

CHARLES STURT
UNIVERSITY



THE JOHNSTONE CENTRE
REPORT N° 197

***A Rapid Assessment
of the
Library of the
Joachim deBrum
House, Likiep Atoll,
Republic of the
Marshall Islands***

*Dirk H.R. Spennemann
Jon O'Neill
Joan O'Neill*



Albury Australia

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INTRODUCTION

DIRK H.R. SPENNEMANN & JON O'NEILL

The deBrum House on Likiep Island, Likiep Atoll, Marshall Islands is a cultural heritage site, which is unique in the Marshall Islands, in Micronesia and in fact in most of the Pacific. As a complete colonial period homestead replete with much of the original furnishings, including ornaments, books, phonograph rolls and glass plate negatives, it provides a unique insight into both the living conditions of affluent planters during the late 19th and early 20th century, as well as into the mind of an exceptional Marshallese man, Joachim deBrum.

Survey History

The fieldwork of Jon O'Neill as part of his Bachelor of Applied Science (Honours) project into the management of German colonial heritage,¹ provided an opportunity to conduct a rapid assessment of the library of the deBrum house and to assess its condition in a very general manner, Joan O'Neill, accompanying her husband, agreed to record the books as well as possible. The data collection was limited by two constraints: the bad preservation of many books and the bibliographic inexperience of the recorder. During the Likiep documentation, many books were deemed too fragile to remove from the shelf for inspection. As a result, only information discernable from the spine was obtained.

Six bookcases were found arranged in the southern bedroom of the deBrum house. This room has one internal and two external doors, all of which were securely locked and barred. It also has two windows (both on the southern wall) that were also locked and nailed fast with wooden shutters. Each bookcase had glass doors that were also shut and locked. Only on rare occasions when the veranda and parlour doors were opened could light and fresh air enter the room.

Where their condition permitted, books were removed from the shelves and catalogued. However, many were so damaged that it was not possible to decipher all their bibliographic details. In some cases, books were accreted together and the paper so fragile that it was not possible to get any details without severe risk of further extensive damage – these books are listed as “unknown”. Where books could be removed from the shelves but were in especially poor condition, they were simply dusted and returned unopened—they are listed as “Unable to Identify”.

Pangelinan reported there were approximately 1,500 books stored on shelves in the house in 1977.² In 1999, only 736 books that could be separated and catalogued individually were found in the bookcases. After books had been catalogued, cleaned and dusted, the shelves were also cleaned before the books were returned.

Notes to the Chapter

- ¹ O'Neill, Jon G. (2000). *Management of German Colonial Heritage in the Pacific*. Honours dissertation, Charles Sturt University - Murray, Albury, NSW. Australia
- ² Pangelinan, J. B. (1978). Participation of Jesus Pangelinan to the Stabilization Project of Joachim de Brum House of Likiep Atoll, Marshalls District, First Acquisition and Development Project in the Trust Territory. *Report to Office of the High Commissioner, Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, Saipan* (Serial:HP-952; File:178.67.36).

2



HISTORY

JON O'NEILL & DIRK H.R. SPENNEMANN

Coral atolls form from extinct and submerged volcanic mountains with fringing coral reefs. Dynamic processes of oceanic erosion and deposition construct islands of unconsolidated sand and coral rubble that are gradually colonised by vegetation. The Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI) extends over about 1,950,000 km² of the Pacific Ocean but has only 171 km² of land. It comprises 29 coral atolls and five islands (Figure 1) that are arranged geographically in two chains trending north-west to north-east in an area between 4° - 19° North latitude and 160° - 175° East longitude.

Likiep Atoll

Likiep Atoll (Figure 2) forms part of the eastern-most chain (*Ratak* or sunrise) and is located at 10° North, 169° East, about 450 kilometres northwest of Majuro, the capital of the RMI. With a lagoon area of 425 Km², it includes 65 islands totalling only ten km² of land. According to the 1988 census¹ the total population was 482 resulting in a population density of 48 per km².

Pre-European colonisation of this part of the vast Pacific Ocean by Melanesians involved voyages that were heroic in proportion. Bellwood² states that many facets of these voyages “demonstrate great skill and daring” and Irwin³ described the exploration, discovery and settlement of the Pacific as “remarkable episodes in human prehistory”. At a time when Europeans rarely ventured beyond sight of land, these explorers sailed large voyaging canoes into a truly vast ocean with little knowledge of what lay beyond their horizons. As they explored, their knowledge grew, their technology developed, and navigation improved. Their methods were not European methods but they were successful, and cultural and social structures adapted to suit the circumstances. Irwin⁴ also suggests that this first human exploration of the Pacific was rapid, purposeful, systematic, and “involved less loss of human life than conventionally thought.” Rather than a series of accidents whereby primitive, flimsy and unseaworthy vessels were carried uncontrollably into a terrifying unknown, it is now generally acknowledged that voyages of exploration and colonisation were deliberate and planned.

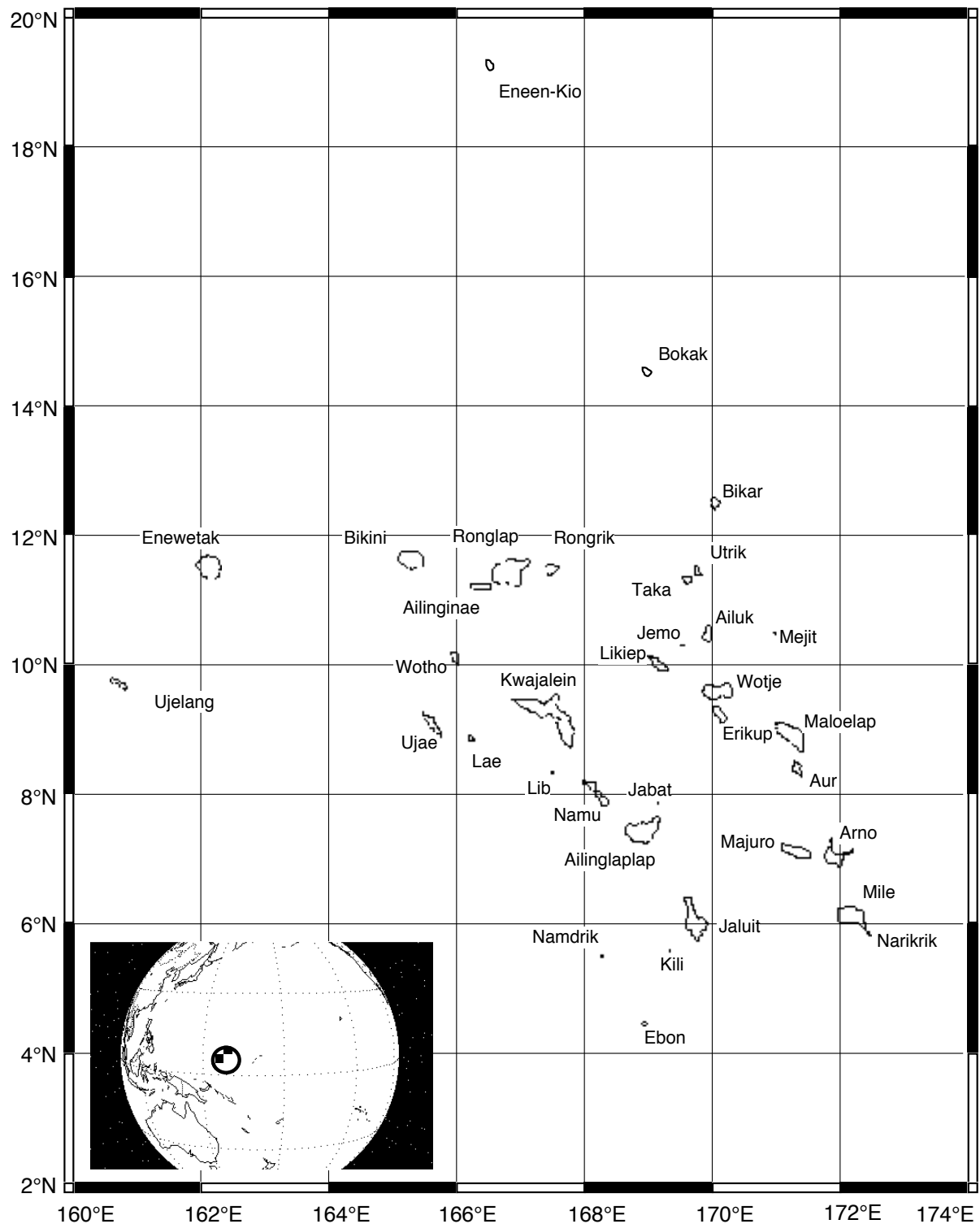


Figure 2.1 - Map of the Marshall Islands

By the time Europeans arrived in their waters perhaps more than 1,000 years later, the Marshallese people had established a viable and dynamic society. Complex lines of trade, responsibility, and political authority linked all the islands and atolls in a series of cultural, familial and economic networks. Dramatic change began in the latter part of the 19th century and continued through the 20th century as different colonial powers exerted control.

