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CULTURES OF COMMEMORATION:
THE POLITICS OF WAR, MEMORY AND HISTORY
IN THE MARIANA ISLANDS

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by

Keith L. Camacho

This work is dedicated to three of my father's brothers who passed away during the researching and writing of this dissertation: Uncle Joe, Uncle Luis and Uncle Ben. And to Uncle Fing and others we miss dearly.

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ABSTRACT

Most studies on World War II in the Pacific explore the relationships between Japan and the United States. As a result, Japanese and Americans figure prominently in diplomatic, social, military and economic studies of World War II. Rarely do any of these studies seriously consider the role of Pacific Islanders as actors and narrators of the war. This dissertation addresses the issue of Pacific Islander representation in the historical record of World War II. Its purpose is to examine the social construction of memories of the war in the Mariana Islands, and the degree to which they are informed by the politics of colonialism, indigenous cultural agency and, finally, commemoration. Employing an interdisciplinary approach, this dissertation focuses on the indigenous Chamorro people of the Mariana Islands and their experiences with and memories of Japanese and American colonialism in the twentieth-century. This project thus contributes to comparative and indigenous-centered studies of colonialism, conflict and commemoration in the Pacific and elsewhere.

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CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION: WAR, MEMORY, HISTORY

The relationship between war, memory and history resonates deeply and profoundly in what Naoto Sudo calls the first “postcolonial” literary history of the western Pacific region.¹ Referring to the 1986 publication of Chris Perez Howard’s *Mariquita: A Tragedy of Guam*, Sudo observes that this novel highlights both Japanese and American colonialisms in Guam.² Unlike most postcolonial writings which target Euro-American colonialisms in the Pacific, Howard’s novel offers a radical postcolonial intervention in its critique of what might be understood as “Asian” and “Western” forms of colonialism.³ The book focuses on a family tragedy in Guam, the southernmost island in the Marianas archipelago invaded and occupied by the Japanese military during World War II.⁴ In particular, the novel portrays an indigenous Chamorro woman, Mariquita Perez, who rises in social status in prewar Guam, then ruled by the United States Navy, only to perish for unknown reasons in the subsequent war between Japan and the United States.⁵

Mariquita’s ascendancy to the upper social and political spheres of prewar Guam stems from her fierce sense of independence—an independence fostered by her curiosity

¹ Naoto Sudo, “Colonial Mirror Images of Micronesia and Japan: Beyond the Tug of War between ‘Americanization’ and ‘Japanization,’” *Postcolonial Text* [online] 1, no. 1 (30 July 2004): 2. Available from <http://www.pkp.ubc.ca/pocol/viewarticle.php?id=19>. For more on Pacific literature and criticism, see Nicholas J. Goetzfridt, *Indigenous Literature of Oceania: A Survey of Criticism and Interpretation* (Westport and London: Greenwood Press, 1995).

² Ibid., 2.

³ Ibid., 2.

⁴ Chris Perez Howard, *Mariquita: A Tragedy of Guam* (Institute of Pacific Studies of the University of the South Pacific, 1986).

⁵ Mariquita Perez Howard disappeared toward the end of the war, and no human remains have surfaced that could be identified as hers. The late Joaquin V.E. Manibusan, a former Superior Court Judge of Guam and survivor of World War II, claims that the Japanese killed Mariquita Perez Howard in Tai. See his commentary, “In Tai, a Day of Terror and Tragedy,” in *Liberation: Guam Remembers* (Agaña: 50th Anniversary of Liberation Day Committee, 1994), 35-36.

about and passion for imitating the “modern” American woman of the early twentieth century.⁶ In her attempt to stand apart from her more “traditional” peers, she maintains close ties to the island’s indigenous and military elite, dresses in the latest American fashions and eventually marries a United States Navy sailor by the name of Eddie Howard. Shortly thereafter, the newlyweds bear two children, Chris and Helen. The family forms a relationship that is tolerated and contemplated by their friends and families, Americans and Chamorros alike, in local gossip and print media.

On December 8, 1941, the Japanese military bombs Pearl Harbor, Oahu, and invades various countries in Southeast Asia and the Pacific. On this same day, the Japanese military attacks Guam. The Japanese invasion of Guam abruptly interrupts and transforms the novel’s nostalgic portrait of an intercultural marriage among the island’s prewar cultures of the “colonizer” and the “colonized.” Mariquita’s modern world suddenly faces, however reluctantly, another vision of modernity as inscribed in Japan’s call for “Asia for Asians” and an Asia without Western colonial tyranny. The Japanese militarization of the island and its indigenous people soon leads to a series of conflicts, radically altering the setting from one of a peaceful prewar past to a violent wartime present. In the novel, the conscription of indigenous interpreters and police assistants, the physical and psychological abuse of civilians, and the institutionalized rape of Asian and indigenous “comfort women” all surface as conflicts of varying degrees and with varying consequences among the indigenous and colonial communities of Guam.

Furthermore, at the demand of the Japanese military, the couple is forced to separate, signaling the gradual and, at times, rapid escalation of tragedies to come. Like some of his American and Allied counterparts in the European and Pacific theaters of the

⁶ Ibid., 10.

war, Eddie becomes a prisoner-of-war of Japan. The dictates of Japanese colonial policy and racial prejudice dehumanize Eddie, emasculating him given the loss of his honored position as a “fighting man in the service of his country.”⁷ Mariquita, on the other hand, lives with her extended family in preparation for what would be nearly three years of Japanese wartime rule. Another separation occurs when the Japanese military enlists Mariquita, now twenty-three years old, as one of the female domestic “aides” to a Japanese agricultural officer in the village of Tai. The final separation, indeed the novel’s dramatic climax, transpires when she mysteriously disappears in the jungles of Guam, under the muffling reverberation of American aerial bombardment and rapid gunfire in the summer of 1944.

Mariquita unfortunately never lived to see what many Guam Chamorros recall as the American “liberation” of Guam from Japanese colonial rule. Her memory and history of the war, however, live on in the pages of the novel, in the hands of its author and in the minds of its readers. In what way, then, is this novel compelling in terms of its contribution to postcolonial literature and criticism in the Pacific and elsewhere?⁸ What does its approach to the study of the past suggest for creative and critical reflections on war, memory and history? The novel’s significance rests, in part, in its contribution to literary studies of the “typical trope” in colonial fiction, that is, what Sudo refers to as “a

⁷ Ibid., 52.

⁸ The region of the Pacific islands is divided into three areas: Melanesia, Polynesia and Micronesia. They are problematic terms, as are the labels “Asia-Pacific,” “South Pacific, and “Oceania,” because they are often used to describe and homogenize the diverse political, cultural, economic and historical makeup of these island and atoll societies. This dissertation treats such terms as *strictly* geographical locales. On the topic of naming, as it pertains to the region of Micronesia, see David Hanlon, “Micronesia: Writing and Rewriting the Histories of a Nonentity,” *Pacific Studies* 12, no. 2 (March 1989): 1-21; on the issue of racial determinism reflected in the usage of these labels, see Nicholas Thomas, *In Oceania: Visions, Artifacts, Histories* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1997); and, finally, on the decolonizing usage of these terms, see Epeli Hau’ofa, “Our Sea of Islands,” in *A New Oceania: Rediscovering Our Sea of Islands*, ed. Eric Waddell, Vijay Naidu and Epeli Hau’ofa (Suva: School of Social and Economic Development, the University of the South Pacific, 1993), 2-16.

happy marriage between a white man and an indigenous woman, their reluctant painful separation, and her tragic death.”⁹ However, this literary interpretation, although an important one, essentializes the novel’s portrayal of culture and colonialism, memory and history. The complex inter and intra-cultural relationships that take place in the novel resist any simplified form of reading. What happens, for example, when an indigenous culture adopts two conflicting notions of colonial loyalty? What structures of power inform colonialism in times of war and peace? How do people, indeed social collectivities, remember traumatic events and experiences? *Mariquita* offers much more in terms of illustrating the contradictions and malleability of culture and colonialism, memory and history, as categories of representation and analysis.

Howard’s novel also challenges the dominant paradigm in conventional and even postcolonial studies of the “Pacific” in which most scholarship, historical or otherwise, focuses on Euro-American colonialisms.¹⁰ As the Tongan scholar Epeli Hau’ofa observes, the main factors for the reconstruction of Pacific pasts are “events determined by Euro-American imperialism.”¹¹ The “West,” in short, often attracts the attention of scholarly and creative authors in the Pacific. By looking to Asia and Asian forms of colonialism, *Mariquita* contributes to a growing “postcolonial” literature that examines issues of war, memory and history in comparative contexts in and outside the Pacific region.¹² Like the postcolonial writers of Africa and the Pacific, Howard similarly enriches an understanding of colonial contact, movement and exchange among the

⁹ Sudo, 5.

¹⁰ Exceptions include studies on migration and diaspora, with their focus on the movement and exchange of peoples and ideas across lands and oceans. See, for example, Paul Spickard, Joanne L. Rondilla, Debbie Hippolite Wright, eds., *Pacific Diaspora: Island Peoples in the United States and Across the Pacific* (Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press, 2002).

¹¹ Epeli Hau’ofa, “Epilogue: Pasts to Remember,” in *Remembrance of Pacific Pasts: An Invitation to Remake History*, ed. Robert Borofsky (Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press, 2000), 455.

¹² Sudo, 14.

diverse peoples of the colonial periphery and metropole. This has been one of the roles of the postcolonial writer—to bring a deeper sense of humanity and complexity to understandings of the colonized and the colonizer. As Ibo novelist Chinua Achebe eloquently puts it, writers can teach “where we went wrong, where the rain began to beat us.”¹³ *Mariquita* likewise informs readers where the rain began to beat the Japanese, Americans and Chamorros in the Pacific and elsewhere.

What also makes this novel particularly significant is its commemorative dimension. That Chris Perez Howard wrote a novel about his mother’s life testifies strongly to his interest in issues of memory and history. Given the unknown reasons surrounding his mother’s disappearance in World War II, the war provided a highly-charged emotional setting through which Howard could come to terms with his own cultural identity, his mother’s life history and his island’s turbulent encounter with both Japanese and American colonialism. Having moved to the United States after the war under the care of his father, Eddie, Howard returned to Guam in the late 1970s.

During many occasions, such as family parties, Howard reunited with his mother’s extended family. His mother, naturally, became a subject of numerous conversations. At first, recalls Howard, “I hadn’t wanted to know anything more [about my mother] because I knew she had been killed by the Japanese during World War II and I didn’t want to dwell on it. I am one of those who shy away from unpleasanties and what could be more unpleasant than to think of the death of one’s own mother?”¹⁴

However, Howard’s interest in his mother’s life increased as he encountered more stories

¹³ Chinua Achebe, “The Novelist as Teacher,” in *African Writers on African Writing*, ed. G.D. Killam. (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1973), 3.

¹⁴ Chris Perez Howard, “Thoughts and Confessions of a Chamorro Advocate,” in *Hale’ta: Hinasso’: Tinige’ Put Chamorro, Insights: The Chamorro Identity* (Agaña: Political Status Education Coordinating Commission, 1993), 155.

about her and his extended family.

Eventually, Howard decided to write a novel about his mother based on archival sources and personal interviews with relatives and friends who knew her before the war. “In writing my book,” states Howard, “I grew to love my mother and toward the end of this difficult undertaking, I discovered that I did, in fact, have an emotional memory of her.”¹⁵ In this sense, the novel commemorates Howard’s mother, Mariquita, not as a static figure of the past. Rather, she comes across as a living and breathing person, whose tragedy in war commemorates the suffering experienced by the various people affected by it. *Mariquita*, the book and the person, thus commemorates the undue tragedies of the war in general, and the tragedy of her death in particular. It is up to her readers to remember the war and her memory of it in ways found appropriate, relevant and meaningful.

A HISTORIOGRAPHY OF WAR

This dissertation examines the social construction of memories of World War II in the Mariana Islands, and the degree to which they are informed by the politics of colonialism, indigenous cultural agency and, finally, commemoration. Like the novel *Mariquita*, this dissertation primarily focuses on the Chamorro people of the Mariana Islands and their memories of and experiences with Japanese and American colonialisms in the twentieth-century. The three interrelated goals of this dissertation are to demonstrate: 1) that culture functions as a process of local and global identification and differentiation; 2) that colonialism operates as an ambivalent and mutable process of control; and 3) that people consciously engage in interpretations and representations of the past. In doing so, this project advocates the need for more rigorous postcolonial,

¹⁵ Howard 1993, 157.

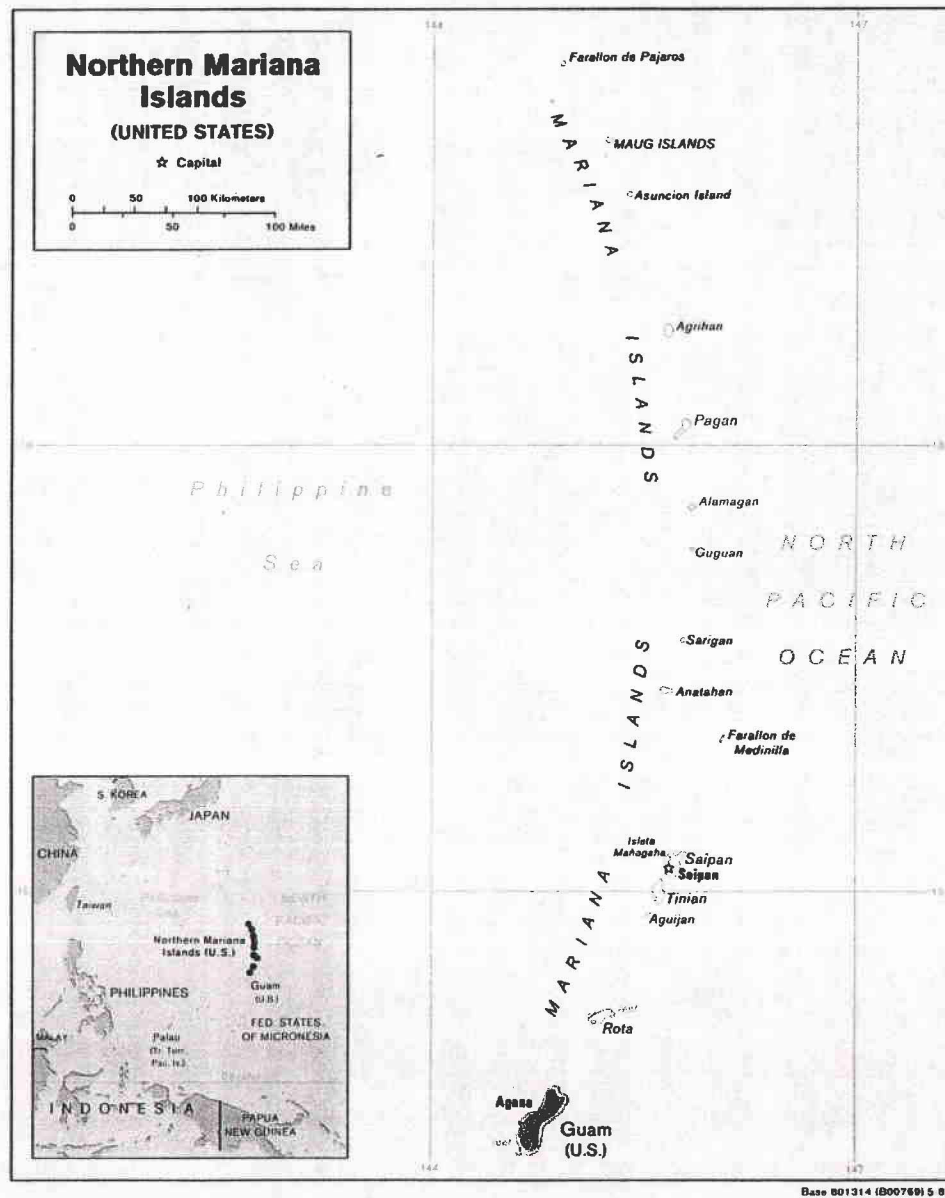


Figure 1. Map of the Mariana Islands.

interdisciplinary and comparative approaches concerning the historical study and historiography of war.

This need becomes readily apparent when one considers the methodological and theoretical limitations of the historiography of war in the American profession of history. Far from positing interdisciplinary approaches, the study of the writing of war has been largely the concern of military historians in the United States.¹⁶ Since the turn of the twentieth-century, American military historians have gained prominence in the field of military history, rivaling their peers in Britain, Germany and France. The voluminous works produced by American military historians on the two world wars often focus on “biography, fiction, battle narratives, memoirs, theoretical treaties, scientific discourses, philosophy [and] economic studies.”¹⁷ The content and scope of such works fall into two general overlapping categories, with soldiers seeking the utilitarian value of military history on the one hand and with scholars observing its educational value on the other. Soldierly concerns with strategy, combat and morale do not differ much from scholarly analyses of war. Both the soldier and the historical specialist read similar documents and sources, engage common problems, and arrive at their own conclusions. Yet changing social impressions of war, conflict and violence eventually threatened what was primarily a conservative vision of military history.

In the early 1900s, professional historians in the United States “began to turn

¹⁶ Numerous subtopics of war exist and so do a wide array of interpretations on these subtopics. This dissertation only focuses on a few studies of war, especially as they pertain to discussions of World War II in the Pacific. For more on the philosophical, anthropological and scientific origins and repercussions of war, see Doyme Dawson, “The Origins of War: Biological and Anthropological Theories,” *History and Theory* 35, no. 1 (1996): 1-28; Keith L. Nelson and Spencer C. Olin, Jr., *Why War?: Ideology, Theory, and History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980); and Dean G. Pruitt and Richard C. Snyder, eds., *Theory and Research on the Causes of War* (Englewood, Cliffs: Prentice Hall, Inc., 1969).

¹⁷ Lt. Col. John F. Votaw, “An Approach to the Study of Military History,” in *A Guide to the Study and Use of Military History*, ed. John E. Jessup, Jr. and Robert W. Coakley (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1979), 41.

away from political and military history,” and instead devoted “more of their attention to social, economic, and intellectual problems.”¹⁸ As military historians demonstrated less interest in adapting to the historiographical trends of that period, a rift emerged between military history and the larger discipline of history. This resulted in the writing of military history before World War II done “largely by the military profession as a vehicle for the instruction of officers and as propaganda for preparedness.”¹⁹ Military historians subsequently catered to military cadets, officers, enlisted personnel and the general public rather than to graduate students and researchers interested in the overall study of war in modern diplomacy and society. Many of these military historians soon found themselves immersed more deeply in the making of military policy than in the scholarly advancement of the profession. While such changes in the reception and instruction of war and military affairs in the United States did not altogether diminish the profession of military history, these shifts in attitudes on war, from embracing nationalist and romantic histories of war to ignoring them, served as a precursor to even greater shifts in the discipline of military history.²⁰

By the end of World War II, American military histories proliferated on a global scale; this publication explosion disguised the profession’s decline.²¹ Despite the general public’s interest in stories of the “good war,” enrollment in military history courses at

¹⁸ Louis Morton, “The Historian and the Study of War,” *The Mississippi Valley Historical Review* 48, no. 4 (1962): 600.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 600.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 600.

²¹ Numerous American movies, documentaries, coffee table books and other popular media on World War II flourished in production as well. This dissertation does not focus on these media as most cinematic or visual descriptions of the Mariana Islands stress military strategy and battles, rarely centering on the lives of the Chamorro people. For an analysis of film in Micronesia, see James Mellon, “Images of Micronesia on Film and Video,” in *Pacific History: Papers from the 8th Pacific History Association Conference*, ed. Donald H. Rubinstein (Mangilao: University of Guam Press and Micronesia Area Research Center, 1992), 385-403.

colleges and universities dropped dramatically, a problem which the field has yet to resolve. Military historians began to realize that their provincial concern for the technical and utilitarian aspects of war worked against them. In an essay on military historiography, Col. Thomas E. Griess writes that "following World War II and the Korean War a note of despondency concerning the relevance of military history began to be heard."²² Griess maintains that "this discouragement, largely voiced by civilian critics, was rooted in the belief that military history ... was still too technical and utilitarian in purpose and that if it was to be of more than antiquarian interest it had to become a broad study of war itself."²³ Others cognizant of the impact of the civil rights and Vietnam anti-war movements in the United States, criticized the profession of military history largely because they believed war "as a subject was unworthy of study, if not downright dangerous."²⁴ Feminist scholars and civil rights activists, in particular, challenged the intentions of military historians, military policymakers and military institutions in ways that focused needed attention on the understudied social and gendered aspects of war.

Although military historians have long shown interest in the relationships between war and society, feminist, activist and gender scholars argue that such studies generally associate war with "activity, heroism and masculinity," and view its antithesis, peace, as "quiet, mundane, feminine."²⁵ Feminist scholars reveal more clearly the "patriarchal"

²² Col. Thomas E. Griess, "A Perspective on Military History," in *A Guide to the Study and Use of Military History*, ed. John E. Jessup, Jr. and Robert W. Coakley (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1979), 29.

²³ Ibid., 29.

²⁴ Morton, 612.

²⁵ Liz Kelly, "Wars Against Women: Sexual Violence, Sexual Politics and the Militarized State," in *States of Conflict: Gender, Violence and Resistance*, ed. Susie Jacobs, Ruth Jacobson and Jen Marchbank (London and New York: Zed Books, 2000), 48.

and “feminine” dimensions of war, and especially, the languages and discourses of war. As Karen J. Warren and Duane L. Cady note, “much of feminist critique regarding war and violence focuses on language, particularly the symbolic connections between sexist-naturist-warist language, that is, language which inferiorizes women and nonhuman nature by naturalizing women and feminizing nature.”²⁶ These feminist, semiotic analyses urge others to understand war “as a *gendering* activity, one that ritually marks the gender of all members of a society, whether or not they are combatants.”²⁷

In times of war, for example, women who “consort with the enemy are stigmatized, humiliated, even executed, while soldiers’ romantic interludes in enemy territory are idealized.”²⁸ National war-time propaganda provides an abundant variety of instances when the friendly and the hostile are gendered feminine or masculine. In World War II, the governments, militaries and popular media of Japan and the United States produced racist and gendered images of each opposing society (e.g., the Japanese ape and the American barbarian). For both countries, the purpose of generating these images was to justify the defeat of a feminine or masculine-worthy opponent, yet an ultimately weak and non-human enemy.²⁹ These gendered images serve a variety of purposes during war, and often become employed to glorify violence or to dehumanize people.

Cynthia Enloe and bell hooks separately argue that criticisms leveled against

²⁶ Karen J. Warren and Duane L. Cady, “Feminism and Peace: Seeing Connections,” *Hypatia* 9, no. 2 (Spring 1994): 12.

²⁷ Margaret Randolph Higonnet, Jane Jenson, Sonya Michel and Margaret Collins Weitz, “Introduction,” in *Behind the Lines: Gender and the Two World Wars*, ed. Margaret Randolph Higonnet, Jane Jenson, Sonya Michel and Margaret Collins Weitz (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1987), 4.

²⁸ Margaret Randolph Higonnet and Patrice L. R. Higonnet, “The Double Helix,” in *Behind the Lines: Gender and the Two World Wars*, ed. Margaret Randolph Higonnet, Jane Jenson, Sonya Michel and Margaret Collins Weitz (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1987), 37.

²⁹ John W. Dower, *War without Mercy: Race and Power in the Pacific War* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1986), 9-10.

colonial militaries and industries, as well as wars and conflicts, can be framed within the larger study of "militarism." They believe that by focusing on militarism one can examine better the intersecting relationships and processes linking the military, society and war. For example, Enloe lists some of the strengths of a feminist study of militarism. She notes that the concept of militarism avoids being subjected "to patriarchal historiography in the same way as the concept of war" and encourages cross-cultural dialogue and the analysis of ideological change.³⁰ hooks, on the other hand, adds that although feminists view militarism as a gendered process in certain ways, they have to understand first that "imperialism and not patriarchy is the core foundation of militarism."³¹

Feminism, activist, and gendered studies of war thus engage in discourse analyses of militarism, patriarchy and imperialism. These studies present new approaches for the study of war. For one, more women pursue the study of war, a field once dominated by men, in ways that draw from a variety of disciplinary and theoretical approaches on race, class and gender.³² As diverse approaches to the study of war increase in scope, it becomes clear that the study of war in the American context no longer exists as the exclusive preserve of soldiers and military historians. Yet despite recent innovative efforts to reshape and rethink studies on wars few studies focus on the cultural dimensions, political implications and theoretical concerns of wars as they specifically

³⁰ Cynthia H. Enloe, "Feminist Thinking About War, Militarism, and Peace," in *Analyzing Gender: A Handbook of Social Science Research*, ed. Beth B. Hess and Myra Marx Ferree (Newbury Park: Sage Publications, 1987), 540. For more on militarism, see John R. Gillis, ed., *The Militarization of the Western World* (New Brunswick and London: Rutgers University Press, 1989).

³¹ bell hooks, "Feminism and Militarism: A Comment," *Women's Studies Quarterly* 23, no. 3 and 4 (1995): 61.

³² John Shy, "The Cultural Approach to the History of War," *The Journal of Military History* 57, no. 5 (October 1993): 23.

pertain to indigenous people.

The impact and influence of World War II in the Pacific Islands region is a case in point.³³ For example, military historians commonly interpret World War II as “essentially an American-Japanese war.”³⁴ Conventional military historiography reads the war as “the result of a clash of political goals: the Japanese calling for ‘Asia for the Asiatics’ ... and the Americans demanding an ‘open door’ policy in China.”³⁵ Even studies by social and economic historians frame the war as grounds to discuss exclusively the Japanese mandate of Micronesia, American international diplomacy and Japanese-American social relations in general.³⁶ What results is a historiographical perception that the war affected only Japan and the United States.

Military histories of World War II in the Pacific show that Pacific Islanders play no central role in their narratives. This suggests that military historians privilege the histories of national governments, combatants and imperial politics. Pacific Islanders provide a silent, faceless backdrop on which to write these histories. Further, military historians seldom refer to the work of Pacific historians, thereby creating a wide gulf between the two fields of history in their understanding of the Pacific Islands and of the war.³⁷

³³ Understandably, the terms “World War II” and the “Pacific War” oversimplify the plurality of experiences and views about the war. For the purpose of this dissertation, these terms are used interchangeably, as are any general reference to “war” to connote the war’s impact in the Pacific islands.

³⁴ Stanley Sandler, “Introduction,” in *World War II in the Pacific: An Encyclopedia*, ed. Stanley Sandler (New York and London: Garland Publishing, Inc., 2001), viii.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, vii.

³⁶ These studies discuss the contexts and consequences of World War II in the Pacific as perceived especially by American and Japanese government officials and policy makers. For studies on Japanese expansion into the Pacific, see George H. Blakeslee, “The Mandates of the Pacific,” *Foreign Affairs: An American Quarterly Review* 1, no. 1 (1922): 98-115. On American interest in the Pacific, see Earl S. Pomeroy, “American Policy Respecting the Marshalls, Carolines, and the Marianas, 1898-1941,” *The Pacific Historical Review* 17, no. 1 (1948): 43-53.

³⁷ On the origins and future directions of Pacific History, since its inception as a discipline in the 1950s,

On the one hand, military historians usually envision the Pacific Islands as a *tabula rasa* on which to inscribe their histories of heroism and victimization without due consideration of Pacific Islander understandings of the war, let alone with any recognition of the variety of indigenous knowledge systems of the region and its peoples. The military historiography of the Pacific war can be read, indeed, as a body of discourse in which only Japanese and Americans constitute the agents of change and continuity in the region, erasing the agency and voice of indigenous peoples and replicating what Edward W. Said calls “orientalism.”³⁸

On the other hand, Pacific historians continue to grapple with indigenous and non-indigenous histories of culture contact, colonization, missionization, exploration and gender roles. They pay little attention to military historiography perhaps because of its tendency to study the utilitarian nature of combat and to focus exclusively on imperial agents. Additionally, Pacific historians often concentrate on the “effects” of the war on indigenous societies, rather than assessing the impact of the war beyond indigenous shores.

It comes as no surprise that military and diplomatic histories of World War II rarely mention the roles of Pacific Islanders, presuming that they do not fit nicely into the schemes of colonial history and historiography. As anthropologists Lamont Lindstrom and Geoffrey M. White note, “military historians writing about the Pacific war, for their part, have ignored wholesale the people living on the islands over which the armies were

see J.W. Davidson, “Problems of Pacific History,” *Journal of Pacific History* 1 (1966): 5-21; David Routledge, “Pacific History as Seen From the Pacific Islands,” *Pacific Studies* 8, no. 2 (1985): 81-99; and Greg Denning, “History ‘in’ the Pacific,” *The Contemporary Pacific* 1, no. 1 & 2 (1989): 134-139.

³⁸ See Edward W. Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1978).

'hopping'."³⁹ They add that "we can augment and enrich reinterpretations of the war by listening to the stories, songs, and personal recollections of some of the thousands of Pacific Islanders who took part in the events of the 1940s. Their stories, too, compose a valuable historical archive."⁴⁰ The recent publication of *The Typhoon of War*, for instance, draws from Micronesian oral histories of the war, relying heavily on indigenous experiences and memories as valuable sources of data.⁴¹ White's edited collection of essays in *Remembering the Pacific War* also illustrates the lasting significance of the war as a period of great change in the memories of Micronesians and Melanesians alike.⁴²

The archive Lindstrom and White speak of continues to grow, also producing studies on race, nationalism and oral history.⁴³ These contributions to the study of World War II underscore the significance of Pacific Islanders as laborers, community leaders, couriers, soldiers, mediators, coast-watchers and translators. As David Welchman Gegeo explains, "one thing Pacific Islanders can teach historians, therefore, is about the roles Islanders took in the war, the activities and events they witnessed and participated in, and

³⁹ Lamont Lindstrom and Geoffrey M. White, "War Stories," in *The Pacific Theater: Island Representations of World War II*, ed. Geoffrey M. White and Lamont Lindstrom (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1989), 6.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 6.

⁴¹ Lin Poyer, Suzanne Falgout and Laurence Marshall Carucci, *The Typhoon of War: Micronesian Experiences of the Pacific War* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2001). On oral histories of World War II in Melanesia, see the special issue of 'O'O: A Journal of Solomon Islands Studies, no. 4 (1988), ed. Geoffrey White and Hugh Laracy; and Geoffrey M. White and David W. Gegeo, eds., *The Big Death: Solomon Islanders Remember World War II* (Suva: Solomon Islands College of Higher Education and the University of the South Pacific, 1988).

⁴² Geoffrey M. White, ed., *Remembering the Pacific War* (Honolulu: Center for Pacific Islands Studies at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, 1991).

⁴³ For an introduction to the postwar Maasina Rule movement in the Solomons, see Hugh M. Laracy, "Marching Rule and Missions," *The Journal of Pacific History* 6 (1971):96-114; and Hugh Laracy, ed., *Pacific Protest: The Maasina Rule Movement, Solomon Islands, 1944-1952* (Suva: Institute of Pacific Studies, University of the South Pacific, 1983). On the issue of war and race, see K.S. Inglis, "War, Race and Loyalty in New Guinea, 1939-1945," in *The History of Melanesia* (Canberra and Port Moresby: Research School of Pacific Studies, The Australian National University and The University of Papua and New Guinea, 1969), 503-529.

the changes the war brought about in their understandings about the world.”⁴⁴ An awareness of and sensitivity to Pacific Islander involvement in and perceptions of World War II, as well as those of the colonial nations, help historians to appreciate more fully the complexity of the war in global and local terms. How, then, can scholars incorporate indigenous perspectives into the study of war? What methodological and theoretical concerns should be considered? What can Pacific Islander experiences of the war tell about the power and persuasion of colonialism and indigenous cultural agency? How can these studies of war rethink not only historiography, but also, more broadly, the nature of humanistic inquiry in the Pacific and elsewhere around the world?

MEMORY AND HISTORY

This dissertation addresses these questions of Pacific Islander representation in the historical record of World War II. To a certain degree, an ethnohistorical approach informs the methodological scope of this dissertation, and not just because of this project’s focus on the social construction of ethnic or cultural groups.⁴⁵ Rather, as Greg Denning notes, ethnohistory fosters conversations “we have about the ways in which historical consciousness is culturally distinct and socially specific and how, in whatever culture or social circumstance, the past constitutes the present in being known.”⁴⁶ This project likewise interprets the *past* as culturally distinct and socially specific, a past that is shaped by both contemporary and historically contextualized demands and circumstances. In the study of Pacific Islander involvement in World War II,

⁴⁴ David Welchman Gegeo, “The Big Death: What Pacific Islanders Can Teach Us About World War II,” *O’O: A Journal of Solomon Islands Studies*, no. 4 (1988): 7.

⁴⁵ Ethnohistory focuses on the study of culture and change. For a brief survey of ethnohistory, see William S. Simmons, “Culture Theory in Contemporary Ethnohistory,” *Ethnohistory* 35, no. 1 (Winter 1988): 1-14.

⁴⁶ Greg Denning, “A Poetic for Histories: Transformations that Present the Past,” in *Clio in Oceania: Toward a Historical Anthropology*, ed. Aletta Biersack (Washington and London: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1991), 356.

ethnohistory provides one interpretive lens to discuss the historical impact and implications of this war upon indigenous and non-indigenous people alike, now and then.

More than an insulated field of study, ethnohistory's anthropological and historical theories have helped to give shape to a related field of study called "memory studies."⁴⁷ Increasingly, sociologists, historians, literary critics and anthropologists are turning to this field of inquiry in their study of traumatic events, such as conflicts, natural disasters and genocide campaigns. But what makes memory studies different from the conventional historiography of war is its concern with collective remembrances of the past; to put it another way, the question of cultural, religious, and national remembrances of traumatic pasts comprises the general focus of this field of study. As David Thelen observes, "the historical study of memory opens exciting opportunities to ask fresh questions of our conventional sources and topics and to create points for fresh synthesis since the study of memory can link topics we have come to regard as specialized and distinct."⁴⁸ Fundamental, then, to memory studies is the relationship between "memory" and "history."

However, it would be erroneous on this author's part to suggest that memory and history are two uncontested categories of analysis. Different traditions of history and memory exist in the fields of psychology and history.⁴⁹ In the field of history, for example, the identification of truth requires documentable recollection. However, David

⁴⁷ For overviews on the theory and historiography of memory studies, see Jaclyn Jeffrey and Glenace Edwall, eds., *Memory and History: Essays on Recalling and Interpreting Experience* (Lanham and London: University Press of America, 1994), and Susannah Radstone, ed., *Memory and Methodology* (Oxford and New York: Berg, 2000).

⁴⁸ David Thelen, "Memory and American History," *The Journal of American History* 75, no. 4 (March 1989): 1117.

⁴⁹ For problems in the study of memory and history, see Alon Confino, "Collective Memory and Cultural History: Problems of Method," *The American Historical Review* 102, no. 5 (December 1997): 1386-1403; and Noa Gedi and Yigal Elam, "Collective Memory--What is It?" *History and Memory* 8, no. 1 (Spring/Summer 1996): 30-50.

Lowenthal explains that “psychologists generally confine themselves to aspects of memory testable or replicable in the laboratory; historians study the past by scrutinizing accounts of what has happened in the real world.”⁵⁰ Some also caution that history and memory should not be conflated as they sometimes signify different meanings altogether. As Pierre Nora notes, “memory and history, far from being synonymous, appear now to be in fundamental opposition.”⁵¹ That opposition rests on the notion that “history,” by which Nora means the academically distanced study of the past, finds no sustainable comparison to “memory,” an ephemeral and emotional remembrance of the past. Nora suggests that history and memory are not only antithetical to each other, but that “history is perpetually suspicious of memory, and its true mission is to suppress and destroy it.”⁵² Nora’s stark observations rightly attest to conventional historians’ views of memory. For a traditionally trained historian, memory endangers the historian’s fact-finding mission to interpret and to portray the past objectively. Emotional and personal feelings taint the historian’s narrative, and distort the objective interpretation of the past.

Indeed, the gap between traditional historical and psychological methods seems vast, without much close interaction and debate. Even the psychologist Sigmund Freud said little about history, devoting most of his energy to studies of the remembering and forgetting of personal experiences. Writing in the early 1900s, and despite his ongoing analyses of childhood and adult memory, Freud remarked that “no psychologic theory has yet been able to account for the connection between the fundamental phenomena of

⁵⁰ David Lowenthal, *The Past is a Foreign Country* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 212.

⁵¹ Pierre Nora, “Between Memory and History: *Les Lieux de Mémoire*,” *Representations* no. 26 (Spring 1989): 8.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 9.

remembering and forgetting.”⁵³ The task of memory studies, however, does not involve the search for a universal model of human memory, as has been the case for those like Freud, but rather entails an understanding of the determinative role that social factors play in the processes of remembering and forgetting.

The early intellectual thrust in the advancement of memory studies comes not from psychologists and historians, but from a sociologist by the name of Maurice Halbwachs, the “starting point for every scholar of memory.”⁵⁴ Unlike Freud’s goal to create a model for understanding what he called conscious and unconscious memories, Halbwachs believes that individual memories are shaped in social contexts, made even more meaningful by the shared experiences of a group.⁵⁵ In his words, memory should be defined as “a collective function.”⁵⁶

In the 1930s, Halbwachs studied family traditions, religious pilgrimages and communities to demonstrate that individual memories find meaning and significance only in relation to a society’s concerns and views. He argued that individuals fashioned their memories in the present, through the aid of group recollections, thereby giving shape to what he termed “collective memory.” The analysis of collective and individual memory now stands at the forefront of memory studies, tracing its origins to sociological, psychological and historical understandings of memory and history. An interdisciplinary approach to the study of “memory” and “history” thus informs this dissertation.

This approach does not advocate a psychological model of human memory, or

⁵³ Quoted in A.A. Brill, ed., *The Basic Writings of Sigmund Freud* (New York: The Modern Library, 1965), 95.

⁵⁴ Confino, 1392.

⁵⁵ Patrick H. Hutton, “Collective Memory and Collective Mentalities: The Halbwachs-Ariès Connection,” *Historical Reflections/Reflexions Historiques* 15, no. 2 (1988): 313-314.

