

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

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Neo-Tobian Culture: Modern Life on a Micronesian Atoll

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the
requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy

in Anthropology

by

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1977

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To my mother
Elizabeth Jenkins Black and to the
memory of my father,
George Waleston Black (1915 - 1961),
with love and gratitude

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A NOTE ON ORTHOGRAPHY

There are almost as many indigenous ways of spelling Tobian words as there are Tobian people. Everyone over the age of five or so is literate, with the sole exception of one old woman. Each literate person represents the sounds of his language in the best way that he can. There is some agreement, but also a great deal of variation. Furthermore, those linguists and others who have written about Tobian and/or related dialects also vary wildly in the way that they represent those sounds. Capell (1948), Quackenbush (1968), Sohn (1969), Eilers (1936), Lessa (1961), Gladwin (1970), Goodenough (1951), Holden (1936), Hale (1846), Pickering (1845), all use different systems. The University of Hawaii has been engaged in a project designed to reduce this kind of confusion in the writing of Micronesian languages. Unfortunately the system presented in Sohn (1975) for Woleaian (the closest dialect of Trukic to Tobian which has thus far been "standardized") is, to my mind, overly cumbersome and probably will have little impact. Therefore, reluctantly, I must add to the confusion by using my own system. I have tried to keep things as simple as possible. Vowels have their continental values. Most consonants sound as they do in English. I have avoided using the letter "c" in those few Tobian words mentioned in the text. "R" has the same sound as an untrilled Spanish "r." "H" is aspirated. "G" is a very

heavy guttural sound. It is this sound, more than any other, which leads to variation. The Germans tended to write this sound with an "x" which, for a non-English speaking audience, might be the best solution. Others have represented it with an "h" which is no solution at all.

Finally, there are a few loan words which have not been changed much in their pronunciation. I have left these spelled the way they are in the original. "Idea" should perhaps be written "aidia" for consistency's sake but that spelling seems unnecessarily awkward. Similarly, "Deutch" and "smart" have not been transmogrified.

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Space is unavailable here to thank adequately, or even merely to mention, everyone who has contributed in one form or another to this dissertation. What follows, therefore, is only a partial listing of those to whom I am indebted.

First of all, of course, I must thank the people of Tobi. The warmth and generosity with which they extended their hospitality to me are inadequately reflected in the pages which follow. I do not wish to thank some of them by name but not others. Yet I must single out two people-- Perpetua Perfecto, who in many ways treated me as a son and in others as a friend, and her adopted daughter Felisisima Andrew, who put an immense amount of work into the gathering of the data on which this account is based. To both of them I offer deep thanks--"Hapari sewa ma hatawa."

I have presented various pieces of this work to my anthropology classes and also to several symposia. To all, whether students or colleagues, who offered criticisms or suggestions, I give my thanks.

The faculty and students of the Anthropology Department at the University of California, San Diego have been unfailingly helpful. In addition to the members of my committee, I wish to thank Professors D. K. Jordan,

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Finally, I must mention my wife, Mary, who contributed to this dissertation in many, many ways. Her good humor, patience and strength made endurable those long stretches of time when it seemed as though it would never be finished. Only now, after it is done, do I fully realize just how much she has given. A National Institutes of Mental Health Grant (UPHS 5 T01 MH 12766) financed part of the research on which the following pages are based.

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Neo-Tobian Culture: Modern Life on
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by

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Doctor of Philosophy in Anthropology

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Professor F. G. Bailey, Chairman

This dissertation reports some of the results of research carried out at Tobi Island, a small Carolinian atoll in the United States Trust Territory of the Pacific. It is centered around a cluster of problems related to the integration of socio-cultural systems.

The Tobian socio-cultural system has undergone several severe disruptions in this century. A catastrophic demographic collapse, occupation by the Japanese military, and forced political innovation by the Americans all made some cultural forms obsolete and others dysfunctional. The processes are detailed by which the Tobians, despite serious obstacles, managed to resynthesize a useable culture out of the remnants of old forms and various borrowed elements. An understanding of this achievement is the major

topic of the dissertation. A crucial role is played by the new myth which recounts the events of the Tobian's conversion to Christianity. This myth is one of the central elements in neo-Tobian culture and contains virtually all salient theology and it serves as a link between present day Tobians and their pre-Christian past. However, it also is the source of some current disputes among the Tobians themselves and between the islanders and their current missionaries. Several important beliefs about the nature of the world contained in this myth are examined. These beliefs also are shown to be important components in less profound but more immediate segments of neo-Tobian culture.

The concept of "routine" is developed. This concept is the result of an attempt to explore some of the properties of an intermediate range of cultural processes. Routines are shown to be the connections between everyday behavior and such esoterica as the highly symbolic conversion myth. They are built up out of some of the same assumptions which underlie that myth. Several of these routines are inspected in detail. Processes of conflict and cooperation evident in the unfolding of the routines are analyzed. Tobian notions of intelligence, central to an understanding of these routines, are presented.

The translation of routine into behavior is examined in some detail in the context of an incident of attempted homicide and the reactions which it caused. The

storage, transmission and activation of the routine for dealing with such an event provide an example of how routines of one type mesh with other cultural structures. Tobian theories about human nature, especially their ideas about the bases for compliance also prove necessary to an understanding of this routine and thus of Tobian behavior.

The authenticity or "integration" of the neo-Tobian socio-cultural system is seen to rest on a dynamic relationship between characteristic ways of feeling (revealed in the conversion myth) and characteristic ways of thinking (revealed in the routines), as well as on the operation of cross-cutting and thus mutually reinforcing sociological ties.

CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

The need is for research on men's assumptions about human nature; on the schemata we use, intuitively, in interpreting what both we and our neighbors do.

(Hudson 1972:160)

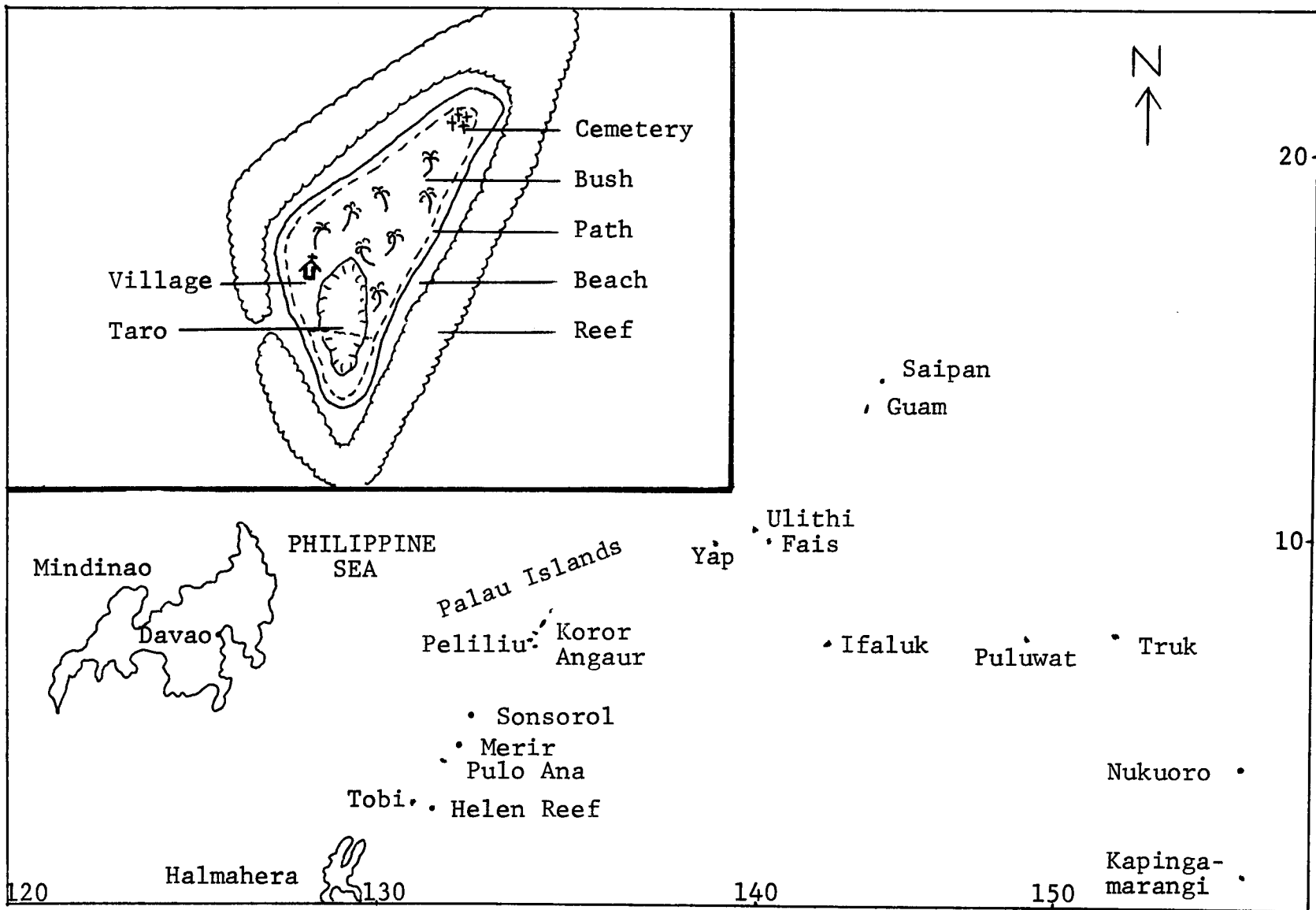
Location of Tobi Island

The island of Tobi lies at latitude 3° 00' 50" north and longitude 131° 10' 37" east. It is about four hundred miles southeast of Mindanao in the Philippines and half that distance north of Halmahera in Indonesia. It is a small coral atoll, alone in the immense Western Pacific. The nearest land is an uninhabited sand spit on Helen Reef forty miles east. The nearest inhabited island is Pulo Ana, one hundred and twenty five miles northeast. To reach the closest place of any size one must continue north more than two hundred and fifty miles from Pulo Ana to the islands of the Palau Archipelago.¹

Tobi is in Palau District of the United States Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands. The Trust Territory is commonly known as Micronesia.² The island can be found on any fairly good world map by tracing the western boundary of the Trust Territory to its southern extremity. Here, in the far southwestern corner of the Trust Territory, is Tobi. If the map is both detailed and

Footnotes for this chapter may be found between pages 89 and pages 95.

TOBI ISLAND AND ITS VICINITY. Only a few of the many Western Caroline Islands are shown. The inset (not to scale) shows Tobi and its most prominent features.



accurate one can see that there are five small islands lying southwest of Palau proper.³ These are a northern cluster of Sonsorol, Merir, and Pulo Ana and the two southern islands of Helen Reef and Tobi. All of these islands are sometimes known as the South West Islands of Palau.

The South West Islands leads a rather shadowy existence. As a geo-political unit it is not recognized, so far as I know, in any law, code, or regulation of either Palau District or the Trust Territory. Many people in the Territorial and even District Governments are unaware of its existence. This is especially true of Americans on short term contracts who are sometimes not even aware that there are six Trust Territory districts. Yet decisions are often made which treat these southern islands as a unit.

In some contexts such decisions make a good deal of sense. South West Islanders do speak dialects of a common language and do share many socio-cultural elements. Furthermore, both language and culture are only remotely related to those of the rest of the people of Palau District. Also people from the South West Islands live together in a migrant community in Koror, capital of Palau. However, the primary reason that the sub-division of Palau District called the South West Islands has even a minimal degree of coherence is that the islands which compose it are all serviced by the same government ship.

The schedule of this ship determines, to a large extent, the annual cycle of events on the three inhabited South West Islands, including Tobi. It looms large in the lives of people of these atolls. It provides the only access to the islands from the outside, and anyone visiting Tobi, or one of the other islands, must first spend several days and nights on the ship. All Tobian enterprises begin with reference to the ship--how long it has been since the last one and when the next one is expected. It is appropriate, therefore, to begin this enterprise with a description of the ship and its activities.

The South West Island Field Trip

As part of its trust responsibility, assumed under the terms of the trusteeship agreement in 1947, the United States is obligated to provide for the "economic, social, educational and political advancement of the Micronesian people" (McHenry 1975:32). This responsibility results, by a tortuous process, in the formation of a South West Island Field Trip Party every four months or so. This group is composed of the representatives of several government departments. The District Administrator or Distad almost always sends someone from his office. The Department of Public Health usually sends a doctor and occasionally a dentist. The Police Department always sends a patrolman. The Education Department always sends someone. Other departments send people on a less regular basis. These

departments include those of economic development, sanitation, and fisheries. All these people, along with representatives of religious and commercial establishments, visit the South West Islands three or four times a year on board a small government vessel.

The whole menage, bureaucrats, missionaries, Micronesian sailors, copra buyers, hangers-on, laborers and ship is known as the Field Trip Ship, or the Field Trip or even just the Ship and is prefaced with the name of the month in which it took place e.g., the May Ship. It plays a decisive role in the lives of the inhabitants of Tobi and the other South West Islands.

The ship departs from Malakal, the port for the island of Koror. Its actual departure date is one of those phenomena which are so overdetermined as to appear nearly random. Among the factors which influence the date on which the ship departs Malakal for the South West Islands the five which follow are most important. First is the availability of a ship. There are no ships regularly stationed at Koror and the field trip must often wait on other, always more pressing, Trust Territory business in other districts. As a practical matter the South West Island Field Trip seems to rank very low on Trust Territory priorities. Second is the time since the last field trip. As the three months which are supposed to pass between field trips stretch into four and even five,

pressure builds up from departments which have stationed representatives in the South West Islands. These are usually the education and public health departments, and the need to keep their people supplied occasionally makes them proponents of a trip. The third variable is the school calender. Very frequently the students are in Koror while their teachers are in the South West Islands (or vice versa) and if first day of school is near they must be gotten together. Fourth is the health picture in Koror. If one of the frequent influenza or cold epidemics is taking place in Palau the ship is sometimes (but only sometimes) delayed. The fifth important factor is morale in the government offices. If it has been some time since the last trip, some of the government people start feeling a little stale and begin quietly agitating for a field trip. This motive is much less prominent in recent years as the availability of liquor on board has been reduced and the traditional overnight picnic on Helen Reef eliminated. If all these considerations can be brought into agreement and the weather in both Palau and the South West (if known) permits, the Field Trip Party is enrolled and an announcement is placed on the radio alerting the populace to the scheduled date for the departure of the field trip.

Prior to this time rumors already have made the rounds of the two communities where South West Islanders

live in Koror, creating waves of excitement and anticipation. The radio announcement sets off a great buying of supplies, packing of goods and writing of letters in these small hamlets.

Sometime after the appointed day the field trip actually departs. In all my association with Tobi I have never known the field trip to leave on the announced date. Something always ruins the Distad's plans even though an announcement is never made until a ship is actually at the pier ready for loading. Sometimes the ship's engines, old and frail, break down and parts have to be ordered. Sometimes essential supplies cannot be found.⁴ Once, the Captain could not be found and once, it was rumored, he was too drunk to find his way to the ship.

A typical field trip therefore begins with a series of false alarms. Everyone appears at the dock, baggage in hand. Sometimes they are told right away to return again the next day but at other times they do not get the word until all their belongings have been stowed away. Eventually, of course, the ship does depart. In addition to the Field Trip Party and the other representatives of the Koror establishment, it also carries anywhere from twenty to forty South West Islanders. This ship is the only method of travel between their home islands and Palau.

The Field Trip Party and the traders and missionary (who are mostly Palauan and mostly male) sleep in the ship's cabin. The South West Islanders sleep on deck. If the weather is nice members of the two groups pass the time in card games, gossip and baby tending, sitting under the tarpaulines which shelter the decks from the tropical sun. When it rains, the government and other important people retire to their dry cabins and the islanders huddle in a soggy mass under the leaking tarpaulines.

The government and other important people eat ship's food, which like all ship's food declines in appeal as people grow accustomed to it and as perishables begin to spoil. The islanders bring their own food, which is a combination of canned convenience food (for those who can afford it) and traditional Pacific island mariner's rations--smoked fish, preserved taro and coconuts.

Fishing lines are tended with (usually unwarranted) optimism by various members of the Field Trip Party--usually those venturing outside Palau's reef for the first time. Old hands lounge on the stern where they can either condescendingly watch the fruitless activities of the fishermen or leap to their aid as the situation demands. Every three trips or so someone does catch a marlin or other large pelagic fish and those who help pull it in are entitled to choice cuts of its meat. If the fish is big enough everyone will enjoy a taste of fresh fish. If it is

not then they will at least take pleasure in manuevering to become one of those who do. And everyone can be sure that he will get some of the delicious chowder which even the most incompetent Micronesian ship's cooks can make of fish innards and bones.

The sailing of the field trip is usually timed so that landfall at Sonsorol, the first stop on the way south, is at high tide. This often takes place on the day after the departure from Koror. If there is an early morning high tide the ship frequently arrives at Sonsorol during the night and waits for sunup, steaming around and around the island. As the new day dawns the roosters on the ship crow and are answered by those on the island. Winches noisily whine as the ship's boats are lowered onto the sea and the first boat heads toward shore. It is met by the islanders dressed in their finest clothes, and the business of the day begins.

Mass is held and so is sick call. Copra is bought and store goods are sold. Government policy is proclaimed and reports are taken. People snatch whatever time they can to exchange news with their relatives and friends from Koror. They also closely watch the activities of the Field Trip Party, who have been known in the past to make off with chickens, coconuts and other island produce without paying, and even to attempt to molest the women. The fact that there is much less of this behavior since the Distad has

banned liquor on the field trip is appreciated by the South West Islanders but they have not yet overcome years of casual mistreatment by sundry members of various field trips.

All the activity takes place in a great hurry because of the tides upon which the loading and unloading depend. No one wants to man-handle sacks of copra weighing one hundred pounds or more over great stretches of slippery, sharp, and uneven coral reef if he can avoid it. If all goes well the copra can be off-loaded directly from the beach onto the ship's boats which then run it right out to the ship. If the tide goes out before this is finished, however, then there is no avoiding the back breaking work of carrying each sack out across the exposed reef.

Eventually the ship sounds its horn and the Field Trip Party and passengers depart. Sonsorol is always visited twice by the field trip, once on the way south and then again on the return trip to Koror. This means that, unlike at Tobi and the other islands, various people can be dropped off there to wait for the ship's return. So it is that when the ship leaves Sonsorol it is much less crowded than when it left Koror.

The ship proceeds on its way south, stopping at Pulo Ana to serve the few people living there, coasting along the reef of currently uninhabited Merir, and sailing

on toward Tobi. Time now begins to hang heavy for everyone on board as daily life on the small ship falls into its unvarying pattern. Finally, sometimes on the third or fourth day out if all has gone well, the atoll comes into view.⁵

The first sight of Tobi is of a misty, short, smudge on the horizon, only marginally darker than the surrounding area. It is not betrayed by cloud build-up in the way that larger islands are because it is too small to affect local weather patterns. Sometimes, in fact, people on the ship mistake the island itself for one of the clouds that usually line the horizon in this part of the world. Gradually the ship and the island reveal themselves to each other. Just as the tops of the ship's booms are all that initially appeared to the people on shore, so all that those on the ship at first can see are the gradually greening tops of the island's coconut trees. As the ship mounts the horizon and the islanders start to see its cabins and deck, those on board see more and more of the island. Finally all of Tobi is visible; green fronds, brown tree trunks, white beach. The people who have launched their canoes through the surf are now nearing the ship. They swarm aboard and are welcomed with smiles, handshakes, and cigarettes. After a few confused and hectic moments the ship's boats are launched. They ferry passengers to the island to begin, once again, the official and unofficial

rituals of the "trip." This time the setting (much more than on Sonsorol) seems of the conventional "south seas," with towering palms, wide shady paths, thatch houses, and all. The village is strung out along the southwestern shore and grass and flowers, shaded by huge trees, grow throughout it.

The activities of the Field Trip Party are even more frantic on Tobi than on the other islands. This is the last stop on the southward run and when it is finished the ship can start back north toward Koror, carrying its load of passengers, by now heartily sick of the whole trip.⁶ After a few hours and a final burst of excitement, the last boat leaves shore and heads for the ship. As it is taken aboard, the crowd which had gathered to watch the proceedings and to say goodbye to friends and relatives begins to leave. As the ship steams off toward the north, bearing away spouses, lovers, children, siblings and parents in addition to the unlamented Field Trip Party, people begin to sort out the events of the last few hours. By the time the ship disappears over the horizon everyone will have left the beach--both the newly arrived and those who have been here all along. Putting together what they know about events of the last few months with their assessments of the story telling ability of various people, the Tobians drift off to one or another of the island's houses to drink coffee (if nothing stronger has come on the ship), smoke

Winstons, and exchange the latest Tobian news for the latest news from Koror.

Two other types of ships visit Tobi, although with even less regularity than the Field Trip Ship. The U. S. Navy, which patrols the waters of the Trust Territory, stops by the island once or twice a year. The sailors always stock up the dispensary and often stage much appreciated give-aways of toys and candies. The other ships which call at the island are all fishing boats of various Asian nations. Most of these boats are Taiwanese but occasionally a Korean, a Filipino or even a relatively rich Japanese puts in at the atoll for water and fresh food. These visits are highly illegal and are precisely the object of the Navy's patrol. Although recognizing the damage that these vessels do, especially to the now almost depleted turtle, trochus, and tridachna fisheries of Helen Reef, the Tobians welcome them gladly. This is because they appreciate the chance to trade coconuts for cigarettes, liquor, watches and clothes. In any case there is nothing much which the Tobians could do to discourage such visits if they did disapprove of them. Three or four of these vessels visit Tobi every year

Description of the Island

From the deck of a ship, Tobi appears Lilliputian-- as though it could be encompassed by a single glance. Its area is less than one quarter of a square mile. In less

Tobi From the Air



a) Tobi seen from the west. The channel is visible as the small break in the reef in the center. Photo courtesy U.S.N.



b) The southern end of the island. Photo taken from the east. The causeway across the taro fields can be seen. Photo courtesy U.S.N.

than an hour one can walk its circumference on the path which parallels the beach. Furthermore it is flat--its highest point (barring tree tops) is less than twenty feet above sea-level and the elevation of most of the island is less than half of that.

As a land-form, Tobi is comparatively simple. Viewed from above the island would appear as a set of alternating concentric rings and bands. The outer edge is a ring of breakers where the sea meets the reef. Inside this is a band of reef, exposed at low tide and scarred on its west side by a channel, which stretches in to the next ring which is the beach. Inside the beach is a band of high ground, planted with coconuts. Next comes the path which circles the island, then another stretch of coconut plantations and bush. At the center of the configuration are taro gardens, green and lush. Islands of this form are called raised coral atolls and the major differences between them and other low tropical islands is that they have no lagoon. Their reef does not enclose a sheltered body of water but merely fringes the island.

The relative simplicity of the island's geological structure is mirrored in its flora and fauna. Offering relatively little variety in exploitable niches, the island is home to comparatively few native species of either plants or animals.⁷ Even today there are relatively few species present despite the arrival of man, who

in this part of the world has traditionally arrived accompanied by companion organisms (both invited and uninvited). The impression of biological richness which Tobi conveys to the visitor is due not so much to a diversity of life forms as to the fact that most species which do exist on the island are represented by a great number of individuals. Almost all plant and animal species which have established themselves on Tobi are thriving.⁸ In particular, the verdant appearance which Tobi offers the visitor is due mostly to the great number of coconut palms which fringe the beach and grow in profusion almost everywhere on the island.

The wide distribution of the coconut trees and their success in competing for space against hardier species is due to human intervention. Furthermore, the clearing of brush and planting of palms by the Tobians is not an isolated example of human manipulation of the Tobian ecosystem. On the contrary, this ecosystem (like all the low island environments which have been successfully occupied by man) has been so radically restructured that today it is only somewhat of an exaggeration to call the atoll itself an "artifact" of Tobian culture.

Virtually every aspect of the island has felt the hand of man. The reef has had a channel blasted across it and fish traps built upon it. The land has been ringed with a broad path and criss-crossed with many others.

Houses and other structures have at one time or another been located in almost every corner of the island. The number of animal species has been greatly increased by the addition of pigs, chickens, cats, rats, and mice (and of course human beings) to the land crabs, birds and geckos which are native. During the Japanese era (1918-1945) the island was even mined for phosphate.⁹ The channel through the reef and the large pier supports marching out beside it, (looking vaguely like ancient megaliths), are also remnants of this era, as is much of the lumber still used in the island's houses and the cement slabs on which they are built.¹⁰ The American bombing of 1944 has left only a few craters to be pointed to by the old people as they tell their stories. More ominously, an unexploded bomb, apparently American or British (according to the stories which are told about the raid in which it was dropped) sits on the reef. It is rediscovered by visiting government officials every few years or so who, shocked, invariably request the American navy to remove it.

The greatest intervention has occurred in the island's flora--the Tobians have thoroughly reorganized the plant kingdom on their island. Much bush has been cleared and replanted with coconuts. Breadfruit and other useful trees are preserved wherever possible but other plants have been replaced in many parts of the

islands with palms. Papaya and banana have been introduced. There is even a lone lemon tree, brought to Tobi sometime in the last fifty years. Sweet potatoes are also cultivated but the staple plant food of the Tobians is Cyrtosperma chamissonis, a root crop of the taro family. The presence of this plant has led to one of the most impressive of all the environmental manipulations.

Unlike other widely distributed staple cultigens Cyrtosperma has not been genetically modified to suit all the many environments to which it has been introduced. Instead, the environments themselves have been adapted to the plant. They have been made to reproduce the swampy Southeast Asian niche where taro was first domesticated. The taro bogs of Tobi are a laboriously constructed example of this phenomenon. The center of the island (in its pristine state probably a swamp of sorts) has been dug out and rock-lined pits have been put in. Into the pits are put gabions, bottomless baskets made of woven twigs. These are then filled with a humus created by mulching with leaves, branches and other organic material. Taro is then planted in the humus.¹¹ Considering the fact that the pits were dug by people with neither metal nor hard rock out of which to make tools, the taro bogs of Tobi are an impressive achievement.¹²

Tobian History

The human population which has so profoundly transformed the island traces its origin to one of the low coral atolls to the northeast. The myth which tells of the island's settlement has it that the founders came from a place called Mog Mog which is the name of a district on Ulithi atoll. Other evidence indicates some sort of link with the island of Fais, not too far from Ulithi.¹³ In the absence of more complete data it is impossible to determine which (if either) of the two islands is the ancestral home of the Tobians. To ask where the ancestors of the present population came from is not necessarily the same as asking where the sources of their socio-cultural system lie and it is important to distinguish carefully between these two questions.

The people of Tobi may very well be the descendants of people from a variety of places. Even today drift voyages from the Philippines, Indonesia and Papua are not unknown. Furthermore, the present population may not be the only one to have settled the island. On a cultural and linguistic level, however, the relationships are clearly to islands like Ulithi and Fais--islands of the old Yapese political and economic network.

The language spoken on Tobi is a dialect of Trukic, of the Malayo-Polynesian stock.¹⁴ A Trukic dialect called Trukese (naturally enough) is spoken by the people

of Truk, a high island fifteen hundred miles and more to the east. Varieties of the language are spoken by people of all the many low atolls which are found between Truk and Tobi. The atolls in the west-central part of this chain formed, in pre-European days, an intricate trading and political network with the high island of Yap (whose people do not speak a Trukic dialect). Although the evidence indicates that Tobi never formed a part of this so-called "empire," cultural affinities parallel those of language.

Tobi remained isolated and uncontacted, except for an occasionally drift voyage, for a number of years after the initial settlement by the Trukic speaking representatives of the Carolinian tradition.¹⁵ There is very little evidence which can be used to determine how long a period this was. The list of all the men who have served as Tobi's chief begins with a son of the foundress and continues up to the incumbent who assumed office more than forty years ago. This list contains twenty one names. Assigning an average reign of twenty years to each of these people produces an approximate date of 1550 A. D. for the first settlement. The first report of the Tobians which is still extant was given by Captain Douglas of the ship "Iphigenie" in 1788.¹⁶ Apparently on the basis of the several canoe loads of men who boarded his ship to barter he estimated the island to have a population of

two hundred people. A population of this size obviously takes some time to establish, therefore the settlement must have taken place sometime earlier. Taking these two data (weak as they are) into consideration, I have decided that the end of the seventeenth century is the minimum acceptable figure for the settlement date with a relatively high probability that the actual date was some time earlier, perhaps in the mid-sixteenth century. If archeological work is ever done on Tobi these dates may be pushed much farther back.¹⁷

Following Magellan's circumnavigation in 1522 the Spanish crown claimed possession of what were soon to be named the Caroline islands. The claim was, perhaps, a legitimate counter in the game of European power politics as it was played in that era, but it is doubtful if the people of islands such as Tobi were even aware of its existence. The Tobians refer to the era between the time white-men first started arriving in ships and the time that things began to change rapidly as ifiri Ingris which means "pertaining to Englishmen." The Spanish may have claimed sovereignty, but it was English speaking sailors who explored in detail this part of the Pacific and who began trading with the islands. Englishmen from bases in East Asia and Australia and Americans from further east all begin criss-crossing the Western Pacific in search of profit. With greater and greater frequency their ships

began stopping at islands such as Tobi to replenish supplies of food and water in exchange for otherwise unobtainable tobacco, cloth, and metal. As the nineteenth century drew to a close the eastern edges of Micronesia began to feel a new and aggressive force. Great German trading concerns were establishing themselves in the Marshall islands. At this time too the Japanese (who also loomed large in Tobi's future) began to put in an appearance in the area. Finally a conflict over an island half the world away led to the end of "English times" and the acceleration of Tobi's loss of autonomy. As part of the settlement of the Cuban caused Spanish-American war, Spain sold her Micronesian possessions to the vigorous and expanding German Empire.

The Germans held onto the islands only until the first World War, when they lost them to the Japanese. But during this period they brought changes to the people of the Western Carolines more dramatic than any during the nearly four hundred years of Spanish "rule." They introduced Protestantism (which had no impact on the still pagan Tobians), and they began a semi-regular ship service between Tobi and Palau (which did). They encouraged the establishment of a Tobian community in Palau and they demanded the production of copra. They also brought disease, which decimated the population of the island.

The Japanese, who won the islands from the Germans as spoils of war and lost them to the Americans by the same process thirty years later, ruled Micronesia under the terms of a League of Nations mandate. Unlike previous imperial regimes, they attempted to colonize the islands. For example Palau was thrown open to settlement and eventually the Palauans were outnumbered by Japanese settlers. Tobi was spared settlement but could not escape the Japanese drive to exploit all the territory's resources, regardless of economic or human cost. It was during this period that the phosphate mine was opened on Tobi and this is also the time when a small operation smoking fish for export was begun. During this time a connection was formed (probably for the first time since the inception of the Tobian settlement) between the island and the other low atolls of similar language and culture further east in the old Yap trading network. The Japanese phosphate mine on Tobi was worked for a brief while (no one can say exactly how long) by a mixed labor force of Tobians and Puluwatese. For some reason the usual Micronesian practice of establishing near permanent pseudo-kinship bonds in such circumstances apparently did not take place and the connection was broken with the repatriation of the Puluwatese to their atoll far to the east following the closing of the mine. Today there is no evidence of such a relationship between Pulowat and Tobi. No one claims an

adopted son on Pulowat and no one claims to have a Pulowat "brother." This is particularly curious given the low atoll techniques for dealing with strangers detailed in some of McKnight's work (MS).

Once again, events thousands of miles from the island began to impinge on the unknowing Tobians. This time it was neither the sinking of a battleship Maine nor the assassination of an Austrian archduke but the surprise attack on Pearl Harbor which led to a change in their rulers.

As war in the Pacific became more and more inevitable the Japanese began to fortify their Micronesian possessions. By the time of the raid on Pearl Harbor there was even a small garrison on Tobi. Fortunately for all concerned the only enemies these soldiers had to face were boredom and hunger. Tobi was not invaded by the Americans and was only bombed once.¹⁸

The United States Naval occupation which resulted from the war was given legitimacy by a United Nations mandate which proclaimed the former Japanese mandate territory a strategic (and thus fortifiable) trust of the United States. Ifiri Sapan, which had followed Ifiri Deutch had given way to Ifiri Neivi. The Navy ran things with little interference from the United States Government (to say nothing of the United Nations) and, in turn, interfered in the affairs of their Micronesian charges as little

as possible. The heady days of Japanese settlement and investment were gone and things went along at a much slower pace. On Tobi, after the Japanese garrison had been removed and the initial Naval gift of a mountain of C-rations had been consumed, life picked up where it had left off at the outbreak of the war. Ship service to Palau was resumed and people began once again making copra for export. The Japanese installations, never very substantial, began to deteriorate and the people scavenged what they could for their own use.

Another war, this time waged with memos and meetings instead of bombs but as serious in its consequences as those waged with more traditional ammunition, signalled the end of the Navy's empire. In 1951 Micronesia changed hands once again. This time the winning empire was that of the Department of the Interior which added Micronesia to its Indian reservations, national parks, and other possessions. Although the transfer was between bureaucratic departments and not sovereign states, the results have been as radical for the Micronesians as those flowing from previous transfers.

For the first decade of Interior Department rule budgets were tight and little beyond the Navy's holding operation was attempted. Economic activity was not yet at anywhere near the level of Japanese times. Some political innovations were made. Tobi was declared a municipality

and the people were told to elect a magistrate as well as a representative to a newly organized district legislature. The basic premise of American rule, that the islands had no value in and of themselves and were only important in a strategic sense, remained unchanged as did its negative cast--we were there only to keep others out.

During the early Kennedy Administration it was decided, for a number of reasons, that this passive role was no longer sufficient. World-wide decolonization and the realities of the cold war made the trusteeship agreement seem destined to become less and less secure. As other trust territories claimed their independence the American position in the United Nations Trusteeship Council was bound to become more and more exposed. Since the strategic reasons for the possession of Micronesia were still accepted as valid, it was thought necessary to tie the islands to the United States in a more secure fashion. A referendum seemed in the cards and it seemed imperative to ensure that the outcome was favorable to the Americans.

Over the next few years and into the Johnson Administration budgets were increased, Micronesians were recruited into previously closed administrative positions, Micronesian salaries were raised, programs and personnel were upgraded. The "war on poverty" was extended to the islands and in 1966 the Peace Corps was invited to begin operations. All this activity had only an indirect impact

on Tobi until November 1967 when I arrived at the atoll, a Peace Corps Volunteer with only the vaguest of assignments and the first non-Micronesian to live on the island since the war.

First Stay on Tobi

By the time I actually went to Tobi I had already spent three months with the Tobi people in Koror, studying their language and trying to become familiar with the various tasks which were added to my assignments as one government department after another became aware that the Peace Corps (whose ways no one could fathom) was actually going to station people in the South West Islands.¹⁹ I also had made the previous field trip to determine if the South West Islanders actually wanted to have volunteers stationed on their atolls.²⁰

I spent a total of sixteen months with the Tobi people as a Peace Corps Volunteer. They were divided into three periods: three months prior to going to the island, twelve months there, and then another six weeks in Palau. During this time I engaged in various projects of one kind or another. Two of these projects were vaguely anthropological in nature and indirectly led to my return three years later.

At the request of the head of the Fisheries Department I began to interview some of the men about fishing. Due to mutual enthusiasm this project quickly

ballooned until virtually every evening for the next three months was taken up with recording, transcribing, or verifying information on the Tobi fisheries. In doing this project I first became aware of the possibilities which these thoughtful, intelligent and verbal men offered for the investigation of such topics.²¹ Their eagerness to record for the future what they felt to be a passing set of skills was impressive. I did a second set of interviews at the request of the Trust Territory's entomologist, who asked me to collect medicinal recipes and samples of the plants used in them. In doing this I became aware of the existence of non-corporeal private property. Medicinal recipes (and I later learned, songs and some fishing techniques) were owned by individuals who used secrecy to guard them from theft. When I realized this I realized how badly some of these people wanted to have their knowledge recorded for they took the chance of entrusting their medicinal recipes to me despite my known close ties to one family.

My ties with this family led, all unwittingly, to involvement with the case of attempted clan incest which is discussed in Chapter Two. By attempting to retain both the couples' friendship and that of the family to which both the pregnant girl and I were attached, I found myself in the middle of a number of discussions of clan, marriage and morality. This proved to me that the smallness of the place

insured that I would learn of most important events despite Tobian discretion and their attempts to keep scandal from me.

I knew when I left the island, therefore, that the chances for productive research on Tobi were very good. I had thoroughly enjoyed my stay on the island and wanted to return. As I look back on it now I think I must have felt some obligation to act as a sort of amenuensis for the islanders and especially for the elders.

During the years of graduate training which followed, this desire was transformed into a curiosity about why Tobians do the kinds of things that they do, and why they do them in characteristically Tobian ways. Gradually it came to seem that a consideration of population and social variables offered the best opportunities for understanding the behavior of my friends on Tobi. To understand why this should have seemed reasonable it is necessary to understand something of the nature of Tobian demographic and social structures. More importantly, such an understanding is necessary background for understanding the results of the research I actually did when I returned to the island and which in part are reported in this dissertation.

Population

There are several methods of reckoning the Tobian population. Each method gives its own, unique, total. Schwartz's observations that one "cannot count the number

of members of a society without being able to decide on its boundaries" and that one "must accept the possibility of ambiguous membership and relative boundedness for some social entities," hold especially true for anyone attempting to count the Tobians. (Schwartz MS(a):12).²²

If only people with both a Tobian mother and a Tobian father are included, then there are 95 Tobians. This figure could be 98, for there are three people who fall into this category except that they are probably no longer living. One of these is (or was) a man who would now be in his fifties. He left Tobi after World War II to work in Guam and was last seen in the early 1950's. The other two are a man and a woman who would now be in their early forties. In the early 1950's these lovers, thwarted in their desire to marry, set sail for the Philippines in a twenty foot sailing canoe. Their chances of safely reaching land were slim. However, rumors occasionally reach the Tobians telling of a couple living in Davao city with a dozen or so children, and claiming to be natives of some eastern atoll. Regardless of whether they are living or dead, however, all three of these people have removed themselves, by one way or another, from the knowledge of their fellows and thus I have not included them in the population count.

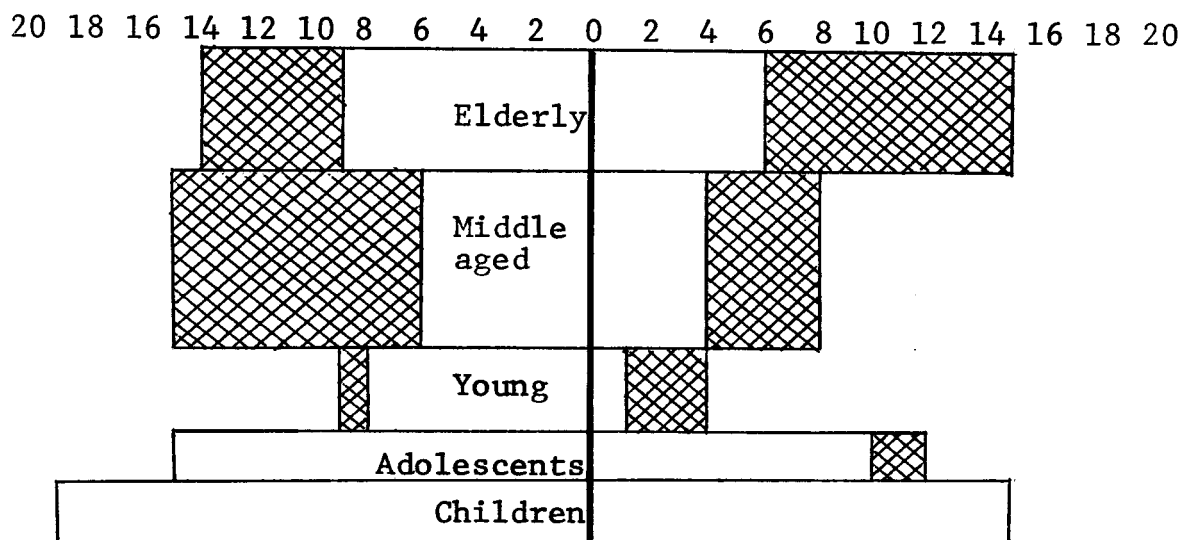
There are a number of people who are the children of marriages between Tobians and people from other islands. Some of these people consider themselves, and are considered

by others, as full-fledged Tobians. They ignore the fact that they are the offspring of mixed marriages. They are indistinguishable from other Tobians. There are also several children of mixed marriages who are still too young to have made a choice about their identity. Some of them clearly are being affiliated to their non-Tobian parent's group and will in all probability be lost to the Tobian population. Others just as clearly are destined to become full Tobians in all but a genetic sense. By adding to the previous total all children of mixed marriages who consider themselves, or who seem likely to consider themselves, full Tobians a figure of 115 is reached.

There is one further group which should be included in any total of the Tobian population. It is made up of people who are Tobians at one time and not another. All but one of these people are the children of mixed marriages. The exception is a Sonsorolese boy who was adopted by a Tobian at a very young age and who has recently begun playing on his dual identity. All the people in this group claim Tobian identity on some occasions but not on others. It is necessary to include them in the total figure because when they utilize their Tobian identity they are virtually indistinguishable from the rest of the population. Furthermore, there is occasionally some movement from this category into the previous one (that composed of people of mixed ancestry who do not manipulate their identities but simply consider themselves Tobians.) The existence of this final category (people who are

Table I

Age, Sex, and Marital Composition of the Tobian Population in November 1972. These figures do not include natives of other islands who have married Tobians. These cohorts are drawn from Tobian cultural categories.



Male

Female

Total 72

Total 54

TOTAL POPULATION 126



Currently cohabiting with spouse.

Elderly: Includes all people who are retired or semi-retired because of age. Estimated ages: 65 and up.

Middle aged: Includes all people no longer thought of as young but still active. Estimated ages: 35-65. One is married to a Sonsorolese.

Young: Includes all people between the ages of 21 and 35. These people are beginning to assume fully adult roles. One man has a non-Tobian father. One man is married to a Ponapean, one to a Marshallese, one to a Saipanese, and three to Palauans.

Adolescents: Includes all people between the ages of 12 and 20. All these people are still under the control of adults. Eight men and three women have non-Tobian mothers. One girl has married a Sonsorolese.

Children: Includes all people under 11 years of whom seven boys and nine girls have non-Tobian mothers and one boy and one girl have non-Tobian fathers. One boy is a Sonsorolese adopted by a Tobian woman.

Tobians at one time and not another) is what makes it so difficult to answer the seemingly simple question: "How many Tobians are there?" If they are included in the calculations, then the answer to that question is that there are 126 Tobians.²³ It is this population which is displayed in Table 1.

There are two other populations which must be discussed. The first of these is composed of all people actually living on Tobi at any one time, and the other is made up of those living in the Tobi settlements in Palau. Once again things are more complicated than they at first appear. There are usually between 55 and 65 people living on Tobi. Not all of these people are Tobians. In addition to the occasional non-Tobian spouse who accompanies his or her mate to the island, government personnel occasionally are stationed on Tobi. The departments concerned are the Department of Public Health, which maintains a dispensary staffed by a health-aide, and the Department of Education, which operates an elementary school staffed by a single teacher. Both departments try, for a variety of reasons, to run their operations on Tobi with native-born personnel. This is not always possible of course and occasionally a non-Tobian health-aide or school teacher is assigned to the atoll and arrives on the ship, apprehensive and uncertain. Within a few weeks these people invariably start to play an active and important role in the island's affairs. This is primarily due to their control over the resources

of their offices. At any rate they must be included in any head-count of all people on the island.

There are usually between forty and fifty people living in Tobian settlements in Palau. A precise figure is unobtainable because of the fluid nature of this population. With every ship which travels from Koror to Tobi and back there is a considerable exchange of population between the two sub-populations. There are also a number of young Tobians who have succeeded in finding work in other districts of the Trust Territory. These people periodically return to Palau on leave to stay in one or another of the Tobi households there. They also occasionally send their children back to Palau, or even Tobi, for a few months or even years.

Social Organization

All these populations or categories of people are organized in a variety of ways. Households, families and clans are important and so are divisions based on sex, age and politics. Since it is not my purpose here to analyze in depth the workings of the social structure but merely to provide the reader with that ethnographic background necessary for the discussions which appear in the body of the dissertation, I shall simply describe the components of that structure. Even this is no easy task because actual membership in the various groupings is almost always contingent on individual calculation of the most advantageous

response to make to shifting alliances and the vagaries of fortune.

The four principles which underlie relations between Tobians are kinship, residence, sex, and age. Ties based on one or more of these principles exist, in a potential state, between all members of the population. These ties are activated and manipulated as events dictate. All of these principles are to some degree under the control of the individual. People can change households easily enough. They can also change kin groups, although with more trouble. It is still more difficult to change one's age but even this can be done. And there is even one person who has succeeded in acquiring important elements of womanhood although born male.

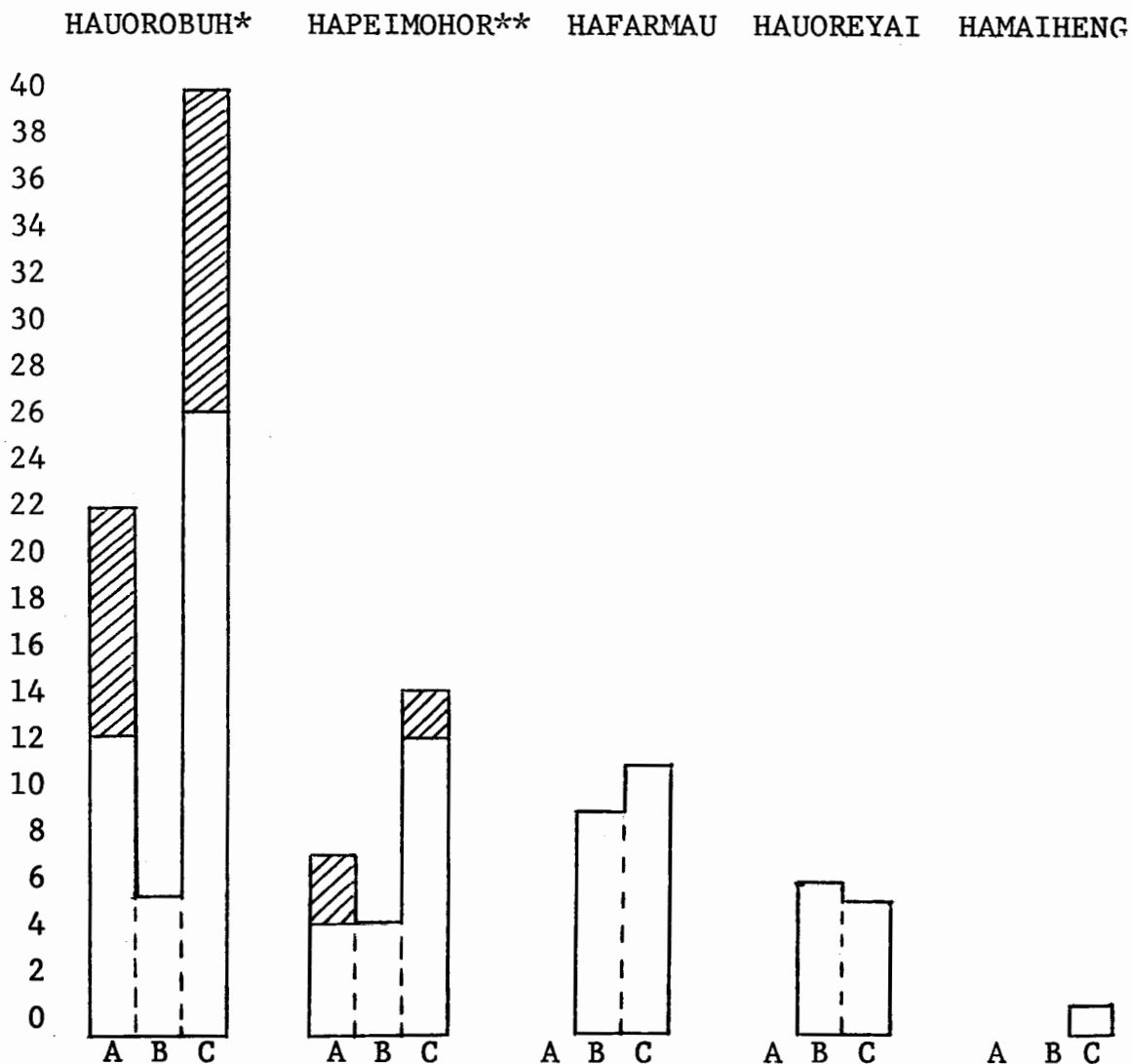
Clan

The maximal Tobian kinship unit is called by the island's English speakers "clan" and I follow their usage. There are currently five of these named, matrilineal exogamous groups. A glance at Table Two on page 41 will show that the future of three of the clans is bleak. Unless these three can somehow recruit fertile women they are doomed to follow the other two other clans which have disappeared, in living memory, due to the failure of their women to bear female children. Chapter Two contains a lengthy discussion of these clans, here I merely wish to note their existence and to point out that, although in

theory one's clan is determined at birth by the clan of one's mother, even here there is some room for individual maneuver. Individual Tobians occasionally claim membership in their father's clan.

This is perhaps a slightly misleading statement. Clans function today in the regulation of marriage. Their only other importance is in the justification of amiable relations between individuals who can find no closer genealogical link between them. It is in this sense that the father's clan may become salient. The feeling is that kinship ties should be the most enduring. When people become friends or allies they begin to look for a genealogical connection. If all they can find is the fact that one of their fathers belonged to either the father's or mother's clan of the other, then they use that fact as a rationale for their association. In no instance is an association formed because of those ties. However, even the minimal usage which is made of father's clan depends on people's willingness to consider themselves, in some circumstances, bound to the clan of their father as well as their mother. Therefore a man who is known to all as a son of a Hauoreyai woman, called himself a Hauorobuh one day, tracing his line back through his father and an adopted "stranger" to do so. When his friendship with his Hauorobuh age mate collapsed, he stopped referring to himself as Hauorobuh. Of course he never claimed (and no one

Table II
Age and Sex Composition of Tobian Clans



- A) All pre-menarche females
 B) All other females
 C) All males

People of mixed ancestry, filiated to father's clan

* Includes one Sonsoralese boy adopted by a Haurobuh woman.

** Three people not included. They are the children of a Haurobuh man and a woman whose father is Hapeimohor but mother Palauan. The mother must trace her clan through her father. There is some feeling that the children (two boys and a girl all under three years) should do likewise. On the other hand the rule is that one's clan is traced through the mother. When these children grow up they will undoubtedly pick the most advantageous clan to belong to, if clan membership is still important enough to matter.

would have granted his claim if he had) that he had ceased to be Hauoreyai.

The notion that a person can belong to his father's clan is related to the fact that offspring of non-Tobian women and Tobian men assume, in some circumstances, their father's clan. At one time a radical proposal was made to assign some of these people to one of the empty clans (that is; those clans which exist only in memory) and the rest to those three clans which are in danger of becoming empty due to lack of fertile women. The proposal failed for a number of reasons. The most fundamental of these was probably that it exaggerated the optional nature of clan identity. Yet it would not be surprising to find people from this category claiming membership in those clans if; in their calculations, such membership ever becomes valuable. And their success or failure in establishing those claims will depend mostly on whether it is to the advantage of their fellow Tobians to repopulate those clans, and not on abstract notions about the basis for clan membership. Leadership within the clans rests with their old women, custodians of the genealogies. Since marriage disputes in which clan membership is an issue occur infrequently, it is seldom that these women actually exercise this leadership, for such disputes are the only occasions in which the clans are mobilized. Further details about the clans can be

found in Chapter Two. I now wish to turn to another, and more potent, kinship based structural component of Tobian society.

Yahamatara

If Tobians seldom act on the basis of clan membership they frequently act on the basis of other, more intimate kinship ties. Father's kin, mother's kin, spouse's kin, even the kin of a child's spouse can all be included in such reckoning. Each individual is at the center of a network of kin who he refers to as yahamatai. This word is from the root yahamat ("person"). Yahamatai has a number of possible translations. I chose to translate it as "relative". There are three distinct classes of people which are called yahamatai or "my relatives". Just as all Tobians are relatives of one another, being woven together by one genealogical trace or another, so the word yahamatai is occasionally used to refer to all one's fellow Tobians. Just as all people within a clan are thought to be relatives in a special, matrilineal, sense, so one can call clan mates yahamatai. It is used by people to refer to all the people with whom, in any specific context, they wish to claim kinship. This brings us closer to the reason for introducing this word. These activated kinship networks are difficult to pin down empirically. This is because they are highly unstable especially on the outer edges.

Regardless of the situation, a person cannot afford to ignore the bonds within the nuclear family. Father, mother, sister, brother, son, daughter are always included within the category of persons referred to by the term yahamatai when it is used in its third sense. Beyond this inner circle however, the category can expand to include many different people, depending on the situation. The difference between "yahamatai's" use in this sense and its use in the sense of "my fellow Tobians" is that the former (reference to ego centered kin networks) conveys a more positive moral tone. People referring to each other as yahamat(ai) and meaning not "fellow Tobian" but something like "family member" are expected to support one another in any disputes which either may have with a third party and to share food and hospitality unreservedly.

For most people it is very difficult to specify all the people they would refer to in this fashion on any given day. However, there are a number of Tobians whose expanded kin networks have a relative degree of stability. These are the important people of the island. They are the major property owners. They are mostly elders, although not all elders fall into this group and not all important people are elders. Their wishes must be included in the calculations leading up to any important decision. They control, through one mechanism or another, the labor of numbers of people. Only the nuclear family is included

within the inner, stable, circle of most people but for important individuals that circle contains numbers of people who are much less closely related when reckoned objectively. All the people within the stable inner circle of one of these important people are known as yahamatara N or "the people of N."

Despite their sociological importance (which I detail below) these groups have (as a class) no Tobian name.²⁴ Therefore, in order to avoid the constant repetition of the cumbersome phrase "activated ego-centered kin networks of important people" in the discussion which follows, I shall refer to them with the invented term "yahamatara". I am forced to resort to such a neo-(Tobian)-logism due to the lack of both a specific Tobian term and an etic (anthropological) term for such groups. Unfortunately the term "kindred" which comes closest to meeting the second specification (that is, it is perhaps the most appropriate anthropological term) does not come close enough. It cannot be used to name these groups.

My reading in the literature on kindreds (Arensburg and Kimball, 1940, Pehrson 1954, Firth 1957, Davenport 1959, Goodenough 1962, and especially Gulliver 1971) indicates that it would be a serious error to apply this term to these Tobian groups. Among the reasons for this conclusion are the following: (1) While all individuals in Tobian society reckon kin bilaterally and can (temporarily) activate

groups based on (among other things) such reckoning, the groups I am interested in are centered around a select group of important people. (2) While for most people only the nuclear family persists from one "activation" to the next, the enduring group for the important people is much larger. (3) There are many people in one or another of these groups whose inclusion is not accounted for by bilateral kinship reckoning at all, but rather by other non-genealogical, specifications. (4) There are a number of people who are not included in any of the groups; there are even some unattached nuclear families. Some of these people are quite close (in an "objective" kin reckoning and also in the Tobian reckoning of kinship) to people at the center of one or more of these groups--in one instance a full sibling.

