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A CYCLE OF REBELLION IN MICRONESIA¹

Cognatic descent groups have obstinately resisted classification. Indeed, the many recent discoveries of such groups, mainly in Indonesia and Oceania, has called into question the entire taxonomic method of British and American social anthropology.² A major source of anomalies is the fact that so-called cognatic groups perversely incorporate unilineal features into their structure. Many Polynesian descent groups, for example, have the overall structure of segmentary patrilineages and provide for agnatic succession to chieftainship. Yet living commoners may claim membership in several groups by employing both paternal and maternal genealogical connections.³

This paper suggests, on the basis of North Gilbertese materials, that segmentary groups can be fused by the application of an agnatic principle, while a principle of cognatic descent permits the proliferation of segments. Since the society in question, like those of Polynesia, is a chiefdom, the autonomy of its segments is symbolized by allegiance to petty chiefs and aristocrats. There is evidence that a shift in emphasis, from cognatic fission to agnatic fusion, traditionally occurred as an epilogue to a bloody drama of succession to the paramount chieftainship. Although our concern is with the insular Pacific, we must turn first to some recent African ethnographies for paradigmatic cases of the segmentary state and the cyclical rebellions which seem to be part of its structure.

Max Gluckman and Aidan W. Southall have noted that many states in southern and eastern Africa, and in medieval Europe, had a segmentary structure reminiscent of lineage-based societies. County chiefs, while theoretically the king's representatives, have autonomous power either

as royal princes or as hereditary local rulers. As long as the economy was based on subsistence agriculture, weapons were simple and the population was dispersed, sections of the country were practically self-sufficient. They could become entirely independent with little difficulty, especially if they were situated on the marches of the kingdom. They could also fight one another, or follow their chiefs into rebellion against the king himself. A defeated rebel was executed, but his followers were innocent of treason since their loyalty to the king was mediated through their lords (Gluckman 1965: 135-142; Southall 1953:). According to Gluckman (1963: 84-90), the state continued to exist because the divergent interests of groups within it were balanced by their common allegiance to the king, by the administration machinery, and by organizations, such as the Zulu regiments, that cut across territorial boundaries. The ritual superiority of the king served to unify the nation, at least temporarily, just as adherence to values associated with the clan unified the divergent segments of a stateless society.

Gluckman considers the civil wars of segmentary states to have been "rebellions" or "revolts" rather than "revolutions", since the disaffected party usually aimed at replacing the king with another member of the royal family, and not at altering the institution of kingship. A revolt might be precipitated by the ambition of a prince, by the desire of his followers and kinsmen to advance their own fortunes, by the cruel behavior of the reigning monarch, or even by natural disasters, which were blamed on his ritual unworthiness. "Complicated, variable, and flexible rules of succession" often allowed several pretenders to make legitimate claims to the throne (Gluckman 1965: 138-139, 163-166). For example, among the Bemba and other Central African peoples, there was frequently a contradiction between a norm of matrilineal primogeniture, which re-

quired succession by the sons of certain titled princesses, and another norm holding that a king should be succeeded by a near kinsman (Gluckman 1963: 98-106). The rotation of the kingship among two or three dynasties was instituted as a compromise solution in the Fulani emirates of northern Nigeria (Gluckman 1965: 161-162) and in early medieval Scotland (Mackie). Regardless of how the throne had been acquired, a new ruler consolidated his position by appointing close relatives and loyal henchmen to many important posts (Gluckman 1963: 105-106).

Recurrent accession wars have been interpreted mainly in the light of functionalist theory. Gluckman regards them as a means of reintegrating a fundamentally unchanging social order by emphasizing the prestige of the kingship, even when the incumbent is unworthy. The hope that a local chief can seize supreme power is also considered effective in preventing the secession of outlying counties. The entire territory is unified as a single social system under the aegis of a victorious descent group (Gluckman 1965: 140-141). Werbner, in a recent article (1967) has partially refuted this explanation by pointing to structural changes occurring in the nineteenth-century Bemba kingdom under the cover of political oscillations. The Bemba, according to this point of view, engaged in civil wars primarily because they found it necessary to devise a new administrative system to handle trade with the Arabs, raiding by Igoni and other wandering tribes, and their own territorial expansion.

Even if the functional explanation for recurrent conflicts is rejected, however, the latter remain as a subject of investigation and as a means of gaining a better understanding of the social structure. For, as Gluckman puts it, "conflicts of organizing principles, expressed in disputes and quarrels, are not merely disruptive breakdowns in social organization but are attributes of society itself" (Gluckman 1965: 142).

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Because any particular society is likely to have characteristic ways of dispersing rights among territorial sections or the branches of a descent group, the alignment of rival forces in an accession war may be fairly predictable. Once membership in, say, a royal lineage has been expanded to a certain point, the attributes of an ideal legitimate heir are also likely to be distributed among several claimants. None of these denies that power ought to be concentrated in his hands, although each may have recourse to a different norm in maintaining his right to rule. After the accession war, the state will probably be centralized once more along traditional lines, even though there may be some adjustment to changing conditions and some surviving autonomous power centers. Poor historical records make it hard to determine the rate at which centralization and decentralization occur in a tribal society (Gluckman 1965: 142).

The investigation of cycles of rebellion provides a means for gaining understanding of the total structure of a society in which relations between chiefs and subjects are expressed in an idiom of kinship. The dispersal of political power then becomes a function of the proliferation of branches of a descent group. Conversely, by limiting the aristocracy to his immediate kin, the victor in an accession war tends to fuse the segments into a larger unit. This paper will suggest that, in certain Micronesian and Polynesian societies, cognatic descent groups may be integrated according to an agnatic principle based on the succession of chiefs. Chiefs reassert this principle when they redistribute newly-won power. As a result, they counteract a tendency for cognatic descent to blur the boundaries between status levels.

A good deal is known about the cyclical rebellions of Butaritari-Makin⁴, the northernmost Gilbertese society. There was a high chief until 1963, although distinctions between aristocrats and commoners were gradually obliterated after the division of jointly-owned estates in 1922.

The traditional history and genealogies of the chief's predecessors were fortunately recorded in Gilbertese in the early 1950's, partly because such data could be used as evidence in land disputes. The history begins with the creation of the world, but ends with realistic accounts of the accession wars of about five generations ago. It could be brought up to date by using oral traditions, particularly those of the transfers of land that accompanied all important changes in social relationships. Nineteenth-century explorers and travelers mention a few of the persons whose names appear in the native histories and genealogies. The most informative, as well as the most distinguished, of the travellers was Robert Louis Stevenson (1901) who in a two-months' stay on Butaritari in 1889 made extensive notes on the workings of the high chieftainship.

A single high chief ruled over both Makin and Butaritari in pre-colonial times. The high chieftainship and the position of headman of Makin Town, the main village on Makin Island, were apparently the only statuses in the society which were regularly inherited by patrilineal primogeniture. Wilkes's statement that the high chief was normally succeeded by the eldest son of his highest-ranking wife (Wilkes 1845: 85) is confirmed by native traditions. In default of sons, the high chief's eldest full brother succeeded him. Nineteenth-century high chiefs used to be installed by the elders of the ramage (cognatic descent groups)⁵ founded by children of Chief Nan Teauoki, who will be discussed ~~the~~ below. The decisive speech at the installation reminded the new ruler of his duties, and warned him not to oppress his subjects. It was made by a descendant of Nan Teauoki's eldest daughter, who was entitled to respect as the first-born child, but disqualified by her sex from assuming the chieftainship. It is said that the same aristocratic elders who formally elected the high chief had the power of deposing him for great offenses, but there is no memory of their ever having done so. In general, the high chief maintained his popularity

through generosity, especially on occasions when he received gifts of food.

Succession to the high chieftainship was anything but automatic before the establishment of British rule, however. Almost every legitimate heir was challenged either by a younger brother or by a son of one of his father's full brothers. Like an ordinary father, an old chief sometimes tried to disinherit an elder son who lived at a distance in favor of a younger one who showed greater filial devotion by remaining near-by. In one of the best-known cases of disinheritance, which will be described below, the beneficiary was the chief's brother's son--but this act of generosity was considered as unnatural by the native historians. An elder brother who wanted to reassert his rights, or a father's brother's son who undertook to depose a reigning chief, needed to secure the support of the people of the district where he resided. He recruited followers for the accession war through conspicuous generosity and friendliness. One dispossessed heir attacked Butaritari with a troop of foreigners from the island of Warakei but, perhaps out of shame, disguised himself by blackening his face and cutting off his hair. Commoners who dared to revolt without a chief at their head are said to have been inevitably massacred (cf. Wilkes 1845: 84).

Two cases of attempted usurpation--one successful, the other not--should clarify the process of rebellion. Nan Teauoki, whom the natives of Butaritari later considered as the most illustrious man their island had ever produced (Wilkes 1845: 100), gained the paramount chieftainship through the favor of his father's eldest brother, the high chief Nan Tetab'akea, and by his own victory over the legitimate heirs. Once when Nan Tetab'akea lay ill, Nan Teauoki was advised by his own father to insinuate himself into the generous old man's good graces. Nan Teauoki told his wives to spend their nights with Nan Tetab'akea, although

even thoughts of sex were believed to be slowing the chief's recovery. Afterwards the chief was moved to Nan Teauoki's land to convalesce. Now, a man who has had sexual access to a classificatory son's wife is expected to make the husband a gift called te bora. Nan Tetab'akea's bora was neither a plot of land nor a taro garden, but the high chieftainship and the lives of his sons.

Nan Teauoki treacherously began to murder Nan Tetab'akea's sons one by one with their father's connivance, pretending that the killings were the outcome of personal quarrels. When the survivors suspected Nan Teauoki of actually aiming at the high chieftainship, they banded together under the leadership of the eldest to wage war against the pretender. Most men were prepared to fight for the legitimate heirs, because, as the history says, "They had power to hold the status of chief because it surely was their property." The word m'aaka, which is used for "power" in this sentence, has the same supernatural connotations as mana, its presumed cognate in other Oceanic languages. The implication is that the son of a high chief possessed an inherent legitimacy, supported by charisma, which even his father's ill will could not deprive him of. Nan Teauoki was, in fact, forced to flee Butaritari temporarily with his henchmen after being severely wounded. On his return, he was permitted to settle on an isolated islet, where he spent his time in fishing and in training his younger brothers. He made a habit of giving the choicest part of his catch to large Butaritari ramage, in order to put them under obligation to himself. When his brothers had grown into warriors, he assembled his allies and resumed the battle. After many days of fighting, Nan Tetab'akea's eldest son was killed and his forces scattered. Nan Teauoki was now assured of the high chieftainship.

Before his death, Nan Teauoki asked his only surviving full brother,

Nam Mannarara, to act as regent for Ian Teauoki's eldest son and heir, Nan Teatumateataata, who was too young to exercise the powers of a high chief. Nam Mannarara then tried to transfer the high chieftainship to two of his own sons. The people showed that they accepted the substitution by making the customary gifts of food to the two usurpers.⁷ Nam Mannarara's sons, however, believed that they had to put the true ruler out of the way in order to attain the full renown of chieftainship. They planned to murder Ian Teatumateataata at a time when everyone had assembled at Butaritari Town for dances and games. Nan Teatumateataata, who was living on Makin at that time, was warned of the plot by his father's half-brother, Nan Temango. The young high chief crossed over to Butaritari, supposedly to attend the festival, and, together with three of his brothers, his sister's husband, and two followers, killed Nam Mannarara's sons the day before he himself was to have been murdered. Once his rivals were dead, Ian Teatumateataata remembered that they had been his near classificatory brothers and the full brothers of his principal wife. He not only helped to bury them, but thought it bad manners to object when his wife tried to have his infant son buried alive in her brother's grave. Fortunately a bystander rescued the baby.

No brother's son except Ian Teauoki ever succeeded in displacing the son of a high chief. Many thought they had a good chance of doing so, however, probably because they already possessed some chiefly attributes. I have called the high chief's full siblings "petty chiefs", but in the local dialect the same term--to uea--was probably applied to the high chief, his full siblings, and his paternal half-siblings. In the pre-colonial society, each petty chief was allotted a domain composed of estates in all or most of the villages on the two islands. The petty chief had authority to order the aristocratic and commoner owners

of these estates to bring him food for delivery to the high chief. In the twentieth century, the high chief's own rights to food and hospitality were restricted to his personal domain, a step which virtually placed him on the same level as his siblings (Lambert 1966b: 164-165; Lambert 1968). The children of the petty chiefs inherited their fathers' rank and domains temporarily, but eventually had to surrender both to the full siblings of a new high chief. Dispossession implied great loss in prestige. It is not surprising, then, that some petty chiefs retained food gifts as a symbol of sovereignty and prepared to fight the heir. They usually failed, apparently because most of the people would accept as chief only a man who had inherited the full measure of charisma or who had the public support of his predecessor.

The victorious high chief, whether he was the legitimate heir or a usurper, reserved the attributes of chieftainship for himself, his siblings and his children. The chief's brothers and sisters, and all of his children except the eldest son, became the founders of aristocratic ramares holding residual title to estates cultivated by native commoners or immigrants (Lambert 1968). The ruler also tried to assume control over the outlying villages, which were semi-autonomous. In every village except Makin Town⁸, the wealthiest and most powerful rama, that of the headman, is descended from one of Nan Teatumateataata's children or sibling's children. The defeated claimants, their allies, and most of the other collateral descendants of former chiefs were reduced to commoner rank. The last two realignments are associated with Nan Teatumateataata himself and with his father Ian Teauoki. They are attested by genealogies and land records, and seem to be referred to directly in an early description of Butaritari-Makin and in native tradition. Hale, the ethnographer of the United States Exploring Exped-

ition of 1841, learned from a castaway that:

. . . Teauoki, the grandfather of the reigning king, and a mighty warrior, succeeded in concentrating in his own hands the sovereign power, which was before lodged with the whole body of the gentry or petty chiefs . . . His descendants constitute the ioomata [= inaomata, literally "free people"--one of the terms used to designate the aristocrats], and share among them the supremacy, though there is one that retains especially the title of head chief (ueea). (Hale 1846:101)

Tradition calls Nan Teatumateataata's battle against Mannarara's sons, te buaka ae te rai-toka--"the war which overturned the aristocracy."

The status system was not drastically altered after that time, partly because widespread sterility in the nineteenth century reduced the number of potential contenders.

The latent function of the realignment was to maintain boundaries between status levels in spite of the absence of unilineal descent or strict status endogamy. Almost every member of the society, except for the high chief's children, inherited land right and descent-group affiliations from both parents. The high chief's wives did not transmit ramage affiliation to their children; they received gifts of food from their brothers as a kind of compensation instead. The children became the founders of aristocratic ramaes which right be linked to the maternal ones (Lambert 1968). Their own children and grandchildren, however, again possessed multiple affiliation. Since the preference for marriage within the status level became weaker in each generation of a high chief's descendants, many of these affiliations were with commoner groups. Aristocratic land rights were consequently diffused among a large proportion of the population. The accession war reversed this process by eliminating all but the children of a recent high chief from the aristocracy. The upper status level was thus temporarily re-established on an agnatic principle. Since commoner ramaes were usually

associated with aristocratic ones as joint owners of estates, the fusion process may be said to have affected the entire society.

It is probable that a number of Polynesian societies also allocated some statuses patrilineally and others cognatically. In Tonga, for example, only the aristocracy could trace descent from the chiefly founders of patrilineages. The commoners were all considered to be junior relatives of their local chief, but many could not trace their genealogical connection to him, and some ramares in each district were known to have been founded by immigrants from other areas (Gifford 1929: 19-20, 30-36). Perhaps the recurrent warfare in societies such as this was in part a result of the proliferation of segments, which gave several contenders the qualifications for chieftainship and made it possible for each to recruit followers through his cognatic, affinal, and territorial ties. The notion of cyclical rebellions might then be added to status rivalry (Goldman 1955), the creation of economic surpluses (Sahlins 1958), and the shift from a kinship-based to territorially-based societies (Burrows 193) as a factor in Polynesian history.

FOOTNOTES

¹Field work was conducted on Makin Island from May, 1956 to October, 1961 under the auspices of the Tri-Institutional Pacific Program, which was financed by a grant from the Carnegie Foundation.

²For the classification of descent systems by British social anthropologists, see various articles by Fortes, especially "The Structure of Unilineal Descent Groups" (1953). Murdock (1960) offers a new classification, incorporating three kinds of cognatic societies.

³Sahlins (1958: 146) and Burrows (1939: 1) describe Polynesian descent groups as patrilineages which permit occasional matrilineal affiliations.

⁴On most American maps, Butaritari is labelled "Makin", and Makin "Little Makin" or "Makin Meang." The principal villages on the two islands are also called Butaritari and Makin, respectively; I have added "Town" to their names to prevent confusion.

⁵A ramage is a corporate descent group composed of some of the founder's descendants through either men or women. For the general concept, see Murdock (1960) and Firth (1957). I have described the Butaritari-Makin ramage in detail elsewhere (Lambert 1966a).

⁶Omitted.

⁷For the symbolic significance of redistributive activities, see Lambert 1966b.

⁸The Ma'in headmen were descended from Nan Temango, Nan Teatuuma-teataata's father's half-brother who aided him in securing the high chieftainship. They were almost independent of the high chiefs (Stevenson 1901: 2: 105-106). No accession wars are remembered as having taken place on Makin among Nan Temango's descendants. However, in the late nineteenth century the headmanship was divided between representatives of two lines.

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THE CONTENTS OF THIS PRE-PUBLICATION
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EFFECTS OF POPULATION DENSITY AND DISTRIBUTION ON
GILBERTESE SOCIAL BEHAVIOR¹

(DRAFT COPY)

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- 1) Paper prepared for the South Pacific Commission Seminar on "Health Problems of Coral Atoll Populations" held at Bikenibeu, Tarawa Island, Gilbert and Ellice Islands Colony, May 1967.

