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“The Lolelaplap (Marshall Islands) in Us: Sailing West to East (Ralik→Ratak) to These Our Atolls (Aelon Kein Ad) Ad Jolet Jen Anij (Our Blessed Inheritance from God)”

Desmond N. Doulatram

University of San Francisco, desmonddoulatram@gmail.com

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“THE *LOLELAPLAP* (MARSHALL ISLANDS) IN US: SAILING WEST TO EAST
(*RALIK* → *RATAK*) TO THESE OUR ATOLLS (*AELON KEIN AD*) *AD JOLET JEN*
ANIJ (OUR BLESSED INHERITANCE FROM GOD)”

LOLELAPLAP (OCEAN) IN US

Desmond Narain Doulatram

APS 698: Masters in Asia Pacific Studies (MAPS) CAPSTONE

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*“Won enaj jumaiki ilo an etal em rolok em tolok em ruburube
ikijit, nijirto, nijirto, nijirto, nijir too medre in.”*

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Source(s): <http://wesa.fm/post/international-day-peace-encourages-nonviolence-pittsburgh#stream/0>

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Abstract

This paper discusses the expansion of Oceania through a Marshallese indigenous lens as a focal point. It explains that decolonizing methodologies allows reclaiming of space for mental liberation and reassessment of constitutional rights. It highlights similar occurrences of decolonization practices meeting resistance in the 21st century all while strengthening the human right argument that no human deserves any less than their fellow human brothers and sisters. It argues that an indigenous imagery can only be viewed through an indigenous lens where the researches' level of purity is retained and unfiltered. It nevertheless argues that Marshallese ethnolinguistics reveal the same cultural practices in America, Judeo-Christianity, and Oceania thus dictating the reality that "we are the same not withstanding one stays here and one there (*Bedbedjin Bedbedjen, Bedbedjinma wot Kwe*)". It further explains the importance in these similarities and how Marshallese spirituality predates introduced American Judeo-Christianity despite the latter attempting to marginalize the former. It concludes by stating that Marshallese contributions on the global stage are rooted in that culture of love (*IaKwe*) which is echoed by the custom(s) revealing the significance of Marshallese validation academically, spiritually, economically, & socially to prevent institutionalized discrimination. This paper ends stating that the agency to know one's self and how one should fit in the world, is a human right in itself and Marshallese are entitled to this sense of self worth through knowing thy self by thy self where real thinking takes place in one's own mind as we all live our own lives.

Key Words: *Oceania, Pacific, Marshall Islands, Decolonization, Indigenization, Contextualization, Ethnolinguistics, Culture, Indigenous Methodology, Equal Dignity*

TIMELINE

- 2000BC: Marshallese Voyagers settle Marshall Islands calling it *Aelon Kein Ad*.
- 1823: Lemari Juen of the Rimwejoor Clan in Arno becomes Paramount Chief of *Ratak* (Western) Chain.
- 1857: Kabua of the Iroij Clan, with his maternal uncle Kaibuke's blessing, saves the American Boston missionaries bringing the Gospel to Ebon atoll.
- 1863: Iroijlaplap Kaibuke Labadeo of Southern *Ralik* dies of typhoid fever.
- 1878-1879: Kabua signs Jaluit Harbor Treaty along with first cousin and stepson Nelu (Son of Kaibuke). This commerce and navigation treaty was concluded by Kabua, on behalf of the Marshallese people with an emissary of chancellor Bismark of the Imperial German Government in 1879. This treaty not only recognized the national flag of the islands but it also granted the German government certain rights such as the right to establish a coaling station for its warships.
- 1885: Kabua leads the signing of the German Treaty of Friendship on behalf of his father Iroij Lajidrik Jiba (Chief of Northern *Ralik/Eaninmeto*). Germany officially declares the Marshall Islands as a protectorate.
- 1904: Iroijlaplap Loeak of Southern *Ralik/Rakinmeto* dies and Kabua succeeds.
- 1907: German Tribunal reverses matrilineal succession and awards Kabua's first cousin Litokwa as heir to Iroijlaplap Loeak's lands thus following a patrilineal form of inheritance.
- 1910: German Tribunal reverses mistaken decision and awards summary judgment in favor of Kabua the Great in accordance with matrilineal cultural norms. Kabua dies in July and is succeeded matrilineally by younger brother Leit (Lakijmwe).
- 1914: Japanese Navy ousts Germany and installs the Japanese Imperial flag. Iroijlaplap Leit (Lakijmwe) passes away.
- 1945: Japan is ousted by US Military following defeat in WWII
- 1946-1958: U.S. Nuclear Testing Period in Bikini and Enewetak
- 1953: Dorothy Kabua, a chieftain of the Raano clan of Majuro, becomes the first indigenous Micronesian to attend a United Nations Trusteeship Council Meeting. Iroij Pwio Jeimata Kabua (son of Kabua the Great) passes away.
- 1956: Marshall Islands Legislature called *Nitijela* is formed.
- 1965: Congress of Micronesia is formed.
- 1977: Marshall Islands Constitutional Convention is formed. Allison Quentin-Baxter and Laurence Tribe assist in legal framework.
- 1979: Marshall Islands Constitution is ratified on May 1, 1979 after being voted by the voting Majority and observed by a United Nations Mission. Amata Kabua becomes first president.
- 1981: Iroijlaplap Lejolan Kabua passes away.
- 1982: Iroijlaplap Manini Kabua passes away.
- 1983: Marshall Islands approves by voting majority the Compact of Free Association. Iroijlaplap Joba Kabua passes away.
- 1986: United States Approves Compact of Free Association
- 1990: United Nations Security Council terminates Trusteeship Status of Marshall Islands
- 1991: Marshall Islands gains official membership in the United Nations
- 1996: President Amata Kabua passes away.

Indeed, as the preeminent military power in the world, the United States has dealt with the Pacific, since World War II, as if it were an American ocean.
Haunani Kay-Trask

It is interesting to note that while others may look at the Ocean as a vast barrier which separates, we (Pacific Islanders) view it as a medium which connects us all.
Amata Kabua

Our ocean demands that we live up to the expectations of our ancestors and bring to life what it means to be people of the ocean, especially in school.
Emani Ilaoa

Ocean informs and organizes all islander experiences
David Ga'oupu Palaita

We sweat and cry salt water, so we know that the ocean is really in our blood
Teresia Teaiwa

We do not know exactly when the first people settled these islands...but we do know that our ancestors were dauntlessly sailing the vastness of the Pacific with hand hewn wooden canoes without instruments while Europeans were still arguing whether the Earth was round or flat
Amata Kabua

We are the sea, we are the ocean, we must wake up to this ancient truth and together use it to overturn all hegemonic views that aim ultimately to confine us again, physically and psychologically, in the tiny spaces that we have resisted accepting as our sole appointed places, and from which we have recently liberated ourselves. We must not allow anyone to belittle us again, and take away our freedom.
Eveli Hau'ofa

Introduction → Oceania: Our Sea of Islands!

“Vāsā (Ocean) —The Space that is Sacred”¹ connecting the Pacific people to a common way of knowing reinserts the notion of community building and empowerment. In a recent *Talanoa*² series held at the City College of San Francisco, the living essence of Oceania expanding echoed by Epeli³ showcases that Oceania is indeed growing⁴ through various avenues while still retaining the notion of community building through the medium of the Pacific.⁵ (Re)claiming or better said truth seeking, finds it a bit odd that colonial scientist(s) defining Pacific imagery are overlooking one huge factor — the

¹ David Ga'oupu Palaita. “Vāsā (Ocean) —The Space that is Sacred: Pacific Islanders in Higher Education.” (PhD diss. University of California, Berkeley, 2015).

² See 2018 Talanoa Dialogue Platform:
http://unfccc.int/focus/talanoa_dialogue/items/10265.php

³ Epeli Hau'Ofa. “Our Sea of Islands.” *Contemporary Pacific* 6, no. 1. (1994): 147-161.

⁴ See The Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander Population: 2010
<https://www.census.gov/prod/cen2010/briefs/c2010br-12.pdf>

⁵ Dame Meg Taylor “A Sea of Islands: How a Regional Group of Pacific States is Working to Achieve SDG 14.” *UN Chronicle*, Volume LIV Nos. 1 & 2 May 2017.

“witnesses” who dauntlessly sailed the vastness of the Pacific (which covers one third of the world’s surface) at a time when the “world” was still arguing whether the Earth was round or flat.⁶ These Pacific people who sailed around one third of the world’s surface being the “Pacific Ocean” witnessed⁷ and saw the events that transpired in this part of the globe.⁸ People sail faster than they walk and they fly faster than they sail. This answers the question as to who really moved first in that part of the region (Pacific Ocean) as it has now been irrefutably conclusive that people of the majestic liquid continent being Oceania are genetically related to people from the Continent(s)⁹. History is movement and the center of the tale is in the movement. Hence, those who moved first in the Pacific are Pacific Islanders and they remember how they moved. It is with this ultimate truth that this paper seeks to reclaim or rather to revalidate an indigenous Pacific lens through a qualitative case study approach from the Marshall Islands using a hybrid decolonization methodology via ‘narrative inquiry’¹⁰ and auto-ethnography.¹¹

Literature Review → Decolonizing Methodologies to (Re)Claim Sacred Space for Mental Liberation and reassurement of Constitutional Rights

‘Decolonizing research methodologies’¹² gives proper agency to re(claim) sacred space for mental liberation and reassurement of Constitutional rights.¹³ Having proper agency equalizes the political spectrum to retain dignity for all peoples concerned. The historic ruling of *Brown versus Board of Education* ruled that “A sense of inferiority affects the

⁶ Paul Frederick Kluge, *The Edge of Paradise: America in Micronesia*. (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1991), 55.

⁷ Amata Kabua "A RESPONSE TO THE ADDRESS BY THE PRESIDENT OF ISRAEL AT THE STATE DINNER." *Republic of the Marshall Islands*. Israel, 6 September 1987.

⁸ Amata Kabua “Statement by His Excellency Amata Kabua, President of the Republic of the Marshall Islands in the General Debate of the 46th Session of the General Assembly of the United Nations.” United Nations. New York City, NY. 24 September 1991.

⁹ In a recent *Talanoa* Series, Dr. Vid Ratioor, a native of Chuuk revealed that his ancestry included Native American. This is in light of the fact that Chuuk is part of a language group called Nuclear Micronesia which is linguistically related to the Austronesian language family of Taiwan.

¹⁰ D. Jean Clandinin. “Narrative Inquiry: A Methodology for Studying Lived Experience.” *Research Studies in Musical Education* 27, no.1 (2006): 44-54.

¹¹ Desmond Narain Doulatram. “THINK PIECE: Do You See Me or Not? The Human Duty to Decolonize Our Frame of Thoughts to see people for who and what they are as members of Historical Groups with Distinct Characteristics built on Circumstance.” *American Journal of Social Science R&D* 2, no.1(2018):1-51.

¹² Linda Tuhiwai Smith, *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples*, (New Zealand: University of Otago Press, 1999).

¹³ Desmond Narain Doulatram, “Indigenous Decolonization of Academia: Using the Marshall Islands as Precedent for Social Injustice.” *Journal of Humanities and Cultural Studies R&D* 3, no.1 (2018): 1-48.

motivation of a child to learn” because ‘equal dignity’¹⁴ is a crucial element to a great mental health and indigenous islanders are entitled to this sense of self-worth particularly when they are simply existing as they are and are faultless in the process.¹⁵ Delegitimizing an existing knowledge structure that is based on a respective space time continuum entirely dictated by movement itself measured by voyaging cosmic observation of time; allows the skillful mental imposition of colonized Pacific peoples to retain a certain description of themselves, an imagery created by their colonizer(s) where they are held legally captive to view themselves “barbaric” through the lens of what’s been written about them forever following the neocolonial timeline. Obviously, these descriptions are not always accurate as they are written by observing groups of people who are not members of these groups. As Dr. Nabobo-Baba perfectly states this analysis:

Research among indigenous peoples of the Pacific in the 21st century face a number of challenges. One of the most powerful of these is the unchecked and careless use of frames that do not take into account languages and Indigenous knowledge protocols, philosophies and principles, especially where and when their own knowledges and tribal issues are researched.

Eurocentric literature driven by imperialist traditions of manifest destiny and the white man’s burden has forever altered the social hierarchy by institutionalizing demeaning viewpoints where the mentally captive began to reconstruct their reality thus living out someone else’s version of themselves and never truly succumbing to one’s actual attuned way of being. Shiela Wildman explains this obvious danger stating that “At the extreme obverse of mental health we may lose our capacity for identity: our capacity to tell a coherent story of the self, to hold a stable set of values or memories, and with this, to assert political, moral and legal agency in a manner others recognize as legitimate.”¹⁶ Even today, “indigenous Pacific people are beginning to describe and articulate their preferred processes of knowledge gathering, processing and dissemination in a wider move to achieve some form of self-determination in academia and in knowledge institutions especially.”¹⁷ It has been fully realized that ‘decolonizing the mind’¹⁸ adds merit in indigenous knowledge being seen, validated, and valued because for once, at a glance, one is able to see a legitimized knowledge system of themselves without the filters of savagery imposed to lessen the very existence of Pacific indigeniety. This leads

¹⁴ Laurence Tribe, “Equal Dignity: Speaking Its Name,” *Harvard Law Review Forum*, no. 129:16 (2015): 16-32.

¹⁵ Desmond Narain Doulatram, “Indigenous Decolonization of Academia: Using the Marshall Islands as Precedent for Social Injustice,” 1-48.

¹⁶ Shiela Wildeman. “Agonizing Identity in Mental Health Law and Policy (Part I),” *Dalhousie Law Journal*, (2015): 625.

¹⁷ Unaisi Nabobo-Baba, “Decolonising Framings in Pacific Research: Indigenous Fijian Vanua Research Framework as an Organic Response,” *AlterNative* 4, no. 2 (2008): 141.

¹⁸ P-Kiven Tunteng, “Political Freedom and Mental Colonization,” *Transition*, no. 44 (1974): 9-16.

to a ‘reclaiming’¹⁹ in religion and how Marshallese people see themselves. Indigenous imagery told through an indigenous lens retains the research’s level of purity by granting it with ‘methodological integrity’²⁰ to echo the authentic voices of the studied where research is often ‘reciprocal.’²¹ As Dr. Konai Helu Thaman perfectly states:

The curricula of formal education, particularly higher education, should include indigenous Oceanic knowledge, worldviews, and philosophies of teaching and learning, for several reasons: to contribute to and expand the general knowledge base of higher education; to make university study more meaningful for many students; to validate and legitimize academic work, particularly in the eyes of indigenous peoples; and to enhance collaboration between indigenous and nonindigenous peoples.²²

The last assertion of Dr. Konai Helu Thaman retains merit considering the deplorable ‘state of indigenous peoples today’²³ and considering how even the Christian religion²⁴ was ‘customized’²⁵ to cater to Marshallese’s particular circumstances where it was pragmatic rather than dogmatic.²⁶ Even today, this can be seen in the Pacific where Christianity has been adapted and adopted in various ways. A primary example of this is the distinctive form of “communal Christianity” evidently manifested through the historic mainline churches.²⁷ Predatory Christianity preached through an Anglophone lens, similar

¹⁹Desmond Narain Doulatram, “A MARSHALLESE TALE OF MODERNITY IN THE PACIFIC RIM: BRIDGING THE MODERN AND THE TRADITIONAL.” *Journal of Humanities and Cultural Studies R&D* 3, no.3 (2018): 1-66.

²⁰Unaisi Nabobo-Baba, “Decolonising Framings in Pacific Research: Indigenous Fijian Vanua Research Framework as an Organic Response,” 141.

²¹Epeli Hau’Ofa. “Our Sea of Islands,” 147-161.

²² Konai Helu Thaman. “Decolonizing Pacific Studies: Indigenous Perspectives, Knowledge, and Wisdom in Higher Education,” *Contemporary Pacific*, no. 1 (2003): 1-17.

²³UNESCO, *State of the World’s Indigenous Peoples: Education, Vol.3*. New York, New York: United Nations, 2017.

²⁴ Manfred Ernst and Anna Anisi. “The Historical Development of Christianity in Oceania.” In *The Wiley-Blackwell Companion to World Christianity* by Lamin Sanneh and Michael J. McClymond, (United Kingdom: John Wiley & Sons Ltd, 2016), 588-604.

²⁵ Hilda C. Heine, “‘Tuwaak Bwe Elimaajnono’ Perspectives and Voices: A Multiple Case Study of Successful Marshallese Immigrant High School Students In the United States.” (EdD diss., University of Southern California, 2004), 124.

²⁶Desmond Narain Doulatram, “A MARSHALLESE TALE OF MODERNITY IN THE PACIFIC RIM: BRIDGING THE MODERN AND THE TRADITIONAL,” 1-66.

²⁷ Manfred Ernst and Anna Anisi. “The Historical Development of Christianity in Oceania.” 588-604.

to ‘what was done to African Americans,’²⁸ taught many Pacific people to harbor hatred towards themselves and their ways where savage imagery driven by barbaric tales of infanticide, cannibalism, and warfare have forever black mailed Pacific imagery into a state of hiding only to resurface when the irony of the situation reveals institutionalized racism. Epeli Hau’Ofa describes this reality affirming that “In a number of Pacific societies, people still divide their history into two parts: the era of darkness associated with savagery and barbarism; and the era of light and civilization ushered in by Christianity.”²⁹ Technically speaking, everyone has agency to know themselves but careless research due to prejudice stemming from imperialist traditions has left others disenfranchised from exercising their own agency to describe themselves. As Dr. Linda Tuhiwai Smith perfectly states this debauchery:

It galls us that Western researchers and intellectuals can assume to know all that it is possible to know of us, on the basis of their brief encounters with some of us. It appalls us that the West can desire, extract and claim ownership of our ways of knowing, our imagery, the things we create and produce, and then simultaneously reject the people who created and developed those ideas and seek to deny them further opportunities to be creators of their own culture and own nations.³⁰

This is the ‘counter-narrative’³¹ of the indigenous Pacific to imperial hegemony where resistance to ‘institutional oppression’³² is prevalent and where Blacks remain a reminding precedent of the sad commonality between minorities. As Dr. Trask sarcastically puts, “Our daily existence in the modern world is thus best described not as a struggle for civil rights but as a struggle against our planned disappearance.”³³ The most vulnerable of Pacific communities who are minorities of minorities are then left mentally colonized with no hope of bettering themselves beyond what they’ve been confined to believe. The famous Tongan scholar Epeli Hau’ofa said the same thing when he referred to Marshallese in his classic essay “Our Sea of Islands” in which he states that

²⁸ Malcolm X. “Not Just an American Problem but a World Problem” Speech for religious congregation, Cornhill Methodist Church, February 16, 1965.

²⁹ Epeli Hau’Ofa. “Our Sea of Islands,” 149.

³⁰ Linda Tuhiwai Smith, *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples*, (New Zealand: University of Otago Press, 1999), 1.

³¹ Raul Alberto Mora. “Counter-Narrative.” *Key Concepts in Intercultural Dialogue*, no. 36 (2014) <https://centerforinterculturaldialogue.files.wordpress.com/2014/10/key-concept-counter-narrative.pdf>

³² Renita Seabrook and Heather Wyatt-Nichol. “The Ugly Side of America: Institutional Oppression and Race.” *Journal of Public Management & Social Policy* 23, no.1 (2016): 20-46.

³³ Haunani Kay-Trask. *From a Native Daughter: Colonialism and Sovereignty in Hawai’i*. (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1999), 26.

Belittlement in whatever guise, if internalized for long, and transmitted across generations, may lead to moral paralysis, to apathy, and to the kind of fatalism that we can see among our fellow human beings who have been herded and confined to reservations or internment camps. People in some of our islands are in danger of being confined to mental reservations, if not already to physical ones. I am thinking here of people in the Marshall Islands, who have been victims of atomic and missile tests by the United States.³⁴

Epeli's assertion hits the nail on the head as I realized that after years of mental colonization going unnoticed due to it being normalized, I began to see myself the way Westerners saw me which was that I was lazy, undisciplined, and impoverished.³⁵ However, when I applied an indigenous methodology in my 'auto-ethnography'³⁶ called *JitDam Kapeel*³⁷ to describe me and my 'Oceanic experience',³⁸ this was hardly the case, revealing that decolonization is an ongoing process forward in its momentum and 'my truth'³⁹ in the University of San Francisco, speaks that reality where "Anthropology is the science which tells us that people are the same the whole world over – except when they are different."⁴⁰ This saying of Nancy Banks-Smith that she trademarked is nothing but common knowledge to indigenous Marshallese who state the same basic thing in their proverbial idiom "*Berberjin, Berberjen, Berberjinma wot kwe*" literally translated as "We are the same notwithstanding one stays here and one there."⁴¹ This begs us to ask the question(s): Who creates Knowledge and Are we not allowed to exist freely and equally by thinking freely for ourselves? It is important to note that theorizing has always made

³⁴ Epeli Hau'Ofa. "Our Sea of Islands." *Contemporary Pacific* 6, no. 1. (1994): 147-161.

³⁵ Hilda C. Heine, "'Tuwaak Bwe Elimaaajnono' Perspectives and Voices: A Multiple Case Study of Successful Marshallese Immigrant High School Students In the United States," (EdD diss., University of Southern California, 2004), 19.

³⁶ Carolyn Ellis, Tony E. Adams & Arthur P. Bochner. "Autoethnography: An Overview." *Forum: Qualitative Social Research* 12, no. 1 (2011). <http://www.qualitative-research.net/index.php/fqs/article/view/1589/3095>

³⁷ Desmond Narain Doulatram, "Indigenous Decolonization of Academia: Using the Marshall Islands as Precedent for Social Injustice." *Journal of Humanities and Cultural Studies R&D* 3, no.1 (2018): 1-48.

³⁸ Peace Boat. "The Ocean Conference, From Awareness Raising to Action for the Oceans: the Role of Youth and Civil Society." *Peace Boat*. June 9 2017. https://www.facebook.com/peaceboat/videos/1572626869436635/?hc_ref=ARSeEggO2tDrtYFoZaGRKYT3EPMW6msj4J8iGM6mYAHtfz7-Y3RUsuslJRPT2GsNSo%20See.

³⁹ Desmond Narain Doulatram, "Indigenous Decolonization of Academia: Using the Marshall Islands as Precedent for Social Injustice," 1-48.

⁴⁰ James Duplass, *Teaching Elementary Social Studies: Strategies, Standards, and Internet Resources*, 3rd ed, (Belmont: Wadsworth Cengage Learning, 2010), 204.

⁴¹ Amata Kabua, *Customary Titles and Inherent Rights: A General Guideline in Brief*, (Majuro: Republic of the Marshall Islands, 1993), 24.

us human for it validates that every human being is entitled to think⁴² for themselves.⁴³ If academia is to respect the cultural integrity and human dignity of all indigenous peoples, “they must adopt a posture that goes beyond the usual generation and conveyance of literate knowledge to include the institutional legitimation of indigenous knowledge and skills to foster a reevaluation of various forms of knowledge” — which in its most practical sense — are not always derived from books as they are experienced based dictating lived realities of indigenous peoples.⁴⁴ Verna J. Kirkness and Ray Barnhardt further add that “such a responsibility requires an institutional respect for indigenous knowledge, as well as an ability to help students to appreciate and build upon their customary forms of consciousness and representation as they expand their understanding of the world in which they live.”⁴⁵ Viewing their own lived experiences through their own indigenous lens validates an already living knowledge continuum embedded in their own genealogical ancestry further establishing and solidifying a connection to an existing groups of peoples by building on their ways of knowing and being through magnifying indigenous ontologies. As one Fijian researcher brilliantly states:

To say that we did not as a people research our own knowledge given our own evolving methodologies and methods is to ‘ignorantly assume/say’ that we did not have complex systems of education and philosophy as well as relationships and values that determine such conduct. Research outcomes are reflected through a variety of means and forms such as through paintings, art, cave drawings, spoken reports, craft and genealogical expositions, songs, poems and the like—though they may be not written as is expected in traditional academic institutions. Even today research findings are not always written; there are increasingly more ways of presenting research through drama and other oral presentations such as thesis viva and researcher reporting through ‘story-telling’ to villagers and community groups.⁴⁶

The decolonization movement led by Pacific scholars such as Dr. Nabobo Baba⁴⁷, Dr. Smith⁴⁸, Dr. Trask⁴⁹, Dr. Konai Helu Thaman⁵⁰, and recently myself⁵¹, indicates that our

⁴² The Marshallese proverb echoing this truth is *Aolep im Lon Aer Kolmonlokjen* literally translated “Everyone has a mind of his or her own to use at his or her disposal.”

