

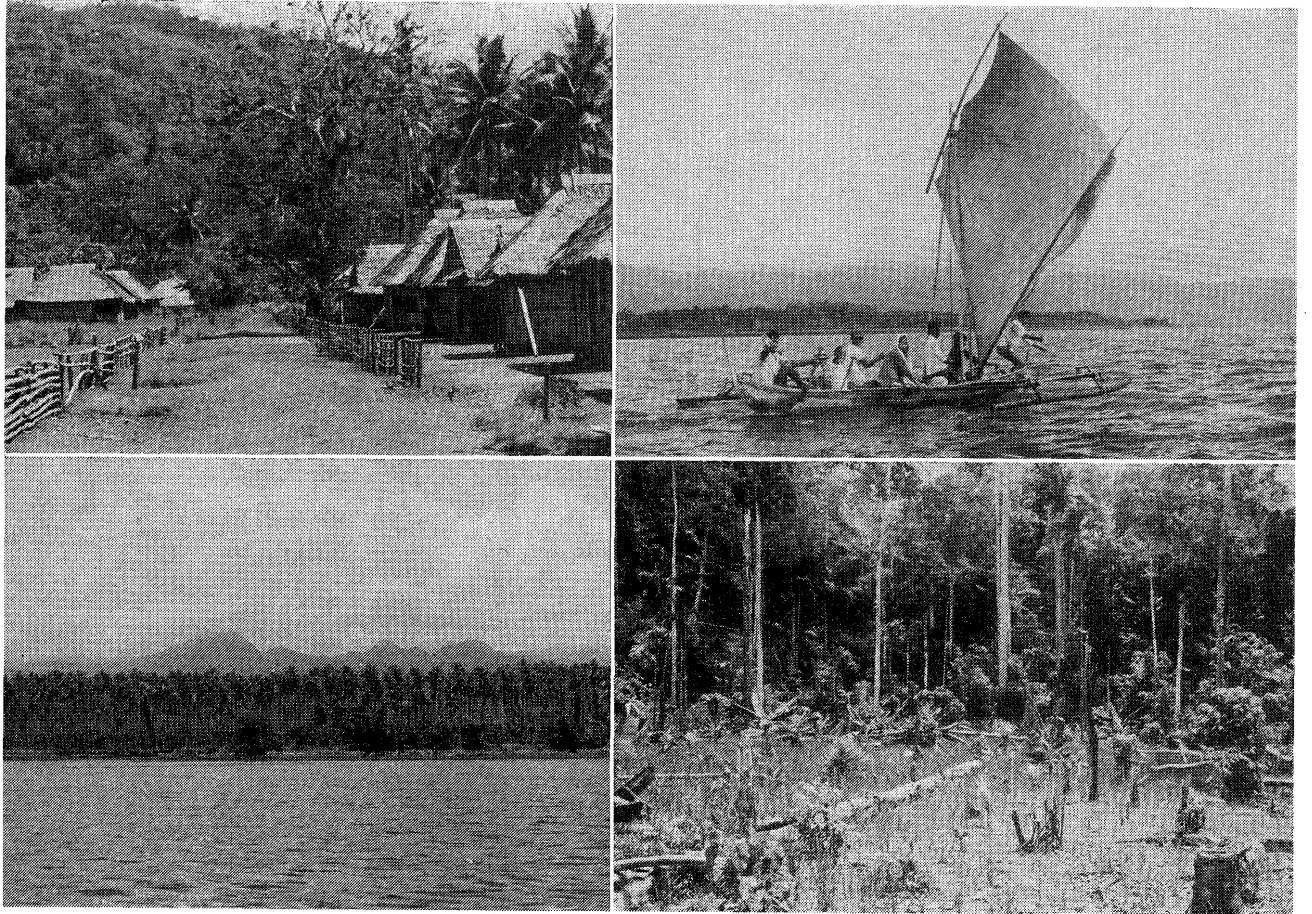
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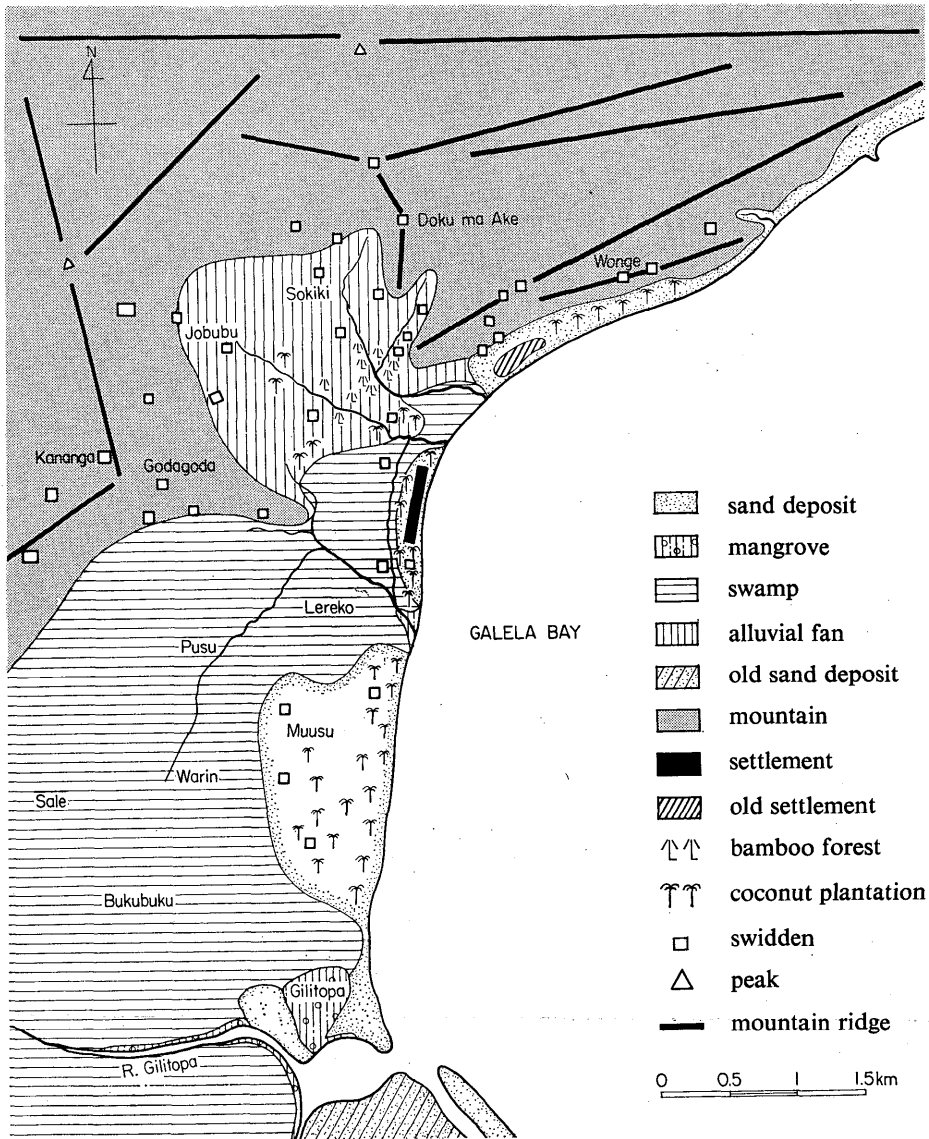
Limau Village and Its Setting

