

GERMAN RULE IN MICRONESIA

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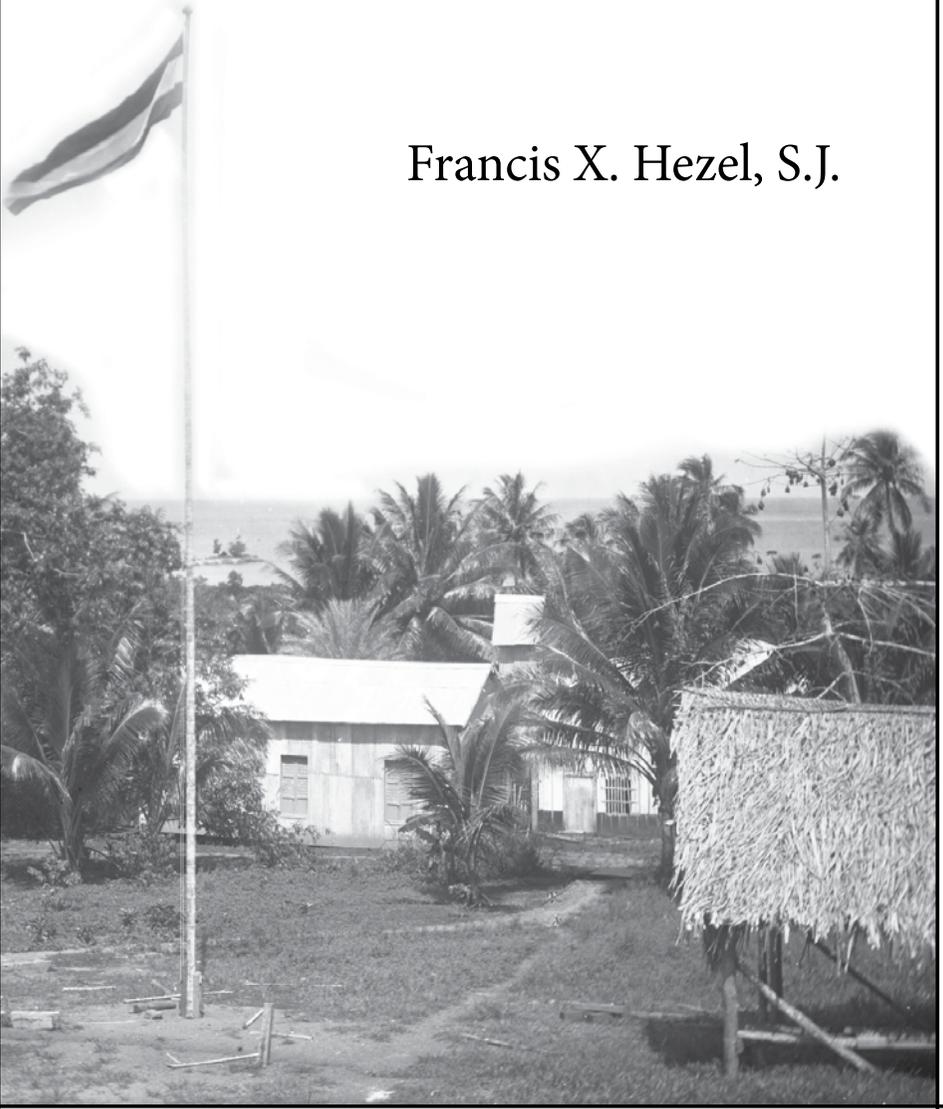


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INTRODUCTION

This year (2014) marks the centennial of the end of German colonial rule in Micronesia. As such, it is an opportune time to reassess the contributions that Germany made to the island groups that would experience colonial rule under two more powers before realizing full self-government in the late 1970s. The German period in Micronesia, 1899-1914, was brief but more influential than its short duration would suggest.¹ It coincided with the thrust toward modernization in several of these island groups, something brought on by years of sporadic contact with the West during the nineteenth century and the Spanish colonial rule that immediately preceded the German period.



German's on horseback below Governor Hahl's residence



Members of the Hamburg South Sea Expedition aboard their ship

The steps toward modernization that the island groups took during German colonial rule were generated by internal forces as much as by the attempts of a colonial power to impose foreign ways on its people, as we shall see. The dynamics of this period cannot be captured in a simple “local vs. colonial” model, for some of the most important and long-lasting changes were made precisely to advance the interests of local groups. Whether intentionally or not, German administrators sometimes tapped into island institutions so effectively that the aims of both the administrators and their island people were served. The cultural elements of the islands played a key role throughout this era—a point that will be highlighted repeatedly in this work.

Our emphasis, then, is not on what German colonial rule took away from islanders, but on what it gave them. Enough time has elapsed since the colonial period to allow us a longer and broader perspective. Not so long ago, island societies might have expressed their gratitude for deliverance from foreign rule. Today’s Micronesian societies may have evolved to the point where they can gratefully acknowledge what each of their colonial overlords contributed to the making of the present day island societies. Each gift is different, of course, depending on the peculiarities of the culture and what was needed at the time. This monograph, then, is not intended as a rewrite of the history of the period, but only a summary of the ways

in which the German government interacted with the local society and its leaders. It is a presentation of the achievements as well as the failures of colonial rule, with emphasis on what the most significant contribution was to each major island group during the German era.

This same period, we might note, saw intense research into the culture and language of these island societies. The standout achievement was the compilation of work that went into the Hamburg South Seas Expedition, with its twenty volumes on the area. The series offers a detailed study of island cultures in their various aspects, including long sections on folklore, myths, and religious beliefs and practices. In addition, German Capuchin missionaries contributed heavily with their own ethnographical and linguistic research, much of it published in the journal *Anthropos*. These works would be consulted by later ethnographers and linguists in their own research in the islands. They are still being mined today, often by islanders as they retrace the steps of their own cultural evolution. The photographs taken during this period, many of them long stored in the German Capuchin archives in Münster, offer us a window on this fascinating period. They will be used here to illustrate the tensions and the achievements of the German period.



German Capuchin taking photos on Pohnpei

GERMAN BEGINNINGS

Germany, largely landlocked and half a world away, might have appeared an unlikely partner for islands in the western Pacific at the end of the nineteenth century. Germany had been unified into a single nation not even thirty years earlier. Ships from Hamburg, Hanover, Bremen and the other shipping ports in Prussia had been scouring the Pacific for a half century or longer, but this was driven by the search for commercial products. In 1857, a wealthy trading house based in Hamburg, J. C. Godeffroy & Son, established a base in Samoa for what would become its broad commercial operations in the Pacific. For a time, the company was collecting anything that could be sold in the China market—tortoise shell, beche-de-mer, or pearl shell. Soon the company began planting cotton, coffee, pineapple, and whatever other cash crops could be grown. By 1870, though, Godeffroy and the other companies that had followed it into the Pacific recognized that the future lay not in these exotic crops, but in the simple and abundant coconut.²

The copra industry was born, by coincidence, at about the same time as the German nation. From the early 1870s, as the government of the new Germany was organizing itself, resident traders were spreading to islands throughout the Pacific and merchant ships were becoming nearly as numerous as whaleships had been earlier in the century. For the next several years, the copra trade flourished as a succession of German firms, led by Hensheim & Company and Deutsche Handels-und Plantagen-Gesellschaft [DHPG], gained commercial control throughout the Caroline and Marshall Islands. By this time, German firms in the Pacific controlled 80 percent of the total copra trade in the western Pacific.³ Every tiny island had its resident copra trader, it seemed, and the trade goods offered as payment for the copra they produced soon became a vital part of islanders' lives.



Adolph Capelle and wife

Nowhere in the northern Pacific was copra more lucrative than in the Marshall Islands, a chain of coral atolls that spawned its own trading company, founded by a German immigrant Adolph Capelle with the help of the Portuguese Anton DeBrum. Capelle arrived in the Marshalls in 1859 and DeBrum came in 1864. Both married local women and soon joined in a long-lasting business partnership.⁴ Capelle & Company, as the venture was known, afterwards developed links with other firms in the region in its effort to build a trading empire that might dominate the market.

As was true in other island groups throughout the Pacific, commercial interests paved the way for administrative rule. German trading companies with a stake in the region soon started appealing to their government for protection. The clamor for annexation of the Marshalls and other islands in the area began in the late 1870s, as Hensheim and the heads of other firms pressed the issue on the new German government.⁵ But Otto von Bismarck, the German Chancellor, thought colonies a luxury—“like a poverty-stricken Polish no-



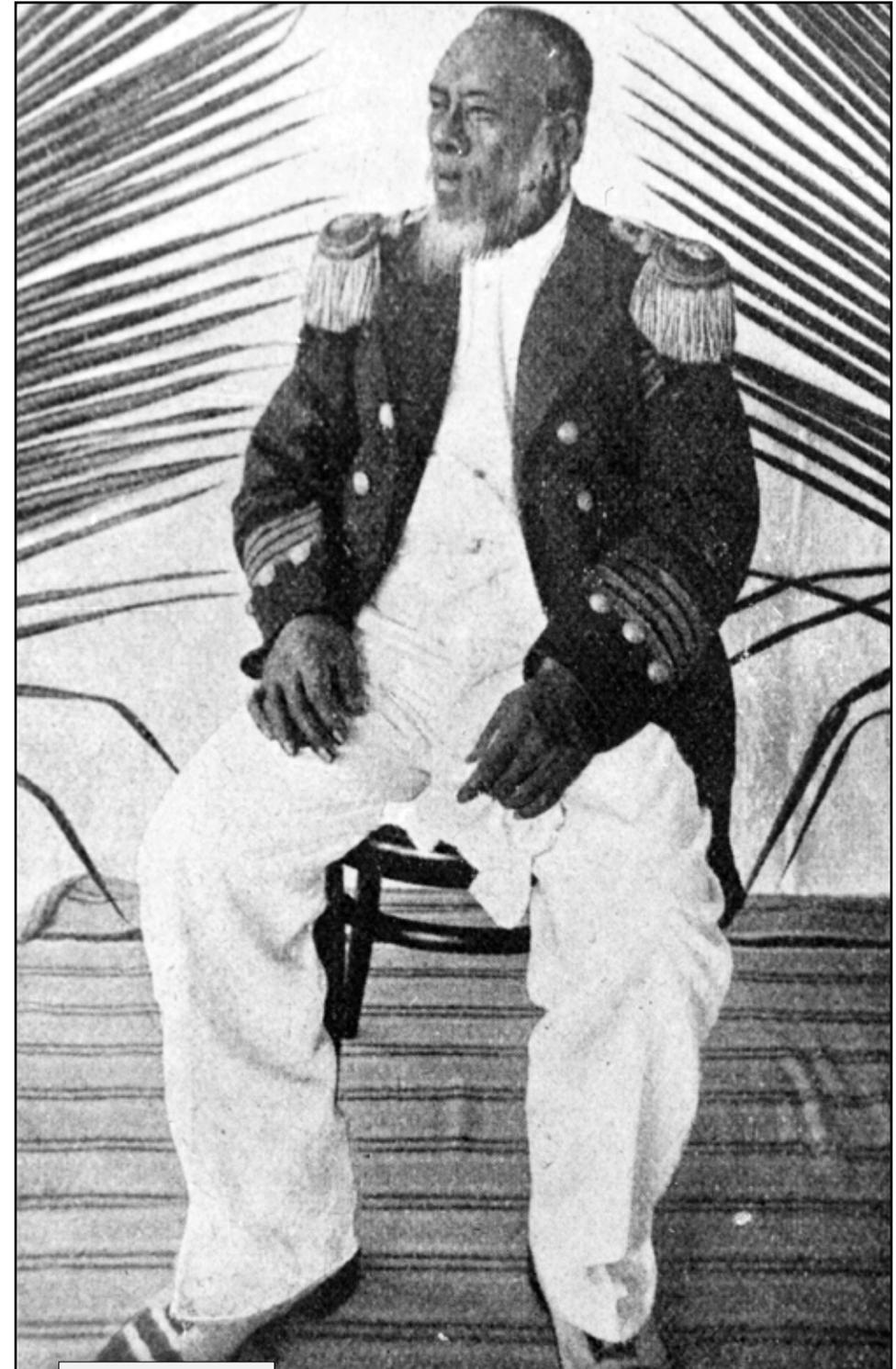
Godeffroy firm headquarters in Hamburg

bleman providing himself with silks and sables when he needed shirts.”⁶ Hence, a compromise was struck. A German naval cruiser, on a visit to Jaluit in 1878, recruited Kabua, the most prominent chief in the group, to sign a formal treaty recognizing German interests in the Marshalls. Kabua, dressed in a new black suit and wearing shoes and socks for the first time ever, watched as the specially designed flag of the western Marshalls, or Ralik chain, was hoisted aloft. The Marshall Islands thereupon became a German protectorate that was, in effect, overseen by the trading firms, with Franz Hensheim serving as consul and acting as de facto administrator.⁷

As German commercial interests in the area grew stronger, the heads of the trading firms brought increasing pressure to bear on the German government for outright annexation of the Marshalls. The German public, which had long been clamoring for an overseas empire, was delighted. Despite the reluctance of Bismarck to have Germany assume the burden of new colonies, the chancellor acquiesced on condition that the financial responsibility for the colonies be assumed by the companies that would benefit from annexation.⁸

In 1885, then, Germany took the next step and declared outright annexation of the Marshalls. The German warship *Nautilus* steamed into Jaluit, the main atoll in the island group, as Kabua, this time wearing a naval officer’s uniform, again watched with delight. The chief heartily endorsed the annexation. After all, his earlier partnership with the Germans had solidified his own political position and brought increased prosperity to him and his people; he had good reason to hope for even more when his islands were brought under the full protection of Germany. Then a company of marines landed and distributed gifts to Kabua and the other assembled Marshallese chiefs before the formal ceremonies began. Finally, the chiefs signed the annexation papers, the German flag was run up the staff, the naval band played the German national anthem, and the ship fired a 21-gun salute.⁹

Bismarck had insisted from the start that one of the commercial firms administer the new colony. Since the Marshalls had been annexed largely at the insistence of German firms, why shouldn’t the government turn to the same firms to administer the islands? He argued that they could recover their administrative expenses from the taxes they collected and the profits derived from the trading privileges they enjoyed. At first the firms declined, but Bismarck persisted until one of them agreed to take on the



Chief Kabua in naval uniform



Spanish demonstrations in Madrid over the Carolines controversy

administrative responsibility for the islands. In 1887, the Jaluit Company, a joint-stock company controlled by Hensheim and DHPG, assumed rule of the colony.

Germany acquired the Marshall Islands with little fuss, but its attempt to pursue its national interests in the Caroline Islands was a different matter altogether. Spanish sea captains had sighted these islands and visited some of them from the early sixteenth century on, but Spain had never taken possession of the Caroline Islands as it had of the Marianas to the north. Spain, which had exercised tight control over the Marianas for two centuries, had never shown much interest in occupying the Carolines. American missionaries, European naval parties, and traders from just about every nation came and went as they pleased throughout the nineteenth century with barely a nod to Spain. It was only in the 1870s, as the European scramble for Pacific colonies intensified, that Spain tried to reassert its claim to the islands.

For a time Germany was too busy organizing its own government to notice; but a decade later Bismarck, as unenthusiastic as he was about the annexation of the Marshalls, prepared to contest Spain's claim for the Carolines. He recognized that the archipelago, extending 2,000 miles east-west, would afford Germany the coaling stations and naval bases needed to establish a military perimeter in the Pacific. In the face of strong public

sentiment in Spain on its right to ownership, Germany challenged Spain's claim to the Carolines. In August 1885 both countries sent warships out to Yap, which was then the major trade center in the archipelago, to occupy and formally annex the islands. The two Spanish naval cruisers arrived first, but as they were reconnoitering the island, the German cruiser *Ittis* steamed into harbor and within half an hour had raised the German colors over the island.¹⁰

Spanish reaction to what the press called "an act of piracy" exploded into one of fury. The people took to the streets, storming the German embassy and burning its coat of arms, insulting the German ambassador and his staff, and threatening war.¹¹ Bismarck, surprised at the furor that Germany's claim to the Carolines had caused, backpedaled and tried to resolve the crisis by making it clear that Germany was prepared to surrender its claim in the interests of peace. Ever the realist, Bismarck privately admitted, "They are not worth it. The islands would not repay one week of preparation for war."¹² The dispute was remanded to the Vatican for arbitration, and by the end of the year Spanish claims to the Carolines were formally recognized.¹³

Germany continued to rule the Marshall Islands through the end of the century, even if indirectly through a commissioner appointed by the Jaluit Company. Such governance, unsurprisingly, was tilted much more toward commercial profits than to German national interest or the development of the local people. Indeed, Germany was beginning to recognize that the officials in the Marshalls, like those in New Guinea, were "too beholden to the commercial interests" of the companies that appointed them.¹⁴ But the early German policy of parceling out the administration of such colonies to concession companies would end soon enough.

Meanwhile, Bismarck had fallen from power with the death of Kaiser Wilhelm I, and with him went any hesitation the new nation might have had about acquiring colonial possessions. The young Kaiser Wilhelm II insisted that Germany find its "place in the sun," as he often put it.¹⁵ The German public, sensing its strength and eager for a seat on the world stage, readily agreed. By this time, the acquisition of colonies was less a matter of supporting the commercial ventures of German firms, or even of acquiring coaling stations or naval bases; it was primarily a matter of national prestige. If colonies were a sign of the coming of age of a modern nation state,

then why should Germany, already an emerging world power, be denied its own colonies?¹⁶

When Spain was defeated by the United States in the Spanish-American War and so was forced to surrender its last remaining colonial possessions in the Pacific, Germany was quick to seize the opportunity. Even before the peace treaty was signed, Germany offered to buy Spain's former Pacific colonies. Although the US insisted on retaining Guam, Germany was able to purchase the Northern Marianas and the Caroline Islands, the islands over which it had almost gone to war with Spain fifteen years earlier, for 25 million pesetas. In 1899, Germany had acquired an empire that consisted of most of what was known then and today as Micronesia: the Marshalls, the Carolines, and the northern Marianas.¹⁷



The flag-raising ceremony on Saipan

ISLANDS ON THE VERGE OF MODERNIZATION

Western ships had been putting into the islands of Micronesia for at least a century, and much longer at some islands, before Germany raised its flag over the Marshalls in 1885 and the Carolines and Marianas in 1899.¹⁸ Long after the Spanish sea captains made initial contact with a few of the islands in the sixteenth century, European and American traders ventured into some of the islands to gather trochus and turtle shell for sale in China. Then came the whaleships, first British and then American ships in unprecedented numbers, stopping for refreshment during their pursuit of whales. Refreshment could mean food, water and firewood to boil blubber on shipboard, but it might also mean recreation with island women. During these visits, desertions were common, so a few of the larger islands like Pohnpei and Kosrae acquired a small number of beachcombers. These were not short-time residents like the shore parties deposited by the China traders, foreigners who would stay for a month or two while they gathered their trochus or shell, but men who intended to remain there permanently. By the 1870s copra trade vessels were visiting the islands regularly to pick up copra and restock with trade goods the resident agents who conducted business on the islands.

