

Rigid Models and Ridiculous Boundaries Political Development and Practice in Palau— circa 1955-64¹

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Modernization in Micronesia cannot be tidily documented and thus accounts pertaining to political development can border on fabrication when they mainly emphasize events that seemingly portray a smooth and purposeful adaptation of European political practices to those of Micronesia.

The bulk of commentary that I would hope to bring to bear on a discussion of political development in Micronesia can be summed up under two major sources of bias: (1) the simplistic use of a single, lineal model of political progress; (2) the ineptness of cross-cultural studies of political behavior resulting from academic compartmentalization in the Western world.

While some social scientists have adopted a broader perspective, our applications of social science in developmental programs still adhere to a Nineteenth Century lineal model of progress and evolution. There is no such thing as cultural modernization;³ development becomes merely Westernization. Deviations from the Western model, in the context of changing institutions, become incidents to be expected but not evaluated beyond the observation that they deter from the full achievement of the model. For example, a bicameral Congress of Micronesia, recognized as only a moderate deviation from the approved unicameral model, is not spoken of as a functional "adaptation" to the needs of a rapidly changing Micronesian polity, but is labeled a "compromise" or, in our meaning of this term, a set-back, a deviation from the proposed and supported ideal.⁴ Transitional or original models of political organization, other than a unicameral or bicameral

¹ Based on a paper presented at a Symposium on the Political Status of Micronesia held at the Center for South Pacific Studies of the University of California, Santa Cruz, on March 27-29, 1969.

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³ I have tried to adopt a distinction between "modernization" and "development" introduced by Mr. Francisco Uludong during the Santa Cruz symposium. Modernization will refer to what has variously been called "in-cultural development," "cultural self-realization," "growth from within," etc. Development will refer to planned culture change in circumstances in which assistance is generally contingent on the recipient adopting Western cultural models of behavior.

⁴ Widely scattered examples come to mind as in house construction (with a strong rejection of Japanese carpentry techniques as learned by Palauans during the mandate period), in the field of cooperatives (in which an adaptive system of village-group membership emerged among fishermen and was rejected), or in the insistence on "sit-down" toilets as opposed to "squat" toilets by many, though by no means all, public health officials.

Congress, go unmentioned or are unknown, in part at least, because no effort is made to discover whether a suitable model of pan-Micronesian polity could emerge from behavioral potentials germane to the cultures of Micronesia. It is not known what the nature of such a polity might be. This is not a relevant question as long as we adhere to a Nineteenth Century lineal model of cultural evolution with European traditions as the end product of progress. While we give ample lip-service to other views, our applied social science models still suggest that the people of Micronesia are children not yet matured to the sophistication of European society.

Additionally, while many social scientists have reached beyond the boundaries imposed on their disciplines by classical academia, many others have not. In the administration of planned cultural change their tightly drawn departmental boundaries typically reflect and even magnify their academic counterparts. For example, should a political scientist, with only the tools and prescribed models of his particular discipline, attempt to cross cultural boundaries in an effort to understand culture change, the results are likely to be meaningful only to another analyst with the same perspective bias. Both analysts use the same European political forms as analytic models. Interestingly, results are largely the same for any of the social sciences as they are for Christian mission work. But for those disciplines that are distinctly European in conceptual commitment, rather than cross-cultural in scope, the results are dramatically disheartening.⁵

Similar criticisms, with appropriate word changes, can be leveled at each of the social sciences. I feel, therefore, that I am not being unduly biased in any specific sense. In a general sense I intend to adopt a bias. Hopefully it will be one that will help to clarify some of the distortions that inhere in Western analyses of cultural development.

Americans found in Micronesia a people, in various cultural forms, who were ready, in Margaret Mead's well-known term, to exchange "new lives for old." This expressed readiness for modernization has consistently been misunderstood by Americans as a franchise to impose on Micronesians the acceptance of Western institutional models of behavior. This narrowness of vision is evident in political development as elsewhere and suggests merely that we are relatively inept at modernization, though we often have the power to impose Westernization. This paper focuses on political development; it could as well focus on economic development, education, religion, agriculture, public health, etc.