The cumulative weight of these considerations makes even the terms "stem kindred" (Arensburg and Kimball 1940) and/or "nodal kindred" (Goodenough 1962) sufficiently remote from the ethnographic facts so that their application to those facts could only lead to serious distortions of those facts or the terms themselves. And these two terms seem to me to be the best available anthropological categories. Therefore, I use the word "yahamatara".

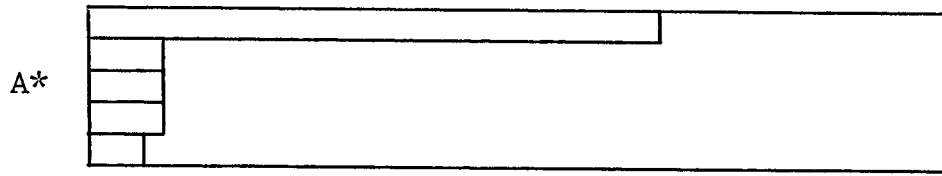
Yahamatara are important in the workings of Tobian society for a number of reasons. Most adoptions take place within them, most land is inherited within them, most

Table III

Tobian Yahamatara in November 1972. Natives of other islands who have married Tobians are included.

MEMBERSHIP

0 . 5 . 10 . 15 . 20 . 25 . 30 . 35 . 40 . 45 . 50



UNATTACHED

*Yahamatara A contains five sub groups

marriages take place between them. Although they are stable in only a relative sense and both mature over the years and fluctuate on their outer boundaries on a daily basis, they offer an intermediate structure between the nearly rigid clans and the nearly fluid interest groups which form and dissolve with each passing issue. The accompanying figure gives approximate figures for the yahamatara of the present Tobian population. Yahamatara "A", is unique in that it is composed of one major group and four small ones. No other yahamatara contains sub-groups. The person at the center of "A" is the chief, who through his wife and his adopted sons, is linked to the four sub-groups. His total yahamatara is only mobilized on rare occasions. The rest of the time its five components act as though they were separate.

Kinship is not the sole principle on which Tobian social structure is based. Residence is also important. First of all there are the two poles of Tobian geography, the atoll itself and Palau.

Settlement

Currently about half of the Tobians live on Tobi at any one time. The others either live in one of two communities near Koror or are in one of the other districts of the Trust Territory. One of the communities near Koror is on Malakal, an island connected to Koror by a causeway. The Tobi community on Malakal, near the docks and warehouses

of the Port of Palau, consists of three or four households and fifteen to twenty people. The rest of the Tobians live in Eang village on Arkapasang Island, also connected to Koror by a causeway. Eang, unlike the settlement on Malakal, does not house only Tobians--people from all the South West Islands live there. The two settlements are relatively recent. The one on Malakal has only been in existence since World War II, Eang was begun in 1904 but it was not until 1909 that Tobians were brought there by the Germans.

Some of the Tobians living in Eang and Malakal have lived there for years and have no intention of ever living on Tobi again. Others are only visiting and plan on taking the next ship back to their home island. Similar circumstances hold on Tobi, where some people only rarely leave the island to visit Palau and others spend more than half their time there. There is one important difference between living in Koror and only visiting Tobi and living on Tobi and only visiting Koror. People living in Eang or Malakal can visit their relatives on Tobi and return on the same ship, but people living on Tobi who want to visit their relatives in Koror must plan on spending at least four months with them while waiting for a ship home.

Reasons for visiting Palau vary. Sick people sometimes must go to the hospital there for treatment which Tobi cannot supply. Since Tobi school only goes up through the sixth grade, older students and their families frequently

go to Koror for the school year. Anyone with legal problems must visit Koror. People frequently go there just to be with relatives. Reasons for staying in Koror also vary but the opportunities for cash employment is probably most important today. The major factional political conflict of the last two generations has also played a role in peopling the two Koror settlements.

Reasons for visiting the island from Koror need not be so weighty since a visit involves only a monetary investment of \$10.00 for deck passage and a week to ten days of time for the round trip instead of the much larger investment of time and money that a visit to Koror from the island requires. Of course such a visit can only be for a few hours while the Field Trip Party's business is in progress.²⁵ People "round-trip down to Tobi" (as the expression has it) to inspect property, such as houses and canoes, to visit relatives or to conduct various kinds of business. As the result of a large number of choices based on these and similar factors a pattern is beginning to emerge in the relations between the population of Tobians on Tobi and the population of Tobians on Palau. Despite the massive reciprocal turnover of population every few months, there is enough regularity to make necessary a discussion of the structural consequences of residence choice.

A consideration of the demographic characteristics of the two populations show that Tobi is becoming a place of old people and of children. Very few other people can be found on the island during most of the year, and those few are people with some special reason for being there, such as nurse, magistrate, school teacher or store keeper.²⁶ The Palau settlements are much more heterogenous, with perhaps a slight tendency toward young families becoming apparent. Not surprisingly, most of the aliens who have married Tobians are to be found in the Palau populations. The two populations exchange food, with a fine oceanic enthusiasm, every time a ship circulates between them. This food exchange takes place between relatives, of course, and most often within the yahamataras, which are all represented in both populations. Cash from copra sales (the island's only cash crop) and island produce goes north from Tobi on the ship. Store goods and cash from wage labor goes south from Palau. Neither settlement can do without the other.

The title of the Tobians and the other South West Islanders to land in Eang is clear and well documented but not very firm. They were given that land at a time when Palau was underpopulated and the Palauan chief in control of what is now the village's location felt he needed to increase the number of his people. At the same time a typhoon had ravaged all the South West Islands but Tobi

and the Germans (the administrators of the territory at that time) brought the survivors to Koror. Over the next few years various people from Tobi joined their fellow South West Islanders in Palau.

Much has changed since those days seventy years ago and land is now at a premium in Koror and its vicinity. Therefore the inhabitants of Eang are understandably hesitant about cutting their ties with their home islands. They have witnessed the handing over of local power by the Americans to the Palauans. They know their land title rests on a piece of paper, signed by a long dead Palauan chief. In the event that the much rumored court challenge to that title takes place they know that the odds are that the judge will be a Palauan. People fear that they will be evicted and left with no place to go but the South West.²⁷

In these circumstances the maintenance of close ties with the home islands, in particular recognized claims on gardens and coconut groves, might mean the difference between becoming an independent householder and a dependent, propertyless hanger-on of one of the important people.

For people on Tobi the benefits of maintaining links with the people in Palau are much more immediate. For when circumstances of health, education, or employment

demand that a person travel to Palau, it is with the Tobian population there that he will find food and shelter.

Households

The other important unit based on residence is the household. There is considerable overlap between household membership and membership in yahamatara. Most people at the center of yahamataras are also house owners. Here again great flexibility is apparent.

It is much easier to determine the number of households (nine on Tobi and eight in Palau in 1972) than to give an accurate picture of their membership. Just as with yahamatara, there is a relatively stable core group, composed of the house owner and his or her nuclear family, surrounded by a more unstable peripheral group, composed of people usually (but not always) related to the house owner.

Not all houses are centers of households. Frequently they are occupied by only one or two people (typically childless widows or widowers) and are satellites of some other more populous home. The minimal requirement for a house to become the center of a household seems to be that food be prepared and served there to all comers at least twice each day. For although mature adults are attached more or less permanently to their households, adolescents and older children circulate freely among them, sometimes eating here and sometimes there.

Just as the clans regulate marriage and the yahamatara inheritance and adoption, the household regulates the day to day activities of the people. This is especially true for economic activities and it is here that the division of labor between the sexes plays its role as each sex contributes the special fruits of its labor to the production of those two meals which are the distinguishing characteristic of a household.

Gender

On Tobi women garden and manage the domestic tasks of cooking and cleaning; the men fish and manage the coconut plantations. In Palau men work (if they can find employment) and provide storegoods; the women garden and do the domestic chores. The joint responsibility of both sexes to provide food and labor is important to the Tobians because to them there is a great difference between eating a meal and just consuming food. A meal must consist of both meat and vegetables. Fish and taro, chicken and rice, pork and potatoes, all such combinations make a meal. In the normal course of things such combinations are only achieved by bringing together the fruits of the labor of individuals of both sexes.

Occasionally groups form on the basis of sexual identity. Sometimes these are work gangs--fishing or gardening. At other times they are recreational groups. Groups of men are frequently seen going to the movies in

Koror or going skin diving on Tobi. Groups of women gather to gossip and tend babies together. These unigender groups frequently exhibit antagonism toward people of the opposite sex. This process is most dramatically evident at the parties which are held on Christmas and New Years days. The songs sung and dances danced on these occasions make clear that there is hostility between the sexes. That hostility is expressed ritually, to be sure, but it is not very effectively disguised.²⁸ Men seem to feel that the women exact the last possible benefit from the contributions which they make to communal welfare, while the women seem to feel that the men shirk their responsibilities whenever they can. Both sexes agree, however, that neither can be self-sufficient. It is this perception which drives the young to seek mates. For until they can acquire a spouse, they cannot start their own household and must remain dependents of their elders.²⁹ Marriage is not an easy process on Tobi. If it were not for the desire to establish an independent household and the recognition that this is only possible with the economic participation of people of both sexes I doubt if many people would bother with it.³⁰

Tobian men, unlike most other Micronesian men, have traditionally felt free to work in the taro gardens. Their work there usually consists of helping the women with the heavy work involved in mulching or planting. However, it is not thought womanly for a man to have his own taro pits

in which he does all the work and harvests the crop for his own use. This practice is quite rare--I did not witness it but I was told about it a number of times and in a number of ways. The reason it does not happen very often is, I think, that most men are tied into households where the women produce the taro. Most of those who are not so aligned have no taro land to cultivate.³¹ This tolerance for male participation in the female realm is not reciprocal and women are not allowed to fish. A man is someone who can both garden and fish, while a woman is a person who can only garden.

There is one person, who has used this formula to transform his self. Known as a mar-faifir (man-women) this individual was born a male but has partially succeeded in escaping that fact. He moves like a woman, and speaks in the feminine fashion, which dictates much use of the falsetto, a certain Roccoco quality to the obsenities with which most conversations are punctuated, as well as a saccharine sentimentality to balance the more pungent expressions. He (or perhaps she) spends most of his (her) time with the women doing women's tasks. He/she is a skillful respected gardener but never goes fishing.³² Evidently, just as one can change household or yahamatara if one desires, so one (to some degree at least) can change sex.

Same sex friendships play an important role in the daily life of the Tobians. These friendships arise between

people of diverse ages and of varying degrees of genealogical closeness. They are highly unstable and most last no more than a month or so. They are preceded and followed not by hostility, but by unintense and casual relations between the two parties.

Typically, two people casually decide to do together one of the petty chores which mark their days. They enjoy the jokes and the stories which they exchange in the process and repeat the task the next day. Gradually they spend more and more time in joint efforts. If they are women they tend children and garden together. If they are men they fish together. They then start spending their free time together. After a week or so the friendship enters its final, intense phase. The two do everything together. They eat together and spend all day in each other's company. They spread their mats in the same place at night. Following this phase, which may last anywhere from three days to a month or more, the tone of the relationship spins down over a period of days to the pleasant, relaxed state which is the norm for all relationships. Adolescent boys, the freest people, show this pattern to the greatest extent but everyone participates in it to some degree. Most of these relationships occur between people of the same age but occasionally friendships form between people of different ages. Such dyads cut across one of the major fault lines of Tobian society.

Generation

The discrepancies between the experiences of the three generations of adult Tobians are profound. The oldest people were born on an autonomous and populous island, remote and self sufficient, barely aware of the existence of other people. The middle-aged were born and grew up on an island under the stern hand of the Japanese. It was an island which had suffered one major disaster after another. The young adults were born in late Japanese or early American times. Most were not even born on the island but in the hospital in Koror. They are mission educated, for the most part, and they are oriented toward Palau and the outside in a way that the others are not.

As a result the three generations have major differences in their approaches to the problems which they all, as Tobians, face. These problems mostly have to do either with Tobi's relations with external agencies or with the fact of underpopulation. The young people perceive the older two generations as hindering the island's adaptation to the social, economic and political facts of the Trust Territory. The oldest generation is concerned that the young people will cause a disaster by tampering with forces which they don't understand. The middle-aged people, those who are actually managing the island and its resources, are unsure of the accuracy of their knowledge of either the traditional or the new. The people of this

generation are aware of the necessity for action and change but are unsure about specifics. The people to whom they would in other circumstances turn for counsel are the elders, whose knowledge of the situation is even less secure than their own. The people who claim that knowledge, those of the young generation, are well known to exaggerate their competence and their unsolicited advice is not trusted by the middle-aged people.

The issues which divide the generations are complex. Some involve morals and religion. Others are about economics and the administration of the island. Still others revolve around the relation of the settlements in Palau to each other and to the home island. Since all these issues involve the whole population, all of them have a political component. And all political issues (whether generationally relevant or not) are complicated by the existence of two factions.

Political Factions

The origin of the two political groupings can be found in the events surrounding the accession of the present chief to his title. These events are detailed in Chapter Two. Here we need note only that one of the households in Koror is that of the defeated contender for the office of chief. This man is also at the center of a yahamatara. Included in the more stable portion of his network is another man who was once magistrate of the

island. These two men play an important role in the life of the island. They form a counterpart to the chief-magistrate axis. These four men, Chief, anti-chief, Magistrate and anti-magistrate, are at the center of every controversy and dispute which agitate the Tobians. Each paints his opposite number as black as possible and credits himself and his ally with only the best of intentions. Various people have at various times aligned themselves with these two axes depending on the issues involved and calculations of personal advantage. The existence of these two factions provides a countercurrent of hostility and tension to the pleasant and smooth surface of everyday interactions.

Political struggle is apparently not a recent development on Tobi. Many of the songs which are sung today were composed in the long ago time before the population collapse, when the island was divided into hostile north and south villages. These songs are quite obscure, dealing in richly disguised meanings. As Albert points out such disguises themselves can convey valuable informational content (1964:54). And the primary information these songs still convey is that at one time the island was divided into two competing halves. Current factionalism is also related to residence, in that most of the group opposing the present chief live in the Malakal settlement.

Among the prizes for which the two current parties contend are the various salaried positions available on the island. These include the offices of the school-teacher and health-aide which are relatively well paid but only partially within the control of the islanders. The teacher and the nurse are hired, trained, and paid by their government departments. The factional leaders can and do influence the choice of who is hired and indirectly can and do try to discredit those people of the opposite alignment who succeed in landing one of these plums. As representatives of the new order, the school teacher and nurse have considerable power of their own, especially in the issues at the center of intergenerational disputes. It is to the marked advantage of a political faction to minimize the damage that these people can do to the faction's interests by maintaining some control over them.

Other offices are those of municipal clerk and store-keeper. The latter, of course, is only relevant during those brief periods when the islanders actually manage to operate a store. There have been a number of small, cooperative stores on Tobi over the years. Dealing in retail goods they provide a great service to the populace. Inevitably they all have sunk under the weight of a mountain of bad debts after only the briefest of lives.³³ During their short existence, however, they confer considerable power on the person chosen to operate them, who can refuse

or grant credit at will and who also receives a small salary.

The municipal clerk, is the assistant to the magistrate. He acts to record the various ordinances which are passed from time to time by the monthly general meetings which is the official governing body of the island. He also stands in for the magistrate during his absence. This person is appointed by the magistrate and the tiny salary is used to reward a faithful (and usually literate) follower.

The magistrate himself is elected as are the members of the advisory council and the island's representative to the district legislature. The council members receive a very small honorarium for attending monthly meetings with the magistrate and chief, which typically take place a day or two before the general meetings which ratify their decisions. The elected members of the council are chosen so it is said, on the basis of wisdom and probity. Naturally their offices are the subjects of dispute between the two factions. The present magistrate came to his office after a series of predecessors failed to retain it. He is by far the most successful incumbent of the post thus far. He owes his success to a modus-vivendi he has worked out with the chief with is discussed in Chapter Three. He is, as I have said, the staunch ally

of the chief in the factional dispute. The man who is the representative of the island in the District Legislature is well known to everyone having anything to do with Tobi. For this reason I shall not give the details of how he fits his office into the political structure of the Tobians. It must suffice to say that the per-diem which he receives (along with the chief who is a member of the upper house) while the legislature is in session is one of the great political rewards struggled over by the factions.

Factional organization is reminiscent of the organization of households and yahamataras. All three are composed of stable inner cores surrounded by a variable outer group composed of people who, at the moment, feel it to their advantage to align themselves one way and not another. The people at the core of the two factions are the two chiefs and the two magistrates. The present chief and magistrate have managed to fill most of the island's offices with people who can generally be counted on to support them as long as the present situation persists. The one thing these people have in common is that they are not closely tied to the opposition by kinship or other links.

Tobian Society

The contingent nature of many of this society's categories gives the individual great freedom in deciding to which group within the category he will belong.

Furthermore, the principles which underlie the categories can be used now to produce one alignment and now another. As in all societies men feel themselves attached to other men and opposed to women because of perceived sexual differences (and vice versa) while at the same time they form attachments to individual women precisely on the basis of those differences. Sometimes people are drawn together to act because they are of the same sex and sometimes because they are of different sex. Kinship underlies both yahamatara and clan. Sometimes people are united because they are clan mates and sometimes because they are part of the network of some important person. Sometimes people included in the first group are excluded from the second with kinship the basis for both decisions. Residence underlies both household and settlement. Since households move from place to place, people of one household are frequently aligned on the basis of settlement with people, who, before the ship, had been opposed to them.

Finally there is the way in which ties of one kind cut across those of another. Both clan and yahamatara link together different households just as households link together different clans. Friendships cut across both clan and household and also tie together people of all generations (due to the speed with which they cycle through their phases, friendships never link together the Palau

settlements and Tobi the way that clan and yahamatara do). Generational ties, naturally, link together people regardless of sex, kinship, or residence. All these ties then have a dual nature. They not only link each person to all others in a variety of ways but they also divide each person from all others in a variety of ways. The society's strength comes, in part, from the fact that the ties cut across one another. Yet there is another source of Tobian social solidarity. It is shared experience. And of all shared Tobian facts of existence the most profound and the most pervasive is the experience of the unique structure which time assumes on their atoll. Therefore, before concluding this introductory chapter, I shall briefly describe one cycle of that time.

Time and The Field Trip

The South West Island Field Trip is the key factor in Tobian time. It structures the islander's year in many ways, some subtle and some not. The schedule punctuates time on the island, endowing Tobi's calendar with a unique form. The atoll's year is now composed of three or four cycles of unequal duration which are marked off by the ship's visit (during my time on the island the briefest of these periods lasted seven weeks and the longest dragged on for six months). The nature of activities as well as their tempo follows a regular progression within these periods. The rhythm of life on the island is thus set by

the uneven beat of the field trip schedule. The Tobians and other South West Islanders have learned to use the fact of the ship, they have adopted their socio-cultural systems to it and have integrated it into their way of life. Tobian culture, then, is permeated by "the field trip ship" in ways for which no analogy exist in our continental culture (just as nothing in Tobian culture plays a role anything like that played here by the automobile). It unifies that culture by its dictation of common activities. Let us therefore pick up where we left off and consider what happens after the ship's departure from the atoll.

Aftermath

The ship's visit, anticipated for so long, passes with a blur. Once the ship leaves, usually in the afternoon, people drift off to the various centers of activity--the dispensary, the meeting house, the copra storehouse. The quick process of sorting out the consequences of the ship begins. There are two sorts of consequences. One derives from the news which the ship has brought of events in the settlements in Palau. The other derives from the exchange of population which always accompanies the ship. The ship brings people to the island as well as news, and trade goods, and it takes people from the island along with copra and (on rare occasions) taxes. All of these people carry with them small gifts--tobacco, soap, perfume, and

sometimes liquor. These items, which are in addition to the personal supplies for the months ahead, are given as gifts to people with whom they wish to activate ties of support and kinship.

On an individual or even household level, the newcomers do not replace those who have left. Someone whose wife has left to give birth in the Koror hospital does not receive another wife on the ship.³⁴ People must rebuild their activated networks after every ship. The gifts are a way of doing this. People try to insure themselves against the greatly feared danger of being stranded in either settlement without friends or relatives to live with by sending gifts to those people on every ship. So the people with whom the newcomers want to activate ties are not the only ones who get presents on ship day. Just about everyone else does too, either directly from the ship or from the general redistribution which always follows the introduction of any but purely non-corporeal wealth.

If anyone has brought liquor with them, drinking starts on this first day. It continues until the island is once again dry. This can take anywhere from a day or so to more than a week, depending on the amount of liquor brought and the number of hard drinkers on the island at the time. By the end of this first day a number of men are usually already drunk. Their singing and laughing echo through the village by nightfall. The first question

people ask the next morning is whether the drinkers are still awake or not. If they have passed out, all the liquor must be gone and people's calculations will not have to include the unpredictable drunkards. If they have not yet passed out, most attention necessarily is focused on them as one and all wonder what they will do. By this time the drinkers have become argumentative and, in the Tobian view, dangerous. Occasionally one of these men will stagger through the village, yelling vague imprecations. Everyone treats him as a threat. No one ever gets hurt, but the wanderings of the drunkards does make it difficult to begin the day's chores. Finally, of course, the liquor is gone and a time of peacefulness and quiet begins.

Between Ships

Following the excitement of ship day and its aftermath people do not engage in any but the most necessary subsistence activities. Men fish; women harvet their gardens. The rest of their time is given over to small repairs to house and equipment. But mostly people relax, enjoying their leisure--gossiping, smoking, and drinking coffee.

The social groupings established in the wake of ship day, and expressed in the first morning's breakfast gatherings, provide the contexts for most of these activities. Gradually the repairs and maintenance activities occupy more and more of the time. People do not spend

quite as much time roaming around the island; they stay around their homes much more and work at the jobs that need to be done there. As the weeks pass, people come to realize that the store goods which came down on the ship are beginning to run out and the time may be getting close to begin to make copra in anticipation of the next ship. They start to organize to undertake major tasks, such as well-cleaning and thatching. At the same time that this is happening those people without major tasks to perform begin to make copra.

At first only one or two people begin making copra. These are usually older people. They work alone and slowly, and can be seen dragging half filled sacks of coconuts out of their shaded plantations and onto the open path, there to leave the halved nuts to dry in the sun. Sometime after these people begin other, more vigorous, people also start in. They may have to break their new schedule occasionally as one or another of their fellows stages a thatching party, and of course they must either fish or garden almost every day, but now, instead of spending hours in leisured conversation during the day, they are collecting, husking or drying coconuts. Their nights however, are still occupied in coffee drinking and gossip. These people make their copra in copra dryers, small buildings composed of a fire pit and drying rack. This phase of copra making always begins with determined individuals (usually those most in

debt), working alone. As the weeks go by more and more people join them. Finally there are a series of groups, (approximately the same which crystalized at the first day's breakfast) making copra, each under the supervision of an important person.

As the work increases, tobacco and coffee run out. The large scale making of copra places a heavy drain on these commodities and long-hoarded supplies vanish under its pressure. The evening gossip and play groups attract fewer and fewer people and no longer run on all night. A full moon which, a month or two before, would have been the excuse for an all night song-fest on the beach now becomes the means by which the more ambitious stay up all night chopping copra. It is now that people begin to wish audibly for a cold beer, or a commercial cigarette. "I wonder what those people in Eang are doing now?" they say. "They must be getting ready to go to the movies tonight, or maybe they are going to the store to buy some beer."³⁵

At this time the question of whether the two-way radio is working or not becomes so important in determining the atmosphere on the island. On those occasions when it is out of order the problem of when to expect the ship becomes a matter for fancy and debate. Everyone's calculation must be based on past experience and whatever knowledge of the Koror situation they possess. This knowledge is, of

course, increasingly obsolete as the weeks pass. If the radio is working then the rumors which sweep Palau filter down to Tobi (surely not in unmodified form) and everyone's calculations are constantly being updated by new (and almost always wrong) information. Everyone is getting ready for the ship. If the radio is working the most active preparations begin to be made about the same time that they are in Koror: that is, when someone hears that a ship has actually been ordered to proceed to Palau to make the trip. If the radio is not working then serious preparations begin to be made when they seem "right." All kinds of calculations are made by just about everyone, but most people seem to watch one of the two or three people known as good ship predictors. When these people begin to make preparations, so do they.

Preparations for the Ship

As ship day draws near people begin to abandon their copra production. This is because it takes four days to dry a batch of copra and no one wants to have to tend drying nuts on ship day. It is now that the magistrate begins the clean-up program. People also write letters and patch clothes. Gifts of food and provisions for the ship are made ready and suitcases are packed. More and more Palauan is heard and its expressions creep into everyday conversation. Talk is about the ship and about the people traveling on it. Finally the day of the ship arrives. If the radio

is working all are up early, to dress in clean clothes and wait. If it is not people go about their daily tasks. Most will have finished their preparation by now but there are always one or two whose calculations prove very wrong and who have not yet written their letters, finished their copra, prepared gifts of food, or even begun (unconsciously to be sure) to practice the language of the Field Trip Party. They can be heard cursing and shouting immediately after the long drawn out "auuu!" of the first person to see the ship's smokestack echoes across the atoll. The long familiar chaos of ship day proceeds to rapidly unfold and the Tobians once again briefly come into contact with the off-island world.

One of the peculiarly Tobian cycles of time has ended and another is about to begin. The common experience of these temporal cycles serves an important function, I think, in the achievement and maintenance of Tobian social solidarity. Operating on the same time schedule as everyone else, undertaking the same activities at the same time as one's fellows, leads to a solidarity which may be only "mechanical" in Durkheim's sense but which does, I think, complement the more "organic" solidarity produced by the interlocking of the relatively wide variety of statuses described in the previous section. Nevertheless, reinforced as it might be, that solidarity is far from harmonious. The many ways in which people in all the statuses are opposed to

one another means that disputes are another important shared Tobian experience.

Furthermore, the combination of tiny population, great social complexity, and cultural uniqueness gives Tobian disputes great interest and makes them a natural subject for study. In such a situation, in which the total number of actors in the social universe is barely more than one hundred and in which the ties between those actors are dense, multiplex and contradictory, conflicts must present special, serious problems.

Research

During the years of training in Anthropology which followed my first stay on the atoll several aspects of Tobian disputing behavior took on great interest for me. I knew the details of several serious disputes over land and women and was certain there were more. However, I did not know how such disputes were contained. Were there special mechanisms which allowed people to dispute without disrupting their relationship in other areas or dragging in third parties? These mechanisms must exist, the pleasant and friendly surface relations among all the Tobians was as inescapable a fact as the conflicts and disputes. I was aware of the way in which the people on Tobi were able to draw on the help of their fellows, regardless of disputes, when engaged in such activities as roof thatching, communal fishing or gardening. How were these surface relations,

which made life on the island so pleasant during my stay, maintained? I knew that, with their intimate knowledge of one another, the Tobians were very good at cheering up the downcast, and calming the angry. Was any of this skill generalizable, or was it Tobi-specific? It seemed certain that both the knowledge of how to dispute and the knowledge of how to maintain good relations with one's fellows were taught during childhood. Perhaps if I studied some aspect of this process of transmission I could gain an understanding of how these problems are solved on Tobi.

Conflict and Childrearing

As the time drew near to return to Tobi, it seemed to me that in any long term dispute there were two classes of people, those who possessed a resource and their opponents. Each of these postures called for a slightly different set of disputation skills. People who belonged to a group which possessed some disputed resource would give their children a different set of learnings about that resource than those who opposed them. Furthermore, it seemed possible that the haves and the have nots would transmit different attitudes toward conflict to their offspring and that these differences would be expressed in different behaviors. The interplay of these two sets of behaviors was perhaps one of the mechanisms which acted to limit disputes. A set of hypotheses was constructed to

test these notions and, accompanied this time by my wife and eight month old son, I set off for Palau.

We arrived in Palau in August 1972 and spent the next three months in Eang, living with the yahamatara to which I had become attached during my first stay. As I was brought up to date on the events of the intervening three and a half years, and as I struggled to regain competency in the language, I began to see that even if my ideas on childrearing and conflict were correct, it was going to be next to impossible to verify them. There were simply not enough children available for the necessary observations and those that were available were not distributed among all the interest groups. Furthermore, as I should have known from the beginning, no family could be classified as either have or have not except with reference to a specific resource. Some of those resources were of such importance that semi-factional or even factional organizations seemed to crystalize around them (the most notable example being the dispute over the chieftaincy). But all the people within these interest groups belonged to other interest groups with respect to other resources. In effect, then, children had to learn to be both contenders and incumbents, both haves and have nots, both winners and losers.

When the ship finally departed for the South West Islands in November, I had already abandoned the planned

research. However, through out the year of research that remained (eleven months on Tobi and the rest in Palau) I did attempt to observe systematically whatever children were available and to correlate differences in the ways that they were treated by their parents with their probable future involvement in conflicts.

Our presence on Tobi presented something of an intellectual puzzle to the islanders. Aware that the ties of adoption which linked me to one of the powerful yahamatara heads were founded only in sentiment and involved no real considerations of family or land, women or office (the motives behind "real" adoption) they could not satisfactorily explain our presence. Our explanations seemed to fall on deaf or uncomprehending ears until, abandoning those that stressed our interest in the daily life of the present, we told an inquirer that we had come to Tobi to study its "customs". It was (literally) an "Aha!" experience for the old man who had been questioning us when we gave him that answer. "Aha!", he said, "You want to know about the old days." From that moment the research (willy nilly) took a definitely historical turn. People who before this had decided that we were writing a dictionary, no longer came to our house with obscure words. Now they showed up at all hours to explain some aspect of life on the island in the old days. The old people who had so enjoyed talking about fishing and medicine during my

previous trip, now deluged us with information about the social, political, and religious customs of the island in the days of their youth. There are only so many old customs, however, and eventually people ran out of offerings. They then began telling stories about the past, most of which I had heard the first time I was on the island. More to placate these people than for any other reason, I carefully wrote down all the stories and rechecked them with other informants.

During all this time I was engaged in general ethnographic work. Maps were made, genealogies were taken, fishing catches measured, and special events such as deaths, thatchings, domestic squabbles, and meetings were all recorded in as great detail as possible. The major task which I set myself was to interview in depth every person over the age of ten years.

I wanted to get as complete sociological coverage as possible for each Tobian. After several false starts, a forty-seven page census interview was put together and run off on the school's ancient mimeograph machine. Each of these interview booklets took anywhere from an afternoon to three full days to complete. Information on land ownership, marital history, kinship relations, migration history, and much more was obtained from informants. Eventually the project was finished--almost all adult and adolescent Tobians were interviewed.³⁶ I also conducted interviews

on standard anthropological topics. During one such interview I realized that my command of Tobian was not all that I had thought. The incident took place during the first month or so that we were on the island. Feeling the need to know more about clans, I asked Santos, one of the old men, to tell me all the clans names which he knew. At least I thought that was what I had asked him but when, after giving me an incredulous look, he said he did not know any such names, I began to wonder if I had made a mistake. I repeated the question, this time more slowly. Again the same answer. The third time though, the exasperated old man told me that some "clans" were white, others red, some brown or black and still others a mixture of all these colors. Not quite sure just what was going on, and uncertain whether or not I had discovered some hitherto unknown dimension of clanness I called a passing friend, an English speaker, into the canoe house where old Santos and I were sitting. After a few murmured words with Santos, my friend turned to me and asked; "Why do you think chickens have names?" I had confused the word for clan with an Indonesian word for chicken then enjoying a brief popularity on the atoll.

I began using an interpreter more often after this blunder (at everyone's insistence) and continued the practice to the end. Gradually more and more of the interviews were conducted in Tobian, but for formal interview sessions,

I almost always asked one of the English speakers to accompany me to help out in the occasional impasses caused by my less than perfect command of Tobian.

I continued my observations of child-adult interactions and came to realize that although my initial ideas about intra-cultural differences in childrearing and conflict were neither solid nor testable, there was considerable variation from adult to adult in interactions with children. Instead of being related to that person's position in the conflict structure, however, those differences were apparently related to the epochs of the Tobian past with which the parent or other adult identified most closely.

There appeared to be three broad classes of parents. Those who were raising their children in what they considered a modern or American manner, those who emulated the Japanese and those who seemed to be raising their children in an "old fashioned" (the Tobian word is masuwe) style. Without exception the American style parents were all young people who had been to school in Koror and who spoke English. The people using Japanese methods, were the same people who used many Japanese words in their everyday speech--most of them had worked for the Japanese in one capacity or another. The final "old fashioned" category of childrearing was practiced by old people who had somehow gotten control of a child, usually by adoption.

The old people gave their children great freedom, seldom requiring them to work, but not feeding them much either. These children occasionally would steal food and cause a great uproar. The parent's response was invariably that the offended victims should deal directly with the child (if they could find him). The middle-aged, "Japanese-type" parents, demanded absolute obedience from their children and punished them severely when they failed to perform one of the many tasks which were required of them. On the other hand, these children were always well fed and neatly and cleanly dressed. Young parents were comparatively patient with their children but did require them to do a good deal of work about the house. The "modern" nature of their child rearing lay in their insistence (unlike the other two sets of parents) that the child complete his homework before playing and, in general, on the high value they placed on doing well in school. These were also the parents who seemed most aware that what they were doing was going to have an effect on the kind of adult which the child would become. They frequently justified some instruction or discipline as necessary for instilling good work habits and a good code of ethics so that the child would grow into a good adult, able and willing to support his parents.

The variability in childrearing techniques occurred mainly with respect to responsibility training. Other aspects

of childhood experience were more uniform. Still, the existence of the three types of parents posed serious questions, especially when I compared the actual behavior of children growing up in the different households. Although differences were apparent, they seemed to me to fall well within the range of expected variation. The children, that is, showed much more commonality than one would expect given the data on the differences in the techniques their parents used. The children, despite their household, were much more similar to each other than they were different. Furthermore they were similar to their parents. They were Tobians not just because they lived on an island of that name, or spoke a language of that name or even because they were genetically the next generation of the Tobian population; they were Tobian because they acted in peculiarly Tobian fashion and because they seemed to think and feel in peculiarly Tobian ways. The more I thought about this problem the more it became apparent that the private and generationally specific household experiences are only a small part of the child's total learning environment. Many other contexts exist, some of which, in some way, must "balance out" the household differences. After all, as Codere pointed out (1956:348) "serious contradictions (between public and private life) might always be expected to exist in any culture." It seemed to me that public, shared contexts must be especially

salient in the teaching of "Tobian" culture. Therefore I began to examine public situations. As I did so I realized that they were a mix of the old and the new.³⁷

Neo-Tobian Culture

Variation in childhood experience was probably not a new phenomenon, and its balancing by common learnings in public contexts was probably an old Tobian pattern. However, the current manifestation of childhood variation, based in part on perceptions of Americans and Japanese, was obviously recent, and so were some of the contexts in which they were balanced, such as church and school. Furthermore, even those contexts which were "traditional" contained both new and old elements. For example one of the most important of the regular public occasions in which children learned things were the evening leisure groups. These were probably as old as the settlement itself, but they now centered around card games and checkers as well as the more traditional activities of gossip and story telling. The social system seemed to parallel this. Its layered complexity was probably as characteristic of ancient Tobian society as it is of today's. Yet the groups which make it up are a mix of both old (the clans for example) and the new (such as the Eang settlement).

Yet all these elements seemed to hang together very well, and the whole they composed was definitely Tobian. A synthesis had apparently occurred (or perhaps was occurring)

and the Tobians had constructed (or were in the process of constructing) a new culture--one no longer aboriginal Carolinian but still exhibiting the coherence and integrity of a genuine culture.

By this point research time had almost run out. Yet I felt that an analysis of the sociological data which I had so laboriously collected and which comprised the bulk of my field notes was going to have to wait until I could verify my ideas about what I had decided to call neo-Tobian culture. I was sure that Tobian society was not composed merely of a related set of families and a few unattached individuals, the survivors of the catastrophes which our century had brought to their remote island. These people were members of a community, sharing a common culture, as well as a common language. That culture was composed of both indigenous and alien elements and its analysis seemed a strategic and perhaps logical precondition to a consideration of patterns of marriage, adoption, land tenure or residence (all topics on which I had collected masses of raw data). The uses to which I put those data were going to depend on whether my intuitions about the existence and characteristics of neo-Tobian culture could be substantiated or not. I turned, therefore, in the short time remaining, to the stories and the accounts of old customs which had come pouring in during the early months and began checking and rechecking them with informants. For it was probably

in those stories that I could find the material I needed, since they comprised the vast bulk of source material on the Tobi past. By the time I left I was confident that I could demonstrate the existence of neo-Tobian culture and could also sketch in something of its nature, and in this dissertation that is what I attempt to do.

Preview of the Dissertation

Three major chapters follow this introduction. Building on the background presented here, each chapter approaches time in a different manner. The first amplifies the historical section with a presentation of a chronology of the events which have attended the island's integration into the modern world (with all the anguish and disruption which that cliché so often implies). The next is concerned with daily life, the present activities which take up the time of most people on most days. The third is concerned with a modern activity in relation to the past.

Each chapter also discusses a different aspect of the culture which has grown out of the past. Chapter Two explores some of the basic cultural beliefs. Chapter Three discusses other basic beliefs and also some of the less basic, intermediate beliefs or ideas characteristic of neo-Tobian culture. Chapter Four discusses in detail behavior based on one of those intermediate ideas as well as basic beliefs.

All three chapters grow out of the detailed consideration of a single topic. The topic of Chapter Two is Christianity, probably the most alien of all the components integrated into neo-Tobian culture. The chapter is thus focused on a single belief system. Chapter Three is focused on how certain aspects of neo-Tobian culture are learned and used. Those aspects are not the deep beliefs discussed in Chapter Two but those aspects which are concerned with how things get done. The final major chapter is built around a single case and illustrates how the things that were done in response to a possible attempt on the life of one of the men were the outgrowth of historical experience as well as the natural expression of certain characteristics of neo-Tobian culture.

In order to demonstrate the existence and the nature of Tobian culture, I must show the ways in which the beliefs and the behaviors of the Tobians form some kind of coherent whole. Therefore my study is, of necessity, addressed to the question of cultural integration--one of the oldest and stubbornest anthropological problems. I approach this issue with a theoretical orientation derived from the ideas of a group of anthropologists who, for want of a better term, can be called the configurationalists. The fifth and final chapter contains my conclusions and I defer a detailed discussion of these matters until then. As we proceed toward those conclusions, however, the reader should be aware that

the configurationalist orientation contains many pitfalls. Perhaps John Bennett stated these dangers most clearly when, commenting on Thompson's analysis of Hopi values, he warned that: "(without) sound documentation . . . or careful conceptual manipulation . . . a configurationalist approach must inevitably slip into a personalized impression." (1946:371). I certainly do not claim that my work meets either of Bennett's two criteria at anywhere near his standards. After all the only two exemplars he cites are Navajo Witchcraft and Balinese Character. Nevertheless, I accept Bennett's warning and attempt to avoid being overly subjective. The problem is that if one reacts too strongly here, he runs the danger of doing violence to the very phenomenon he is attempting to understand.

Gene Weltfish (whose The Lost Universe might well have been included by Bennett in his list of acceptable configurationalist works if it had been available) talks about this. She warns that the penetration and description of another cultural world is "a delicate task (requiring) a special kind of listening." (1965:2). It is obvious then, that I am approaching a task of no small difficulty caught as I am between Bennett's and Weltfish's warnings. I believe the attempt is worth making.

Liam Hudson, a radical British psychologist, claims in a deceptively simple programmatic statement that: "the psychologist should envisage his work as a process wherein

one person becomes acquainted with others." (1972:162)

I do not know how his discipline has responded to his charge. It seems to me, however, that I, as an anthropologist, could do far worse than this in defining what my field is all about. Despite its dangers, the configurationalist approach, with its holistic emphasis on cultural patterns, has been the most fruitful way for me to begin the process of introducing the people of Tobi first to myself and then to the reader.

As I proceed with the introductions it will become apparent that the Tobian situation is not an easy one. Their past frequently was tragic, their present is far from tranquil and their future is clouded at best. It also will become evident that not all these difficulties were or are beyond the islander's control. Some of these difficulties, in fact, are self created. Therefore the cheerfulness and good humor with which the Tobians approach life, the stimulation they seem to feel when faced with what others might consider insurmountable problems, and most of all the kindness which it is their custom to display toward one another despite serious conflicts should be all the more impressive. I, at least, find them persuasive evidence of the vigor of some of the more liberal impulses of the human spirit.

FOOTNOTES FOR CHAPTER ONE

1. The map on page 3 shows most islands mentioned in the text.
2. Strictly speaking the two terms should be kept separate. "Micronesia" is a geo-cultural term referring to one of the three major divisions of the Pacific islands (the other two are Polynesia and Melanesia). It is north of the equator, west of the international date line and east of the Philippines. The Trust Territory is a geopolitical unit which covers most but not all Micronesian islands. It also includes some islands which are not Micronesian. Guam, the Gilbert and Ellice Islands and soon the Mariana Islands are all Micronesian but not part of the Trust Territory. Kapingamarengi and Nukuoro, both with Polynesian populations, are located within the Trust Territory boundaries.
3. One of the by-products of a concern with an obscure place like Tobi is that I am provided with a good standard for measuring the accuracy of maps. Over the years I have found a surprising amount of variation. Tobi and the other South West Islands sometimes appear and sometimes do not. Sometimes other islands are added and sometimes one of the South West Islands is omitted. Distances vary and so do boundaries. The "Tobi Bulge" is one mystery which I probably will never solve. The western boundary of Palau district, which is of course the western boundary of the Trust Territory, is sometimes shown making a westward loop at the approximate location of Tobi and at other times it is not shown this way but simply as a straight line. I have no idea which is correct. The best example of this which I have found so far is in McHenry (1975). The second and third pages of this book are given over to a two-page map of the Trust Territory. On this map the western boundary runs with no deviation from the vertical. Yet an inset, called "Vicinity Map," which shows the Territory in relation to the rest of the Western Pacific, displays the Tobi Bulge. It is not often that the same map contains quite so obvious a contradiction.
4. Supplies essential to the Field Trip Party that is-- the lack of bread in Koror once held up the departure of the ship for two days. The omission of supplies for the island is always regretted but never strongly enough to prevent the ship's sailing. Bags of cement, sheet metal, and other building supplies long on order, miss the ship with monotonous regularity.

5. The ship can be slowed down by complications at any of the northern islands, by bad weather, and by mechanical failure. Occasionally, something goes awry with the ship's navigation and the atoll does not appear on the radar screen when expected. Much time can then be lost casting about for the island.
6. Every so often, for one reason or another, the ship returns to Tobi after visiting Helen Reef. If this is scheduled and everyone knows it will happen, things become much calmer during the first visit and even more frantic during the second. The Catholic missionaries, Palauan and American alike, who occasionally visit the island always try to make sure that the Field Trip Party meets its responsibilities. Thus they stay overnight on Tobi if the ship goes to Helen Reef and back.
7. "Native species" is a relative term. I mean by it those species which were not introduced by man. All life on the island, of course, is descended from "alien" stock i.e., ancestral forms which did not originate on the island. All life on the island then (including human) is part of what is known as a "waif biota." Marine life is present on the reef and in the surrounding waters in countless variety. For more on the problems which islands present to biology see Carlquist (1974).
8. Mankind is an exception to this rule. The causes and consequences of this tragic fact are discussed in the following pages.
9. The atoll seems to have recovered from this quite well. It is not clear how much was actually removed from Tobi. About all that remain of the actual mining operations are several piles of tailings (one of which is now the highest point on the island) and a few overgrown holes in the ground.
10. Various bits and pieces of Japanese material culture turn up from time to time. The bush is full of plumbing fixtures, especially and inexplicably fancy tile toilets. Also there still are three Japanese artillery pieces on the island, rusting and abandoned.
11. See Barrau (1965) for an illustrated discussion of taro cultivation. The word "taro" as used in the rest of this work refers to Cyrtosperma.
12. The other South West Islands are without taro pits and Cyrtosperma is not cultivated on them.

13. This evidence is reviewed in Black (MS(b)). For a detailed treatment of the origin myth see Black (MS(c)).
14. I call Trukic a language rather than a language family because its variants fall within the definition of dialect offered by Ferguson and Gumperz (1960:7) in which dialect is defined as ". . . all varieties (of a language) which share a single superimposed variety having substantial similarity in phonology and grammar with the included varieties or which are mutually intelligible or are connected by a series of mutually intelligible varieties." As Quakenbush (1968) makes clear Trukic is a language in the sense of the final clause of the Ferguson and Gumperz definition. Tobian is one of those "mutually intelligible varieties" and is thus a dialect of Trukic. Tobian speakers can understand the people of the other South West Islands with little difficulty; they can understand people speaking other Trukic dialects only with a good deal of effort.
15. The following factors lead me to this conclusion. (a) The Tobians maintain that this is fact and nothing in their traditions contradicts them. (b) There is no uniquely Tobian resource which might have led to the inclusion of the island in the Yapese or any other trading network. (c) Carolinian navigation, an impressive native science, (see Gladwin:1970), operates on the basis of the imagined tracks which stars follow from rising to setting. Naturally, then, this system works best on runs between east and west and less well on north-south journeys. Tobi lies south of the rest of the Carolines. (d) The castaway 19th century American sailor who wrote a book about his experiences on Tobi does not mention any Tobian connection with other islands, (Holden:1836). (e) The report of the early 20th century German ethnological expedition which visited Tobi also says nothing about the island's inclusion in any inter-island system of trade and politics. (Eilers:1936).
16. This was not the first sighting of which we have record. In 1710 Woodes Rogers, captain of the ship Duke of Bristol, recorded sighting what must have been Tobi. He did not draw near enough to observe any signs of life and, unimpressed, did not even bother to name his discovery (Rogers 1970:273). See Eilers (1936:1) for the Douglas report.

17. A brief archeological survey is reported in Osborn (1966:52-66). It also is probable that the date for Tobi's first contact by the West could also be pushed back if a thorough search of Spanish and other European archives were undertaken.
18. Even the one bombing raid need not have happened (or so the story goes) if a Japanese sergeant had only obeyed his orders. The Tobians say that the anti-aircraft gun was the responsibility of a sergeant who had a two man crew to help him. Overall command of the outpost was held by a higher officer of some kind. After the bloody battles in Palau in 1944, the Americans built an airbase there. They began patrolling the area and everyday sent a lone plane down to Tobi and back. This plane peacefully flew over the island. The Japanese commander refused to allow the sergeant (despite much pleading) to fire on this plane on the sensible grounds that if he missed it the following day would be sure to produce a sky filled with angry American bombers. Full of confidence in his ability and unable to restrain himself the sergeant one day opened fire on the patrol plane. We can only imagine his chagrin at missing his tormentor. The next day the Tobian lookout posted in a huge breadfruit tree by the Japanese to supplement their own scrutiny of the skies awoke from his unauthorized nap to find himself almost face to face with a fleet of American bombers which proceeded to thoroughly bomb the island.
19. Five volunteers were sent in all. Both Tobi and Sonsorol received a school teacher, Tobi received a construction expert to supervise the building of a concrete combination school-office building, and both islands received a "generalist," who was supposed to turn his hand to whatever seemed both possible and appropriate. I was the "generalist" sent to Tobi.
20. I was not the first member of the Peace Corps to reach the islands. My good friends Paul Berry and Dirk Ballendorf (the latter is the person whom I later convinced to station me on the island) visited them on a previous field trip. Their journey was cut short by typhoon Sally in February 1967.
21. Fishing is a male activity, therefore I only talked to men about it. I see now that this was a blunder and can only offer my lack of any anthropological training as an excuse. During my next visit, of course, I did interview women about a number of topics. With one notable exception, they did not prove to be as informative (at least overtly) as the men. They were simply much less articulate on the subjects about which I needed information.

22. The reader interested in the problems of counting island populations is referred to Carroll (1975a and 1975b) and Feeney (1975).
23. This is not the maximum possible total, for if all people who have married into this population are included, the figure rises to 133.
24. Current Tobian contains two interchangeable terms, either of which can refer to any of the following: clan, sub-clan section, activated ego-centered kin network, nuclear family. The terms are: haireng (from a common Malayo-Polynesian root) and famari (from the English). In order to specify the sociological level to which one is referring one must use some qualifying phrase.
25. I often have thought that the many differences which can be seen between Sonsorol and Tobi in house types, dress and even behavior (with the Sonsorolese always the more "modern" of the two people,) probably are due to the simple fact that the ship visits Sonsorol on both outward and homeward legs of its journey so that people from Palau (with their modern ways) can visit Sonsorol for a week at a time. Tobi of course, only gets to see such people three or four hours at a time.
26. This tendency partially is compensated for in the summer months when high school students vacation on Tobi.
27. I was told about (but did not witness) what may turn out to have been an ominous portent. In one of the recent elections in Palau the Eang people voted for the losing party. After the results were announced a canoe was placed in a prominent public location in downtown Koror. It was a threat to the Eang people. Its message was that they should get in their canoes and sail back to their home islands.
28. The expression of this hostility in the language of song and dance does serve a useful function. I think it permits the participants to make more complete statements (albeit in a disguised fashion) than they could ordinarily. If a man simply said one day that all women were greedy and grasping, all eyes would swing to his female kin--his wife, mother, or sisters. In his dancing of that idea, however, he can express the same sentiments with impunity. After all he is merely following the rules. Furthermore, on Tobi at any rate, advantage is taken of this fact. Several series of such statements are made in dance and song at the

holiday parties. These series culminate in a thinly disguised dialogue between the sexes in which the full consequences which Tobians feel would result from a breakdown of cooperation between the sexes is discussed. Such a conversation could never take place in ordinary language because of the intimacy in which Tobians live. Abstract discussions of emotionally powerful ideas are very rare on Tobi, people avoid them because all know each other's situation so well. In this sense the holiday dances on Tobi are similar to an Abelem ceremonial house which as Anthony Forge says is "not just a decorated structure which serves as a setting for ceremonies and displays, but a statement about Abelem culture and society made in architectural terms; a statement that could not just as well be said in words or told in myth." (1966:27-28). Unfortunately, like Bunzel's Pueblo potters, Tobians can give "ex post facto explanations of design, but never of form" (1929:49). Thus Tobian dancers delight in discussing sequences of foot and hand movements, but when asked to explain the "meaning" of the dance, they simply appeal to past tradition. "This is the way we have always done it." Lacking an exegetical folk I am forced to invent my own explanation.

29. The desire for sexual partner plays a lesser role in this process. Although people do want to find someone with whom they can sleep on a regular basis, it is not necessary to marry someone to meet that goal. Much more on this subject can be found in the succeeding chapters.
30. The brother-sister relationship offers an alternative as do those between father and daughter and mother and son. All of these can, and sometimes do, form the basis of households but all of them are subject to sufficient prohibitions and avoidances to make them uncomfortable for the kind of long-run intimacy which households require. Furthermore none of them offer the possibility of the production of children without the cooperation of some third, potentially disruptive, person. And it is only those households which manage to produce children that enable the team at the center to decrease their labor.
31. Lack of land and lack of women go together, I think, because it takes the former to acquire the latter.
32. I am unsure if this person has had a male lover. Everyone says he is totally uninterested in women as sexual partners.

33. The Tobians do not say that the stores "sink." They, even more graphically perhaps, say that they "capsize."
34. A well regulated household will be set up so that if one of its key food providers leaves, a replacement can be brought in either from the ship on which his predecessor has left or from one of the other households on the island.
35. Everyone knows that this is also the time that the people in Koror are wishing that they were down on Tobi. The newcomers to Palau have by now spent all the copra money they brought up with them. The fishing off Koror is much poorer than off Tobi. So by now the people in Eang are saying things like: "I wonder what they are doing right now on Tobi. I bet they are eating fresh tuna and taro." Frequently the same person makes both complaints, now in Koror and later on Tobi. Everyone knows this and the response to one of these statements is often an ironical mention of its twin. People enjoy the irony of this situation but not the fact that they cannot find a place with both cold beer and fresh tuna.
36. An idea of its thoroughness can be gotten from the fact that from the sixty three completed forms a tabulation of all mentioned names totaled more than 1300.
37. See Metraux (1975) for another approach to the analysis of the process of generational cultural continuity in a time stratified society.

CHAPTER II
TOBIAN CATHOLICISM¹

. . . the Ute never borrowed the sun dance of the Plains at all. Rather, they seized upon its existence, hastening to reinterpret it in the light of their own religious experience The ritual becomes the instructive symbol of the vitality of primitive culture fighting for its existence in the midst of modern civilization.

(Opler 1941:571-2)

Introduction

The people of Tobi became Roman Catholic in the 1930's. The conversion occurred en masse during the brief visit of a Spanish Jesuit priest called Father Marino, the first missionary known to have visited the island. Apparently Father Marino only made this one short but extremely successful visit from his mission headquarters in Koror.

The Tobians are a religious people and faithfully adhere to the beliefs and practices of their new religion as they understand them. Each day at dawn and again at dusk they gather together in their church to say the rosary. Every three or four months a priest comes to their island for a few hours and they all earnestly confess sins committed in his absence and eagerly flock to church to hear mass. All pre-Christian religious and magical rituals have been abandoned and the old sacred chants are heard no more. The Catholic ceremonies for birth, marriage and

Footnotes for this chapter can be found between pages 180 and 185.

death are thought to be of great importance and are performed with enthusiasm. The high festivals of Christmas and Easter are the focus of much preparation and enjoyment. A number of women belong to sodalities, special church organizations that require dietary restrictions and extra prayer. Prayer marks many kinds of behavior. Meetings and formal meals are begun and ended with prayer. Individuals often can be observed sitting apart with hands clasped and heads bowed in silent prayer. Sundays are marked by an absence of work and a more elaborate church service which is attended by the people in their best clothes.

If questioned about their beliefs most people are able to present reasonably intact versions of traditional Catholic thought. They are familiar with such concepts as the human soul, divine love, hell, purgatory and heaven. Quite accurate explanations of the Trinity, the Virgin, the fall of man and the nature of Christ's mission are also common knowledge. Young people who have attended mission school in Koror are the recognized local experts in these topics and the older people have learned much from them. Many episodes from the Bible have become part of the storyteller's repertoire and the exploits of Adam and Eve, Noah and various other Old and New Testament figures are often told. In short, the conversion of the islanders seems to have been strikingly successful and the perception shared

by the Tobians and their priests of the island as a Christian place seems to be quite accurate.

These data on current religion and religiosity on Tobi give rise to three questions. Why was Father Marino, in the absence of either force or prior missionary activity, so successful? Why are the people so conscientious in the practice of their new religion? Why is there no local variation in Catholic belief and ritual? These questions involve issues of importance to anthropology as well as to an understanding of Neo-Tobian culture. They are closely related and all three stem from the assumption that the religion of a given people is seldom, if ever, an isolated phenomenon. It is instead a part of their culture and as such is both a response and a way of responding to the exigencies of their situation. From this perspective aboriginal Tobian religion was Tobi-specific and like Tobian culture in general it can be seen as one of many local adaptations of a general, pan-Pacific pattern. Roman Catholicism, in as much as it can be said to be a unitary phenomenon, is one of several European adaptations of the Judeo-Christian pattern. Aboriginal Tobian religion probably traced its roots back to neolithic Southeast Asia, and was influenced in its development by the largely obscure events which can be summed up as "the peopling of the Pacific." Roman Catholicism is ultimately rooted in the ancient Near East and has been influenced in its

development by events summed up as "European History." Aboriginal Tobian religion reached its full development on a tiny atoll isolated from the political and economic centers of power far to the northeast in the so-called Yap empire. Roman Catholicism is a world-wide religion and its history is interwoven with the history of various European power centers and, more generally, with the development of Western culture over the last two thousand years. The differences between the two cultures and in particular between the two sets of religious forms, are the result of two discrete cultural traditions lived in two very different environments.