In the course of this, Christian missionaries had also found their way to the islands. The first group of Protestant missionaries, a team of ten sponsored by the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, began work on Pohnpei and Kosrae in 1852. Within five years they extended their work to the Marshall Islands, and after another fifteen years they had trained a corps of island pastors and teachers who carried the gospel to Chuuk. The missionaries began the first schools in the islands, admittedly

basic and bible-oriented, but which produced a stream of islanders who were literate in their own language. With the turnover of the Carolines to Spain in 1885, Catholic missionary priests and brothers soon began work in the islands and initiated their own education system.

By the end of the century, even those on the most remote islands in the region had been affected by the changes their visitors had brought. Islanders had acquired a pair of religious creeds as well as a wide array of Western goods: iron cooking utensils and steel tools to replace their stone and shell implements; cloth goods and the shirts, trousers and dresses that spread so rapidly through the population; food such as rice, biscuit and tinned meats that the traders bought; tobacco, used on some islands as currency for a time; and liquor and firearms along with a growing sense of the harm that they might inflict. Islanders also picked up some familiarity with foreign ways and a smattering of their visitors' languages. They had also absorbed some rudimentary knowledge of foreign justice, beginning with the type dispensed from the quarterdeck of a warship.

Interisland warfare had died off everywhere during the last few decades of the century. On the other hand, local people had succumbed in large number to the infectious diseases that foreigners introduced during their visits to the islands. The population of the Marshalls had dropped by a third, the number of people in Palau and Pohnpei had been reduced by a half, and Kosrae had suffered a loss of 90 percent of its population by the end of the century. Only the much more isolated islands of Chuuk and Yap were spared this decline.¹⁹



The shelves of a trade store in the Marshalls



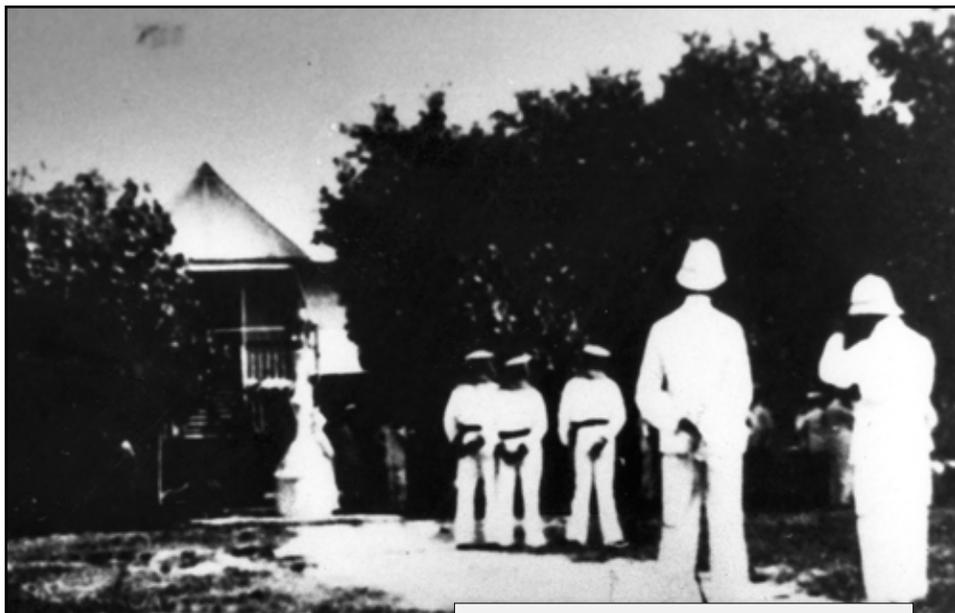
Capuchin missionary off to visit a village

Islanders sometimes presented a strikingly changed appearance. Island women were developing a fondness for calico dresses, and a few men were even going about in suits and sporting top hats. Stone and shell tools had become passé except in the most remote atolls, while machetes and iron axes were used everywhere else. The guitar was becoming a fashionable music instrument in some of the port towns, and traders were having a hard time keeping tinned beef and sea biscuits on their store shelves. These changes were sometimes lamented by Western observers, who saw in all this the beginning of the end for island culture.²⁰

But the laments were premature: the unraveling of the core did not occur as predicted—at least not at that time. By the beginning of German rule, a century of Western cultural influence had chipped away at the edges of island life, but it had not eroded the main institutions of island culture. The social organization of the island peoples, always foundational in Pacific societies, was largely unaffected by Western trade and by the foreigners who resided on the islands. The family system was intact, and the traditional land ownership system, so intimately linked with kinship, had proven resistant to change just about everywhere. Even the political organization remained much as it had always been. The balance of power may have shifted slightly from one chiefdom to another, especially in Palau

and Yap, as a result of foreign contact, but that sort of thing was always happening anyway. Island systems were durable enough to accommodate a surprising degree of outside influence, as the long history of Western contact in the Pacific demonstrates.

Spanish rule in the Carolines, initiated in 1886, had been largely inconsequential for the island peoples.²¹ Spain brought hundreds of troops into the islands, but established colonial centers only on Yap and Pohnpei. Other places—Palau, Chuuk and Kosrae, along with the atolls of the Central Carolines—were unaffected by the Spanish, since the latter made minimal effort to visit these islands. Even on Yap, where there was a sizeable Spanish presence, the colonizing force had little impact on the life of the people except by way of the Catholic missionaries introduced at this time. Spain had contested Germany's claim to the islands in 1885 simply as a matter of national honor. The country had seen the remnants of its global empire dissolve during the past century and it wished for nothing more than to retain some vestige of its overseas territory, some glimmer of what had once been. Spain had no ambitious social program to implement; an understanding of island culture and establishing bonds with local people was not a priority. Accordingly, the naval commanders appointed as governors of the Western Carolines and the Eastern Carolines were administrative functionaries who served no more than a year or two before they were replaced. The



Spanish troops guarding the government compound on Yap



Cockfighting in the Marianas

three outbreaks of violence that occurred on Pohnpei—in 1887, 1890 and 1896—may have only confirmed the belief of the Spanish that they could do little more there than keep the national flag flying.

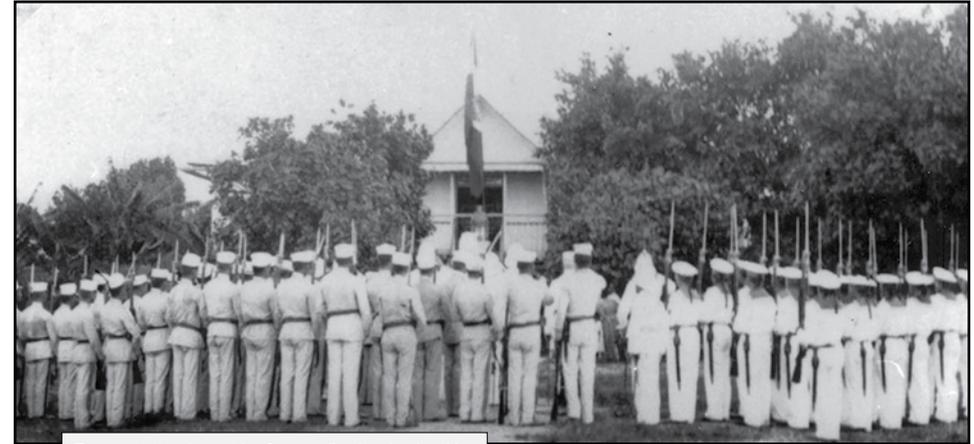
Although Spain had never had a real presence in the Marshall Islands, the country had ruled in the Marianas for over two centuries. The imprint of Spanish culture was everywhere to be found in Chamorro society: tortillas cooked in the distinctive Spanish ovens, the bull carts used to haul people and goods, the mantillas the women wore to mass, the cockfight pits that were always crowded on holidays. A strong case could be made that by this time Chamorro culture had absorbed enough Spanish influence to be reshaped by it, but without losing its distinctive island character. Indeed, the Marianas may have been the only part of Micronesia in which the local culture had been tested this way. Other places, however, would be in years to come.

THE GERMAN FLAG IS RAISED

In October 1899, the German Governor of New Guinea, Rudolf von Benigsen, steamed into Pohnpei on the German warship *Kudat* to take possession of the island and to raise the German flag over the Eastern Caroline Islands.²² At the ceremony to celebrate the transfer on October 13, the German contingent of four officials and 25 Malayan policemen were vastly outnumbered by the departing Spanish garrison of 150 Europeans and 252 Malayan troops.²³ The small size of the German administration raised the eyebrows of the Spanish, who appeared relieved that they were leaving the island at last. One of them turned to his German counterpart and suggested that if he wanted to save his life, he would do well to turn around at once and head for home.²⁴

Two weeks later the German warship arrived at Yap where the same ceremony was repeated. Then once again, on November 17, the German flag was raised on Saipan, bringing an end to the 200 years of Spanish rule there. At the takeover of these islands, Germany installed a Governor for all its new Pacific territories in New Guinea, thus centralizing its administration system while signaling that it intended to exercise direct control over its colonies rather than delegate this authority to a trading firm, as it had in the past. Even so, the new German possessions in Micronesia could easily be swamped by the much larger and more heavily populated protectorate of New Guinea. To ensure that this would not happen, the German Vice-Governor, Albert Hahl, was given authority over its colonies in Micronesia, provided with a separate budget, and stationed on Pohnpei.²⁵

The new administrative team in the new Micronesian territory was composed of Albert Hahl on Pohnpei, Arno Senfft on Yap, and Georg Fritz on Saipan. All three were “able technocrats” rather than political appoin-



Troops at attention as the German flag is raised on Yap

tees,²⁶ men supported by a skeleton staff in each place that consisted of two or three Germans and a handful of Malayan policemen. In keeping with the German emphasis on long-term management and improvement of colonies, they saw their mission as developing the islands, socially as well as economically. The new colonies, of course, were meant to be a national adornment for Germany, as the older colonies were to other European powers of the day. But well managed colonies that showed unmistakable signs of growth would be both a credit to their protector and a boon to the local people.



Capuchin priest on his way to say Mass in a village on Pohnpei



Capuchin priest with Pohnpei boys

To achieve these goals, Germany hoped to involve the island people as fully as possible in the new government and the development programs expected to spring from it. Albert Hahl, the Deputy Governor of New Guinea and the interim district officer on Pohnpei, was an admirer of the British system of indirect rule in Fiji. His visionary plan was to win the confidence of the island people, then to enlist their cooperation in a development program that would offer a range of benefits to the population. Winning the good will and cooperation of the island people was imperative if they were to be engaged in the planning and execution of the development program.²⁷

If all this was to be successfully carried out, German administrators would have to come to know the local people well. Hence, the terms of administrators tended to be long—certainly by comparison with the Spanish governors in the islands in the Carolines and the US governors on Guam. The early German district officers held their position for seven or eight years rather than for only a year or two. They had the added advantage of not being smothered by a large expatriate staff, for they had very few administrative personnel from their own country.²⁸ All this prevented the German staff from insulating themselves from the islanders and their culture. It is telling that nearly all of this first contingent of German administrators—Albert Hahl, Georg Fritz, Albert Vahlkampf, Viktor Berg, Max Girschner—picked up a decent knowledge of the local language. This was

not the case in the Marshalls, where administrators had shorter postings, nor was it true of the administrators appointed later in the era.²⁹

Such was the administrative plan, at least during the early years of German rule, and it was surprisingly effective throughout most of the Micronesian protectorate. But in 1907, this *laissez faire* approach yielded to a more strongly interventionist stance as German colonial policy changed sharply.³⁰ Indirect rule might have been fine in principle, but development guided by local desire can come slowly—far too slowly to satisfy impatient administrators back home and the government to which they report. The hurried timetable for change imposed on the administration in later years of German rule, along with the increased centralization of administrative authority, led to desperate, ill-advised measures throughout the islands, including the chain of events that triggered the Sokehs Rebellion on Pohnpei.

Throughout these years, the church would remain the other major force, besides commerce and colonial government, at work in the islands. In 1904, five years after the German flag was raised in the Carolines, German Capuchins replaced their Spanish confreres, with the last Spanish missionary leaving the following year.³¹ The switch to German missionaries was much more easily executed by Catholics than by Protestants; the Capuchins, after all, were an international order and could find replacements for the



Governor Hahl with his people on Pohnpei

Spanish from the Rhein-Westphalian Province. The Protestant missionaries at work in the islands, on the other hand, were all English-speaking—at least until the arrival of the Liebenzell evangelicals in 1907. But Protestant churchmen would have no role whatsoever in the western Carolines; the arrival of the first Liebenzell missionaries in Yap and Palau would occur long after the end of German rule in those islands.

To evaluate what was accomplished under German rule, let us now turn to each of the major island groups to see how the foreign administration interacted with island leaders and what resulted in each place.



Governor Hahl on Pohnpei

YAP: A MODEL OF CLOSE COLLABORATION

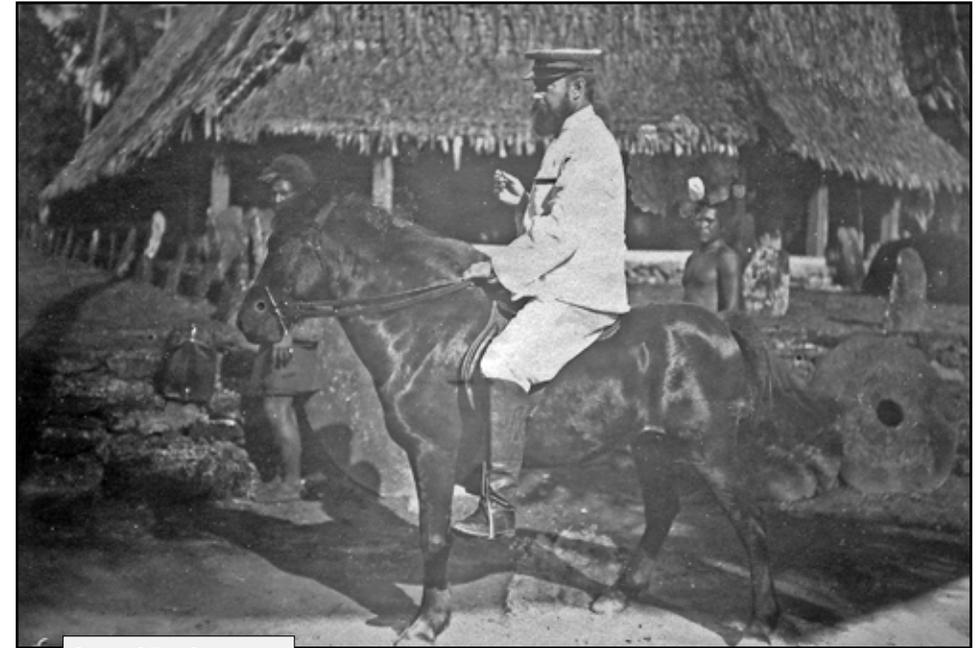
Yap, a cluster of high islands near the western end of Micronesia with a population of about 7,000, was a conundrum during the late 19th century. Proud of their culture and resistant to change, Yapese were regarded by Westerners as one of the most culturally conservative island groups in the region. Yet, Yap was the trade center of the western Carolines and one of the busiest ports of call in that part of the Pacific. The island group had no single paramount chief. Instead, each of its village had its own chief and was supposedly autonomous. In fact, however, the villages were ranked in tiers according to an elaborate caste system. Clusters of villages were linked into “nets,” with the dealings from one net to another conducted through the chief of the highest ranked village in each net.³²

During the years of Spanish rule, the colonial administration worked in isolation from the islanders; there was very little interface between them. The Spanish governor had his own Filipino police force to keep peace on the island, even as Chamorros brought in from Saipan and Guam handled the administrative tasks for the government and taught in the Catholic schools. This had resulted in a two-track system of colonial rule: Yapese managed their local affairs, while the Spaniards oversaw the welfare of the island group as a whole. The latter meant, in practice, keeping an eye on the involvement of foreign ship captains and trade agents and filing regular reports to superiors on the condition of the island.

Arno Senfft, who had served as a minor official in the Marshalls for four years and in New Guinea before that, was appointed the district officer of Yap and the Western Carolines. The new administrator understood that the key to success was in maintaining close relations with the local island leadership while exercising restraint in the use of his own authority.

Soon after taking up his new position, Senfft set up a council of eight chiefs who were to assume responsibility for island affairs. This number included the six village chiefs who controlled the net of villages that was interwoven throughout the whole island group. The council met with Senfft each month to discuss administration policy and work programs, after which the eight chiefs presided at a gathering of village chiefs from all over the island to pass on orders and pick up feedback.³³ Orders, then, were passed on from the highest-ranking chiefs, who had a hand in deciding what would be done, to the remainder of the village chiefs and thence to the people themselves.