A fairly superficial study at the community level of political change in Palau, especially the results of administrative fiat and local adaptation, would illustrate the effect of simplistic political models and the impropriety of the boundaries of

⁵ European analytic models may or may not derive from European behavior as such. One model that motivates practical administrators in many fields is the notion that all pre-literate societies are inherently communal. The "happy commune" model, in which the members of a community are imagined to participate in group labor in spontaneous congeniality, is far too simplistic an image of village life in Micronesia. Yet it is often applied on a taken-for-granted basis. (See McKnight, 1960).

analysis dictated by academic disciplines in cross-cultural observations.

The potential for in-cultural change or cultural modernization, rather than culture change dictated by external models, has been rather greater than usual, in my opinion, in Palau. This potential has been consistently difficult to realize because of the nature of developmental programs espoused by the American administration. In Palau, at least, we have tended to stultify in-cultural modernization by our own developmental efforts. Additionally, our simplistic stereotypes of traditional society have inhibited realistic interpretations of the results that our developmental efforts have achieved.

In 1958, when I arrived in Palau to serve as District Anthropologist, the program of political development was well underway. The United Nations had recently put pressure on the United States to stress political development generally in Micronesia. In Palau, particular emphasis may be attributed in part to the fact that the current District Administrator had served previously as political advisor to the High Commissioner. Municipal chartering was nearly complete throughout the fourteen traditional village clusters of Palau. The Palau Legislature (then termed Congress), had actually been formed in name in 1947, and had been formally chartered by the High Commissioner in 1955.

The Legislature, composed of voting members elected in each municipality according to demographic formula, non-voting members, magistrates or elected "mayors" of the municipalities and the hereditary chiefs of the village clusters, was already beginning to view its potential role in Palauan affairs with some seriousness. It is relevant to note here that the hereditary chiefs, who had been relegated to a separate table during sessions of the Legislature, were becoming more interested in the organization as time passed, and that about 1960, they chose to join the voting legislators of their particular municipality in their seating arrangement. Many Palauans viewed this show of interest on the part of their traditional leadership as progress. From the standpoint of our program in political development there seemed no easy way to evaluate it. There were those in the American administration who expressed concern that the chiefs would interfere with progress.

There was an evident administrative posture against bicameral legislatures at the district level, although in effect this was the informal structure that was evident in the Palau Legislature. The elected, voting members were fairly rigidly bound to any position adopted by the hereditary chiefs. The formalization of a bicameral legislature might have made this informal decision-making structure apparent and, given time, a healthy dialog between the houses might have promoted greater synthesis and in-cultural modernization in Palau. Administrative theory, however, dictated a unicameral legislature. Given this structure, hereditary chiefs exercised control indirectly and with little recognition of their efforts or with little appreciation by the administration. The approach is one that illustrates why some American administrators appear to feel that non-Western cultures constitute mainly stumbling blocks, having no inherent purpose beyond vexation and opposition to development.

The fact that hereditary chiefs seldom gained elected political office as municipal magistrates in Palau was much noted by a variety of Western observers. As we will see in more detail later, this fact was interpreted to mean that Palauans had come to reject their traditional form of government.

A more reasonable interpretation would have been that both sides, traditional Palauan and administrative American, had chosen, insofar as possible, to ignore one another. The administration adhered to a policy that, in practice, paid as little heed as possible to hereditary leaders. The chiefs, for the most part, chose not to participate in the games offered by the administration's program of elected officialdom, at least not to the extent of personal involvement in elections. The Legislature met and offered the administration a form or image of political development. The form, however, was one that for a considerable number of years contained the elements of a stalemate. The elected legislators were not those who could easily initiate political action in Palau while those who could do so viewed their position in the new structure as passive. For a while, particularly between 1961-1963, the administration sponsored the vast majority of bills considered by the Legislature, thus further contravening in-cultural modernization in favor of imposed culture change.

For many hereditary leaders the reaction has been one of frustration. They have been confused and peeved by the posture of the administration, and not without some justification.