The symbols of a given religion are one way by which private psychological states and public social forms are united into a more or less coherent whole. In this sense religious symbols are channels through which private meanings are invested into shared forms and, conversely, order is offered to the individual in assigning meaning to his private states. Both the private and the public poles are, in part at least, determined by experience. Thus, whatever the origin of the religious impulse, the symbols which are used in its expression must, in part at least, be shaped by the physical, social and historical environment in which they were formed. Why then would a people exchange their indigenous set of religious symbols for a set that arose in radically different circumstances?

Specifically, why did the Tobians replace the miniature canoe and wooden phalluses of their old religion with the crucifix and the Sacred Heart of their new religion? The same question could be asked about the Tobian acquisition of other aspects of Catholic religious life such as myth or ritual. The shallow acquaintance the islanders seem to have had with Roman Catholicism before they adopted it makes the Tobian case particularly interesting. The resistance to change which the adopted forms have shown also makes this case intriguing. The Tobians seem to have made an alien religion their own without significant modification. The frequency with which they engage in "Catholic" behaviors indicates that they maintain a relatively high level of involvement with those unmodified forms.

When Father Marino stepped ashore on Tobi he encountered a people who had recently embarked on an experiment in secularism. They had dropped the practice of all their communal religious ritual. Although scattered individuals may have continued to interact with supernatural forces, the islanders no longer acted as a community vis-a-vis the sacred. Even the buildings in which communal ritual had taken place had been destroyed along with all the religious paraphernalia which they contained. This attempt at secularism failed of course, and the Tobians became firm Catholics. It is necessary to

understand the background of this attempt at secularism for three reasons: the attempt's failure to meet certain needs of the Tobian population was probably the most important contributing cause to the speed and success of the original mass conversion; the feelings that people have about the experiment today are some of the most compelling reasons for their adherence to their new faith; and the complex of cultural beliefs, personality attributes and sociological factors which triggered both the attempt and its failure is still operative today and gives the teachings of Father Marino their special Tobian meanings. Although the decision to attempt this radical break with the past was implemented literally overnight, the processes which has led up to it had been set in motion years before. In fact, if we are to understand the events of that night we must go back to the dawn of the modern age on Tobi.

Background to Secularism

There is no way to assess the impact of the first western ship to visit Tobi. The first known sighting occurred in 1710 (Eilers 1936:1) and a clue to the impression which it made can be found in the explanation which Tobians offer for uafarug, (ship). They trace the origin of this word, a compound formed of the nouns denoting "canoe" and "island," to the first time a ship was seen off Tobi. They claim that their ancestors believed the ship to be an island which had been made into a gigantic canoe.

They thought that huge sails had been attached to its trees (the masts) and that the crew observed entering and leaving the cabins were the island's inhabitants going in and out of their houses. This may or may not be an accurate derivation of the term for ship but it does indicate the alien nature which the West first presented to the islanders.

Bartering soon sprang up between the gradually increasing ship traffic and the island. Tobi was never a port of call like other better endowed islands. Although an occasional ship stopped to take on coconuts or other provisions the majority sailed by without stopping. If sea conditions were right and the ship passed close enough to the atoll the men would give chase in their canoes. If they succeeded in overtaking it they would barter for metal, that most prized of goods. A class of men arose which claimed to possess magical incantations which had the power to force the ships to come about and wait for the canoes to catch them. These men exercised their power in return for a share in the proceeds of the bartering.

Ifiri Ingris

In 1832 a small jerry-built boat with nine Americans and three Palauan castaways aboard drifted into Tobian waters. These men, adrift for fourteen days, were in very bad condition. The Americans were survivors of a whaling ship which had gone aground on a reef in northern Palau. With their Palauan friends and their homemade boat they

were trying to reach Ternate on Halmahera in the Dutch East Indies. The events which followed were forgotten by the Tobians but fortunately one of the survivors has left us a record of his stay on Tobi (Holden 1836). The Palauans and Americans were allotted to various families as "slaves" and forced to work in the taro gardens. After four months several shamans decided that these men were the cause of the sickness and starvation which had decimated the island. These shamans persuaded elements of the population to do away with the strangers. Most of the men who had not already died of ill treatment or malnutrition were killed but a few were protected by the families which had taken them in. Two years after their arrival, the two surviving Americans persuaded their owners to release them to a passing ship by promising that they would help them obtain a large amount of metal. The exchange was made and the sailors left, leaving the one surviving Palauan to his fate. The following year a U. S. Navy ship put into Tobi, landed a force of Marines and conducted an unsuccessful house to house search for this man.

These events gave Tobi a certain notoriety and following the publication of Holden's book foreign vessels were less willing to put into the island or even to stop for barter. As late as 1900 some captains felt that allowing Tobians on their ships was simply too dangerous.² Others, however, either ignorant of the supposed savage nature of the islanders or confident of their ability to

control it, began, in the late 19th century, to recruit men from the island as workers. The Tobian population, after an approximate decrease of fifty percent during the two years in which the castaways were on the island had recovered its original size by this time and was still growing. Genealogical evidence shows that the men who were recruited were all single, young and had many siblings.

Some of these men worked for German functionaries on Yap, the administrative center of Wilhelmine possessions in Micronesia. Others worked for English and Australian ship masters harvesting the bounty of Helen Reef, an uninhabited atoll 39 miles east of Tobi. There were probably no more than a dozen men away from the island at any one time and most of them never returned to Tobi. A few did make it back, however, and stories of their adventures are told and retold with relish.

One of the captains who used Tobians for his crew was a man whose name was probably something like Borrie. Apparently Borrie was either English or Australian and was engaged in the beche-de-mer between Helen Reef and Manila. The nickname given him by his Tobian crew was Botchor, which means "gums." The story is told that on the first day out from Tobi the Captain went into his cabin and reappeared without his teeth, much to his new crew members astonishment. This was the period in which blackbirding or unofficial recruiting of forced labor was being suppressed. The Germans suspected Borrie of blackbirding

and eventually tracked him down to Sidney. A trial was held and the Tobian crew, after admitting that they had not been paid any money by Borrie, were taken to Palau and forced to make rope for one year as "punishment." Afterwards they were returned to Tobi to live out their days musing over the curious ways of the Europeans. By this time Europeans were known by a generic term which is still in use today and which translates as "person of possessions" or "rich man." These possessions were and are much appreciated by the Tobians. However, they did not always know what to make of them at first acquaintance. There are many stories about confusions and blunders resulting from Tobian ignorance of the uses to which newly borrowed things should be put.³

Ifiri Deutch

In 1909, the Thelenius ethnological expedition arrived at Tobi (Eilers 1936). The scientists set up their headquarters in the main spirit house. This was the building where the chief performed the rituals associated with his office. These rituals centered around the chief as spokesman for and in some senses as personification of, the entire Tobian community. It was here that people came to participate in the communal rites, and now it was here that they came to have their skulls measured by the anthropologists. A census was conducted and it was found that 968 people were living on the island. The area of Tobi is

only .228 square miles thus the population density at this time was 4246 people per square mile which is quite high even for the Pacific. This figure is even more striking when it is compared with Holden's estimate of 200 Tobians when the castaways escaped from the island 75 years before. Even if we allow a considerable margin of error in Holden's estimate it is apparent that the island had experienced a dramatic rate of increase.

This upward trend was soon reversed. An epidemic broke out after the visit of the Thelenius expedition, and six months later upon the arrival of a German government vessel it was found that two hundred people had died. The doctor on the ship attempted to evacuate the island but the people hid in the bush and he was able to convince only fifty-one men and one woman to go with him to Yap. Tobians remember the epidemic but do not recall the doctor's "rescue" of the 52 people. Possibly this is the same event that lies at the core of a story relating how the Germans took hundreds of men from the island to work in the phosphate mines on Angaur, a Palauan island. I have found no documents to substantiate this claim although the mines were opened in 1909 (Grattan 1963:351). The need for mine workers is a possible explanation for the imbalance in the sex ratio of those "saved" by the Germans in the same year that the Angaur mine opened. In any case, it is certain that some Tobians went to Angaur at this time because the report of the Thelenius expedition contains

several photographs of Tobian men which were taken on that island.

The Tobians say that the Germans ordered the chief of Tobi to accompany the men to Angaur. The chief delegated some of his functions to a younger man who remained on the island. This assistant was forbidden by the departing chief from carrying out at least one of the important rites. The assistant disobeyed his instructions and performed the ritual, thus, it is believed, causing the death of the absent chief and making himself chief. This is a crucial event in the evolution of modern Tobian society. It precipitated political quarrels and gave rise to the two political factions described in Chapter One. The descendants of the original chief form the core of one faction and the descendants of his assistant that of the other. All agree that these events took place but disagree on the interpretation which should be placed upon them.

This factionalism is a key element in all that followed, including the attempt at secularism, the conversion to Catholicism and the interpretations of some of the missionary's teachings. The argument between the two factions hinges on the legitimacy of the assistant's links to the chiefly genealogy and the legitimacy of the present chief, the details of which are not relevant to the following discussion. The assistant occupied the status of chief for only a few years, his title then passing to his son. When this man died the title did not go to his son

but to a descendant of the man who had died on Angaur. This person is the present chief of Tobi and the passed over grandson of the assistant is the contender for the title. The present chief and his followers attempt to blacken the memory of the assistant while the contender and his few remaining followers attempt to defend it. The chief presents the assistant as an usurper who committed acts which he knew would lead to the death of the "true" chief, hundreds of miles away on Angaur. The contender claims that his grandfather knew that the chief was already dead at the time he took over the title.

The ritual performed against orders by the assistant involved the distribution of coconuts from a tabooed plot of land in the northern part of the island. This land was magically forbidden to all but the chief and a subdivision of one of the seven clans which existed at that time. This subdivision was probably either a lineage or a lineage section although today, in less populous times, there are no such units on the island. The men from this group were responsible for taking care of this land and for harvesting its coconuts for an annual ritual. This is the ritual which the assistant performed against the wishes of the absent chief. The assistant somehow convinced the caretakers to harvest the coconuts from the sacred land and to float them down to the chief's spirit house. Performing the chiefly ritual which always preceded the distribution of this annual harvest, he shouted out the names of all the chiefs of Tobi. He started

with the name of the first chief, the son of the ancestress of the present population, and continued up to the name of the father of the man who had appointed him assistant. He did not stop there, as might have been expected, but proceeded to call out the name of the chief in Angaur. If he had stopped with the name of this man's father the ceremony would have been identical in this respect at least to that which the absent chief would have performed. By extending the list to include this man's name he asserted his claim to the chieftaincy and, in the present chief's version caused the death of the man who had appointed him.

It should be noted that the calling out of the list of all previous chiefs was a key part of another ritual which traditionally took place when an appointed successor to a recently deceased chief assumed office. In the opinion of the current chief and a large part of the present population the assistant not only violated the taboos on the northern land and disobeyed the man who had appointed him, but converted the ceremony of distribution into one of accession. Their primary objection is that the assistant was not of the chiefly line but the manner by which he is thought to have obtained the title also disqualifies him in their minds. According to the ideal rule covering succession to the chieftaincy, the old chief should instruct his heir in both the sacred and the secular duties of office and pass to his heir the ritual paraphernalia belonging to it. It was most important that he should pass

on the chants through which it was believed the chief could communicate with the spirits. Everyone except the contender and his few followers profess that the chief who went to Angaur had neither the time nor the inclination to provide such instruction to the man he asked to stand in for him. Therefore they view the acquisition of the title by the assistant and the subsequent death of the "true" chief on Angaur as an irremediable break in the flow of sacred power through the chiefly line. This interruption is thought to have had disastrous consequences for Tobi. The chief's story continues--recounting that the "true" chief found a coconut on Angaur Beach. He examined it and identified it as Tobian in origin. Closer inspection revealed that it was a coconut from the tabooed northern plot. Studying it further the chief realized that it had not fallen naturally to the ground but had been cut from its tree. From these conclusions he correctly deduced that his assistant must have recently performed the distribution ceremony even though he had been told not to. He reasoned further and decided that the assistant had probably proclaimed himself chief. He announced his own imminent death to his Tobian companions, "Its too bad for Tobi now." He is supposed to have said, "the island will be covered by grass." This sentence is a prediction that the population of the atoll was going to drop to a very low level, perhaps even to extinction. As house sites are abandoned on Tobi

their neatly swept sand compounds are invaded by grass. As fewer and fewer people use the island's paths they also become grassy. Taro pits too become covered with grass as they are abandoned. The prediction was accurate. The population of Tobi today is a mere sixty people and grass covers much of the island. To visitors this lends a certain park-like charm to the atoll but to its inhabitants it is a constant reminder of the tragic nature of their recent demographic history.

The contender's version of these events is much less elaborate. He and his followers simply say that when the assistant learned that the chief had died he took over the office even though he had not been taught the sacred chants.

There is no way at this point to reconcile the three versions offered of this one event: the Germans said that there was an epidemic and a rescue; the chief says that there was an usurpation of the title; and the contender says that there was a legitimate but incomplete succession. Yet in certain fundamentals the versions agree or at least do not contradict each other. For some reason the Germans did remove a number of men from the island. The chief accompanied them and died off the island without passing on to his heir in the prescribed manner the esoteric lore attached to his office. The present chief's version seems to be correct in drawing a link between these facts and the atoll's depopulation. However it is probable that the

sequence related in his version is the reverse of the actual ordering of these events. That is, performance of the ritual by the assistant is likely to have been the result, rather than the cause of the population collapse.

In the aboriginal order the chief performed a number of rituals through which the community related to the supernatural. The sacred and secular worlds were not discrete and separate categories. Most profane behavior had a "religious" aspect and even the most arcane of rituals was thought to have important effects on the course of everyday events. This pragmatic aspect of ritual life is quite clear in the minds of the islanders. The overall function of religion both then and now is to protect the island and its inhabitants from disasters. This pragmatic stance toward their religion would have led the islanders to resort to ritual when faced with the epidemic reported by the Germans. Perhaps to them it appeared that it was better in that time of crisis to have an imperfect chief than no chief at all. This decision may have eased the psychic distress of the Tobians but it did nothing to halt the decline in the population which continued up until recent times. The nature of the decline did change however, and this change played a certain role in the events which followed. There was never again a wave of deaths or "accidental epidemic genocide" (Moody 1966:35). The next population crisis was much slower in becoming apparent.

Ifiri Sapan

The Germans lost control of Tobi during World War I when the island passed to the Japanese along with the rest of Micronesia. It did not take long for the new masters to contribute to the processes which were leading up to the attempt at secularism. Sometime in the 1920's Yoshino, an agent for a Japanese commercial company, came to live on Tobi. He was the first outsider to live on the island for an extended period of time since Holden and his companions nearly one hundred years before. The circumstances of his stay were quite different from Holden's. The Americans had arrived lost, friendless, and starving in the remnants of a crude, hand-made life boat. Yoshino arrived on a Japanese government vessel with the full weight of the vigorously expanding Japanese imperial order behind him. Holden and his companions were under the authority of local household heads; Yoshino had at his disposal the labor of a number of men and women enrolled in a school which he had started to teach literacy, carpentry and copra production. Most importantly, of course, the Tobians had experienced a century of intermittent contact with the power of men who arrived on ships. Given these differences it is not difficult to understand the profound discrepancy between the fate of the two parties. Holden and company underwent an ordeal from which few emerged alive whereas Yoshino was treated with great respect and exerted a great deal of influence in the affairs of the island.

He exerted this influence to increase copra production and in this he received cooperation from the chief, the son of the ex-assistant. Yoshino was also helped by a landless Tobian named Johannes who had recently been returned to the island from Yap by his departing German master. With the support of the chief and Johannes, Yoshino forced a division of the sacred northern land into separately owned plots in order to place more land into copra production despite opposition from the people of the clan subdivision who were guardians of that land. Johannes wished to acquire an estate, and the chief not only acquired more land and buttressed his power by gaining Japanese support but also succeeded in ending the annual distribution ceremony which had apparently turned into a time of dissension and an opportunity for his opposition to deny his legitimacy. At this time it must have seemed that the demographic decline had halted; the epidemic of 1909 had run its course and the population had stabilized. However, probably unknown to the islanders, a new and equally dangerous threat had appeared.

Just as the Germans had brought a "plague" (probably influenza) the Japanese brought venereal disease (most likely gonorrhoea) which soon became endemic. Not fatal to those infected, this disease led to barrenness in the women. Thus, the stability of the demographic structure in the early years of the Yoshino era was only

illusory. From about 1925 on the birth rate plummeted until by the time Father Marino arrived only one woman was bearing children. The illusion that further disasters had been averted also must have been shattered by then.

By the early 1930's the Spanish Jesuit mission in Koror had been successfully established among the Tobians who had taken advantage of the opportunities offered by the regularly scheduled ships which now plied between Tobi and Koror to leave the atoll for varying lengths of time. Opportunities for cash income and the intense factionalism over chiefly succession probably played a large part in the growth of the expatriate community. Its inhabitants probably found themselves to be politically and socially peripheral to both Tobian and Palauan societies and must have found psychological and social advantages in adopting the mission religion. Eventually one family left this community and returned to Tobi. This family included a young man who was probably a communicant of the church (all church records of this period have been lost). The elders' recollections are vague, confused and contradictory on this point. The chief on Tobi at this time was the son of the man who had performed the forbidden ritual. The young man from Koror explained to him the power of the Jesuits. The factionalism surrounding the legitimacy of his father's accession to the title must have played some role in the chief's agreement to what followed but the

stories do not mention this. Instead, they stress the purely religious nature of the young man's arguments and imply that these are what compelled the chief's agreement. Armed with the chief's blessing, the young man joined with the youths from Yoshino's school and Yoshino's friend Johannes, and on a dark night they attacked the chief's spirit house, the menstrual house and the sorcerer's canoe house and burned them all to the ground. This event, rather than the conversions which took place a year or two later, marks the end of the traditional Tobian order. The old rituals were scrapped, the chief abandoned his exclusive rights to certain food stuffs and the great majority of the prohibitions and avoidances associated with everyday life were no longer observed.

The motives of the people involved bear some examination because it is through them that we can distinguish the operation of the historical processes which had been gathering force for some time. Several of the young men who participated in the burning are still living and I have talked with them about their activities of that night. What emerges from their accounts is that they, and others of their generation, had come to view the many restrictions or taboos which hedged their activities as onerous. This was especially true of the food and sexual avoidances associated with many types of fishing. These taboos were essentially religious in nature, and by doing away with the

structures which were the focus of religion on the island the young men hoped to liberate themselves.

The young man from Eang died during World War II and we can only speculate about his motives. He also probably felt the taboos to be a burden. He had lived in Eang for a number of years, in the ferment and excitement of the creation of a new South West Island community. The prohibitions upon his behavior which he found when he returned to Tobi must have seemed even more difficult and meaningless to him than to the other young men. Perhaps he hoped that a destruction of the old order would allow him access to land and other resources. His genealogy shows that he was only marginally integrated into Tobian society. Finally, of course, there is the motivation mentioned in the story. Perhaps the religious practices of the island seemed especially futile to him after his exposure to the political and economic power of the Catholic mission in Palau.

We can only speculate about the motives which led the chief to give his blessing to the destruction of the sacred structures. Perhaps the same factors which led to his agreement to the division of the northern tract operated here. It might have been the case that all ritual activity was contested by his political opponents who denied him legitimacy. The chief's attempt to use the buildings was bound to be both clumsy and presumptuous. On the other

hand, failing to use them while they still stood was a reminder of his irregular rise to power. It should be remembered that the chief and his opponents were all agreed that the flow of ritual power had been terminated with the death of the old chief on Angaur. The sacred buildings were unusable because the ritual knowledge and power associated with them had been lost. On a more general level, the ongoing demographic crisis was inescapable evidence that traditional religious forms of behavior were no longer functioning to protect the island and had become empty as well as burdensome. The withdrawal of confidence from them led to their abandonment and to the destruction of the structures and equipment associated with them. This break was not accompanied by radical transformations of other areas of the Tobian order. Life apparently went on much as before but without the ritual underpinning which had given it meaning.

This secular experiment by the Tobians failed and led to great anxiety. The fortuitous arrival of Father Marino a year or so later offered the people a chance to relieve that anxiety by adopting a new religion. Tobians believe that communal religious behavior has consequences for society as a whole. The most important of these consequences or functions is the prevention of disasters. It has been shown how the failure of the rituals to prevent the disaster of depopulation was probably one motive

in the abandonment of the aboriginal religion. Ritual is thought to function in the prevention of both physical disasters such as depopulation and tidal waves and supernatural disasters, especially the activities of ghosts, the most feared of supernatural manifestations. Ghosts are hated as the essence of malicious evil and they are feared as a constant threat. Tobi is thought to be infested with them and more are thought to live in the seas surrounding the island. The power of these ghosts to do harm is dependent on human action; in particular, the correct performance of ritual is thought to render the ghosts powerless.

Tobian belief in ghosts serves the same functions of displacing anti-social aggression and focusing free floating anxiety that belief in beings called by a cognate name serves on the distant but culturally and linguistically related atoll of Ifaluk (Spiro 1952). On Tobi these ghosts are called yarus, on Ifaluk they are called alus. Faced with an environment in which forced intimacy is unavoidable and in which the ethic of non-aggression and cooperation is very highly developed, the Tobians, like the people of Ifaluk, displace aggressive feelings onto supernatural beings. Ghosts offer both peoples an acceptable focus for anxieties which have as their actual cause consciously unacceptable drives. With complete approval by both the self and others a Tobian can and does hate and fear ghosts. However by abandoning the aboriginal rituals

the Tobians denied themselves power over those ghosts. They were caught in a trap of their own, if unconscious, devising.

Social and intrapsychic tensions were almost surely at a high point during the year or so of the secular experiment on Tobi. The processes of sorting out the consequences of the recent population decline seem to have given rise to a great deal of covert conflict. Genealogical evidence shows that not all land holding groups declined at the same rate. Some disappeared entirely, others declined to one or two members, while others came through relatively intact. With the Japanese induced drive to expand copra production, control over land resources became an important political issue. Each family tried to expand its holdings by moving into the vacuum left by extinct groups. Claims were made to lands of this type by reference to genealogical links. Many cases arose where two or more groups with equally tenuous claims claimed the same estate. In some cases there were still one or two members of the original group whose title to the land was clear but who could not mobilize the support of sufficient numbers of people to defend it. There were other sources of tension which also made this an extremely uncomfortable period. The establishment of the Tobian settlement in Eang, the acquisition and retention of new forms of wealth and the continuing failure of the women to bear children were

important factors. Because belief in ghosts had not been abandoned, the antagonisms and anxieties contributed to the perception of a high rate of ghostly activity and a great number of ghost sightings. And since the Tobians had lost faith in the ability of traditional religion to control these hated and feared apparitions, the sightings in turn gave rise to more anxiety. A vicious circle had closed which was not broken until Father Marino offered an escape through new prophylactic ritual.

It is possible at this point to provide a rough answer to two of the questions posed at the beginning of this chapter. Father Marino's success derived from the alternative he offered to the frightening powerless state which the Tobians felt themselves to be in due to the absence of control mechanisms over ghosts. The conscientiousness with which the Tobians practice their religion is a result of their understandings of the connections between religious ritual and disasters. Father Marino gave them mechanisms for preventing disasters and they dare not abandon them lest they again be overwhelmed by either physical or supernatural catastrophe. Thus it is not surprising that despite all the time which they spend praying, the Tobians seem remarkably unconcerned over their ignorance of the literal meanings of their prayers.

Before turning to the events that are remembered about Marino's visit it will be useful to summarize the

chronology presented in this section. The series of events is not offered as a summary of the last century or so of Tobian history. Episodes are included which illustrate the most significant theme which has marked that history. That theme is the response which the Tobians have made to the West. The chronology is a graduated measuring device for estimating the rising tide of western impact and the simultaneous decline of Tobian confidence in their own institutions. Six stages or response-types can be distinguished. First, the material power of the West elicited awe, as indicated by the word for ship. Second, an attempt was made to control the West in its local manifestations. Ritual evolved for this purpose. Third, an effort was made to deny the power of the aliens. Holden and his fellow castaways suffered the consequences of this attempt. Fourth, the islanders began to use and exploit the outsiders for the special rewards which they seemed to control. By working for people such as Captain Borrie, Tobians acquired knowledge of more than western dental technology. They learned at first hand the extent of alien power. The fifth response was submission. The events of the disputed ritual and the division of the sacred plot of land indicate the direct impact which the West was beginning to have on Tobian autonomy. Tobian society, as a system, accommodated itself to the German and Japanese presences by passive submission instead of the more active modes employed in

earlier times. The fact that various individuals were active in promoting this submission is important but does not negate the passive character of the response on the more general level of the society as a whole.

The final episode in the chronology shows the system once more actively engaged in coming to terms with the West. The burning of the sacred structures was, in a literal sense, a necessary clearing away of the debris of old and apparently inadequate forms so that the incorporation of western forms could begin. The subsequent acquisition of Christianity was the first act in a process which continues to this day. This process can most usefully be thought of as the creation of neo-Tobian culture. It involves the integration of western forms into a Tobian setting. Viewed in this perspective, the apparent orthodoxy of Tobian Catholicism is even more striking.

The Nature of Tobian Orthodoxy

If cultures are functionally integrated then the acquisition of an institution as fundamental as religion must be accompanied by transformations in that institution so that it fits with the rest of the borrowing culture. The ethnographic literature is rich in examples of precisely this process. The Islam of some sub-Saharan Africans (Greenberg:1946), the Catholicism of some of the Yucatecan Mayans (Vogt:1964), and the Protestantism of some of the Indian groups around Puget Sound (Barnett:1957) are

end products of histories of transformations. Such examples exhibit local features which can be interpreted only as the syncretic results of local attempts to adapt the borrowed religion to local needs and understandings. Tobian religious behavior does not appear to exhibit this dimension. The great bulk of their specifically religious beliefs also appear to be quite orthodox. One of the key institutions in neo-Tobian culture appears to have almost no Tobian coloring. If, however, we do not examine the religious beliefs and practices of the Tobians per se, but rather inquire into the islanders' beliefs about religion then "Tobianness" begins to emerge. The functional or instrumental orientation toward Catholicism, for example, is clearly a carry-over from the pre-Christian past; religion must be practiced in order to keep ghosts and other disasters at bay.

The functional integration of Catholicism into neo-Tobian culture thus occurs on a more general level than that of specific Catholic beliefs or practices.⁴ Catholicism itself is appropriated to play the role of the discredited old religion; therefore, there is no need to transform or even to think very much about the elements which make up Catholic belief and practice. The beliefs are simply subscribed to and the practices simply followed.⁵ In fact the elements become resistant to transformation since their success in preventing disaster lies

not in their inner meaning but in their correct performance. Change, generated either internally or externally, is potentially disastrous. Once the Tobians become convinced of the utility of Catholicism their self-perceived task was to learn the correct rituals and to practice them. How they were convinced, or perhaps how they convinced themselves, of the power of the new religion is therefore a topic worth investigating. Spier pointed the way as long ago as 1921 in his paper, "The Sun Dance of the Plains Indians: Its Development and Diffusion." Noting that there was a great uniformity among the different Plains tribes in the externals of the Sun Dance while at the same time a great deal of difference in the ideas associated with those externals. He said: "It follows that the determinants (of the relationship between externals and ideas) must be sought in the conditions under which incorporation proceeds." (1921:522) Therefore let us examine what is remembered about Father Marino, the man who converted the Tobians.

Marino arrived at Tobi on a Japanese government steamer. At this time Japanese imperial policy was to encourage, within strict limits, the Christian missionaries in Micronesia. The reasoning behind that policy is of no importance here except that part of it which held that the Micronesians were not fit material for the imperial Japanese creed of Shinto. This meant that such people as

Yoshino could not translate their personal influence into an institutionalized religious setting. If this had not been the case there is little doubt that the islanders would have converted to the religion of the powerful Japanese and not to that of the long departed Spanish administration. There is also little doubt that missionaries such as Father Marino benefited in their evangelical endeavors from the approval of the Japanese. This policy changed with the coming of the war, however, and Father Marino was beheaded by the Japanese military in Koror about ten years after his triumph on Tobi.

Marino was accompanied by a Spanish speaking convert from Merir. This man acted as Marino's interpreter. Also accompanying the priest were several of his Tobian converts from Eang, the settlement in Koror.

Interviews about his activities during his stay on the island, which is given as anywhere from a few days to a month, reveal a great deal of confusion over what actually happened. It is agreed by all surviving witnesses that Father Marino baptized all the people on the island, and that he attempted to bring all the marriage unions which existed at the time of his visit into line with some aspects of Catholic law. These are the only acts that are universally attributed to him. In addition it is generally held that Marino made four statements. These statements were a threat to raise the dead, the

promise that he would be their judge in heaven, the warning that they should not give credence to any outsider who came to the island claiming to be a priest unless he was wearing the Roman collar, and the teaching that marriage within a clan was incestuous. There is an additional statement which the chief and his allies claim was made but about which other people profess to know nothing. This denial is the equivalent to a statement that the chief and his allies are lying. The contested statement involves the destroyed spirit house which the priest is alleged to have said would have made a good church. This is virtually all that is remembered today about this crucial event some forty years ago. There are no traditions about the response of the chief or Yoshino or the young men who had burned the sacred buildings or any of the other people who had been so important in shaping the course of Tobian events up to this time. Some of the narratives telling of the acts and statements of Marino do contain hints of Tobian response. Here a sorcerer or shaman challenges the priest, there a woman tricks him into agreeing to her marriage to her lover. Yet these few scraps do not make possible a confident reconstruction of the full history of the conversion. Rather than speculate about the behavior of the various actors in the events of the conversion, it is more profitable to discuss the reasons for the preservation of the remembered teachings.

Father Marino as an evangelist must have said and done more than the things which are remembered of him. Nor do the seven things which are remembered appear to reflect those elements he would have stressed as being fundamental. Christ, the Trinity, and the Virgin are all absent from the remembered teachings. Moreover, some of the teachings seem to be quite improbable. Furthermore, it is apparent from internal evidence that the baptism probably did not take place in the manner described today. In other words, the preservation of the seven teachings is a result of a process of selective retention in which some of the retained matter has been distorted. Perhaps, then, the transformations which the theory of functional integration tells us to expect took place not in the borrowed religion itself, but in the words and deeds of the man who brought the religion. That is, the words and deeds of Father Marino may have been subjected to systematic pressure over the last forty years to make them congruent with Tobian culture. In effect, then, a myth has been created--which serves as a Malinowskian charter for the current Tobian religion.

If, by some unlikely chance, the elders of the island were to become aware of this line of reasoning, they would strongly disagree. To them these stories are not myth at all, but sober statements of historical fact. As Bidney (1953:166) points out: "the concept of 'myth' is

relative to one's accepted beliefs and convictions, so that what is gospel truth for the believer is sheer 'myth' and 'fiction' for the non-believer or sceptic." To us it is highly unlikely that Marino said and did the things attributed to him; to the Tobians it is not. "Myths . . . are accepted precisely because pre-scientific folk do not consider them as merely 'myths'." (1953:166) Treating the Marino stories as a myth will enable us to discover some interesting things. "When taken at their face value, myths provide a reliable source of prime value . . . they offer basic data about unarticulated, unformalized, and unorganized concepts regarding which informants cannot be expected to generalize" (Hallowell 1960:28). The Marino stories may tell us something of the fundamental nature of Neo-Tobian culture.

The most direct test of the hypothesis that Marino's teachings have been modified would be to compare the actual deeds and words of Marino with what is remembered today. Since the only source for his deeds and words are the remembrances themselves this procedure is not possible. Another approach is to examine carefully each of the remembered teachings for the meanings which they convey to Tobians. If these meanings are congruent with other Tobian beliefs and values then this will be strong evidence that transformations have taken place. Such evidence, combined with the facts that distortion is

evident from the wording of some of the statements and that statements reflecting concerns much more central to orthodox Catholicism have not been retained will be considered conclusive. If it can then be established that the memories of Marino are not merely bits and pieces but form a coherent and meaningful corpus created out of the priest's actual words and deeds by the Tobians, then it will be possible to treat the corpus as a system so that its properties can be determined and analyzed.

Baptism

Only the vaguest outlines of the initial mass baptism are recalled today. It is possible to reconstruct a more detailed picture from other data; for example it is evident from census data that two of the Merir converts from Koror who accompanied the priest stood as godparents to all the initiates.⁶ However, this fact was confirmed in interviews only in response to direct questioning and was never a part of the narrative itself. The initial baptism is usually simply recounted as follows: "He called the people together and they were baptized." Some of the younger people can explain this rite in orthodox Christian terms but their knowledge is the result of exposure to post-war mission schools in Koror and is not an interpretation surviving from the time of Marino. More fundamental, and for many people the only, meanings involve the notion of the island as a whole becoming a Christian place.

There is an emphasis on the mass nature of the act. This is a case where some distortion probably has occurred. As will be discussed below Marino sanctified marriages during his visit. This would necessarily take place after the baptism of the partners. The baptism involved the assigning of new, Christian (i.e. Spanish) names to each individual. Apparently in the interest of symmetry, married couples received similar names, (e.g., Juan and Juana, Terso and Teresa, Marino and Marina). This symmetry in the Spanish names of the newly weds can only be explained by assuming that Marino knew who was to wed whom before he baptized them. From this it follows that he must have done the genealogical research necessary for making "good" marriages before he christened them. It is difficult to imagine that the sequence Marino followed was: investigations of all potential spouses, mass baptism, and then marriage. It makes more sense to posit an individual sequence for each couple, including individual baptism. The probable distortion involved in seeing the baptism as a single collective rite is most likely based on a smaller event in which all children and those few adults who for one reason or another did not wish to be married were baptized together. It is evidence for the hypothesis that a component of the meaning of the original baptism lies in its total nature, including all those actors in the Tobian socio-cultural system who call themselves Tobian,

and thus, in a sense, the system itself. The fact that the christening of each convert with a new name is not stressed and seldom even mentioned indicates that the individual aspect of the initial rite is not important. If the baptism is viewed as speaking about the nature of the socio-cultural order then it is necessary to inquire into the content of its message as perceived by the present day inhabitants of the island.

The word used in Tobian for "baptize" more usually refers to bathing (both swimming and washing) but it also has two other meanings which describe both the traditional cure for insanity and a traditional disciplinary measure. Fathers punished their misbehaving sons in the following manner: they took them to the sea and held their heads under the water until they lost consciousness. Incantation chanting shamans used a similar technique to treat the insane. This convergence of treatments for insanity and misbehavior illustrates one of the fundamental tenets of Tobian concepts of behavior, the similarity between "crazy" and "bad" behavior. There is an additional element, "ghost-like" which will be discussed below.

It is no accident, I think, that the word for these techniques has been extended to cover baptism. When people discuss the pre-Christian era, and especially the years immediately preceding the coming of the priest, it is commonly said that people were both crazy and bad. The

times are perceived as having been out of joint and Father Marino is viewed as having acted to put things right.

The symbolism is striking. Combining the role of father (because he insisted that he be called by this term) with that of shaman (by reciting ritual formulae) Marino linked together in one rite the cure for insanity and the punishment for transgression. Obviously there can be no correction without a previous malfunction. Therefore Tobians seem to see Marino as symbolically having said (by the act of mass baptism) that the system had been out of order. While this one rite certainly did not trigger the perception of pre-Christian Tobi as a bad, crazy place it has reinforced it so that today the brief attempt at secularism between the time the spirit house was burned and the arrival of the priest is viewed in an extremely negative light, even by the men who helped instigate it. An additional element in this interpretation is related to the fact that there are important differences between the two traditional techniques and baptism. The two traditional techniques involved rendering the subject unconscious through near drowning, whereas Tobians say the baptism involved merely tracing a watery cross on the penitent's forehead and pouring a little water over his head. The former experience was undoubtedly terrifying while the latter, especially by contract, was not. From the contrast emerged the perception of Marino as the good father-

shaman whose corrective abilities embraced a whole society but involved no unpleasantness.

The baptism emerges as a fundamental event, and its retention in the corpus of remembered teachings becomes understandable. As a communication it has two messages, one of which deals with the contrast between pre-Christian Tobi and the present and the other with the nature of Father Marino. In addition to the intervention at the highly symbolic level of the baptism, priestly intervention at the more focused level of marriage is also remembered.

Remarriage

Pre-Christian marriage patterns were characterized by a wide variety of arrangements. Men were permitted a number of wives, and women could have either one or two husbands. Cross cousin marriages were preferred and serial polygamy with frequent divorce was the rule for both sexes. All of these practices were and are frowned upon by the church and one would expect that Marino would have acted to eliminate unions resulting from them. All that is remembered, however, is that he forced each married person to go back to their earliest living spouse and then sanctified that marriage. A number of points of interest arise in this connection. It is only in stories surrounding this incident that the Tobians are seen as more than passive targets of some item of priestly behavior. This fact is due to the impossible nature of the task which

Marino apparently set himself. For example, while newly christened Roberto may have been Fausta's first husband, she could very well have been his second, third or even seventh wife. The opportunities this created for the type of manipulation at which the Tobians are so skilled were not lost and what emerges from these stories is that many people succeeded in marrying their lovers, who may not have been either a previous or current spouse. More importantly, no one was forced to marry someone whom he or she detested. This proved to be highly adaptive since the marriage ceremonies performed by Father Marino wrote finis to the aboriginal pattern of frequent divorce and remarriage. Tobians typically say: "He made everyone who had been divorced go back to their first spouse." That this is the only interpretation of his behavior brings us to an anomaly.

If the body of stories about Marino is in fact the locus of the processing which the borrowed institution of Catholicism has undergone at the hands of the Tobians we would expect each story to speak to important issues facing the islanders. We would also expect that most serious socio-cultural problems would be reflected in the stories. It is this latter point which is at issue here. Why does the corpus of remembered teachings not deal with changes in such practices as cross-cousin marriage and polygamy? From Marino's point of view the unions that

existed prior to his visit were not marriages at all. Therefore it is quite likely that the recollections are accurate and he did not deal directly with these practices in the limited time at his disposal. However, if these changes were viewed today as significant one would expect them to be reflected in the stories, whether based on fact or not. From the observer's perspective these changes certainly seem to have contributed to a major dilemma facing Tobian society today.

The range of choice in which a current Tobian mate seeker, especially a man, operates is extremely narrow. Church marriage regulations prohibiting the two possibilities of polygamy (especially polyandry) and divorce and remarriage contribute to this restriction. The fundamental problem is demographic. One of the consequences of severe underpopulation is that random reproductive asymmetries are not balanced by complementary asymmetries as they are in larger, more stable populations. Only a few women of the present and preceding generations have proved fertile. Most of these women have given birth to many more males than females. In a larger population such a disparity in the sex ratio of the children of a few women would be more or less canceled by an opposite disparity in the sex ratio of the offspring of other women. On Tobi, of course, there are no other women, and the fate of the predominantly male children is to compete for the

few available women. The situation is made worse by the fact that a male remains in the marriage market much longer than a female and so there is a number of widowers who also are searching for mates among the young women. The combination of church marriage regulations with the retention of pre-Christian rules forbidding clan endogamy exacerbates the problem by restricting the number of options open to the men. This is quite apparent to those thoughtful Tobians who ponder these matters. To these people, however, the most significant of the church's marriage prohibitions would seem to be the one against divorce. This is particularly striking because divorce, in the usual sense of the term, does occur on the island.

Marriages can and do break up, and the spouses may set up or join separate households or may even form semi-secret liasons with third parties. However these liasons cannot be sacrilized nor can they result in the joint households which are characteristic of church sanctioned unions until the legitimate spouses of the lovers are deceased. The rule seems to operate as follows: no one can remarry until his previous spouse has died. The factors which led to the instability of marriage in the pre-Christian era are still operative yet the "natural" result of those tensions (frequent divorce and remarriage) is no longer a possibility.⁷ It is not surprising that this is reflected in the stories. Objectively the elimination of remarriage

while a previous spouse is still living creates the most difficulty in terms of numbers of people involved. This rule can also be seen as an indirect prohibition of polygamy. It stresses the strength and exclusive nature of the marriage tie between a man and woman. This tie is so exclusive that a third party cannot be included in the equation even when the man and the woman are no longer living together. A relationship of such strength and exclusiveness rules out polygamy. One cannot marry a second spouse until the first is dead. Cross-cousin marriage is not spoken of in the story of the remarriages. There are no people on Tobi at the present time who would be eligible mates if the rule against cross-cousin marriage were to be waived. Therefore, although it is true that a significant change has taken place with respect to the cross-cousin rule, that change is not, currently, an issue.⁸ Not being an issue it is not reflected in any of the stories told about Marino. At this point it might be asked why a story is not invented which would re-validate the aboriginal practice of frequent divorce and remarriage. As we shall see this is evidently what has happened with respect to clan exogamy. This has not happened because the priests who have followed Marino have refused to preside at second marriages when the first spouse was still living. It is not possible for people to simply set up joint households without the church's blessing since by

concerning himself with marriage in the way that he did. Father Marino firmly set the institution of marriage within the realm of the sacred. In marked contrast to aboriginal unions a post conversion marriage is, at least in part, a sacred event.

To summarize, Father Marino baptized all the people and presided over a number of marriages. The former event signals a change from the old, bad and crazy society to a new, good and sane one, a change accomplished by a good father-shaman, Father Marino. The latter makes of marriage a concern of the sacred and signifies the exclusion of various classes of people, particularly those seeking a second mate before the death of the first, from making legitimate matches.

Power Over Ghosts

While walking through the cemetery Father Marino is supposed to have said, "My power is from Dios and it is true. Shall I call the dead people here in this ground to stand up?" The cemetery had only recently come into use under Japanese pressure. Prior to its introduction the dead had been disposed of over the reef. It is located in the northern end of the island within the bounds of the old sacred grounds. This continuity in the spiritual geography of the island may or may not be accidental but the fearful attitude of the islanders toward this plot today is probably similar to that of their ancestors. At night the

area is avoided if at all possible and if a visit is necessary, as during turtle hunting season, people only go there in parties of three or more. The area is dangerous and frightening because it is the haunt of ghosts and there is no reason to suppose that the situation was different in Marino's time. The setting in which the words were spoken thus conveys to the minds of the islanders an aura of supernatural power.

Among the several versions of this story the most widely accepted has the missionary utter his words in response to a challenge from a shaman. There is unanimity on two points, the wording of the phrase quoted above and the response of the audience. Everyone took Marino's utterance as a threat, since in the Tobian view of things a resurrection of the dead would be an unmitigated disaster for the living. The newly risen would not be mortals bound by the physical and moral restraints of the normal world but Lazarus-like beings who had passed beyond that world and returned, eerie and frightening. Whatever Marino's intentions when he uttered these words, assuming that he did, they are felt today to have been a stratagem designed to impress the people with the power of the missionary and the dire consequences in store for any who would not follow him. He did not, so the stories go, have to actually raise the dead since the people begged him not to. The very act of pleading with him, of course, concedes his power to carry out the threat.

This leads to one of the two important messages contained in the saying: the unique and liminal position of Father Marino. Clearly the resurrection of the dead is no task for an ordinary mortal; only a man in close touch with the supernatural could do so. The claim of power to raise the dead is a claim over the processes of life and death. The statement makes clear the source of that power. The emphasis is on the concrete and the immediate. It is not a vague and generalized statement about the omnipotence of Marino's God which is reported here but rather a claim to be a channel through which that power can enter the affairs of this world. The theme of Marino's special spiritual abilities is one which runs through most of the stories told of his visit. In this instance what is reflected is his power to create ghosts. To a people accustomed to the idea of human-ghostly dialogue, which is how the pre-Christian trance states of the shamans are remembered, Marino's assertion of the power to call up a whole new population of ghosts does not appear as far-fetched as it would to a more secularly oriented audience.

For the Tobians, as for the Ojibwa "the more we penetrate (their) world view the more it is apparent that 'social relations' between human beings and other-than-human 'persons' are of cardinal significance" (Hallowell 1960:22-23). To the Tobians Marino's claim is plausible but awe-inspiring. It represents a level of spiritual

power for which there is no parallel in Tobian thought. The claim is an innovation but like all innovations, it is built of pre-existing elements. The most important of these elements is the belief in ghosts which is itself reinforced by the statement under consideration.

The second message contained in that statement, then, is that ghosts exist, and furthermore, that there is a close connection between ghosts and religion. The threat can be paraphrased: "Do as I say or there will be many ghosts on the island." The first half of this warning can only refer to the necessity of conforming with Roman Catholicism, as understood by the islanders, while the second half refers not only to ghosts as such but, by inference, to all disasters likely to strike the rather fragile Tobian ecosystem. A final reading of the statement would emphasize its congruence with the traditional Tobian notion of the function of religion as a set of techniques necessary to ward off disasters in general and ghosts in particular.

Power to Judge the Dead

Father Marino is said to have made the following statement as he was about to leave the island: "Don't forget that I am in charge of you and when you die I, and no one else, shall be the one to decide where you go." When questioned about his meaning informants argued that Marino was saying that he, and not Christ, is the one to decide

whether heaven or hell will be each Tobian's ultimate destination. Obviously this statement strengthened Marino's unique cosmological position vis-a-vis the islanders. Of all the acts and sayings remembered of Marino this one most directly speaks to that point and it does this via an idiom of power; that is, the concept of hosuar, "in charge."

In the Tobian view of human nature the only true adults are men between middle age and senility. Only individuals of this class fully possess the prime virtues of self-restraint, competence and independence. Females and all other males are thought to be capable of exhibiting these characteristics only in varying degrees of approximation. In other words, there is a single model of the good person of which men of middle age and older are thought to be the best examples. People lacking the first two virtues of self restraint and competence are deprived of the third virtue of independence by having some one, usually an adult male, placed "in charge" of them. All major decisions are made only with this person's consent and he has the power of reward and punishment over his wards--especially if they are children. Ideally all women, children, young and senile men are supposed to have someone in charge of them. Exceptions do not vitiate the rule. The operation of the rule can become quite complex. For example, an adult male, Roberto, is in charge of both

another adult, Honaria, and her daughter Tina, while Honaria is in charge of Tina. The rule also applies to temporary arrangements so that a woman in mourning will have another woman placed in charge of her for the duration of the mourning period.

Women, children, young and senile men are thought to have imperfect impulse control. It is therefore necessary for the well being of everyone that people who do have this virtue be permitted to intervene in their affairs.⁹ Tobians say that in pre-Christian times the chief who wielded political power and acted on the island's behalf in exchanges with the spiritual world was "in charge" of the whole island. Marino's claim to be "in charge" is similar. It implies that the population of the island as a whole is deficient in the three important virtues and that it is necessary for a superordinate to interfere in its affairs. Marino's claim is considerably more far reaching than that attributed to pre-Christian chiefs because it is thought to transcend both his and his congregation's mortality. Father Marino was beheaded by the Japanese about ten years after he converted Tobi. Thirty years after his death, it is thought that he is still in charge of the island and is still watching from on high the behavior of its inhabitants. In addition, Marino is thought to have the responsibility for deciding the post-mortal fate of the people. The belief that Marino will judge the

Tobian dead has firmly established his unique cosmological position. The islander's belief that they will be judged and either rewarded or punished according to their earthly conduct is an important moral sanction that acquires its force from Tobian attitudes towards authority which reflect attitudes toward the father.

The Tobian father is a remote and threatening figure in the life of the child. This is now changing as other styles of child rearing are practiced, but for the old people and those raised by them the father was a figure to be treated with respect and fear. Stories told by older people of their childhood commonly include beatings by the father and stress the respect and fear in which the father was held. This attitude has been institutionalized in the custom of avoiding where possible the mention of one's dead father's name.¹⁰ When this is not possible (as for example during some of my interviews with them) Tobians make a great show of whispering the name into the listener's ear.

Evidence that this attitude is extended, especially among the old people, to other authority figures is not hard to find. Traditional behavior toward the chief was also apparently marked by fear and respect as is behavior toward Americans or Palauans invested with some power over the islanders. No non-ghostly figure is more frightening to old people, especially old women, than the Palauan

policemen who are occasionally called to Tobi to investigate some problem

This fear of authority is seen as highly functional by the more thoughtful people on the island. It is conventional Tobian wisdom that only fear keeps people, particularly those who are not fully autonomous adults, from dangerous and anti-social acts. In Chapter Four I elaborate on this theme, here it is sufficient to note that someone who performs such acts is seen as someone without fear. This is congruent with the notion that ghosts are fearlessly anti-social beings unless they are kept in check by religious ritual.

This conception of the basis of compliance was shown during a meeting (discussed in depth in Chapter Four) held to determine the culprit in a possible attempt on the life of one of the men. The question arose of whether the events which had precipitated the meeting should be reported to the administration in Palau. An affirmative consensus was quickly reached on the basis that no one's life would be safe and the island would be uninhabitable unless the young people were given an immediate object lesson by seeing the criminal brought to justice and punished. In this way others would be made afraid to do such a bad thing.

A policeman was sent to the island on the next field trip some months later but was unable to make any

progress in his investigation. Commenting on this, one young man made a statement which clearly expresses the shared belief in the importance of Father Marino in sanctioning moral behavior. "Maybe that guy who did it," he said, referring to the person who attempted the murder, "is really proud and happy now, but when he dies and meets Father Marino I think he will be very sorry."

Other Missionaries

Father Marino's person is firmly embedded within the structure of Tobian theology. The beliefs which endow him with this status have also made it extremely difficult for subsequent professional religious personnel to deal with the islanders. Current Roman Catholic priests have little chance to introduce religious and social innovations and exponents of other versions of Christianity can make no headway at all. This is made particularly clear in the third statement which Marino is supposed to have made. "If any person comes here and tries to say Mass but is not wearing the same thing around his neck that I am, do not listen to him." This statement was not given to me as part of the stories about Marino, which include all the other material discussed here, but rather as the basis for an anecdote about the first priest to visit the island after World War II--a Navy chaplain who was wearing a uniform without a Roman collar. The fact that the statement is not contained in the usual narrative of the doings of Father

Marino does not mean that it is not part of the corpus of remembered teachings. Everyone is aware of it and there is no disagreement about its authenticity. But I think this does indicate that it has a separate status. It is as though it is pre-adapted to the possibility, of which the people are keenly aware, that a non-Catholic missionary might visit the island. However, since this is not a current issue, the saying does not form part of the active narration. In a negative sense, however, it is of current importance. While this statement is felt to be a warning against falling away from the religion revealed by Marino it is primarily a warning against non-Catholic missionaries. It is not a direct admonition to pay heed to other Roman Catholic priests who over the years have followed Marino to the island. The lack of a forceful direct admonition accounts for the ease with which teachings of subsequent priests have been ignored when they contradicted Marino's word.

It is notable that the Marino corpus is structured in such a way that the process of ignoring more recent church teachings in order not to violate that corpus does not in itself contradict a teaching of Marino. This would not be the case if the statement under consideration here were amended to read as follows: "If any person comes here and tries to say Mass but is not wearing the same thing

around his neck that I am, do not listen to him; but if he is wearing the same thing that I am you must do what he says."

Clan Incest

The next saying attributed to Marino, and the last of those over which there is unanimity, conveys a limited message. It forbids clan exogamy, but it does so in an elliptical manner. The actual wording is as follows:

"It is as impossible to marry a clan sister as it is to marry an angel."

The wording of the statement is that given by Tobian English speakers, some of whom have achieved a high degree of fluency in English. If one talks to an old person who was at the crucial meeting when Marino is thought to have said this, he will quote a statement which can be rendered as the English speakers do, or as the following: "Intercourse with a sibling of opposite sex is like intercourse with a ghost, you cannot," or as some mixture of the two sets of words. The problem lies in the fact that the words translated by the English speakers as "marriage," "clan sister" and "angel" can with equal accuracy be translated as "intercourse," "sibling of opposite sex" and "ghost." The same words which gloss as "marriage" and "clan sister" also gloss "intercourse" and "sibling of opposite sex." Only one word exists for "clan sister" and "sibling of opposite sex" and while there is a

vast corpus of words for "sexual intercourse" only the one which is also the only word for "marriage" is polite enough to have been used in this context. The word for "angel" in Tobian is now "angel." The old man who gave me the quotation as he heard it from Marino explained the priest's use of the word yarus on the grounds that since the word angel did not exist on Tobi prior to Marino's coming he (or rather the translator which he brought with him) did not use it because no one would have understood it. As he rhetorically asked me, "The people of that time, what did they know about angel?" But when the old people use the Marino quotation in arguments about clan incest they use the borrowed form, angel.

Before discussing the import of the complex statement about clan incest it is necessary to first review and then expand information on Tobian clans provided in the introduction. They are named, unranked, matrilineal, exogamous groups in which genealogical connections between all members are felt to exist even though they cannot be traced by any one individual.¹¹ At the present time clans are the only recognized structural unit between households on the one hand and the collectivity known as "the people of the island" on the other. The most populous of these clans were subdivided into lineages in the past. Currently there are five clans, one of which is doomed to extinction as it consists of a single male member (see Table One).

A similar fate has already overtaken two and possibly three other clans within living memory.

Exogamous clans have apparently existed on Tobi since shortly after the initial settlement. They possess a mythological charter in the epic which tells of the island's discovery, having been constituted by the original ancestress. If it is assumed that the clan exogamy rule is felt to be either extremely important or else highly problematical so that it requires supernatural justification it is not surprising, given the general attenuation of the power of the aboriginal religious system, that the original pre-Christian charter has been reinforced by one bearing Marino's stamp. This is the only instance in which a pre-Christian rule has been revalidated in such an overt manner. On a more general level, of course, the entire corpus of Marino's teachings can be seen as revalidating the entire Tobian ethical and moral system. Acts ranging from hoarding to murder were all thought as evil in aboriginal times as they are today and they are all sins which will be punished by Father Marino.

The simile expressed in the statement that marrying a clan sister is like marrying an angel acquires its force from the Tobi notion of angel as a kind of benevolent ghost.¹² Ghosts are frightening because they can flout with impunity the laws governing the normal world. Angels share this characteristic and thus arouse the same reaction of

horror in the Tobians as do the traditional ghosts. The use of the word angel instead of the more usual word for ghost is primarily a device to give the statement a Christian cast and the benevolent aspect of angelic nature is here beside the point.

Part of the strangeness of the statement when viewed from a Christian perspective is that it does not directly speak of morality; marriage to a clan sister is not said to be evil but rather impossible. To a Tobian, however, the word "impossible" in the teaching speaks to a greater truth about men and morality. This is the notion that there is essentially no difference between some kinds of moral and physical laws.¹³ In the West the two are clearly distinguished primarily on the basis that violation of moral laws although bad, is possible while physical laws are such that their violation is impossible without supernatural intervention. In this sense moral laws are less absolute in the West than are physical laws. In the Tobian view of things the two are indistinguishable on this axis. We occasionally show traces of the same attitude toward morality, as for example when we speak of "unnatural acts." The word "impossible" in Marino's teaching is congruent with the Tobian idea that men are as bound by incest regulations as, for example, they are by gravity; neither can be violated by a "normal" person.