Once a public project was approved by the district officer and endorsed by the chiefly council, workers would have to be gathered from the villages and kept on the job, sometimes for months at a time. To accomplish this, Senfft again drew on Yapese cultural resources. He allowed the chiefs to pick candidates for the police force that would enforce the decisions of the chiefly council. The police officers were chosen from among high-born young men, all with junior titles in their village, who acted on behalf of the chiefs themselves as well as for the German government. In effect, this police force provided “enforcers” for the chiefs—policemen chosen from

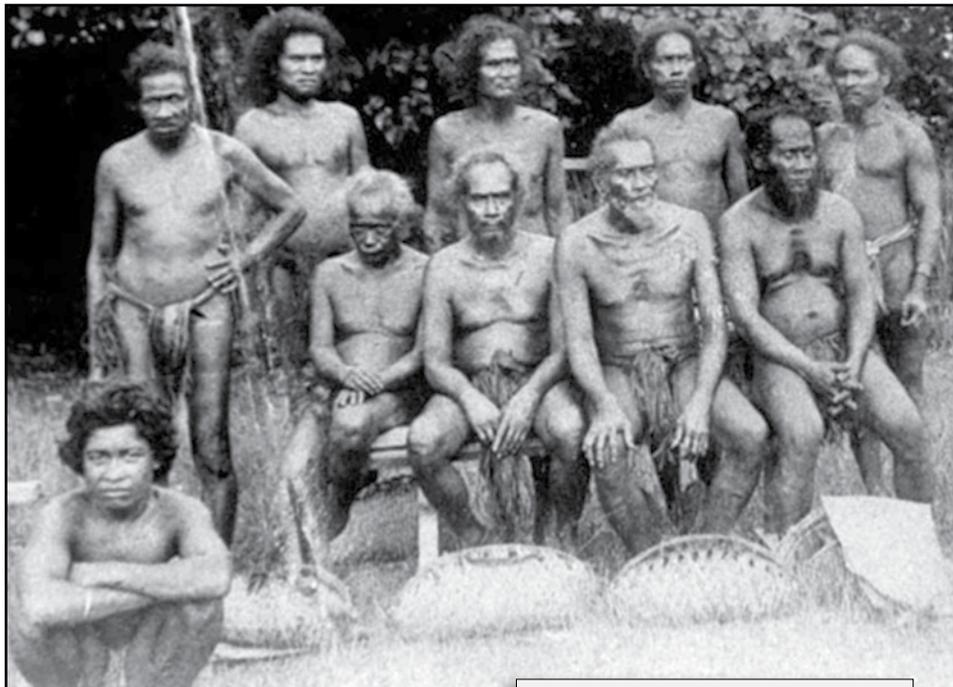


District Officer Senfft in Yap

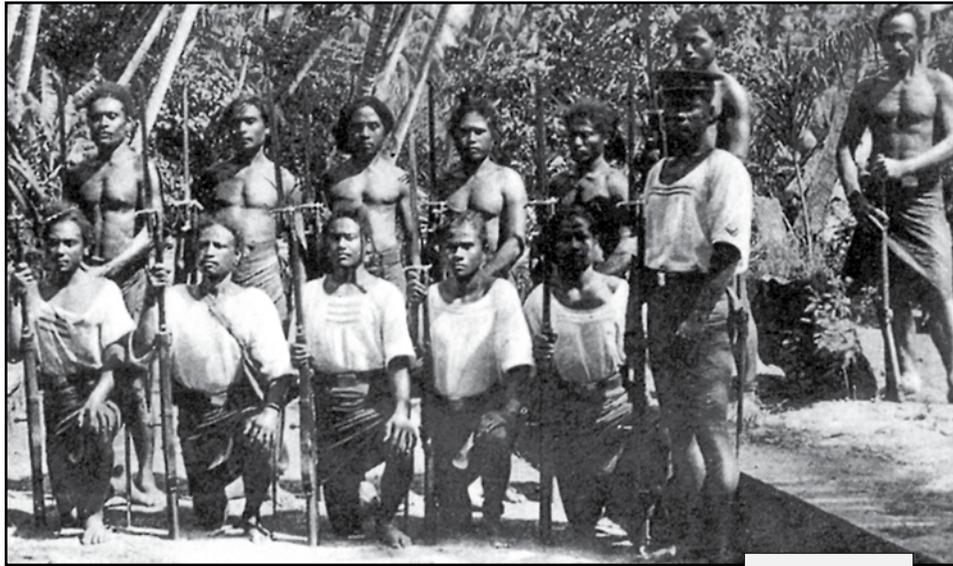
the elite who could stand at the beck and call of the village chiefs, even as they contributed to the ambitious public projects program inaugurated by the government. The chiefs, who were expected to assign laborers for these projects, had only to report one of their laborers as a laggard and then leave it to Senfft and the police force to take disciplinary measures.³⁴

The strategy worked to the satisfaction of everyone, German officials and Yapese chiefs. It not only provided the enforcement needed to keep Yapese laborers on the job during their long work on public projects, but it also created an effective law and order system. By 1903, Senfft had replaced all his Malayan policemen with Yapese and sent the Malaysians off to Pohnpei, where they were much more badly needed.³⁵

Since the German administration hoped to make the police force the vanguard of its modernization program, it provided training in carpentry, bricklaying and other trades in addition to military drills and rifle practice. The policemen, like their counterparts in other island groups, went to school where they studied German and math for a few hours each day. The members of the police force cut a fine figure in their jackets and hats, even if they wore loincloths rather than trousers in deference to local custom. A German official with a practiced eye for such things pronounced them the equal of German soldiers anywhere.³⁶



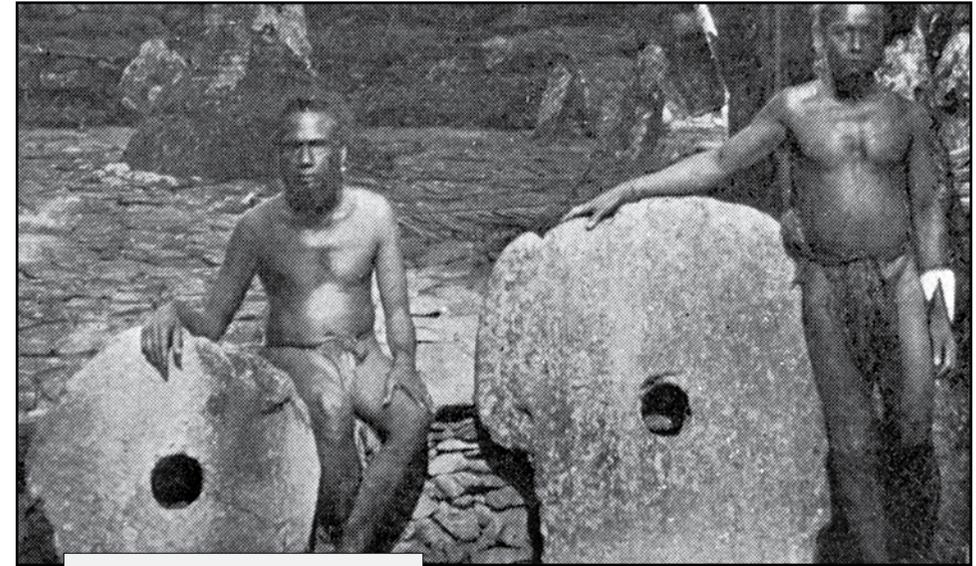
High-ranking Yapese chiefs after a council meeting



Yapese police force

Even the punitive measures that were a necessary part of law enforcement were locked into the local culture. People assigned to projects who failed to appear for work or those who had committed other offenses were required to pay fines. Senfft collected these fines in the form of the large limestone discs, used in cultural exchanges, that later came to be called stone money. Rather than trying to haul off the gigantic discs, Senfft simply had one of the policemen paint on the appropriated piece of money the letters “BA” for *Bezirksamt*, signifying that it was now the property of the colonial government. Upon the payment of the fine, usually in the form of labor on a project, the letters were erased and the stone disc reverted to its original owner. This unusual procedure—something akin to a “mortgage” or “pawn” system—proved effective because it, like so much else that Senfft did, was singularly well adapted to Yapese culture.³⁷

With his administrative apparatus running effectively through Yapese authorities, Senfft simply ignored the colony of Filipinos, most of whom had once been soldiers, and Chamorros, formerly called upon to handle administrative chores. They numbered over a hundred, but they no longer served as the channels of authority into the local community that they had been during the Spanish era. Senfft may have sneered at their pretensions, but this “middle-class” were allowed to linger on, supporting themselves in whatever way they could, throughout the remainder of German rule.³⁸



Yapese men with large pieces of stone money

The spectacular results of the ambitious public works program were a testimony to what could be achieved when colonial authority was seamlessly integrated into the local cultural system. The projects were proposed by Senfft, undertaken with the approval of the chiefs, carried out by Yapese workers provided by the villages, and supervised by policemen beholden to the chiefs. Within a few years, a singular array of public works projects was completed. Yap now had over 60 miles of paved road—roads around the island from north to south along with five cross-island roads. Also con-



Newly built bridge linking Tomil with the main part of Yap



Tageren Canal

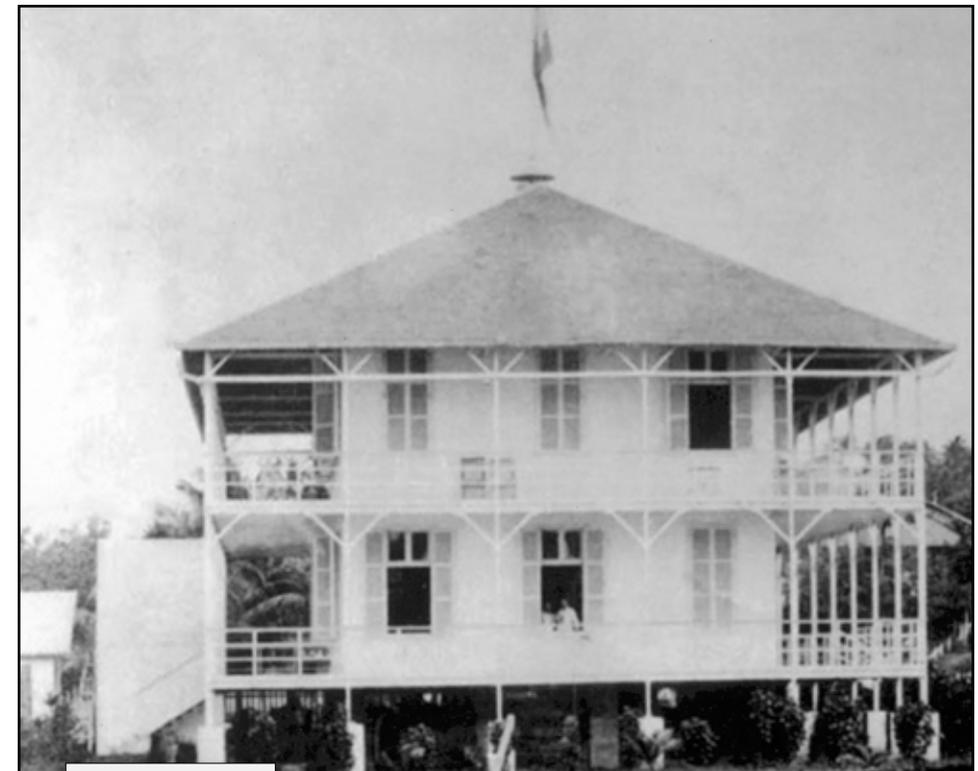
structed was a stone pier 400 yards long that became the main dock for Yap. Teams of workers built several new causeways, the largest of which (900 yards long) was interlinked with several bridges and connected the main island with Gagil and Tomil. Finally, in what was the proudest achievement, the Yapese dug the Tageren Canal, half a mile long and 20 feet wide, that provided a waterway from north to south within the reef. The last project took nine months of constant work, but its completion was the occasion for one of the biggest celebrations the island had ever seen. Garlands and pennants decorated both sides of the canal, while a flotilla of over a hundred canoes and twenty boats were paddled through the channel to the music of a Filipino band and the cheers of onlookers. The dancing and feasting continued for two more nights.³⁹

The festival at the opening of the Tageren Canal was not unique. At the completion of a major project, there was always a celebration lasting for a day or two, depending on the magnitude of the project. Food, drink, and island dancing—the very things that would have had a real appeal to Yapese—were the main features of these celebrations. Senfft not only used the police force and chiefly authority to motivate this work team, but the prospect of a good island-style celebration afterwards as an added appeal.

Kindly and paternal towards the people he governed, Senfft easily won goodwill and respect from the Yapese. He kept an open-door policy and prided himself on the interest he showed the islanders who visited him, whatever their concerns. The district officer once described his policy as

consulting with the chiefs first on any government initiative affecting the people, and for the rest leaving people as much as possible to their “harmless old customs.”⁴⁰ Senfft had no program of social reform to promote. The German Capuchin missionaries, who had already committed themselves to spreading formal education, were vigorously opposed to clubhouse prostitution, but this was already in decline and would quietly disappear on its own after a few years. The heavy drinking that had been so widespread under the Spanish was far less common now, thanks in good measure to the lack of cash income after the fall-off of the copra trade.

The one major intrusion into island life during these years occurred in 1905 when a new cable station was opened on Yap. With three segments of undersea cable linking Yap to Guam, the Dutch East Indies and China, the island suddenly became the hub of a communications network extending throughout the western Pacific. A telegraph station was also opened on Yap in the same year. The sudden heightened importance of the island in a global communications system might not have made much difference to the islanders, but the arrival of dozens of Europeans to staff the cable



New cable station on Yap



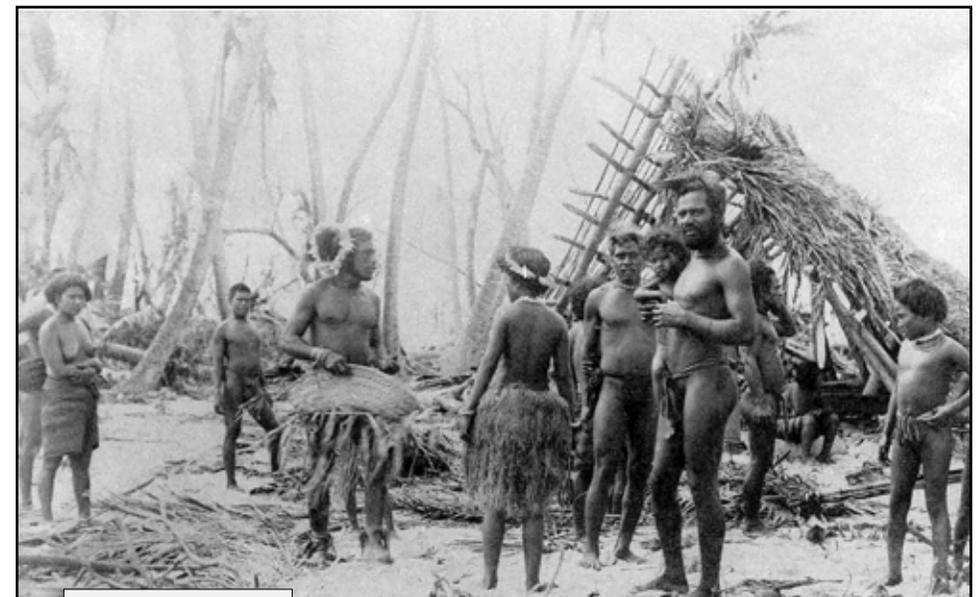
German employees and their families

station did. To provide for the new employees, several houses were built, a large water cistern was erected, and a nicely designed club and restaurant were opened. The arrival of several German families necessitated the building and staffing of new facilities on the island—all of which were intended for expatriates rather than Yapese. Shortly after the cable station was opened, for instance, a second hospital was built—this one exclusively for foreigners—and two new medical personnel brought in to staff it. The Chamorros and Filipinos who had been living on the heights above the government center were displaced to make room for the new homes; they were forced to resettle along the inlet that came to be known as Chamorro Bay.⁴¹ Prior to this, German administrative policy had been largely determined by what Senfft and his staff regarded as beneficial to the Yapese. Now islanders were being asked to make way for the staff of a cable station that would advance the interests of Germany much more than of the local population. Although the splendid working relationship between Senfft and the islanders was not impaired, this shift in emphasis would set a pattern for the remainder of German rule and for the colonial administrations to come.

Then, in 1907, German colonial policy suddenly shifted toward centralization. The move was partly in response to the abuses towards local

peoples, especially in the African colonies, that had led to local uprisings, which were brutally suppressed by German administrators. But even avowed colonialists complained that the colonies had been allowed to drift and so were much less productive than they should be. It was time to make these colonies, which so far had been a drain on the national economy, pay their own way. This would mean a sharpened focus on Berlin's aims for its colonies and the adoption of stronger and more forceful policies to realize these goals. Economic development of the colonies was clearly to be a priority, whatever social changes this might entail for local people.⁴²

But the setbacks in Yap, all of which were due to natural disasters rather than policy decisions, made such development impossible. In 1907 a terrible typhoon coursed through the atolls near Yap, claiming 230 lives on Woleai alone and wiping out the food resources throughout the area. A German doctor surveyed the islands and supervised the salvage of what little food crops remained on the island. Meanwhile, Senfft organized relief efforts in Yap, sending out food and building materials to provide for the islanders who remained, even as hundreds of outer-islanders were resettled in other places.⁴³ This was the fourth major typhoon in two years, and German officials earnestly hoped that the atoll people exposed to such threats would abandon their low-lying islands for the safety offered them on Yap and the other high islands of the region. Indeed, a policy to en-



Typhoon damage on Woleai

courage migration from the outer islands into more central locations was adopted by the German administration.⁴⁴ But the strong bonds of islanders to their home outweighed such considerations in the minds of the atoll dwellers, and the policy was never successfully implemented. It was only many years later, half a century after the end of German rule, when the cash economy had become a real factor in the lives of these people, that any real migration began.

Any hope for the expansion of Yap's copra industry, once the heart of its vibrant economy, was lost due to the spread of the leaf lice that had been destroying the island's coconut trees. The leaf lice, which first appeared in 1895, was responsible for a major drop in copra exports throughout German rule in Yap. Senfft had tried everything to rid the island of this plague: burning diseased leaves, smoking out the lice, and introducing natural enemies to feed on them. But nothing worked. By 1907 nearly all the trees in Yap were diseased, and copra production had all but ceased. The government conducted on-going experimentation to find cash crops that might replace copra as the mainstay of the island economy, but this was done without success.⁴⁵



Governor Georg Fritz and policemen in Gagil



Colonia, Yap at the height of German rule

Even more alarming was the rapid decline in the island population, which dropped from 7,500 in 1900 to 6,200 ten years later. Not even the improved health care, beginning with the opening of a hospital and the hiring of a resident doctor, was able to halt the population decline.⁴⁶ The down-swing was not reversed until mid-century, and its cause is being debated even today.

