. However, neither preacher nor congregation is ever greatly concerned about the activity of small children during the service.

The Bible and a book of hymns were translated into Marshallese during the nineteenth century by the missionaries. The Bible and the hymn book are quite widely disseminated in the village. They comprise the sacred literature of the community and form the basis of the weekly church services, which are always conducted entirely in Marshallese. The procedure at these services follows an established pattern: The singing of hymns; responsive reading of selected passages from the Bible; a sermon whose text is taken from the Bible and delivered by the pastor or members considered qualified by the pastor and elders; prayers, spoken either in unison or individually by the leader of the service; and a closing benediction.

The Christian Endeavor meetings held on Sunday afternoons introduce some variation into this pattern in that the services are always led by a man and woman, both members of the Christian Endeavor group. These leaders change each Sunday. In addition a series of Bible readings is assigned to members of the congregation, who rise and read aloud their pieces. The readings themselves are taken from a list of assignments printed in Marshallese and disseminated among the members.

One of the principal characteristics of the church meetings is the emphasis placed on having church members other than the pastor give sermons and lead services. This is apparent not only at the Christian Endeavor meetings but also at the Sunday morning church service.

In addition to their primary religious function, the regular meetings at the church are used to disseminate purely secular information. On Sundays, for instance, following the Christian Endeavor meeting, announcements are made on various subjects of general interest. An excerpt from my field notes covers the point:

> Following the Christian Endeavor meeting today, the school principal rose and thanked the people for their co-operation in working on the new schoolhouse. The village headman said that it should be finished by Monday and named the leaders of Jitiam's and Langlan's groups to oversee the work. The pastor said that he had received a number of Marshallese Bibles for sale. A village council meeting was announced for the following week.

In the internal, formal organization of the church there is first of all the pastor (fig. 44, upper), a Marshallese trained by American missionaries and other Marshallese pastors and ordained by the American Board. The pastor and his family live in a house built on church grounds (fig. 45, lower). The house was constructed a number of years ago by the church members and is re-thatched when necessary by them. The pastor, the only paid official of the church, receives the sum of eight dollars a month.

There is also a board of elders consisting of fifteen men, one of whom is designated a deacon. The elders meet once a month for discussion of church affairs. At this time they select the lay preachers for the coming month and consider matters such as the state of church membership. As a group, the elders are highly conservative and rigidly adhere to the conduct they have learned to believe consonant with Christian morality.

The church has two committees, each elected on a yearly basis. One of these is called the church committee and the other the committee on "seeing." The latter can be termed a membership committee. The church committee consists of fifteen members and the membership committee of seventeen. Both committees include men and women, and they usually have weekly meetings. The church committee has the duty of selecting the leaders of the weekly Christian Endeavor meetings and the people who read Bible selections at these meetings. It selects the Sunday School teachers and a number of ushers for the Sunday services, for, like other peoples, the Marshallese in church like to sit near the door and need polite urging to distribute themselves. The church committee may also ask individual church members to pray and sing with the sick after the Sunday afternoon meeting. Finally, it cares for the cleanliness of the church and decorates the interior with flowers before the Sunday morning service.

The membership committee is concerned with the conduct of church members. The committee is supposed to act on applications for admission of new members and on ejections of erring ones. It investigates instances of rumored infractions of the moral code, such as smoking or commission of adultery, that are grounds for ejection from the church, as well as lesser departures from the virtuous life. Those who commit a serious offense, such as adultery, are questioned directly, and, if the person involved admits his guilt, which the villagers are very frank about doing, his name is brought up before the church membership on Sunday afternoon after the Christian

Endeavor meeting. The church members vote on ejection, but the vote is a formality and I never saw or heard of a dissenting vote or discussion preceding it. During my stay one very elderly and rather decrepit man was ousted from the church for adultery, to the amused disbelief of some of the villagers.

The Christian Endeavor meeting on Sunday afternoon is attended by anyone who so desires. The Christian Endeavor group is a part of the church organization and has a president, a vice-president, and a secretary. A small number of people—about forty—belong to the Christian Endeavor group but not to the church, because membership in the Christian Endeavor group is a necessary step preparatory to being admitted to membership in the church. The Christian Endeavor group is not a young people's organization; all ages are represented. Nor is church membership confined only to adults. An adolescent who can read and understand the Marshallese Bible is eligible to join the church. He first, however, passes through a probationary period, variable in length, as a member of the Christian Endeavor group. If he is ejected after he has been admitted to the church, he loses membership in both the church proper and the Christian Endeavor group.

The church organization does not bear any particular relation to the old class structure. One paramount chief, Jitiam, is a church member. However, he is not an officer of the church, nor when he attends church is he shown particular deference. Aisea, the magistrate, is also a church member but is not accorded any special position. The pastor is a commoner. Both commoners and nobles are represented on the church and membership committees. Not all commoners and not all nobles are church members. Neither church membership nor official position within the church organization is a prerogative of a single class. Probably the majority of the prominent persons and leaders in the community are church members, but a number are not. However, several in the latter group attend church with fair regularity.

The extent to which the religious beliefs of the villagers form an organized and inter-related body of meanings, and the extent to which these meanings coincide or depart from Congregational orthodoxy—the general background of many American Board missionaries—is a subject that time did not permit me to investigate fully. The sermons that I listened to were based on passages from the New Testament, often incidents in the life and teachings of Jesus. The speakers naturally varied in their command of Biblical material and

in their ease of delivery, but I discovered no striking instances of singular interpretations of the scriptures, such as a merging of Jesus and God, that are reported from other peoples to whom Christianity is a relatively recent introduction.

Increments of old religious belief, however, still survive in the culture of the community. This cultural material includes references to (1) the old culture heroes, the principal characters in the surviving folklore, (2) mythical beings whose existence is still given credence, and (3) beliefs concerning ghosts of the dead. The last-mentioned will be discussed in connection with the curing of disease; the first two will be touched on here.

The culture heroes of Majuro legend and myth are such an intimate part of the local scene that they persist as a part of common knowledge. These characters include Toltoleben, the giant; Jemelut, his brother; Limejokren, their mother; and Etau, the trickster. The incidents in which they figure in the folklore involve the principal natural features of the atoll. The pass into the lagoon was created by Toltoleben, who smashed the reef with a great rock. The insects and crawling things on Majuro and the other Marshall atolls are descended from Limejokren. Arrowroot was brought to Majuro from the Ralik chain by Jemelut, who lived in *Iolab* on a piece of land known to all. Etau's escapades occurred on particular islands on the atoll and on well-known parts of the lagoon. Although the legendary material is passing away and for most people has become of only secular and antiquarian rather than of sacred and immediate interest, it still has a certain amount of vitality and is accepted by at least a few of the older people as a form of true native history, incorporating principal characters formerly also important in the body of religious belief.

In addition to the culture heroes, the old religion recognized a large number of spiritual beings of different sorts. German accounts do not entirely agree on the kinds and varieties of these spiritual beings, no doubt because there were some inter-atoll differences and because the old religion was perhaps not highly systematized and hence resulted in considerable variation in interpretation among individual Marshallese. A German writer as long ago as 1886 commented on the decline of the old religion (Hager, 1886, p. 101). As for the spiritual beings, Erdland mentions the *ekjöb*, a hierarchical order of beings in human form that reside in and around an atoll—in the sky or in stones, trees, and other natural objects—and the *anij*, spirits that have names and for the most part are dangerous

and harmful to man, except for a few such as the *anjinmar*, good-natured little people who live in the bush (Erdland, 1914, pp. 312–314).