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Environment



The land and sea environment of Limau.



Map 1. Limau and its surroundings.

Limau Village and Its Setting

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National Museum of Ethnology

I. Halmahera Island	Environments of Limau as a
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I. HALMAHERA ISLAND

Halmahera is located at the northern end of the former Molucca Islands, now renamed Maluku. The Philippine island of Mindanao lies north of Halmahera, Palau, in Micronesia, to the northeast and New Guinea to the southeast. Geographically, Halmahera lies at the eastern extremity of the Indonesian cultural realm. To the west of Halmahera the world of the Oceanian culture dominates.

Halmahera, situated on the equator, has an area of approximately 20,000 km². Topographically, the island is traversed by complex mountain ridges, that support luxuriant tropical rainforests. Much of the forest in the hinterland appears to be virgin. It impedes human penetration and restricts most settlement to the coast. The climate is typically humid tropical (Table 1).

Administratively, Halmahera together with Morotai Island, to the north, belongs, to Maluku Utara Regency. According to the population census of 1971, the total population of the Regency is 376,722 [KBKDMU 1973]. However, this figure includes the islands of Morotai, Ternate—which are quite heavily populated—Tidore, Makian and Bacan in addition to Halmahera. It is estimated that the population of Halmahera is some 200,000.

Although more than 18 dialects are spoken in Halmahera they can be divided linguistically into two major groups, both of which differ in their origin. The northern half of the island is populated by speakers of the North Halmahera Language group (Non-Austronesian language family) which includes: Galela, Tobelo, Modole, Pagu, Loloda, Ibu, Tobaru, Wayoli, Ternate and Tidor. In the southern half of Halmahera people speak dialects belonging to the Austronesian language family: Buli, Maba, Patani, Sawai, Weda and Gane (see Yoshida, this volume pp. 21–23).

Generally, language groups classified by dialect distinction correspond with a socio-cultural group unit, a unit of ethnic group. However, the present situation is

Table 1. Precipitation (P) in mm and Raindays (R) in Galela and Ternate

		Jan.		Feb.		Mar.		Apr.		May		Jun.		Jul.	
		P	R	P	R	P	R	P	R	P	R	P	R	P	R
Galela	1974	—	—	—	—	—	—	237	19	182	19	244	10	179	14
	1975	127	13	81	6	175	14	183	14	289	13	376	17	346	22
Ternate	1974	—	—	144	7	164	13	331	20	174	14	67	8	110	10
		Aug.		Sep.		Oct.		Nov.		Dec.		total			
		P	R	P	R	P	R	P	R	P	R	P	R		
Galela	1974	61	8	231	20	195	14	327	14	191	13	—	—		
	1975	262	19	244	22	307	18	410	16	333	18	3104	194		
Ternate	1974	13	3	160	12	193	9	151	12	241	17	—	—		

characterized by frequent in-migration and out-migration and people leave their native villages to relocate in those dominated by speakers of other language groups. Moreover, the islands of Ternate, Tidore and Bacan, where the spice trade flourished, comprise the "Creole Moluccan" culture [GEERTZ 1963: 93], where peoples speaking several different dialects live together. This centuries-old trade in cloves and nutmegs has led to the development of a particular composite culture composed of Javanese, Makasarese, Buginese, Chinese and Arab merchants. Malay has long been used as the *lingua franca* of commerce.

By the fifteenth century a Sultanate was already established on the islands of Ternate, Tidore, Bacan and Jailolo, on the west coast of the main island. However, most residents of Halmahera were not subject to the rule of the sultanate and even in the sixteenth century there were few Moslems on the island. The Dutch ousted the Portuguese at the beginning of the seventeenth century, and in 1609 a Dutch Governor came to Ternate. Shortly thereafter Halmahera and the neighboring islands became a Dutch colony. But because the main land of Halmahera played almost no part in the spice trade and produced little else of commercial value it was left virtually untouched by Dutch colonial policy, until the nineteenth century. This isolation from the colonial mainstream explains the lack of historical documents dealing with Halmahera and its inhabitants.