Arno Senfft died in 1908 after governing the island for nearly a decade. The administrators who replaced him served short stints and were subject to much stricter bureaucratic control than Senfft had been. The yearly reports they sent on to their superiors were brief and unexciting, perhaps because their mission was merely a holding concern—the maintenance of a colony that had once implemented an exemplary public works program, but had been unable to find solutions for its vexing economic problems. Its real achievements had been registered earlier by an administrator committed to collaborating closely with his people through systems that were largely their own.

PALAU: THE PATH TO MODERNIZATION

Palau, like Yap, was a society in which there was no paramount chief; each “village” or section had its own chief. Villages, which might better be termed “districts” since some of these contained many different hamlets, were larger and fewer than on Yap. Although not ranked and not organized into a traditional network as in Yap, the fourteen districts in Palau competed bitterly for status and the traditional valuables that bestowed that status. They often formed alliances with one another, alliances that were constantly shifting at one time, but had frozen into place by the end of the nineteenth century as two major confederations—one headed by Koror and the other by Melekeok.⁴⁷

When the Germans arrived on the scene, Palauans were still going about in loincloths and grass skirts, their bodies smeared with saffron turmeric. They were every bit as traditionally dressed as their Yapese neighbors and had a reputation at that time for being one of the more conservative island groups in the region. Although Palau had enjoyed a century of intermittent contact with the British Navy and traders of different nationalities, the people shunned most of the showy goods foreigners offered in favor of the practical—metal tools and iron pots, but especially muskets and rifles that they could use in their inter-district wars. Even by the beginning of German rule, it was unusual to see Palauans dressed in the stylish clothes and hats for which Marshallese, Pohnpeians and even Chuukese developed such a fondness. Palauans, who later gained a deserved reputation throughout the region for being pacesetters in change, would have then been regarded as at the low end of the modernization scale.⁴⁸

When Senfft visited Palau in 1901 to survey this part of his territory, he appointed James Gibbons, a West Indian who had lived in Palau for over 40 years, as administrator and provided him with five Palauan policemen to



Ibedul, the high chief of Koror

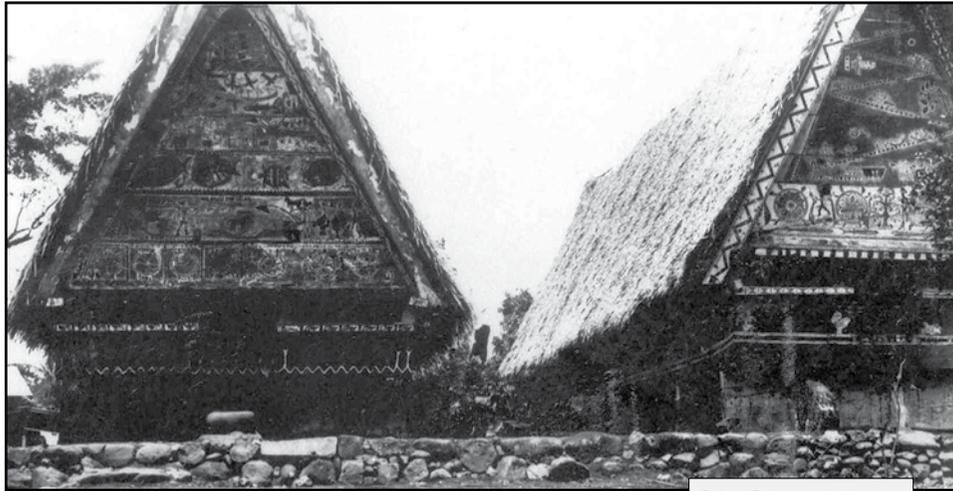
assist him. He instructed Gibbons to form a chiefly council, just as he himself had done on Yap. Senfft knew that Gibbons could accomplish nothing without the support of the Palauan chiefs, even though he himself took a dim view of them, regarding them as “generally old, dull and apathetic...and with hardly any other interests than in

making money.”⁴⁹ Senfft’s hope lay in the policemen, carefully chosen from high title families in Koror and Melekeok, the two leading districts in Palau; for they had close access to the chiefs but still were not so highly placed as to constitute a threat to their chiefs.

Gibbons proved ineffective, however. At Senfft’s visit to Palau three years later, the district officer found that none of the public works projects that he had hoped to see completed were even begun. There were no new roads, no causeways, no docks; and very few coconut tree seedlings had been planted in compliance with German directives. Instead, the men spent their time lounging in the clubhouses that were so central to Palauan



Palauans in traditional dress at a community event



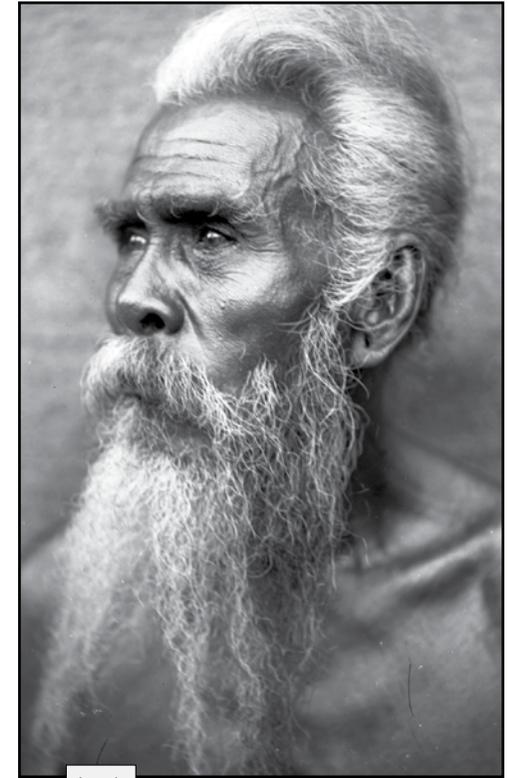
Pair of Palauan clubhouses

village life. Like the Yapese men's houses, these clubhouses were served by young women abducted from other villages that were rewarded very generously for their loss. Palauan clubhouses, however, had much more a political life of their own than Yapese men's houses. Usually they remained outside the direct jurisdiction of village chiefs and were sometimes powerful enough to supersede the orders of a chief. With their hold over the young men and how they spent their time, Palauan clubhouses served as the labor unions of their day.⁵⁰

In Yap Senfft had been able to mobilize the manpower to carry out his many work projects by enlisting the support of the chiefs, but in Palau even the chiefs seemed to be powerless in the face of the strong hold that clubhouses had over their members. Convinced that he would need a German presence in Palau to accomplish anything, Senfft appointed his police chief, Wilhelm Winkler, as resident administrator of Palau and head of the government station that he was opening there. Immediately after taking office in 1905, Winkler expanded his police force by another twelve men, organized a council of chiefs that was to meet each month, and began enforcing the German ordinances on planting trees and cleaning village property. Local people made their displeasure known by dragging their feet on these reforms and failing to deliver on promises made to the German administration to provide labor for public projects. The drive to overcome resistance to German reform efforts might well have resulted in a stand-off between the government and local people if it had not been for the support of one of the highest ranked Palauans.⁵¹

The Germans found a valuable ally in Louch, the man who held the second highest title in Koror. The man presented an imposing figure “with his tall muscular frame, his expressive and animated face, his flowing white beard and his bushy eyebrows.”⁵² His appearance was a striking contrast with those short and heavysset chiefs whom the Germans derided as “dull and apathetic;” indeed, he reminded one German official of a figure from mythology—Neptune or an “old Nordic sea hero.”⁵³ Moreover, Louch had seen a good bit of the outside world during the many years he had spent abroad. As a young man, he had signed on a trading schooner and sailed up and down the Asian coast, acquiring fluency in English along with a mastery of seamanship and navigation. His years abroad had left him with a deep appreciation of modern ways, which he longed to see supplant some of the more backward customs of his own islands. The Spanish had banished Louch for some reason during the 1890s, but Senfft, soon after taking office, repatriated him at the request of James Gibbons to help win the support of the other chiefs.⁵⁴

The clubhouses were one of the first targets of German reform. After all, German authorities were distressed at the role this institution played in frustrating the work projects they had hoped would be carried out as successfully in Palau as they had been in Yap. Palauan men spent the day relaxing in the comfortable confines of the clubhouse instead of planting the coconut trees and conducting the other projects the government imposed on them. But there were other reasons for the all-out crusade against the clubhouse. The German government, allied with the Catholic Church, was interested in suppressing the prostitution that was so deeply linked with the institution—the church for moral reasons and the government be-



Louch



Winkler and a German work supervisor with Palauans

cause of its impact on the health of the population. Palau's population had been declining for some thirty or forty years by this time—it had dropped from an estimated 8,000 to not much more than 3,000 in the early 1900s. The Germans suspected that clubhouse prostitution was responsible for the rampant venereal disease and decreased fertility they observed in the island group. Louch and the other chiefs who sided with him had their own reasons for wishing to suppress the clubhouse system, as strongly entrenched as it was in Palauan culture. The clubhouse was a rival power with which the chiefs had long been forced to contend, and suppression of the institution would enhance their own authority.⁵⁵

With such powerful forces aligned against the institution, the outcome was predictable. By 1906, just a year after Winkler's arrival in Palau, clubhouse prostitution was suppressed and the power of the clubhouses seriously weakened.⁵⁶ There was resistance, of course, but this was effectively countered. Louch is said to have once summoned a German cruiser to pursue some men who were trying to procure women from the northern island of Kayangel in defiance of the German order. The chief of Peleliu, one of the major suppliers of women to clubhouses all around Palau, was removed from office by the Germans for not complying with the ban. Encouraged by their success and confident in the strong support of Louch, the German administration launched new reforms: giving out children for adoption was

forbidden, divorce laws were tightened, and adultery was punished by the government. Winkler was implementing a program of social reform in Palau that Senfft himself would not have dared to pursue in Yap.⁵⁷

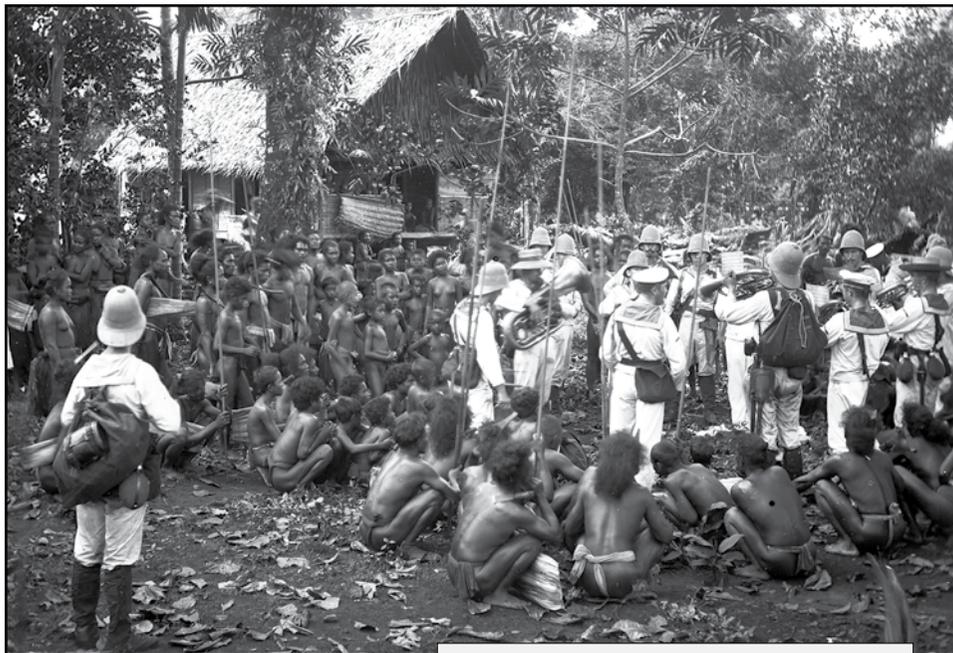
Such sweeping changes were bound to provoke a reaction. In some quarters of Palau, people showed their resentment by failing to heed German directives; they refused to burn coconut leaves as a prevention against the leaf lice that was now threatening Palau, and they left their land uncleared and untended. Behind this protest movement of non-compliance the German administration saw the hand of the spirit mediums, a group whose power had grown so great that it "threatened to swallow up every other form of government," according to Kubary.⁵⁸ The spirit mediums were individuals, scattered through the islands, who were believed to have the power to speak with the dead, including those ancestral spirits to whom villagers turned for counsel in time of need. When consulted for help in communicating with the dead, the spirit medium would work into a frenzy, usually by rapidly chewing betelnut, before falling into a trance-like state. It was then that the medium would begin relaying to their patrons the message from the spirit; it might be the cure for an ailment, the location



Spirit mediums in Palau shortly before their exile

of good new fishing grounds, the identity of someone who had tormented a member of the family with sorcery. For that matter, the spirit medium might even be consulted on whether a village chief should be retained or removed from his position. The spirit mediums were priests, shamans and sorcerers—they were spokespersons for the powers above, and their word was definitive in a way that a chief's could never be.⁵⁹

As the German government pressed its reforms, resistance from the mediums mounted. Increasingly this resistance moved from quiet protest to direct confrontation, as the spirit mediums used their influence to persuade others to take action against the Germans. The uprising would free Palau once and for all of its white overlords, the mediums prophesied. In Ngarchelong, the district in northern Palau that had been the seat of their power, they sent emissaries to high-ranking Koror and Melekeok to ask the chiefs there to support their planned uprising. But Ibedul and Reklai, the chiefs of these two districts, betrayed their plot and informed Winkler of what was afoot. Immediately Winkler and his small company of policemen marched into Ngarchelong, destroyed a shrine that had been recently built in defiance of his orders, and arrested the six ringleaders of the conspiracy. The six men, all of them spirit mediums, were transported by naval cruiser to Saipan where they served out a long sentence of penal labor. The



German ban playing at the celebration of the Kaiser's birthday



War canoe races on the Kaiser's birthday

German government soon afterward banned the native priests outright, tearing down their shrines and evicting them from their house sites. Louch himself played a large role in the suppression of the spirit mediums; he was said to have personally led an expedition against Peleliu and Airai to level the shrines there and arrest the priests, while the rest of the Palauan chiefs applauded quietly from a safe distance. In the end, the last of the spirit mediums had been driven underground and the practice all but extinguished. Louch and the Palauan chiefs who sided with him—and they were the majority—had overcome, with the help of the German government, the two greatest challenges to their authority: clubhouses and spirit mediums.⁶⁰

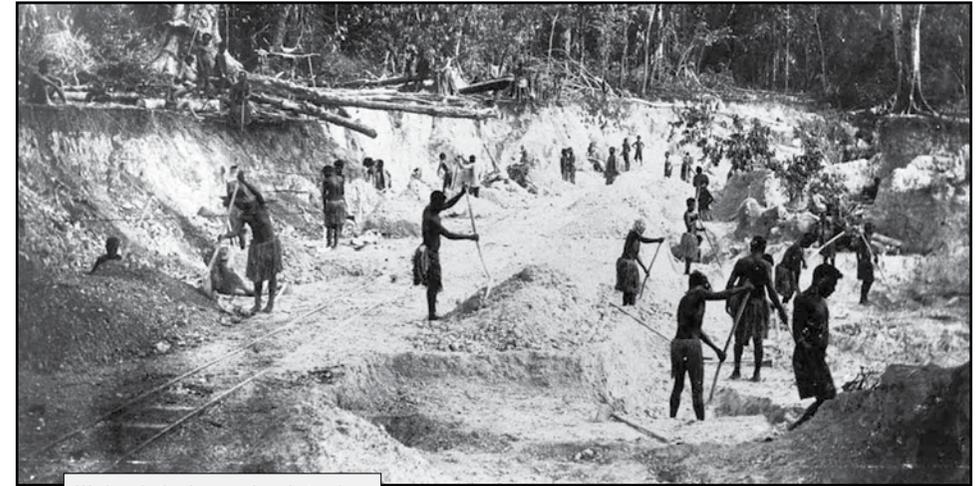
The celebration of the Kaiser's birthday in late January 1908, following the successful campaigns against clubhouses and the spirit mediums, marked a triumph for the German administration and its chiefly allies. The district chiefs, who formerly seemed indifferent to the event, orchestrated a heavy turnout for the festivities that year with hundreds of Palauans attending. The celebration featured interdistrict competition at a level seldom seen before. There were races in war canoes and old war dances, both of which were survivals from a tumultuous age now past. War itself might have disappeared, but the spirit of competitiveness that so often triggered war in the past would not die; it would simply be expressed in different, less disruptive forms. Some of the women came dressed in

smocks instead of the small woven aprons they once wore, and men began appearing with shorter hair at the urging of Louch and some of the other chiefs. At the opening ceremonies, some of the best students from the Capuchin-run schools in Melekeok and Koror recited German poetry, and the entire student sang rousing choruses of “Der Kaiser ist ein guter Mann” and “Deutschland über alles.”⁶¹

While the feast was a formal homage to the head of a colonial power, it clearly also served as a celebration of Palauan culture with its war canoes, its dances and its feasts. The Palauan culture being celebrated was undergoing major change, of course: the venerable clubhouse institution had been seriously weakened, the spirits mediums had been hunted down and their practices suppressed, clothing was just beginning to change from the old loincloth and woman’s skirt to modern apparel, and further changes were on the way. Yet, it might not be stretching the matter too much to suggest that this feast was a celebration of a cultural breakthrough: not just the changes made through the reform program initiated by the German administration and strongly supported by the chiefs, but the recognition that assimilation of these new cultural features need not spell the death of the culture.

Just a year later, in early 1909, two chartered ships appeared off Angaur, the southernmost of the islands in the Palau group. They were there to begin the phosphate mining operations that were being organized since the discovery of phosphate on the island three years earlier. Thus began an industry that would reverse the bleak economic picture in the western Carolines, even as its copra output continued to plummet.