⁵⁶ Quoted in Lewis A. Coser, ed., *Maurice Halbwachs on Collective Memory* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1992), 183.

seek an objectified view of the past in trying to understand the impact of the war in the Pacific. Nor does this approach belittle the features and differences that underscore professional studies on memory and history; psychiatric and medical studies of the brain, for example, are important and necessary in the study of pathology, neurology and other clinical functions. As Marita Sturken observes, there is “so much traffic across the borders of cultural memory and history that in many cases it may be futile to maintain a distinction between them. Yet there are times when those distinctions are important in understanding political intent, when memories are asserted specifically outside of or in response to historical narratives.”⁵⁷ In this respect, this dissertation posits “memory and history as *entangled* rather than oppositional.”⁵⁸ This project recognizes, moreover, that the production of knowledge about the past “is always enmeshed in the exercise of power and is always accompanied by elements of repression.”⁵⁹

In the study of Pacific Islanders’ involvement in the war, as well as their remembrances of it, one must consider that memory and history also function as processes that exert power in shaping *how* the past is constructed, represented and interpreted. Pacific Islander experiences and remembrances of the war present much in terms of trying to understand the politics of historical remembrance and erasure, especially since many of the societies draw from oral traditions rather than written ones. As Jacques Le Goff notes, “it is societies whose social memory is primarily oral or which are in the process of establishing a written collective memory that offer us the best chance of understanding this struggle for domination over remembrance and tradition,

⁵⁷ Marita Sturken, *Tangled Memories: The Vietnam War, the AIDS Epidemic, and the Politics of Remembering* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 5.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 5.

⁵⁹ Lisa Yoneyama, *Hiroshima Traces: Time, Space, and the Dialectics of Memory* (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press, 1999), 27.

this manipulation of memory.”⁶⁰ The rise of World War II commemorations in the Mariana Islands, the general subject of this dissertation, provides an opportunity to explore the politics of remembrance among one oral and two written societies: the indigenous Chamorros on the one hand, and the Japanese and Americans on the other.

THE POLITICS OF COMMEMORATION

The power and reach of national and local identity, collective and individual memory, and colonial and indigenous history can be revealed in the study of commemorations. Commemorations, in this respect, can be read as “mnemonic technique[s] for localizing collective memory” and can be studied as a means to revisit and rethink current theoretical notions of war, memory and history.⁶¹ This dissertation specifically employs John R. Gillis’ definition of commemorative activity as a social and political process, entailing “the coordination of individual and group memories, whose results may appear consensual when they are in fact the product of processes of intense contest, struggle, and, in some instances, annihilation.”⁶² This concept of commemorative activity, Gillis reminds scholars, derives from twentieth-century understandings of commemorations. But commemorations are by no means unique to one society, geographical locale, or time period.

Commemorations are as varied as the memories and histories they represent. In nineteenth-century Europe, for example, commemorations served the interests of “fallen kings and martyred revolutionary leaders” of monarchical societies, such as

⁶⁰ Jacques Le Goff, *History and Memory*, trans. Steven Rendall and Elizabeth Claman (New York: Columbia University Press, 1992), 98.

⁶¹ Hutton, 315.

⁶² John R. Gillis, “Memory and Identity: The History of a Relationship,” in *Commemorations: The Politics of National Identity*, ed. John R. Gillis (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996), 5.

France.⁶³ The commemorations focused on men of the clergy and aristocracy, tributes to the elite members of a society. As Gillis states, “national commemorations were largely the preserve of elite males, the designated carriers of progress.”⁶⁴ Since that time period, military cemeteries, pilgrimages, monuments and other kinds of commemorative activities and structures have emerged throughout Europe and America. The gendered and social dynamics of these commemorative activities emphasized the place of elite *men* in the formation or disintegration of nations, as well as inscribed histories for the people premised on lives of these various leaders. Women therefore occupied marginal spaces in the commemoration of events and individuals. The role of women, writes Gillis, “was largely allegorical....The figure of Liberty [for example] came to stand in both France and the United States as a symbol of national identity, but the history of real women was systematically forgotten.”⁶⁵ “It was not until after the Second World War,” continues Gillis, “that national commemoration began to alter.”⁶⁶ The widespread destruction that ensued and the tremendous political and economic changes that occurred throughout the world greatly affected the content and style of commemorative activities.

In terms of style, parades rapidly replaced pilgrimages as the primary memorial activity. Aspects of mourning that first transpired in World War I lingered into World War II, again suppressing the rank and class of the fallen in favor of acts of collective bereavement.⁶⁷ Veterans, the survivors of war, also became more glorified than common soldiers of past wars. Further, as Gillis suggests, the construction of “living memorials,”

⁶³ Ibid., 9.

⁶⁴ Ibid., 10.

⁶⁵ Ibid., 10.

⁶⁶ Ibid., 12.

⁶⁷ Jay Winter, *Sites of Memory, Sites of Mourning: The Great War in European Cultural History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 227.

such as parks and sports stadiums, proliferated in honor of civilians lost in the war.⁶⁸

These social forms of celebrating and mourning, as well as architectural innovations in monument development, again transformed the meaning of commemorative activities.

Gradually, the commemorations shifted, though did not lose entirely, their focus from the memories of “elite” individuals to the memories of cultural, national and religious groups.

Some did not even commemorate World War II, or at least in ways comparable to the commemoration of it in Europe. In Southeast Asia, for example, Wang Gungwu asserts that people there did not “seem to be keen to remember the war. Compared with the range of writings by the Europeans about the war in Europe, it is obvious that the people in this region either do not wish to remember, or do not feel as intensely about their experiences.”⁶⁹ Many indigenous peoples of this region did not possess any dominant memory of their wartime occupiers, the Japanese, as antagonists of war. Consequently, they did not collectively resent the Japanese. As Gungwu explains, this “was partly because the Japanese had been skillful in the discriminatory policy they had devised to support the claim that they had launched the war to rescue the local peoples from Western colonialism.”⁷⁰

The perceived sense of liberation from Western colonialism shared by some people in Southeast Asia gave rise to “prospects of nationhood to which they could look forward.”⁷¹ Indonesian cooperation with the Japanese, for example, was “the highest form of patriotism because it advanced Indonesian nationalism” and opposed further

⁶⁸ Gillis 1996, 13.

⁶⁹ Wang Gungwu, “Memories of War: World War II in Asia,” in *War and Memory in Malaysia and Singapore*, ed. P. Lim Pui Huen and Diana Wong (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2000), 14.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 19.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 20.

Dutch colonization of Southeast Asia.⁷² The general lack of national commemorations of World War II in Southeast Asia further demonstrates the degree to which memories of the war are influenced by the politics of the past and the present. Still, the proliferation of war commemorations is now a global phenomenon.

Four features best describe the recent internationalization of these commemorations.⁷³ First, the debates encircling the commemoration of the Shoah, otherwise known as the Holocaust, constitute the most apparent transnational manifestation of war remembrance and commemoration.⁷⁴ As Dominick LaCapra notes, the “recent past has been marked by the proliferation of museums, monuments, and memorials dedicated to the Holocaust.”⁷⁵ The three other indications for the increase in global commemorative activities include the rise in anniversary commemorations of various wars, legal demands for redressing wartime injustices and injuries, and civil strife in former Soviet territories. With regard to the latter indicator on civil wars, the very continuation of wars—ethnic, nationalist or religious—creates the conditions for future forms of remembrance and erasure, legal debate and reparation.

At stake in the study of these commemorative activities of war are rituals of national identification, collective and individual mourning, and familial life-stories of war. These studies reveal that the nation-state, as much as the individual or group,

⁷² David Joel Steinberg, *Philippine Collaboration in World War II* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan, 1967), 15.

⁷³ T.G. Ashplant, Graham Dawson and Michael Roper, “The Politics of War Memory and Commemoration: Contexts, Structures and Dynamics,” in *The Politics of War Memory and Commemoration*, ed. T.G. Ashplant, Graham Dawson and Michael Roper (London and New York: Routledge, 2000), 1-5.

⁷⁴ In the Hebrew language, *shoah* means “great disaster.” For a fuller treatment of the critical distinctions in terms used to describe the German persecution of Jews in World War II, see Omer Bartov, “Antisemitism, the Holocaust, and Reinterpretations of National Socialism,” in *The Holocaust and History: The Known, the Unknown, the Disputed, and the Reexamined*, ed. Michael Berenbaum and Abraham J. Peck (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1998), 75-98.

⁷⁵ Dominick LaCapra, *History and Memory after Auschwitz* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1998), 10.

controls and shapes the means by which peoples and institutions remember wars. Through a close attention to the politics of institutional and personal remembrances of war, one can grasp better not only the social construction of collective and individual memories of war, but also understand the *competing histories* upon which such memories are built. The increasing variety of political, national and personal expressions from which to commemorate or contest war and the growing internationalization of these activities certainly indicate the significance of the study of war memory and commemoration. This case applies as well to the Pacific region where various war commemorations have also emerged since the end of World War II.

In the Pacific, war commemorative activities have been influenced by narratives of defeat and triumph, death and survival. Pilgrimages of mourning, the construction of war and peace memorials, ceremonial speeches and a whole host of commemorative activities have taken place in this region.⁷⁶ The most internationally visible commemorations of the war in the Pacific include the remembrance of its “beginning” and its “end”: America’s Pearl Harbor of 1941 and Japan’s Hiroshima of 1945. These studies criticize both the United States and Japan for commemorating the war in terms of victory and victimization, which often disregard competing and lesser-known memories of the war.⁷⁷ By calling into question the dominant narratives of Pearl Harbor and

⁷⁶ James West Turner and Suzanne Falgout, “Time Traces: Cultural Memory and World War II in Pohnpei,” *The Contemporary Pacific* 14, no. 1 (Spring 2002): 119.

⁷⁷ John W. Dower, “Three Narratives of Our Humanity,” in *History Wars: The Enola Gay and Other Battles for the American Past*, ed. Edward T. Linenthal and Tom Engelhardt (New York: Henry Holt and Company, Inc., 1996), 66. Dower states that the United States has repeatedly constructed narratives of heroism and value, giving shape to a discourse he calls “triumphalism.” With regard to Japan, Dower argues that *higaisha ishiki*, or “victim consciousness,” has developed among Japanese since the American atomic bombing of Hiroshima on 6 August 1945. Yet he reminds readers that Japan was not solely responsible for presenting itself as a nation of victims. As he indicates, the “soft-pedaling of Japan’s war responsibility was an American *policy*, and not merely a peculiarly Japanese manifestation of nationalistic

Hiroshima, respectively, these scholars hope to publicize marginalized remembrances of the war.⁷⁸ In doing so, as in the case of the Smithsonian Institution's 1995 exhibition of the *Enola Gay*, they find that challenging dominant views of the war often leads to politically and morally charged discussions over interpreting the past.⁷⁹ Although the Smithsonian Institution eventually commemorated an American celebratory view of the airplane and the atom bomb, the debates surrounding the *Enola Gay* demonstrate that the exhibit drew its meaning from cross-cultural notions of war, memory and history.

Elsewhere, in areas like Micronesia, "most islands quickly instituted commemorative holidays marking the local end of the war."⁸⁰ "Liberation Day" celebrations emerged, for instance, in such areas as the Marshall Islands and Pohnpei to commemorate the arrival of American military forces and the surrender of the Japanese military in 1944. Interestingly, neither island society used commemorations to encourage active remembrances of the war. In the Marshall Islands, religious prayer, feasting and field games characterized Liberation Day, but did not recreate the war "as a part of national or local history."⁸¹ For those in Pohnpei, Liberation Day's "primary focus was

forgetfulness. Downplaying prewar Japanese militarism, sanitizing Japanese atrocities, minimizing the horror of war in general—including the horror of Hiroshima and Nagasaki—was a bilateral agenda" (68).

⁷⁸ For more on the multiple interpretations, commemorative activities, and operations associated with Pearl Harbor, see Geoffrey M. White, "Moving History: The Pearl Harbor Films," in *Perilous Memories: The Asia-Pacific War(s)*, ed. T. Fujitani, Geoffrey M. White, and Lisa Yoneyama (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2001), 267-295.

⁷⁹ The Smithsonian Institution exhibition of the *Enola Gay*, the B-29 Superfortress known for dropping an atomic bomb on Hiroshima, culminated in intense debates between United States government officials, museum curators, historians, war veterans and peace activists as to how to represent the role of the atom bomb in ending World War II. For more on this exhibit, which eventually resulted in portraying a celebratory and triumphal view of the *Enola Gay*, see Philip Nobile, ed., *Judgment at the Smithsonian* (New York: Marlowe and Company, 1995), Michael J. Hogan, ed., *Hiroshima in History and Memory* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), and Edward T. Linenthal and Tom Engelhardt, eds., *History Wars: The "Enola Gay" and Other Battles for the American Past* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1996).

⁸⁰ Poyer, Falgout and Carucci 2001, 338.

⁸¹ Lin Poyer, *Ethnography and Ethnohistory of Taroa Island, Republic of the Marshall Islands* (San Francisco: Micronesian Endowment for Historic Preservation, Republic of the Marshall Islands and U.S. National Park Service, 1997), 67.

on shore and field athletic competitions,” and not on indigenous attempts to recall the war.⁸² Although commemorative activities usually mediated notions of memory and history, the commemoration of the war in the Marshall Islands and Pohnpei showed that such mediations were not as significant for the people of these areas.

On Kosrae, commemorative activities were “deliberately scripted so as to teach” a war history of survival.⁸³ World War II commemorations in the Solomon Islands have increasingly become associated with narratives of American heroism and valor.⁸⁴ And in the Mariana Islands, Chamorros “on Guam, and to a lesser extent on Saipan, have long made something of a memory industry of the war.”⁸⁵ The mere presence of commemorative activities, therefore, does not suggest that all island societies participated in collective acts of war remembrance, nor do such commemorative activities imply that island societies conformed to only one method of remembering the war.

In large part, indigenous memories of the war are not limited to national, international or local commemorations of the war. In fact, the principle mediums of conveying indigenous experiences and memories of the war include storytelling, legends, songs, art and chants. For example, songs, like all of these mediums, are often appreciated for their “historical weight” by Pacific Islanders and scholars alike.⁸⁶ These traditionally regarded modes of retaining indigenous memories of the war are also supplemented by such “non-traditional” mediums as radio broadcasts, video and audio

⁸² Turner and Falgout, 119.

⁸³ Poyer, Falgout and Carucci 2001, 338.

⁸⁴ Geoffrey M. White, “Remembering Guadalcanal: National Identity and Transnational Memory-Making,” *Public Culture* 7 (1995): 531.

⁸⁵ Poyer, Falgout and Carucci 2001, 337.

⁸⁶ Lamont Lindstrom and Geoffrey M. White, “Singing History: Island Songs from the Pacific War,” in *Artistic Heritage in a Changing Pacific*, ed. Philip J.C. Dark and Roger G. Rose (Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press, 1993), 193.

recordings, and government policies.⁸⁷ Through such mediums, Pacific Islanders recall their memories as survivors, couriers, soldiers, laborers and coast watchers. These memories are then shared, across generations, with friends and family. However, not all memories are conveyed to different generations, let alone in public spaces of commemorative activities. Some memories are tightly hidden because of their violent, disrespectful, or shameful content. For example, memories of indigenous women who served as “comfort women” for the Japanese colonial and military administrations are not easily disseminated across generations and among outsiders.⁸⁸ Under certain circumstances, though, memories of comfort women in the Philippines, Chuuk, and the Mariana Islands may be shared and understood, but in ways respectful and sensitive to the women and indigenous people themselves.⁸⁹

Overall, many Pacific Islanders recall a period of conflict prompted by foreign politics and agendas, as well as a time for reflecting upon the impact of colonial rule and

⁸⁷ Turner and Falgout, 119.

⁸⁸ Memories regarding “comfort women” in the Pacific are largely repressed for cultural reasons. For some island societies, the general subject of sex is guarded from public exposure, scrutiny and ridicule. On the other hand, sexuality can be openly discussed by Pacific Islanders as gossip, for example. Overall, though, it is challenging to discuss such emotionally-charged or “shameful” topics as rape, abortion, and prostitution. This problem in trying to understand wartime female agency is compounded by a historiography of war that privileges the exploration of military policy and strategy rather than the examination of the human and social dimensions of war. Furthermore, few Japanese military records, if any, exist that document the conscription of comfort women in the Pacific. For assessments of women and gender issues in the Pacific, see Caroline Ralston, “The Study of Women in the Pacific,” *The Contemporary Pacific* 4, no. 1 (Spring 1992): 162-175; and Margaret Jolly and Martha Macintyre, eds., *Family and Gender in the Pacific: Domestic Contradictions and the Colonial Impact* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1989).

⁸⁹ Revisions to Japanese textbooks on World War II, legal demands for formal apologies and war-time reparations, American anti-nuclear protests, and organized peace meetings for war veterans all illustrate a critical space through which scholars can begin to understand marginal memories of the war by the comfort women of Asia and the Pacific. For more on these issues as they pertain to the Asian region, see Gerald Figal, “Waging Peace on Okinawa,” *Critical Asian Studies* 33, no. 1 (2001): 37-69; and Ellen H. Hammond, “Politics of the War and Public History: Japan’s Own Museum Controversy,” *Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars* 27, no. 2 (April - June 1995): 56-59.

race relations in the region.⁹⁰ Japanese wartime militarism, for example, left a negative imprint on some indigenous memories of the war, yet a nostalgia for prewar Japanese rule still exists in many former Japanese-mandated islands in Micronesia. Americans continue to be recalled as “generous” people because of their donations of food—a key cultural item of exchange and reciprocation in the Pacific—during times of struggle and famine. But no matter what generic representation might be used to characterize wartime relations in the Pacific, it remains clear that indigenous memories of and social relations with colonial authorities differed from one setting to another. With the rise in commemorative activities in the Pacific Islands, these issues regarding cross-cultural relations, varying indigenous and colonial memories of war, and conflicting interpretations of the past come to the fore.

CULTURES OF COMMEMORATION

World War II, and the subject of war itself, attracts the attention of scholars from a wide variety of fields. Military historians, feminists, cultural historians, anthropologists, sociologists, memory scholars and others all interpret differently the subjects of war, memory and history. The utilitarian significance of combat strategies, the sexism and patriarchal structures of militarism, the collective memories of war survivors and their descendents, and the politics of war commemoration constitute a thematic sampling of what these scholars critically assess. Of course, these scholars and their schools of thought likewise become subject to different forms of critique and assessment. They have limitations, as all fields do. This dissertation relies, in part, on the pragmatic, intellectual and theoretical insights of these fields of study. Its purpose is

⁹⁰ Geoffrey M. White, “Preface,” in *Remembering the Pacific War*, ed. Geoffrey M. White (Honolulu: Center for Pacific Islands Studies, University of Hawai‘i, 1991), vi.

to produce a social history of World War II commemorations in the Mariana Islands, examining the politics of collective and individual memory, imperial and indigenous identity, and colonial and indigenous history.

In doing so, this project aims to demonstrate three interrelated goals. The first objective is to assert that “culture” functions as a process of local and global identification and differentiation. This is an important consideration, given that group cultural labels sometimes homogenize generational and intra-cultural variations and divisions. As Arif Dirlik explains, in the context of indigenous peoples, “the very notions of *Indian* or *Hawai’ian* (sic) that are utilized to describe collective identities take for granted categories invented by colonizers and imposed upon the colonized in remapping and redefining diverse peoples.”⁹¹ However, the reification of cultural categories does not come as a result of colonization alone. Notions of cultural identity, solidarity and difference are also shaped by anthropological concepts of race, tradition, and culture.⁹² With regard to the Pacific, Jocelyn Linnekin argues that conventional concepts of culture “have in common an essentialist project: they ... rely on and advance the proposition that a core or essence of customs and values is handed down from one generation to another, and that this core defines a group’s distinctive cultural identity.”⁹³ What results is the objectification of culture, whereby notions of Pacific Islander cultural identity remain fixed and resistant to change and adaptation.⁹⁴

⁹¹ Arif Dirlik, “The Past as Legacy and Project: Postcolonial Criticism in the Perspective of Indigenous Historicism,” in *Contemporary Native American Political Issues*, ed. Troy R. Johnson (Walnut Creek, London and New Delhi: Altamira Press, 1999), 77.

⁹² See, for example, Eric Hobsbawm, “Introduction: Inventing Traditions,” in *The Invention of Tradition*, ed. Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 1-14.

⁹³ Jocelyn Linnekin, “On the Theory and Politics of Cultural Construction in the Pacific,” *Oceania* 62, n. 4 (1992): 251.

⁹⁴ Jocelyn Linnekin, “The Politics of Culture in the Pacific,” in *Cultural Identity and Ethnicity in the Pacific*, ed. Jocelyn Linnekin and Lin Poyer (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 1990), 162-163.

As an alternative to reductive notions of cultural change and continuity, this dissertation posits a constructionist view of culture. A constructionist view of culture, writes Linnekin, implies that culture is a “selective representation of the past, fashioned in the present, responsive to contemporary priorities and agendas, and politically instrumental.”⁹⁵ The following chapters explore colonial and indigenous constructions of culture in the twentieth-century, with a focus on the ways in which colonial loyalties affect cultural relationships and memories of the war in the Mariana Islands. Geoffrey M. White’s thesis that competing memories of World War II in the Solomon Islands give shape to historical narratives of “loyalty” and “liberation” especially applies to this dissertation’s study of war, memory and history.⁹⁶ Exploring the fiftieth anniversary of the war, White argues that concepts of loyalty and liberation have produced idealized images of the “national subject” in memories and histories of the war.⁹⁷ Moreover, these concepts have helped to develop dominant paradigms in the remembrance of the war in places like the Solomon Islands, where triumphal narratives of American and Allied victory sometimes subsume dissonant indigenous memories of the war.⁹⁸ This dissertation invokes White’s thesis, examining the “internal tensions among contending memories or the flow of images and image-making practices across national boundaries.”⁹⁹

Chapter 2 draws from White’s argument in its discussion of the politics of Japanese and American colonialism and indigenous cultural agency in the Mariana Islands. This chapter specifically explores colonial and indigenous efforts to produce the

⁹⁵ Linnekin 1992, 251.

⁹⁶ White 1995, 531.

⁹⁷ Ibid., 552.

⁹⁸ Ibid., 552.

⁹⁹ Ibid., 531.

“loyal Chamorro subject”—that is, one who is simultaneously embraced and renounced as a member of the American and Japanese nation-states. The setting takes place during what Chamorros call *antes gi tiempon guerra*, or “the time before the war.” Many Chamorros, especially the older wartime generations, remember this era in terms of peace and peaceful social relations. “Life was pleasantly simple,” recalled the late Chamorro educator Pedro C. Sanchez.¹⁰⁰ Indeed, Chamorros often romanticize rural life and idealize the American, German and Japanese colonial administrations of the early twentieth-century. Some island societies affected by the war share this perception, many of whom divide time into two categories: before the war or after the war.¹⁰¹ Chapter 2 shows that prewar memories of peace actually work to conceal what was, in fact, a violent era of American and Japanese colonialism in the Mariana Islands. This prewar nostalgia actually suppresses histories of “Asian” and “Western” *wartime* expansion and colonial rule in the Mariana Islands, most notably histories of the Spanish-American War in 1898 and World War I in 1914.

Chapter 2 partly fulfills the second goal of this dissertation, which is to show that “colonialism” operates in ways attentive to the needs of the colonizer and the colonized. This position on colonialism recognizes the violent and forceful histories of political conquest, religious conversion and economic subjugation that have come to define, in part, the historiography of colonialism and resistance. Chapter 2, and the chapters that follow it, also understand colonialism as an ambivalent process of control and resistance,

¹⁰⁰ Pedro C. Sanchez, *Uncle Sam, Please Come Back to Guam* (Tamuning and Agaña: Pacific Island Publishing Company and Star Press, 1979), 4.

¹⁰¹ Lindstrom and White 1989, 22.

adaptation and mutation on the part of the colonized and the colonizer.¹⁰² As Vicente M. Diaz argues, the sometimes ambivalent character of colonialism in the Mariana Islands can be described as a “two-way flow of power that constrains but also furnishes possible modes (and often competing levels) of indigenous expression and survival only insofar as the layered expressions are themselves constituted in a two-way process of historical and political action and reaction between the colonizer and the colonized.”¹⁰³ This dissertation adopts Diaz’s theoretical premise on the various “flows” of power in the relationships among the colonized and the colonizer. The goal is to examine some of the parallels and differences among American and Japanese forms of colonialism, as well as the various adaptations to and resistance of these colonialisms on the part of different and divergent Chamorro political identities.

Chapter 3 thus broadens this discussion on the politics of colonialism and indigenous cultural agency with its examination of World War II in the Mariana Islands. It surveys the history of this war in the archipelago, paying attention to the motives and consequences of wartime colonial policies and indigenous cultural politics. In its exploration of Japanese and American wartime invasion and occupational policies, chapter 3 considers the agent/victim dichotomy as “not mutually exclusive categories but contextually signified roles.”¹⁰⁴ As David Chappell elaborates, “everyone is acted upon every day, no matter how independent they may pretend to be. Victims need not be

¹⁰² Homi K. Bhaba describes the ambivalence associated with colonialism in terms of “mimicry” and “mockery,” whereby the power of colonialism is both reinforced and disavowed by the colonial subjects’ efforts to imitate and mock colonial authority. See his book, *The Location of Culture* (London and New York: Routledge, 1994).

¹⁰³ Vicente M. Diaz, “Repositioning the Missionary: The Beatification of Blessed Diego De Luis SanVitores and Chamorro Cultural and Political History in Guam,” (PhD dissertation, University of California at Santa Cruz, 1992), 35.

¹⁰⁴ David A. Chappell, “Active Agents versus Passive Victims: Decolonized Historiography or Problematic Paradigm?” *The Contemporary Pacific: A Journal of Island Affairs* 7, no. 2 (Fall 1995): 316.

passive, nor the passive weak, nor actors free agents, for history to happen.”¹⁰⁵ This chapter treats indigenous agency in terms of everyday survival in the Mariana Islands, set against the grain of Japanese and American wartime colonialism. Further, as a matter of clarification, the term “imperialism” will be used interchangeably with “colonialism.” This is not to conflate the etymological roots and distinct historical developments of each term, but to emphasize their contested processes of colonial expansion and ideology on the one hand, and indigenous resistance and agency on the other.¹⁰⁶

Chapter 4 then examines the aftermath of the war in the Mariana Islands. It asks: if loyalty and liberation functioned as key concepts in the narrating of colonial histories in the time before the war, how would these concepts function in its aftermath? This chapter addresses this question alongside the issue of the American “rehabilitation” project in the Mariana Islands. Placed within the emerging era of the cold war, it examines American post-war expansionist policies in the Pacific, the displacement of village populations in Guam, and the establishment of an American internment compound for civilians in Camp Susupe, Saipan, among other examples of American rehabilitation efforts.

Chapter 4 intends to show that the American rehabilitation project, like the war itself, profoundly affected Chamorro perceptions of themselves and of their colonial “Others.” This chapter asserts that both the war and postwar eras created the conceptual foundation, indeed a contested collective memory of the past, through which future remembrances of the war would draw direction, value and purpose.

In this respect, the third goal of this dissertation is to argue that people actively

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., 315.

¹⁰⁶ For a brief overview of imperialism, see Wolfgang J. Mommsen, *Theories of Imperialism*, trans. P.S. Falla (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982).

engage in the remembrance and commemoration of the past; that is to say, that everyday people “make history,” as much as they are made by it. Chapters 5 and 6 intend to show that Chamorros, Japanese and Americans, of varying generations, continue to remember the war and to interpret it in ways they find appropriate and meaningful. These chapters examine the development of World War II commemorations in Guam and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI), respectively. Particular emphasis is placed on the emergence of the commemoration called “Liberation Day.” Both the CNMI and Guam celebrate Liberation Day, though on different days and for different reasons.

In the CNMI, as formerly mandated islands of Japan, Liberation Day commemorates July 4, 1946 to mark the time when American military forces released Chamorros and Refaluwasch from Camp Susupe, a temporary holding compound not only for the indigenous population, but also for Japanese, Okinawan and Korean civilian and military populations.¹⁰⁷ Guam, a former American possession prior to the war, witnessed no large-scale systematic internment of the indigenous population. Instead, the

¹⁰⁷ The Refaluwasch, also known as “Carolinians,” are descendents of the indigenous peoples of Woleai, Lamotrek, Elato and Satawal atolls in the Carolines, which are located south of the Mariana Islands. For centuries, the peoples of this region navigated to the Mariana Islands, as did others, interacting and trading with the Chamorros. The onset of Spanish colonialism in the 1600s severed most of these relations. From 1815 to the mid 1800s, the Refaluwasch migrated, once again, to the Mariana Islands. The purpose was to seek shelter from typhoons and earthquakes that had devastated their atolls, and to acquire new resources and partnerships with the Spanish colonial government. Seeing interest in using Refaluwasch methods of navigation to travel throughout the Marianas archipelago, the Spanish government granted permission to the Refaluwasch to settle in Saipan, Tinian and Guam. Today, the CNMI legally recognizes both the Refaluwasch and Chamorros as “indigenous people.” In the American territory of Guam, the Refaluwasch receive no comparable form of political identity and sovereignty; instead, their rights are premised more closely to U.S. federal, constitutional and local governmental laws than to indigenous notions of political representation and authority. Indeed, the various issues and implications of Refaluwasch migration and settlement in the Mariana Islands beg closer study. However, a cross-cultural analysis of Chamorro and Refaluwasch relations is beyond the scope of this project. For a cinematic overview of Refaluwasch history in the Mariana Islands, see *Lieweila: A Micronesian Story*. 1998. 57 min. New York: First Run Icarus Films, a film produced by Cinta Matagolai Kaipat and Beret E. Strong. Also, see William H. Alkire, “The Carolinians of Saipan and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands,” *Pacific Affairs* 57, no. 2 (Summer 1984): 270-283.

Chamorros of Guam commemorate Liberation Day to recall the landing of American forces in Guam on July 21, 1944, “liberating” the indigenous population from Japanese war-time rule and indicating the return of American colonialism. Chapters 5 and 6 intend to demonstrate that the colonial and indigenous memories that inform these commemorations of the war are premised, in fact, on the politics of the past, as much as the politics of the present.¹⁰⁸

Yet commemorations of the war also remember to forget certain events, issues, and experiences, as they, too, are fraught with the politics of exclusion and erasure. Chapter 7 pursues the issue of collective amnesia in the Mariana Islands, by examining the “forgotten” history of Japan’s conscription of indigenous labor in wartime Guam, from 1941 to 1944. This chapter discusses the roles of those who could be understood as indigenous “collaborators” with Japan’s wartime empire, namely Chamorro interpreters, “comfort women,” and police assistants. Guam is chosen as the site of study because this is where the greatest contact among “Japanized” and “Americanized” Chamorros occurred. This chapter aims to demonstrate that the recruitment of Chamorro collaborators in Japanese-occupied Guam created the conditions to fragment further the intra-cultural relations among Chamorros, illustrating the violence associated with colonial loyalties and disloyalties in the time of war.

As a conclusion, chapter 8 revisits the key themes explored in this social history of the construction of memories of World War II. It raises questions about the future of commemorative activities in the Mariana Islands, given the changing politics of colonialism and indigenous cultural agency. As a means to address these issues, this

¹⁰⁸ Michel-Rolph Trouillot, *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1995), 23.

chapter explores the life and death of Father Jesus Baza Dueñas, a Chamorro priest who worked in Japanese-occupied Guam. Taken as an ethnographic and mnemonic figure, this chapter examines Father Dueñas in light of the emergence of war commemorations since 1945 throughout the Mariana Islands. Chapter 8 intends to demonstrate that the past is never past, that people consciously engage in the making of history. The story of Father Dueñas provides a poetic rumination on the study of war histories and histories of war in the Mariana Islands and elsewhere.

It is through this kind of social history of war that this dissertation hopes to encourage more studies on the politics of colonialism, indigenous cultural agency and commemoration. Given the already understudied histories of American and Japanese colonialisms in postcolonial studies of empire, the urgency to study these issues in comparative *and* indigenous frameworks becomes readily apparent.¹⁰⁹ As Amy Kaplan observes, the “absence of the United States in the postcolonial study of culture and imperialism curiously reproduces American exceptionalism from without.”¹¹⁰ The United States, Kaplan asserts, is either “absorbed into a general notion of ‘the West,’ represented by Europe, or it stands for a monolithic West.”¹¹¹ Similarly, a “conspicuously missing element in the burgeoning critique of colonialism is the lack of any concerted reference to Japan, the only non-Western colonial power that, even in the postcolonial era, still situates itself ambivalently in the West/non-West divide.”¹¹²

¹⁰⁹ For more on this subject, see the special issue of *The Contemporary Pacific: A Journal of Island Affairs* 13, no. 2 (Fall 2001), titled “Native Pacific Cultural Studies on the Edge” and edited by Vicente M. Diaz and Kēhaulani Kauanui.

¹¹⁰ Amy Kaplan, “‘Left Alone with America’: The Absence of Empire in the Study of American Culture,” in *Cultures of United States Imperialism*, ed. Amy Kaplan and Donald E. Pease (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1993), 17.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, 17.

¹¹² Leo T.S. Ching, *Becoming ‘Japanese’: Colonial Taiwan and the Politics of Identity Formation* (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press, 2001), 29-30.

This dissertation calls for frameworks which can incorporate, like the novel *Mariquita*, broad areas of study and, at the same time, consider the role of indigenous actors and agents in the narration of war, memory and history.¹¹³ It is important that such frameworks further interrogate and, ultimately, give a greater sense of depth and humanity to stories of the colonized and the colonizer. This form of dialogue raises its own set of theoretical and methodological problems that scholars are still attempting to understand. But it is an ongoing dialogue premised on the potential to think beyond conventionally perceived disciplinary boundaries, geographical areas, cultural systems, and political paradigms.¹¹⁴ This project intends to foster debate about these issues and, above all, about colonial and indigenous engagements with war, memory and history.

¹¹³ Vicente M. Diaz, "'To 'P' or Not to 'P?': Marking the Territory Between Pacific Islander and Asian American Studies," Forthcoming in the *Journal of American Asian Studies*, 5.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 7.

CHAPTER 2
NARRATING LOYALTY AND LIBERATION:
THE POLITICS OF COLONIALISM AND INDIGENOUS AGENCY IN THE
MARIANA ISLANDS

One cannot appreciate the memories and histories of World War II in the Mariana Islands without understanding the narrative devices, or concepts, which shape their meaning and purpose. In the time before the war, what Chamorros identify as “*antes gi tiempon guerra*,” a variety of concepts informed the nature of social, economic and political relations among Chamorros and their respective colonizers. Most notably, these concepts included, but were not limited to, notions of “loyalty” and “liberation.” As a working definition, loyalty signifies “an abiding disposition to act with others in support of a shared commitment.”¹ The etymological roots of loyalty stem from “law,” or the Latin *lex*, which has “also generated the French terms *loi* (law) and *loyauté* (loyalty).”² The idea of “liberation,” on the other hand, can be described as “the action of liberating or condition of being liberated.”³ The significance of these terms for this discussion primarily rests on the broad range through which they could have been implemented and interpreted by both the colonizer and the colonized not only in the Marianas, but in the colonized world of the early twentieth-century.

In attempting to establish colonial rule in Africa, Southeast Asia or the Pacific, colonial powers often resorted to acquiring the loyalty of its subjects, if not achieving outright political conquest through violence and conflict. A loyal, colonized society implied, superficially, an obedient and pacified population. As John Bodnar notes with

¹ Michael Waller and Andrew Linklater, “Introduction: Loyalty and the Post-national State,” in *Political Loyalty and the Nation-State*, ed. Michael Walker and Andrew Linklater (London and New York: Routledge, 2003), 224.

² George P. Fletcher, *Loyalty: An Essay on the Morality of Relationships* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), 62.

³ *The Oxford English Dictionary* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989), 884.

regard to the American context, the rhetoric of loyalty has been “invented as a form of social control.”⁴ Similarly, European missionaries promulgated the idea of “spiritual liberation” in an attempt to convert colonized peoples to Christianity, contributing, in turn, to the rise or demise of colonial rule.⁵ Historical developments of loyalty and liberation, as concepts of control and conversion, have thus varied in meaning and purpose over time. Yet these concepts find common ground in what Nicholas P. Dirks calls the process of “securing the nation-state,” that is, developing and maintaining state rule, class ruptures, world capitalism and even international political, cultural and economic hegemony.⁶

By no means, however, did the modern expansion of European rule and settlement in the colonial periphery signal a homogenous or uniquely Western colonial enterprise.⁷ As Nicholas Thomas asserts, “colonialism is not a unitary project but a fractured one, riddled with contradictions and exhausted as much by its own internal debates as by the resistance of the colonized.”⁸ As opposed to the citizenry, the colonized often resided, and still do, in states of political ambivalence and uncertainty,

⁴ John Bodnar, *Remaking America: Public Memory, Commemoration, and Patriotism in the Twentieth Century* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992), 17.

⁵ The politics of conversion—Christian, Islamic or otherwise—are particularly fraught with varying degrees of local and global appropriation, resistance and acculturation. For a compelling ethnography on the subject of conversion, see Jean and John Comaroff, *Of Revelation and Revolution: Christianity, Colonialism and Consciousness in South Africa*, vol. 1 (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1991).

⁶ Nicholas B. Dirks, “Introduction: Colonialism and Culture,” in *Colonialism and Culture*, ed. Nicholas B. Dirks (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1992), 4.

⁷ David Hanlon, “Patterns of Colonial Rule in Micronesia,” in *Tides of History: The Pacific Islands in the Twentieth Century*, ed. K.R. Howe, Robert C. Kiste and Brij V. Lal (Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press, 1994), 93.

⁸ Nicholas Thomas, *Colonialism’s Culture: Anthropology, Travel and Government* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), 51.

simultaneously recognized and renounced as members of colonial polities.⁹

Yet the questions remain: How did the colonial governments of Japan and the United States foster notions of loyalty among the Chamorros of the Mariana Islands and among its colonized subjects more generally? How did the historical development of the concepts of loyalty and liberation affect the social, political and economic fabric of indigenous and settler societies in the Mariana Islands? And how did the establishment of two competing notions of colonial loyalty affect the intra-cultural relations among Chamorros and, moreover, their sense of cultural agency and collectivity? This chapter explores these questions in an effort to bring greater context and meaning to the politics of Japanese and American colonialism in the Mariana Islands. The purpose is to examine the origins and impact of the concepts of loyalty and liberation among the Chamorro people in the time before the war.