⁴³ Ani Mikaere, “2013 He Manawa Whenbua Indigenous Research Conference” Keynote Presentation at the Te Kotahi Research Institute at the University of Waikato, Hamilton, New Zealand, 30 June-3 July, 2013.

⁴⁴ Verna J. Kirkness and Ray Barnhardt. “FIRST NATIONS AND HIGHER EDUCATION: The Four R’s — Respect, Relevance, Reciprocity, Responsibility.” *Journal of American Indian Education* 30, no. 3 (1991): 8.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Unaisi Nabobo-Baba, “Decolonising Framings in Pacific Research: Indigenous Fijian Vanua Research Framework as an Organic Response,” *AlterNative* 4, no. 2 (2008): 142..

⁴⁷ Ibid, 141.

movement to be seen and validated showcases the very act of us thinking for ourselves by decolonizing the western constructs that seek to mitigate our truths from being heard raw in its form as originally meant when it first existed in the first place. Dr. Trask defines racism as

A historically created system of power in which one racial/ethnic group dominates another racial/ethnic group for the benefit of the dominating group; economic and cultural domination as well as political power are included in the systemic dominance of the exploiting group; a monopoly of the means of violence is also held by those in the dominating group.⁵²

Additionally, Dr. Trask defines the response to racism through Righteous Anger which is “The emotional/psychological response of victims of racism/discrimination to the system of power that dominates/exploits/oppresses them. Righteous anger is not racism; rather, it is a defensible response to racism.”⁵³ ‘Counter-narratives’⁵⁴ have been the most common form of righteous anger to re(claim) indigenous imagery that predates colonization. While story telling⁵⁵ (*Talanoa*)⁵⁶ is not new, an ‘auto-ethnographic approach’⁵⁷ legitimizes

⁴⁸ Linda Tuhiwai Smith, *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples*, (New Zealand: University of Otago Press, 1999), 1.

⁴⁹ Haunani-Kay Trask. “Settlers of Color and “Immigrant Hegemony: “Locals” in Hawai’i.” *Amerasia* 26, no.2 (2000): 1-24.

⁵⁰ Konai Helu Thaman. “Decolonizing Pacific Studies: Indigenous Perspectives, Knowledge, and Wisdom in Higher Education,” *Contemporary Pacific* 15, no. 1 (2003): 1-17.

⁵¹ Desmond Narain Doulatram. “Indigenous Decolonization of Academia: Using the Marshall Islands as Precedent for Social Injustice,” 1-48.

⁵² Haunani Kay-Trask. *From a Native Daughter: Colonialism and Sovereignty in Hawai’I*, 229-232.

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ “Counter-narrative refers to the narratives that arise from the vantage point of those who have been historically marginalized. The idea of “counter“ itself implies a space of resistance against traditional domination. A counter-narrative goes beyond the notion that those in relative positions of power can just tell the stories of those in the margins.” (Raul Alberto Mora 2014)

⁵⁵ See Pacific Resources for Education & Learning (PREL) Launches Pacific-Wide Storytelling Initiative: <http://prel.org/index.php/?announcements/prel-launches-pacific-wide-storytelling-initiative>

⁵⁶ Trisia Farrely and Unaisi Nabobo-Baba. “Talanoa as empathic apprenticeship.” *Asia Pacific Viewpoint* 55, no. 3 (2014): 319-330.

⁵⁷ Carolyn Ellis and Tony E. Adams. “The Purposes, Practices, and Principles of Autoethnographic Research.” In *The Oxford Handbook of Qualitative Research* edited by Patricia Leavy. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014).

story telling within the research framework to take into account that a ‘primary source’⁵⁸ to research, being an enactor of an event, cannot be removed. This approach privileges truth in research by allowing those who live(d) the tale to tell the truth they live(d).

Indigenous Imagery → Marshallese Indigenous Methodology of JitDam Kapeel

The Marshallese method of indigenous skillful inquiry⁵⁹ (*Jitdam Kapeel*)⁶⁰ retains that the integral self (auto) provides an extra layer of analysis (graphy) in understanding a particular culture and society (ethno).⁶¹ Marshallese Indigenous Imagery is understood through the Marshallese Indigenous Storytelling (*Talanoa*) Methodology of *JitDam Kapeel* (Skillful Inquiry). According to leading Marshallese poet Kathy Jetnil-Kijiner

The term “*jitdam*” means to “Seek knowledge; look for the true pedigree; study one’s genealogy; inquire of an authority. The proverb *JitDam Kapeel* means Seeking knowledge guarantees wisdom. *Jitdam bwe ej ja mour* means Inquire of him (who has the knowledge) while he’s still around...if one was to split the terms “*jitdam*” in two, it would be “*jit*” and “*dam*.” “*Jit*” would be alluding to “*jijit*” which means to sit while “*dam*” means forehead, which alludes to sitting and metaphorically touching foreheads with your elders. Since the head is an especially sacred part of the body for Marshallese, and it is where all knowledge is stored, it makes the concept of “touching foreheads”⁶² that much more significant.⁶³

Thus, the intimate way to inquire would be to sit down face to face with your forehead facing your mentor which allows words to be taken to heart through a closer physical contact scenario. To help illustrate the last point of Ms. Kathy Jetnil-Kijiner, the following photo of Ms. Dorothy Kabua, the first indigenous Marshallese and Micronesian to ever sit in a United Nations Trusteeship Council,⁶⁴ is given in Figure 1 below.

⁵⁸ “Primary Sources are immediate, first-hand accounts of a topic, from people who had a direct connection with it.” See *Primary Sources: A Research Guide* in link given below: <https://umb.libguides.com/PrimarySources/secondary>

⁵⁹ Kathy Jetnil-Kijiner, “Iep Jaltok: A History of Marshallese Literature,” (Master’s Thesis, University of Hawaii, 2014), 56.

⁶⁰ Monica LaBriola, “Iien Ippan Doon: Celebrating Survival in a ‘Atypical Marshallese Community’,” (Master’s Thesis, University of Hawaii, 2006), 12.

⁶¹ [Ema Wolfgramm-Foliaki. “Under the Mango Tree: Lessons for the Insider-Outsider Researcher.” *Journal of Perspectives in Applied Academic Practices* 4, no.3 \(2016\): 32-37.](#)

⁶² This alluding of foreheads touching is somewhat similar to the Polynesian Maori greeting Hongi where foreheads literally touch.

⁶³ Kathy Jetnil-Kijiner, “Iep Jaltok: A History of Marshallese Literature,” 56.

⁶⁴ Dorothy Kabua, “Micronesian Representative Addresses Trusteeship Council,” *Department of State Bulletin* 29 no. 732 (1953): 151.



Figure 1: Dorothy Kabua performing *JiTDam* (sitting down foreheads faced) with son Amata Kabua

Dr. Monica LaBriola further states that

The Marshallese expression *jitdam kapeel* suggest that wisdom is assured to those who study and understand these genealogies. While on the one hand *jitdam kapeel* translates roughly as “seeking knowledge guarantees wisdom,” the words by themselves have more precise connotations: *jitdam* means to study one’s genealogy, while *kapeel* means skillful; clever...wise; astute.” Put simply, those who study genealogy and other aspects of *mantin majel* (Marshallese Customs) grow wise, skillful, and astute.⁶⁵

Although scientists, anthropologists, and linguists⁶⁶ alike argue solidly on their origins---claiming that Marshallese people and their culture originated from Southeast Asia due to their connection to the Austronesian and Nuclear Micronesian language families---Marshallese are more inclined to understand their past, specifically their prehistory, through their improperly labeled myths, genealogies, folklores, and legends which have immortalized their proud heritage.⁶⁷

⁶⁵ Monica LaBriola, “Iien Ippan Doon: Celebrating Survival in a ‘Atypical Marshallese Community’,” 12.

⁶⁶Hilda C. Heine and Julianne Walsh, *Etto Nan Raan Kein*, (Honolulu: Bess Press, 2013), 22.

⁶⁷ Desmond Narain Doulatram, “A MARSHALLESE TALE OF MODERNITY IN THE PACIFIC RIM: BRIDGING THE MODERN AND THE TRADITIONAL,” 1-66.

It is through studying Marshallese genealogies via *JitDam Kapeel* that relationships (*karkar*)⁶⁸ are established and a clearer understanding of characters, titles, ranks, and their connections are granted. In other words, *JitDam Kapeel* is literally the Marshall Islands version of *Talanoa*⁶⁹ (Story Telling) where a narrative inquiry is an empathetic apprenticeship worthy of merit. The word “tala” in Oceania languages means “story” while the word “noa” means “to tie or to bind” hence when the two words are combined, they form the word “talanoa” which translates to “connecting stories together.”⁷⁰ This signifies the same approach of famous Asian Scholar Donald R. Davis in which he stated the “Three Principles for an Asian Humanities: Care First...Learn from...Connect Histories.”⁷¹ And by extension, it signifies the same approach of *JitDam Kapeel*.⁷² These same approaches further reveals that “we are the same notwithstanding one stays here and one there.”⁷³ Indigenizing foreign scholarly design and catering it towards a Marshallese end reveals the collaborative nature of Marshallese protocols and westernized research in identifying errors and misconceptions due to the ultimate failure of overlooking the necessary that aligns Marshallese traditional protocol with ethical research.⁷⁴ The reason why establishing this basis (*bedbed*) is significant is because a Marshallese indigenous lens produces a counter hegemonic narrative to the same imperial invented traditions of the White Race’s manifest destiny that was used to confine and oppress Blacks⁷⁵, Asians⁷⁶, and ‘Indigenous peoples of the Americas’⁷⁷ and ‘of the Pacific’⁷⁸, all under the guise of the White Man’s burden.

⁶⁸ Amata Kabua, *Customary Titles and Inherent Rights: A General Guideline in Brief*, (Majuro: Republic of the Marshall Islands, 1993), V.

⁶⁹ Trisia Farrely and Unaisi Nabobo-Baba, “Talanoa as empathic apprenticeship.” *Asia Pacific Viewpoint* 55, no. 3 (2014): 319-330.

⁷⁰ David Ga'oupu Palaita, “*Talanoa Series*” (lecture, City College of San Francisco, San Francisco, CA, March 1, 2018).

⁷¹ Donald R. Davis. “Three Principles for an Asian Humanities: Care First...Learn from...Connect Histories,” *The Journal of Asian Studies*, no. 74 (2015): 43-67.

⁷² Desmond Narain Doulatram. “Indigenous Decolonization of Academia: Using the Marshall Islands as Precedent for Social Injustice,” 1-48.

⁷³ Amata Kabua, *Customary Titles and Inherent Rights: A General Guideline in Brief*, (Majuro: Republic of the Marshall Islands, 1993), 24.

⁷⁴ Desmond Narain Doulatram, “Indigenous Decolonization of Academia: Using the Marshall Islands as Precedent for Social Injustice,” 1-48.

⁷⁵ Mampilly, Zachariah. “Decolonizing the United States: Lessons from Africa.” *Ufahamu: A Journal of African Studies* 38, no. 3 (2015): 25-34.

⁷⁶ Edward W. Said. *Orientalism*. (New York City: Pantheon Books, 1978).

⁷⁷ Rebecca Tsosie. "RECLAIMING NATIVE STORIES: An Essay on Cultural Appropriation and Cultural Rights." *Arizona State Law Journal* 34, (2002): 299-358.

⁷⁸ Epeli Hau'Ofa. “Our Sea of Islands.” 147-161.

Marshallese Culture through Ethnolinguistics

Marshallese ontologies revealed in ethnolinguistics further elaborates that Marshallese contributions to all that is human is no different from its most favored nation being the United States, its Pacific neighbors in Oceania, and to world religions/world views. In Marshallese culture, the word for love is “*Iakwe*” broken down to two words being “*Ia*” meaning rainbow and “*Kwe*” meaning you. Hence, *Iakwe* would literally mean you are the colors of the rainbow hence light. You are light because you are good reflecting God’s promise as a creature of light housing his breath within his temple that is you. For the sake of clarity, the following definition is further elaborated in Figure 2 taken from the Marshallese English Dictionary.

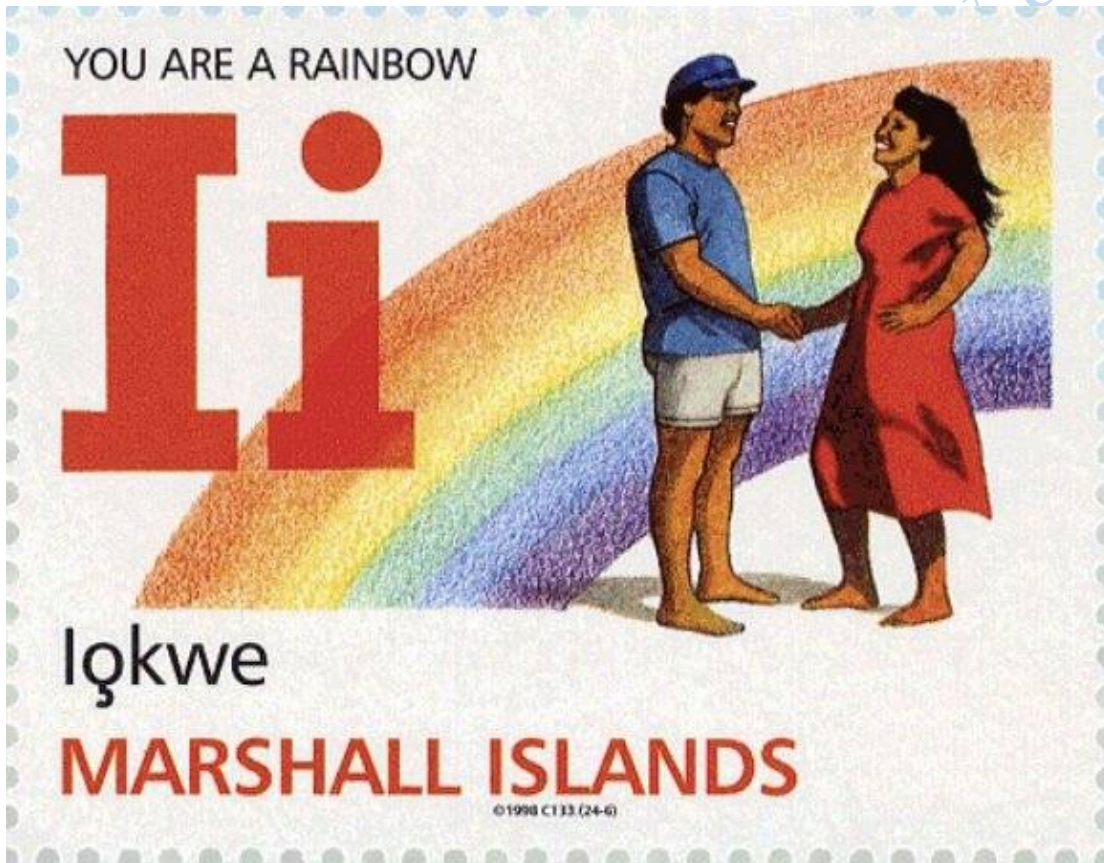


Figure 2: Etymology of the Word *Iakwe* (Love)

The biblical verses found in Corinthians 6: 9-10, 1 John 4:8, 1 John 1:5-2:2, Genesis 9:13, Genesis 2:7, Matthew 5: 13-16, Philippians 2:15-16, 1 John 1:5, 1 Thessalonians 5:5, 1 Corinthians 3:16-17, 1 Corinthians 6:19, 1 John 4:7 and John 8:12 speak the same ‘heathen greeting *Iakwe* of the Marshallese Ralik Chiefs culture’.⁷⁹ Unfortunately, missionaries felt threatened by local religions and attempted to eradicate it despite these religious beliefs of Marshallese resembling the same creation concepts in the book of

⁷⁹ Stewart Firth and Paula Mochida. *Translations of German Documents Relating to Micronesia*. (Honolulu: University of Hawaii, 1986), 1-98.

Genesis where a powerful spirit speaks what becomes.⁸⁰ Erdland further reveals that prior to missionary eradication of indigenous religious beliefs, Marshallese already had a sophisticated language with specific vocabulary describing Biblical concepts, characters, and figures.⁸¹ Insecure Missionaries and colonizers believed that the drive to ‘save lost souls’ meant colonizing of the mind of Pacific Islanders which required conformity to Western ideals using Christianity as a catalyst.⁸² As perfectly stated by Manfred Ernst and Anna Anisi

It seems astounding that within a period of only two hundred years, Christianity had established a firm stronghold, that is, by the turn of the twentieth century about 90 % of Pacific Islanders were professed Christians. Experts suggests that the rapid success of Christianity can be related to various factors; one is that the indigenous people often reasoned that to gain the missionaries’ “mana”⁸³ one must worship his God.⁸⁴

The Marshallese equivalence of the Polynesian/Melanesian term *Mana*,⁸⁵ is called *Aao*,⁸⁶ literally translated Halo or that which has spiritual presence. These similarity in spiritual terms is precisely why the Marshallese Chiefs from the Western (*Ralik*) Chain and Eastern (*Ratak*) chains themselves served as ‘spiritual mediums’⁸⁷ when they safely welcomed the ‘American Boston Protestant Missionaries on Ebon’⁸⁸ and ‘assisted the

⁸⁰ Jack Tobin, *Stories from the Marshall Islands*, (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2002), 11.

⁸¹ August Erdland *Die Sternkunde beiden Seefahren der Marshall-Inseln*. Anthropos: Internationale Sammlung Ethnologischer Moographie. Ed. 5:16-26. (Munster: I.W. Aschedorff, 1914), 308-311.

⁸²Manfred Ernst and Anna Anisi. “The Historical Development of Christianity in Oceania.” In *The Wiley-Blackwell Companion to World Christianity* by Lamin Sanneh and Michael J. McClymond, (United Kingdom: John Wiley & Sons Ltd, 2016), 588-604.

⁸³ Special Spiritual Power & Strength

⁸⁴Manfred Ernst and Anna Anisi. “The Historical Development of Christianity in Oceania,” 588-604.

⁸⁵ Alexander Spoehr. *Majuro: A Village in the Marshall Islands*. (Chicago: Chicago Natural History Museum, 1949), 77.

⁸⁶ Dirk H.R. Spenneman. “The Story of Aao.” In *Bwebwenatoon Etto: A Collection of Marshallese Legends and Traditions*, 2nd ed. Edited by Jane Downing and Dirk H.R. Spenneman, (Republic of the Marshall Islands: Ministry of Internal Affairs, Historic Preservation Office, 1992). <http://marshall.csu.edu.au/Marshalls/html/legends/frame-le-1-4.html>

⁸⁷ Desmond Narain Doulatram, “A MARSHALLESE TALE OF MODERNITY IN THE PACIFIC RIM: BRIDGING THE MODERN AND THE TRADITIONAL,” 5-6.

⁸⁸ ABCFM, *The Missionary Herald, Vol. 120*, (Boston: American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, 1924), 347-348.

Catholic Jesuit Order⁸⁹ in building the biggest Catholic Parish in the capital city of ‘Majuro’ during the spirit of the American occupation where a new independent government would be built speaking that same spiritual tale of *IaKwe* (Love) confirmed by ‘catholic nuns’⁹⁰ and ‘Jesuit volunteers’⁹¹ alike.

Environmentalism and Spiritualism of Majuro Mejen Armij

The environmental tale of Majuro is best observed and seen through the etymology of the word Majuro, alternatively spelt MEJRO. *Mej* meaning eye(s) and *ro* meaning two,⁹² denotes the inclusive nature of witnessing where it requires two eyes to fully see an event elaborating properly through the visual experience. Capturing life at a single glance requires two eyes (*ro Mej*). This is where true witnessing takes place, at the present conditions where what’s available to eyes welcomes facts. Another set of eyes pinpointing two requires a person to witness another’s action thus repeating the same trend of needing two eyes through the form of two people to see things. Even when one takes into consideration the proverb which Majuro is known to embody, we see the same aspect of witnessing reflected in the proverbial idiom *Majuro Mejen Armij* which is literally translated “Majuro is the Face and Eyes of the People.”⁹³ *Majuro Mejen Armij* literally translated “Majuro: Eyes of the People” means many things in Marshallese culture. For one thing, it means that the people of Majuro are known to stare a lot hence paying homage to their proverbial idiom and the simple nature of witnessing which they are known to do superbly. Secondly is the obvious nature of Majuro showcasing what the people see which is everything because it is a center of activity being the capital where everything and everyone is blended through its melting pot. Lastly and most importantly is the aspect of divine witnessing alone, which is said to take place in Majuro—according to indigenous beliefs—where truth and practicality is taken into account. When people say *Majuro Mejen Armij*, they use in conjunction the phrase “*Ijo Anij ej tol*” meaning Majuro: Eyes of the People where God leads (*ijo Anij ej Tol*). One must wonder whether it is mere coincidence that this proverb perfectly sums up the atoll of Majuro by

⁸⁹ Francis X. Hezel, “The Catholic Church in Marshalls.” *Micronesian Seminar*. 2003. <http://www.micsem.org/pubs/books/catholic/marshalls/index.htm?PHPSESSID=7c2ff85adb5766a972c7f2f21cf4fe05>

⁹⁰ Angelus News. “The ‘Ocean Pathways’ of Sister Joan Crevoure.” *Angelus News*. 20 February 2013. <https://angelusnews.com/content/the-ocean-pathways-of-sister-joan-crevoure>.

⁹¹ Former Marshall Islands Jesuit International Volunteer Dr. Julianne Walsh elaborates that “Majuro is known in proverbs and common talk as a gathering site, a place where things happen, where one can witness new trends, see interesting things, and experience the outside world. In this sense, both today and in the past, Majuro is the face of the people-*Majuro Mejen Armij*. It is the place to see and be seen, a place where appearances are important particularly as its audience is so multifarious varied and intranational and the implications of and opportunities for interaction are so numerous.”

⁹² William H. Davenport. “Marshallese Folklore Types.” *Journal of American Folklore* 66, no. 261 (1953): 223.

⁹³ Julianne Walsh. “Imagining the Marshalls: Chiefs, Traditions, and the State on the Fringes of U.S. Empire.” (PhD diss., University of Hawaii, 2003), 237.

flawlessly capturing its deep spiritual connection of communication established through the proper utilization of the capital home front, past, present and the not too distant future.