Violation of the incest regulations, then, produces a rupture in the fabric of the normal universe as dramatic and shocking as the flouting of the laws of the physical world by a ghost. Both acts are beyond the capacity of normal men but well within the powers of ghosts. Thus it is not surprising that both of the men involved in the only two instances of clan incest of which I am aware were described as ghosts. The fact that only the men were so described is a product of the Tobian view of adulthood discussed earlier. The belief that people are capable of anything and that only fear keeps most people from behaving in immoral ways forms a counterpoint to this attitude. A normal man is one who is, among other things, sufficiently afraid of the consequences of immoral acts. Since people other than men are not thought to be sufficiently afraid, which is why they need someone "in charge" of them to monitor their behavior, they are not "normal" or true adults and thus are not covered by statements about normal people.¹⁴

If it is correct to say that marriage to a clan sister requires a man to act in a ghostly manner, what does this imply about the way that such a man is viewed? In the two instances of attempts at endogamous clan marriage of which I am aware the primary reaction of the people seemed to consist of a mixture of wonder and horror. Wonder seemed to arise from the perception that a fundamental law

had been flouted, while horror originated in part from feelings people have about incest. People were aghast at the act and their treatment of the actors reflected their feelings.

What is relevant here is that the men in both cases were treated, within limits, as ghosts. People did not run shrieking from their presence but they were avoided as much as was consistent with the obligations of civility-- which minimally require that one give a cheerful response to any social initiative of another. Eventually they were indirectly pressured into leaving the island. The gossip that continues to swirl about the two marriages stresses the men's frightening boldness and their untrustworthiness. These men are directly referred to as ghosts. This is of course, a metaphor; everyone recognizes that they are human. However it is a metaphor that contains a strong element of truth for the Tobi people since these two men did indeed act like ghosts. Part of the consequences for those who break the incest rule, then, are that people will treat you like a ghost. The other and more severe threat implied by Marino's statement derives from the way that ghostly behavior is related to insanity.

Acting like a ghost and being crazy share important attributes; both are dangerous, uncanny, unpredictable and they arouse a great deal of fear. One important difference between ghostly and insane behavior is that the fear of the

former is directed outward while fear connected with insanity is directed towards the self. This is nicely summed up in the conventional wisdom that ghosts are harmful to other people while crazy people are prone to suicide. The unknown person who was thought to have attempted the life of one of the men was said to be a ghost while a man who repeatedly tried to kill himself was said to be insane.

The fear of insanity and subsequent suicide are important components of the sanctions that act to prevent clan incest and Marino's teaching speaks to this point by drawing attention to the ghostly nature of such an act. This is because, to a Tobian, what seems ghostly behavior in others must seem to be insanity in the self. Recognizing the immense social pressure which is brought to bear on anyone attempting an incestuous match a Tobian is likely to feel that he would have to be crazy to try such ghostly behavior.

There is one final point to be made in connection with this statement. The word translated as "marry" refers both to "intercourse" and to "marriage" depending on the context in which it is used. The fact that the English speakers choose the former and not the latter is significant. Sexual intercourse with a clan mate (providing that the genealogical connection is no closer than first cousin) is forbidden but arouses no great reaction when it becomes known. It is expected that young people will make love as

often as possible and with very little regard for the amenities. While it is bad for clan mates to sleep together, there is usually a good deal of resigned tolerance for what is perceived as the weaknesses of the flesh. Parents or guardians do try to break up such liaisons and ensure that the act is not repeated. However, it is only when the parties try to formalize the union that the full complex of wonder and horror, ghosts and insanity is triggered. The dramatic difference in the reaction to incestuous intercourse and endogamous clan marriage lies in the nature of Tobian marriages, which involve the establishment of long term economic exchange relations between spouses and, to a lesser extent, among their families. Marriage involves the formation of a household, the most fundamental of the units in Tobian society. It involves the filiation of children to the mother's and the father's kin in different ways and for different ends. Embarking on such a project with a woman of the same clan publically flaunts one's immorality. It makes the statement that society's respect is held in little or no esteem. It places oneself outside the conventions which govern the conduct of normal men. These are the actions and statements of a ghost or madman.

The teaching that marriage to a clan sister is as impossible as marriage to an angel and its implications may be transformed into the following statement: "Only a

person like a ghost, unbound by moral laws, could marry a woman of the same clan. One who does such a thing will be treated with fear and loathing by his fellows, and will die by his own hand."

Chief and Church

The final teaching of Father Marino which is remembered differs from the others because the Tobians are not unanimous about its authenticity. This fact provides an important clue to the workings of the whole Marino complex. Referring to the chief's spirit house the priest is alleged by some to have said, "It is too bad you burned this place down. It would have made a good Church." Prior to the collapse of the old order the chief exercised ultimate spiritual and political power. His spirit house was the site of most of the important rituals over which he presided. This statement is an attempt to charter a role for the chief in the new religion.

The chief and his allies began a campaign some time ago to infiltrate the Church's activities both on the island and in Eang. They have achieved a degree of success in certain minor areas but overall direction of the church remains firmly in the hands of the mission. The chief's objective is to be formally recognized as leader of the congregation. He means to achieve a position of leadership over the rituals i.e. novennas for the dead and twice daily rosarios which constitute the religious life of the island

except for the services held by the priest on the four or five days a year that he visits the island. The chief would also like to be the sole intermediary between the people and the priest through which all matters pertaining to church business and ritual would be channeled. There are a number of factors which have so far prevented incorporation of the chief's office into the structure of the church. These need not detain us here, and it is sufficient to note that although the mission treats the chief with great respect it has refused to fall in with his plans. The American and Palauan priests are unimpressed with his appeal to the authority of Marino but it is obvious that the islanders understand the implications of the statement which the chief and his partisans attribute to Father Marino.

Disagreement over the validity of the statement about the chief's spirit house follows the lines of cleavage over the chiefly succession and is part of the general process described by Schwartz as "the constant litigation of culture" (MS(B) :2) Those who accord the incumbent legitimacy believe that Marino actually made the statement, whereas those who support his challenger do not. It is interesting to note that this denial can be taken as a measure of the lack of confidence which the contender and his allies have of success in the near future. If they believed themselves to be close to replacing the

present chief with one of their party it would be in their interest to strengthen the office (as opposed to the person) of the chief. Marino's statement is viewed as a recognition that the chief's office has legitimate religious attributes which can be incorporated within the Christian system without harm to the church's nature. For supporters of the chief the validity of this statement means that his effort to gain power within the church structure is entirely justified. For those who deny its validity that effort is simply another example of what they profess to view as his despotic and grasping nature.

This, then, is all the material remembered about Father Marino; out of a much wider range of potential memories the Tobians have chosen these seven items. There is no way to tell at this late date whether they are grounded in fact or fantasy, although it is certain that they all contain particularly Tobian meanings. In this sense the alien missionary's teachings have been processed by the islanders so that they have become congruent with indigenous ideas. Understandings have arisen about them that are remote from the understandings of orthodox Catholicism but which fit with the rest of Tobian culture. Transformation has taken place, not in the borrowed religious practices, but in the words and deeds of its conveyer.

Further analysis reveals that these seven items are linked together into a coherent ideological complex with definite properties. The complex is non-falsifiable, possesses a certain curious dynamic and has both positive and negative functions for the people who use it. It is also an idiom which expresses certain Tobian truths about the nature of man, society and the supernatural.

The system contains two major precepts: first, religion is necessary, and second, Tobian religion must be Father Marino's. The former concept is supported by the baptism which teaches that society without religion is bad and crazy as well as the threat to raise the dead which confirms the Tobian notion that religion is necessary to prevent disasters. The concept that the religion of Tobi must be Marino's religion is supported by belief in his special powers over ghosts, over the individual soul and over society. These beliefs derive, at least in a cognitive sense, from Father Marino's remembered teachings. His power over ghosts is spoken of in the threat to raise the dead. Marino's power over individual souls is asserted in his claim to be their post mortal judge. His power over Tobian society is taught in the baptism, in the statement about being in charge and in the threat to raise the dead.

The other four items, i.e., the remarriage, and the statements about clan incest, other missionaries, and the

chief's spirit house, fulfill a different function. They speak to specific issues which have been given a religious coloring. These issues are marriage, in particular clan marriage, the chief's power, and the contradiction of the system by other missionaries. There is unanimity about the authenticity of the three items dealing with marriage and other missionaries. Therefore the solutions to problems embodied in these items are adhered to since Marino's power to dictate them is validated by the precepts about religion and his place in it discussed above.

For both sides in the succession dispute the argument about whether Marino actually made the statement is, in an important sense, the only argument that matters. It is a property of this system, and perhaps all ideological systems, that once an issue has been framed in its terms only those terms are relevant. Arguments based on other grounds, such as personal interest or pragmatism, simply do not apply. This does not mean that the solutions it offers are permanent, but it does mean that as long as the two general precepts are accepted change in the solutions requires change in the Marino corpus. The solutions can be seen as adjustments made to cope with past realities. When the realities change the solutions may become maladaptive. This leads to considerable tension and pressure to modify the system. A number of factors make this a difficult and slow process. These factors can be most

clearly seen in the current disputes over clan endogamy. By examining this issue these factors can be isolated and the actual operation of the Marino system presented.

A young Tobian may wish to marry a clan sister. He can point out his present unhappy wifeless situation. He can assure her and her guardians of his deep love for the girl. He can offer the guardians presents of tobacco and money and he can tell them of the land which he owns and the lands which he stands to inherit. All these arguments based on his, the girl's and her guardian's personal interest will tempt but not persuade those guardians to give their blessing to the match (a blessing which is absolutely necessary if the young man is to succeed). He can raise the argument to a more general level and point out the scarcity of eligible women on the island and the dearth of babies. He can also claim that he and his fellows will have to seek non-Tobian spouses if the rule is not waived. The guardians will agree that this is a shame and will even complete his argument for him, pointing out the relatively large number of such marriages that have already taken place resulting in many children with no Tobian clan. At this point someone is sure to say that if this keeps up eventually there will be no more Tobians but only half-caste Palauans, since most non-Tobian wives are Palauan. This is not a compelling argument, however, and the guardians will still not agree to let their ward marry

within the clan. Their refusal will be framed in terms of the Marino ideology, and their denial will be phrased in the missionary's supposed words: "It is as impossible to marry a clan sister as it is to marry an angel." The young man can counter this by telling how he was taught at the Catholic mission school that the church does not forbid clan endogamy. He can even remind his elders of the many sermons which the American priest has preached on just this topic during his visits to the island. The guardians would probably respond along the lines of the following: "You know what the Americans are like. They are very nice but they want everyone to like them. The priest just tells us that to make things easy for us. But we are strong enough to follow the true law, the one of Marino."¹⁵

A full understanding of the reasons for the maintenance of the clan exogomy rule requires consideration of the structural positions of both the elders and the young men. The old people who are guardians of the few unmarried women of childbearing age are the ones who insist on the rule's maintenance. They are in a position to enforce their wishes for a number of reasons. They control many other resources beside the young women. These include land and much of the secret and highly valued knowledge of things such as medicinal recipes and fishing techniques. Therefore it is not in the young men's interests to alienate the old people. Of course, individual cases

vary and sometimes it does happen that the only thing which a given young man wishes from a guardian is the hand of his or her ward. Even in this situation the young man's chances of success are not very good. This is because old people are central to the gossip network and therefore are in a position to disrupt most proposed matches. Finally, if the guardians cannot succeed in provoking jealousy and dissension between the lovers by the use of rumors, they still have one other technique for the prevention of the match at their disposal. As trusted elders of the congregation they can attempt to convince the priest that the proposed match is inappropriate. In recent years, as the priests have gained more familiarity with the islanders, guardians have resorted to camouflaging their efforts by using agents to transmit reasons why the priest should not marry their ward to her clan mate.

The young men are in a difficult position. They cannot form a coalition against the old people around this issue. Not only do they hope to gain future property from the elders but the very nature of Tobian marriage makes it a particularly difficult subject around which to unify. The subject of clan endogamy always arises in reference to particular cases. Someone wants to marry a clan mate and her guardians forbid the match. He cannot find any allies to help him convince those guardians or at least to fight their rumors. The other single young men

who might be his allies in a different context are now his competitors; if he fails then perhaps one of them can marry the girl. If the girl marries him then there will be a permanent loss of one woman from the field in which all the young men operate. The rule against divorce and the imbalance in the sex ratio make the competition for a girl's hand an extreme example of a zero-sum game. I examine some of the consequences of this in Chapter Three.

Young married people have no stake in this contest. They have succeeded in winning their mates and the success of their unmarried brothers and sisters is of only academic interest to them. Seeing no benefit in helping the young man they find it in their interest to remain neutral and thus to preserve their status as moral persons following the way of Marino. The young man's elders are also of little help to him. It is the exceptional old person who will help a young man get married in any case. This is because as long as he is single his elders have no competitors for his labor and its fruits. Thus, there is a natural tendency for a young man's elders to oppose his marriage and, in cases where it applies, the clan exogamy rule is a perfect nail on which to hang that opposition. The only help a young man can expect is from the girl herself. She is not likely to be of much help to him. Although she cannot be forced to marry someone against her will neither can she marry someone against the will of her

guardians. They have control of her person and can apply both verbal and physical pressure to keep her from marrying someone of whom they disapprove.

A young man needs a good deal of courage and self confidence to even broach the topic of an endogamous marriage. Knowing that he will be called a ghost by his fellows and face eventual exile if he succeeds, he is most likely to search elsewhere for a wife. Even if he could outmanuever the girl's guardians and convince the priest to perform the marriage he would have to leave Tobi. Disowned by the girl's guardians and family and perhaps by his own as well he would have extreme difficulty in mobilizing the kinsmen upon whom a reasonable Tobian existence depends.

Tobians also operate in two other social systems besides that of their island. One of these is the community which has grown up in Eang composed of people from all four of the South West Islands. These people are but one or two generations removed from their natal islands of Sonsorol, Pulo Ana, Merir and Tobi. They have created a village and a social system based on linguistic and cultural similarities, and like the people of Tobi they are all Catholic. The other society is that of Palau.

One of the strongest elements in Palauan social organization is the Catholic Church which has considerable economic and political power despite the fact that it is

only one of many religious organizations in the district. Tobians use their Catholicism as a major dimension of identity in their interactions with both Palauans and other Southwest islanders. As fellow communicants of a universal church they have a basis for meeting and interacting with these people that is not based on invidious distinctions. This is particularly true of their interactions with Palauans. Just as a reasonable existence on Tobi demands the cooperation of one's kinsmen, a reasonable existence on Palau depends on overcoming the prejudice which Palauans exhibit toward South West Islanders.¹⁶ Education, health care and employment are concentrated in the hands of the Palauans.

The Catholic Church is virtually the only institution in which people from the Southern islands can make meaningful contacts with the people who control the levers of power and service. The church also directly binds the Southwest islanders to herself by providing some employment and education and by helping them when they run into difficulties with Palauan run institutions. All these factors mean that a young man wishing to marry a clan mate cannot simply take her to Eang and marry her outside the Church. He needs his identity as a Catholic to function adequately in the greater society in which Eang is embedded.

In effect then, the young men have no option but to comply with the clan exogamy rule. The old people control

both the women and the priests. Their control of the latter is slipping as evidenced by the recent successful completion of one of the two endo-clan marriages which have been attempted since Marino's visit. However this is not really a very hopeful precedent for the young men; it took a number of contention filled years before the two middle-aged clan mates succeeded in convincing the priest to marry them. They now live in Palau and have very little to do with any of their relatives. None of the specifics of this case are likely to be repeated soon. Indeed, the total dependency of this couple on the husband's cash income has become something of an object lesson for the young people. I am aware of one other marriage attempt by people in the same clan. It is even less likely to encourage imitation. The attempt took place during my first stay on the island. It was brought on by the girl's pregnancy. Only fifteen years old, she was still very much under the control of the people "in charge" of her--her adopted mother, her natural mother, her older brother, and the chief. Her lover was older than she was. He attempted to convince the girl's guardian that marriage would be the best solution to their ward's predicament. They agreed to this readily enough, but did not buy the rest of his argument--that he should be the one to marry her. He tried various stratagems without success. That is, he tried his "idea" (see Chapter Three). Even though

all agreed that he was a "smart" (again see Chapter Three) person, he could not find a way to gain her guardians' permission. As for his relatives, most of them were as shocked by the idea of his marriage to his clan sister as were her relatives. He did manage, via the radio, to gain the priest's blessing, but the news that the Father had agreed to marry them did not eliminate his difficulties--rather the opposite, in fact. The announcement served as a catalyst in solidifying the public opposition to his proposal. The night it became public the old women of his clan danced through the village stopping at each house in turn and singing an extremely abusive song about the couple. Obviously shaken by this totally unexpected event the young man declared himself still determined. His young lover was less staunch and from this night also opposed his plans. The child was born out of wedlock and soon died. The young man's mother was the next to die, shortly thereafter. Within a month of this loss the young man himself died of a long standing illness. This outcome is thought of as poetically just--even by the girl herself, who has gone on to enjoy a rather lively late adolescence and early adulthood. The problem of maintaining the clan exogamy rule thus hinges on the motive of the old people. Why do they persist in enforcing this rule when by doing so they will cause the extinction of the very institution which it is designed to preserve?

There is no great commitment on the part of any Tobian, either young or old, to the integrity of Tobian society. People are interested in their own fate and, to a lesser extent, in the fate of their families but the future course of their society is, to them, a matter of little concern. Therefore, when the young men point out the number of Palauan women who have been brought into Tobian society and the fact that their children have no Tobian clan, they are not appealing to a factor capable of forcing the old people into modifying the rule. A girl's guardians know that she will eventually marry someone so commitment to family is not a factor either. Finally, as people already in control of the island's resources there is not much which a girl's guardian would stand to personally gain from allowing their ward to marry a clan mate. Indeed, for these firm believers in Marino's word, they stand to lose paradise, the only reward which lies ahead of them. As people close to death they are naturally much concerned with their fate after death. And Marino not only ruled out clan exogamy but also proclaimed himself the judge of that fate. The young men are armed with statements from current, unmythologized, missionaries, but these missionaries can offer no arguments powerful enough to counter those drawn from the Marino corpus. A change in the marriage rule would require change in the Marino corpus and, as survivors of the original conversion,

the old people control that corpus. It is their memories upon which it is based and these memories are a resource in the struggle between the generations just as surely as are the women, land, and specialized knowledge also controlled by the old.

It should be pointed out that the preservation of the clan exogamy rule has certain unique characteristics. The observation that the clans will become extinct if foreign women are continually incorporated into the population has become a truism for the Tobians. However, this prediction does not appear to be well founded, at least with respect to the more populous clans. The continuity of a clan depends not on the social identity of the women married by its men but rather on the production of female children by its women, something which the current population of Tobian young women have managed to do quite successfully. Thus far all but one or two have married their fellow Tobians and have given birth to a number of female children. All of these children are full members of their mother's clans of course, as are the few children who have been born to those women out of wedlock. Therefore the biological continuity of most clans is assured for at least one more generation regardless of the fact that a number of Palauan women have married into them. The other fear expressed by the young men in their attempt to persuade the old to waive the rule appears equally unrealistic.

The foreign women who have married into Tobi have so far been mainly from inferior ranked Palauan clans. Having relatively little to lose in Palau they have rapidly and successfully assimilated into Tobian society. These women have mastered the fundamentals of their adopted culture, even including the Marino system. Although there is some difference in the speed and thoroughness with which they have been integrated, all of these women appear to be quite at home with the islanders. Children of these unions are fluent in both Tobian and Palauan and are quite bi-cultural. Their mastery of Palauan culture is the only thing that combines with their lack of Tobian clan to distinguish these children from others of their generation. Although they are genealogically half-Palauan there is certainly no evidence that Tobian culture will undergo any dramatic changes which will be directly traceable to them. Their social links to Palau through their mothers may be helpful to them in later years as they participate in district-wide institutions, and there may be a higher rate of movement out of Tobian society and into Palauan society from this group than from full-blooded Tobians. The statement that "soon there will be no more Tobians but only half-caste Palauans" may or may not be an accurate prediction. The inference that Tobi will eventually be a mere appendage of Palau appears unlikely.

Finally, it must be noted that even if all the clans were to become extinct there would be few if any

repercussions. The clans function only in the regulation of marriage. As regulators of who may marry whom they are complemented by Catholic incest regulations. Clans have no other function today, regardless of the role they may have played in the past. This statement must be qualified by the exception offered by some of the old people for whom clan affiliation provides a minor, though important, component of self identity. For all except these two or three people, who are of course the most adamant about the inviolable nature of the clans, these social units are simply groupings of people who may not marry one another. The clans have no estates and neither do they play a role in the ritual life of the island.

If clan exogamy was not unique in these ways the course of the dispute over its maintenance might have been considerably different. The incorporation of a number of Palauan women into Tobian society poses no threat to either the clans or the society as a whole. If this were not so then the young men might be able to force an abandonment of the clan exogamy rule. However, the underlying factors, in particular the young people's need to remain Catholic and the old people's control of the Marino corpus, mean that the outcome of this dispute will be dictated by the old. This is true of all disputes between the two generations involving the teachings of Father Marino. The argument over the relationship of the chieftaincy to the

church is an example of another type of dispute. Father Marino's teachings are also involved in this dispute but the parties are not divided along generational lines. There can be no final resolution of disputes of this sort because all parties have access to the Marino corpus through their older members.

Changes in the Marino system and the behaviors which it justifies are dependent on the survivors of the original conversion. If they decide, either consciously or unconsciously, to remember things differently then the system can be adapted to meet changed circumstances. Failing that decision, change must wait upon their death.

Church and Island

The questions of why the Tobians rapidly converted to Catholicism, why they appear so orthodox in their observance of Catholicism and why they are so active in its practice are three facets of a single problem. Why is Tobian religion the way it is today? The attempt to answer that question has involved a number of approaches.

Past events were presented to show the fundamental and increasing pressures to which the Tobians have been subjected. Elements of their world view were introduced in order that their response to those pressures might be clear. Thus the religious nature of the reaction to depopulation follows from the islanders' definitions of both disasters and religious ritual and the connection

assumed to exist between them. This combination of history and world view promoted rapid and unanimous conversion to Catholicism.

The apparent orthodoxy of current Tobian religious behavior can best be understood when it is realized that it is essentially an epiphenomenon. The meaning of these behavioral forms is not to be found in their content but rather in their status as validated procedures for preventing disasters and maintaining Catholic identity. Their validation is provided by the system of precepts and principles which the Tobians have constructed out of the remembered fragments of the events surrounding the work of their evangelist, Father Marino. Each of these fragments conveys meanings to the Tobians and each was examined for those meanings. Unlike other converted peoples, the Tobians have not seized upon similarities in Christian and native myths and symbols to adapt the introduced religion to its new context. Tobians have instead created a system which justifies and even compels close adherence to the new religion in a relatively unmodified form. This adherence extends to the frequency with which religious ritual is performed. This frequency is a result of a combination of ideas about the function of religion with faith in the Marino system.

Of course in both behavior and belief there have been some departures from the faith propagated by the

Vatican. To clarify these differences it is necessary to distinguish between knowledge of religious beliefs, personal commitment to those beliefs and beliefs about religion. Tobians have knowledge of most traditional Catholic beliefs. They know of the Virgin, the Trinity, papal infallibility and other Roman Catholic dogmas. They have little or no personal involvement with those beliefs and in this sense they are different from many other Catholics. Such involvement as they do show is as much an epiphenomenon of the Marino system as the constant attention to prayers, the words of which also convey no meaning to them. Tobians also have a set of beliefs about religion which are not shared by most other Catholics. These ideas about the nature and function of religion lead them to give great weight to those relatively few beliefs which they do not share with other Catholics. Their faith in Father Marino as personal savior with power over ghosts would certainly be rejected by current missionaries were they to learn of it; however, this belief is basic to the Catholicism of the islanders. The missionaries would have little success if they attempted to bring the Tobians into conformity on this point of doctrine and to eliminate Marino from his role as savior. The highly personalized view of the church taken by the islanders, which is so evident in the manner in which they dismiss the American priest's efforts to withdraw church sanction

from the clan exogamy rule, would make the attempt a contest between the present missionaries and the ever present Marino. Refusal to grant the American priest equal status with Father Marino rests upon the islanders' failure to grasp the institutional nature of the church. To them a contradiction of the Marino system by a contemporary missionary can only be resolved by balancing one priest's words against another's. Analysis of the dispute over the clan exogamy rule indicates that even when current missionaries have the support of a considerable segment of the Tobian population they may fail to modify behavior based on the Marino system. This is particularly striking because the use of the Marino system to validate the prohibition of marriage between clan mates perpetuates a rule which is felt by some to be a burden and by no one to be beneficial.

As long as the current priests do not try to tamper with the Marino system they enjoy considerable power over the Tobians. Current relations between the mission and the islanders are rather productive from the Tobian point of view. In addition to its role as a helper of individual Tobians the mission also acts in what it considers to be the best interest of the island as a whole. Frequently this involves protecting the island from the neglect of various government and commercial agencies in Koror. On occasion the mission acts to "protect the people from

themselves." A few years ago the Field Trip was a time of great liquor consumption. Sailors, Field Trip Party, passengers and host islanders all drank great quantities during the brief visit of the ship. Usually the visit was so short that the effects of all this drinking did not become apparent until after the ship departed. As mentioned in Chapter One when the ship makes a scheduled round trip from Tobi to Helen Reef and back, the priest remains on Tobi in order to get a little extra time with the people. One occasion when this occurred was also an occasion on which, for some reason, much more than the usual supply of liquor had come down on the ship. Drinking went on all night and by the next morning when the visiting priest walked to the church to hold services there were people sprawled all along the path, partially or completely sunk into drunken unconscious.¹⁷ The few children and old women who did make it to the church were soon joined by several drunken men, one of whom (a visitor from Eang) sang obscene Tobi songs all through the mass (thereby scandalizing the women tremendously).¹⁸ Despite the fact that (or maybe because of the fact) his songs were unintelligible to the priest, the latter stated that they were "the last straw(s)." Upon returning to Koror he used his influence with the District Administrator to have Tobi declared a "dry" island despite the fact that under normal circumstances a declaration by the Administrator that

liquor is banned in any given municipality depends on a majority vote by its inhabitants. The priest had acted, it was felt, for the islanders' own good.¹⁹

Change and Its Agent

Father Marino was an agent of change for the Tobians. He converted them to Christianity by offering them an escape from the paradox of formal secularism without a concomitant secularization of world view. Yet by mythologizing him the islanders have become immersed in another difficulty. In constructing an ideology out of his teachings the Tobians invented a system which responds only minimally to changes in its environment and makes of Father Marino an agent of conservation. The very institution that Marino served is powerless to adjust the system to changed realities because for the Tobians the missionary's stature does not derive from his status as a consecrated representative of the true faith. Instead the stature of Catholicism is derived from its status as the religion of Father Marino.²⁰

FOOTNOTES FOR CHAPTER TWO

1. Much of this chapter appears in my paper, "The teachings of Father Marino: Christianity on Tobi atoll" (in press) Comments and suggestions on an earlier version of this chapter were made by F. G. Bailey, J. Boutilier, S. Decktor-Korn, D. K. Jordan, R. Levy, R. McKnight, T. Schwartz, M. Spiro, and S. Tiffany.
2. Captain Fred K. Klebingat (personal communication) informed me that in the year 1907 he passed by Tobi on the vessel Anna. The vessel's master refused to stop for the canoes which set out from the island because he feared the Tobian's hostile intentions.
3. That this is not alone a Tobian characteristic is shown in the fact that, according to Ruth Underhill, Navajo people, like to tell the story of the first time their forefathers came across coffee--now a favorite drink. Assuming that the strange beans which the army had issued them were like the Mexican pinto beans they had learned to enjoy, they tried to boil them up and kept throwing away the "dirty water." (1967:124)
4. Mourning rites provide the single exception to this. They are Christian in that they are the occasion of endless prayer and at least three church services but they do not follow orthodox Catholic practice. From the canoe in which the deceased is buried and the elaborate food presentations after his funeral to the rigorous year-long taboos placed upon his close female kin these practices seem to be an amalgamation of aboriginal and Catholic ritual. It is not surprising considering what we know about Tobian ghosts that the one area of ritual activity where syncretistic forces have clearly been at work is that which is concerned with death.
5. It is rather like the situation imagined by Ruth Benedict in which her readers imitate the snake dance of the western Pueblos. It is possible that the performance would be a very close replica of the original. Its emotional significance and its functional consequences for the dancer's culture would be very different. (1932:6-7)

6. The pattern set by the first baptism still holds to some extent; i.e., a large number of the godparents of the present population are natives of the other three South West Islands. There is a competing pattern in which close relatives of one of the parents (usually the mother) stand as godparents. Tobians who are not closely related rarely act as godparents. Godparenthood is not of any great importance in Tobian social life. Other church introduced pseudo-kinship bonds, those of marriage parents, or people who stand surety for the two partners to a marriage, are occasionally activated when the priest seeks help in the reconciliation of a marriage dispute.
7. This is the opposite situation from that which existed with respect to religious practice in the years immediately preceding Marino's visit. That is, in a very simplified sense, religious practice had persisted after the "reason" for them had evaporated, until finally, like the ancient Hawaiian system of tapu, the system had collapsed of its own weight (Webb 1965). The Pre-Christian Tobian practice of serial monogamy, on the other hand, (like for example warfare in India's Kond Hills (Bailey 1960:72)) was abandoned while the "reasons" for it still obtained. Each type of change must produce its own stress.
8. This will not be the case fifteen or twenty years from now when children of recently married siblings come of age. It will be interesting to see what will happen. The prediction, of course, is that a teaching which validates cross-cousin marriage will be remembered. As with all predictions of this sort the caveat "all things being equal" applies. A much safer prediction is that all things will not be equal, that the opening up of the Tobian universe which is accelerating rapidly will continue and these children will have more exposure to the priests in Koror, and that unforeseen events will occur.
9. This system of people being "in charge" of each other is much more complex than I have presented it here. An important factor not previously mentioned is the high value placed on non-interference in other people's affairs. This is directly contrary to the ideology behind the "in charge" system and leads to many contradictions. Moreover some women, especially widows, occupy powerful political and economic positions with flair and vigor and are far from the incompetent creatures which the "in charge" system takes them to be.

10. The shouting in public of a person's dead father's name is thought to be a way to make that person crazy. Even the accidental overhearing of the name of the dead father is thought to be dangerous and likely to lead to insanity. I take this to be an indication of a belief in the existence of highly ambivalent feelings toward the father.
11. The population as a whole, however, possesses the knowledge to trace the genealogies of most people in a given clan back to a common ancestress. This was demonstrated to me when I compared the various individual genealogies that I had collected. It is possible for me, but for no individual Tobian who does not duplicate the work which I did, to construct a series of clan genealogies.
12. This was graphically illustrated in the meeting held to find the perpetrator of the attempted homicide. The meeting was held on the front steps of the church so that the angels would help the people find the truth. The fact that only church services can be held within the church is all that prevented the meeting from being held inside. The realization that the class of ghosts is not necessarily closed for all time and that additional types of beings can be added to it in the way that angels apparently were was brought home to me at that same meeting when one of the younger women, a great fan of Classic Comics, bemoaned the remoteness of the island from America in the following words: "If only we weren't so far from the States probably those fairies and elves would help us now."
13. Of course this is often thought to be a trait of all pre-scientific peoples. Ackerknecht supports the following statement by reference to the whole work of Levy-Bruhl: "There is no limit (in primitive mentality) between the natural and the supernatural. The natural is supernatural and the supernatural is quite natural." (1943:53-54)
14. Other peoples use their term for "ghost" more liberally. For example both the Chinese of Taiwan and the Navajo use it to abuse their children . . . somewhat in the way that we use the term "devil" (Jordan 1972:35) (Wyman, Hill and Osanai 1942:11). The material in the Wyman work suggests that in other respects Navajo and Tobian ghost beliefs are remarkably similar. Tobians do not call their children, "ghosts." They do use ghosts as a socialization tool. Children are constantly threatened with ghosts in order to gain compliance:

14. continued

"Nixon," (the real name of a real Tobian three year old) "come here!"

The child does not respond.

"Nixon bring me that knife,"

No response.

"Nixon there is a yarus behind you.

Yarus, Nikki, yarus!"

The child runs to his mother.

15. This is an actual quotation overhead in just this context. There is a certain element of truth here. The American priest who periodically visits the island told me that he considers life on the island difficult and that he will do anything he can to make it easier for the people. This has in the past led to his exercising a considerable degree of flexibility in permitting related people to marry. To this priest the clans are an interesting impediment in the path of the happiness of young lovers. To the occasional Palauan priest, raised in a culture which almost can be characterized as clan ridden, the notion of clan-ship makes sense and he has told me that he would like to see Tobi clans continue because they provide people with a bigger family than they ordinarily would have.

16. Palauan attitudes towards South West Islanders are complex. Operating from a position of considerable ignorance most Palauans are convinced that they are superior to the outer islanders. Tobians, like the Pygmies of the Ituri Forest, must on occasion cope with a socially dominant people on the latter's home ground. (Turnbull 1965) Like the Pygmies they are skilled at humoring their hosts in order to gain their own ends. Occasional miscalculations are made. When this happens the basic flaws in the relations between the two peoples become apparent.

The lyrics of one of the favorite Tobian dance songs are in Palauan. "Segid a diokong!", the song begins-- "Here is a tapioca plant!" The dance dates to the pre-war Japanese era. It was first performed by a Tobian dance team at a fair or carnival of a sort that the Japanese put on in Koror. The violent reaction of the Palauan audience apparently reached near riot proportions and led to the closing of the fair. This is not at all what the dancers had in mind (or so they claim today). Their miscalculation lay in making a public spectacle out of a rather

16. continued

indecent incident which was at the time only "unofficially" public. The rumored incident had to do with the daughter of a prominent Palauan family whose shame should not have been exposed in this way. Her overly intimate involvement with a tapioca root was undoubtedly the subject of much private ribald humor (neither the Palauan nor the South West Islanders are laggards in this respect). However, when the "low-born" Tobians (which is the Palauan view) paraded out into the fair's dance ground with a huge basket, set it down on the ground, pulled out a wooden replica of a monstrous tapioca root, and began an obscene dance to the words "Segid a diokong!", they had carried things much to far.

17. Drinking, on Tobi, is sporadic and depends on a number of factors. The islanders are not totally dependent on the Field Trip for alcohol since the coconut toddy they make can be brewed with little trouble into a potent beer. Regardless of the type of liquor drunk, however, the Tobian drinking pattern is to drink as much as one can as fast as one can in order to reach a state of intoxication. After this some people only drink enough to maintain this state while others continue their rapid consumption until they pass out. The first group will then slowly continue drinking, with intermittent small meals and cat naps, for days at a time--until the liquor is gone. The second group will spend some hours sleeping off the effects of the drink. When they wake up, more or less sober, they may start drinking all over again if there is anything left. Most of the drinkers are men, only one or two men do not drink. Some of the drinkers are women, but most women do not drink. The sexes never drink together. People drink in small single sex groups, people never drink alone.

This pattern, which produces occasional periods of great drunkenness on Tobi, has proven extremely maladaptive in Palau. Tobian drinking is, in essence, a supply controlled behavior--when there is liquor people drink, when it is all gone they stop. This works well enough on Tobi where the most that is ever seen are a few quarts of spirits, some cases of beer and a few liters of "hard" toddy. In Palau, with its warehouses bulging with beer and liquor, the pattern verges on the pathological. (Levy 1966)

18. This man gave some of the same women another great blasphemous shock a few years later. Years ago this man took a job with the mission. As part of the paper work involved in hiring him the priest asked him for his last name. Knowing that the priest spoke no Tobian the man carefully spelled out a name which translated means "red penis." The priest wrote it down and both parties promptly forgot it.

Over the years the man found his work at the mission, doing odd jobs and helping the priests, very enjoyable. Finally, however, the time came when he decided to quit his job at the mission in order to find work elsewhere. Therefore the priest, who had become very fond of Joseph (as I will call him) announced one Sunday to the people of Eang assembled for church, that Joseph was leaving the mission. I don't think that the priest has ever understood the shocked gasps which echoed out as he said, "So now let us pray for our brother, Joseph"

19. Since there was no local pressure to stay teetotal and since the circumstances of the priest's visit have not been repeated, the island has slowly, and unofficially, become "wet" again.
20. Marino also apparently visited Sonsorol. The story told by the Sonsorolese is as follows: Marino came at a time when Sonsorol, like Tobi was suffering from a very low fertility rate. Unlike Tobi, however, Sonsorol had had previous contact with the church. Two eighteenth century Catholic missionaries had died on the island under rather mysterious circumstances. Marino is supposed to have told the people that the reason that they had had no babies was that they had killed the previous missionaries. If they would embrace the new faith and promise the first boy born on the island to him to raise in the mission, they would start having children again. The people did as he asked, became Catholics and promised him the first son that should be born to them. Sure enough a woman was soon found pregnant and her child when it was born proved to be male. As the time grew near for his parents to send him to Koror they grew less and less enamored with the idea of losing their son. They finally decided not to send him but to keep him with them, in the hopes that he would marry one of the girls who had been born in the spate of births which followed. They were disappointed and the boy did not marry but rather died.

CHAPTER III

HOW TO DO THINGS ON TOBI

He (the ethnographer) records a boys' game on stilts as faithfully as he does the cosmogonies of . . . priests: both are part of his theme, and children at play may reveal as much of basic cultural process as does the metaphysical speculation of their elders.

(Lowie 1937:4)

Weddings and Checkers

The previous chapter contained a discussion of the trouble caused by attempts at within-clan marriages. It is not only clan mates' marriage attempts which generate conflict, however. Virtually any attempt by one Tobian to marry another is bound to cause dissension and dispute. Yet, tragically, the islanders are singularly ill-equipped to deal with marriage disputes. It is necessary to consider Tobian conflict behavior to understand why this should be so. Such an understanding can best be gained, paradoxically enough, by an examination of the way that Tobians play the game of checkers or draughts.

For our purposes the most instructive checker games to watch are those between novices (usually young people) and masters. In these games the old men show no mercy. A master tries to win the game as efficiently and as quickly as he can even if his opponent is a small child.

Footnotes for this chapter can be found between pages 291 and 299.

Tobian behavior in such situations contrasts sharply with that of Americans. An American adult playing checkers or another game with a small child tends to restrain himself--to play at less than maximum capacity. In my experience he often arranges things so that the child will "win." Questioned about this he is likely to respond that the game would not be "fun" for the child if he didn't have a chance to win. The game can get quite complicated for the adult, since he is likely to feel that it is necessary to prevent the child from perceiving what is going on. It is not fun for the child either to lose too badly or to realize that his adult opponent is "playing down" to him. I think that what lies behind this playing down is a notion that losses in a competitive situation are more than a child can deal with, that is, they are beyond his emotional capacity. There must be a more basic belief which leads Americans to this conclusion. I think that the belief that a child is incapable of dealing with losses is predicated on a belief that winning and losing reflect important inner states. To Americans, it is rational to assume that people invest heavily of themselves in a competition so that losing is therefore emotionally painful. The belief in the pleasure or pain involved in the possible outcomes of a game of competition is related to the belief in what we can call high ego involvement in these games, that is the wins or losses are

thought to be felt as judgements about some aspect of the player's worth as a person. For games such as checkers, the important variable which it is thought is being measured is intelligence. The belief system so roughly sketched in above finds no parallel on Tobi.

A Tobian adult does not "play down" to his child opponent. But neither does he lose patience with the child as the evening wears on as would all but an exceptional American adult. He appears happy to play the game as often as the child wishes. The belief about the game is not that it is a test of intelligence but rather that it is an exercise in the comparative mastery of checker strategy. Thus there is no emphasis on wins and losses as measures of worth; they are not thought to be felt deeply. In both the American and Tobian cases I believe that the beliefs are accurate and reflect a real difference in the amount of involvement people feel toward the games. Mainstream Americans, as a rule, do seem to internalize wins and losses much more than do Tobians and Tobian children appear to have no difficulty accepting defeats--at least in checker games.

Among other things, this chapter will attempt to show that on Tobi competition, like most if not all of social life, is thought to be acted out according to stereotypic patterns or routines. Another belief is that wins and losses are reflections of the comprehensiveness of

one's knowledge of the routines and the skill with which one plays them out, and do not speak of inner states such as intelligence or worthiness. The result is that when a Tobian is faced with a loss, either of a piece of land or a political office, he does not react with rage or depression but immediately begins planning new moves for reversing the outcome. Similarly a winner does not rest content with his spoils but immediately begins planning ways to defend them. The outcome of a dispute is always felt to be reversible; the novice always wants to play another game.

There is one important class of disputes which does not follow this pattern. The result of a dispute between two or more men wishing to marry the same woman is thought to be much more permanent than outcomes over political office or land. This is a result of the Marino derived insistence on the permanence of the marriage bond discussed in Chapter Two. The chances of marrying a given woman, once she has married a rival are today much less than they were in pre-Christian times when marriages were extremely unstable. Today the only possibility for a reversal of the outcome is the death of her husband, freeing her to remarry. From the winner's point of view, the outcome of the dispute is final, from the loser's point of view a reversal of that outcome is out of his hands (short of committing murder). The acquisition of a mate

is a serious problem for a Tobian. The interplay of aboriginal and church incest rules combined with the vagaries of demographic events at the current low point in the population curve has produced a situation in which the field of choice for a mate seeker is limited and there is considerable overlap in those fields from one seeker to another. To repeat--the problem is only secondarily one of acquiring a sexual partner, since it is not necessary to be married to find such a person. The primary reason which people give for their search for a mate is the necessity of establishing a joint household for the enactment of all the roles attached to being a fully fledged, competent and independent adult. For men especially, there is no possibility of playing the role of fully competent adult without an independent household. Acquiring a mate is therefore a serious, difficult and inevitably competitive process. It is also the only competitive process of this order in which the outcome approaches finality. For these reasons (especially I think the last) disputes between mate seekers are the most explosive disputes on Tobi today. There have been only three or four "unnatural deaths" on Tobi since the time of Father Marino. All but one of these were directly related to disputes over women.¹ There are other issues about which people feel deeply, but it is only in the case of a dispute over a mate that a loss is seen as final. It

does not appear that the competitors are prepared by their culture for this type of loss. On both the individual and cultural level there exists the pattern of non-permanent outcomes. Wins and losses are not felt deeply because they are thought to be the reversible outcomes of learnable routines. Marriage disputes are the sole outcomes which do not have post outcome routines attached to them, since by definition, the outcomes are irreversible.²

Thus far in Tobi's Catholic history no marriages have been annulled by the church. If this were to happen I would predict that the priest would find himself inundated with confidential information designed to invalidate most of the marriages on Tobi. In other words a routine would shortly be worked out to reverse the outcome of most of the marriage contests.

In this chapter I shall consider some of the Tobian routines for such things as acquiring a wife. On page 197 I offer a definition of "routine" and a discussion of what I mean by the term. At this point, therefore I shall simply say that they are similar to what Kluckhohn and Kelly called "explicit and implicit designs for living" (1976:198). Like all designs, they exist only in a potential state and are approximated more or less closely by those who try to follow them. In this sense the Tobians are far from "passive porters of a cultural tradition" (Dollard 1939). The knowledge of the routines

for most behavior is shared by most people. Very frequently they are predicated on the actions and reactions of another. Routines can be "complementary" or "symmetrical" (Bateson 1958). Frequently but not always they mesh together in such a way that the various actors find their beliefs about themselves, each other, and the world at large strengthened. This "benevolent collusion" Schwartz (MS(b):33) is not typical of all routines however, and occasionally as in marriage disputes these beliefs are undercut.

A number of the older Tobian men are extremely skillful players of the game of checkers. Their skill lies in their mastery of the strategies which, in the hands of an expert, always yield wins. The only exceptions are games between two master players. Unless someone makes a mistake such games always end in draws.

The game is usually played in the evening, in one of the places where people tend to gather for a few hours of relaxation before settling down for the night. These places enjoy periodic popularity. They include the meeting house, the dispensary, the copra warehouse, various canoe houses and platforms built along the beach. Usually only one, and never more than two, of these places is popular at any given time so that checker games played in these settings are assured of an audience. Almost every checker game which I witnessed or took part in was played in the midst of an audience. The exceptions were all games

played in the same settings late in the evening after most of the audience had gone to sleep.

It is by playing game after game with the masters that the novice learns the way to win at the game of checkers. Since the checker strategies are complex and difficult, involving the application of principles in a wide variety of situations the mastery of checkers can take years. However, the main reason that the checker strategies take so long to learn is that they are only rarely taught by direct tuition.

Masters play checkers with novices. All games are characterized by each player loudly slapping down his tiles and muttering a steady stream of comments: "So you want to go there!" for example. The master plays rapidly, displaying no hesitancy about his moves. The novice attempts to mimic this style but is soon bogged down by the task of deciding which piece to sacrifice next, for he is quickly placed on the defensive. When the final move is made and the master has won the explanations may begin. The master recounts the game, detailing the mistakes his opponent made. He does not tell the novice (and indirectly the audience) why a given move was a mistake, he just tells him that he should not have moved from point "a" to point "b" when he did. Often the novice is not given even this minimal feedback. When the master player does analyze the game in this way it is clear from his

comments that his belief--shared by all--is that there is a strategy for the game's performance which ensures that one who has learned it will not lose so long as he does not err. As a game between two master players shows this is in fact an accurate perception.

There is one context in which a master will attempt to transmit the strategy as a strategy. This is when he is teaching a young child, always a close relative, how to play. In this case the master will attempt to show the youngster the way to play the game. He gives the youngster the set of rules which are thought to underline the strategy.³ There is a small irony here. For reasons which will be dealt with below, only small children can be routinely instructed in a direct manner in a non-school setting. Yet these children are not yet in possession of the cognitive capacity to master the checker strategies. By the time they have matured enough to have acquired the capacity to learn the strategy they are too old to be given this type of instruction, and must rely on the indirect learnings from the occasional analysis of a game offered by a master.

Routines: Recipes for Action

Conflict strategies exist for a whole range of situations besides checker games. I first became aware of them when, as part of my research on Tobian aggression, I presented a carefully selected sample of the islanders

with the task of completing a set of brief stories.⁴ The test was designed to elicit a series of comparable hostile feelings sorted along age and sex lines. Therefore, all the partial stories involved "typical" conflict situations. They all had to do with incidents which Tobian common sense knows to be potentially disruptive of social harmony.

To my dismay it soon became apparent that the test was unsuitable for the purpose which I had in mind. Instead of producing the desired results the test seemed to generate a conformity which I knew, from other more persuasive evidence, was masking a good deal of difference in the ways that Tobians of varying age and experience both reacted to and expressed aggression. However, in seeking to explain to myself what had gone "wrong" so as to salvage as much as possible from the ruins of the experiment I began to see that there might be some useful things after all to be learned from the endings which the Tobians had provided to the stories.

This insight sprang from the fact that, even though the partial stories had been presented with the informant himself as the main actor, in their answers people almost invariably transformed the story into a discussion of ideal behavior. "Someone stole food from your house and you know that it was a child who did it and you know who its father and mother are. What do you do?" I asked each person. "In such circumstances the people of this island

do nothing. If it is the first time, they just wait and see if the people in charge of that child punish it." I was answered again and again.

By choosing such terms as "the people of this island" people obviously choose to distance themselves from the story completion test. There could be many reasons for this. Perhaps they felt threatened, perhaps they did not want to seem overly conflictful, perhaps they did not want to assume full responsibility for their answers, perhaps they misunderstood the task and conceived of it as a challenge to their knowledge of Tobian culture. Yet there must be more to it than this. For there exists a precondition for making a statement such as: "In such circumstances the people of this island do this and this" or "In that event we do such and such" (which was another common phrase). Regardless of the motives for their utterance, they all depend on a perception of social life which focuses on shared behavior and not idiosyncratic inner states. Such phrases are statements that the informant's repertoire of behavior in conflictful situations is shared by his fellow islanders. These statements became more interesting when they were validated by the results of the test. There was indeed a great deal of uniformity in the ways that people said such conflicts are dealt with. Problems of adultery and land ownership as well as the more trivial incidents of everyday life elicited very similar

responses, indicating standardized knowledge of appropriate behavior.

In my search for information on Tobian psychological organization I had come across an important class of cultural phenomena. For the stereotyped schemes for meeting various sorts of trouble are representative of a middle range of Tobian socio-cultural experience, being neither belief nor behavior but mediating between them. I call items from this class "routines."

I have tried a whole series of other words to name what I mean by the word routine but they all have proved inadequate. Custom, for example, is quite close to what I mean but it conveys more than a hint of the static and impersonal which I wish to avoid. Similar considerations weigh against the use of the word tradition. For routines can be, and often are, invented and disseminated today as well as inherited from the past. The term ritual, especially as used by Goffman (1967) could be used except for the fact that routines can be, and often are, free of the esoteric and/or sacred tones which even Goffman has not succeeded in removing from "ritual." Schieffelin (1976) adopts the word scenario to cover somewhat similar range of phenomena but this term, as he uses it, does not convey the goal-directed quality which "routine" implies and which is an important component of the concept. The word scenario also conveys a certain theatrical quality which, with its associations

of artificiality, is quite the opposite of what I mean by routine. The word plan certainly conveys the goal directed nature of routines but it also calls to mind two other meanings which are not necessarily what I want to convey. These are individuality and rationality. The term "plan," along with other terms such as "strategies" or "tactics" implies a focus on individually created sequences of logically related operations. Such things can become routines, if they are shared by a number of people, but they are not, in themselves routines. Furthermore, many routines do not share with plans the characteristic of rationality. They are purposive, certainly, in that they are felt to be the ways to get things done, or, (and this is better phrasing), to do things, but the progression from step to step may follow the rules of (for example) symbolism rather than reason.⁵

Victor Turner has elaborated over the last twenty years a theory of social phenomena which speaks to an aspect of what I am trying to develop here. In particular, his concept of social drama, expressed most clearly perhaps in his essay "Social Drama and Ritual Metaphors" (1974:23-59), bears some resemblance to my concept of "routine." However the differences between the two are significant enough to override those resemblances. Routines are not a kind of social drama, nor are social dramas a kind of routine. Both are species (to use Turner's metaphor) of

the genus "processual unit" (1974:33). Social dramas are seen in "public episodes of tensional irritation" and they are thus closely related to conflict. Routines, which are not necessarily out of the awareness of the actors, are just as likely to lead people into co-operative endeavors as into conflict.

Although I am far from happy with the term, disliking especially its secondary meaning of "dull" or "unsurprising" I am forced for want of an alternative to retain the word "routine" in the discussion which follows.

Routines, then, are shared prescriptions or recipes for action. They mediate between belief and behavior, being based on the former and underlying the later. They can be of either recent or ancient origin, they can guide behavior either trivial or profound and either sacred or secular, and they are goal directed.⁶ It may be objected that the data presented so far in support of the existence of these routines are not sufficiently compelling. Although further evidence will be presented below, it seems to me that the responses to the conflict story test are in themselves, persuasive. It could be argued that the informants presented their routines in an impersonal and uniform fashion because they defined their role in the unique test interaction as informants on "Tobian Culture." Thus they told me not what they would do in the situation but what they thought Tobian customs dictated. If this were so it

would not weaken the argument however, since I am here concerned not with actual behavior but, in fact, with just that--Tobian customs or at least a subset of them.

Whether or not the people are all cultural automatons, having internalized these customary routines so deeply that they mindlessly act them out is not the issue here. The fact that the informants could describe behaviors as if they were customary and reach a good deal of agreement among themselves indicated to me that (1), these routines are thought to be shared and (2), this belief is largely correct.

I find this concept of the performance of masterable behavioral routines helpful in thinking about Tobian behavior.

Routines and Cooperation: Thatching

I now turn to a discussion of cooperation, which is also approached through shared routines. In particular I wish to discuss the thatching parties which are periodically mounted and invariably carried through (with difficulty) to successful completion. Therefore, the reader should bear in mind that actual thatching parties can vary from the way they "ought" to happen in a number of ways.

A man sees that his roof will need to be replaced in the near future. He makes arrangements to build up a supply of cigarettes, and checks to see if the women of his

household have stored up enough pieces of prepared thatch to re-cover the house. If he estimates there is not enough thatch on hand he sets everyone under his control to making more. He has to do this in as indirect way as possible since people, even small children, take great umbrage at direct orders. If he thinks the amount of coconut fiber (sennit) twine (or coir) on hand is insufficient he either asks a senior relative to give him some or begins himself to make more.⁷ He tells the women of the household what he plans to do and checks to see if they have ready for harvesting sufficient taro to feed the expected crowd. When all is in readiness he lets it be known that on such and such a day (typically five or six days from the time of the, again indirect, announcement) he will begin taking the old thatch off his roof.

The day before the big day he and his sons go fishing and the women of the household harvest taro. The whole day is spent in the preparation of food and in the final checking of supplies. Everyone of the household helps. So do close female kin and special friends of the women from other households. Rumors are collected and sorted out to determine who will actually be coming to help. The next day, very early, the men again go out fishing. Back at the house close male kin and special friends of the household's men may stop by to drop off fish on their way home from fishing. (As a general rule of

life on Tobi one can never have too much fish.) About eight o'clock or so people start to show up at the house. The close female kin and special friends of the women pitch in to help with the actual cooking.

The men begin by stripping the old thatch off the roof. The wooden roof frame is checked, rotten pieces are replaced as are any pieces of rotten lashing. Most of the helpers then start to tie the new thatch onto the roof. One or two men stay on the ground to throw the pieces of thatch up to the men perched on the rafters. The owner of the house stays on the ground. He supervises the boys who carry out the new thatch to be tossed up to the thatchers. He also supervises the women cooking the food for the feast. Perhaps "watches over" is a better term than "supervises" for the cautious manner in which he occasionally questions his wife about the progress of the food. His primary activity, however, is supplying the thatchers with cigarettes and drink--sugar water or cold tea and milk, or coconuts. There is usually a small boy who does the actual distribution of these items.

The problem for the house owner is to make sure that the thatchers are content by giving them enough cigarettes, while at the same time making sure that the supply of cigarettes does not run out. A canoe house can take two full days of work to finish. Each man who works on the job expects at least one pack of cigarettes to take home when

the job is done. Therefore the management of the supply is no easy task. It is made easier by having a small boy as the person who actually passes out the smokes. He will not give out any unless ordered by the houseowner--usually his father.

The owner can wait until he feels that the thatchers are anxious for their cigarettes and then shout at the small boy to hurry up and pass out some cigarettes. "Can't you see those men need cigarettes?" he might yell. "What's the matter with your head that you are just sitting there when these hard working people need to smoke (or drink)." The message, which fools no one, runs: "Don't be mad at me because you are not getting enough to smoke, it is this small boy's fault." If he is miserly with the cigarettes he will be embarrassed by the men working on the house who will loudly chant "Tabaka, tabaka give us tabaka." When the job is finished the men eat the food prepared by the women. Each man receives in addition some cigarettes and a package of food to take home.

There are a number of interesting things which can be said about these thatching parties. The most important consideration is the generosity of the house owner. It is said that the reason people will come to help someone rethatch his house is that they want the cigarettes and food. To the observer it seems obvious that the work which people put in on one another's' houses is in the nature of

an investment. Everyone has the periodic need of everyone else's help since everyone has thatch that must be replaced every five years or so. The nature of the work requires that all able bodied men be on hand for each major job. It would not just take longer for two or three men to do it on their own, the fact is that they could not do it at all. Rethatching requires at least seven men for a middle size structure and at least a dozen for a major structure such as a canoe house. At any one time the able bodied men on the island are not likely to total more than twelve. It is for this reason that the two largest structures on the island (the church and the meeting house) have recently been roofed with sheet metal--there were simply not enough men left to maintain their thatch roofs. Even middle sized structures such as canoe houses require that some men who are not, in fact, all that "able bodied" help in thatching. Some quite elderly old men take part in these jobs today.⁸ It seems to me that the combination of kinship obligations, reciprocity, and reputation are sufficient to attract the requisite number of people for any given rethatching. However, the islanders do not see things in this way.