At present, information on these spiritual beings is in a still more fragmentary state. Meanings of words denoting the various kinds of spirits have changed, in part because the missionaries in translating the Bible into Marshallese found it necessary to use such words in designating the somewhat differently conceived ghosts, spirits, and idols mentioned in the scriptures. At least some of those ancient spiritual beings that are still recognized are gradually being merged with ghosts of the dead as a common potential disease-causing group. Such are *Leoij* and *Layij*, gods of the sky, who cause *mijlay*, or sickness from the sky. An exception are the *nonieb*, handsome little people who dwell beneath the atoll and who are friendly to man; it was the *nonieb* who devised the old one-piece shell fishhook whose point is turned inward toward the shaft so that, unlike most steel fishhooks, it does not snag on a coral bottom.

These survivals of old religious belief do not, so far as I could tell, form a theological system that offers serious competition to the established Christianity of the church. It is in regard to ghosts of the dead that old beliefs are strongest. These are primarily related to the causes and cure for disease and will be discussed in the section relating to medicine.

Among church members great emphasis is placed on the ban against smoking, drinking, and dancing. This is a heritage of early missionary activity in the Marshalls. The intensity of feeling that the first missionaries expressed on the subject of dancing is evident in the following extract from a letter written by the Reverend Kekuewa, a Hawaiian stationed at Majuro as the resident missionary in 1877:

> It is a time of darkness at Mejuro. There are three great impediments in the way of the progress of the Gospel, viz.: first, the conduct of foreigners; second, war; third, dancing . . . . (From the *Friend*, 1877, p. 61.)

Today the local sins are becoming the basis of a division of opinion within the village. It is my impression that many young people are beginning to question whether the ban on dancing is actually an integral part of Christianity. Others I know are beginning to do likewise in regard to smoking. As culture contact continues, the church may have to change its attitude or lose its power of attracting younger members. Likewise, many of the non-church people give the impression of having become secularized,

neither actively for nor against the organized church, but merely indifferent. The ban on dancing is apparently becoming less strict, however. According to my informants, it was formerly prohibited to church members to even watch a dance. But during my stay, I saw a number of church members watching Marshallese dances.

The situation with regard to Marshallese dances is interesting. The dances today are obviously not what they once must have been, and as art forms are primarily survivals. But today American officials, and in former times Japanese officials, are and were keen on seeing native dances. These dances have accordingly become part of the accepted program of events at all major secular occasions, like the Fourth of July, that are cultural borrowings from the dominant political power. To celebrate these occasions properly, however, the village must fall back on its non-church members, for they are the only ones who can or will dance. Thus, the secular holidays brought from outside the culture tend to keep dancing alive, in the face of continued opposition of the church, also an introduced institution.

There is, however, a lack of secular entertainment in village life, and one senses a sort of unconscious desire on the part of the villagers for something exciting. Marshallese culture appears well integrated. Life is leisurely and pleasant, but it also lacks color. In sacrificing dancing, to which they were once much devoted, the Marshallese have lost a vital form of artistic expression and have introduced a measure of drabness into their lives.

A final word as to the relation of the church to village life should be included. J. L. Dunstan of the Board of the Hawaiian Evangelical Association has stated (1947, p. 247):

> In the Marshalls the church organization has become, generally speaking, the organization through which life moves. Law and order are established and maintained by the church, social life is that which comes within the church, and the control of the people is exercised through the church. It is as though a primitive tribe living through its traditions and its various human relationships had simply replaced its own traditions with some it had taken from Christianity.

As far as Majuro is concerned, this statement is not in accord with my own observations. The church is an important integrating force in village life and a center of communal activity. It serves secular as well as sacred ends, for, as the largest public building, the church house is used on secular occasions such as school exercises. At church meetings, secular news and announcements of importance to the village are circulated among the people. But other forms of social control—familial and kinship sanctions, for example—are

just as important as the church. Law and order are not particularly functions of the church, and it is not a completely pervasive factor running through the entire range of village life. It is an important village institution, but it is not all-important.

THE STORES

The Marshallese have long been accustomed to trade goods and to trade stores, so that the two stores at the village are not merely post-war cultural intrusions brought by Americans. Following the occupation of Majuro in 1944, the United States Navy operated a small store at the village in order to supply the people with at least some of their needs during the disruptive years of the war. In June, 1946, the village's present stores commenced operations as co-operatives. Each store is run by Marshallese residents of the village. At the time of my visit in 1947, both stores procured their entire supply of trade goods by purchase from a federal agency, the United States Commercial Company. The trade goods were then sold to the villagers for cash. Both the trade goods coming into Majuro, and the handicraft products and copra taken out of the atoll, passed through the hands of the United States Commercial Company. Hence this agency exercised final control over the export and import features of village economy, except for a certain amount of mail order purchases from Sears Roebuck and Montgomery Ward made through the Navy post office at the administrative headquarters on the east end of the atoll.

A list of the more important items bought by the two stores for resale to the villagers gives an indication of the variety of trade goods handled:

Food
- Sugar
- Flour
- Rice
- Biscuits
- Canned pork and pork sausage
- Canned tuna and salmon
- Canned milk
- Canned apple sauce
- Canned sweet potatoes
- Syrup
- Marmalade
- Cigarettes

Clothing
- Dress cloth
- Dungaree cloth
- Thread
- Needles
- Men's shirts

Tools
- Fishhooks and fishlines
- Pocket knives
- Sandpaper
- Nails
- Wire netting

Household items
- Soap
- Blankets
- Washboards
- Matches
- Kerosene
- Toilet paper
- Pencils
- Fountain pens
- Notebooks

Livestock
- Sows and pigs

To the residents of Majuro village, trade goods are ...re frills and luxuries. They are considered essential and nec... have become firmly imbedded in the pattern of consume... Mason (1947) emphasizes this fact, completely support... own observations.

The combined purchases of the two stores from th... States Commercial Company for the 11-month period fro... 1946, to May 1, 1947, totaled $5,759.42. Yet in proportio... demand, actual need, and ability to pay, the supply of tra... was very limited and inadequate at the time of my sta... village. This is primarily a reflection of the lack of shippin... ing the disruptions of war and subsequent military demob... Fishing equipment, sail cloth, sewing machines, bicycles, an... were greatly desired, in addition to a more abundant supp... those consumer's goods listed above. Needless to say, the ... was looking forward hopefully to better days and to a more a... supply of products from the industrial part of the world.

The reason for the existence of two stores in the village l... the cleavage between Langlan's and Jitiam's groups. Each sto... a co-operative, but Jitiam's group wished to organize and ru... own store. The old and long-standing split between the two pa...a-mount chiefs has consequently been projected into the present economic organization of the village.

Although both stores are co-operatives, they are organized in somewhat different ways. Store Number One (fig. 46, upper) is a *kumiai*, a term borrowed from the Japanese and signifying to the villagers any association; 127 individual shareholders have contributed amounts ranging from a few dollars to several hund...d to form the capital of the store. The shareholders have designa... as storekeeper one man, who receives $10 a month and rati... In addition, he has two assistants, who receive rations but no salary. The supporters of Jitiam control this store.

Store Number Two is called a "council" store, probably because it is organized in a way similar to the village council. Here a large number of *alabs*, or lineage heads, have contributed the capital. An individual who wished to contribute to this store would do so through his *alab*, or head of the lineage to which he belonged. In Store Number One, the shareholders have formed a co-operative without regard to their lineages and *alabs*. In Store Number Two the lineage is still a part of the organization. Store Number Two is controlled by the followers of Langlan, the other paramount chief.

FIG. 46. Upper: Store Number One. Lower: Gossip at the store.