The stories of Majuro residents—in relation to their environment—is of epic proportions. When one thinks of the value of the human spirit, nowhere is it more prevalent than in the spirits of Majuro residents who have pioneered RMI into the pages of global history. The first indigenous Micronesian to the United Nation was the one and only Dorothy Tarjikit Laelan Kabua, who was a Chieftain from Majuro, and also an avid outspoken advocate for nuclear justice.⁹⁴ She spoke heavily on the causes of environmental degradation due to Nuclear testing by global superpowers.⁹⁵ One of Tarjikit's interpreters was none other than the late Dwight Heine who led the petitions in 1954 and in 1956 to end the nuclear testing program.⁹⁶ Our ancestors labeled *Majuro Mejen Armij* for a reason. It is to reaffirm the beliefs that made Majuro distinct from other places. It was to safeguard the health of its spiritual environment by reaffirming the functions of the atoll through oral tradition and language where the spoken word came before the written.

Let us further evaluate the concrete examples of Majuro's healthy spiritual environment. Former Climate Change ambassador Tony DeBrum—in a speech given at New York—stated that in Rio+20, they (through President Christopher Jorebon Loeak) had read the first opening paragraph of President Amata Kabua's statement during the 1992 Earth Summit because twenty years later, we found ourselves in the exact same position because of Climate Change.⁹⁷ We look at the same prophetic statements made in President Kabua's first speech at the United Nations and he states the obvious affirming that we are left in a state of quandary because scientists are not in a general consensus as to the magnitude of the problem and that there is little to nothing a small nation like the Marshall Islands can do other than to raise awareness in the international community.⁹⁸ Twenty years later again after his first UN statement---scientist come out in general consensus with '97 percent'⁹⁹ of them stating that Climate Change is real with the first

⁹⁴ U.S. Congress. Congressional Record. 94th Cong., 1st sess., Vol.121, pt.8, 8123-8126.

⁹⁵ Kathy Jetnil-Kijiner, "Iep Jaltok: A History of Marshallese Literature," 48-49.

⁹⁶ "Two United Nations resolutions in response to the Marshallese peoples' petitions in 1954 and 1956, Trusteeship resolutions 1082 and 1493, remains the only time in which any United Nations organ has every explicitly authorized specific use of nuclear weapons" (UN Ambassador Amatlain E. Kabua).

⁹⁷ Tony de Brum, "Acting Locally and Globally to Pressure the Capitals: What the US Owes the Islands." Speech at St. John's University. New York City, New York. September 20, 2014. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aPPyQPfFTBs>

⁹⁸ Amata Kabua "Statement by His Excellency Amata Kabua, President of the Republic of the Marshall Islands in the General Debate of the 46th Session of the General Assembly of the United Nations." United Nations. New York City, NY. 24 September 1991.

⁹⁹ Justin Fox. "97 Percent Consensus on Climate Change? It's Complicated." *Bloomberg*. 15 June 2017. <https://www.bloomberg.com/view/articles/2017-06-15/97-percent-consensus-on-climate-change-it-s-complicated>

African American President, Barack Obama, taking a firmer and more active stance on the issue.¹⁰⁰

We fast forward to New York and we see Jo-JiKuM co-founder Kathy Jetnil-Kijiner, a resident of Majuro, and a native of Aur, bringing the world to tears, drawing light again upon what is taking place in Majuro where the author of this paper resides and is spelling out the tale—through his voice—the power and healthy spiritual environment taking place on *Majuro Mejen Armij*.¹⁰¹ Did you not know that the communications leading to RMI's first ever Climate Change Policy was handled by the author of this paper on Majuro, who was the Climate Change Policy officer,¹⁰² where he helped co-found the Non Profit Organization Jo-JiKuM¹⁰³ along with Ms. Kathy Jetnil-Kijiner of the reknown Shark Clan¹⁰⁴ known to control the weather? Is this not further affirmation on the spiritual nature of Majuro? As we look to the present leadership of Majuro through the first female President of the Pacific,¹⁰⁵ are we not also seeing the rich spiritual environment of Majuro reflected in the present context where Dr. Hilda Heine stands as president from neighboring Aur which was the traditional capital of the Majuro Chiefs stemming from the character Limanbine of the Raano *Jowi* and Laninbit of the Rimwejoor Clan? The Paris Agreement which Climate Change Ambassador Tony Debrum, Former President Christopher Jorebon Loek, and current first female President Dr. Hilda Heine have been vocal advocates of, has been signed into law,¹⁰⁶ culminating the spiritual environmental presence of Majuro's tale where the power of the human spirits that constitutes the greater moral worth of environmental concerns is represented in our deeds where we put ourselves out there engraving a human face on environmental issues through indigenous spiritual prowess.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁰ Dana Nuccitelli. "President Obama acts on climate change by enforcing the law." *The Guardian*. 25 June 2013. <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/climate-consensus-97-percent/2013/jun/25/climate-change-carbon-emissions-president-obama-epa>

¹⁰¹ Lisa Visentin. "Poet brings world leaders to tears at UN Climate Summit." *The Sydney Morning Herald*. 25 September 2014. <http://www.smh.com.au/environment/climate-change/poet-brings-world-leaders-to-tears-at-un-climate-summit-20140925-10lq5x.html>.

¹⁰² SPREP. "Report on the Summary of the Outcomes and Proceeding from the Niue Pacific Climate Change Roundtable Meeting, 14 to 17 March, 2011." *SPREP*. 27 April 2011. http://www.pacificdisaster.net/pdnadmin/data/original/PCCR_NIU_2011_Report_summary.pdf.

¹⁰³ Peace Boat. "Special Report: Sailing for a nuclear free world: The Pacific Peace Forum." *Peace Boat*. April 4, 2016. <http://peaceboat.org/english/?page=view&nr=521&type=20&menu=64>.

¹⁰⁴ Peter Rudiak-Gold, *Climate Change and Tradition in a Small Island State: The Rising Tide*. (New York: Routledge, 2013), 96-101.

¹⁰⁵ Ellie Van Baaren. "Dr. Hilda Heine: First woman to lead an independent Pacific nation." *UNWOMEN*. 27 January 2016. <http://asiapacific.unwomen.org/en/news-and-events/stories/2016/01/first-woman-to-lead-an-independent-pacific-nation>.

¹⁰⁶ UN Secretary General Ban Ki Moon "Paris Agreement to combat climate change becomes international law." *PRESSTVnews*. 5 November 2016. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GppYujtTkws>

When people think Majuro, they automatically think capital and environmentalist automatically conjure the image of pollution upon first entry. Yet, what Majuro reveals within its own anthropology, kept through myth and legend, is that the atoll of Majuro, particularly its lagoon, is very much alive, and witnessing of its environmental tale continues uninterrupted showcasing the true value of its resilience and the perseverance of its deep environmental spiritual half. Do we doubt the tale of indigenous Marshallese whose methods of knowing and being have far existed beyond our ability to recall? Do we simply label them as heathens without taking into consideration the merit of their argument that showcases the atoll of Majuro in its true sense despite the physical criticism done by outsiders pertaining to its physical environment, or do we rectify the writings and misconceptions of these critics by painting Majuro for what it really is—which is—an atoll that is very much alive and well through its spiritual component. This is where true witnessing takes place and where truth is laid fully from the focal point and from the unique frames of reference of the seers of the tale, which are the residents and people of Majuro that come from all over. Hearing the indigenous voice by viewing it through an indigenous lens gives an opportunity for true witnessing to take place for it is these very indigenous people that lived the tale that is being told on their land & waters a.k.a. environment. This is the tale of *Majuro Mejen Armij*. We should never underestimate the indigenous grammatical functions of language as can be seen in the case of Majuro. As the word grammar means usage, the way Marshallese utilize their language includes a spiritual component that caters understanding through a holistic lens where the physical and the spiritual clearly co-exist. Never underestimate the power of indigenous language for it centers around practicality. Pragmatism is what drives the continuance of the Marshallese tale for even materialistic preservation of writing fades in time whereas the spoken word passed down from generation to generation continues through oral tradition where the human spirit is permanently preserved in the art of intimate communication where memories are stored in humans and not in books. Dr. Konai Helu Thaman echoes this thought elaborating that

Even today, Pacific peoples share worldviews that comprise intricate webs of inter-relationships that provide meaning to, and frameworks for, living and cultural survival. Generally manifested in various kinship relationships, such frameworks not only define particular ways of being and behaving, but also ways of knowing, types of knowledge and wisdom, and how these are passed on and/or communicated to others. Pacific sustainable livelihoods are also linked to cultural survival and continuity and people are keen to pass on to future generations the core values, knowledges and skills of their cultures.¹⁰⁸

Unfortunately, Dr. Konai Helu Thaman further adds that “In order for schools and curricula to positively respond to the need to make teaching and learning more culturally

¹⁰⁷ Lisa Friedman. “Tony de Brum, Voice of Pacific Islands on Climate Change, Dies at 72.” *New York Times*. 22 August 2017. <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/08/22/world/tony-de-brum-dead-climate-change-advocate.html>

¹⁰⁸ Konai Helu Thaman. “Towards Cultural Democracy in Teaching and Learning With Specific References to Pacific Island Nations (PINs),” 1-9.

inclusive, there will be a need for a paradigm shift¹⁰⁹ that legitimizes indigenous ways of knowing such as the ever existing body of knowledge presented by Pacific Islanders from the Marshall Islands previously mentioned. To further illustrate the proverb *Majuro Mejen Armij*, a picture and an explanation of the Majuro Flag is given in Figure 3 below.



Figure 3: Majuro Flag with White Bird (*Litakbok*) symbolizing Peace and sharing of good things to others. The bird *Litakbok* is similarly situated to the White Bird in Genesis 8 and indigenous accounts.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁹ Konai Helu Thaman. "Towards Cultural Democracy in Teaching and Learning With Specific References to Pacific Island Nations (PINs)," 1-9.

¹¹⁰ Erdland, August. "*Die Marshall Insulaner, Leben und Sitte, Sinn und Religion eines Sudsee-Volkes* [The Marshall Islanders: Life and Custom, Thought and Religion of a South Seas People]." 1914. Translation of the original located at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa Hamilton Library Hawaiian and Pacific Collection. Translated in part for the Yale Cross-Cultural Survey in Connection with the Navy Pacific Islands Handbook Project and in part by Richard Neuse in 1961.

These ethnolinguistics reveal the purified form of Marshallese identity unfiltered by the inferiority complex of Missionizers and Colonizers who attempted to eradicate indigenous religion to keep their misguided agency to confine people mentally. Marshallese custom(s) “was and is still the unwritten law of the Marshall Islands extended down through memory with certain key words or brief phrases of expression invoking each of its various underlying principles and their proper application.”¹¹¹ This is perfectly displayed in the motto of the Marshall Islands government Seal below.



Figure 4: Official National Seal of the Marshall Islands' Government

The Ancient Marshallese Proverb *Jepelpelin ke Ejukaan* loosely translated as accomplishment through joint effort means that the scattered atolls and islands comprising the Marshall Islands maybe separated geographically in land but it is united in sacred Ocean culture as a medium where an integral network of communication is prevalent to sustainably live.¹¹² This proverb pays reference to the traditional culture of voyaging that has maintained the Marshall Islands since time immemorial. “The Marshallese people...are descendants of the voyagers who came in canoes across the trackless sea to find and settle our islands more than two thousand years ago. The remote environment and temperate climate impelled us to form our own nation and develop our own unique culture, which has withstood the test of time.”¹¹³ The indigenous names of the Marshall Islands speak this same truth. The traditional name of the Marshall Islands is

¹¹¹ Amata Kabua, *Customary Titles and Inherent Rights: A General Guideline in Brief*, (Majuro: Republic of the Marshall Islands, 1993), 24.

¹¹² Amata Kabua “Statement by His Excellency Amata Kabua, President of the Republic of the Marshall Islands in the General Debate of the 46th Session of the General Assembly of the United Nations.” United Nations. New York City, NY. 24 September 1991.

¹¹³Ibid.

Lollelapp, which was the name of the Ocean between the two chains of *Ralik* (Western) and *Ratak* (Eastern).¹¹⁴ It is because of this navigation culture that the Marshall Islands is also known as *Ralik Ratak* which is not only the name of the two chains but also the directions in which the atolls were first settled from West to East.¹¹⁵ The last name which Marshall Islands is also known as is *Aelon Kein Ad* which means “these our atolls” and it is often used in conjunction with the proverb “*Ad Jolet Jen Anij*” literally translated as Our Blessed Inheritance from God. The very meaning of *Aelon Kein* as broken down is best elaborated through the words of Dr. Walsh and Dr. Heine.¹¹⁶ *Aelon Kein* is broken down to three root words, *ae* meaning currents of the ocean, *lan* meaning sky, and *kein* being plants of the land. The utilization of the Marshallese Universe in its empirical knowledge preservation processes, fills the very meaning of its most famous traditional name *Aelon Kein Ad* literally the water (*ae*), the air (*lan*) and earth (*kein*) are ours (*ad*).

In numerous addresses signifying an independent international personality, President Amata Kabua has always stated that the Marshallese people are a very special people because it is believed that these islands were discovered through the aid of ‘ancestral spirits’¹¹⁷ as is also mentioned in the ‘preamble’¹¹⁸ of the Marshallese Constitution where the proverb *Jepelpelin Ke Ejukaan* speaks the Marshallese tale of ‘modernity’¹¹⁹. This is Why Marshallese deserve to be validated in America. Marshallese contributions to International Peace and Security during the Cold War period, specifically the nuclear testing period (1946-1958) remains an unprecedented contribution to America’s national security and global peace efforts.¹²⁰ Yet, racist stereotypes¹²¹ about Marshallese and Micronesians¹²² remain abundant because of general lack of appreciation

¹¹⁴ Hilda C. Heine and Julianne M. Walsh, *Etto nan Raan Kein: A Marshall Islands History*, (Honolulu: Bess Press, 2012).

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁷ Maria Kabua Fowler, Irene J. Taafaki, and Randolph R. Thaman. *Traditional Medicine of the Marshall Islands: The Women, the Plants, the Treatments*. (Suva, Fiji: Institute of Pacific Studies, University of the South Pacific, 2006), 1.

¹¹⁸ See Preamble of RMI Constitution: <https://rmiparliament.org/cms/constitution.html>

¹¹⁹ Desmond Narain Doulatram, “A MARSHALLESE TALE OF MODERNITY IN THE PACIFIC RIM: BRIDGING THE MODERN AND THE TRADITIONAL,” 1-66.

¹²⁰ Desmond Narain Doulatram. “EVIDENCE OF INCONSIDERATION AND INEQUALITY TOWARDS A PACIFIC ISLAND STATE SERVING U.S. MILITARY INTERESTS IN THE ASIA PACIFIC REGION: MARSHALL ISLANDS PROVIDE GREATER TRANSPRENCY THROUGH A MORAL ANGLE DESPITE AMERICAN HEGEMONY.” *Journal of Humanities and Cultural Studies R&D* 3, no.2 (2018): 1-90.

¹²¹ Isabelle Rhee. “Debunking Micronesian Stereotypes in Hawaii.” *CivilBeat*. 29 December 2017. <http://www.civilbeat.org/2017/12/debunking-micronesian-stereotypes-in-hawaii>.

¹²² Jon Letman. “Micronesians in Hawaii face uncertain future.” *Aljazeera*. 2 October 2013. <http://www.aljazeera.com/humanrights/2013/10/micronesians-hawaii-face-uncertain-future-201310191535637288.html>.

to global history and U.S. Human Right Commitments etched in the Compact of Free Association where its preamble states the human right of equal dignity and the right to be self-determining people as promised by the United States.¹²³ Today, the Marshall Islands continues to play an integral part in American global security due to its 'strategic location'¹²⁴, allowing full 'spatial dominance'¹²⁵ and 'meteorological support'.¹²⁶

However, even before the U.S. Military won WWII, Marshallese were already serving side by side as scouts during WWII for the U.S. Military in Japanese held atolls risking their very lives in the process.¹²⁷ Furthermore, it was Marshallese chiefs that saved the American Boston Missionaries from a troubling death of being speared to death when the Gospel first entered the Marshall Islands.¹²⁸ It is these unique spiritual tale(s) revealing the same spiritual merit of Marshallese and major world powers and religions that underscores why the Marshall Islands continues to contribute on the global stage through human right discourse(s) pertaining to 'climate change'¹²⁹ and 'Nuclear disarmament'¹³⁰. This lack of understanding on the Marshall Islands' contribution(s) to America and contributions on the global stage often leads to institutionalized discrimination and often a times, Marshallese themselves, including me, have to fight for an 'academic space'¹³¹ that should already be recognized thus wasting valuable time and effort for other priorities deemed equally significant as time is money. The idea that Marshallese even have to validate an indigenous way of knowing and being is sickening given that these indigenous epistemologies predate current ontologies that stem from recently invented traditions. Dr. Konai Helu Thaman makes a similar argument for cultural democracy as "most Pacific people are indigenous to the island nations in which

¹²³ See Compact of Free Association *Preamble*:
<https://www.state.gov/documents/organization/173999.pdf>

¹²⁴ U.S. Army Kwajalein. "Space Operations." *Ronald Reagan Ballistic Missile Defense Test Site*.
<https://www.smcd.army.mil/KWAJ/SpaceOps.html> (accessed October 5, 2016).

¹²⁵ U.S. Army Kwajalein. "Strategic Location." *Ronald Reagan Ballistic Missile Defense Test Site*.
<https://www.smcd.army.mil/KWAJ/Location.html> (accessed October 5, 2016).

¹²⁶ U.S. Army Kwajalein. "Meteorological Support Systems." *Ronald Reagan Ballistic Missile Defense Test Site*. https://www.smcd.army.mil/KWAJ/Met_support.html (accessed October 5, 2016).

¹²⁷ Alexander Spoehr. *Majuro: A Village in the Marshall Islands*. (Chicago: Chicago Natural History Museum, 1949), 90.

¹²⁸ Desmond Narain Doulatram, "A MARSHALLESE TALE OF MODERNITY IN THE PACIFIC RIM: BRIDGING THE MODERN AND THE TRADITIONAL," 1-66.

¹²⁹ Alister Doyle. "Marshall Islands first to ratify global HFC greenhouse pact." *Reuters*. 28 Feb 2017. <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-climatechange-hfc-idUSKBN1670IN>.

¹³⁰ Desmond Narain Doulatram. "EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: A CASE STUDY OF URBANIZATION AND GLOBALIZATION IN EBEYE AND MAJURO." *Journal of Humanities and Cultural Studies R&D* 3, no.2 (2018): 1-15.

¹³¹ Desmond Narain Doulatram. "Indigenous Decolonization of Academia: Using the Marshall Islands as Precedent for Social Injustice," 1-48.

they live and their cultures and education systems have existed for thousands of years, predating the introduction of schools by European missionaries and later colonial administrators in the 19th and early 20th centuries.”¹³² The fact that the Marshallese Cultural tale speaks similar traits of philanthropy, human rights, Judeo-Christianity, and Pacific Oceania reaffirms that Marshallese speak the same human language of having a caring and compassionate loving heart and thus deserve no less than their fellow human brothers and sisters. For the sake of clarity, the following pic collage is offered in Figure 5 to simultaneously glance at the obvious cultural and religious similarities.

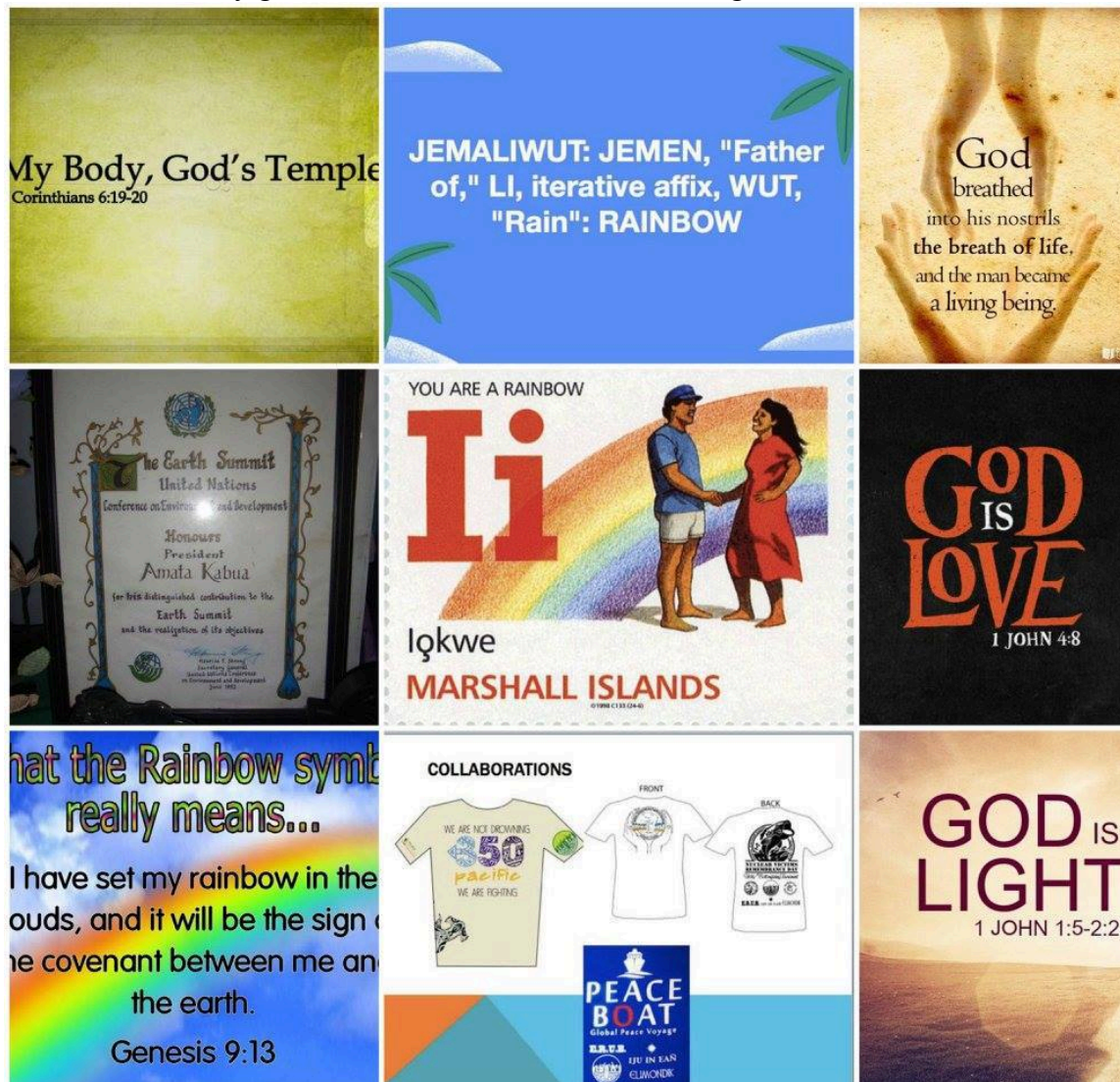


Figure 5: Pic Collage of Cultural and Religious Similarities

Social scientist(s) have irrefutably concluded that “culture helps shape people’s beliefs and attitudes, their roles, and role expectations as well as the way they interpret and brand

¹³²Konai Helu Thaman. “Towards Cultural Democracy in Teaching and Learning With Specific References to Pacific Island Nations (PINs).” *International Journal for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning* 3, no.2 (2009): 1-9.

meaning in their own and other people's behavior."¹³³ I say this because even I found that these cultural meanings propelled me in the same moral direction to manifest those beliefs in my own line of work through various collaborations.¹³⁴ And, as can also be seen in Figure 5 above and Figure 6 below, it was the same set of beliefs that led my grandfather Amata Kabua, my great grandmother Dorothy Kabua, and many Marshallese to pick up the torch to keep the faith by keeping hope in the prime mover alive.



Figure 6: Pic Collage of Cultural and Religious Similarities

¹³³ Konai Helu Thaman. "Towards Cultural Democracy in Teaching and Learning With Specific References to Pacific Island Nations (PINs)," 1-9.