THE POLITICS OF AMERICAN COLONIALISM IN GUAM

Irony resonates in Chamorro recollections of the time before the war. As noted previously in the introduction, Chamorros, especially those of the elder generation, romanticize the prewar past of the Mariana Islands, equating the time before the war with peace. Violence and conflict do not appear as dominant themes in these memories. But many Chamorros forget, or remember to forget, that this prewar past speaks to two equally significant wars: the Spanish-American War in 1898 and World War I in 1914. More importantly, these wars greatly contributed to the rise in American and Japanese colonial expansion and settlement in regions that extended beyond their national borders,

⁹ Edward LiPuma, "The Formation of Nation-States and National Cultures in Oceania," in *Nation Making: Emergent Identities in Postcolonial Melanesia*, ed. Robert J. Foster (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1998), 43.

geographically bridging Asia and the Pacific with the Americas and the Caribbean.¹⁰ In other words, these two wars helped to promote, at that time, debates about the economic, political and military value of colonial rule outside the demarcated territories of nineteenth-century Japan and the United States.¹¹

These wars, in short, introduced the Chamorros of the Mariana Islands to their new “Mother Countries.”¹² As Penelope Bordallo Hofschneider observes, Chamorros saw the Americans, and by extension, the Japanese, as filling “in a position established and held by the Spanish for two hundred and fifty years.”¹³ At the turn of the twentieth-century, Chamorros expressed no collective, inter-island affinity for “national” belonging to either Japan or the United States. As Michael Waller and Andrew Linklater state, new loyalties “lack strong emotional attachment until they have survived real tests and been hallowed by time—or have been sealed by a compact, formal or informal.”¹⁴ Loyalty to a nation, religion or ethnic group, moreover, “does not naturally find resonance within the hearts and minds of ordinary people.”¹⁵ The Spanish-American War and World War I generated the conditions for the United States and Japan, respectively, to introduce and attempt to make “natural” colonial loyalties among their colonized populations. Through their varied forms of governance, the United States and Japan strove to foster, in theory

¹⁰ Mark R. Peattie, “Introduction,” in *The Japanese Colonial Empire, 1895-1945*, ed. Ramon H. Myers and Mark R. Peattie (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), 18; Thomas Schoonover, *Uncle Sam's War of 1898 and the Origins of Globalization* (Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 2003), 34.

¹¹ As early as the late 1800s, debates emerged in Japan about the significance of *hokushin* (northern expansion) into Asia and *nanshin* (southern expansion) into the Pacific. Similarly, politicians and legal analysts debated the issue of American expansionism beyond California at the turn of the twentieth-century. For more on these debates, see Mark R. Peattie, *Nan'yō: The Rise and Fall of the Japanese in Micronesia, 1885-1945* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1988), 34-40; and Gary Lawson and Guy Seidman, *The Constitution of Empire: Territorial Expansion and American Legal History* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2004).

¹² Penelope Bordallo Hofschneider, *A Campaign for Political Rights on the Island of Guam, 1899 to 1950* (Saipan: Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas Division of Historic Preservation, 2001), 51.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 51.

¹⁴ Waller and Linklater, 13.

¹⁵ Bodnar, 17.

and praxis, loyalty and liberation as concepts of social control.

The Spanish-American War of 1898 signaled both the end and beginning of colonial rule in Guam, with Spain exiting the island and the United States entering it. Spain's loss in the war also led to the political separation of Guam from the northern Mariana Islands. With Guam in the hands of the United States Naval government, Germany acquired the Mariana Islands north of Guam, which included Rota, Tinian and Saipan.¹⁶ Germany purchased the northern Mariana Islands from Spain, along with Palau and the Caroline Islands, for five million dollars. Germany's interest in the economic potential of these islands as sites for the production of copra or the mining of phosphate rose as quickly as it fell. The onset of World War I in 1914 led to the dismantling of German rule in the Pacific region and to the introduction of Japanese overseas governance. The United States, though, obtained more than Guam.

In 1898, the United States also expanded its rule to the Philippines, eastern Sāmoa, and Hawai'i in the Pacific, as well as to Cuba and Puerto Rico in the Caribbean.¹⁷ The American government especially valued the Pacific Islands and atolls for their ability to support and sustain American naval and maritime activities in the region. The Navy erected a coaling station in Guam which served the refueling needs of visiting vessels on voyages of economic and military exploration and exchange. Elsewhere in the Pacific naval vessels made similar stops for provisions at naval stations located in eastern Sāmoa,

¹⁶ The United States Navy assumed control of Guam, the southernmost island, while Germany ruled the northern islands, from Rota to Farallon de Pajaros. This chapter focuses solely on American and Japanese colonial rule in the Marianas, as extensive comments on the German colonial period are beyond the scope of this project. On the political separation of the Mariana Islands in the early twentieth century, see Don A. Farrell, "The Partition of the Marianas: A Diplomatic History, 1898-1919," *ISLA: A Journal of Micronesian Studies* 2, no. 2 (Dry Season, 1994): 273-301. Here, Farrell argues that the United States did not acquire the entire Mariana Islands partly because it did not see any immediate economic or military benefit in pursuing such an endeavor.

¹⁷ Warner Levi, "American Attitudes toward Pacific Islands, 1914-1919," *The Pacific Historical Review* 17, no. 1 (1948): 55.

the Philippines, and Hawai'i.

While American policy in the Pacific showed a decidedly militarist character, neither the United States government nor its military services fortified or militarized the islands beyond Hawai'i's shores. The United States saw no immediate and pressing need to do so. Numerous military strategists and diplomats reassured themselves that the Hawaiian archipelago provided the sufficient land mass and distance needed to shield the American mainland from potential Asian enemies, more particularly, Japan. Although many worried about the military capabilities of the Japanese, American officials quelled such fears by arguing that Japan posed no substantial military threat. In the time before the war, the United States Navy saw the western Pacific region as an area for military maneuvering, economic exploration and political posturing.

On Guam, the American Naval government attempted to impart to Chamorros an awareness of American civic notions of economic and political development, while nonetheless ensuring that Chamorros attain only token and trivial positions of political representation and authority.¹⁸ In replacing the previous Spanish colonial government, American naval authorities made no official proclamations about "liberating" Chamorros. Yet advocates for American expansion in the media, military and government often spoke in euphemisms to the contrary, supporting the immediate "liberation" of indigenous peoples in Cuba, the Philippines and Guam from Spanish "tyranny." The American media promoted, for example, the "conviction that only a war with Spain could free Cuba and thus fulfill the American obligation to spread freedom and end Old World

¹⁸ The Guam Congress, for example, was established in 1917, but the members therein only held advisory power to the Naval governor.

tyranny.”¹⁹ Other American military and government officials used the terms “‘liberate’ as a code for ‘occupy,’ and ‘pacify’ for ‘conquer’” in their descriptions of American colonial activities in the Pacific and the Caribbean.²⁰ In matters regarding relations with the Chamorros, however, the issue of loyalty “was consistently voiced during navy discussions over” the island.²¹

American loyalty in Guam, as Underwood argues, “didn’t spring up overnight. It was planted and cultivated by many individuals with many motives.”²² American colonial education, health policies, and economic projects attempted to garner the loyalties of Chamorros.²³ The American Naval government specifically sponsored various activities, such as speech contests and village parades, to acculturate Chamorros to American overseas rule. By the early 1900s, some Chamorros, in turn, appropriated the concept of American loyalty to attain citizenship, which was then perceived as offering greater individual and collective autonomy to Chamorros under naval rule.

On 1 July 1925, for example, three Guam Chamorro leaders presented their views of the United States to several visiting congressmen in Hagatña, Guam’s largest village and the island’s capital. They aimed to convince these congressmen that their loyalty to America warranted inclusion into America’s political sphere. Don Atanasio T. Perez, a Chief Clerk to the naval Governor of Guam, noted that “the Chamorros are neither citizens nor aliens--they are truly without country...I hope that Congress will see fit to

¹⁹ Merle Curti, *The Roots of American Loyalty* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1946), 195.

²⁰ Schoonover, 99.

²¹ Timothy P. Maga, “Democracy and Defense: The Case of Guam, U.S.A., 1898-1941,” *The Journal of Pacific History* 3, no. 4 (1985): 171.

²² Robert Underwood, “Red, Whitewash and Blue: Painting over the Chamorro Experience,” *Islander* July 17, 1977, 6.

²³ For analyses of United States naval policies on health and hygiene in Guam, see Anne Perez Hattori, *Colonial Dis-ease: U.S. Navy Health Policies and the Chamorros of Guam, 1898-1941* (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 2004); and Christine Taitano DeLisle, “Delivering the Body: Narratives of Family, Childbirth and Prewar Pattera,” (Master’s thesis, University of Guam, 2001).

retain our appreciation and strengthen our loyalty by granting us the title we would prize above all others:--Citizens of the United States.”²⁴ Jose Roberto added that the “middle aged natives of the island...assure you of their respect and loyalty to the [American] flag.”²⁵ Another Chamorro, Ramon Sablan, reiterated these points by saying, “as political orphans, we trust, obey and appreciate the paternal protection and guidance of the American flag. As citizens, we would not betray that trust, we would not neglect our obligations; we would not decrease that appreciation.”²⁶

The visiting congressmen listened to these petitions for citizenship, reassuring the Chamorro leadership that the United States Congress would soon deliberate on the issue of granting citizenship to the people of Guam.²⁷ Naval governors, such as Wilis W. Bradley, Jr., also endorsed the movement for American citizenship in Guam.²⁸ Yet, as David Hanlon observes, the United States Navy ultimately stated that the Chamorro people of Guam were “not prepared for self-government and that, in effect, they already enjoyed many of the privileges of citizenship without any of the accompanying responsibilities.”²⁹

Efforts to attain American citizenship evidently failed in that the issues regarding the civil rights and political status of the Chamorro people rarely attracted the serious attention of Congress or the United States Navy. The Chamorro movement to seek American citizenship, though, reflected a substantial degree of success in the navy’s

²⁴ Quoted in Political Status Education Coordinating Commission, *Hinasso’: Tinige’ Put Chamorro/Insights: The Chamorro Identity* (Agaña: Political Status Education Coordinating Commission, 1993), 31.

²⁵ Quoted in Political Status Education Coordinating Commission 1993, 31.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 32.

²⁷ Hofschneider, 67.

²⁸ Hanlon 1994, 112.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 113.

attempts to indoctrinate Chamorros into believing in the ideals of American law and politics. Guam Chamorros had accustomed themselves to the workings of American naval colonialism in Guam. That they still attempted to achieve citizenship demonstrated, at the very least, the complex layers of subjugation, resistance and adaptation through which Chamorros interacted with the American colonial government.

Indeed, the move to garner American citizenship in Guam illustrated a paradox. This paradox represented indigenous efforts to resist American naval rule on the one hand, but also showed indigenous acceptance of American democracy on the other—the same democracy that supports and is supported by the American military. The mutability of loyalty to the United States had finally transpired, as it often does, serving both the needs and desires of the American colonial government and the Chamorro political elite. But despite the various interpretations of American loyalty, the idea that Chamorros should serve the wider needs of the American polity persisted. Holidays and celebrations often publicly reminded the wider Chamorro population of this point—to abide by and uphold American notions of loyalty, education, sanitation, and industry. The Guam Industrial Fair, for example, displayed agricultural stands, organized carabao races and coordinated parades to encourage Chamorros to compete amongst themselves. The goal of the fair was to determine who could produce the most and best agricultural products.

Another holiday, called Flag Day, celebrated the American presence in Guam, specifically highlighting the infrastructural, medical and educational contributions of the colonial government. In March 1934, Remedios L.G. Perez, the Chamorro principal of Dorn Hall School, praised the occasion of this holiday. Addressing American naval officials and public spectators at the Althouse Plaza, she spoke with authority and

conviction. "These improvements," she began, "come to us through the American Flag, the American Government, the American People."³⁰ Raising her voice, she firmly continued, "and, does it [America] ask for a penny in return? It does not! But it is expected of all of us to appreciate the benefits we enjoy under American rule and we should always love, honor and uphold that flag and never bring it to shame."³¹ As evidenced in Remedios' comments, Chamorro loyalty to the United States had become a pressing and highly visible issue by the mid 1930s.

Throughout the island of Guam on specific occasions like Flag Day, the Industrial Fair, or the Fourth of July, American governors required Chamorros and military personnel to display the American flag in front of their homes. The colonial government likewise advised the populace to paint the trees surrounding their homes with the colors red, white and blue. Did these commemorative activities represent a growing interest on the part of Guam Chamorros to be loyal to the United States? And did the concept of loyalty function only within these contexts of commemoration and, in the case of the citizenship movement, political representation?

To the contrary, American efforts to garner the loyalties of Chamorros in the first half of the twentieth-century were fundamentally racist, belittling Chamorros in every manner possible. With few exceptions, racism and militarism determined the scope and purpose of American naval governance of Guam. The militarist dimension of American loyalty attempted to ensure that Chamorros did not challenge the naval operations of the island in particular and the role of the American Navy in general. The racist elements of

³⁰ "Flag Day: Guam's Greatest Patriotic Celebration," *The Guam Recorder* 10, no. 12 (March 1934): 213. Naval governor George A. Alexander declared the 1st of February as Flag Day by Executive Order on 20 January 1933.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 213.

American loyalty were reflected in many American views of Chamorros in Guam.³² As Hanlon notes, America “sought to justify domination of Guam and its people through demeaning, essentially racist description.”³³ Many Americans who came to Guam in the early part of the twentieth-century, as either sojourners or settlers, perceived Chamorros as lazy, dirty and ignorant. The “hospitable” nature of Chamorros also garnered praise from these same peoples, as many noted the “generous” nature of Chamorros in providing food and shelter. Thus, numerous American military personnel envisioned Chamorros as either the “noble savage” or the “ignoble savage,” drawing from a longer history of colonial discourse in the Pacific.³⁴ But the racial and racist dimensions of American loyalty were not only descriptive in nature. These dimensions were also prescriptive in that American loyalty simultaneously worked to accept and distance the colonized from the colonizer.

Indeed, the early historical development of American loyalty in Guam drew from a wider history of white American perceptions of and relations with colonized people in the continental United States. The strong racist undercurrents that gave shape to the promotion of American loyalty in Guam reflected, in fact, histories of indigenous dispossession and slavery in the United States. The American Naval government, in other words, looked upon the generic figure of the “Chamorro” by borrowing from canonical and caricatured images of the “Indian” and the “Negro.” Merle Curti states, for example, that the “Indian was, like the African, of an inferior race, alien, incapable of

³² Arnold H. Leibowitz, *Defining Status: A Comprehensive Analysis of United States Territorial Relations* (Dordrecht, Boston and London: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 1989), 323.

³³ Hanlon 1994, 111.

³⁴ A closer discussion of American views of Chamorros in Guam is provided in Keith Lujan Camacho, “Enframing I Taotao Tano’: Colonialism, Militarism, and Tourism in Twentieth-Century Guam,” (Master’s thesis, University of Hawai’i at Mānoa, 1998). For a fuller account on images of “savagery” in the Pacific, see Eric P. Kjellgren, “Rousseau and Hobbes in the Pacific: Western Literary Visions of Polynesia and Melanesia,” *Mana: A South Pacific Journal of Language and Literature* 10, no. 1 (1993): 95-111.

learning the white man's ways or ever becoming an American."³⁵ In his assessment of the social relations in early twentieth-century America, Curti argues that the "Indian had seldom been regarded as capable of becoming a full-fledged citizen."³⁶ Yet the possibility of integrating Native Americans into the public sphere of American society arose as a topic of discussion in American political and legal debates. "Having at last been worsted and shoved into reservations," explains Curti, "the red men, many held, now could be integrated into American life through missionary, educational, and governmental means, made over into good Americans and trained in loyalty to the nation."³⁷

Merle Curti's observations apply to the case of America's colonized subjects outside of the continental United States in general and to the Chamorros of Guam in particular. As E. Robert Statham asserts, the Native American "experience is similar to that of territorial inhabitants, and it results from a mixture of dissimilar, irreconcilable ways of living...and unfortunate tyranny, greed, ignorance, and xenophobia on the part of a certain number of Americans and their government."³⁸ In the time before the war, the American Naval government thus employed the concept of American loyalty ultimately as a form of social control, reflecting a larger history of racism and militarism in the United States and in its newly acquired territories. That Chamorros began to speak English, sample American foods like hot dogs, and even develop personal and marital relationships with American soldiers and sailors did not signal total acculturation into the American political and social sphere.

³⁵ Curti, 90.

³⁶ Ibid., 183.

³⁷ Ibid., 183.

³⁸ E. Robert Statham, Jr., *Colonial Constitutionalism: The Tyranny of United States' Offshore Territorial Policy and Relations* (Lanham, Boulder, New York and Oxford: Lexington Books, 2002), 75.

The politics of American colonialism in Guam attempted to guarantee that the “Indian,” the “Chamorro,” and other colonized subjects be loyal to the American nation only insofar as citizenship, or full constitutional recognition, remained beyond their reach.³⁹ On the other hand, the concept of liberation did not play as integral a role as the concept of loyalty in Guam. It surfaced only during the time of the Spanish-American War in 1898 and briefly thereafter. That would not be the case for the Chamorros of the northern Mariana Islands, where the politics of Japanese colonialism necessitated the use of both loyalty and liberation as, first, concepts of social control and, second, as concepts of “national belonging.” As in the case of the Chamorros in Guam, the Chamorros of the northern Marianas would soon comprehend the colonial dimensions of Japanese loyalty and liberation, as well as their mutability to assist indigenous needs and demands.

THE POLITICS OF JAPANESE COLONIALISM IN THE NORTHERN MARIANAS

At the onset of World War I, German rule in the northern Mariana Islands ceased. Germany lost the northern islands to Japan, as a result of the League of Nations granting Japan a Class C Mandate to govern the islands of the western Pacific, otherwise known as Micronesia. Specifically, and without the expressed consent of indigenous peoples, the League of Nations presented Japan, Australia, New Zealand and Britain with the sovereignty to preside over former German possessions in the Pacific. Japan received islands north of the equator, which included the Caroline, Marshall and Mariana Islands, excepting the United States territory of Guam. Australia took control of islands south of the equator, such as former German New Guinea and the Bismark Archipelago. New Zealand and Britain transferred their authority to Western Sāmoa and Nauru,

³⁹ Ibid., 71.

respectively.⁴⁰

Furthermore, the Japanese acquisition of islands in Micronesia reflected an extension of its expansionist policies already in effect in Asia. Premised on the veiled belief in a Pan-Asian empire, Japan sought and fought for new territories in such areas as Korea and Manchuria, China. The Japanese aspired to promote what they euphemistically called *kaigai hatten* (overseas development) in an attempt to address Malthusian fears of overpopulation and poverty in Japan proper, and to resist Western colonialism in the Asia and Pacific regions. Japanese colonial authorities promoted the idea of liberation mainly because the rhetoric of Pan-Asian solidarity and national self-determination did not appeal to non-Sinitic worlds, such as Southeast Asia and the Pacific Islands.⁴¹ As Li Narangoa and Robert Cribb state, Confucian “principles were not especially useful in seeking to include the countries of Southeast Asia which, apart from Vietnam and the Chinese diaspora, were well outside the Chinese cultural world.”⁴² In Micronesia, the Nan’yō-chō, or the South Seas Government, likewise aspired to undermine, through the rubric of “liberation,” Western forms of colonialism.

Coupled with aspirations to bring “modernity” and a particularly modern Japanese way of life to the Pacific, the Nan’yō-chō promoted itself as a “liberator” of German, English and American colonial rule in Micronesia.⁴³ Under the provisions of the mandate, Japan established laws, monitored the traffic of arms, alcohol and ammunition,

⁴⁰ For more on Japanese expansion, see Akira Iriye, *Pacific Estrangement: Japanese and American Expansion, 1897-1911* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1972); and Joyce C. Lebra, ed., *Japan's Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere in World War II: Selected Readings and Documents* (Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1975).

⁴¹ Nicholas Tarling, *A Sudden Rampage: The Japanese Occupation of Southeast Asia, 1941-1945* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2001), 126.

⁴² Li Narangoa and Robert Cribb, “Japan and the Transformation of National Identities in Asia in the Imperial Era,” in *Imperial Japan and National Identities in Asia, 1895-1945*, ed. Li Narangoa and Robert Cribb (London and New York: Routledge Curzon, 2003), 17.

⁴³ Ching, 11.

and submitted annual reports to the League of Nations. These stipulations helped Japan to establish the Nan'yō-chō and to govern the indigenous peoples of these islands and atolls. The Japanese language quickly became the *lingua franca* of Micronesia, supplanting through formal order the use of indigenous languages in official and administrative settings. Japanese entrepreneurial, trade and scholarly interest in the region increased in scope and effort in comparison to earlier ventures in the late 1800s. As expected, the establishment of the mandate later in 1922 allowed these peoples and companies to pursue their interests.

The economic development of the region proved foremost on the agendas of government-sponsored and privately owned economic enterprises. This economic fervor led to the development of sugar plantations and processing plants in the northern Marianas, especially in Tinian and Saipan, and to the mining of phosphate in such islands as Peleliu, Palau.⁴⁴ As part of their obligations under the new mandate, Japan also built schools for the education of Pacific Islanders in Micronesia, and “saw education as a means to insure the obedient and loyal acquiescence of Micronesian peoples.”⁴⁵ It can be argued that the American naval education in Guam also served the same purpose, that is, to acquire the loyalty of the Chamorros. Japanese educational efforts differed no less. In addition to the implementation of education programs, the Nanyō-chō introduced the Shinto religion, provided opportunities for a few Pacific Islanders to visit Japan, and

⁴⁴ Copra production, trade, tuna fishing and other economic enterprises succeeded in part because the Japanese monopolized the region's limited resources. The economic infrastructure left behind by the Germans (i.e., mining buildings and equipment) also contributed greatly to the development of these Japanese economies. See David C. Purcell, Jr., “The Economics of Exploitation: The Japanese in the Mariana, Caroline and Marshall Islands, 1915-1940,” *The Journal of Pacific History* 11, no. 3-4 (1976): 189-211.

⁴⁵ Peattie 1988, 92.

organized Pacific Islander youth into patriotic organizations.⁴⁶

The historian Mark R. Peattie argues that these policies were not intended to “assimilate” (*doka*) indigenous peoples into Japanese society, as numerous theories of Japanization claimed.⁴⁷ The actual purpose of these policies was to ensure that the Japanese remain in important socio-economic positions, reflecting the hierarchal nature of this settler society. As in the case of loyalty and citizenship issues in American-occupied Guam, indigenous peoples throughout the Japanese empire were similarly subjected to colonial policies and processes of “becoming Japanese and not having the rights of a Japanese citizen.”⁴⁸ As Peattie remarks, Japan’s notion of assimilation attempted to “remold them [islanders of Micronesia] into loyal, law-abiding subjects who could become almost, but not quite, Japanese.”⁴⁹

The concept of loyalty, as perceived by Japanese colonial authorities, thus functioned in the same manner as that of American loyalty in Guam: to “shape the native to be like us, but not quite like us.” Yet these concepts differed in application and in interpretation over time. What remains clear is that the Japanese notion of loyalty served to *differentiate* indigenous people from the shared cultural traditions in Asia, such as Confucianism, whereas the American notion of loyalty worked to *associate* indigenous peoples with either the noble or ignoble savages. The Japanese notion of loyalty, as Ohnuki-Tierney reveals, represented the “‘Confucian’ ... moral values of loyalty and filial piety [which] were resurrected [in the 1880s] to buttress the newly created emperor

⁴⁶ Ibid., 104.

⁴⁷ Wakako Higuchi clarifies the shared and divergent meanings associated with such terms and phrases as “assimilation” (*doka*), “Japanization” (*nihonka*), and being something like Japanese (*nihonteki narumono*). See her essay, “The Japanization Policy for the Chamorros of Guam, 1941-1944,” *The Journal of Pacific History* 36, no. 1 (2001): 19-35.

⁴⁸ Ching, 7.

⁴⁹ Peattie 1988, 104.

system and the modern military nation.”⁵⁰ With regard to the indigenous people of the Pacific, Peattie asserts that “Micronesians, like their indigenous counterparts elsewhere in the empire, were second-class citizens in their own lands, and indeed were considered by the Japanese as considerably less worthy than Chinese and Koreans with whom the Japanese at least shared a common cultural heritage.”⁵¹ These contradictory processes of assimilation and exclusion, as illustrated in the Japanese notion of loyalty in the mandated islands of the Pacific, formed “a constant theme throughout the imperial era and were a major element in the dissatisfaction of colonized people with Japanese rule.”⁵²

Despite the broad range of indigenous experiences under the Nanyō-chō, general statements can be made about Japan’s relationship with the indigenous people of Micronesia. As preparation for war got underway in the late 1930s, for example, views on Micronesia shifted from seeing it as a region of economic possibility to seeing it as a region of military necessity. Natives contributed to Japan’s economy and war-effort as a “patriotic” and dependable labor force—a goal Japanese assimilation policies strove to attain in times of peace and maintain in times of war.⁵³ Chamorros of the northern Mariana Islands, like the neighboring Pacific Islanders of Micronesia, encountered these policies first-hand. Many experienced Japanese rule in the schools, in the fields and in

⁵⁰ Emiko Ohnuki-Tierney, *Kamikaze, Cherry Blossoms, and Nationalisms: The Militarization of Aesthetics in Japanese History* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2002), 6.

⁵¹ Mark R. Peattie, “The Nan’yō: Japan in the South Pacific, 1885-1945,” in *The Japanese Colonial Empire, 1895-1945*, ed. Ramon H. Myers and Mark R. Peattie (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), 189.

⁵² Narangoa and Cribb, 11.

⁵³ Although many islanders devoted their loyalties to Japan, a complicated issue worth closer examination from one island society to another, not every islander succumbed to Japan’s patriotic zeal. For instance, the Palauan anti-Japanese movement, *Modekngei*, challenged Japanese authority in the early 1900s. However, *Modekngei*’s members failed to increase in number and to mature in political strength due to the efforts of pro-Japanese indigenous factions which helped to identify, find and arrest the key leaders of the movement. Donald R. Shuster talked briefly about the significance of this movement in his essay on Shinto in Micronesia, “State Shinto in Micronesia During Japanese Rule, 1914-1945,” *Pacific Studies* 5, no. 2 (1982): 20-43.

the everyday activities of that period.

At the level of interpersonal communication, Chamorros believed that the Japanese generally respected their customs and, outside of school and the workplace, the Japanese rarely interfered with their daily routines. Chamorros attended Catholic mass and rituals without interruption. In the time before the war, they also continued to fulfill their familial obligations of providing food for the immediate and extended family, and tending to the sick and elderly. *Tan* Lucia Aldan Dueñas noted that “the living condition ... was very good during the Japanese administration. The groceries were cheap....The people were well off because there were lots of respect amongst the people. There was respect between the Japanese and Chamorros and everyone was in good terms.”⁵⁴ *Tan* Lucia suggested that mutual respect existed between Chamorros and Japanese.

Furthermore, the fact that intercultural marriages occurred acknowledged, at the very least, the relatively peaceful co-existence of Chamorros and Japanese.⁵⁵ Friendships grew and relations were maintained. Chamorros and Japanese, as well as Okinawans and Koreans, learned or were exposed to the intimacies of each other’s culture through individual relationships rather “than through the more formalized aspects of political, economic, and educational organization.”⁵⁶

Although the Japanese allowed intermarriages to take place, and although they met the minimum requirements of the mandate in governing indigenous peoples, nothing detracted from the reality that their policies were discriminatory in nature. This

⁵⁴ *Tan* Lucia Aldan Dueñas, “Finiho Yan Estoria Ginen I C.N.M.I. Archives Kolehon San Kattan Na Islas Marianas/C.N.M.I. Oral History Project Northern Marianas College,” interview by Herbert S. Del Rosario. Translated by Nominanda L. Kosaka and Herbert S. Del Rosario. (Saipan: Northern Marianas College, 20 January 1994), 4.

⁵⁵ The gendered dynamics of these relations (i.e., the number of Japanese men married to Chamorro women, motivations for marriage, etc.) are unknown and demand further study.

⁵⁶ Alexander Spoehr, *Saipan: The Ethnology of a War-Devastated Island* (Saipan: Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Division of Historic Preservation, 2000), 57.

demonstrates that some Chamorro elders, like *Tan* Lucia Aldan Dueñas, continue to remember the time before the war in nostalgic terms, eliding the realities of Japanese racial and economic discrimination. But Chamorro prewar memories are not entirely couched in romantic terms. Some Chamorros recall this era in ways which appropriately reflect the tone and temperament of the *Nanyō-chō*. For example, *Tun* Nicolas Q. Muña, a Chamorro elder of Saipan, explained that “during the Japanese times there was discrimination.”⁵⁷ *Tun* Ignacio M. Sablan, another elder of Saipan, added that “the high positions in the government were held by Japanese.”⁵⁸ These Chamorros testified to the actuality that Chamorros, again, were losing their place in their own homeland.

Yet despite the discriminatory nature of Japanese rule in the northern Marianas, some Chamorro leaders believed in complying with the Japanese to the point of requesting political participation and integration. Led by Jose Pangelinan and signed by 180 Chamorros, a petition presented to the Japanese government clearly evidenced Chamorro political interest in working with and abiding by the norms of Japanese colonial rule. Dated 11 September 1938, part of the petition read,

For twenty years we have been honored to be taken care of by Your Majesty. We have greatly enjoyed the civilization that you have brought to us, and have sought to improve ourselves. Herein, we wish to express our deepest gratitude, even though a full expression is impossible....Great Emperor, we believe that we are ready to stand as Your Majesty's shield. We wish to be the protectors of our country's south sea line. We strongly wish to be Japanese nationals forever. Therefore, we humbly beseech your Majesty's permission, that we, the natives of the nan'yo (South Seas Islands) become citizens of the Empire of Japan.⁵⁹

⁵⁷ *Tun* Nicolas Q. Muña, “Finiho Yan Estoria Ginen I C.N.M.I. Archives Kolehon San Kattan Na Islas Marianas/C.N.M.I. Oral History Project Northern Marianas College,” interview by Herbert S. Del Rosario. Translated by Nominanda L. Kosaka and Herbert S. Del Rosario. (Saipan: Northern Marianas College, 1 December 1995), 3. Also, Japanese, Chapanes and Hapones all mean “Japanese” in the Chamorro language.

⁵⁸ Sablan 1981B, 52.

⁵⁹ Kayoko K. Kushima, a researcher and graduate of the Master's program in Micronesian Studies at the University of Guam, found the petition in Ajia Minshu Hotei Junbi Kaigi, ed., *Shashin Zusetsu: Nippon no Shinryaku* (Tokyo: Otsuki Shoten, 1992), 128-129. This author thanks Kayoko K. Kushima for alerting

In accordance with Japanese policy in its treatment of indigenous peoples in the mandated islands of Micronesia, however, Japan presumably responded negatively as its government never granted Chamorros from the northern Marianas citizenship. In spite of these loyal expressions and efforts to attain Japanese citizenship, the Japanese government continued to belittle the significance of Chamorro political representation.

Comparable to the American citizenship movement in Guam, the movement to attain Japanese citizenship for Chamorros in the northern Marianas also emerged during the time before the war. And, like the push for American citizenship in Guam, the efforts to acquire Japanese citizenship in the northern Marianas illustrated the complex web of colonial politics and indigenous strategies for cultural survival that have come to signify the nature of intercultural relations in prewar Mariana Islands. Like the American Naval government on Guam, the the Nanyō-chō provided no equal positions of power for indigenous peoples in their colonial society. In this respect, Japan held no place for indigenous peoples in its wider endeavor to develop economically the region of Micronesia. As a result, Japan sponsored the importation of Asian immigrants, many of whom worked in Saipan's sugar industries.

In the early 1900s, Okinawan, Korean and Japanese laborers and their families began to migrate to the northern Marianas. Farrell writes that "between 1916 and 1918 some 2,000 Korean and Okinawan farmers arrived to work in the first sugarcane fields. By 1925 there were 5,000 Japanese, Okinawans and Koreans in the [northern] Marianas. By 1930 it was well over 40,000."⁶⁰ In the late 1930s, a few years before the onset of the

him to this movement for Japanese citizenship in Saipan, a topic in Chamorro history that begs closer study. Her translation of the text from Japanese to English is also greatly appreciated.

⁶⁰ Don A. Farrell, *History of the Northern Mariana Islands* (Saipan: Public School System,

war, Chamorros and Refaluwasch numbered around 4,300, less than ten percent of the total population in the northern Marianas. The Asian labor and settler population had indeed displaced the indigenous people.

Some of the Asians came as skilled laborers for the sugar industry. Others came to support the military fortification of the islands.⁶¹ Many came under the auspices of the Japanese imperial government. On Saipan, Tatsu Sato, for example, recalled her childhood visit to “Karabera-yama,” or Mt. Kalabera, with her family of sugar pioneers. Once atop the hill, Sato reminisced that “father rammed the pole with the rising sun flag deep into the earth. The flag snapped wildly in the strong wind. I can still picture my father’s smiling face as [he] turned to me and said proudly, ‘We as Japanese marked our feet here.’”⁶² Tatu Sato’s remarks represented the patriotic and nationalistic zeal of those times. As part of the Japanization process, a plethora of organizations, holidays and events emerged to indoctrinate Pacific Islanders into becoming patriotic subjects of Japan.⁶³

The Japanese created such events as a means to glorify their national “heroes” and histories, as well as to impose principles and beliefs of Japanese colonial society on the Pacific. Islanders throughout this region, especially the youth, began to identify closely and patriotically with their new colonizers. While the youth constituted but one of the generations targeted by assimilation policies and propaganda, Japanese officials clearly demonstrated a strong interest in changing the attitudes of the younger, presumably easier

Commonwealth of the Northern Marian Islands, 1991), 323.

⁶¹ See D. Colt Denfeld, “Korean Laborers in Micronesia During World War II,” *Korea Observer* 15, no. 1 (Spring 1984): 3-15.

⁶² Tatsu Sato, *A Record of the Japanese Pioneers’ Achievements Obliterated by the War: Photographic Collections of Saipan, Tinian, Rota* (Tokyo: The South Sea Islands Album Publication Committee, 1985), 18.

⁶³ Alice Joseph and Veronica F. Murray, *Chamorros and Carolinians of Saipan* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1951), 344.

influenced, generation. Peattie argues that this happened in Micronesia where “parades, uniforms, and banners, fused with imperial rhetoric and appeals to local pride, seem to have won the loyalty and approval of hundreds of youngsters.”⁶⁴

In the 1930s, photographs illustrated Chamorros, as well as Palauans, Yapese and other Pacific Islanders, frequenting Shinto shrines and appearing to pray for the success of Japan’s expansionist efforts throughout Asia and the Pacific.⁶⁵ Patriotic youth groups like the *seinendan* sprang up throughout the major islands of Micronesia.⁶⁶ Japanese loyalty and patriotic activities infused almost every facet of daily life, from the northern Marianas to the Marshalls, as Pacific Islanders “joined Japanese in patriotic displays. People recall lining up behind Japanese leaders, facing Japan, listening to prayers, and singing songs dedicated to the emperor.”⁶⁷ These Japanese methods of colonization actually did not differ greatly from those concurrently employed by the Americans in Guam. The emphasis on indigenous loyalty ranked high among the concerns of these colonial administrations in their governance of Chamorros. By 1941, Pacific Islanders’ “attitudes toward the Japanese had been shaped by decades of colonial effort to socialize them as loyal members of the empire.”⁶⁸

THE TIME BEFORE THE WAR IN RETROSPECT

Despite their differences in governance, the Japanese and American colonial governments agreed on one point. The governments separately concurred that the processes involving the colonization of Chamorros could not be fully implemented

⁶⁴ Peattie 1988, 108.

⁶⁵ Ibid., 106.

⁶⁶ Ibid., 108.

⁶⁷ Poyer, Falgout and Carucci 2001, 30.

⁶⁸ Ibid., 27.

without guaranteeing their loyalty to an “imagined community.”⁶⁹ These two colonial governments interpreted the notion of loyalty as a form of social control, perhaps even hegemony. Farthest from their minds was the idea that loyalty designated total incorporation into the nation-state. Based on their racial notions of difference and sameness, militarism and imperialism, the Japanese and American colonial governments created the generic “loyal Chamorro subject” in order to justify their establishment of colonial expansion and rule in the Mariana Islands.⁷⁰ In the first half of the twentieth-century, however, Chamorros did not openly resist colonial efforts to inculcate them as loyal subjects of the United States and Japan. They instead coped with their everyday activities and responsibilities within the limits of American and Japanese colonial rule.

It can be argued, though, that nascent forms of loyalties were taking shape in ways contrary to the intentions of the Japanese and American colonial governments. Loyalty was indeed an emergent concept, one of what Raymond Williams calls “new meanings and values, new practices, new relationships and kinds of relationships [that] are continually being created.”⁷¹ Initially a form of control, loyalty also took on the shape of a mechanism for indigenous adaptation and survival, rather than perceived outright subjugation. Chamorro political petitions for Japanese and American citizenship demonstrated, at the very least, that some Chamorros saw loyalty as a means of achieving equality and, ideally, a shared sense of “nationality” with their respective colonial powers.

These political efforts by Chamorros in the northern Marianas and Guam

⁶⁹ This dissertation invokes, in part, Benedict Anderson’s notion of “imagined communities” in *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London and New York: Verso, 1983). Given the colonial setting of the Mariana Islands, however, Chamorro notions of loyalty should not be entirely conflated with Anderson’s discussion of “nationalism.”

⁷⁰ Bhaba, 70.

⁷¹ Raymond Williams, *Marxism and Literature* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977), 123.

illustrated the ambivalent nature of indigenous loyalties in the period before World War II. Calls for integration evidenced a degree of colonial control, as much as a degree of indigenous adaptation and survival. But what these failed attempts for political recognition ultimately demonstrated was that Chamorros, as a cultural unit of one language and shared customs, had now acquired conflicting notions of loyalty. After all, the promotion of ethnic divisions, both inter-cultural and intra-cultural, has surfaced as a common theme in colonial policies in the Pacific and elsewhere around the world.⁷² Specifically, Japanese and American impositions of colonial loyalty further fragmented Chamorro inter-island and intra-cultural relations, deepening divisions, rather than fostering unity, in Chamorro cultural collectivity throughout the Mariana Islands.

Chamorros in the northern Mariana Islands of Rota and Saipan usually developed favorable attitudes toward the Japanese, but knew very little about Americans and the United States. Many Guam Chamorros, conversely, viewed Americans in more familiar terms, slowly adjusting their loyalties to the United States. Generally, Guam Chamorros interpreted the Japanese as a foreign people of no immediate significance.⁷³ At the same time, some Chamorros throughout the archipelago noted, with expressed dissatisfaction and resentment, the imperialist, racist and militarist dimensions of both Japanese and American colonialism.