One man is designated as storekeeper and receives $12 a month and rations.

Both stores are housed in small, modest buildings that were Japanese stores in pre-war days. The stores are open on week-days, but hours are not strictly kept, because there is no need to do so. Both stores are meeting places for gossip and passing the time of day among the people (fig. 46, lower).

Although one store is controlled and operated by the supporters of Langlan and the other by the followers of Jitiam, anyone may make purchases at either store. Sugar, flour, and rice, however, were rationed at the time of my 1947 visit, and a person registered with one store and made his purchases of these scarce items only at that store. In April, 633 people were registered at Store Number Two, and 550 at Store Number One. However, these included people living in Rongrong, Woja, Arrak, and Ajeltake districts, as well as over a hundred who left the village to return to their home atolls in the three months following.

From the point of view of village social organization the stores are important because they involve a type of economic co-operation not found in the old Marshallese culture. Store Number One, in particular, represents, as a co-operative, an economic association divorced from a kinship basis. Such associations were supposedly absent in pre-contact times. However, during the period of Japanese administration, the economic association became a familiar part of village life. It was not uncommon for a number of unrelated people to contribute cash to a common fund, buy Japanese trade goods, and resell these in the village at a small profit. Work groups, formed without particular regard to kin ties, would also work on other people's land making copra, receiving in return a share in the proceeds from the sale of the copra.

Since the taking of the atoll in 1944 by Americans, several work groups have been formed at the village, though only one continues to function at present. Shortly after the occupation, a number of women—fifty-nine in all—established a *kumiai* to produce handicraft for sale to Americans at the base. This *kumiai* was important in getting the women interested in handicraft again and in stimulating production. It disbanded in 1945, as its immediate objective had been attained. Two other smaller associations of men have also formed, and also disbanded, since the war. Their purpose was to earn cash by doing village odd jobs. One association, however, is still active. It consists of thirteen men, including several men of

the nobility as well as commoners. This group will dig a well or a trash pit, move a house, clean bush from copra land, or perform any job that needs to be done. The men are paid in cash and divide the proceeds. Some idea of the cost of their services can be obtained from the fact that a well costs one dollar, a trash pit six feet long, fifty cents. The odd job market in the village is not large, and this one association can easily handle it all.

All the work groups that I learned of shared one characteristic—one or two people took the initiative in forming the association and in keeping it going. The one active work group in the village has a manager who arranges times and dates for jobs and a boss who oversees the jobs themselves, though work is done on an informal basis. These two men organized the association and now ensure its continuation. It is probably characteristic of most Marshallese associations that they are relatively transient and impermanent organizations, forming for a definite purpose to be achieved in the near future and disbanding after the objective has been reached.

Although the economic association is now a familiar type of social unit to the people of the village, its place in the organization of production should not be over-emphasized. First of all, for the day to day economic enterprises of the villagers, large groups are seldom necessary. Fishing, canoe-making, collection of vegetable food, and women's handicraft do not require large co-operating groups, as these activities are carried on at Majuro. If a man needs help, he will usually ask a few relatives and friends to lend him a hand. To the extent that these small groups are formed on a kinship basis, they follow neither lineage nor clan lines alone, but make use of bilateral and affinal ties of relationship as well. Ties of friendship with unrelated neighbors are also important. An instance is given below, as related by *K*, a man.

> I decided to build a canoe. I walked around the interior of the island until I found a breadfruit tree that just suited my needs. This tree, however, was not on my land. It was on the land of *L*, who is the *alab*. I asked *L* for permission to cut down the breadfruit tree for my canoe and she gave me permission. She (*L* is a woman) did not ask for payment nor did I give her a gift. I cut down the tree and cut a large log from the trunk for the canoe. Then I asked six men to help me. Three of them are my relatives; the other three are friends, not relatives. We brought poles and rope to the land where the tree lay. We carried the log to my land and put it near the beach. Before we brought the log to my land, I asked my mother and sister to prepare food. After we had carried the log to my land, we went to our cookhouse, where we sat down and ate the food my mother and sister had cooked. After we had eaten, the men who helped me thanked us for the food.

The size of co-operating groups is therefore generally small, except when some infrequent all-village event takes place, such as

building a new schoolhouse. Fishing, for instance, is usually carried on by individuals or at most by two or three persons. When larger groups are needed, they are easily formed and quick to dissolve as soon as the job at hand has been completed. The economic association is important, not because of the number or size of such associations, but because they do exist in a community which once did not make use of them. Now they provide a recognized way of getting a job done.

It should be noted, however, that at the time of my visits to Majuro, copra production had barely commenced. Before World War II, copra was an important export item. The organization of copra production I did not really have a chance to observe. The copra produced during the spring and summer of 1947 was the product of individual or family effort alone, as is, likewise, the large-scale processing of breadfruit only started after my departure in 1947, though I believe this too is carried on by individual households.

The stores at Majuro are also important with regard to exchange, which can be considered conveniently under two related aspects. The first is the exchange of goods between the village and the outside world—the village's foreign trade (fig. 47). The second is exchange within the village itself.

The village exports two commodities in "normal" times: copra and handicraft. As just noted, copra production has not yet been fully resumed, and handicraft is considerably more important. In addition, since the war many men from the village have worked at various times in the labor camp at the naval headquarters across the atoll. A share of their wages—just how much would be difficult or impossible to determine—has been turned over to relatives at the village, and can be considered a return on an export item. Trade goods, coming into the village primarily through the stores, are the village's imports. In this system of foreign trade, money is of course the medium of exchange, wholly and completely. It happens that the village has had a favorable trade balance, and that a good many hundreds of American dollars are in the possession of the villagers.

Within the village, the situation is more complicated. As a medium of exchange, money has made only a partial penetration of the internal economy. Everything bought at the stores is paid for in cash. Fishermen bring their surplus catch to the two stores, because the latter have weighing scales, and here they sell their fish for money. Several elderly men make coconut-fiber lines and

FIG. 47. Upper: The sailboat *Marjanna*, used to carry trade goods across the lagoon. Lower: Loading a small boat with export mats to take out to the *Marjanna*. The *Marjanna* will take the mats across the lagoon, where they will be loaded on a ship sailing for Guam.

bags, which they sell for cash. Canoes are occasionally bought and sold within the village, while sometimes standing breadfruit trees are sold for canoe lumber. Certain of the village specialists—pastor, storekeeper, medical aid, school teachers—receive monthly cash stipends for their services. Money is being increasingly used, yet the internal "domestic" economy of the village is by no means a money economy. Much of the income of the villagers is subsistence income in the form of goods and services that have no price attached to them, that enter no market, and that follow traditional channels of distribution, described briefly below.

Food items form the major share of goods that are produced and consumed locally and that do not enter a money economy. The traditional channels by which such subsistence income is distributed are primarily three: (1) the system of food tribute, (2) gifts made within the circle of relatives and friends, and (3) gifts to the sick, to strangers visiting the atoll, and for special village occasions.

The system of food tribute stems directly from the old class structure and involves gifts of food passing up a chain composed of worker–*alab*–lesser chief–paramount chief. As mentioned previously, this food tribute is no longer absolutely obligatory for commoners. Unfortunately, actual statistics are difficult to obtain and I have none to offer. The paramount chiefs, however, are certainly not starving, and it is primarily by food tribute that they live. On the other hand, it must not be thought that the obligation of food gifts is entirely a one-way affair. If the paramount or lesser chief happens to have a surplus of food, he is expected to think of his people and to distribute the surplus among them. On certain days the catch from a fish pound at the north end of the island traditionally goes to the paramount chief, on whose land the pound lies. One day several hundred fish were taken from the pound on the chief's day. These fish were distributed by the chief among his *alabs*. Thus, although food usually passes up the worker–*alab*–lesser chief–paramount chief chain, occasionally it passes downward.