Tobians say that it is necessary to make sure that the people doing the work are "happy." They believe that the happiness of the work party is maintained by the "presents" which are customarily given out on those occasions.

The nature of the work is such that it is difficult, if not impossible, to tell, once the job is finished, who stitched on a given piece of thatch. This is important because it frees the individual worker to sabotage the job anonymously. It is believed that this is what will happen if the workers are not "happy." Tobians say that if the owner is miserly and does not pass out enough tobacco then the thatchers will get angry and do a bad job on the roof, fixing it so that it will leak and have to be replaced.⁹

If one makes it to their direct self interest, one can achieve an impressive degree of cooperation from one's fellows. Providing the rewards are immediate enough people can be gotten to help one another. However, if expectations of rewards are not met then one can expect to meet with anger and punishment. The rewards are not only necessary to get people to show up, but even more to get them to do a good job. My suspicion is that this belief does not reflect reality very directly. I think that considerations of kinship, reciprocity and reputation are enough not only to insure that people will help in these tasks but also that they will do good work.

It is not the case, however, that the thatching parties go smoothly, in fact they are always scenes of dissension. Fortunately for the roofless houseowner, however, a system has been worked out to prevent the

outright breakdown of these workcrews. An important point to be born in mind is that all the adult and near adult men are equally knowledgeable and almost equally skilled at this task. They have all thatched many, many roofs, a task which in any event is not very difficult.

I have observed many thatching parties on Tobi. When I was first on the atoll and neither spoke nor understood Tobian I was impressed by what I perceived as the extreme hostility which the normally pleasant spoken men displayed on these occasions. I felt that there must be a great deal of subsurface hostility to cause the men to speak (or rather shout) in such harsh sounding tones as they crouched high up on a roof beam, knitting together a new roof. However, as I learned the language I discovered that the men were not yelling curses and imprecations at each other but only simple instructions; things like "that piece goes the other way," or "hurry up, I am getting ahead of you." At this point I felt that my earlier perception was incorrect and that there was just some quirk of Tobian shouting style or perhaps the rather unliquid language itself that made the thatchers sound so contentious. Finally, as I achieved some understanding of the ways things are learned on Tobi I began to see that my original, uninformed impression was probably correct after all. For if the only people who are normally given direct instructions are children, and the notion of

adulthood is positively valued, then to give an adult direct instructions is to act toward him in a hostile manner. The message within the shouted instruction of "tie it this way" is, "You incompetent!" And since competence is a valued trait the essence of the message is "I don't like you."¹⁰

The men on the roof doing the actual lashing on of thatch are likely to be a mix of young beginners and older men, fully adult and highly skilled. The younger men are very concerned to sit next to their friends of the moment who are likely (but not necessarily) to be age mates. Since friendship is a purely dyadic relationship on Tobi, the final arrangement of men on the roof consists of pairs of young friends scattered through a mix of unattached young and old men. But the job requires cooperation between adjacent individuals regardless of whether they are working on the same piece of thatch or not.

The lashing on of new thatch occurs in rows and columns. All men at any one time are working on the same horizontal row, and pairs of men are responsible for each vertical column. However, the columns must overlap to get a sealed, water-proof roof. Therefore each pair of young friends cannot work in isolation, they must coordinate their activities with the men to their immediate left and right.

Young men, when paired with friends, engage in a great deal of horseplay. The physical component of this behavior is rather confined when they are working thatch due, naturally enough, to the restrictions of both the work itself and its location high above the ground. Verbal witticisms, however, are not diminished at all, in fact they occur with greater frequency in the thatching context than in almost any other. Working thatch is a male activity and like all male activities is characterized by scatological and sexual profanities.¹¹ The jokes of the young men are heavily weighted in this direction.

Any old man who is so unfortunate as to be sitting next to one of these pairs is likely to become a target for this not very subtle abuse. Old men too make scatological and sexual jokes about their fellow workers, but they have a nice feeling for the tolerable limits of such abuse, and very rarely violate them. The young men claim equal status with their elders by acting as the old ones do. But, due to imperfect skill, youthful enthusiasm, and mutual reinforcement, they always carry things too far. Young men's jokes very rapidly spiral off into overly personal abuse, usually of one of the old men sitting near them who are the handiest targets. These are the same old men with whom the jokers must cooperate to get the job done. The old man retaliates by telling the young men what to do--by instructing them in thatching. In

effect, the old one denies the status claims of the youths. By telling them directly what to do the old man is saying that the young men are still children.

The young men's jokes get more savage and they even reply by giving the old man instructions. Eventually a shouting match takes place with both parties, (the pair of friends on one hand and the old man on the other) screaming instructions at each other. Since the jokes which trigger these scenes are not spoken in a whisper, almost all the workers can hear them. Although these jokes are usually crude and not very amusing occasionally (more by sheer random chance than anything else--out of so many attempts there are bound to be some successes) a genuinely funny (to the Tobians) comment will emerge. When this happens the whole work party explodes with laughter.

The joke is repeated for those who missed it the first time, embellished and saved to replay in the evening. If it was one of the jokes which the young men had been making about one of the old men, its target reacts by ranting against the whole crew. He denigrates the quality of the work that is being done and tells everyone how to do it better. One or more of the other old men inevitably responds in kind and soon a shouting match is under way. I once saw two old and near-blind grandfathers, sitting at either end of a roof, screaming instructions at each other despite the fact that neither had any real idea of what the

other was doing. It is at this point that the alert house-owner intervenes by ordering the small boy (wide eyed and awestruck) to pass out cigarettes. The episode concludes and, after a brief rest, thatching is begun again, shortly to be punctuated by jokes from the young men, instructions from the old and possibly another yelling incident.

It did not take me long to realize that joking was the only skill in which the young roofers were deficient. That is, thatching skills, like all those in the public domain, are learned in a much less painful manner than joking skills.

A roof being rethatched is surrounded by a flock of young children, who help where they are able and spend the rest of their time running and shouting around the building. They are not given any instruction as a group about the techniques of thatching but through propinquity, observation and discussion they do absorb quite a bit of the knowledge involved in the skill. A relatively small boy is perfectly capable of discussing the fine points of a new roof. Elders take such discussions quite seriously, and are willing to treat the boys' statements with respect.

Occasionally a father will attempt to teach his son how to thatch. Such instruction invariably occurs when the relations between the two have become closer and warmer than usual. A small boy receiving such instruction is barely able to contain his joy. He tries manfully to act

and speak in as matter-as-fact a way as possible but it is clear that he views the instruction as a special mark of his father's esteem and affection. By the time a boy reaches puberty he need only practice to make himself almost as good a thatcher as an adult man. He then acquires thatching experience on various small structures.

A person who needs a new roof on his cookhouse or copra dryer tells a dependent adolescent boy to call his friends to come and help. These events are not full fledged thatching bees, and do not require the distribution of food and cigarettes (the boys are considered too young to smoke in any event). They are provided with drinking coconuts and may be invited to join the family meal when they are finished. The boys jump at the chance to thatch a roof and the owner never has any trouble getting enough boys to do the rather small amount of work involved.

Clearly then, the instructions bandied about by the old men when rethatching are not needed by the young men and the feeling on Tobi is that any one with as much experience as one of the young men would have to be pretty dull to still need instructions. Why, then, do the young men (or the old men for that matter) not walk off the job in anger or in hurt? In all of the thatching parties which I witnessed and took part in only once did anything of this nature occur.

We were nearly finished replacing the roof on a canoe house one day when one of the young men, in a burst of exuberance asked loudly where "Short Penis" was. Unfortunately the person so referred to was not out of hearing as the youth had thought. This old man, the shortest adult on the island, stalked home in a towering rage. After the roof had been thatched and we were enjoying our hard earned fish and taro and contemplating our gifts of tobacco, all agreed with the (sotto voce) comment of the house owner's brother: "Too bad Short Penis, you really lost out." The role of the food and the tobacco distributed during thatching parties is crucial in gaining cooperation, at least in the Tobian analysis. It is appropriate therefore to consider the role of tobacco in more detail.

Although our notion of cigarettes as oral gratification is entirely unknown on Tobi, I do not think the equivalence which is sometimes drawn by people in our culture between cigarettes and "pacifiers" would seem entirely alien to the islanders. If people are "happy" they will work together well; one makes them "happy" by giving them gifts. Cigarettes are the main currency of esteem and the main medium for conveying affection on Tobi. More than this they are the major way of showing that acceptable relations obtain between individuals. Even people who do not like each other at all and who are at

odds over some piece of property will share tobacco. This is related to the belief that the individual is master of his emotions and capable of keeping channels open even to enemies (who may be allies tomorrow) and to the idea that good relations ought to obtain between all Tobians.

The punctuation of escalating (disguised) quarrels on roofs or elsewhere with cigarettes depends on their use as both symbolic and actual pacifiers (these people are heavy and passionate smokers). The symbolic aspect refers not only to the use of cigarettes as markers of esteem and affection but also to the fact that as soon as the roof is finished everyone will get a quantity of tobacco and food. A competent man would not want to jeopardize his chance at these rewards by allowing his temporary anger to place him in a position where he had to leave the job early. Thatching parties usually take place sometime after the field trip, when stocks of tobacco are running low. Therefore, the rewards of working are more than merely symbolic, they can mean the difference between smoking and not smoking for a number of people. No one who has viewed the mournful aspect of life on Tobi when tobacco supplies run out could doubt that in one sense at least the people are correct in saying that a person needs cigarettes to be happy.

Of course the mournful mein of a tobaccoless Tobian is only partially due to withdrawal from an addictive substance. Because cigarettes do symbolize

hospitality and generosity, a tobaccoless person finds himself without the small change of sociability, and has to resort to more painfully acquired and more meaningful symbols of good feeling in his communication with others.

A person without cigarettes is often caught in a dilemma. He feels the impulse (for whatever reason) to make a gesture of support towards a fellow (or to at least communicate that the relationship between them is tolerable to him). Having no cigarettes to offer he is forced to choose between asking the other party to partake of his food (which may be inconvenient for both practical and symbolic reasons) or doing nothing. On Tobi, to ask someone to eat your food is saying much more positive things about the quality of your relationship with him than is the mere offer of a cigarette. Since the idea is that tobacco is a substance that makes people happy it follows that to give someone tobacco is to make him happy. For physiological reasons we can grant the accuracy of this statement because these people are addicts. Making people happy is an activity which is appropriate in a wide variety of contexts. Not having cigarettes to give leads to stress for the individual. Not being given cigarettes in contexts in which they are customary (mini-) presentations also leads to stress, and, more to the point, anger and resentment. If the thatchers do not feel they are getting "enough" cigarettes, and if they know that enough are

available (or reasonably could be) they will not be happy and will not do a good job.¹²

To sum up then: rethatching a major structure is the sole repetitive context in which cooperation is successfully achieved among large numbers of people. Through the use of cigarettes and food the pressures toward fragmentation and hostility are contained. These pressures are generated in part by the high value placed on individual autonomy and self reliance. I have noted that the main catalyst in producing disaffection between workers is the joking behavior of the pairs of young friends. It is obvious that there is a good deal of hostility across generational lines. As I pointed out in Chapters One and Two there are several identifiable reasons for this, reasons which can be summed up as the perception by the young that the old are hindering the adaptation of the island to its changed circumstances. It is not necessary, however, to appeal to such consideration in explaining why it is that the young men succeed in antagonizing the old.

The way to prove manhood (read autonomy and self reliance) on Tobi is to act as a man. Men joke at each other's expense. Young men want to be thought of, and treated as, men. Therefore they joke in a "manly" manner. Due to their inexperience, and perhaps a predisposition against granting their status claims on the part of the

old men, they give offense and trigger the anger of the old ones. If an old man does not want to grant adult status to a young man then he cannot accept adult jokes from him--children joke with their elders but never in a scatological or obscene manner. His reaction is to feign anger, just the way he would if the young man had been a small boy--the feigning of anger is a heavily used socialization technique. The young men react to this by escalating their jokes, making them more scatological and more obscene until they finally succeed in throwing the old man into a state of rage. The old man, in turn attacks the young men's claims to adult status in as direct a way as possible; he tells them what to do. He implies that they have yet to master the simple adult skills involved in thatching. We have seen that, due to the ways in which this skill is transmitted, the instructions by the old men can only be taken as a statement that the young men are not very bright, i.e., that they are lacking in that capacity to learn by indirection which is the hall-mark of a fully adult Tobian. Thus the old man's angry instruction of the young denies their status claims in at least two ways. There is a further message in that instruction which, I think also may be of some importance.

It will be remembered that fathers occasionally do teach their young sons how to thatch and that the sons apparently consider such instruction the mark of special

affection. I do not think it is unreasonable to speculate that a denial of a young man's capacity to thatch is also a statement to the effect that his father has no regard for him. Obviously, if this is true it constitutes a major attack on the young man. Before leaving this topic I must mention one further fact. The dearth of able bodied men not only means that people who are "too old" must work on the job, but also that people who are "too young" must climb the roof. There are three or four boys on Tobi who are regular helpers in the thatching parties but who are too young to smoke. They are given packs of cigarettes after the job to take home. Since they are all well known secret smokers they are usually closely monitored by people in charge of them to see that they do not get cigarettes to keep. The cigarettes they get from thatching, however, are theirs to smoke (in secret)--the guardians "forget" to ask them. They are also given cigarettes during the distribution while the job is in progress. These they take great delight in lighting and then passing along to older relatives.

Thatching can be compared with two other sets of routines. Since it involves a skill which is acquired in a manner typical of all skills found in the public domain (of which more later) its performance can with profit be compared to other routines which involve such skills, for example, fishing. Since thatching demands that almost all

people on the island cooperate regardless of other considerations it is also worthwhile to compare it with other contexts in which cooperation is desired. I shall take these two topics in order, beginning with a brief description of fishing on Tobi, then proceeding to a discussion of the ways in which fishing skills are acquired and finally moving to a consideration of fishing disputes. I shall then begin a discussion of cooperation on Tobi.

Fishing and Thatching Compared

There are 53 fishing techniques currently known on Tobi. These techniques are the result of the differential combination of a small set of variables (such things as bait, line, hook, time of year and time of day, water conditions, location etc.). The fishing techniques are privately owned by men. Some of them are widely owned, others are owned by only one or two men. The more difficult a given technique is, the fewer the people who own it. This is somewhat like academic degrees in our culture. Many people own high school diplomas, relatively few own Doctorates. It is a little more complicated on Tobi because there are not even the symbolic pieces of paper which we use to mark ownership of the expertise involved in obtaining a degree. What is owned is pure knowledge.¹³ It is not the case that ownership of the more widely known techniques is only partially located in each person who knows it any more than it is the case that everyone with a high school

diploma is owner of a portion of it in our culture. Each person has a kind of "fee simple" ownership of the techniques which he has legitimately acquired. It is here that the ownership of knowledge differs from the ownership of property. If it were money for example that was being discussed here instead of knowledge, then the principle could not work. Obviously, a number of people could not have clear title to the same money. The title either would have to be shared among them or the decision would have to be made that one person really owned it and the rest had false titles.

It is interesting to note that on Tobi virtually the only things which are owned outright are non-material. Medicinal recipes, songs, fishing techniques, all are privately owned. Material items (everything from gardens to home sites, to clothes and cigarette lighters) are much less firmly tied to the individual. People claim ownership of these items but these claims are always subject to challenge, or at the least to dilution by competing claims of kinship. A person may own a piece of land but if his sister wants to build a house on it he inevitably gives it to her either as an outright gift or as a loan for as long as she needs it. Although a person will treat a sister without charge if she is sick and he knows a medicine which will cure her, he will not teach it to her, i.e., he will

not "give" it to her. There is no expectation that he will and she would not even think of asking him.

The acquisition of title to privately owned technologies, is ideally, almost always the result of instruction by the father. Still speaking in an ideal sense, the (seldom used) routine for obtaining knowledge which the father does not have is to humble oneself before one of the people who do have it and ask to be taught the skill. This procedure involves the establishment of a master-apprentice relationship in which the apprentice is required to provide the master with food as well as certain benefits specific to each domain of knowledge which is being transmitted. There is an apparent mix of roles in this latter situation.

The applicant's demeanor is essentially childlike-- which is in accord with the relation between direct tuition and childishness. However, the successful applicant (one who has been accepted as a student) provides food and other benefits. This is at first glance the reverse of what it should be since fathers provide food to children on Tobi. This is one of the most basic axioms of Tobian social thought.¹⁴ The incongruity is only apparent however. We have seen how the notion of direct reward is important in achieving compliance, and it is reasonable to say that for the Tobians it is necessary to keep the instructor "happy" so that he will teach the

apprentice the "truth." This can be done with food and other gifts. Furthermore, although it is true that to give food is to act as an adult, it is also true that to give food is on some occasions to act as an offspring. Grown children are thought to be responsible for feeding their parents. One of the signs of retirement from many of the islands affairs is the gradual dependence on one's children for food.¹⁵ The two phases of the behavior of a knowledge seeker parallel the maturation of a child.

So far I have been speaking of the ideal ways that privately owned knowledge, including fishing lore, is transmitted. One learns it either from one's father or from someone with whom one interacts as though he were the father. In actuality the process is somewhat different and only partially adheres to the pattern of how things ought to happen.

Those fishing techniques which are widely owned are learned more or less informally and indirectly. That is, they are learned as thatching techniques are learned. These popular techniques are not only the most widely known, they are also the easiest and the most widely practiced. Young boys have plenty of chances to witness the preparations which fishermen make to carry them out. They also have plenty of opportunity to overhear discussions about them. This is because these are the techniques which youths only a little older than themselves are

beginning to use. Things have not always been so relaxed for apprentice freshmen. Several grizzled old master fishermen seem to take a perverse delight in reviewing the ardors of their training and in pointing out the deficiencies in the preparation of their younger compatriots.

In the pre-modern scheme of things boys went through a long and rigorous training before they mastered the total corpus of fishing techniques to which they could legitimately aspire. Indeed, it was not until a man was well into what we consider as middle age that he could even begin to be considered a maruset or master fisherman. Informants report that a boy would begin his fishing career in the company of a group of boys of his own age. They would gather on the reef at low tide and, using very small unbaited hooks and extremely fine line, try to catch the tiny fish which live in tidepools on the reef. These boys, averaging seven or eight years of age, would be restricted to this type of fishing for three or four years until they had achieved its total mastery. Men who had followed the traditional learning scheme in their own childhood emphasize that this time was necessary not in order to catch these very insignificant fish but to learn patience and the habits of fish.

The first stage was followed by a graduated series of steps all involving the use of poles, hooks and lines.

The final stage in this period, when the boys had reached their late adolescence, involved learning how to cast out onto the open sea to catch some of the large fish which live on the outer edge of the reef. This was the first time that the boy engaged in a fishing technique which was routinely used by adult fishermen. All the preceding stages were practice stages, just as the roofing of a cook-house is a practice step in learning how to thatch.

The final stage in the boys' learning program is analogous to the first time that a young man actually climbs a roof and helps to rethatch it. There are differences between the two sets of learning, of course. The aboriginal program for learning to fish was much more elaborated than that for thatching. This is not unrelated to the fact that fishing is a much more complex activity than thatching. However, the major difference is that fishing is only exceptionally a communal activity while thatching always requires the achievement of a high degree of cooperation.

The aboriginal procedure by which a boy learned fishing exists today in only an attenuated version. Young boys are encouraged to fish on the reef for small fish.¹⁶ They tend to do this in small groups of three or four. There is nothing like the rigidity in approach which older people maintain used to exist. Boys do this kind of fishing because they want to fish and because

there is no other fishing open to them. That is, this type of fishing requires the minimum in equipment, a thin line and a minute hook which in this day of plentiful metal is easily attainable.

Most boys probably go through the same general progression as their ancestors but in a much shorter time. Two reasons account for this. One is the general secularization of fishing which has accompanied the transformation of the island into a Roman Catholic place and the other is the demographic collapse of this century.

The abandonment of the many onerous prohibitions associated with pre-Christian fishing and the lack of men middle-aged or older in certain of the present day households both mean that by the time a boy is physically capable of working a canoe he will have the opportunity of doing so. Depending on his father's judgement of his physical maturity and strength, boys of from thirteen to sixteen years are now crewing on the large canoes as they troll for tuna, net flying fish, and hunt turtles. A boy starts off helping his father or other senior male relative in the canoe. These are the same people who are expected to give boys direct instruction. After a year or so of this the boy starts going out with his friends and brothers, usually in a canoe belonging to one of their fathers. At the same time he begins to acquire access to the small one-man canoes in which much day-to-day fishing takes place.

None of the highly secret fishing techniques involve the use of the larger sailing canoes which are used for catching flying fish, turtles, and tuna. Techniques for catching these creatures are all widely known. A boy will have learned how to catch them through observation, and through his father's or other senior male relative's instruction, as well as through serving as crew for his brothers and friends. There are also a few techniques for fishing from a one-man canoe which are quite well known and widely owned. There are many more, however, which are not widely owned. It is these techniques which are the object of much contention.

The problem is that they are owned by only a few people but known to many more. Lots of men know how to do them but only a few have the right to use them. A boy gaining his initial access to a one-man canoe is told by his father which of the techniques he may legitimately use. Even if the boy already knows these techniques he is quite publicly taught them. He is shown how to prepare the equipment necessary for their enactment, and if the technique is particularly difficult the youth's father may go along (in a separate canoe of course) on his first few expeditions. This is especially true if the technique is one of the night fishing procedures which are potentially dangerous. A young man alone in a seven or eight foot canoe, spending

all of a moonless night just outside the breaking surf, is in considerable danger.

Soon the youth masters all the techniques to which he can legitimately aspire. Inevitably he is drawn to those techniques which belong to others. He can see them in practice now that he is one of the people who routinely venture outside the reef, he is conditioned by his upbringing to exercise his ingenuity and he is presented with a situation which is identical with the prototypic event used in defining the highly valued trait of "smart." In a later section I devote a good deal of attention to this trait. Here it is sufficient simply to note that when asked to define the adjective taga(r), which English speakers translate as "smart," people always offer some such scenario as the following: "If we saw someone who did not know how to make a certain kind of net, and he went and sat down beside a man making that net, but he didn't ask him any questions, he just sat and smoked and talked and watched and then he went to his house and made that kind of net, we would say he is really smart." This describes a situation exactly analogous to that occurring when a novice fisherman gets the chance to observe one of the masters practicing one of the esoteric, restricted fishing techniques. The situation is even more seductive from the young man's point of view because he is likely to already know how to use the technique in question. He is likely to

have heard it often discussed, usually in response to just such a situation as he is about to create. Frequently he gives into the temptation to be "smart" and begins using a technique which does not belong to him. The owner inevitably finds out about it, either through actually seeing the youth "stealing" (and this is the Tobian phrasing) the technique or through hearing about it later. The source of the rumor which reaches the owner may be another fisherman who observed the youth in his transgression or it may be the youth himself, who finds it impossible to keep from telling his friends about his success in using a new technique.

The confrontation which ensues provides much opportunity for gossip and rumor. As with most Tobian confrontations it occurs indirectly, through third and fourth parties. The owner of the technique lets his indignation be known to a close relative, who tells someone else, who tells someone else until it eventually reaches the ears of a close relative of the youth, who tells him. The youth's response travels the same type of circuitous route back to the owner. This general characteristic of Tobian disputes has great functional utility. It allows the two parties to maintain civil relations even during the height of the dispute since there is never a direct face-to-face airing of the dispute. If everything is transmitted third and fourth hand it is very easy to disclaim responsibility for any harsh statements. The most common response to any bit of news is "who told you."

The most common epitaph is "liar." Both of these are related to the major role that rumor plays in transmitting information about relations between people.

In all of the disputes over the use of privately owned fishing techniques, on which I have data, the offender responded that he had the right to use the technique. The justifications varied, usually they were based on the youth's claim that some senior male relative (temporarily unavailable due to a visit to Koror or perhaps even deceased) had given him the technique. It is through this indirect process of claim and counter claim that other youths and boys become familiar with the technique in question.

Fishing skills are acquired by men and boys in ways which are very similar to the ways in which thatching skills are acquired. Some instruction is given by the father (or whoever stands in that relation to the boy), much indirect learning takes place and quite a bit of practicing. In both thatching and fishing young men offend their elders by acting inappropriately. In the former context they clumsily make status claims which infuriate their elders, in the latter they are seduced into stealing fishing techniques which do not belong to them.¹⁷ In both cases these disputes are built into the system by the contradictions between people's beliefs about what ought to happen and certain highly valued

personality traits. The problems that the youths present to the system are analogous to the concerns discussed in the chapter on the attempted murder. The youths have yet to learn a sufficient degree of self control, alternatively, they have only learned the grosser sorts of expected behavior and have yet to learn to fine tune their actions to the many contexts which they begin to encounter as their maturing physiques enable them to partake of previously closed activities.

The skills or routines necessary for both the continuance of the system and the achievement of individual fulfillment are transmitted from generation to generation. The transmission is not a particularly easy process. As the material on fishing techniques shows it is made difficult by the same variable that acts as its motive force, the skill at indirect learning. Thatching is inevitably a contentious event. The successful completion of this cooperative task by a group of prideful and independent men is only thought possible by the liberal use of direct rewards. The protection of ownership rights in the mental property called fishing techniques is made difficult by the non-communal nature of the exercise of those techniques. The techniques which are the source of most contention are practiced by individuals alone in small canoes. While this makes it easier for a youth to wrongly engage in those techniques without interference it

also makes the dialogue between the young thief and owner much less emotional than that occurring in thatching parties between young and old. In the latter context the dispute is quite literally shouted from the roof tops. In the former it is diluted through a network of rumor and gossip.

Independence and self reliance are highly valued traits on Tobi. So is skill at indirect learning. Self reliance is valued in a hierarchy of units. In some situations an intelligent person depends on himself, in others it is families which are self reliant, and in still others it is the island as a whole. A smart person recognizes that his own self interest is at times best served by cooperating with others, who may be either his family or all his fellow Tobians. To the degree that his welfare is served through cooperation with others he is dependent upon them. Within the family the benefits of cooperation are so immediate and apparent and the ethic of family solidarity so well developed, that cooperation is achieved and individual autonomy compromised, with little or no fuss. In the larger contexts of island-wide cooperation however this is not the case. Thatching a roof is the only regularly reoccurring occasion in which island-wide cooperation can be both achieved and maintained. There are at present two other situations which demand (but do not achieve) a similar cooperation. These are the

attempts at island cleanup and holiday dances. The former is attempted two or three times a year, the latter every Christmas and New Years. Both begin with a flourish of enthusiasm but finish with only a small proportion of the original participants still active.

Thatching Compared With Other Cooperative Contexts

Every year in late October or early November people begin practicing for the holiday dances. It is important to practice, people say, so that the dances will be done with precision and no mistake will be made when they are performed.

In the past, when there were more people on the island, different sections of the atoll fielded competition dance teams. These teams were made up of only the most beautiful of girls and the most handsome of men (or so the old people claim). Today things are very different. Only two teams are formed--one composed of men and boys and the other of women and girls. Everyone who can walk, from the smallest toddler to the oldest still mobile inhabitant is encouraged (by everyone else) to join in the rehearsals.

The actual performance of the dances are occasions of great hilarity and much good feeling even though only a few of the people who turned out for the first practice eight weeks before have kept up with the rehearsals. They are not the sole dancers however, because some people have

no shame about dropping out of the rehearsals and still taking part in the holiday dances. It is these people who consistently mistake the beat, forget the words and stumble over their fellow dancers. The immoderate consumption of alcohol by some or all of the dancers also helps create a most unstudied look to the long rehearsed dances. The same pattern occurs in the clean-up parties. Periodically the magistrate or chief will decide that the path which goes around the island should be cleaned. In the past people say this was a regularly occurring part of a program to keep the whole island clean.

That program included semi-annual clean-up of the taro gardens, a daily patrol of the beach, and a weekly sweeping of the path. Today only the last part of this program is still practiced, and only in an attenuated form.

A meeting is held in which people are told that they should gather on an appointed morning (usually the next Saturday) to begin to clean up the path. Frequently it is decided that a fine (typically five dollars) will be levied against those who don't participate. Early in the morning on the appointed day almost all the people appear ready and even eager to work. That first day, with everyone working, between one third and one half of the path gets cleaned. The next Saturday fewer people show up to work and less than half the remaining work gets completed. The

week after that finds only the magistrate and his family and a few other dedicated cleaners working on the path. Usually they manage to finish the job which is fortunate because the following week no one, not even the magistrate, bothers to turn out.

The same process by which people are led to drop out of cooperative activity occurs in both dance practice and clean-up. Briefly, that process is as follows: on day one (actually night one in the case of the dance practices) almost everyone turns out. There are always one or two people who don't appear. These people are referred to "people of the bush" and everyone has a great time pointing out how anti-social they are. However, since these non-cooperators do not suffer any apparent disadvantages by remaining at home, the other people start to feel that they are being foolish in working (either at dance practice or at the clean-up) when people of the bush can enjoy the fruits of that work without participating. The next time people gather, the situation is worse, since many people who are not thought of as people of the bush do not show up.

In the case of the island clean-up the five dollar fine is never actually charged to anyone. This, of course, is because of the great value which is put on non-interference. If someone doesn't show up everyone can agree that he should pay five dollars into the municipal strong box

but no one (magistrate included) actually tells this person to pay. Instead it is assumed that he knows he should pay and his non-payment (which is inevitable) is simply added to the catalogue of similar offenses and abuses which is maintained against him.

The core of people who remain refer to those who drop out as "people of the bush." Indeed this is the definition of a "person of the bush": someone who does not participate in non-utilitarian communal activities. These people are not called chimweri peiah (literally head of feces) which means stupid.¹⁸ I asked about this and was told, in effect, that a jungle person while deficient in the valued quality of communal concern, was not stupid but rather likely to be just the opposite, smart--perhaps too smart. Such an extremely self reliant person, of course, does suffer some negative consequences for his anti-social attitude. People tend to gossip about him and perhaps trust him a little less than they do people more motivated to help in dances and clean up. Yet none of the negative consequences are directly harmful to the bush person in a physical or even utilitarian sense. The high value placed on non-interference with others, which is a converse of the value placed on self reliance, prevents anyone from taking direct action against these people.

The tendency toward action in an anti-social manner is present in all Tobians. It is a direct correlation of

stress placed on independence and self reliance. Values fostered culturally tend to sabotage an important range of cultural behavior. Most people overcome this impasse through feelings of solidarity or perhaps the simple desire for entertainment. The problem is most successfully overcome when individuals can see that it is to their direct interest to participate. This is the situation on rethatching occasions. Objectively speaking, the problem with achieving cooperation in such endeavors as dances and clean up activity is perhaps not just that there are no direct rewards but also that neither reciprocity nor kinship is involved. Only considerations of reputation are left to appeal to in trying to get cooperation and, as we have seen, one's reputation as a competent person suffers in no way from acting like a person of the bush. This is not true of thatching parties where a person who does not show up is "punished" by not receiving food and cigarettes. Competent people avoid such negative consequences.

The Learning of Routines

I now wish to briefly discuss the ways that routines are learned on Tobi. Such a discussion is a necessary prelude to a consideration of a special kind of personal characteristic which in turn gives rise to ideas which are Tobian mental constructs very similar to what are known in English as "plans" and thus are closely related to, yet different from, routines.

It will be recalled that I began to be concerned with Tobian routines as a result of an analysis of the responses given to the story completion test. I was impressed with the agreement, among people of both sexes and all ages, in the ways that conflict was best handled. However, there were some discrepancies.

These variations were all in situations with which the respondent was unfamiliar; young peoples' answers to questions about situations which do not, in fact, occur very often, and old peoples' answers to questions set in a "modern" context (mostly located in Koror). However to predict whether a given response is atypical it is not sufficient to know simply the frequency or context of the situation which elicited it. A few of the infrequent and/or "modern" situations are of such importance to the people that stereotypic behavioral sequences (shared routines) have been constructed which are familiar to all. Court cases are an example of a "modern" conflict situation and adultery an example of an infrequent conflict situation which did not elicit any differences. Both young and old said that if a person heard rumors that someone was about to start a court case over a piece of his (the first person's) land, he would first try to determine if the rumors were true, next confer with relatives who knew the history of the plot and finally wait for the court to summon him. Both young and old said that if someone knew

that his spouse was having an affair (something which seldom occurs on the island) he would first trap the two lovers, surprising them together, then beat the lover (who would not fight back) and then accept the lover's apologies and presents.

The routines, like all of Tobian culture, are distributed unevenly across the population. There is greatest conformity in stereotypic responses to situations in which there is either widely shared experience or in which, for one reason or another, there is a great deal of interest. Conversely there is most disunity in the appropriate ways to respond to situations which do not occur very often and which are not interesting.

The problem of which situations are, to the Tobians, interesting or important is, in itself, interesting. Generally these are situations in which sex, property, or violence is involved. The measure of their importance is the great number of Tobian stories which deal with them. One would think that the information on how to deal with situations containing one or more of these variables would be transmitted in these stories and generally speaking this is the case.

The process is complicated however because these are recognized to be issues loaded with affect. Therefore, although the total corpus of Tobian stories probably overwhelmingly deals with these issues, most of the stories

which are told and retold in public session do not. If the story is about incidents which have happened within the last two generations the chances are very high that one of the original parties to the incident (or at least a close relative) will be included in the group around the story teller and would take offense at the public display of his involvement. In a sense the stories are about things which are too important to talk about, at least in public. These stories are told however, in less public settings--two women alone in the taro gardens, two men on a canoe, or two or three people very late at night after everyone else is asleep. Invariably in these cases either none of the people are party to the original incident or else they are all very close relatives. These semi-secret stories are the way in which, I think, information on the routines appropriate to infrequent yet important situations are acquired. By listening to and then retelling these stories people who have never been involved in these situations learn the correct way to deal with them and something analogous to fa'a Samoa or the Hopi Way is transmitted (Mead 1928; Titiev 1944).

Chapter Four will show that when an unfamiliar situation arises which is of interest to the people stories relating similar past events are suddenly remembered and are told and retold, conveying to one and all the correct procedures to be followed. Chapter Two has

shown that the relation between actual events and the stories may be quite unclear, and the stories may be manipulated for political ends.¹⁹

Tension Between Routine and Ingenuity

I do not think that Tobians are very comfortable with the notion that the best solutions to many of life's difficulties are already worked out and, like checker strategies, need only to be learned, even though the answers they gave in the situation test indicate that this is a common belief. The reason that they are bothered by this perception is, I think, that they also greatly value ingenuity. As a general model of social life, routines seem to offer little if any scope for creative intelligence.

As I was sitting with a group of friends on Tobi one night I remembered a parlor trick which had once mystified me. It was a simple and quite well known procedure for fooling an audience. I decided to try it out and, taking the opportunity provided by a diversion of some sort, I quickly taught one of the young boys how to help pull off the trick. We then announced that I knew magic and was prepared to prove it. Accompanied by a third person to insure that I did not "cheat" I left the bench on which we were sitting and walked off into the darkness. My partner, the young boy, remained behind. He asked one of the old men to point to any nearby object. This the

old man did, pointing, if I remember correctly, to the small kerosene lantern which was providing us with a modicum of light. The boy then called me back and announced to the group that his American friend was about to tell them which object the old man had chosen. He pointed to something other than the lantern and asked me "Is it this?" I "tested" the object by feeling it and answered "No." The boy pointed to another object, asked the same question and received the same answer. We went through a series of objects (five or six I think) before the boy (who I was beginning to think had forgotten the trick) pointed to an object a little farther away than the others and asked "Is it that?" I again answered in the negative but knew that if the boy had not forgotten his instructions the next item he pointed to should be the correct one. It proved to be the lantern and after thoughtfully touching it I answered "yes" to his question "Is it this?" After some gratifying gasps and stares from the audience we were asked to repeat the performance. Again it succeeded in mystifying the group. Next we switched roles and the boy played magician, mimicking my performance while I asked the questions. As I think about it now this was probably the point at which any lingering doubts that it was a trick and not magic which was being displayed were dispelled. While the group perhaps might have entertained the notion that the American stranger knew magic,

there was no chance that it would grant magician status to my young friend whom they all knew so well. Once they were sure that it was a trick they began to try to discover how it worked. All the hypotheses which they put forward were wrong, which is not surprising since, like all good puzzles, the answer is only obvious once it is known.²⁰

Given the high social costs of maintaining a secret on Tobi there was no chance that my friend and I could keep the gimmick to ourselves however and by the next night everyone knew how to do this "magic."²¹ Thus far this incident seems to be one that could have taken place almost anywhere in almost any culture and if this were all there was to the story there would be little need to discuss it here. What followed is, however, uniquely and typically Tobian.

To me the game was over, there was no longer any point in playing it since there was no longer any possibility of fooling anyone. However to the Tobians the game was just beginning. The night following the incident, as we gathered again to drink coffee, smoke and talk, I was treated to a whole series of repetitious performances. Everyone, from toothless old man to youngest boy, tried his hand at both the roles of magician and assistant, not just once but several times. Those not performing it at any given time commented upon and criticized those who were. That night and for the next several weeks the renditions were judged on the faithfulness with which they reproduced

the original performance of my young friend and myself. This all took place eight years ago and many of the details are vague by now but one thing I do remember clearly is the contrast between the intense boredom which this activity quickly aroused in me and the continuing interest shown in it by the Tobians. This was most striking when small children, in partnership with either a peer or an older person, were the performers. The gravity with which they were watched and commented upon by their elders, including some of the most powerful people on the island, was impressive. This contrast can, I think, be instructive. As with so many of the confusions which at one time or another have bothered me in my dealings with the Tobians, the problem of "punctuation" lay at its core. I was ready to terminate the sequence but the people were not.²² If we examine what happened during the month or so between the initial performance and the final evening during which we entertained ourselves this way I think that it is fair to say that the people were perfecting a new behavioral routine.²³ Yet why did they spend a month or more in its mastery?

I believe that we can find part of the reason for this in the discomfort caused by the contradiction between, on the one hand, the value placed on ingenuity and, on the other hand, the recognition that pre-existing routines are the most effective ways of dealing with other people. In

such a situation of psychological conflict the Roberts and Sutton-Smith hypothesis (1962) tells us to expect a high degree of involvement in games which "model" some element of the conflict. Their hypothesis, therefore, would predict a high Tobian involvement in games in which routines and/or ingenuity are important variables. In such games so called "buffered" learnings can take place. Apparently this is what was happening in those long evenings playing the magic trick (and also in the checker games).

Of course this one instance is far from conclusive but it makes a closer examination of Tobian ideas about intelligence a necessary next step.

Tobian Notions of Intelligence

The reader should bear in mind that I did not directly measure the intelligence or the creativity of the Tobians. I am not at all convinced that such measurements could even be made. My impression is that if they could be made Tobians would score quite high. Many instances come to mind in which the people of this island displayed a good deal of ingenuity.

When I first went to the island I brought with me a single side band radio for use in reporting weather observations to Koror. The power source for this radio was a three kilowatt diesel generator which I also brought with me. This was the first time since before the war that

electricity had been generated on the island. The generator was started with a regular automobile battery.

The batteries were, by their nature, in constant danger of running down. I was told by the public works department of the Trust Territory government that there was no other way to start the generator. There was some talk about installing a hand-start mechanism on the machine for use when the battery died but, as with so much else, this talk came to nothing. The battery, of course, ran down and the generator (and thus the radio) was unusable for long periods of time. My Tobian friends encouraged me to try to start the thing by hand but I resisted, telling them that this was impossible and that we would probably only wreck the machine if we tried. I even pointed out the passage in the maintenance manual that stated that the generator could only be started by battery and that warned against just such an attempt as my friends had suggested.

When I left the island the magistrate took over the daily weather observations. He managed to get himself appointed weather observer for Tobi and arrangements were made by the Weather Bureau in Koror to pay him for this work. By this time the two way radio had become integrated into life on the island. A system of semi-illegitimate radio conferences had been worked out so that people on the island could talk to their relatives in Koror. The

education and health departments had taken to sending messages to their workers on Tobi by radio. A system of supply ordering had also sprung up so people were no longer quite so dependent on the whims of the commercial company which served the island. Thus when the battery failed the magistrate had great incentive to try and fix it. By studying the pictures and diagrams in the manual and by carefully dismantling parts of the machine he figured out a system whereby three men, two with a strong pole and the other with a screw driver, could start the generator by hand. This impressive feat of engineering indicates to me that there are some smart people on Tobi.

When a Tobian English speaker is asked to provide a Tobian equivalent for the English word "smart" he responds that there are a number of possible translations.²⁴ The Tobian terms are distinguished in part by the type of learning each "smart" depends on. They are also evaluatively ranked. Lowest value is given to being smart in school, that is, to learning quickly and well by direct tuition. Highest value is placed on extremely indirect learning. These words are typically illustrated with examples. The latter type of "smart" is often illustrated with the following example, which is worth repeating: "If we saw someone who did not know how to make a certain kind of net, and he went and sat down beside a man making that kind of net, and he did not ask him any questions, but just sat and smoked and talked

and watched and then went to his house and made that kind of a net we would say he is really taga(r)." Intelligence is apparently not thought to be a unitary phenomenon. It is measured not by that which is known but by the process by which it is learned.²⁵ Once this fact is grasped and the value orientation toward each type of "smart" is understood much initially confusing behavior is clarified.

I did not achieve any understanding in this until rather late in my field work. Once I did I was no longer bothered by the fact that a number of people were sitting in my house day after day as I typed up my field notes. They were, it was now obvious, studying typing.²⁶

Most knowledge and especially skills, were apparently transmitted in this indirect way in aboriginal times. However, some areas of technology were clearly marked off as domains in which knowledge and skill could be transferred by direct tuition without a loss of face. As I have already discussed in the section on fishing, in these cases a person would either be taught the skill from a particularly close older relative or enter an apprentice-master relationship with a person skilled in the area. All these domains were either extremely complex (including such things as canoe construction, and house building) or secret (including such things as medicinal recipes, magic, and stick fight techniques).²⁷ Those skills not clearly marked off as those in which the apprentice-master relationship

was appropriate, depended for their transmission on indirect learning. Most of them were public, in that people were willing to discuss (but not to teach) the techniques involved. Most of them also were shared, in that there were no significant differences between the way that one person performed them and the way that everyone else did. They were shared in another sense as well. They were all more or less standard performances in the repertoire of adult men and/or women (the two most fundamental statuses). The problem facing people who wish to learn the strategy for playing checkers is that, despite its complex nature, the game falls into the category of a skill which is transferred indirectly. Therefore, even if an impatient novice could find a master willing to teach him the strategy for winning, he would not gain anything by this. His reputation would not be that of a smart person who knows how to play checkers and win, but rather as someone so dull that he had to have someone tell him how to play something which is, by definition, indirectly learnable to any normally intelligent person.²⁸

There is a correlation between the fact that only children are taught most things by direct tuition and the disvaluing of direct tuition as a method of acquiring knowledge. Direct tuition is a childish way to learn anything but a few clearly specified skills. Given the heavy emphasis on the achievement of competency and

independence, and on the frequent use of these qualities in judging both the self and others, it is not difficult to see why this childish way to learn things is disvalued. Once, for whatever reasons, this type of learning became identified as childish its disvaluing as a learning technique for non-children became inevitable. If the concern is to act in as unchildish (that is competent and non-dependent) manner as possible, then one way to do this is to make a big point of learning by the reverse of the way a child learns. There is more to it than that however, since one who learns to make a net by simple observation is not only a better (that is more mature) person but also "smarter" than a person who needs direct tuition to master skills.

The adjective taga(r) covers much more than merely skill at indirect learning. For example when I asked them to rate people on any scale they felt interesting or important, many English speaking informants used the "smart" or learning style category. Here I was not asking for a definition or translation of terms, but rather for an evaluation of others using self-generated categories. I was interested both in finding out which categories would be used and in seeing how people rated their fellows in terms of those categories.²⁹ Those who used the "smart" category consistently listed one particular man, old Martin, as either number one or number two. I was more

than a little surprised at this since the old man had always struck me as being as inconspicuous a person as one could expect to find in such a small population. He seemed to be peripheral to most of the informants kin and friendship networks and had not seemed especially noteworthy either to them or to myself. Asked to say why they rated Martin so highly, informants gave two explanations. Old Martin, as a childless lifetime bachelor with no close female kin, had no one to provide him with food on a regular basis. He was rated "smart" because he was such a careful manager of his meagre resources. He made enough copra so that he could purchase the rice needed to substitute for the taro which other, better affiliated, old men obtained from their female relatives. These points were mentioned by the informants. They elaborated by pointing out that Martin always had enough money to buy his rice but that he planned things so well that he never made more copra than he needed. He never ran out of rice and yet never seriously over bought. They explained how he, like all Tobians, would rather eat taro than rice, but that he did not "give up."

This was a rather direct reference to another old man who had recently died. This man, it was said, had given up. The old woman who had been providing him with taro had gotten sick and had been unable to provide him with his daily ration. He had refused to eat the rice

which had been offered, stating that he had eaten taro since he had been a boy and was not about to start eating rice. None of his kin had been able to convince him to eat the rice and so he had gone without the vegetable portion, which to a Tobian's way of thinking is an absolutely necessary complement to the fish and meat which makes up the rest of Tobian cuisine. His already sickly body could not stand the strain (so the explanation went) and he died. This second old man was consistently rated low on the "smart" scale.³⁰

The other reason people gave for rating old Martin as "smart" is interesting because it illustrates the way that reputation, even among a people as intimately familiar with the behavior of one another as are the Tobians, is not a fixed entity but rather a fluid, and contingent, assessment, subject to modification. When I was first on the island, Old Martin was just starting to exhibit what at the time were thought to be symptoms of insanity. He had begun to talk to himself, especially as he roamed the bush collecting coconuts for copra. This was regarded as humorous but "crazy" behavior. Explanations for his insanity were sought and found and by the time I left he was increasingly referred to as Crazy Martin. When I returned to Tobi this evaluation had changed radically. It seems that as people, through secretly listening to him, became more and more familiar with Martin's auto-glossia they

discovered that he was rehearsing rhetoric. Tobian meetings are characterized by arguments which are "won" when one party can ask the other an unanswerable question. This is described graphically, if unelegantly, by the English speakers as "stuck." One person wins the argument when the other is "stuck." It was decided that Martin was perfecting arguments for use in future meetings. Characteristically, no one asked him about this behavior. It was inspected and analyzed indirectly. The point here is that once it became known that he was practicing arguments he was no longer thought of as crazy. Informants in fact used this same behavior to justify their assessment of Martin as "smart."

Neither of the two behaviors reported above (Martin's careful management of his resources, and his rehearsing of arguments) seems very closely related to indirect learning. They do seem to speak to issues of competence and independence. He refuses to "give up" and force his dependency on others--he provides his own vegetable food. He is competent to manage his own affairs without impinging on others and even to perfect social skills (such as rhetoric) without needing others. Other people do practice arguments but never by themselves. They do this in the small intimate groups in which they spend most of their leisure time. Only Martin is self-reliant enough to do this on his own.

The adjective taga(r) covers both people skilled at learning by simple observation and those who are self reliant and competent. The common features seem to be (1) both require the use of some common mental ability and (2) both are thought of as qualities exhibited by a mature person. Obviously, given the way that most skills are transmitted, only someone skilled at indirect learning can achieve full competency in all the skills which are necessary for the status of self reliant adult. In games of checkers children were (indirectly) learning how to learn (indirectly).

Let us now return to the way that routines and cleverness are related. All the routines discussed so far have been shared. The way to react when one's spouse takes a lover, the way to learn a fishing technique, the way to get people to come and help thatch one's house, the way to win checkers, all these are in the public domain. They are proof to the Tobians that solutions to the difficulties one encounters have been worked out and that a smart person is well advised to learn them. This view of life seems to give only minimal scope for individual initiative. Yet the picture as I have presented it so far is oversimplified. Within the generally acknowledged routinized responses to life situations there is some degree of freedom for the exercise of wit and cunning. First of all the mastery of these public routines requires

a good deal of skill at indirect learning. Second, they may require the use of initiative to gain access to them. For example, to get the one old man who knows a certain medicinal recipe to teach it to him, a young person may have to engage on a campaign of gifts and flattery for a period of months. Third, some of the routines require a not insignificant amount of cleverness for their enactment.³¹ However, the primary source for individual gratification of the culturally implanted need to be thought clever arises from the existence of a category of plans and action labeled ideas.

The Tobian Concept: "Idea"

In referring to private strategies for the attainment of goals which may or may not be private the English word "idea" has largely replaced the Tobian word mwengemweng (literally: "thought" noun). Mwengemweng is increasingly restricted to a referent which is much less complex and much closer to that which in standard English usage is called "idea". That which is called idea by Tobian speakers (as in: "I hura yar idea;" "I know his idea") is a phenomenon very similar to that which I have called routine in an earlier section of this chapter. The difference is that routines are shared and ideas usually are not.

The cultural form called "idea" plays an important role in communal life on Tobi. At a minimum we can see how

their creation serves to provide scope for individual creativity and initiative in a way that the standardized routines do not.

Their form can vary along a number of dimensions. They range from petty to grandiose. They can and often do contain an element of fantasy which varies from idea to idea and individual to individual. They can be for the benefit of the individual, his family, or the island as a whole. This last point is interesting for the light it sheds on cooperation and the ethic of island interdependence and I shall return to it after I give a few examples of the way the word gets used on Tobi today.

The defeated contender for the chieftainship (defeated more than thirty years ago) has yet to reconcile himself to his loss. He and his few remaining allies are at or near the center of most disputes which exercise the wit and patience of the islanders. I am of course speaking here from the point of view of the present day chief and his allies, who view this man (primarily because of his trouble making penchant) as a sort of anti-chief. In the political cosmology of these people he, along with the Russians, fills the (necessary?) status of evil opposition to the good chief and the Americans. At any rate when people explain his involvement as a kind of silent partner of his allies in everything from land disputes to incestuous marriage engagements to a court case over the distribution

of the annual parachute borne Christmas presents which fall out of the sky courtesy of the U. S. Airforce every December, they say that it is his idea to cause as much trouble on the island as he can so that the Americo-Palauan administration will become dissatisfied with the present chief and appoint a new chief of Tobi. This man, of course, denies that this is his idea and explains his actions on a case by case basis as the simple defense of his relatives from the overbearing and grasping ways of the present chief and his relatives.

The validity of either of these views is not the issue here. I merely use this as an example of the existence of a concept of thought and behavior, labelled idea which is identical to what I have called routine except that it refers to private programs. A second example is much less grandiose.

Nineteen year old James, a new smoker, had only a limited number of cigarettes and the ship was not expected for another three or four months. He gave his cigarettes to Terecita, a non-smoker, to keep for him. Terecita was a rather isolated old woman, a widow with no close kin on the island at the time. She lived at the opposite end of the settlement from James. One and all applauded James' idea: he had given his cigarettes into the safe keeping of one of the few people who would not be tempted to smoke them up herself and who was less

vulnerable than most to pressure to share them with others. She lived far enough away so that going to her house for a cigarette could not be an unconscious act like so much of the islanders' smoking behavior. James went to get some of his cigarettes two or three times a day usually in the morning and the evening. He made a great show of these trips. Everybody knew when he went to Terecita's house and how many cigarettes he returned with.

This program of cigarette conservation meant, in essence, that James had devised a way out of the trap that makes life difficult for all young smokers. These generally are the people with the least access to cigarettes, all of whose friends are in the same position. There is a definite progression in the drying up of the cigarette supply every three months or so. First to run out are the young men and young women, last to run out are the old people, less bound by kinship and friendship networks and with a greater initial supply due to copra money. James could do nothing to increase his supply of tobacco but he could protect himself to some degree from the drain on his supplies by spur of the moment demands from other young people. Thus his idea was said to be a good one and he was said to be "smart."

People are constantly constructing minor ideas. They range from ways to acquire cigarettes from a miserly old man to one boy's scheme to get another to feed his

chickens for him. Ideas can also implicate the whole island and its people. When this happens things can get very complex very quickly.

One time the ship came down here and brought an American Distad. He called all the people together and told them that we were going to be taken to Airai.³² He said that we were too few now and that it cost too much money to send the ship down here for so few people. He told us that they would give us government land in Airai. He said that the ship would come back here in three months and take us and all our stuff, even our chickens and pigs and everything to Koror. He said we should get everything ready. He said that if we did not want to go to Airai then the ship would never come back here again. He said that this would be the last field trip. He told us to have a meeting and then to give him our answer, if we wanted to go to Airai or if we did not want any more ships to come here. The chief said: "Thank you very much. We understand what you said. You said that if we agreed then the ship would come back here in three months and take us, our pigs and our chickens to Koror and we could have some land in Airai. You said that if we do not agree then the ship will never come here again. We understand, thank you, we understand your idea. Maybe we will never see the Field Trip Ship again. That is all right. The Field Trip Ship is your idea. Maybe we will never see a Distad again. That is all right. The government is your idea, we know how to take care of this island. Maybe we will never see store goods again. That is all right. Copra is your idea, we know how to grow our own food and tobacco. Maybe we will never see a policeman again. That is all right. The police are your idea, we know how to take care of trouble here. Maybe we will never see a Doctor again. That is all right. The hospital is your idea too, we have our own medicine. The only thing we will be sorry about is that we will not see the priest again, but we know how to baptise and marry people and how to say the rosary." At that the American was really stuck and couldn't say anything. But before the ship left he told the chief that he would think over his idea.

This is a rough translation of one of the Tobians' favorite stories. The teller does not have to point out to his audience that the ships with all their government, religious and commercial personnel, are still coming to Tobi and that no one has been moved to the Palauan village of Airai. Some versions have the chief teasing the American about whether they should take a vote and if so whether they should canvass opinion among the pigs and the chickens. The chief denies that he said this.

The supplement to the story (whether true or not) indicated the reaction of Tobians to plans made for them by others. The reaction is summed up in the rhetorical question beloved by mistrusted wives, put-upon children and everyone else feeling exploited or abused by the operations of someone else's idea: "Am I a chicken of the jungle?" The sarcastic reference to an election among the chickens and the pigs implies parallels between the way the Administration was treating the Tobians and the way that humans treat animals. The analogy acquires its force from the fact that just as people do not inquire into the wishes of animals when making decisions about them the Administration had sprung its Draconian choice upon the Tobians with no prior consultation.

"Am I a chicken of the jungle?" asks Sisma with righteous indignation, upon learning of her boy friend's idea to test her sexual fidelity. "No, I am a person and

he should just ask me if he has any questions," she answers herself. When people begin asking this kind of question of one another the relationship between them is almost always troubled and short lived. Sisma and Andy's love affair was no exception. The question does not arise in untroubled close relationships because the partners have most ideas in common. Those ideas which they do not have in common are not thought to operate at the expense of the other. People who are close to one another cannot, by definition as it were, treat each other in a utilitarian fashion. Whatever the objective facts of the situation neither party will perceive the other to be acting in this way if the relations between them are untroubled. Once, for whatever reason, the relation does become troubled however, people are predisposed to see manipulation in even the most innocuous acts of the other. This triggers a hostile response and, as both parties seek to secure their interests, each begins to fear manipulation by the other and the relationship spirals down until the "jungle chicken question" is raised. The chief (in the supplement to the story) was overtly saying that the relationship between the Administration and the island had reached this point.