⁷² Michael C. Howard, "Ethnicity and the State in the Pacific," in *Ethnicity and Nation-building in the Pacific*, ed. Michael C. Howard (Tokyo: The United Nations University, 1989), 45.

⁷³ Chamorro-Japanese families (*Nisei*) in Guam were an exception. Prior to World War II, a few Japanese entrepreneurs migrated to Guam and formed a small Japanese community. Many of the Japanese migrants owned stores, learned the Chamorro language and customs and, overall, maintained amicable relations with the American colonial administration. In 1940, Laura Thompson estimates that approximately thirty-nine Japanese nationals lived in Guam. In her book, *Guam and its People: A Study of Culture Change and Colonial Education* (San Francisco, New York and Honolulu: American Council Institute of Pacific Relations), 1941, Thompson states that these *nisei* families raised about 211 Chamorro-Japanese children, all of whom were all classified as "natives" by the American naval government (30). The topic of Chamorro-Japanese social, religious and sexual intercultural relations, as framed within the context of "marriage," lies beyond the scope of this dissertation, yet warrants our scholarly attention.

What these inter-cultural and intra-cultural relations reveal is that the politics of Japanese and American colonialism never worked in a totalizing fashion, in the same way that indigenous agency never unequivocally yielded to or resisted colonialism. Instead, as Diaz reminds, it is necessary to understand Chamorro agency, here in the present or there in the past, through “discursive claims, that is, by virtue of Chamorro ways of speaking as well as unique Chamorro ways of doing things.”⁷⁴ These claims, he continues, “work through the materiality of things and ideas that are non-Chamorro in origin,” as in the case of American and Japanese notions of loyalty and liberation.⁷⁵ “Where these claims are recalled,” Diaz asserts, “in conscious (and unconscious) ways, there is Chamorro culture in struggle.”⁷⁶ In the time before the war, Chamorros of every age and gender “struggled” with coming to terms with their new Japanese and American colonizers. In trying to understand the histories of this era, it is important, as Diaz notes, to “scrutinize the historical processes by which the natives have learned to work within and against the grain of ... outsider attempts to colonize the Chamorro.”⁷⁷

In the time before the war, Chamorro loyalties to Japan or the United States have to be understood within the terms and contexts of both the colonized and the colonizer. The notion that these loyalties had strongly resonated among *all* Chamorros in Guam and the northern Mariana Islands remains highly suspect.⁷⁸ Nor did the concept of liberation greatly impact Chamorro views of themselves and their colonizers; this concept, for one, never came to fruition in prewar Guam and even Japan’s rhetoric of liberation failed to

⁷⁴ Vicente M. Diaz, “Simply Chamorro: Telling Tales of Demise and Survival in Guam,” *The Contemporary Pacific: A Journal of Island Affairs* 6, no. 1 (Spring 1994): 53.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 53.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 53.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 53.

⁷⁸ Robert A. Underwood, “Teaching Guam History in Guam High Schools,” in *Guam History: Perspectives*, ed. Lee D. Carter, William L. Wuerch and Rosa Roberto Carter, vol. 1 (Mangilao: Richard F. Taitano Micronesian Area Research Center, University of Guam, 1997), 7.

take on meaningful dimensions among Chamorros in the northern Mariana Islands.

Scholars might learn something, instead, about the fluid, ambivalent and still emergent state of colonial loyalty in prewar Mariana Islands by listening to the words of a young Chamorro boy.

This unidentified, fourteen year-old Chamorro boy lived on Saipan, presumably during the late 1930s, only a few years before the time of the war. His words were etched on paper by a visiting American journalist who worked for the *National Geographic Magazine*, compiling ethnographic depictions of island societies in Japanese Micronesia.⁷⁹ When asked by the American journalist Willard Price if he worshipped pictures of the Japanese emperor, adorned across school walls, the young schoolboy responded, "Of course. They [the Japanese] put them up in the assembly room and we must worship."⁸⁰ Speaking to an elder, the Chamorro boy quickly consented to the American journalist's inquiry as if he were his teacher, relative or colonial official. Perhaps his extended family raised him to respond to elderly and authoritative figures with respect and humility. Perhaps the young boy agreed immediately, without question, to the curious request of the American journalist.

But the young Chamorro boy had not finished speaking, saying a few more words to what he probably thought was a strange-looking white man. He continued, in a matter of fact way, "but I have a cross [crucifix] on a string around my neck. It's under my shirt and they [the Japanese] can't see it. I put my hand on it [the cross] when I bow."⁸¹

Resistance? Complicity? Loyalty? This young Chamorro boy's brief conversation with

⁷⁹ Willard Price recorded some of his travel experiences to Japanese Micronesia in a book titled, *Japan's Islands of Mystery* (New York: The John Day Company, 1944).

⁸⁰ Quoted in Willard Price, "Springboards to Tokyo," *The National Geographic Magazine*, 4 October 1944, 404.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 404-405.

an American man, located in a Japanese colonial setting, illustrates the intricate and complicated web of colonialism and indigenous agency in the time before the war. In the years to come, the concepts of loyalty and liberation would assume greater meaning, force and persuasion in narrating not only the histories of prewar Mariana Islands, but the very memories that inform these histories, demonstrating, indeed, the complex processes through which “history” is made and remade in the margins of empire in the Pacific.

CHAPTER 3

JAPAN, THE UNITED STATES AND WORLD WAR II IN THE MARIANA ISLANDS

By 1941, several decades of colonial indoctrination had resulted in the development of separate, though ambivalent, spheres of Chamorro loyalties in the Mariana Islands. In the time before the war, Chamorro identifications with and against their colonial powers, particularly Japan and the United States, surfaced. Political movements for citizenship, educational instruction, commemorative activities and national holidays, village health and agricultural contests, and everyday interactions with the colonial governments provided venues for Chamorros to come to terms with the politics of Japanese and American colonialism. Outside of the efforts to acquire citizenships, Chamorros evidenced no collective, politically conscious, desire to embrace or contest Japanese and American colonialism.

Throughout the archipelago, Chamorros showed little in terms of wanting to “belong” among the wider American and Japanese communities, but rather strove to survive under American and Japanese rule. Further, no mass movements for or against colonial policies and loyalties transpired; loyalty was, at best, an emergent, mutable concept of colonial control and indigenous adaptation. Liberation, too, was an idea forged by Japan and the United States, but without much success. Chamorros, quite simply, carried on with their everyday lives to the extent permitted by American and Japanese colonial policies.

The onset of World War II in the Mariana Islands, however, dramatically changed the politics of colonialism and indigenous agency, as the war intensified in scope what was already a heavily militarized setting. The war now required Chamorros to

contemplate, if not openly accept or resist, their loyalty to their colonizers; one's loyalty or disloyalty in the war often determined one's death or survival. Certainly, concepts of loyalty varied from place to place, changing subtly or radically over time.¹ But the war between Japan and the United States created the conditions to make visible and violent the divided loyalties among Chamorros of the Mariana Islands. As John Somerville asserts, wars manifests loyalties as much as loyalties manifest wars.² The case of the Mariana Islands is no exception.

Thus, the United States and Japan hoped to foster loyalty and solidarity among the peoples of their respective countries. The purpose was to encourage peoples' contributions toward the development and maintenance of Japanese and American wartime ideologies on the one hand, and military arsenal and technologies on the other. Japanese and Americans enlisted as soldiers, worked in airplane factories, donated goods or purchased war bonds. The fervor of Japanese and American loyalties reached its peak during this time period. But what did Japanese and American loyalties mean for those in the colonies and for those who were not considered citizens of these nation-states? How did the divided loyalties among Chamorros affect their perceptions of and social relations with themselves and their colonizers? This chapter addresses these questions by surveying the impact of World War II in the Mariana Islands. It examines the influence of American and Japanese war-time colonial policies in reshaping notions of loyalty and, indeed, liberation among the Chamorros in Guam and the northern Marianas.

¹ Waller and Linklater, 6.

² John Somerville, "Patriotism and War," *Ethics* 91 (July 1981): 568.

WORLD WAR II IN GUAM

In the late 1930s, the American Naval administration of Guam began replacing the pre-existing Spanish Capuchins with American Capuchins. The naval government asserted that the Spanish priests helped to “perpetuate the Chamorro language in their sermons and writings,” a philosophy which countered American efforts to institutionalize English as the primary language of use in Guam.³ The Spanish endorsement of the Chamorro language challenged naval authority. The American Naval government eventually decided that the Spaniards would no longer interfere, directly or indirectly, with their policies regarding the Chamorro people. By 1939, the Spaniards relinquished control over Guam’s diocese to a Capuchin order from Detroit, Michigan.⁴

Of all the exiting Spanish priests, only Bishop Miguel Angel de Olano y Urteaga and Father Jauregui Jesús de Begona remained on island. Father Román María de Vera, a priest revered by the Chamorros and a staunch supporter of the Chamorro language in church activities, represented one of the last Spaniards who left in the month of September 1941. Midway through Guam’s rainy season, a group of Chamorro women followed Father Román to the Apra pier where his boat awaited his arrival. As the women wept, many recalled Father Román saying, “You are crying because I am leaving and you are wiping your tears with your handkerchiefs. But soon will be the day when not even your sheets will be enough to dry your tears!”⁵ Although Father Román spoke to a small group of women, his “words spread like wildfire, and proof of that is the fact that so many Chamorros have repeated this anecdote up to the present time, even though

³ Robert F. Rogers, *Destiny’s Landfall: A History of Guam* (Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press, 1995), 159.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 159.

⁵ Eric Forbes, interview by the author, Hagatña, Guam, 10 March 2002. Father Eric Forbes, himself a scholar of Chamorro culture and history, serves various Catholic parishes in Guam.

they were not actually present at the pier.”⁶ His brief gesture of farewell provoked caution and alertness among Chamorros who believed in an impending war.

Those who heeded Father Román’s prophecy noticed that there were “bad signs in heaven.” According to local histories, animals became restless throughout the island and the sun sets appeared redder than usual. Sanchez notes that “some predicted a big typhoon, or a tidal wave, or an earthquake, or all three. There was prediction of a famine. Some of those who remembered the dreadful influenza of 1918 saw another epidemic on the horizon. Because it was outside of their experience, no one predicted war!”⁷ Neither Father Román’s ominous warnings nor local predictions of disasters prepared Chamorros for the forthcoming Japanese attack on Guam and for the following years of occupation.

While some may have taken these admonitions seriously, the majority of Chamorros on Guam cared little about international politics, let alone a possible conflict between Japan and the United States. With the exception of the Naval government and a few local leaders, Chamorros failed to recognize the increasingly severe degradation of relations between the United States and Japan. The Naval government, for its part, contributed greatly to local misunderstandings of American and Japanese political and economic relations, as it rarely fully informed Chamorros of the impending dangers to come. Dirk Anthony Ballendorf argues that the “U.S. Navy had long abandoned any plans for defending Guam, and had concluded in 1938 to let the island fall to the Japanese in the event of an attack. Guam was simply too far away from American supply lines to be properly defended.”⁸ On 17 October 1941, American military dependents of

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Sanchez 1979, 9.

⁸ Dirk Anthony Ballendorf, “Guam Military Action in World War II,” in *Guam History: Perspectives*, ed. Lee D. Carter, William L. Wuerch and Rosa Roberto Carter, volume 1 (Mangilao: Richard F. Taitano

the Naval government departed for Hawai'i on board the USS *Henderson*, leaving approximately 160 military personnel and local men of the Insular Force Guard to defend the island.⁹

Not many Chamorros knew of the American evacuation and of the American government's view of the island as a defenseless bastion. Undisturbed by worldly politics, Chamorros tended to their farms and family matters, and spoke little about war. If the topic of war ever arose, the Chamorros of Guam assumed that the United States held superior military forces that not even Japan, a newcomer to the colonial powers of the world, could sway. Sanchez states that for Chamorros "in the late 30's and early 40's the talk of war among the powers of the world was of no particular concern. They did not believe for even a moment that war would actually touch them. For one thing, they felt quite strongly that war with Japan would not last long--perhaps two weeks" but "not over a month."¹⁰ Numerous Chamorros instead prepared for the approaching religious celebration, called Santa Marian Kamalen, on 8 December 1941.¹¹ People slaughtered pigs, caught fish and gathered foodstuffs in preparation for this Catholic holiday.

The Japanese invasion of Guam, on the Feast of the Santa Marian Kamalen, coincided with the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, Oahu, surprising the residents of these two islands. As Japanese planes flew over Guam's villages of Hagatña, Sumay and Piti, strafing military and civilian buildings, Japanese soldiers landed on the island's

Micronesian Area Research Center, 1997), 221.

⁹ Robers, 162. Duties assigned to the Insular Patrol, a token police unit comprised of only Chamorro men, included assisting naval operations and guarding naval facilities on the island. Their tokenism became self-evident during the Japanese invasion of Guam when none of them knew how to operate firearms. The American naval government had previously trained the men of the Insular Force Guard, using only fake, wooden rifles in their mock-fighting drills.

¹⁰ Sanchez 1979, 4.

¹¹ See Marilyn Anne Jorgensen, *Guam's Patroness: Santa Marian Kamalen* (Austin: The University of Texas at Austin, 1984); and Dominica M. Tolentino, "Images of History, Commemoration and Cultural Identity: The Santa Marian Kamalen Tradition on Guam," December 1999.

southernmost and centrally located beaches. Chamorros hurriedly gathered family members and scattered for shelter at their ranches and nearby family dwellings. They sought refuge in their spirituality as they tried to come to grips with the reality of war on Guam. Praying to “Yu’us” (God), many began to recall Father Román’s “prophetic” words.¹² He was right, as “war came ... not even sheets were enough to dry their tears.”¹³

During the early weeks of December 1941, Japan invaded Guam as a part of a larger effort to militarize the western Pacific region. Japanese navy and army combatants moved forcefully and swiftly, from Pearl Harbor to New Guinea. Reviewing the organization and efficiency of the Japanese military, Stewart Firth writes that “the air strike against the United States fleet at Pearl Harbor on 7 December 1941 initiated a blitzkrieg against other targets in the Pacific and South-East Asia, all rapidly taken.”¹⁴ Firth adds that “Japan’s Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere, now vastly extended, encompassed not only most of South-East Asia but also the Gilbert Islands, the Solomons, Australian New Guinea and parts of Papua.”¹⁵

As in the case of these separate island invasions, the Japanese assault on Guam, under the command of Major General Tomitara Horii, took on a character of machine-like precision and calculation. The Japanese assault battalions and naval forces, numbering over 5,000 soldiers, quickly overcame the ill-equipped American military

¹² Forbes, Interview.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Stewart Firth, “The War in the Pacific,” in *The Cambridge History of Pacific Islanders*, ed. Donald Denoon, Stewart Firth, Jocelyn Linnekin, Malama Meleisea and Karen Nero (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 294.

¹⁵ Ibid., 296.

defenses of Hagatña.¹⁶ The Japanese Imperial Army wasted no time in establishing its presence and military superiority. The first few days of occupation witnessed the death of several Chamorros, some of whom worked for the Naval government as Insular Guards.¹⁷ Others were innocent bystanders. By 10 December 1941, only two days after the initial bombing of the island, the American Naval governor George J. McMillin surrendered the island to the Japanese occupation forces. Thereafter, the Japanese renamed Guam "*Omiya Jima*" (Great Shrine Island); they renamed all of Guam's villages as well. "At this point," observes Ballendorf, "the Japanese capture of Guam was seen as a relatively small action within the context of the entire Pacific War. But, for those living on Guam at the time, it was a fierce and frightening engagement."¹⁸ That the Japanese violently invaded Guam and that the Americans did nothing to counter the Japanese largely explained why Chamorros increasingly became wary, even fearful of the Japanese. Unlike the Chamorros of the northern Marianas who had been under Japanese colonial rule since 1914, and who had become accustomed to Japanese traditions and laws, the Chamorros of Guam were, in large part, ignorant of Japanese society as a whole.¹⁹

Based on their poor familiarity with the Japanese, Chamorros in Guam could not anticipate what awaited them from the Japanese military. "We Chamorros," writes Ben

¹⁶ Less than fifty men, consisting of United States Marines and Chamorros of the Insular Force Guard, defended the Naval governor's headquarters in Hagatña. Small in number and lacking sufficient weaponry, the men quickly surrendered to the Japanese military forces.

¹⁷ Among those killed were Larry L. Pangelinan, Teddy F. Cruz, Angel Flores, Vicente Chargualaf, and Jose C. Untalan. Approximately thirteen American servicemen and ten Japanese soldiers died as well. Unfortunately, the exact number and identification of native and foreigner deaths remains unknown.

¹⁸ Ballendorf, 231.

¹⁹ Chamorro-Japanese families (*Nisei*) in Guam proved an exception.

Blaz, “simply did not know what to expect from our new masters.”²⁰ Chamorros also shared no preconceived prejudices about the Japanese or Japan, other than that they were a weaker nation than the United States. Even when the Chamorros of Guam espoused their loyalty to America they rarely demonized and dehumanized Japanese in ways similar to the racist propaganda of the American media and military. In other words, Chamorros lacked a political will and cultural vocabulary to portray Japanese along the lines of dominant American views of Japanese “Others,” that is, as Dower summarizes, as “inherently inferior men and women who had to be understood in terms of primitivism, childishness, and collective mental and emotional deficiency.”²¹ Toward the end of the war in Guam, however, during the early months of 1944, Chamorros began to despise the Japanese military for its cruel treatment of Chamorros. What remained certain for Chamorros, though, was their continued subjugation under military administrations.

In acquiring Guam, the Japanese Imperial Army viewed the island as another country “liberated” from western rule, reflecting the wider goals of the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere. Now, the Japanese military sought to achieve and maintain peace and order, acquire natural resources, and establish military self-sufficiency on the island.²² In achieving these goals, the Japanese military needed an obedient and industrious indigenous population, something ideally akin to the Japanized Chamorros of the northern Marianas and the Japanized Pacific Islanders of Micronesia. As a necessary first step, the *Minseisho*, the civilian affairs division of the Japanese Imperial Army’s Southern Sea Detachment (*Nankai Shitai*), initiated a census of Chamorros and others

²⁰ Ben Blaz, *Bisita Guam: A Special Place in the Sun* (Fairfax Station: Evers Press, 1998), 88.

²¹ Dower 1986, 9.

²² Higuchi 2001, 19.

living on the island. In March 1942, the *Keibitai*, a security force of the Imperial Navy, and the *Minseibu*, the Department of Civilian Affairs, replaced the *Minseisho*. The *Minseisho*'s administrative power was restored with the return of the Army in March 1944. For almost three years, until the American invasion of Guam in the summer of 1944, these three agencies, composed of Japanese civilians and Army and Navy personnel, attempted to Japanize the Chamorros.

In her assessment of the Japanization of Chamorros in Guam, Wakako Higuchi notes that the Japanization policy "was intended to place Chamorros in the same group as the other races ruled by Japan. The purpose was to mobilise Chamorros as a labour and fighting force for carrying out national policies."²³ Although the Japanese administration wanted to place Chamorros on "the level of Japanisation which the islanders in the Japanese mandate had achieved during 28 years of Japanese rule," the circumstances of war and the fact that Guam was a former American territory meant that Japanization was more about military occupation.²⁴ The Japanization of Guam Chamorros was not only a matter of "educating" them about things Japanese. For the Japanese military and its civilian benefactors, the task of eradicating forty years of American symbols, values and, ultimately, loyalty among the Chamorros was, in fact, the main goal of Japanization.

The Japanese recognized that as long as the Chamorros identified with America they could never fully transform Guam into an effective Japanese military outpost, as part of Japan's eastern defense perimeter. As Higuchi explains, the Japanese military aimed "to eliminate all influences implanted by the American administration....The political-social dynamics required that the Japanese language replace English, and the Japanese

²³ Ibid., 34.

²⁴ Ibid., 34.

spirit and work ethic overturn American ideals of democracy and rationalism.

Furthermore, Chamorros were required to share with the Japanese hostile feelings toward the Americans.”²⁵ Higuchi rightly suggests that the Japanization policies implemented by the various military and civilian Japanese agencies tried to change Chamorro attitudes, from ones sympathetic to the United States to ones favorable toward Japan. The implementation of these policies, however, placed Chamorros in an ambiguous position. The fact that the Japanese regarded the Chamorros of Guam as both ward and foe contributed significantly to this ambiguity.

Because of the Chamorro affiliation with America, the Japanese found it difficult to view Chamorros outside the parameters of the “enemy,” even though the Japanese perceived them as “non-whites” and thus as part of the Greater East-Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere. Consequently, the Japanese often treated Chamorros with suspicion, reflecting the militarist dimension of their overall assimilation program. During the first year of occupation in 1941, for example, the Japanese administration issued passes or “*lisiensan ga’lago*,” as a means to identify Chamorros.²⁶ With the assistance of Chamorro interpreters from Rota and Saipan, also called Rotanese and Saipanese, the Japanese immediately established police personnel throughout the island to survey the activities of Chamorros and to arrest anyone who challenged Japanese authority. Militant in their form of investigation, the Rotanese, Saipanese and their Japanese supervising officers interrogated, punished and executed some Chamorros for failing to yield to Japanese war-time rules and laws.

Allegations of being an American spy or sympathizer abounded during the time of

²⁵ Ibid., 34.

²⁶ “Dog tag.”

the war, and Guam Chamorros suffered dearly and, in many ways, innocently for those reasons. Some of the most severe examples of suffering occurred precisely because of the search for the only unaccounted American sailor on island, a radio-man by the name of George R. Tweed.²⁷ Soldiers also raped indigenous women, though no written records or oral testimonies exist as to how many suffered from these violent acts.²⁸ Similarly, Chamorro women, as well as Okinawan, Korean, and Japanese women, served in comfort stations throughout the island. Chamorro families also provided vegetables and livestock on demand for Japanese soldiers.

More often than not, however, the Japanese tried to assimilate Chamorros in as “peaceful” a process as possible. While examples of physical violence and abuse occurred, especially during the early months in 1944 leading to the American invasion, the Japanese civilian administration made every effort to incorporate the Chamorros into their segregated society. As in their past interactions with Pacific Islanders under the mandate, the Japanese sought the peaceful incorporation—a euphemism for wartime colonization—of Chamorros into the empire. In their view, the Japanese wanted Chamorros to “uplift” their “spirits” and to appreciate and respect *Nihon Seishin* (the Spirit of Japan). Kiyoshi Nakahashi, a former Japanese teacher in war-time Guam, exclaimed that Japanization policies did not exploit or oppress Chamorros, but instead worked to “awaken the Chamorro mind’s eye to some aspects of East-Asia and the

²⁷ George R. Tweed survived the war because of the generosity of several Chamorro families. During the war, many Chamorros viewed Tweed as a symbolic figure of the United States and held him in high regard because of that belief.

²⁸ Limited documented materials exist on the subject of sex and sexual relations during World War II in the Pacific. In *Senso Daughters*, however, filmmaker Noriko Sekiguchi offers a critical examination of Japan’s establishment of “comfort stations” in Papua New Guinea. The film provides much insight into the role of prostitution during Japan’s war campaigns in the Pacific and East and Southeast Asian regions. See *Senso Daughters*. 1990. 54 min. New York: First Run Icarus Films.

Orient.””²⁹ Education and the instruction of the Japanese language especially typified the paternalistic character of Japanization policies.

Japanese language schools emerged all over the island “as the Japanese language was considered to be fundamentally important as the first step in Japanisation.”³⁰ Some Chamorros served as teachers and assisted the administration whenever called upon. Competency in the Japanese language constituted one aspect of Japanization, as the Japanese also focused on “school ceremonies which centered on Japan’s Emperor, the nation state, history, and war events.”³¹ To this extent, instruction in the Japanese language coincided with the observance of Japanese commemorations. These commemorations occurred during “national holidays, such as *Kigensetsu* (Anniversary of the Emperor Jinmu’s Ascension), *Tenchogetsu* (Emperor’s Birthday) and New Year’s Day.”³²

In their attempt to mold Chamorros into loyal subjects, Japanese officials promoted the knowledge of Japanese culture and history beyond the classroom. They lectured Chamorros in churches about the virtues of Japan, showed propaganda films about Japan’s military conquests in Asia, and forced Chamorros to partake in their military celebrations. The fall of Singapore to the Japanese Army on 15 February 1942, for example, led to a celebration in Hagatña attended by both Chamorros and Japanese. Sanchez observes that Chamorro “men, women and children were given Nihon flags. Then they were forced to march through the main streets of Hagatña to celebrate the victory over the British Army. Every few hundred yards, at the urging of the gun-toting

²⁹ Quoted in Higuchi 2001, 24.

³⁰ Ibid., 24.

³¹ Ibid., 24.

³² Ibid., 24.

troops and Samurai-sword wielding officers, the marchers shouted 'banzai!' 'banzai!' 'banzai!'"³³ Tony Palomo similarly notes that "most elderly Chamorros who witnessed these events remembered ... the inevitable float showing a young nisei boy wearing a Japanese military uniform and pointing a rifle at another boy dressed in American navy attire, with the nisei youngster stepping on an American flag."³⁴ Such celebrations of Japanese war-time successes provided one of the few times when Chamorros and Japanese assembled together. Despite the promotion of Japanese assimilationist policies, no systematic attempt to join the two groups existed. Efforts to integrate Chamorros into the Japanese public sphere were impeded by preexisting Japanese segregationist and racist attitudes toward the *tōmin*, or Pacific Islanders. Japan's nationalist rhetoric of "Asia for Asians" did not fully apply to Pacific Islanders, who were considered inferior subjects in Japan's socio-economic and racial hierarchies.

In Guam, most interactions between Chamorros and Japanese occurred in official settings and on official terms set by the *Minseibu*. Any personal relationship that developed did so in secrecy. Overall, though, Chamorros kept to themselves in much the same way as the Japanese did. Social activities like the trading of goods and the attending of segregated games briefly brought them together. The Japanization policies, however, disturbed many Chamorros who saw them as strange, intrusive and disrespectful. Forced to live under Japanese rule, Chamorros grudgingly accepted their subjugated roles. Whenever possible, they resisted these policies by simply refusing to obey them. When there was no choice, many Chamorros honored these policies, such as bowing to Japanese officials, just so they could move on with their daily lives and

³³ Sanchez 1979, 67.

³⁴ Tony Palomo, "Island in Agony: The War in Guam," in *Remembering the Pacific War*, ed. Geoffrey M. White (Honolulu: Center for Pacific Islands Studies at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, 1991), 139.

familial obligations. Chamorro parents also discouraged their daughters from developing relations with Japanese soldiers and sailors and, as a result, “there was no known marriage between Chamorros and Japanese during the occupation.”³⁵ From the level of individual interaction to that of the family, Chamorros distanced themselves from the Japanese and their policies whenever they could.

Musical expression, though, constituted the most powerful and popular form of resistance as Chamorros sang pre-war American melodies whenever they were by themselves, especially during family gatherings. “During the war,” assert Lindstrom and White, “Islanders composed a huge medley of songs to comment on remarkable experiences and transformations in their lives.”³⁶ In Guam, a commonly cited English song personified the United States as “Uncle Sam,” an approachable symbol that Chamorros looked to moral guidance. They saw Uncle Sam as a figure of “courage, thrift, simplicity, an ability to carry more than a fair share of the load, a capacity to labor and to make lightning decisions, and an optimism not to be floored.”³⁷ Sung to the melody of “Sierra Sue,” some of the lyrics read:

Early Monday morning
The action came to Guam,
Eighth of December,
Nineteen forty-one.

Oh, Mr. Sam, Sam, my dear Uncle Sam
Won't you please come back to Guam?

Our lives are in danger,
You better come.
And kill all the Japanese

³⁵ Pedro C. Sanchez, *Guahan Guam: The History of Our Island* (Agaña: Sanchez Publishing House, 1989), 225.

³⁶ Lindstrom and White 1993, 192.

³⁷ Curit, 142. The figure of Uncle Sam first appeared in the *Troy Post* on September 7, 1813. Although initially conceived as an anti-war symbol, it now represents the federal government.

Right here on Guam.

Oh, Mr. Sam, Sam, my dear Uncle Sam
Won't you please come back to Guam?

We don't like the *sake*,
We like Canadian [whiskey],
We don't like the Japanese.
It's better American.

Oh, Mr. Sam, Sam, my dear Uncle Sam
Won't you please come back to Guam?

So long with corned beef,
With bacon and ham,
So long with sandwiches,
With juices and jam.

Oh, Mr. Sam, Sam, my dear Uncle Sam
Won't you please come back to Guam?³⁸

Another equally well-circulated tune ridiculed the authority of Japanese teachers.

Pedro C. Sanchez recorded some of the lyrics, which were based on the tune of a Japanese patriotic war song. Originally sung in the Chamorro language, one of the translated English verses reads:

Teacher, teacher
what do you eat?
Soy sauce and soybean soup.
Seems that you like that very much."³⁹

The last line of the song cut to the point: No wonder you are ugly.⁴⁰

Songs like these illustrated the creativity of a Chamorro resistance whose form often took the shape of sarcasm. Music provided a discursive means for Chamorros to express their frustrations with the Japanese occupation, as well as their desire for the

³⁸ The exact wording of this song varies slightly from one version to another. For the sake of clarity, I refer to two accounts. See Sanchez 1979, 160; and Alvin M. Josephy, Jr., *The Long and the Short and the Tall: The Story of a Marine Combat Unit in the Pacific* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1946), 79.

³⁹ Sanchez 1979, 77.

⁴⁰ Ibid., 77.

return of the United States. Outmatched by the Japanese military, Chamorros possessed no technical or military means to overthrow them. They instead resorted to these passive forms of resistance—what James C. Scott calls “*everyday* forms of peasant resistance”—such as song, prayer and humor, whose overall content could be described as a kind of politicized spirituality.⁴¹ With regard to the Malaysian context, Scott explains that peasant forms of resistance “require little or no coordination or planning; they make use of implicit understandings and informal networks...[and] they typically avoid any direct, symbolic confrontation with authority.”⁴² In many ways, Scott’s analysis of peasant resistance can be extended to understandings of everyday Chamorro forms of resistance under Japanese rule in Guam.

For example, Chamorros frequently drew on the supportive and reciprocal networks of the immediate and extended clans, strongly embracing, in song and story, their collective belief in the guidance of God and in the supremacy of America. They often repeated the phrase, “We are in God’s hands. God knows better. Only God disposes.”⁴³ Chamorros intricately intertwined these beliefs to the point where the distinctions between church and state became blurred, resulting in a spiritualism deeply couched in the Catholic faith and in the perceived political, military and humanitarian power of the United States. For the Chamorros of Guam, those principles espoused by the United States, such as democracy and freedom, countered dramatically the oppressive nature of the Japanese administration.

Although Chamorros held a variety of views of the United States during the pre-

⁴¹ James C. Scott, *Weapons of the Weak: Everyday Forms of Peasant Resistance* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1985), xvi.

⁴² *Ibid.*, xvi.

⁴³ Sanchez 1979, 101.

war era, the onset of World War II in Guam radically suppressed criticisms of the United States in general and of the Navy in particular. Perhaps because of the implementation of the Japanization policies, Chamorros further embraced their loyalties to God and America. As Higuchi argues, the Japanization policies “did not bear any fruit in Guam. One important, but unanticipated result ... was the creation among the Chamorros of a stronger pro-American feeling and political identity.”⁴⁴ Further, the Japanese eventually recognized “the difficulty of replacing religion with a political ideology and the figure of Jesus with that of the Japanese Emperor.”⁴⁵ As Palomo observes, “one of the most difficult things for the Chamorros to accept was the edict that the Japanese Emperor was both the temporal and spiritual leader of the empire. This was contrary to their religious upbringing because at least 95 percent of the people of Guam were Christians, the great majority Catholics.”⁴⁶

Flawed from the onset, the Japanese colonial project in Guam did not succeed, nor could it. Partly because of the intrusive, militarist and violent nature of their assimilationist policies in Guam, the Japanese failed to transform fully the social, political and spiritual fabric of most Chamorros on the island. Chamorros contrasted the Japanization war-time policies with what they remembered of a “peaceful” pre-war period of Americanization. They concluded that American rule was simply better than that of the Japanese. As they entered the most turbulent times of the Japanese occupation, these political and spiritual convictions, no matter how problematic and romanticized they appeared, gave Chamorros strength in a period of tragedy and despair.

That period began in the spring of 1944. By that time, the Japanese were

⁴⁴ Higuchi 2001, 35.

⁴⁵ Ibid., 26.

⁴⁶ Palomo 1991, 139.

conscripting Chamorro men “between the ages of 12 and 60 ... to work on projects related to the Japanese defense of Guam.”⁴⁷ These young and elderly men, along with the assistance of Korean and Okinawan laborers, helped to build roads and runways, coastal canon fortifications, ammunition storage shelters, and other military facilities. The Japanese administration also mandated that Chamorro women above the age of 12 participate in an aggressive campaign to produce agricultural goods and livestock for consumption by Japanese soldiers and sailors. As American military forces moved into Micronesia, capturing first the islands of the Gilberts and the Marshalls in March 1944, the Japanese Imperial Army hastily worked to fortify the Marianas “as part of Japan’s inner perimeter of defense.”⁴⁸ That same month, the Japanese military “sent some of its best troops to Guam--seasoned combat veterans from Manchuria commanded by Lt. General Takashina.”⁴⁹

Yet no amount of training and experience prepared these soldiers for the war in Guam. Some became restless and hungry.⁵⁰ They knew of the rapidly approaching Americans, who had already landed on nearby Saipan in June 1944, and of their earlier military victories in the Pacific. While the Japanese believed in the overall might of their war empire, they also realized that Guam was nowhere near a sufficient military base. Some of these soldiers released their anxieties and frustrations on the Chamorros, a people whose loyalties they understood as more American than Japanese.

Despite the contribution of labor, albeit forced, in the construction of military fortifications and in the production of food, numerous Japanese soldiers, as well as some

⁴⁷ Ballendorf, 232.

⁴⁸ Ibid., 232.

⁴⁹ Ibid., 232.

⁵⁰ Rogers 176.

of their Chamorro interpreters from the northern Mariana Islands, abused, punished and murdered Chamorros from Guam. Sanchez writes that “from Yigo in the north to Merizo in the south, scores of men, women and children met untimely death in the hands of the Japanese police and troops.”⁵¹ He approximates that about 500 Chamorros “met death through Japanese atrocities,” which included the indiscriminate beating, bayoneting and shooting of individuals in caves, shallow graves, and other jungle areas.⁵² One survivor Jose F. Mendiola pleaded, for example, that “you have to be patient with me. You see my tears come out? This comes from the Japanese. They beat me, they clubbed me during the Japanese times.”⁵³ The Japanese also executed Chamorros, such as Father Jesus Baza Dueñas, a priest who the Japanese accused of withholding information on the whereabouts of the U.S. Navy sailor George Tweed. Indeed, Japanese military behavior “denigrated into a kind of destructive nihilism.”⁵⁴ This erratic kind of conduct increased as American forces approached Guam. As a result, the Japanese forced most of the Chamorros into concentration camps in the villages of Yoña, Malesso and Malojloj. Instances of Japanese humanity and generosity were few and far between.

The way of war held no place for compassion and sympathy in Guam, as several Japanese massacres of Chamorros in the villages of Agat, Malesso and Yigo attested.⁵⁵ Survivor Joaquin Cruz recalled, however, a rare incident in which an unknown Japanese soldier befriended his family. Remembering his time spent in the Manengon concentration camp in Yoña, Cruz noted that a soldier provided his family with desperately needed food items, such as rice and candy. In return, Cruz instructed the

⁵¹ Sanchez 1989, 222.

⁵² Ibid., 222.

⁵³ Quoted in “Survivors Recall Joy of Liberation,” *Pacific Daily News*, 21 July 1990, 2A.

⁵⁴ Rogers, 181.

⁵⁵ Ibid., 180.

soldier on how to make coconut oil, a versatile oil used as medicine and food.⁵⁶ That friendship lasted briefly, risking the lives of the soldier and the Cruz family. In another instance, survivor Maria Cruz talked about an unidentified Japanese male who helped her family. She described how the soldier assisted her family in escaping harm during the American invasion of Guam. "When morning came," Cruz recalled, "this one Japanese told us to go to a different place than the others. He wrote a note and gave it to us and said, 'if you meet a Japanese soldier give him this note because you people are good.'"⁵⁷ Maria Cruz failed to indicate where the "others" ventured, only stating her indebtedness to the Japanese soldier for protecting her family.

No one knew, among the two Cruz families, what happened to these considerate soldiers, as bombs from above quickly forced many into hiding. From early June to mid July, the American Navy bombarded the island, focusing on Japanese coast-line defenses and on the city of Hagatña. During the war, many Chamorros interpreted the dropping of bombs as "*bindision Yu'us*," or "God's blessing." As a young child during the war, for example, Antonio "Min" C. Babauta recalls that his "mother and grandmother used to pray to the Blessed Virgin Mary to spread her cape, saying 'Baba nai I copamu yan protehi ham,' or 'open your cape and protect us.' I didn't know what it meant at that time...Now I know more about what they're praying for."⁵⁸ God's blessing thus signaled the return of the Americans and hopefully the end of Japanese rule.

⁵⁶ Quoted in Frale Oyen, "Longtime Asan Resident Remembers: Joaquin Cruz Describes Some Childhood Events," *Pacific Daily News*, 21 July 1990, 17A.

⁵⁷ Quoted in Barbara Ray, "The Invasion Begins: Memories of Battle for Guam Deeply Etched," *Pacific Daily News Liberation Day Supplement*, 21 Thursday 1994, 41 and 60.

⁵⁸ Antonio "Min" C. Babauta, interview by the author, Agat, Guam. 5 March 2002.

The bombing finally ceased with the American invasion of Guam, code-named “Operation Stevedore,” on 21 July 1944.⁵⁹ After days and nights of armed conflict, the United States military declared Guam secure on 10 August 1944. About 16,000 Japanese, Korean and Okinawan soldiers and laborers, as well as 2,000 American infantrymen, lost their lives in an island far from their homes and families. The Chamorros of Guam, on the other hand, surfaced from the debris of almost three years of war under Japan’s rule. For them, the war began with the Japanese invasion on 8 December 1941. The war continued with the military and civil administration of Chamorros, and ended with the American military victory over Japanese forces in the summer of 1944. Treated as both enemy and subject by the Japanese soldiers and administrators, the Chamorros of Guam never received nor sought recognition as patriotic minorities of Japan. They instead directed their spiritual and political allegiances to the United States, and judged the Japanese as enemies.