Food gifts are also made among the circle of relatives, as well as among friends and neighbors. Gifts of this sort occur at family occasions, such as first birthday parties and after funerals, and also as daily occurrences. Gifts to friends and neighbors are made with no thought of an immediate return. There is no feeling of barter about gift-giving at Majuro. Gifts of food are made to relatives and to friends—people on whom one has depended in the past for help and on whom one can expect to depend in the future.

In addition, there is a miscellaneous category of food gifts to the sick and feeble, to strangers visiting the atoll, or at special occasions, when the village may entertain guests and nobility at a special meal. The Fourth of July is an example. Lavish food displays on these occasions—or on any occasion—are not particularly characteristic of Majuro. Food displays are made, especially at *kemems* and funerals, but even at such times there is not a great over-abundance of food.

As examples of the distribution of food, there follow a number of instances of the division of a fish catch. These examples illustrate the operation of several channels of distribution at one occasion.

(1) *K* caught twenty medium-sized fish by hook and line from his canoe. He gave four to his older sister, who lives at a different household; saved six for his own household; sold five to *E* for one dollar; and five to *R* for one dollar. Neither *E* nor *R* is related to *K*.

(2) *P* caught one large and one small tuna by himself. The large fish he gave to the school for their graduation day celebration. The smaller one he sold for forty cents a pound.

(3) *Q* caught a twelve-foot shark by hook and line. It is still customary to give the head of a large fish to the paramount chief. *Q* gave the head of the shark and some extra pieces to Jitiam and distributed the remainder to all his friends and neighbors in *Lobat* district, where he lives.

(4) *M*, during an excellent fishing period, caught 100 red snappers with hook and line. He gave twenty fish to Jitiam and forty to his mother's brother, who is *M*'s *alab*. He gave ten to his wife's mother's brother and ten to his wife's brother. He kept twenty for his own household.

(5) *K* caught a nine-foot swordfish off the ocean reef. When he brought the swordfish home, a number of people gathered to inspect it. *K* gave each of these people some of the fish. The head and five pieces he gave to his paramount chief. He gave some of the fish to his older brother, who lives at a separate household with his mother, the *alab* of their lineage. He gave other pieces to his wife's mother's brother, and to *Z* and *Z*'s wife, old people who need food. He kept part for his own household, and sold the remainder for five dollars to five different people, none of whom were kin.

(6) *A* went fishing one day with *G*. They caught two large fish (tuna?). *A* lives at the household of *P*, a lesser chief. *G* did not need any fish, and wished none. *A* gave both fish to *P*, except for some he gave to some people who were present on the beach when he and *G* came ashore. *P* divided the fish among the following people: the paramount chief, six *alabs* who hold rights on *P*'s land, the pastor of the church, a visiting pastor, *A*'s mother and his wife's sister, a visiting chief from Mille, some war refugees from Maloelap who have not yet returned to their own atoll, and *P*'s mother-in-law, who lives at the household next door. He sent some across the lagoon to the hospital patients at the Navy headquarters, and kept the remainder for his own household.

Vegetable food collected locally also follows similar gift channels. To my knowledge it is never sold in the village for cash, however. Fowl and pork are saved for special occasions. Women's handicraft either is used by the maker's household or is sold to the United States Commercial Company or is given to visitors—in particular,

American officials—at all village occasions. Within the village, handicraft also is given to the invited guests at a *kemem*.

As noted previously, some services within the village are paid for in cash. The group of men, or *kumiai*, that have organized to work at odd jobs expect to be paid in American money. There are several expert canoe-builders who have helped other men build or repair canoes, and who have been paid a fee for their services. Yet the idea of hiring and paying men for a specific job, or for a stated number of hours of labor, is not a generally accepted economic practice in the village. For the most, co-operation is achieved by voluntary association of men helping one another on a specific job. Help is given by one man to a relative or friend, the former knowing that he will need help at some time in the future or that he has received help in the past.

Returning to the stores, from which this discussion started, we may note that they exemplify one aspect of the village's economic relations with the outside world. These relations are characterized by the use of money as a medium of exchange. Within the village, however, neither exchange nor the distribution of income utilizes money entirely. The internal economy is a mixture of a money and what one might call a gift economy.

In this connection, a word should be said as to specialization within Majuro village. The village magistrate and scribe, medical aid, school teachers, pastor, and storekeepers are specialists in that they spend a major share or all of their working time at their special jobs. They also receive a money compensation from either the American government or the villagers. These specialists are the product of introduced institutions; specialization connected with such institutions is further connected with money compensation. This is not so clearly the case with specialization within the framework of the old culture. Fishermen, canoe-builders, net and line makers, and medicine men are never completely specialized, nor as specialized as the medical aid. Their special qualifications are also not so closely tied to cash compensation—partly so, as in the case of fishermen who sell surplus fish, but not entirely so. The medicine men do not demand a money fee, though they generally receive a gift, usually of food, after they have ministered to the sick. To what extent specialization will increase in the village, and to what extent this in itself will lead to expansion of the use of money, to the establishment of market conditions and a price economy, and to the use of contracts in utilizing specialized services of individuals is a problem for the future.

THE DISPENSARY

The dispensary (fig. 48, lower) consists of three wards, each housed in a separate quonset hut: an obstetrics ward; a ward for contagious diseases; and a ward for non-contagious cases. The physical facilities at Majuro are considerably more extensive than is the case at villages on other atolls, for at Majuro the quonsets formerly housing the Navy hospital for Marshallese have been largely turned over to the dispensary. The dispensary is an intrusive element in that it is operated and closely supervised by the Navy, but modern medical practice receives a wide degree of acceptance among the people, and the dispensary is an integral part of the village.

The dispensary is under the supervision of a Marshallese medical aid, appointed to his post by the Navy on the basis of his competence (fig. 48, upper). He is a vigorous man of middle age, a commoner, originally trained by the Japanese, and given additional instruction by United States Navy medical officers. He receives a monthly compensation from the Navy. The village is fortunate in that their medical aid is well above average in knowledge and skill. He is assisted by his wife, who is a nurse's aid, and by a young man starting his training as a medical aid, who rotates with others from different atolls. Facilities are lacking for providing meals for ward patients, who instead are brought food by their relatives, an arrangement that works very well.

The medical aid holds a daily sick call, at which time there are always a number of patients waiting to be treated. The greatest percentage of cases involve skin diseases, usually fungus infections and yaws. Yaws are under control, and such manifestations as are present seldom involve serious skin lesions. For the six-month period, January–June, 1947, twenty-seven individuals received treatment for yaws, and nineteen of these were ten years of age or under. Apparently resistance to yaws is developed with age, for few young adults are troubled by the disease. A number of individuals with yaws are insufficiently discommoded to present themselves for treatment, but the medical aid doubts that there are more than forty-five active yaws cases in the village. This statement agrees with my own observations.

Upper respiratory infections and mild cases of conjunctivitis are also common. Tuberculosis is present, but its diagnosed incidence is not particularly high. Medical officers consider gonorrhea to be widespread, but apparently the symptoms are mild, for Marshallese seldom report for treatment. According to the Japanese, syphilis

was widespread, but as American medical officers during my stay had yet to find a case at the village, or elsewhere, the Japanese probably mistook yaws for syphilis.

Serious cases of illness, such as suspected tuberculosis or cancer patients, are held for transportation to the hospital at the Navy headquarters. The medical aid is an excellent midwife, and all expectant mothers come to the dispensary to have their babies delivered by him.