¹³⁴ Desmond Narain Doulatram. "AN AUTOETHNOGRAPHIC RESPONSE TO DISCRIMINATION: GIVING SPACE TO THE MARGINALIZED MARSHALLESE COMMUNITY THROUGH RESEARCH AND MORAL DEEDS." *Journal of Humanities and Cultural Studies R&D* 3, no.4 (2018): 0-58.

As Dr. Konai Helu Thaman best puts: “Role expectations, learned and internalized through the process of socialization, guide people’s behavior and social interactions and there exists a close relationship between beliefs, learning conceptions and approaches to study with learners’ cultures.”¹³⁵ As mentioned at the outset, the cultural beliefs of Marshallese and many Pacific Islanders guides their behavior as can be seen in my case and thus needs to be prioritized to expedite educational needs for Pacific Island learners who are simply existing as they are and are faultless in exercising their self-determining right to think beyond their mental confinements.¹³⁶ Dr. Konai Helu Thaman explains this stating that

As part of a larger effort to reflect critically on the nature, scope, and processes of colonialism in Oceania, decolonizing the field of Pacific studies must focus on the impact of colonialism on people's minds—particularly on their ways of knowing, their views of who and what they are, and what they consider worthwhile to teach and to learn. It is essential to challenge the dominance of western philosophy, content, and pedagogy in the lives and the education of Pacific peoples, and to reclaim indigenous Oceanic perspectives, knowledge, and wisdom that have been devalued or suppressed. Modern scholars and writers must examine the western disciplinary frameworks within which they have been schooled, as well as the ideas and images of the Pacific they have inherited, in order to move beyond them.¹³⁷

Significance of Marshallese Validation Academically, Spiritually, Economically, & Socially

The right of human dignity has been etched clearly in international humanitarian law revealing the importance of equal treatment of all humans as the ideal poster child image for human rights. However, the reality of existing precedent(s) on indigenous populations in the Marshall Islands is to the contrary. For academic, spiritual, economic, and social reasons, every human being is entitled to think for themselves to see fit what circumstances need to be reworked to survive in this day and age as members of the global community as we all live our own live(s).¹³⁸ As Dr. Nabobo-Baba best elaborates:

¹³⁵ Konai Helu Thaman. “Towards Cultural Democracy in Teaching and Learning With Specific References to Pacific Island Nations (PINs),” 1-9.

¹³⁶ Desmond Narain Doulatram. “AN AUTOETHNOGRAPHIC RESPONSE TO DISCRIMINATION: GIVING SPACE TO THE MARGINALIZED MARSHALLESE COMMUNITY THROUGH RESEARCH AND MORAL DEEDS,” 0-58.

¹³⁷ Konai Helu Thaman. “Decolonizing Pacific Studies: Indigenous Perspectives, Knowledge, and Wisdom in Higher Education,” *Contemporary Pacific* 15, no. 1 (2003): 1-17.

¹³⁸ Desmond Narain Doulatram. “THE INFERIORITY COMPLEX OF MISSIONIZERS AND COLONIZERS HID ULTIMATE TRUTHS: A CASE STUDY FROM A DECOLONIZED PERSPECTIVE FROM THE PACIFIC’S MARSHALL ISLANDS.” *Journal of Humanities and Cultural Studies R&D* 3, no.5 (2018): 0-28.

Knowledge claims are always socially situated rather than universalistic. By situating indigenous people at the center of the research act and using their systems of knowledge and understandings as the basis for inquiry and investigation, we open the possibility of dramatically extending the knowledge base of indigenous people and transforming their understanding of the social cultural world. Research is a process that sees the creation of knowledge is done in a place and time. Hence, ‘what is known or knowledge and how it is known reflects the knowers’ situation and perspective’¹³⁹

This is why validation is important. Validation (re)instills a sense of belonging to facilitate identity making within the constructs situated in to navigate the anxieties of the new world order.¹⁴⁰ It paves the way for younger generations to a heightened conscience that brings out their most beautiful expressions of themselves revealing their true colors all while setting the right type of human right precedents.¹⁴¹ It is through validation that the mentally colonized portions and marginalized segments of society are made to matter to themselves because external validation reveals that it is okay to be your full integral self without shame.¹⁴² It is through the acceptance of other knowledge systems that we begin to see the diverse pool of knowledge via ‘intersectionality’¹⁴³ thus showcasing that everyone has the right to know their own truths and people’s relations to that truth. It is through a greater understanding of people through education that prevents Micronesians such as Marshallese from being unjustly treated in places like Hawaii¹⁴⁴ and here in the ‘University of the San Francisco’¹⁴⁵. And most importantly, it is through validation that existence becomes fully realized to echo the authentic voices of the minority class.¹⁴⁶

¹³⁹ Unaisi Nabobo-Baba, “Decolonising Framings in Pacific Research: Indigenous Fijian Vanua Research Framework as an Organic Response,” 141.

¹⁴⁰ Desmond Narain Doulatram. “THE INFERIORITY COMPLEX OF MISSIONIZERS AND COLONIZERS HID ULTIMATE TRUTHS: A CASE STUDY FROM A DECOLONIZED PERSPECTIVE FROM THE PACIFIC’S MARSHALL ISLANDS,” 0-28.

¹⁴¹ Ibid.

¹⁴² Ibid.

¹⁴³ “Intersectionality considers that the various aspects of humanity, such as race, culture, nationality, sexual orientation, class, ethnicity, spirituality, religion, disability, and gender, do not exist separately from each other but are complexly interwoven.”

¹⁴⁴ Jon Letman. “Micronesians in Hawaii face uncertain future.” *Aljazeera*. 2 October 2013. <http://www.aljazeera.com/humanrights/2013/10/micronesians-hawaii-face-uncertain-future-201310191535637288.html>.

¹⁴⁵ Desmond Narain Doulatram. “AN AUTOETHNOGRAPHIC RESPONSE TO DISCRIMINATION: GIVING SPACE TO THE MARGINALIZED MARSHALLESE COMMUNITY THROUGH RESEARCH AND MORAL DEEDS,” 0-58.

¹⁴⁶ Desmond Narain Doulatram. “THE INFERIORITY COMPLEX OF MISSIONIZERS AND COLONIZERS HID ULTIMATE TRUTHS: A CASE STUDY FROM A DECOLONIZED PERSPECTIVE FROM THE PACIFIC’S MARSHALL ISLANDS.” 0-28.

Existence becomes resistance and thus releases all negative connotations associated with resistance where persistence and insistence lay hold in securing validation. This is why both the ‘Marshall Islands’¹⁴⁷ and the ‘United States’¹⁴⁸ have a Constitutional Democracy and not a pure one where the minority is protected from the majority through their equal protection clause(s) even if that majority happens to be White and suffers from the classic case of ‘white fragility.’¹⁴⁹ As Dr. Trask perfectly puts, dark skin people are the classic bogeyman for the *haole* (white race).

White people know that all over the world, people of color have been brutally and unjustly treated by white imperialism. White people know how violent they have been to each other and to us and they know our grievances are real; and thus they imagine how much more violent we would be to them, with our real history of violations. This is why every demand for respect and recognition of dignity on our part is read as a sign of violence. This is why white people so fear black people in the United States, despite the fact that it is white people who have a history of violence against black people and not the other way around. White violence, then, has a long and sick history- in the world, in the Americas, in the Pacific, and right here in Hawai’i. And this continues to be denied.¹⁵⁰

My own situation in the University of San Francisco with a similar incident echoes Dr. Trask’s remarks where I was reprimanded for offering an alternative intellectual tradition when building on my own intellectual capital as a free thinker.¹⁵¹ Like Dr. Trask who challenged the philosophy department in the University of Hawaii, I also sought to challenge the Masters in Asia Pacific Studies Program for seeking to silence me from living my own intellectual capital ‘as if I haven’t dealt with such ignorance before by arrogant White Americans’¹⁵² whose privilege are always met equally with ‘white fragility’¹⁵³. As Robert DiAngelo states:

¹⁴⁷ See Section 12: Equal Protection and Freedom from Discrimination:
https://www.constituteproject.org/constitution/Marshall_Islands_1995.pdf?lang=en

¹⁴⁸ See Equal Protection Clause via 14th Amendment:
<https://www.law.cornell.edu/constitution/amendmentxiv>

¹⁴⁹ Robin DiAngelo. “White Fragility.” *International Journal of Critical Pedagogy* 3, no.3 (2011): 54-70.

¹⁵⁰ Haunani-Kay Trask. *From a Native Daughter: Colonialism and Sovereignty in Hawai’I*, 152-153.

¹⁵¹ Desmond Narain Doulatram. “AN AUTOETHNOGRAPHIC RESPONSE TO DISCRIMINATION: GIVING SPACE TO THE MARGINALIZED MARSHALLESE COMMUNITY THROUGH RESEARCH AND MORAL DEEDS,” 0-58

¹⁵² Ibid.

¹⁵³ Robin DiAngelo. “White Fragility.” *International Journal of Critical Pedagogy* 3, no.3 (2011): 54-70.

White people in North America live in a social environment that protects and insulates them from race-based stress. This insulated environment of racial protection builds white expectations for racial comfort while at the same time lowering the ability to tolerate racial stress, leading to...White Fragility. White Fragility is a state in which even a minimum amount of racial stress becomes intolerable, triggering a range of defensive moves. These moves include the outward display of emotions such as anger, fear, and guilt, and behaviors such as argumentation, silence, and leaving the stress-inducing situation. These behaviors, in turn, function to reinstate white racial equilibrium.¹⁵⁴

However, this way of thinking promoting White privilege is slowly losing grip in the 21st century with more recognition towards indigenous grievances as is evident in America, where Columbus Day marking Christopher Columbus's mythological discovery of an already settled America, is slowly being replaced with the more appropriate Indigenous Peoples' Day.¹⁵⁵ This indicates that the world is slowly adhering to a more ethically bound resolution to cleanse itself of past misgivings towards indigenous ways, which in all honesty, were once labeled savage at best. In the case of Indigenous Marshallese, our respective epistemologies are represented in our own literary achievements that manifest itself differently from western concepts and principles.¹⁵⁶ As one famous Marshallese Poet writes: our "literature holds the possibility of contribution to the survival of Marshallese culture and values in a world dominated by the presence of media and literature that privilege western principles and concepts which have a damaging effect on how we view ourselves."¹⁵⁷ Dr. David Ga'oupu Palaita wrote of a similar concern in his dissertation revealing the painful assumption that Islander students are not smart enough. His dissertation research proved that despite that assumption, "Islander students have created and produced programs and publications—counter-narratives—that is testament to their ability to produce knowledge."¹⁵⁸ This is the danger of the imperial imprint in academia where minorities are taught to view themselves as less, savage, uncivilized, and criminal to all that is moral and uplifting to academic enlightenment. As Dr. David Ga'oupu Palaita asserts: "Colonization then is not about just resources but also about the ways it affects the psyche that manifests itself in every day ordinary practices."¹⁵⁹

¹⁵⁴ [Robin DiAngelo. "White Fragility," 54-70.](#)

¹⁵⁵ Democracy Now!. "San Francisco Votes to Replace Columbus Day with Indigenous Peoples' Day." *Democracy Now!* 14 January 2018. https://www.democracynow.org/2018/1/24/headlines/san_francisco_votes_to_replace_columbus_day_with_indigenous_peoples_day

¹⁵⁶ Kathy Jetnil-Kijiner, "Iep Jaltok: A History of Marshallese Literature," (Master's Thesis, University of Hawaii, 2014).

¹⁵⁷ Ibid,13.

¹⁵⁸ David Ga'oupu Palaita. "Vāsā (Ocean) —The Space that is Sacred: Pacific Islanders in Higher Education." (PhD diss. University of California, Berkeley, 2015), 3-4.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid, 6-7.

Malcolm X, in a speech to the larger argument at Corn Hill Methodist Church in Rochester, New York on February 16th, 1965, expressed this concern. As Malcolm X stated:

This is a science that's called 'image-making.' They hold you in check through the science of imagery. They even make you look down upon yourself. It's imagery. They use their ability to create images, and then they use these images that they've created to mislead the people. To confuse the people and make the people accept wrong as right and reject right as wrong. Make the people actually think that the criminal is the victim and the victim is the criminal.¹⁶⁰

In this statement, Malcolm X clearly pays reference to the extremes of institutional racism resulting from the discursive immoral practices of imperialism which when left unchecked build the same racist dehumanizing outcomes upon which they were first built.¹⁶¹

Centuries of imperialism, colonialism, slavery and apartheid have clearly left a legacy of institutional racism.¹⁶² This is no different in the Marshall Islands where this damaging effect in which we view ourselves is ever so prevalent and reinforced by western institutions that seek to mitigate indigenous Marshallese imagery placing it as backwards instead of something to intellectually move forward with that has been around longer than the idea of America.¹⁶³ Dr. Hilda C. Heine, the first female president of any independent Pacific nation state and the first Marshallese doctorate wrote about this damaging effect in her dissertation entitled "Tuwaak Bwe Elimajnono" Perspectives and Voices: A Multiple Case Study of Successful Marshallese Immigrant High School Students in the United States." She wrote that "After years of colonization, many Marshallese see themselves as they are seen by Westerners - as, 'lazy, impoverished and undisciplined.'"¹⁶⁴ This was a slap in the face to my own self-doubt and further affirmation to the fatalism I was taught to uphold due to the prevailing imagery imposed on indigenous Marshallese. It seems however that I'm not alone as even Dr. Vid Ratioor, from Chuuk, in a recent *Talanoa* series at the City College of San Francisco explains that he himself had to reclaim his own identity after realizing the unnoticed segments of

¹⁶⁰ Malcolm X. "Not Just an American Problem but a World Problem" Speech for religious congregation, Cornhill Methodist Church, February 16, 1965.

¹⁶¹ Ameil J. Joesph "A Prescription for Violence: The Legacy of Colonization in Contemporary Forensic Mental Health and the Production of Difference," *Critical Criminology*, no. 22 (2014) 273-292.

¹⁶² William Gumede "Centuries of Colonialism, Slavery and Apartheid Have Left a Legacy Of Institutional Racism." *Global Research*. 4 December 2014. <http://www.globalresearch.ca/centuries-of-colonialism-slavery-and-apartheid-have-left-a-legacy-of-institutional-racism/5418149>

¹⁶³ Kathy Jetnil-Kijiner, "Iep Jaltok: A History of Marshallese Literature," 13.

¹⁶⁴ Hilda C. Heine, "'Tuwaak Bwe Elimajnono' Perspectives and Voices: A Multiple Case Study of Successful Marshallese Immigrant High School Students In the United States," (EdD diss., University of Southern California, 2004), 19.

colonialism embedded even in names where he had to reclaim his own indigenous name at the expense of erasing his introduced European family name.¹⁶⁵ His lecture went on to say that the terms Micronesia (small islands), Melanesia (dark islands), and Polynesia (many islands) are not indigenous inventions but European paying reference to mental colonization where we are now viewing ourselves through a French Man's lens.¹⁶⁶ It has always been assumed and implanted in our minds that European culture was the epitome of civilization to replicate because they represent high culture and that our Indigenous Marshallese culture was backwards, savage, barbaric, and literally the problem to the solution of progress. This self realization reminded me so much of late Nelson Mandela's words where he stated something around the same lines reminding us that "No one is born hating another person because of the color of his skin, or his background, or his religion. People must learn to hate, and if they can learn to hate, they can be taught to love, for love comes more naturally to the human heart than its opposite." This is why Indigenous peoples are gaining greater momentum in validating themselves as they realize that validation leads to them loving themselves at a time when the dominant prevailing western ideology tells them otherwise. This is made even clearer in the Marshall Islands today as Marshallese are going matrilineal by promoting clan names of mothers which existed before the European installment of patriarchy favoring last name of fathers.

We are All Smart In Our Own Way!

The idea that Pacific Islanders and Marshallese are incapable of producing knowledge through research is both racist and immorally inappropriate. Marshallese people, along with many Pacific Islanders, were dauntlessly navigating the vastness of the Pacific in nothing but hand hewn wooden canoes without instruments while Europeans were still arguing whether the earth was round or flat. As Donna Stone bluntly puts:

Astronomy is as old as human kind, since people first walked the earth, we looked up to the sky. Slowly, the relationship between the sun, moon, stars, and events on earth were observed. This enabled man to measure the passage of time, to predict the recurrence of seasonal events, to develop calendars, and to undertake difficult navigations...The naming of the stars and constellations are based on several factors: their position, their size and brilliance, their similarity with animals, their similarity with tools, and their similarity with people and things of legends.¹⁶⁷

¹⁶⁵ Vidalino Raatior, "Talanoa Series" (lecture, City College of San Francisco, San Francisco, CA, March 1, 2018).

¹⁶⁶ Ibid.

¹⁶⁷ Donna Stone. *Ri-Jedjed Iju in Majel: Traditional Astronomy in the Marshall Islands*. (Majuro, Marshall Islands: Alele Museum, 2001).

Astronomy developed in the Marshall Islands because of its voyaging culture where 99.99 percent of the Marshall Islands is geographically water. From the historical point of view of human and social development, there is a strange mutual life-giving relationship between human progress and the ocean or large bodies of water.¹⁶⁸ Early civilizations as we know of today first began along coastal regions of the seas and oceans and across river banks.¹⁶⁹ From here trade expanded to the point in which brave discoverers had to traverse uncharted seas and uncharted oceans.¹⁷⁰ The result was that new frontiers of human endeavors were soon found from which new civilizations such as the Marshall Islands and many Pacific Island Nations flourished.¹⁷¹

Europeans were fairly new to voyaging in the Pacific as they did not realize that voyaging such a vast area could take years.¹⁷² Most of their food was salt pork, salt beef, and biscuits.¹⁷³ This meant a lack of Vitamin C leading to scurvy.¹⁷⁴ The usual European explorer over packed a supply of men hoping that half of them would not succumb to the deadly ordeal of scurvy.¹⁷⁵ While European explorers were still ‘trialing and erroring’ Pacific Voyaging, Pacific Islanders were sailing with their teeth intact and gums severely blood free due to preserved breadfruit and pandanus.¹⁷⁶ Furthermore, while Europeans were pouring out salt to preserve food in their deep ocean voyaging, Pacific Islanders sailed with dried fish that lasted longer. The earliest accounts of European explorer(s) in the Pacific speak tales of men dying massively by scurvy, eating rats and leather, and killing innocent islanders under the assumption of theft because they didn’t understand the cultural value of reciprocity. As in Hawaii, European explorers also introduced deadly, lethal and contagious diseases such as leprosy, chicken pox, tuberculosis, ring worms, and various Sexually Transmitted Diseases to indigenous Micronesians, Marshallese especially. Yet, within numerous European texts by explorers, islanders were still pretty much savage even if they were able to maintain the bare existences of their atolls ably responding to the constant challenges of their respective environments. With such a list of obvious intellectual capital based on sustainable livelihood, it is clear that Marshallese are equally capable of producing and reproducing knowledge as they see fit to survive their own circumstances.

¹⁶⁸ Amata Kabua, “The Role of the Island Nations in the 21st Century: Statement by the Right Honorable President Amata Kabua, President of the Republic of the Marshall Islands.” The Federation of Island Nations for World Peace. Tokyo, Japan. 16-18 June 1996.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid.

¹⁷⁰ Ibid.

¹⁷¹ Ibid.

¹⁷² Reilly Ridgell. *PACIFIC NATIONS and TERRITORIES: The Islands of Micronesia, Melanesia, and Polynesia*, 3rd. ed. (Honolulu: Bess Press, 1995), 36-38.

¹⁷³ Ibid.

¹⁷⁴ Ibid.

¹⁷⁵ Ibid.

¹⁷⁶ Ibid.

My Own Journey Through the Maze of Discrimination

I speak a rather depressing tale of the 21st century reliving the realities of indigenous and black Oppression by White Americans. There is a saying in Marshallese Culture, “*kinke ejjelok aer Manit.*” Literally, this sarcastic remark states bluntly, “it’s because they have no manners and no sense of moral direction. The Marshallese word for custom and culture *Manit* is also literally translated ‘conduct and behavior’¹⁷⁷ because culture and customs shape behavior and conduct as social scientist(s) have also stated. I have heard older people saying this such as my grandmother Emlain Kabua who tells me that if you think holistically and measure the cultures of the world, you will never see ours as anything but love (*iakwe*) for we since independence have yet to wage war or hurt other people. Her exact words to this nature were “*kolmonlokjen im mok lale ellon ke renaj jonne mantin majol ke ejjelok*” literally translated to mean “please think holistically and judge for yourself if there is a culture in the world that can measure up to Marshallese custom(s)? It seems my grandmother’s point being is the culture acts as a moral compass to guide ethical behavior as now been irrefutably conclusive by social scientist(s). People who have no Culture and Custom(s) to teach them any better will only appear the way they present themselves showing in how they treat others. As someone who can attest to this reality having been a punching bag to the bitter insecure mental colonizers who need to belittle others to uplift their tainted egos, I found that these were driven by imperial traditions succumbing to nothing but white privilege.

Somewhere down the line in my career as a teacher, a certain inaccurate textbook made its way to the curriculum.¹⁷⁸ This is where my experience with discrimination begins where I am held legally captive along with my students through the Ministry of Education to teach a textbook that was emotionally damaging to indigenous peoples. After evaluating the accuracy of the first Marshallese history textbook, I began to find many errors and felt yet again consciously coerced to do something about it for the sake of my country and my people.¹⁷⁹ It was not easy lobbying, and certainly not easy to apply the research skills I gained in college, but in the end, it paid off.¹⁸⁰ The textbook was banned and is currently undergoing corrections which I also took part in.¹⁸¹ This story is interesting because I was almost mentally colonized beyond return where I immediately believed the packaged academic presentation of the textbook given that it was written by two reputable scholars being Dr. Julianne Walsh with assistance from Dr. Hilda C. Heine. The ‘Kabua’ in me wanted to just burn the collection of textbooks but the Christian in me

¹⁷⁷ Monica LaBriola, “Ien Ippan Doon: Celebrating Survival in a ‘Atypical Marshallese Community’,” 132.

¹⁷⁸ Desmond Narain Doulatram. “AN AUTOETHNOGRAPHIC RESPONSE TO DISCRIMINATION: GIVING SPACE TO THE MARGINALIZED MARSHALLESE COMMUNITY THROUGH RESEARCH AND MORAL DEEDS,” 0-58

¹⁷⁹ Ibid. See: <https://www.jsrd-humanities.com/volume-3>

¹⁸⁰ Ibid.

¹⁸¹ Ibid.

sought better ways of addressing my concerns through the avenue of research taught to me at Southwestern Adventist University.

My first approach was to disregard my researcher bias and as afraid as I was, I decided to ask my cousin Ingrid K. Kabua; who was and still is the Chief Clerk to the Marshall Islands Court House, if I could get access to the high court archives to research and cross reference the accusations in the first ever Marshallese textbook.¹⁸² This was a hilarious journey for me because I was literally going with the accusation(s) implied in the textbook and decided to pull my cousin Ingrid K. Kabua along for the ride. It was such a comic relief to see her face getting scared as we got closer dissecting the outcome of the textbook's claim and I felt relieved that I was not alone in feeling fear that perhaps my family history was wrong. The look on my cousin Ingrid's face was hilarious as she kept getting closer in reading the summary judgment and looked at me and said "*ugh, enwot imijak in loe*" (OMG, I am afraid of seeing it). She read it and to my amazement, I was right. The textbook had errors as it was citing an unpublished research report by Dr. Leonard Mason which was thrown out of court because it had no citations or list of references for the various allegations and assumptions posed in its content. The bigger irony of the situation is that although my grandmother told me the same things, I was so mentally colonized into viewing Marshallese knowledge systems and protocols as less that I felt programmed to research through the direction of western discourse. The most hilarious part of this journey was me finding out that the court records I voluntarily pursued to research with my cousin's assistance were already archived and in my grandmother's bedroom to which she hid because of its level of sensitivity. I was somewhat dumbstruck at my grandma's level of expertise but even more proud that the research skills I attained in college worked collaboratively with indigenous Marshallese protocols revealing that decolonization is not radical but rather revealing of the human in each and everyone of us as we make ends meet to make the world a lot safer and better for all of humanity's children, Marshallese included.