"We understand your idea" he says. An idea is precisely what the Administrations proposal was from the point of view of the Tobians. That is, they saw it, and still

see it, as a plan devised for by the administrator to relocate the Tobi islanders for his convenience. The "choice" in the Tobian reading of the American's intentions was not supposed to be a choice at all. The chief called this bluff by picking what the people believe was a phony option. I was unable to determine if this was a counter-bluff on the chief's part or not. Some people claim that it was and others (including the chief) say that it wasn't. The important thing here is that the chief vocalized the perception that the Administration was involved in the enactment of an "idea" of the worst sort.

He used the term idea again in referring to the various organizations of the twentieth century which link Tobi to the rest of the world. He characterized each of these as "your idea." This is typical of the Tobian perception (or rather lack of perception) of the phenomenon which we call institution. They simply do not see that the various people with whom they have to deal are representatives or agents of larger, organized structures. While keenly aware that the government consists of more than just the District Administrator, their personalized view of the social world leads them to view religious, economic, and political institutions as the ideas of the Americans. That is, the behaviors involved in economic, religious, and governmental transactions are seen as flowing from strategies, plans etc., of the two parties. The introduced forms

are seen as flowing from American and other outsider ideas. The rejection of these behaviors (and thus of the Americans' ideas) is (rhetorically?) said to be possible because of the existence of equivalent, but autarkic, forms.

Ideas To Help The Island

I now turn to a special class of ideas called "ideas to help the island." Once again I begin the discussion with examples. During the period between my two stays on the atoll the health-aide, at that time a Tobian, brought to the people a proposal to build an airfield on the island so that emergency patients could be air-evacuated to the hospital in Koror. The funding for this program had already been arranged and provision had even been made that people would be well paid for their labor in the runway's construction. The only requirement was that the owners of the trees on the land agree to their being removed. They did not have to give up title to the land, they just had to agree that the trees would be removed from it and the runway built. Furthermore, it was pointed out, that if something went wrong, the concrete runway would be broken up so that trees could be replanted.

Tobi, a very small island, has only one site suitable for an airfield. One of the old men who owned coconut trees on the site demanded to be paid for each of his trees to be cut. He did not need the trees for copra making, he had not gathered nuts on this site for years

and owned more than enough coconut trees at other, more convenient, sites to meet his rather meagre needs. This old man is one of the most notorious of the "people of the bush." When I interviewed him about this incident he told me that the reason that he had not agreed to the request was that the nurse-aide and his family were trying to act like chiefs. "Their idea," he said, "was to get all the power for themselves." He simply did not see that this program had been put together by a number of agencies or institutions in Koror (the Hospital, the local War on Poverty agency, even the Federal Aviation Administration) and that the ambitions of the nurse-aide really had very little to do with it.

Tobians have a keen appreciation of "poetic justice." The old man who had refused to allow his trees to be cut was almost fatally hoist on his own petard and the story has become a favorite. It seems that the major argument used by the nurse to try to convince this old man to allow the runway to be built was that if someone became sick beyond the therapeutic capabilities of the island they might die before they could be taken off the island unless there was a place on the island where a plane could land. The old man rejected this argument, stating that in that case the person would die on Tobi surrounded by his family, instead of in Koror surrounded by strangers. "Besides," he is supposed to have said, "he is only one"

meaning that the airfield would not benefit the people as a whole but just whoever happened to be seriously ill. Later on, after the various agencies had abandoned the scheme, the old man became very sick. As it happened his family was in Koror at that time and, thinking he was about to die he bemoaned the fact that he might die without seeing them. He begged the nurse to call Koror and ask for a ship for a medical evacuation. "But you are only one" answered the nurse. Only temporarily chastened, the old man recovered and is today his old "man of the bush" self.

The school teacher on Tobi is blind. This is the result of a recent tragedy which itself was the outcome of an idea gone wrong. He has managed to retain his government paid position but, not unreasonably, feels uncertain of his tenure in teaching the children of his fellows. His wife, a minimally educated but literate English speaker, gives him a great deal of help. His idea is to try to get his wife certified as the teacher. He claims that this is an idea to "help the island," saying that it is to the island's benefit to have the children taught by a Tobian. Those who are aware that this is the teacher's idea and not the chief's (the teacher has been only partially successful in disguising his authorship of the idea) say that it is not an idea to help the island but

rather an attempt by the school teacher to keep the salary in his family by foisting off an unqualified teacher on them.

Tobians do construct ideas, and they do, with varying degrees of success act on them. Furthermore, there is a predisposition to think of almost all behavior as the outcome of ideas. I am moving here from the existence of ideas to people's beliefs about them. Given the common human problem of interpreting the behavior of others, a Tobian is much more prone to analyze it as a result of a strategy than as the outcome of either impulse or such impersonal forces as institutions. The old man ascribed the request to give up his trees neither to governmental policies nor to malice on the part of the nurse-aide but rather to an ill-defined plot by the nurse-aide's family. Similarly, the attempted murder discussed in the next chapter presented a problem, in part, because no one knew what idea lay behind the attack and so no one knew who else might be in danger. Eventually we were forced to settle for a reference to impulse for an explanation since no one could see how the criminal would have benefited from the death of the victim. Although everyone appeared satisfied with the explanation from impulse, it seems to me that the lack of an idea in this explanation facilitated its abandonment in favor of the hypothesis that no crime had occurred.

"Helping the island" (faringengeru faruh) is a positively valued trait but not so highly regarded as individual and family autonomy. People thought to be more lacking in this trait than others are said to be "people of the bush." These are also the people who cannot be gotten to practice for the Christmas dances or to help in the island cleanup. And they are also the people who consistently sabotage plans drawn up for the island's "betterment." Naturally these plans are thought by one and all to be someone's idea. People of the bush (in great consistency with their other anti-social activities) do not grant that anyone is willing to act disinterestedly on behalf of the island. This suspicious attitude is present in all Tobians, who are all more than ready to assume that other people are plotting against them. Bush people simply show it to a greater degree. Every proposal, regardless of its source, which purported to benefit the island, failed if it meant that any of these bush people would have to sacrifice anything toward it.³³

Proposals for the benefit of the island are always defined as idea. If they are indigenous they are offered as ideas. If they are offered from outside the island (whether from Church, Government or the Peace Corps) they are still interpreted by the island as someone's idea. I have probably heard more of these ideas than anyone else since from the start of my association with the islanders

I have been defined as someone who desired to: "help the island." I am interested here in the differential reactions to these various schemes. As the examples of the airport and the school teacher make clear the question of "who pays?" is a crucial element in the success or failure of these schemes. Another important factor is the source of the proposal.

There are two reactions which a Tobian can offer to a proposal to "help" the island. He can scorn it as a self-serving device for the aggrandizement of its author and his family, or he can laud it as evidence of the virtue of communal cooperation. If the person is "of the bush" the odds are very high that he will choose the former. However, even people who are not of the bush may also offer this negative interpretation. Which of the two is picked depends on the interpreter's relations at that time with the author. People who have an active dispute with the author are likely to explain the proposal as an idea not to help the island but rather to further the interests of its originator. The attribute of "smartness," which is so intimately linked to notions of self reliance and personal and family autonomy, serves to facilitate this type of explanation in two ways. The primary stress of this whole complex lies on the securing of one's own interests. Therefore the first response of a person learning of a proposal to help the island is to figure out whether his

own interests would be furthered or harmed by that proposal. Since by and large the same people offer schemes to help the island as are thought to be smart the second reaction of the audience is likely to be an evaluation of how the scheme benefits its originator. People actively in conflict with the author will use this propensity to sabotage the proposal. The magistrate often complained to me that he could always get agreement (meaning non-opposition) to his proposals in the meetings but walking through the village in the evenings following the meetings he would hear people in their houses gossiping about him. He was describing the sabotaging of his proposals to help the island by accusations of self interest.

There are two main indigenous sources of schemes to help the island: the young people and the chief. The young people view the construction of these proposals as an arena for the exercise of their skill at constructing ideas and thus of their "smartness." They are also the people most familiar with the workings of the institutions in Koror which can be appealed to for support (although their understandings of these institutions are far from accurate). As inheritors of the island they are also the people with most to gain from the solution of what they perceive as its major problems. As people in the process of constructing identities as adults they are concerned to display their smartness in a socially approved manner.

However, as in general the "have not" group (in contrast with older established household heads) they are also the ones most likely to attempt to gain land and other resources through devious ideas supposedly for the good of the island as a whole. This latter fact is given lively attention by one and all. Knowing that they will be accused of planning in their own and not the island's interest, these young people have evolved a routine of proposing their ideas through the chief. The rather circuitous route these proposals usually travels is as follows:

1. A young person thinks up some proposal to benefit the island--such as solving the population problem by asking the mission in Koror to arrange for the adoption of Vietnamese orphans. Usually these schemes are developed in vacuo and in secret since, as has been shown, any identification of the proposal as a young person's can be fatal to its chances.
2. The young person casually slips the proposal into conversation with the chief. Usually these proposals are so self evident that they need very little elaboration. In the example given above the young person simply said that there were many babies in Vietnam who had no parents but were being taken care of by the Church. Referring to the head of the Catholic Mission in Koror he then suggested that: "Maybe Father Felix knows those Fathers in Vietnam" and then changed the topic.
3. The chief talks the proposal over with his wife. Between the two of them the chief and his wife are closely related to all the important people on the island.³⁴ Usually no checking with these important people is necessary since people are familiar enough with

each others attitudes and resources to be able to predict quite accurately each others reactions.

4. If they decide that the proposal is acceptable the chief and his wife begin to discuss the proposal with friends and relatives--especially household heads. The process may become quite formal at this point with the chief sending a note to the magistrate (a signal that official business is to be discussed). The magistrate comes to the chief's house and he is told the proposal. Of course by this time he has probably heard rumors of it.
5. The magistrate brings up the proposal as an item of business at the next council meeting. These meetings are rather different from the general meetings which follow them a few days later. There is generally a more relaxed attitude in the council meetings. Lacking an audience the speakers do not engage in rhetorical debate, nor do they get angry as often as speakers in general meetings do. The proposal which was transmitted to the magistrate in the same way that the young man had transmitted it to the chief, i. e., casually and in an abbreviated fashion, is discussed. If all agree that it is suitable it will be scheduled for presentation by the magistrate at the next general meeting.
6. The magistrate presents the idea to the public at the general meeting which often is called for just this purpose. Most people have already heard about it through rumor, and through their connections in the council or with the chief. The discussion in the meeting very quickly splinters into the usual large number of side arguments of which only a few deal with the issue at hand.

7. That night the magistrate circulates through the village to canvass reaction to the proposal. In this case, although the discussion which had taken place about the Vietnamese orphans in the general meeting had been quite enthusiastic, the proposal was rejected on the grounds that its author was trying to put something over on the people. Other proposals have gone through this cycle three or four times. A rejected proposal with strong support by either the chief or the magistrate (which this one did not have) is frequently run through this routine several times. Even a proposal which receives a favorable initial reaction may be considered a number of times to insure that its implementation will not be sabotaged at a crucial moment.

This routine for gaining acceptance of proposals to help the island was, as I have said, developed by the young people as a way to disguise the authorship of their ideas. In the case of the Vietnamese orphans the routine failed. The proposal was rejected because its author was discovered to be one of the young people. His opponents in a marriage dispute capitalized on the widespread fear of being used to undercut his chance to be the savior of the island. The discovery of the author was due to the contradiction between his goals (which at least in part were to gain recognition as a "smart" person) and the techniques necessary for successfully gaining agreement with his idea. This is a reoccurring problem. The necessity of disguising authorship means that the author can gain credit neither for being smart nor for wanting to help the island. In the case of the Vietnamese orphans the young author could

not resist arguing "too" vigorously in support of his idea. People are immensely curious as to the sources of ideas and he gave himself away by marshalling too many ready-made arguments and by having too many obviously prepared answers to objections and questions. Despite the fact that he had succeeded in obtaining the imprimatur of the powers-that-be for his plan, he failed due, as is so often the case on Tobi, to inexperience and insufficient self-control.

The routine for gaining acceptance for ideas to help the island obviously gives great power to the chief. It would not be difficult to show the opportunities this offers him to manipulate such situations for his own ends. It is more fruitful, however, to examine the two assumptions on which it is based. These two assumptions are, (1) that the chief is the one person on the island who is expected to operate altruistically and (2) that the island and its problems are manageable.

Occasionally the chief has a proposal of his own to make. Even in these circumstances he lets the magistrate bear the public burden of convincing the people. This is partly because the magistrate is the leader of the meetings in which such proposals are put forth and partly because by doing things in this way the chief avoids the appearance of interfering in peoples' affairs. The following episode illustrates the way in which even in situations in which

the chief's special province, (the island's morality) is at stake, the magistrate is the person who is forced to act.

It all began when, disturbed by the reckless profanity of the adolescent boys, the chief hinted to the magistrate that something ought to be done. The magistrate started to notify the people that a meeting would be held.

As is usually the case on Tobi, the meeting's topic was known well in advance and it was with an air of expectation that the people gathered on the appointed day. Everyone was curious to learn how the magistrate would handle the delicate topic without antagonizing the boys or offending the old women, who with the chief, are the monitors of the public morality on the island. The meeting which followed was memorable for several reasons.

After the opening prayer, the magistrate announced the reason for the meeting. He then reviewed the rules covering profanity. It is bad to say bad words in mixed company and especially in the presence of the chief. Therefore, one should not use bad words in the village or any place where one might be overheard. It is permissible to use bad words when there is no chance of offending anyone-- such as when fishing outside the reef. During all this the chief nodded his approval and the magistrate kept his eyes fixed on the floor. He was probably trying to avoid

giving even the appearance of accusing specific people of breaking the rules about using bad words. He was also worried I think that if he met anyone's gaze the two of them, and then the whole meeting, would dissolve into laughter. For, seated next to the magistrate, loudly slapping down worn and greasy playing cards in a self-invented game of solitaire, and seemingly oblivious to the meeting going on around him, was Max, his three-year old son. And with every card that he played Max yelled for all to hear his father's favorite English expression: "Fuck your mouth!"

The meeting's powers of self control were tested even further as the stony-faced magistrate, carrying on despite his son's antics, proposed a five dollar fine. Just as the people started to debate this proposal the magistrate's four-year old nephew paraded out into the middle of the meeting house floor, stark naked and sporting an erection. The island's three teenage girls, happened at this moment to be looking out the window. Everyone's gaze now swung toward them as the magistrate droned on in vain hope of carrying things to a sober conclusion. Sensing that something was up, the eldest turned back toward the meeting. Displaying commendable qualities of self control (even for a Tobian) she reacted only by nudging her friend. As the magistrate later explained to me, this was

a fatal error, because, as everyone knows, this second girl is extremely giddy.

The girl seemed to be engrossed in something happening outside the hall and she did not respond to the nudge. Her friend nudged her again, this time quite firmly. With everyone now waiting for her reaction she turned to see what was going on. No one was disappointed for as she caught sight of the naked boy she gasped out the filthiest possible Tobian profanity. Of course, the meeting collapsed into howls of laughter. Even the magistrate abandoned the struggle and his guffaw could be heard above everyone else's'.³⁵

The meeting has become a favorite anecdote and is told again and again. Those who were not on the island when it occurred have now heard it enough times so that they can tell it with even more detail than I have used here. These people could not tell what happened next, however, since no one has bothered to tell them. Apparently I was the only participant who thought the events which followed to be worthy of note.

What the story tellers do not bother relating is that the laughter only lasted for a few minutes before it subsided as quickly as it had erupted. The signal for its ending was given by the chief. After the initial explosion had swept the room, I saw him catch the magistrate's eye and cough. The magistrate's laugh, which had been

dominating the uproar with its volumn ceased, and ceasing, dominated the uproar with its absence. The magistrate and I were not the only ones to have heard that cough. All fell silent and the discussion continued. That cough was the most active participation that I ever saw the chief take in any secular public proceeding.³⁶

Chief and Magistrate

"The chief is supposed to help the people," I was told again and again. A good chief, people said, is one who helps the people, and a bad chief is one who does not. Helping the people can be translated as a readiness to sacrifice for the benefit of the island. More important, it means the chief avoids using his position for the aggrandizement of himself and his family at the expense of the rest of the populace. There is unanimity on the island that the present chief is a good chief. This statement is not just a shorthand way of indicating that by one means or another the chief has rid the island of all his opponents. The existence of an opposition party in Koror, tiny and weak as it is, means that the chief has to be doubly careful to avoid the appearance of acting in any way other than for the benefit of the island as a whole. The procedure followed by the young people which uses him as a vehicle for the transmissions of their ideas both takes advantage of this fact and reinforces it.

Of course the chief values this component of his status and is capable of acting vigorously to defend it.

In the early nineteen fifties when the introduction of the elected status of magistrate was being pressed by the Americans, there was a great deal of confusion and political squabbling. This was the last major political crisis surmounted by the Tobians and its resolution sheds a good deal of light on the uses to which beliefs about "helping the island" can be put.

At first it was thought that the position of magistrate was meant to supplant that of chief. This was viewed by the chief and the old people as an impossible proposal. The rules for accession to the chieftaincy were clear and explicit and made no provision for the selection of a person who might not even be a descendant of the foundress. Aboriginally the chief could choose among his sons for an heir.³⁷ To this son he would pass the sacred objects and ritual knowledge which he had learned from his father. Only a person so instructed and so related to the previous chief could inherit the title on his death. By the time the election of a magistrate had become an issue much of this old body of rules was no longer operable, of course. As I pointed out in Chapter Two, this fact is closely related to the genesis of the political factions which now, forty years later, began struggling over the

magistracy. What remained however (and still remains today) is that the chieftaincy is the gift of the incumbent.

The argument used with telling effect by the chief and his supporters against the imposition of a magistrate system was that only a chief could be expected to work for the good of the island. They correctly predicted that the successful candidate in a magisterial election would be the one with the closest kniship ties to the most voters. They also correctly predicted that this person would then begin to exploit his position for his own and his yahamatara's benefit. By combining all the disaffected voters the chief was able to insure the defeat of each magistrate after only one term. (Most of these men then left the island to join the "anti-chief" in Koror.)

The arguments used against these magistrates as well as their actual behavior say something important about the way the Tobians view their fellows. On the one hand there is the notion that only the chief can be depended on to act for the benefit for the whole population. On the other hand there is the fear that anyone else in power will use that power to exploit others. I should point out that the present chief acquired his title before the island became Christian and doubtlessly benefits from this today. The aura of the pre-Christian chieftainship clings to the present chief, in an attenuated form to be

sure, but in sufficient strength to lend his person a certain air of otherworldliness, especially in the minds of the older people. An important component of this otherworldliness lies precisely in the fact that it is he who "helps the island." Only a Tobian radically different from his fellows is thought capable of acting disinterestedly. The issue of the nature of the magistracy was finally surmounted by the election of a young man to the post who was willing to go along with the proposal offered by the administration that the magistrate limit himself to activities relating to government programs while the chief retains final authority over traditional activities. As the islanders phrase it: the magistrate is "in charge" of the government (read: municipal office) just as the school teacher is "in charge" of the school and the health-aide is "in charge" of the dispensary, but the Chief is "in charge" of the island. The magistrate today functions in two ways; he serves as a conduit through which government programs impinge on the island (this is the function described in the in-charge formula) and he also serves as an executive arm of the chief. It is by restricting his activities to these two functions that the incumbent magistrate has managed to survive in his post for a number of years. It was by refusing to play such a restricted role that the previous magistrates alienated the chief and lost their positions.

If one examines precisely what the previous magistrates did which the incumbent avoids doing, it turns out that they offered proposals under their own names to "help the island." Some of these proposals were in fact transmitted from Koror, others were those magistrates' own inventions. I strongly suspect, although direct evidence on this point is lacking, that the monotonous repudiation of each early magistrate at the polls directly follows from this fact.

The explanation for the constant replacement of one magistrate by another offered by the survivors of those troubled times is quite inadequate. People claim that each early magistrate was defeated because it was found that he was using his position for his own and his family's advantage. Yet the present magistrate has been re-elected a number of times even though he does precisely the same thing. The only significant difference I have been able to discover between the early magistrates and the incumbent is that the former attempted to help the island in a "chiefly" manner. They offered proposals for the improvement of the island's situation in the same way that the chief does. They did not, as the present magistrate does, offer proposals either as government policies or else through the chief utilizing the routine sketched in above. Not only did those early magistrate's ideas for helping the island fail but they all failed to get

re-elected. The hypothesis is that they antagonized not only the chief, but the rest of the public as well by attempting to help the island in a "chiefly" manner. They certainly served notice to the chief that he was faced with a challenge to his unique position as the only person capable of altruism. By doing this they also walked right into the dilemma facing the young Tobians today.

Since the chief is the only person thought capable of disinterested behavior, ideas to help the island from other people raise everyone's suspicions that they are only superficially ideas to help the island and in reality are ideas to further the interests of the originator at the probable expense of some or all of the rest of the people. Under these circumstances it was not difficult for the chief to engineer the downfall of the early magistrates. Today the people are willing to grant, and the magistrate to claim, only a limited sphere of authority for this introduced position and the chief remains in charge of the island. This is no accidental formulation. The connection between being in charge of the island and helping the island is clear. As the discussion in Chapter Two indicated, the notion of being "in charge": (Tobian hosuar vb.) is an important construct in Tobian culture. It indicates a structural relationship of superordinate to a subordinate in which the former is thought to have the right to

supervise the behavior of the latter.³⁸ The subordinate is always thought to be incompetent (for one reason or another) to achieve his own long range interests without disrupting social life. The superordinate is thought to have the best interests of his ward in mind. This complex of associations lends to the Tobian mind, I think, a "rightness" to the conventional wisdom that the chief is the one person who can help the island with no ulterior motives. His prime duty (in his as well as other Tobians' view) is to ensure that tranquility prevails. There are many instances that I either witnessed or was told of in which he acted to this end. Although he was not on the island at the time of the attempted murder case discussed in Chapter Four everyone I asked told me that if he had been he would have tried to get the whole thing dropped, and would have probably advised against even having the meeting. This is despite the fact that, as we shall see, two of the (incompatible) goals of that meeting were to restore harmony and prevent future trouble. In these people's prediction the chief would have been so concerned at the possibility of further trouble being caused by the meeting that he would have been willing to forego those two goals in that setting and tried to resolve the problem much more indirectly and without involving the whole population.

People who are in charge of others exercise their power very indirectly. The behavior of the chief vis-a-vis the islanders is directly comparable to this. Just as the virtue of non-interference in the affairs of others complicates the position of everyone who is in charge of all but the smallest children so it interferes against direct leadership by the chief. It is in this connection that the present magistrate is most useful to him. Suggestions can be funnelled by the chief through the magistrate, disguised with a patina of governmentese, and passed along without the necessity of the chief ever having to tell someone directly to modify his behavior.

Finally of course the chief helps the island. Just as a person in charge of someone else is expected to guard that person's best interests (even sometimes against his ward's wishes) so the chief is supposed to guard the best interests of the island and does so to the best of his ability. On occasion this involves becoming identified with ideas (either his or someone else's) to help the island.

Managing Tobi's Problems

The second assumption which seems to lie behind the set of ideas called helping the island is that the island can, indeed, be helped. Yet, objectively viewed, Tobians have as little control over their fate as nearly any people one can imagine.

Demographic events in particular have a brute and ineluctable force at Tobi's end of the population curve. As a people the Tobians are faced with the most basic problem of all, whether the present population can replace itself. Furthermore, as a horticultural and fishing people their sustenance is subject to a wide variety of natural and man-made disasters that peoples who are better intergrated into wider economic systems are to some degree insured against. As if this were not enough, as colonial wards of a remote and uninterested power they are at the very end of a long and tenuous chain of authority in which almost all messages flow from the top down and very few, if any, flow in a reverse direction. And finally, to the extent that they are dependent on the outside world for those things which once were luxuries but which now are rapidly becoming necessities, they are totally at the mercy of that system. The only cash crop of the island is copra, the dried meat of the mature coconut. As with so many primary products the world price for copra fluctuates wildly. The government marketing board set up to protect producers from such fluctuations has historically failed to meet its stated function. As producers of an absolutely minute fraction of the Trust Territory's copra (to say nothing of the total world supply) the Tobi copra sellers have no say at all over the price they receive per ton. Even the existence of a daughter community in Koror does

little if anything to ease the plight of the island. Instead it forces the Tobians into close contact with a people who are more numerous, more powerful and who for the most part look down on the Tobians and the other South West Islanders as inferior people. I am not referring here to the Americans in Koror, most of whom are only vaguely aware of the existence of the South West Islands. It is the Palauans who challenge so directly the Eang Tobian's sense of self worth. And as the Americans withdraw from the local administration the much touted self government which results is most definitely not Tobian self government--the Americans are being replaced by Palauans. All this is a bleak but accurate view of the island's present day situation. It can be summed up by the often repeated comment of Americans and Palauans who are visiting the atoll for the first time. Typically they look around the tiny island and then in either awed or ironic tones depending on their disposition they say: "One wave and it would be all over . . . woosh!" I must have heard that comment or something like it fifty times. I probably said it myself the first time I stepped ashore. But I don't think I ever heard a Tobian say it.

The people are aware, more keenly than most observers, of the problems which face them. For example only a Tobian or one long familiar with them knows the ways in which Catholic and pre-Christian marriage regulations

have combined to make mate selection even more difficult than the unaided results of recent demographic trends would have done.

The Tobians see the problems facing them but they do not perceive them as intractable. Instead, with their personalistic view of their social environment, they see the problems posed by the Church, the government, and the commercial companies as stemming from the ideas of certain identifiable (in principle at least), individuals. In a sense this view makes some of the situations which face them easier to cope with.

A Tobian does not bemoan the softness of the world copra market if the price drops. Neither does he blame the marketing board for failing to deliver on its promises. He blames instead the Palauan at the scales on the beach at Tobi, or, at the most, the company that the buyer is working for. Attempts at alternative arrangements for marketing the crop can be explored; that is, one can try to deal with different people. So far such attempts have met with a not unsurprising lack of success. However this view of the price of copra does enable people to feel more in control of their fate than would a more nearly correct view which held the price to be the result of the interplay of such vast and impersonal forces as "supply" and "demand." Naturally, attempts at finding alternative buyers for the copra are called ideas. If the attempt is

aimed at finding an alternative buyer for all the island's copra then it is called an idea to help the island, and falls into the chief's provenance.

Even problems assigned to natural and not human agencies have solutions proposed to them. The idea to help the island by adopting Vietnamese children is an example of an attempt to escape the consequences of recent demographic events. Other examples are not hard to find.

In view of the clinical picture of Western Carolinians from Ulithi and Truk as a people with no capacity to plan for the future (Lessa and Spiegelman 1954, and Gladwin and Sarason 1953) I shall present examples of two successfully implemented ideas to help the island.

In recent years there has been a dramatic decrease in the number of turtles caught on the island. Turtles are a favorite food and during the turtle season people put a lot of effort into their capture. It is thought by the islanders that turtles return to lay their eggs on the same island where they themselves were hatched. (I do not know if this is traditional or new knowledge.) It was decided in a meeting that turtle eggs (a great delicacy) would no longer be eaten, so that in the future there would be more turtles to eat. A fine was established for anyone who violated the new ordinance. A person finding a nest of turtle eggs reports this to the magistrate who immediately fences the site to keep the eggs safe from hungry cats. When the eggs hatch, (the time can be predicted to within a day) the new born turtles are not allowed to make their dangerous trek across the beach and reef to the open sea. Much to the disappointment of the many birds who gather at the first sign of a hatching, the baby turtles are

gathered up and kept in a large bucket for a week. They are fed fine-chopped fish and it is only when they are thought big enough to have a good chance for survival that they are ferried by canoe out to the open sea and released. This program was newly inaugurated when I first visited the island and was being faithfully carried out. By the time I returned three years later the ban on eating eggs, although still in effect, was not being observed by the new crop of adolescent boys who had not been in on the initial decision. They were now stealthily eating all the eggs they could find. This failure is, one should note, a failure to maintain compliance and not a failure to plan for the future.³⁹

The second example has enjoyed greater success in its implementation, due no doubt to its drastic nature.

Some years ago many people kept dogs on the island. Some of the dogs, so the story goes, were extremely well trained and helped their owners in many ways. Others had become wild and lived in the bush, eating rats and feral chickens. The dog population steadily increased and eventually the dogs became a problem. Children were being bitten, chicken flocks being raided and cats being killed. Nights of full moon became intolerable, so the story goes, as packs of dogs raced up and down the village path, howling, barking, and fighting. Eventually a meeting was called by the magistrate to propose a solution. The meeting, which took place on a Sunday, agreed to give dog owners until the following Wednesday to get rid of their dogs. On that day the magistrate and some of the young men would go dog hunting with the municipale rifle, and dispatch any dog they could find. The chief was the first to kill his (so it is said) much loved pet. Most other people followed suit. One old woman could not bring herself to kill her pet and begged the young men to let it live but her pleas were not heeded. The following Wednesday a general slaughter of dogs took place. When it was over only one dog was left alive on the island. It belonged to the mistress of one of the most powerful

men on the island and she simply hid it in her house and defied the hunters to kill it. Threats of fines were of no avail. It was eventually decided that, since he was the last dog on the island, an expert chicken hunter, and was well behaved, they would let him live.⁴⁰ A big feast was held with the victims of the purge as the main course. Some people attended but many others could not bring themselves to eat their pets. The problem posed by the dogs had been solved, however, and remains solved today.

These ideas to help the island, as well as all others both acted on and rejected, depend on a certain attitude toward the world. This attitude permeates Tobian culture. I have mentioned in the Chapter Two how those events most impervious to human control such as tidal waves, droughts and typhoons are thought to be manageable by the exercise of sufficiently powerful religious ritual. Even ghosts, which serve both as a shorthand for disasters of the previous type and also as disasters in their own right, can be rendered powerless by religious ritual. And, whatever else he might be, a ghost is by definition a being or a force beyond the control of the natural forces which bind mortals. The laws of physics and of biology have no power over such creatures. This is recognized by the Tobians even though they would never use these terms. Yet they are not beyond the control of men. People do not have to submit tamely to ghosts even if they are beyond the power of life and death and all the laws which dictate that a ten foot tall, stinking, three eyed, cigarette smoking being must be a super-natural, or (more

precisely perhaps) an "a-natural." Tobians view their situation, either personal or communal, as responsive to initiative and intelligence. Through the exercise of "smartness" it is possible to devise ideas which can become embedded into what I have called routines and which are designed to provide solutions to problems.⁴¹ Paradoxically enough, it is precisely those problems which the observer sees as so powerfully dictating a dismal future for the island that give its residents the greatest scope for the exercise of their wit; an exercise which has great psychic rewards if no others.

Tobians, then, do not regard their demographic, economic, and ecological problems as insoluble. However, thoughtful Tobians speculate, there may be one problem which in fact has no solution. This is the inability of their fellow islanders to achieve consensus on solutions to problems.

"The people of this island will never agree on anything," despaired a young man whose proposal had just been rejected. Asked to name the most pressing problem facing the island, the great majority of informants stated that there were too many "people of the jungle" and not enough who wanted to "help the island." The people do not perceive themselves to be at the mercy of powerful unresponsive forces but rather to be in danger from failure to implement coordinated responses to severe but

manageable difficulties. This perception presents several problems to those outsiders who for one reason or another have interested themselves in the island's fate. On the one hand such a person will find plenty of people willing to sit and talk with him about the problems and about possible solutions. Whatever the degree of fantasy in these various solutions (and it can be quite large) the outsider finds himself in the presence of people used to thinking of problems, no matter how severe, as soluable; people who in fact see these problems as challenges to their ingenuity. Yet they are people who have such a negative view of their fellows that any proposal which requires joint action of all the people, or which even involves the achievement of unanimity of opinion, elicits an extremely pessimistic prediction of its chances. This identification of the major problem as lying within the community and not with external forces functions to reduce despair and despondency, which is fortunate because, as the material presented in this chapter shows, severe contradictions within the Tobian value system work to make that pessimism sadly realistic.

FOOTNOTES FOR CHAPTER THREE

1. These are the remembered unnatural deaths (that is suicides and murders). There are no independent statistics available. The one unnatural death not accounted for by a dispute over a woman was that of a man who was killed by an apparently crazed and starving Japanese soldier.
2. This was not the case in pre-Catholic times. Marriages were unstable and one's winnings had to be protected. There are a number of ways in which this was done, most dramatic was the invitation of one's rival to become cospouse. The scenario states that the problem arose when one man visited the wife of another who was out fishing. A Tobian women's labia majora were stretched and elongated at puberty. Before going fishing a man would tie his wife together with his own special secret knot. If, upon returning from fishing, he found that she had been retied he confronted her, demanded the name of her lover, confronted the lover or trapped him with his wife, beat him and then accepted his presents, and invited him to move in. Such a menage a trois, it is said, ensured that a woman would always have a man to watch her.
3. Tobian phrasing of this is not the same as ours. In Tobian one says that he is teaching the child to know (hura, vb.) the game. One who "knows" the game in the fullest sense is one who has mastered its strategies.
4. The stories were presented (in Tobian) during separate interviews which I held with each of the people in the sample. Tabulated responses will be presented in a later publication dealing with the nature of conflict on Tobi.
5. There is a related set of phenomena, called in Tobian English idea. I reserve the word "plan" to translate this and discuss it toward the end of this chapter.
6. McKnight has described an elaborated development of this phenomenon in Palau where traditional political power was thought to be attainable by any one of seven stereotyped "paths" (1960).

7. Coir is one of the most crucial items. The whole manufacturing process, from coconut husk to finished twine takes six weeks at the minimum. It is quite an intricate procedure especially when contrasted with the making of thatch. Old men are thought to have great stores of twine, accumulated over the years not only by their own efforts but also by inheritance and gift.
8. This is one of the changes remarked on most frequently by informants. A person signifies his transition from middle to old age by the gradual withdrawal from the more physical chores. He marks his new status by using a walking stick. In fact a euphemism for old people is stick man/woman. Informants say that in the past stick-men did not climb roofs to rethatch them--they just stayed on the ground and yelled directions. "Today," they say, "we are so few that these men have to climb the roof and work."
9. A boy was left in charge of a large quantity of tobacco by his father who was temporarily visiting in Palau. The man had asked his wife's father to reroof his canoe house. The boy was not strong enough to maintain his control over the tobacco and his grandfather (the man who had been asked to reroof the canoe house) used it to reward the workers. He innovated by giving out the final reward on the basis of the time people had put in on the job--up to this time the practice had been to give everyone who put in any time at all the same reward. People were furious at this. It was "remembered" that he had been stingy with the cigarettes during the actual work and it was predicted that his (or rather his son-in-law's) canoe house would need another roof within the year. Interestingly no one said that they would not help him the next time he asked, and none admitted to sabotaging the job himself.
10. As part of its attempt to win the hearts and minds of the Micronesians the U. S. Navy sent a team of Sea Bees to Tobi to build a dispensary. This happened between my two stays on the atoll. The men of the island were paid to help put up the building. The Sea Bees spoke no Tobian and so were in the same position that I was during my first months on the island. They also noticed the hostile tone of the remarks between co-workers and remarked on it to one of the English speakers. This man recounted the conversation to me when I got back to the island and told me that he had told his Sea Bee friends that they just did not understand the people of Tobi. "If we

couldn't yell at each other, he said, "we could not work together--it is just our way."

11. There is no religious profanity on Tobi. There are a number of curses which use the name of Buuat, one of the most powerful of the pre-Christian spirits. The most common of these curses is "Han a Buuat" "(you are) food of Buuat." The shock value of this epithet has been so attenuated that it draws virtually no reaction and can be used in almost any setting between almost any two people, even brother and sister.
12. Much of the material on smoking behavior which appears in this chapter was first worked out in an earlier paper (Black MS(d)).
13. Other knowledge is "owned" on Tobi. Medicinal recipes, canoe building, stick fighting techniques, magic, were all owned in the past and to the degree that they have survived into modern era, they still are. As new knowledge comes into the culture it is also treated very much like private property. Even such things as how to order from a mail order catalogue are known only to a few people who receive presents for using that knowledge on behalf of a non-relative.
14. A symmetrical axiom was rather nicely illustrated one evening as a group of men were lounging in my house. To pass the time I told them about "logic." I illustrated "proofment" (as one of the English speakers named it) with the syllogism:

"All people must die
I am a person
Therefore I must die"

I also explained the difference between necessary and sufficient causes and we began to play games. We tried to catch each other out in logical fallacies. One person would make two statements (major and minor premises) and ask another to respond with a "truth." The men quickly caught on and vied with each other in constructing seductive but inadequate sets. Such things as "Marcello is hungry. There are fish in the ocean. Therefore: . . .?" The men saw that to say that Marcello will go fishing would not be "true." We played the game for an hour or so and I became convinced that everyone had mastered the paradigm. But I learned that some "truths" are indeed provincial.

"A child is crying" said someone
"Its mother hears it, therefore???"

One and all answered "She goes to her baby." This is as fundamental an axiom as the one about fathers and food.

15. It is literally true, in fact, that this is the whole point in having children. Tobians, of course, love and cherish their children as would any people who had been through similar demographic events. The major reward in raising children, however, is said to be the freedom from a hungry old age which they can bring. What this means in practice is that people try to get their children to do as much of the household work as possible.
16. Direct encouragement plays only a partial role in getting the boys to spend long hours out on the reef dangling baitless hooks into tide pools. Peer pressure also is important as is the existence of a set of rules about work and play. Fishing is defined as a "work" activity. It is one of the few such activities in which boys can indulge without adult supervision. All of their other unsupervised activities fall into the category labeled "play." Play activities (and this holds true for everyone and not just prepubescent boys) are always subject to disruption by appeal to "work" activities. That is, if the boys are just "playing around" they can be assigned to do some of the tedious chores which they detest. If they are on their way to the reef to go fishing, they can at least argue, and sometimes successfully, that they are already "working."
17. There are techniques which are apparently never stolen. These are all difficult and complex and are currently owned by no more than two people. Such things as the use of breadfruit leaf kites and spider web to catch needle fish are so clearly identified as the property of certain individuals that a youth would have no chance of successfully claiming ownership of them. The techniques which are illegitimately used are more widely owned. They are not simple but neither are they highly elaborate. In a manuscript now in preparation Robert Johannes, an ichthyologist, and I are in the process of presenting the full range of Tobian fishing techniques.
18. "Feces head" contrasts with all the words for "smart." Other terms for the same quality are "rock head," "bad head," "sand head."
19. As I have already explained in this chapter, skills, in contrast to the routines in which they are embedded, are transmitted in their performance. We can contrast this with behavior in our culture. We also practice new skills. However our distinction between private practice and public performance does not hold for the

Tobians. Learnings are not only mostly indirect, they also happen in full view of one's fellows. The pressure is great in such circumstances for a learner to act more competent than he in fact is. He proclaims his competence in thatching by making claims to adulthood through the use of jokes. He proclaims his competence in fishing by making claims to the adult virtue of smartness by exercising his skill at indirect learning to master routines to which he has no right. Furthermore just as the thatching of cookhouses is done by boys training for adult performances but is in no sense a make-work or non-utilitarian event so the fishing which was done by boys has its practical consequences--those fish they do manage to catch are eaten. What we have here is the absence of the use of a practical or utilitarian versus impractical or non-utilitarian axis in dividing practice from performance. The contexts are only categorized on two dimensions: easy versus difficult and appropriate for grown men versus appropriate for young men and boys.

20. For those unfamiliar with the trick, the gimmick lies in the use of the word "this" in all questions except the one preceding the correct one. The questions can be directly translated into Tobian.
21. It seems to me that there are two kinds of secrets. Those which are totally private so that only those party to them even know that there is a secret and those which are only partially private, so that many people know there is a secret although only those party to it know what it is. It is the latter which are socially expensive to keep since they involve denying knowledge to kinsmen and friends which they know you have. When the knowledge is essentially trivial, which was the case with my young friend's and my knowledge of the secret of the "magic," people (including the well socialized Peace Corps Volunteer) find it impossible to keep it to themselves.
22. In Chapter Four I describe the reverse situation, in which the people terminated a meeting at what seemed to me to be a premature point.
23. The phasing out of this behavior was a gradual process. Starting from an evening in which this was virtually all we did, the performances became less and less frequent until finally they ended. When I revisited the island one of the first things that happened was that this routine was revived. Everyone seemed to remember it and it enjoyed a brief popularity.

24. This in direct contradiction to the widely shared belief that English has a much richer vocabulary than Tobian. "We have only one word for something while you have three or four for each thing," I was told on numerous occasions even by people who do not speak English.
25. It is not the case that Tobian English speakers have confused the English word "smart" with "learn." In speaking English they clearly keep them separate and use them correctly.
26. Manning Nash (1967) describes the way that Mayan peasant women learn factory operations (typically in textile mills). Their behavior sounds very much like the way Tobians would act under similar circumstances. The women spend a month or so simply standing beside a machine operator watching what she is doing.
27. Obviously the thing I should have done for those wishing to learn to type was to have offered to teach them in return for the gifts of food and valuables which were the apprentice's (or rather his family's) obligation under the traditional system.
28. I speak from personal experience here.
29. For particularly Tobian reasons this line of investigation had to be abandoned. Throughout the research systematic questioning of informants about sensitive topics proved impossible. This was because of the lack of completely private contexts. There was always a third or fourth party involved in structured interviews. I was able to get quite a bit of private information but only on an ad hoc basis during the occasional private settings which arose. It was never possible to structure things so that I could count on these settings. Rating one's fellow islanders is one of the most sensitive yet popular social pastimes in Tobi.
30. I believe that this old man insisted on eating only taro as a way of insisting on his status as a well connected elder and to avoid assignment to the category which includes Martin . . . peripheral old man.

31. I have come across several examples in the ethnographic literature of something like the Tobian conception of "smart" or taga(r). The Burundi value "ubenge" or "successful cleverness" (Albert 1964:44). A Tongan known as a "tangata poto" (clever person) has the "capacity to achieve (his) ends through devious, indirect means." (Marcus MS:10). See also Cole, Gay, Glick and Sharp (1971:220-221) and Wober (1974) for accounts of the notions of the Kepelle and Kiganda respectively. A recent provocative approach to the question of intelligence in a cross cultural perspective can be found in Paredes and Hepburn (1976). This last article is highly interesting but suffers, I think, from a confusion of native ideas about intelligence (such as the Tobian taga(r)) with the notion of intelligence as an etic category.
32. Airai is a village on the southern end of Babeldaob, the main island in the Palau group, a ferry ride from Koror. These events happened (I think) in the middle to late nineteen fifties.
33. The requirement that no bush person be asked to make sacrifices is only the minimum requirement for achieving cooperation in these schemes.
34. The anti-chief in Koror claims that this is no accident.
35. I was reminded of the time during my first stay when, after making strenuous but futile efforts to put out a fire consuming a copra dryer, the whole population hid behind trees to hear what the absent owner, a profane old man, would say when he returned.
36. The meeting eventually agreed to institute the five dollar fine. Like the fine voted to force people to come to the island clean-ups, it was never imposed. The rule was that anyone (read: unmarried girl) who heard some one (read: adolescent boy) use a bad word should report it to the municle clerk (who happened to be the magistrate's wife). Following the adoption of this rule the meeting broke up into two sub-meetings. One was composed of all the boys. They were told the words they shouldn't use by Old Martin, the island's expert on words and their usage. The other sub-meeting was made up of all the island's girls who withdrew from the meeting house accompanied by one of the old women who told them the words they should report. Those people who were neither student nor instructor attended the sub-meeting appropriate for their sex and offered many unsolicited comments. The whole procedure

soon dropped into limbo and will not be resurrected until the next crop of boys starts to get out of hand. Only once did a girl actually report someone for using bad words in her presence. This was Paulina, the magistrate's adopted daughter and the third girl at the window during the meeting. A few nights after the meetings she woke her mother up and told her that X., a middle-aged man well known as a man of the jungle, had crept into her room and propositioned her using one of the forbidden words. On getting this report from his wife, the magistrate realized that the net woven at the meeting had caught a rather bigger fish than one of the adolescent boys. He decided not to impose a fine (an impossible task anyway) after (he told me) consulting with Old Martin. "You see," he explained, "Martin told us that we could not fine that guy because when he said that bad word he was using it like you are supposed to use it." Hiding a grin he finished, "After all that is what the word 'fuck' is for." Since we all knew that Paulina's brother had chased off the man of the jungle with a piece of lumber, the matter was dropped.

37. This patrilineal succession in the chiefly line means, of course, that since the clans are matrilineal, each generation sees a chief of different clan. At about the time that the government was pushing the magistrate program the chief and his allies developed the following argument. Meaning to impress the District Administrator and thus ease the pressure to elect a magistrate the chief claimed that the Tobian political system was "democratic" (especially in comparison to that of Palau) because no one clan could monopolize political power. There is no evidence that anyone in the District Administrator office was swayed by this argument--the chief lost the point and the position of magistrate was grafted into the political system. Never one to abandon a good argument the chief presented it to McKnight in the early 1960's (McKnight, personal communication) and to me almost as soon as I stepped ashore on both my visits. The argument ignores the difference between Palauan and Tobian clans, Palauan and Tobian families and Palauan and Tobian chiefs.
38. This verb also refers to the ownership of property. It is here, I think, that Holden and the other shipwrecked whalers radically misinterpreted their situation. They thought they were slaves because people had been placed "in charge" of them (Holden 1836).

39. Lacking any real knowledge of turtle ethology I never had the heart to share my suspicion of the importance of the imprinting of the island on the young turtle's nervous systems by the very trek across the beach and the reef that the routine replaces.
40. I think the most persuasive argument was the one based on Peun's (the dogs name) hunting prowess, since the dog killers were the very people who most loved to go hunting bush chickens with a dog. Peun has since died and has not been replaced.
41. See Miller, Galanter, and Pribram (1960) for a sustained attempt at working out a model of behavior dealing with many of the same variables discussed here. If that work had been carried further I might have used it as a basis for my discussion of routine and idea. However, their extremely fine grained approach is focused on too minute a level of behavior for the kinds of things I need to discuss.

A CASE OF ATTEMPTED MURDER¹

It is interesting to note that the normal gossip of any group is actually a slow scanning of the total informational resource of the group. In Zuni for example it is striking how this process of informal gossip has contributed to the storage of salient judicial cases of the last thirty or forty years in the heads of fully participating adults in the culture and how the same process contributes to the mobilization or retrieval of these salient cases when they become pertinent as precedents to on-going court trials or in discussion of those trials. (Smith and Roberts, 1954) (Roberts 1964:441).

Introduction

An extended case analysis is presented in this chapter, designed first, to provide evidence so as to amplify our understanding of certain Tobian beliefs (vide Chapter Two); second, to give an illustration of a major, if seldom practiced, Tobian cultural routine (vide Chapter Three); and third, to offer an example of what actually happens when such a routine is performed. I therefore am placing a considerable burden on this case by demanding that it play a cumulative and integrative role for the whole dissertation. Fortunately, I collected a large amount of material about the case so that data are available to support most, if not all, of the points made in this chapter. More importantly, the case is an example of a dispute settlement and thus shares the peculiar qualifications of all such procedures for the kind of analysis

Footnotes for this chapter can be found between pages 371 and 375.

offered in this chapter. I believe that these qualifications are inherent in all classes of dispute settlement procedures and are a necessary result of the functions which they are designed to meet. A good beginning, therefore, will be to take the three things which I wish to accomplish through the analysis of this case and consider them in the light of those qualifications.

The Nature of Dispute Settlement Procedures

The beliefs which I wish to discuss are all subsumed under the general heading of beliefs about "human nature." That is, they all have to do with Tobian understandings about people, how they work, why they do the things that they do, how they are put together and so forth. Dispute settlements are particularly apropos for an examination of such beliefs. This is because in perhaps no other behavioral setting are a people's beliefs so clearly exposed as they are in the events surrounding the settlement of a dispute. Regardless of the particular form such procedures take--and ethnology offers a great diversity of types--it is possible to enrich our understanding of a people's self image by closely examining the ways in which disputes are handled. The fundamental reason for this is that a key design feature of any such procedure is the attempt to modify someone's behavior. Settling the conflict means that someone (and perhaps everyone) must act differently. Therefore the beliefs which the participants

hold about human nature in general, and human motivation in particular, are especially salient in these contexts and thus are at least relatively accessible for analysis.²

If dispute settlement procedures are well suited for an analysis of beliefs about human nature, they also offer fertile ground for determining the properties of routines. The reason for this is obvious: a procedure is simply a well defined or codified routine, in fact a dispute settlement procedure is an example, par excellence, of what I mean by a routine. As such they share the qualities of all routines. They are built up out of beliefs and they are used to guide behavior. Since the management of conflict is a problem faced by all societies, dispute settlement procedures have the potential for providing much interesting cross-cultural comparative material illustrating differences and similarities in routines in a variety of ethnographic settings. In fact, of course, much of the literature on dispute settlement is related to this. More to the point, as specimens of a given culture's routine repertoire, they can be used to determine the characteristics of other items in that repertoire.

Finally, there is the fact that dispute settlement is apparently universally recognized as a critical process. This recognition (often but not always conscious) leads to the fact that settling disputes is nowhere treated as a trivial exercise. This in turn means that the enactment

of a routine for settling disputes is likely to be taken extremely seriously by everyone involved and that contradictions between the "ought to be" of the routine and the "is" of experience will be the subject of some concern. That is, perhaps unlike routines used to script behavior felt to be of little or no ultimate importance (like the one for learning how to play checkers) the ends for which dispute settlement procedures are employed are serious enough to generate a good deal of unease when there is a lack of correspondence between the predicted events of the routine and the actual events of the "case." This unease may work to our advantage in that it may lead informants to explain more fully than they would otherwise just what it is that they think is going on. This is what happened in the incident which forms the heart of this chapter.

At this point I face a vexing (if minor) organizational problem. The routine on which the dispute settlement was based was initially known to only a portion of the Tobian population. This is a fact of considerable interest and it receives due attention in its place. I mention it here only because it complicates the order of presentation of the material. All the young people of the island (including myself) entered the case ignorant of the routine which was designed for events of its type. If I follow the sequence of events as I participated in them, then the narrative will be continually broken as I explain

what was explained to me. On the other hand, if I try for the clearest (simplest) organization I sacrifice some verisimilitude. I have chosen the latter course and have thereby placed the reader in the position of one of those indomitable old Tobians who, veterans of a similar event forty years before, entered the case already in control of the routine.

The Poisoned Cup (c. 1938)

Climbing his coconut tree one morning to collect its sap for toddy making, Juanito noticed "something bad" in the half coconut shell collecting cup he had hung the night before from the spathe which he was currently tapping. He decided that it was poison and took the evidence to Perfecto, the man who led the twice-daily prayers. Due to his friendship with Yoshino, the Japanese trader, and the force of what seems to have been a remarkable personality, Perfecto had achieved a degree of informal leadership over the one hundred and fifty to two hundred people then living on the island.

At the close of communal prayers later that same morning Perfecto asked the congregation to wait on the steps of the newly built church before going home for breakfast. He told them that "something serious" had happened. All but one of the people did as he asked and soon a meeting was under way to find the person who had planted poison in Juanito's cup. The one person who did

not participate in this meeting was old Jesus, the brother of the chief (the chief himself was not on Tobi at the time). Old Jesus had, by prearrangement with Perfecto, secretly remained hidden inside the church where he could observe the meeting but not be seen. Perfecto began the meeting by telling the assembled crowd that someone had put poison in Juanito's cup. He then, feigning anger, stridently demanded of each man in turn: "Did you try to kill Juanito?" Each man denied any guilt but when Moses, the husband of the near-victim's lover, was asked the question, he betrayed his guilt to Juanito, Jesus, and the men sitting on either side of him by exhibiting the following signs: his body shook, his eyes got wide, his lips and complexion got darker. To these men, and perhaps others, his denial rang hollow in the presence of such obvious signs of fear.

Having completed his questioning of each man, Perfecto, much to the surprise of his audience, called old Jesus out from the church. "Now do you know who did it?" Perfecto asked. "I know!" the old man answered with a shout. At this Moses gave a visible start confirming his guilt in the eyes of the others. "Good," replied Perfecto, "this meeting is over, you can all go eat now." Everyone went home to breakfast. Juanito said nothing at the time but that night he secretly went to Moses' house and asked Moses if he had tried to kill him. Moses admitted his

guilt and apologized, presenting Juanito with some of the gifts which symbolize contrition--tobacco, cloth, and tumeric. Perhaps Juanito did not believe that he was out of danger even after this customary presentation, which is supposed to close incidents troubling the relations between two people. At any rate he took the next available ship to Koror and has stayed there ever since. Today he is the sole survivor of the main participants in this drama.

This story has several interesting features. It possesses a curious status of being both public and not public. It was told only during the events which make up the main case. None of the young people knew it and one of the preparations which were made for the second meeting was the recital of this story by the old people to very attentive young listeners.³ For the young people (and the ethnographer) Juanito's near poisoning had not been part of the known history of the island until the second of the two incidents occurred. This story was used as a criterion for measuring the correctness of the way that the second meeting was run. Thus it was, in a sense, the repository for the routine which we can label: How to react to a serious crime by an unknown person. The events spoken of in this story were viewed as having the form which such events should have. The outcome (especially the apology) was thought to be particularly apropos. The story functioned as a kind of model in the second incident.

It was used heuristically, those familiar with it showing the young people how such situations should be dealt with by teaching it to them. It was also used mnemonically, being discussed at length during the meeting which climaxed those events. As a story it is a representative specimen of Tobian folklore.

Life rarely if ever provides material which is suitable in its unedited form for the story teller's art, yet this story contains all the dramatic elements which are necessary for a good Tobian story. Therefore it is reasonable to conclude that the events related in this story have been transformed to conform both with the uses to which it was eventually put and with the requirements of a good Tobian story. There is not much point in speculating about which elements in the story "really" happened and which did not. Like the seven items in the Marino Corpus, this story rests only indirectly on an actual set of preceding events. The routine for dealing with events of this type, in which a serious offense is committed by an unknown person, is contained in the story. And the story has been probably modified so that it could store that routine effectively.

The meeting described in the story is an item of culture which is seen as important and necessary on those infrequent situations when it is called into play. The story of Juanito and Moses is a way of storing the

information about the design of that item through the long years during which there is no occasion to use it. A comparison of this story with the second set of events reveals, however, that it does not contain more than a fraction of the information which we need to understand it. This is because the story is predicated on a whole set of understandings which have to do with things like fear and shame, fairness and self-control, old men and meetings.

The Severed Fronds (1972)

The usual placid evening atmosphere was disrupted one night by the shocking news that someone had tried to kill Alberto, the half-Tobian health aide. He had fallen from his toddy tree because a frond had given way on him. He claimed that someone had deliberately sabotaged that frond in an attempt on his life. He claimed that he had climbed back up into the tree after his fall and had found that fronds higher up in the tree also had been tampered with. This news spread from household to household with great speed. It also spread with great accuracy as I learned in talking with a still shaken Alberto shortly after word of his fall reached me.