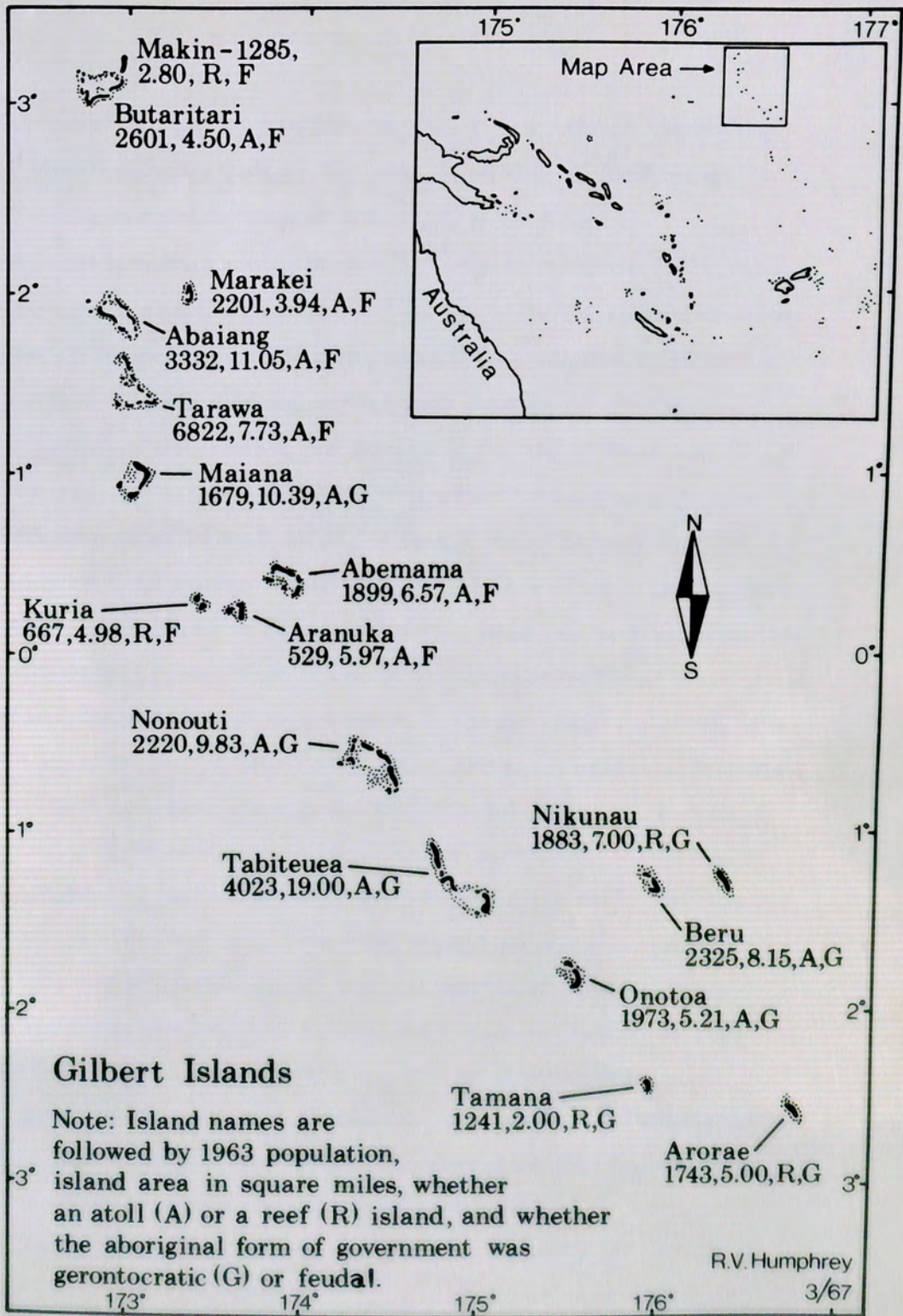
Effects of Population Density and Distribution on
Gilbertese Social Behavior

Introduction

Population size, density, and spatial distribution within a limited habitat has long been postulated to have a measurable effect on the behavior of non-human animal aggregates and it may prove rewarding for scientists primarily concerned with human behavior to hypothesize that these same factors exert similar or parallel selective pressures on man and society (cf. Allee 1958; Andrewartha 1961; Calhoun 1962: 139-143; Christian 1961: 428-446; Deevey 1966: 336-350; Dorn 1966: 319-334; Dubos 1965; Hoagland 1966: 351-359). Hainline's (1965: 1174) extensive quantitative analysis of the relationships between population size and social stratification in Micronesian societies ". . . indicates that the complex of socially transmitted beliefs and associated behavior constituting a system of social stratification is biologically maladaptive, resulting in the decreased relative abundance of the human population in which such phenomena receive social expression. Although many exceptions to Hainline's generalization are revealed by close examination of recent demographic and ethnographic

field data on the Gilbert Islands (Lundsgaarde 1966; n.d.) such exceptions are relatively trivial and can usually be attributed to the variable and rather complex changes that have effected individual island societies following culture contacts with Europeans since the 19th century.²

The Gilbert Islands are located between 172° E and 178° E longitude and from 4° N to 3° S latitude in the Central Pacific. The entire archipelago consists of sixteen coral islands which vary from a few miles to about thirty miles in length and one hundred yards to one mile in width. The islands, which since 1916 have been administered by the British as the Gilbert and Ellice Islands Colony, are uniformly characterized by low elevation, sandy coral soils, a predominant vegetation of coconut trees, and a lack of variety in terrestrial flora and fauna. Low annual rainfall and severe occasional droughts sharply distinguishes the ecology and productivity of the southern islands from the northern Gilberts which more closely exemplify coral islands in general (cf. Wiens 1962). As of 1963 there were 36,423 Gilbertese, 896 Ellice, and 654 European residents in the Gilbert Islands (McArthur and Craig 1963: 80). The Gilbertese population is unevenly distributed between the sixteen islands (Map) that occupy less than an estimated 114.6 square miles of total land area (cf. Mason 1951: 274). The majority of the populace is, paradoxically, concentrated on the islands located south of the equator which, from an economic perspective, provide the least favorable prospects for human survival. The more sparsely populated central and northern Gilbert Islands have (in agreement with Heulin's prediction) until recently had a feudal or stratified social organization with High



Chiefs or "Kings" ruling the residents of one or more islands whereas the southern Gilbert Islands, to this day, have maintained an essentially democratic or gerontocratic form of native political authority.

Population estimates were attempted by European residents during the early Protectorate period from 1892 to 1916. Government sponsored censuses were conducted in the years 1905, 1916, 1921, 1931, 1947, and 1963. Of these, the 1947 and 1963 censuses are the most accurate, comprehensive, and undoubtedly the best sources for estimating population trends and island densities. The annual 2.07% increase of the Gilbertese population since 1947, or a total increase of 38.55% in the period between the 1947 and 1963 censuses, is perhaps not so much a reflection of added technological or exploitative efficiency as it may be a direct result of both (a) effective control of periodic fluctuations in island productivity following articulation with a dependable and broader economic system, and (b) abolition of negative population controls such as internecine island warfare, abortion, infanticide, famine, and some diseases. In 1931 the British Government began to take an active interest in the possible growth of social problems concomitant with the very noticeable numerical growth of the Gilbertese populace. The "Phoenix Islands Settlement Scheme" (cf. Maude 1952: 62-89) was a direct response to what was then believed to constitute a severe problem of "overpopulation." The Phoenix Islands settlers were uprooted from their new habitat in 1955 by yet another official administrative decision to alleviate Gilbertese survival and population problems. The Phoenix settlers were moved to a new home in the Solomon Islands (cf. Knudsen 1964) where they now have been joined with emigrants coming directly from the Gilberts.

TABLE I

CONTINUOUS AND BISERIAL VARIABLES FOR TWELVE GILBERT ISLANDS

VARIABLE*	NORTHERN GILBERT ISLANDS					
	MARAKEI	ABAIANG	KURIA	ARANUKA	ABEMAMA	MAIANA
Latitude	2 02N	1 45N	0 14N	0 12N	0 23N	1 00N
Rainfall	65.26	71.55	40.34	38.07	46.90	52.53
Copra Production	381	533	175	101	707	307
Population Density	0.63	0.48	0.18	0.12	0.35	0.31
Land Area	2752	6001	3030	3822	4205	4491
Indigenous Government	FEUDAL	FEUDAL	FEUDAL	FEUDAL	FEUDAL	DEMO.
Island Type	ATOLL	ATOLL	REEF	ATOLL	ATOLL	ATOLL
	SOUTHERN GILBERT ISLANDS					
	MONOUTI	BERU	NIKUNAU	ONTOA	TAMANA	ARORAE
Latitude	0 12S	1 20S	1 21S	1 47S	2 29S	2 39S
Rainfall	42.97	44.27	38.73	39.93	44.91	50.94
Copra Production	267	120	174	167	68	91
Population Density	0.34	0.54	0.43	0.56	0.82	0.67
Land Area	6291	3632	4480	3337	1280	2342
Indigenous Government	DEMO.	DEMO.	DEMO.	DEMO.	DEMO.	DEMO.
Island Type	ATOLL	ATOLL	REEF	ATOLL	REEF	REEF

*Rainfall is measured in inches averaged over seven years

Copra production measured in tons is averaged over a ten year period

Land area is measured in acres and population density in persons per acre

These facts clearly point to the Gilbert Islands as a significant testing ground for hypotheses concerning the probable effects of demographic variables on human social behavior since we (1) can readily control for variability of significant social institutions within a well defined and isolated cultural universe and (2) have recourse to extensive historical, ethnographic, and ecological data on the Gilbertese population. On a small scale, then, it

should be possible to sketch out both theoretical problems and empirical questions related to crowding, overpopulation, population maldistribution, density dependent factors, and social pathology. Although these problems cannot be adequately treated in this paper, I hope to point out that questions about "overpopulation"--in addition to being of direct concern to scientists, administrators, public health officials, and politicians--all too easily become involved with partisan national, religious, and moral issues which, to say the least, confuse rather than clarify both data gathering and analysis on matters related to species, or sub-species, survival and continuity. One such view of the "population problem" holds, for example, that--despite the continuous improvement of technological efficiency--there are definite limits on the size which human populations can work without serious psychological and sociological pathologies affecting the welfare of the population. The opposite view expresses an almost Panglossian faith in the ability of technology--and the political machinery necessary for the successful coordination and application of this technology--to continually cope with the increasing demands of growing populations for adequate food supplies. The dilemma presented by present inequalities between segments of the world population, in terms of their unequal access to these food supplies, is often mistakenly separated from the socio-cultural or political problems of maldistribution; where the latter view contends that "overpopulation" is a function of the maldistribution of human population aggregates and that the solution to the perceived problems arising from crowding in selective areas can be solved once we (as a species) redistribute the human population and make technological advances equally available to all. It now seems clear that any discussion of human population "problems" must take into account an

almost unmanageable number of analytical perspectives, including, among many others, (1) biological, (2) psychological, (3) sociological, (4) ethnological, (5) political. In the remaining paragraphs I wish to summarize some aspects of each of these perspectives as they might be applied to the contemporary situation in the Gilbert Islands.

1. The Biological Perspective

What, if any, biological mechanisms operate to control population size? It is well known that population growth can be measured in terms of Darwinian fitness and population studies commonly focus on the ratios between fertility/fecundity and natality/mortality, to characterize the fitness or growth of a particular population isolate. The Gilbertese population of the 20th century gets high marks in Darwinian fitness. But as the population continues to grow, in the non-elastic and insular habitat, what biological factors may help to produce a favorable ratio between population size and resources if Darwinian fitness for the population remains constant? I think the answer, or part of it, can be found in physiological studies of density phenomena in non-human animal populations. For example, a recent article by Christian states that: "... population growth and decline (is) regulated by series of feed-back mechanisms, particularly involving the pituitary-adrenocortical and pituitary-gonadal systems, and that these in turn (are) activated by socio-psychological factors (intraspecific competition) within the population. Present evidence indicates that interacting behavioral and endocrine mechanisms comprise at least an important part of such a system in the individuals in a population: a system responding to changes in the number of animals in such a way that growth is self-limiting and self-regulating" (Christian 1961: 428).

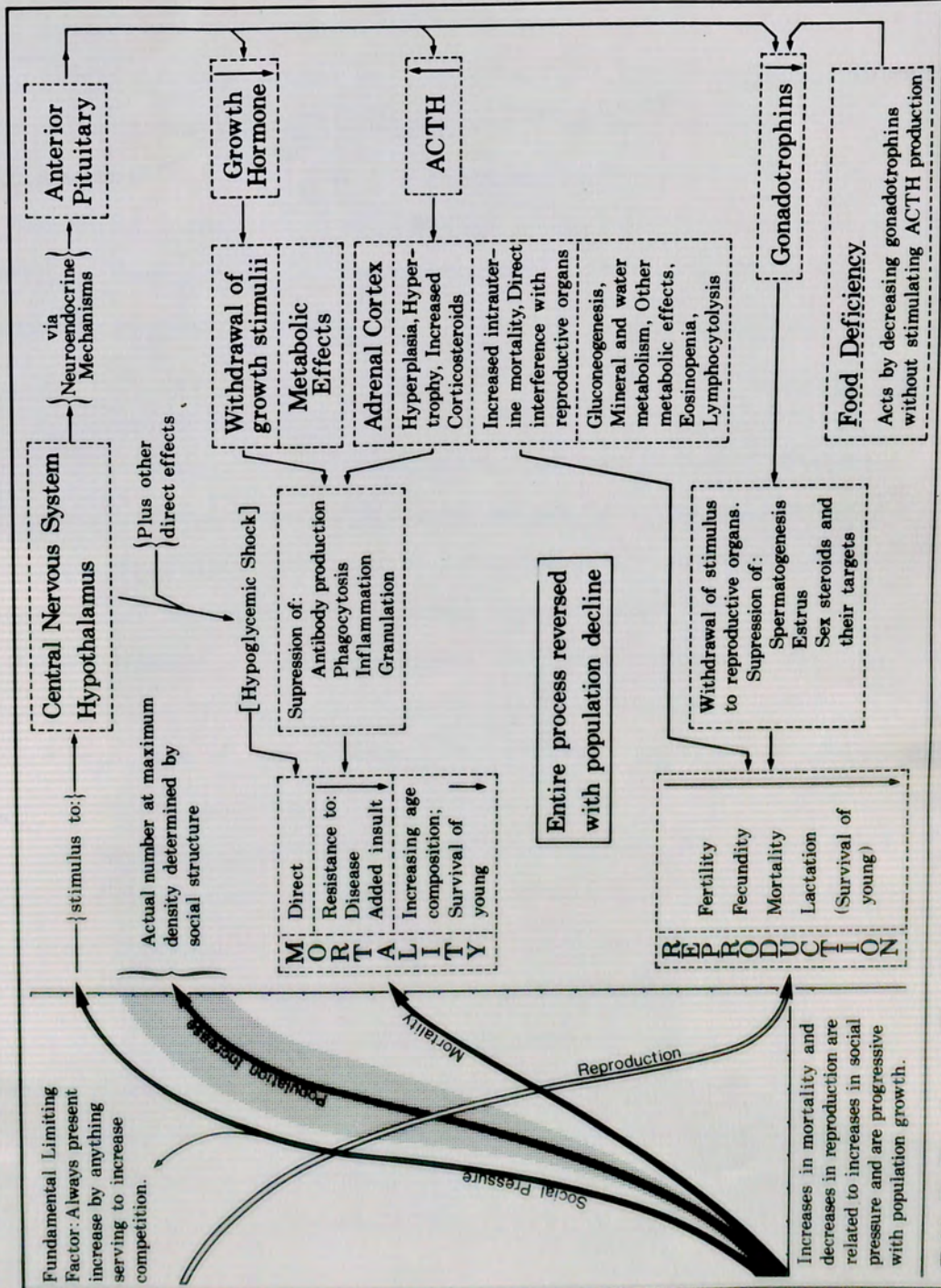


Table II. Regulatory Physiological Mechanisms of Population Growth (3). (After Christian, J.J. 1961:445.)

Since Christian's article may not be readily available to isolated research workers in Pacific communities I have presented Christian's schematic summary of his data below (Table II). His data strongly suggest that insofar as such findings can be extended to the situation in the Gilbert Islands, populations achieve optimum size and density levels through biological and sociological feed-back mechanisms.

2. The Psychological Perspective

Although psychological generalizations derived from studies of non-human animal populations must be used with extreme caution if extrapolated to human behavior (cf. Beach 1966: 3-14) it is at times desirable to look for plausible analogues between controlled data for animal populations and observational data on human populations. Empirical analysis of human responses to an increase in population density, however, is made infinitely more difficult by the presence of cultural factors whereas, for example, a population of Norway rats can be studied experimentally by controlled manipulation of variables. In a highly significant experiment on the relationship between the numerical increase of a rat population confined to the limited spatial environment of a laboratory setting it has been demonstrated that an increase in population density resulted directly in acutely abnormal patterns of behavior (Calhoun 1962: 139-149). According to the psychologist primarily responsible for these experiments it was found that: "The consequences of the behavioral pathology we observed were most apparent among the females. Many were unable to carry pregnancy to full term or to survive delivery of their litters if they did. An even greater number, after successfully giving birth, felt short in their

maternal functions. Among the males the behavioral disturbances ranged from sexual deviation to cannibalism and from frenetic overactivity to pathological withdrawal from which individuals would emerge to eat, drink and move about only when other members of the community were asleep. The social organization of the animals showed equal disruption. Each of the experimental populations divided itself into several groups, in each of which the sex ratios were drastically modified. One group might consist of six or seven females and one male, whereas another would have 20 males and only 10 females" (Calhoun 1962: 139). There is presently no concrete empirical data which indicates the presence of parallel behavioral pathologies among the Gilbertese people. I can, therefore, conclude that either (1) the analogue between Calhoun's experimental findings and available demographic and ethnographic data on the Gilbert Islands is inappropriate or (2) that this analogue is valid and that the absence of pathological behavioral responses on the most densely populated islands simply means that these populations have yet to reach an optimum density level which would contribute to the formation of such responses. I prefer to defend the latter choice by calling attention to the two islands of the archipelago that have the highest population densities. The people of Tamana Island (.82 persons per acre) and Arerua Island (.67 persons per acre) are, if anything, outstanding examples of well adjusted, cooperative, and "happy" populations (cf. Lundegaarde 1966).

3. The Sociological Perspective

Sociologists and criminologists have repeatedly pointed to the relationship between high delinquency and crime rates and congested industrialized urban

settings. Social deviancy promises to serve as a useful tool with which to detect departures from optimum population densities; i.e., "overpopulation" and "crowding" would become evident with a noticeable growth of delinquency and crime beyond expected rates. This situation appears to be emerging on tiny Betio islet on Tarawa Island--the "urban" center of the Gilberts--but is nowhere evident on any of the outer islands where delinquency and crime is virtually absent. In a recent and detailed statistical survey of litigation on twelve of the sixteen islands I was unable to discover significant correlations between these factors and island population densities. In fact, there was a slightly higher incidence of litigation on islands with some of the lowest population densities (Lundsgaarde n.d.). Such findings, however, do not necessarily rule out using future increases in delinquency and crime rates on the outer islands as indices of population crowding.

4. The Ethnological Perspective

The Gilbertese are staunch individualists who prize the personal autonomy afforded by their traditional culture. Land ownership, which frequently is identified with the social standing of the individual in his community, is the measure of both wealth and prestige. As the Gilbertese saying goes, "He has no land, so his words are big." Despite this emphasis on private ownership--or membership in a particular kinship group which jointly administers legal rights and privileges to an ancestral estate--the Gilbertese acknowledge the necessity of sanctions to implement cooperation and sharing in economic endeavors. Such ancient customs as the bubuti (a form of request

for goods, services, or favors similar to the Ellice Islands' custom of fakamelmole and the Fijian institution of kerekere serves to distribute valuables equally among members of a kin group and, indeed, among residents of a particular island. The post-contact trends toward village life--formerly households were located on individual land plots--and the high value placed on communal social activities focused on the island, village, or hamlet mancaba council houses, are but a few indications of the definite desire on part of most Gilbertese individuals to be together in large groups for long periods of time. Privacy is impossible but no one seems to complain about its absence. Should we then, as outside observers of the culture, resolve that the Gilbertese respond negatively to crowding? They are crowded by our numerical assessment, as evident from household surveys which show an average range of 4.76 to 5.11 persons per household in the southern islands, but they are most frequently congregated by choice rather than necessity (cf. Lundsgaarde 1966).

5. The Political Perspective

The unevenly distributed Gilbertese population suggests that socio-political factors probably serve--and have served in the past--to maintain boundaries within the population by restricting movement from supposedly "crowded" to so called "underpopulated" islands within the archipelago. In pre-contact days each island maintained strict territorial boundaries by means of inter-island warfare, with a shift in boundaries being determined by forceful conquest and political demonstration of the conquered island population, and since the effective establishment of British law by the

continuing emphasis on exclusive rights, on part of individuals, to control the allocation of land plots. The government has recently initiated a program whereby Gilbertese from the "crowded" southern islands could purchase land plots in the sparsely populated central Gilberts (Abemena, Kuria, Aranuka) but although such purchases have been made there has been no wholesale flocking of southern Gilbertese to these islands. Nor, for that matter, is there a rush among the Gilbertese to purchase lands in the Solomon Islands set aside by the colonial government for occupancy by Gilbertese. These factors, among others, strongly suggest that the notion of "overpopulation" primarily, at the present time, resides with the European officials responsible for the overall administration of the Gilbertese populace in a habitat so niggardly endowed with natural resources and economic potentials. The question, which still remains to be answered, is: Does past and present attempts by the British administration to relocate segments of the Gilbertese population reflect ^a well defined empirical reality of overpopulation or a manufactured political crisis founded on emotional responses to world wide cries of population explosion? Or are such efforts on part of this, as well as numerous other administrations, a psychological guilt response created by the situation where "it is criminal that our best humanitarian motives in medicine and public health are primarily responsible for the grave dangers of the population explosion" (Heagland 1966: 351).

Summary

I have emphasized that the accelerated growth of the Gilbertese population in the 20th century has not even approximated a state of optimum density as

viewed from biological, psychological, and ethnological perspectives whereas such a state has primarily been defined by political and administrative concerns for the apparently dismal economic future of the inhabitants of the archipelago. This political view was first fostered in the 1930's when the colony was run on a shoe string budget and external political events at that time certainly did not inspire the local resident administrators with confidence in sustained and increased economic support from the outside and, second, brought to its present stage of pessimism where colonial administrators see the creeping shadow of political independence encroaching on a people who, without future revenue from the depleting phosphate deposits on Ocean Island and continuing opportunities for the temporary emigration of local labor to more favorable locations abroad, must learn to substitute their growing hopes for increased economic prosperity for the realities of a marginally productive subsistence life.