During the mandate period, the Japanese sought to implement a formula of indirect rule through which traditional leaders played an important part in carrying out government programs directed by the Japanese administration. It was in this context that the idiom *ouisae-kaigi* (Palauan-Japanese: "yes-meeting") came into usage in reference to the lack of authority vested in traditional leaders. Their function was to respond in agreement with any program sponsored by the administration. As one observer has opined, if hereditary power were viewed on a ten-point scale, ten being an ideal high, such power sank to 4 or 5 during this period. In this approach to administration, however, the Japanese administration was keenly interested in who was who and who did what among traditional leaders. The success of their programs depended largely on cooperation and compliance from traditional leaders. When these were not evident, the Japanese, on occasion, deposed a title holder in favor of another who could be depended upon to cooperate.

Such has hardly been the case during the American administration. The same observer noted that, without the restrictions imposed by the Japanese, hereditary power during the American administration had risen on the scale to about 7 or 8. But the context of this revitalization of traditional power was peculiar. The administration was mildly interested in the ability of a municipality to display a chief when rare instances of protocol and ceremony seemed to make his presence relevant. For most purposes, however, the position and potential authority of the hereditary chief was ignored. In administrative theory, political authority, beyond its own strong executive authority, resided in two categories of officials: the voting

legislators and the elected magistrates of the municipalities. Chiefs were to be accorded courtesy, but little more.

The switch from indirect rule, as applied to Palau by the Japanese, to the narrowly conceived political model imposed by the American administration was, as might be anticipated, not easily accepted by the hereditary leaders. This was especially true for those who felt that their position of leadership was relevant to progressive modernization in Palau.

The American administration appeared willing to provide the opportunity for development as a benefit to Palauans (in contrast to the colonial posture of the latter period of Japanese administration) but the definition of progress was clearly to be provided by the Americans. The chiefs did what they could when they considered it necessary to preserve their image of the proper texture of Palauan society. Given the passive structural position that they occupied, their function in practice became more and more obstructionist and conservative. Ironically they were the ones, Palauans would say, who could insure the success of any given program sponsored by the administration. Occasionally they would prove that this was the case. The village cluster called Airai, for instance, resisted municipal chartering for about six years. More typically, however, hereditary leaders in Palau were progressive. Concrete structural recognition of their interest in Palau's modernization and effective use of their power would have eased the course of many administrative programs. Granted this would have meant the creation of a new kind of political structure, or the sacrifice of a pure Western political model.

The hereditary chiefs were given a back-seat structurally in the Palau Legislature by virtue of granting them membership but denying them the right to vote. As far as I know a chief could run for the office of Legislator, but seldom, or never, did so.

The same situation has held, generally, for the elected office of magistrate, the chief executive official recognized by the administration at the municipal level. It should be made clear that the boundaries of municipalities, as formalized by the chartering program, were based on traditionally recognized boundary zones comprising one politically dominant village and its subordinate hamlets. Such village clusters, generally with populations from 500-800 (Koror with about 5,000), were local levels of political authority relevant to the traditional political structure. The highest ranking chief of the highest ranking clan of the dominant village was recognized as the political leader of such a cluster, and is referred to here as the "hereditary leader". However, the authority of such leaders was restricted and balanced in a complex system of clan representation and shared or delegated political functions. Additionally, lines of communication between clusters, even between villages, viewed traditionally as enemies, were maintained by a leadership for a variety of political and economic purposes. Although there have been dictatorial, arbitrary, and selfish chiefs in Palauan history, the structure probably inhibited this likelihood about as effectively as any structure can. The ideal of a good chief differs from our image of a good political leader mainly in two respects: it is somewhat more embodied

with sacred symbolism and there is more emphasis on craftiness as opposed to open-handed ability.

It is relevant to note that the position of magistrate in the municipality is structurally proximal to that of the traditionally recognized political leader of a village cluster. There were fourteen village clusters in the traditional geopolitical structure, there are now fourteen magistrates corresponding to the same geopolitical units.

In a Trust Territory report to the United Nations (ca. 1957) it is observed that Palau appears to be the most advanced district politically in Micronesia. Justification for this statement was the observation that the office of magistrate, often occupied by hereditary chiefs elsewhere in Micronesia, was usually held by "commoners" in Palau. I do not know who wrote this report, probably an American administrative official in Palau. The interpretation was probably supported by some Palauans out of a desire to share with Americans a progressive image of Palau. It is true that since the formation of municipalities relatively few hereditary leaders have been elected to the office of magistrate. They have been elected when they have chosen to be nominated. This is not to say that hereditary leaders will automatically be elected if they run for office in Palau, but merely to observe that they probably will and, further, that hereditary leaders have not generally sought nomination.