The idea that a scholar can actually attain real meaning from what it means to be a Marshallese without no fundamental connection that would allow them to feel the insults imposed on us is insulting in itself. It gives us goosebumps to even hear someone speak for us telling others who we are without knowing the proper intel given lack of access and given their limited purview. Where in such a manner presents itself, have I entered the premises of a family with no archival record of me being a member of such groups equipped with the proper intellectual capital to relay traditional knowledge? I was well equipped with the primary sources at my fingertips depicting truth. Yet, despite my insider reference, I caved into western methodology because of how undervalued indigenous knowledge has become in academia to the point where the most conservative indigenous beliefs are labeled as most backwards in academe. Anthropologists have been known to be trouble makers where their unchecked uses of research frames that don't take into consideration indigenous knowledge protocols have driven a political tale of inner resistance using American liberalism as a defining factor to ascertain truth. Even when I successfully challenged the textbook, the white washed committee members that composed the correction team sought to instill their own direction as to how the culture should be viewed despite being but outside observers of the royal household they claimed

¹⁸² See *Senior Courts and Judges* in RMI Court website:
<http://rmicourts.org/the-judiciarys-courts-and-personnel/senior-judges-and-staff/>

to be experts on. As Dr. Nelson notes, “More often than not, the prescriptive lessons learned along the way are woven into a narrative heavily dependent upon the strategies and goals of those telling the story: primarily, how best to influence people so they think and act as national subjects” where their main audience of choice are children “young, impressionable, and held legally captive in the educational system.”¹⁸³ I felt disrespected that the correction committee sought to rewrite the narrative of my family’s German Tribunal victory where my family refused to be absorbed by colonial rhetoric and sought to protect the traditional matrilineal norm to which the German Tribunal attempted to change to cater towards a more Eurocentric patriarchal view of land tenure. This was in light of the fact that all primary source evidence was given showcasing the summary judgment. Instead of going by the signed evidence and primary documentation, the correction committee sought to present the summary judgment as another perspective to promote the losing side to cater towards the author’s creative decision thereby making the author the defining act of our customs, a white woman. My cousins Kino Kabua, Ellen Milne, Malia Heine and I took the extended liberty of re-challenging this not for any other reason but for the right of human dignity to be self-determining people. As our grandfather and founding father of the Marshall Islands stated in our acceptance speech when the Marshall Islands was accepted into the Pacific Islands Forum:

Our society has survived, and has withstood the test of time, the impact of other cultures, the devastation of war, and the high price paid for the purposes of international peace and security. All we have and are today as a people, we have received as a sacred heritage which we pledge ourselves to safeguard and maintain, valuing nothing more dearly than our rightful home on our islands. Our culture and traditions date back over 2000 years and we are committed to maintain these as the paramount rubrics of our society. It has not been an easy path, indeed a long wait for over a century to reassert our sovereignty and to maintain our deep profound love for peace and freedom. Like other peace and freedom-loving people we are grateful for the opportunity you have given us to rediscover ourselves as the rightful heirs of such God-given rights, and to zealously maintain those rights within our Dominion. This is indeed the real sense of value and commitment we aspire to and have expressly inscribed in the preamble to our Constitution, which reads: “We extend to other peoples what we profoundly seek from them: peace, friendship, mutual understanding, and respect for our individual idealism and our common humanity”¹⁸⁴

Although we understood that everyone is entitled to freedom of thought, we understood even more that freedom of thought doesn’t mean imposing discriminatory intel to children and teachers who are held legally captive under the Ministry of Education. The thought of a reworked history being forced taught built on fabrications of the jealous

¹⁸³ John K. Nelson “Signs of Recovery for Japanese Nationalism? The Citizen's Committee for Reclaiming Cultural Identity through Textbook Reform.” *Pacific Rim Report*, no.15 (2001).

¹⁸⁴ See Statement of H.E. President Amata Kabua at *Pacific Islands Forum* website: <http://www.forumsec.org/resources/uploads/attachments/documents/HE%20Kabua%27s%20Speech%2018th%20SP%20Forum.pdf>

nature where ambitious political opponents fed the author their personal interpretations of their bitter loss using the existing educational structure to push their views is not only corrupt but downright disrespectful and offensive to the customs (*Manit*) that shape us Marshallese. The oral accounts in the first textbook were completely one sided and not at all descriptive of the actual diverse situation in the Marshall Islands. It was a brilliant attempt to rewrite history making others view life through the lens of the author's political framing. However, it came at the cost of infringing on the constitutional rights of the affected people as can be seen in the equal protection clause below in Figure 7.

Section 12: Equal Protection and Freedom from Discrimination

1. All persons are equal under the law and are entitled to the equal protection of the laws.
2. No law and no executive or judicial action shall, either expressly, or in its practical application, discriminate against any persons on the basis of gender, race, color, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, place of birth, family status or descent.
3. Nothing in this Section shall be deemed to preclude non-arbitrary preferences for citizens pursuant to law

Figure 7: Equal Protection Clause in Marshall Islands Constitution

Most Marshallese remain ignorant to the importance of the written word in safeguarding history. As Rynkiewich states: "Narratives can make or break a people. At stake are traditioning, identity formation, and cultural creativity. People who forget their own stories risk living out someone else's story."¹⁸⁵ The idea to challenge the Ministry of Education, something that has never been done, was based on the idea of equal dignity where me and my family felt coerced to remind our own government of the equal protection clause where they were not allowed to teach discrimination nor change who've we've always been.¹⁸⁶ The resolution in itself called the "Ministry of Education, through the Cabinet, to suspend the use of the new textbook, *Etto Nan Raan Kein: A Marshall Islands History* as part of 'the' education curriculum until errors or omissions concerns with customs, culture, tradition and origins of the founding fathers of the Republic are corrected."¹⁸⁷ It seemed daunting that after years of mental colonization going unnoticed that Marshallese will forever look at themselves through the values of a white woman who briefly resided in the Marshall Islands and will never know the sharp end of what it means to be Marshallese because the research framings that shape how she saw our knowledge system saw us as backwards in meaning. My success in helping pass Resolution 28 taught me various lessons on indigenous Marshallese research particularly in following indigenous protocols of establishing basis to oral history which in actuality are basically the same research framings in ethical research that need to be further

¹⁸⁵ Michael A. Rynkiewich "Stories from the Marshall Islands: Bwebwenato Jan Aelon Kein (review)." *Contemporary Pacific* 15, no. 1 (2003): 216.

¹⁸⁶ Desmond Narain Doulatram, "Indigenous Decolonization of Academia: Using the Marshall Islands as Precedent for Social Injustice," 1-48.

¹⁸⁷ Ibid. See: http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/DRIPS_en.pdf

indigenized to humanize Marshallese people from the savage, barbaric, and heathen poster child image that sought to colonially program them as backwards.

Marshallese Research Lesson(s) → Ethnolinguistics of the word Bedbed (Basis)

Contrary to popular belief, in establishing the legitimacy of any oral claim, it is very important to guarantee the presence of *Bedbed* in a particular tale especially when dealing with oral history to which the textbook heavily cited. *Bedbed* carries two meanings, one would be *bedbed* meaning reef which is a literal definition and the other is a metaphorical definition which is literally translated having basis or foundation, the latter being the more applicable definition.¹⁸⁸ Each story must have basis and an existing foundation. Upon closer examination of the word etymology, *BedBed* can be broken down to two words carrying the same definition. *Bed* literally means Present (here) so *Bedbed* would be literally translated present and present hence the repetition factor for emphasis. This is the Alliterative Repetition is the mother of All Studies concept solidified in practice and accepted through customs and language. The word *Bedbed* itself has a strong correlation to the etymology/ethnography surrounding the cosmological character *Lowa*, the being who created the universe including the Reefs, as the story goes “*Lowa Im Bedbed inom ewor bedbed*”¹⁸⁹ (Let there be reefs and then there were reefs).¹⁹⁰ Marshallese Stories of creation has strong correlations and connection to Christianity and the existence of a supreme being who tells what becomes through the power of His speech. This strong language correlation in regards to oral History from an orally driven society tells us that to discern the legitimacy of verbal claims, one must have *bedbed* which entails presence in the stories at hand or as the metaphorical definition of *bedbed* would entail, a reef that acts as a foundation to support life in a story or claim, life being the land in metaphorical terms as land is always associated with livelihood in Marshallese culture. This same concept of credibility is popularly practiced even in a westernized courtroom setting where all claims need not be baseless but must have an existing foundation that bears fruit to such logic. Marshallese strictly follow this rule and its associated criteria whether in the courtroom or outside it.

Having a foundation (*bedbed*) or a base to your claim is a necessary requirement in separating truth from fiction as all knowledge is sourced. Thus, A primary anthropological account or recollection must have *bedbed* for credible primary sources are the key to paying the way to a more accurate portrayal of oral History and history in general whether it be given through means of writing or *Jitdam*. This was hardly the case as it is widely known that anthropologists have become trouble makers and an extra layer

¹⁸⁸ See Marshallese English Dictionary for definition of word *Bedbed* alternatively spelt *Pedped*: <http://www.trussel2.com/mod/MED2P.htm#6610>

¹⁸⁹ Jelibor Jam “The Beginning of this World.” In *Stories from the Marshall Islands* by Jack A. Tobin (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2004): 26.

¹⁹⁰ Erdland, August. “*Die Marshall Insulaner, Leben und Sitte, Sinn und Religion eines Sudsee-Volkes* [The Marshall Islanders: Life and Custom, Thought and Religion of a South Seas People].” 1914. Translation of the original located at the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa Hamilton Library Hawaiian and Pacific Collection. Translated in part for the Yale Cross-Cultural Survey in Connection with the Navy Pacific Islands Handbook Project and in part by Richard Neuse in 1961.

of nuisance in creating political turmoil as was the case with the first ever Marshallese textbook that cited irreputable oral sources from so called experts as the basis to its narrative. Most Marshallese that are eager to share their intellectual property are often experts or wannabe experts. As the primary author of the first ever Marshallese Textbook Dr. Julianne Walsh herself states: “Given the power of written texts to inscribe memories and ascribe identities, the act of composing any text is daunting.” This was a hard lesson learned on her part as her first ever textbook was mere selective representation and not truly reflective of the peripheral voices that are often silenced in the Marshallese political and traditional hierarchy being but innocent children institutionalized into the existing system that stretches back to when Marshallese people first settled their islands. It became a question as to why should we view our world and ourselves through the lens of how Dr. Julianne Walsh sees us. This was not very Christian and reflective of the Golden Rule taught to us by Jesuits to which Dr. Julianne Walsh was a recent volunteer having no legal basis to discuss traditional norms she was attempting to reshape and repackage or rather reimagine in her own image-making. This is why most Marshallese prefer oral tradition as opposed to the western style discourse driven by unsustainable written records that need western instruments to implement that the Marshall Islands is in shortage of.

Marshallese Research Lesson (s) → Why Oral Tradition? Kein Ta JitDam? Is this not the 21st Century?

Jitdam is an important part of Marshallese Culture. This is why Oral Tradition is still preferred. Oral History dictates intimacy where words are taken to heart through the process of *jitdam* which encompasses the very culture of Marshallese society, a process that emphasizes a more intimate approach to communication stemming from obvious proximity in the physical and emotional sense. However, intimacy comes with a price because oral history, unlike written history where it is fixed, is often adaptable and changeable which often leads to a dead end, if it lacks *Bedbed* (basis/foundation). The common issue with oral history being adaptable is that, with the changing times, cultural contact with the west forever altered the once conservative values of the Marshallese identity. Thus, the language and the stories change to better adapt to the mindset of the present populace and their present customs. This is why one must have basis or foundation (*bedbed*) to his or her stories. *Bedbed* is necessary to ensure a clear and successful flow of untampered historical events, insights, and knowledge perceived. Thus, all elements must be present including the witnesses who witnessed history in order for it to have basis (*Bedbed*) or an existing foundation where the source of information is credible and truthfully authoritative. Establishing *Bedbed* tells us which accounts are primary sources and which are secondary sources. Anyone can tell a story. So, it is important to showcase who wrote or told what in order to ascertain whether those individuals have credibility as credibility establishes authority, and an authoritative source is what real history is based on. Hence, why *Bedbed* is absolutely necessary and must ascertain a degree of credibility acceptable to establish authoritative logic and knowledge.

Marshallese Research Lesson(s) → Bedbed (Basis) Criterion: Ways of Ascertaining Credibility

The best way to ascertain whether one has *Bedbed* to their stories would be to ask the questions: *Kwar ke Bed ippan* (were you present with them), *bed Ijo* (present there), *bed Im kommane makitkit ko* (present in the events and stories), *ak bed Im lo* (present to witness), *bed Im kommane Im bok konan ije* (present to take part). The importance of having *bedbed* is a cultural attribute to any storyteller and thus a historian proceeds with extra caution (*Mijmij Karuo*) to these tales particularly when dealing with the *Iroij* (chief) lineage stories which are deemed highly sensitive and in accordance to *Manit* (Custom) are their exclusive property and must be relayed accordingly, a fact that even famous storytellers mention going as far as stating that such knowledge was reserved only for the ears of chiefs.¹⁹¹ As the representatives of the culture, discretion is often given to the chiefs because their stories often reflect the most credible sources of knowledge which often at times are at their disposal. This is easily understood considering the stories are often about them and their families as well as their transactions (*makitkit*). Stories are often told from parent to child and in some instances (*Wawein*), grandparent to grandchild. “The chief, who was also understood to hold a mystical connection between the material and the spiritual world, was held in awe and, therefore, his health and well-being were carefully guarded. Certain specialists, including healers, were selected to serve the well-being of the *iroij* and his family. These healers were known as *ri-katutu* and *kwor*.”¹⁹² My mother’s clan as seen in Figure 8, no. 5, are these ‘special workers’.¹⁹³

Marshallese Research Lesson(s) → KEIN KAMMOL (PROOF)

When relaying the history of Chiefs I provided in my indigenous research for the parliamentarians and traditional leaders to enact Resolution 28, all sources of proof were evaluated and preference was given to the sources of the mentioned families in the stories because they were PRESENT with them. Thus, they have basis or foundation to their stories. In other words, they have *BEDBED* (basis) meaning they have authority and credibility on the subject at hand giving them reasonable jurisdiction on such matters of sensitive discussion. Having *Bedbed* from a holistically accurate perspective in accordance to the customs, literally means that the person telling the story had to have been present at the present time or connected to it primarily, hence, they must carry family ties or an equitable relation that is just as valid that guarantees credibility and presence in the stories at hand. In many instances, despite a scholarly title addressed in

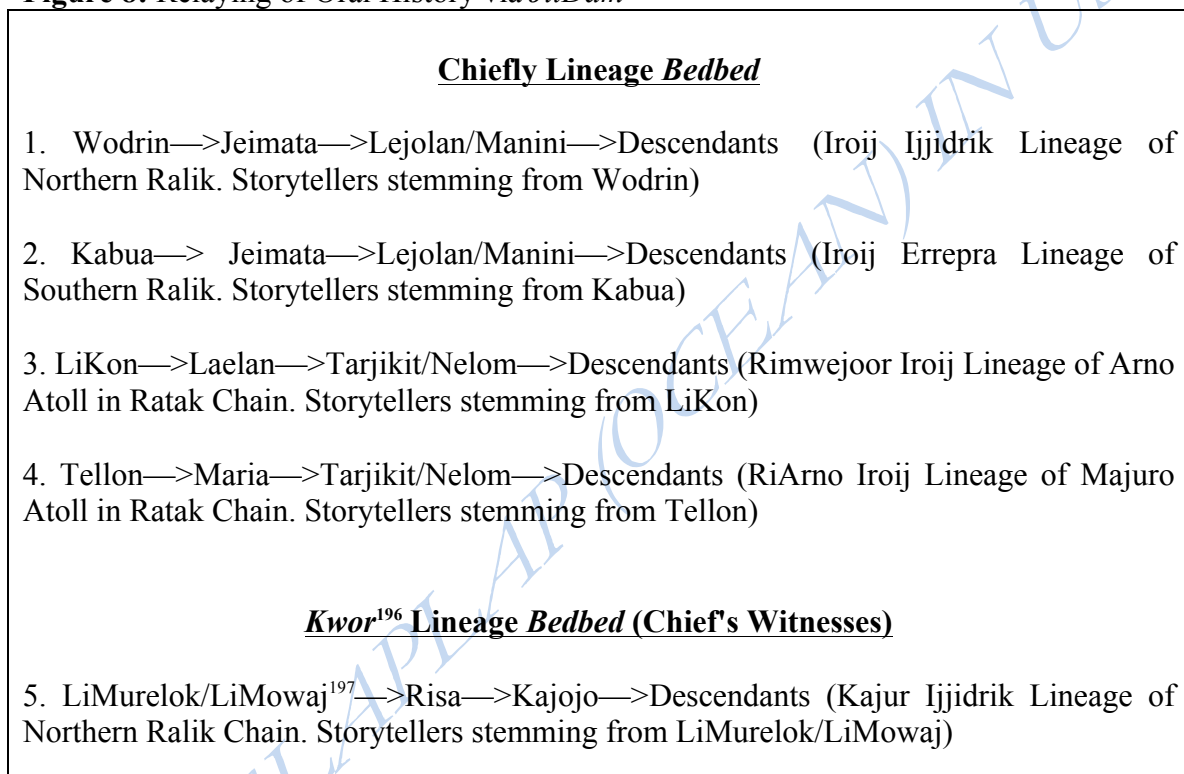
¹⁹¹ Kathy Jetnil-Kijiner, “Iep Jaltok: A History of Marshallese Literature,” 21

¹⁹² Maria Kabua Fowler, Irene J. Taafaki, and Randolph R. Thaman. *Traditional Medicine of the Marshall Islands: The Women, the Plants, the Treatments*. (Suva, Fiji: Institute of Pacific Studies, University of the South Pacific, 2006), 2.

¹⁹³ Emlain Kabua and Maria Kabua Fowler, “Kwo ke’e Nan am Detake Ian? (Are You Ready To Be the Wife of an *Iroij*?),” In *Life in the Republic of the Marshall Islands*, edited by Anono Loeak, Veronica Kiluwe, and Linda Crowl, (Majuro, Marshall Islands: Institute of Pacific Studies, University of the South Pacific, 2004), 72.

the modern world of education, professional titles recognized in the modern academic setting cannot overstep the authorities of the real professionals and real scholars on such matters which the Marshallese people themselves dictate the modes of interpretation. If the study is on Marshallese, a foreigner may not present information in full disclosure of the customs because he or she might be learning the culture themselves through their own research. Primary sources in conjunction with established customary precedents¹⁹⁴ were key to solving this dilemma in my own research to dissecting the textbook. For the sake of reference, the following diagram¹⁹⁵ in Figure 8 below showcases how the chief's stories were passed down orally from parent to offspring:

Figure 8: Relaying of Oral History via *JitDam*



¹⁹⁴ Kathy Jetnīl-Kijiner, “Iep Jaltok: A History of Marshallese Literature,” 21

¹⁹⁵ This diagram serves to satisfy the requirements of Bedbed for the aforementioned lineages and clans.

¹⁹⁶ *Kwor* is a special class of *Kajur* (commoners) who are said to be “*Mejen Iroj Ro* (Eyes of the Chiefs)” or more so their witnesses. This four generation lineage given represents a lineage of medicine women who were held in high regard by the Chiefs (*Iroj*). All the above mentioned women lived in the chief's pen (*woror ko an iroj*) and were the caretakers of the chiefs children. Most of them were related to them and in most instances were even adopted by them or had become their wives through arranged marriage. The word *Kwor* is also a container made out of a hallow ripe coconut shell used for medicine hence its association with this particular lineage whose art and skill of labor is medicine (*Uno*).

¹⁹⁷ Limurelok and Limowaj are sisters with Limurelok being the elder. Limurelok adopted Risa from her younger sister Limowaj. Emlain Kabua was inturn adopted by her grandma Risa from her mother Kajojo.

This diagram serves to satisfy the requirements of *Bedbed* for the aforementioned lineages and clans. The contents of this paper will contend for itself the full validity of these individual's credibility as well as their authority. When it comes to indigenous research of the sensitive nature, particularly the chiefs, attaining credibility and following traditional protocol is a must. Poet Kathy Jetnil-Kijiner elaborated this very process in her own field research in the Marshall Islands. She writes that:

Going through the proper channels was the first crucial step of my research. In the past, before starting any sort of task or project, one needed to go through the proper channels to gain approval – usually this meant gaining the approval of the Iroij, the Chiefs before taking any further steps. Meeting with the Iroij, however, is usually a delicate process, one which I do not have any experience with and am not entirely accustomed to. So before I began this project I needed to find out who I was allowed to speak to, and whether this project would be acceptable.¹⁹⁸

The difference between Ms. Kathy Jentil-Kijiner and me is that I am more accustomed to the delicate process of Skillfully Inquiring being an immediate member of the Chiefly kin. However, I am a *Kajur* (commoner) by birth so understandably there are some restrictions to how far I can go with my own voice given traditional protocol where at times, I let my iroij (chief), in this case, my great uncle Imata Kabua express my worries. This was made clear with the textbook where he took my concerns to the Marshallese Parliament. I have insider reference and although I once caved in to western doctrine to avoid researcher bias, I was proved wrong the indigenous way when reliving my own mistaken arrogant bias that was taught to me by colonizers. Decolonization involves decolonizing the mind of the colonized and also the mind of the colonizer. It's a two way street.

Marshallese Research Lesson(s) → My Righteous Anger!

The idea that someone has the agency to tell me how to view myself through their recently invented lens makes my blood boil and it gives me a sense of morals in knowing how corrupt a soul can be to intentionally rewrite history to relive a fabricated past whilst mentally colonizing people into a certain outlook of fatalism. As a dual citizen being American and Marshallese, I found it odd that an independent country such as the Marshall Islands was subjectively allowing itself to be defined through an Anglophone imagery forever tainting an image of heroism favored amongst minorities. The classic underdog in Marshallese victories reminds us that such political intrigues of lessening the perfected cultural leaderships of prominent figures gives the truth that White Privilege is alive and well and misguidedly relived by arrogant Western scholars seeking to glorify their own way of thinking above others. My first experience(s) with being mentally colonized went unnoticed as I silently accepted them never really resisting given the associated headaches. However it is the most troubling ones at the political and educational levels defining character building and career manifestations that are always enlightening and shocking to the very creation of morality forcing us to finally speak up.