One cannot realistically request medical personnel to discontinue their excellent services but they must be persuaded that the current availability of such services must be complemented by the ready availability of clinical abortion, implementation and acceptance of contraceptive programs, and participation on part of informed medical personnel in political and administrative forums which ultimately see to their practical realization. Similarly, government administrators cannot continue to direct social and economic innovations without reference to the mounting scientific data and resources committed to the solution of social and political problems. Administrators should thus now be urged to approximate scientific theories and generalizations about human social responses to change before being burdened--or frivolously discarding such burdens by bureaucratic practicality--with the formalization

and implementation of policies which can have far reaching effects on native populations that still do not partake in decisions which will affect their future as well as that of their children. "If I should succeed in drawing the attention of more able men, to what I conceive to be the chief difficulty in the way to the improvement of society, and should, in consequence, see this difficulty removed, even in theory, I will gladly retract my present opinions, and rejoice in a conviction of my error" (Malthus 1798: V).

FOOTNOTES

- 2) Ethnographic fieldwork in the Gilbert Islands during the year 1964-1965 was supported by a Woodrow Wilson Dissertation Fellowship and a National Science Foundation grant to Professor Homer G. Barnett at the University of Oregon. Additional grants from the National Institute of Mental Health (1 RO3MH13042-01) and the University of California permitted me to revisit the Gilberts during the summer of 1966 to collect statistical data on land tenure and court litigation from twelve of the sixteen islands in the archipelago. These granting agents, however, are not to be understood as approving by virtue of their financial assistance any of the views expressed in this paper. I wish to acknowledge the courteous and valuable assistance offered by Gilbertese and British government officers during my two visits to the Gilbert and Ellice Islands Colony.
- 3) "A graphical summary of the means by which density-related social pressures operate through physiological mechanisms to regulate population growth. The arrows on the left indicate that as population increases, social pressure increases and increases the magnitude to the physiological effects. The dotted lines above and below the arrow for population increase indicate that there may be considerable variation in the actual number of animals required to produce a given level of "social pressure" depending on the behavioral composition of the population, such as the aggressiveness of the dominant animals, clarity of definition of rank differences, and probably other

unknown behavioral factors. Environmental factors operating to increase competition will in effect increase the social density or, in numerical terms, will serve to lower the upper asymptote of population growth in terms of numbers. Arrows indicate the mortality increases and reproduction decreases as the population increases, and the mechanisms by which these are achieved are shown. It must be remembered that this scheme represents average changes for the population as a whole and that great variations in response of individuals with respect to social rank will be observed, although the greater the density, the greater the proportion of the animals affected and the greater severity of the effects. The diagram certainly cannot be complete, but it can only be completed gradually as various physiological responses to behavioral and various environmental factors are studied in detail in relation to changes in density. Probably the least understood at the present time are the behavioral and social factors" (Christian 1961: 445).

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THE STRATEGY AND ETIOLOGY OF GILBERTESE PROPERTY DISPUTES¹

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Introduction

The present day Gilbertese seem excessively given to litigation, with cases at law involving property and inter-personal disputes consuming much time and attention on the part of large numbers of persons. Computer analysis of quantitative data on Gilbertese land tenure and law from Nonouti and Tamana Islands in the southern Gilbert Islands, investigated in the year 1964-1965, earlier led me to conclude that the high frequency of court litigation on those islands could be explained by relating court disputes to geographical, demographic, and cultural variables (Lundsgaarde 1966). To test the broader applicability of these conclusions I returned to the Gilbert Islands during the summer of 1966 to collect comparable data for the remaining twelve islands in the archipelago. In this paper I will discuss the relationship of court disputes to the following variables:

- 1) Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Anthropological Association, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, 1966.

1. Geography: (a) latitudinal position, (b) rainfall, (c) land area, (d) atoll versus reef configuration;
2. Demography: (a) population size and density, (b) population composition by age and sex;
3. Land Use: (a) distribution of land plots per title holder, per capita, and by sex of owner, (b) singly versus jointly owned estates, (c) feudal or democratic political organization.

As some of these variables can be treated as either dependent or independent the designation of court litigation as the dependent variable is, of course, a matter of research emphasis. This approach, however, permits testing of specific hypotheses against a large body of numerical data that can be evaluated by correlational analysis and statistical tests of significance. In this way it has been possible to (a) combine observational and numerical data to minimize error in generalization and (b) test hypotheses derived from intensive study of two islands against quantitative data for an entire archipelago or cultural universe.

Data variables

The Gilbert Islands are located between 172° E longitude and from 4° N to 3° S latitude in the Western Pacific. The archipelago consists of sixteen coral islands which vary from a few miles to about thirty miles in length and one hundred yards to one mile in width. The islands are characterized by low elevation above sea level, sandy coral soils, a predominant vegetation of coconut trees, and a lack of variety in terrestrial fauna and flora. Low annual rainfall (Table I) is the most

TABLE I

CONTINUOUS AND BISERIAL VARIABLES FOR TWELVE GILBERT ISLANDS

<u>VARIABLE*</u>	NORTHERN GILBERT ISLANDS					
	MARAKEI	ABALANG	KURIA	ARANUKA	ABEMAMA	MAIANA
Litigation	650	963	604	157	195	653
Criminal Cases	550	844	497	90	151	564
Land & Civil Cases	100	119	107	68	43	88
Cases per Capita	0.37	0.33	0.29	0.43	0.41	0.47
Plots per Title Holder	2.9	2.8	2.5	3.0	3.9	2.7
Plots per Capita	1.28	0.80	2.13	2.68	1.38	1.75
Latitude	2 03N	1 45N	0 14N	0 12N	0 23N	1 00N
Rainfall	65.26	71.55	40.34	38.07	46.90	52.53
Copra Production	381	533	175	101	707	307
Population Density	0.63	0.48	0.18	0.12	0.35	0.31
Land Area	2752	6001	3030	3822	4205	4491
% Male owned Plots	68.8	64.9	73.5	79.4	71.2	63.5
% Jointly owned Plots	29.9	38.0	2.7	1.3	5.1	18.6
Indigenous Government	FEUDAL	FEUDAL	FEUDAL	FEUDAL	FEUDAL	DEMO.
Island Type	ATOLL	ATOLL	REEF	ATOLL	ATOLL	ATOLL

<u>VARIABLE</u>	SOUTHERN GILBERT ISLANDS					
	NONOUTI	BERU	NIKUNAU	ONOTOA	TAMANA	ARORAE
Litigation	451	523	483	279	344	396
Criminal Cases	359	469	381	209	303	349
Land & Civil Cases	92	54	102	71	41	47
Cases per Capita	0.21	0.27	0.25	0.15	0.33	0.25
Plots per Title Holder	7.7	3.5	2.6	4.0	3.1	2.7
Plots per Capita	3.95	2.60	1.15	2.25	2.13	1.85
Latitude	0 12S	1 20S	1 21S	1 47S	2 29S	2 39S
Rainfall	42.97	44.27	38.73	39.93	44.91	50.94
Copra Production	267	120	174	167	68	91
Population Density	0.34	0.54	0.43	0.56	0.82	0.67
Land Area	6291	3632	4480	3337	1280	2342
% Male owned Plots	72.6	59.4	62.6	63.5	57.3	64.0
% Jointly owned Plots	33.0	0.3	11.0	21.6	19.7	20.0
Indigenous Government	DEMO.	DEMO.	DEMO.	DEMO.	DEMO.	DEMO.
Island Type	ATOLL	ATOLL	REEF	ATOLL	REEF	REEF

*Criminal cases are averaged over a ten year period

Land cases are averaged over a ten year period

Rainfall is measured in inches averaged over seven years

Copra production measured in tons is averaged over a ten year period

Land area is measured in acres and population density in persons per acre

conspicuous feature distinguishing the dry southern islands from the northern Gilberts and coral islands in general.

As of the year 1963 there were 36,423 Gilbertese, 896 Ellice, and 645 European residents in the archipelago (McArthur and Craig 1963:80). The Gilbert Islands were formally annexed by Great Britain in 1916. The majority of the Gilbertese population is, paradoxically, concentrated on the most unfavorable and southern islands. The more sparsely populated northern Gilbert Islands have until recently had a feudal-type social organization with High Chiefs or "Kings" ruling the population of one or more islands while the southern Gilberts, to this day, have maintained an essentially "democratic" or, more precisely, "oligarcic" form of native political authority.

Although it would seem desirable to compare data from all the sixteen islands I have good reasons to exclude four particular islands from the present study. For example, I have excluded Makin and Butari-tari Islands in the extreme north because the land tenure system of those islands is radically different from all the other islands in the group; Tarawa Island is simply too messy to deal with since a great proportion of native lands have been leased by government and mission agencies headquartered there; and Tabiteuea Island in the southern group is so large that it was impossible to record all necessary data for that island during my two visits to the Gilberts. The exclusion of these four islands still, however, leaves us with a well represented north-to-south continuum of island types that, in my opinion, constitutes more than an adequate sample (75%) from which to generalize about the nature of court litigation in Gilbertese culture.

The data summarized in Table I were collected from government records maintained on all the islands by native Gilbertese functionaries and from the Colony archives at Betio, Tarawa Island. Since complete sets of data were collected for each island, as opposed to samples, the probability of sampling or human error can be dismissed as insignificant. All litigations brought to the attention of the local island government are heard either before the native Lands Court or the Island Court. The Lands Court, in addition to adjudicating all matters related to land ownership and transfer, absorbs the bulk of civil litigations whereas the Island Court primarily functions to adjudicate on cases directly involving breach of the Native Laws. Since there is some overlap in the kinds of cases heard by the two courts it is advisable to subdivide court cases into four categories (i.e., dependent variables) for each island. These are:

- (1) Average number of criminal cases over a ten year period;
- (2) Average number of land and civil cases over a ten year period;
- (3) Average number of litigations heard by both courts over a ten year period;
- (4) Average number of cases per capita over a ten year period.

Eleven independent variables for each island are correlated with each of these categories and then used to derive the correlation coefficients summarized in Table II. In general, these variables fall into two categories: continuous and bivariate. All variables, briefly, include measurement of the following:

1a. Number of plots per land title holder. A land title holder is an adult person who has exclusive or joint legal title to a partic-

TABLE II

RELATIONSHIP OF COURT LITIGATION TO CONTINUOUS AND BISERIAL VARIABLES

	CORRELATION COEFFICIENTS			
	PLOTS PER TITLE HOLDER	PLOTS PER CAPITA	LATITUDE	RAINFALL
CRIMINAL CASES	-0.069	-0.534	0.508	0.843
CIVIL CASES	0.147	-0.474	0.664	0.525
LITIGATION	-0.046	-0.546	0.545	0.835
CASES PER CAPITA	-0.393	-0.331	0.585	0.314
	COPRA PRODUCTION	POPULATION DENSITY	LAND AREA	MALE HELD PLOTS
CRIMINAL CASES	0.656	0.246	0.457	-0.331
CIVIL CASES	0.815	-0.170	0.675	0.091
LITIGATION	0.698	0.204	0.499	-0.292
CASES PER CAPITA	0.397	-0.338	-0.002	0.287
	PLOTS JOINTLY HELD	GOVERNMENT	GEO. CONFIG.	
CRIMINAL CASES	0.538	0.158	-0.540	
CIVIL CASES	0.462	0.398	-0.462	
LITIGATION	0.548	0.193	-0.550	
CASES PER CAPITA	-0.192	0.630	-0.347	

ular section of land. All title holders and land plots are recorded in lands registers maintained by native government officials on each island.

2a. Number of plots per capita. Although plot size is a variable unit the number of plots per capita is roughly indicative of the degree of fragmentation of family estates. This, in turn, relates to the availability of lands per island resident.

3a. Island location by latitude. The Gilbert Islands straddle the equator from north to south with considerable inter island variation in ecology related to latitudinal position.

4a. Average rainfall in inches over a seven year period. The southern Gilbert Islands are periodically exposed to droughts where coconuts, taro, and pandanus plants are notably curtailed in productivity. The northern Gilberts, to the contrary, are favored by a steady annual rainfall and therefore not plagued by the droughts which can make survival precarious for many southern Gilbertese.

5a. Average copra production over a ten year period. Whereas "ecological efficiency" is spurious measurement, the tons of copra sold to the Colony Wholesale Society by island cooperative societies is a preferable measurement of surplus productivity. Surplus copra production is then used as a rough index of economic achievement but it should not be misinterpreted as measurement of potential economic capacity.

6a. Average population density. The exponential growth of the Gilbertese population in the 20th century, in a non-elastic insular habitat, has had detectable effects on both ecology and social

organization. That such relationships can be studied for man should be expected since population density has long been known to have an effect on animal populations (cf. Christian 1961:428-446; Calhoun 1962:139-149; Dorn 1966:319-334; Deevey 1966:336-350; Hoagland 1966: 351-359).

7a. Island area. The Gilbert Islands have never been properly surveyed and area measurements, whether in square miles or acres, are only rough estimates based on aerial maps. Furthermore, the Gilbertese ecosystem incorporates reef and lagoon zones which, like terrestrial resources, are exploited on a continuous all year basis.

8a. Percent of land plots held by males. This is primarily a variable used to measure the relationship between patterns of inheritance and sex of recipients of land plots.

9a. Percent of plots held in joint ownership. Conflicts frequently arise over usufruct privilege when an estate is shared by two or more individuals. Many court cases recorded on Tamana and Nonouti Islands during the year 1964-1965 revealed that joint ownership is a prime source of conflict and formal court litigation.

10a. "Feudal" versus "democratic" or "oligarcic" government. Although the local government structure is, following the imposition of British colonial rule over the islands, basically the same from one island to the next, the traditional political structure (generally speaking, "feudal" in the north and "oligarcic" in the south) has had marked effects on the distribution of the Gilbertese population and in differences between individual island systems of land tenure.

11a. Atoll versus table reef configuration. Although the geomorphology of all the islands is similar, the ecological and potential economic differences between atolls and reef islands are pronounced. The modes of exploitation of natural resources vary considerably between these two types of island and, as such, the physiography of an island can be treated as a variable related to court litigation.

Correlation coefficients

The correlation coefficients for the relationship between the dependent and independent variables summarized in Table II have been computed by the Pearson product-moment method. Correlation coefficients with a value greater than .35 indicate a relationship between the dependent and independent variable. A positive correlation coefficient means that as the dependent variable increases there is a corresponding increase in the value for the independent variable. Conversely, a negative correlation coefficient means that as the dependent variable decreases the independent variable increases in value.

In the following paragraphs I will briefly discuss the significance of the various correlations shown in Table II. To clarify the discussion it is useful to denote the four dependent variables as follows:

DV_1 = Island Court or criminal court cases,

DV_2 = Civil and Lands Court cases,

DV_3 = Litigation before either court, and

DV_4 = Court cases per capita.

1b. The number of plots per land title holder correlate inversely with the number of court cases per capita. For example, as more plots become available there are fewer cases to be heard by the court--or a decrease in the number of court cases per capita signals that more plots of land have become available per title holder. This relation illustrates how land scarcity, measured as the number of plots per land title holder, directly relates to the number of cases brought before the courts.

2b. The number of plots per capita correlates inversely with DV_1 , DV_2 , and DV_3 . This means that as more plots become available on a per capita basis there will be a predictable overall decline in the number of court cases for any given island. If the number of land plots per capita is used as a broad index of population crowding it certainly seems evident that court activities mirror anxieties generated by a culturally defined conception of scarcity or abundance of natural resources. Since land is the ultimate measure of value to the Gilbertese it is now obvious why they, as a population, respond so readily to any factor which decreases the individual's potential or actual access to coconut estates.

3b. The high correlation between latitude and all dependent variables illustrates that there is a higher rate of crime and litigation on the more northerly islands. The more northern the location of an island the more acculturated its population. With increased contacts with Westerners has come new notions of economic independence from fellow islanders--and cooperation, expressed as economic reciprocity, has long ceased to be a necessity for survival in the northern

islands; whereas economic corporation has persisted in the south.

4b. Rainfall averages correlate directly with DV_1 , DV_2 , and DV_3 . The northern and central Gilberts have never been exposed to the long-drawn periodic droughts or short intervals of food scarcity concomitant with low rainfall which are part of life in the southern Gilberts.

5b. Copra production is, of course, intimately related to both latitude and rainfall. It is paradoxical to find a uniformly high correlation coefficient for this variable since higher productivity should theoretically relate to the availability of lands. This is not entirely true, however, since at least 60% of all potential coconut producing plots in the Gilberts are not being exploited to maximum capacity. Such effectiveness of exploitation is continuously hampered by tenacious emotional adherence to ancestral land plot locations. A land owner frequently will not exchange his plots even if a greater maximization of his coconut produce is obvious. Surplus copra for most Gilbertese represents the only source of cash income or means of securing the few luxuries of life -- such as imported cloth, tobacco, bicycles, and steel utensils and tools. I believe that the correlation coefficients for this variable thus can best be explained by the close association of coconut estates with cash income and, in turn, with disputes arising over access to either plots or the small capital derived from such plots.

6b. Population density, surprisingly, does not correlate with any of the four dependent variables. This is particularly interesting since it contradicts common sociological notions regarding the relation-

ship between crime and high density social aggregates. The Gilbertese, in general, quarrel over lands and property but they much prefer to cluster in village settlements. The sociability afforded by village residence is highly treasured by most people who, whenever the opportunity permits, like to gather for communal activities centering around village and island meeting houses or maneaba(s). Tamana Island, for example, is the most densely populated island in the archipelago and it is undoubtedly one of the most hospitable islands that anyone, Gilbertese or European, can visit. This, in part, relates to the absence of the religious factions that on many other islands prevent amicable social relations and cooperative all-island economic efforts.

7b. Land area correlates directly with DV_1 , DV_2 , and DV_3 but shows no significant correlation with respect to the number of court cases per capita. This is somewhat paradoxical at first glance since one would not expect to find an increase in litigations with the greater availability of land. The explanation, of course, resides in the nature of the present land tenure system where an increase in island area (for the islands compared on a continuum) simply means that there will be a parallel increase in land plot dispersion. This immediately gives rise to such legal problems as right of access, usufruct, negligence, and trespass.

8b. There is no significant relationship between court cases and the proportion of land plots owned by men.

9b. Joint ownership of estates creates continuous inter-personal opportunities for feud or formal litigation. The high coefficients for DV_1 , DV_2 , and DV_3 strongly suggest that the traditional principles

of inheritance, ownership, and usufruct privilege generate continuous opportunities for conflict. These conflicts, incidentally, frequently arise among close consanguineal kinsmen who, when it comes to matters of land and moveable property rights, pay less attention to kinship obligations than to self-designated rights. An outside observer only has to witness any session of a local court to realize how emotional ties to land sections can overrule all other social or economic ties.

10b. The DV_2 and DV_4 coefficients indicate that there is a higher rate of land and civil disputes on islands with a "democratic" form of government than on islands with a "feudal" type of government. This is partially accounted for by reference to the historical past where land holdings on the "feudal" islands were, until recently, controlled by a chiefly authority or his consanguineal representatives. Where land title has always resided with individual persons irrespective of social or kinship status on the "democratic" islands.

11b. The negative correlation coefficients for the relationship between court cases and geographical configuration (atoll versus reef island) shows that there is a higher rate of court disputes on atolls than on reef islands. These correlations concur with my comparative observations of the ecology, social organization, and land tenure on Tamana Island (reef) and Nonouti Island (atoll) where problems of existence and social cooperation are intensified in the atoll setting.

Summary and Conclusions

I have briefly outlined and discussed the evidence for the relationships between Gilbertese court disputes and such variables as

island ecology, economic productivity, and principles of land tenure. I now offer four general hypotheses concerning the etiology of court disputes in Gilbertese society:

Hypothesis I

The frequency of land disputes in the Gilbert Islands is related to the scarcity of productive coconut and taro lands and the utilization of such estates by two or more legal owners.

Hypothesis II

The frequency of criminal cases in the Gilbert Islands is related to the structure of the indigenous political system and the differential economic opportunities provided by disproportionate access to coconut producing lands or similar crucial resource areas.

Hypothesis III

The frequency of court litigation in the Gilbert Islands is related to population crowding and joint legal privilege to exploit terrestrial resources.

Hypothesis IV

The number of court cases per capita for the Gilbert Islands relates to economic, political, and geographical features characteristic of each island.