Developments on Jaluit first, then on Likiep provided impetus for change in the Marshall Islands. Two expatriate traders, a German named Adolph Capelle and a Portuguese named Jose Anton deBrum, played key roles in the development of present-day Likiep. Independently of each other, they decided to make their homes in the Marshall Islands and subsequently married Marshallese women.

Jose deBrum married a woman of Maloelap, an atoll that was then under the control of Jortoka, the *Iroij laplap* of the Ratak chain. Mason⁵ shows that deBrum purchased Likiep Atoll in 1877 from Jortoka, paying with goods valued then at US\$1,250. In 1878, he transferred it to A. Capelle & Co. for US\$886.73, which Mason suggests was the wholesale value of the trade goods paid to Jortoka. Capelle and deBrum formed a highly effective and enduring partnership that passed beyond a merely commercial transaction. They both produced large and influential families that have since intermarried⁶ and between them have founded what may almost be described as a Marshallese dynasty. Their social, political and commercial legacies remain very significant in the RMI today.

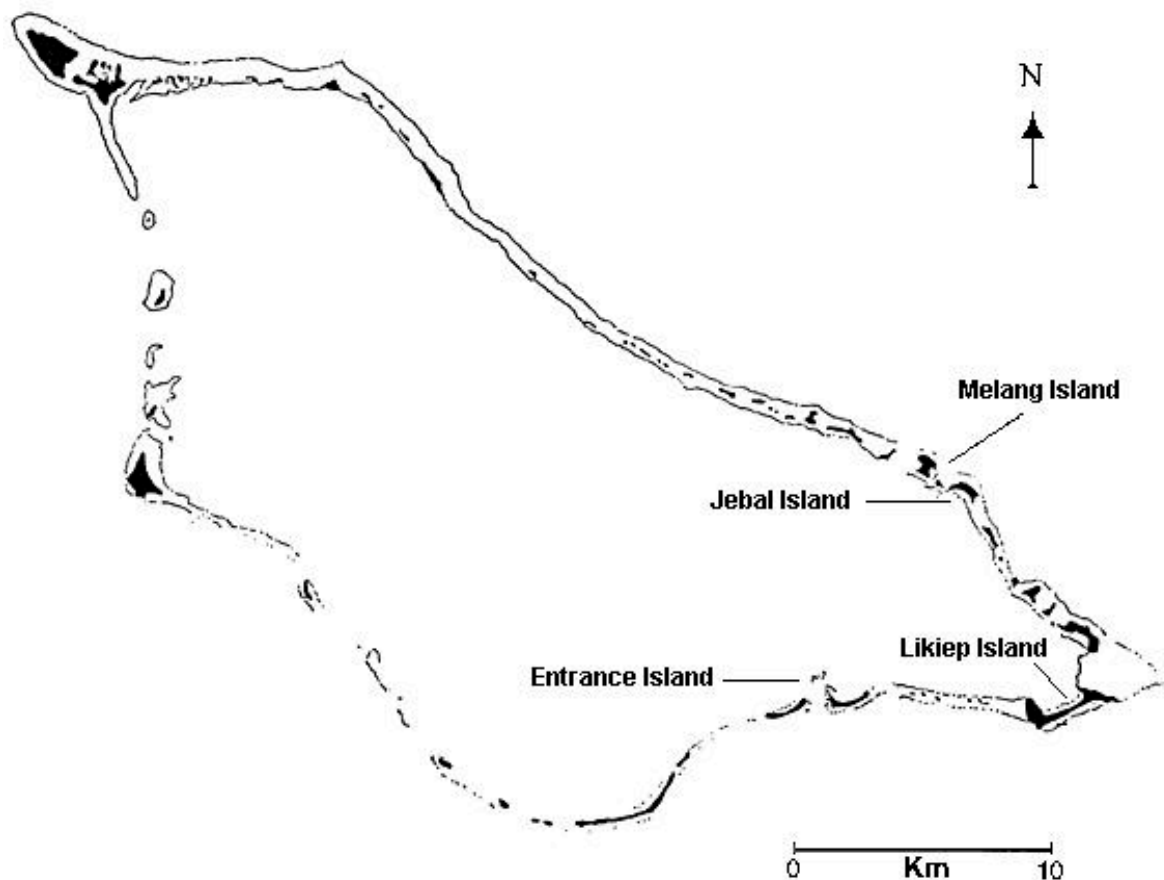


Figure 2.2 - Likiep Atoll

Likiep's physical environment was doubtless a significant factor in the partners' decision to acquire the atoll, as it must also have been for Likiep's original settlers. It has also contributed significantly to the type and extent of historical and cultural property remaining. Likiep is further north of the main track of tropical cyclones than are other atolls, and has consequently not suffered as much damage from tropical cyclones as have Majuro and Jaluit for example⁷. Yet it is not immune from such events.⁸ Reliable rainfall maintained a supply of potable water in the form of freshwater lenses⁹, and reasonable soil fertility led to extensive coconut plantations being established on most islands of the atoll using successful German patterns first introduced on Samoa.

The great significance of Likiep Atoll results directly from its unique history and the life of its most celebrated son, Joachim deBrum. The first historic site in Micronesia to have been included on the Historic Site Register of the United States is on Likiep Island. Joachim deBrum's house and associated buildings form its centrepiece.



Figure 2.3- Joachim deBrum

Joachim deBrum and the deBrum House

Joachim deBrum has been described as a sophisticated and urbane “Marshallese renaissance man who might have stepped out of a James Michener novel.”¹⁰ The eldest son of José and Likemeto deBrum, he was born on Jaluit Atoll on February 22, 1860. His success as a self taught businessman, builder, artist, engineer, shipbuilder, and scientist is remarkable, especially considering the remoteness of his island home. It is astounding to consider that he also learned sufficient medical skills to provide basic medical services¹¹, and established clinics at his own expense on Likiep¹² and nearby islands.

The emerging science of photography fascinated him as both engineer and scientist. Its potential as an art form and a means of recording images of his Marshallese heritage seems to have particularly appealed to him as an artist. In what had already become a trademark characteristic, he focussed on learning everything he could about photography and ordered several appropriate books, some of which remain in his library. He built, equipped and operated his own darkrooms to develop and print his photographs. He devised a simple and effective method of cooling his darkroom to protect the stored chemicals and special photographic papers from the tropical heat. He became an artist of clearly remarkable ability and vision, producing a spectacular portfolio of photographs that is highly significant from artistic, medical, cultural and historical viewpoints. Despite being exposed, developed, printed and stored in tropical conditions (in some cases for over 100 years), more than 2,000 glass plate negatives¹³ remain in good to excellent condition, illustrating his artistic and technical skills.

A prolific builder, many of the houses he designed and constructed between 1890 and 1920 are still used by descendants of those for whom they were originally built. Most remain substantially unchanged. Although a few houses use small generators to provide lighting, kerosene lamps are still much more common. In many cases rainwater is stored in cisterns that are also original, and it remains the major source of drinking water. A near-to-original curtilage is a common feature throughout Likiep Village and original coral blocks are still edging coral paths constructed more than 100 years ago.

The extent and variety of Joachim deBrum's personal achievements parallel his life-long thirst for learning. The variety¹⁴ of books and manuscripts¹⁵ in his library illustrate the extraordinary breadth of his interests. For example, existing library books have been collated into various categories such as Religious, Scientific (natural and physical), Medical (including surgical, dentistry and geriatrics), Technical (engineering, wood working, house building), Maritime (navigation, boat building), Photographic, History, and Fiction. Publication dates imply that he probably obtained his books over many years and suggest that his interest in a broad range of subjects remained throughout his whole life. Development of this library¹⁶ portrays a person with an unquenchable thirst to learn about a remarkable variety of subjects. For him, learning was an exciting part of life.