II. GALELA PEOPLE

Although unaware of any survey of the physical anthropology of the Galela, we surmise that these people belong to the Malay race. Adult males average 160 cm in height and have brown skin. Straight or curly, black hair predominates. Yet among them are some people whose frizzly hair, dark skin, hooknose and low stature is similar to that of the Papuans. Some villagers claim that some ancestors married people from Seram Island or Biak Island, producing a mixed-blood type. Possibly, this is a natural consequence of the spice trade. The Galela are basically of Malay

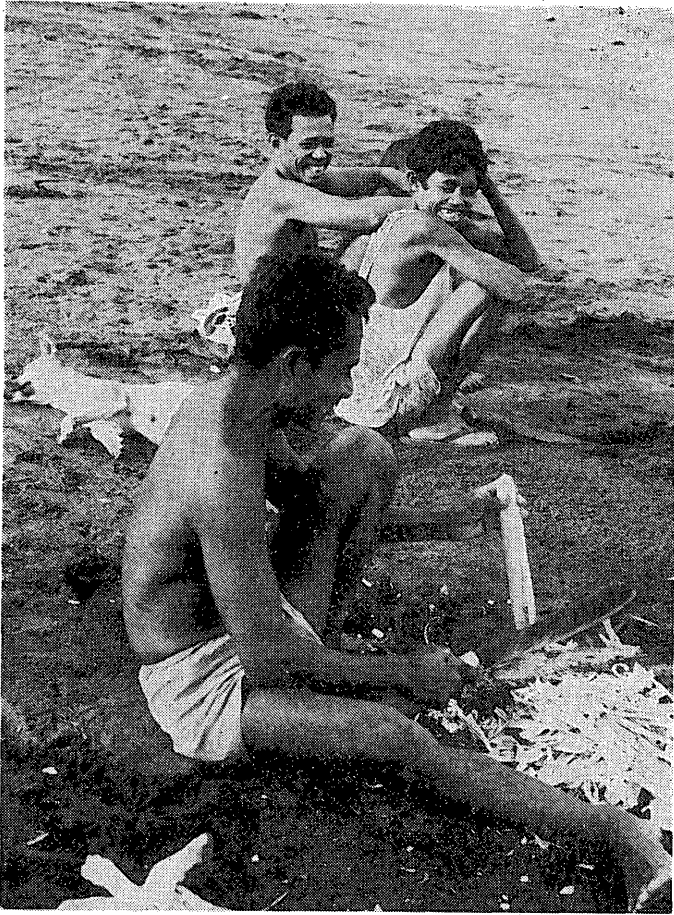


Photo. 1. Galelans, Limau villagers.

stock but Papuan physical traits are also found among them (Photo. 1).

Galela people speak the Galelan dialect of the North Halmahera language group. The name Galela is said to have been derived from the Ternate term "Gamulela". The people identify themselves as *Galela-ka ma nyawa* (Galela people), "those who reside in *Galela ma tona* (Galela land) and speak *Gogalela-ka* (the language of Galela).

The Galela are distributed along the east coast of the peninsula that forms the northern end of Halmahera. Their homeland is situated on the northern slopes of Mt. Mamuya (933 m), an active volcano facing Galela Bay and the Morotai Strait. Administratively it comprises the "Galela Sub-district". The western coast of the peninsula is inhabited by the Loloda people, and the area to the south of Mt. Mamuya by the Tobelos.

The administrative center of Galela Sub-district is Soasio, a small urban settlement that faces the sea, and which contains the Sub-district Office. Chinese merchants run several shops in Soasio, which also has a weekly market.

Lake Galela lies a few kilometers inland from Soasio, and to the north of this lake are two smaller lakes, L. Makete and L. Kapupu. The flat land lying between Soasio and these lakes is easily exploited for agriculture and has been completely deforested and converted to arable production. The population census conducted by the Sub-district Office in 1975 is shown in Table 2. The total population of the district is 14,083, and the area of densest settlement in Galela Sub-district is around the inland lakes, where the combined village population numbers 7,890. Makete and Pelita Villages are inhabited by in-migrants from Sulawesi. The population figure includes in-migrants to the Galela Sub-district. On the average it can be assumed that about 70 percent of the population of every village is Galela, which gives a total population in Galela Sub-district of about 10,000.

Those villages distinguished in Table 2 by an asterisk are located on the coast, and are usually isolated from one another, unlike the lakeside settlements, which are usually adjacent to neighboring villages. In this Sub-district the steep mountain slopes fall precipitously to the sea and there is little flat land along the coast. Each coastal village occupies a small plain area and is dominated by mangrove forests. Narrow paths link the coastal villages only a low tide, and canoes are the main means of inter-village transport (Photo. 2). Shifting cultivation (swiddening) is practised on the steep and densely forested mountain slopes inland of the coastal village.

It is said that the Galela frequently engaged in piracy until their activities were suppressed by the Dutch. In former times they ventured far afield and had established colonies on Morotai and Bacan by the nineteenth century. Even today some people maintain kinship ties with the Galela living on those two islands.

There has been no archaeological survey of Halmahera, which precludes an

Table 2. Galela Villages and their Population

*Soasio	1,412	Ch < Is	Ngidiho	661	Ch < Is
*Towara	341	?	*Mamuya	808	Ch = Is
Seki	425	Ch = Is	*Toweka	518	?
Togawa	718	Ch = Is	*Limau	262	Ch < Is
Soakonora	828	Ch < Is	*Lalonga	265	Is only
Igobura	775	Is only	*Bobisingo	287	Is only
Bale	454	Ch = Is	*Salimuli	496	Ch < Is
Soatobaro	1,028	Ch only	*Tutumaloleo	329	Is only
Roko	276	Ch only	*Pelita ¹⁾	?	Ch only
Dokulamo	1,252	Ch < Is	*Saluta	500	Ch > Is
Duma	860	Ch only	*Jure	981	Ch < Is
Gotalamo	324	Is only			
Makete	289	Ch only	Total	14,083	

The comparison of Christian (Ch) and Muslim (Is) population was obtained from the village headmen of Duma, Dokulamo and Lalonga.