However, their relatives to the north, especially in the islands of Rota and Saipan, held different and generally favorable attitudes toward the Japanese that “had been shaped by decades of colonial effort to socialize them as loyal members of the [Japanese] empire.”⁶⁰ World War II also began on December 1941 for those in the northern Marianas when the Japanese “instituted martial law in the Marianas, giving the military full authority over the islands and their people.”⁶¹ While the Japanese military implemented policies to fortify the entire Marianas, Chamorros of the northern islands

⁵⁹ For a review of the American invasion of Guam, see O.R. Lodge, *The Recapture of Guam* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1954).

⁶⁰ Poyer, Falgout and Carucci 2001, 27. The island of Tinian housed mostly Okinawan, Korean and Japanese laborers of the sugar industry. Chamorro families, many of whom previously worked in Yap under the Japanese mandate, did not reside there until the end of the war in 1945.

⁶¹ Farrell 1991A, 329.

prepared for war. They readied themselves for encounters with what they had come to know as violent and evil white men.

WORLD WAR II IN THE NORTHERN MARIANAS

From 1941 to 1943, the Japanese government militarized Chamorros of the northern islands in ways different from the intimidation and harm experienced by the Chamorros of Guam.⁶² Chamorros, as well as Refaluwasch, Koreans and others, built military fortifications and runways, learned basic military skills, and participated in fire drills. They worked together with the Japanese government and military, reflecting a stronger level of acceptance and cooperation than the Chamorros of Guam. *Tan* Consolacion C. Guerrero remarked that “when the invasion of Saipan was about to happen, the natives were taught. They were gathered up, Chamorros and Carolinians. They were taught about what to expect from the war....We were made to carry the bucket so that once the war ensued, we will scoop the water and spray it to control the fire. All of those were taught by the Japanese before the war.”⁶³

Some Chamorros assisted the Japanese military with specifically assigned duties.⁶⁴ Although the Japanese seldom conscripted Chamorros as actual soldiers, they required Chamorros to aid in the operations of Japanese military warfare. *Tun* Vicente T. Camacho, for example, learned the military occupation of semaphore signaling, or *hōkukutai*, for the National Service Corps. He noted that “every morning in the

⁶² Considerable debate still occurs as to when Japan decided to militarize the mandated islands of Micronesia. For more on the political and military implications of this debate, see Peattie 1988, 230-256.

⁶³ *Tan* Consolacion C. Guerrero, “Finiho Yan Estoria Ginen I C.N.M.I. Archives Kolehon San Kattan Na Islas Marianas/C.N.M.I. Oral History Project Northern Marianas College,” interview by Herbert S. Del Rosario. Written and Translated by Nominanda L. Kosaka and Herbert S. Del Rosario (Saipan: Northern Marianas College, 25 April 1994), 5.

⁶⁴ While Chamorros in the northern Marianas assisted the Japanese military in various capacities such as police assistants or laborers, Chamorros in Guam served in the United States Navy as mess attendants, one of the few available positions open to people of color before the war.

hokukutai, it was exercises and drills; every morning [Sergeant Nakano] trained us in the things that Japanese soldiers did.... We learned how to shoot rifles, how to dive into air-raid shelters, all the things that regular soldiers did. Even how to dig air-raid shelters, how to make them--everything."⁶⁵ Approximately twenty to thirty Chamorros worked as police assistants in Saipan and Guam. Chamorros, especially male laborers and interpreters, participated in these military-sponsored activities as they prepared for an impending war.⁶⁶ In fact, Pacific Islanders throughout Micronesia contributed to Japan's war efforts in the Pacific. These Pacific Islanders "served the Japanese military directly as lookouts and quasi-military servicemen of various sorts; as loyalists who passed information and enforced local security rules; or rarely and most dramatically as recruited members of the military services."⁶⁷ With military activity on the rise, the Japanese called on Pacific Islanders across the region of Micronesia to show their loyalty to Japan by working in these capacities.

Public opinion about the war naturally sharpened with the involvement of so many Pacific Islanders in the construction of military fortifications and projects throughout Micronesia. Chamorros of the northern Marianas saw Japan as the eventual victor of the war in the Pacific. They asserted that the Japanese "were unbeatable, especially with the events of the early part of the war and with Guam being lost and...the fact that the United States was thrown out without much of a fight and all of the early

⁶⁵ Vicente T. Camacho, "The Japanese Blood Shed in Saipan is still with Us," interview by Yoshiaki Kamisawa *Journal of the Pacific Society* 14, no. 4 (January 1992): 23.

⁶⁶ A small number of Chamorro women served as nurses and medical assistants for the Japanese government. No documentation can be found, at least in English translation, that accurately quantified the number of Chamorro men and women employed by the Japanese government before the war. A substantial amount of material was lost during the war as a result of the American bombings of Saipan.

⁶⁷ Poyer, Falgout and Carucci 2001, 159.

victories.”⁶⁸ The few Chamorros who questioned the exact meanings and motives of the war remained silent or discreet, fearing Japanese punishment. Even the mere mention of “*beikoku*” (America) served as grounds for Japanese disciplinary measures. *Tun* Vicente Atalig Inos, a Chamorro elder from Rota, observed that “we never said anything about the Americans during the war because...I don’t know their customs....But you never would say these words in front of the Japanese because if they heard you saying that, they would hit you or kill you because they don’t want local people to talk about [Americans].”⁶⁹

While many Chamorros knew that they could not talk openly about Americans, they continued to wonder about their attitudes toward Chamorros. Chamorro interest in Americans stemmed, in part, from Japanese descriptions of “America” as one of the Western countries opposing Japan’s “liberation” campaigns in Asia and the Pacific. Based on accounts of relatives in Guam married to Americans, several Chamorro families thought that Americans were decent people. The majority of northern Marianas Chamorros, however, accepted Japanese characterizations of the Americans as imperialist murderers. *Tun* Ignacio M. Sablan reflected, for example, that the Americans “were a bunch of killers.”⁷⁰ He added, “that’s what the Japanese told us.”⁷¹ For the duration of the war, the belief in Americans as “killers” endured in the northern Marianas, an idea antithetical to that of Americans as saviors in Guam. Chamorro loyalties to Japan undoubtedly prospered, but the question of its collective continuity loomed on the horizon.

⁶⁸ Scott Russell, interview by the author, Chalan Kanoa, Saipan, 7 February 2002.

⁶⁹ Vicente Atalig Inos, “The War Years on Saipan: Transcripts of Interviews with Residents,” interview by Ted Oxborrow and Associates (Mangilao: Micronesian Area Research Center, 1981), 64.

⁷⁰ Sablan 1981B, 56.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 56.

Beginning in February 1944, several Japanese military units arrived in Saipan, including the 29th Infantry Division, the 9th Tank Regiment, and the 43rd Infantry Division. Most of these divisions came from Manchuria. Many of these soldiers entered Saipan ignorant of the relationship that had developed over the years between the Japanese and Chamorros of the northern Marianas. *Tun* Vicente T. Camacho, himself an aid to the Japanese military and police, noticed that the Japanese soldiers “weren’t friends anymore. So many soldiers came to Saipan; they came in droves.”⁷² The stress of war affected these soldiers, making it difficult for them to perform their military assignments, let alone interact with indigenous peoples. The success of American and Allied naval attacks on Japanese shipping undermined the confidence of these soldiers, many of whom displaced their increasing anxiety on the Chamorro communities.⁷³

Throughout the northern Marianas and other battle sites of the western Pacific, Japanese soldiers caused some of “the most profound dislocations in the patterns of civilian life.”⁷⁴ The arrival of the Japanese Army divisions, the final warning that war with the United States was imminent, marked a key turning point in Chamorro relations with the Japanese. Russell states that “when the military came in things changed. The military was pretty brutal. People didn’t like them. People tried to avoid them....And a lot of the disillusionment that came with the Japanese came with the Japanese military in that period. The Japanese military did not care about the people....They had a mission and the mission was to hold the homeland.”⁷⁵

That these particular Japanese soldiers cared little about Chamorros immediately

⁷² Camacho 1992, 25.

⁷³ Peattie 1988, 277.

⁷⁴ Ibid, 297.

⁷⁵ Russell 2002, Interview.

impacted indigenous understandings of the Japanese. As *Tan Escolastica Tudela Cabrera* observed, “when the fighting started the Japanese became mean.”⁷⁶ *Tan Lucia Aldan Duenas* likewise recollected that “the new soldiers who came ... were very strict to the people of the islands. They slapped people who do not help and whenever they pass by you have to stand up and salute them irregardless of their appearance. You have to salute them.”⁷⁷ In the spring of 1944, therefore, the violent attitudes of the newly arrived Japanese soldiers, some of whom were veterans of battles in Nanjing and Shanghai, China, undermined further an already strained relationship between Chamorros and Japanese.

Not able to attend Mass and displaced from their homes in Garapan, now occupied by the soldiers, Chamorro families, laborers and civilians rushed to the caves in the mountains and valleys for protection from the war.⁷⁸ To the south, in Rota and Tinian, the Japanese military instructed civilians to seek shelter as well. Many Chamorros in Rota stayed in the village of Tatachao under orders from the Japanese military. Others feverishly worked to complete fortifications, scores of which failed to meet the standards of the military since “panic and exhaustion ruled the way things were constructed.”⁷⁹

Panic and a general sense of chaos permeated the atmosphere of the southernmost islands of the chain, as soldiers prepared their military defense strategies and as Chamorros scrambled for protection. With most of the Army stationed in Saipan, the

⁷⁶ Quoted in Bruce Petty, ed., *Saipan: Oral Histories of the Pacific War* (Jefferson: McFarland and Company, Inc., 2002), 27.

⁷⁷ Dueñas 1994, 6.

⁷⁸ Farrell 1991A, 328.

⁷⁹ W.M. Peck, “Rota’s Ginalagan Cliff Unchallenged,” [1983?], copy in Mark Peattie’s Nan’yō Papers, Box 2, Folder 3, Richard F. Taitano Micronesia Area Research Center Manuscript Collection, University of Guam, 6.

Chamorros there experienced the force and pressure of the soldiers' demands. While the Japanese did not erect internment camps for the Saipanese, as was in the case in Guam, they required Chamorros to dig holes near their homes. Although the Japanese military never stated its exact intention for these holes, many Chamorros suspected that the holes would serve as burial sites for them. *Tan Lucia Aldan Dueñas* remarked that "what scared the Chamorros here on Saipan was on every house the Japanese dug big holes for everyone to hide. Then my father was suspicious of what was happening."⁸⁰ Chamorro fears of these holes and of the possibility that they may be executed by the Japanese reflected similar suspicions held by other Pacific Islanders in Micronesia.

These Pacific Islanders likewise "suspected that the Japanese planned to exterminate them--perhaps to alleviate the critical food shortage, in retaliation for disloyalty, to cheat the enemy of his prize, or as a final attempt to achieve honor in a lost war."⁸¹ Fortunately, no exterminations occurred in the northern Marianas. As *Russell* notes, "there wasn't the atrocities that you had in Guam."⁸² That northern Chamorros cooperated willingly with the Japanese military may have tempered some of the anxieties and prejudices of the soldiers. Unlike the Chamorros of Guam, Chamorros in the northern Marianas had grown accustomed to dealing with the Japanese over more than three decades of colonial rule. This relationship helped to ease the wartime tension between Japanese and Chamorros. In effect, the Chamorros of the northern Marianas showed themselves to be loyal.

Even with the American bombing of Saipan in early June 1944, culminating with the American invasion of the island code-named "Forager," Chamorros in the northern

⁸⁰ *Dueñas* 1994, 6.

⁸¹ *Poyer, Falgout and Carucci* 2001, 10.

⁸² *Russell* 2002, Interview.

Marianas assisted, however unwillingly, the Japanese military in its needs. This meant that Chamorros risked their lives and those of their families. As the Japanese soldiers fought the invading American forces through different valleys and terrain, they often sought food and shelter in caves where Chamorros and civilians hid. There, the soldiers took pleasure in helping themselves to food, water and rest. Many families resented this kind of disrespectful behavior, but all they could do was watch as the coming and going of the soldiers depleted their supplies. Chamorros also guided the Japanese soldiers around the villages and through the jungles and, in some instances, fought alongside them. Many prayed to *Yu'us* and their favorite saints to stop the war. Overhead, the bombs fell incessantly on Chamorros, Refaluwasch, Koreans, Okinawans and Japanese alike. However, the dropping of bombs did not signal God's blessing as it did in Guam. Chamorros might have interpreted the bombs as signs of God's wrath, or even evidence of the evil Americans, but definitely not as God's blessing. For the Chamorros of the northern Marianas, the arrival of the Americans brought violence and destruction. As the bombs rained on them, Chamorros feared the Americans and, increasingly, the Japanese.

With the war at its height in Saipan, Chamorros tried to protect themselves from the fighting. *Tun* John M. Taitano noted that "immediately after the [American] invasion, I was with my family. We were wandering around not sure of what was happening. I was most concerned about the safety of my family, most of whom were not with us. The invasion itself did not bother me too much because I was on the Japanese side and I was sure the Japanese would win against the Americans."⁸³ But "as the invasion continued, and as the bombs were dropped," added *Tun* John, "I became worried about my family,

⁸³ John M. Taitano, "The War Years on Saipan: Transcripts of Interviews with Residents," interview by Ted Oxborrow and Associates (Mangilao: Micronesian Area Research Center, 1981), 10.

about their safety, and about the island itself. Everything was being damaged, and it looked like the Japanese might not win. Everybody was out of the village, at the farm, hiding from both the Japanese and the Americans as the war progressed.”⁸⁴ *Tun* Vicente T. Camacho similarly remarked that Chamorros “thought that both sides were our enemies. That was the worst time of all. If we turned to the left there were enemies, if we turned to the right, there were enemies. No matter where we turned, up, down, east, west, it was enemies everywhere.”⁸⁵ Indeed, everywhere in the northern Marianas, Chamorros began to question the strength of the Japanese empire and, in turn, question their loyalties to that empire.

On Rota, *Tun* Lewis Manglona excitedly recalled a battle between Japanese and American aircraft. He stated that “now I’m not sure why my friend and I were for the American plane for we had been told that the Americans’ sole purpose in coming to Rota was to cut off our ears and tongues, but it was the American plane we were cheering for.”⁸⁶ Amazed at the skill of the American pilot, *Tun* Lewis said that “suddenly [the American airplane] seemed to have been hit for it rolled over in the air and started to fall. But it was only a stunt, for as soon as the Japanese plane turned its tail it recovered, came at the Japanese plane and shot it down.”⁸⁷ *Tun* Lewis finally exclaimed that “we almost went crazy laughing and clapping and shouting until a Japanese soldier heard us and came running at us with his sword raised. That settled us and we bowed to him and tried to look as if we had been crying.”⁸⁸ *Tun* Lewis’ “tears” reflected the ambiguous nature of northern Marianas Chamorro loyalties to Japan toward the end of the war.

⁸⁴ Ibid., 10.

⁸⁵ Camacho 1992, 29.

⁸⁶ Quoted in Peck, 6.

⁸⁷ Quoted in Peck, 6.

⁸⁸ Quoted in Peck, 6.

The power and cohesiveness of Japanese loyalty slowly deteriorated among Chamorros who wondered if Japan would even win the war. In addition, Japanese military acts of disrespect and violence disturbed and offended many Chamorros. Unbeknownst to them, Japanese soldiers unwittingly created the conditions for Chamorros to think more critically about their colonial status as indigenous subjects of the Japanese empire. Although Chamorros supported Japan's war effort on the surface, they began to question to what extent their loyalties guaranteed them safety and survival. Some Chamorros continued to aid the Japanese military during the war, at times hesitantly and at other times willingly. But the majority of Chamorros protected their own families in the confines of caves and underground dwellings. There, they thought deeply about their lives and the outcome of the war in the northern Marianas. Uncertain about their future, Chamorros pondered the increasing fragmentary nature of their loyalties to Japan.

Various Asian populations in Saipan, Rota and Tinian shared concerns similar to those of the Chamorros. Okinawans, Koreans and Japanese civilians hid in natural and artificially made shelters. They, too, feared the war and its outcome, not knowing their future under either the Japanese or American militaries. Apprehensive of what that future might entail, they sometimes contemplated surrendering to two kinds of "death." One type of death required that Japanese subjects pay tribute and honor to Japan in the form of *gyokusai*, an "honorable death."⁸⁹ This was the patriotic way to die. The other form of death, indeed the dishonorable one, came from contact with the relatively unknown American enemy. As a result of Japanese wartime propaganda, many civilians believed that encounters with Americans would lead to torture and, finally, execution. Yet despite

⁸⁹ *Shogakukan Progressive Japanese-English Dictionary* (Tokyo: Shogakukan, 1986), 453.

the severity of these fears and stresses, only a small number of Okinawans, Japanese and Koreans chose *gyokusai*.

Small numbers of people jumped from cliffs and ridges located in the northern coasts of Saipan and Tinian during the humid month of July. Facing north to Japan, with the salty wind in their faces, these civilians and soldiers died in the direction of their “motherland.” American military forces and the media often misconstrued these deaths as “mass suicide.”⁹⁰ They rightly noted, however, the patriotic and nationalist zeal behind these deaths. Recounting a dramatic encounter with *gyokusai* on Saipan, Lt. Robert B. Sheeks observed that “some civilians and troops crowded at the end of the island, swam out to the high outer edge of the submerged reef, and most drowned themselves when our boats or amphibian tractors approached in an effort to rescue them.”⁹¹ Others, continued Sheeks, “banded together at the top of cliffs, sang patriotic songs, and leaped into the sea.”⁹²

The actual losses associated with *gyokusai* constituted only a fragment of the total number of deaths in the northern Marianas. Many more people, especially the elderly and the young, died either from starvation or from the violence inflicted upon them by the Japanese and American armed forces. Those who survived chose to trust the words of enlisted *nisei*, or Japanese soldiers in the American Army, as well as some of their kin who had already passed over into American lines. The *nisei*, working as interpreters, traveled through stretches of jungle, cliffs and caves where many civilians still took cover. Speaking through megaphones, the *nisei* offered food, water and medical

⁹⁰ The exact number of these deaths is not known. Haruko Taya Cook estimates that about 1,000 civilians died as a result of *gyokusai*. See her essay, “The Myth of the Saipan Suicides,” in *No End Save Victory: Perspectives on World War II*, ed. Robert Cowley (New York: Berkley Books, 2001).

⁹¹ Lt. Robert B. Sheeks, “Civilians on Saipan,” *Far Eastern Survey* 14, no. 9 (1945): 112.

⁹² *Ibid.*, 112.

treatment for civilians and promised them safe refuge. The presence of relatively healthy civilians and captured prisoners of war during these excursions encouraged others to surrender, easing further suffering and death.

MEMORY AND MEANING IN WORLD WAR II

The surrender of civilians to the American forces continued long after the Americans declared the Marianas secure on 10 August 1944, though most had turned themselves over by the end of that summer.⁹³ It was not until the end of the war, a year later in September 1945, that the Japanese gave up Rota, an island the Americans earlier declared as non-threatening because of its lack of sufficient military resources.⁹⁴ The campaign to secure the Marianas having ended successfully, the United States now used the islands as bases for aircraft bombers and as refueling stations for submarines.⁹⁵ As Ballendorf states, "Guam, along with the Mariana Islands of Saipan and Tinian, became huge airbases from which daily bombing attacks were launched against Japan."⁹⁶ These assaults included the *Enola Gay's* atomic bombing of Hiroshima on 6 August 1945.

Following Japan's surrender on 15 August 1945, the United States "set out upon an imperial course to guarantee its future security in the Pacific and East Asia by taking direct control over the Pacific Islands from Japan at the end of World War II."⁹⁷ In 1947, the United States established a strategic trusteeship through the United Nations which

⁹³ The American military secured Saipan on 9 July 1944 and Tinian on 1 August 1944. In his *History of the Northern Marianas*, Farrell states that a total of 60,000 Japanese (many of whom were actually Okinawans) and 5,000 Americans lost their lives in the battle for the Marianas, 383.

⁹⁴ The islands of Pagan held a very small population of Chamorros and Refaluwasch. Aguigan and Anatahan hosted an even smaller number of Japanese and Okinawan civilians and soldiers. The American forces ignored these islands, seeing them as non-threatening to their larger war effort in the Pacific. The peoples of these islands later received food and aid from the United States in the late 1940s.

⁹⁵ Farrell 1991A, 371.

⁹⁶ Ballendorf, 235.

⁹⁷ Hal M. Friedman, "The Limitations of Collective Security: The United States and the Micronesian Trusteeship, 1945-1947," *ISLA: A Journal of Micronesian Studies* 3, no 2 (Dry Season 1995): 339.

enabled them to govern not only the Marianas, but all of the formerly Japanese held islands in Micronesia. This trusteeship allowed “the United States to deny the area to foreign powers and guarantee that Pearl Harbor-style attacks were never again inflicted on the United States.”⁹⁸ While American policy-makers in distant capitals negotiated for the colonial acquisition of Micronesia, Pacific Islanders at home struggled to recover from the ravages of the war.

The major islands and atolls in Micronesia witnessed some form of military activity or warfare. Melanesian Islands, such as Papua New Guinea and the Solomons, also bore the brunt of numerous air raids and land invasions. It made perfect sense, then, that survival temporarily superceded all other priorities. Pacific Islanders contacted relatives, salvaged food, and hastily built shelters. They worked feverishly to rebuild their lives. Even though the war was declared over in 1945, “the meaning and the memory of the war would never end” for these Pacific Islanders and for other survivors and veterans.⁹⁹

In the Mariana Islands, memories of the war are matters complicated by the histories that precede it. Histories of nearly half a century of Japanese and American rule greatly inform how Chamorros came to remember and understand the war. As White notes, “from one island group to another the local meanings of the war frequently depended upon the prior history of colonial experience.”¹⁰⁰ Chamorros thus held conflicting views of Japan and the United States as they entered the war. Although they shared the same cultural values and spoke the same language, Chamorros expressed

⁹⁸ Ibid., 341.

⁹⁹ Lin Poyer, “Micronesian Experiences of the War in the Pacific,” in *Remembering the Pacific War*, ed. Geoffrey M. White (Honolulu: Center for Pacific Islands Studies at the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa, 1991), 86.

¹⁰⁰ White 1991a, viii.

different notions about these two colonial powers. Going into the war, the Chamorros of the northern Marianas, namely Rota and Saipan, generally revealed their loyalties to Japan and considered Americans their enemy. Chamorros on Guam, on the other hand, saw Japan as the enemy and looked to America for moral and spiritual support.

While World War II raged on between military strategists and diplomats, another war broke across the shores of the Marianas. That war illustrated the politically charged and conflicting nature of loyalties among Chamorros, giving greater shape, coherence and meaning to what were emergent loyalties in the time before the war. The political language of loyalty infused the everyday life of Chamorros throughout the islands. It quickly became the main medium of communication between them and their colonizers. "For colonial powers," suggests White, "relations with 'native' peoples during the war were often framed in terms of 'loyalty.'"¹⁰¹ As White states, "Islanders whose relations with colonial 'masters' were ambivalent at best prior to the war often did not regard the conflict as their war."¹⁰² This assertion generally ran true for most Pacific Islanders, such as those in Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands. Referring to the diversity of war experiences in Papua New Guinea, Hank Nelson observes that the peoples of this region lacked any sense of "national unity."¹⁰³ The question of loyalty, argues Nelson, "did not arise for most villagers."¹⁰⁴ They obeyed, quite frankly, "whoever was present and

¹⁰¹ Ibid., vii. The story of shifting loyalties, as expressed in the life of Solomon Islander George Bogese, is a one example. For more on this subject, see Hugh Laracy, "George Bogese: 'Just a Bloody Traitor'?" in *Remembering the Pacific War*, ed. Geoffrey M. White (Honolulu: Center for Pacific Islands Studies at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, 1991), 59-75.

¹⁰² Ibid., vii.

¹⁰³ Hank Nelson, "Taim Bilong Pait: The Impact of the Second World War on Papua New Guinea," in *Southeast Asia under Japanese Occupation*, ed. Alfred W. McCoy (New Haven: Yale University Southeast Asia Studies, 1980), 255.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., 254.

holding a gun.”¹⁰⁵

However, the Chamorros of the Mariana Islands are an exception. To some degree, Chamorros knew about the political, cultural and ideological stakes involved in suppressing or revealing their loyalties; to put it another way, the war became *their* war, though in ways not entirely of their own making. By patriotically supporting Americans during the war, for example, Guam Chamorros resisted Japanization. They invariably looked to the figure of Uncle Sam, whose principles of freedom and liberty fused nicely with indigenous understandings of spiritual providence and cultural perseverance. As a result, they suffered dearly for their loyalty, as numerous innocent Guam Chamorros died at the hands of Japanese soldiers.

Chamorros in the northern Marianas likewise extracted strength from *Yu'us*, as they, too, wanted the war to cease. But the Chamorros of Rota and Saipan represented, in effect, symbols of Japanese militarism as soldiers, interpreters and workers for Japan's empire—a collective image of Japanese militarism and “collaboration” despised by the Chamorros of Guam. Chamorro loyalty to Japan thus meant betrayal and distrust in Guam. But it concomitantly meant loyalty and, ultimately, survival in the northern Mariana Islands. As the war came to a close, however, Chamorros in Rota and Saipan lessened their loyalties to Japan due to the increased militant behavior of Japanese soldiers, a change in social behavior revealed elsewhere in Japan's wartime empire.¹⁰⁶

In all respects, then, the war deepened the intra-cultural divisions among Chamorros, especially within the contexts of colonial loyalties in the northern Mariana Islands and Guam. As one American correspondent observed in 1946, “to speak of

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., 254.

¹⁰⁶ Poyer, Falgout and Carucci 2001, 223.

Saipan and Guam—which are about 100 miles apart—is almost to speak of black and white. The atmosphere, scenery and morale on the two islands is that much in contrast.”¹⁰⁷ Unlike the Spanish-American War in 1898 and World War I in 1914, World War II impacted Chamorros in ways that left profound wounds of great ideological, physical and cultural magnitude. How would the following postwar period of American reconstruction and rehabilitation address these issues of war, colonialism and agency? If the onset of the war generated the conditions to make visible and violent colonial loyalties, how would its “end” shape the meaning and, indeed, the future of Chamorro political identities? The attempt to assess these questions involves another historical period fraught with the politics of American militarization in particular and the rise of the cold war in general.

¹⁰⁷ “Pacific Islands Still Bear Scars of Warfare,” *The Christian Science Monitor*, 4 December 1946, 139.

CHAPTER 4
THE WAR'S AFTERMATH:
THE POLITICS OF AMERICAN MILITARY REHABILITATION
IN THE MARIANA ISLANDS

The immediate years following the aftermath of World War II in 1945 have been referred to, interchangeably, as periods of "reconstruction" and "rehabilitation."¹ These terms have been used to describe the dismantling of the military industries of Germany and Japan, respectively, and of the Allied rebuilding of local and regional economies affected by the war.² In the European theater, for example, the question of Germany's future arose as an issue of intense international debate. In addressing the displacement of hundreds of thousands of people, especially formerly Nazi-persecuted Jews, Allied countries approached the issue of Germany's "rehabilitation" with the goals of restoring a viable economy and preventing a potential remilitarization campaign.³

As Anne Dieghton states, "historically and psychologically, Germany represented a threat."⁴ "Germany was at the centre of Europe," writes Deighton, "straddling east and west, and holding the key to the balance of power there....The lessons both of the Versailles settlement and of appeasement were not forgotten."⁵ Further, Allied countries, such as Britain and the United States, worried that the Soviet Union would ally itself with Germany in the near future, remilitarizing the country and preventing Allied access to its

¹ John Lewis Gaddis, *The United States and the Origins of the Cold War, 1941-1947* (New York and London: Columbia University Press, 1972), 96.

² Thomas J. McCormick, "America's Half Century: United States Foreign Policy in the Cold War," in *The Cold War in Europe*, ed. Charles S. Maier (New York: Markus Wiener Publishing, Inc., 1991), 27.

³ Ian Turner, "British Policy Towards German Industry, 1945-9: Reconstruction, Restriction or Exploitation?" in *Reconstruction in Post-War Germany: British Occupation Policy and the Western Zones, 1945-55*, ed. Ian D. Turner (Oxford, New York and Munich: Berg, 1989), 67.

⁴ Anne Deighton, "Cold-War Diplomacy: British Policy Towards Germany's Role in Europe, 1945-9," in *Reconstruction in Post-War Germany: British Occupation Policy and the Western Zones, 1945-55*, ed. Ian D. Turner (Oxford, New York and Munich: Berg, 1989), 16.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 16.

natural and human resources.⁶ This possible alliance, the Allied countries feared, would compound an already disturbing history of Germany's violation of peace treaties and of wartime militarization and expansion into sovereign territories.⁷

The perception that the Soviet Union posed a threat to Allied political, military and economic interests in Germany extended beyond the European continent and represented a shift in postwar global power and geopolitics. The dropping of the atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Japan, by the United States on 6 and 9 August 1945 had not just killed hundreds of thousands in these cities, compelling Japan to surrender a few days later on 15 August, but had also instigated a new sort of war.⁸ More than a militarist act of profound violence, America's use of the atomic bomb on Japan demonstrated to the world, and particularly to the Soviet Union, America's capacity to exert its newly acquired military and economic power on a global scale.⁹ In the words of Margot A. Henriksen, the atomic bomb "shook the foundations of the physical and psychological universe."¹⁰ Indeed, as Henriksen observes, "atomic diplomacy became an integral part of American foreign policy," signaling the rise of the cold war between the United States and the Soviet Union.¹¹

Viewed as an ideological war between Soviet communism and American democracy, the cold war's onset greatly shaped the policies and politics of Allied

⁶ Turner, 89.

⁷ Deighton., 16.

⁸ Laura Hein and Mark Selden, "Commemoration and Silence: Fifty Years of Remembering the Bomb in America and Japan," in *Living with the Bomb: American and Japanese Cultural Conflicts in the Nuclear Age*, ed. Laura Hein and Mark Selden (Armonk and London: M. E. Sharpe, 1997), 4.

⁹ For a brief overview of America's rise to economic global power, see Geir Lundestad, "Empire by Invitation? The United States and Western Europe, 1945-1952," in *The Cold War in Europe*, ed. Charles S. Maier (New York: Markus Wiener Publishing, Inc., 1991), 145.

¹⁰ Margot A. Henriksen, *Dr. Strangelove's America: Society and Culture in the Atomic Age* (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press, 1997), 7.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 15.

rehabilitation efforts not only in Europe, but also in Japan and the wider Asian and Pacific regions.¹² Of particular relevance is American president Harry Truman's "Truman Doctrine," outlined in 1947, which required the United States and its allies to "contain" communism by spreading democracy. In American-occupied Japan, from August 1945 to April 1952, the campaign to demilitarize, rehabilitate and, ultimately, democratize Japan and its people took on, ironically, the militarist dimensions of the cold war.¹³ Comparable to the Allied rehabilitation of Germany, the American rehabilitation of Japan served to deter Soviet communism and to revive an East Asian regional economy which granted the United States access to its resources.¹⁴

Just how, though, did the different peoples of these war-torn countries respond to and interact with the Allies and their attempts to "rehabilitate" them and their physical surroundings? More broadly, how did the cold war affect these so-called rehabilitation policies? How did the Allies, the "victors," and the "defeated" portray themselves? And, if the concepts of loyalty and liberation applied to wartime contexts, did they likewise apply to the war's aftermath? For some people in Europe, write Claire Duchen and Irene Bandhauer-Schöffmann, liberation "meant welcoming Allied soldiers while for others the Nazi occupation was replaced by another occupation by the Soviets."¹⁵ Elsewhere in Okinawa and Japan, the United States presented itself as a "liberator" of regions once

¹² Gaddis, 361. For more on Allied reconstruction efforts in Asia and Southeast Asia, see Roger C. Thompson, *The Pacific Basin since 1945*, 2nd ed. (Harlow and New York: Longman, 2001).

¹³ John Dower, *Embracing Defeat: Japan in the Wake of World War II* (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1999), 23.

¹⁴ Bruce Cummings, "Japan's Position in the World System," in *Postwar Japan as History*, ed. Andrew Gordon (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press, 1993), 38.

¹⁵ Claire Duchen and Irene Bandhauer-Schöffmann, "Introduction," in *When the War Was Over: Women, War and Peace in Europe, 1940-1956*, ed. Claire Duchen and Irene Bandhauer-Schöffmann (London and New York, Leicester University Press, 2000), 1.

under Japanese wartime militarism and fanaticism.¹⁶ In Micronesia, the American rehabilitation campaign likewise invoked the rhetoric of liberation. Moreover, the arrival of American military forces in 1944 provided indigenous peoples and even Asian settlers with opportunities to compare and contrast Americans with the Japanese, both in terms of wartime militaries and peacetime societies. The question of indigenous responses to the American rehabilitation campaign in Micronesia is the primary concern of this chapter.

Specifically, this chapter explores the impact of the American rehabilitation project upon the Chamorros of the Mariana Islands, with a particular emphasis on Chamorro views of and responses to American notions of loyalty and liberation. This chapter suggests that Chamorros, like their neighboring Pacific Islanders of Micronesia, used the postwar period as another time to assess their relations with the Japanese and Americans. Therefore, the American rehabilitation project did not merely generate tremendous changes in the physical, economic and political landscape of the Mariana Islands. This chapter asserts that the American rehabilitation project also greatly shaped Chamorro memories of the war period and of the colonial histories that preceded it. These two periods—the war and postwar rehabilitation eras—would later serve as key historical markers for the commemoration of World War II in the Mariana Islands.

LIBERATION SOUGHT, LIBERATION RECEIVED?

Shortly after the Japanese military assault on Guam in December 8, 1941, rumors about the return of the Americans circulated among the Chamorro population. “Like their fellow Americans on the Mainland,” writes Sanchez, “the people of Guam believed that war with Japan would not last over a month or two. This strong belief in the

¹⁶ T. Fujitani, Geoffrey M. White and Lisa Yoneyama, “Introduction,” in *Perilous Memories: The Asia-Pacific War(s)*, ed. T. Fujitani, Geoffrey M. White and Lisa Yoneyama (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2001), 12.

immediate recapture of the island provided hope to the islanders from the day the war broke out.”¹⁷ Chamorros imagined that the American return invasion would occur on a national holiday. They knew that American commemorations played a large role in the naval administration of the island. Commemorations, as the navy had sometimes proclaimed in the prewar era, signified important days of remembrance and reflection in America. Agricultural fairs, parades and American national holidays instilled such values as cooperation and loyalty among Chamorros. In a world suddenly challenged by the foreign presence of the Japanese, it made perfect sense that Chamorros drew inspiration from the then widely held belief that Americans would reappear on a day of significance—that is, on a day of commemoration.

The earliest rumor indicated that the United States military planned to attack Guam on December 25, 1941, as a “Christmas gift” to the Chamorros.¹⁸ That rumor proved false. Further, Japanese officials, assisted by Chamorro interpreters from Saipan and Rota, punished anyone accused of spreading such rumors in an overall attempt to eradicate Chamorro loyalties to the United States. However, the threat of punishment and the erroneous nature of previous rumors did not prevent Chamorros from speculating about the return of the Americans. During the first year of the Japanese occupation in 1942, these rumors flourished, again focusing on national holidays as possible dates for an American military invasion. As Rafael J. M. Reyes expressed, “I thought of the upcoming 4th of July [in 1942?] ... when perhaps the American troops would liberate us. They were long overdue, I told myself, as we marked each national holiday since the

¹⁷ Sanchez 1979, 99.

¹⁸ Ibid., 99.

Japanese invasion as the day the Americans would free us.”¹⁹ Teresita Perez reiterated these sentiments. Throughout the war period, she said that “never have we doubted the return of the Americans to us but at desperate moments we wondered just how long it would take them to cross the vast ocean that lay between our liberation and the place of our suffering.”²⁰ Indeed, Japanization policies placed a heavy toll on the indigenous population’s moral, spiritual and political loyalties to America. As the years under Japanese rule progressed, the prospects of American liberation seemed to grow bleaker.

Although Chamorros on Guam generally refused to accept their subjugation to Japan, the delay in the United States military’s return to the island with each passing holiday disheartened them. Sanchez notes that when the Americans did not appear on New Year’s Day in 1942 “rumor had it that the [American Navy] fleet was detained elsewhere in a battle with the Japanese Navy.”²¹ When rumors of another American return proved untrue, Chamorros moved the dates of their presumed liberation from one holiday to the next. Eventually, claims Sanchez, “the rumor mill stopped” because “its credibility suffered from so many liberation rumors which went sour.”²² By the time the United States military returned in the summer of 1944, the “rumor mill” of American liberation was exhausted. Nearly three years of false rumors had tested Chamorros’ optimism. The sight of American planes overhead and naval ships across the island’s reefs steadily increased Chamorro morale. But they still waited for concrete evidence of an American land invasion. As Marian Johnston exclaimed, “sometimes [Chamorro scout patrols] would return and tell us Americans had landed, but we had heard that so

¹⁹ Rafael J. M. Reyes, “Terror in the Waning Days of Occupation,” *Pacific Sunday News*, 21 July 1991, 10.

²⁰ Quoted in “C.B.S. The Columbia Broadcasting System to [Agueda I. Johnston],” 3 July 1945, copy in Agueda Iglesias Johnston’s Papers, Box 4, Correspondence Folder, Richard F. Taitano Micronesia Area Research Center Manuscript Collection, University of Guam, 6.

²¹ Sanchez 1979, 99.

²² *Ibid.*, 99.

often in the past two years that we didn't believe it."²³ "We finally were convinced," she continued, "when some of the boys came back to camp with Lucky Strike and Chesterfield cigarettes. We knew then that [the American landings] were true."²⁴ Excited by the reality of American land invasions, Chamorros again spread stories throughout the island that the Americans finally arrived.