Joachim died at the age of 77, leaving his library and tools to his family. He stated in his Will¹⁷ that all his tools and books should be “kept as a memorial” of him and that while both could be loaned out, they could “not be sold”. This simple request provides a fascinating insight into the man. He wanted his library and other tools to be used, not lost, sold or locked away. He was not interested in ostentatious tombstones or statues and insisted that he be buried simply “in a small plot of ground... by the Protestant Church, Likiep” which he and Edward Capelle built¹⁸ together in 1906. The memorial he wanted was a living and useful legacy of knowledge, and he even established specific rules¹⁹ by which books could be borrowed, including a maximum loan period of “three weeks”.

The most outstanding building complex in Likiep Village Historic Site is the Joachim deBrum House (figure 2.4) and curtilage which is now maintained and operated as a family museum. Joachim's house itself is a simple though large, timber frame structure (figure 2.5) and was originally built using Californian Redwood planks and local hardwoods. It consists of only three rooms, a central Parlour, a northern and a southern bedroom, but has a large veranda on all four sides, a high loft for cooling and storage, and

an external kitchen and dining room. This separate kitchen and dining room was built about thirty metres southwest of the house, a sensible practice which reduced the fire hazard and also helped to keep the main house cool.



Figure 2.4 - Joachim deBrum House looking northeast

The house and associated outbuildings contains many items directly connected with this remarkable man, including furniture, tools, household items, personal effects, and what remains of his once extensive library. In September 1982, the Government of the RMI formed and chartered the Joachim deBrum Memorial Trust Corporation²⁰. It is now the legal entity owning and managing the house, a large variety of personal items and several outbuildings. A not-for-profit organisation, it is chaired by Joachim's youngest son Leonard, and was formed specifically to preserve this valuable and highly significant cultural property. At first the roof was thatched, but sometime after 1910 the thatch was removed and the house was re-roofed with corrugated iron instead. Later again, this very substantial house was raised and the original short concrete piers replaced by local hardwood piers. In doing so, the headroom underneath the house was raised to almost two metres.

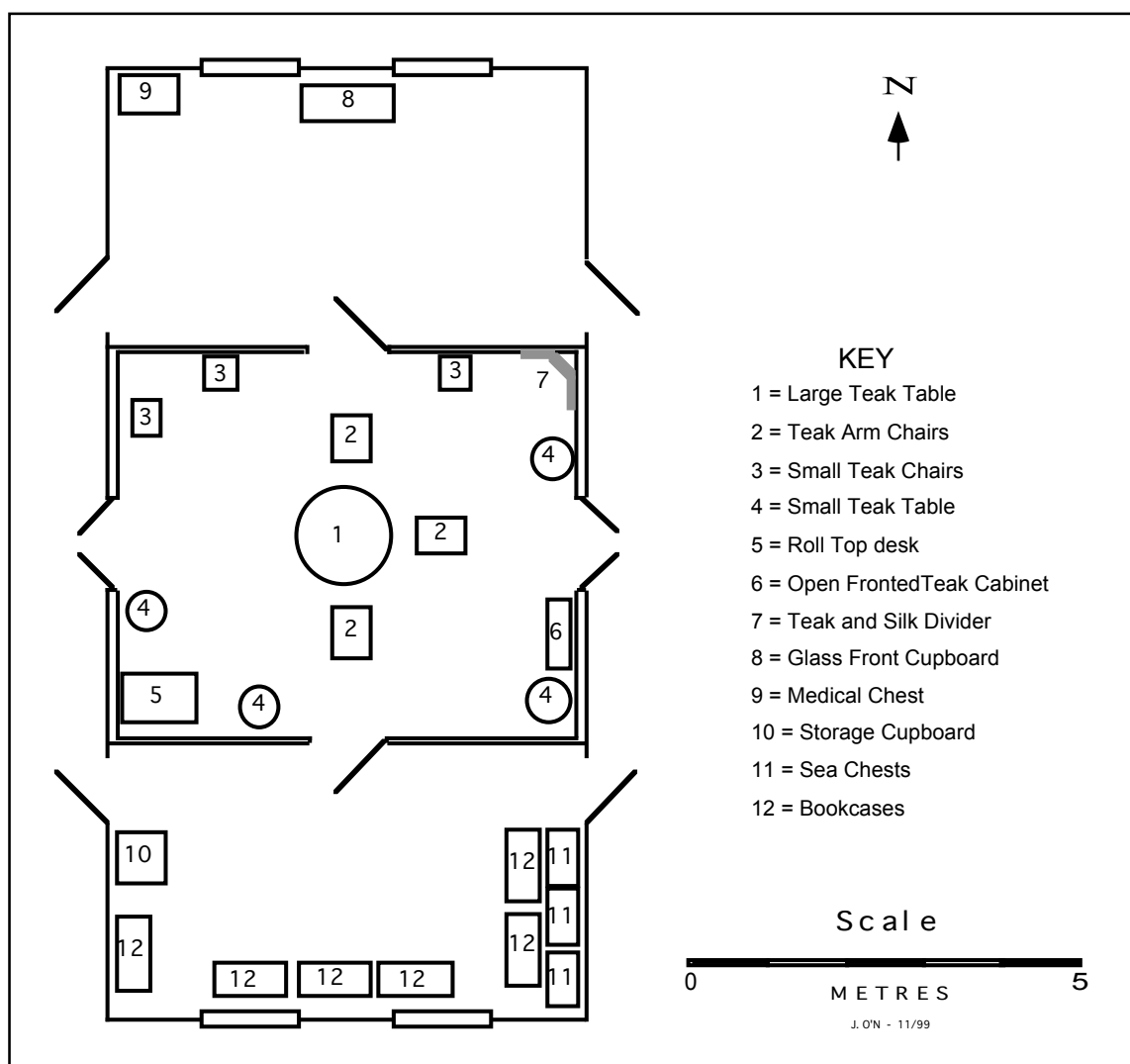


Figure 2.5 - Joachim deBrum House – Floorplan and Spatial Arrangement of Furniture

Notes to the Chapter

- ¹ Office of Planning and Statistics (1989). *Census of population and housing 1988: Final Report*. Majuro Atoll, Republic of the Marshall Islands: Office of Planning and Statistics, Republic of the Marshall Islands.
- ² Bellwood, P. (1978). *Man's Conquest of the Pacific*. Auckland: William Collins Publishers Ltd. p. 302
- ³ Irwin, G. (1994). *The Prehistoric Exploration and Colonisation of the Pacific*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. p. 1
- ⁴ Irwin, *Prehistoric Exploration...* p. 118
- ⁵ Mason, L. K. (1947). *The Economic Organisation of the Marshall Islanders*. Honolulu: U.S. Commercial Company, Economic Survey. P. 170-171
- ⁶ Hezel, F. X. (1983). *The First Taint of Civilisation: A History of the Caroline and Marshall Islands in Precolonial Days, 1521-1885* (Robert C. Kiste (Ed.), Pacific Islands Monograph Series, No. 1). Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press. P. 214
- ⁷ Spennemann, D. H. R. (1995b). Settlement Patterns and Typhoon Hazard on Majuro Atoll, Republic of the Marshall Islands. *The Australian Journal of Emergency Management*, 10 (3). pp. 49-50.— Spennemann, Dirk H.R. (1996) Dreading the next wave: non-traditional settlement patterns and typhoon threats on contemporary Majuro, Marshall Islands. *Environmental Management* 20(3), 337-348.
- ⁸ Spennemann, Dirk H.R. and Ian G. Marschner (1995) Association between ENSO and typhoons in the Marshall Islands. *Disasters* 19(3), 194-197.— Spennemann, Dirk H.R. & Ian Marschner (1994) Stormy Years. On the association between the El Niño/Southern oscillation phenomenon and the occurrence of typhoons in the Marshall Islands. Report to the Federal Emergency Management Agency, Region IX, San Francisco. Johnstone Centre for Parks, Recreation and Heritage Report N° 9. The Johnstone Centre for Parks, Recreation and Heritage, Charles Sturt University, Albury, NSW., 1994.
- ⁹ Ghyben-Herzberg lenses occur within the porous interior of many coral atolls. They are shallow and result from the tendency for freshwater to 'float' on top of saltwater in undisturbed conditions because of the differential between their comparative densities. However, tidal movement can cause the two to mix with the consequence that lenses can become thin and contain water that is saline. Inundations through cyclonic storms and associated oceanic waves can so contaminate the lenses that they cannot provide potable water until flushed by sufficient rainfall.
- ¹⁰ Jelks, Edward B. and Jelks, Juliet C. (1978) The Joachim De Brum House, Likiep, Marshall Islands. *Stabilisation and Inventory*, 1977. P. 3-4
- ¹¹ De Brum, Leonard (Pers. Com.) 29th October, 1999 - advised that his father had a regular schedule of visits to islands to provide medical and dental services.
- ¹² De Brum, Elmo (Pers. Com.) In a conversation held on 28th October, 1999, Elmo, Leonard's grandson, advised J.O'N. that he was now the supervisor of Likiep's Medical Centre built and supported by funding from the Australian Government.
- ¹³ Estimates of numbers vary from 2,200 (US National Park Service National Register of Historic Places Inventory - Nomination Form, Item number 8, Page 2); 2,250 (US National Park Service National Register of Historic Places Inventory - Nomination Form, Item number 7, Page 2); and 2,600 (Jelks, Edward B. and Jelks, Juliet C. (1978) The Joachim De Brum House, Likiep, Marshall Islands. *Stabilisation and Inventory*, 1977. P. 19)
- ¹⁴ Pers. Obs. The present cataloguing of books that have been stored in the bookcases alone has displayed a remarkable variety of books, and an intense interest in scientific, medical, (continued)