These hypotheses suggest that the causal factors underlying continuous litigation in Gilbertese society reside to a marked degree in independent conditions quite beyond the control of island residents. Such a view, however, does not deny the probable operation of psychological determinants on court behavior. Once the stage for a dispute has been set, the Gilbertese litigant becomes an overt individualist and a bold land claimant. He readily overlooks the real issues of his cause if colorful oratory directed against his opponent promises public recognition.

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SOME LEGAL ASPECTS OF GILBERTESE ADOPTION¹

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Introduction

The present-day generation of Gilbert Islanders treat adoption as a contractual or legal agreement between two parties: the adopter and his consanguine kinsmen constitute one party; the adopted and his respective consanguine kinsmen constitute the second. As other students of Gilbertese culture previously have described the general features of both adoption and fosterage, I have chosen a different and more specific analytic approach. A discussion of some of the legal aspects of adoption, as exemplified by ethnographic data from Tamana Island in the southern Gilbert Islands may possibly bring additional features of the institution to our attention (Lambert 1964: 232-258, this volume; Maude and Maude 1931: 225-235; Silverman, this volume).

The relevance of introducing a legal perspective to the analysis of ethnographic data is, briefly, that since all societies prescribe ideal modes of conduct for its participants...who, in turn, continually challenge or reformulate these ideals...the legal transactions between people naturally embody the cultural beliefs, values, and behavioral patterns defined as requisite to cooperation and social continuity. We can now begin to conceptualize adoption as a particular configuration of abstract behavioral principles supported by social sanctions. The existence of complex relationships between such principles and actual social behavior were empirically validated by Llewellyn and Hoebel (1961) in their penetrating study of Cheyenne law and by Pospisil's (1958) analysis of the Kapauku legal system. Eight court cases from Tamana Island have been included in this paper to further illustrate the nature of these relationships in the context of Gilbertese culture.

The Adoption Contract

"A contract is a promise or a set of promises for the breach of which the law gives a remedy, or the performance of

which the law in some way recognizes as a duty" (Atiyah 1961:20).

The Gilbertese adoption contract most visibly involves the creation of specific rights and obligations connected with the use or ownership of real property. It also signifies the public recognition of a well defined series of reciprocal economic and ceremonial obligations between two kin groups or between members of the same family. These reciprocal obligations usually endure until the adopted child reaches maturity. At that time the adopter discharges the final part of his contractual promises by transferring legal title to part or all of his estate to the adoptee. When this title transfer has been approved by the local island Lands Court the adoption contract has been discharged. While this frees both parties from all further obligation toward each other it does not mean that they thereby dissolve emotional or social bonds. If, on the other hand, these emotional and social bonds break or weaken before the title transfer has been finalized the adoption contract may be discharged by a breach of contractual obligation.

A breach of contract may be induced by members of either party. An adopted child may, for example, be returned to his family if he fails to fully assume the economic responsibilities expected of junior kinsmen of his age and sex. The natural parents of an adopted child may, on the other hand, attempt to terminate the adoption contract if they feel that the adopter neglects to discharge his obligations toward their child or themselves.

Although breach of the adoption contract is rare, it is significant to note that it is precisely when such an exception to the rules

governing adoption, or "trouble case", occurs that we learn what the rules are. In addition, it must be made clear that many of these rules -- i.e., obligations and duties -- are made explicit when two parties declare their intention to enter a contractual relationship before the island Lands Court. At that time, or before a proposed adoption has been approved by the court, we learn that an adopter may have to obtain the consent of his parents, siblings, or natural children before he formally enters an adoptive relationship. The social ramifications which are created by an act of adoption can be better understood if, as stated above, we focus attention on the place of adoption in the sub-cultural legal system involving individual and corporate rights, privileges, powers, and immunities connected with the control of property.

Modes and Consequences of Adoption

The Gilbertese recognize two distinct modes of adoption which, in linguistic usage, are distinguished by applying either a frequentative term for "child" (natinati) or by applying the analogous term "grand-child" (tibutibu) to denote the relationship. The crucial difference in the usage of these terms lies in the differential rights and privileges conferred on the adopted person by his adopter. In case of the person adopted as natinati, these jural rights and privileges are identical to those ordinarily conferred on natural children by direct descent. The person adopted as tibutibu expects to receive the rights and privileges normally extended to any stranger in the form of a gift or as a compensation for a wrong.

Although these two modes of adoption are well defined, it is

exceedingly difficult to be specific about the frequency of adoption in the Tamana Island population. In the first place, the adopter does not fulfill his part of the adoption contract until he transfers the title of some of his property to the adopted person. In the second place, my data do not show the exact age at which various individuals were adopted. I simply wish to acknowledge this lacuna in my data, and in passing to call attention to the statistical aspects of the problem, because the frequency of adoption, obviously, is directly related to the importance of adoption as an element of Gilbertese social organization. The data summarized in Tables 1 and 2 show the distinct preference among the Tamans for adopting consanguine kinsmen. Table 3 illustrates the high proportion of children in the island populace who, theoretically speaking, would be eligible for adoption on the basis of age alone.

[insert Tables 1, 2, and 3]

It is desirable to briefly call attention to the distinction between legal (i.e., an adoption registered and approved by the island Lands Court) and customary or de facto adoption (i.e., an adoption sanctioned by custom or kin group consensus). Table 1 illustrates the present disparity on Tamana Island between legal and de facto adoptions. Customary adoption may be recognized as legal if, as in a case of disputed inheritance rights, acceptable witnesses will testify before the Lands Court and support the claim of the adopted person against those of the natural heirs.

The data summarized in Table 4 show that 85.2% of all legal adoptions on Tamana Island are of the natinati variety. This mode of adoption -- which according to the provisional Lands Code established by the Tamana

Island Council on 16th June, 1950 (Table 5) -- confers specific inheritance rights on the adoptee with respect to his adopter's estate. The person adopted as natinati receives the same inheritance status as his adopter's natural children. Adoption of a person as natinati therefore reduces the size of the inheritance share which would normally be transferred to an adopter's natural children. This, in part, explains why disputes often arise between adoptive and natural children following the death of their common benefactor. In addition, it is now readily apparent why a person usually must obtain the consent of his children before adopting a person as his natinati.

On the other hand, the person adopted as tibutibu can only expect to receive a small share of his adopter's estate. This share is often transferred right at the time of the adoption or, in other words, well before the time when the adopter dies or settles his estate.

TABLE 5

TAMANA ISLAND REGULATIONS GOVERNING ADOPTION

"A "land-of-the-adopted" may only be given if the adoption has previously been approved by the Lands Court. An adoption shall be approved by the Lands Court if it is confirmed that the natural children of the adopter or his next-of-kin if he has no natural children will be left with sufficient land for their support after the gift of a "land-of-the-adopted". If, however, the natural children are guilty of neglecting their parent or live elsewhere and cannot look

after him, the adoption may be approved regardless of their claims. An adoption may be annulled by the Lands Court on the request of the adopter if it is confirmed that the adopted child has not fulfilled his obligations. If an adoption has not been annulled prior to the death of the adopter the adopted child may be granted a "land-of-the-adopted" by the Lands Court notwithstanding the failure of the adopter to make such a bequest.

Only a brother or sister of the natural parent may adopt a child as his or her son or daughter. In such adoptions the child may inherit land from the adoptive parent and his or her spouse and may be disinherited by the natural parent. In all other adoptions the child shall inherit land from his or her natural parents. An only child may not be adopted as a son or daughter but only as a grandson or granddaughter.

An adopted grandson or grand-daughter may not be given more than one land plot, one taro pit, one pond and five "niba" (taro pits capable of holding one plant) by the adopter. The adoption of a stranger is not prohibited. If the adopted person dies without issue the "gifts-of-the-adopted" shall revert to the donor or his heirs. If the adopted person dies leaving issue the "gifts-of-the-adopted" shall pass to such issue and the reversionary interest of the donor is lost.

The regulations governing adoption on Tamana Island (Table 5) exemplify the relationships between Gilbertese conceptualizations of proprietorship and adoption. These relationships similarly allow the ethnographer to conceptualize adoption as a contractual arrangement between two principals (the adopter and the adoptee) together with their respective consanguine kinsmen. The connection between these abstract principles and concrete social behavior will be further illustrated in

the following analyses of court litigations involving adoption.

Court Litigations and Adoption

The Tamana Island Lands Court, presided over by a Gilbertese magistrate appointed by the Resident Commissioner of the Gilbert and Ellice Islands Colony, regularly adjudicates all matters related to adoption. In particular, the Lands Court officially approves or disapproves any proposed adoption, decides disputes between adopted and natural heirs in cases of inheritance, and codifies new island regulations formulated through a concensus of island elders (unimane).

The following cases, heard by the Tamana Island Lands Court between 1955 and 1963, illustrate the nature and social context of disputes involving adoption. These cases, while simplified by the Lands Court's scribe who usually only manages to jot down the most essential points of an often prolonged discourse, show how the court frequently disregards written regulations in favor of situational variables such as, for example, the age of the child to be adopted, the economic situation of the adoptive parents, or the probable hardships resulting from the enforcement of a particularly exclusive or inclusive testament. It should be noted that the prefix "Te" denotes masculine and "Nei" feminine gender.

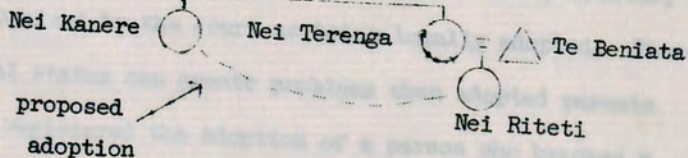
The first case from Tamana Island concerns a formal request from an unmarried woman for the adoption of her sister's infant child. The Lands Court has to decide whether a parent can recant his promise to allow another person to adopt his child. The court's decision, which favors the parent, indicates that the parent of a child promised in adoption may recant such a promise if the would-be adopter fails to

show that he can satisfy the customary economic and social obligations toward the child. A verbal agreement between two parties cannot be said to comprise an adoption contract unless either party can meet the obligations required to make the relationship legal.

Case No. 3/1955 Tamana Island Lands Court

Appellant: Nei Kanere

Respondent: Nei Terenga



Nei Kanere: I wish to adopt Nei Riteti, daughter of Te Beniata and Nei Terenga. It is right that the Lands Court ask Nei Terenga if she will accept the adoption. For some reason she has now decided that it would not be right for me to adopt her child despite the fact that she earlier agreed that the adoption would be acceptable.

Nei Terenga: I claim that the proposed adoption would be unwise as the child is too small to be adopted and Nei Kanere has no husband who can help in the care and support of the baby. I propose that she cancel her wish as she will certainly face a number of difficulties if she adopts my child.

Decision: The Lands Court favors what has been said by Nei Terenga. The proposal for the adoption of Nei

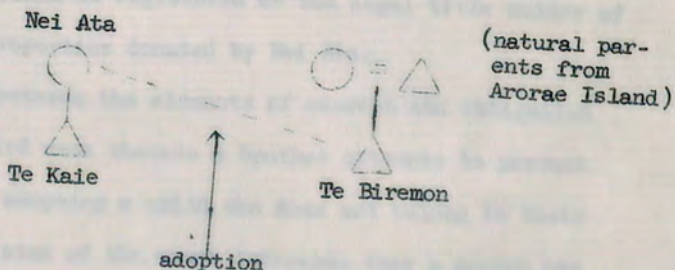
Terenga's child is rejected.

The second case further illustrates the primacy of obligation as an element of the adoption contract. The formal change in status from a de facto to a legal relationship is marked by the registration of a property title in the adoptee's name. This change may occur when the adopter feels that the "adoptee" has satisfactorily fulfilled his obligations or when the "adoptee" appeals to the Lands Court for part of his adopter's estate. To claim all or part of an estate, however, a person must be recognized by the court as being legally adopted. These ambiguities in legal status can create problems when adopted parents die without having registered the adoption of a person who becomes a claimant before the Lands Court. The "adoptee" may possibly win his case against natural heirs if witnesses will testify on his behalf. For these, and other reasons, it is common to find that would-be adopters first obtain the consent of their consanguine kinsmen before they initiate the adoptive relationship.

Case No. 25/1955 Tamana Island Lands Court

Appellant: Nei Ata

Respondent: Te Kaie



Nei Ata: I have treated Te Biremon as my adopted son ever

since his childhood. He has been faithful and looked after me. Because of this I wish to register him as my adopted "son" (natinati) and to transfer the title of some of my properties to his name.

Te Kaie: I sincerely support her proposal of adoption. Te Biremon has been true and faithful in his care of Nei Ata.

Nei Ata: I would like Biremon to have the following:

Lands: Tekirikiri, Tekarara, and Tebwe; Taro pits: Retaki and Tuoua

Decision: The Lands Court agrees to the proposed adoption and to the distribution of the properties, but the adoption can only be confirmed when Te Biremon's parents on Arorae Island have given their consent.

Following the court's request a telegram was sent to Te Biremon's parents on Arorae Island. The reply received expressed the consent of the parents to the adoption.

Decision: Te Biremon is registered as the legal title holder of the properties donated by Nei Ata.

The relationships between the elements of consent and obligation are amplified in the third case wherein a brother attempts to prevent his sister from legally adopting a child who does not belong to their own kin group. The decision of the court indicates that a person has the right to contest an adoption by one of his siblings if he feels

that it may threaten his livelihood or, more important, the future welfare of his own children. It is interesting to note that the appellant's brother attempts to prevent his sister from adopting a person who is not a consanguine kinsman. When Te Tiaban states that "Nei Tutaiman hates my children" he is, in effect, saying that his sister is ignoring her duty to adopt his child as prescribed by custom. Although Te Tiaban's appeal for cancellation of his sister's petition is overruled, his objection to the adoption is given serious consideration by the court. From this we can infer that an adoption contract will be recognized as legal if the principal parties to the adoption (the adopter and the adoptee's natural parents) both give their consent to the adoption. However, it is also clear that the court will not approve such an adoption unless these two parties can satisfactorily demonstrate that the adoption will not jeopardize the welfare and survival of the adopter's consanguine kinsmen by depriving them of adequate land plots.

Case No. 9/1957 Tamana Island Lends Court

Appellant: Nei Tutaima

Respondents: Te Tiaban, Te Teinai, Nei Beteri, Nei Mamao



Nei Tutaima: I appeal to the Lands Court to register Nei Mamao

as my adopted "grandchild" (tibutibu).

Te Teina: I do not object to the proposal

Nei Beteri: I agree to the adoption.

Te Tiaban: I oppose the adoption because Nei Tutaima hates my children.

Te Kauring: This must be well considered because the adoption is opposed by Te Tiaban, Nei Tutaima's brother.

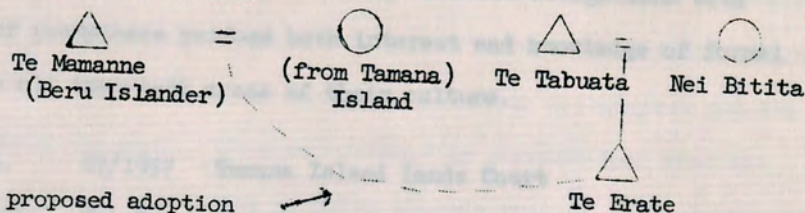
Decision: Te Tiaban is not responsible for the support of Nei Tutaima and if she wishes to adopt the child Nei Mamao it is agreeable to the members of the Lands Court. The adoption is officially recognized by the court.

The element of mutual consent is once again stressed in the following case. The court, at first, seems to waver in its decision to approve the proposed adoption because of the probable complications which could arise if the adopter's consanguine relatives were not consulted before the adoption was registered. However, since the adopter is not residing on his home island (which, in fact, means that he is deriving a living from his wife's estate) the court simply rules that they cannot be concerned with whatever complications may arise on the adopter's home island. We note that this is a natinati adoption and therefore of much more consequence than the tibutibu adoption contested in the previous case.

Case No. 40/1957 Tamana Island Lands Court

Appellant: Te Mamanne (Beru Islander married to Tamana Island woman)

Respondent: Te Tabuata



Te Mamanne: It is my desire to adopt Erate the son of Te Tabuata.

Tabuata: It is agreeable to me if Te Mamanne wishes to adopt my son, Te Erate, as his natinati.

Nei Bitita: I also agree to the proposed adoption

Decision: The adoption can readily be approved by the court since both parents of the child have agreed to the adoption. Te Mamanne, however, has relatives who must also give their consent before the adoption can be legal.

However, since Te Mamanne is a Beru Islander, the Tamana Island Lands Court really is outside of its jurisdiction. However, both of the child's parents have given their consent and the adoption of the child as te natinati is granted.

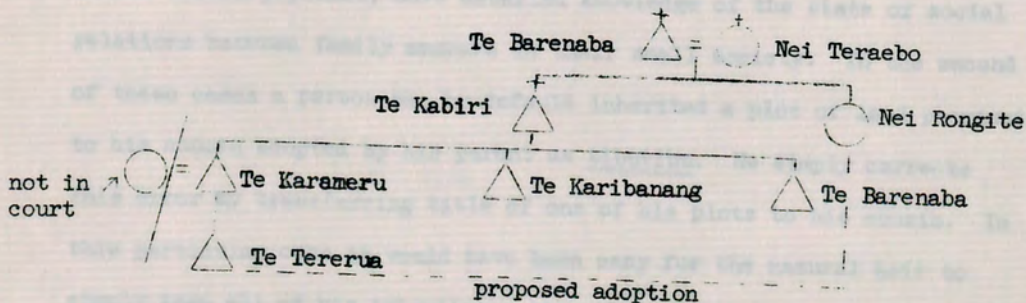
In the next case we also see the importance of consent. First we note that all the siblings of the natural parent appear in court to voice their approval of the proposed adoption but that the adoptee's mother, and her relatives, have not appeared in court. I do not know if the adoptee's maternal relatives deliberately have stayed away from the court or if they simply did not know that their presence was required. The former assumption is probably the correct one since most Gilbertese

although seemingly casual about executing official obligations with any degree of promptness profess both interest and knowledge of formal procedure in all important areas of their culture.

Case No. 27/1957 Tamana Island Lands Court

Appellant: Nei Rongite

Respondents: Te Karibanang, Te Barenaba



Nei Rongite: I appeal to the lands Court to register Te Iererua as my adopted "child" (natinati).

Te Barenaba: I accept the adoption.

Te Karibanang: I accept the adoption

Decision: It appears that the adoption is accepted by the father's side only and not by the mother's side. The adoption proposal therefore cannot be approved by the Lands Court until such consent is obtained. Te Iererua's mother and her relatives will be summoned to the next meeting of the Lands Court.

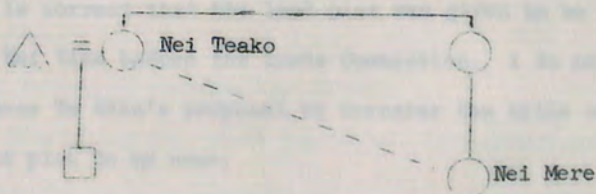
The two following cases are brief and uncomplicated. In the first of these, we observe how the adoption contract is finalized by the registration of a land plot in the name of the adoptee. Although the

adopter's natural children have not appeared in court they have apparently voiced their consent. This slight oversight of a procedural technicality by the court may result in future litigation between the adoptee and the adopter's natural children. However, it must be acknowledged that the jurors and the island magistrate probably already know if such complications would be likely to arise since they, like all other adult members of the Tamana Island populace, have detailed knowledge of the state of social relations between family members in their small society. In the second of these cases a person has by default inherited a plot of land promised to his cousin adopted by his parent as tibutibu. He simply corrects this error by transferring title of one of his plots to his cousin. In this particular case it would have been easy for the natural heir to simply keep all of his inheritance since his rights have been confirmed by an act of the Lands Commission. What we see displayed in this case, however, is part of the pride which the Gilbertese take in being known among their fellows as honorable and generous in their dealings with others.

Case No. 30/1963 Tamana Island Lands Court

Appellant: Nei Teako

Respondent: Nei Mere



Nei Teako: I have come to make an allotment of my land Aonterkeri.