Phosphate, which had proved such a lucrative export in Nauru, promised to repay German investments in Angaur many times over. The German government, acting on behalf of the mining company formed by a consortium of German firms, purchased the entire island of Angaur and opened a government station there, relocated the small local population to one corner of the island, and brought in workers from Hong Kong to work the mines. When the Chinese called a general strike to protest their salary and living conditions, the company requested that the German government begin recruiting Carolinians to replace them. The Yapese chiefs, always responsive to such requests from the German government, sent off 100 men to labor in the mines on one-year contracts. A second recruiting voyage rounded up another 200 men, some from Yap and others from Pa-



Workers in the Angaur phosphate mines

lau. Work conditions were difficult; the islanders worked long days, were fed the simplest of fare, and were housed in long wooden barracks. In the evenings, the men often entertained themselves singing and dancing, thus passing on from one island to another the stick dances and marching dances that later became so widespread in Micronesia.⁶²

When the phosphate company reneged on the promises it had made in the contract and short-changed workers, some of the more high-minded government officials—notably Georg Fritz, who had replaced Senfft as district officer in Yap when the latter died—refused to provide any further recruiting assistance. A shortage of laborers resulted; for a time there were not enough workers to fill the ships putting into Angaur to haul off the phosphate. Soon, the German Colonial Office in Berlin began replacing men like Fritz with others more sympathetic to the company’s concerns. Whatever doubts these replacements may have had about the company’s procedures, the new officials saw to it that the chiefs filled their recruiting quotas, even as the range of recruiting voyages expanded to include Chuuk and Pohnpei and the contract was lengthened from one year to three.

By the end of German rule, the Angaur mines were producing 90,000 tons of phosphate a year and were generating a good enough profit margin to pay its investors dividends of 13% a year. The 500 Micronesians employed there earned a total income of 200,000 German marks a year—an average of 400 marks per worker—at least some of which was being sent back home to provide for families.⁶³ Angaur had evolved into a factory town by this time. With its narrow-gauge railroad tracks, its European-style buildings,



Palauan schoolboys studying by lamplight

its communications links with the outside world by telegraph, its regular shipping schedules, its numerous little shops and stores, and its polyethnic community, Angaur was the harbinger of town life that Micronesians in much larger numbers would taste in the years to come.

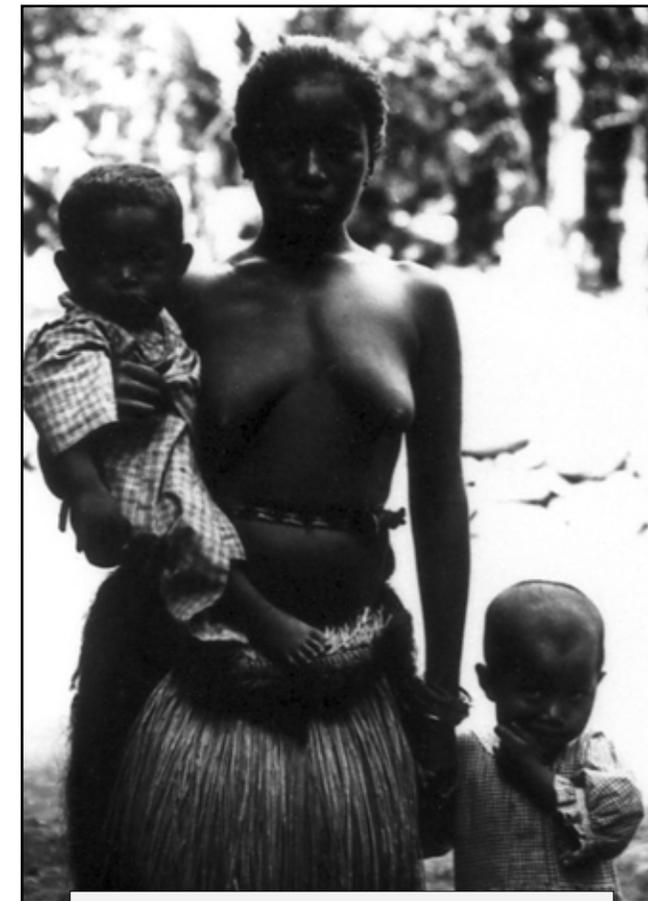
Meanwhile, the schools run by the German Capuchins were filled with students eager to absorb what they could of formal education and the German language. The combined enrollment of the Catholic schools in Koror and Melekeok was over 200 students, many of them the children of chiefs and high-titled men. After their arrival in 1909 the Franciscan sisters also offered schooling to girls.⁶⁴ Palauans were quick to seize on the importance of an education in the new world that was just beginning to open to them.



Palauan women clad in western dress, 1930

Students sang with gusto on the Kaiser's birthday the songs they learned at school, and many soon became proficient enough in German to write letters in that language to their pen pals abroad. Education, they may have suspected, was to be the gateway to success in the future.

Louch, the champion of modernization, finally gained the title of Ibedul, high chief of Koror, in 1911 when his older brother finally died. His chiefly powers offered him the ideal position to utilize his enormous personal influence that stemmed from his energy, his intelligence, and his ability to deal effectively with foreigners. Upon receiving the title, Louch continued to use his influence to further the modernization of Palau. As Ibedul, he decreed that men should cut their hair, customarily worn long and bound in a topknot, and discard the loincloth for foreign dress. He also abolished the more extreme forms of respect behavior, especially profound bows and crawling, and allowed commoners access to the areas that had once been



Palauan woman in traditional dress with two children in western clothes

off-limits to them. Louch remained the champion of modernization in Palau, not because it was imposed by the German government, but because he sensed that it was the path to the future. Reactionary elements would surface in Palau in the coming years, especially the early Modekngai movement under Temedad, but such reactionary movements would soon be marginalized. Louch's vision would become the dominant one in the years to come.⁶⁵

CHUUK: THE GIFT OF STRONG CENTRAL AUTHORITY

Chuuk, situated in the geographical center of the Germany's Micronesian protectorate, was assigned to the Eastern Carolines under the administrative authority of the Pohnpei office. The island group, which lay 400 miles west of Pohnpei, had been neglected by the Spanish administration but not by missionaries or traders. By the end of the nineteenth century, Chuuk had a flourishing Protestant church and a dozen or so resident traders of European descent along with an equal number of recent arrivals from Japan.



Chuukese man and woman



Government administration office in Chuuk

Inter-island warfare was fought intermittently in Chuuk even after it ceased altogether in other parts of Micronesia. Chuuk, like Palau and Yap, had no paramount chiefs. It did not even have the tight system of village chiefs that was to be found in these other two groups. Villages in Chuuk were small, numerous and all but autonomous. The typical village had a population of perhaps a hundred people, but there were dozens of these villages, each headed by a man with relatively little direct authority over his people and none whatsoever over those beyond his village. There were no formal links between villages as there were in Yap with its system of nets. Villages had to create their own links through temporary alliances, and this was done especially in time of warfare.⁶⁶

The Spanish administration had neglected Chuuk, if only because it was obliged to concentrate on Pohnpei where it had more problems than it could handle, including three major outbreaks of violence. Germany's impact would be occasional—limited to the two or three visits that the naval cruisers would make there each year—but significant nonetheless. It was only in 1909, a few years before the end of German rule, that the German authorities assigned a resident administrator to Chuuk.

In 1901, Albert Hahl, the district officer on Pohnpei, paid an unannounced visit to Chuuk on the German cruiser *Kormoran*. From the outset Hahl established as a keystone in his administrative policy his intention to put a halt to the illegal trade in guns and alcohol that had been carried on



Chuukese leaders

for years in the islands, most recently by Japanese traders. When, at their surprise visit, the Germans found firearms and liquor among the trade goods, Hahl immediately placed the traders under arrest. All the Japanese traders except one—the exception was Koben Mori, who would spend the remaining forty years of his life in Chuuk—were expelled, while the European traders were warned that they would receive the same treatment unless they observed the law. The authorities also used this visit as an occasion for making a statement to the Chuukese people on the penalties they could expect if they continued to make war with one another. Hahl and the police force picked up three warrior-chiefs implicated in local murders—Soon from Tonoas, Ngenimun from Uman, and Menimen from Weno—and brought them in chains to Pohnpei where they were imprisoned for the next couple of years. The German authorities had made their point: warfare would not be tolerated during this colonial administration. Those who persisted in the practice could expect to be summarily arrested and punished, while those who provided the alcohol to inflame passions and the firearms to execute warlike designs could expect no better treatment.⁶⁷

German authorities had made a strong show of force in Chuuk, and their efforts to restrict the sales of arms there were successful during those early years. Yet, they had to find a way to recall all those weapons already in the hands of local people. They did so in December 1904 when Victor Berg, Hahl's successor as district officer on Pohnpei, paid a visit to Chuuk with a company of his Malayan policemen. When Berg announced that he was there to collect any weapons and ammunition that remained in



Chuukese men aboard a German naval ship

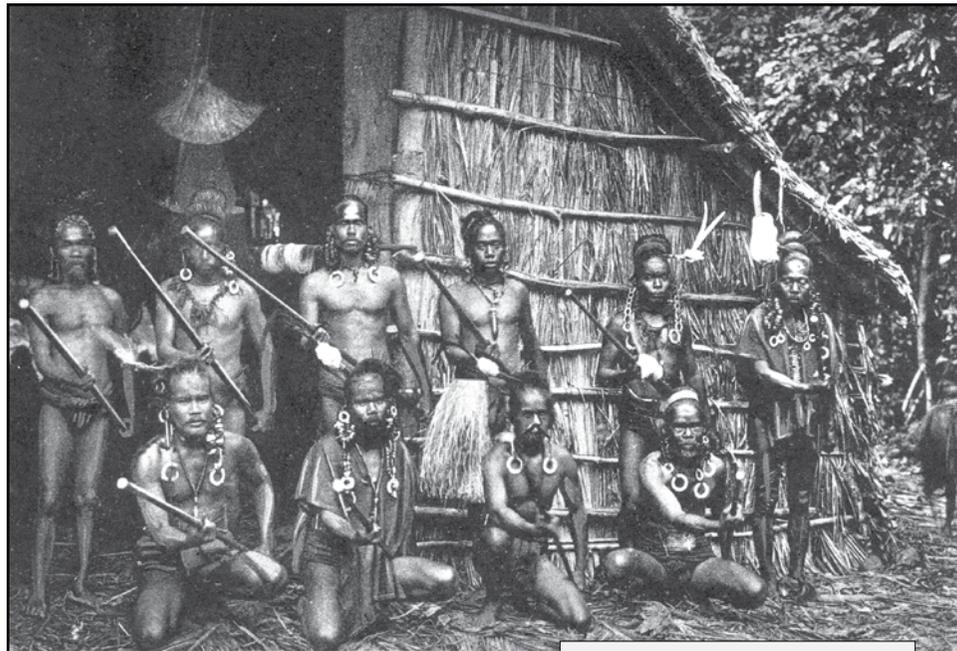
the hands of people, they surrendered their arms without resistance. In all, Berg confiscated over 400 guns and 2,500 rounds of ammunition during the visit.⁶⁸ Far from being angry at the demand that they turn over their weapons, the Chuukese people seemed almost relieved to be forced to do so. With this arms control measure enacted by the Germans, Chuukese had a ready excuse to end once and for all the warfare that had plagued their islands for as long as they could remember. Chuuk was a society with very little political stratification; hence, there was no authority to which they could turn to resolve the disputes that would lead to fighting between villages. The German government at last offered them such a higher authority. Without suffering serious loss of face, then, Chuukese could simply ascribe to the foreign government measures that they themselves would have been happy to adopt if only they had the power to do so.



Chuukese outside of a trade station

When the German administration appointed six “flag chiefs” from the host of village chiefs, one from each major island in Chuuk, to act as a conduit between the government and the people, Chuukese seemed genuinely delighted. The ready submission of the Chuuk people reported by the Germans might simply have been for show, but in all likelihood the enthusiasm was real. The appointment did offer them an upper layer of political stratification, something they sorely needed.⁶⁹ It provided a channel between the Germans and the local people—perhaps not as an effective one as in Yap and Palau—but in Chuuk any channel was an improvement. Moreover, the “promotion” of village chiefs to one of wider regional recognition followed the Chuukese pattern of acquired status through special knowledge (*itang*) or other Big Man avenues.

After Germany’s initial show of muscle, the people of Chuuk readily fell into line. Heads of families began clearing their land and planting coconut and fruit trees, especially after the government let it be known that it might decide to resettle others on unproductive land. Village chiefs were quick to provide a count of their village population whenever authorities demanded it for the official census. There was even some interest in public works improvements after one of the chiefs from Uman built a road, bordered by stone-lined drainage ditches, the length of his island. Construc-



Dancers on Nama during the nativistic revival



German district officer with Chuukese people

tion of docks and piers was neglected, however, since Chuukese had never been prepared to make a heavy labor investment in their community. After all, their interest was as confined as their sense of community—and this was restricted to not much beyond the local village.⁷⁰

Such resistance as was offered came not from Chuuk itself, but from the surrounding atolls. A revivalist movement broke out on Nama in the Mortlock Islands in 1903 and soon spread throughout the rest of the group, flaring up from time to time until 1908. The movement centered on a revival of the old dances, but also included a return to traditional dress, the use of turmeric as a bodily adornment, and restoration of the old practice of contacting the spirits in a trance state. During the revivalistic fervor, one seer from Kuttu declared that a dead warrior hero from his island was superior to the German governor, but the man was soon arrested and sent to prison on Pohnpei along with other ringleaders in the movement. The revival, however, seems to have been more a reaction to changes brought by the Protestant missionaries, who had by then converted most of the Mortlocks, than a political statement directed to the government. Islanders took their dancing seriously, to be sure, and periodically initiated an orgy of dancing and feasting that could last for months at a time. The German government, while encouraging dancing and traditional activities in general, limited

these for reasons that were purely practical: to prevent exhaustion of food supplies and the consequent threat of semi-starvation. The church, on the other hand, was in principle an avowed foe of dancing, which it regarded as immoral and heathenish.⁷¹



Chuukese girls drawing water

The spate of severe typhoons that struck the region during these years did serious damage to some of the atolls in the Chuuk area. After the terrible typhoon of 1905 devastated some of the islands in the Halls and Namonuitos, an even more deadly typhoon struck the Mortlocks in 1907, killing nearly 200 people and stripping bare some of the nearby islands. The Germans were forced to evacuate nearly 1,500 people and relocate them on other islands in the area, including Saipan and Pohnpei. The German government would have been happy to take advantage of this opportunity to



German Station Master Kersting and his wife alongside a Franciscan sister and Capuchin priest

implement a much larger scheme to move atoll dwellers to a more central location that was more easily served by the government, but such a plan was not easily carried out. As it was, nearly all of the hundreds of typhoon victims settled in Saipan left within a few years. Most of those who had been relocated on Pohnpei, on the other hand, remained there and would play a large role on the island in future years.⁷²

Throughout the years German officials had governed Chuuk from a distance, visiting the island group once or twice a year and relying on the ready cooperation that the people there had shown from the very beginning. Then, in 1909, the government set up an administrative office on Tonoas with the intention of stationing a resident officer there. A German physician was assigned to Chuuk to provide medical assistance to the local people and to train health aides, but the hospital that he wanted to build, like the proposed vocational school, were never acted upon. Germany was forced to surrender its colonial possessions before these proposals could be approved.⁷³

The development projects initiated by the government in the hope of making the colony more economically viable fared no better in Chuuk than they had in Yap or Palau. Chuukese dutifully paid their head tax without argument, but they would not push themselves to produce more than they needed to satisfy their simple requirements. The obstacle to development was not the loss of coconut trees to disease and predators, as was the case in the islands to the west, but simply a lack of motivation to do more than the minimum. In the end, the German contribution to Chuuk, like the other islands that made up its colony, was much more cultural than economic.

Germany gave Chuuk the one thing it desperately needed: a central authority—even if it was vested in a foreign government—that would end warfare once and for all and open up a grander sense of purpose to the islanders.

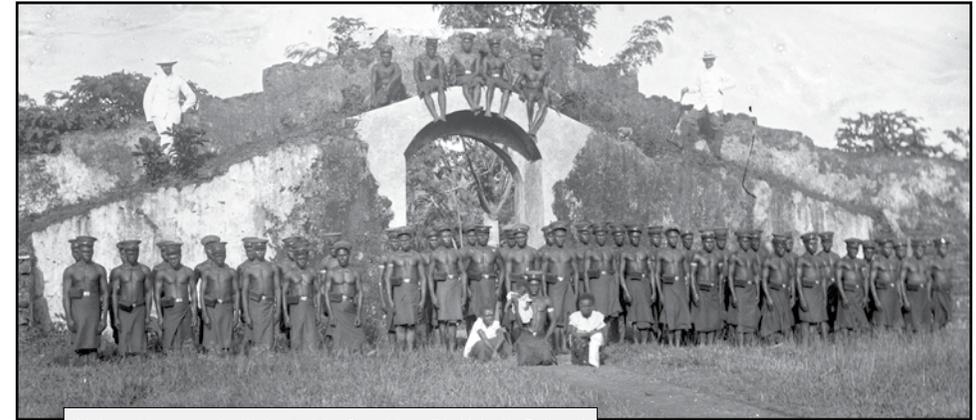


Chuukese canoe and a boat of western design

POHNPEI: SHOW OF STRENGTH

Pohnpei, the German administrative center of the Eastern Caroline Islands, was altogether different from the islands to the west. In contrast to Chuuk and its neighboring atolls with their simple political systems, Pohnpei had the complex political stratification of a Polynesian island. Indeed, its political organization was almost certainly the reflection of Polynesian influence on the area at some unknown point in the distant past. The island of Pohnpei was divided into five kingdoms, each headed by its own high chief and underchief and embellished with an elaborate title system for nobles. There were numerous formal feasts at which people offered what might be considered tribute, always in the form of yams, pigs and kava. For several centuries at one point in its history, the entire island had been united under a single leader bearing the title of Saudeleur; but most Pohnpeians looked back on this as a dark time of repression. Pohnpeians thereafter seem to have borne a strong mistrust of any central authority, local or foreign, according to many observers.⁷⁴

Shortly after the German flag was raised over Pohnpei, Governor Rudolf von Bennigsen observed the dilapidated state of the old Spanish fortifications in the colony and remarked that he hoped they would collapse completely so that the people of the island might see that Germans had no need of fortifications against them.⁷⁵ Ironically, however, Germans officials would eventually be forced to retreat within this enclosure just as had the Spaniards before them. Pohnpeians who witnessed the turnover ceremony were openly scornful of the small German party that had come to govern the island: four German officials and another forty Malayan troops. What could such a tiny force do in the face of opposition from the people? Ger-



Malayan troops posing in front of the Spanish wall in Kolonia, Pohnpei

many, on the other hand, was counting on close collaboration with the local people rather than the force of arms to make its rule effective.⁷⁶

Albert Hahl, the first district officer on Pohnpei, did his best to create a climate of goodwill and cooperation. He spent time walking the island and talking to people in the villages. Hahl also announced an amnesty for all those islanders who had taken any part in the resistance against the Spanish, and made it known that in the future he would leave any new charges brought against islanders to the judgment of their chiefs. On top of all this, his government offered good-sized cash subsidies to the most influential island leaders, nominally to support their educational efforts but in reality an inducement to keep the peace.