Why not? None of the answers that I received to this question would lend much credit to the interpretation given in the report to the United Nations. Perhaps the most frequent reasons given for the lack of magistrate-chiefs were as follows: (1) the office was too lowly to be occupied by one with the sacred authority of a chief; (2) while a chief could be deposed by known traditional processes, the title was granted for life, not for a one or two-year term; (3) the magistrate was considered, not without reason, as a lowly official of the American administration. Of the sixteen responsibilities listed for magistrates in a guide prepared by the administration, five refer directly to obligations to the administration and seven more refer to duties associated with programs implemented by the administration through its various departments. The popular image of the magistrate as a messenger boy of the administration, in a structure reminiscent of the Japanese mandate formula, was not easily disputed. The problem was not necessarily one of opposition to the administration, but rather of incongruity and potentially of serious conflict of interest. This could be said particularly of a lesser ranking chief with additional obligations to chiefs of higher ranking village clusters. Thus, the chief of high ranking Koror municipality occasionally does a stint as magistrate but not without some criticism.

Others observed that a traditional leader once elected to the position of magistrate would be a very difficult incumbent to displace. This could be a disadvantage to a community if, in fact, the incumbent chief turned out to be a poor negotiator with the American administration. If the object of the community is to seek an office for a man with the right kind of skills, the community would try to elect not

a generalist but an individual with specific and special abilities in the management of occasional confrontations with the administration. In this not uncommon view, hereditary chiefs remained the ideal general administrators of the community. The same sort of argument may be raised with regard to a chief's participation in economic enterprise, as follows: suppose there are two boat builders in a community and the chief backs one of them through some form of assistance to the exclusion of the other. Before long, it is reasoned, everyone would buy boats from the builder supported by the chief, not necessarily because he was more skilled but simply to avoid offending or to curry favor with the chief. Economic favoritism by a chief may thus be regarded as unethical and damaging to the interplay of competitive skills. The position of magistrate as a skilled specialization may be regarded in like manner. A chief could become magistrate if he wished and there would be little option except to back him, but he should not because it would be unethical and non-adaptive. It would tend to prevent men of specialized ability from demonstrating their skills. Congruently, the chief of one northern municipality became so angered at the lack of ability demonstrated by an incumbent magistrate that he did run for office and he won, of course.

The administrative model applied to a magistrate was a peculiarly illogical one. It has been attributed to a former Staff Anthropologist, now prominent in the field of applied anthropology, but while I was in the Trust Territory, I could find only one indirect reference to the source of the policy. The often repeated policy formula was as follows: The hereditary chiefs will serve largely as social symbols in their communities conducting their traditional functions in their traditional spheres. The magistrates will be the executives of modernization, carrying out the programs sponsored by the administration. The two spheres, traditional and modern, were seemingly presumed not to overlap. Verbalizations of the model generally ended with a happy image of cooperation between chiefs and magistrates, each going about his individual duties, keeping the other advised but never treading on each other's toes. Overlooked in this policy formula is the fact that both the traditional political sphere and the new programs being introduced by the administration constituted hypothetical total community programs of administration. In theory, one should be able to demonstrate perfect functional duplication or overlap between the so-called traditional sphere and the sphere of administrative programs. Fortunately, perhaps, neither sphere was perfect in its comprehension of community needs, but neither did the two spheres support one another systematically, supplementing the other's weaknesses. The programs of the administration were dictated by a host of models (agricultural, medical, educational, as well as political) that were supported and promoted mainly because they could be recognized by American observers as goals in the Western world. Needs or program emphases voiced by Palauan communities were generally not noted unless there was evident correspondence with goals voiced by Western administrators. *Ngkora kaldos*, "applying the medicine to the wrong foot," was the idiom that Palauans used to describe the result.

Confrontation between traditional government and the administration at the level of the municipality was minimized in large measure because the administration lacked comprehensive programs at the village level. Schools, medical aid stations, and the homesteading program with some agricultural assistance to the coconut grower were the main thrusts of administrative programs other than the municipal chartering program itself that reached beyond the district center. In the highly compartmentalized department structure of the Trust Territory Government, these programs were organizationally separate from the political development program and were thus independent of the magistrate as a creation of the political development program. To add to the confusion, departmental employees involved in programs at the village level (i.e. education, public health, and agriculture) carefully sought out the hereditary chief when local authority or support was felt to be important. At one stage, the Palauan official in charge of political development in the administration found himself at a loss to define the appropriate functions for the magistrates beyond collecting taxes to pay their own salaries.