¹⁾ Pelita is a new village inhabited by in-migrants from Sangihe. The population size is unknown.

* coastal village.



Photo. 2. On market day villagers go to Soasio by motorized canoe.

assessment of the prehistoric situation, and the only historical documents available concern the area on the west coast effectively controlled by the sultanate. A philological study of the Galela people is impossible, as they had not been studied before the latter half of the nineteenth century.

There is no documentary evidence to confirm that the Galela were formerly a single people. Traditional Galela society was divided into more than ten groups (*soa*), each of which is considered to have been an autonomous socio-political group. The histories of the members of each *soa* converge into a patrilineal common ancestor, and within the territory of each *soa* there were hamlets composed of several large extended family units. The chief of a *soa* was a direct descendant of a founder, but no paramount chief stood above the *soa* chiefs. Only the Sultan of Ternate could give them orders. Yet it remains unclear when the Galela people yielded to the Sultan's rule. Probably it was sometime between the seventeenth and the eighteenth centuries, if the oral tradition that Galela have obeyed the Sultan since he expelled Portuguese from Halmahera and sent a messenger to the Galela people, at the beginning of the seventeenth century, can be believed. However, the Sultan did not reign directly over the Galela with standing officials, but rather messengers sent by the Sultan delivered his orders. Concrete information concerning such matters as the rate of tax paid by the Galela to the Sultan are not available, although it is said that they were asked to participate in the Sultan's navy during wartime.

The introduction of cloth, iron tools, gold or silver accessories and pottery, as well as the propagation of Islam began with the extension of the Sultanate of Ternate over the Galela. There is no historical record of the propagation of Islam among the Galela but considering that some Galela still believed in their traditional

religion at the beginning of the twentieth century, rather than Islam or Christianity, the propagation of Islam did not progress much among them, compared with the west coast of Halmahera.

Isolated from Ternate and the west coast of Halmahera by densely forested, high mountains, and owing to the difficulty of crossing the furious Morotai Strait that separates Galela from Morotai, using traditional sailing craft, the Galelans were little influenced by the outside world (Fig. 1). Indeed, the Galela were called “*alfoer*”, “uncivilized aboriginal”, by the westerners.

Propagation of Christianity among Galela began in 1864 when the missionaries of the Dutch Reformed Church (Protestant) established a church in Duma Village. At present the Galela are either Muslim or Christians, but the Islamic population is larger than the Christian.

The *soa* system collapsed with the introduction of effective Dutch colonial administration, at the beginning of the twentieth century. Regardless of *soa* mem-

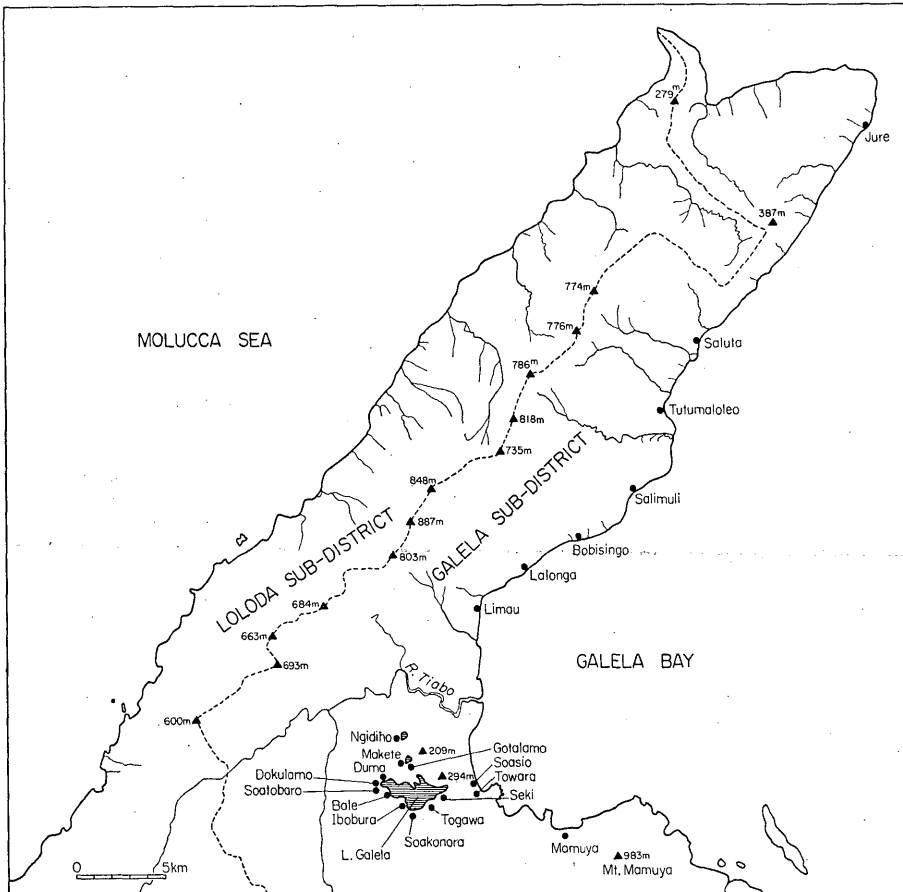


Fig. 1. The Galela Sub-district.

bership, people formed a new village under the leadership of a village headman. At that time the traditional extended family was converted to a nuclear family. The cash economy also was introduced then.