technical and religious matters. There are many works of fiction also including such authors as Dickens, Twain, Sinclair Lewis and Winston Churchill.

- ¹⁵ Jelks, Edward B. and Jelks, Juliet C. (1978) The Joachim De Brum House, Likiep, Marshall Islands. Stabilisation and Inventory, 1977. P. 5
- ¹⁶ In his report on the 1977 Preservation Project, Jelks (1978, p. 18) reported there were “thousands of books”. Referring specifically to books that were “stored on the shelves in his house”, Pangelinan reported there were “1,500 books” (1978, p. 8). The present cataloguing revealed there were 700 books that were in a condition permitting them to be identified.
- ¹⁷ A copy of this Will is held by Leonard De Brum and was shown to J.O’N. on November 2, 1999.
- ¹⁸ United States Department of the Interior, National Register of Historic Places Inventory - Nomination Form, Item number 7, page 7.
- ¹⁹ These instructions were set out in his Will.
- ²⁰ Roberts, Michael (1984). Completion Report for Rehabilitation of the De Brum House, Likiep Atoll, Republic of the Marshall Islands. P. 13



LIBRARIES

DIRK H.R. SPENNEMANN

The early history of public libraries in the Pacific outside of Hawai'i has so far attracted only limited academic attention. Goetzfridt has researched issues of American libraries in Micronesia and the role of Daniel Peacock,¹ while Spennemann has looked at the development of the nineteenth century public library in Apia, Samoa.² Problems of modern libraries in Micronesia have been addressed by Loeak.³

The main period we need to be concerned about is the period of the German colonial administration in the Marshall Islands (1886-1914) and that of the Japanese administration (1914-1945) in the same area. In the following we will address the nature of public libraries in the German colonies in Africa and the Pacific, before we concentrate on the situation in the Marshall Islands. This chapter will conclude with an overview of the Japanese period.

Libraries in the German colonies in Africa

The need for the establishment of public libraries in the colonies was clearly understood in the first decade of the 20th century. While the speaking of German as an official language, and the need to teach German in schools was government policy in most colonies, there was little appreciation of the possible need of the resident indigenous population for books. This was different, however, where a considerable German population existed. Unlike the Pacific, the German colonies in Africa were run by large administrative staff and had a large number of resident German planters and traders. Hence it is not surprising that the more organized push for public libraries started here.

The *Deutsche Kolonialzeitung*, the official organ of the German colonial society, of November 1909 carried an appeal for the donation of books for the colonies, which seems to have originated from requests by the colonial occupation troops in German South-West Africa.⁴ Some of the libraries were assembled and donated by German communities.⁵ Most of the libraries thus assembled were sent to German South-West Africa, with libraries destined to Arahob, Chamis, Kanus, Okawajo, Keetmanshoop (books donated by the city of Berlin), Otavi (donated by the city of Bremen), and Aus (books donated by the German colonial society for South-West Africa). Two additional libraries each had been compiled for German Cameroon, some locations in South-West Africa and German

East Africa.⁶ To facilitate the establishment, the libraries were sent out in fully-stocked library cupboards ready for set-up.⁷



Figure 3.1. *Adda Freifrau von Lilienkron, patron of German colonial libraries in Africa.*

In 1900 the German citizen, Baurat Hoech, donated RMK 2,000 to the establishment of a public library in Windhoek, German South Africa. Through the offices of the German colonial society a selection of books was made and the first volumes sent there in mid 1901. The concept of the library is that of a community and school library (Volks- und Schulbibliothek). The holdings were systematically expanded through donations and purchases, so that by the end of 1909 some 1700 volumes were held.⁸

In the Pacific, however, formal public libraries did not exist in German Samoa, German Micronesia or German New Guinea.

German vs British Public Libraries in the Pacific

Concomitant with the establishment of British supremacy in an area and the establishment of a civilian administration went the development of a public library system. Almost perversely, the colonies and outposts of Empire were deemed much more in need of such facilities than the British homeland. Consider that Public Libraries attached to Athenaeums and the like were established in Barbados in 1821⁹ and Jamaica in 1827,¹⁰ yet the public library system of Cambridgeshire (outside the Universities) did not commence until the 1850s.¹¹

In Australia public libraries were founded early. In South Australia a Literary Institute was formed before the ships set sail and books were shipped out. A Mechanics Institute was founded in 1838 with the help of a Government Grant. The institute, initially too exclusive (due to costs) became more popular when the membership fee was reduced, but

lost income in the process.¹² The Hobart public library was founded in 1849,¹³ with Melbourne following in 1853,¹⁴ and the Free Public Library in Sydney, in 1869.¹⁵



Figure 3.2. Example of the library cupboards sent out to Africa.¹⁶

SAMOA

The German Rudolf Indra, in 1901 travelling through Fiji, Samoa and Tonga, commented on the presence of well equipped public libraries in Levuka and Suva, Fiji.¹⁷ Indeed, even Apia on Samoa, with an expatriate community of less than 280, was in possession of a public library prior to the commencement of the German rule. One of the reasons for these colonial developments rested in the fear held by administrators and consuls that Englishmen would lose their identity without continual cultural reinforcement.

In January 1893 Sir Thomas Berry Cusack-Smith, British Consul to Samoa wrote a letter to the Editor of the *London Evening Standard*, asking the readers of that paper for donations for the Apia Public Library. In his letter, Cusack-Smith appealed to the English audience:

“There are, in the Isles of the Pacific, Englishmen who pass year after year, seldom seeing any human beings except the native—solitary among a crowd. They almost forget their mother tongue from long disuse. Even books they cannot get, and the long evenings are dull indeed. I venture to appeal for gifts of books from our fellow countrymen at home, which they have read and done with. Novels, yellow backs, science, history, school books, and standard works will be equally acceptable provided they are bound. Paper-bound books will not bear the wear and tear of a lending library.”¹⁸

And the books came flooding in, as by late April over 500 volumes had been received and readied for shipment to Samoa.

This was not the case with German Pacific colonies. One reason why public libraries may have been more prevalent in the British Pacific than in the German colonies may rest in the fact that in Germany proper the libraries were regarded by many as hallowed halls. Thus only students and the intelligentsia of German society (*Bildungsbürgertum*) patronised the facilities. The German visitor Indra, for example, marvelled at the holdings of the libraries in Sydney, Melbourne and Adelaide, and stressed that all walks of life could be found using them. One reason may well be the saturation of urban and rural Australia with School of Arts and Mechanics Institutes, which led to a general sense of ‘ownership’ of libraries. And this sense, then, was exported to the colonies.