¹⁹⁸ Kathy Jetnil-Kijiner, "Iep Jaltok: A History of Marshallese Literature," 21

We Marshallese always feel the need to teach others a lesson on morals to give us back that space that was violated and tainted to lessen our dignity as a caring people. We know our rights and how to attain them equally even if it means stepping on our own Governments, Colonizers, and Instructors to do it. We have our ways of communicating our point of views and ways to disregard the ulterior motive of being absorbed by someone else's narrative as to how we should know, be, and most importantly exist as ourselves. We are not "Wannabes." We simply know and be as we've always felt to be. Just as everyone has agency to decide their own fate, everyone has the right to know and be and create how they know to be. Knowledge is defined by its core root word being know. According to the Oxford English Dictionary, the word know comes from the Old English *cnāwan* (earlier *gecnāwan*) which means to recognize/identify.¹⁹⁹ So this basic knowledge of the word etymology alone should attest already that everyone is entitled to KNOW and be as they are for they are the first to recognize themselves and identify themselves simply by knowing themselves. Everyone is entitled to decide how knowledge is created because everyone knows/recognize/and can identify themselves and are uniquely situated to give their way of knowing to others who hold a different perception. Although everyone has agency to know, people are often oppressed when it comes to how people value other knowledges at the expense of erasing and demeaning the ways of KNOWING of what Edward Said has referred to as the OTHER/ORIENT, mainly indigenous peoples who hold a different world view.

Knowing and being requires peaceful coexistence between all man and the history of imperialism has greatly led to a state of mental wardship amongst indigenous peoples. I say this because of my mental struggle to attain meaning as to why I was afraid to challenge a packaged textbook that attempted to compartmentalize my family's imagery into political intrigue because of the power of the written text. For us, writing has power to instill and identify. When Europeans first arrived and through pen and paper attempted to capture us, our traditional leaders felt scared to see the scribbled images showcasing our imagery because it was contained and confined forever frozen to lessen your entire being at the will of the European lens. As can be seen in the text below by Russian Explorer Kotzebue, Marshallese already understood the power of writing in shaping their respective realities and how they would ultimately view themselves through European standardized writing, an act that is thoroughly real given mental colonization going unnoticed. As Kotzebue observed:

The writing was a new discovery, which excited their attention as well as reflection. I tried to make Lagediack understand that all we spoke was written down on the tables; wrote his name down and said, that is Lagediack. He was greatly frightened to see himself represented by such singular figures, and seemed to fear that he would be obliged, by magic, to assume such a shape; the others

¹⁹⁹ See Oxford Online Dictionary for Definition and Word of Origin of *Know*:
<http://en.oxforddictionaries.com/know>

laughed heartily at the comical Lagediack on the tables, while he himself stood in great uneasiness, expecting the terrible metamorphosis.²⁰⁰

Kotzebue obviously didn't understand Lagediack's (the Marshallese Chief), point of view where Lagediack was not frightened out of mere superstition but rather frightened at the thought of being contained, confined, and reshaped through the lens of a European that allowed him to see a different perception of self that didn't register with him formally. Marshallese utilized writing differently from the European standard. As poet Kathy Jetnil-Kijiner states: the way we view Marshallese Literature can be both detrimental and uplifting for it changes the way we view ourselves. Marshallese have been known to represent writing in stick charts, mat weaving, and tattoos.²⁰¹ In fact, writing and color first began to appear in the Marshall Islands through the tattoo gods Lewaj and Lanej.²⁰² Writing therefore has always had spiritual significance for Marshallese for it shapes their ontologies as in the case of Lagediack given above. However, these forms of worship, cultural and religious practice have largely been segmented to the point of oppression where any mention of such tradition is but mere fantasy and culturally unacceptable to Christians even in the most religious Christian setting in the Marshall Islands. I am not attempting to discuss the effect of Christianity and how they demonized tattooing rituals and dancing because it was associated with the old religion for that is beyond the scope of this paper and well represented in the fact that there is no more traditional tattooing in the Marshall Islands and no traditional dancing aside from the *Jebwa*.²⁰³ I speak more of the demonizing aspect of feminine forms of intellectual capital that have been utilized to suppress and devalue Marshallese indigenous ontologies because of its associated sexism. For example, the 'female life giving land parcel'²⁰⁴ named *LIWATUONMOUR*²⁰⁵ that encompasses the 'traditional land tenure system' and is the Marshallese mother earth archetype has forever been demonized by the Missionary Dr. Rife.²⁰⁶ Nevertheless, Dr. Monica Labriola writes that "The female life giving land parcel Liwatuonmour is

²⁰⁰ Otto von Kotzebue. *A Voyage of Discovery in the South Sea and the Beering's Straits*. (New York: Da Capo Press, 1967), 68.

²⁰¹ Kathy Jetnil-Kijiner, "Iep Jaltok: A History of Marshallese Literature," (Master's Thesis, University of Hawaii, 2014).

²⁰² Dorothy Kabua. "The Origin of Tattooing." In *Stories from the Marshall Islands* by Jack A. Tobin, (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2001), 49-50.

²⁰³ See Bwebwenato in Jobwa:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U9ImPYxv4Ws>

²⁰⁴ Monica LaBriola "Likiep Kapin Iep: Land, Power, and History on a Marshallese Atoll." (PhD diss. University of Hawaii, 2013), 109.

²⁰⁵ Dorothy Kabua. "Liwatuonmour." In *Stories from the Marshall Islands* by Jack A. Tobin, (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2001), 53.

²⁰⁶Ibid.

important because she generated the physical fruits and the social and cultural systems that have made life in this fragile ecosystem sustainable” — this serving as an epistemological basis.²⁰⁷ The Marshallese female archetype *JINED ILO KOBO*²⁰⁸, another representation of feminine inspired epistemology paying reference to Marshallese intellectual capital is also considered idolatry yet Pope Francis of the Christian Catholic Church is allowed to use the language of Mother earth under the same premise without being labeled pagan as can be seen in his address below:

“LAUDATO SI’, mi’ Signore” – “Praise be to you, my Lord”. In the words of this beautiful canticle, Saint Francis of Assisi reminds us that our common home is like a sister with whom we share our life and a beautiful mother who opens her arms to embrace us. “Praise be to you, my Lord, through our Sister, Mother Earth, who sustains and governs us, and who produces various fruit with coloured flowers and herbs”. This sister now cries out to us because of the harm we have inflicted on her by our irresponsible use and abuse of the goods with which God has endowed her. We have come to see ourselves as her lords and masters, entitled to plunder her at will. The violence present in our hearts, wounded by sin, is also reflected in the symptoms of sickness evident in the soil, in the water, in the air and in all forms of life. This is why the earth herself, burdened and laid waste, is among the most abandoned and maltreated of our poor; she “groans in travail” (Rom 8:22). We have forgotten that we ourselves are dust of the earth (cf. Gen 2:7); our very bodies are made up of her elements, we breathe her air and we receive life and refreshment from her waters.²⁰⁹

This Eurocentric patriarchal lens is largely due to predatory Christianity in the era of capitalism, colonialism, and imperialism where Marshallese female traditions are associated and incorporated with Salem Witch Trial Hunts because of idolatry claims. In order to survive such impending tactics driven by ambitious narratives to globally absorb Marshall Islanders into a belittling global narrative, Marshallese need to start representing themselves as a distinct groups of people instead of viewing themselves or allowing others to frame them their way. The sexism of religion where the female equivalence of Priest being Priestess refers to magic while the masculine Priest becomes the holy one is all religious wars and this is evident in the case of Liwatuonmour above where she was demonized and cast aside by the AngloAmerican Male Christian named Dr. Rife.

²⁰⁷ Monica LaBriola “Likiep Kapin Iep: Land, Power, and History on a Marshallese Atoll.” (PhD diss. University of Hawaii, 2013), 109.

²⁰⁸ Maria Kabua Fowler and Irene J. Taafaki. “Women’s roles, attributes and health in the Marshall Islands.” In *Traditional Medicine of the Marshall Islands: The Women, the Plants, the Treatments* by Maria Kabua Fowler, Irene J. Taafaki, and Randolph R. Thaman. (Suva, Fiji: Institute of Pacific Studies, University of the South Pacific, 2006), 11-18.

²⁰⁹ See **ENCYCLICAL LETTER LAUDATO SI’ OF THE HOLY FATHER FRANCIS ON CARE FOR OUR COMMON HOME:**
http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20150524_enciclica-laudato-si.html

Although traditional Marshallese culture afforded gender symmetry and harmony²¹⁰, it is slowly losing grip being tainted by western methodologies that aren't applicable to the realities of the actual circumstances.

However, Marshallese in their most practical sense have situated themselves by adapting the global context to better suit their narratives. These disenfranchised people are at the risk of having their knowledge systems erased. The saddest part of this reality is that indigenous peoples knowledge systems have had a history of sustainability and stretches longer than the history of the great red, white, and blue being America. While one can attest firmly that America is an 'invented tradition'²¹¹, indigenous ways built on sustainable livelihood have been in existence since forever and has a proven record of sustainability. In a past Kava Session with Dr. Nabobo-Baba, she expressed this in the most sarcastic note stating the racial irony. She told me that "We Pacific Islanders have been doing sustainable livelihood and now Europeans are telling us to go back to the same ways they sought to eliminate where they once told was backwards." This is, where I believe, the irony is at. The people who state that everyone is entitled to know and create knowledge such as the imperial super powers of the globe are the ones who state this very fact yet at the same time, they marginalize peoples systemically through institutions to lessen the value and voices of indigenous peoples and minorities to retain power as to who creates knowledge even if knowledge belongs to everyone. I believe that there are two ways knowledge is lost and abused, one is through exploitation and one is through grudging teaching where the best skills are kept within several people to keep power within their grasp. This means that in America, sadly the 'invented tradition of the White Race'²¹² retains that authority because they are more positioned to promote their views in a way that would promote themselves and mitigate the views of 'others.'²¹³

Applying Marshallese Research Lesson(s) → My University of San Francisco Experience!

My journey to validate my indigenous ways of knowing and being became challenged again in the University of San Francisco of all places. After succeeding in helping pass legislation in the Marshall Islands to temporarily suspend the inaccurate textbook mentioned above, my healing journey took a drastic turn when I enrolled myself in the University of San Francisco's Masters in Asia-Pacific Studies Program (MAPS)

²¹⁰ Maria Kabua Fowler, Irene J. Taafaki, and Randolph R. Thaman. *Traditional Medicine of the Marshall Islands: The Women, the Plants, the Treatments*, 11.

²¹¹ Eric Hobsbawm. "Introduction: Inventing Traditions." In *The Invention of Tradition*, edited by Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, (Cambridge, United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 1-14.

²¹² Ibid. (The invention of tradition is a concept that rose to popularity in the above-mentioned 1983 publication edited by British Marxist intellectual E. J. Hobsbawm and T. O. Ranger. In their Introduction, both editors argue that many traditions which "appear or claim to be old are often quite recent in origin and sometimes invented." The invented tradition of the White Race bred on White Imperialism, Colonialism and racial superiority based on color is one such tradition as is America)

²¹³ Edward W. Said *Orientalism*. (New York City: Pantheon Books, 1978).

only to encounter a new form of institutionalized discrimination. It seemed rather ludicrous that despite the United States through California being a progressive leader in change, that I would have to be creative in using my research experience to set an example as to how the academy was still severely lacking in granting fairness. This was one of the hardest parts of my experience where it became a “look at me, poor me” narrative. The opportunity came when I took my first prerequisites. This included a Research and Methodologies class with Dr. Leung. It was in this class that we had a guest speaker named Father Carbonneau who explained the value of archival/primary source research in grounding present realities so that no one can lie to you as was in my case with the textbook. This validating experience of me—hearing from a scholar and priest—on the same research strategies that I applied in suspending an inaccurate textbook served as validation to my mental confinements that prevented me from jumping to that same conclusion myself because I was mentally colonized into believing that I, as an indigenous Marshallese, had no moral authority because of my kin. It was in this moment where I realized my mental liberation because I was starting to realize that I myself, due to the prevailing western concepts on research, regarded a Catholic Priest as more authoritative than me because I was always taught by western academia that my indigenous ways of knowing and being were less than normal and not credible.²¹⁴ This idea is constantly reinforced by prevailing western tendencies in media that literally privilege the concepts of the privileged. As Malcolm X once stated, “this is the science of image making” where they teach you to hate yourself by cleverly concealing the true intent of reimagining a social hierarchy based on minority belittlement. The famous poet Kathy Jetnil-Kijiner wrote of this damaging effect on Marshallese when relaying her own journey of self-discovery. She wrote that “When Marshallese continue to be bombarded by this perspective, that we are nothing but lazy and undisciplined, that we are merely problems that need to be fixed - then we are bound to begin to believe that perspective, to doubt ourselves and then to drown in a fatalism that confines us as a people.”²¹⁵ In one of her poems,²¹⁶ Ms. Kathy Jetnil-Kijiner reflects on the Micronesian and Marshallese diaspora where even in America, Hawaii of all places, Marshallese are belittled to the point where they begin hating themselves.²¹⁷ I also fell victim to this self-hatred where I

²¹⁴Desmond Narain Doulatram. “Indigenous Decolonization of Academia: Using the Marshall Islands as Precedent for Social Injustice,” 1-48.

²¹⁵ Kathy Jetnil-Kijiner, “Iep Jaltok: A History of Marshallese Literature,” (Master’s Thesis, University of Hawaii, 2014), 13.

²¹⁶ I purposely used Ms. Kathy Jetnil-Kijiner’s poem as it relates to my argument where Poetry and literary compositions of the oral nature are art forms embedded in orality which is a key part in the humanities, particularly the arts. As Marshall Islands is an oral society, I pay reference to Marshallese and this particular poet’s approach to using poetry as a medium to relay truth in her research as a performing slam poet. Her emotions also help to convey the raw emotions needed that are hardly heard in western academic contexts and instruments of implementation. In this way of thinking, Ms. Kathy Jetnil-Kijiner further breaks barriers as to what research is. As stated earlier by Fijian researcher Dr. Nabobo-Baba “Research outcomes are reflected through a variety of means and forms—though they may be not written as is expected in traditional academic institutions.”

²¹⁷ Kathy Jetnil-Kijiner. “Lessons From Hawaii.” Jan 19 2013.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3sbtpazYra0>

silently accepted racism against Micronesians in Hawaii and against brown people in Texas as if it was okay. However, my story is a bit different from Ms. Jetnil-Kijiner because I dealt with another extra layer of hatred where I too began to hate myself due to prevailing Americanized tendencies where Marshallese themselves began to view me and my family through a western discourse that belittled traditional Marshallese worldviews and pedagogies thus hating on my traditional intellectual capital that comes with my clan identity. So, I had to mentally liberate myself from this way of thinking by utilizing an indigenous Marshallese lens called *JitDam Kapeel* to situate myself so as to give an auto-ethnographic response to discrimination through my research and moral deeds by first starting with my Research and Methodologies class.²¹⁸

I made every moment count when I was mentored by Dr. Leung who inspired me to fight for my academic space without filter. Her words of encouragement resonated well with me; and as I began to research, I found more evidence that what she instilled in me and what I was relearning was the real deal. I wrote in my auto-ethnography entitled “Indigenous Decolonization of Academia: Using the Marshall Islands as a precedent for Social Injustice” that it was rather unfair for Marshallese languages not be given equal privilege alongside Asian Languages.²¹⁹ I paid reference to the academic hierarchy and how it made me feel even less about myself because of the institutionalized oppression within the academic structure of the Masters in Asia Pacific Studies Program.²²⁰ It seemed rather ludicrous that Pacific languages weren’t equally recognized alongside Asian languages despite the program being called Masters in Asia Pacific Studies.²²¹ It seemed even more ludicrous that while academic(s), linguist(s), and western scholar(s) lump us into the Asian category via Austronesian/Lapita groupings, that our languages weren’t recognized. Moreover, it was insulting to my ego that I had to ask for what I should already have giving off the “poor me, look at me” sob story narrative which we Marshallese really hate to do unless it’s a last resort because we don’t like talking about ourselves.

It was but a research paper so I had to make it into a living document if I were to at least spit out the truth to the Program itself to showcase how they were directly and indirectly contributing to institutional oppression and to institutional racism of Marshallese.²²² Obviously, it got the attention of Dr. Leung who was a linguist.²²³ To

²¹⁸ Desmond Narain Doulatram. “AN AUTOETHNOGRAPHIC RESPONSE TO DISCRIMINATION: GIVING SPACE TO THE MARGINALIZED MARSHALLESE COMMUNITY THROUGH RESEARCH AND MORAL DEEDS,” 0-58

²¹⁹ Ibid.

²²⁰ Desmond Narain Doulatram. “Indigenous Decolonization of Academia: Using the Marshall Islands as Precedent for Social Injustice,” 1-48.

²²¹ Ibid.

²²² Ibid.

²²³ Desmond Narain Doulatram. “AN AUTOETHNOGRAPHIC RESPONSE TO DISCRIMINATION: GIVING SPACE TO THE MARGINALIZED MARSHALLESE COMMUNITY THROUGH RESEARCH AND MORAL DEEDS,” 0-58

further express my frustrations, I sent my paper to the program Director Brian Dempster and to the *Asia Pacific Perspectives* journal editor(s) mainly Ms. Melissa Dayle and Dr. Woodhouse. Brian Dempster was immediately supportive and thus he arranged for the paper work to go through.²²⁴ It was a bit of a shocker that when I sent in the same paper to the *Asia Pacific Perspectives* journal editor(s) that Dr. Woodhouse would automatically assume that my primary goal was seeking publication when in reality I was seeking sympathy using auto-ethnographic research as a Marshallese Pacific Islander.²²⁵ My professor labeled my paper as a THINK PIECE and so that label stuck.²²⁶ It was very disappointing to hear a professor mislabeling auto-ethnographic research with this label stating that it wasn't purely research.²²⁷ This was ludicrous for me because I wrote that paper for a Research and Methodology class taught by a professor who specializes in research methodologies and understands decolonization.²²⁸ Why should any student take a prerequisite Research and Methodology Class if the professors themselves don't agree with the various Research methodologies known and taught to apply in academia? It was in this moment where I had to seek external validation to acquire as to whether my academic integrity was still intact given a research acceptability discrepancy with my Chinese American Research and Methodology Professor named Dr. Leung and my White American Asia Pacific Modernity Professor called Dr. Woodhouse.²²⁹ I therefore sent my paper to the International Festival of Authors for a conference called "The State of (In)Equality: Social Justice Under Siege" at Humber School of Liberal Arts & Science in Toronto and it got accepted.²³⁰ This was when I realized that my academic integrity was intact. However, I also realized that I was institutionally oppressed even within the program I was enrolled in that promised a safe academic space to be equally dignified.²³¹

This made me realize that institutionalized oppression often goes unnoticed even within the most humanitarian friendly campuses preaching Christian values because it is normalized. Ethical academics such as Dr. Leung are hard to come by but when a scholar of her caliber introduces her entire class to Pacific scholars such as Dr. Linda Tuhiwai

²²⁴ Desmond Narain Doulatram. "AN AUTOETHNOGRAPHIC RESPONSE TO DISCRIMINATION: GIVING SPACE TO THE MARGINALIZED MARSHALLESE COMMUNITY THROUGH RESEARCH AND MORAL DEEDS," 0-58

²²⁵ Ibid.

²²⁶ Ibid.

²²⁷ Ibid.

²²⁸ Ibid.

²²⁹ Ibid.

²³⁰ See conference program for confirmation at Conference Website <http://www.humber.ca/liberalarts-ifo/2017-conference-program>

²³¹ Desmond Narain Doulatram. "AN AUTOETHNOGRAPHIC RESPONSE TO DISCRIMINATION: GIVING SPACE TO THE MARGINALIZED MARSHALLESE COMMUNITY THROUGH RESEARCH AND MORAL DEEDS," 0-58

Smith who is a leader in decolonizing research methodologies, you begin to realize that not all scholars are well rounded in the various discourses in existences nor prone to entertaining their obvious value due to their respective white fragilities and internalized prejudices. However, to be punished by professors academically because of their lack of knowledge on the various discourses in existence is not only academically immoral but proof that mental violence is a greater threat than we have come to believe.²³² To be lied to based on prejudice is something students take to heart and never forget because it is a good indicator of who you are. As mentioned above, Marshallese would literally say “*kinke ejelok aer manit*,” literally translated as It’s because they have no culture and custom(s).

It would seem opportune that even when I took a class with another White American Professor called Contemporary Culture and Society of the Asia Pacific that I would also encounter the same treatment due to the Ivory Tower Mentality. This class in itself was a result of that altercation where my professor sought to tell me how to rework and reimagine myself within the constructs I was situated in when describing my home atolls of Majuro and Ebeye. The paper in which he gave me a C was published in its first attempt of submission.²³³ This is extremely disheartening as the reason why he gave me a C was because he didn’t like my view on what culture meant despite me having an indigenous language that tells me culture means *MANIT* to me. He told me that I should not view culture the way I see it where I linked the lack of a homeless population in the Marshall Islands due to social safety nets embedded in our *Manit* (Customs). This was a slap in the face to my White American Professor’s ego where he saw the comparison of homeless populations in America growing here in San Francisco and in New York City. The irony of the situation is, I was not deviating from the readings on Culture that Dr. Nelson spoke of had he known more about my Marshallese Culture, my history, and our respective epistemologies and ontologies.²³⁴ I had to go the extra mile and meet with the interim program Director Dr. Ho. I don’t understand why I have to overcompensate to be heard nor to make that extra effort that takes time and money to prove something we all know is true. This was the reason why I coldheartedly believe, that institutionalized racism is alive and well in the campus of the University of San Francisco. Even after agreeing to an indigenous Marshallese discourse called *JitDam Kapeel*, the White Fragility in my professor Dr. Nelson sought to belittle my paper entitled²³⁵ “THINK PIECE: Do You See Me or Not? The Human Duty to Decolonize Our Frame of Thoughts

²³² Desmond Narain Doulatram. “AN AUTOETHNOGRAPHIC RESPONSE TO DISCRIMINATION: GIVING SPACE TO THE MARGINALIZED MARSHALLESE COMMUNITY THROUGH RESEARCH AND MORAL DEEDS,” 0-58

²³³ Desmond Narain Doulatram. “EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: A CASE STUDY OF URBANIZATION AND GLOBALIZATION IN EBEYE AND MAJURO.” *Journal of Humanities and Cultural Studies R&D* 3, no.2 (2018): 1-15.

²³⁴ Dorothy Kabua. “Story of the Heaven Post Men.” In *Stories from the Marshall Islands* by Jack A. Tobin, (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2001), 48.

²³⁵ Desmond Narain Doulatram. “AN AUTOETHNOGRAPHIC RESPONSE TO DISCRIMINATION: GIVING SPACE TO THE MARGINALIZED MARSHALLESE COMMUNITY THROUGH RESEARCH AND MORAL DEEDS,” 0-58.

to see people for who and what they are as members of Historical Groups with Distinct Characteristics built on Circumstance.” This paper also got published at the first attempt of submission. Had Dr. Nelson took the time to research what *JitDam Kapeel* meant and had he known what an auto-ethnography is, his obvious prejudice would have been concealed to his benefit. However, because he chose to apply white privilege to protect his and Dr. Woodhouse’s White Fragility, they will now be forever etched as prejudice unethical academics to any Marshallese I meet or any Pacific Islander I come across as this story is forever in the records in ‘publication’²³⁶ and forever archived in the RMI Scholarship, Loan, and Grant Board database.