The following table is included to show the relative incidence of major disease categories, and lists the number of treatments (not individuals) for a single month, May, 1947. The total of monthly treatments ranges from approximately 1,000 to 1,200. Deliveries of babies have not been included in the table, nor are yaws treatments included. During May, twenty-two persons were under regular treatment for yaws. The data were obtained from the medical aid's sick call book.

Medical Treatments, May, 1947

Skin diseases (excluding yaws)	470
Upper respiratory infections	255
Conjunctivitis	204
Lacerations	95
Arthritis	41
Enteritis; stomach and intestinal disorders	14
Asthma	5
Ear infection	5
Gonorrhea	1
Headache	1
	1,091
Total number of patients	185

Although the efficacy of western medicine is generally accepted, native methods of therapy still have their place in the village. The latter vary from simple household remedies, such as placing crushed banana stalks on a bruise to reduce the swelling, to involved magical practices used to exorcise a ghost. Marshallese medicines are generally plant preparations. In simple ailments, the medicine alone is used; in more serious cases, the medicine is combined with magical spells, or the latter may be used alone. Massage is also favored. The spells themselves are secret; if they become common knowledge their efficacy tends to be lost.

Magic is one subject on which the villagers are reluctant to speak, probably because they have been ridiculed by Japanese and more recently by Americans for their beliefs. My own stay was not protracted enough to investigate fully the subject of magic, but

FIG. 48. Upper: Ria, the medical aid. Lower: The village dispensary.

certain outlines of the magical system in regard to disease can be tentatively given. It is primarily with respect to disease that magical practices still survive. Magic used in conjunction with secular techniques, such as fishing, canoe-building, or sailing is not common.

The basis of the system of magic now in use is found in two categories of belief and practice: (1) the concepts as to the cause of disease; (2) the conviction that certain types of symptoms can best be treated by a medicine man.

At Majuro there is a firm and unshakable belief that the ghosts of the dead are highly dangerous to the health and well-being of the living. Ghosts are particularly apt to harm one at night when one is asleep, and for this reason no one in the village lives alone, and a lantern is usually kept burning through the night in each house. Pregnant women are particularly susceptible to ghost-sickness. Another cause of disease, thought to affect women in particular, is despondency. Finally, I found three cases of illness occurring in the last few years attributed to black magic, though this is a minor category.

If a person is seized with sudden or unusual symptoms, such as a severe head-, stomach-, or leg-ache, or inflammation and swelling of some part of the body, a ghost is immediately suspected. The medicine man is sent for to exorcise the unwanted visitor, which he attempts to do by massage and medicine and his own magical power. Ghost-sickness is not caused by a generalized "ghost," but by ghosts who are individuals in their own right. One of the medicine man's functions is to diagnose which ghost is causing the difficulty and to arrange his therapy accordingly, for it will vary from ghost to ghost.

So far as I could tell, the villager's beliefs concerning the afterlife are not highly formalized. Two entities are thought to persist after a person dies. One is his *an*, or soul. The *an* has been fitted into Christian belief, and it is the *an* that proceeds either to heaven or hell, though some individuals were doubtful on the point and a sweeping generalization cannot be made. Erdland noted the native belief that the soul stays by the dead body for six days and then makes its way to *Eorök*, the island of the dead that lies in the west (Erdland, 1914, pp. 322–323). Today there seems to be some confusion between Christian and native belief as to just what happens to the soul. The second entity is the *jitöb*, or ghost. (This dualism may possibly be a product of culture contact. It needs further investigation.) Most ghosts are harmless. Some, however, are not,

and wander about attacking the living and making them ill. It is this latter category of ghost that is a principal disease-causing agent. The Marshallese have incorporated the word "demon" into their language and use it to denote these wandering ghosts that attack humans.

Ghost-sickness is classified primarily according to the particular ghost that is causing the trouble. I was told that most ghost-sickness at the village is *mij in ailiŋ*, or sickness caused by local ghosts. In addition, however, other atolls have their own ghosts who may occasionally get over to Majuro and cause trouble. Finally, certain spirits or one-time deities—survivals from the corpus of old religious belief—may also cause sickness, which is classed as ghost-sickness today.

The principal non-Majuro ghosts that I recorded come from the following atolls: Arno, Mejit, Mille, Kili, Maloelap, Utirik, and Jaluit. It is probable that at one time each atoll had its own set of ghosts, and that the most notorious of these became known on other atolls. Erdland mentions a famous Jaluit ghost, Limkein, a female relative of the Ralik chief Kabua. Limkein is known on Majuro today as the cause of the ghost-sickness, *ri kub in meto*.

As for the sickness caused by spirits and deities, there is *mij in anjilik*, caused by a spirit in the sea off the Ralik chain; *mijlaŋ*, caused by the two sky deities, *Leoij* and *Laŋij; orijbatu*, caused by a spirit that manifests itself as a moving reef at Bikini; and *mij in jibuaman*, caused by an obscure spirit, or possibly a ghost, that lives in the ocean to the north. Finally there is a very severe sickness, *mij in kwar*, to which women are particularly susceptible, though it is not certain that one particular ghost is responsible.

Those local ghosts of the dead that manifest themselves by malicious activity do so because they are made "strong" by a living human. The living human being who makes a ghost strong is, interestingly enough, a medicine man, though I believe anyone can make a ghost strong and active if he wishes. The way to make a ghost strong is to feed him, particularly to feed him tobacco. Tobacco or food is placed on the grave of the individual whose ghost it is desired to activate, or more usually it is put in a secret place. The ghost eats the food and becomes active and "ready to fight with men." He is controlled, however, by the medicine man who has fed him. Whether a lay person can control a ghost after he has fed it is a point on which my data are deficient. At the village, however, it is only the two or three medicine men (of whom

one is pre-eminent) who cure ghost-sickness who are said to feed ghosts. Furthermore, there are at the village only two principal active ghosts, used, it so happens, by all the medicine men, though there are four other ghosts, less active and dangerous, about which people were doubtful. These latter ghosts I suspect were once actively made strong, but no longer are so strengthened. All these ghosts are those of real individuals who have died in the past thirty years or less. The two principal ones belong to a man and a woman, both related to all the medicine men who "use" them.

It is the medicine man who feeds a ghost and makes him "strong." At the same time the medicine man controls the ghost by exorcising it from people whom it has made ill. From the community's point of view, the public welfare would seem to be served best if the medicine man desisted from making a ghost "strong" in the first place. However, in the special relation set up between the medicine man and the ghost, the latter assists the medicine man in a number of ways: He gives the medicine man power and knowledge to cure sickness caused by ghosts from other atolls and by spirits. This is his most important gift. He may also give the medicine man ability to foresee future events. And he protects the medicine man from the black magic and harmful acts of others, though black magic is not a highly conspicuous part of the magical system. The mechanics by which the medicine man acquires knowledge given by a ghost is not clear, but one means by which this is achieved is through dreams. The fact that ghosts are believed to be most active at night is probably also connected with the dream aspect of Marshallese culture. One informant, for instance, told me that nightmares are caused by ghosts, and others mentioned seeing ghosts in dreams. There are also instances of villagers who while awake have seen ghosts at night or just at dusk.

There is some evidence that in former times "activated" ghosts were more numerous and that they were used more in black magic. The principal medicine man, a kindly old gentleman, said that there were formerly more demons and more medicine men than now. The practice of using a ghost to harm others is called *korote*. If one tells a "demon" to eat an enemy's food, the enemy will fall ill when he comes in contact with the food. Erdland mentioned that the chief Kabua at Jaluit used the ghost of Limkein against offending subjects (Erdland, 1914, p. 328). Spells can also be used in black magic, apart from ghosts.