Another good example of the difference in attitudes between British and German colonial attitudes is also the representation of fiction published in the local newspapers. Despite frequent changes in ownership,¹⁹ Samoan newspapers prior to the establishment of a German colony, *ie* pre 1900, regularly ran fiction items, both poetry and short fiction, the latter frequently gleaned from contemporary Australian weeklies, such as *The Bulletin*.²⁰ In this the Samoan papers were similar to other regional colonial newspapers in Australia.²¹ Yet, once Samoa had become a German colony and the newspaper turned into the bilingual German-owned *Samoanische Zeitung*, fiction was only very rarely included.²²

During the German administration the public library continued but on a smaller scale, with a sprinkling of German-language books included. The journal of the *Deutsche Kolonialgesellschaft* (German Colonial Society) opined in 1902 that the establishment of a German Public Library was an urgent need, as the average German settler in Samoa, albeit not impecunious, did not have the disposable income to acquire a large personal library. And without such the ‘Germandom’ of the settlers was under threat. A public ‘call to arms’ to provide books, akin to the call made by Cusack-Smith a decade earlier, was issued.²³ As contact address the brother of one of the planters, Richard Deeken, was given, suggesting that he was behind the scheme. We do not know how many books were thus obtained.

SCHOOL LIBRARIES

The German school in Apia was founded in 1891.²⁴ Until 1903 it was run as a private school subsidised by the German government, when it was taken over as a government school. At that time it had a small library, but that was normally not open to the general public.²⁵ New buildings were erected in 1905. The *Cyclopaedia of Samoa* comments in 1907 that the school has ‘a well stocked library,’ but does not elaborate on its contents.²⁶

Libraries in German Micronesia

What was the situation in German Micronesia? The area comprised the Marshall Islands, acquired from Spain in 1886, and the Caroline, Palau and Mariana Islands, acquired from Spain in 1899, following the Spanish-American War.²⁷ The German administration in Micronesia comprised of district administrations with seats in Saipan (for the Marianas),

Yap (for the Western Carolines and Palau), and Pohnpei (for the Eastern Carolines). These were subordinate to the Governor of German New Guinea, residing in Herbertshöhe (later in Rabaul), in New Britain, who in turn was answerable to Berlin. The Marshall Islands were a separate colony until 1906 when they too were made districts subordinate to German New Guinea.

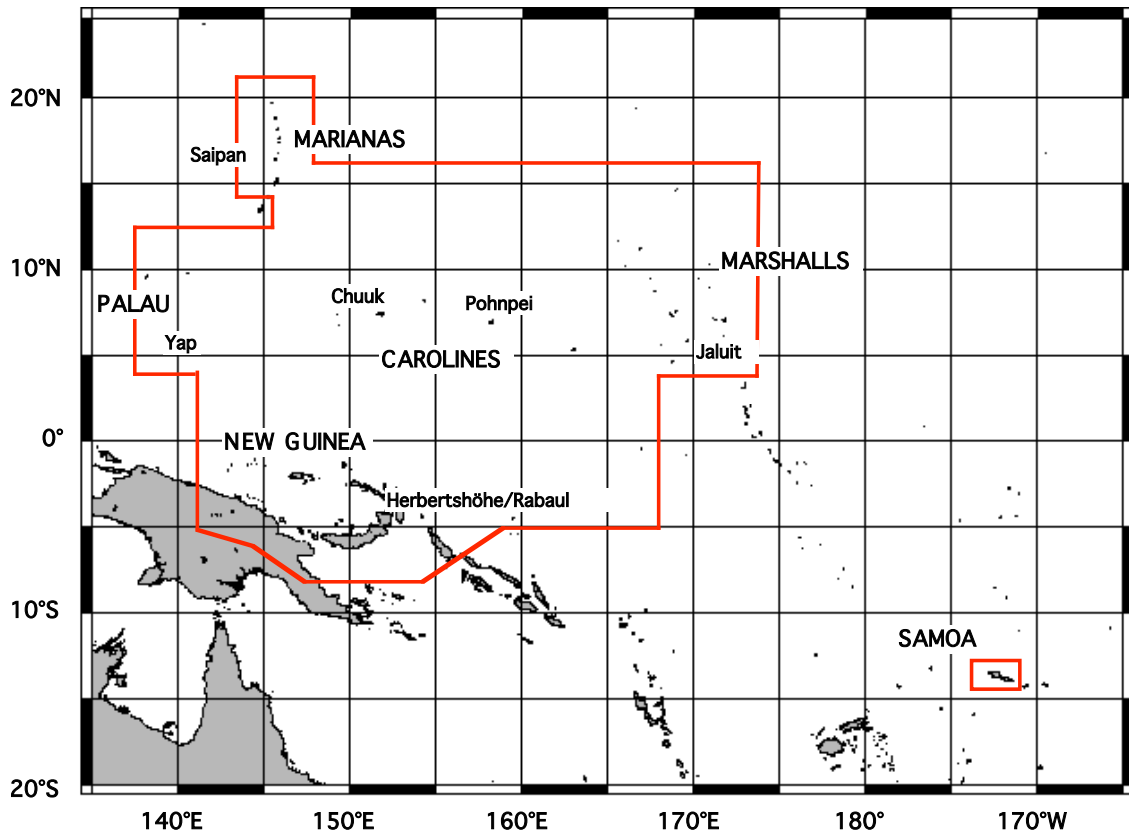


Figure 3-3 Map of the German Pacific

EXTENT OF THE EXPATRIATE POPULATION

Before we comment on the presence or the nature of libraries in German Micronesia we need to consider that the size of the expatriate population in the area was not only very small (table 3-1) but also geographically very dispersed—thus the demand for a public library was virtually non-existent.

Table 3-1 Extent of non-indigenous population in the Micronesia 1886 to 1914 (excluding Chinese labourers)²⁸

	Total Population				Men Only			
	Marshalls	Eastern Carolines	Western Carolines	Marianas	Marshalls	Eastern Carolines	Western Carolines	Marianas
1886	62							
1890	95							
1891	99							

The Library of the Joachim deBrum House, Likiep Atoll, Marshall Islands

1892	74				64			
1893	72				56			
1894	81				58			
1895	71							
1896	51				45			
1898	87				81			
1899	55				50			
1900	55	87	43	26	50	49	43	26
1901	68	88	59	23	63	54	59	23
1902	63							
1903	77	89	56	58		61	33	12
1904	81	92	69	53	64	64	41	14
1905	84	77	107	44	65	64	41	15
1906	103	71	69	31	85	51	63	15
1907	103	78	118	35	132	56	106	30
1908	160							
1909		80	192		124	49	85	
1910	172	78	116	60	151	102	54	
1911	239		186		155		173	
1912	264		195		157		195	
1913								

ADMINISTRATION LIBRARIES

The German district administration on Saipan, Marianas, owned a library, for use by the government officials and appropriate members of the public. This library was saved through concerted efforts by the colonial administrators during the 2/3 October 1909 typhoon that severely affected the island.²⁹

There were no public libraries in any of district centres of the German administration in Micronesia: Kolonia (Pohnpei), Kolonia (Yap), Jaluit (Marshall Islands), Saipan (Marianas). Yet, clearly private citizens as well as some of the companies held books. The German naval physician and ethnographer Dr. Augustin Krämer commented that in 1892 the separate dining (and presumably also lounge room (“Speisehaus”) of the Jaluit Gesellschaft on Jaluit contained a nice (‘hübsche’) library, where he found many useful items on the Marshalls.³⁰ The Pacific Phosphate company, a joint venture between the Jaluit Gesellschaft and the Pacific Island Company, mined phosphate on Nauru. As part of the amenities provided for the 60 expatriate staff, the company maintained, *inter alia* a reading and billiard room with piano, newspapers and a close to 1000 volume library of German and English-language books.³¹

Libraries

Table 3-2 Nationality of non-indigenous population in the Marshall Islands 1886 to 1908