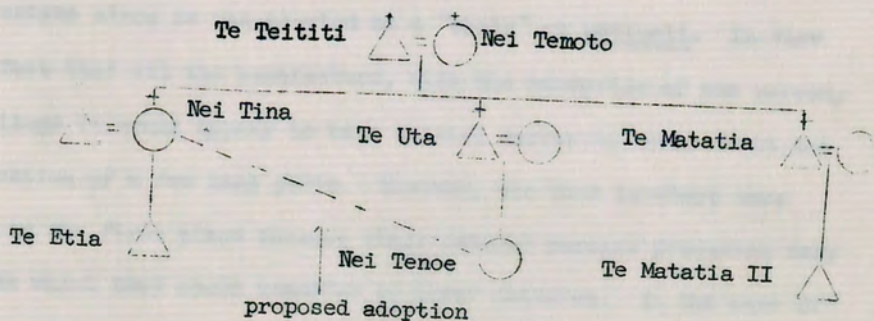
I request that Nei Mere should be registered as owner of plot No. 35. My children have given their consent.

Decision: Plot No. 35 on Aontekeru will be registered in Nei Mere's name.

Case No. 4/1955 Tamana Island Lands Court

Appellant: Te Etia

Respondent: Nei Tenoe



Te Etia: I have come to return the land plot named Tebun to Nei Tenoe. This plot was given to Nei Tenoe by my mother before all the lands on the island were registered by the government's Lands Commissioner. At the time of the Lands Commission (1950's) I won the plot back.

Nei Tenoe: It is correct that the land plot was given to me by Nei Tina before the Lands Commission. I do not oppose Te Etia's proposal to transfer the title of that plot to my name.

Decision: It is agreed that the land should be returned to Nei Tenoe in accordance with the former will.

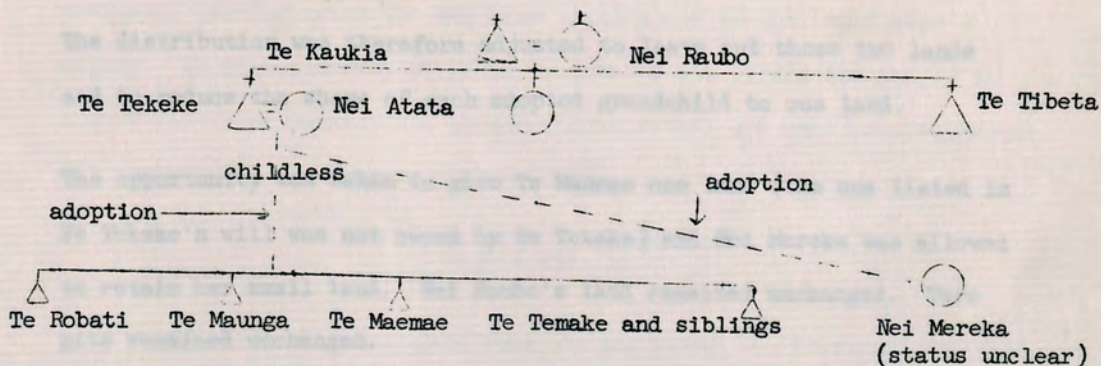
The final case illustrates the complications which often arise when natural and adopted heirs have to divide an estate following the death of their common benefactor. The appellant bases his claim for a greater share of his father's estate on the legal distinction between the natinati and tibutibu modes of adoption. The European officer who adjudicated this appeal upholds the appellant's claim by redistributing the lands so that each of the deceased person's adopted "grandchildren" receive one share of land only and the claimant receive the remainder of the estate since he was adopted as a "child" or natinati. In view of the fact that all the benefactors, with the exception of one person, are siblings it would appear to be a trivial matter to worry about the re-allocation of a few land plots. However, the four brothers were adopted in the first place because their natural parents possessed very few lands which they could transfer to their children. In the case of Te Robati, for example, he has no other lands than what he has received from his adopter (Lundsgaarde 1966: Appendix A-1 and A-2). Since Te Temake was the eldest sibling in the group he was given the preferential inheritance status conferred to a person adopted as natinati.

Appeal No. 1/1960 Tamana Island Lands Court (adjudicated by
European government officer)

Appeal of Case No. 20/1959

Appellant: Te Temake

Respondents: Nei Raubo, Te Maunga, Nei Mereka
Te Robati and Nei Atata (last two respondents not
present)



The appellant claims that the defendants were adopted as grandchildren and not as children and should therefore have received only one land for the adoption, and he, Te Temake, should have received the remainder of the estate. Temake's cousin, Nei Raubo, received her share of the estate in 1954--the land Barebuka. Te temake claims that only Te Robati, Te Maunga and Te Maemae were adopted and that Nei Mereka was not adopted.

Respondent Te Maunga agrees that Nei Mereka was not adopted but was never-the-less included in Te Tekeke's will. Te Tekeke was nursed by Te Robati.

Despite the fact that the court members agreed that the appellant had not neglected Te Tekeke and that consequently only one land should go to each of the adopted grandchildren in accordance with the Lands Code, they, in fact, followed the terms of Te Tekeke's will. Again, in accordance with the Lands Code, only wills which comply with the Lands Code should be allowed. The Magistrate, Scribe, and court members, as well as Te Tekeke in his will, had also overlooked the fact that two lands--Teinati and Karakiboi--were lands of adoption received by Te Tekeke and upon his issueless death they should revert to the donor's

family.

The distribution was therefore adjusted to leave out those two lands and to reduce the share of each adopted grandchild to one land.

The opportunity was taken to give Te Maemae one land (the one listed in Te Tekeke's will was not owned by Te Tekeke) and Nei Mereka was allowed to retain her small land. Nei Raubo's land remained unchanged. Taro pits remained unchanged.

Decision: Te Robati should be given the land Natano as a land of adoption. Te Maunga should have, by adoption, the land Tebaro. The land Tenibaobao should be given to Te Maemae as land of adoption. The land Barebuka should be given to Nei Mereka as land of adoption from Te Tekeke. Te Temake with siblings should have the land Abaora and Te Temake alone should have one half of the lands Maetane and Tanginimate. Nei Raubo should have the land Barebuka. The taro pits should remain as they were.

Adoption and Group Relations

I will now conclude the discussion by briefly examining the role of adoption in intra and inter family relations. The "trouble cases" presented in the previous section illustrate that Gilbertese adoption involves a large number of people who are related to the two principal parties. These people partly participate in the reciprocal obligations created between the adopter and the adoptee or they may be directly concerned with the transfer of property which has to take place if the adopter honors his obligations toward the adoptee. This transfer of property rights and privileges is a likely source of conflict.

between the benefactor, his natural or adopted heirs, and all other potential beneficiaries who may have legal claim to the benefactor's estate. If this transfer of property takes place within the family it simply serves to consolidate an ancestral estate and reaffirm reciprocal obligations between kinsmen (Figure 1).

[insert Fig. 1]

It is generally recognized that one quick way to discourage reciprocal expectations (i.e., reduce the demands for economic goods or services) is to refuse to adopt one's sibling's child or, worse, to turn around and adopt someone who is not even a relative. Such an act is interpreted as a mild insult against one's siblings and it most effectively serves as a warning signal to one's natural heirs that unless they prepare to take better care of their aging parents their inheritance share will be markedly reduced. We note, however, that most adoptions on Tamana Island have involved members of the same consanguine family unit (Tables 1, 2, and 4). In this way adoption symbolizes family solidarity by establishing additional ties between kinsmen and it is not solely to be regarded as a convenient way to reallocate rights and privileges to scarce natural resources among destitute members of the family. Conflicts involving equity (i.e., problems relating to the interpretation of customary rules, principles, or precedents to be followed by the two parties who have entered a contractual relationship) could also be avoided if only childless couples were permitted to adopt children from destitute families. As the matter stands, however, the adoption of a non-relative, particularly if it is of the natinati variety, is commonly regarded as a direct slap in the face of one's consanguine

kinsmen (Figure 2).

[insert Figure 2]

The contrast between the information derived from the eight court cases concerning adoption and the various motives for adoption outlined by Tamana Island informants in interviews illustrate the complexity of adoption as a social institution. The most frequent responses to questions about the motivations for adoption include:

1. The desire to transfer property if a couple is childless.
2. To provide a destitute or orphan child who has been slighted by his own family members in terms of inheritance.
3. To insure a comfortable old age by taking a younger person into the household who will supply his adoptive parents with food and generally perform the necessary tasks requiring the strength and endurance of youth.
4. To reciprocate and solidify a cordial social relationship with members of a different kin group or strengthen the emotional and economic ties with one's sibling or most distant consanguine relatives.

These motivations for adoption, as well as the traditional procedures abided by all parties involved in an adoption, have not been significantly altered since the Maudes first described and analyzed Gilbertese adoption in the 1930's (Maude and Maude 1931:225-232).

Although the data described in the court cases illustrate the behavioral reality of these motivations they also suggest that the Gilbertese view adoption as more than a simple procedure for creating

families for childless couples or as a counter measure against the debilities of old age. If, for example, childlessness was a primary motive for adoption it would be difficult to understand why such a high proportion of Gilbertese with natural children should choose to adopt additional children when they already have large families to support. It would also be difficult to comprehend why people living at a marginal subsistence level would choose to become involved in long-term economic obligations when they already are burdened by obligations toward consanguine kinsmen.

The discrepancy between the motives for adoption and actual behavioral performance has partly been explained by noting how the contractual relationship between two principal parties can lead to conflicts among their consanguine kinsmen. These secondary parties may either gain or lose when the adopter transfers title to part of his estate to the adoptee and thereby concludes his final legal obligations specified by the adoption contract.

NOTE

1) This is a revised version of a paper read at the annual meeting of the American Anthropological Association in Denver in November, 1965. I wish to thank Vern Carroll, Ward Goodenough, Bernd Lambert, Michael Lieber, Martin Silverman, and the other contributors to this volume for valuable criticisms and suggestions. Data on adoption were collected during fieldwork in the southern Gilbert Islands in the year 1964-1965 with the financial support of a National Science Foundation grant to Professor Homer G. Barnett and a Woodrow Wilson Dissertation Fellowship. Additional grants from the University of California and the National Institute of Mental Health (grant #1 R03 MH 13042-01) permitted me to revisit the Gilbert Islands during the summer of 1966 and helped to defray the costs of revision of an earlier version of this paper.

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ADOPTION AND JURAL RIVALRY: TAMANA ISLAND, SOUTHERN GILBERT ISLANDS¹

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Introduction

Since adoption in the Gilbert Islands creates specific and reciprocal jural relations between both individuals and corporate kin groups it is essential to study how and why such relations develop, persist, or dissolve in response to the formal aspects of adoption. Gilbertese adoption will be described as a particular aspect of a complex, and often ambiguous, system of individual and corporate rights, privileges, powers, and immunities connected with the control of property (cf. Hohfeld 1964; Lundsgaarde 1966). As other students of Gilbertese culture previously have outlined the general features of both adoption and fosterage a more specific and different analytic approach may possibly bring additional features of the institution to our attention (Lambert 1964:232-258; Maude and Maude 1931:225-235).

In general, the Gilbertese view adoption as a contract or formal agreement between two parties usually consisting of the adopter, the adopted, and their respective consanguineal kinsmen. The relationship between two different kin groups, or two sub-groups within the same kin group, is particularly significant until the time when the adopted person reaches maturity. The natural parents of an adopted child commonly expect to receive small gifts of surplus food and other valuables from the adopter and his immediate relatives. The natural parents of an adopted person may also exercise their jural power to terminate

the adoption if the adopter fails to recognize his duties toward their child or themselves. This, of course, is the adopter's disability.

On the other hand, the adopter may cancel the adoption if the adopted child fails to comply with his obligations which are defined as a demonstrated and continuous willingness to supply his adoptive parents with fish and coconuts or, in more general terms, to assume the economic responsibilities appropriate for a junior kinsman of his age and sex. While a person frequently adopts a child before he himself has acquired title to an estate, or where he shares usufruct privilege with his siblings over an undivided estate, he must obtain the consent of his parents, siblings, and often that of his natural children before formally entering an adoptive relationship.

It is exceedingly difficult to determine the frequency of adoption in the Tamana Island population (Tables 1, 2, and 3) because (a) the adopter does not fulfill his part of the contract until he transfers the title of some of his property to the adopted child and (b) my data do not show the exact age at which various individuals were adopted. In passing, I simply wish to acknowledge this discrepancy of my data and to call attention to the statistical aspects of the problem because the frequency of adoption, obviously, relates directly to the relative importance of adoption as an element of Gilbertese social organization.

Modes and Consequences of Adoption

The Gilbertese recognize two distinctive modes of adoption which, in linguistic usage, are classified by a frequentative term for "child"

(natinati) or "grandchild" (tibutibu). Either of these terms, however, can be used to denote adoption of any person, kin and non-kin alike, who is one, two, or three generational links below the adopter.

The crucial distinction between these two modes of adoption is therefore not generational distance, as the terminological usage would seem to suggest, but a difference in the particular rights and privileges conferred on the adopted person by his adopter. The data summarized in Table 4 show that 85.2% of all registered adoptions on Tamana Island are of the natinati variety. This, by itself, is significant since this mode of adoption is decidedly the most favorable from the viewpoint of the adopted person and, conversely, the least favorable from the viewpoint of the adopter's natural children. In addition, Table 6 illustrates that the natinati mode of adoption is not used by the Gilbertese on Beru Island. This, perhaps, reflects a deliberate avoidance by the residents of that island of the jural problems which often arise when an estate has to be divided between natural and adopted heirs.

In case of the person adopted as natinati, these jural rights and privileges are identical to those ordinarily conferred on natural children by direct descent. The person adopted as tibutibu expects to receive the rights and privileges normally extended to any stranger in the form of a gift or as compensation for a wrong.

It is desirable to distinguish between legal (i.e., an adoption registered with the Island Lands Court) and customary or de facto adoption (i.e., adoption sanctioned by custom or kin group consensus).

Table 1 illustrates the present state of affairs on Tamana Island.

Customary adoption may be recognized as legal if, as in a case of disputed inheritance rights, acceptable witnesses will testify before the Island Lands Court and support the claim of the adopted person against those of the natural heirs. Whether an adoption is recognized as legal or customary, however, the adopter must make a prescribed gesture of intent to confer rights of inheritance and usufruct privilege to his adopted child.

A few elementary algebraic expressions can be used to illustrate the precise jural consequences of adoption as natinati or tibutibu. To simplify even further, property is used to refer to the same thing as title to coconut lands, coconut trees, taro pits, sea-walls, fish ponds, or any movables which may substitute for or complement the title transfer of a person's estate.

According to the regulations for adoption established by the Tamana Island Council on 16th June, 1950 (Table 5), any act of legal (i.e., registered) adoption confers specific inheritance expectations on the adopted person. In brief, suppose that n represents the number of modular land units owned by person A and that A has x number of children. First, one notes that each child's share of A's estate will be n/x . Second, if A adopts a child as his natinati the share to his natural children becomes $n/x + 1$. Third, if A adopts a child as his tibutibu the share to his natural children becomes $n-1/x$. The person adopted as natinati thus receives equal status with A's natural children since both have equal inheritance expectations with respect

to A's estate. Adoption of a person as natinati quite obviously reduces the share of the adopter's natural children and this, in part, explains why disputes often arise between adoptive and natural children following the death of their common benefactor. In addition, it is now readily evident why a person usually must obtain the consent of his children before adopting a person as his natinati.

Quite to the contrary, the person adopted as tibutibu only expects to receive $n-1/x$ shares of A's estate or the equivalent of the customary share distributed to any outsider in the form of a gift or as compensation for a wrong. The share of the tibutibu is, incidentally, often transferred at the time of adoption or, in other words, well before the time when A dies or settles his estate.

By substituting a numerical value for n (say $n = 10$ plots of coconut land of about one acre each), it immediately becomes evident how the two different modes of adoption directly relate to differences in the number of shares subtracted from A's estate or the size of the share expected by A's natural children. If A has only two children and if he does not adopt anyone the share to each child will normally be 5 plots. Suppose, then, that A adopts a child as his natinati the share to his natural children will be reduced to $3 \frac{1}{3}$ plots. If A, on the other hand, had chosen to adopt a child as his tibutibu the share to his natural children would only have been slightly reduced since each would receive $4 \frac{1}{2}$ plots. Considering the possibility that A may choose to adopt more than one person, or give away some of his plots in some other way, the final share to his children may quite

easily be reduced to something like $n-1/x+1$ or only 3 plots of land per natural child. To summarize, it is evident that the expected inheritance share of a person adopted as natinati can be expressed as $n/x+1$ and that of the tibutibu as $n-1/x$. Each mode of adoption, therefore, can be used to create or rearrange interpersonal relations which, in turn, are ultimately founded on rights and privileges to property.

The scarcity of lands, the rapidly accelerating island population, and the high value placed on land ownership by the Gilbertese people combine to illustrate how adoption can and is used as an effective means of rearranging and manipulating interpersonal relations. At least two possibilities come to mind: (a) adoption can be used to consolidate holdings of an ancestral estate and to reaffirm kinship ties (Fig. 1), (b) adoption can be used to fragment or disperse the plots of an ancestral estate and thereby contribute to a weakening of ties within a corporate group composed of consanguineal kinsmen (Fig. 2).

Furthermore, because property is transferred in accordance with a bilateral principle of succession (e.g., a person, whether male or female, generally inherits property from both of his parents) it can be said that the sex of the adopted person is only a minor, if not altogether insignificant variable affecting the social relations created by adoption. It is clearly evident, however, that the choice of a particular mode of adoption and the kinship status of the adopted person are crucial determinants of such relations.

If the principle of bilateral succession is traced through several generation time intervals, where each interval is composed of sibling groups, it can be hypothesized that the ancestral estate eventually will be fragmented or, in fact, dispersed among individuals who cannot be classified as consanguineal kinsmen of the original land owner. Several principles of Gilbertese land tenure serve to decelerate this process, and adoption is merely one way to prevent fragmentation of a family estate (see Fig. 1 and Fig. 2).

One wonders if it is entirely coincidental that the preferred patterns of adoption on Tamana Island (Tables 2 and 4) involve the adoption of a person's consanguineal kinsman or his spouse's sibling's child. For example, the economic relationships between two inlaws are frequently intensified by adoption. Also, this same relationship between inlaws was formerly (and still is on other islands in the archipelago) a permissive sexual relationship termed te eiriki. I doubt if the Gilbertese recognize that, following the eiriki custom, one's adopted child could easily be one's natural child. Although poorly documented by actual incidents it is at least worthwhile to consider that adoption involves both property and affective relationships which, given other data, can be explained as consistent with other principles of social organization.

Court Litigations and Adoption

The Tamana Island Lands Court, presided over by a Gilbertese magistrate appointed by the Resident Commissioner of the Gilbert and Ellice Islands Colony, regularly adjudicates all matters related to formal

adoption. In particular, the Lands Court officially approves or annuls proposed adoption, decides disputes between adopted and natural heirs in cases of inheritance, and codifies new island regulations formulated by consensus of island elders (unimane). Tables 5 and 6 illustrate how the residents of two islands in the Gilbert Islands archipelago observe slightly different regulations concerning adoption.

The following cases, heard by the Tamana Island Lands Court between 1955 and 1963, illustrate the nature and social context of disputes involving adoption. These cases, while simplified by the Lands Court's scribe who usually only manages to scribble down the most essential points of an often prolonged discourse, show how the court frequently disregards written regulations in favor of situational variables such as, for example, the age of the child wanted for adoption, the economic situation of the adoptive parents, or the probable hardships resulting from the enforcement of a particularly exclusive or inclusive testament.

Case No. 3/1955 Tamana Island Lands Court

Appellant: Nei Kanere (Si)

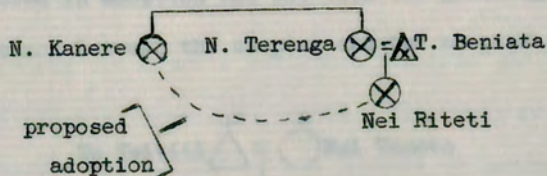
Respondent: Nei Terenga (Si)

Nei Kanere: I wish to adopt Nei Riteti, daughter of Te Beniata and Nei Terenga. It is right that the Lands Court ask Nei Terenga if she will accept the adoption. For some reason she has now decided that it would not be for me to adopt her child despite the fact that she earlier agreed that the adoption would be acceptable.

Nei Terenga: I claim that the proposed adoption would be unwise as the child is too small to be adopted and Nei Kanere has no husband who can help in the care and support of the baby. I propose that she cancel her wish as she will certainly face a number of difficulties if she adopts my child.