As mentioned previously, I recorded only three cases of illness ascribed to black magic. In two cases, the individuals died some

time ago, and details were difficult to acquire. All three persons were people of prominence, and all cases involved prolonged illness that did not respond readily to treatment. The third case was that of a man living today who had a long and difficult time with a case of amoebic dysentery, relatively rare on Marshallese atolls. Black magic was thought to be a probable cause, and he resorted to magical as well as modern medical means to rid himself of the ailment. However, life in the village does not go on under the constant fear of sorcery and witchcraft. There is fear of ghosts, but not continuous suspicion and fear of other villagers who might be sorcerers.

One elderly man is pre-eminent in the treatment of illness caused by ghosts. He is certainly regarded by the villagers as a useful benefactor, rather than as a dangerous person whose powers are as often used for evil as for good. There are two or three other villagers, including both men and women, of lesser competence. For the most, these are specialized in curing ghost-sickness. One or two others are more in the nature of "general practitioners." One elderly woman is a specialist in the treatment of despondency.

The Marshallese consider despondency a pathological mental condition, for which treatment is desirable. Various degrees of despondency are recognized, from relatively light cases to more severe and complex ones. The simplest form is termed *laro*. This is the equivalent of unrequited love, or it follows on the parting of lovers. It is sadness and longing at being spurned by a woman or man one loves; or it may occur when one's lover or spouse leaves for another atoll for an indefinite period. *Laro* is not considered to be particularly serious, at least by people other than the affected person.

Much more serious is *bromij*. This is sadness that usually follows on the death of a close relative, such as a parent, a child, or a spouse. Long-continued despondency and sadness is thought to lead to severe symptoms and serious illness, with physical pains or acute emaciation of the victim. At least two forms of serious *bromij* are recognized. One of these is called *mayinturiamo*. The sufferer has long morose periods of evident dejection, worries and gets upset about inconsequential things, and, if a woman, weeps at the slightest provocation, as when someone talks loudly to her. An even more acute form is *jinukjij*, sufferers from which, I was told, are usually women. In this form the soul (*an*) of the victim tries to leave the body, and must be restrained. The person may get irrational and has to be watched by the family. A native dance

that is still occasionally performed concerns a woman whose soul flew away and had to be brought back by magical means.

Treatment for *bromij* involves the taking of plant medicines, usually in conjunction with magic spells. In the case of *jinukjij*, the patient is covered with mats, and the medicine man uses a spell to call back the soul. Later a plant medicine is drunk. The patient can have no sexual intercourse for a period of a month, nor eat chicken. The reason for not eating chicken is a sympathetic one. The chicken is a bird; birds fly away; so do souls in this type of illness; therefore chicken should be avoided. Abstinence from sexual intercourse is a common restriction in cases of illness and applies to the medicine man during the treatment as well as to the patient.

These types of despondency are not merely hypothetical, for many villagers have suffered from, and been treated for, *bromij*. The medicine woman who is the specialist in this type of illness is herself a sufferer, mourning the death of one of her children. After funerals, it is customary for the relatives of the deceased to guard against *bromij* by taking a special precautionary medicine.

Finally, the Marshallese recognize acute psychoneurotic states, grouping them under the term *bwebwe*. There is at least one woman in the village who is considered to be *bwebwe* periodically. At such times she talks irrationally to herself, does no work, spends hours just sitting, and laughs at nothing. Unfortunately, I did not realize her abnormality until almost the end of my visit and had no opportunity to observe her closely myself. Other members of her family are also thought to be somewhat abnormal.

The material given above on Marshallese magic and medicine has been introduced to show that this aspect of the old culture is still very much alive. It offers a contrast to the dispensary and introduced western medical practice. However, the system of magic and the system of modern medicine are not in violent competition. Most ailments—excluding mental cases—are treated by the medical aid, some by both medical aid and medicine man, and some by the medicine man alone. The principal medicine man who treats ghost-sickness is called on for help between ten and twenty times a month at the most. He himself has come to the dispensary for treatment at times. As long as the deep-rooted beliefs concerning the ghosts of the dead remain, magic will continue to have a place in village life. On the whole, the local medicine men and women contribute to the mental health and stability of the villagers.

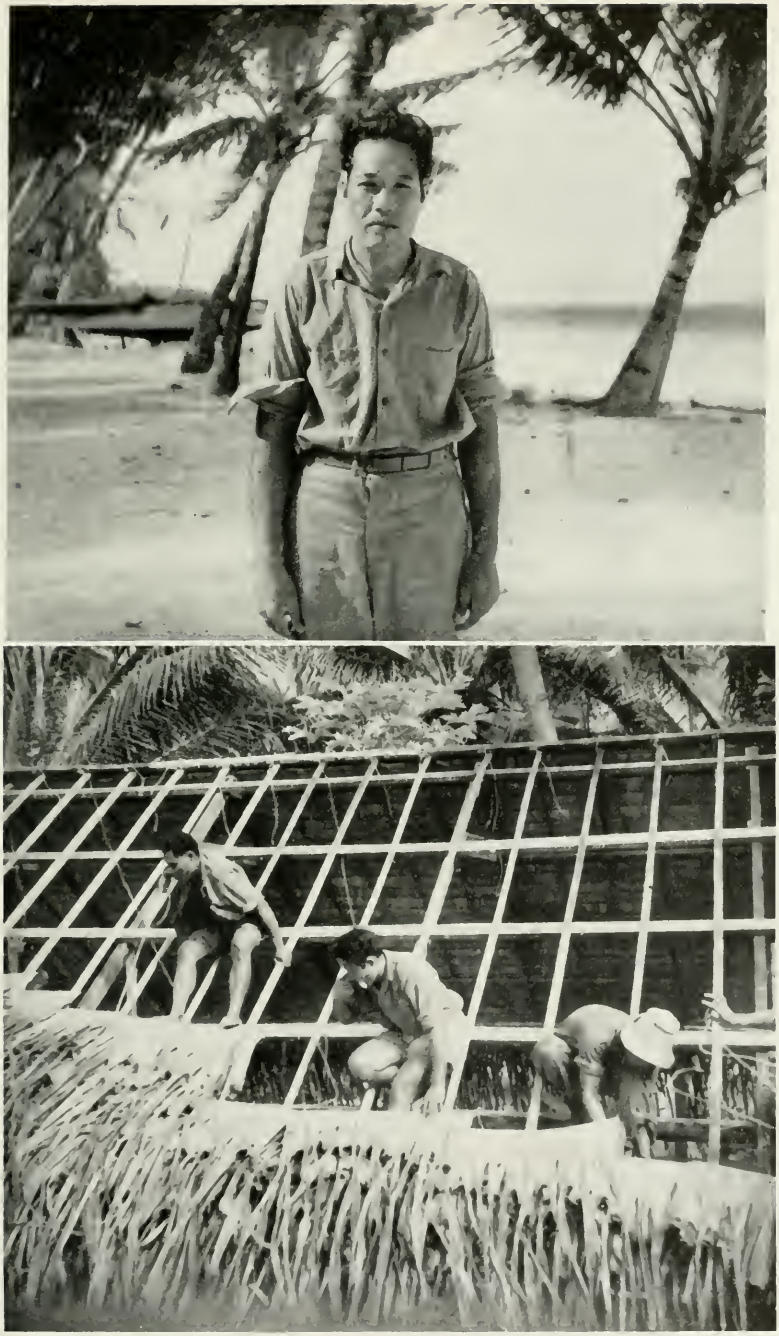


FIG. 49. Upper: Bartimeous, the school teacher. Lower: Working on the new schoolhouse.