	German	British	colonial	American	Chinese	Norwegian	Swedish	Danish	Portuguese	Brazilian	Swiss	Russian	Japanese	Dutch	Austrians	without	Total
1886	34	11	0	10	0	2	0	0	4	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	62
1890	33	23	0	23	11	4	3	2	2	1	1	1	2	0	0	0	106
1891	34	20	0	24	10	6	2	3	2	1	1	1	2	0	0	3	109
1892	30	17	0	18	11	4	2	1	2	1	1	1	2	0	0	3	93
1893	39	14	0	13	11	3	1	1	2	1	1	0	0	0	0	3	89
1894	32	13	0	11	15	3	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	4	82
1895	37	13	0	10	14	3	1	1	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	3	85
1896	33	13	0	10	14	4	1	1	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	3	82
1898	43	11	0	8	9	4	2	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	4	83
1899	50	9	0	9	11	5	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	3	90
1900	48	8	0	10	10	1	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	3	0	3	85
1901	59	12	0	11	15	5	1	0	0	0	2	0	0	3	0	2	110
1902	36	7	0	10	13	3	1	1	0	0	1	1	0	1	0	2	76
1903	51	5	0	11	13	2	0	0	0	0	4	1	0	1	0	2	90
1904	61	5	0	10	13	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	2	94
1905	66	4	1	8	13	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	2	97
1906	65	5	2	7	16	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	2	100
1907	76	9	6	7	326	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	2	429
1908	91	29	23	11	429	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	2	589

Table 3-3 Non-indigenous population in the Marshall Islands by language group 1886 to 1908

	German	English	Nordic	Dutch	Portuguese	Other
1886	34	21	2	1	4	0
1890	34	46	9	0	3	14
1891	35	44	11	0	3	16
1892	31	35	7	0	3	17
1893	40	27	5	0	3	14
1894	32	24	5	0	2	19
1895	37	23	5	0	3	17
1896	33	23	6	0	3	17
1898	44	19	7	0	0	13
1899	51	18	7	0	0	14
1900	50	18	1	3	0	13
1901	61	23	6	3	0	17
1902	37	17	5	1	0	16
1903	55	16	2	1	0	16
1904	61	15	2	1	0	15
1905	66	13	2	1	0	15
1906	66	14	1	1	0	18
1907	77	22	1	1	0	328
1908	92	63	1	2	0	431

Table 3-4 Presence of non-indigenous population on outer atolls of the Marshall Islands in 1892 and 1893³²

Atoll	1892	1893
Ailinglaplap	1 trader	1 trader
Arno	6 traders	5 traders
Ebon	3 traders	3 traders
Kili	1 planter	1 planter
Likiep	2 planters & 2 artisans	2 planters & 3 artisans
Majuro	7 traders	7 traders
Maloelap	1 trader	2 trader
Mejit	1 trader	1 trader
Mile	3 traders	3 traders
Namorik	3 traders	3 traders
Ujelang	1 planter	2 planters

German Schools in Micronesia

The German education system in Micronesia was in the hands of Protestant and Catholic missionaries, with the exception of a Government school on Saipan. Catholic schools existed on Pohnpei, Yap, Palau and Saipan, all run by the Capuchins, and on Jaluit, and Arno, Likiep and Nauru, run by the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart. Protestant schools, operated by the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (ABCFM) and later in part by the (German) Liebenzeller Mission, operated on Kosrae, Pohnpei, Pangelap, Mokil, Chuuk, Nauru and Majuro.³³

We do not know the extent of the libraries held by the mission schools, but know that some of them were destroyed in the typhoons that ravaged the islands on 20 April 1905 (Kosrae and Pohnpei) and 30 June 1905 (Jaluit).

Libraries were an integral part of German schools, and when in 1905 the government school was opened on Saipan, a school library for use by the pupils was planned.³⁴

The role of individuals

Private individuals always kept their own professional and recreational libraries. As reading matter was ordered and shipped by mail and the arrival of the mail bag of great importance. Newspapers were the most significant, with books taking a comparative backseat. The obsession of the arriving mailbag, and the anticipation of reading the, albeit several weeks old, news in the *Times* and other newspapers, is nicely captured in Somerset Maugham's short story *The Outstation*.³⁵

Yet we need to read this with some caution. While the main trading companies placed administrators in charge, the bulk of the traders operating in the islands were self-made men with an adventurous streak, often with limited education. While most of them would have been readers, few would have acquired libraries of their own.

VOLUME OF BOOK IMPORTS

As a rule, import statistics of reading matter to the colonies are rare. A snapshot of the volume of reading matter reaching Samoa can be obtained for 1885. In his annual report, post master John Davis mentions that for the period 3 January to 30 November 1885 he received 3168 letters, 6253 newspapers and 377 books.³⁶ Unfortunately no other similar accounts could be found in the files. As there is no reason to assume that 1885 was a special year, we can estimate that the annual volume of book imports would have been similar for the 1890s.³⁷ Worth noting is that the number of newspapers far exceeds that of the numbers of letters and other mail.

We have no such data for the German colonial period. For some years, however, we have in hand the figures of newspapers delivered by mail, while books would have been summarised under parcels. The fragmentary data available from the annual reports and other sources are shown in tables 3-5 and 3-6. For most years we only have the total numbers of issues carried (table 3-5), but for a few years we also have in hand the number of subscriptions (table 3-6). Comparing these with the non-indigenous population the low rate of newspaper subscription becomes obvious. This is exacerbated if we look at the

number of subscriptions per household, as represented by the number of males over 15 (table 3-1). Moreover, the number of newspapers carried by mail is less than half the number of letters carried, a reversal to the pre-German situation in Samoa.

Table 3-5 Imports of newspapers (issues) to the German Pacific colonies.³⁸

Year	Jaluit	Eastern Carolines	Western Carolines	Marianas	German Micronesia Total	Samoa	German New Guinea
1899	3022				3022		
1900	2923				2923		
1901	4452				5467		12540
1902	5151				5151	26000	15500
1903					3501		26224
1904	6013	2914	4371	1775	15073		30595
1905		5052	6281	2185	13518		
1906	7880	4643	6281		18804	20096	
1907	8119		7027		15146		48800
1908	9421		5830		15251	30686	
1909					8454	27939	62562
1910					13175	28833	104512
1911					7368	24312	102719
1912	13973				24547	32718	126567

Table 3-6 Imports of newspapers (subscriptions) to the German Pacific colonies.³⁹

Year	Jaluit	Eastern Carolines	Western Carolines	Marianas	German Micronesia Total	Samoa	German New Guinea
1896	40				40		
1903					22		210
1904		17	32	13	62		224
1905		37	46	16	99		
1906		34	46	31	111		
1907		158		99	257		
1908			185		185		

Table 3-7 Total Imports of paper products to German Micronesia.⁴⁰

Year	Total Imports		Imported for Government	
	Weight	Value (Rmk)	Weight	Value (Rmk)
Western Carolines and Marianas				
1909	3651	11384	?	?
1910	1466	4912	?	?
1911	7991	13605	1129	2058
1912	4187	10536	768	7991
Eastern Carolines				
1905	782	2715	200	229
1906	2012	6687	666	2283
1907	1655	4236	606	983
1908	1434	2692	?	?
1909	2060	3018	0	0
1910	2398	3406	38	20
Eastern Carolines and Marshalls				
1911	10814	24527	?	?
1912	150019	20838	0	0

Table 3-8 Origin of imports of paper products to German Micronesia.⁴¹

Year	Germany		Australia		England		USA		Asia		Other	
	Weight	Value	Weight	Value	Weight	Value	Weight	Value	Weight	Value	Weight	Value
Western Carolines and Marianas												
1909	2187	4819	533	1164	21	68	886	5240	3	43	21	50
1910	842	3619	408	934	8	49	207	300	0	0	1	10
1911	5545	10243	32	67	90	217	5	40	2319	3038	0	0
1912	3020	7748	260	236	24	290	0	0	883	2262	0	0
Eastern Carolines												
1905	487	1206	4	7	0	0	276	1488	15	14	0	0
1906	1783	6091	?	288	0	0	0	0	229	308	0	0
1907	1052	3298	442	326	0	0	?	400	161	212	0	0
1908	993	2181	356	453	0	0	0	0	85	58	0	0
1909	1339	2478	574	344	0	0	0	0	147	196	0	0
1910	1363	2304	879	702	0	0	5	50	151	350	0	0
Eastern Carolines and Marshalls												
1911	5322	11029	3653	6506	0	0	1553	6112	286	880	0	0
1912	141905	7625	5170	7339	0	0	617	2501	2305	3212	22	161

The only other statistics available to gauge book imports to German Micronesia are the annual trade statistics, which list *Papier und Pappwaren, literarische und Kunstgegenstände* (Paper and cardboard stationery, literary and art items). These statistics did not start until 1905; before that statistics are available for German New Guinea proper, but not for the 'Islands Territory of the Carolines, Palau and Mariana Islands,' where paper products were summarised under the heading 'sundries'.⁴² Unfortunately the published statistics (table 3-7) do not discriminate between printed matter and stationery.⁴³ The same applies to the archival sources of the Reichskolonialamt.