Decision: The Lands Court favors what has been said by Nei Terenga. The proposal for the adoption of Nei Terenga's child is rejected.

Discussion: This case clearly illustrates how adoption may serve to weaken reciprocal ties within the corporate kin group.



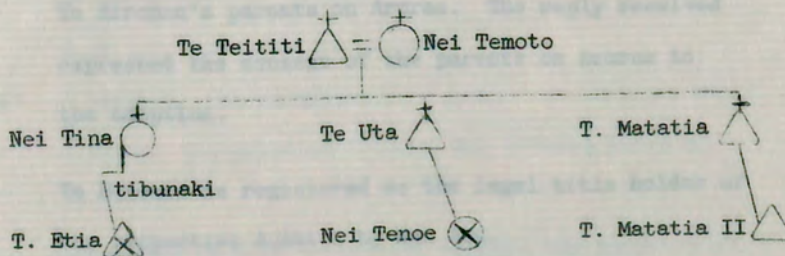
Case No. 4/1955 Tamana Island Lands Court

Appellant: Te Etia

Respondent: Nei Tenoe

Te Etia: I come to return the land Tebuu 26/ne to Nei Tenoe. This land was given to Nei Tenoe by my mother before the Lands Commission. At the time of the Lands Commission I won the land back.

- Nei Tenoe: It is correct that the land was given to me before the Lands Commission by Nei Tina. I do not oppose Etia's proposal.
- Decision: It is agreed that the land should be returned to Nei Tenoe in accordance with the former will. The land Tebuu/ne-2N will be registered in the name of Nei Tenoe Euta.
- Discussion: Nei Tenoe was adopted by Nei Tina and the land is classified as "te aba n tibu" (note: the distinction between the natinati and the tibutibu modes of adoption is made clear. The distinction between the two modes of adoption resides with the proportion of the estate donated in adoption and not with the genealogical distance between the adopter and the adopted child.



Case No. 25/1955 Tamana Island Lands Court

- Appellant: Nei Ata (Adoptor)
- Respondents: Te Kaie (son) and Te Biremon (son of Arorae Island parents)
- Nei Ata: I have treated Te Biremon as my adopted son ever since his childhood. He has been faithful and looked after me.

Because of this I wish to register him as my adopted son (natinati) and to transfer the title of some of my properties to his name.

Te Kaie: I sincerely support her proposal of adoption. Te Biremon has been true and faithful in his care of Nei Ata.

Nei Ata: I would like Biremon to have the following:

Lands: 63/o--3N; Tekirikiri 75/u--3R; 1/2 Tekarara 80/ea 3N; Tebwe 95/a--3N.

Babai pits: Retaki 52/ma--R618; Tuoua 105/u--R919.

Niba: 20 (3838-3857)

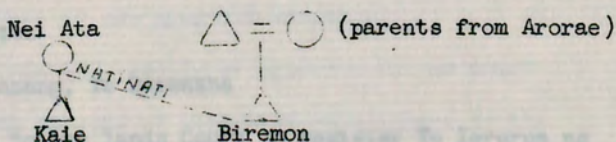
Decision: The Lands Court agrees to the proposed adoption and to the distribution of the properties, but the adoption can only be confirmed when Te Biremon's parents on Arorae have given their consent.

Following the court's request a telegram was sent to Te Biremon's parents on Arorae. The reply received expressed the consent of the parents on Arorae to the adoption.

Decision: Te Biremon is registered as the legal title holder of the properties donated by Nei Ata.

Discussion: De facto adoption may take place without registration of property title. To claim lands, however, the adopted person must be recognized by the court (this is a common source of property disputes, e.g., adopted parents die without having registered the adoption of a child, and technically this leaves that

person without any legal claim to the deceased person's estate). Note that the minimum gift of land stipulated by the Provincial Lands Code of 1950 is upheld by the court as 1 plot for a person adopted as te tibutibu and an equal sibling share for the person adopted as natinati.



Case No. 9/1957 Tamana Island Lands Court

Appellant: Nei Tutaima

Respondents: Te Tiaban, Te Teinai, Nei Beteri, Nei Mamao

Nei Tutaima: I appeal to the Lands Court to register Nei Mamao as my adopted child (tibutibu).

Te Teina: I do not object to the proposal.

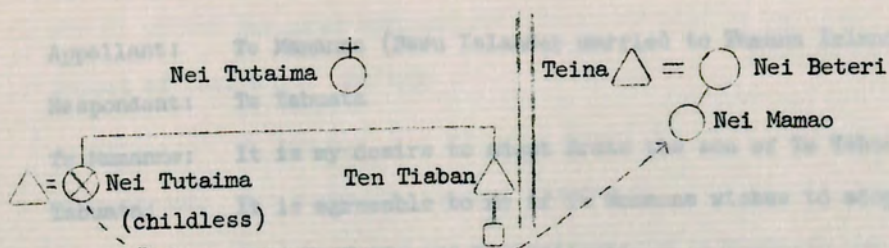
Nei Beteri: I agree to the adoption.

Te Tiaban: I oppose the adoption because Nei Tutaima hates my children.

Te Kauring: This must be well considered because the adoption is opposed by Te Tiaban, Nei Tutaima's brother.

Decision: Te Tiaban is not responsible for the support of Nei Tutaima and if she wishes to adopt the child Nei Mamao it is agreeable to the members of the Lands Court. The

adoption is officially recognized by the court.



Case No. 27/1957 Tamana Island Lands Court

Appellant: Nei Rongite

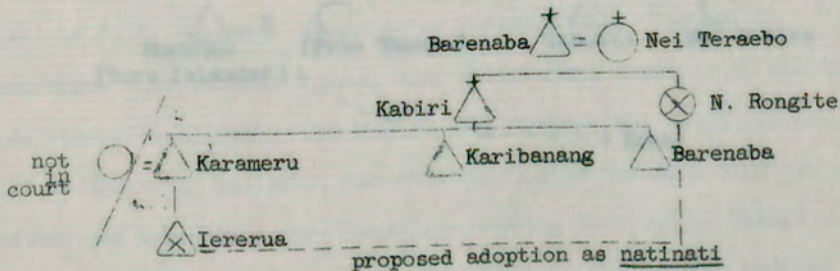
Respondents: Te Karibanang, Te Barenaba

Rongite: I appeal to the lands Court to register Te Iererua as my adopted child (as natinati).

Te Barenaba: I accept the adoption.

Te Karibanang: I accept the adoption.

Decision: It appears that the adoption is accepted by the father's side only and not by the mother's side. The adoption proposal therefore cannot be approved by the lands Court until such consent is obtained. Te Iererua's mother and her relatives will be summoned to the next meeting of the lands court.



Case No. 40/1957 Tamana Island Lands Court (adjudicated by ...)

Appellant: Te Mamanne (Beru Islander married to Tamana Island woman)

Respondent: Te Tabuata

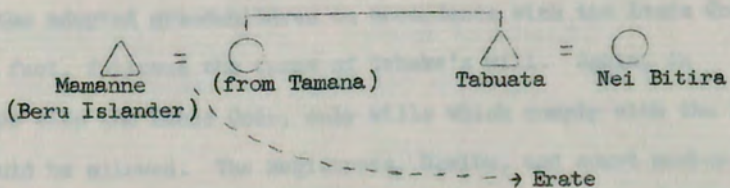
Te Mamanne: It is my desire to adopt Erate the son of Te Tabuata.

Tabuata: It is agreeable to me if Te Mamanne wishes to adopt my son, Te Erate, as his natinati.

Nei Bitita: I also agree to the proposed adoption.

Decision: The adoption can readily be approved by the court since both parents of the child have agreed to the adoption. Te Mamanne, however, has relatives who must also give their consent before the adoption can be legal.

However, since Te Mamanne is a Beru man, the Tamana Island Lands Court really is outside of its jurisdiction. However, both of the child's parents have given their consent and the adoption of the child as te natinati is granted.



Appeal No. 1/1960 Tamana Island Lands Court (adjudicated by
European Officer)

Appeal of Case No. 20/1959

Appellant: Te Temake

Respondents: Nei Raubo, Te Maunga, Nei Mereka

Te Robati and Nei Atata (last two respondents not present)

The appellant claims that the defendants were adopted as grandchildren and not as children and should therefore received only one land for the adoption, and he, Te Temake, should have received the remainder of the estate. Temake's cousin, Nei Raubo, received her share of the issueless estate in 1954--the land Barebuka 27/0. Temake claims that only Robati, Maunga and Maemae were adopted and that Nei Mereka was not adopted.

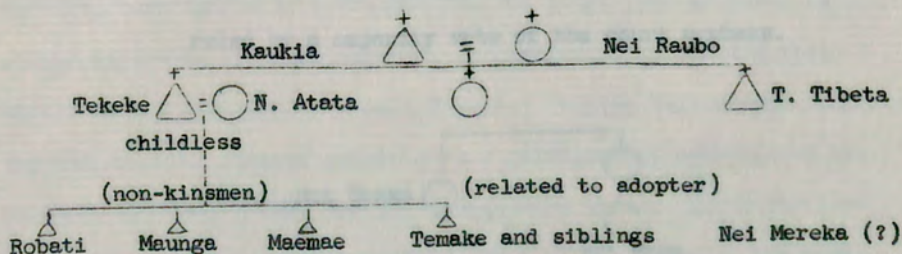
Respondent Maunga agrees that Nei Mereka was not adopted but was nevertheless included in Tekeke's will. Tekeke was nursed by Robati.

Despite the fact that the court members agreed that the appellant had not neglected Tekeke and that consequently only one land should go to each of the adopted grandchildren in accordance with the Lands Code, they, in fact, followed the terms of Tekeke's will. Again, in accordance with the Lands Code, only wills which comply with the Lands Code should be allowed. The Magistrate, Scribe, and court members, as well as Tekeke in his will, had also overlooked the fact that two lands--Teinati and Karakiboi--were lands of adoption received by Tekeke and upon his issueless death they should revert to the donor's family.

The distribution was therefore adjusted to leave out those two lands and to reduce the share of each adopted grandchild to one land.

The opportunity was taken to give Maemae one land (the one listed in Tekeke's will was not owned by Tekeke) and Mereka was allowed to retain her small land. Nei Raubo's land remained unchanged. Pits, niba, and nei remained unchanged.

Decision: Robati should be given the land Natano as a land of adoption (1/2 Maotane 23/e). Maunga should have, by adoption, the land Tebaro 28/m. The land Tenibaobao should be given to Maemae as land of adoption. The land Barebuka should be given to Mereke Raturu as land of adoption from Tekeke. Temake Kaucia with siblings should have the land Abaora 2/n and Temake alone should have 1/2 Maetane and Tanginimate 68/a. Nei Raubo should have the land Barebuka 27/o. The pits and the niba should remain as they were.



Case No. 30/1963 Tamana Island Lands Court

Appellant: Nei Teako (MoSi)

Respondent: Nei Mere (SiDa)

Nei Teako: I have come to make an allotment of my land Aontekeri. I request that Nei Mere should be registered as owner of plot No. 35/ea. My children have given their consent.

Decision: Plot 35/ea on Aontekeri will be registered in Nei Mere's name.

Discussion: Nei Mere was adopted by Nei Teako as tibutibu long before the "land-of-the-adopted" was transferred to her name. One member of the Lands Court rejected the proposal on grounds that written or verbal consent first had to be obtained from Nei Teako's children who, at this particular time, were living on one of the other islands in the archipelago. The objection was overruled by a majority vote of the court members.



Conclusions

In conclusion, let us briefly look at the various motives for adoption outlined by Tamana Island informants. The most frequent responses to questions about adoption include:

1. The desire to transfer property if a couple is childless.
2. To adopt a destitute or orphan child who has been slighted by his own family members in terms of inheritance.
3. To reciprocate and solidify a fictive kinship relationship (te bo) or strengthen the emotional and economic ties with one's siblings or more distant consanguineal relatives.
4. To insure a comfortable old age by taking a younger person into the household who will supply his adoptive parents with food or generally perform the necessary tasks requiring the strength and endurance of youth.

I think here that both Lambert (1964:235) and the Maudes (1931: 225-226) have tended to overemphasize the point that adoption is primarily motivated by childlessness. As evident from Table 4 this surely is not the case on Tamana Island. Perhaps this simply reflects our own cultural view of adoption as a relationship established between a childless couple and an illegitimate child. The Gilbertese prefer to adopt their own relatives and I think, bringing the argument to its logical conclusion, that their motives for doing so are self-evident from the previous discussion. Adoption, as the matter stands, is a fundamental and highly integral element of Gilbertese

social relations that, most visibly, evolve around the manifest cultural concern with rights and privileges over lands.

Considering the motivations outlined above, the advantages of adopting (and being adopted by) a relative are infinitely greater than if adoption occurs outside the large group of consanguineal kinsmen (sometimes numbering about 200 individuals). The Gilbertese make a clearcut distinction between bonds of consanguinity and all other social relations. Since consanguinity involves a person in a series of reciprocal obligations and expectations concerning economic and corporate activities, adoption is merely one way to affirm existing relations or, in some cases, to dissolve or modify reciprocal expectations.

Adoption of a non-relative, particularly if the adoption is of the natinati variety, is commonly regarded as a direct slap in the face of one's consanguineal kinsmen. It is generally recognized that one quick way to discourage reciprocal expectations (i.e., reduce demands for economic requests) is to refuse to adopt one's sibling's child or, worse, to turn around and adopt someone who is not even a relative. Such an act is interpreted as a mild insult against one's siblings and it most effectively serves as a warning signal to one's natural heirs that unless they prepare to take better care of their aging parents their inheritance share will be markedly reduced.

NOTE

¹This is a revised version of a paper read at the annual meeting of the American Anthropological Association in Denver in November, 1965. I wish to thank the participants in the symposium on "Adoption in the Pacific" for contributing valuable criticisms and suggestions. Data on adoption were collected during fieldwork in the southern Gilbert Islands in the year 1964-1965 with the financial support of a National Science Foundation grant to Professor Homer G. Barnett and a Woodrow Wilson Dissertation Fellowship.

DISTRIBUTION OF ADOPTED
PERSONS BY SEX AND STATUS;
TAMAIKA ISLAND, 1964 (II)

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Relationship of Adopter and Adopted	Ethnographer's Census		Island Court Records	
	male	female	male	female
	No.	%	No.	%
Kinman	26	24	12	4
	24	36.4	480	16.0
	30	31	18	7
	330	470	720	280
	66	1100	35	100
Status of Adopted Person	No.	%	No.	%
Male	26	22.4	30	76.0
Female	24	36.4	10	24.0
Male	2	17.0	10	24.0
Female	7	20.8	10	24.0
Male	35	80.0	31	100.0
Female	31	47.6		

Table 1

**DISTRIBUTION OF ADOPTED
PERSONS BY SEX AND STATUS;
TAMANA ISLAND, 1964 (1)**

Relationship of Adopter and Adopted	Ethnographer's Census				Island Court Records			
	male		female		male		female	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Kinsmen	26	39.4	24	36.4	12	48.0	4	16.0
Not Related	9	13.6	7	10.6	6	24.0	3	12.0
Sub Totals	35	53.0	31	47.0	18	72.0	7	28.0
TOTAL	66 (100%)				25 (100%)			

Table 2

**PREFERENTIAL MODES
OF ADOPTION ON
TAMANA ISLAND, 1964 (2)**

Status of Adopted Person		No.	%	No.	%
Kinsman	Male	26	39.4	50	76.0
	Female	24	36.4		
Non Kinsmen	Male	9	13.6	16	24.0
	Female	7	10.6		
Male		35	53.0	66	100.0
Female		31	47.0		

(1) Tamana Island government records.

(2) Ethnographer's census, 1964.

20. Humphrey 4-66

Figure 1

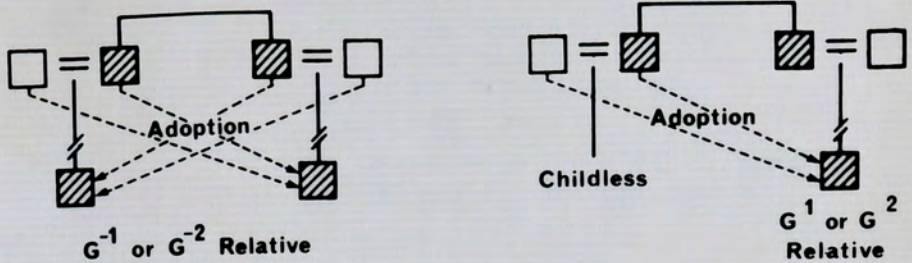


Figure 1: Consolidation of an ancestral estate and reaffirmation of reciprocal obligation within the corporate kin group or the Gilbertese utu by adoption of a consanguineal relative.

Figure 2

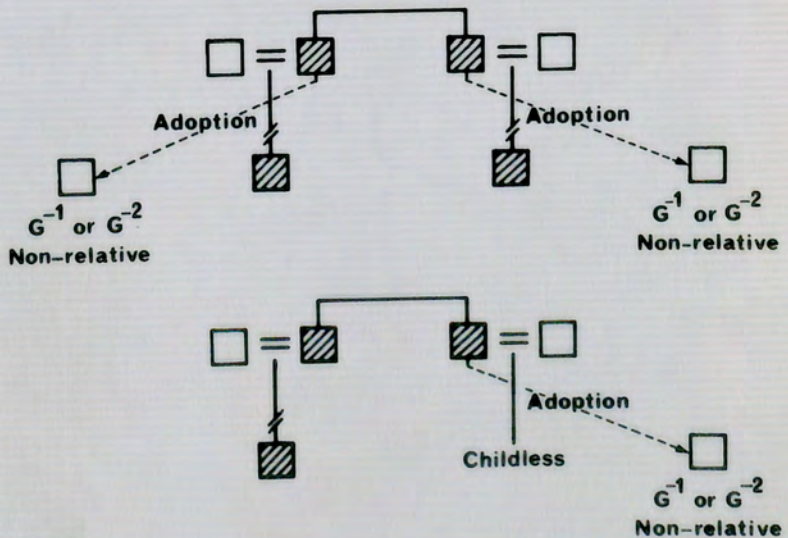


Figure 2: Fragmentation of an ancestral estate and weakening of reciprocal obligations within the corporate kin group or the Gilbertese utu by adoption of a non-relative.