However, it was within these various experiences with prejudice that I discovered that I was able to give myself an academic space where I am now being taught by a sympathetic ethical professor who caters towards the necessary building blocks individualized to any learner as we all live our own lives. My CAPSTONE professor, Professor Rubio, understands the value of Oceanic lenses and has taken me to several lectures validating her position. In a recent *Talanoa* series on March 1st, 2018 at the City College of San Francisco,²³⁷ it was a confident affirmation for me to hear Dr. Vid Raatior stating the exact same thing I said which angered Dr. Nelson.²³⁸ Dr. Vid Raatior said the same thing in his lecture where he linked the idea of culture to being a moral compass and told the audience in attendance that it was a culture shock for him as it was for me to see homeless people in New York City. When I told Professor Rubio as to why I was upset and angry at my former mentor Dr. Nelson, she understood right away and assured me that it doesn’t mean everyone at the University of San Francisco is close minded. It was a bit upsetting for me to mentally damage myself by patiently waiting for the truth to surface but when it did, I couldn’t help but thank the same research methodology of *JitDam Kapeel* because it taught me patience and had my professors known, it’s a research methodology that begins as soon as you know how to be. In other words, I’ve been researching all my life through the Marshallese indigenous methodology of *JitDam Kapeel* which is the Marshall Islands version of *Talanoa* as an empathetic apprenticeship. In the Marshallese stylized discourse paper entitled “THINK PIECE: Do You See Me or Not? The Human Duty to Decolonize Our Frame of Thoughts to see people for who and what they are as members of Historical Groups with Distinct Characteristics built on Circumstance,” I wrote to Dr. Nelson that the human duty to decolonize our frames of thought begins with the ability to lend a listening ear to understand a specific context so as to not respond thereby adding insult to injury. This is the indigenous Pacific Way where no one is left behind. As is with *JitDam Kapeel*, *Talanoa* preaches the same

²³⁶Desmond Narain Doulatram. “AN AUTOETHNOGRAPHIC RESPONSE TO DISCRIMINATION: GIVING SPACE TO THE MARGINALIZED MARSHALLESE COMMUNITY THROUGH RESEARCH AND MORAL DEEDS,” 0-58

²³⁷ See:
https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=10155149918592751&set=a.148891167750.126122.546797750&type=3&theater&comment_id=10155256460467751¬if_t=feedback_reaction_generic¬if_id=1522643072471224

²³⁸ Vidalino Raatior, “*Talanoa* Series” (lecture, City College of San Francisco, San Francisco, CA, March 1, 2018).

rhetoric.

Talanoa is a traditional word used in Fiji and across the Pacific to reflect a process of inclusive, participatory and transparent dialogue. The purpose of Talanoa is to share stories, build empathy and to make wise decisions for the collective good. The process of Talanoa involves the sharing of ideas, skills and experience through storytelling. During the process, participants build trust and advance knowledge through empathy and understanding. Blaming others and making critical observations are inconsistent with building mutual trust and respect, and therefore inconsistent with the Talanoa concept. Talanoa fosters stability and inclusiveness in dialogue, by creating a safe space that embraces mutual respect for a platform for decision making for a greater good.²³⁹

As Davis perfectly puts: “The purpose...therefore is not to suggest that we have been doing everything wrong, but rather not to leave unexamined or undertheorized those core principles that ground the humanistic contributions.”²⁴⁰ Indoctrination in the 21st century, at a time where Moral commitment has reached its peak, presents a dangerous reality for any Pacific Islander clinging on to self-preservation as rightfully deserved under the *Human Rights Declaration of Indigenous Peoples*.²⁴¹ The unique case of the Marshall Islands offers a unique perspective as to how the academy is still severely lacking in granting fairness of representation even within a more inclusive academy.²⁴² As Nancy Pollock further adds “ethical issues, and the means of handling Marshallese taboos and customary rules would enhance our understanding of researching.”²⁴³

Conclusion → Revisiting the root word of Knowledge and who has agency to Know

The heart of the matter is that Marshallese indigenous knowledge has largely been delegitimized by the imperial imprint in academia. Ameil J. Joseph adds that “these particular technologies of violence owe their inheritance to the Orientalizing, discursive practices and disciplinary hegemony developed during colonization that when ignored, reproduce the dehumanizing outcomes upon which they were built.”²⁴⁴ The goal of

²³⁹ See 2018 Talanoa Dialogue Platform:
http://unfccc.int/focus/talanoa_dialogue/items/10265.php

²⁴⁰ Donald R. Davis. “Three Principles for an Asian Humanities: Care First...Learn from...Connect Histories,” *The Journal of Asian Studies*, no. 74 (2015): 43.

²⁴¹ Desmond Narain Doulatram. “Indigenous Decolonization of Academia: Using the Marshall Islands as Precedent for Social Injustice,” 1-48.

²⁴² Ibid.

²⁴³ Nancy J. Pollock. “Traditional Medicine of the Marshall Islands: The Women, the Plants, The Treatments (review).” *Contemporary Pacific* 20, no. 1 (2008): 268-270.

²⁴⁴ Ameil J. Joseph “A Prescription for Violence: The Legacy of Colonization in Contemporary Forensic Mental Health and the Production of Difference,” *Critical Criminology*, no. 22 (2014) 273-292.

‘indigenous decolonization’²⁴⁵ is to undo the effects of ‘colonization.’²⁴⁶ This paper discusses the need and significance to legitimize indigenous Pacific lenses that incorporate a more holistic world view describing Pacific identities. It reveals the need for accurate imagery to retain merit within the colonial academic structure to attain the intended outcomes of education which is professionally defined as meaningful and valuable knowledge attained and appreciated by the student learners through active involvement.²⁴⁷ It concludes that meaningful education is subject relatable content that empowers indigenous voices and further instills human dignity in student learners as relevant and accurate content reinstalls and facilitates real identity making. The ability to choose one's fate starts off with the ability and chance to enable one's self to think freely and theorize from the flesh chosen knowledge systems applicable to a student's particular life context(s) as we all live our own lives.²⁴⁸ Hence, this paper concludes that the ability to choose is ingrained in the need to contextualize/indigenize the curriculum for indigenous viewers of knowledge who need the proper tools to steer them towards academic success. Studies have shown that relevant content and indigenization/contextualization of academia provides desirable learning outcomes for students where invisibility, hybridity, and ‘decolonization’²⁴⁹ often intersect.²⁵⁰ In this light, this paper concludes that contextualizing curriculum for minorities such as Pacific Islanders enacts the human right of human dignity by providing a safe democratic academic space that ensures that all students are treated, viewed, and respected equally in

²⁴⁵ Garza, Victor. “Decolonization of the mind and spirit: healing strategies through Latin@ critical consciousness.” (EdD diss., University of San Francisco, 2010), 16-17.

²⁴⁶ William Gumedé “Centuries of Colonialism, Slavery and Apartheid Have Left a Legacy Of Institutional Racism.” *Global Research*. 4 December 2014. <http://www.globalresearch.ca/centuries-of-colonialism-slavery-and-apartheid-have-left-a-legacy-of-institutional-racism/5418149>

²⁴⁷ Konai Helu Thaman. “Towards Cultural Democracy in Teaching and Learning With Specific References to Pacific Island Nations (PINs),” 1-9.

²⁴⁸ Jiba Kabua. “We are the Land, the Land is Us: The Moral Responsibility of Our Education and Sustainability.” In *Life in the Republic of the Marshall Islands*, edited by Anono Loeak, Veronica Kiluwe, and Linda Crowl. (Majuro, Marshall Islands: Institute of Pacific Studies, University of the South Pacific, 2004) 180-191.

²⁴⁹ “Indigenous Decolonization transcends theory – it is a process that individuals/groups/communities must experience in their journey in understanding the history of their colonization and rediscovering their ancestral traditions and cultural values. It is a socio-psychological and spiritual journey that may involve grief, anger, rage, growth and empowerment. In addition, there is an intergenerational component that considers the accumulation of trauma in individuals/groups/communities over decades or centuries of intense struggle and resistance against assimilation, domination, oppression, or annihilation. Indigenous Decolonization explains the historical impact of colonization on the minds, spirits, and bodies of the colonized; this includes the awareness of its present day grasp and effects. In addition, Indigenous Decolonization does something which theories rarely do – they engage emotions. It places abstract notions into the form of a testimonial/story, and it is details that stir the emotions, it has the power to fill us with feeling.” (Victor Garza 2010)

²⁵⁰ Nancy Ellen Martinsen. “Supporting Pacific Islander student success in higher education through culturally sustaining leadership.” (EdD diss. San Francisco State University, 2017).

light of their own unique circumstances. Malcolm X once stated that if you are convinced you never did anything, then you will never believe that you can do anything. To take his argument further in relation to the human right of equal dignity, I only add that if Marshallese are made to feel less than they actually are in academic settings with their knowledge not being equally validated, then we are doomed to repeat institutionalized discrimination as it was in *Brown versus Board of Education* where segregation affected students' ability and students' motivation to learn because of a sense of inferiority taught by those with inferiority complexes seeking to mentally confine minority populations from truly taking their rightful place in the world as they've always have when 'they first took their rightful place in discovering and settling'²⁵¹ the Marshall Islands²⁵². It is with this ultimate truth that this paper re(claims) this right to remember one's self by knowing one's self as a free thinker equally dignified in rights to secure the validation of the Marshallese genealogical gene pool manifested through its existing knowledge continuums ascribed herein. Why should we Marshallese look down on ourselves just because 'Others'²⁵³ are insecure about themselves is the defining question and this is where this skillful inquiry (*JiT Dam Kapeel*) ends.

THE END!

Jarjar eo:

*I naj koon ia ke I jaje lometo kolu io I melijij, ta
ejjab bwe iren ed in ke?*

Uak eo:

Eto jebwe eo irratem, ko-kabjer man ere in.

²⁵¹ The first eight clans being Errepra, Ijjidrik, Dabdeb, Kalo, Jejed, Rikwajlein, Rikabinaelonin, and Erroja were the first in Bojar, Namu where the Eonout (designated meeting place) was located as told by Amata Kabua but was later moved to Ailinglaplap and from Ailinglaplap, the clans transmigrated to the Ratak Chain and formed new jowis and bwijis. Some appeared in the capital of Majuro, some in Arno, some in Mili, and finally the whole of Marshall Islands. Thus, settlement patterns as relayed orally through oral tradition (*JiT Dam*) reveal a West to East (Ralik→Ratak) settlement pattern of clans. Per Hage in his assessment of the Ralik genealogies also makes mention of the Eonout in Namu bojar being moved to Ailinglaplap as the political center of gravity shifted towards the southern atolls. Where Bojar, Namu is the home of the legendary Goddess Liwetoinmour; Wojja, Ailinglaplap where the Eonwout was moved to was the home of Liktanur, the mother of Jebro who is credited as being the inventor of the Sail. See notes on *MANIT* by Amata Sam Kabua: <https://issuu.com/desmondnaraindoulattram/docs/manit.docx>

²⁵² Amata Kabua, "The Role of the Island Nations in the 21st Century: Statement by the Right Honorable President Amata Kabua, President of the Republic of the Marshall Islands." The Federation of Island Nations for World Peace. Tokyo, Japan. 16-18 June 1996.

²⁵³ Desmond Narain Doulatram. "THE INFERIORITY COMPLEX OF MISSIONIZERS AND COLONIZERS HID ULTIMATE TRUTHS: A CASE STUDY FROM A DECOLONIZED PERSPECTIVE FROM THE PACIFIC'S MARSHALL ISLANDS." 0-28. (In this reference of using "Others" to refer to insecure Mental Colonizers, I re(claim) my space to be for in reality, the real others are those who lack the ethical wisdom to pioneer humanity towards the constant state of Peace needed where minorities are equally protected from the inferiority complex of the colonizers seeking to confine people mentally from upholding their innate being to its fullest complexities)

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Appendix A

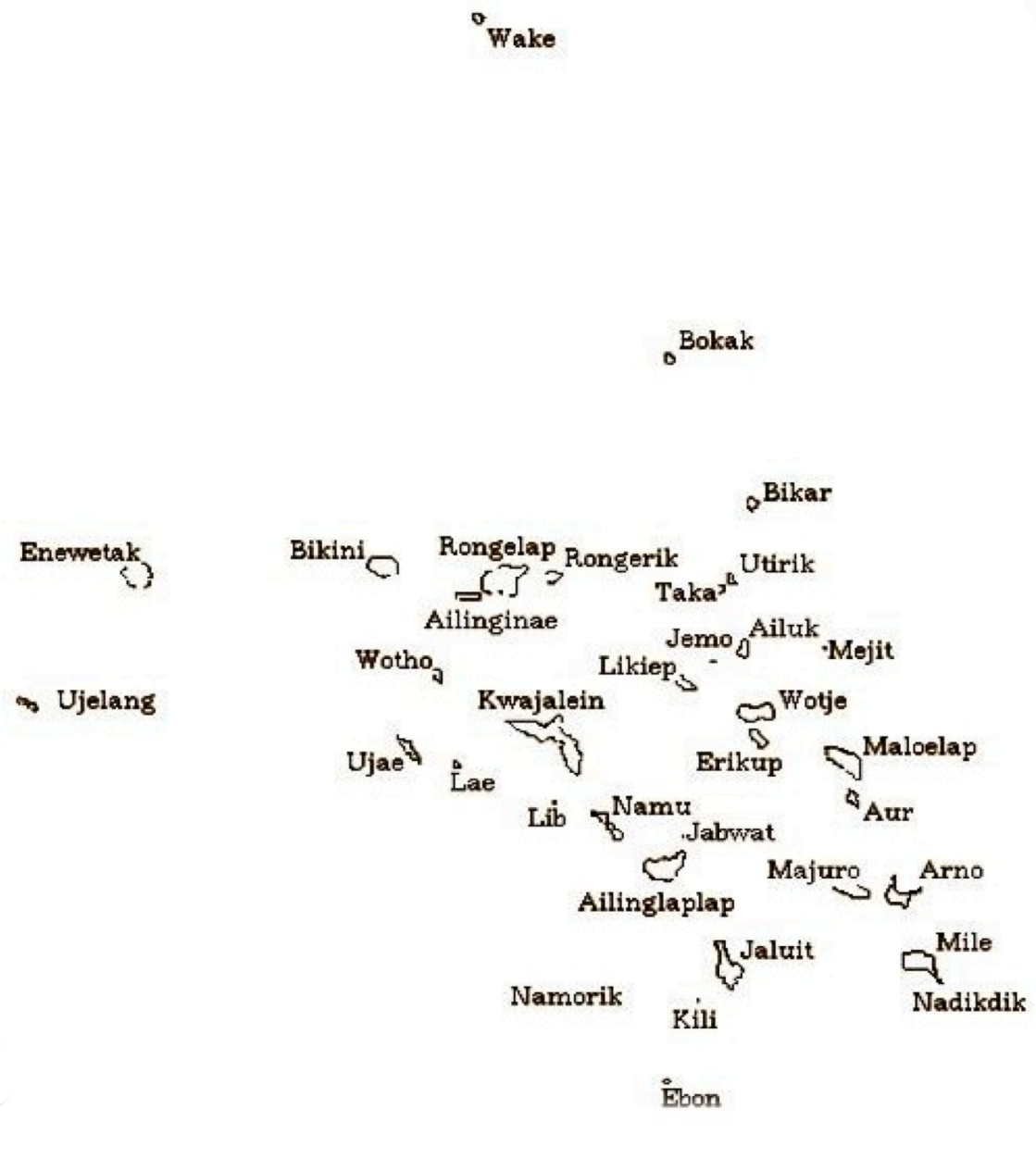
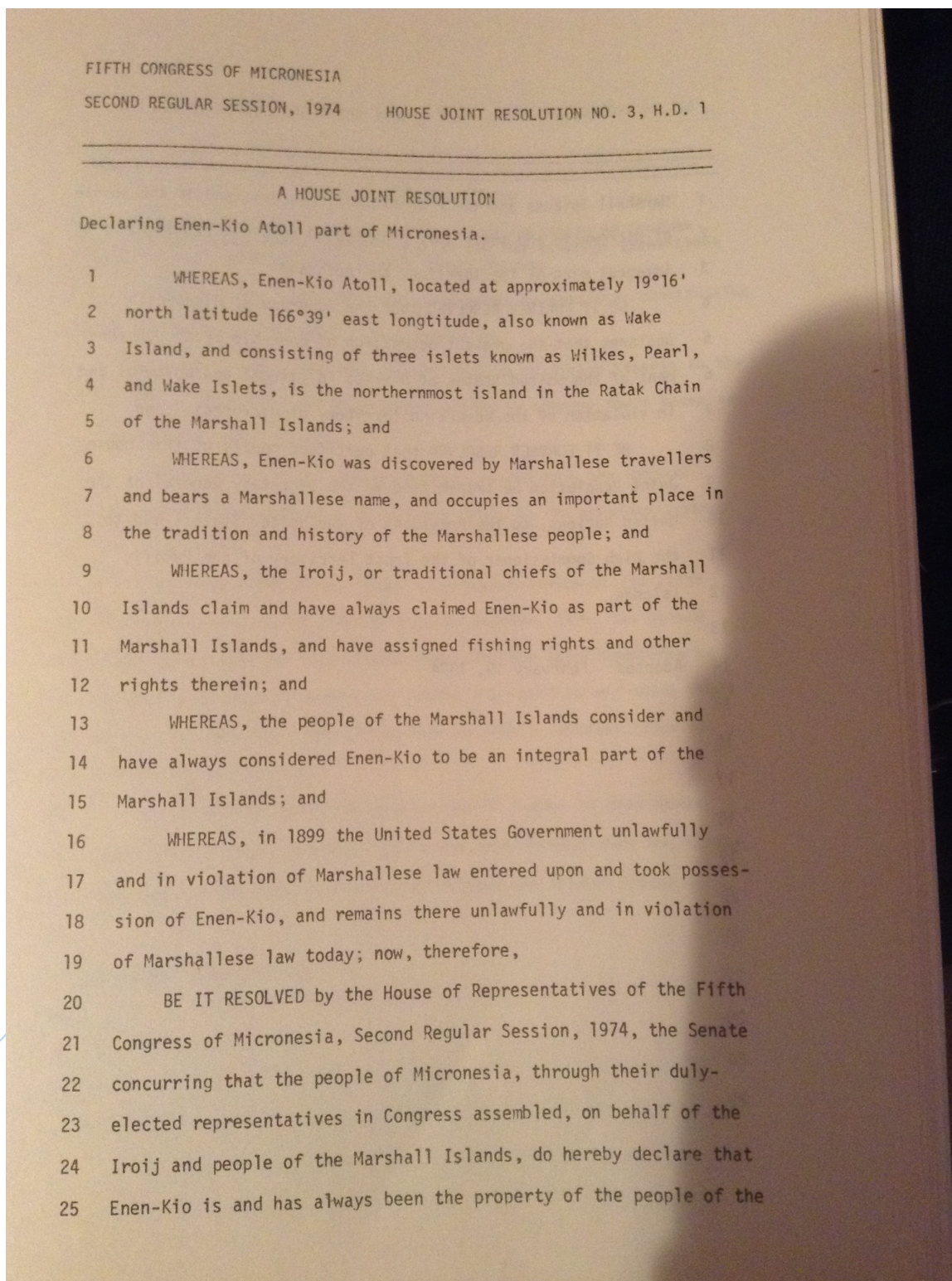


Figure 9: Map of the Marshall Islands. Courtesy of Dirk Spenneman. This map was purposely chosen to reclaim Enen Kio (Wake Island)²⁵⁴

²⁵⁴ Taylor and Francis Groups. *The Far East and Australasia 2003*, 34 ed. (London: Europa Publications, 2003), 1144.

Appendix B: (Figure 10: House Joint Resolution No.3 Declaring Enen-Kio part of Marshall Islands, Micronesia)



HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 3, H.D. 1

1 Marshall Islands and their traditional leaders, and of the people
2 of Micronesia and their duly constituted government, and forms an
3 integral part of the territory thereof; and

4 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Congress of Micronesia
5 declares that the present occupation of Enen-Kio by the govern-
6 ment of the United States of America is illegal and unlawful and
7 in violation of the sovereign territory of Micronesia; and

8 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this House
9 Joint Resolution be transmitted to the Secretary General of the
10 United Nations, to the President of the United States, and to
11 the High Commissioner of the Trust Territory of the Pacific
12 Islands.

13

14 Adopted: February 19, 1974

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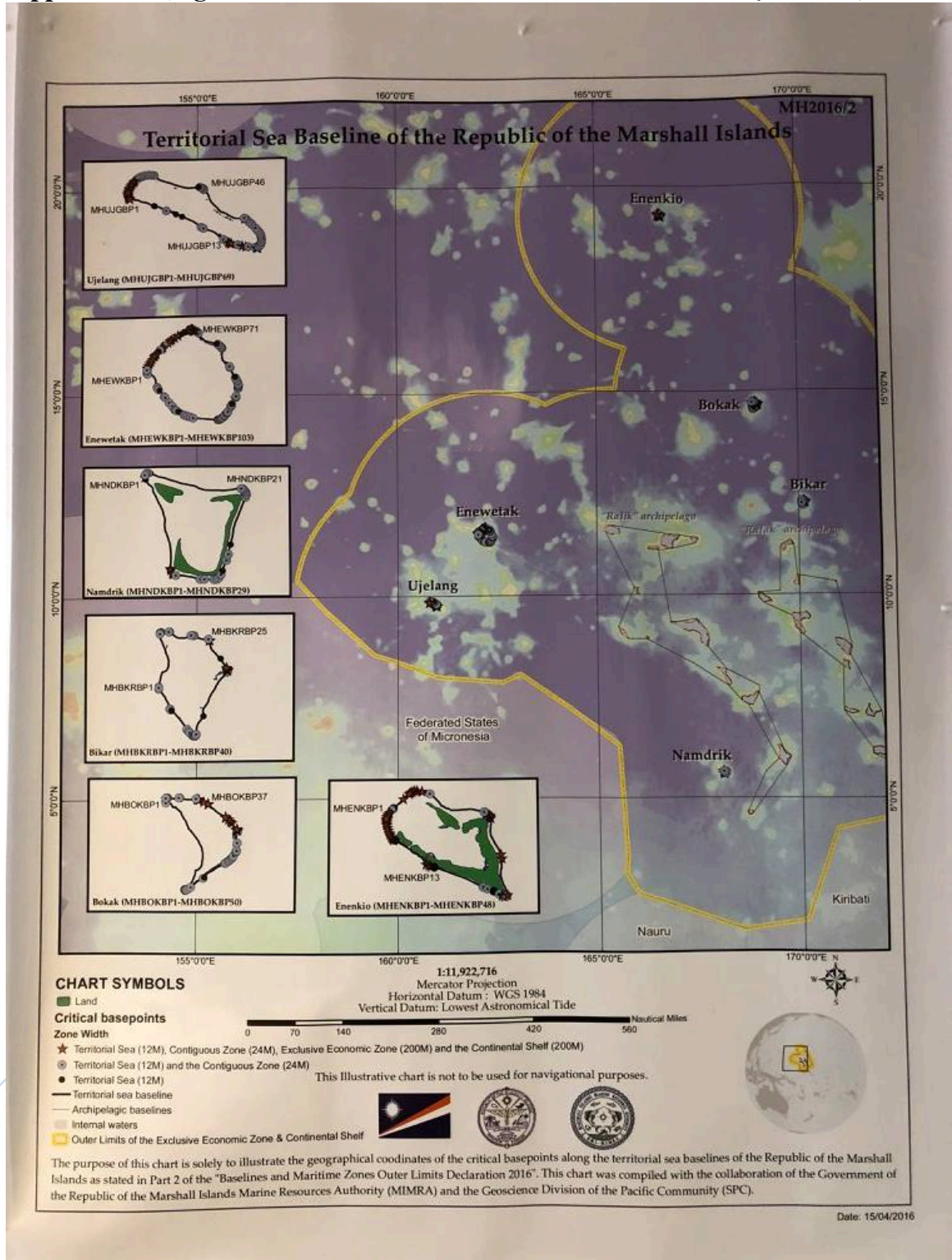
21