Investigation

The next morning when Marcello, the magistrate, Isauro, the school teacher, and I (at the magistrate's request) went to investigate we found that the fronds had

been partially severed, apparently with a sharp knife. We reached several conclusions. It was thought that Alberto had been lucky that the lowest of the severed fronds had given way on him. His injuries (a bruised shoulder and a sandy ear) would have been much more severe if he had fallen the thirty feet from the uppermost severed frond and not the mere ten feet that he had. It was said that he was lucky that the previous afternoon's spring tide had cleared the beach under his tree of the stones and driftwood that usually littered it. It was said that the culprit was also lucky in this regard because that same high tide had also eliminated his tracks. Since everyone knows everyone else's footprints, the "bad guy" (which was how the culprit was increasingly becoming known to even non-English speakers) would not have remained unknown if it had not been for that tide. It was also said that the criminal was certainly a man since women do not have knives sharp enough to leave the kind of edge shown by the cut fronds. As we walked back to the village an old woman called from her garden, asking if it was true that someone had cut the fronds in Alberto's tree. "Of course," shouted back Aureo, an old man who had joined us at the site a few minutes earlier, "is a person a coconut?" (to fall "naturally" from a tree.) The magistrate told us that we would have a meeting to find out who had tried to commit the murder as soon as we had eaten our breakfast and he had finished

with his morning radio conference with Koror. So it was that at nine-thirty that morning we found ourselves outside the church waiting for all the people to arrive so that the meeting could get under way.

The story of Juanito and Moses was retold yet again and was given close attention by all even though it had been told and retold again and again ever since the rumors had started the night before.⁴ Also discussed at length was the pre-Christian technique for this type of situation. As recollected by the old people, this technique (which was abandoned when the main spirit house had been set afire not long before the Juanito incident) involved a gathering of the people in the main spirit house, where they witnessed what appears to have been a divination by the chief. The culprit would then become so afraid that he would give himself away or, failing this, a spirit would identify him by throwing a coconut at him. The culprit would then be punished, usually by being set adrift in a provisioned but paddleless canoe to drift helplessly away.⁵

The Meeting

As soon as everyone was present except Alberto (whose injuries prevented his attendance) Marcello began the meeting. He requested that the women sit apart from the men whom he asked to form a circle. Three times he carefully, and with exhaustive detail, described the

events which had led to the meeting. After each recital he paused, looked around, and commented that it was "bad" to have such a thing occur. The fact that there were outsiders on the island (Alberto, his eighteen-year-old son Jerry, and I) was mentioned. So was the possibility that after such an event no other nurse-aide would accept an assignment on Tobi. During this part of the proceedings he had what appeared to be the undivided attention of the whole population, including the toddlers and the women. He next asked the women if they had witnessed anything the day before which could shed any light on the matter before them. One by one the women told what they had been doing the previous afternoon. None of them had seen anything suspicious.

Marcello then mentioned the fact that only someone with a sharp knife could have sliced the fronds. He turned to the men and asked about the teenage boys--whom they had been playing with yesterday and what time they had come home. As they answered these questions about their dependents (who were all sitting in the men's circle watching and listening) the men started to give details about their activities during the time in question. None of them had seen anything and all, in effect, denied that they had been anywhere near Alberto's tree during the time it must have been cut. Marcello then let it be known that he had not yet reported the matter to the police and would

prefer not to. Several of the old women heatedly disagreed with this and he gave way saying that it would be reported and that he would request that a policeman be sent down on the next Field Trip Ship to investigate. He agreed to this against his will because he was worried that he would have to go to Koror if any court proceedings developed from this case. The old women wanted it reported so that a graphic lesson would be taught to all potential killers.

During the meeting I sat next to Jerry, the health-aide's son. As the discussion about whether the police should be brought in was being resolved, he leaned over and asked if I had found the culprit. I asked if he had any idea and he furtively nodded toward Isodoro, one of the older men, sitting by himself. Isodoro's face was immobile, his features carefully arranged in the same noncommittal expression which was shown by all the men in the moments when they were not speaking. Isodoro had said not a word thus far and he had placed himself apart from the rest of the people. When I walked over to sit next to him he nodded at my camera and told me to take pictures of all the people--meaning that, as far as he was concerned, they were all equally suspect.

Once again Marcello turned to the women and asked two of the teenage girls if they had seen anything. These girls, who had previously not spoken, responded with detailed itemizations of their activities during the

previous afternoon. As it became evident that they had nothing useful to add to the discussion, Aureo, the old man who had made the day's most memorable quip (about the difference between people and coconuts) announced that he had seen footprints on the beach the previous afternoon leading toward Alberto's coconut tree.

Before anyone could question him the magistrate's wife shrieked: "Someone stop that baby. He is going into the church without any clothes on!" I was sitting with Isodoro in the door of the church, so it was I who stopped the wayward infant from inadvertently committing a minor sacrilege. Since Isodoro and I, as well as other people in the vicinity of the church door, had spent the better part of the meeting quietly preventing just such innocent desecration, the cry of the magistrate's wife came as something of a surprise. As I turned back toward the meeting I saw that she had risen to her feet and was about to strike the old torpedo tube which serves this not-very-affluent congregation as a bell. She rang it twice, everyone stood up, the magistrate led us in a recital of a "Hail Mary," and we all went home to eat lunch.

Afterward

Throughout the following afternoon and evening the meeting was enthusiastically discussed and rediscussed. A definite pattern soon emerged. Two or three people would gather in an out-of-the-way place. Someone would ask the

others who they thought had done it. He would be met with the same question and names would be traded off. Younger people would mention only one name and cite evidence to support their suspicion. Older people would mention two or three names, eliminate all but one by explaining away the facts that led to their inclusion and then cite the evidence that compelled them to accuse the remaining person. Immediately after the meeting there were at least three different people being mentioned as probable suspects. As the day wore on into the evening more and more unanimity was achieved so that by the time people started to go to bed everyone agreed that the culprit was Isodoro, the same man that Jerry had pointed out to me in the meeting.

I was not the only one to watch Isodoro carefully in the days that followed. His toddy tree grew at the opposite end of the island from his house and he had to walk through the village and past the dispensary where Alberto lived to reach it. Twice a day he made that trip under the close but disguised scrutiny of one and all. As he passed the dispensary on the evening of the meeting he simply kept walking with his head bowed. He did not stop and talk with Alberto as he usually did. The following morning he stopped briefly and spoke with some of the people waiting for treatment but did not go inside for a cup of coffee as usual. That evening he spoke with Alberto, outside the dispensary, in full view of the village. This

was simply a routine, but abbreviated version of the typical exchange between people who are not particularly close friends (as discussed in Chapter One) at the moment but who have been in the past and who might be in the future. By the fourth day relations between Alberto and Isodoro were back on their old footing; Isodoro was again spending his evenings drinking the health-aide's coffee, playing cards and in general being his usual truculent (for a Tobian) self. Three months later when the next ship arrived all traces of the incident had disappeared. The policeman could find no one who would name a suspect, the severed fronds had regrown and it was no longer possible to distinguish Isodoro on the basis of his behavior. An alternative hypothesis to his guilt had started to gain adherents so that by the time that I left the island five months later most people were saying that it was probable that Alberto, who was well known to be subject to fainting spells, had fallen from the tree by accident and had been so embarrassed by such grossly incompetent, indeed coconut-like, behavior that he had climbed back into the tree and cut the limbs himself. In effect, more and more people had come to the conclusion that no crime had occurred at all.

At the time this incident occurred I was baffled by certain aspects of the events (especially by the way that the meeting ended). This was because I had preconceived

notions about the nature and the purpose of the meeting. That is, the confusion resulted from the dramatic distance between this meeting and the kinds of procedures Americans have come to expect as appropriate in cases of this sort. These preconceptions were reinforced by the persistent questions which people addressed to me. The young people in particular constantly asked if I did not know "elective." It soon dawned on me that, in conformity with the generally high valuation of all things western, they were assuming that I, as an American, was familiar with other, and more powerful "detective" techniques. It was not until much later, however, that I realized that the identification of the culprit was only one of a set of goals which the people had set for themselves in that meeting. Having presented the pertinent details of the two cases which make up the total body of data which directly bear on this technique it is now possible to begin to identify the other things the Tobians were trying to accomplish.

Most Tobians had never participated in a meeting of this type. In fact, a large percentage of the population had been totally ignorant of the very existence of the type until shortly before its second manifestation--the Marcello meeting. Yet the second meeting closely resembled the first. The success of the replication can be attributed in part to the success of the Perfecto story in teaching the uninitiated how things should be done. Some of the

faithfulness of the replication can be attributed to the fact that the population of forty years ago shared with that of today certain notions about the relation of fear to shame. Finally, some of the faithfulness of the replication was due, paradoxically enough, to the shortcomings in the Perfecto story as a storage device. Since the story did not relate in any detail the events which occurred in Perfecto's meeting, there was constant pressure on the Marcello meeting to assume the shape of an ordinary Tobian meeting. Since only a few people had actually participated in this type of meeting before and since the Perfecto story did not contain detailed instructions on meeting behavior, the mass of the population naturally kept trying to act the way they ordinarily act in meetings. Marcello (and I am certain Perfecto before him) used this pressure as one of a series of devices for regulating the excitement level of the meetings.

Characteristics of Tobian Meetings

Tobian meetings are, with the exception of the meeting which is the subject of this chapter, rather uniform in form. Almost without exception all meetings start off focused on a single topic. After an initial presentation by the chief or the magistrate discussion becomes general. People respond, they are interrupted, the interrupters are themselves interrupted. Interrupted people only rarely cease talking. They more usually

continue whatever point they were making. Those not talking listen to all the discussions going on, seeking a chance to bring the house down with a joke, usually at the expense of one of the shouters. People try to stump one another with unanswerable arguments or objections. Discussion rapidly spirals off the topic and splinters into many loud and competing conversations. Eventually the meeting is simply a collection of small groups of three or four persons, scattered about the area, talking on a wide variety of subjects, passing babies and cigarettes back and forth, occasionally tossing out a joke for the entertainment of one and all. The meeting ends as people drift away to engage in other activities. Decisions are very rarely made at these meetings. A plan of action is usually proposed at the beginning but its adoption or rejection depends on the opinions gathered the following evening by the magistrate as he visits each household and informally canvasses their reactions to the proposal.⁶

Starting with its unique spatial arrangements (in no other meeting were the seating arrangements of any concern) the Alberto meeting was different. "We have to make that guy afraid," the magistrate told me before the meeting started. By focusing closely on the subject at hand, by interrogating possible witnesses, by constantly referring to the possible island-wide negative consequences (directly in the threat that no other nurse would want to come to

Tobi and indirectly by reference to the presence of the three outsiders who could be expected to spread "bad stories" about Tobi in Palau) and by the triple recitation of the events which led up to the meeting, Marcello built a level of excitement and psychological pressure which, it was hoped, would force the culprit to give himself away.⁷ It was thought dangerous, however, to let the excitement build to too great a pitch. The danger lay in the possibility that one of the old men (who as a class are known for their disregard of the consequences of their actions) would become angry enough to point his finger in the trembling culprit's face and shout an accusation at him.⁸ Such an accusation would lead its object to do one of three things, all of which are thought of as actions which in varying degree would have negative consequences for the island as a whole. At best he might simply cut himself off from further social intercourse with the other Tobians, retreating to the bush during the day and locking himself in his house during the night. Next in order of the harm it is thought that it would do the fabric of life on the atoll would be his self-destruction, stereotypically by hanging. Worse of all would be something very like the phenomenon called amuk by the Malays. He might take his toddy knife and run through the village slashing and killing all who got in his way.

The task of the leader of one of these meetings, then, is to strike a balance between two end states: one in which not enough psychological pressure is generated to force the culprit into revealing himself, and one in which so much excitement is created that a direct accusation results. Marcello dealt with this problem in an interesting fashion. He alternated periods of focused attention with diffuse and less intense periods.

There was a constant pressure on the form of the meeting to slide off into a more usual Tobi gathering. People constantly started side discussions and introduced irrelevant comments. Marcello used this tendency to relax pressure. He, in fact, triggered it on occasion by asking someone for a cigarette or by picking up and fondling one of the toddlers who were constantly trying to penetrate the circle to their fathers and older brothers. The magistrate let the excitement die down. After a few moments he gave the child back to one of the women, intervened in one of the more relevant side discussions (this is how the question of whether the police should be notified came under general consideration) or in a loud voice asked a pertinent question to the group at large. Any of these three acts again focused attention on the subject of the meeting and pressure again started to build. During the brief relaxed interludes there was never enough time for the side discussions to stray far from the point and it was

in these moments that the story of Juanito and also the pre-Christian method of dealing with such situations were rehearsed yet again. Significantly, these stories emphasized the way in which a culprit gives himself away.

Choosing a Culprit

A goal of the meeting was to identify, by producing fear symptoms, the person who had cut the fronds of the health-aide's tree. To my knowledge these signs were not shown by anyone. In all the discussion after the meeting no one claimed either that he had seen them or that someone else had. Naturally enough I made inquiries about this and received a negative answer from one and all. Yet a "culprit" was found--the old man Isodoro. He became the agreed upon suspect even though he did not show the fear signs. There may have been pre-existing factors here which led to his selection, possible bad feelings against him by enough of the people so that they could sway the rest into assigning him the guilt. It is a fact that his arrogance and taciturnity (measured by Tobian standards--in a Palauan or Western context the same behavior which led to these adjectives would have elicited a much less negative evaluation) were said by many people to be rather distasteful. He was directly involved in several of the long term interest conflicts and he was indirectly involved through kinship ties with even more of these disputes. This should not be taken to mean, however, that he was extra-ordinarily

disputatious. Virtually everyone on the island is both directly and indirectly involved in such disputes. Those people with the most generally acknowledged reasons to discredit him were, in fact, the very people to show the greatest degree of tentativeness in initially naming him the criminal. Their very show of hesitation served to emphasize the reasonableness of their final verdict. Perhaps some people were primarily interested in convincing the rest of the island that Isodoro was guilty as a ploy. If so, the case against the old man still could not be constructed out of whole cloth. There had to be some evidentiary material against him. The question is; what led to the naming of Isodoro as the probable criminal? At least one person was ready to name him before the meeting had even concluded.

This person was the victim's son, Jerry, who covertly pointed out Isodoro to me as the one whom he thought had done it. After the meeting, when questioned as to why he had picked Isodoro, Jerry mentioned the fact that the old man had been sitting alone and did not talk. Other people gave the same behavior as the reason they felt Isodoro was guilty. Several people added the fact that he had looked at the ground throughout the meeting. Several times statements like this were put to me: "If someone is afraid to sit next to the people and is afraid to let them see his face (by looking at the ground) then

maybe we suspect him." It should be pointed out that Isodoro sat no more than six feet away from the other participants in the meeting. But, apparently the theory was that this was too far for the trembling and other fear signs to be detected.

The other names mentioned as possible criminals (names which quickly dropped out of contention for this less than dubious honor as unanimity on Isodoro's guilt was achieved during the afternoon and evening) were all the names of men who at one time or another during the meeting had acted in the same way as Isodoro. He was the only one to act this way throughout the entire meeting however. The logic used in assigning guilt to Isodoro is interesting in that it forces us to modify the prescription for identifying the criminal given in the Juanito story. The culprit can be identified either by his exhibition of the stereotypic fear signs or by his over-obvious hiding of them. This is a significant amendment to the routine. It decreases the probability that no one will be chosen. The fear signs form a limited set of four items. As can be seen in the Alberto story they do not positively ensure that a culprit can be identified. A meeting which failed in this way could only lead to two conclusions: (1) either the culprit got away or (2) he didn't exist.

The first conclusion is unacceptable for reasons which have to do with other goals of the meeting (to be

discussed below). Its alternative would be premature at this stage although, as can be seen in the Alberto case, it remains an option for use at a later point. By broadening the criteria by which guilt is established the inclusion of "hiding signs" acts to foreclose both conclusions. If a crime has indeed been committed it is likely that the criminal would attempt to prevent the detection of fear signs either by remaining aloof and non-involved or by attempting to brazen it out by participating in the meeting--relying on his skills of self control. The first alternative was the interpretation of Isodoro's behavior, the second that of Moses'. It is interesting to speculate about what would happen in a case in which there was no guilty party. The odds are that the "hiding signs" would be shown by someone.

In any crime there is liable to be at least one person who feels that due either to the pre-existing disposition of the crowd toward him or to the special circumstances surrounding the crime he is the most likely suspect, despite his innocence. Neither he nor anyone else (barring perhaps the "victim") knows that a crime has not been committed--these meetings are only called when it is agreed that a serious crime has occurred, that was the whole point of Marcello's investigation of Alberto's tree. In this situation such a person will be most concerned with not giving the crowd anything on which to hang his

guilt. He will, in other words, be afraid of showing the fear signs. Whether Isodoro cut the frond or not made no difference to his problem. Lacking witnesses of his innocence (established by everyone's detailing of their activities during the crucial time) and knowing as he does of his bad reputation, he had to prevent himself from looking afraid. Apparently not having enough confidence in his abilities to control his physiology he was forced to attempt an aloofness which, in the end, betrayed him.

There are undoubtedly other behaviors which allow the assigning of guilt in the absence of fear signs. Most extreme of these would be failure to attend the meeting--something which would be the same as a confession. Other behaviors are not hard to imagine but it is not possible, even for a Tobian, to give an exhaustive list of them. People mentioned such things as stammering and lying as also being possible indicators but essentially this is an open category. Someone will be picked as being guilty. The several ways of identifying this person are not thought of as being of equal value however. The most unequivocal of them is the one talked of in the Juanito story--the fear signs. The redundancy in the procedure is understandable once this fact is grasped. Not only is the culprit to be made afraid by the pressure and excitement during the body of the meeting but the last act before dismissal is specially designed to trigger signs of fear.

In both meetings reported here an old man brought the proceedings to a conclusion by a dramatic claim that he knew who the culprit was. The difference between Jesus' announcement that he knew who had tried to kill Juanito and Aureo's announcement that he had seen footprints on the beach below Alberto's tree are minimal in a formal sense; all Tobians know each others footprints. The fact that Aureo was not hidden in the church merely reflects one of the scale effects which bedevil life on present day Tobi. There were only five possible candidates for this post in 1973 and the absence of any one of them would have been immediately evident to one and all. In the earlier meeting, at a time when there were between one hundred and fifty and two hundred people on the island, there were probably at least twice as many old men and Jesus could be hidden successfully.

Demographics precluded the replication of the specifics of the "old-man" ploy in Alberto's case. Aureo's attempt at duplicating its results (the triggering of fear signs in the culprit) also failed. This failure presents no problem to the hypothesis that a crime was not committed. Obviously if this was the case then the results of Aureo's intervention are precisely what one would predict; no one showed any fear signs. In fact, as the "no crime" hypothesis gained adherents in the weeks and months which followed, this fact was used in its support. In the

intervening period, however when people still felt that an attempt had been made on Alberto's life, Aureo's lack of success required explanation.

This explanation was quickly found. It hinges on the fact that Aureo was lying, and that he had not, in fact, seen incriminating footprints. He readily admitted this to me and several of his close friends after the meeting and in a short time his lie was known to all. Several people claimed to have come to the same conclusion independently. They all gave the same reason for this. They had not heard any rumors about the supposed find during the fifteen hours between the time the nurse's fall had become public knowledge and Aureo's announcement. These people had decided (or at least they said they had decided) that there was no way that a person (even as tight lipped a person as Aureo) could have kept such a dramatic find to himself and out of the rumor network. Word of the footprints would have spread. Thus the failure of Aureo's claim initially was explained. The culprit knew, so it was argued, that it was untrue. Everyone, Aureo included, viewed his lie as well intentioned but not very bright.⁹

Comparing the actions of Jesus and Aureo we can see that despite the differences there are certain, important, similarities. Both announced to the group as a whole that they knew the culprit's identity. I think this is the conscious utilization of the stylized fear of the

irresponsibility of old men. Given the drastic consequences which are thought to follow a direct accusation, the public announcement can only heighten the pressure on the culprit to inadvertently confess his guilt by fear signs. The very thin line between the announcement that the culprit has been identified and the naming of that culprit has been reached by one of the notoriously irresponsible old men. If the innocent bystanders are frightened of what lies across that line then the culprit must be terrified.

The belief is that a person directly accused will withdraw from society, hang himself or kill other people. That belief is shared by the culprit. No one wants to be placed in a situation where such terrible actions are his only options. We can leave aside for the moment the reasons for this belief and the motives which might drive someone to act in such a fashion. It is sufficient to note that the belief exists. It serves to prevent direct accusations and so no one has any experience in testing its accuracy as a prediction. Hearing the announcement that his identity is known must increase the tension felt by the guilty party, tension which it is thought expresses itself in detectable, somatic, fashion. Moses, the culprit in the Juanito case, "jumped" when Jesus pointed at the sky and shouted "I know." The question arises here as to why Aureo did not also raise his arm and shout "I know!"

To answer this it is necessary to turn to another of the meeting's objectives.

Differences Between The Two Cases

Three differences between the way the Juanito story said one of these meetings should proceed and the way the Alberto meeting actually happened are obvious: (1) Perfecto, the leader of the meeting in Juanito's case, questioned each man--sternly asking them if they had committed the crime; Marcello did not. (2) Jesus shouted "I know (who did it)!"; Aureo did not. (3) Juanito attended the meeting in his case; Alberto did not. It seems to me that these differences are all related to the greater stress which Marcello placed on the prevention of further breakdown because, as he said at its beginning, "We are only a few now and it is bad that such a thing should happen." Two factors are important here: (1) the smaller population size and (2) the increased integration of Tobian society into previously external systems. Briefly, the chances either that someone would leave the island or that a court case would result weighed more heavily on Marcello than on Perfecto. Marcello was concerned least the meeting itself become a cause of further disruption rather than smoothing things over.

The loss of an able bodied man from the present day population would exacerbate already severe difficulties which plague the Tobians. Both Isodoro and Alberto

control relatively large numbers of people through descent and marriage. A "walkout" by either one of them, bad enough in itself, would probably involve at least some of their dependents, and could result in a major, and probably fatal, schism in Tobian society. Such "walkouts" have occurred in the past and indeed they are the major reason why only half of the Tobian people actually live on the island. A court case is felt to be an unmitigated disaster for everyone involved, even the most innocent of witnesses. "Court is not a place for true" said Marcello in his unique English, "it is only a place for smart." It is thought that a court case always creates more problems than it solves. They are seen as the arena par excellence for cheating and lying. They are thought dangerous for everyone involved and also immensely time consuming. This perception is based to a certain extent on bitter experience.

Trials are held in Koror. A trip there involves a stay of at least three months off Tobi with all the expenses and inconveniences which prolonged visits in that cash economy cause for these basically subsistence people. The proceedings are conducted in either Palauan or English. They are based on an amalgam of American common law and Palauan traditional law, both of which are rather remote from the Tobian order. They involve the retention of Palauan "lawyers" whose legal training is minimal and who

often share the general contempt for things Tobian held by most Palauans.

Juanito's case occurred at a time when there were two or three times as many people on the island as today. The Tobi settlement in Eang was in its infancy and trips to Koror had not yet become routinized. Therefore the dangers of a walkout may have seemed less important to Perfecto than to Marcello.¹⁰ The Japanese only rarely interfered in the day-to-day workings of Tobian society and court cases were rare as they preferred to let the people settle their own problems. Therefore a court case was probably not one of the things that Perfecto worried about either.

Underlying the concerns with both a walkout and with court cases is a perception that there is a substratum of hostility masked by the pleasant tone of daily social intercourse. The two possibilities of a court fight and a permanent fission are immediate threats to the Tobians because they feel their society to be highly volatile. For quite pragmatic reasons (summed up in Marcello's statement that "we are only a few now . . .") it is thought to be vitally important to keep these disputes from breaking through to the surface. Any act which could potentially lead to a breakdown of the containment of these disputes is avoided. The post hoc way in which the question of the motivation of the criminal was approached

in the Alberto case (and I suspect in the Juanito case as well) is related to this perception.

To make the motives of the culprit a subject of investigation before he had been identified would be to run the risks of eliciting the whole range of disputes to which the intended victim was a party.¹¹ In another setting, among people with a different view of their own potentials this might be a practical procedure. For the Tobians, however, this would be a recipe for chaos. The islanders view themselves as subject to strong, anti-social urges, which are held in check only by an act of the will and they also believe (accurately) that there is a great deal of feeling involved in the covert disputes. The public discussion of a whole group of disputes is thought dangerous because of the rage it would trigger in the parties to those disputes. Since almost everyone is either directly or indirectly involved in all the disputes, it seems to me that an investigation of the reasons why someone would have wanted to kill the nurse could only have led to a breakdown of the meeting.

Another reason the question of motivation was dealt with in the way that it was is that Tobian etiquette dictates the avoidance of interference, or even the appearance of interference, in others' affairs. This etiquette also places the blame equally on those who lose their tempers and those who cause them to do so. Given these two values

it is hard to see how anyone could even begin to publicly discuss all the reasons that exist which could have led to the attempted killing. The person who initiated such a discussion would be making a statement about himself--a statement that he was "above" the rest of the people (or in western terms, that he was "above" the rules which govern social behavior).

The major reason that the possible motivation of the crime was not an issue at the meeting is that it would have disrupted the proceedings and (in Isauro's words) "made more trouble than ever." These kinds of meetings have as one of their goals the elimination of "trouble" and not its creation. Prevention of further trouble also can explain a good deal of the magistrate's behavior. Not only did he have to ensure that an old man did not fly out of control he also had to make sure that his own behavior did not itself become a source of dispute.

Marcello at one point in the meeting wished to inquire about the whereabouts of some of the teenage boys who had recently started to make toddy and thus owned sharp knives. (It will be remembered that possession of a sharp knife was thought to be one of the attributes of the culprit). Someone mentioned that one of the boys had recently acquired one of these knives. Marcello immediately responded that his son had also just gotten one. He was, in effect, naming his own son as a suspect. As the

men recited where they had been the previous afternoon Marcello did not hold himself aloof but rather joined in and gave his and his son's alibis. He acted here to avoid angering the people by even an indirect show of favoritism--he was trying to be "fair." The notion of fairness is highly developed on Tobi and is an important factor in communal behavior. Nothing is more certain to anger a group of Tobians than unequal treatment. Whether it is the allocation of food in a public distribution, of chores in communal tasks, or of suspicion in one of these meetings the slightest hint of favoritism or punitiveness is enough to trigger public outrage, or "trouble." People distain the food, and walk off the job, in the first two contexts. The unfairness rankles for a long time and is hotly discussed in gossip sessions. In the case of one of these meetings, defined probably by one and all as important and serious business, the reaction would have been even more severe and at the least would have made Marcello's chances of re-election a lot slimmer than they were.

At the beginning of this section three major differences were noted between the Alberto meeting and the Juanito meeting. In each of these instances the behavior in the Alberto case seems less likely to provoke a further disruption of the social surface than the analogous behavior in the Juanito case. A direct questioning of each man would have been a direct statement that he was under

suspicion. Indirectly encouraging each man to give his alibi elicited the same information without such a threatening statement. The presence of the victim, the person most likely to succumb to anger against the culprit is much more likely to cause trouble than his absence. A shout of "I know" (who did it)" is more likely to trigger a dangerous uproar than a quiet statement that footprints had been seen. I have given the reason why I think the goal of preventing angry confrontations weighed more heavily on Marcello than on Perfecto. I have also mentioned other ways in which Marcello seemed to be acting to minimize this possibility. There is an interesting point to be made in this connection.

The prevention of a further breakdown in the social order is very similar to the prevention of an accusation by an old man. Both of these are extremely negative consequences of allowing the excitement to reach too great a pitch. Indeed it is possible to see the stereotyped fear of the righteous wrath of an old man as a symbolic statement about the dangers of creating too great an anger. As in the prevention of a direct accusation by an old man, the prevention of the outbreak of trouble acts against the efficiency of the meeting as a criminal detection mechanism. To the extent that behavior is directed toward the former concerns it reduces the pressure on the criminal to give himself away. The compromise which a leader of one

of these meetings makes is between a meeting in which so little pressure is applied that there is virtually no danger of either a breakdown or a direct accusation and thus a decreased probability of identifying the culprit and one in which both the chances of "trouble" and of finding the criminal were very high. Perfecto chose the latter, Marcello the former.

It is legitimate to ask at this point why Marcello bothered with the meeting at all if he was so afraid of triggering some kind of "trouble." Prevention of "trouble" was only the negative side of a larger goal; which was the restoration of normal relationships among all the people either directly or indirectly involved in the crime. "Trouble" had already occurred; someone had tried to kill the nurse. The crime was both so serious and so public that it had to be dealt with--it could not be ignored or dealt with privately. The trouble had to be contained and eliminated. This does not mean that the conflict which had triggered the attempt on Alberto's life was to be resolved. Rather it means that the expression of the hostility which was contained in or generated by that dispute was to be prevented.

The endings of the two cases are quite different. In the first a culprit was clearly identified and he later apologized to his intended victim. In the second a culprit was found but belief in his guilt rapidly decreased

until it was agreed that no crime had taken place. Yet these two endings share certain important features. They both involve what can be labeled the "undoing" of the crime.

Moses' apology can be seen as an attempt (which apparently failed since Juanito went into exile) to restore the relations between the two men to their previous state. It is important to note what happened to the record of these events. The episode did not become part of the publicly known historical record of the island. It was not transformed into a tale for the entertainment of the people. Indeed, for the younger people who had not witnessed these events, the crime and its aftermath had been "undone" they knew nothing about it until the Alberto case forty years later. For these people the trouble between Moses and Juanito had never happened.

The process of transforming an attempted murder into a "non-event" was much easier in the second case because Alberto and Isodoro, the "victim" and "culprit" did not play out the script in the same way that Juanito and Moses had. The criteria which served to establish Isodoro's guilt were less persuasive than the ones shown by Moses. Alberto did not go to Isodoro and confront him with his guilt the way that Juanito had confronted Moses and so Alberto did not receive the private (but soon publicly known) apology which Juanito had obtained.

Lacking such reinforcing information it was relatively easy for the public to decide that they had been wrong in assigning guilt to Isodoro. It was decided that a crime had probably not occurred and things were soon back to normal--that is, the relations between Isodoro and Alberto were back to the cordial yet distant state which had characterized them before the incident had occurred. The tension between the two goals of finding a guilty party and restoring harmony can best be shown by comparing the two cases. In Juanito's case the culprit was found but society wide harmony was restored only at the price of the loss of one of the parties, even after the mechanism for restoring harmony--the apology had been set in motion. That is, the meeting failed to bring about a true restoral of the original state of the relations between the two parties most intimately involved. Perhaps the ultimate lesson of the Juanito story is a message about the inadequacy of the culturally constituted mechanism for restoring harmony. The apology did fail after all. In the Alberto case harmony was restored between the two men but only at the price of abandoning the initial identification of the culprit.

Achieving Harmony

Given the fact that it is felt necessary to restore harmony it is possible to begin to understand why these kinds of meetings are thought necessary.¹² An attack had

been secretly made upon a person. It was necessary first to identify the person making an attack and then to bring pressure to bear upon him to restore his relations with his intended victim to a more acceptable state. The very process of identifying the culprit is thought to be enough to accomplish this since, as it was explained, if anything further were to happen to the victim the people would know whom to blame. It should be noted that the restoration of harmony is not thought to depend upon the elimination of whatever conflict lay at the heart of the attempt. It is simply necessary to let the culprit know that he has been identified. Of course he must first be identified, and this is something which only the meeting can accomplish. The role of fear in these meetings is crucial. The culprit is thought to give himself away by the exhibition of signs of fear. He is thought to be forced into an apology by the knowledge that he has been identified and the fear arising from this of further overt hostility. More fundamentally perhaps, it is thought necessary to provide everyone with an object lesson of the negative consequences which a culprit must endure. That is, it is thought necessary to make everyone afraid to try such acts in the future.

Perpetua said: "If we don't make those boys afraid then no one will be able to live on this island." She mentioned the boys because it is felt that they are still incompletely socialized, being subject to the

strongest impulses toward anti-social behavior, while at the same time being already both physically mature and competent at men's tasks. In the Alberto case they were the ones who possessed sharp toddy knives and the skills to use them and who were already involved in the disputes over women and land, but were at the same time still acquiring the mastery over their own behavior necessary to control rage and hostility. The arguments which were used to persuade Marcello to notify the police were all drawn from this belief. In a more general sense it provided the main rationale for holding the meeting in the first place. Only if the culprit were found and the boys witnessed his identification would they be taught this vital lesson. This lesson was not for the boy's benefit alone of course. It was for all the people. Perpetua was merely pointing out the boys as the group which is stereotypically thought to be most in need of such teaching. With this goal we are getting quite close to some of the more basic of Tobian ideas about human nature. Before considering them separately however it is necessary to briefly attempt an answer to an intriguing ethnographic question which can be stated as follows: just what is it that these people are afraid of? An answer to this question will lead us into the world view of these islanders.

Fear and Shame

It will be remembered that the theory of these meetings is that the culprit will become afraid and give himself away. It was noted that part of the fear was probably the fear of being accused by one of the old men and of being then left with only three courses of action, none of which could be seen as anything but highly frightening. Part of the fear was said to result from the psychological pressure which the meeting focused on the culprit.

One would think that for the meeting to serve as an object lesson for the rest of the people some terrible consequence should befall the criminal. From an outsiders point of view we can see nothing which resembles such a consequence. A point in the meeting is reached at which at least some people think they have identified the culprit and then the meeting is abruptly adjourned, to be followed perhaps by an apology to the victim by the criminal. Perhaps if we attempt to view the meeting through the eyes of one of these young men we shall be able to discern something frightening.

The first thing that becomes apparent is that this is a meeting in which adult men, each of whom considers himself an autonomous, competent and skillful player of the social game, are trying to make one of their fellows afraid. Whatever it is that is going on here is apparently

enough to make one of these people afraid. And yet, in the Alberto case at any rate, all they are doing is either bemoaning the negative consequences for the island which might follow the attempt on Alberto's life or going through the process of indirectly eliminating possible suspects. The discussion of the negative consequences for the island (such as the possibility that no nurse-aide would accept an assignment to the island) focuses the attention of the young man on the serious and public nature of the crime.¹³

The progressive elimination of the suspects (by eliciting information on their whereabouts during the time in which the crime was committed) probably heightens the suspense as the group of possible culprits gets smaller and smaller. It was this progress that brought the tension to the pitch which was punctuated by Aureo's claim that he had seen footprints. The question is: why should there be this tension and what is going on to make the young man feel it? The fact that Isodoro was ultimately identified unanimously as the culprit despite the fact that he did not react in the way that the Juanito story predicted he would lends support to the hypothesis that something akin to the "emperor's new clothes" phenomenon occurred. The young men are told, both directly and indirectly, that the procedure will serve to identify the culprit to those who are sufficiently clever and observant. The admission that one had failed to identify the culprit would therefore

be an admission that one is lacking in these highly prized qualities. Thus there is considerable pressure on the young man to "see" the emperors' new wardrobe and claim that he has identified the criminal. But this does not explain why, in the absence of anything which we can label as punishment, the young man should learn to be afraid to commit this kind of crime. As an aside it can be noted that the possibility exists that the young men did not learn this lesson, at least in the manner which I have outlined here. The fact remains that the belief exists (as expressed by Perpetua), that they should and would learn fear. For simplicity's sake I have phrased the discussion as though the old woman's perceptions are accurate and these meetings do indeed instill fear in the young men.

The young man plays his role as participant observer both in the meeting and in the events which followed. When questioned after the meeting he makes it clear that there are two things which, in his mind, explain the fear which Isodoro is presumably feeling. As I learned from interviews these are, 1) that the police will be coming to investigate and will find him out and jail him (or maybe even shoot him) and that 2) Father Marino will damn him for his crime.

The problem with the boys' (and others') explanations of the sources of the fear is that they are

transparently unrealistic. The probability that a policeman would actually shoot the criminal is so low as to be almost nil. The prison in Koror is run with an inefficiency that results in conditions very similar to some of those advocated by our more liberal penal reformers. The prisoners are well fed, and most of them spend only their nights in the jail, being more or less free to spend their days as they wish. They are all taught and given the opportunity to practice the highly lucrative skill of making Palauan "handicrafts."

The threat of eternal punishment is mitigated by the belief that absolution is obtainable through the use of the confessional and (for the boys in particular) the increasing scepticism with which they have come to view both the special powers attributed to the missionary and the whole theology of the church. Furthermore, the meeting is not, by Tobian reckoning, necessary for the Marino sanction. As their special supernatural guardian he is presumably privy to all their doings--secret or public. Therefore there is no special reason why the meeting should make the culprit afraid for his soul.

In trying to view these proceedings through the eyes of one of the boys perhaps the most striking feature, is that the criminal is, indeed, identified. The unfolding of the events of the meeting leads up to this (unadmitted) climax, after which it is dissolved. The very fact of

being identified, then, and not the fear of retribution by superordinate power, must be that which is thought capable of generating enough fear to insure conformity with the norms against such immoral behavior as the taking of another's life. The process of being identified for all to see--that is the "punishment."

In a cross-cultural perspective this is reasonable, perhaps, but hardly surprising. The record is rich in cases of community opinion being a key sanction. It is congruent with our expectations of politics in a small scale community that this also should be the case on Tobi. What is not predictable solely on the basis of knowledge of the scale of Tobian society is that the fear which lies at the basis of compliance is said, by the Tobians, to be fear of punishment by powerful outsiders. In this instance (though not in many others) the Tobians are rather poor self analysts.

If the fear which Tobians think prevents the repetition of the crime is a fear of being identified as a criminal then it is profitable to turn to the hypothetical case in which a culprit is accused to his face by one of the old men during the course of the meeting. It will be remembered that this is one of the dreaded potentialities of one of these meetings. The fear of it acts as a brake on the amount of tension generated by the meeting's leader.

This fear is also manipulated by that leader and by the old man who proclaims his knowledge of the culprit's identity.

Becoming identified is, itself, the punishment for the crime. A direct accusation in a public meeting is different in degree but not in kind from the indirect identification "suffered" by Isodoro and Moses. Therefore the consequences of the indirect identification for its target are probably similar (if less extreme) as for the target of a direct accusation. In other words what the young men and others are supposed to learn from is the presumed pain which Isodoro felt as a result of knowing that he had been found out. That pain is similar but less intense than the pain which would drive a publicly accused person to kill either himself or others.

Q. Why is it bad to say: 'You did it!' (i.e., tried to kill the nurse-aide)?

A. Maybe he becomes mah, and never walk on path, maybe even ties his neck or uses knife on all the people. It is impolite on this island. Just like if you tell P. that she has a crooked back or ask M. about his missing ear lobe. They become mah.

This exchange took place during an interview with one of the young English speakers directly after the meeting.

After the meeting people indicated that Isodoro now probably was mah. The clear implication was that if he was not mah then something was wrong with him. This word "mah" contrasts with another word: "touagi." Both of these words have connotations covered by standard English users

with the word "shame." Neither of them has much resemblance to the word "guilt." The word "touagi" is interesting here mainly because it was not used in the interview quoted above. Touagi refers to people in a variety of situations all of which involve the creation of an obligation on the part of the touagi person to give another person a present. Most of these situations involve the harming of that other person in some way. It certainly looks therefore as though the culprit in an attempted murder should be touagi. In fact in the first case Moses undoubtedly would have said that he was touagi toward Juanito and that is why he gave him the apology presents. But touagi is never thought to be the kind of phenomenon which could drive a person to destroy himself or others. That status is reserved for anger, insanity and mah.

Mah is also said to occur in a variety of situations. The common ingredient in all of these mah situations is that attention is focused on the self by others. Bodily defects, or incompetencies in either social or economic skills are stressed and the appropriate everyday response involves a withdrawal of one sort or another. This concept appears very similar to that glossed in Tahitian as ha'ama, and discussed by Levy (1973:334-340).

Without doing undue violence to the Tobian ideas, I think we can translate mah as "shame" and say that the

thing which instills a respect for the moral law that one should not kill is the fear of being shamed. That which is shameful of course is being found out. Our young man then has received two messages in this meeting; (1) if you are going to do something bad it will be painful to be found out; and (2) (the emperor's new clothes phenomenon) if you do something bad you inevitably will be found out. These are statements that are repeated over and over again in Tobian social life. They are messages that are contained in everything from songs and dances to folktales and legends. They are reinforced in childhood and dramatically brought home on the infrequent occasions in which meetings of this sort are necessary.

The Method of Analysis

This is the place for a brief methodological note. The analysis used to explain this meeting leans heavily on the goals of the meeting to explain both the design of the routine and the behavior of the actors. That is, I am assuming that the people are aware of what is going on, want it to happen, and guide their actions toward this end. It could be argued that we have no way of knowing this and that the goals and/or the mechanisms are implicit, and that all that I have described is, in fact, latent. Two lines of evidence lead me to reject this. The goals have been taken from the people themselves, in interviews and statements made during and after the meeting. What

Marcello had to say as leader of the meeting was given particular, but not exclusive, weight. Also, these meetings are a rather recent innovation.

Following the collapse of the old religious system and the introduction of Christianity the old method of handling such cases (by divination and spirit invocation) became obsolete. Certainly there are similarities between the old and the new forms; that is to be expected since men only rarely create an institution out of whole cloth. The point is that when some unknown person tried to poison Juanito the people were faced with a situation for which precedent was not a solution. They had to devise a new routine for dealing with such problems. They (or rather Perfecto) invented the meeting. Years later when Marcello and his people were faced with a similar situation but in a radically different environment the meeting was modified by giving it a less harsh tone. This meeting is not a cultural form inherited from the forgotten past and used only because it is there. It exists because some clearly identifiable people invented it when faced with a situation which required action. This fact allows us to omit several steps which would be necessary for this kind of analysis if we were dealing with a more ancient form. Questions of origin versus persistence as well as latent versus manifest, and intended versus unintended consequences are not at issue here. The Tobian

procedure under consideration is an example of a special form of cultural phenomena, and the analytic techniques which I am employing are not applicable without modification to less teleological forms.

In the introduction to this chapter I stated that a dispute settlement case is analytically important for three reasons. (1) It should be a rich source of information about a people's self-image, especially their ideas about motivation. (2) It should be an excellent example of a culturally constituted routine. (3) It should be an equally excellent example of routine-guided behavior. I shall now systematically review this case along these lines.

Self Image and Beliefs

The discussion of the goals of the meeting and the procedures used to reach those goals has been designed to lead us to a position from which it is possible to make some statements about Tobian beliefs. Much of what follows has been implied in earlier portions of this chapter.

The form of the meeting only makes sense if we accept the Tobians' valuation of themselves as a people governed by fear. For example, the boys will not kill other people because they will be afraid of being caught; the culprit will give himself away not by remorse or guilt but by fear. Also implicit in the form of the meeting, if

less immediately evident, is the apparent notion that people are subject to strong hostile feelings, feelings which the individual, and indirectly society, can control but not eliminate. Behavior based on those feelings is what is dealt with in the meeting and not the feelings themselves--neither is there any stress in the direction of reinforcing positive feelings. There are no exhortations to love one another, any more than there are comments on the necessity of doing away with the bad feelings.

Motives are not sought for the crime until after the criminal has been identified. This did not occur during the meeting, so the explanation goes, because of the dangers involved in tapping such a potentially explosive topic. However, this explanation is inadequate to explain the fact that the motives were not sought in the pre-meeting informal gossip sessions either. These sessions, composed of small groups of intimates, could have considered the question of motive in relative tranquility. Yet they did not do so.

I believe that the reasons for the crime were ignored in the gossip sessions not because people were worried about getting into a too-sensitive area, but because they "knew" that it would be a fruitless topic and would not help them find the criminal. Two conventional wisdoms combine to make this observation self evident (to a Tobian at least). The first has already been mentioned, namely

that the perception exists that nearly everyone is involved in long term disputes with everyone else. Therefore there would be many people with "objective" reasons for doing away with the nurse, and looking for people with such motives for killing him would not discriminate finely enough among the potential criminals.¹⁴ Obviously then these disputes are taken rather seriously, being thought to have enough affect involved with them to trigger a murder. The other perception which leads people to think that an attempt at finding the culprit by looking for a motive would be fruitless is that "real" issues are not the only issues which are capable, in the Tobian view of human motivation, of generating rage.

Once Isodoro had been identified as a culprit then the same gossip group which had avoided (consciously or unconsciously) discussion of motives before the meeting were faced with the question of why he had done it. It turned out that Isodoro and Alberto composed one of the few dyads which was not made up of people divided by one or more interest disputes. Of course they were indirectly party to many disputes which put them on opposite sides but only through several intermediaries and there was certainly no issue between them which was such that one would have materially benefited from the death of the other.

So during the time between the end of the meeting and the time when it was decided that Isodoro was innocent

it was necessary to look at other things if one was going to come up with Isodoro's reasons for trying to do away with Alberto. The Tobians had no difficulty with this and soon came up with a set of things which they felt to be sufficient to explain the old man's behavior. This was a series of seemingly petty incidents which included the following: (1) Isodoro's habit of sleeping at the dispensary. Alberto had decided that too many people were spending the night there and he posted a sign (typical "modern" behavior) notifying all that only patients and their relatives could sleep at the dispensary. Isodoro ignored the sign and continued to spend his night in the mosquito-proof dispensary (typical "old fashioned" behavior). (2) Alberto was more successful in his toddy making than Isodoro. (3) Alberto's eldest son Jerry (the same person who pointed out Isodoro as the culprit to me) used to tease Isodoro unmercifully but Isodoro did not react with the same anger that other old men did when teased by Jerry. He just smiled and laughed. It would be possible to make more out of these incidents than is in them. They are all, perhaps, highly symbolic and significant but they also are characteristic of all normal social intercourse, on Tobi and everywhere else. There is nothing extraordinary in this set, just the normal irritants of everyday life. The list seemed to satisfy the Tobians--everyone claimed

to find it persuasive. I think this can tell us something important.

The triviality of some criminal motives is not a uniquely Tobian experience. Witchcraft accusations in other societies frequently refer to similar phenomenon. In our own society also it is not at all unusual for something similar to occur. A serious crime is committed, the criminal is caught, yet there seems to be insufficient reason for the crime to have taken place. In a witchcraft case the paucity of motive is explained (away?) by reference to the innate evilness of witches, in our society a person who commits a "motiveless" crime will probably find himself labeled insane or (in some quarters) subhuman. The petty nature of the irritants which caused the crime are explained by assigning the criminal to a special class, a class which whatever its label, is by definition, not normal, that is, different than the rest of society. Precisely the opposite happened on Tobi.

All three categories were available to the Tobians if they had wished to classify the criminal as not normal. Although everyone agrees that there are today no practicing sorcerers on the island, there is still a good deal of belief in the existence of such people. In fact one of the old men, the son of a sorcerer, knows many of the old magical chants and when drunk it is his custom to weave through the village singing these chants to a barricaded

and frightened audience. It was certainly possible, then, for those concerned with the criminal's motivation to label Isodoro a witch, yet they did not. Neither did they use the other two categories of "insane" or "subhuman." Both of these categories are elaborated on Tobi and together with "bad" and ghostly they form one pole of perhaps the most important contrast set in the world view of the islanders.

"Subhuman" is glossed on Tobi by a series of metaphors. "Monkeys," "Papuan," and "chickens-of-the-brush" are the three most common ways of expressing this concept, (although one old man has an inordinate fondness for the English word "barbarian," which, as far as he is concerned, is the most powerful derogative available, especially when it is combined with summa bichei). Although some people did categorize the behavior of attempted murder as subhuman ("just like a chicken-of-the-jungle"), no one said that Isodoro was a Papuan or a monkey or a bush chicken for doing it.

Reference to insanity is, on Tobi, perhaps the most common way of explaining seemingly inexplicable behavior.¹⁵ If someone does something which is out of the ordinary the first suspicion is that he is engaged in some secret project to better himself or his close kin. If it turns out that this is not the case then he is said to be probably a little crazy. Yet no one said that Isodoro

was crazy to have tried to kill the nurse though several people said that he was stupid to think he could get away with it.

Consider the following facts: (1) there were people who Isodoro had more "real" reasons to wish dead than the nurse (those with whom he was disputing land and women); (2) there were other people who had more reason than Isodoro for wishing the nurse ill; (3) only trivial incidents between the two men had occurred. For a western audience these three facts would present a difficulty which logically could be solved by (1) a reassessment of Isodoro's guilt; (2) a classification of Isodoro as crazy; (3) a deduction that there were other secret motives. None of these things happened (at the time) on Tobi. Perhaps it is the case that Isodoro's guilt was a foregone conclusion and the results of the meeting were manipulated in such a way as to force him into acting "fearful." Yet, as was mentioned in an earlier discussion of this point, even if we assume that this was so we are still left with the problem of how those who wished to see Isodoro saddled with the guilt convinced the rest of the population, including the old man's allies and close kin, that he was the culprit. Again we are faced with the problem that the petty incidents of friction between Isodoro and Alberto were accepted by the gossip sessions as sufficient cause for the attempted murder. These meetings are not perceived either consciously

or unconsciously as random affairs to furnish names for public consideration. The belief exists that these meetings result in the identification of the guilty party. There is a need, on Tobi, for this belief.

For these people it is very important that they feel they are in control of the events which effect them both on an individual and a societal level. The meetings are the result of careful consideration of the best way to find the person who committed a serious crime. It is important that the correct person be identified, and to the Tobian mind, it is highly unlikely that the wrong person will be chosen. (The fact that this is precisely the conclusion the people were forced to after it finally was decided that no attempt had in fact been made on Alberto's life should produce interesting changes in the format of the meeting the next time it is called into play.) Having agreed on one person's guilt then, the people were faced with the task of explaining why the crime had occurred. (I think this was less of a burning issue for the Tobians than it was for me; the lists of incidents of friction between the nurse and the old man arose spontaneously but it was I who seemed most concerned with them.) They arrived at a series of apparently trivial incidents between the two men, and were satisfied that they had gotten to the root causes of the attempt. They did not classify Isodoro as abnormal.

What vision of human nature can explain the belief that incidents of such a character are thought sufficient to cause one normal man to kill another? I believe a significant clue can be found in the incidents themselves, particularly in the rather strange (to a Tobian) reaction of Isodoro to Jerry's jokes. "You know if something happen we have to look for that guy's friend . . . not somebody far away. You know Jerry give him hell. It's joke but not sound like joke--but that guy never mad." This was Marcello's way of relating this "evidence" to me. The allusion to the distance of the culprit refers to two things (1) Jerry and Isodoro had been good friends in the month or so preceding the incident and (2) Jerry was Alberto's son so that an attack on Alberto was bound to hurt Jerry. Jerry was close both to the victim and the criminal. One examines not only the relations between Alberto and Isodoro but between Jerry and Isodoro. Jerry was the adult most closely related to the victim. Alberto recognized this fact when he ordered Jerry to cease making toddy immediately after the near fatal fall from the tree. Jerry teased Isodoro. He did it in a heavy-handed and hostile way. "He gave him hell . . . it not sound like joke."¹⁶

I believe that we are dealing with notions of human behavior very similar to some Western folk ideas. It is possible to rephrase Marcello's explanation for

Isodoro's attack on Alberto in terms a newspaper advice columnist (for example) might use. A series of petty incidents occurred which aroused the wrath of the old man. Instead of blowing off steam he "bottled it up inside" until he exploded.¹⁷ Although this particular metaphor might appear strange to the Tobians, there is little doubt that the assumptions about the generation and management of impulse which underlie it are congruent with Tobian belief. These assumptions may be sketched as follows: people are subject to impulses which demand expression; if they are denied this expression they cumulate until they finally force the person to express them in behavior. Tobians differ in that they seem to believe that they can indefinitely prevent the expression of these impulses.

The normal reaction for one of Isodoro's age and status to teasing from someone of Jerry's age and status would have been immediate anger. This anger in turn would have modified the form of Jerry's jokes. Precisely this happened with another old man whom Jerry had tried to tease a few months earlier. Isodoro did not do this however: "He never mad." Up until the attempt on the life of Jerry's father the difference in the reaction of the two men redounded to Isodoro's credit in the careful winnowing of the minutiae of daily life which provides grist for the Tobi gossip mill.¹⁸ The other old man lost face by becoming angry and shouting at Jerry. The islanders'

diagnosis of Isodoro's behavior is not that he should have found a better way of expressing his rage--his smiling acceptance of Jerry's clumsy attempts at humor were in the best traditions of Tobian social interaction. Rather, Isodoro's fault lay in an overestimation of his own capacity for impulse control or, to put it another way, in his lack of fear. For it is fear, so the Tobians think, which serves to prevent the direct behavioral expression of hostility. The lesson of the meeting then was as much for Isodoro's benefit as for that of the boys. It is now possible to take an etic view of the fear and to state the probable objective bases for it.

Tobians claim that it is a fear of retaliation by a superordinate which leads to a suppression of hostile behavior. There is strong evidence that the fear is actually a fear of being shamed. There are two questions here: (1) why is it necessary for Tobians to deny that they are afraid of shame and (2) why do they use superordinate retaliation as the (false) explanation and not some other factor (for example the fear of becoming sick, or the fear of retaliation by the kin of the victim)? To answer the first question we must turn to a broader theme which plays a fundamental role in the set of ideas I label Tobian world view. This is the value which is placed on self reliance.

In Chapter Two the "in charge" system was described and in Chapter Three the reliance on indirect learning. Both of these are related to the virtue of self-reliance. The proposition can be stated as follows: a truly adult person should be dependent on no one. The reverse is also true: an adult person should not concern himself with the affairs of others. A man should stand alone, be self-reliant and give others the same privilege.¹⁹ The emphasis on self-reliance is modified in certain well-recognized contexts. In those contexts a "self-reliant" person sees that it is to his advantage to cooperate with others. These contexts are arranged hierarchically, embracing an ever-widening circle of people. A man should be emotionally self-reliant. A family should be economically self-reliant. The island as a whole should be politically and "ecologically" self-reliant.²⁰

Given the stress on individual autonomy it is possible to see why shame is not given as a response in answer to questions about what it is that makes people afraid to commit misdeeds. Our own culture offers us a similar phenomenon, based on a roughly similar belief in free will and the individual's control over his own destiny. "Sticks and stones will break my bones," chant our children, "but names will never hurt me." Of course as we all know it is precisely the names we are called that inflict the greatest pain. For Tobians, and maybe for us

as well, it is difficult to accept this fact. It is much easier to assign the fear which governs behavior to more "real," external, "objective" causes, be they sticks and stones or the policeman's gun. Any rational creature, the thinking apparently goes, is afraid of being shot, but the admission that gossip ("women's talk" is the Tobian expression) is capable of generating fear would be an admission of weakness and a failure to achieve autonomy. In this connection it only remains to be said that on an unconscious level the Tobians do recognize the sanctioning power of gossip. We need only to refer back to the mah concept and the beliefs surrounding it to see this. This unconscious recognition makes the distortion involved in referring to the policeman's gun become even more striking.

The second question raised by that distortion has to do with the reasons for the selection of the policeman and Father Marino as the sanctioning devices. These reasons are related to the general attitude toward authority figures. Chapter Three contained a discussion of this. As a person reaches maturity these authority figures become fewer and fewer in number but the fear with which they are regarded does not diminish. Finally for one of the autonomous men there is no one of the island who is, in any real sense, in authority over him. The only "people" with such power are the police and judiciary of Palau and supernatural

figures, especially Father Marino. But the fear which they evoke in a Tobian is as real and intense, I think, as the fear with which he regarded his long dead father. There are many anecdotes about people who, having requested in a moment of anger that police be sent to Tobi to investigate some matter, lost their nerve and hid in the bush when the police finally arrived to talk to them. It is obvious that this fear must be functional in some way to the workings of the Tobian personality. One of its functions is, I think, to disguise from one's self and others the more damaging admission that one's behavior is modified not by fear of police but rather by the fear of shame and gossip.