Table 3

AGE AND SEX PROFILES OF
TAMANA ISLAND RESIDENTS,
GILBERT ISLANDS, 1963⁽¹⁾

TOTAL MALES: 568 (-----•)
TOTAL FEMALES: 673 (•-----)
TOTAL POPULATION: 1241

(1) ADAPTED FROM G.E.I.C. CENSUS
OF THE POPULATION. 1963:107

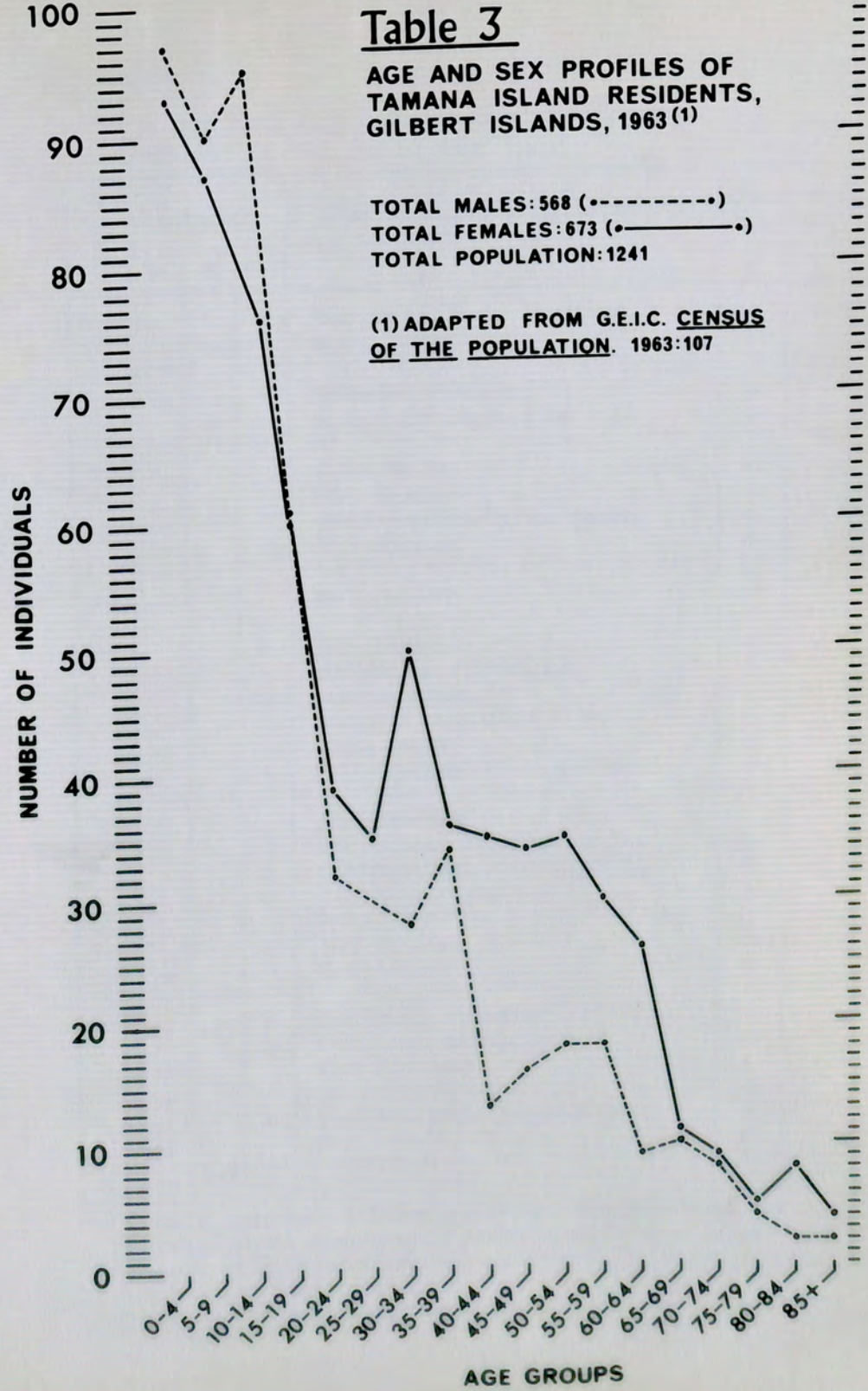


Table 4

FREQUENCY AND MODE OF LEGAL ADOPTIONS ON TAMANA ISLAND, 1957-1964⁽¹⁾

Year	Adopter			Relationship of Adopter(s) to Adopted	Mode of Adoption	
	M	F	M+F		N	T
1957		+	+	Not Related MoSi-SiSo	+	+
1958	+	+		WiBrSo - FaSiHu MoSiSoDa - FaMoSiDa	+	
1959	+			SiDa-MoBr Not Related Wi(ex husband's)So - MoHu Not Related	+	
1960	+			BrSo - FaBr	+	
1961	+		+	Not Related FaSiSoDa - FaMoBrSo Not Related WiBrSo - FaSiHu SiSo - MoBr (Wi)FaBrSoSo - FaFaBrDa(Hu)	+	
1962	+		+	Not Related (Hu)SiDaSo - MoMoBr(Wi) (Wi)FaBrDaDa - MoFaBrDa(Hu) (Wi)BrSo - FaSi(Hu)	+	+
1963	+		+	Not Related SiSo - MoBr	+	
1964	+		+	(Wi)BrSo - FaSi(Hu) (Wi)SiSo - MoSi(Hu) Not Related WiBrSo - FaSiHu (Hu)MoSiSoSo - FaMoSiSo(Wi) Not Related	+	
8	12	2	11		25	2

M: Male Adopter; F: Female Adopter; M+F: Husband and Wife Combined Adopters; } : Adoption by two or more persons; N (Natinati): Adopted as "Child"; T (Tibutibu): Adopted as "Grandchild"

(1) Tamana Island Government Records

R.V.H. 4-66

Table 5

TAMANA ISLAND REGULATIONS GOVERNING ADOPTION⁽¹⁾

A "land-of-the-adopted" may only be given if the adoption has previously been approved by the Lands Court. An adoption shall be approved by the Lands Court if it is confirmed that the natural children of the adopter or his next-of-kin if he has no natural children will be left with sufficient land for their support after the gift of a "land-of-the-adopted". If, however, the natural children are guilty of neglecting their parent or live elsewhere and cannot look after him, the adoption may be approved regardless of their claims (7). An adoption may be annulled by the Lands Court on the request of the adopter if it is confirmed that the adopted child has not fulfilled his obligations. If an adoption has not been annulled prior to the death of the adopter the adopted child may be granted a "land-of-the-adopted" by the Lands Court notwithstanding the failure of the adopter to make such a bequest.

Only a brother or sister of the natural parent may adopt a child as his or her son or daughter. In such adoptions the child may inherit land from the adoptive parent and his or her spouse and may be disinherited by the natural parent. In all other adoptions the child shall inherit land from his or her natural parents. An only child may not be adopted as a son or daughter but only as a grandson or granddaughter.

An adopted grandson or grand-daughter may not be given more than one land plot, one pit, one pond and five "niba" by the adopter. The adoption of a stranger is not prohibited. If the adopted person dies without issue the "gifts-of-the-adopted" shall revert to the donor or his heirs. If the adopted person dies leaving issue the "gifts-of-the-adopted" shall pass to such issue and the reversionary interest of the donor is lost.

(1) Excerpted from the Provisional Lands Code for Tamana Island,
16 June 1950

Table 6

BERU ISLAND REGULATIONS GOVERNING ADOPTION⁽¹⁾

If a man or woman adopts a child as "Tibu" and has issue of his own he will normally give one piece of land to the Tibu. Should the adopting couple be very rich they will give one piece each to the Tibu as "te aban Tibu".

There is no custom of adopting as "Nati" but, should a man have no children of his own but only an adopted Tibu, the Tibu will sometimes live with the man (or woman) in every respect as his real Nati until his (or her) death. In that case he may be given all the lands of the adopter in the same manner as the real issue would and to the exclusion of the adopter's brothers and sisters.

A person adopted by a man (or woman) is also adopted by the spouse and will normally receive his land from the adopting parent who

has most land.

"Te aban Tibu" will be given on the death of the adopter or when he divides his land on old age.

A person adopted as Tibu will still receive the same share of his real parent's lands as his real brothers and sisters. His "aban Tibu" will be regarded as a "raka" and personal to him and will not be counted in any division made by his real parents.

Nearly all adoptions are of people on the island. Few are adopted from outside the island except orphans who will usually come under the exceptional case detailed above, being regarded as a Nati for all practical purposes. The old men state that even this is a new custom which has arisen owing to modern peaceful traveling. In former times no one traveled except to make war and seize lands, and no children were brought back to be adopted.

"Te aban Tibu" will not revert to the adopter or his utu on the death of the adopted without issue. The old men are unanimous on this point and state that the modern decision to the contrary by the Native Court is an ever according to native custom.

"Te Nini Marai" may be given by the parents of an adopted child to the adopters. This land will be used by them in return for looking after the child, and on the child growing up it will be given to him and subtracted from his share of his real parents land when the parents make their "katautau".

A man can adopt with or without the consent of his utu, but sometimes, should he have only a few lands and many children, he will adopt without giving the adopted child any "aban Tibu".

Should a child die before he has grown up enough to receive the "Nini Marai" given the adopter by his real parents, the "Nini Marai" will return to the real parents.

(1) Excerpted from N.D. Townsend, Land Customs-Beru Island. (Unpublished manuscript.)

PROJECT TITLE: LAND TENURE SYSTEMS IN THE GILBERT ISLANDS

1. Research Plan:

A. Introduction and specific aims:

The primary objective of this study is to expand on my previous work on coral island ecology, customary systems of land tenure, social organization, and population crowding in the Gilbert Islands. My published monograph entitled Cultural Adaptation in the Southern Gilbert Islands is the only study of its kind in this culture area and possibly the only study by a social anthropologist which compares the similarities and differences in social organization between coral atoll and reef island populations using quantitative data on land tenure and jurisprudence to support observational data. I expect that the extension of that study to include all the islands in the Gilbert Islands archipelago will serve as an initial phase of a broader project on Gilbertese land tenure and jurisprudence with eventual comparison of findings to data from the adjacent Marshall and Ellice Islands. Analyzed data from Nonouti and Tamana Islands in the southern Gilberts indicate a high correlation between such variables as island physiography and ecology, population density, social organization, and variations in the size and productive quality of per capita land holdings. I can now postulate the following:

Postulate 1:

The frequency of litigations concerning property rights reflect (a) psychological tensions arising from increased scarcity of terrestrial resources concomitant with an increase in population densities, (b) human confinement to an insular ecological niche where alternative modes of social behavior are restricted by the necessities of survival and where court litigation, like former cultural emphasis on recitation of oral traditions and genealogies, provide one of the least threatening modes of cultural expression for innovative or creative talents.

Postulate 2:

The degree of land fragmentation and the number of court litigations on each island constitute a measurable index of overpopulation.

Postulate 3:

The problems of scarcity of terrestrial resources will be multiplied when the phosphate mines on Nauru and Ocean Islands, which provide the most significant source of cash income and government revenue for the colony, are depleted sometime within the next ten to fifteen years.

Data collected this summer will be used to develop and test hypotheses about the relationships between five measurable variables which are:

1. Land holdings per capita, per island, and by sex of owner
2. Population size and density per island
3. Surplus copra productivity per island
4. Property litigations per capita and per island
5. Rainfall per island by geographical location in the archipelago

To delineate these interrelationships I propose to do the following:

- a. Collect and analyze all available statistical data on land holdings, frequency of property disputes, economic productivity in terms of exports, and population size for all islands in the Gilbert Islands archipelago.
- b. Correlate geographic, demographic, and economic attributes of each island and compare these to the frequency of land litigations and the number of land title holders.
- c. Develop a numerical expression of Gilbertese population crowding based on analysis of the relationship between the number of registered land owners by sex and island residence, productive quality of coconut plots, and survival minimums as conceptualized by Gilbertese informants. This assumes that land holdings can serve as an index or gross measurement of both crowding and overpopulation. Subsequent studies in the area will focus on the cultural and historical factors which influence these variables.
- d. Describe interisland variations in the modes of property ownership and transfer to coordinate findings with current efforts to revise the Lands Code for the Gilbert and Ellice Islands Colony. This, by itself, presents a rare opportunity to study the processes of legal syncretism -- the formulation of written laws founded on traditional and procedural native law -- and to directly test the applicability of empirical generalizations when incorporated into government policy.

- B. Methods of procedure: Both statistical and linguistic data on land tenure patterns will be collected:
- a. Quantitative data: All islands in the archipelago, excepting Nonouti and Tamana Islands from which I already have statistical data, will be visited to permit examination and copying of local court records and land registers. These data are not available outside each island since no duplicates are kept by the central government at Tarawa. All data obtained in this manner will be coded as follows: island, number of registered land owners by sex, number of joint versus singly held estates, number of plots by quality, mode of transfer if known (i.e., estate received by direct inheritance from either parent or as a gift from a non-relative), relationship between quality of land to sex of transferor and sex of recipient. It must be emphasized that these data will represent the total universe, not a sample, of land ownership patterns for each island.
 - b. Taxonomic data: Insofar as time permits I will expand on my data related to the ways which the Gilbertese categorize and conceptualize their cultural universe related to the complex rights, duties, privileges, and liabilities of the exclusive or corporate use of terrestrial resources. This approach parallels that used by Goodenough on Truk Island and, in general, conforms to the so-called "ethnoscience" techniques of analysis successfully employed by American ethnographers since the 1950s.
- C. Significance of this research: Since land ownership is of direct concern to the Gilbertese -- and government administrators who indirectly face the problems of preventing excessive fragmentation of coconut estates and the codification of land tenure principles -- this study will initially attempt to answer the simple questions related to variation in the per capita distribution of lands per island. By deliberately restricting the scope of this study to a few manageable variables it should be possible to outline the ecological and cultural problems facing a large and expanding population confined to a limited and culturally isolated terrestrial space.
- D. Facilities available: The Gilbert and Ellice Islands government has offered to make all of the above mentioned records available for my inspection and further extended whatever cooperation may be required by government officials. The University of California, Santa Barbara, computer research facilities will be used to program and correlate the statistical data.

E. Organization framework: This project does not require collaboration with any other organizational element. I have no contract agreement with the Gilbert and Ellice Islands government to disclose any of my findings to them outside published accounts.

II. Supporting Data:

A. Previous work done in this or related fields: Chapters V and VI of my published monograph entitled Cultural Adaptation in the Southern Gilbert Islands are enclosed in this application to illustrate the nature of both data and generalizations derived from a study of the land tenure patterns on two islands in the archipelago. In addition, a large portion of the twelve-month period of field research was devoted to language acquisition. Since all island records are written in Gilbertese, my knowledge of the Gilbertese language is an essential and prerequisite part of the proposed research.

B. Personal publications: All my publications to date have been cited under the section entitled "Research and/or professional experience." My Ph.D. dissertation has been submitted to the editors of the University of Washington Press for consideration as a book. If the manuscript is accepted it will be totally rewritten, and findings from the period covered under this research proposal will possibly be incorporated in that book.

C. Pertinent literature references:

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II. Supporting Data (cont.)

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III. Research and/or Professional Experience:

University of California, Santa Barbara

1965 - 1966 Assistant Professor of Anthropology

Research: Analysis of ethnographic field data collected in the southern Gilbert Islands in the year 1964-1965. A paper entitled Adoption and Jural Rivalry: Tamana Island, Southern Gilbert Islands was read at the 1965 annual meeting of the American Anthropological Association. This paper outlines the modes of adoption found on Tamana Island and relates these to customary principles of property control and distribution of estate holdings. A separate but related study entitled Gilbertese Jurisprudence: The Transformation of Customary Law from 1892 to 1965 IS IN PROGRESS. This study concerns the observable processes of cultural syncretism resulting from the addition of British colonial government regulations and ordinances to Gilbertese procedural law. Since serious crime in the colony is negligible, matters related to land transference and ownership are of primary concern to both island residents and administrative officials. Numerous and continuous litigations over land holdings appear to correlate with rising interpersonal tensions over adequate distribution of terrestrial resources precipitated by an accelerated numerical increase and crowding of island populations.

Gilbert and Ellice Islands Colony, Central Pacific

1964 - 1965

Woodrow Wilson Doctoral Dissertation Fellow (University of Wisconsin)
Adjunct Research Assistant (University of Oregon)

Research: Investigation of the ecology, social organization, juridical systems, and language on three islands (Nonouti, Tamana, Tabiteuea) in the southern Gilbert Islands was undertaken to compare indigenous Gilbert Island societies with relocated Gilbertese communities in the Solomon Islands. Analysis of these data was aimed toward understanding the relationships between systems of land tenure, procedural law, and environmental-demographic variables. The results have been published in monograph form by the University of Oregon under the title: Cultural Adaptation in the Southern Gilbert Islands.

University of Washington, Seattle

Summer 1963

American Council of Learned Societies Fellow

Professional experience: Participation in the 1963 Linguistic Institute with course work in morphology and syntax, history of linguistic theory, structural semantics.

Nez Perce Indian Reservation, Idaho

Summer 1962

Graduate student (NSF support from research grant to Professor William W. Elmendorf)

Research and professional experience: Student participant in the Washington State University field school in ethnography and linguistics. Investigation of language and culture relationships, kinship behavior, and folk taxonomies. Two published papers have resulted from this field experience: (1) "A three dimensional approach to kinship analysis," in Anthropology Tomorrow, Vol. IX, pp. 13-22, 1963 -- concerns the analytic procedures for analysis of kinship terms by application of the componential method. (2) "A structural analysis of Nez Perce kinship," to appear in Research Studies, Washington State University Press, 1966 -- provides a detailed analysis of the techniques for derivation of structural principles from semantic analysis and classification of kinship terminology. This paper explores the relationship between linguistic models and patterns of social behavior.

III. Research and/or Professional Experience (cont.)

8

Kodiak Island, Alaska

Summer 1961

Graduate student (NSF, NIMH support from research grants to Professor William S. Laughlin)

Professional experience: Student participant in the University of Wisconsin combined anthropology-zoology expedition to Kodiak Island. Brief participation in archaeological excavation of early Eskimo sites. Primary study of small Koniag Eskimo village with collection and analysis of both life history and ethnohistorical data.

Solvang, California

1960 - 1961

Undergraduate student in Anthropology

Research: Senior year independent anthropology research project. A study of a Danish immigrant settlement in California tracing the development of the semi-utopian community from its early 20th Century establishment to present day conditions with a critical evaluation of Florence Kludkhohn's value orientation hypotheses. The results were published in Acta Sociologica, Vol. 7, Fac. 1:1-18, 1963, under the title "Differential Assimilation and the Perpetuation of Sub-Cultural Goals: A Pilot Study of a Danish-American Village in California."

25 March 1968

Paper to be presented at symposium on relocated communities, Society for Applied Anthropology, Berkeley, 27 April 1968 (not for quotation without author's permission)

Modernization, Relocation, and the Colonial System:
An Essay in Conjectural History

M. G. Silverman
Program in Anthropology
Princeton University

The Banabans were the indigenous community of the phosphate island of Banaba (Ocean Island), a part of the Gilbert and Ellice Islands Colony. In 1945, accompanied by some Gilbertese, they moved to Rambi Island in Fiji. The group in 1964 numbered almost 2000.

In speaking about relocation, we inevitably speak about continuity and change. Continuity and change in what depends upon our preoccupations and theoretical assumptions. In this paper I will focus on differentiation within and between social and symbolic systems: roughly, the specialization of sub-structures and the degree of "embeddedness" of the symbolic system in local, existing conditions.¹

With all due respect to the spirit of Radcliffe-Brown, I subtitle this paper, "an essay in conjectural history." Fully aware of the dangers (but more excited by the prospects of what anthropologist and historian can do for one another), I am using modernization and kinship theory and what we know of other colonial societies to fill in gaps and explicate the likely course of events.²

There are four paramount things about the history on Ocean Island, although not distinctive to it: First, differentiation took place in the direction of Western, non-traditional institutions. Second, with differentiation Banaban institutions became incorporated and in some instances identified with them. Third, the integration of those institutional networks was at times quite remote

from the local scene. And fourth, at the same time as and in part because of these developments, there was a growing sense of community identity in a much more comprehensive way than before. The Banabans became a sort of ethnic minority interest group on their own island, more conscious of themselves as they became less self-sufficient. I must explain how this process came about.

In pre-Christian times people lived on fish and tree crops. Banaba was divided into districts, hamlets and sub-hamlets, each with a founding ancestor whose bilateral descendants identified themselves with the respective units. An order of precedence was recognized among them through differentiated rights exercised in activities associated with 'meeting houses' and 'spirit houses,' which existed at the district or hamlet levels. These units functioned mainly in ritual and recreational situations, including handling visitors from the outside. More diffuse solidary ties were recognized in the context of the bilateral kindred. As a whole, the structure was more "ego-oriented" than "group-oriented" (in Schneider & Roberts' terms).³

Religious action was oriented to an incompletely systematized set of spirits related to descent units and spirits which controlled or symbolized certain natural phenomena. The religion was not "other-worldly" in nature. We thus have a relatively undifferentiated picture.

In 1885 the first Protestant missionary arrived on Banaba. The very activities and existence of the mission, whether people were converted or not, brought to awareness and thus systematized the native structure; it could be contemplated as an object. Christianity decreased the "embeddedness" of the cultural in the social system. With the literacy missionaries taught, it presented a symbolic system ideally free of particular people in particular places.⁴ Social structurally, the church was far from what existed before: it introduced a non-ascriptively recruited, continuing, solidary, exclusive

membership group organized on quasi-bureaucratic lines. It brought a theology stressing the individual's relationship to God, but defining religious action also in terms of strong groups. It carried a universal morality, which in the long run was of central importance, as it meant that kinsman, Banaban, Governor and Parliament were bound by a single moral system. It provided a unified moral means of envisioning the world as a whole. And that this systematic "breaking into" the modern world was in moralistic terms has its effects today.

The local church was part of an international network, and religious roles became more differentiated from other roles.⁵ But the idea of Banaban progress became linked with Christianization (as was of course the case elsewhere), and Christianization with the church which brought it about. (The idea of progress was probably a new one, and presupposes a tension and thus a marked differentiation between social and symbolic systems.)