III. AN OVERVIEW OF LIMAU VILLAGE

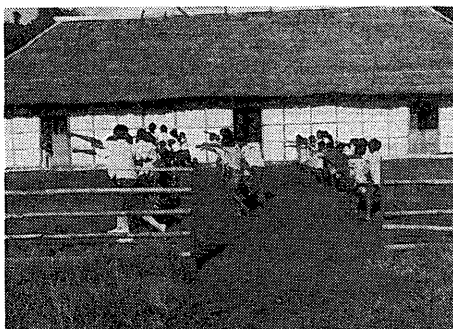
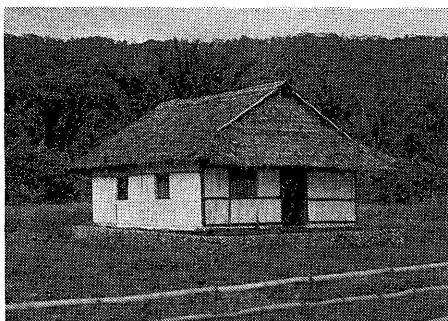
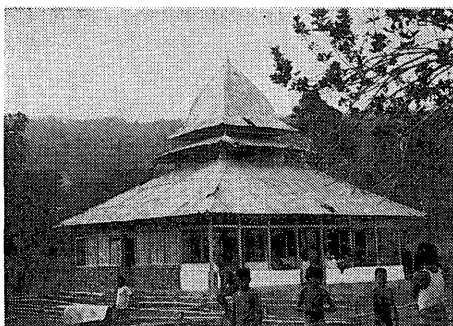
An intensive survey was made of Limau Village, a coastal settlement facing Galela Bay. It lies about 10 km north of Soasio, from which it is about 90 minutes distant by motorized canoe. The neighboring village, Lalonga, is situated about 3 km north of Limau, also on the coast. Inland of Limau is an uninhabited ridge covered with tropical rainforest, and a swamp forest.

The name Limau derives from an anecdote that the members of the "soa Limau" formed a village. It is assumed that at the beginning of the twentieth century there was a village established somewhat to the south of Limau Village. In the 1930s Limau consisted of 11 large extended family households (*bangsaha*). In 1949, Limau Village was relocated about 1 km northwest of the present village (Map 2.). That location, however, was on a floodplain and the people were afflicted by disease in 1964, so the site was abandoned and the present village established.

In October, 1976, Matsuzawa and Soukota made a population census, visiting each village household. They recorded 41 households with a total population of 246. Other residents, who are not the members of Limau Village, include a Christian minister and a primary school teacher. A merchant from Soasio, who has a household at Limau, stays in the village 3-4 days each week to work in this grocery store. Most of the villagers were born in Galela Sub-district, but 19 of the 41 households moved in from either Morotai Island, Wasile Sub-district or Kau Sub-district. But in all cases they are Galela people with relatives on either their father's or their mother's side (see Matsuzawa, this volume pp. 368). Maba people from Wasile Sub-district, though few in number and belonging to other ethnic groups, are included as members of the village, having accepted the Galela customary laws (*adat* in Indonesian) which require that they accept the customs of the community.

The everyday language of Limau is Galela, and even people whose mother tongue is Maba use Galela to communicate with other villagers. Indonesian, the national and official language, is taught in the primary school, and is spoken at official meetings or at the Chinese-run stores in Soasio. All adult men can understand Indonesian, and many can speak other North Halmaheran languages, especially Tobelo. Women in their fifties and pre-school age children speak only Galela.

There is a Protestant church and a mosque in the village (Photo. 3, 4, and Map 2). Thirty-three households are Moslem, and 8 are Christian. There is no hostility between the two religious groups, and the villagers are differentiated only by separate religious meetings and the obligatory cooperative work required to construct or repair either the church or the mosque. Religion does not affect the interpersonal



↖ Photo. 3. The village mosque.

↑ Photo. 4. The village church.

← Photo. 5. Limau elementary school.