22

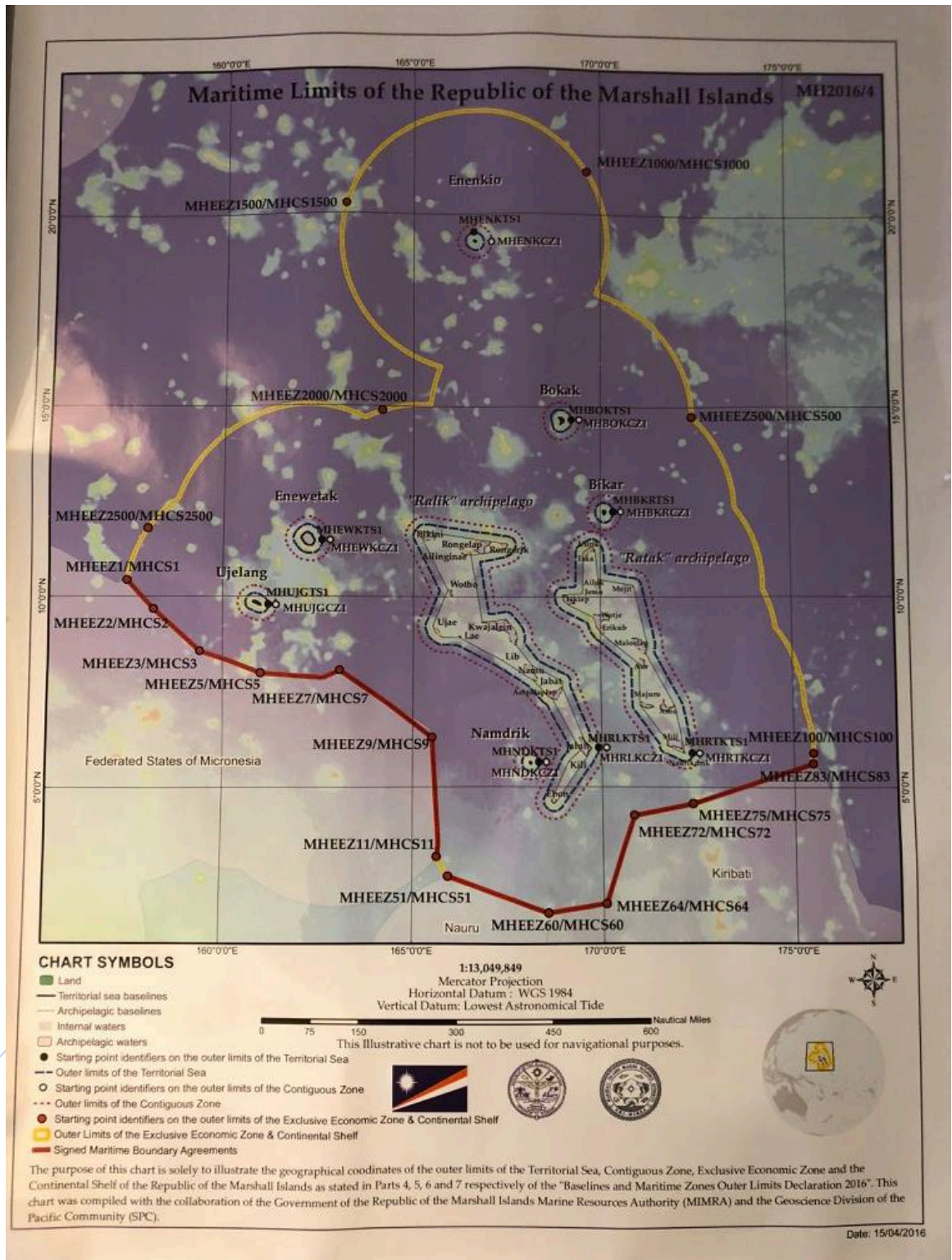
23

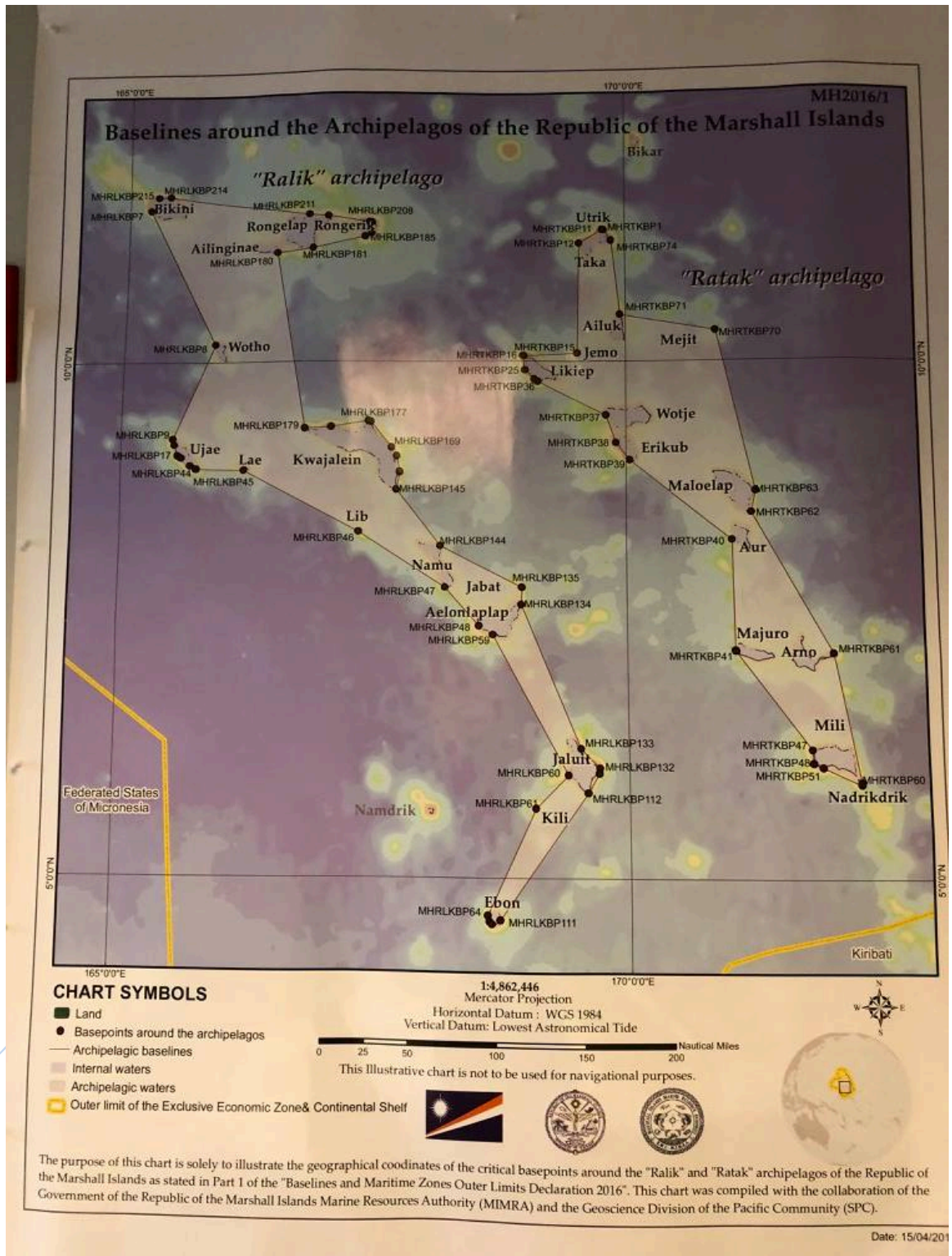
24

Appendix C: (Figure 11: Maritime Limits of Marshall Islands, Courtesy of SPC²⁵⁵)

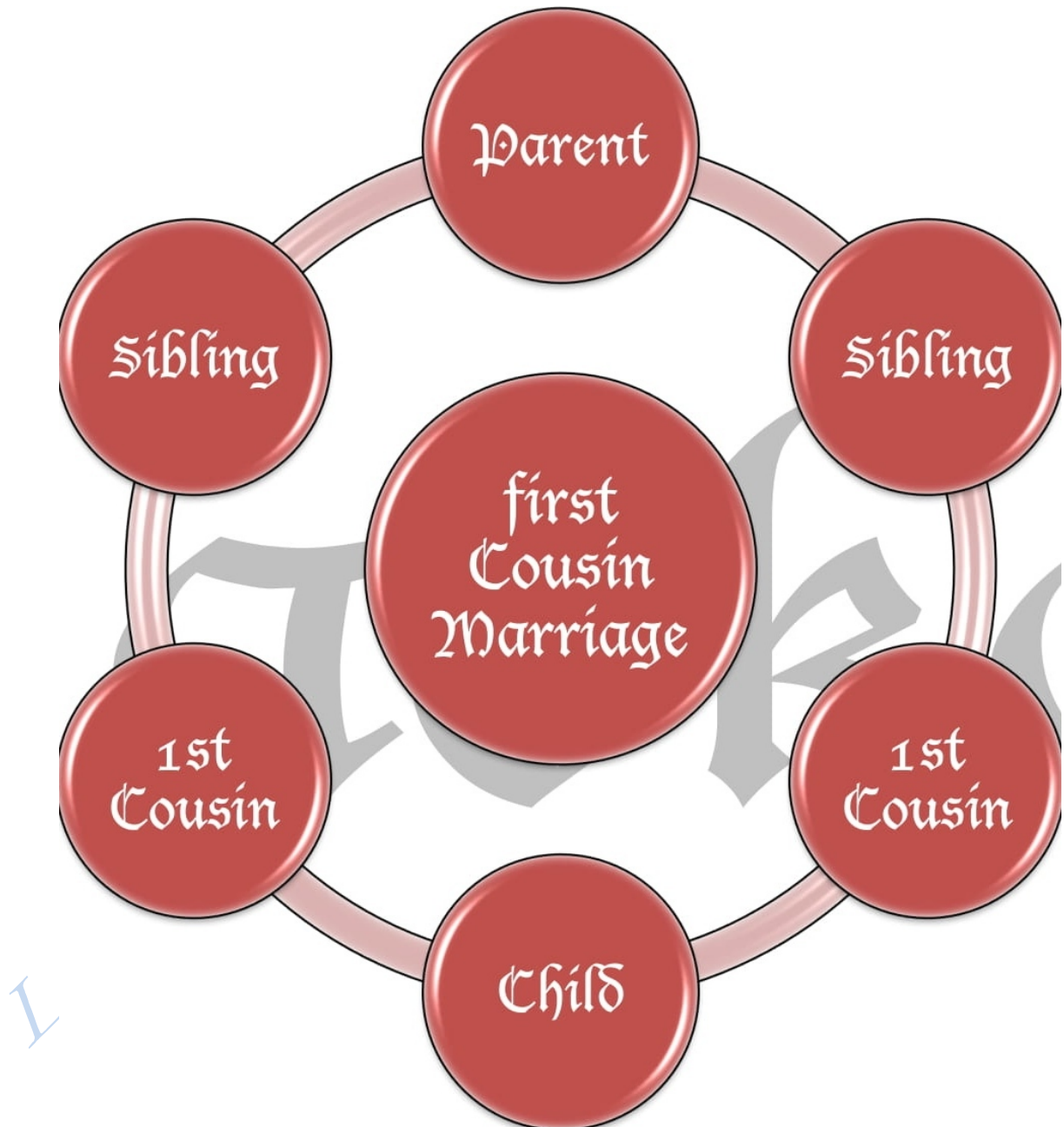


²⁵⁵ See SPC Report Marshall Islands Declares Maritime Borders:
<http://www.spc.int/blog/marshall-islands-declares-maritime-boundaries-to-un/>



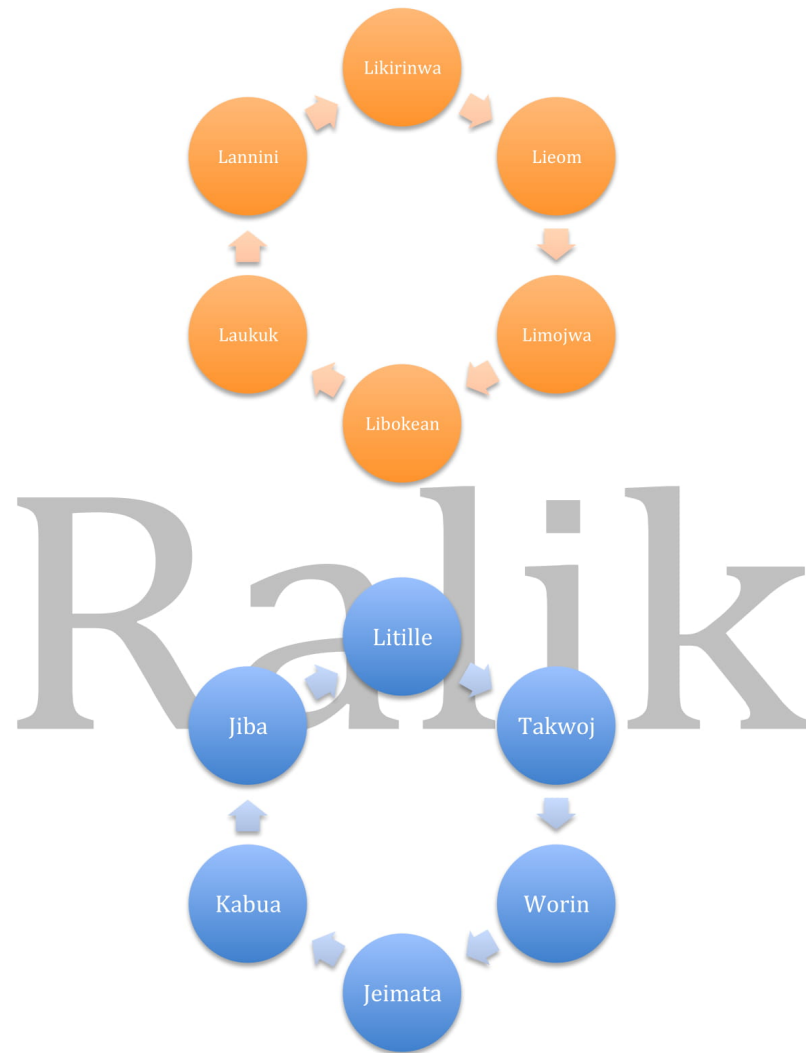


Appendix D: (Figure 12: Relationship/*Kadkad* Genealogical Charts acquired via *JitDam Kapeel*)



I

Etymological Note: See: http://rmicourts.org/wp-content/uploads/kabua_land.pdf
https://www.usp.ac.fj/fileadmin/random_images/home_middle_banners/emalus/Pacific_law_materials/Marshall_Islands/kabua_land.pdf
<http://www.pacificdigitalibrary.org/cgi-bin/pdl?e=d-000off-pdl--00-2--0-010---4-----0-11--10en-50---20-info---00-3-1-00bySR-0-0-000utfZz-8-00&a=d&cl=CL1.3&d=HASH01dba2976651ff1ae4bbce75.1>
<https://issuu.com/desmondnaraindoulatram/docs/manit>



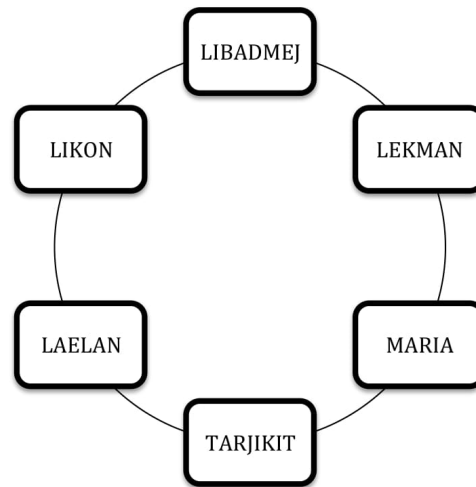
Kabua's mother Libokean is the product of a first cousin union between Laukuk and Limojwa while Iroj Pwio Jeimata Kabua is the product of a first cousin union between Iroj Pwio Kabua and Leroij Pwio Worin.

Product of First Cousin Union: Ralik Chain

Figure 3.1

I

Etymological Note: See: https://issuu.com/desmondnaraindoulatram/docs/22007580_10156087514212923_54491292
<https://issuu.com/desmondnaraindoulatram/docs/sejda-25j>



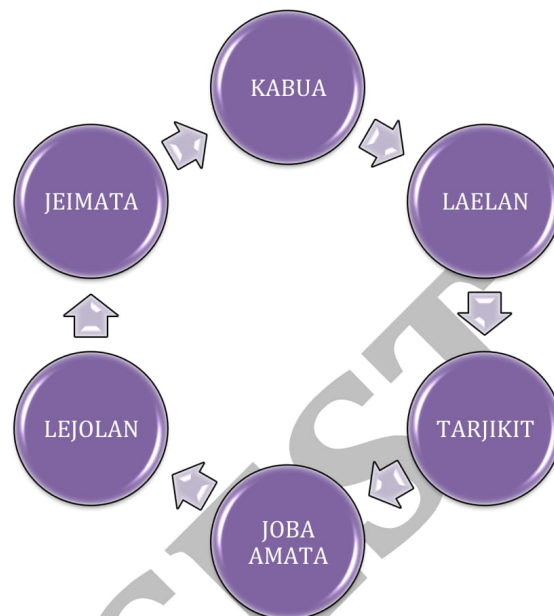
Ratak

You will see in this relationship chart the first cousin marriage trend amongst the Rimwejoor & Ranno Kin members of Arno and Majuro. Libadmej, the parent, who is a leroij of Arno, had a son named Lekman and a daughter named Likon. Likon had a son named Laelan and her brother Lekman, who had married a leroij of Majuro, had a daughter named Maria. This made Laelan (a Rimwejoor iroij of Arno) and Maria (a Raano leroij of Majuro) first cousins and through this union came Leroij Pwio Tarjikit of the Raano Clan.

I

Product of first Cousin Marriage: Dorothy Litarjikit Kabua

Figure 3.7



Whether incest is practiced intentionally or unintentionally, it still comes in the form of first cousin unions. Kabua, the parent, who is an iroij of Rakinmeto, had a son named Jeimata with Leroij Worin of Kabinmeto and another son named Laelan with Leroij LiKon of Arno. Jeimata had a son named Lejolan and his brother Laelan, who had married a Raano leroij of Majuro, had a daughter named Tarjikit. This made Leroij Pwiewo Tarjikit (a leroij of Majuro) and Irojlaplap Lejolan (Jeimata's successor) first cousins and through this marriage alliance came Irojlaplap Joba Kabua & President Amata Kabua of the Raano clan.

Product of First Cousin Union: Joba & Amata

Figure 3.97

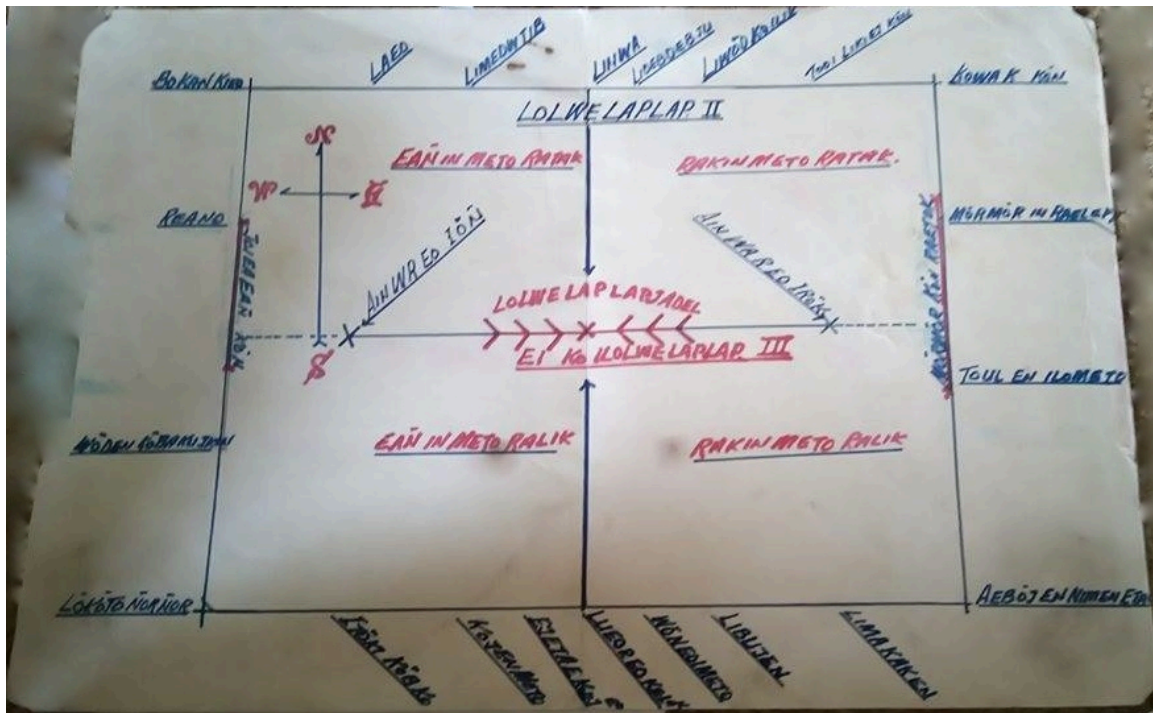
I

Etymological Note: See https://issuu.com/desmondnaraindoulatram/docs/convert-jpg-to-pdf.net_2018-03-07_0²⁵⁶

²⁵⁶ Stewart Firth and Paula Mochida. *Translations of German Documents Relating to Micronesia*. (Honolulu: University of Hawaii, 1986).

Appendix E: (Figure 13: Traditional Map of the Marshall Islands called Lolelaplap)²⁵⁷

Laelan i bubbitom nilnil leo metwadrikdrik metwon mej!



Etymological Note: Hage and Harary note that: "Linguistic evidence suggests that the Marshallese variant represents the ancestral form of all the differently permuted forms of social organization in Nuclear Micronesia. Like its Tongan counterpart, the Marshallese conical clan was a socially encompassing, politically expansive structure, associated with asymmetric marriage alliance and implicated in the formation of island empires."²⁵⁸ Linguistic evidence also suggests that hereditary chieftainships in the Marshall Islands and Tonga had a common origin in Proto-Oceanic (POC) society.²⁵⁹ In the 'Marshall Islands'²⁶⁰ as in Tonga, the conical clan and marriage alliance defined the basic order of social stratification.²⁶¹ "Marshall Islands (except for the two outliers Ene Wetak and Ujelang in Ralik) were part of a regular voyaging and trading network, and in this respect similar to the islands in Tonga."²⁶² "Historical linguistic evidence revealed that the matrilineal variant of the conical clan found in the Marshall Islands in eastern Micronesia was genetically related to the patrilineal variant found in Tonga in western Polynesia, both of them having a common origin in a stratified, that is, conical, Proto-Oceanic society that spread from the region of north coastal New Guinea and the Bismarck Islands around 2,000 BC"²⁶³

²⁵⁷ Dirk Spenneman. "Traditional and Nineteenth Century Communication Patterns in the Marshall Islands." *Journal of the Humanities and Social Sciences* 4, no. 1 (2005): 37.

²⁵⁸ Per Hage and Frank Harary. *Island Networks: Communication, Kinship, and Classification Structures in Oceania*. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 125-126.

²⁵⁹ Ibid, 142.

²⁶⁰ See: https://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/ab838c_876cda6fe9714fb29378da74677550a7.pdf

²⁶¹ Per Hage and Frank Harary. *Island Networks: Communication, Kinship, and Classification Structures in Oceania*, 139.

²⁶² Ibid, 138.

²⁶³ Per Hage. "Generalized Exchange in Eastern Micronesia." *Bidragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde* 154, no. 3 (1998): 397.

“Jouj eo Mour eo Lej eo Mij eo.”

LOLELAPLAP (OCEAN) IN US