THE SCHOOL

The elementary school had been running for approximately a year at the time of my 1947 field work (fig. 49). There were 156 pupils in more or less regular attendance, divided into four classes, and ranging in age from five to seventeen (fig. 50). There were four Marshallese teachers—a principal and three assistants—trained in the Navy teachers' school. The school teachers are appointed by the Navy administration, which also pays them a salary.

Classes are held in both morning and afternoon on week days. Instruction (more or less) is given in English, written Marshallese, arithmetic, geography, history, hygiene, and singing. The teachers are hard-working and earnest; the pupils are active and generally enthusiastic. The principal difficulty is the extremely limited knowledge of English possessed by the teachers, who rapidly reach the limits of their knowledge in teaching the children. Textbooks are few and completely inadequate.

The village school is too recent an innovation to determine at this time what its ultimate place will be in the social organization of the village. The only school in the village prior to the present government-sponsored elementary school was a small one conducted by a predecessor of the present pastor, before the war. In this school the instruction centered around learning written Marshallese, in order to gain a knowledge of the Bible. Today most adults are literate in the Marshallese language. The pastor, a man named Alexander Milne, was of part Caucasian ancestry. During the war, he fell under the suspicion of the Japanese and was executed, the victim of a wartime village tragedy.

Although the village school is a recent innovation, the idea of a school as a place of formal instruction is not new. Mission schools operated for years prior to World War II. In Japanese times, American Board missionaries ran a small school at Jaluit and a more important one at Kusaie in the eastern Carolines. Both of these schools were attended by a number of people at Majuro. Early in their regime the Japanese established a system of elementary schools. Elementary schools offering a three-year course were set up at Jaluit, Wotje, and Kwajalein, and a supplementary two-year course was given at the Jaluit school. The principal purpose of the Japanese schools was to teach the Japanese language and to inculcate respect and admiration for Japanese customs. A few students from the Marshalls were also sent to a vocational school in the Palaus for training as carpenters and mechanics. The school

FIG. 50. Schoolgirl.

as an institution is therefore something with which the Marshallese are well enough acquainted.

On the other hand, schools are not really imbedded in contemporary Marshallese culture. Japanese and mission schools were run by foreigners, though they employed some Marshallese assistants. Nor did all Marshallese children actually attend school in Japanese times, even though Marshallese informants stated that attendance was compulsory. In 1937, there were 454 children in attendance at the Jaluit, Wotje, and Kwajalein Japanese schools (Annual Report to the League of Nations, p. 58). The Japanese schools certainly assisted in a wider diffusion of knowledge of the Japanese language. Though they studiously refrain from using Japanese, probably most young adults in the village have a fair speaking knowledge of the language. But the Japanese schools did not

comprise an all-embracing educational system. With the American administration, an attempt is now being made to establish on all populated atolls schools staffed by Marshallese teachers trained in the Navy teachers' training school.

The future of the school at Majuro village depends on the further training of the teachers and the amount of care and thought given the educational system by the administration. The village is highly receptive to the school as an institution. Formal education is considered primarily as instrumental—the learning of English in order to interact satisfactorily with Americans being considered especially important. As Chave has pointed out in regard to the attitude of the Marshallese toward schools: "They tend to identify schools with the learning of the foreigner's language and not with an abstract educational process." (Chave, 1948, p. 98.) At present the school is an institution still in a formative, not a stabilized and crystallized, stage. In its first year of operation it had no great effect on the diffusion of English, except in a rather casual transference of individual words, popular songs, and discrete bits of information. Its long term effect cannot yet be judged.

X. MAJURO, THE MARSHALLS, AND THE PACIFIC

Marshallese social organization as manifest at Majuro has certain characteristics that may be briefly summarized. Kinship is of continuing importance as a widely ramifying basis of social structure. Formalized kinship behavior patterns, relatively wide extension of the terminological system, the presence of lineage and clan as functioning units, and the existence of extended families as household groups all attest to the fact that kinship is still significant in the organization of village life. Local organization centers around district, village, and household. Introduced institutions such as church, dispensary, and stores act as integrating factors and help give the village its form as a social unit. The church has displaced native ceremony, the dispensary much of native magic, while the stores, small and modest though they may be, signify the participation of the Marshallese in a larger world and further the expansion of a system of exchange using money as its medium. On the other hand, the community is still closely tied to its local natural resources, on which it depends for most of its food and the materials for handicraft and copra, its only export items. A class system, much weakened in comparison to pre-contact days, nevertheless is still important, largely because it is so intimately related to the system of land tenure, while both are tied directly to the kinship system and to kin groupings.

The preceding chapters on the social organization of Majuro village show Marshallese culture as a distinct hybrid. Yet it is not a confused jumble. It has its inconsistencies, but it is still integrated. The Marshallese do not display those features of cultural disintegration that the ethnologist finds so often among native people who have come into intense contact with the west. Marshallese culture, and in particular the social organization, still exhibits a configuration and a pattern. Contact has not been so intense nor change so rapid that the culture has suffered complete disruption. Also, introduced elements cannot be considered a "veneer." The culture as a whole appears integrated.

Although a detailed examination of the particular ways in which the Marshallese have reacted to contact with outsiders and the process by which they have incorporated foreign elements into their own culture lies outside the scope of this report, a few remarks are relevant at this point on past and future culture change in the Marshalls. In their various contacts with Europeans, Japanese, and Americans—not to mention other Pacific islanders such as the Gilbertese—the Marshallese have continuously adopted new ideas from peoples outside their island chain. Yet Marshallese culture has never been overwhelmingly assimilated to that of any of the dominant peoples—Germans, Japanese, or Americans—who have exercised political control of the Marshalls during the contact period. Not being a specialist on Japan, I hesitate to generalize, but during my field work at Majuro I was impressed with the limited degree to which the Marshallese seemed to have taken over Japanese culture. A certain number of discrete items, such as the custom of wrapping a towel around the head, a taste for rice, tea, and soy sauce, the use of some Japanese loan words, and the taking over of a few Japanese songs indicate the sort of assimilated cultural material. Actually, a principal effect of the Japanese regime appears in the economic life of Majuro village; for example, the extension of trading and a money economy, and the formation of economic associations. In many ways, Marshallese contact with the Japanese reflected Japanese contact with Europe and America and the strenuous efforts made by Japan to become an industrialized state. Thus bicycles and sewing machines, adopted by the Japanese and manufactured by them, found a ready market in the Marshalls. In somewhat the same vein, the Marshallese enthusiasm for baseball seems to have come via the Japanese from the American source.

The future course of development of Marshallese social organization, as well as the over-all cultural picture, would be more predictable if one could foresee the nature of future contact. The Marshallese are a flexible people, whose very adaptability in a world of flux gives a certain stability to their culture. It is obvious, of course, that the trend of future change in the Marshalls will not result in the type of urbanization toward which various native communities located on continental land masses, such as those in Latin America, have been moving. The Marshalls will always be far distant from urban centers, and the distinctive features of culture change in these islands will be conditioned accordingly.

It is also highly doubtful that in the predictable future the Marshalls will be affected by the development of commercial trans-

Pacific air and ship routes. The post-war commercial air routes linking Hawaii and the Asiatic mainland lie to the north of the Marshall group (Spoehr, 1946). Military aviation is a different matter, but as a vehicle of culture contact its future effects will probably be minimal.