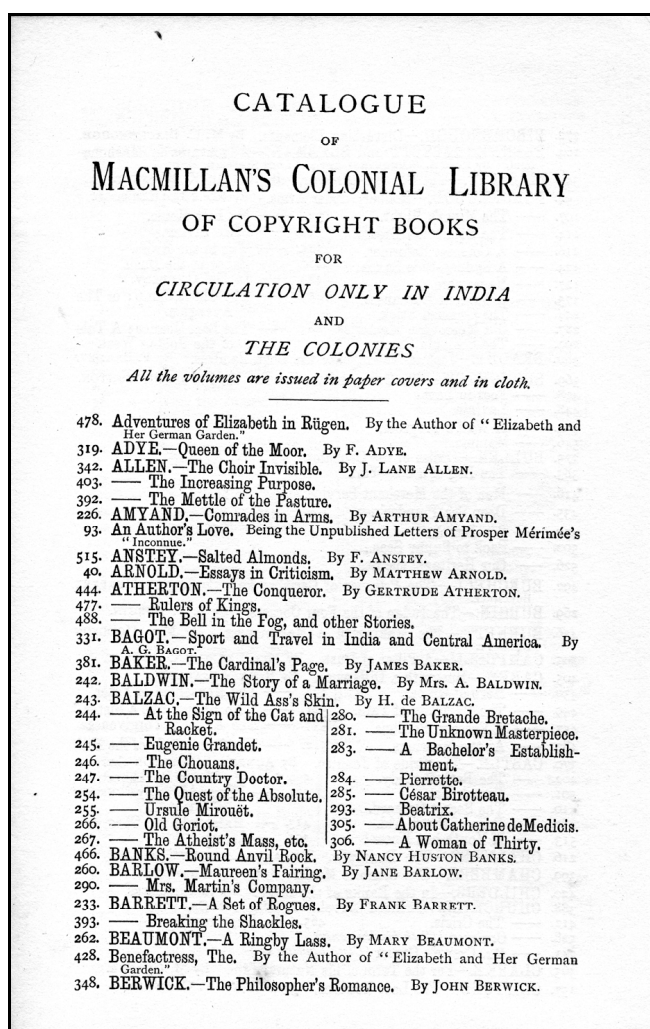


Figure 3.4. Example of a British publisher's advertisement for his colonial series.

The published data allow for two conclusions, however. The role of government in importing matter was small, with the bulk of the material imported for private use (table 3-7). The other demonstrates the nature of supply. While the bulk of paper goods came from German sources, Australian suppliers figure well, particularly in Eastern Micronesia. As stationers often acted as book distributors and vice versa, this has a bearing on the origin of books traded into the region. Asian suppliers are well represented in the west, but also in the eastern Micronesia. These sources are both Japanese and Chinese, the latter via the German colony of Jiazhou (Qingdao).

COLONIAL SERIES

To cater for this market, special 'Colonial Series' were produced by the major publishers, such as Macmillan, T. Fisher Unwin, John Murray, T. Werner Laurie and others. These editions were offered in cheaper bindings and often on cheaper paper, solely for sale in the British Colonies, where they were distributed not only by book sellers but also by mail order houses. To a degree these 'Colonial Series' were the forerunner of the book club editions as they ensured a 'captive' market and thus made a print run profitable.⁴⁴

However, the 'fare' offered by these British colonial libraries was limited and avid readers yearned for more and for variation. Somerset Maugham describes in his short story 'The Bookbag' the desperation some planters and plantation managers experienced in isolation.⁴⁵ Visitors were likely to be accosted for the news as well as the books they might bring with them.

In the Micronesian setting the nature of colonialism differed from that in South East Asia. In his short story 'A Point of Theology on Majuro' the Australian trader turned novelist Louis Becke describes a resident trader with a small religious library:

"The only signs of superiority he showed over the rest of his fellow traders being the display on the rough table in his sitting room of a quantity of theological literature by the Reverend James MacBain, of Aberdeen. Still he was not proud, and would lend any of his books or pamphlets to any white man who visited the island."⁴⁶

The figure displays three distinct advertisements from German colonial journals. The first, 'Illustrierter deutscher Kolonial-Abreiss-Kalender', is a calendar advertisement with a price of 1.50 Mk. and contact information for Ferd. Ashelm in Berlin. The second, 'G. A. v. Halem Export- u. Verlags-Buchhandlung', is a bookshop advertisement from Bremen, highlighting its multilingual service. The third, 'Berliner Tageblatt', is a newspaper advertisement showing its subscription price and a large subscriber base of 175,000.

Illustrierter deutscher Kolonial-Abreiss-Kalender.
Preis Mk. 1,50.
Zu beziehen durch jede Buch-, Papier- und Schreibwaarenhandlung oder direkt vom Verlag
Ferd. Ashelm, Berlin C. 19, Neue Grünstr. 32. (5)

G. A. v. Halem
Export- u. Verlags-Buchhandlung
Bremen
empfiehlt sich zur Besorgung
sämtlicher Bücher und
Zeitschriften
in allen Sprachen. (92)
Kataloge, Prospekte, Spezial-
offerten, Literarische Auskünfte
aller Art gratis und franko.

Berliner Tageblatt
Monatl. 2 Mark.
Jeder Abonnent
erhält 6 Gratis-Wochenhefte:
Montag: Der Zeitgeist, wissenschaftl.,
Feuille, Zeitschr., Mittw., Technische
Rundschau, Dinst., Der Weltspiegel
Freitag: Ulls. f. d. Kunst, politisch-
wiss. Wochenschr., Sonnab. Haus und
Garten, Sonntag: Der Weltspiegel
Ferner:
Montag: Sportblatt, Dienstag:
Reise-, Bilder- u. Touristen-Zeitung
Mittw. u. Donnerstags-Rundschau
Donnerstags-Literarische Rundschau
Freitag: Frauen-Rundschau
Sonntags: Börsen-Wochenblatt
175,000
Abonnenten

Figure 3.5. Examples of publishers' and book sellers' advertisements in German colonial journals.⁴⁷

We need to consider that while Micronesia was a German colony (with the exception of Guam), quite a few of the residents in Micronesia were British and American traders who would acquire British colonial editions. Not all of the reading matter offered in these series was to the taste of the German traders and administrators. The Australian short story author Louis Becke, for example, was a favourite with many of the Pacific trading community for he had once been one of them. He was widely distributed in T. Fisher Unwin's colonial series. Becke's anti-German stance, however, and his negative portrayal,

if not stereotyping of German traders, against a background of German population engrossed in Imperial colonial ambitions did not endear him to the German audience.⁴⁸

While some German publishers, such as Süsserrott of Berlin, began to publish a series of colonial handbooks destined for the budding tropical farmer, mainstream publishers never had a colonial fiction series, largely because the readership and most certainly the well-to-do market in the German colonies was limited.

Those who could afford books obtained directly from the publishers who advertised in the two main colonial journals the *Deutsche Kolonialzeitung* and the *Deutsches Kolonialblatt* (figure 3-5). Overall, however, the quantity of advertisements by publishers or booksellers is very small. In addition, some of the export booksellers also issued their own catalogues of publications on and for the colonies (figure 3-6), which added to the sales markets.