As the American armed forces swept across the island, they came across a fatigued, malnourished and emotionally distressed people. Marine correspondent Alvin M. Josephy, Jr. writes that "we encountered [Chamorros] in small groups, here and there, as they emerged from the caves and broke free from Jap concentration camps."²⁵ He described them as "old, gnarled men with sticks; crones with wispy white hair, lace dresses, and no shoes; young girls in mud-stained rags, carrying naked babies; little boys and girls holding onto each other's hands fearfully."²⁶ Manuel Cruz Diaz, one of the few Chamorros serving in the United States Navy at that time, similarly recalls his return to Guam on the *USS Essex* in 1944. His early impressions of Chamorros reflected their emotional sense of despair. Cruz states that "people's faces were different. You can see the struggle they went through. They were dazed."²⁷ As Guam historian Paul Carano explains, "the people were overjoyed, but they were too weak and tired to engage in avid celebrations."²⁸ Chamorros' physical and emotional exhaustion, however, did not deter them from welcoming American soldiers enthusiastically.

In large part, Chamorros eagerly conveyed their appreciation for the American

²³ Quoted in Larry McManus, "Pacific Liberation," *YANK*, 1 September 1944, 11.

²⁴ Quoted in McManus, 11.

²⁵ Josephy, 72.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 75-76.

²⁷ Quoted in Tricia J. Braley, "We are not Celebrating the Past but the Present," *Pacific Daily News Liberation Supplement*, 21 July 1994, 16.

²⁸ Paul Carano, "Liberation Day: Prelude to Freedom, Lean Liberty is Better than Fat Slavery," *Guam Recorder* 3, no. 2-3 (1973): 5.

invasion. Unlike neighbor Pacific Islanders in Micronesia, the Chamorros of Guam “knew what to expect and were eager to get into American hands.”²⁹ The Chamorro reunion with the American military was therefore “more unequivocal and emotional than American arrivals in former Japanese colonies.”³⁰ Chamorros presented homemade American flags to soldiers, thanked and hugged them profusely, and sang patriotic songs. As Josephy emphatically states, “there was never any question of [Chamorro] loyalty to us: They were hysterically glad to see us.”³¹ After arriving at a civilian camp in Agat, for instance, Reverend Joaquin Flores Sablan remembers that the villagers “hoisted the American flag with bursting hearts, singing the national anthem with gusto. There was not a person in the group with dry eyes. It was a day never to be forgotten by my people. Our cup simply ran over with joy.”³² Another survivor of the war, Don Pascual Artero, similarly describes his family’s emotionally charged meeting with Americans. He notes that ““it is impossible to describe those moments...we started to cry for sheer joy and to embrace each other....Our clothes were soaked and torn, but who cared? We bubbled with happiness to find ourselves among the American soldiers.””³³ These expressions initially surprised American soldiers, many of whom knew nothing about Guam Chamorros and their political affiliation with the United States.

While some soldiers rudely described Chamorros as “gooks,” many Americans

²⁹ Poyer, Falgout and Carucci 2001, 251.

³⁰ Ibid., 251.

³¹ Josephy, 72.

³² Joaquin Flores Sablan, *My Mental Odyssey: Memoirs of the First Guamanian Protestant Minister* (Poplar Bluff: Stinson Press, 1990), 160. For a history of Protestantism on the island, see Eric Forbes, “The Origins of Protestantism in Guam,” in *Guam History: Perspectives*, ed. Lee D. Carter, William Wuerch, and Rosa Roberto Carter, vol. 1 (Mangilao: Richard F. Taitano Micronesian Area Research Center, 1997), 123-140.

³³ Quoted in Tony Palomo, *An Island in Agony* (Agaña: Tony Palomo, 1984), 215.

sympathized with Chamorro stories of struggle under the Japanese occupation.³⁴ The spectacle of ragged Chamorros overwhelmingly in “love” with America inspired cynical soldiers and astounded sensitive combatants. As soldiers, Americans identified with the wartime pains and sufferings of Chamorros. In fact, indigenous narratives of perseverance and especially loyalty provided a common ground to traverse the cultural, political and economic differences that separated Chamorros from Americans. Survivors and soldiers met on common grounds of solidarity and loyalty.³⁵ Both parties identified with the United States and both groups resisted Japanese colonialism.

Describing these cross-cultural exchanges, Reynolds states that “thousands of soldiers and sailors respect [Chamorros], many marry them, and a great many more swear they will return to this green friendly island when the war is over.”³⁶ These stories and the emotions of war forged friendships across ethnic lines and inspired a renewed sense of loyalty for all. As one American combatant declared, “I didn’t have anything to do with rescuing these people... I’m just a goddam spectator here, but I was so proud to be wearing an American uniform that I damned near bust.”³⁷ American soldiers were impressed, saddened and stirred by the war stories of the Chamorros. Troops provided Chamorros with chocolate candies, canned goods, field rations, cigarettes and almost anything that could be easily delivered by hand. Chamorros thankfully acknowledged these gifts by treating the Americans with the utmost respect and admiration.

As a result, numerous Chamorros felt deeply obligated to the families of

³⁴ Quoted in Donovan Brooks, “Guam Liberation Veterans Honored,” *Pacific Stars and Stripes*, 21 Thursday 1994, 6.

³⁵ After the war, intermarriages between Chamorros and stateside peoples increased. Laura Torres Marie Souder briefly discusses this issue. See her book, *Daughters of the Island: Contemporary Chamorro Women Organizers on Guam* (Lanham and Mangilao: University Press of America and Micronesian Area Research Center, 1992), 44.

³⁶ Quentin Reynolds, “These are Americans,” *Collier’s*, 19 May 1945, 5.

³⁷ Quoted in McManus, 10.

American soldiers whose sons sacrificed their lives. The return of American soldiers, as personable and symbolic representations of America, convinced Chamorros of the perceived humanitarian dimension of American military expansion into the Pacific. They consequently viewed the American invasion in cultural and spiritual terms, integrating the deeds and deaths of Americans into indigenous and Christian systems of respect and reciprocity. Felix Torres Pangelinan wrote, for example, that Chamorros “owe an everlasting debt to these gallant [American] men; a debt that we can never repay, but that we can show, in our humble gratitude, by being loyal, faithful, and patriotic to the United States of America.”³⁸ In Pangelinan’s judgment, Chamorros “were ready at any time to lay down their lives for American principles of democracy.”³⁹ Grateful for their renewed sense of freedom, Chamorros created a collective sense of obligation to the United States, thus strengthening the bonds of reciprocity between Chamorros and Americans. Many Chamorros internalized the liberation of Guam into their ways of thinking, receiving, and sharing. At the end of the war, they committed themselves to perpetuating the liberal aspects of American democracy, and to “aiding” Americans at some point in the future.

MILITARY GOVERNMENT AND REHABILITATION IN GUAM

Upon declaring the Mariana Islands secure in August 1944, American military officials transformed the islands into forward deployment bases.⁴⁰ The primary purpose for obtaining these islands was “to further the successful prosecution of the war.”⁴¹ As Don A. Farrell points out, “the decision to capture the Marianas was not based on any

³⁸ Quoted in “Press Release No. 238-46,” 23 July 1946, Pacific Trust Territories, RG 313, National Archives.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ The Japanese garrison in Rota surrendered a year later on September 1945.

⁴¹ “Navy Military Government Bulletin,” 30 April 1945, Pacific Trust Territories, RG 313, National Archives, 1.

American commitment to liberate the people of Guam from the Japanese. Nor was it to liberate the American servicemen who had been stationed there when Guam was taken by the Japanese on December 10, 1941.”⁴² “The decision to capture the Marianas,” he asserts, “was based solely on strategic military objectives.”⁴³ The secondary role of the military in the Mariana Islands was to function as a government for the people, and to reestablish the island economies. The execution of this policy was achieved by “relieving combat forces of the care of civilians, by restoring law and order, by encouraging agriculture, fishing and industry for the purpose of making the civilian population self-subsistent and thereby relieving shipping.”⁴⁴ In addressing both military and civilian concerns, the Naval government strove to support the war effort without further aggravating the already stressful conditions of the various Japanese, Korean, Okinawan, Refaluwasch, and Chamorro populations.

In preparing and implementing these policies, American military officials intended to “win the goodwill, cooperation and loyalty of the native peoples.”⁴⁵ With respect to the Chamorros of Guam, military officials felt optimistic about the future of military and civil affairs on the island. Island commander, Major General Henry L. Larsen, proclaimed that “the success of the administration of this island by the U. S. Navy cannot be illustrated any more forcefully than by pointing out the supreme patriotism of the natives of Guam which has been shown in innumerable ways during the Japanese occupation and since our reoccupation.”⁴⁶ In tune with Larsen’s observations,

⁴² Farrell 1991A, 345.

⁴³ Ibid., 345.

⁴⁴ “Navy Military Government Bulletin,” 1.

⁴⁵ Dorothy E. Richard, *United States Naval Administration of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands*, vol. 1 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1957), 165.

⁴⁶ “Henry L. Larsen to Commander in Chief, U. S. Pacific Fleet and Pacific Ocean Areas,” 25 February 1945, Pacific Trust Territories, RG 313, National Archives, 1.

military officials often repeated that Chamorros were “extremely happy with our return and can be depended upon to co-operate in our efforts toward early re-habilitation, consistent with military necessity.”⁴⁷ Others similarly commended Chamorros for being “most cooperative with Military Government,” again adding that “their devotion and loyalty to the United States is of the highest order.”⁴⁸ That the island was a former naval outpost further encouraged military policy makers to ensure that Guam remained in American jurisdiction.

From August 1944 to May 1946, the military government imposed martial law in Guam. The military government enforced curfews, restricted travel and rationed food.⁴⁹ Chamorro families remained in refugee compounds scattered throughout the island. The military government required the population to remain in their respective compounds and discouraged them from visiting neighboring ranches, villages and extended family members. The isolation of Chamorro families limited and, in fact, constrained daily communication and contact among clans. Despite the imposition of martial law, and the everyday hardships it generated for Chamorros, the military government tempered such acts with celebratory references to prewar colonial rule in Guam. Accordingly, military officials interpreted the island’s prewar government as a “successful” naval colony.

In 1944, the Chief of Naval Operations, F. J. Horne, stated that “the natives of Guam have been wards of the Navy since 1898 and have learned during that period to

⁴⁷ “Review Civil Affairs Administration: Forward Area-Central Pacific,” September 1944, Pacific Trust Territories, RG 313, National Archives.

⁴⁸ “Navy Military Government Bulletin,” 9.

⁴⁹ Anthony Leon Guerero, “The Economic Development of Guam,” in *Kinalamten Pulitikåt: Siñenten I Chamorro, Issues in Guam’s Political Development: The Chamorro Perspective* (Agaña: Political Status Education Coordinating Commission, 1996), 91.

look first and only to the Navy.”⁵⁰ Praising the Naval administration’s relationship with Chamorros, Horne reasoned that the “Navy is familiar with the people, with their needs, and with the values on the island.”⁵¹ As one naval report concluded, “in the half century from 1899 to 1950, the Guamanians have, with gradually awakened but accelerating ambition, become cohesive and progressive people, capable of self-discipline and of adapting the instruments of modern civilization to their own advancement.”⁵² In managing the rehabilitation project in Guam, military officials continually professed their familiarity with the Chamorros of Guam. Conversely, these officials reassured others, such as the media, that the Chamorros understood American government in general and Naval jurisprudence in particular.

By drawing on the island’s naval past, military officials wanted to demonstrate, above all, that the Chamorros of Guam knowingly re-accepted them. Military officials seized this opportunity to represent themselves as humanitarians familiar with indigenous issues and needs. Hence, the image of a “powerful” Navy helping, once again, a “weak” though Americanized, indigenous population surfaced. This provided military officials with the moral and political license to proceed relatively unimpeded with their specific military agendas. Military correspondents, for example, painted a picture of a grateful yet physically impoverished indigenous population. Describing one of the camps in Yoña, Josephy writes that “here thousands of Guamanians were living like savages. Among the trees they had built miserable lean-tos and thatched huts, and crowded together on the mud banks on both sides of the brackish stream....By the time our troops

⁵⁰ “F. J. Horne to Judge Advocate General,” 5 December 1944, Pacific Trust Territories, RG 313, National Archives, 1.

⁵¹ “F. J. Horne to Judge Advocate General,” 1.

⁵² United States Department of the Navy, *U.S. Navy Report on Guam, 1899-1950* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1951), 1.

reached the camp, most of the people were in rags. They were weak and coughing and ridden with malnutrition, dysentery, and tuberculosis.”⁵³ Josephy’s depiction of Chamorro health and well-being was not far from the truth.

Given the demanding and violent conditions of war, Chamorro families were hungry and sick. The military government responded to such dire situations by providing Chamorros with food, medicine and shelter. As Rogers explains, “food was provided free to all Chamorros by the military government through a rationing system.”⁵⁴ Temporary shelters, or “tent-cities,” were erected throughout the island. The military government introduced Tabasco, Spam, and canned cornbeef, food products which Chamorros quickly adopted into their diets. Construction on military airfields, ports and roads began. Schools and desperately needed medical centers also surfaced throughout the island. For the most part, Chamorros appeared to anticipate a brighter postwar future. As Reynolds notes, “the natives of Guam do not talk of the past; they talk of the future when their ... cities will be rebuilt.”⁵⁵

Indeed, optimism about a brighter economic and political future emerged for the navy and the political elite. Enthusiastic about the perceived success of the rehabilitation project, Major General Henry L. Larsen declared that the “results of Naval administration of Guam stand as a monument to the wisdom and effectiveness of this form of government here and may well stand as a pattern model for other similar territory under the American flag.”⁵⁶ Larsen boasted that “the record of achievement already established by the Navy on Guam in the rehabilitation of the natives in these few months since

⁵³ Josephy, 78.

⁵⁴ Rogers, 200.

⁵⁵ Reynolds, 5.

⁵⁶ “Henry L. Larsen to Commander in Chief, U. S. Pacific Fleet and Pacific Ocean Areas,” 1.

reoccupation of this island, it is believed, will compare most favorably with any other corresponding endeavor by the United States or its Allies.”⁵⁷ Considering the magnitude of destruction on the island, the American military government deserved praise for its altruistic efforts to restore Chamorros to a physically more comfortable and secure life. In large part, Chamorros appreciated the time, effort, and money provided by the American military government.

Civilian Koreans, Okinawans and Japanese, however, did not embrace the return of the American military forces. Chamorros with Japanese spouses or relatives also did not welcome the American invasion. Nor did they adhere to the image of Chamorro patriots. Rather than face capture by the Americans, numerous Japanese soldiers and families escaped into the jungles of the island. Rogers writes that “individual Japanese civilians on Guam did kill themselves out of fear of the Americans. Some Japanese civilians simply disappeared, presumably killed in the whirlpool of war that swirled around them.”⁵⁸ As in the case of Asian inhabitants of the northern Marianas, Japanese, Okinawans and Koreans on Guam worried about what the American military might do to them. Toshio Francisco Kishida recalls that “there was no time nor day in our existence. We never knew what to expect or whether we will live or survive. We did not have any direction nor were we knowledgeable of where we were. All we knew was the constant sounds of battle and the cries of the dying.”⁵⁹

Many Japanese soldiers, civilians and laborers were frightened and confused, and

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ Rogers, 192.

⁵⁹ Quoted in Anthony J. Ramirez, “South Pacific Memorial Park: A Symbol of Eternal Peace, Yigu, Guam,” in *46th Anniversary “Freedom to Be”: The Liberation of Guam* (Tamuning: Pacific Color Press, 1984), 58.

some even “accepted the propaganda in reference to the evil of the Americans.”⁶⁰ Fearful of persecution by the American “barbarians,” an image popularly circulated by Japanese wartime propaganda, some Japanese fled into the jungles of Guam. As a result, Timothy Maga notes that “many Japanese still eluded capture, and islander homes and property were always in peril from raiding parties of these ‘stragglers.’”⁶¹ While it has been reported that some Chamorros died as a result of these “raiding parties,” the stragglers were not well equipped in the first place to pose a military threat. In many ways, what they sought was food and safe refuge from the anticipated “horrors” of the American military.⁶²

The Japanese who surrendered to the American military or to Chamorro scout platoons were imprisoned in internment camps in the villages of Agat, Yigo, Tamuning and Tutuhun.⁶³ These camps were set up for “several hundred Japanese soldier and civilian POWs, plus Saipanese, Rotanese, and a few local Chamorros suspected of Japanese sympathies.”⁶⁴ Some Chamorros from the northern Marianas were imprisoned because the American military considered them a “racial problem” in Guam.⁶⁵ The real racial problem concerned, of course, Japanese soldiers and their supporters, some of whom happened to be Chamorro interpreters and police officers during the war. At the

⁶⁰ Timothy Maga, “‘Away From Tokyo:’ The Pacific Islands War Crime Trials, 1945-1949,” *The Journal of Pacific History* 36, no. 1 (2001): 47.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 47. Scout platoons, composed of armed Chamorro men and sometimes Marine soldiers, were set up around the island immediately after the war. Their mission was to capture Japanese stragglers. Since the late 1940s, Rogers estimates that 114 Japanese surrendered and an unknown number were killed. The last known straggler, Sgt. Shoichi Yokoi, evaded capture until 1972 when hunters, Manuel de Garcia and Jesus M. Dueñas, found him in the village of Talofofo. He immediately became a celebrity in Japan for surviving in the jungles of Guam for almost thirty years. For more on the subject of Japanese stragglers, see Rogers, 194 and 245-246.

⁶² The lack of access to maintenance facilities, and the high salt content of Guam’s air, contributed to the rust, malfunction, and obsolete use of guns and grenades. Many eventually resorted to homemade knives and spears for self-defense and hunting purposes.

⁶³ Tutuhon is also called Agaña Heights.

⁶⁴ Poyer, Falgout and Carucci 2001, 252.

⁶⁵ “Review Civil Affairs Administration: Forward Area-Central Pacific,” 1.

camps, the American military separated soldiers from civilians as a means of aiding the investigation of war criminals and of maintaining peace. Chamorro interpreters and police officers, as well as others accused of war crimes, were arrested for “collaborating” with the Japanese military.

Many more innocently faced prison time because of their Japanese heritage. Peter R. Onedera, a Chamorro with three generations of Japanese ancestry, states that Chamorro-Japanese families were “corralled and sent off to stockades in Agat...and many of these families were subjected there in the stockades for even up to two years after the war.”⁶⁶ On numerous occasions, Chamorros “would pass by these stockades and hurl insults and rocks.”⁶⁷ Onedera remarks that these Chamorro-Japanese families “were never compensated for that humiliation...Many of these families also lost their livelihood, their businesses.”⁶⁸

Catherine Okada Rivera, another Japanese descendent, likewise asserts that “many Japanese civilians and their families on Guam began to be mistreated by both the native and the American population.”⁶⁹ Upon release from these camps, Rivera says that her family members had to replace their Japanese surnames with Chamorro ones. “For this reason,” she writes, “several of my grandfather’s sons were forced to change their names. They took their mother’s maiden name of Santos in place of Okada. This enabled them to get much needed jobs in order to support their families.”⁷⁰ Chamorro-Japanese families thus struggled to rebuild their lives after the war. As Rivera notes,

⁶⁶ Peter R. Onedera, interview by the author, Mangilao, Guam, 8 January 2002. Peter R. Onedera is a Chamorro language teacher at the University of Guam. He is also an established poet, playwright and social activist.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ Catherine Okada Rivera, “Chamorro/Japanese: The Okada Family,” in *46th Anniversary “Freedom to Be”: The Liberation of Guam* (Tamuning: Pacific Color Press, 1984), 83.

⁷⁰ Ibid., 83.

many Japanese descendants changed their names in order to survive among an island people whose understanding of Japanese society was limited to and tainted by Japan's wartime militarism.

The discriminatory imprisonment of Chamorro-Japanese families in postwar Guam was not an isolated event. The internment of Japanese in Guam paralleled the wartime confinement of Japanese and Japanese Americans along the Pacific coast of the continental United States.⁷¹ There Japanese families were segregated and placed on Native American reservations located in such areas as California and Arizona, and mainly because of American racism and xenophobia. Elsewhere, governments in Canada and South America similarly created and enforced anti-Japanese segregation and relocation policies during the war. For example, the Canadian government in British Columbia forcibly displaced up to 23,000 Japanese residents to remote camps in areas like the subarctic, many of whom did not return to their homes until 1949.⁷²

Japanese soldiers and civilians in Guam were imprisoned for racist and xenophobic reasons, too, but most notably for accusations of facilitating wartime atrocities. Regardless of the rationale, the American government and military unlawfully incarcerated Japanese civilian families. It did not matter whether or not these families supported the American war effort. They were the "enemy." By virtue of their Japanese ethnicity or perceived association with the Japanese military, these families witnessed Americans justifying their dehumanization as the Japanese "enemy" in Guam and the continental United States.

⁷¹ The available literature on the wartime internment of Japanese in the Pacific Coast is immense. For an introduction to this subject, see Jacobus tenBroek, Edward N. Barnhart and Floyd W. Matson, *Prejudice, War and the Constitution: Causes and Consequences of the Evacuation of the Japanese Americans in World War II* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1970).

⁷² David Wingeate Pike, "Foreword," in *The Closing of the Second War: Twilight of a Totalitarianism*, ed. David Wingeate Pike (New York: Peter Lang, 2001), xxxiii.

On Guam, many Chamorros continued to reject public affiliation with Japanese, Chamorro-Japanese families, and Chamorros from the northern Marianas. For example, the term, “Guamanian,” emerged in this time period as a way to distinguish Guam’s “Americanized” Chamorros from the northern Marianas’ “Japanized” Chamorros.⁷³ Profound emotional feelings of hate and distrust hence characterized most relationships among Chamorros and Japanese in Guam. In contrast, equally intense emotions of praise and joy typified the nature of intercultural relations among Chamorros and Americans. Expressed in terms of cultural obligation and survival, Guam Chamorros displayed their loyalties to Americans.

AMERICAN LIBERATION AND LOYALTY RECONSIDERED

Elsewhere throughout Micronesia, the concepts of “liberation” and “loyalty” continued to dictate, in part, the terms of intercultural relations among the colonized and the colonizer. Even before World War II erupted in the Pacific, Japanese officials frequently assured indigenous peoples of their liberation from such western powers as Australia, Germany, Britain, and the United States. The general intent of the rhetoric of liberation—to attain the loyalties of indigenous peoples—persisted rather unimpeded into the war and postwar periods. In the case of the United States, Hanlon notes that Americans “expected that their role as liberators would secure a welcome reception and an extended period of goodwill from grateful, needy, and debilitated populations.”⁷⁴ Americans believed, in large part, that they were liberating former European colonies under Japanese wartime rule. However, not all island populations viewed Americans as

⁷³ Pedro C. Sanchez, *Guahan Guam: The History of Our Island* (Agaña: Sanchez Publishing House, 1989), 264.

⁷⁴ David Hanlon, *Remaking Micronesia: Discourses over Development in a Pacific Territory, 1944-1982* (Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press, 1998), 24.

“liberators”. In fact, in most cases, Micronesians did not “regard the Americans as liberators who saved them” from the awful fate of war.⁷⁵ Indeed, as some argue, Micronesian experiences “of the war’s end were far from uniform.”⁷⁶ And, even if Americans assumed that the indigenous peoples were non-hostile, observes Richard, “it yet was inaccurate to suppose that they would be cooperative out of spite or out of any dislike of the Japanese who had ruled them.”⁷⁷ Initial wartime encounters among indigenous peoples and Americans were burdensome to say the least. Information about Americans came from Japanese propaganda, or from limited contact with American missionaries, traders, and whalers in the early twentieth-century. Neither group had much experience with the other, nor did the limited use of interpreters and sign language prove effective means of communication.

During this period of transition from Japanese to American rule, intercultural relations among Americans and the Japanese were certainly fraught with communicative problems. Also, Japanese loyalties to their emperor and nation did not necessarily create a suitable environment for these cultural exchanges. Some Japanese, for instance, completely refused to believe anything redeeming about the Americans. The Japanese, as Useem states, “have not been won over to a deep and abiding love of all things American. They are not reconciled to defeat and assume that the Japanese armed forces will some day restore them to their earlier status.”⁷⁸ In Saipan, interned Japanese spread “rumors about the Japanese navy shortly coming to liberate Saipan and to drive the Americans

⁷⁵ John Useem, “The American Pattern of Military Government in Micronesia,” *The American Journal of Sociology* 51, no. 2 (September 1945): 100.

⁷⁶ Poyer, Falgout and Carucci 2001, 230.

⁷⁷ Richard, 2:5.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 2:100.

into the sea.”⁷⁹ When the Japanese navy failed to arrive, the rumors shifted to stories about “imminent, surreptitious landings from Japanese submarines bent on committing devastating sabotage.”⁸⁰

Beliefs in the invincibility of the Japanese empire and in the spiritual strength of its military forces legitimized these rumors for the Japanese. Like the Chamorros of Japanese-occupied Guam, who longed for the arrival of the American military, the Japanese similarly hoped for the return of Japan’s army and navy. Even if the rumors of Japanese liberation never came true, it was clear that such stories lasted well into the first few months of the American occupation of Micronesia. For the American military forces, one task at hand was to eradicate any and all forms of loyalty to Japan, especially notions about Japanese liberation. By demonstrating to indigenous populations the “generous” character of the American military government, American military officials hoped to eliminate Japanese loyalties. On Guam, the military encountered no substantial difficulty in promoting this image of generosity. The Chamorros of Guam generally embraced the Americans and thanked them profusely for their salvation. In the neighbor islands of Micronesia, Americans generated a new set of problems in these previously Japanese-ruled territories.

Unlike the case in Guam, elsewhere in Micronesia the loyalty of indigenous peoples and civilians had to be acquired in order to sustain the American war effort in the western Pacific. Policy dictated that Americans be as courteous as possible to these peoples, especially in their initial proclamations of the principles of liberation, democracy

⁷⁹ Norman Meller, *Saipan’s Camp Susupe* (Honolulu: Center for Pacific Islands Studies at the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa, 1999), 3

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 3.

and freedom.⁸¹ Richard explains that “relations with the people of the islands were handled with great care....Service personnel were ordered to show the islanders all possible consideration, to refrain insofar as possible from disturbing their normal existence, and not to intermingle with them.”⁸² At times, military personnel were even advised to suspend temporarily their racial and moral understandings of the Pacific region, its peoples and its histories. Any prejudices on the part of Americans had to be suppressed, many argued, for the purpose of achieving peaceful social relations among peoples believed to be “pro-Japanese.”

For instance, John W. Vandercook of the National Broadcasting Company suggested that “the strictest orders—and of course this goes for the whole Pacific area—be issued that neither American officers nor men should ever be allowed to show any hint of racial prejudice.”⁸³ Vandercook reasoned that “even a wrong tone of voice” would “instantly be reported to tens of thousands—and would color their attitude toward us accordingly.”⁸⁴ If the appearance of “brotherhood” were not maintained among all, he asserted, especially between black and white soldiers, then indigenous populations might question the benevolent attitudes and intentions of Americans.

This semblance of brotherhood affected Pacific Islanders throughout the Pacific region. The representation of black soldiers working alongside white soldiers had a significant impact on Pacific Islanders in Melanesia, where a “positive image of military others” emerged.⁸⁵ As Lindstrom and White assert, Melanesians “saw for the first time skilled [black] American servicemen looking at least superficially similar to themselves:

⁸¹ Poyer, Falgout and Carucci 2001, 278.

⁸² Richard, 1:165.

⁸³ “John W. Vandercook to Frank Mason,” 10 August 1942, Pacific Trust Territories, RG 313, National Archives, 2.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 2.

⁸⁵ Lindstrom and White 1989, 18.

made, as it were, in their own image, but already possessing the knowledge and accoutrements of Western culture.”⁸⁶

Throughout the Pacific region, it was important for Americans of all ethnicities to present themselves as a homogenous, peaceful, and cooperative mass. Although they were soldiers first with military missions, they were now required to work as civil servants in the war-torn communities of Micronesia and Melanesia. The last thought on their minds was to incite resistance on the part of the indigenous and civilian populations. At least at a policy level, Americans did not desire to fight another enemy, nor did they aspire to be perceived as invaders. It was crucial, then, that Americans generate support from the rather sizeable indigenous and civilian populations of the former Japanese mandated and wartime-occupied islands.

It has been estimated that in 1944 the three major archipelagos of Micronesia—the Marshalls, the Marianas, and the Carolines—were comprised of “approximately 56,600 civilians, of whom 31,000 are natives, 22,000 are Japanese, and 3,600 are Koreans.”⁸⁷ Many of these people, originally sugar cane laborers, were located in the northern Mariana Islands. Saipan alone hosted the largest pool of Asian civilians and indigenous people, with a projected population of 17,880 in the summer of 1944.⁸⁸ Okinawans, Koreans, and Japanese vastly outnumbered Chamorros and Refaluwasch in Saipan, as well as in the neighboring islands of Tinian and Rota. Japanese and Koreans also hid on the smaller islands of Pagan, Aguigan, Sariguan, and Anatahan, some of

⁸⁶ Ibid., 18.

⁸⁷ Useem, 94.

⁸⁸ Meller, 2.

whom surrendered to American military forces as late as June 30, 1951.⁸⁹ In the northern Mariana Islands, the American military confronted a population whose loyalties to Japan were either clearly defined or somewhat ambivalent.

The Chamorros of the northern Mariana Islands certainly did not run from the hills to welcome the Americans, nor did rumors of salvation and liberation circulate among them. The main cause of concern for American military officials, however, regarded Japanese armed resistance, sabotage, and disobedience. As Meller states, Americans considered the Japanese "enemy aliens, with all the negative connotations that designation engendered."⁹⁰ Okinawans, often mistaken for Japanese, were also subjected to American military surveillance and psychological assessments. For instance, military personnel took great interest in non-combatant Japanese "because the capture of Saipan afforded the first opportunity of studying enemy civilian attitudes toward both the United States and the Japanese homeland."⁹¹

Furthermore, the United States had no experience abroad "with Japanese civilian populations and no definite information as to how they might affect" a military operation.⁹² By assessing Japanese attitudes, the American military reached a general understanding of the wartime roles of Japanese civilians in the northern Marianas. They found that many believed in the naval superiority of Japan, feared capture by the Americans, and in a few instances resorted to "honorable deaths" as a form of resistance. But what many American intelligence personnel sought in studying Japanese attitudes were ways to improve American propaganda. In the event that the United States might

⁸⁹ Believing that the war still raged on between Japan and the United States, a small group of Japanese civilians lived on Anatahan until they finally surrendered on June 30, 1951.

⁹⁰ Meller, 33.

⁹¹ Richard, 1:466.

⁹² Sheeks, 112.

invade Japan, American intelligence personnel wanted to develop propaganda—from flyers detailed with instructions for surrender to *nisei* offerings of peace—that would guarantee the capitulation of enemy civilians.⁹³ On Tinian and Saipan, American efforts to encourage surrender were successful, as illustrated in the large number of survivors.

The non-Japanese fared no better in the initial days of encountering the Americans in the northern Marianas. Despite their designated status as “liberated peoples,” Koreans, Refaluwasch and Chamorros were still treated with suspicion. It was not until camps were fully established, monitored, and self-governed by “loyal” subjects that the American military government would lessen its control over civilian affairs. The military government decided to erect two civilian camps as a means to consolidate its resources. As in the case of Guam, the camps provided much needed medical care, food, and shelter to the indigenous and Asian populations. In certain instances, however, the rehabilitation of the northern Marianas did not completely parallel the situation in Guam.

In Saipan, Tinian, and Rota, American military officials believed they were dealing with an “Oriental,” or Japanized population. As a result, the civilian populations had to be treated even more “carefully” than those in Guam, many of whom were already familiar with the Americans. In the case of Chamorros and Refaluwasch in Saipan, some argued that the people needed “time to recover from the shock of invasion, time to adjust themselves to their new situation, and time to gain enough confidence in [Americans] to make known their needs as they see them, not merely as they think we wish them to be.”⁹⁴ The rehabilitation camps provided ample “time” for indigenous people to make sense of their new American colonizers, and vice versa. The largest of the camps, Camp

⁹³ See Paul C. Bosse, “Polling Civilian Japanese on Saipan,” *Public Opinion Quarterly* (Summer 1945): 176-182.

⁹⁴ Joseph and Murray, 318-319.

Susupe, was located in Saipan. The second camp, Camp Churo, was situated in Tinian. In addition to supplying provisions to the detainees, the official purpose of the camps was twofold. The goals were to protect the indigenous and non-indigenous populations from the violence of war, and to protect American personnel from the possible violent nature of those interned.

The apparent separation of Americans and civilians was but one of numerous divisions in the camps. In Camp Susupe, the American military government assigned three areas of dwelling: area one for Refaluwasch and Chamorros; area two for Koreans; and area three for Japanese and Okinawans. As Russell recounts, "each area had its own internal administration which provided basic services headed by an elected mayor. The mayors, in turn, reported to a military government officer who was responsible for the local affairs of his respective area."⁹⁵ The village of Chalan Kanoa, once the exclusive domain of Japanese residents, housed area one. Prior to the war, Japanese law prevented indigenous people from visiting this restricted site after dark. With the relocation of Refaluwasch and Chamorros to the village, the prewar rules of Chalan Kanoa changed. Japanese were not only prohibited from entering the village, now inhabited by the indigenous population, but they also could not fraternize with Americans and Koreans. Americans themselves were not exempt from such rules. The men in particular could not interact with the women of the camp, as inter-ethnic relationships were strongly discouraged.⁹⁶

The military government appointed American military officers and indigenous

⁹⁵ Scott Russell, "Camp Susupe: Postwar Internment on Saipan," *Pacific Magazine* (May/June 1983): 21.

⁹⁶ Yet these policies did not prevent inter-ethnic relationships from occurring among Chamorros and non-Chamorros; for example, some Chamorros married Koreans and Japanese, and some Americans also formed new relationships with both the indigenous and Asian populations.

policemen to enforce camp rules and regulations. In the interior, Japanese civilians were assigned to monitor domestic activities. They had some form of authority but it was limited in comparison to their indigenous counterparts. Entrusted with guarding the periphery of Camp Susupe, Refaluwasch and Chamorros served as policemen who inspected all visitors to the camp. They held considerable symbolic power since they could, for the first time, oversee the doings of their former Japanese colonizers. In extreme cases, indigenous police officers "treated Japanese and Korean civilians rather roughly, even striking them on occasion."⁹⁷ The physical abuse of internees was not an unfamiliar disciplinary tactic for Refaluwasch and Chamorros. It was highly likely that a few of them worked as policemen for the Japanese during the war. More importantly, the physical punishment of "criminals," from alleged spies to petty thieves, was one way of demonstrating police officers' loyalty to their Japanese supervisors. Interestingly, Chamorros and Refaluwasch may have internalized these strategies in their roles as police officers for the Americans, thereby illustrating a shift in allegiances.

The granting of such powers to Chamorros angered the internees, most notably the Japanese, who frequently considered indigenous peoples inferior. The Japanese also deemed the Okinawans to be inferior, and disliked the idea that they shared the same housing area. American military officials knew about the increasing social tensions among the groups in Susupe, but they did not implement any policies to alleviate them. Neither could they transform the camp into an ideal living space for every ethnic group. Military practices and notions of governance, rather than what some might have erroneously perceived as democracy, administered the camp. In fact, the entire logistical

⁹⁷ John F. Embree, "Military Government in Saipan and Tinian," *Applied Anthropology* 5, no. 1 (Winter 1946): 6.

setup for Camp Susupe “mirrored the military government’s ethnically distinctive containment policies.”⁹⁸ Consequently, the Japanese racial hierarchies of the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere were turned upside down, with the Japanese situated at the lowest social echelon of the camp.

On Tinian, rehabilitation efforts at Camp Churo mirrored those in Saipan. But because of the small, almost entirely Japanese population, “a situation was avoided that might lead to the sharp discriminatory treatment which existed at Susupe.”⁹⁹ Due to the absence of Refaluwasch and Chamorros, Camp Churo operated relatively peacefully. The camp was “less constraining, families afforded more privacy, and the Japanese civilian administration there exercising greater power over and concomitantly sharing responsibility for matters relating to camp governance and internee welfare.”¹⁰⁰ The establishment of rehabilitation camps in Rota also proceeded without serious harm to the people, the exception being damage sustained from a typhoon in the autumn of 1945. As in the case of Saipan and Tinian, the Asian populations lived in dwellings separated from the Chamorros, many of whom later settled at the village of Songsong.¹⁰¹ English instruction classes, religious services, and menial employment opportunities gradually surfaced as the basic needs of these camps were met. The peoples resumed their daily, though monitored, routines of fishing and farming and, before long, fears of being tortured by Americans began to fade.

As the American military government continued to provide goods and services to the civilian populations, some concluded that the Americans were not the barbarians

⁹⁸ Meller, 34.

⁹⁹ Embree, 34.

¹⁰⁰ Meller, 27.

¹⁰¹ Neal M. Bowers, *Problems of Resettlement on Saipan, Tinian and Rota, Mariana Islands* (Garapan: CNMI Division of Historic Preservation, 2001), 65.

portrayed in Japanese propaganda. Liberal provisions of food, shelter, and medicine greatly shaped, at times in positive terms, how indigenous peoples and others came to view the Americans. As historian Francis X. Hezel notes, “the Americans could have done nothing more calculated to ingratiate themselves with the Micronesian people than to offer them generous amounts of food—something that had always had a sacramental quality for Pacific peoples—after what many called ‘the year of famine.’”¹⁰² Likewise, in Melanesia, the Americans had garnered a reputation for producing and distributing “cargo.” Pacific Islanders in this region variously interpreted cargo as material, political or economic wealth. In the Solomon Islands, some praised “American soldiers for their friendliness, generosity, and the equality with which they treated Solomon Islanders. Especially important to them was the sharing of food, which assumed importance because food sharing is a key value in . . . many cultures in the Solomon Islands.”¹⁰³

Humbled by these gestures of goodwill, some Pacific Islanders supported the American and Allied war effort by enlisting in scout-platoons, assisting injured personnel and providing information about Japanese military activities. In the northern Mariana Islands, some forwarded the war effort through monetary means. As a way to show their appreciation, Koreans at Camp Churo, Tinian, gathered money in the amount of \$666.35 and donated it to the United States navy in November 1944.¹⁰⁴ Equally concerned about the struggle for Korea’s independence, Koreans at the camp contributed as much as

¹⁰² Francis X. Hezel, *Strangers in Their Own Land: A Century of Colonial Rule in the Caroline and Marshall Islands* (Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press, 1995), 244.

¹⁰³ David W. Gegeo and Karen Watson-Gegeo, “Malaita Refuge, Guadalcanal Labour Corps,” in *The Big Death: Solomon Islanders Remember World War II*, ed. Geoffrey M. White, David Gegeo, David Akin and Karen Watson-Gegeo (Suva: Institute of Pacific Studies, 1988), 200.