In any event, traditional leaders left little to chance. In their model of political behavior anything that the administration might attempt to do at the village level was within their jurisdiction; it was their responsibility to insure that all things remained manageable in their communities.

Who, then, was elected to the position of magistrate? In a few instances, hereditary chiefs sought and got the office, but as we have seen this was generally considered inappropriate. The range of community response to the problem of filling the magistrate position was considerable. At one extreme was the response described by several persons in one municipality who claimed that there was rarely more than one nominee for the position and that would be the one individual who failed to show up to erase his name from the municipal office blackboard. With considerable humor it was observed that the community aim was to find one individual who was too inept or lazy to get off the nomination list. In the same community the chief occasionally made it a point to demonstrate to the unfortunate incumbent magistrate that the village would not function as long as he, the chief, remained merely passive.

One stormy day, a party from the administration, invited to this community to share its annual municipal charter day celebration, was kept beyond the reef in a small open boat in a rain squall while the magistrate could be observed running up and down the beach searching for someone who would provide canoe or raft transportation to get the party across the fringing reef to shore. Eventually, a Palauan member of the administration party swam ashore and persuaded the chief to relent. Several canoes soon put out to fetch us in.

The "fall-guy" approach, which was not very common, approximates a more widely expressed rationale for magistrate qualifications, namely that the nominee be sufficiently subordinate so that there is no question regarding his subservience to the chief. In this approach, while administrative plans might occasionally be frustrated, there was little likelihood of serious confrontation between the tradi-

tional spheres and the new programs.

Perhaps the most functional approach was that in which the magistrate's office was viewed primarily as a training or apprentice position for young men in line of inheritance for political office. In earlier traditions, village clubs served as miniature societies with leaders whose functions closely paralleled those of the titled village leaders. The clubs provided training and testing situations for future community leaders. For a variety of reasons such clubs are largely defunct. In some municipalities, however, the magistrate's position was used to fulfill this training function. Since the incumbent would be one of the elite and could expect eventually to function as a village chief or elder leader, it was not anticipated that he would consciously undermine the authority or position of chief.

In actual practice, the position of magistrate was only in a highly restricted sense an elected office. Nominees were those who were approved by the traditional leadership because they would cooperate, would not interfere, or might enhance the position of chief.⁶

Palau is not, and appears never, within the span of folk history, to have been lacking in progressive leadership. A study of Palauan folklore strongly suggests that Palauan culture heroes are best viewed as agents of change. Few conservators of traditions appear to have survived the selective process of folk history. This seems congruent with recent history in Palau as well as the recall of the distant past.⁷ Under German colonial, Japanese mandate and American Trust administrations, the prominent hereditary leaders in Palau appear to be men committed to cultural change and, as variously defined, progress. Earlier chiefs, who are recalled in most favorable terms, are those who vigorously promoted programs that appeared to enhance Palau's progressive image. The Chief of Ngiwal during the Japanese mandate period is proudly remembered for his complete restructuring of Ngiwal village after a visit to Japan. Ngiwal is now laid out in two neat rows of homes facing a wide roadway called the "Ginza." A standing dispute exists among leading communities in Palau as to which chief played the dominant part in changing Palauan dress and hair styles. An effective leader, in the traditional view, was a pace-setter in culture change and innovation.

But in the years following the introduction of formal Western political structures

⁶ Around 1964, when a new school building program was launched in numerous rural communities, a number of municipalities found themselves electing chiefs to the office of magistrate. While I was no longer in Palau and could not assess the meaning of this fully, it would appear that: (1) the position of magistrate had become a more interesting one to occupy, with more attention directed at rural communities, and (2) problems of land usage associated with school sites and problems of organizing community labor were too important to risk bungling by an inept or inexperienced hand. It appears that when it is important to do so, Palau digresses from the Western political ideal and traditional leaders can and will step into executive and/or legislative positions to get a job done. In this instance, traditional leaders fully in support of better schools placed their authority where it would count most for modernization.