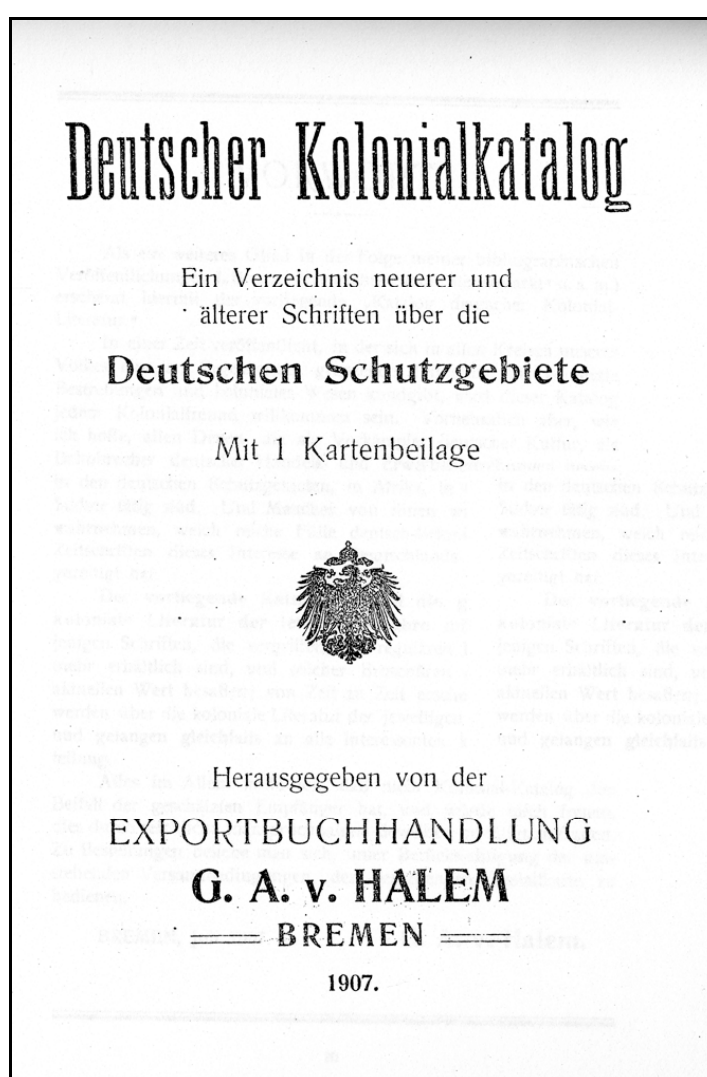


Figure 3.6. Example of a book seller's colonial catalogue for both the domestic and the colonial market.⁴⁹

The pages of colonial journals show that comments on the changes to the book rate in the German postal system to the colonies were quite common,⁵⁰ reflecting the importance expatriates placed on this service. In his 1904 assessment of the contemporary German

postal system in the colonies, Herzog argued that the fact that the newspaper rate for the colonies was the same as the newspaper rate for domestic Germany was seen as an important contributor to the colonisation process.⁵¹

ARNO SENFFT

The German district administrator for the Western Carolines, Dr. Arno Senfft, must have possessed a small private library as well as a nice collection of artefacts from his previous posting in Jaluit. Most of this was stored with his parents.⁵² Upon return from home leave in Germany in 1903 he brought with him a rare book, the German first edition of Anson's voyage around the world. He wrote two articles on Tinian for the *Deutsches Kolonialblatt* drawing on that particular book.⁵³ The volume brought out by him would have most probably been

“Des Herrn Admirals, Lord Ansons Reise um die Welt, welche er als Oberbefehlshaber über ein Geschwader von Sr. Grossbritannischen Majestät Kriegsschiffen, die Zu einer Unternehmung in die Südsee ausgeschiedt worden, in den Jahren 1740, 41, 42, 43 44 verrichtet hat, aus dessen Aufsätzen und Urkunden zusammengetragen und unter seiner Aufsicht and das Licht gestellt von M. Richard Waltern, Capetan Sr. Majestät Schiffe, dem Centurion, in diesem Kriegszuge.”
Göttingen, Abraham Vondenhoecks sel. Witwe., 1763.

We do not know what happened to Senfft's library in Micronesia after his death on 14 February 1909 in Hong Kong, but we can assume that the material left behind in Germany was eventually dispersed.⁵⁴

OTHER GOVERNMENT PHYSICIANS

The tropical climate of the typhoon-affected islands of Micronesia, however, was not at all conducive to maintaining a library, let alone one containing rare books. We know, for example, that the professional library owned by Dr. Max Girschner, government physician on Pohnpei, was destroyed during the 20 April 1905 typhoon that totally levelled the German settlement there. Girschner, who was absent on a different island group, also lost all his patient records.⁵⁵ The German government physician on Saipan, Dr. Paul Schnee, comments on the leaking nature of the Japanese tile roofs, mentioning in his annual report that he had to wrap all his books in towels when rain set in.⁵⁶

There is no documentation of the actual contents of libraries in German Micronesia, with the exception of the library established by Joachim deBrum on Likiep Atoll in the Marshall Islands.

MISSIONARIES

Missionaries can be expected to have maintained small working libraries of religious texts. We have but little detail on the existence of the libraries. The German physician Kretschmar comments in his account of Nauru on the Catholic missionary's library as containing a number of large folios which impressed the local population no end.⁵⁷

Notes to the Chapter

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 - ² Spennemann, Dirk H. R. (2003) 'Solitary among a crowd': Books and Empire at 'The Beach,' Samoa. in: 'Books and Empire. ' *Textual production, distribution and consumption in Colonial and Postcolonial Countries*. A regional conference by the Society for the History of Authorship, Reading and Publishing (USA). Sydney 30 January –1 February 2003. Abstracts. Compiled by Elizabeth Webby and Paul Eggert. Australian National University Humanities Research Centre.
 - ³ Loeak, Christopher J. (1997) "Library Development in the Marshall Islands," in *PIALA '94: Pacific Information Liberation: The Wave of the Future (Guam, 4-9 November 1994) Proceedings of the 6th Pacific Islands Association of Libraries and Archives Conference*, edited by Arlene Cohen. Guam: PIALA. pp. 9-12.
 - ⁴ von Liliencron, Adda Freifrau (1909). Bitte. *Deutsche Kolonialzeitung* 26(44): 730
 - ⁵ von Liliencron, Adda Freifrau (1910) Weiteres über die Büchereien in den Kolonien. *Deutsche Kolonialzeitung* 27(33): 553.
 - ⁶ von Liliencron, Adda Freifrau (1910) Dank für Spenden zu den Büchereien in den Kolonien. *Deutsche Kolonialzeitung* 27(43): 720-721. von Liliencron, Adda Freifrau (1910) Dank für Spenden zu den Soldatenbüchern. *Deutsche Kolonialzeitung* 27(51): 857
 - ⁷ von Liliencron, Adda Freifrau (1910) Weiteres über die Büchereien in den Kolonien. *Deutsche Kolonialzeitung* 27(33): 553.
 - ⁸ Anon. (1910b) Bücherei Windhuk. *Deutsche Kolonialzeitung* 27 (4), p. 58.
 - ⁹ Ifill, E.L.V. (1968) *The public library movement in Barbados and Jamaica from the middle of the nineteenth century to the present day*. Thesis submitted for the Fellowship of the Library Association. p. 6
 - ¹⁰ Ifill *op. cit.* p. 76.
 - ¹¹ Ogle, John F. (1897) *The free library: its history and present condition*. London: G.Allen.
 - ¹² Howes, Brian R. (1976) *Public Library services in South Australia: the story to 1976*. Wagga Wagga. School of Library and Information Sciences, Riverina Institute of Higher Education.
 - ¹³ Levett, John (1984) The Tasmanian Free Public Library in 1850: its members, its managers and its books. in: Elizabeth Morrison and Michael Talbot (eds) *Books, Libraries and Readers in colonial Australia*. Papers from a forum on Australian Colonial Literary History. Clayton, Vic.: Graduate School of Librarianship, Monash University. pp. 11-21.
 - ¹⁴ Ramsey, Margert C. (1984) Concept of a Free Library: the Melbourne Public Library. in: Elizabeth Morrison and Michael Talbot (eds) *Books, Libraries and Readers in colonial Australia*. Papers from a forum on Australian Colonial Literary History. Clayton, Vic.: Graduate School of Librarianship, Monash University. pp. 22-37.
 - ¹⁵ Even though a Australian Subscription Library, existed since 1826
 - ¹⁶ Source: Deutsche Kolonialgesellschaft.
 - ¹⁷ Indra, Karl R. (1903) *Südseefahrten : Schilderungen einer Reise nach den Fidschi-Inseln, Samoa und Tonga*. Berlin : Süsserott, pp. 29-30.
 - ¹⁸ T.B. Cusack-Smith, Letter to the Editor of the London Evening Standard, Reproduced in *Samoa Times* vol. 5, n° 322, 1 April 1893, p.2 col. 7.
 - ¹⁹ Spennemann, Dirk H. R. (2003b) The Heritage of Nineteenth Century Samoan Newspapers. A Bibliographical Analysis. *Johnstone Centre Report* 195. Albury, NSW: The Johnstone Centre, Charles Sturt University.
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