This is perhaps the major contribution which a consideration of the case of attempted murder can make to an understanding of Tobian thought. From this case we achieve an increased appreciation of the place of fear in the psychological functioning of the Tobian individual as well as its place in the shared beliefs about that functioning.²¹ The discrepancies between these two levels (actual psychological processes and beliefs about them) will also be important in the consideration of the characteristics of the routine which was used in the case.

The Meeting as a Cultural Routine

Table IV

HOW TO REACT TO A SERIOUS CRIME BY AN UNKNOWN PERSON

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>OCCUR IN MARCELLO MEETING</u>	<u>OCCUR IN PERFECTO MEETING</u>
A. Population assembles in church yard	+	+
B. What is to come is rehearsed	+	?
C. Pressure is applied and people scan one another for fear signs	+	+
D. Pressure is relaxed	+	?
E. C and D are alternated	+	?
F. Old man claims to have solved the crime without naming suspect	+	+
G. End meeting immediately after F	+	+
H. Culprit apologizes (if there is one)	+	+

This chart summarizes the routine invented by Perfecto and modified by Marcello and initiates a discussion of the routine qua routine. At least two features are shared with most other Tobian routines. The first of these is its use of indirection and the second is its use of the intimate knowledge Tobians have of one another. Both of these are, in turn, related to the very small scale of Tobian society.

To one accustomed to American ideas about crime, detection and punishment the Tobian procedure probably seems very roundabout. This is especially true of Marcello's meeting. Things are arranged in such a way that there are no direct confrontations. The lack of direct, public interaction between victim and suspect, the absence of a consideration of motive until after the meeting, the vagueness of the old man's claim and the abrupt termination of the meeting after it is made, are all manifestations of this trait. This is because, and I have explained this in detail in the preceding pages, such confrontations carry within them the potential for social breakdown. This, in turn, is related to the small scale of Tobian social life in two ways. (1) The number of people on Tobi is so small that the loss of only a few would make life on the island so difficult as to be unendurable.²² A breakdown in the social order would lead to the loss of more than a few people, either through out migration or worse. (2) The small scale of Tobian society means that relations are extremely multidimensional. Multiplex relations of this character mean that no dispute will be isolable. Any confrontation will call into play all disputes between the two initial disputants and rapidly escalate to include the whole population. In the Tobian perspective the prevention of such a confrontation is best achieved by the use of indirect or roundabout methods of procedure.

Also evident in this routine and typical of most Tobian routines is reliance on the intimate knowledge which the Tobians have of one another. The technique used in Marcello's meeting of letting each person recite his movements during the time in question depends on this knowledge to insure that inaccuracies will be detected. Everyone knows each others habits so well, the island is so small, and the people so few, that people generally have very accurate ideas of each other's whereabouts. The fact that everyone knows each others footprints is used by the Tobians to illustrate the familiarity typical of their relations with each other.

In addition to the characteristics which this routine shares with other Tobian routines it has at least two characteristics of routines in general. These are its partiality or incompleteness and its vagueness or lack of specificity. These traits are related and both are consequences of the role that routines play in mediating between beliefs and behavior.

The incompleteness of the routine is more apparent to us than it is to the Tobians. The routine as contained in the story of Juanito and Moses or the newer story of Andreas and Isahias is only the surface manifestation of a whole structure of beliefs about fear and guilt, shame and impulse control etc. This is true, I think, of all routines. They are only partial scripts, yet they are sufficient to

produce the desired result when acted out, providing only that the actors share the deeper assumptions on which they are based. The vagueness of the routine also is probably more evident to us than to the Tobians. In the original story the guilty party gave himself away by the unambiguous signs of fear. There is nothing very vague about this, but in the second meeting despite the fact that no one showed these signs, a guilty person was identified. Abstracting from these two facts we have to de-specify the way that the routine predicts that a guilty person will be found. No longer can we say that the Tobian custom for the identification of an unknown criminal rests on the assumption that the guilty person can be made to exhibit stereotyped signs of fear. Instead we can only say that virtually any behavior which the populace decides to interpret as abnormal can be taken as evidence of guilt. Although the routine appeared to predict results with a high degree of specificity, in actual practice it proved very flexible.

It is, of course, impossible to predict the future with both a high probability of success and a great deal of detail. That is, the more specific the prediction the smaller the chance that the prediction will prove successful. Routines of the type discussed in this chapter are essentially predictions. They have the form: "Such and such will happen if the following things are done: . . ." Reducing the particularity with which items on both sides

of the "if" in the preceding statement are detailed increases the accuracy of the prediction and thus the utility of the routine. For actual events are frequently subject to forces outside the limits of the equation.

Routine and Behavior

This brings us to the final part of this chapter-- the relationship between the routine and the actual events which I observed. The meeting which Marcello led differed in several important respects from the meetings described in the story of Moses and Juanito. These differences are due to the changes which have taken place in the Tobian social and cultural systems during the intervening years.

The meeting described in this paper can be thought of as an artifact of neo-Tobian culture. It is clearly part of a tradition of which two earlier examples are known. As an artifact the meeting seems designed to accomplish two things: the identification of a culprit without creating further disruption, and the reinforcement of social control over everyone's behavior. Marcello, like Perfecto before him, had these goals in mind. The differences between the two meetings result, I think, from the different weights the two men gave to these goals. This difference in turn was the result of changes in the Tobian setting. This point can be clarified by a consideration of one specific difference between the two meetings, for example, Marcello's abandonment of the technique of directly questioning each man.

It will be remembered that Perfecto fiercely asked each man if he had been the one who tried to poison Juanito. It was through this technique that Moses was trapped into giving himself away to the men on either side of him. Marcello did not employ this technique, instead he framed the discussion so that each man could volunteer information which established his innocence. Immediately after the meeting, when Isodoro's lack of fear signs was a topic of some discussion, this deviation from precedent was a sore point with many people. In defending his departure from Perfecto's example in this (as in all other instances) Marcello gave as his reason that he did not want "trouble." Pressed to explain he stated that he was afraid to let the tension and excitement reach too great a pitch because he did not want one or more of the old men to lose control and begin shouting. This, he claimed, would have had terrible results. A variety of scenarios was offered by the magistrate to illustrate these consequences. They all had the same outcome: the departure of a substantial number of people to live in Koror. Marcello chose to reduce the chances of identifying the criminal in order also to reduce the chances of a further disruption of Tobian society. It is clear that the decline in population and the growth of the settlement in Koror since the time when Perfecto held his meeting influenced the way that Marcello ran his meeting

and are at least partial explanations for its divergence from Perfecto's.

Although Marcello gave differing weights to the goals of the meeting than Perfecto did, he did not abandon the old goals nor did he seek new ones. Both men used similar methods to reach similar goals. This is the reason that there is such impressive continuity despite drastic changes in the socio-cultural environment. The persistence of both methods and goals is due to the persistence of Tobian understandings about their society and about human nature. For example, both meetings were designed to trap the culprit into self-identification by the production of somatic indicators of fear. Both used the method of creating excitement and tension through the threat of public exposure to trigger those signs. These similarities were built on a common structure of assumptions about fear and shame. Public recognition of a fault or defect is extremely shameful; the anticipation of great shame is frightening; fear is uniformly indicated by certain bodily signs. Given these beliefs the method for uncovering the culprit is rational. Furthermore, as long as the culprit shares them it is bound to work, if only by making him afraid to appear afraid.

FOOTNOTES FOR CHAPTER FOUR

1. This chapter includes some material which is also included in my paper, "Crime solving in Tobi: a case study." (MS(a)). Some names have been changed.
2. Other aspects of the world view of the people under consideration may or may not be clearly expressed in conflict settlement procedures. One would expect that any notions similar to the Western concept of "fairness" or "justice" would be expressed here and if not then the probability would be quite high that they do not form part of the ethos. The question which, if any, of the other beliefs composing a particular view of the world are expressed in such procedures is, at least preliminarily, an ethnographic one.
3. It was fascinating, but frustrating, to observe the young people (among them my main informants) learning this story. The process of arriving at a standard version took most of the day. A young person would hear the story from an elder and then some time later recite it back to one of the other elders. This second person would correct him. Then the young person would, when the occasion arose, test out the revised version on his original informant. Several times I noticed a young person deliberately change some part of the story to see if an elder would agree or not. Variation was progressively eliminated in this manner so that by the next day there was only "historical truth."
4. By now everyone knew the story and all were telling it. I witnessed several incidents when the story was told by a child to a group which contained one or more survivors of the original meeting. These survivors listened carefully but did not have to correct the youngsters since even the children had by this time mastered the "correct" version of the Juanito-Moses story.
5. Mapia, an atoll south east of Tobi, is thought by the Tobians to have had at one time in the past a settlement made up of these outcasts and their descendents.

6. Frequently opponents of some proposal or people in the minority take advantage of the thinness of Tobian house-walls and discuss the proposal in tones loud enough for the Magistrate to "accidentally" overhear them as he passes by. This enables everyone to avoid that most difficult of situations--a face-to-face rejection and/or display of disagreement.
7. I use the terms "excitement" and "psychological pressure" for lack of a better vocabulary with which to refer to the tone of the meeting.
8. This points out nicely the difference between young and old men. A young man would perhaps be ignorant of the consequences of such an act. As a master of Tobian culture, an old man would certainly know the results which are predicated from such a breach of good social behavior but he is thought to be peculiarly susceptible to something very much like that which we call "righteous anger." The young men can be prevented from breaching the code by teaching it to them but the old men can only be prevented by keeping them from getting too angry. The old man's anger is an implicit threat to the culprit who shares the beliefs about the consequences of a direct accusation as much as do the more innocent participants in the meeting.
9. It is possible to view this argument as a statement about the nature of Tobian society, its smallness and high degree of intimacy. It is possible to make the same statement in more general terms. In such a small scale society the chance of discreet storage of any bit of information in one component of the system is significantly less than in a larger and less homogenous system.
10. The story of Perfecto's meeting does mention this consequence. Juanito left Tobi and never came back for more than a brief visit. This statement was always included as part of the narrative and perhaps kept the dangers of a walkout alive as an issue.
11. The fact that there are so many of these disputes and that they cross cut all categories of the population means that once a culprit is selected the probability that there will be some dispute in which he and the victim are either directly or indirectly involved on opposite sides is quite high.

12. There is another reason why the meeting took place. This was not consciously recognized by the people but played an important role nevertheless. As detailed in Chapter Three it is important to these people to feel that they are in control of their lives. Not to respond to an attempted murder would have been in a sense, to succumb to fate. Furthermore it would have been to miss a chance for the display of cleverness and correct social sentiments in a highly visible yet morally approved, indeed morally required, setting.
13. The possibility of being without a nurse on the island is particularly threatening to society as a whole. There are a number of reasons for this. The occupant of the dispensary is a source of many of the amenities which make life worthwhile on Tobi for many people. If coffee, cigarettes and kerosene are to be found anywhere at all they are to be found at the dispensary, whose salaried and often per-diemed occupant typically stocks large amounts of these goods. Furthermore, the fear of sickness hangs over the island. Many of the people are sick with long term debilities such as arthritis. Others worry about becoming sick. Since at least the time of Yoshino, Tobians have attributed beneficial properties to introduced medicine. The threat of the loss of health service must have been frightening for this reason. A consequence of losing that service might be to make the island uninhabited. If people with arthritis and other diseases needing treatment left the island (as seems likely) the probability is high that there would not be enough people left on the island to carry on.
14. Feinberg reports a similar situation on the Polynesian outlier of Anuta. In describing a case of mental illness he rejects the native explanation which appeals to the other insane people on the patient's family tree. "The small size and isolation of the population means that each Anutan has genetic ties with virtually all others, and this implies, in turn, that almost as impressive a list of kinsmen who have suffered from emotional disturbance at some time could well be advanced for many individuals aside from A (the patient)." (MS:23)
15. Tobians are not alone in this of course: "Psychopathological labeling seems to be foremost an expression of helplessness, a specific attitude of our culture towards the unknown." (italics in original) (Ackerknecht 1943:33)

16. In Chapter Three we considered some of the characteristics of joking between young and old men. The impression may have been left that the young men's jokes always bothered the old. If so, this is not correct--most young men most of the time are reasonably tactful jokers--a few are not. Jerry was one of the worst offenders in this respect. His problem seems to have been an inability to distinguish between the old men who would tolerate his jokes and those who for one reason or another, would not. Jerry joked with all the old men in just the same way. Weltfish (1965:33) reports that the Pawnee had to take considerable care even in structurally legitimate "joking relations." Some individuals could "take strong (joking)" and others were considered "too sensitive." The same is true on Tobi.
17. Of course it is not only newspaper advice columnists who speak in these terms. Like any formulation which enjoys great popular success the "pressure cooker model" tends to pervade all our thinking and is, I think, frequently used without much thought. Consider the following two passages, which could be multiplied almost indefinitely.

Anyone who gets to know the Wyei in their everyday lives cannot but be struck with the lack of any imbalance of hysteria in their everyday behavior. They are often serene and good tempered and not selfish or in the least "difficult." Seeing them again when excited by the spirit one cannot doubt that they are working off volumes of "steam" which others dispose of quickly and perhaps less thoroughly. The Wyei system is probably satisfactory from the Western medical point of view as well as having the social satisfactoriness of providing a dignified niche for the type of person who in Europe would be unfit and a plague of society.
(Field 1937:109)

Also important in almost every one of the cases of suicide and violence related to the use of alcohol was the practice of holding in all of the pain, anger, worry--holding in every emotion--until the emotional pressure became so great that some problem triggered a response that was out of all proportion to the incident that caused it. Often these people gave the impression that they were well adjusted, and frequently there was no hint of the inner

17. continued

stress until the pressure became so great
that it could not be held back."

(Curlee 1969:36)

18. Credit is perhaps not the correct word here. Mixed with the respect which accrued to Isodoro as a result of his self-control was a more negative evaluation. This latter evaluation involved the belief that Isodoro was acting like a very "proud" person. This mix of positive and negative judgments is typical of the gossip in the Tobi network.
19. The use of the word man in this sentence is ethnographically correct. In Tobian theory (but not in practice) women are incapable of sustaining the stance of a truly autonomous adult.
20. The context of the island as a whole gives a partial explanation for the desire of Marcello and others to avoid a court case. This would be an admission that the islanders were incapable of maintaining order on their own but had to appeal to external authorities to solve this problem for them.
21. I should not leave this section without correcting what I fear may be an inadvertent misapprehension. While it is true that on Tobi fear plays an extremely important role in the achievement and maintenance of social control, and that people hide their fear of shame with unrealistic fears of Palauan policemen, in other respects the islanders are remarkably courageous. I have in mind here not only the physical courage displayed on a daily basis, for example by the old men who spend all night, alone in a shark infested sea, fishing from twelve foot canoes. Even more courageous, perhaps, is the calm acceptance with which the Tobians consider a past filled with great loss, the enjoyment with which they live a present in which there is only the minimal number of actors to make their social and cultural universe work and the hope with which they view a future made doubtful by economic and political events totally beyond their control.
22. This is a belief (or a dread) about which the Tobians are quite explicit.

CHAPTER V

TOBI IN PERSPECTIVE

Although not formally abstracted and articulated philosophically, the nature of "persons" is the focal point of Ojibwa ontology and the key to the psychological unity and dynamics of their world outlook. (Hallowell 1960:43).

Introduction

I have covered a wide variety of subjects in the preceding chapters and it may be difficult to see much connection between many of them. Such disparate pairs as, for example, mate selection and checker games, or roof thatching and tobacco, or clan incest and missionaries, or categories of intelligence and fishing techniques all may seem to be only distantly related to one another. Furthermore, many traditional anthropological topics received little if any attention. Copra tonnage, taro production, suicide, genealogies, voting patterns, land distribution and inheritance, songs and funerals--all these and more are topics about which I might have been expected to offer data. My justification for the inclusion of some topics and the exclusion of others rests on the original question posed in the introduction.

The reader will recall that I decided that an "etic" or objective analysis of aspects of Tobian

Footnotes for this chapter can be found between pages 405 and 410.

socio-cultural affairs had to await the resolution of fundamental questions about the existence and nature of Tobian culture. At this point I wish to clarify those questions. I begin by pointing out that any discussion of the nature of Tobian culture presupposes its existence. The first problem to be resolved, then, is whether or not there is a Tobian culture. The question is: what does it mean to inquire about the existence of Tobian culture? One could answer that it means very little. Since all humans are cultured (by definition as it were), and since the Tobians are most assuredly human, Tobian culture must exist. Although this syllogism is correct (if one accepts its premises) it is also not very informative.

Every man is in certain respects like all other men, like some other men and like no other man: so say Kluckhohn and Murray (cited in Singer 1961:15).¹ Here I am addressing myself to the second of their three cases since I am concerned with the "Tobian-ness" of the contemporary Tobian socio-cultural system. Therefore a statement to the effect that Tobian culture exists because Tobians, as a people, have a culture, is not helpful. It addresses itself to the first of Kluckhohn and Murray's three axioms. My problem is not to document the existence of a Tobian culture but to demonstrate something of its nature. This is the explanation for the disparate list of topics covered in these chapters.

Like an oceanographer curious about a certain stretch of sea, I have retrieved samples from different depths and analysed them for their properties. All the topics which I covered were contained in material retrieved from the three layers of belief, routine, and behavior. An oceanographer cannot inspect every cubic meter of water in his area of investigation, nor can I discuss everything which, under one scheme or another, possibly might be expected to throw light on the nature of Tobiian culture. Questions arise, therefore, about the bases on which I made my selection. My theoretical equipment determined the direction in which I looked and that equipment is drawn from the configurationalist tool kit.

I shall turn to an extended treatment of the concept of configuration in due course. Before I do so however, I must attend to other matters. For now I shall content myself with saying that I use the term because I am concerned, at this stage of the analysis of my Tobi data, with the pattern or gestalt into which those data fall. Those data are of two types. There is information written down in my notebooks--stories and legends of Tobi's past, observations of various activities, etymologies of various terms, and interviews about different subjects. It is these data which I drew on in writing these chapters. The other type of data is made up of my subjective impressions. They are what dictated my choice of topics--they indicated which material

to retrieve from each depth. It should be noted that Bennett's caveat which I cited in the introduction does not rule out this use of subjective impressions. It simply demands that great care be taken in working out the insights which they offer.² I abstract my understanding of neo-Tobian culture from my understanding of Tobian behavior. Therefore we must return to a consideration of Tobian behavior in order to begin making generalizations about the culture. The behaviors which I reported most thoroughly are those related to the supposed attack on the nurse's life.

In Chapter Four I used the case as a device for displaying various beliefs and routines and their translation into action. I return to it briefly so that I may use it to display some of the properties of neo-Tobian culture. This is because some of the statements which can be made about the behaviors which clustered around this case also can be made about neo-Tobian culture in general.

The Attempted Murder as a Model

There are three ways in which the reaction to the attack on Alberto mirrors certain properties of neo-Tobian culture. This is another way of saying that the attempted murder was met by behavior that was typical of the Tobians in at least three ways. The first of these is that the behavior was the outcome of the interplay between certain environmental and historical imperatives and certain rather

complex psychological processes. In some ways that behavior was very similar to behavior remembered from previous occasions; in other ways it was quite different. That is, people's ideas about the appropriate response to such a situation reflect both continuities and discontinuities in experience and belief. As in neo-Tobian culture in general differences can be traced to a decline in both population and social autonomy, continuities to unchanging notions about human motivations and emotions.

The second way in which the Alberto case is instructive appears when we treat the meeting led by Marcello as an artifact. In this event it becomes clear that three forms of this artifact are known: Marcello's, Perfecto's and the pre-Christian. Although there are important differences between Marcello's and Perfecto's they are both more similar to the other than either is to the pre-Christian form. Again there is a parallel between the meeting and the culture from which it sprang. With the achievement of a synthesis based on the Marino corpus a real watershed was crossed. After a period of rapid change in which aboriginal solutions to reoccurring problems were perceived to have failed and thus were abandoned, a relatively stable culture was achieved.

The attack on the nurse (a status with only vague parallels in aboriginal Tobian society) was met with a response which dealt with (among other things) policemen, radios, angels, a church and an apotheosized missionary.³

This is the third way in which the case and the general culture mirror one another.

Current Tobian culture incorporates much that has its origin in non-Tobian socio-cultural systems. Furthermore current Tobian society assumes its characteristic form in large part because of the pressure of those same alien systems upon it. Let us consider these two observations separately.

Tobian Culture and the Outside World

An examination of virtually any aspect of Tobian life reveals traces of the impact of foreign societies on the Tobian people.

Those foreign societies which have had an important impact on the Tobian socio-cultural system are memorialized in the names of the epochs into which Tobians arrange their recent and near recent past. Time itself now bears the stamp of the intruders: Ifiri Ingris, Ifiri Deutch, Ifiri Sapan, Ifiri Neivi--each Ifiri or "concerning" speaks of a different alien people who brought change to the island.⁴

Even the atoll itself bears such traces. Overgrown mounds of mine tailings, derelict Japanese cannons, ancient palm trees crudely marked with Germanic double eagles, cracked and broken concrete slabs, swampy bomb craters, all these and more are physical testimony to the many Tobian pasts.

Much of Tobian material culture also shows the impact of the non-Tobian. The list of borrowed items is very long: food, houses, clothes, tools, utensils, cigarettes, coffee, matches, stoves and kerosene among many others. So far at least most Tobians seem to feel that these changes in their material culture are not irreversible. The sentiments which pervade the story of the chief and the Distant Administration are still strong and people seem to feel that they could get along without the trade goods brought every three months or so on the ship.⁵

The foreigners have left traces of their presence in the very language which the Tobians speak. In fact, the vocabulary of the islanders is characterized by a kind of linguistic stratigraphy in which are recorded traces of each historical epoch. Recently borrowed words have changed hardly at all in their pronunciation, older ones have been modified to some degree and the oldest sound very much like indigenous native terms--as indeed by now they are.

The earliest borrowings which I have identified are from English and include words such as "pasej," "pinas," and "kapung," passage (in the reef), (pinnacle (a small boat) and captain). All these words have a nautical referent and probably date from the time of Captain Borrie or before. From the Germans the Tobians borrowed a word for money (maak from the German mark). The Japanese contributed a

rather large set of words having to do with the technology and material culture of this century. Electricity, airplanes, movies, automobiles, motorcycles and diapers all have Tobian names derived from Japanese words. Another set of words with more social meanings also was borrowed from the Japanese. Terms for baseball, election, and punishment spring to mind as do several expletives. Finally there is a second set of English words, recently borrowed and not yet transformed in their pronunciation.⁶ In earlier chapters I discussed at length several of these words such as idea and smart and have detailed the shifts in meaning that have taken place during their borrowing.⁷

The linguistic stratigraphy is paralleled in the social system. In fact, it is almost possible to date the Tobian's acquisition of various new statuses by the language from which the name of the status is drawn. The teacher is called sensei (from the Japanese) while the magistrate is called mahistreit. There are as many sociological traces of the foreigners as there are linguistic or material borrowings. In politics, in residence, and in its economy, contemporary Tobian life bears witness to the various colonialisms to which the island has been subject. Exporting copra, attending school, electing a magistrate, or borrowing coffee from the nurse, Tobians are engaging in behaviors which their fathers did not know.

I shall consider in the remaining pages how all these ontogenetically diverse phenomena are brought together into a coherent whole. To do so I shall fracture the experientially unified Tobian socio-cultural system. For analytic purposes and for clarity of exposition I, like many before me, find it necessary to deal with society and culture as though they were concretely separate. Perhaps this betrays Tobian reality. Life for the Tobians is not bisected in this manner. Tobians have no linguistic items to correspond with the terms "society" and "culture."⁸ I impose such categories for my own purposes. After I consider each of the two terms separately I shall attempt to reunite or at least re-hyphenate them.

I begin with Tobian society--the statuses occupied by Tobians and the roles they play vis-a-vis each other and the outside world. As I indicated above, a fair number of those statuses are themselves not native to the island. It is more important to note that the relationships between individuals (the roles associated with the statuses) are profoundly affected by alien social systems. This was as true of the Japanese and German past as it is of the Americo-Palauan present. The strains on these relationships constitute the major share of current Tobian social problems. In the next section I consider how it is that these problems have been overcome.

The Integration of Neo-Tobian Society

The maintenance of the current level of social solidarity is not the least of contemporary Tobian achievements. Their society is beset with great difficulties. Many of these difficulties seem to flow from the impact of the outside world upon the atoll's social system. The insight that the loss of autonomy and the end of isolation might be linked to social disorganization has been shared by many social theorists since Durkheim first published on anomie. Its role in community (as opposed to individual) distress has been explored by Redfield (1960), Miner (1939) and Tax (1953) among others. The Tobians' situation is interesting because of the nearly total isolation from which their modern history started and because the succession of disrupting influences correlated so closely with the succession of the generations (in the full genealogical sense). The disruptions are linked to the vast disparities between the generations--the great biographical discontinuities between young, middle aged and elderly Tobians.⁹

These discontinuities lead in turn to the many generational differences in behavior, beliefs and values noted in the foregoing chapters. These differences exacerbate, and in a way even cause, intergenerational conflicts and are thus one of the major stresses with which the Tobians must deal. Clan incest disputes, thatching

arguments and stolen fishing techniques, are only a few of the media in which intergenerational conflicts are expressed.

The impact of the outside world has created another major source of difficulties. Perhaps the attribute of "double residence" like that of "double descent" is associated with special characteristics in the societies in which it is an element. The Tobian social system links two islands many miles apart. The ocean between is spanned only by an infrequent ship and a chronically malfunctioning radio. The society suffers great strain on account of its bi-polar nature. The Koror settlements are, of course, foreign inspired and the links between them and Tobi are almost entirely under the control of non-Tobians. The threats to Tobian society inherent in this situation are obvious. Under Palauan pressure the Koror settlement may change more rapidly and in different directions than the atoll. The link between the two poles might even be severed.

The most dramatic consequence of the involvement of Tobian society with powerful alien systems (and thus another facet of its "neo-ness") is its small scale. Analytically speaking, size and scale are not quite the same thing as Schwartz points out (MS (a)) but at Tobi's end of the continuum they almost are identical--and both are miniscule. These facts are at the root of many social problems.

Very often there are not enough people for some cultural routine or other to work properly. The acquisition of a wife is extremely difficult because of the shortage of women. More and more men have been driven to marry outsiders and those who are left struggle bitterly (if in silence) for the few available girls. The lack of enough able bodied people means that inappropriate people must be called upon to engage in communal work such as thatching or fishing. The disputes which result between categories of people who in more populous times would not be forced into the intimacy of acting out shared routines in the same time and place were discussed throughout the preceding pages.

The society's smallness makes it imperative to achieve consensus in all major issues. All the heads of yahamatara wield an indirect veto over all proposed courses of action. Controlling a significant percentage of the remaining population, the implied threat to leave for Koror is enough to impose their will upon the community at large.¹⁰

The power of the yahamatara heads is a result of the fact that there are so few people on Tobi. The withdrawal from the island of that portion of its society controlled by any one of these people would most likely spell the end of the atoll's settlement.¹¹ Their negative veto provides the social basis for the necessity of reaching unanimity and the monotonous failure to achieve

it leads to a failure to implement solutions (some fanciful and some not) to severe demographic, economic, and political difficulties.

Thoughtful Tobians say that the failure to achieve disinterested evaluations of proposals to help the island is the fundamental problem which they face. They diagnose the difficulty as a failure of altruism. People are loath to grant that anyone except the chief can act in an altruistic manner.

Following E. O. Wilson (1975) one may speculate about the adaptive significance of such a lack of altruism for an atoll social system. In a socio-ecological system at a steady state, especially on an isolated atoll where the limits are fixed and where extinction may result from their violation, caution in innovation may be the best strategy. That is, the fewer the innovations once the system is in balance, the less likely it will be to make a fatal error.¹² And in a society like that of Tobi, where innovation rests on unanimity which in turn depends on self sacrifice, failure to act altruistically in this sense may be the most rational strategy from the point of view of the survival of the system as a whole. The requirement for unanimity and the difficulty in achieving it insure that the Tobian system has a conservative bias. Failure to act altruistically in this sense in the past may have conferred an advantage upon the Tobian social system. However

when the system becomes unbalanced due to a change in the parameters within which it must operate, rapid response becomes advantageous and conservatism may have negative consequences. Not acting may penalize the system. Lack of altruism may become a fatal flaw. This remains mere speculation however, and the contemporary Tobian society offers no evidence that such is the case.

All the changes of recent years have not led to a society collapsed into opposing and conflicting blocs based on kinship, residence, age, or gender, despite the generally agreed upon absence of altruism. The reason for the persistence of Tobian society can be sought most profitably in the structure of the society itself.

Failure to achieve concensus is, on the sociological level, an expression of the fact that people's interest (at least their short term, self perceived interests) diverge. People fear that their interests may suffer from the implementation of someone else's plan to help the island. The lines along which interests diverge are those of age, sex, residence and kinship. Conflicts between people can be seen as individual struggles over control of resources (mostly land, political office, and women) in which groupings based, ultimately, on those principles form. However, these groupings do not achieve any permanency. Even the two political factions have only a few individuals who are permanent members.

With the sole exception of the people at the center of these factions, there are no long term interest groups. There are, of course, long term interest conflicts, but these are pursued by individuals in a series of shifting alliances and oppositions.

This is very reminiscent of T. S. Eliot's statement about social unity in Notes Toward a Definition of Culture which Max Gluckman approvingly quotes (1969:2-3): ". . . (An) indefinite number of conflicts and jealousies . . . (are) . . . profitable to society. Indeed the more the better: so that everyone should be an ally of everyone else in some respects, and an opponent in several others, and no one conflict, envy or fear will predominate." Gluckman and his followers have worked out in great detail precisely how such cross cutting ties serve the interests of societal integration.¹³ I do not believe that Tobi society will prove an exception to their general findings. However, a demonstration in equivalent detail for Tobi awaits the next stage of my coming to grips with my data. The interaction of kinship and economics (especially as it is expressed in the relation between land tenure and the yahamataras) will prove, I think, analytically fruitful.¹⁴ At this still tentative stage of my understanding of such things I do not care to go further. However, considering the material presented in Chapter One, I think that the reader will agree that it is fair to say

that Tobian society is held together by the many oppositions within it. In any event, I must leave the matter here pending analysis of my "sociological" data.

It is at this point that I wish to offer some thoughts on the concept of cultural configuration. I have said that it is through this concept that I have approached my data and that it is with this concept that I think I can best introduce Tobi's people to the reader. I wish to make the further point that it is by means of this concept that I think I can best picture the way that neo-Tobian culture is integrated.

The Idea of Configuration in Culture

The term configurationalism is permanently associated with the memory of Ruth Benedict. Working in the grand tradition of Spengler, Dilthy and others, she attempted to develop a method and a vocabulary for the concrete expression of the character (or geist) of whole cultures. Despite the great popular appeal of her Patterns of Culture, her work has drawn intense critical fire.¹⁵

Briefly, the main problem seems to be Benedict's failure to exercise sufficient control over her language. A poet as well as an anthropologist, she speaks at times in metaphor while at other times she speaks in a very straightforward fashion. Very often it is difficult for

the reader to make the necessary distinction between her two modes of communication. A crucial difficulty lies in the relation of the individual character of persons to the character of the culture which they share. For example, she asserts that Dobuan culture is paranoid. The natural question is whether all Dobuans are suffering from paranoia? If not, then are any of them paranoid? How many?

Another difficulty is that the vocabulary which she uses to characterize the patterns she has identified in various cultures is highly eclectic. "Apollonian" and "Dionysian" form one contrasting pair which she uses with great effect. These terms are drawn from Nietzsche who developed them in his struggle to come to terms with the thought of Hegel and the whole tradition of idealism in western philosophy. (It is interesting to note that this tradition can be traced back to Plato of Athens, who exemplified the "Apollonian" aspect of Ancient Greek culture). The other terms which she uses ("megalomania" and "paranoia") are drawn from work of Freud which had its roots in the efforts of Kraepelin to develop a vocabulary with which to label various forms of insanity. The problem with using such a variegated collection of terms is that, in some ways at least, it contains incommensurables. As ideal types her labels fail because they do not identify mutually exclusive and exhaustive categories. These labels also have failed on empirical grounds.

Benedict's characterizations, even on their own terms, have failed to adequately describe the complex cultural wholes which she offers as examples. Apparently she overshoots the mark in her analyses. She has oversimplified and critics have not been slow in pointing out aspects of those cultures which contradict her characterizations because they do not fit into the patterns or configurations which she claims to have discovered.¹⁶

It seems to me that Ruth Benedict's ideas have come to exist in a kind of half-light. In spite of the massive assaults launched on them they clearly have been of great (if at times unacknowledged) importance over the last half century.¹⁷ A succession of scholars has developed and refined her insights in a continuing attempt to find a way to discover and then talk about the patterns which cultures seem to assume. Yet this has not been done systematically. As is so often the case, "development and refinement" of a fundamental thinker's insights in practice seems to have meant the abandonment of all that seems untenable without its replacement by different (and hopefully more well thought out) material. When that which is abandoned is fundamental to the coherence of the originally scholarly edifice, this refinement frequently leaves the whole structure floating in air--in a kind of half light.

In the pages which remain I briefly sketch out a direction in which replacements for some of the missing pieces in contemporary configurational thought may be found. In essence this involves the application of two of the ideas of Gregory Bateson.

Ethos or Cultural Patterning Through Feeling Tone

In his classic account of the Iatmul of New Guinea, Bateson took five different approaches to his ethnographic data. He called one of these the "ethological." This word has been preempted since Bateson first used it by Conrad Lorenz and other animal behaviorists. When Bateson used this term he meant something quite different from the meaning which they have given it. He employed the concept in his analysis of the relationships "between the emotional aspects of details of cultural behavior and the general patterning of the cultural structure" (1958:30). That is, he based this particular approach on the concept of "ethos". He illustrated what he meant by "ethos" as follows: "when a group of young intellectual English men or women are talking and joking together wittily and with a touch of light cynicism, there is established among them for the time being a definite tone of appropriate behavior." He went on to say that such a tone of behavior indicated an ethos. He called an ethos a "definite set of sentiments toward the rest of the world, a definite attitude toward reality" and maintained that it is an important factor in determining

behavior (1958:119-120). From this it is clear that the ethological tone or atmosphere which pervades a culture is affective in nature and is patterned.

The Tobian ethos is a complex arrangement of the relations between all those characteristic feelings which I have discussed throughout these pages. The way that fear relates to positive feelings about autonomy, independence and cleverness is particularly relevant. An understanding of the Tobian ethos is important for an understanding of one aspect of the Tobian cultural configuration.

I already have given considerable attention to the role of fear in Tobian culture and I do not propose to review all that material in depth. I shall merely note several points which have been made either directly or indirectly already.

Clearly fear is very important in Tobian culture. A listing of areas in which it is an important element includes ghost beliefs, incest, childrearing, dispute management and shame. Ghosts are feared and hated. People contracting an incestuous marriage are said to be ghosts and also are said to be fearless. Young men are feared to the extent that their socialization is judged to be incomplete. People fear that the many disputes which exist may explode into a general social conflagration. Old men are feared because they are thought to be irresponsible. The fear of shame governs behavior to a large extent.

People fear their own impulses, gossip, policemen and their fathers with varying degrees of awareness.

One of the things which people fear is that they will be at another's mercy. Tobians view one another with a good deal of suspicion. They fear that their interests may be sacrificed by someone else. The fear is that they will be treated like a "chicken of the jungle."¹⁸ This is the reason that independence is so highly prized. To have no one over you is to be free of the danger that your interests will be sacrificed by someone else. The achievement of autonomy on whatever contextually salient level (individual, family or island) requires self reliance. To achieve self reliance and to avoid the feared relationship of dependency requires that a person be able to act in such a manner that he can acquire and maintain assets or resources while at the same time controlling his impulses.¹⁹ In short it requires that the person be smart (tagar).

People feel that smartness is one of the highest goods. Its exhibition and manipulation is one of the most pervasive themes manifested in Tobian culture. With the notion of smartness however, we are leaving the affective realm and entering the area of cognition.²⁰

Eidos or Cultural Patterning Through Intellectual Tone

Another of the five theoretical avenues which Bateson took was the investigation of what he called "eidological relationships" which linked "the cognitive

aspects of details of cultural behavior (with) the general patterning of the cultural structure" (1958:30). He built this approach on the notion of eidos--a term which he defined as "the standardization of the cognitive aspects of the personality of individuals (and) its expression in cultural behavior" (1958:220). In an investigation of ethos one attends to an affective tone which by permeating a culture serves to pattern it; in an investigation of eidos one pays attention to an intellectual tone which also serves to pattern the culture.

Just as I gave a good deal of attention in previous chapters to the characteristic emotion of fear and its correlates so I also have given a good deal of attention to Tobian ways of thinking. These are expressed most clearly in the routines which formed the subject of Chapter Three but they also are evident in the material on the Marino corpus and in the behavior exhibited in the Alberto case.

The quality of Tobian thought which to me seems most characteristic of the cognitive aspects of Tobian culture is its toughmindedness. For example, the Tobian's stance toward religion, their solution to the declining turtle harvest, and their method of dealing with a major crime all exhibit an attitude toward life which best can be labelled "pragmatic."²¹ Other terms which also would be serviceable in this respect are: "utilitarian," "realistic," "functionalist," and "practical."²² All these words have

in common a certain common-sensical or down-to-earth quality, and indicate an approach to life free of illusion and wishful thinking, and thus they all point to the most fundamental element in the Tobian eidos.

I cannot stress too strongly, however, that the metaphorical ground on which the Tobians' feet are so firmly planted is their island home. When I note a down-to-earth quality in Tobian thought I must emphasize that the earth in this instance is composed of Tobian soil. Tobian thought, then, is common-sensical in its own terms. One of the most important of those terms is the Tobian notion of human (or at least Tobian) nature. Their ideas about what people are form a key to our understanding of the integration of neo-Tobian culture. For it is in this nexus of feeling and thought that the relationship between ethos and eidos is most clearly expressed. Therefore it is in this direction that we can most clearly see the total gestalt or configuration of Tobian culture.

Neo-Tobian Cultural Integration

At one point in Naven Bateson mentions that Ruth Benedict had read the finished manuscript for the book. She agreed, he says, that his concepts of ethos and eidos are "subdivisions of her more general concept, Configuration" (1958:33, his italics). Therefore the configuration of Tobian culture, which is the basis on which borrowed elements

have been integrated into the culture must be a result of the interaction of the pragmatic eidos with the fearful ethos.²³

I think that the relationship between ethos and eidos can best be understood by reference to a third important theorist Clifford Geertz. He has developed an important perspective on religion which we can adapt to our use here.

Briefly, Geertz' point is that religion combines deeply felt moral certainties with fundamental perceptions of reality. This combination, in which each of the two elements reinforces the other, occurs via the mechanism of religious symbols. Geertz, a stylist of the first rank deserves no paraphrase--I shall let him speak for himself.

"The powerfully coercive 'ought' is felt to grow out of a comprehensive factual 'is' and in such a way religion grounds the most specific requirements of human action in the most general contexts of human existence" (1973:126). In this passage he is discussing a process which involves elements which seem to be very similar to Bateson's ethos and eidos. He calls these elements "ethos" and "world view" and sees the relationship between them as follows: "the ethos is made intellectually reasonable by being shown to represent a way of life implied by the actual state of affairs which the world view describes, and the world view is made emotionally acceptable by being

presented as an image of an actual state of affairs, of which such a way of life is an authentic expression" (1973:127).

We must not allow the fact that both Bateson and Geertz use the term "ethos" to persuade us without further investigation that they are talking about the same thing. Social science does not work that way. Geertz' uses the word in a much more reified sense than does Bateson. Yet for our purposes, which are to draw an analogy between the process Geertz describes and the interaction of our Batesonian categories, we can equate the two terms. Similarly, Geertz' concept of world view is much more concrete than Bateson's eidos--specially in the work considered here (first published in 1957).

If we compare Bateson's definition of eidos (given above) with Geertz' definition of world view ("a picture of the way things in sheer actuality are, the concept of nature, of self, of society"), we can see that Geertz is much more concerned with the contents of thought than is Bateson, whose interests lie in typical styles of thinking (1973:127). A Geertzian world view is the end product of a Batesonian eidological process. They are not at all the same thing. Nevertheless it is still possible to free the process which Geertz has described so eloquently from its purely religious limits.²⁴ Instead of restricting the crucial mediation and mutual reinforcement functions to religious symbols, we can

extend them to all of culture.²⁵ By doing this we can answer the question of how a culture is integrated.

Consider the notion of a "good person" in the Tobian scheme of things.²⁶ This notion performs a crucial role in Tobian affairs for it provides a standard against which the performances of all the actors on the Tobian stage are measured. Cleverness, self control, and fearfulness are all traits which are both felt and thought to be good. This idea of what a good person is grows out of the Tobian theory of human nature. It is an outgrowth which is logical in both emotional and cognitive terms. It makes a kind of inevitable sense to the Tobians.

The secular, if highly moral, concept of a good person and its foundation of emotional and intellectual assumptions, acts, I think, exactly like a religious symbol in Geertz' scheme of things. All of Tobian culture has this quality to some degree. Each of its shared symbols has both ethological and eidological components. Furthermore, the interaction of these components is the process out of which the Tobian cultural configuration emerges. Thus it is the process which, in part at least, has led to the modification and subsequent integration of many foreign elements with elements out of the aboriginal past in the synthesis of neo-Tobian culture. This synthesis was only partially cultural in nature however, since sociological forces also were at work. The characteristic sociological processes discussed in

previous sections served to modify new statuses so that they could be made part of a new syntheses just as the interaction of characteristic feeling and thinking tones served to modify borrowed elements.

Characteristic ways of thinking and feeling interact in cultural symbols and produce a configuration which serves to integrate the culture. This configuration gives direction to the modifications which take place in borrowed elements. The social system on the other hand, is held together by the very oppositions which seem to threaten it from within. The statuses which have been introduced (magistrate, school teacher, nurse) have been modified by these oppositions.

The Tobian Socio-Cultural System

In the perspective which I have taken social statuses are considered to be cultural artifacts although they have peculiar qualities which other cultural artifacts do not share. Therefore the modifications in the introduced statuses must also have been determined by the cultural configuration--the way ethos and eidos interact. This is well illustrated by the status of the magistrate.

The position which Marcello occupies was designed by the American planners to be the premiere political position in the Tobian social system. It was meant to replace the autocratic chief with a democratically elected, responsible leader. As I explained in Chapter Three, the factional struggle between the chief and the anti-chief affected the

changes which took place in the magistrate status. This status also has been seriously affected by the relationship between fear of selfishness and the value of being smart. It has become part of the apparatus for the chief's display of altruism. We now may reunite the terms social and cultural so that once again we may speak of socio-cultural systems. The word is cumbersome to be sure, but it reflects in its awkward fashion an important fact--the experiential unity of communal life on Tobi and all other places where men live in groups.

This is the third and final type of integration which I shall consider. One set of questions I asked was about the achievement of wholeness or unification in both the social and cultural subsystems. I showed how all the statuses are held together in the face of seemingly divisive conflicts on the one hand and how all the many cultural elements form a coherent whole on the other. The second type of integration was a special case of the first. I asked how the various introduced social or cultural elements were integrated into their respective systems, for example, how the magistrate fits into the social system or how the Catholic religion has been integrated into Tobian culture. The final type of integration is the integration of the two subsystems with each other--how the social and cultural systems, each integrated on its own terms and each constantly acting to integrate new material, fit together. Finally we

return to the cultural routine. It is in them that I think that this final type of integration takes place.

Routines are not only where belief and behavior come together, they also are where sociological and cultural subsystems come together. People, acting out the roles which come with their statuses, act according to cultural rules. They build routines out of those rules.

The routine to identify a criminal is a good example of this, especially the pragmatic use of fear of shame by the magistrate and the person in the temporary status of irresponsible old man. The cultural configuration--the patterned relationship between ethos and eidos, is expressed by the behavior between people occupying different positions in the social system. On the other hand the pattern of oppositions within the social system plays an important role in the use and manipulation of such cultural constructs as marenoch (good person). Perhaps the neo-Tobian socio-cultural system does not form a seamless web. It does form a coherent whole.

FOOTNOTES FOR CHAPTER FIVE

1. Compare Hymes: "anthropology seeks to illuminate both what is cultural and what is Navajo about Navajo culture." (1969:12)
2. The role of the subjective in socio-cultural understanding is both complex and controversial. I tend to agree with Stanley Diamond who instructs us that the investigator has to come to share the consciousness of those whom he studies. "In conceptualizing a primitive society he (the anthropologist) interprets signs and symbols by exchanging places with the actors in the system under study. The mere cataloging or even systematic linking of institutions and artifacts is meaningless unless the effort to reproduce the social consciousness, the social being of the people who live and produce in their modality is made." (1964:xv). For more extreme statements of this position see Wolff (1964) and Fabian (1971). The main problem which is associated with this approach is that verification and replication of such material is problematic at best. This calls into question the reality of that which is "discovered" (no doubt some would say "invented"). Although one can attempt, as I have, to buttress insights with evidence from a variety of sources, and to make one's case as persuasive as possible by the use of a systematic method of presentation, in the final analysis there is no escape from this dilemma. I think, though, that this is not a dilemma monopolized by this type of approach. It is just that the situation is much more nakedly apparent in the type of approach advocated by Diamond than in systems in which the apparatus of positivism disguises the difficulty. In any event, the fundamental epistemological problem with which I am faced is how do I know that my statements about Tobian culture are accurate reflections of that culture. I think it is best to face this difficulty squarely. Even as firm a believer in the accuracy of his statements about meaningful patterns evident in human affairs as Arnold Toynbee admits as much: "The existence of so-called 'facts' cannot be vouched for by human minds independently of these minds' apprehension of what they observe, and we therefore cannot tell how much of these ostensibly objective facts may or may not have been our minds' own subjective contribution to the construction of them" (1962:viii). This realization does not confer anything like "poetic license." One must still attempt to document one's findings and to give

analytic priority to "facts" regardless of how imperfect their ontological status. To do otherwise is to act as the (one hopes) apocryphal German professor who, when confronted with an empirical disconfirmation of his favorite theory, exclaimed: "Desto schemmer fur die Facten." ("so much the worse for the facts.") Nevertheless, I think most anthropologists will recognize a familiarity in Romanucci-Ross' observation that "in the long process of building bridges for shared understanding with an exotic culture there is distortion as one fabricates what is shared, a tormenting paradox for the anthropological field-worker." (1976:443). I certainly do.

3. See Lessa's study of the history of one of the most important of Western Carolinian ghosts for a view of how such deification operated in the indigenous religious system (1976). Although I did not find any trace of belief in Marespa (the ghost in question) on Tobi, I am quite prepared to believe that the process by which a Tobian acquired supernatural status was similar to that pictured for Ulithi by Lessa. The case of Father Marino is interesting because he was an alien to the indigenous system and because of the validation which his deification offers contemporary, borrowed elements. In my analysis of this situation, I have followed Radcliffe-Brown who said that the modifications which occur in borrowed elements or institutions are "not properly comprehensible until we know the functions of those institutions" (1958:77).
4. The present age probably will be known as Ifiri Pauuh (concerning Palau) when and if it is succeeded by a future epoch. The Tobians think that future epoch may be an Ifiri Russia. The far precontact, past is called masue. See Eickelman for an up to date bibliography of anthropological approaches to time. (1977:35)
5. Paradoxically, it is the presence of so much western or modern material culture which leads to the common feeling among outsiders visiting the island that the people are poverty stricken. This is because the western clothes, tools, utensils, etc. are almost all in very bad repair. Tobians do not share this perception of themselves. These articles to them are, by definition, superfluous. They think of their island as a rather rich place, possessing fertile taro gardens, more than enough coconut trees and surrounded by waters not yet depleted by foreign fishermen and therefore still full of fish. One is poor on Tobi if one does not have enough to eat-- not because one is living in a house built of thirty year old termite infested plywood or wearing clothing more rag than garment.

6. Perhaps there is something in Haudricourt's idea that languages spoken by small numbers of people should show greatest phonological complexity. (cited in Schwartz, MS(a):37) In addition to the various loan words in Tobian, which are used with greater or lesser frequency on an individual basis, there also is a good deal of individual variety in the words people use and the way they pronounce them. This is related to a process of individuation and a kind of marginal differentiation of personality which is shown in many contexts. Yet the speed with which a new item can enter the dialect or an old one drop out might also be related to the fact that the dialect is spoken by only a few people.
7. I am reminded of Evans-Pritchard comment that "the most difficult task in anthropological field work is to determine the meanings of a few key words, upon an understanding of which the whole investigation depends" (1962:80).
8. The nearest equivalent Tobian word to "culture" can be translated best as "law" or "custom." The only word which ever conveys meanings at all related to what is meant by the term "society" is yahamat. This is only when it is used in its most inclusive sense--meaning all the people of a given place.
9. See T. Schwartz' article, "Relations among generations in time stratified cultures" (1975). Perhaps a three generational social structure is evolving on Tobi. E. Bruner suggests that the definition of what constitutes a "good" adult is learned in early childhood. She notes that all early childhood learning is very resistant to change. The children reared by the old people will have very different ideas about what a good adult is than will the children reared by middle-aged and young parents. They may then pass such definitions on to their children, thus perpetuating the differences. Yet one must always bear in mind the role of public shared contexts in the transmission of fundamental assumptions. (See also Postal (1965:276))
10. The power of the Yahamatara heads is important for a comprehension of contemporary Tobian society. It is also an excellent illustration of the futility of attempting to separate on empirical grounds those social problems which result from "acculturation" from those which were characteristic of ancient Tobian society. This statement would be true even if we were in command of sufficient knowledge about pre-historic (or even proto-historic) Tobian society to make such a classification. Every social problem evident today exhibits,

in one way or another, both characteristics. Perhaps as ideal types the two sorts of problems might have heuristic value. They might prove illustrative of the difference in Tobian society before and after its integration into the modern world. However the other integration--the bringing together of the old and the new into a neo-Tobian socio-cultural system--has been so thorough that untangling the two types is probably not worth the effort.

11. The island of Merir offers a graphic example of what might happen if too many people left. This atoll, which is about halfway between Tobi and Koror, is about the same size as Tobi. It is currently uninhabited. For various reasons fewer and fewer people lived on the island until eventually there were only a handful of old people all living together in a huge thatch house. They were finally evacuated to Koror when the burden of keeping a fire burning twenty four hours a day proved too much for them. The fire was necessary to protect the oldsters from the ravages of mosquitoes. There were not enough people on the island to keep it cleaned up. The mosquitoes took advantage of this fact to breed into huge flocks which then had to depend on the island's rats and the few humans for their only mammalian prey.
12. For example, the life cycle of which atoll man is a part could not exist without fresh water. Since the soils are porous there is little or no surface water. The fresh water which is absolutely necessary for the existence of all but the most primitive vegetation is held under the surface in what is known as the Ghyben-Herzberg lens. This lens is a double convex shaped body of soil saturated with fresh water "floating" on a base of salt water-saturated soil and rock. This fresh water lens is vulnerable to the action of man. Any tampering with the lens may lead to penetration of its bottom layer and the mixing of the saline base with the fresh water. If this occurs on a large enough scale it will lead to the destruction of the lens. See Wiens (1962).
13. One should avoid the assumption that this process guarantees social continuity. Gluckman notes two significant conditions which are necessary. There must be "a general need for peace, and recognition of a moral order in which this peace can flourish" (1969:25). Without some such qualification this view very easily can become close to F. H. Bradely's caricature of Dr. Pangloss (read Leibniz): "This is the best of all possible worlds--and everything in it is a necessary evil." (quoted in Russell 1945:581)

14. See Drucker (1977) for the kind of approach that I think I shall be able to build on with profit.
15. For a review of the development of Benedict's thought and the reaction to it see Mead (1959).
16. For example see Codere (1956), Li An-Chi (1937), Bennett (1946) and Piddocke (1965).
17. For empirical work in this vein see, for example, Dubois (1955), Newman (1965), Larrabee (1976). See the works by Opler, Lee, and Kluckhohn and Strodbeck for representatives of different aspects of the tradition which is rooted in Benedict's work.
18. The fear of having someone in a position to impose unwanted sacrifices is complemented by the positive value placed on non-interference in other people's affairs.
19. Occasionally I come across information about other peoples which makes me wonder about the uniquely Tobian qualities of some of what I have reported. "To cause a traditional Trobriand suicide it is not sufficient for the deed to be done (incest or some other asocial act) and for the society to be aware of it (members of the society talk over the event as if the society were telling it to itself . . .) the culprit commits suicide only when his fault is declared in public though he usually knows his fault is not a secret." (Abrahamian 1977:113). This account is based on material reported by Malinsowski. It certainly sounds very similar to what the Tobians said would have followed a direct accusation in the Alberto case. This is a nice illustration of the importance of gaining a feel for the configurations of different cultures. Although there is great similarity between Trobriand Islander suicide and Tobian suicide (in this respect at least), it would be hard to find two more ethologically and eidologically different peoples.
20. Again I must point out that this is an analytic dichotomy which so far as I know has no parallels in Tobian thought, let alone in their actual psychological functioning. Clearly every thought has some feeling attached to it just as every feeling can only be known (or at least communicated) by being "thought."

21. I take some comfort from noting that my justification for this statement is precisely the same as that offered by A. I. Hallowell in his discussion of Ojibwa culture. "When evidence from beliefs, attitudes, conduct and linguistic characterizations are all considered together the psychological basis for their (the Ojibwa) unified cognitive outlook can be appreciated" (1960:24). There are problems in the use of simple English adjectives as labels for phenomena as complex and subtle as ethos and eidos. Clearly "fearful" is not really adequate as a name for the Tobian ethos, nor is "pragmatic" adequate for the Tobian eidos. Both are shorthand for the more complex description contained in earlier passages.
22. Occasionally ignorance of some attribute of the outside world (especially "institutional behavior") gives to certain Tobian plans or ideas an aura of unreality or even fantasy. This unreality exists only in the minds of non-Tobians who become aware of them. It is a result of Tobian ignorance and not wishful thinking or tendermindedness. Within the limits of their ignorance Tobians' plans and ideas invariably turn out to be quite pragmatic.
23. This is a metaphor. Ethos and eidos are abstractions from Tobian behavior. Therefore they are characteristics of aspects of that behavior. They cannot do anything--not even interact. With Bateson I use the metaphor for want of a better way to express the process. With Geertz I await a better vocabulary.
24. The alternative is to so expand the notion of religion that it becomes co-terminal with culture itself.
25. Or at least to all of a genuine culture in Sapir's sense.
26. There are a number of ways to express this in Tobian. The most straightforward is to say simply "emoghamar" which literally translates as "good person." Another, more faddish, term is "mariiyenog." For some reason this expression is always given a Sonsorolese intonation. Its literal translation is "person sweet."

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Errata

Page 383 Line 15
status to **statuses**

Page 402 Line 21
premiere to **premier**

Page 404 Line 1
routine to **routines**

Page 406 Note 4 Line 1
Pauuh to **Panuh**

Note 5 Line 14
termite infested to **termite-infested**

Page 407 Note 10
Yahamatara to **yahamatara**

n.b. The Domestication paper is a fuller account because it contains material in addition to the oral history on which the first paper is based. The priest who converted most Tobians was **Father Elias** and not **Father Marino**.