An important fact in the situation at Majuro is that the leaders of the community look outward from their island home to the other lands of the Pacific, and they look forward to the future rather than to the past. Perhaps this attitude is partly the heritage of an adventurous, seafaring tradition. It is true that the long voyages in the large sea-going canoes belong to the olden days. From a wider perspective, the actual range of travel experience of the villagers appears very limited. Most of the Majuro adults have been to Jaluit and to the four or five neighboring atolls in the Ratak chain. Some eighteen visited Japan prior to World War II. A few have been to the major islands of the Carolines and the Palaus, and to Saipan. During Japanese times no one in the village got out of the Japanese political orbit in the Pacific. Yet many villagers express a great curiosity about the outside world that is reflected in their attitudes. In discussing the reason for an old-time canoe trip to a far-distant atoll in the Carolines, the men who were telling me of the voyage agreed that it was prompted simply because the voyagers "wanted to see what lay over in that direction"—a good seafarer's explanation.

The arrival at Majuro of ships, boats, and canoes from other atolls is always a matter of interest. One day at the village three canoes came in from Wotje atoll to the north:

> There was an air of pleasant anticipation, of interest and excitement, as the people gathered in small groups on the beach to watch the three strange canoes approach the village from the pass across the lagoon. "From Arno, I think," said one. "No, they have come from Aur," said another. The day was fading and the lagoon was dark purple. The low, setting sun picked out the three white canoe sails like bright triangles caught in a searchlight. The canoes headed straight across the lagoon for the passage through the inner reef at the village. They obviously knew their way. After a time one could see the canoe captains standing at the bows, and imagine them calling steering directions to the tiller-men, as they skirted the coral heads. Soon the three craft came through the inner reef and turned south along the village beach. The clothes of the people in the canoes hung damp with salt spray. The tiller-men brought the three canoes in a rush close to the beach until they reached the central part of the village. Then they swung sharply into the wind, dropped the sails, and drifted to the beach. Many helping hands beached the canoes, and there was much handshaking with the visitors. Food was brought, and soon two circles formed—one of men and one of women—each listening to the news and gossiping. Two women were aboard the canoes, which had come from Wotje, 180 miles distant, by way of Aur.

Whatever the reason, the villagers do not focus their entire attention inward on their own society and consciously exclude the rest

of the world from their thoughts. The atomic bomb tests at Bikini and Eniwetok and the prospects of peace and war are matters that concern the more sophisticated of the villagers. How the Marshallese compare with other Micronesians in this matter of attitude toward the Pacific and the world is a matter for future examination. It is of course obvious that Micronesia contains a whole series of island societies whose cultures have been affected by contact in different degrees. It will be possible to assess the particular similarities and differences between the Marshalls and other Micronesian communities when the results of the Coordinated Program for Micronesian Anthropology, sponsored by the National Research Council, become available to augment the accumulating material on Micronesia obtained since the close of the war. Systematic comparison of contemporary Micronesian ethnographic materials is an important job for the future.

Although an important task of comparative work in Micronesia is the clarification of our knowledge regarding the basic similarities in aboriginal culture within the area, the major trends in recent change are likewise a significant matter. As a possible lead in such comparative study, I should like to raise the question as to whether there is forming, both in the Marshalls and among other acculturated Micronesian societies as well, a relatively recent, identifiable culture type, and in what degree these various acculturated societies tend to share the dominant characteristics of such a type. If one exists, its delineation would be of distinct utility in isolating regularities in recent cultural change, and in formulating problems suitable for further empirical investigation. Comparison can also be extended fruitfully to Polynesia. The Beagleholes' study reveals a number of resemblances between the acculturated Tongan village of Pangai and Majuro (Beaglehole and Beaglehole, 1941). In both cases, the cultures appear to have reached a certain stability and to have developed similarities in their lines of resistance and acceptance, in the contact situation. Unfortunately, full reports on contemporary, acculturated Polynesian societies are not numerous and ethnographers interested in centering attention on the present-day scene are few. It is hoped that this account of Majuro will be useful in the comparative study of contemporary social organization within the larger Micronesian and Polynesian sphere.

APPENDIX 1

MARSHALLESE TERMS

alab. Head of a commoner lineage.

bukon. District. There are four districts composing Majuro village: *Iolab*, *Jeirök*, *Lobat*, and *Lomar*.

bwij. In the narrow sense, a maternal lineage.

bwirak. Second highest noble sub-class.

iroij. The highest class of nobility. —— *labalab*, paramount chief. —— *erik*, lesser chief.

jekaro. Unfermented coconut toddy.

kemem. A celebration, in particular that given on a child's first birthday.

rarno. The name of the clan to which all *iroij*, or top nobility, belong.

APPENDIX 2

NAMES OF ISLANDS OF MAJURO ATOLL

The following Marshallese names (see map 11) are included for the convenience of administrators and possible future ethnological field workers. The names were carefully checked with Marshallese informants on a number of different canoe trips on the lagoon. Names marked with an asterisk have previously been checked by Mason. Alternate names appearing in parentheses are those used on United States Hydrographic Office Chart No. 2008. The Marshallese names are as follows:

1. *Ajola.**
2. *Bokalijmwe.**
3. *Ilelian.*
4. *Jelte-Jeloklab** (*Churigurappu*).[1]
5. *Eninpupuen.*
6. *Enerepakut* (*Enygain*).*
7. *Enejibaru*
8. *Roŋroŋ* or *Rongrong* (*Roguron*).
9. *Eneju.*
10. *Bokaituinal.*
11. *Boken.**
12. *Iroij* (*Eroj*).
13. *Calalin.*
14. *Elakun.*
15. *Enimakej* (*Entmagetto*).*
16. *Nanke.**
17. *Enikotkot.**
18. *Bokaitoktok* (*Ropokaire*).*
19. *Lobikaire.**
20. *Eninurij.**
21. *Kiluk.*
22. *Kirenen.*
23. *Bokailukijla.*
24. *Eniku* (*Enigu*).*
25. *Bikonrik.*
26. *Bikonlib.*
27. *Buruen.*
28. *Bikajaj.*
29. *Lijaburu.*
30. *Bokolab.*
31. *Lebloŋ.*
32. *Enibaroro.*
33. *Bikirin.*
34. *Bok.*
35. *Enimonet.**
36. *Enikalimur.*
37. *Renmio.**
38. *Bokairil.*
39. *Bokenmuk.*
40. *Bokiur.*
41. *Bokmej.*
42. *Bokenboten.*
43. *Bokailijkier.*
44. *Keman.*
45. *Bokelijekia.*
46. *Bokalatulib.*
47. *Rirej-Aniel*[2] (*Arniel*).*
48. *Karra* (*Garra*).*
49. *Ejij* (*Ejit*).
50. *Eniarmij.*
51. *Bikeliaŋ* (*Pegerian*).*
52. *Jarrej* (*Darrit*).*
53. *Ulika* (*Uliga*).*
54. *Bikeriat* (*Eniligere*).
55. *Enilikere* (*Biggariat*).
56. *Talab* (*Dalap*).*
57. *Enirik.*
58. *Bukielbo.*
59. *Mejbin.*
60. *Rubar.*
61. *Rairok* (*Rairikku*).*
62. *Enenelib* (*Enierippu*).*
63. *Lokijbar.**
64. *Lajemoi.*
65. *Mejro* (*Majuro*).*

[1] The west half of this island is called *Jelte;* the east half *Jeloklab.* The Marshallese say that originally this was two islands, each with a different name, but that a single island has since formed.

[2] The west half of the island is called *Rirej;* the east half, *Aniel.*

MAP 11. Islands of Majuro Atoll. Numbers refer to native names listed on opposite page.

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INDEX