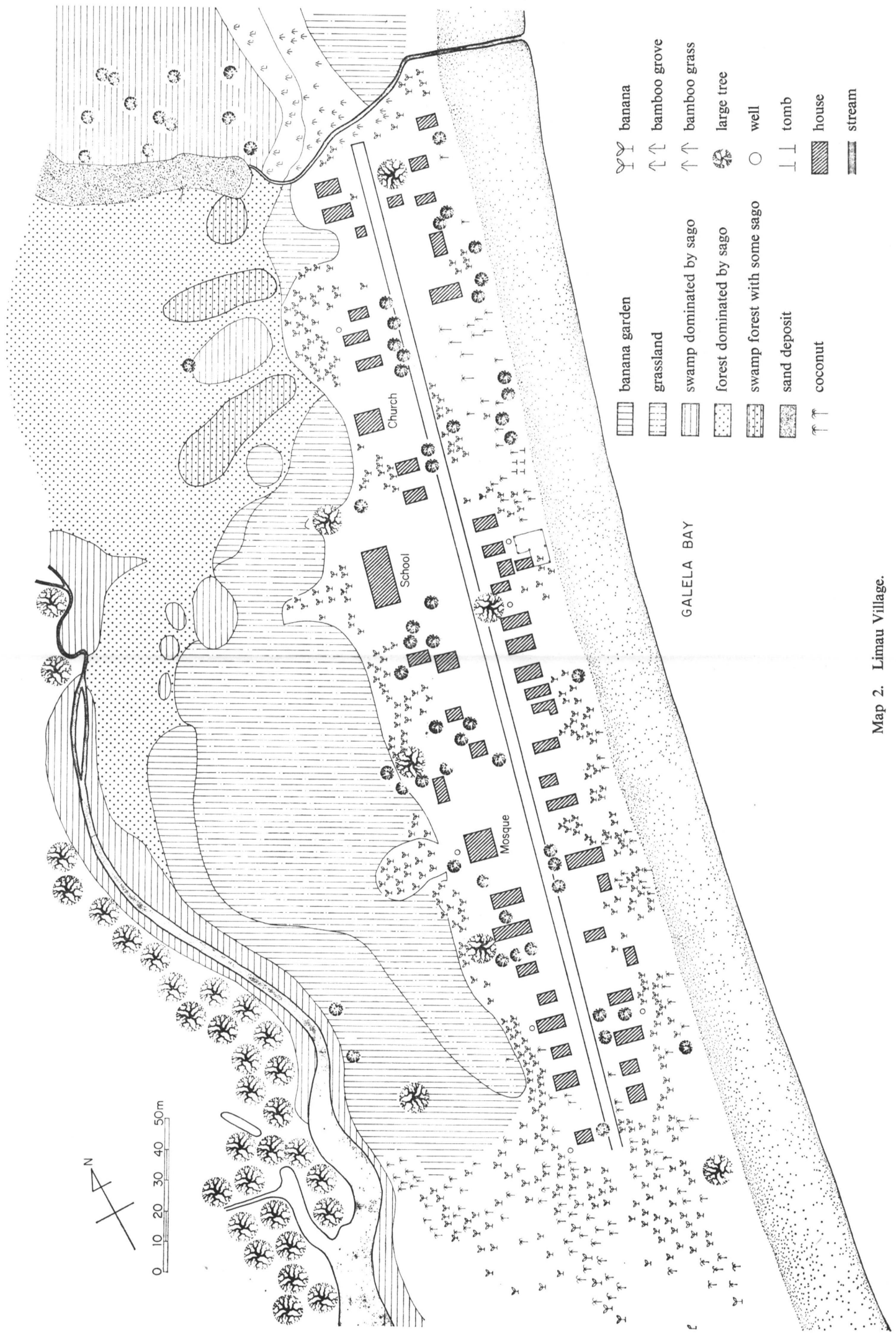
relationships of daily life and intimacy among villagers is determined by kinship and affinity, which preceded the relationships among co-religionists.

The only public facility in Limau is an elementary school where a teacher teaches all grades (Photo. 5). All school-age children attend this school, but only a few go on to the secondary school in Soasio.

IV. THE BIOLOGICAL AND PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT OF LIMAU AS A RENEWABLE NATURAL RESOURCE ASSEMBLAGE

A sandy beach extends landward for about 20 m from the shoreline. Canoes are kept on the beach. The village is located on a flat, sandy area 3.5–4 m above the level of the beach. Houses are built along the road which is about 6 m wide and some 350 m long. The land surrounding the road and the houses, except for some bananas and coconuts planted at intervals, is vacant. Sago swamps dominate the course of a south-north flowing stream, which is used for washing and bathing. Drinking water comes from 7 wells in the village. The area south of stream is devoted to banana gardens and that to the north supports swamp forests.

The area among the rows of houses to the east of the banana gardens is under grass. Clumps of bamboo occur at the northern end of the village. Sago palm, swamp forest plants and bamboo characterize the swampy area, which the villagers hesitate to enter. Limau Village stands on a dry, narrow, sandy strip of land surrounded on three sides by swamps. The daily life of the villagers is restricted to this



Map 2. Limau Village.

narrow area. Because of their dependence on marine transportation, many villages in Halmahera are established on the narrow strips of flat land and that face the sea, and in many cases swiddens are operated on distant mountain slopes.

Wonge, Aru, Sokiki and Kananga, located to the north of Limau, are ridges with an elevation of 100–300 m above sea level. Except for areas used for slash-and-burn cultivation, these mountain slopes are covered with typical tropical rainforest, which contains several species of *Leguminosae* that attain a height of 40 m. These tall trees are exploited for timber.

Northwest of the village is an alluvial fan, with relatively gentle slopes, formed by several streams. This area has long been repeatedly exploited for shifting cultivation such that all primary forest has been eradicated and it is now dominated by low, secondary forest. The sugar palm and other palms, such as rattan, are abundant there.

The narrow strip of land immediately along the shore was once a sand bar. It may have been formed by a small, north-south flowing, in-shore current in north Galela Bay. This raised sand bar is less than 5 m above sea level. The original wild vegetation of the sand bar is rather complex: The principal trees are *baru* (*Hibiscus tiliaceus* L.), *ngolora* (*Erythrina variegata* L. var. *orientalis* [L.] Merr.), *Jajame* (*Dolichandrone spathacea* K. Schum.), (*Cerbera manghas* L.) and *ngusu* (*Terminalia catappa* L.). Pandanus also occurs. There are several understorey grasses, including *kaka leda* (*Paspalum conjugatum* Berg.). These coastal forests contain plants used locally in medicine, and pandanus is indispensable for mat-making. The sand bar has long been utilized for human settlement and for planting coconuts, hence only remnants of the original vegetation are found now.

The sand bar is divided by the mouths of the R. Leleko and R. Gilitopa, where mangroves have developed. Mangroves (*soki*) are composed of two dominant species, *Bruguiera eriopetala* W. & A. and *Rhizophora conjugata* L. A species of nipa, called *bobla ma sopo*, also grows among the mangroves, together with *posi-posi* (*Sonnemaita alba* J. E. Sith), *wawadolo* (*Acanthus ebraceatus* Vahl) and a fern, *tona ma torowa*. *Soki* is utilized as a hard timber material for house construction or for making tools for ships. Nipa and sago leaf is utilized as roofing material (Fig. 2).