Only fifteen years after the mission arrived a company discovered and began working phosphate. This was followed by some of the apparatus of the British government in the Gilberts.⁶ Some time during the early colonial period, four centralized villages were established; there are four on Rambi, named for those on Banaba, with some continuity of personnel.

The social field thus expanded to include the phosphate company, government, mission, Banabans and their respective establishments. Now the Banabans fit into the politico-legal structure of British administration. Banaban political differentiation increased, but the structure was "political" in a very broad sense, perhaps communicating information more than "selecting and ordering" goals (Parsons), and articulating with other forces in the field.

The claim to legitimacy of the Banaban local government, instituted on lines similar to those in the Gilberts, was partially on traditional grounds and partially on modern grounds of 'representativeness.' This was legitimacy of

personnel rather than function, since the functions were new. Some of the figures, with others who commanded respect, constituted an informal Establishment, mainly of elders. The matters of importance with which the Banabans had to contend were few, except for dealing with the phosphate company. The administration and company made a corporate unit of them, since it was decided that the bulk of their share of phosphate monies had to go into a community trust fund. As part of the colonial field, one may think of them (for certain purposes) as a corporate interest group.

In the emerging colonial society the company may be seen as the major differentiated economic structure, having a monopoly both on mining phosphate and retailing imported goods. Banabans were land-owners and workers, and used cash.⁷ Working for the phosphate company, in which achievement standards were applied, differentiated economic action more strongly.⁸ And up to 1931 at the latest, they thought of the phosphate company as operating at their pleasure. But then the Banabans refused to accede to company terms for acquiring new land areas; this was solved by compulsory arbitration which the Banabans did not regard as being in their interests. Events of this period brought into question the legitimacy of two of the institutions which were the very foci of Banaban differentiation.⁹

Ocean Island had become a company town, the company providing services performed elsewhere by other units. The administration was coordinating the different structures: the churches, the company, the Banabans. But its position at times was compromised by the company's influence in London (it was in part a competing center of power.) For some matters, integration was achieved in London, not in the Gilberts at all.

The differentiation of a concrete more economically-oriented Banaban structure occurred just before the war: a cooperative, which received support from community funds. It also represented an expression of independence from the company structure, and was thus an implementation of the generalized idea of Banaban solidarity, with the potential of unifying various segments of the population.¹⁰

And what of the matrix out of which differentiation had occurred? Kinship ties still had (and have) powerful solidarity, sociability and socialization functions. The descent unit structure (still involved in marriage ritual) was partially "historicized," serving identity functions and operating as a set of "subjective status categories," at least as much as a set of institutionalized norms. As a culturally differentiated structure it became elaborated and systematized by different people in different ways; thus attempts to implement it met with difficulty.

The necessity for eventual resettlement was realized quite early in official circles; the phosphate, although quite extensive, was not inexhaustible, and the community would have no source of income on a devastated island after its exhaustion. In 1940 government officials indicated that Rambi was available for sale, and the Banabans expressed their willingness to move. They also selected a local official as Banaban Adviser, and he eventually accompanied them to Rambi. The war brought discussions to a close; Ocean Island was occupied, and the Banabans deported to three other islands. During the war, the structures to which Banaban institutions were tied collapsed, but secretly some religious activities -- the most transportable -- were performed. There was thus a dedifferentiation from the local perspective, the Banabans becoming simply laborers for the Japanese. Being outside the system for the first time, they may have been better able to contemplate it as an object. Meantime, the

government purchased Rambi with invested Banaban phosphate royalties. When the war ended the people were brought together and agreed to go to Rambi,¹¹ where people now live mainly from cash received for copra; public works and other jobs supported by community phosphate income, and some direct payments from the phosphate company. They also derive subsistence from fishing, gardening, and a few small-scale commercial enterprises.

Relocation surely had the effect of "distancing" people from their system; in order to constitute themselves as a community, they had to "objectify" their system.¹² Rambi could be compared with Banaba, Fiji with the Gilberts, the post-war situation with the pre-war, and so on.

Given the close interrelationship of Banaban differentiation with the Ocean Island structure, the analytic drama consists in what happened when the community became unplugged. It was in large measure confusion, and we must go further to account for it.

We will look at some of the problems with which the emerging social organization had to contend: orientation to the cultural system; orientation to the colonial, economic and religious environments of Fiji and the Gilberts; orientation to the new environment of Rambi, and orientation to the internal complexity of the Rambi population.¹³

I will refer to a few of the conditions applying in each. In the cultural system, we locate as value foci: group autonomy, group solidarity and conservation of cultural identity, a high level of consumption of modern goods and services, religious salvation, personal freedom and repute, and the maintenance of diffuse solidary ties. The problem lies in the structuring of commitments. A number of these values were developed within the Ocean Island colonial situation. A clear ranking did not emerge, nor did a clear differentiation between means and ends. I am not suggesting that such ranking and differentiation must

occur,¹⁴ but that the colonial situation as outlined was not conducive to it. One reason is that in the ideal model of integration, high-level values are specified through norms at various levels of social structure. An orderly "specification" process can be hindered where the institutional framework is incorporated with alien forces and not systematized. There can be a cultural elaboration of these values without their institutionalization, and certain potential contradictions which institutionalization would bring to attention are not obvious: such as in the implementation of autonomy, solidarity, freedom, and high level of consumption. And this indeed has become the Banaban problem, plaguing the elected Island Council, so much so that action in many spheres becomes stymied.

There is a related problem the implications of which we shall see shortly: particularly in the earlier phases of contact, the outside agents are more or less "detached specialists." Religious specialists, for example, recognize (implicitly, at least) that there are other commitments to which those manifest in proselytizing must be subordinated. At the colonial periphery, however, the natives may not be aware of that kind of structuring of commitments. Similarly, at home, the activities of specialists are integrated socially by a structure that is lacking at the colonial periphery. Hence the lines of differentiation among the institutions which outside agents represent are drawn differently from the way they are drawn in the metropolitan countries. There is a kind of dedifferentiation, to which some native responses may be linked.

The colonial organization in Fiji featured a greater differentiation of administrative and legal roles, the encouragement of local autonomy in certain domains, and a greater remoteness of the representatives of institutions than was the case on Ocean Island.¹⁵ The Banabans were placed in a new administrative hierarchy the lines of which were not entirely clear vis-à-vis their position

in it. There were also economic aspects in the stress on development and cooperative societies.

Fiji's economic environment was less monopolistic, more segmented, with a number of large and small corporations whose activities concerned people on the smaller islands. The colonial environment of the Gilberts -- relevant because of phosphate -- became simply more remote, and less approachable because of involvement in the Fiji organization.

With regard to religious organization: some continuity was maintained through the responsibility of the London Missionary Society for the Rambi mission, but that was transferred to the Fiji Methodist Church. Rambi Catholics related to the Fiji Catholic organization, and there was much more religious activity in Fiji, with more sects seeking converts. (Religious ties brought people into contact with members of other ethnic groups.)

The natural environment of Rambi was most easily exploitable for copra and gardening, activities encouraged by the government, and which had played a small role in the Banaban economy. There was a recoverable part of the establishment of the island's former owners, who ran Rambi as a copra plantation.

The aspect of the internal complexity of the population I shall mention is the presence of Gilbertese, mainly spouses and friends of Banabans. On Ocean Island they were tied in with the company structure. On Rambi a Banaban organization had to "place" them, and in the context of Fiji law.

We can say that on Banaba in the old days, the major focus of external concern was the physical environment; with colonialism, the social environment; now, a new physical environment, and new sets of social environments. The complexity of the situation radically increased, and one should not underrate the cognitive complexity, which along with value conflict may be responsible for inactivity or erratic activity in certain domains.

What was the social response to these "conditioning" factors? The first phase suggests the development of a "totalistic" response.¹⁵ The old cooperative, which was the more differentiated Banaban economic structure, assumed direction of gathering and marketing copra, and retailing. The old local government was partially resuscitated, but later revised into an Island Council under Fiji ordinance, with eventually each village electing two members.¹⁷

The council and the cooperative were intimately tied, in an interlocking directorate of some members of the old Banaban establishment of elders. The Adviser tried to differentiate between the council as an administrative structure and the co-op as an economic structure, but was thwarted. The council and co-op were essentially the political and economic branches of a single structure, with personnel and money going back and forth, because they were both seen as equally instruments of the Banaban community as a community. The focus was on the societal system as a single system.

The leaders of this movement also tried to unify the community in a single church -- their own, and that of the majority of Banabans. Many of the Catholics were Gilbertese, and it was thought that they should accede to the truly Banaban church. The focus on the church's importance is related to the perception of it not only as an organization that could overcome the difference between Banaban and Gilbertese in a Banaban manner, but also as one that could submerge the rivalries based on the descent unit system that were in some measure being revived. For it was a purely Banaban mode of organization, and under new conditions there was a chance that the status categories could become less "subjective" than before.¹⁸

The initial "totalistic" response was an organizational means of coping with the problems I have outlined. But it assumed the primacy of the value of group solidarity; it presupposed that people would subordinate their other commitments to that.

But such was not the case, and that totalistic pattern encountered difficulties. The pressures toward objectification which followed "unplugging" lead to a more free-wheeling symbolization. What was emerging was a cultural differentiation among four "models," organized around administration-bureaucracy, the church, the descent system, and the individual. Each model was later elaborated by various people and groups, expanding and contracting in its scope at different times.¹⁹

The council was pushed more into a narrowly political role, differentiating more between issues involving Rambi as a community (including Gilbertese), and Banaba with its phosphate. As it became more plugged into the Fiji structure, police and judicial functions became more detached from it. It acquires its legitimacy from universal suffrage, but the same individual focus which grounds that suffrage also "grounds" the fluidity of commitments. People are unsure that their officials will subordinate their own personal interests, or those of their families, churches and villages, to the interests of the polity as a whole.²⁰

There was a fission of distributive units, with the formation of another co-op and some independent stores. Eventually, village co-ops were formed within the Fiji government co-op structure. They intégated into an island-wide organization, which might revert to village co-ops. Village solidarity was developing, too. The villages "began" as residential, electoral and land-holding units, but an individual subdivision of land has begun.

There was greater complexity in the religious picture. The Catholics would not join in the totalistic system, and some Protestant opponents of it joined a new sect, and another sect attracted adherents later. One of the pressures exerted by minority churches is toward a greater differentiation of religion and politics. To exert this pressure they must act politically.

Resistance or acceptance of this pressure by the majority increases their political action. The political component of the whole "field" thus expands, paving the way for certain administrative developments.

Hence there was again the development of differentiation, but with plural groups of various kinds. And again a "plugging in," if reluctantly, into a wider field of institutions, the plugging-in giving some groups more security. The "ego-oriented structure" reasserted itself, and although there are deep divisions, social relational integration is achieved in the "overlapping tie" form, which gives the individual a wider field of action.

In what other ways is integration achieved, insofar as it is? The value of Banaban solidarity remained, but based on the previous evidence it was becoming more highly generalized.

For many it was becoming too generalized, and on and off through the years, and particularly recently, one issue has captured the attention of the people which provides a short-term solution to the problem of structuring the hierarchy of commitments, differentiating and rationalizing the social system, by deflecting attention from them: this is the enormous concern to fight outside authority to get what they think of as a fairer recognition of their phosphate interests.

Most of the Banaban share of the profits goes into a Trust Fund over the disposition of which the government has a veto; this is regarded as unjust since the money represents Banaban land, and the Banabans should thus decide its fate. Ocean Island land is invested with meanings which relate it with Banaban, kinship, descent unit and personal identities. They feel the autonomy of Rambi should be recognized because it was purchased with invested royalties and thus "belongs to the Banabans," who are a people with a distinct "custom."

They object to the fact that about ten times as much of the profit goes to the Gilbert and Ellice Islands Colony administration (from which they receive no services) as goes to them; this is considered near theft.

The people regard their crusade as right in Christian-moral terms, and they are charging their Island Council with the responsibility of going out and winning the case.²¹

Getting the money is an actualization of group autonomy and a conservation of group identity; the amount envisioned would allow a high level of consumption of goods and services; it would give people freedom to do what they want. As conceptualized, it would solve a multiplicity of problems and allow the expression of a multiplicity of commitments at one stroke. Broadly, the pattern suggests a shift from a socially totalistic response to a culturally totalistic one. Ocean Island land can act as a dedifferentiating or integrating symbol.

And there is something else. On Ocean Island some modern orientations developed in the context of what was almost a company town. Rambi is quite different. Without such an industrial enterprise it may be difficult to build the infrastructure which would support the valued level of consumption and services without becoming even more involved in Fiji-wide activity. The scale of the community may be inadequate to support certain levels of differentiation, and to permit of an organization which would give the people what they want, with a concurrent implementation of the value of maintaining community identity and integrity in a concrete way. Perhaps even with a phosphate windfall, this is a problem which in the long run will have to be faced: a more systematic ranking of goals, or their revision. The phosphate issue deflects attention from potentially very basic contradictions in the system.

I will conclude by making a few methodological points. The case demonstrates the importance of studying the conditions of differentiation in colonial (and similar) situations in relationship to the external networks of which differentiated structures may become part. It shows how the integration that may be achieved can be at a level far removed from the community. It illustrates the importance of taking into account the degree to which people contemplate their systems as objects, and what the consequence of such contemplation is. It also illustrates the importance of the factor of scale vis-à-vis the possibilities of kinds of relationships between social and cultural systems.

Hence the study of the relationships between social differentiation, cultural differentiation, the "embeddedness" of social and cultural systems, scale, and group identity, emerges as one of the most crucial areas for research, with ramifications both theoretical and applied.

NOTES

1. I find it difficult in this case to specify relocation qua relocation and analyze its effects. The community has an uncommon history and moved from one colonial field to another with different conditions. I can imagine some of the things which happened after relocation happening even if there had not been relocation, in part because the move in space was also one in time.

2. My guide to kinship theory has been David M. Schneider; to modernization, A. Thomas Kirsch; to the historical sources about Ocean Island (to which, in a manner shocking to the historian, no references are given in this paper), H. E. Maude. I am indebted to Prof. Kirsch for many comments on the first draft of this paper, which have been incorporated in the present manuscript.

3. On the early history of Ocean Island, I have adapted a few paragraphs from my paper, "The historiographic implications of social and cultural change: some Banaban examples," Journal of Pacific History 2 (1967): 137-147. I should note in addition that ideally, district, hamlet and sub-hamlet founders were related as ancestor to descendant in a bilateral genealogy. The descent system was probably involved indigenously in a sense of Banaban identity, insofar as people believed there was a common symbol system although disagreeing as to its concrete implementation. The descent system also represented some degree of politico-religious differentiation. However, the evidence does not indicate that one could consider the Banabans a real polity. These are very complex issues which will be discussed in detail elsewhere.

4. Missionaries were committed to and voiced an articulated set of rules. I assume that it is difficult for such a presence to be simply ignored. To accept or reject would have required a significant alteration in the native structure. The question of the relative functional specificity of the new religious organization, as compared to previous organizations of all kinds, requires a treatment too detailed for the present paper.

5. The religious system carried both a plan of organization and its own legitimation, in both pragmatic terms -- Christianity works better -- and "ground of meaning" terms: it is true and a source of truth. (Banabans contrast the pre- and post-mission phases as "the time of darkness, ignorance" and "the time of light, understanding," respectively.) With the descent units becoming deprived of their religious aspects, a reshuffling was obviously necessary. This will be treated at length elsewhere.

6. The private phosphate company was bought out after World War I by the British Phosphate Commission, owned by the British, Australian and New Zealand governments. This obviously complicated the picture of political and economic differentiation. I should also note that the sources conflict on the nature of the colonial government's claim to legitimacy at the beginning from the local point of view.

7. There is no evidence of an indigenous generalized medium of exchange.

8. However, in working for the company the Banabans probably thought they were getting something due to them, since it was their land that was being mined.

9. For certain purposes it may be useful to think of the Banaban "structure" in the colonial field as an intersection of political, religious, economic and kinship networks.

10. The company store at that time may still have been applying a ~~two-price~~ "two-price" system (higher for natives, lower for Europeans), while within the bureaucracy applying ~~more uniform~~ ^{achievement} standards to native performance. This attempted "compartmentalization" of ~~uniform~~ ^{ascriptive and} standards may be one of the fundamental internal contradictions of colonial systems.

11. A few more remarks may be in order about the war. On Banaba the Japanese actually took up some of the strands of the British administration, but then deportation occurred, to Nauru, Kusaie and Tarawa. Conditions were (according to the Banabans) much better on Tarawa than on the other two islands. In many respects the Banabans were classed together with other groups, from whom they had been distinguished under British administration. On Nauru and Kusaie many had to learn how to circumvent regulations, in order to survive. This may have encouraged a certain attitude toward external authority and rules. The experience surely attenuated what idea there may have been of the all-powerfulness of the British. The groups liberated by the Americans were able to contrast American and British handling of native populations; the British reputation did not fare well in the contrast. Regarding the move itself, it should be noted that the people were given a two-year option on returning to Ocean Island; after that period, they voted to stay on Rambi.

12. One would generally expect the relocation of a community to have this effect. One can imagine, however, certain conditions which would produce almost opposite results. Hopefully, the symposium will clarify this problem.

13. Different analytic paradigms suggest different ways of grouping these "problems;" the categories here are rather loose. At a future time I might revise them.

14. It is only prerequisite to certain kinds of integration.

15. The exception here -- and an important one -- is the position of Banaban Adviser. Explicating the position would require a discussion longer than is possible here.

16. It is difficult to specify the exact role played by the Adviser in these early developments. The original table of organization of the council seems to have been introduced by him, and the suggestion for the economic role

of the co-op may have come from him also. But from his point of view, as indicated, the co-op got out of hand.

17. Some of the suggestions for electoral reform originated with the administration; one was initially regarded by the council as an infringement on their autonomy. The transition from election by "heads of families" (and there was a problem as to what a "family" was) to universal adult suffrage, whatever its origin, is interesting to note, in the context of the changing role of both kinship and "person-ship."

18. Some Banabans ascribe the renewed interest to the fact that a number of people saw what Fijian chiefs were like, and had dreams of becoming something like them. The scope of the activities of high status people in the indigenous Banaban descent group system was far less than that of high status people in the Fijian chiefly system. This matter will be treated in detail elsewhere.

19. Some of the conditions remind one of Levy's "politics as recreation." I suggest that the situation in broad theoretical terms (à la Parsons) can be understood as follows: although differentiated, the exact nature of some aspects of the differentiation lacked a legitimacy that could be generalized, and an integration that could be transported. Yet differentiation did take place, and the "idea" was present. As a system differentiates, as things that were formerly together are taken apart, and capable of contemplation as parts, a process of elaboration takes place. There is a release of creativity, of innovation, with different people going off in different directions, all the more different if the value of efficiency in our sense is not internalized, and thus the "rationalization of means" is blocked. In orderly differentiation, there is a political institution to contain this elaboration, to select among means toward a defined sub-system goal. When the differentiation under discussion is that of the political system itself, the situation is even more complex. In the Banaban case, first of all, there was not a high differentiation between means and ends. And second, there was not a firmly legitimized institution to rationalize the elaboration process.

20. Relevant matters are discussed in A.T. Kirsch, "Loose structure: theory or description?" Paper presented at symposium on "loose structure" in Thailand, Association of Asian Studies, March 1968. It is interesting to speculate that if certain generalized conditions are to be maintained (e.g., defense, level of consumption, in some circumstances), a group with such a structure of "fluid commitments" must be part of a larger system. There is a tendency on the part of some ethnographers -- and even more natives -- to ignore the conditions which make the functioning of systems possible. This is a methodological point of no mean significance: where among "external conditions" does one draw the line? Even trickier is the specific question of "negative" external conditions. In order to explain certain features of Rambi organization, for example, I am still uncertain as to whether or not I have to take into account the fact that Banabans (and others) cannot freely buy land on nearby islands. One may ascertain whether or not they want to. But if they do not, one may want to raise the possibility that they would if they could. I leave this matter for a more methodological context.

21. However, some wonder whether the council can do this, given its involvement in the Fiji administrative structure. A very recent development is the formation of a group, based in the Methodist church but with some hopes of becoming more generalized, which sees itself as a political action group, both to inform the council of the popular will, and to bring in people from the outside to talk about phosphate. This will also be discussed elsewhere. There are also a few declared traditionalists who question the council's legitimacy for dealing with fundamental issues regarding Banaban lands.