¹⁰⁴ “Koreans on Tinian Island, Grateful to U.S. for Liberation, Give \$666 to War Effort,” *The New York Times*, 5 February 1945, 4.

\$2,433.15 to the Korean National Association of Honolulu toward that effort.¹⁰⁵ Even the most skeptical of the group, the Japanese, sometimes expressed their gratitude for items as small as baby bottles. Upon receiving these infant devices, Japanese midwives remarked that they were “very, very happy.”¹⁰⁶

Chamorros of the northern Marianas also shared their thoughts regarding the American military government. For instance, Consolacion C. Guerrero remarked that “regardless of nationality, the Americans provided assistance by giving people water to drink first, then they gave people food to eat. The services provided by the Americans was good.”¹⁰⁷ Vicente Atalig Inos similarly stated that the Americans “were really nice because they treated the sick people and the injured people, and they gave Chamorro people food. They also took the local people to serve and to work in the public works department.”¹⁰⁸ Many clearly expressed thanks for what they interpreted to be “free” American food and services—aid believed to have come from the compassionate hearts and hands of military government officials. Increasing numbers of Chamorros thus felt a “deep gratitude for the disinterested and unselfish help provided by the American government.”¹⁰⁹ Chamorros were emotionally moved in particular by American assistance to the elderly and the sick. These exchanges and acts of goodwill attracted Chamorros to their American benefactors. According to Chamorro cultural traditions, the sharing of food, labor and medicine can be interpreted as acts of *chenchule*, or forms of

¹⁰⁵ Richard, 1:567.

¹⁰⁶ Quoted in Tom O’Brien, “Camp Susupe: Lessons First Learned on Saipan will be Valuable in the Bigger Job Ahead,” *Yank*, 8 June 1945, 2.

¹⁰⁷ Guerrero, 8.

¹⁰⁸ Inos, 64.

¹⁰⁹ Ann Maria Puyo, “The Acceptance of Americanization by the Chamorros and Carolinians of Saipan,” (Master’s thesis, Saint Louis University, 1964), 64.

assistance bound by reciprocal relationships and obligations.¹¹⁰ Chamorros therefore interpreted American rehabilitative efforts through such cultural norms, providing one opportunity for Chamorros to make better sense of the Americans.

Overall, Chamorros in the northern Marianas were still not familiar with American military attitudes, behaviors and goals. American military officials understood that various cultural obstacles hindered their progress in establishing relationships with not only Chamorros, but other Pacific Islanders in Micronesia. Abiding to their projected image as “liberators,” American military officials strove to convey simple, seemingly altruistic and progressive principles to the Pacific Islanders of this region. One of these principles was the American idea of “freedom.” As Poyer, Falgout and Carucci assert, Micronesians “recall that the first U.S. officers they saw proclaimed the arrival of ‘freedom,’ but they had little context in which to interpret that announcement.”¹¹¹ In encountering Americans, Micronesians began to realize that the American notion of freedom, as illustrated in the efforts of the American rehabilitation project, “opened new options in work, leisure, and status relations.”¹¹² During the first weeks of the American military rehabilitation of Saipan, for example, Chamorros understandably could not grasp the significance of “freedom,” let alone comprehend the English language.¹¹³ But after a few months of receiving aid and living in conditions superior to the Japanese, Chamorros began to make sense of the term.

Ignacio M. Sablan acutely observed that “when the Americans came, you know, they were so friendly, so nice, you can tell them what you want, as opposed to under the

¹¹⁰ Lawrence J. Cunningham, *Ancient Chamorro Society* (Honolulu: The Bess Press, 1992), 121.

¹¹¹ Poyer, Falgout and Carucci 2001, 279.

¹¹² Ibid, 279.

¹¹³ Ibid., 279.

Japanese rule whereby you have to be very careful in what you're saying. Here you can say everything you want as long as it is true. And that's the difference. We live as a free man, and this is the first time that we realize."¹¹⁴ It was common for Chamorros like Sablan to arrive at these conclusions after interacting closely with Americans. Ideas such as freedom and, in turn, liberation, steadily became a part of the English political vocabulary of Chamorros in the northern Mariana Islands. The appropriation of these terms reflected more than an increased understanding of the American military government and the English language. More importantly, the use of these terms revealed that Chamorros had acknowledged the defeat of Japan, and had resigned themselves however unwillingly to American colonial governance. As Ignacio M. Sablan put it, a "change in feeling" engulfed him, upon realizing that the rising sun had finally set.¹¹⁵

PROBLEMS OF MILITARY GOVERNMENT IN THE MARIANAS

In the first few years of the American military occupation, Chamorros throughout the Mariana Islands experienced a variety of "feelings." American military officials hoped that indigenous loyalty to the United States would constitute the primary sentiment shared among all Chamorros. But due to the fragmentary nature of Chamorro cultural identities, as well as their separate colonial experiences, there was no single, unifying, sense of loyalty directed at the United States. Nevertheless, the American military government attempted to shape popular opinion about the United States in the western Pacific. In Guam, the navy described a prosperous, homogenous and loyal postwar community. They commended in particular the prewar Naval administration for producing a people and environment conducive to American military and political

¹¹⁴ Sablan 1981B, 55.

¹¹⁵ Ibid., 55.

control.

In the northern Mariana Islands, the navy encountered a different set of conditions and peoples—the “civilian,” the “native,” the “oriental,” and the “enemy”—whose loyalties remained in question. The task at hand seemed challenging from the military’s standpoint as the navy had no prior experience in rehabilitating large wartime populations. Even Stanford University’s School of Naval Administration, which trained junior naval officers as civil administrators, did not adequately prepare military personnel for addressing the various social, political and economic issues affecting the inhabitants of the northern Mariana Islands.¹¹⁶ Still, as months passed, the navy claimed to have transformed a Japanized population into a society supportive of the American war effort. The media legitimized these assertions, often noting that “Saipan is the showplace of naval military government, one of the few places where the results of war-caused American rule in the Pacific are apparent—and on the happy side.”¹¹⁷ The Saipanese, a reporter observed, were “hardworking and grateful for the American direction that has brought them to this independence and prosperity. The exchange of war has been to their advantage—work in the sugar cane for the Japanese versus work in their own fields ... for their own future.”¹¹⁸ In some respects, the American military granted Chamorros specific freedoms and opportunities not allowed under the Japanese wartime governments. The appearance of liberation from colonial rule gave rise to an image of the navy as kind, generous, and ultimately democratic.

But the American rehabilitation project was a severely problematic venture, as

¹¹⁶ Hanlon 1998, 35-50.

¹¹⁷ Virginia Coontz, “Saipan Transformed from Field of Battle into U.S. Showplace,” *Oakland Tribune*, 29 December 1946, 16-A.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 16-A.

evidenced in part by its discriminatory treatment of the Japanese. Despite American military proclamations of ethnic pluralism or administrative benevolence, American officials could not repress the colonial and racial prejudices that underlay the rehabilitation project. As George P. Murdock exclaimed, "military rule is contrary to our entire democratic political philosophy....Because [naval officers] represent an autocratic tradition they are more likely than civilian administrators to manifest race prejudice and institute social discriminations."¹¹⁹ Military officers, Murdock continued, "have not chosen their careers through an interest in civil administration, and are likely to find such activities uncongenial, if not, indeed, an actual barrier in the path of normal promotion."¹²⁰ Critical of the military's "missionary zeal," Murdock cautioned others about the consequences of Americanization.¹²¹ He raised the issue of American historical contacts with American Indians and feared that the indigenous peoples of Micronesia might suffer similar problems of "chaos, bewilderment, helplessness, and stagnation."¹²²

Murdock's observations accurately characterized the entire structural makeup of American military governments in Micronesia. More often than not, Navy officers who administered indigenous affairs possessed "no military government training" and frequently knew "little or nothing about the local population and culture."¹²³ Military officers, some of whom claimed to know the islands' customs and values, failed to implement "culture sensitive" policies. In rehabilitating the islands, these officials employed policies that often reflected American values rather than indigenous ones.

¹¹⁹ George P. Murdock, "How Shall We Administer Our Pacific Trust Territory?" Paper presented at Society for Applied Anthropology, Philadelphia, May 29, 1948, Pacific Trust Territories, RG 313, National Archives, 4.

¹²⁰ Ibid., 4.

¹²¹ Ibid., 3.

¹²² Ibid., 3.

¹²³ Eugene Rachlis, "Navy Rule in the Pacific," *New Republic*, 9 December 1946, 756.

Friedman states that “much of the language used in planning documents and public statements was permeated with racist and cultural assumptions about the alleged superiority of mainland, Caucasian-American values.”¹²⁴ Friedman writes that “American officials perceived the Pacific Islanders as helpless children who needed paternalistic guidance from the United States in their every thought and action.”¹²⁵ American military officials treated Chamorros in the Marianas in corresponding fashion.

In fact, some of the military’s supposedly well-intentioned rehabilitation policies actually proved devastating for the islands and the people. The introduction of a wage economy, for example, was discouraged by many who believed that Chamorros in Guam should return to farming and fishing. Yet in Guam, most of the island’s prime agricultural lands became naval and air force military bases in such areas as Tiyan, Sumay and Yigo. Anthony Leon Guerrero notes that “farming [on Guam] was not allowed on any large scale; it would not have been possible anyway, because of the widespread devastation and the loss of the island’s best farmlands to the new military bases.”¹²⁶ He adds that “without access to their lancho [ranch], Chamorros were forced to seek other ways to make a living. This was the beginning of their economy’s rapid transformation from subsistence agriculture and bartering to a system of wage employment and monetary exchange.”¹²⁷ Paul B. Souder likewise asserts that Guam’s “land use pattern [after the war] changed radically. Farm lands became airfields and supply dumps, land taxes were suspended, and residents of land acquired by the military, or whose homes were demolished by the American bombardment, were moved into

¹²⁴ Hal M. Friedman, *Creating an American Lake: United States Imperialism and Strategic Security in the Pacific Basin, 1945-1947* (Westport and London: Greenwood Press, 2001), 117.

¹²⁵ Ibid., 117-118.

¹²⁶ Leon Guerrero, 91.

¹²⁷ Ibid., 91.

temporary camps.”¹²⁸

On Saipan and Tinian, the American military constructed a number of airfields, bases and harbor installations. North Field in Tinian represented the largest of all the military bases in the northern Marianas. The B-29 *Enola Gay*, the airplane responsible for dropping the first atomic bomb on a civilian population, departed from Tinian for Hiroshima, Japan, on August 6, 1945. Other than North Field and a few bases in Saipan, the American military chose to develop most of its bases in Guam. Military strategists believed that Guam’s southern location protected it from periodic Japanese airplane raids from the north, possibly from Iwo Jima.¹²⁹ The island also had a larger land base and deeper harbors. The fewer number of bases in the northern islands, however, did not necessarily mean smaller problems for the Chamorros there. Farming, an important part of the subsistence lifestyle, also proved to be a difficult task. Coral needed for the construction of the airfields and other military projects covered much of the topsoil. “So after the war,” remarked Igancio M. Sablan, “that’s what happened to Saipan. We could have been very productive today if [the major farm lands] were not buried under the coral.”¹³⁰

It was apparent that the strategic military needs of the islands far outweighed civil objectives for the indigenous population. Military control of the islands had always been explicitly stated in the American rehabilitation project, but it was not an immediate concern for Chamorros who were still recovering from the war. With the gradual establishment of peace and the increasing land dispossession, the colonial nature of

¹²⁸ Paul B. Souder, “Guam: Land Tenure in a Fortress,” in *Land Tenure in the Pacific*, ed. Ron Crocombe. (Melbourne and London: Oxford University Press, 1971), 196.

¹²⁹ Farrell 1991A, 395.

¹³⁰ Sablan 1981B, 57.

rehabilitation became strikingly evident, especially in the island of Guam. Anne Perez Hattori asserts that “the appropriation of land by the military intervened in Chamorro lives unlike any other imposition of the U.S. government. By 1947, a total of 1,350 families had lost their land and homes due to military policy.”¹³¹ Yet despite protests in the Guam Congress and the growth in discontent among Chamorros, no form of resistance prevented the militarization of the island.¹³²

Given Guam Chamorros’ overall sense of appreciation for America’s liberation of the island, indigenous resistance seemed futile. Although it was important to protest military land condemnations, Chamorros did not want to seem ungrateful to Americans for their liberation. As Hattori notes, “for the most part, Chamorros did not dispute the need for military bases. With the war experience so fresh on their minds, Chamorros welcomed bases as signs of future protection against foreign invasion.”¹³³ Blaz likewise says that Chamorros “gladly turned over large tracts of the island to the military—thinking it would be returned when the war ended or when the military no longer needed it—and they did so gladly because they felt it a debt of the heart.”¹³⁴ Bound by cultural values of obligation and respect, Chamorros lent their lands to the military government. As Souder observes, “in deeply felt acts of Chamorro reciprocity, our people extended the most valuable of their possessions, albeit the only possessions they had to give—land

¹³¹ Anne Perez Hattori, “Guardians of Our Soil: Indigenous Responses to Post-World War II Military Land Appropriation on Guam,” in *Farms, Firms, and Runways: Perspectives on U.S. Military Bases in the Western Pacific*, ed. L. Eve Armentrout Ma (Chicago: Imprint Publications, 2001), 190. In response to these land conflicts in the late 1940s, Chamorros filed property claims to Land and Claims Commission. Paul B. Souder observes that “some 5,935 property claims totaling \$10,427,404 had been processed by the Land and Claims Commission” (196). These claims illustrate that numerous Chamorros were clearly upset with the land problems on the island. But due to the fact that many title records, landmarks and boundaries were destroyed during the war, land problems were not easily resolved. As a result, Souder states that the “land title situation on Guam was in extraordinary confusion” (196).

¹³² See Anne Perez Hattori, “Righting Civil Wrongs: The Guam Congress Walkout of 1949,” *ISLA: A Journal of Micronesian Studies* 3, no. 1 (Rainy Season 1995): 1-27.

¹³³ Hattori 2001, 190.

¹³⁴ Blaz, 110.

and their very spirits—to Uncle Sam.”¹³⁵

In legal terms, the political status of Guam as an American territory allowed the military relatively free reign in transforming the island into a strategic outpost. In addition to the prevailing feeling of liberation, it would have been highly unlikely for Chamorros of Guam to intervene in decisions about land use. During the war, the American military seized and, at times, purchased lands not only in Guam but also in the northern islands, especially Tinian and Saipan. Samuel F. McPhetres states that after the war “all Japanese-owned or Japanese-occupied land was turned over to an ‘alien property custodian.’ Thus, one hundred percent of Tinian and about ninety percent of Saipan became public land.”¹³⁶ The remaining northern islands became public lands as well.

Not surprisingly, Refaluwasch and Chamorros encountered problems in reclaiming lands for residential and agricultural use since the military considered the northern islands to be strategically located.¹³⁷ The designation of the northern islands as “public lands” prevented families from staking legal claims to lands they had traditionally owned. But the identification of the lands as public space permitted the American military to repatriate Chamorros from the neighboring islands of Yap and Pohnpei, from as early as 1945 to as late as 1948.¹³⁸ Meanwhile, thousands of Asian civilians from camps Susupe and Churo returned to their respective countries, as did others from

¹³⁵ Laura M. Torres Souder, “Psyche Under Siege: Uncle Sam, look what you’ve done to us,” in *Sustainable Development or Malignant Growth?: Perspectives of Pacific Island Women*, ed. Atu Emberson-Bain (Suva: Marama Publications, 1994), 193.

¹³⁶ Samuel F. McPhetres, “The History of Land Issues in the Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas,” *Umanidat: A Journal of the Humanities* 1, no. 1 (November 1993): 16.

¹³⁷ With the establishment of the Marianas Public Land Corporation in 1976, Refaluwasch and Chamorros were finally able to receive lands for their individual and familial use.

¹³⁸ For a discussion of the Chamorro settlement in Tinian, see Alexander Spoehr, “The Tinian Chamorros,” *Human Organization* 10, no. 4 (Winter 1951): 16-20. Regarding Chamorro migration to Yap and Palau, from the late 1800s to the 1940s, see Hezel’s *Strangers in Their Own Land*. Here, Hezel briefly discusses the histories of Chamorro travel to these islands under Spanish, German and Japanese colonial rule.

Micronesia. Some stayed with their families on Rota, Tinian and Saipan. Other Asians left willingly, while some family members were forcefully separated and never seen again.¹³⁹

The central problem in the rehabilitation of the Mariana Islands was that military officials rarely understood Chamorro customs and values, especially as they related to the centrality of clan ownership and maintenance of land. Given their separate set of objectives, notably the suppression of Japanese military resistance, American military officials felt no obligation to abide by indigenous notions of land as a source of sustenance and familial belonging. Unfortunately, neither Chamorros nor Americans arrived at a mutually respected understanding of the value, use and ownership of land. Due to the heavy militarization of the islands, American uses of property under wartime conditions dominated the ways in which land came to be governed. In the late 1940s, the military strategic value of Guam, now hailed as the next "Pearl Harbor," dramatically increased; Guam transformed from a prewar coaling station to a postwar military fortress.¹⁴⁰ Tinian developed into perhaps the largest military runway in the western Pacific, and would later be used as a training ground for the American armed forces.

Although Guam was an American territory, the northern islands soon fell under the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands. Despite the different political systems of Guam and the northern Marianas, it was the first time in almost fifty years that they would be reunited under one colonial power. During the war, Saipan, Tinian, and Guam briefly entered American popular consciousness as "stepping stones" for the possible invasion of Japan. The image of a generous navy, coupled with attempts to gain the loyalties of

¹³⁹ Farrell 1991A, 472-473.

¹⁴⁰ Uncle Dudley, "Our Pacific Outposts," *The Boston Globe*, 10 January 1947, 18.

Chamorros, demonstrated the initial level of investment placed in these islands by the United States. In the minds of military officials, though, the islands became permanent strategic sites for the militarization of the western Pacific. The United States had the cold war with the Soviet Union, with American military strategists viewing the Pacific region as a vast unprotected area through which Soviet communism could establish itself. Therefore, Soviet communism had to be “contained” by developing what military officials termed a “deterrent” posture in the region.¹⁴¹ The demands of the war, the rehabilitation project, and subsequent cold war posturing turned the Marianas into America’s westernmost line of defense.

As the islands adapted to the contours of the American military, new and familiar notions of loyalty and liberation were introduced. For the Chamorros of the northern Mariana Islands, the American rehabilitation project was a time for comparing American understandings of loyalty and liberation with the former Japanese mandate’s position on these terms. Given language barriers between Chamorros and Americans, however, Chamorros grasped at best only the rudimentary objectives of the American colonial government. It was highly unlikely, therefore, that most Chamorros in the northern Marianas fully comprehended American narratives of loyalty and liberation. It can be argued, however, that American acts of material generosity impressed upon Chamorros a favorable image of the United States—an image that laid one of the historical foundations for succeeding forms of war remembrance in the northern Marianas.

On the other hand, the return of the American military forces to Guam reinforced most Chamorro loyalties to the United States. Although the American rehabilitation

¹⁴¹ For more on the issue of military deterrence, see Anthony Kenny, *The Logic of Deterrence* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1985).

project posed numerous problems, namely the dispossession of Chamorros from their lands, Chamorros continued to showcase their loyalties for the United States and, indeed, for their faith in Catholicism. The notion of American liberation soon became entrenched in the English political vocabulary of Guam Chamorros, as did memories of Chamorro appreciation for the American elimination of Japanese occupational forces. The next chapter examines the World War II commemorations that emerged from this historical period of profound turmoil and change, as they specifically relate to the island of Guam. How, then, did these war commemorations in the postwar era mediate processes of cultural remembrance and historical inquiry?

CHAPTER 5

FROM PROCESSIONS TO PARADES: THE COMMEMORATION OF THE WAR IN GUAM

During the first half of the twentieth-century, American and Japanese colonial administrations in Guam and the northern Mariana Islands sometimes used commemorations as a means to encourage the loyalty of the Chamorro population. Other forms of colonialism were introduced, including the imposition of the English and Japanese languages. The outbreak of World War II had deepened and at times disrupted Chamorro loyalties to both Japan and the United States. By the time the war ended in August 1945, Chamorros in Guam and the northern Marianas had two dominant, though different, views of their colonizers. Chamorros in the northern Marianas, particularly those from Rota and Saipan, felt as ambivalent toward the Japanese, their rulers, as they did toward the Americans, their new conquerors.

On the other hand, Chamorros from Guam expressed their loyalty to the United States, drawing clear distinctions between American “liberators” and Japanese “occupiers.” Along with highlighting the emergence of different Chamorro loyalties to Japan and the United States, the end of the war also fostered the conditions for commemorating the war. This chapter explores the historical development of Liberation Day, Guam’s central commemoration of World War II, from its inception in 1945 to the fiftieth anniversary of the war in 1994. It examines the processes through which memories of colonial triumph and indigenous loyalty, among a myriad of competing war memories, contend for public representation in the commemoration of Liberation Day.

As this chapter intends to demonstrate, Liberation Day is not an uncontested and unchanging commemoration of war. It is a critical space through which Chamorros and

others have come to remember the war in an effort, ultimately, to understand it as war histories they can call their own.

AGUEDA I. JOHNSTON AND THE "REBIRTH" OF LIBERATION DAY

More often than not, women do not occupy prominent positions in the commemoration of war. In the case of western societies, for example, women have been long celebrated in war for their roles as mothers and mourners.¹ Their deeds and doings as members of different wartime societies have not been memorialized in ways equal to that of those male counterparts. Regulated to the domestic sphere, women often continue to be commemorated as caretakers, nurses and wives. While it can be argued that more women throughout history are now being remembered for their social contributions, rather than their assumed domestic roles, this has not been the case in the commemoration of war. The late Chamorro educator Agueda Iglesias Johnston is one exception.

In the 1940s, Agueda I. Johnston had gained the reputation of being "one of the island's most respected school teachers and administrators."² She earned this status from her long record of public service working as a teacher and administrator since the early 1900s. Johnston cooperated with the Japanese and American colonial governments, and sought ways to ease the troubles which plagued island residents. While she may not have succeeded in all of her endeavors, she contributed much to the well-being of her fellow Chamorros. Local leaders, journalists, educators and even colonial officials hailed her in innumerable ways. Over the years, she has been called the "Queen Bee of Guam," "Guam Leader," "Guam Heroine," "First Lady of Guam," "Guam School Expert," and

¹ Gillis 1994, 10.

² *I Manfãyi: Who's Who in Chamorro History*, vol. 1 (Agaña: Political Status Education Coordinating Commission, 1995), 64.

“Guam Matriarch.”³ More than a public servant, Johnston also helped many people survive to see the end of the war, including the American navy radioman George R. Tweed.

Risking her life and those of her family members, Johnston secretly provided food and guidance to Tweed, as she did to numerous others. After the war, Johnston received the title of a “courageous patriot” for her wartime heroism.⁴ Her wartime valor and public service culminated in the creation of Liberation Day in the summer of 1945. She created Liberation Day because of her belief that Chamorros deserved their day of remembrance. Initially, logistical concerns regarding the lack of transportation and shelter nearly canceled the event. Further, the island was still recovering from the ravages of war. With the assistance of the military government, however, Johnston saw her plans for Liberation Day come to fruition.⁵ Other makeshift memorials, impromptu ceremonies with speeches by military officials, and floral grave decorations occurred in the immediate postwar period.⁶

But Liberation Day held the distinction as the first ceremony that featured prayers for the war dead and that honored the return of the American military forces on July 21, 1944. As Diaz affirms, “Liberation Day has been certified as the official celebration of the war.”⁷ Many credited Johnston for establishing the first official and locally

³ Roy Anderberg, “Guam Matriarch—Agueda I. Johnston,” *Territorial Sun*, 16 October 1966, 14.

⁴ Political Status Education Coordinating Commission 1995, 64.

⁵ Joe Murphy, “Agueda Johnston: Spirit of Liberation,” *Pacific Daily News*, 21 July 1983, 4A.

⁶ For instance, Guam’s main thoroughfare, Marine Drive, was named after the 1st Provisional Marine Brigade and the 3rd Marine Division.

⁷ Vicente M. Diaz, “Deliberating ‘Liberation Day’: Identity, History, Memory, and War in Guam,” in *Perilous Memories: The Asia-Pacific War(s)*, ed. T. Fujitani, Geoffrey M. White, and Lisa Yoneyama (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2001), 156.

recognized commemoration of war.⁸ Liberation Day also commemorated the contributions of Chamorros during this period of great change and turmoil.

Being married to a former Naval officer, Lieutenant William Gautier Johnston, Agueda I. Johnston had entered the social scene of the island's elites at an early point in her life. Her privileged status enabled her to participate in a whole host of civil, educational and religious activities. Even prior to World War II, she helped to coordinate numerous patriotic festivities, such as the Fourth of July celebration.⁹ Now, in 1945, one year after the war's end in Guam, she envisioned another commemoration that highlighted not only loyalty to America, but specifically the wartime experiences and loyalties of Chamorros. Liberation Day fulfilled this goal by remembering that "the people of Guam fought the Japanese in their own way, risking their lives, losing their land, hampering their future."¹⁰ As much as she wanted a day of remembrance, though, Johnston also felt that some memories and histories of the war should be "forgotten." Referring to the war, she claimed that "what happened yesterday has been forgotten. I only look to tomorrow and the future."¹¹

In shaping the initial themes of Liberation Day, Johnston imagined a commemoration that suppressed the painful memories and histories of the war. She wanted to forget the vivid descriptions and experiences of wartime atrocities, rape and violence. Consequently, Johnston eschewed narratives of Chamorro "comfort women" from Guam, Saipanese interpreters and police officers, and other controversial wartime figures in her description of Liberation Day. Instead, Johnston saw the commemoration

⁸ C. T. Perez, "A Chamorro Re-Telling of 'Liberation,'" in *Kinalamten Pulitikât: Siñenten I Chamorro, Issues in Guam's Political Development: The Chamorro Perspective* (Agaña: Political Status Education Coordinating Commission, 1996), 72.

⁹ "The Fourth of July," *The Guam Recorder* 4, no. 4 (July 1927): 85.

¹⁰ Virginia Coontz, "American Welcome After Tragic Years," *Oakland Tribune*, 19 December 1946, 3.

¹¹ Quoted in "Guam Heroine Here to Aid Liberation Fete," *Los Angeles Examiner*, 22 July 1955, 1.

as an event for new beginnings. As she explained, "I'd consider the liberation of Guam a rebirth for all its people and all those who showed delinquencies should be forgiven and be given another chance to really live again."¹²

Johnston's notion of "rebirth" permeated the original contours and connotations of Liberation Day in the late 1940s. The reconciliatory aspect of rebirth was about moving beyond the antagonisms and prejudices created by war. In part, Liberation Day offered ceremonial time to reflect upon past conflicts and to aim toward resolving them peacefully. This effort to achieve harmonious social relations constituted a key factor in Johnston's understanding of rebirth. In addition to these cathartic features of liberation, she believed that notions of spiritual salvation, national sacrifice, and cultural obligation should take center stage in Guam's commemoration of war.¹³

Johnston's notion of spiritual salvation rested on the broader Chamorro historical relationship to the Catholic faith. Liberation Day festivities of the late 1940s strove to portray this. Indeed, during this period, the liberation celebrations resembled Catholic rituals more than civic ceremonies. In 1945, the year of its creation, Johnston organized festivities which included not a customary civic parade but an actual religious procession at the Plaza de España in Hagatña, adjacent to the island's Catholic Cathedral. In addition to the ceremonial line of priests and altar boys, this Liberation Day procession included at its core the iconic representation of the Virgin Mary, or *Santa Marian Kamalen*. As anthropologist Dominica Tolentino says, "Guam's patroness is the same

¹² "Agueda I. Johnston to Margaret and Tommy," 15 October 1944, copy in Agueda Iglesias Johnston's Papers, Box 4, Correspondence Folder, 2 of 2, Richard F. Taitano Micronesia Area Research Center Manuscript Collection, University of Guam, 1.

¹³ These notions were not unique to Liberation Day as they have defined commemorative activities elsewhere. The theme of sacrifice, for example, played an important role in the popular remembrance of the American Civil War. In *Remaking America*, John Bodnar writes, the idea of sacrifice related "to the grief and sorrow people felt over the loss of friends and ancestors....It could also stand as an act of loyalty or a contribution to the salvation of the nation itself" (28).

Virgin Mary, but is locally revered as Santa Marian Kamalen, or Our Lady of Camarin.”¹⁴ She states that the Chamorro veneration of the *Santa Marian Kamalen* bears similarities to the Catholic worship of the Virgin Mary in France, Portugal and Mexico. Catholics from these areas pray to her as Our Lady of Lourdes, Our Lady of Fatima and Our Lady of Guadalupe, respectively. In Guam, Chamorros believe that the Virgin Mary protects them “from natural disasters, war and oppression.”¹⁵ Out of respect for the Virgin Mary, the government of Guam observes an official holiday and Chamorros annually celebrate a *fiesta* in her honor on December 8, the Feast of the Immaculate Conception.

Coinciding with the beginning of war, the date of this feast and the icon of the Virgin Mary have gained greater meaning and relevance among Chamorros in Guam. Marilyn Anne Jorgensen writes that “many people of all ages emphasize the fact that war came to Guam on the day of December 8th, the Feast of the Immaculate Conception of the birth of its patroness.”¹⁶ As Jorgensen notes, “the coincidence of December 8th being both the Feast of the Immaculate Conception and the beginning of World War II (December 7 in Hawaii) is, in fact, considered to be important enough from a cultural standpoint in Guam that it was cited in the legislation enacted in 1971 which made December 8th a legal holiday on the island.”¹⁷ The legalization of December 8 as a civil and religious holiday reminded Chamorros of the time when war came to the island. In contrast, Liberation Day’s invocation of the *Santa Marian Kamalen* prompted Chamorros to remember their deliverance at the war’s end.

¹⁴ Tolentino 1999, 5-6.

¹⁵ Ibid., 7.

¹⁶ Jorgensen, 83.

¹⁷ Ibid., 83.

These religious images and views saturated the early commemorations of Liberation Day in Guam. As Roman Catholic priest Fr. Eric Forbes notes, “the first Liberation Day celebrations right after the war...were largely religious in nature. There were no...parades or carnivals in the first Liberation Day celebrations.”¹⁸ Instead, as Fr. Forbes remarks, “people gathered for Mass, to give thanks to God for deliverance from Japanese occupation, and to pray for those who died in the war.”¹⁹ Many attended mass in the various villages. Young boys and girls visited the gravesites of soldiers with flowers and prayed. This three-day event of masses, processions, and parades often concluded with reception dinners and dances at George Washington High School in Sinajaña, a village located near the capital of Hagatña. The annual themes of these commemorations were appropriately named “thanksgiving,” in honor of the return of the Americans.²⁰

The meaning of the Catholic religion, however, extended beyond material celebrations and religious rituals. The relationship between religion and war in Guam differed vastly from their historically perceived roles. Ideally, as Shailer Mathews notes, “the spread of religion will develop such hostility to war as to make universal peace a certainty.”²¹ Mathews suggests that this conventional view of the relationship between religion and war rarely existed in history. “As a matter of fact,” Mathews argues, “none of the great religions has been in practice frankly anti-militaristic. As a rule religion has

¹⁸ Forbes, Interview. By 1947, however, organizers of Liberation Day introduced parades. Military marching units and bands also participated in them. But, as Fr. Forbes perhaps suggests, the festive nature of these parades paled in comparison to the more elaborately decorated ones of the post-1950s.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ “Festivities Herald Liberation Day: Parade, Parties Highlight Date of Deliverance,” *Navy News*, 22 July 1947, 1.

²¹ Shailer Mathews, *Patriotism and Religion* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1918), 80.

been the support of the warrior.”²² Rather than promote warfare, Chamorro religious beliefs helped them to persevere and survive throughout the war. As Gloria F. Camacho remarks, Chamorros held “a bright glow of trust in the Omnipotent God burning in the hearts of the people...Surely God will not turn away at such a terrible time as [war].”²³

On a deeper level, and at a level reflected in Liberation Day, Catholic spiritual concepts shaped Chamorro interpretations of the war and their involvement in it. Chamorro views of God and the Virgin Mary assisted Chamorros in making sense of the ungodly event of war. Catholic religious values and political loyalties to America became synonymous with anti-war and anti-Japanese sentiments. Further, Catholic notions of liberation and salvation fused with political loyalties. Chamorros prayed to Uncle Sam as if he were a saint, a special mediator between the people, the nation and God. They sought his help, his protection and his salvation.

After the war, Chamorro prayers extended to Uncle Sam’s “angels,” the American soldiers. As Rear Admiral C. A. Pownall declared in a 1947 memorial day address, “nowhere on earth are the Americans’ war dead more highly cherished than on Guam.”²⁴ “The worshipping of the Americans by the Chamorros,” writes Vicente M. Diaz, “underscores the religiosity of the event, a solemnity and piety of which there was plenty to go around.”²⁵ On the occasion of the second liberation commemoration in 1946, island leaders presented a message to President Harry S. Truman. The letter illustrated the spiritual, cultural and political values of liberation. Capturing the original themes and values of Liberation Day festivities, part of the text read:

²² Ibid., 81.

²³ Gloria F. Camacho, “Liberation Day—It Brings Back Memories of Joy and Sorrow,” *Guam Daily News*, 21 July 1952, 34.

²⁴ C. A. Pownall, “Governor’s Memorial Day Address: Stresses Debt of Gratitude We Owe Our War Dead,” *Navy News*, 1 June 1947, 3.

²⁵ Diaz 2001, 161.

INSPIRED BY LOVE OF HOME AND COUNTRY; THE MEMORIES OF THE RECENT PAST; THE FAITH AND LOYALTY THAT SUSTAINS EVEN UNDER EXTREME ADVERSITY; THE HOPES OF THE FUTURE; THE RE-OCCUPATION OF GUAM BY THE ARMED FORCES OF THE UNITED STATES D-DAY JULY 21, 1944, WHICH WON VICTORY FOR JUSTICE AND RIGHT, AND FOR OUR PEOPLE FREEDOM FROM THE YOKE OF TYRANNY; AND REVERENCE FOR THE NOBLE AND HONORED HEROES WHO HERE GAVE THEIR LIVES THAT THE NATION MIGHT LIVE—WE,—THE PEOPLE OF GUAM,—ON THIS SECOND ANNIVERSARY OF OUR LIBERATION PAUSE, FROM OUR DAILY TASKS TO: (1) THANK THE ALMIGHTY GOD, IN WHOSE KEEPING RIGHT HAS TRIUMPHED AND EVER SHALL TRIUMPH OVER MIGHT; (2) THOSE BRAVE MEN LIVING AND DEAD, WHO STRUGGLED TO SET US FREE; AND (3) THE ENTIRE NATION WHOSE INDIVIDUAL AND COLLECTIVE SACRIFICES HAVE JUSTIFIED OUR FAITH IN SALVATION.²⁶

Presentations like this clearly evidenced the interconnected nature of spirituality, identity and nationality in postwar Guam. While gratitude to God is prominently evident in the language of the letter, interesting too is the way in which these Chamorro leaders expressed appreciation for the American nation. This patriotic expression of gratitude is couched by these Chamorro writers in terms of American sacrifices that “justified our faith in salvation.” This final sentence of the letter reveals that even in the context of American loyalty, at that time period, Chamorro Catholic ideals of faith and redemption persisted. Others reiterated these points during Liberation Day festivities. They spoke to peoples at home and abroad about the island’s special wartime relationship with the United States.

The idea of an oppressed indigenous population saved by a humane liberating force continued to warrant special status and attention. Americans who lost family members in Guam were especially moved by the island’s Liberation narratives. Iris Weehorn Dodd of Tyler, Texas, was one such example. In coming across news coverage

²⁶ “Naval Government of Guam Monthly Report,” 31 August 1946, Pacific Trust Territories, RG 313, National Archives, 4-5.

of postwar Guam, Dodd recalled the death of her son, Marine Sergeant Frederick Weehorn Dodd. Representing a generation of mourners, she too related to the wartime sufferings of Chamorros. Impressed and emotionally moved by indigenous accounts of wartime survival, Dodd praised Chamorros for being “a brave people.”²⁷ Instead of only grieving for a person close to home, she now grieved for a people far from it. This shared sense of bereavement perhaps helped her to find closure and consolation. Dodd’s moving response to war in Guam therefore showed that Liberation Day’s narratives of suffering crossed ethnic, political, religious and class lines.²⁸

THE RISE IN CIVIL CEREMONY

What made Liberation narratives of Guam particularly recognizable for Americans was the enduring tale of Chamorro loyalty to America. In demonstrating their loyalty to the United States, Guam Chamorros resisted Japanese assimilation efforts; coped with the violence of war; sustained faith in God and the American nation; praised the bravery and sacrifice of American soldiers; and renewed cultural systems of reciprocity and indebtedness with the United States. As in the time of war, the language of loyalty became the primary medium of communication between the colonizer and the colonized. Ideally, Chamorros could have chosen another medium of communication with foreigners after the war. Since the seventeenth-century, however, colonial powers had often considered their interactions with Chamorros in terms of loyalty and disloyalty. In the case of postwar Guam, Diaz observes that Chamorro

²⁷ “Iris Weehorn Dodd to Agueda I. Johnston,” 18 May 1945, copy in Agueda Iglesias Johnston’s Papers, Box 4, Correspondence Folder, 2 of 6, Richard F. Taitano Micronesia Area Research Center Manuscript Collection, University of Guam, 3.

²⁸ Despite their different national affiliations, Jay Winter’s *Sites of Memory, Sites of Mourning* suggests that communities across Britain, France and Germany collectively grieved and memorialized the loss of lives in the Great War. Thus, as in the case of overseas American consolation for lives lost in Guam, mourners can sometimes transcend the political, cultural and geographical boundaries which separate them.

wartime experiences were “expressed in terms of hyperloyalty to the United States” because “this was the only political language available to the Chamorros that could be heard and understood by the Americans.”²⁹ The language of loyalty continued to suit Chamorro needs because of its political and spiritual power and appeal. Given the historical significance of commemorations in Guam, it seemed inevitable that Liberation Day would be the “focal point” of Chamorro loyalty.³⁰

From the 1950s onward, Liberation Day festivities adopted loyalty as a key commemorative theme. The general narrative of Chamorro loyalty to America set the terms for how those in Guam should interpret, understand and remember the war. The narrative of loyalty therefore established the conditions for history and memory making in Guam, especially in regard to the war. Robert A. Underwood, Vicente M. Diaz and C.T. Perez all agree on this point, that is, that the patriotic fervor of Liberation Day mediated Chamorro memories and understandings of the war. The consensus of opinion among Underwood, Diaz, and Perez clearly reflects the power of Liberation Day as a site for the public representation and interpretation of war. Although Agueda I. Johnston saw liberation as a “rebirth” for the island and its people, much of which included a spiritual sense of liberation and salvation, she did not intend for the celebration to be simplified into a civic display of Chamorro loyalty.