⁷ The notion that Palauan culture heroes may be portrayed as agents of change is explored in an unpublished paper by the writer (McKnight, 1969).

in Palau such as the chartered municipalities and unicameral legislature, many hereditary leaders appear to have reversed their political orientation, and viewed their chiefly authority mainly as an instrument of conservatism, rather than modernization. It is difficult to provide absolute documentation relating to this seeming reversal. I must, however, account somehow for contradictions in my notes relating to some interviews in the municipality of Peleliu in southern Palau. In discussions relating to the past, two elders of Peleliu portrayed their community as the locus of cultural innovation in Palau, tracing to events in Peleliu the innovation of clan representation in village government and the structure of the economic distribution system. *Kebliil*, the name given the Palauan clan, is spoken of as a woman of Peleliu who devised out of chaos the correct role relationship between brother and sister, and so on. In interviews concerned with the past, Peleliu conveys an image of innovation and progress. In the recent past, shortly before my arrival in Palau, the community of Peleliu had built a large, fine elementary school—putting up community labor against government matching funds. The elder leader of the community was unusual in that he maintained carefully written records of his career as chief. Another elder, a practitioner of traditional medicine, was pleased that a daughter of his clan was a nurse in the Koror hospital but dejected that Western training in medicine involved a severe rejection of his own interests in the field. In terms of interviews concerned with the past, and evidence from the recent past, Peleliu conveys an image of innovation and progress. But in terms of the present or the period of my sojourn in Palau, elsewhere in my notes I compare Peleliu with Boston as a repository of traditional usages.

Traditional correctness was also the line, during the period under discussion, in three major communities central to the *bitalianged* (side-heaven) opposing Koror. Palau traditionally was divided into two side-heavens which were, in the popular image, traditional enemies. Generally, the division between the side-heavens runs down the middle of the large island of Babelthup, then cuts east placing most of the Western side of Palau in the side-heaven dominated, in recent years, by Koror and most of the opposite or Eastern side-heaven within the current domination of the community of Melekeiok. The chiefs of Koror and Melekeiok are thought of, by Western observers, as parallel ranking high chiefs of Palau, although traditional interpretations would necessarily be more complex. Koror, of course, as the center of administration and as the port-town of Palau has been the focus of all varieties of change. During the period under discussion, from the mid-1950's to mid-1960's, three communities of the Eastern side-heaven (Ngaraard, Melekeiok, and Ngechesar) adopted strongly conservative positions, maintaining that the success of a Palauan community, lineage or clan was to be correctly measured in terms of adherence to proper traditional form in political, economic, and social interaction with other social units. In general, during this period, developmental programs clearly attributed to the administration were given a cool reception or were rejected by these communities. However, in preceding years all three communities had produced young men who have consistently spearheaded progressive development in every

major department of the administration. From some perspectives, it is appropriate to observe that the entire Eastern side-heaven and some communities of the Western side-heaven, such as Peleliu, have adopted in recent years a conservative position. In large measure, I believe this has been in response to the administration's political development program which, in effect, has relegated traditional leaders to a passive role in which they are practically ignored.

What has been overlooked in planning political development in Palau and other parts of Micronesia is the fact that the traditional societies boasted more or less complex and in all cases functionally complete political systems. It is true that most of the hereditary chiefs would have had difficulty managing some of the chores assigned to magistrates and might have experienced a little difficulty with some of the technical problems faced by younger men in the Legislature. Parenthetically, the major difficulty was the English language and could have been resolved by simultaneous translation systems permitting a closer communication between the American administration and all levels of local leadership. What is important to recognize is that, except for some periods of frustrated conservatism, the primary drive for cultural modernization in Palau has come from its principal spokesmen, its titled elders.