Despite everything, Hahl and his administration were unable to secure the full support of the island people. His attempts to introduce new cash crops—coffee, cotton, cocoa, rubber and hemp—met with a general lack of interest and came to nothing in the end. Short of out-and-out conscription—and he was properly reluctant to make such a strong move so early in his administration—he could not induce Pohnpeians to do repair work on the roads or public buildings in the center. Nor could he find Pohnpeians willing to replace the Malayans on his police force; the Germans would be forced to turn to Mortlockese, hundreds of whom were being resettled on Pohnpei, to fill these positions in years to come. The one thing the German administration had managed to do rather effectively was to suppress the trade in alcohol and weapons carried on by whaleships and other foreign vessels.⁷⁷



Pohnpeian villagers with rifles

Yet, to recall those weapons already in the hands of Pohnpeians was another matter altogether. When Hahl was replaced as district officer by Victor Berg in 1901, the first task Berg faced was to disarm Pohnpeians as the initial step in the pacification program that the German administration had set for the island. Unlike the people of Chuuk, however, Pohnpeians were very reluctant to surrender their rifles. Only after a severe typhoon did widespread damage to food crops on the island in 1905 and German authorities began offering a cash payment or the equivalent in imported food for each gun did the disarmament program begin to move forward on Pohnpei. Between 1905 and 1907, Pohnpeians turned over to authorities a total of 1,400 rifles and about 10,000 cartridges.⁷⁸

The public projects that the Germans had envisioned limped along during these early years, with most of the labor provided by the Malayan policemen. A few miles of road were built in the northern part of the island, most of it in the close vicinity of the colony. The longest stretch was a road that extended nearly to Sokehs, but the government authorities were hesitant about attempting to extend the road to the other kingdoms in the south because of the strong reaction that similar attempts provoked under the Spanish just a few years earlier. Pohnpeians looked upon such road-building as a means to extend German rule throughout the entire island. In contrast to the Yapese, who happily provided the labor for such

road-building on their island, Pohnpeians saw no comparable benefit for themselves in such an effort. Only after the typhoon of 1905 had ravaged the island did local people finally begin to serve as laborers for the public projects to earn money to buy food, but even then their efforts went into repairing public buildings rather than doing road construction.⁷⁹

Then, in 1907, German colonial policy took a sharp turn. The German government and people were taking a long and critical look at their colonies, which they had snatched up quickly at the urging of their nationalistic impulses, and they were not happy with what they saw. Germany was becoming impatient with the slow pace of development in the colonies. In theory, the colonies were to be developed to the point where they could pay for themselves and so contribute to their mother country's industrial expansion.⁸⁰ Colonial authorities on Pohnpei, first Hahl and then Berg, had been trying to cultivate the same kind of warm working relationship with island chiefs on Pohnpei that they enjoyed in Yap and Palau. The hope of the administration was that once that trust was established, the chiefs would recruit local labor for the government's work projects and support the other changes that would have to be implemented if local production were to increase. But the German administration was never able to establish the same close collaboration that they had with chiefs in other island groups. In late 1907, just months after the sudden death of District Officer Berg, Hahl paid a visit to Pohnpei to serve notice that the administration would be taking bold steps to develop the island's economy. If the chiefs intended to resist German reforms, then the government would break the chiefs' hold on the people and work directly with the commoners.⁸¹



Capuchins sitting outside the ruins of their house after the 1905 typhoon

The first step in limiting chiefly power was in doing away with the highest chiefs' residual land rights—in what the Germans termed a feudal system—so that individuals might enjoy full ownership of their land. The administration could then appeal directly to the people to implement the reforms they thought necessary to build up the economy. Hahl announced the plans of this proposed change to the high chiefs of Pohnpei before sailing off to New Guinea and leaving Georg Fritz, the newly appointed district officer with several years of successful administrative experience in the Marianas, to deal with the discontent that his announcement had stirred up. The chiefs had already begun spreading the rumor that the Germans intended to introduce new taxes and forced labor. This, in fact, is precisely what the administration felt it must do if it were ever to fuel a productive island economy. Somehow it would have to find a way to put an end to the tribute system on Pohnpei and with it the elaborate feasting that consumed so much of the island's produce and labor, while redirecting some of the labor toward government-sponsored projects that would aid genuine development. To make the changes more acceptable to the chiefs, Fritz proposed to have all able-bodied men work fifteen days a year on public projects, with half their salary going to the chiefs to compensate them for the tribute they would be losing. His hope was that this might force the chiefs to collaborate closely with the government—something that had been achieved in Yap and Palau, but was still far from being accomplished on Pohnpei.⁸²

German goals in furthering the economic development of the islands might have been far-sighted, but they did not lie within the field of vi-



Pohnpeians at a sakau ceremony



Henry Nanpei and family

sion of most Pohnpeians and their leaders. Moreover, the German government offered none of the inducements to Pohnpei chiefs that had motivated reforms in Yap and Palau. Outright payment of money to the chiefs was usually far less effective than

the kind of government assistance that would permit chiefs to strengthen their power or, as in Palau, eliminate rivals. Needless to say, collaboration between island authorities and the government was founded on the readiness of each party to help the other achieve important goals. On Pohnpei, however, the German government was asking the chiefs to surrender their residual land rights, to curtail the feasts that served to affirm their authority among the people, and to surrender their tribute—all without receiving any other compensation than the distant hope of a productive economy. Their reluctance to cooperate under these terms is understandable.

While the chiefs were stewing about the German threat to curtail their traditional powers, an old land dispute between a high-ranking chief and Henry Nanpei, an influential figure in the Protestant Church and a major landowner on Pohnpei, was escalating into a crisis in the southern part of the island. To enable him to keep a close watch on the situation there, Georg Fritz had his men begin work on a road that would extend from the colony to the trouble spot in the south. When the laborers were threatened with armed resistance if they continued their work, Nanpei blamed the high chiefs of Net and Sokehs, two of the kingdoms in the north. Summoned to an island-wide council, the two chiefs merely sat in stony silence as Fritz praised Nanpei for his forward-looking efforts to promote unity on the island. The irony was not lost on any of the traditional leaders present, who well understood that Nanpei was skillfully manipulating the German administration at the expense of those chiefs who stood in his way. In time even Fritz himself came to realize what was going on, even though he took



Melanesian troops aboard the German ship *Nürnberg*

no steps to assure the high chiefs of his support for them. Nanpei might have been outed as the master manipulator, but he still got what he wanted from the Germans.⁸³

Pitting itself against the high chiefs as the German government was doing to initiate its reforms was becoming prohibitively expensive. Naval cruisers had to make such frequent visits to Pohnpei to forestall open conflict that the proposal was made to simply deploy a ship in the area on a regular basis. In 1908, as Fritz resumed work on road construction and his other public works projects, he requested two hundred Melanesian troops on permanent assignment since police patrols were needed to protect the laborers. All of this was an embarrassment for the district office on Pohnpei. The government that once prided itself on a small administrative staff was now requesting that its budget be doubled or tripled—and this at the very time that Berlin was determined to cut subsidies to its colonies in order to stimulate self-reliance. It probably came as no surprise to Fritz when the new budget requests for Pohnpei were turned down. Even so, Fritz was able to persuade the high chiefs to acquiesce in his plan to limit the number of feasts, cut out tributes, and implement the proposed labor tax. They did so reluctantly, but in the end agreed to the plan because they badly needed the cash income that would revert to them as their share of the fifteen-day labor tax. Pressed as they were to pay their debts to their creditors—one

of whom was Nanpei, the adroit businessman—the chiefs were forced to accept a measure that they understood to be undoing their own traditional privileges.⁸⁴

In late 1909, Carl Boeder, fresh from Africa, replaced Fritz as district officer on Pohnpei. Authoritarian and aloof, Boeder was not the sort of man to delay action long enough to get the feel of the people he governed. If the compulsory labor program had been enacted by the German government, he would see that it was enforced as quickly and thoroughly as possible. The chiefs of the other kingdoms on the island had reluctantly implemented the program the year before, but Sokehs had dragged its feet and postponed fulfilling its requirements. Boeder pressed the chiefs of Sokehs to begin the mandatory labor immediately, and for good measure announced that the Sokehs people would be required to work an extra fifteen days to make up for the year before. Even worse, the laborers were set to work building a road around their own part of the island, a road that would give the Germans easy access to Sokehs. Resentment deepened despite the fact that the government had enlisted Soumadau, a renowned warrior and the most influential chief in Sokehs, as one of the two supervisors on the project. As rumors of an uprising began circulating, Boeder arranged for the two German warships lying off Pohnpei at the time to conduct military maneuvers to impress the islanders. Feelings continued to harden, however, as the Sokehs people began their second stint of compulsory labor that year. When the high chief of Sokehs visited Boeder to request a salary increase for his workers, Boeder threw him bodily out of his office. Then, one day in mid-October 1910, Boeder had one of the Sokehs workers flogged so badly that he could barely walk. With that, any outward compliance that the Sokehs people once showed ended.⁸⁵

The following morning the Sokehs laborers turned out at the work site fully armed. Realizing what was afoot, the two Germans supervising the project fled to the Catholic rectory but were cut down by the Sokehs men as they made a run for the government launch. Boeder and his secretary were killed when they attempted to respond to the emergency.⁸⁶ Meanwhile, the other Europeans on the island took refuge in the colony while Max Girschner, the physician who had assumed command of the forces, sent out a call to the other four kingdoms to come to the aid of the colony. This they readily did, however deep their own resentment at the new German



Pohnpeian men protecting the German colony during the uprising

policies, not just for fear of German retaliation, but to seize an opportunity to take down an old foe.

For forty days the Germans remained in the shelter of the colony, protected by the 50 Melanesian soldiers and their Pohnpeian allies, while they awaited relief from abroad. The Sokehs warriors, seemingly satisfied with the retribution they had exacted on Boeder and the handful of other government officials killed, never made the all-out attack that the Germans feared. Instead, they confined themselves to sniping at night. Finally, in early December, the *Germania* steamed into port with 170 additional Melanesian troops, emergency supplies, and instructions to await the naval cruisers that were being dispatched. A month later, in early January 1911, the promised German forces arrived: five warships bringing in 300 marines, artillery pieces, and shells enough to conduct a campaign of several months. Within a few days, the German troops had begun their assault on the peak of Sokehs Island, where the insurgents had retreated and dug in to resist the attack they knew was coming. During their ascent, the German troops were under constant fire, but when they finally took the summit they found that the Sokehs men had already slipped away.

For the next month the German forces pursued the remnants of the Sokehs warriors around the island, but the insurgents no longer had their heart in the fight. Each day, a few more of them surrendered to the Germans until, in mid-February, Soumadau and the last of the Sokehs fugitives turned themselves in. Just a few days later, the Germans tried and convicted 17 of the ringleaders of the uprising, the men judged responsible



German forces marching against Sokehs

for the deaths of the Germans. These men were led to an old cemetery outside the colony, lined up in front of a mass grave and executed by firing squad. The remainder of the Sokehs inhabitants, some 460 people, were sentenced to exile in Palau and their land confiscated and given to those who helped the government during the uprising.

The show of strength by Germany put an end to any open opposition on the island against the foreign administration, but a short-lived nationalist movement sprang up, as it had in Chuuk and Palau, giving birth to a handful of secret societies proclaiming the return of full self-rule. Within a few months, however, the government disbanded the societies and exiled several of their former members to New Guinea.⁸⁷

With the pacification of the island, the new district officer, Hermann Kersting, had very little difficulty implementing the policies that had been so controversial just a few years earlier. Soon the government began issuing land deeds, with full title going to the village landowner and the chief



German troops on the peak of Sokehs



Sokehs leaders awaiting execution

losing any residual rights he might have once had over the land. The inheritance pattern was also changed to reflect European law: all land would henceforth go to the eldest male in the family rather than to the matrilineal descendants, as was the ancient Micronesian practice. (In actual fact, Pohnpei had been moving toward this practice for years anyway.) Kersting was also able to carry out the reform of the tribute system by strictly limiting the numbers of feasts that could be given to honor the high chief. Finally, the Germans were at last able to carry out the public works program that they had long hoped to undertake; the program included the completion of the road around Sokehs and the construction of that long-envisioned but fiercely contested new road to the southern part of the island.⁸⁸



Sokehs exiles building new homes for themselves in Palau

Successful colonial rule in other parts of Micronesia depended, as we have seen, on the readiness of the foreign government and local leadership to help advance one another's interests, often in ways that were not readily recognized by the other partner. Moreover, in Yap and Palau autonomous villages were already linked through a well-defined socio-political network. A protocol was already in place for interaction among these villages. On Pohnpei, however, there was no real network tying the kingdoms together, much less anything resembling a council of chiefs. Even a person of the caliber of Arno Senfft would have had difficulty finding there a partner with whom he could collaborate and a link that would extend beyond this partner to the other chiefdoms of the island. Tellingly, the incident that appears to have united nearly all the kingdoms with the German authorities was their joint resistance to the Sokehs warriors after the uprising had broken out.

Perhaps the difficult events during the latter part of German rule drew attention to the island's lack of any effective central authority or even an island-wide council. In any case, the kingdoms on Pohnpei afterwards yielded the administration of the island-wide government to whatever outside nation came in to fill that void. This may not have been done willingly at first, thanks to Pohnpeian mistrust of any attempt to unify the island and impose central government. But eventually Pohnpei seems to have resigned itself to the need for a centralized government of some sort, even if it was left to outsiders to fill this need.



The German colony seen from beyond the harbor

MARSHALLS: FROM COMPANY STORE TO COLONY

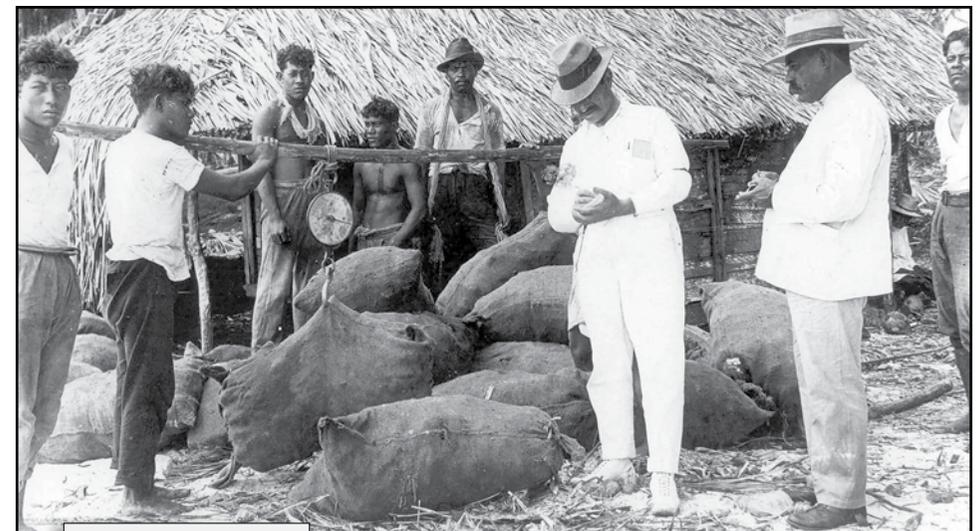
The Marshall Islands, made up of two chains of coral atolls with a population of about 11,000, was an early entry into the ranks of German colonies in Micronesia. In 1885, just a few years after signing a formal treaty with the chiefs of the western side of the island chain, Germany annexed the entire island group at the urging of its trading companies. Soon the new protectorate was handed over to the Jaluit Company to be administered by the commercial interests that supposedly reaped the benefits from this distant colony. The islands were the richest source of copra in Micronesia and a major trade entrepôt in the northern Pacific.⁸⁹ The Marshalls also had a strong traditional political system headed by paramount chiefs, or *iroij*. The German administrative staff was composed of only two people: the commissioner (or *Landeshauptmann*, as he came to be known) and his secretary.

To recoup its administrative expenses, the Jaluit Company levied taxes on the Marshallese people. The taxes, however, were not laid upon the people directly. Instead, the taxation was integrated into the tribute customarily offered to the chiefs for anything produced on land over which the chiefs had title. Ordinary Marshallese were used to offering their chiefs “first fruits” on all crops, a fraction of the yield in recognition of the authority of chiefs over their land—and, it might be added, over their lives. German authorities merely exacted their own percentage of the tax from what was offered to the chief (the equivalent of twenty marks a year for each adult) while allowing the chiefs to raise their customary tax on copra to one-third of the total value.⁹⁰ The chiefs were delighted at this integration of taxation and tribute: the Germans, who easily raised the revenue they

required, gave the chiefs reason to increase the rate of overall tribute (it had been about ten percent formerly), and lent a hand to the chiefs in enforcing this tribute system.⁹¹

All of this served as a splendid beginning for a period of rule in which German government would reinforce the authority of traditional chiefs, and vice versa. The Marshallese political system, with its few powerful chiefs possessing full title to the land and near absolute authority over the people, was a good match for the foreign control the Germans wished to impose. The copra trade had made the chiefs wealthy—four or five of them owned small ships and one was said to be making more money each year than the resident German commissioner. Foreign rule had only increased their benefits even while giving them legitimation as a tax.⁹² The chiefs suffered some loss of authority when the German government arrogated to itself the power to adjudicate disputes and punish offenders, responsibilities the chiefs had once exercised; but this was a small price to pay for the material gains the chiefs had reaped.