South of the village is a swamp, an indicator of which is the sago palm (*tano*, *Metroxylon sagu* Rottb. and *M. rumphii* Mart) which forms entire forests. Other swamp vegetation is limited to the *moa* (*Maranta* sp.) underbrush. Huge trees including *ngusu* (*Terminalia catappa* L.), *doko* (*Areca glandiformis* Lamk.) and *tagewo* (*Sapium indicum* Willd.) grow around the periphery of the sago forests (Fig. 3). Villagers go to the swamp forests mainly to extract sago.

Figure 4 and 5 shows schematically how the Limau villagers conceptualize and use the local renewable natural resource assemblage. The Galela classify lands basically into four categories: *teo* (sea), *doku* (village), *toro* (field) and *ponga* (areas that have been partly modified by man or not modified at all).

Teo is used as a highway and it provides marine fisheries. Limau villagers do not venture far out to sea and confine their fishing activities to inshore waters.

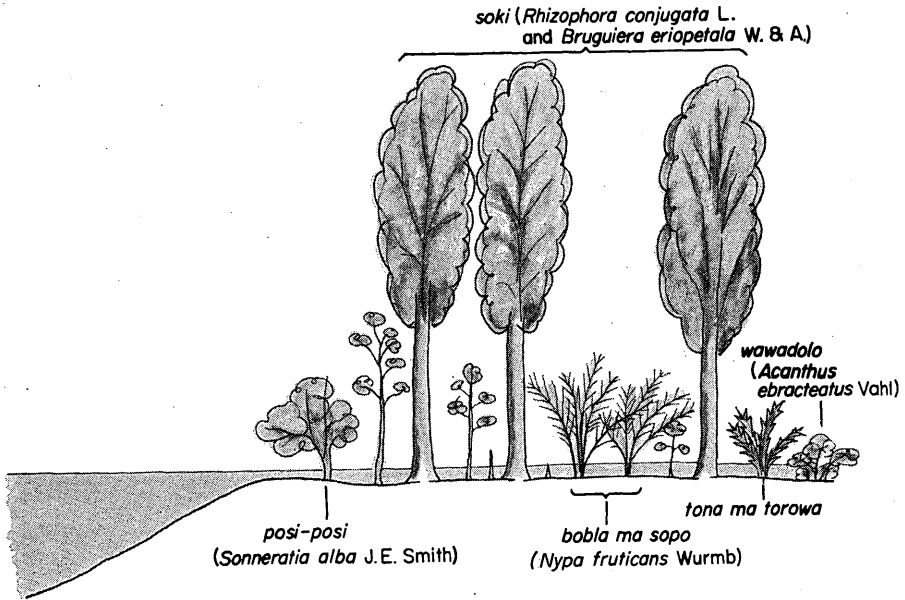


Fig. 2. Mangrove forest vegetation.

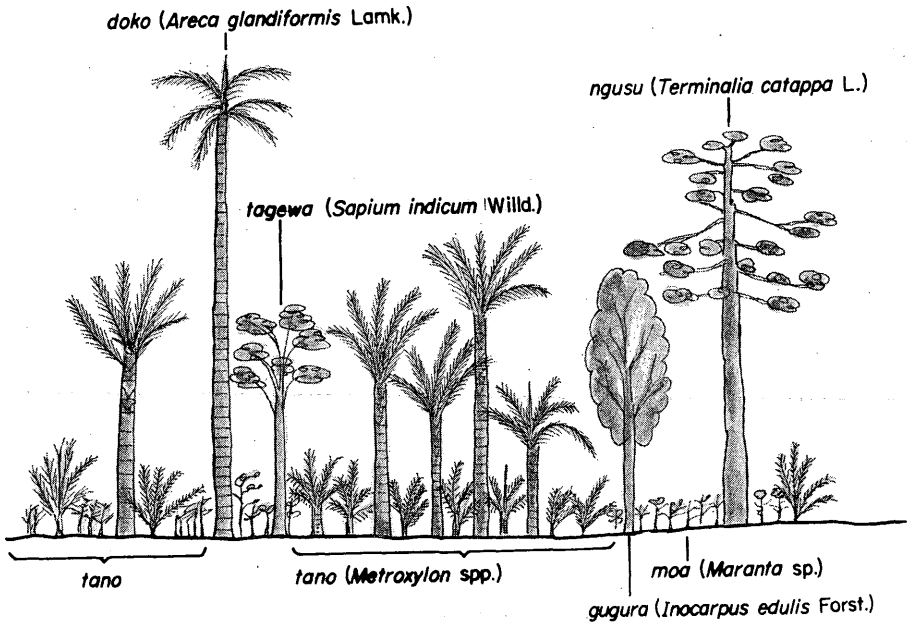


Fig. 3. Sago forest vegetation.

Galela people normally settle along the coast, although some villages are located around L. Galela. Limau village was established on a sand bar. Within the village (*doku*) the land use categories consist of *takapi* (road) and *loloha* (homestead).

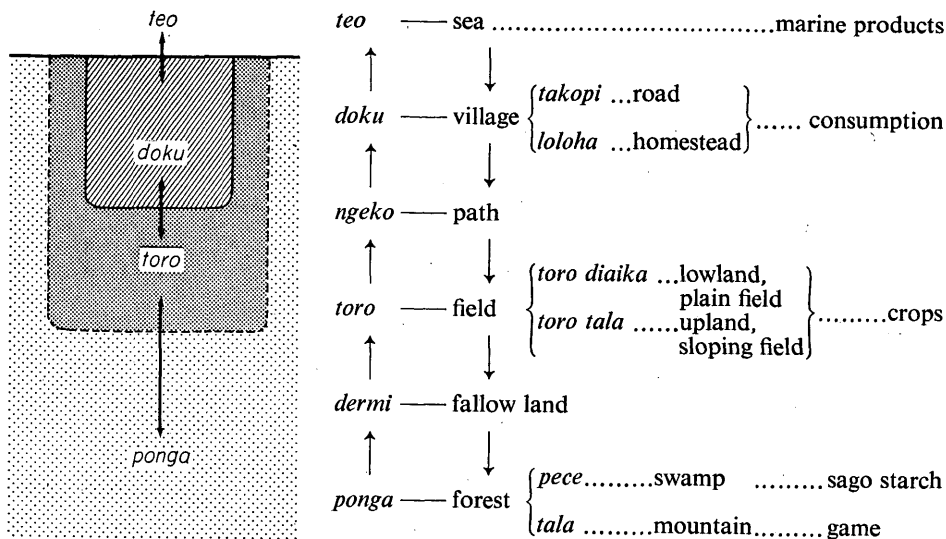


Fig. 4. Schematic relationships among micro-environments and food resources.