The actual situation in Palauan culture combined a complex and highly representative form of community government with a positive drive for modernization. The situation as viewed by the administration involved a highly limited view of traditional political behavior (a simplistic opposition between dictatorial, hereditary chiefs and elected representatives) and an inadequate understanding of political behavior in its functional relations with other institutional spheres of community behavior. As a result, cultural adaptation in terms of political development has been dominantly one-sided in Palau. Traditional leadership adapted to the form of political programs imposed by the administration. Palauans appear to enjoy "playing" with new varieties of social organization and, in most instances, have found both the position of magistrate, as a new political phenomenon, and the Legislature, as a rather complex social organization, to be of interest as novel social games. Perhaps traditional leaders in Palau, in the absence of their traditional right to wage intrigue and war with other communities, but still close to the folk histories of war-lore and war heroes rather appreciate the diversion involved in maintaining social control in the context of the new political structures brought as gifts of modernization by the American administration. It is also apparent that hereditary chiefs have generally approved of the idea of new political ventures. It is equally clear that many of them felt deep personal frustration and affront with the simplistic forms actually imposed on them and with the total lack of comprehension shown by the American administration either for the form of traditional government or its functions at the community level. It is relevant to note here that some of the churches within the Modeknge, a Palauan religious movement that developed during the German period of administration, attempted general cultural reformulation, seemingly in an effort to manage in-cultural modernization. Adaptation

and modernization appear to be goals germane to Palauan society.

The traditional leadership structure in Palau is indeed failing and will, no doubt, eventually collapse. Ironically this failure is, and will probably continue to be, largely an economic failure resulting not so much from displacement by new political structures as from the unwillingness of the American administration to sponsor an effective economic development program. Of course, it will not be the chiefs alone who will suffer this failure, rather it may be viewed as a comprehensive failure of the total texture of Palauan society.

There is a curious or tragic analogy here to the process of organ transplants in the field of medicine. Traditional or "cold" cultures, as they are sometimes called, are perceived to be nonadaptive, to lack what may be termed perstability or the capacity for sustained identifiic continuity.⁸ In general, the more a society appears to be "non-Western" the more likely it is to be labeled "cold." When such societies become targets of planned change in the management of Western social practitioners, they are subjected to "organ transplants" through a process that is closely analogous to that of "antibody inhibition," limiting the capacity of the system to exercise its normal maintenance functions in adapting to foreign antigens. In the field of medicine it is considered unethical and rather foolhardy to inhibit antibody formation in order to introduce a foreign organ without first assessing fully the patient's capability to adapt or accommodate, to exhibit metabolic perstability. Yet this seems to be the accepted procedure in developmental programs of planned change.

For approximately the past forty years, anthropological cross-cultural research has been dominantly concerned with the synchronic or structural aspects of culture, with primary focus on the maintenance sub-systems of society. Most anthropologists recognize that the approach is a methodological convenience, a first, preliminary step toward understanding culture, and that the familiar static models of social anthropology have little bearing on the actualities of the cultures under observation. These models, however, have become the accepted reality for many social scientists peripheral to the field as well as for many orthodox anthropologists. The consequence is to talk about such supposed realities as cold or traditional cultures, in short, the maintenance sub-systems of culture are mistaken for the totality. The result of this confusion between method, model, and reality, is that license is provided to the practitioners of planned change to undertake whatever operations seem justified to accomplish organ or institutional transplants. In the ensuing events the static models seem to be realistic as we compile documentation upon documentation describing the resistance of traditional cultures to development. The analysis is satisfactorily self-fulfilling.

With this perspective as justification, the newly transplanted political institutions in the Trust Territory will be maintained artificially so long as it is under American administration. The heart will be kept beating, as it were, regardless of the patient's

⁸ Many current anthropological publications intended to teach planned culture change (e.g. Batten, 1957; Foster, 1962; Arensberg and Niehoff, 1964) may be rejected for promoting similar simple stereotypes of so-called traditionalist, non-Western societies.

condition. At the local level, in particular, it can be observed that the program of political development in Palau was salvaged from complete absurdity largely because traditional leaders have been sufficiently adaptive to find ways to control and, in many instances, to further the aims of their communities while tolerating the pretext of the newly imposed forms. Seemingly, however, the eventual success of the transplanted model imposed by the American administration, the time when model and political practice will be more nearly one and the same, will depend on the failure of Palauan society. This seems to me a sad commentary on the technology of political development.

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Professor McKnight's paper is scheduled for publication in *Political Development in Micronesia*, edited by Daniel T. Hughes and Sherwood Lingenfelter, and is Copyright 1972 (provided this is the year the paper is published as a journal article) by the Ohio State University Press.