The direct impact of German rule over the Marshalls during these early years was minimal. As they did in other places, German authorities banned the import of guns into the islands. One of the yearly reports during this period noted that the tropical humidity had taken its toll of the guns that Marshallese already owned and that, in any case, the ban made it nearly impossible for people to buy ammunition.⁹³ Interisland warfare had been an ongoing problem in the Marshalls, most of it prompted by conflicting



Copra traders in the Marshalls

claims to chiefly titles and land. The last battles were fought during the early 1880s, with the final war ending just the year before German annexation.⁹⁴ The peace that ensured from the beginning of the protectorate was certainly not due to any strong German military presence. There were only six policemen assigned to the islands and an occasional naval cruiser visiting the area. The German government, as tiny as it was, served as the symbol of a central authority to which chiefs could appeal if they felt wronged and a vehicle for a resolution of the conflict, as later events would show.

Many of the government regulations issued during this time were

aimed at increasing copra production, the lifeblood of the economy and of enormous benefit to all parties involved—chiefs, commoners and the Jaluit Company itself. Directives ordered that three new coconut trees be planted for each one destroyed, that new coconut plantations be established, that the sale or lease of land to foreigners be restricted, and that limits be placed on the credit that trading firms might extend to Marshallese.⁹⁵ Now and then a German official would propose a radical change in the traditional land ownership system—namely, that full title to land be granted to the commoners who lived on the land. The



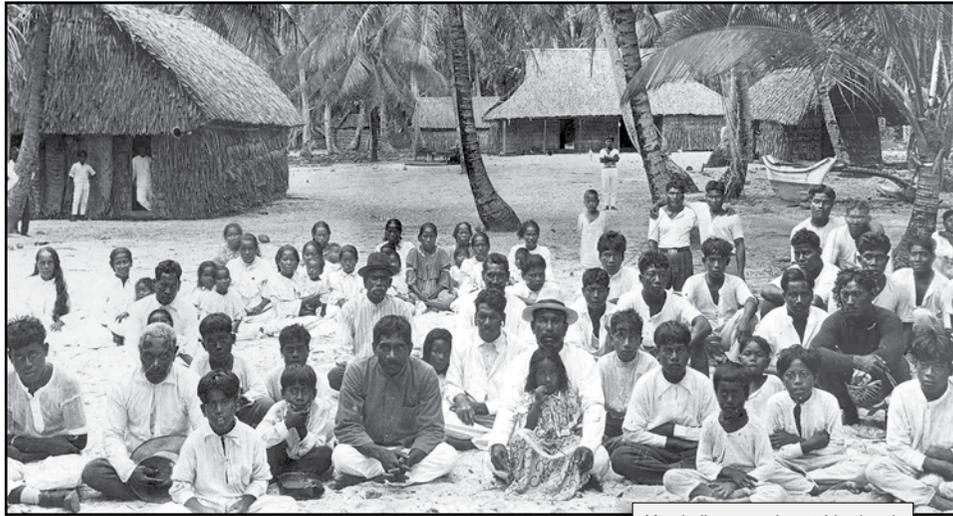
Jebrik, Chief of Majuro, and his wife



German government office on Jaluit

assumption was that such a change would have motivated the commoners to produce more and so would have strengthened the economy. But such a change would also have weakened the bond between the chiefs and the German government that had proved mutually beneficial throughout the early years of the protectorate. The change was never successfully implemented throughout the years of German rule or since. Chiefly title to land has remained even to the present day what it has ever been.

The wisdom of the government in maintaining close links with the chiefs was underscored when the Jaluit Company faced a crisis in 1900. When the commoners who were working the docks loading copra went on strike for higher wages, the German government put pressure on the chiefs to order their people to resume their work. This strategy, which worked in all but the two islands of Namorik and Mejit, again drew on the close collaboration between German government and the chiefly authority. The resistance on Namorik and Mejit had been organized by the churches there, and with the support of their pastors the people held out for four years, returning to work only in 1904 after the daily salary for dockworkers was doubled from two marks to four.⁹⁶ This was not the first time the pastors in the Marshalls stood up against the chiefs. The incident simply made



Marshallese people outside church

clear what was true throughout the era: the main threat to the power of the chiefs was not German authorities, but the Protestant Church.⁹⁷

When the administration of the Marshalls was taken out of the hands of the Jaluit Company and turned over to a district officer in 1906, the change had very little impact on the life of the colony. The role of the German government in the Marshalls had been very limited from the start: there were no schools, none of the docks and roads built as public works projects in other island groups, only a few basic services. Everything else was left up to the traditional chiefs, business firms and the church, institutions that had been the main forces in the lives of the Marshallese for years.⁹⁸ Had it not been for the eruption of an old conflict between chiefs, it would have been business as usual for the colony, even if it was no longer being managed as a company store.

A long-standing dispute over land between Kabua and Loeak, two chiefs in the western chain, had surfaced again in 1904 when Litokwa succeeded Loeak after the latter's death. Litokwa claimed that the deceased chief had willed all his lands to him, while Kabua had already assumed possession of these lands as the sole remaining high chief. In 1907, the German tribunal first rendered a judgment in favor of Kabua. Then, a few months later, the judgment was reversed when the Catholic missionary priest August Erdland wrote the court to argue that some of the witnesses on behalf of Kabua had been coerced into testifying. The Catholic missionaries, who had just taken up work in the Marshalls a few years earlier, sup-

ported Litokwa, while the Protestant pastors almost to a man championed Kabua. Hence, the conflict quickly turned into a religious battle as well as a chiefly dispute. Tempers rose, Kabua threatened war against his rival, and a German naval cruiser was brought in for artillery practice in what was intended as a crude display of power.

As the dispute dragged on, the German government enacted an unpopular import tax that increased the cost of trade goods—and this at a time when the price of copra, the only major export, was falling. This only heightened the level of tension in the island group. Marshallese who sided with Kabua believed that the German government intended to settle the matter by force, and so talk began of an open insurrection against the German administration. As a counter-measure, Germany began to plan for the assignment of thirty more Melanesian policemen to the island group. Finally, in January 1910, the court finally reached a compromise, awarding Kabua title to most of the land but allowing Litokwa to retain some of the land parcels he had worked. The sense of relief, almost elation, at the settlement of the conflict was shared by everyone, Marshallese on both sides as well as the foreign community. Because the decision was issued just a few days before the Kaiser's birthday, that holiday took on special significance in 1910. The Kaiser's birthday that year drew a large turnout of Marshallese, who celebrated the peace with island dances in unfeigned merriment, while the foreign community partied the evening away in relief that a crisis had been averted.⁹⁹



Kabua and two women

The economic miracle that the German government encouraged never occurred. Copra production continued to flourish in the Marshalls, in marked contrast to its decline in nearly every other part of Micronesia. Yet, attempts to increase production dramatically by establishing coconut plantations came to naught. When a subsidiary of the Jaluit Company in 1912 attempted to purchase four whole islands in the northern Marshalls for this purpose, the high chief de-

manded such an impossibly high price for the islands that the plan was abandoned.¹⁰⁰ Meanwhile, Marshallese showed time and time again that they were more than willing to make copra for their chiefs, but they had no intentions of selling their labor cheaply to others. Another



Litokwa and two women

labor strike, this time on Jaluit, had the support of the chiefs and forced up the daily wage of dockworkers still more. The high wage scale in the Marshalls made it impossible to recruit Marshallese workers for the phosphate mines on distant Angaur or on nearby Nauru. Albert Hahl, still the governor of Micronesia and now a proponent of rapid economic development, was increasingly frustrated at the government's failure to make the islands more productive. In his mind, the Marshallese people would have to be freed from the "despotic rule" of their chiefs. They would then retain complete title to their own land and so do away with residual rights of the chiefs, freeing themselves of the obligation to turn over one-third of their copra receipts to their chiefs. Supposedly, this would trigger a spirit of personal entrepreneurship that would revolutionize the economic future of the islands.¹⁰¹

The plans that the German administration drew up in 1914 to sever its long alliance with the Marshallese chiefs as a forceful initial step in implementing this new policy were never acted upon. The First World War, with the Japanese takeover of the islands, intervened before this could happen. Indeed, the traditional land system remains in force in the Marshalls, alone of all island groups in the region, even to the present day.

In the end, the German administration made a few ill-advised moves—perhaps in listening to the Catholic missionaries too closely, and certainly in imposing the import tax at such an unsettled time—but the general



Marshallese facing the sea

success of their long administration in the Marshalls was due in large part to the tight links they had maintained with the high chiefs. Maintaining peace if the island groups, even under threatening conditions that would have led to war in the past, was one achievement that resulted.

Another was the ease with which copra taxes were implemented. By the Kaiser's birthday in 1910, the Marshallese people were beginning to believe that German rule could bring real benefits to their islands—provided that the Germans worked closely enough with the chiefs so that people didn't have to choose one system in preference to the other.



German school in the Marshalls

NORTHERN MARIANAS: CREATION OF A NEW STATE

Germany's new colony in the Marianas included the entire island chain except for Guam, the southernmost island, which remained in the hands of the US following the end of the Spanish-American War. The northern islands had remained sparsely populated throughout the two centuries of Spanish rule. Saipan, the largest and most important of the Northern Marianas, was only repopulated in the latter half of the nineteenth century. By the time of the German takeover, Saipan had a population of about 1,200, Rota just under 500, and the other islands a mere sprinkling of inhabitants.¹⁰² The population of the island chain had been readjusted in 1899 as the US assumed control of Guam and Germany of the remainder of the archipelago. Several hundred Chamorros had fled from Guam to Saipan to escape newly imposed restrictions on their religious expression, and a hundred Carolinians were deported there a year later because they refused to give up their traditional island dress.¹⁰³

After 200 years of Spanish rule, the Marianas had taken on the appearance of a Spanish colony. The layout of the villages, with the parish church in a central location, was such as could be found throughout South America and the Philippines. Men and women dressed as elegantly in western clothes as their income would allow. Both sexes smoked cigars made from tobacco grown on the island, and everyone enjoyed cockfighting on holidays. Chamorros had plenty of time to work out an accommodation between Spanish culture and their own ways. Cultural change was far less an issue than consolidation of the population, made up of the more accultur-



Flag raising ceremony on Saipan

ated Chamorros and the simple Carolinians dressed only in loincloths and woven mats. The two very different peoples would have to work together to develop the island wildernesses in the north unsettled for generations.

Georg Fritz, a man fluent in Spanish and with administrative experience overseas, was appointed district officer in 1899. Fritz also had an undisguised admiration of island culture. He wasted no time in recruiting a local police force, after which he personally designed their uniform and spent hours each day training them in language and math in addition to the other skills they would need to perform their work. Fritz also set about the construction of a new administration building, an imposing two-story structure rising from a hill with a portico adorned with cement latte stones below it. The building was a symbol of what Fritz hoped his administration of the Marianas would become: German rule resting on a strong Chamorro cultural base.¹⁰⁴



Newly built German administration building



Policemen in uniform on Saipan with Fritz

Under Fritz's administration, the German government was culturally accommodating to a surprising degree. From the start, Chamorro was made the language of instruction in the schools. Indeed, Fritz was so fiercely opposed to English, whether standard or pidgin, that he would have blessed any language at all other than English. Likewise, all official business was conducted in Chamorro.¹⁰⁵ It was only in 1906, with the turn-around in Germany policy dictated by Berlin, that the local language was supplanted by German, which soon became compulsory in government affairs.

Initially, Fritz's plan was to entrust the education system to the Spanish priests who were still working in the islands even after Spanish rule ended. But when the clergy declined, the German administration opened the first public schools in its entire Micronesian colony. With education declared compulsory for all children aged seven to thirteen, three schools were opened: one for the main village of Garapan, another for the nearby village of Tanapag, and a third on the island of Rota. The largest of the schools, which began with four grades and later expanded to five, was eventually housed in what had once been the German administration building before it was ruined in the 1905 typhoon. In keeping with Fritz's insistence on the



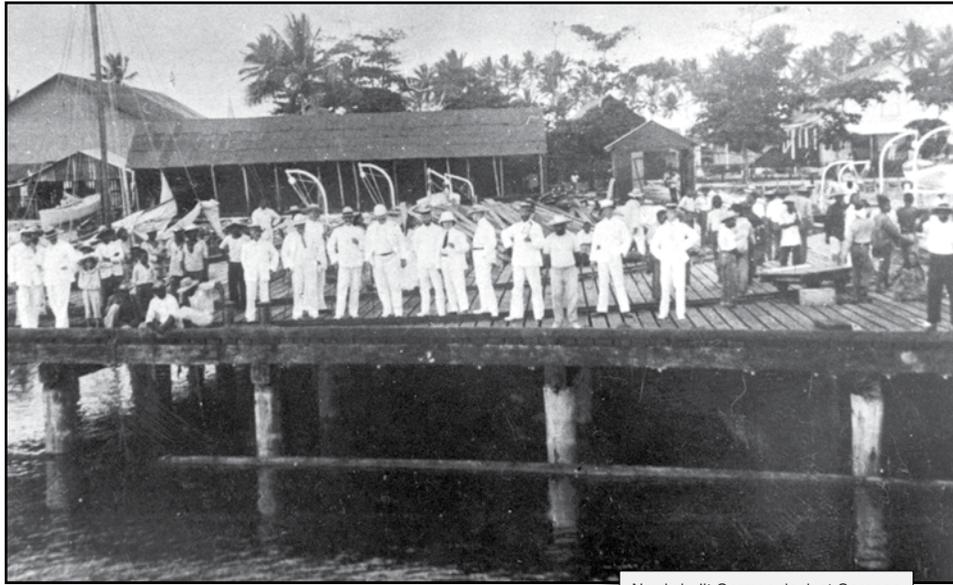
Good Friday procession on Saipan

primacy of the local culture, the school curriculum was centered on the Pacific itself rather than Europe.¹⁰⁶

Education, Fritz believed, should serve as preparation for a career rather than a tool for the liberation of the minds of the young. "Education of the natives should be oriented toward diligence, and the earning and saving of money," he wrote.¹⁰⁷ Central in Fritz's view of education was the grand vision of economic development that would guide German colonial policy for the remainder of its rule in the islands.



School children in front of their school, the former administration building



Newly built German dock at Garapan

Fritz's belief that the islanders could enjoy the benefits of economic development underlay most of the measures he supported during his time in the Marianas. He insisted on the registration of land privately owned by the people, even in the face of a rebuke he received from the foreign office. Foreigners, on the other hand, were thenceforth forbidden to own land in the Marianas. Fritz confiscated large unused tracts of land that had been awarded to influential families by the Spanish government. With this land he inaugurated a homesteading program that was intended to encourage its productive use. He set up a bank for local people that would offer loans to islanders who wished to open new businesses or expand existing ones. Overall, his policies on Saipan a century ago were not much different from those recommended by Asian Development Bank to countries in search of economic growth today.¹⁰⁸

There were several major improvements made on Saipan during this time. In Garapan, which was established as the main population center on the island, a new small boat harbor and dock were built. An aqueduct was also constructed to bring clean water to the village, while residents were urged to build their own cisterns to store the water for family use. The coastal road was upgraded and a new road was built linking Garapan with Laulau, then considered the best deepwater anchorage on Saipan.¹⁰⁹ Saipan and the rest of the northern islands had long been isolated from Guam, the

population center of the island group. Shipping, which had been non-existent for long periods and sporadic at best, was now regularly scheduled, with mail ships stopping off at Saipan every few months.¹¹⁰

When Fritz was reassigned in 1907, the Saipan district was downgraded to the status of a station under the supervision of the district officer for the Western Caroline Islands. Four administrators filled this position, each for a rather short period of time, before the islands were handed over to Japan at the outbreak of the war in 1914. The structural changes were well in place by this time, however, and the work of the men who succeeded Fritz consisted in little more than caretaking. The most significant changes in the Northern Marianas occurred during the first eight years of German rule under Georg Fritz—the man who, as one author puts it, “was almost solely responsible for shaping the future of the colony.”¹¹¹

The greatest single achievement of the German administration in the Marianas was to create the political and social apparatus in the northern islands, especially on Saipan, that would permit these islands to become a viable unit in the years to come. For the previous two centuries they had been anchored to Guam, but, with that bond broken in 1899, they were forced to establish an identity of their own. The population had doubled

to about 2,500 by 1912, thanks to high birth rates and an influx from Guam.¹¹² Yet, Chamorros and Carolinians, divided by culture, remained very separate groups throughout the era despite all the attempts at assimilation initiated by the Germans. It would take decades to bridge the cultural divide, but at least the groundwork was laid for a common state.



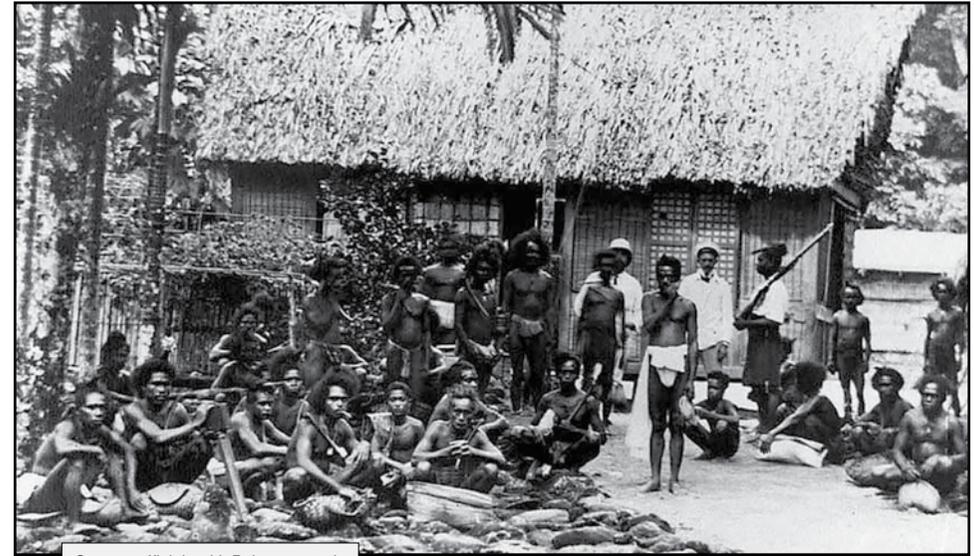
Georg Fritz

CONCLUSION

Germany arrived on the scene after a half century or longer of continual Western impact on the islands through whalers, missionaries, beachcombers and traders. All this had fascinated islanders with an array of Western goods—everything from iron tools, serge and cotton clothing, canned foods, tobacco and alcohol—not to mention the dozens of foreigners themselves who made their homes on the islands. Such novelties were bound to rattle the island societies to some extent, providing in turn challenges to existing social patterns and incentives for change. Even so, the social structures in the island societies were largely intact by the turn of the century. The only exceptions were Kosrae, which had lost ninety percent of its population to disease within forty-five years, and the Marianas, which had suffered a similar population drop at the beginning of its 200 years of rule under the Spanish.