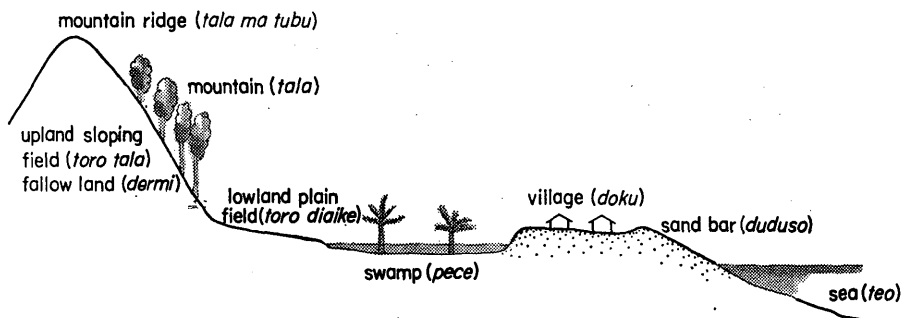


Fig. 5. Schematic setting of Limau Village.

Doku is an artificial dooryard garden environment, where in principle no plants are raised apart from food plants, herbs, or decoratives. The village headman supervises the cooperative work of weeding the roadway and repairing the wooden fences that separate it from the houses (Photo. 6). Together with the collection of taxes, one of the most important duties of a village headman is to maintain village public facilities in good condition. In contrast, *ngeko*, paths leading from the village to the fields, are not maintained.

There are two classes of *toro*, *toro diaika*, a lowland plain field, and *toro tala*, a sloping upland (mountain) field. This division is based on geographical criteria and not on potential cropping patterns. When a field is distinguished according to the crops planted, the name of the crop is attached as a prefix to the word for field, e.g. coconut field (*igo ma toro* [*igo* means coconut]). A field can be cleared in unused land,

ponga. *Ponga* is divided into two categories, *tala* (mountain) and *pece* (flat land or swamp).

Tala refers to a mountainous area covered with tropical rainforest and where the abundant wild pigs and deer are hunted. *Toro tala* means a swidden cleared on *tala*. The Limau villagers make *toro tala* in the area to the north of the village and in the secondary forest on the alluvial fan.

In Limau, *pece* refers to the swamp forest area south of the village. It is utilized for the extraction of sago and fields are not made there. It is also infested with malaria-carrying mosquitos.

Toro diaika is made on the coastal sand bar or in an isolated spot in the swamp forest. All cultivable land on the sand bar is exploited for coconut plantations and does require not periodic burning for land clearance, so *toro diaika* in Limau will probably be retained as a perennial field. *Toro tala*, however, is cultivated for 3-4 years after which it is fallowed and a new field is cleared elsewhere. The fallowed *toro tala* returns to *ponga*. *Deremi* refers to a transitional state between *toro* and *ponga*, and is dominated by the tall grasses and shrubs that characterize the early stages of plant succession.

All Limau villagers engage in the agriculture, the main crops of which are banana, sweet potato, manioc, upland rice and coconut. Coconut alone is a cash crop, the others being for family subsistence. Villagers obtaining cash income from selling copra, as well as from the production and sale of sago, *katu* (roofing material made of sago palm leaves; *Mal. atap*), timber and smoked fish.



Photo. 6. Houses line both sides of the village street.

Many localities in the area around Limau remain unexploited, and when developed they will surely increase the quantity of both subsistence products and cash crops produced. The villages around L. Galela have converted all cultivable land for arable use. Compared with these villages Limau is still a frontier outpost, a factor that has induced in-migration from Morotai Island, Wasile Sub-district and Kau Sub-district.

Toro diaika (a field on a sand bar) is the land most easily exploited and that best suited for making a coconut plantation. All such land already has been put to arable use. Other places still retain considerable scope for exploitation. Particularly in the *tala* (mountain) there remains plenty of land for swiddens. Newcomers to the village are permitted to operate *toro tala* or to earn a cash income by felling trees in the mountains for timber. However, the greatest natural resource in Limau is the *pece* to the southeast of the village. It is the largest sago-producing swamp in Galela Sub-district.

Before the first season's swidden crops yield, in-migrants sustain their households by extracting sago or fishing. Sago and *katu* can also provide a cash income. Thus, all-in-all, making a living in Limau is relatively easy, as the many in-migrants have demonstrated.

Although the swamp yields abundant sago it is also heavily infested with malaria. The death rate from malaria in Limau is abnormally high, and most of couples of more than 40 years of age represent second marriages after the death of a spouse. About 50 percent of the children die of malaria before reaching adulthood. The Galela themselves admit that this is the most unhealthy place in the entire Galela Sub-district.

Limau village is an easy place to live in as far as the productivity of food resources is concerned. But when the material factors of the households are considered the village appears rather humble and the level of living low of compared with the villages around L. Galela. The reason of this lies in the serious constraint imposed on copra production—the largest source of cash income—owing to the shortage of flat lands suitable for coconut plantations.

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