The islands of Micronesia were not prepared to forsake the wonders to which they had just been introduced, but neither were they prepared to divest themselves of their own cherished way of life to pursue them. By the turn of the twentieth century the islanders needed a pathway toward modernization—that is, a way of maintaining ongoing contact with the modern world without losing the most precious elements in their culture to do so. They needed to come to terms with Western society—to adapt to it without slavishly imitating it, to take what it had to offer without losing their souls in the process. Hence, German rule came at a pivotal point in history for the Micronesian island groups under its control.

At its best, German colonial rule offered the Micronesian island groups an opportunity for ongoing engagement with an outside government and the policies that the government embraced. None of the island societies



German officials with Palauan people

had a paramount chief with authority over the entire island group, as we have seen. Nor was any of the island societies prepared to create a full central government of its own by the end of German rule. But the ongoing contact of these island societies with German administrators certainly strengthened whatever internal political networks they might have had so that these islands could better interface with the German authorities. This might be seen as the first step in developing the socio-political apparatus needed to engage with modern nations in the future.

The particular forms this development took varied from one island group to another. In Palau, the German interaction resulted in major changes in traditional institutions, notably the decline in the influence of the village clubhouses and the exile of the spirit mediums, that strengthened the power of the village chiefs. In Yap, too, the authority of village chiefs was strengthened, thanks to the creation of a local police force that worked closely with the chiefs to enforce their decisions and to the successful public works program that represented a singular achievement for them. At the same time, the improved roads and channels also contributed to the effectiveness of the island-wide village net that the chiefs and the German administration relied on so heavily throughout these years. On Pohnpei, by contrast, the most significant changes were made without the collaboration of the island chiefs, sometimes even against their wishes. Chiefs lost their residual land rights to the parcels on which their subjects lived, and

full title was turned over to the occupants of the land. The German government also imposed limits on the feasts and tribute traditionally offered to paramount chiefs. Overall, the impact of German rule on Pohnpei was to limit chiefly prerogatives rather than expand their influence—quite the opposite of what resulted in Yap and Palau. Yet, the net effect of German rule on the island may have been to strengthen awareness of the need for some centralized authority, even if this need would not be fulfilled until many years afterwards.

German rule in the Marshalls and Chuuk brought an end to inter-island warfare; and planting a single flag, even if foreign, was an effective check on the fragmentation in both island groups. Few structural changes were made by the Germans in either place, and there was little infrastructure development to show at the end of the era. The Marianas, which had already undergone two centuries of acculturation under the Spanish, were faced with very different problems. German rule assisted the northern islands to develop for the first time a government of their own separate from Guam, even as it built up a rudimentary infrastructure and a public school system.

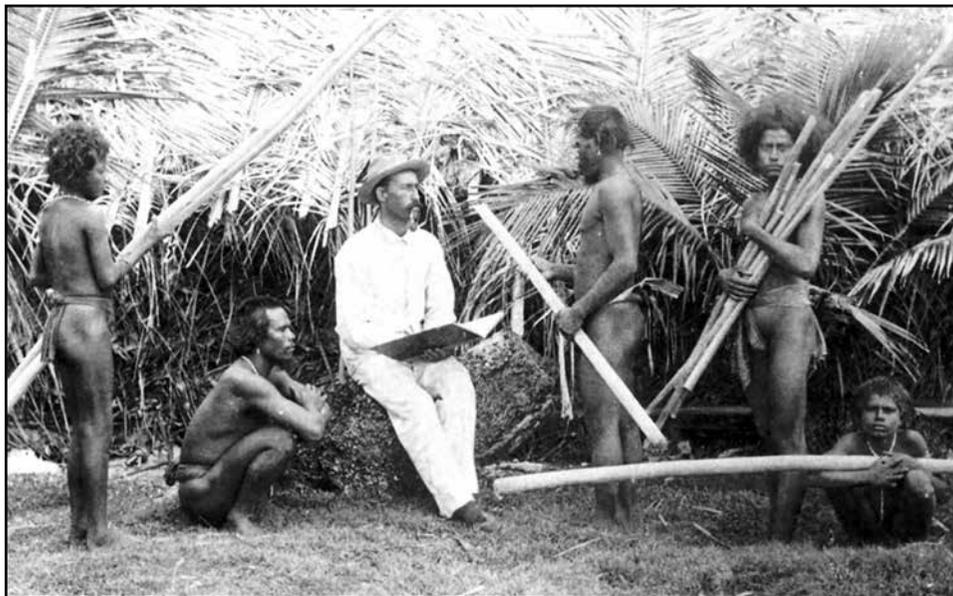
Close collaboration with island chiefs was a key component of German administrative strategy, at least for the first half of the German era. It was during the early years, when district officers served long enough terms



Palauan children captivated by a toy train

to get to know something of island culture and when these officers were given broad latitude to use their own initiative, that the major achievements occurred. Germany learned early on that if it was to rule the islands effectively, it would have to rule through the chiefs and local institutions. Reform by decree was doomed, as German officials discovered when they tried to implement the policy changes that issued from Berlin in 1906. The social and economic reforms that issued from these policy changes were a dead letter; only on Pohnpei, ironically enough, were they implemented to some degree, but not in the other island groups. Major innovations by Germans were almost never carried out successfully without the support of the local chiefs.

The surge in economic productivity that Germany projected never took place. The leaf lice and pests that did such damage to coconut trees in many islands could not be controlled. Major shifts in population from remote atolls to more central locations were never accepted by the people who made their home on these atolls, even after the widespread typhoon destruction during these years. Proposals for changes in land ownership, the removal of the land rights of the chiefs, and other measures to utilize the



Krämer taking fieldnotes during his research in Chuuk

land more productively were largely unsuccessful. Even if they had been accepted, they probably would have had very little impact on the economic output of the islands. Germany, after all, was not the only colonial power to be disappointed by the poor economic performance of the islands.

Overall, Germany's real impact on Micronesia was cultural rather than economic. The nation that had been more responsible than any other for founding the discipline of anthropology showed a keen interest in understanding how local island cultures worked. This curiosity is reflected in the formal study of Micronesian cultures undertaken by the Hamburg South Seas Expedition in 1908-1910. The enormous amount of published material generated by the Expedition provides us with a treasure trove of cultural data, much of it very detailed, that is simply not available anywhere else. The information collected may have had little direct impact on German colonial policy in the islands, but it stemmed from the same cultural interest that inspired men like Senfft and Fritz and Hahl to adapt their government to the local features of those island societies. This certainly made German colonial rule more successful than it would have been otherwise.

The net effect of German rule on island culture, besides recording it for posterity, was to expand it rather than displace it so that Micronesian island societies would be able to embrace the foreign elements that might serve them well in the future. The interaction of the foreign with the local is not a zero-sum game, after all, in which the advancement of one party leads to the loss of the other. German administrators, at their best, recognized that the interests of chiefs could be realized even as the aims of the German government were being advanced. They also learned that island societies were fully capable of resisting pressure to change when the change was perceived to be overly threatening. The island societies of Micronesia were not ready for the break with the traditional economy and its social underpinnings that the Germans envisaged. Yet, the years of German rule had not been fruitless; German initiatives had moved the island societies a few steps closer to accommodation with the modern world.

END NOTES

Introduction

- 1 The Marshall Islands, of course, remained under German rule for thirty years, twice as long as the Carolines and Northern Marianas.

German Beginnings

- 2 Firth 1977; Hezel 1983: 210-216
- 3 Hezel 1983: 299. For additional information on the growth of German commerce in the Pacific at this time, see Hager 1886: 116-127, and Suchan-Galow 1940: 87-99.
- 4 Hezel 1983: 212-216
- 5 On the rising colonialism in Germany, see Townsend 1966: 32-94, and Brown 1976: 43-46
- 6 Quoted in Carlson 1970: 47
- 7 For a detailed description of the 1878 treaty, see Werner 1889: 360-378. Also Hezel 1983: 298-299.
- 8 See Townsend 1966: 194-195, and Brown 1977: 140-150.
- 9 On the annexation of the Marshall Islands see Anon 1886, and Hezel 1983: 305
- 10 An eyewitness account of the events on Yap is offered in Müller 1917: 5-6.
- 11 Spanish reaction to German claims is described in Brown 1976: 75-102.
- 12 Quoted in Brown 1976: 139.
- 13 The whole controversy over the Carolines is treated in Hezel 1983: 306-313.
- 14 Spennemann 1999: 20.
- 15 Quoted in Carlson 1970:16.
- 16 Brown 1977: 140-150, and Townsend 1966: 194-197.
- 17 Hezel 1995: 94-95.

Islands on the Verge of Modernization

- 18 For a more detailed history of Western contact with the islands through the late nineteenth century, see Hezel 1983.
- 19 For a summary of population decline during the period, see Hezel 1983: 317-318.
- 20 A few of the laments for a fatally damaged culture are cited in Hezel 1983: 318. Such feelings were shared by at least one of the German social scientists (Paul Hambruch) involved in the South Seas Expedition; see Petersen 2007.
- 21 On Spanish rule in the Carolines, see Hezel 1995: 1-44.

The German Flag is Raised

- 22 A first-hand account of the German takeover of the islands on Pohnpei, Yap and Saipan is offered in Bennigsen 1900. For a summary see Hezel 1995: 95-96.
- 23 The troops that were brought in during early German rule were variously identified as Malayan or Melanesian. Spennemann (1999: 15) reports that the 46 police troops accompanying the German administrative officials were hired in Macassa (currently known as Makassar), a region at the southern tip of Sulawesi. The island is currently part of Indonesia, but the port offers easy access to nearby Papua with its Melanesian population. It appears that many of the later police recruits, and perhaps even some of the earlier ones, were Melanesian from New Guinea; see Hardach 1997: 234.
- 24 Hezel 1995: 95.
- 25 Spennemann 1999: 14.
- 26 Spennemann 1999: 14.
- 27 On Hahl's views on administration see Hezel 1995: 96.
- 28 The German administrative staff throughout Micronesia never grew very large; by 1912 it numbered just 25 persons; Hardach 1997: 235.
- 29 Spennemann 1999: 215.

- 30 The abrupt change in German colonial policy of 1907 is treated in Smith 1978: 183-209, and in Townsend 1966: 225-245.
- 31 On Catholic missions during the German period, see Hezel 2001.

Yap: A Model of Close Collaboration

- 32 For more on how the nets in Yap worked, see Lingenfelter 1975.
- 33 McKinney 1947: 76, and Hezel 1995: 105-106.
- 34 Hezel 1995: 106.
- 35 McKinney 1947: 77-78; Hezel 1995: 107.
- 36 Quoted in Volkens 1901: 71.
- 37 The collection of fines in stone money is described by the district officer himself in Senfft 1901: 870-871. See also Hahl 1980: 82-83.
- 38 Hezel 1995: 108.
- 39 The accomplishments of the public works program in Yap are described in Senfft 1902: 95-97. See also Hezel 1995: 105-107.
- 40 Senfft's relations with the Yapese are treated explicitly in two of the Annual reports to Berlin-Reichstag 1901/02: 5305, and Reichstag 1902/03: 134-135. See also Hezel 1995: 107-108.
- 41 Sapper 1920; Hezel 1995: 109-110.
- 42 A clear elaboration of the shift in German colonial policy can be found in Hardach 1997: 234. See also Hezel 1995: 132.
- 43 For a first-hand description of the typhoon and the German relief services, see Born 1907.
- 44 Hezel 1995: 109.
- 45 The losing battle to save the copra industry in Yap are described in the annual reports from Senfft; see Reichstag 1900/01: 2950; 1903/04: 2997; 1906/07: 4122. This is summarized in Hezel 1995: 110.
- 46 McKinney 1947: 82, 112; and Hezel 1995: 111.

Palau: The Path to Modernization

- 47 For cultural background on Palau, see Force 1960 and Vidich 1952.
- 48 Hezel 1995: 111-112.
- 49 The quote is from Senfft (1906: 282) who visited the group regularly in his capacity as district officer.
- 50 For a fuller treatment of the power of the Palauan clubhouse, see Nero 1987: 318ff.
- 51 Hezel 1995: 115.
- 52 The quote is from Senfft 1905: 52.
- 53 Bennigsen 1901: 449.
- 54 Several works provide material on Louch's background. See, for instance, Senfft 1905: 52; Bennigsen 1901: 448-449; Fritz 1907: 662; Vidich 1952: 170-172; Nero 1987: 334-335.
- 55 Hezel 1995: 116-117.
- 56 Vidich 1952: 154
- 57 Hezel 1995: 117.
- 58 Kubary 1888: 30.
- 59 On spirit mediums in Palau and their influence, see Kubary 1888, and Dobbin 2011: 170-180.
- 60 Hezel 1995: 118-120.
- 61 A description of the Kaiser's birthday may be found in Laile 1908: 32-35.
- 62 The fullest treatment of the phosphate industry is found in Firth 1973: 291-319, and 1977.
- 63 Hezel 1995: 122-123.
- 64 Hezel 1991: 202-210.
- 65 Hezel 1995: 123-124.

Chuuk: The Gift of Strong Central Authority

- 66 For a thorough treatment of Chuukese social organization see Goodenough 1961.
- 67 The initial German visit to Chuuk to enforce its regulations is described in Hahl 1901: 318-322.
- 68 On the disarmament of Chuuk see Berg 1905.
- 69 The reports on early German trips to Chuuk are all high in their praise of Chuukese cooperation with the government. See, for example, Vahlkampf 1901, and Berg 1903 & 1905.
- 70 Hezel 1995: 144.
- 71 The nativistic revival is described in Tolerton and Rausch 1949: 182-183. See also Hezel 1995: 98-99.

- 72 The 1907 typhoon in the Mortlocks and its aftermath is treated in Berg 1907, and Anon 1908: 292-294.
- 73 Hezel 1995: 144-145.

Pohnpei: Show of Strength

- 74 For an overview of the main features of Pohnpeian culture and the forces impacting on it during the nineteenth century, see Hanlon 1988. An early overview of the cultural landscape is offered in Fischer 1970.
- 75 The remark is recorded in Bennigsen 1900: 102.
- 76 Hezel 1995: 95-96.
- 77 The early years of German rule on Pohnpei are reported on in Hahl 1980: 55-82, and the annual reports in Reichstag 1900-1905. For a brief summary see Hezel 1995: 95-97.
- 78 For the disarmament of Pohnpei, see McKinney 1947: 64-65, and Hezel 1995: 100
- 79 Ballendorf 1989: 40-41.
- 80 On the shift in German colonial policy see Smith 1978: 183-209, Townsend 1966: 225-245, and Hezel 1995: 132.
- 81 For a fuller treatment of Hahl's visit to Pohnpei, see Hempenstall 1978: 87.
- 82 The events of 1908-1909 are recorded in Hempenstall 1978: 87-98.
- 83 Hezel 1995: 133-136.
- 84 Hempenstall 1978: 90-98; and Hezel 1995: 136.
- 85 For the events leading up to the uprising see Hempenstall 1978: 98-106.
- 86 The Sokehs uprising is described in several sources, including Peckelsheim 1912, Girschner 1911, and Hempenstall 1978: 103-113.
- 87 Reichstag 1911/12: 153.
- 88 Hempenstall 1978: 114-115; Hezel 1995: 143.

Marshalls: From Company Store to Colony

- 89 For an overview of the copra trade in the region, see McKinney 1947: 66-72, and Firth 1977: 17-21.
- 90 Hezel 1995: 48-49.
- 91 Carucci (1997: 204) claims that the chief's share of copra produced was about 3 mills, or 0.3 cents, per pound of copra. Since copra was selling at 3 cents a pound at the end of the nineteenth century, the chief's share amounted to one-tenth of the value of the sale price.
- 92 The wealth of Marshallese chiefs is treated in Hezel 1983: 224, and Hezel 1995: 53.
- 93 Reichstag 1893/94.
- 94 Recent hostilities in the Marshalls are discussed in Hezel 1983: 293-298.
- 95 McKinney 1947: 24, and Hezel 1995: 49-50.
- 96 The labor strike is treated in Firth 1973: 288-90. See also Hezel 1995: 54.
- 97 The influence of the church is acknowledged in the government report for 1896; Reichstag 1896/97.
- 98 McKinney 1947: 94, and Hezel 1995: 124.
- 99 For a brief treatment of the dispute between the chiefs see Hezel 1995: 125-127.
- 100 Hezel 1995: 131.
- 101 Hezel 1995: 131.

Northern Marianas: Creation of a New State

- 102 Population figures from Underwood 1973.
- 103 Spennemann 1999: 81. Much of the material for this section has been taken from Spennemann's work, *Edge of Empire: The German Colonial Period in the Northern Mariana Islands*.
- 104 Spennemann 1999: 156-157.
- 105 Spennemann 1999: 216-7.
- 106 Spennemann 1999: 239-241.
- 107 Cited in Spennemann 1999: 210.
- 108 Fritz's land policies are presented in Spennemann 1999: 85-87.
- 109 Spennemann 1999: 171-175.
- 110 A detailed section on shipping in the colony can be found in Spennemann 1999: 42-69.
- 111 Spennemann 1999: 25.
- 112 The population figures are found in Underwood 1973, and cited by Spennemann 1999: 78.

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