This is not to say that the idea of Chamorro loyalty persisted unchanged throughout these years of commemoration. As C. T. Perez remarks, “the decision of how and where ‘Liberation’ Day would be observed has never been a simple matter of practicality. Each action has been dictated by political motive and explains the changes

²⁹ Diaz 2001, 165.

³⁰ Underwood 1977, 6.

in the celebration of 'Liberation' Day over the years."³¹ Thus, the concept of Chamorro loyalty changed over the years according to the desires and needs of the island's leadership and population. In the continental United States, loyalty to the nation also shared an essential, though changing, role in the shaping of commemorations. John Bodnar argues that "the need to sustain loyalty to the nation during World War II and during the earliest days of the Cold War obviously did not diminish the enthusiasm of authorities in the federal government and the states to use commemorations to foster patriotism."³² State centennials in the Midwest in the late 1940s and 1950s evidenced this official desire to foster loyalty among Americans.³³ As Bodnar explains, "these activities always honored patriotism and governmental institutions in an unquestioning way. But they also celebrated numerous vernacular interests—ethnic groups, pioneers, material progress, business, women."³⁴

Guam's Liberation Day indeed celebrated vernacular as well as official interests. As Bodnar suggests, vernacular and official narratives of loyalty meshed in ways that helped to commemorate the past in various parts of the United States. Guam's Liberation Day festivities did not differ. As the commemoration shifted from an intensely spiritual festivity to a civil one, the politics of loyalty changed. During and after the war, Chamorro spiritual and political loyalties to God and the American nation became apparent. By the late 1940s, the political currency of loyalty in Guam intensified in the wake of a renewed movement for civil government and American citizenship. This movement demonstrated that indigenous narratives of loyalty could achieve political

³¹ Perez 1996, 73.

³² Bodnar, 250.

³³ Ibid., 250.

³⁴ Ibid., 250.

recognition and power at home and abroad. As Underwood notes, "Chamorros hit upon an irrefutable argument for civil government. The Chamorros were patriotic. They survived the [war] ordeal. They proved their loyalty. In fact, the Chamorros not only deserved political rights, the U.S. owed it to them."³⁵ He states that "the war experience soon became a hammer to obtain political rights, and, subsequently, to obtain federal funds. In order to assure its success, the war experience and Liberation Day became expressed with American symbols."³⁶ Hofschneider likewise asserts that "now that [Chamorros] had unquestionably proven their love for and loyalty to the Mother Country, the indigenous inhabitants deserved the rights and privileges of American citizenship."³⁷

As in the case of commemorations elsewhere, Chamorros used Liberation Day not simply as a way to remember the past. They also used the commemoration, and the general narrative of loyalty, to "support their claims for greater political power and social equality."³⁸ After the war, they sought an end to the oppressive features of American military rule in Guam and strove for equality within the American body politic. At the time, the lure of American citizenship seemed to answer long-standing questions of civil governance and political representation. Dames writes that "citizenship and all that it symbolized had powerful appeal to a stateless people struggling to recover from the brutalities of Japanese occupation and the devastation" of war.³⁹ To Chamorros citizenship "would bring not only some limitation on untrammelled Naval authority but also a sense of dignity and equality with the rest of the United States, the security of permanent political union, and finally an acceptance by the national government of their

³⁵ Underwood 1977, 8.

³⁶ Ibid., 8.

³⁷ Hofschneider, 115.

³⁸ Bodnar, 27.

³⁹ Vivian Loyola Dames, "Rethinking the Circle of Belonging: American Citizenship and the Chamorros of Guam," (Ph.D. dissertation. The University of Michigan, 2000), 197.

political loyalty and willingness to share the obligations of the U.S. Federal system.”⁴⁰

With the passage of the Organic Act in 1950, Chamorros finally attained a congressional form of American citizenship. A civil government surfaced, ending half-a-century of naval rule.⁴¹ In accomplishing this change in government and citizenship, Chamorros were reassured that their loyalties to America were heeded by peoples beyond the island’s shores. Now a part of the “American family,” Chamorros rejoiced in their newfound political identity.

Liberation Day captured more than the celebratory mood of that period. Although President Truman signed the Organic Act on August 1, 1950, it took effect retroactively on July 21st of that year. In fact, both the Organic Act and Liberation Day came to be celebrated on the same date as a legal government holiday. Title 1 of the Guam Code Annotated states that “(a) Liberation Day is a legal holiday declared in commemoration of the anniversary of the liberation of Guam from the Japanese Occupation on July 21, 1944 and the inauguration of civil government in Guam on July 21, 1950.”⁴² The law adds that “(b) The Governor is authorized and requested to issue annually a proclamation calling upon the people of Guam to observe Liberation Day by displaying the flag at their homes or other suitable places, with appropriate ceremonies and festivities expressive of the public sentiment befitting the occasion.”⁴³ Beginning in 1950, Liberation Day

⁴⁰ Leibowitz, 330.

⁴¹ On August 1, 1950, President Harry Truman signed bill H.R. 7273 into law as the Organic Act. Rogers writes that “the Organic Act, passed by Congress without a vote on it by the people of Guam, made Guamanians U.S. citizens, established civilian government, and remains the basic law of the island until the local people approve a constitution of their own” (222). Debates about the constitutional validity and political implications of the Organic Act have arisen since its passage in 1950. See Dames, Leibowitz, and Statham for differing views on the passage of the Organic Act in particular and on the question of American citizenship in general. For an ethnographic assessment of these issues, see Ronald Stadel, *Pacific Passages: World Culture and Local Politics in Guam* (Stockholm: Stockholm Studies in Social Anthropology, 1998).

⁴² *Guam Code Annotated*, section 1011, Agaña, Guam (1996).

⁴³ *Ibid.*

changed into a grand celebration of Chamorro loyalty. The inauguration of civil government and the granting of American citizenship to Chamorros strengthened further the narratives of loyalty in the commemoration of war.

While the Catholic Church continued to participate in the commemoration, it never again would achieve the prominence it once held during the immediate postwar years. Editors of the *Umatuna Si Yuus*, Guam's weekly Catholic newspaper, witnessed with some unease the transformation of Liberation Day from a spiritually laden commemoration to a civil-minded one. In 1954, they wrote that "the annual observance of Liberation Day is a civic expression of gladness at the return of Guam to American possession and gratitude towards the United States Congress for the establishment of civil law and the granting of a local constitution for the territory."⁴⁴ Recognizing the increasingly marginalized role of the Church in the commemoration of war, the editors asserted that "no special religious observance has been part of the celebration for the last few years."⁴⁵ In response to the increased civic nature of Liberation Day, they reminded readers that "Liberation Day is not just an occasion for floats and flowers, for queens and crownings, for games and gimmicks, it is a time for soul-searching to see whether we have honestly tried to make ourselves worthy of the sacrifices of those who died for us."⁴⁶

Whenever possible, priests and parishioners alike infused Liberation Day with spiritual themes strongly reminiscent of the war and with the wartime experiences of such survivors as Agueda I. Johnston. Liberation Day planners always welcomed these views.

⁴⁴ "Tenth Anniversary of Liberation of Guam to be Celebrated Wednesday," *Umatuna Si Yuus*, 18 July 1954, 1.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 1.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 5.

But by the 1950s, different approaches to remembering the past competed to gain centrality as the official public representation. Peoples and organizations from different secular and religious circles seized the opportunity to use Liberation Day as a site to interpret the past and the present. Liberation Day illustrated its potential as a marker and maker of island history. It also possessed tremendous flexibility as a platform for local and national politics and, even, economics.

IN THE NAME OF ECONOMIC PROGRESS

After 1950, now that the island had its own form of civil government, local leaders and developers saw the need to “rehabilitate” the island once again. Unlike the military’s notion of rehabilitation, this form exemplified modernization rather than militarization.⁴⁷ Liberation Day festivities of the 1950s represented the island’s move toward a “modern” society. The commemorative themes of this decade reflected the modernization of the island. In 1953, for example, the commemorative theme was “post-war progress and future of Guam.”⁴⁸ The governor of that year, Ford Q. Elvidge, remarked that “Guam emerges from the past, reconstructs and rehabilitates itself. A new government is born. A new territory takes its place among the component parts of the American nation.”⁴⁹ Others echoed Elvidge’s comments about the new, modern Guam. Supportive of the local and military economies, the editors of *Guam Daily News* observed in 1954 that “businessmen have pioneered in the rehabilitation of home and the

⁴⁷ One can argue that Guam’s postwar economic changes reflected patterns of “modern development” as articulated by economic historians. For a sampling of the literature on modernization, see C.E. Black, *The Dynamics of Modernization: A Study in Comparative History* (New York: Harper and Row, 1976); and W.W. Rostow, *The Stages of Economic Growth: A Non-Communist Manifesto* (London and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1968).

⁴⁸ “Coronation Ball at 8 Tonight Climaxes 2-Day Celebration,” *Guam Daily News*, 21 July 1953, 1.

⁴⁹ Quoted in “Messages from Governor, Military,” *Guam Daily News*, 21 July 1953, 2.

rebuilding of a shattered economy.”⁵⁰ They listed the various economic accomplishments on the island, such as the development of subdivisions, banks, agricultural nurseries, insurance firms, restaurants, and radio stations.

Prominent businessperson Eduardo T. Calvo cautioned others, however, to be receptive and careful of the economic future of Chamorros in particular. As part of his Liberation Day remarks in 1955, Calvo stated that Chamorros “must constantly strive to lessen our dependence upon the military and to develop wherever possible an independent economy from such of our resources as remain to us.”⁵¹ Despite these concerns, many touted what they believed to be economic prosperity and progress. Economic growth, they claimed, derived from the island’s patriotic history and renewed political ties with the United States.

As expected, the political and economic strides of the 1950s impacted the commemoration of Liberation Day in ways that further fostered its growth as a civic celebration. The commemoration now featured images of parades, floats and marching bands rather than the Catholic processions of the immediate postwar years. Young women throughout the villages enthusiastically competed to become the next Liberation Day Queen. They sold tickets as a means of fundraising for the commemoration, with the candidate who sold the most tickets becoming the next Liberation Day queen. Furthermore, the former one-day event now included activities which spanned three days. Held at the Paseo de Susana, an artificial park built upon the wartime debris of Hagatña, the festivities ranged from firework displays to sport competitions to public addresses. Engrossed in the political achievements and economic materialism of the decade,

⁵⁰ “Salute to Builders,” *Guam Daily News*, 21 July 1954, 2.

⁵¹ Quoted in “Stress Economic Liberation—Calvo: Lawmaker Calls for Development of Independent Economy,” *Guam Daily News*, 22 July 1955, 2.

Liberation Day had been transformed into a commercialized celebration of the war. Even the 1959 commemorative theme, "Old Guam," appeared to signal less a nostalgic call to the past than a warm welcome to the economic future of the island.⁵²

In the later 1950s, several local voices raised the question, once again, of why Chamorro narratives of survival and salvation so central in defining the earlier Liberation Day commemorations were no longer figuring prominently in the recent celebrations. Refusing to be silenced by the pomp and pageantry of Liberation Day, Chamorro Protestant Minister and University of Guam Professor Dr. Joaquin Flores Sablan voiced points raised earlier in the decade. He stated that "the meaning of the day has been growing dimmer and dimmer each year as indicated in the way we have been celebrating it. Gambling, heavy drinking, music and dancing, and other forms of entertainment have obscured the meaning and importance of the occasion."⁵³ Sablan asserted that Liberation Day "should be a day of thanksgiving and sober thinking. It is fitting and proper for all of us to pause and look upward and recognize where our help is coming from."⁵⁴

Editors of *Umatuna Si Yu'us* similarly reminded Chamorros about the spiritual significance of Liberation Day. They asserted that "the temptation to overdo it in the pursuit of sport, entertainment, eating and drinking on occasions of this kind, to place ourselves into dangerous occasions of sin, and to act as though the laws of God were suspended for the duration of the celebration, leads us to issue the word of warning, and to call for a safe and sane observance of Liberation Day."⁵⁵ Both Sablan and the editors of the island's Catholic paper expressed consternation over the increasingly secular

⁵² Tony Palomo, "Thousands See Floats on Parade," *Guam Daily News*, 20 July 1959, 1.

⁵³ Joaquin Flores Sablan, "To My Guamanian People," in *13th Anniversary of Liberation of Guam* (Agaña: Liberation Day Committee, 1957), 7.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 7.

⁵⁵ "Liberation Day 1959," *Umatuna si Yu'us*, 19 July 1959, 4.

dimensions of the commemoration. However, they lamented not so much the form of the commemoration, as its content. As part of the generation of war survivors, Sablan and others stressed the need to see the commemoration as a somber ceremony of gratitude and appreciation. The commemoration, they believed, served to remember a tragic time in the war histories of the island. The generations of the late 1950s, they intimated, had lost all understanding of the war and its violent impact on the island.

Overall, these reactions indicated a level of discomfort felt by the *manamko*, the elder generations of Chamorros who survived the war. The excessive attention paid to sports and parades, rather than to Christian activities, offended the elder survivors and seemingly trivialized their war experiences. For the elders, memories and histories of a violent war conflicted with the idea of festive war commemorations. Even Agueda I. Johnston tempered her celebrations with a strong commitment to the spiritual reflection of the war in general and the forgiveness of individual antagonisms in particular. In an ironic lament over the secular changes in Liberation Day, Dr. Joaquin Flores Sablan unwittingly described the Chamorro appropriation of the commemoration as a *fiesta*. The fact that merrymaking persisted suggested that a growing number of people, especially those of the postwar generation, accepted the nature and direction of the commemoration. Indeed, by the late 1950s and early 1960s, Liberation Day had adopted what anthropologist N. Ross Crumrine calls the “Guamanian fiesta complex.”⁵⁶ Although Crumrine’s study is about village celebrations of saints, or *fiestas*, her argument regarding Chamorro forms of celebration extends to this analysis of Liberation Day. As Crumrine notes, the fiesta complex is an “extremely flexible and adaptive” system that absorbs

⁵⁶ N. Ross Crumrine, “Praying and Feasting: Modern Guamanian Fiestas,” *Anthropos* 77 (1982):89-112.

popular symbolism and reflects interpersonal and intersocietal relations.⁵⁷ Far from being a meaningless celebration, Liberation Day, then and now, offers insight into symbol-making, social interacting and social perceptions, feasting, entertaining and, above all, remembering and interpreting the war in Guam.

As more Chamorros embraced Liberation Day as one of their special occasions, they not surprisingly celebrated it in special, fiesta-like, ways. As Perez explains, Liberation Day has “become a Chamorro tradition, families set up tents along the parade route and camp out the night before preparing ‘mini-fiestas’ to enjoy during the parade. Large amounts of food are prepared to feed families and friends who may pass by.”⁵⁸ The enlarged festive nature of Liberation Day indicated that increasing numbers of Chamorros accepted the commemoration as an important day and event in their cultural calendar. The festivities still commemorated Chamorro and American war experiences. Elders such as Sablan believed that Liberation Day’s forms of entertainment detracted from what he perceived to be the true meaning of the commemoration, that is, a day of “thanksgiving” for God and the American nation.

As Sablan’s response showed, Liberation Day elicited contestations on the part of the *manamko* because it catered to a generation of people who did not much understand the war, let alone people who had experienced it. As the editors of a local newspaper in 1962 remarked, “there are thousands of islanders who do not remember the liberation of Guam eighteen years ago. There are thousands more who were not born at the time but who have seen our celebrations of this historical anniversary in the past years.”⁵⁹ The civil dimensions of Liberation Day were bolstered, in part, because of this new

⁵⁷ Ibid., 89.

⁵⁸ Perez 1996, 72.

⁵⁹ “Prices of Victory and Freedom,” *Guam Daily News*, 21 July 1962, 6.

generation of non-survivors and non-veterans. In terms of actual experience, postwar generations did not “remember” the battles and conflicts that occurred on the island. Songs, stories and commemorations, however, passed on increasingly disembodied memories and histories of the war from one generation to another.

Certainly, some *manamko* simply wanted Liberation Day to pay closer attention to their horrific experiences and to take note of their appreciation for the United States. That it always did, although to a lesser degree with each passing year. But the concerns of local and national politics, competing loyalties, commercial entertainment, and regional economies were influential and, at times, unpredictable. Consequently, no single person, organization or commemoration could, for any extended period of time, narrate a dominant and unchanging war history of the island. The commemoration of Liberation Day could never be only about Chamorro wartime experiences, itself a central and longstanding cultural and historical feature of the celebration. The general narrative of Chamorro loyalty therefore held various shades of meanings and implications among the different generations. The challenges facing *manamko* perceptions of how the war should be remembered had only begun.

TOURISM, JAPAN AND THE COMMEMORATION OF THE WAR IN GUAM

In the 1960s, it became evident among island leaders and the wider business community that tourism was the economy of the future. Yet at that time, most Chamorros did not know what tourism meant. As Bert Unpingco recalls, “the word ‘tourism’ was foreign to Chamorros and islanders and no one knew how Guam would benefit from tourism.”⁶⁰ Still, American military and federal officials, consultants and corporate representatives encouraged island leaders to consider tourism as a viable

⁶⁰ Quoted in Paul Borja, “GVB had Roots Planted in 1952,” *Pacific Daily News*, 1 May 1980, 8.

economy.⁶¹

The enthusiasm for the development of tourism in Guam stemmed from the fact that the United States Navy had opened the island's ports, airways and trade routes to the region in 1962. Prior to this time, the United States Navy regulated and enforced what was called the Naval Security Clearance Policy.⁶² This policy restricted travel into and out of the Mariana Islands, with the exception of Rota. A product of the cold war, the policy strove to maintain a level of secrecy regarding the American military fortification of such islands as Guam, Tinian and Saipan. Having then completed the construction of military facilities in these islands, President John F. Kennedy abolished the policy in August 21, 1962, thereby allowing tourist industries to develop in Guam, as well as the northern Mariana Islands.

With the termination of the Naval Security Clearance Policy in 1962, the once marginal tourist industry soon thrived as foreign hotel developers, businesses and entrepreneurs came to the island. Given the great distance separating Guam from the continental United States, as well as the prohibitive air travel costs, island leaders looked dimly on the prospects of attracting American tourists to the island. Further, Americans already saw Hawai'i as their premier Pacific Island tourist destination. Guam's leaders instead looked east to Japan, where they recognized a potential tourist market.

As might be anticipated, elder Chamorros did not openly welcome this new industry. The fact that Guam's tourist industry catered primarily to Japanese visitors resonated poorly with the wartime generations. Yet, despite their reservations, these

⁶¹ For a literary examination of tourism in Guam, see Camacho 1998.

⁶² This policy was officially titled "The Guam Island Defensive Area and the Guam Island Naval Airspace Reservation." For more on this issue, see Donald F. McHenry, *Micronesia: Trust Betrayed, Altruism vs. Self Interest in American Foreign Policy* (New York and Washington: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1975).

elders did not publicly object to the idea of a Japanese tourist industry in Guam. Torn between promises of a modern island economy and unsettling memories of the past, the *manamko* reluctantly accepted the turn of events. As Urelia A. Francisco remarked, “when I think of those times, I hate the Japanese...I know people say we need a strong economy, but I don’t care. We did just fine before they came and we don’t need them now.”⁶³ “I do forgive the Japanese for what they did,” she adds, “but I will never forget.”⁶⁴ As Francisco’s comments illustrate, the notion of a Japanese-oriented tourist economy did not sit well with the elder wartime generations. The issue at stake concerned the role of tourism in generating discussion about the remembrance of the Japanese.

Prior to the 1960s, Liberation Day festivities rarely incorporated Japanese veterans and survivors of the war as honored guests, heroic symbols, or patriotic figures. The few Chamorros who maintained relationships with the Japanese frequently remained quiet, hidden beneath a veil of shame and embarrassment. For the most part, Chamorros felt no need to celebrate the histories of their wartime occupiers. The postwar commemorative representations of the Japanese that surfaced featured Japanese as faceless victimizers and obedient followers of imperial ideology. Guam Chamorros therefore tended to view the Japanese as a homogenous group of soldiers, rapists, and murderers. But as the industry promoted an image of the island as a hospitable island paradise, supporters of tourism asked Chamorros to perceive the Japanese in contemporary terms. Public leaders asserted that Japan had changed from a violent war country to a peaceful nation embracing the world economy. For example, editors of the

⁶³ Quoted in Paul Bassler, “Liberation is Great, but Time Does Move On,” *Pacific Daily News Advertising Supplement*, 21 July 1991, 16.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 16.

Guam Daily News in 1966 appealed to the public to “turn away from the thoughts of the bloodshed and the occupation to the better days that lie ahead.”⁶⁵ Some even argued that Chamorros should outright suppress the violent memories and histories of the war.

The political elite of Guam knew that indigenous war memories of Japan could jeopardize or make unstable the new tourist economy. For instance, educator Dr. Katherine B. Aguon invoked this rationale as a means of spreading support for tourism. She reasoned that in order to “clear” antagonisms created by the war, Liberation Day activities should “be played down gradually.”⁶⁶ Aguon proclaimed that “there is widespread agreement that Guam must recognize its economic alignment with Japan. It is said by many others that our relationship with Japan, our former foe, is fundamental to Guam’s future growth.”⁶⁷ The economic survival of Guam, she argued, was in part dependent upon the reshaping of war memories and commemorations suitable for a Japanese tourist audience. As a means to detract Chamorros from remembering the violence of the Japanese, Aguon proposed that the island instead commemorate the Organic Act rather than Liberation Day. Although her recommendation never came to fruition, others maintained the belief that Chamorro war memories of the Japanese as a violent people should be “played down.”

The debate surrounding Japanese wartime violence in Guam told Chamorros, especially those of the elder generations, that tourist industries catered to a different, “peaceful” group of Japanese. Interestingly, though, these discussions had little impact on the ways Japanese would be remembered and commemorated among Chamorros. In

⁶⁵ “A Chance to Pause and Reflect about War,” *Guam Daily News*, 21 July 1966, 4.

⁶⁶ Katherine B. Aguon, “A Proposal to Commemorate the Birth of the Organic Act of Guam,” [1971?], copy in Agueda Iglesias Johnston’s Papers, Subject File, Box 1, Folder 6, Richard F. Taitano Micronesia Area Research Center Manuscript Collection, University of Guam, 2.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 2.

the first place, Chamorro loyalties to America would appear meaningless without reference to wartime antagonisms with the Japanese military. Further, Liberation Day festivities rarely addressed Japanese memories and histories of the war in ways that provided context for Japanese imperialism and propaganda. Rather than moving toward critical understandings of Japanese and, indeed, American colonialisms, the discussions on the role of Japan in Guam's tourist economy sadly generated another caricature of the Japanese people.

The wartime image of the Japanese as "victimizers" was now coupled with the postwar image of them as "tourists." Proponents of tourism in Guam were not the only ones responsible for attempting to refashion interpretations of the Japanese during the war and postwar periods. In fact, the emerging peace movement in Japan and the gradual proliferation of "bone-collecting" missions and peace memorials all contributed to producing representations of the Japanese as peaceful, proud, and prosperous people. By the early 1960s, the Japanese government, itself a key contributor in reshaping images of the nation's wartime past, established annual memorial services "to encourage pride in Japanese accomplishment and raise awareness of nationhood."⁶⁸

These memorial services stretched from the Japanese mainland to Japan's former wartime territories. In Guam, the Japanese government cooperated with American military officials to negotiate the planning for the memorial services. A major part of these memorial services entailed the collecting of human remains believed to be Japanese in origin. Separated from the pageantry of Liberation Day festivities, these bone-collecting missions grew in the 1960s with the arrival of elderly Japanese veterans and

⁶⁸ James J. Orr, *The Victim as Hero: Ideologies of Peace and National Identity in Postwar Japan* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2001), 138.

war survivors.⁶⁹ As Hope Cristobal elaborates, “when the tourist industry opened up, a lot of Japanese started coming up here. One of the first things they did was to organize Japanese tour groups and comb through the jungles and collect all the bones of the Japanese people.”⁷⁰ The Japanese tour groups then performed religious services and cremated the bones. These memorial services continued rather undisturbed and without much public attention until 1967.

January 1967 marked the time when members of the South Pacific Memorial Association arrived on Guam to initiate the construction of a peace memorial. Representing the Buddhist and Catholic faiths, the association dedicated the memorial to the war dead. It equally recognized the past and future spiritual efforts of bone-collecting missions and cremation ceremonies. Mitsunoti Ueki, one of the founding organizers for what came to be known as the Guam Peace Memorial, believed that the shrine symbolized peace, friendship, and goodwill.⁷¹ Catholic bishop Senuemon Fukahori of the Kyushu Diocese noted that “we are here to bring consolation to the relatives of the deceased of all races and of all nations.”⁷² He stated that the purpose of the memorial was to “foster the beginning of peace and friendship between nations in this part of the world.”⁷³ The association envisioned a tall, white memorial with “two hands clasped folded in prayer and meditation.”⁷⁴ It would be situated alongside a pool, fountain, and statue of two boys, an American and Japanese, whose hands would be “clasped in

⁶⁹ Japanese Buddhist and Shinto priests conducted bone-collecting missions as early as 1953, about a decade before Japan nationally endorsed the memorialization of its war dead. See “The Enemy Came Seeking His Dead,” *Guam Daily News*, 21 July 1953, 16.

⁷⁰ Quoted in Zohl dé Ishtar, *Daughters of the Pacific* (North Melbourne: Spinifex Press, 1994), 75.

⁷¹ “Why are the Japanese Building Memorial?” *Guam Daily News*, 13 May 1966, 1.

⁷² Quoted in Wayne A. Butterbaugh, “Catholics-Buddhists Join Forces to Emphasize Need for Peace,” *Guam Daily News*, 19 January 1967, 11.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, 11.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 24.

‘eternal’ friendship.”⁷⁵

The association chose a parcel of land in the northern village of Yigo, where the last military conflict between Japanese and American forces took place in August 1944, as the location for the shrine. They gathered there to commemorate Japan’s war past. In the words of Mitsunoti Ueki, they came not as soldiers or tourists, but as “newly born” Japanese in search of peace.⁷⁶

At the outset, the South Pacific Memorial Association seemed to garner all the support it needed. The association received encouragement from the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the United States Department of State and several of Guam’s local leaders and organizations. Even Father Oscar L. Calvo, a prominent Chamorro priest and spiritual figure, openly endorsed the project and ensured that the association was welcomed warmly in Guam. Perhaps in part because of Father Calvo’s involvement, no public protests by Chamorros developed. But the process to recognize the legitimacy of the peace memorial did not come without heated debate and conflict. Only a few months after the inauguration of the memorial, disapproval and criticism surfaced. The most outspoken critics were overseas Americans.⁷⁷

Herbert P. Beyer, a member of The American South and Central Pacific Society, vehemently exclaimed that “NEVER BEFORE IN HISTORY, has a group of private citizens of a FOREIGN COUNTRY... ever conspired to USURP, CIRCUMVENT, and SUBVERT, the prerogatives and function of our government in the erection of War

⁷⁵ Ibid., 24.

⁷⁶ Quoted in “Why are Japanese Building Memorial?” *Guam Daily News*, 13 May 1966, 1.

⁷⁷ Some of these critics identified themselves as members of The American South and Central Pacific Society. Its mission aimed to preserve peace and to defend American interests in the Western Pacific. This society of American “super-patriots,” as they called themselves, circulated propaganda in an effort to deter the increasing proliferation of Japanese memorials in American jurisdictions. The University of Guam’s Richard F. Taitano Micronesian Area Research Center possesses documents on the society. They can be accessed at the center’s Vertical Files, under the heading of “memorials.”

Memorials to their war dead on our soil.”⁷⁸ Upon hearing of Japanese efforts to construct a memorial, various United States congressional representatives also voiced their concerns. Congressman L. Roudebush, a Republican from Indiana, decried that the United States “lost some 100,000 American servicemen in the Pacific theatre in World War Two—7,083 were either killed, missing or wounded during the Guam campaign and we don’t even have a memorial on Guam honoring our own war dead.”⁷⁹ Shortly thereafter, in July 1967, a resolution was submitted to the United States House of Representatives that insisted on the removal of the Japanese shrine. While the resolution did not pass, many continued to argue that the Japanese peace memorial stood as “an affront to those American servicemen who fought and died in the Pacific theater.”⁸⁰ As these Americans attested, Guam was an American territory and key battleground in the war. In their eyes, the island signified a sacred war site of valor and loyalty. The creation of a Japanese memorial ignited, once again, Americans’ wartime convictions about their military sacrifice and superiority.

The objections to the peace memorial were made even more pressing by the fact that the island had no nationally recognized American war memorial. Indeed, American memorials already existed throughout the island as plaques, bomb shelters, tanks and other military markers of the war. But none received designation as an American National Historic Landmark, as in the case of Pearl Harbor, Oahu, in 1964.⁸¹ Later that year, however, the Advisory Board on National Parks, Historic Sites, Buildings and

⁷⁸ Quoted in Janet Goodwin, “War Memorial Again,” *Guam Daily News*, 25 July 1967, 14.

⁷⁹ Quoted in “‘This Infuriates Me’: Asks U.S. Congress to Oppose War Memorial,” *Guam Daily News*, 11 February 1967, 1.

⁸⁰ Quoted in “Calls Government of Guam ‘Prejudicial’: Congress Gets Resolution to Block Japanese War Memorial,” *Guam Daily News*, 10 July 1967, 3.

⁸¹ Jim Adams, “World War II Battlefields and National Parks in the Pacific,” *Creative Resources Management* 19, no. 3 (1996): 58.

Monuments approved a proposal to create a “War in the Pacific National Historic Park” in Guam. The Advisory Board indicated that pressure to develop the War in the Pacific National Historic Park increased “following the announcement of plans of a private group to set up a Japanese memorial in the island territory.”⁸²

These statements lessened most American criticisms; in truth, however, studies to build a nationally registered park in Guam actually began in 1965, two years before the formal dedication of the Japanese peace memorial.⁸³ The War in the Pacific National Historic Park would register the American invasion sites in Asan and Agat as a National Historic Landmark. The park would commemorate “the epic story of that phase of World War II, between the debacle of Pearl Harbor and the formal surrender of Japan, which involved the conquest of island strongholds on the road to victory in the Pacific Theater,” as well as the recapture of Guam and its strategic importance as an American territory.⁸⁴

On August 18, 1978, a decade after the inauguration of the Japanese peace memorial in Yigo, Guam, plans for the War in the Pacific National Historic Park came to fruition. Organizers for the War in the Pacific Park anticipated that “such a park would be a source of pride to Guamanians and to other Americans and would be of considerable interest to foreign visitors not only for its historic significance, but as an example of an American institution—the National Park System.”⁸⁵ The pride and enthusiasm attached to the War in the Pacific may have been shared by veterans and survivors of the war, but it was not as widespread among Chamorros as some assumed. As in the case of the unveiling of the Japanese peace memorial, the majority of the indigenous population paid

⁸² “‘War in Pacific’ Park OK,” *Guam Daily News*, 6 May 1967, 1.

⁸³ Frank Hewlett, “Over 2,500 Acres Complete Master Plan for Pacific War Park,” *Guam Daily News*, 9 December 1969, 1.

⁸⁴ United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service, *Master Plan, Proposed War in the Pacific National Historic Park, Guam* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1969), 7.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 7.

little attention to the new turn of events. As Vicente L. G. Perez observes, “there has been an extreme lack of interest for the Second World War Monuments and markers by the local people.”⁸⁶ Part of this apathy toward the memorials stems from the reality that they often commemorated Americans and Japanese rather than the indigenous population. The War in the Pacific National Historic Park, at that time, simply represented another example of how a national government, as well as its affiliates, could commemorate the war.⁸⁷

As the criticisms surrounding the construction of the Japanese peace memorial demonstrated, numerous issues were involved in Guam’s “national” commemoration of the war. Japanese organizations, for example, saw the development of peace memorials, at home and abroad, as a way to appease both the living and the dead. On the other hand, American veteran groups strongly defended what they believed was their sole stewardship of American wartime sites and burial grounds. Both groups nevertheless envisioned Guam as an island intimately part of their own individual lifetime experiences and memories. Ultimately, the propaganda leveled against Japanese war commemorations demonstrated one of the few instances in which Americans attempted to set the terms for war remembrance in Guam. They may not have succeeded in deterring the influx of Japanese peace and bone-collecting missions, or other efforts on the part of the Japanese to commemorate the war. But the public effort to silence Japanese responses to these attacks, as well as the immediate approval of the War in the Pacific National Historical Park, revealed one outstanding truth. Clearly, American

⁸⁶ Vicente L. G. Perez, *Guam Historical Monuments* (Mangilao: Micronesia Area Research Center, [1970?]), 43.

⁸⁷ In July 22, 1996, another memorial was added to the War in the Pacific National Historic Park. It was called the Memorial Wall of Names, the first federal commemoration of Chamorros who experienced the war. Guam’s Congressman Robert A. Underwood played an instrumental role in seeing this memorial through to its completion.

veterans and politicians in the 1960s possessed the political, emotional, and social license to determine how the war should be commemorated at a national level in Guam.

NEW VISIONS FOR LIBERATION DAY

The exclusive nature of American efforts to memorialize the war in the island was not unique. The Japanese often performed their peace ceremonies privately amongst friends and families. Liberation Day itself catered mostly to those sympathetic toward the American Armed Forces and Chamorro war experiences. However, the rise in tourism and the overall changing social environment of the 1970s affected the meaning and direction of Liberation Day. Prior to this time period, the commemoration praised the American military as interpreted through the wartime memories of Chamorros. Religious interpretations of liberation and salvation were later meshed with secular and civic traditions of commemoration. As the island developed a military and tourist economy, large numbers of migrants arrived as laborers, professionals, and educators.⁸⁸ This increase in migration to Guam broadened Liberation Day's intended audiences. Rather than being mainly a celebration for Chamorros and Americans, Liberation Day expanded its audience to include Japanese tourists and the diverse groups of people who now called Guam their home.

Of all those who contributed to the shaping of Liberation Day, former Governor of Guam Ricardo J. Bordallo emerged as one of the few who worked to make it more inclusive and pluralistic. During his two terms, from 1975 to 1978 and from 1983 to 1986, Bordallo transformed Liberation Day into a multicultural celebration. The story of

⁸⁸ In 1940, approximately 20,000 Chamorros, 800 whites, and 1,300 primarily Filipino and Asian residents lived on the island. By 1980, the number of people increased to 100,000, with Chamorros comprising almost half of the population. See Leeland Bettis, "Colonial Immigration in Guam," in *Kinalamten Pulitikât: Siñenten I Chamorro, Issues in Guam's Political Development: The Chamorro Perspective* (Agaña: Political Status Education Coordinating Commission, 1996), 102-118.

the American liberation of Guam still figured prominently. But the charismatic Bordallo, himself a survivor of the war, wanted the commemoration to represent the elements of what he called “fiestan Guam.” The central ideas of fiestan Guam included cooperation, friendship, ethnic tolerance, and, of course, celebration. As Bordallo explained in 1977, “to ‘fiesta’ means to enjoy and celebrate....We can emphasize this special festivity as the one time during the year, when all the people of Guam cannot only gather together and celebrate in commemoration and honor, but also as a time to show our off-island and tourist friends that we can, as a homogenous and assimilated people do this in spirit, friendship, and harmony.”⁸⁹ Aware of the emerging communities on the island, such as the Filipinos and Chinese, Bordallo also ensured that Liberation Day would welcome these groups into its festivities. “Our ethnic communities,” he noted, “have even taken the time to plan cultural programs to both acquaint our [Chamorro] people with these different lifestyles, and to provide our visitors with a little touch of home while here on Guam.”⁹⁰

This promotion of a multicultural commemoration of war reflected a part of Bordallo’s overall “philosophy” as a governor. He believed that Liberation Day extended his philosophy of togetherness, tolerance and tradition. Liberation Day was about modern Guam and the future of its diverse peoples. The commemorative themes during Bordallo’s separate administrations illustrated his commitment to a productive and prosperous Guam. A few of these themes included: 1972’s “Peace Through a Brotherhood of Man”; 1975’s “*I Famaguon Guinaiya*” (Children are Love); 1977’s

⁸⁹ Ricardo J. Bordallo, “Opening Remarks—July 1st, 1977,” copy in Papers of Governor Ricardo J. Bordallo, Box 59, Speeches, Etc. (First Adm.), Richard F. Taitano Micronesia Area Research Center Manuscript Collection, University of Guam, 3.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 3.

"*Dinaña*" (Cooperation); and 1981's "Partners in Progress: A Salute to the Year of the Handicapped."⁹¹ Others recognized these new focal points of Liberation Day, including its value as a site to raise important social, historical, political, and economic issues. This did not come as a surprise to the Chamorros, especially the political elite, many of whom used the celebration to voice their specific concerns regarding the island's past and future.

Bordallo's pluralistic worldview challenged the notion that Liberation Day was only a holiday for Chamorros and American veterans. He continually sought ways to incorporate the island's different ethnic groups into the commemoration, allowing others to share their traditions, crafts, foods, and views. By this period, it was not uncommon to partake in the festivities of cultures not indigenous to the island. People not only celebrated the time off from work, but a few even reflected upon the significance of the war amongst themselves. For instance, parallels between one ethnic group's war experiences and those of the Chamorros were frequently raised.

In 1972, Kyon Shik Kim, Consul for the Republic of South Korea, noted that "when liberation is mentioned, our Korean people come to have a feeling of sympathy, for Korea was also once occupied by an enemy for a long time."⁹² On another occasion, Philippine Consul General Jose S. Estrada acknowledged the historical affinity between Filipinos and Chamorros. He explained that they were "stumbled across by Magellan in 1521 in search of a shorter gateway to the east; colonized under the flag of Castille for almost four centuries; ceded to the United States under the Treaty of Paris; overrun by the

⁹¹ *Dinaña* literally means a "mixture," but Bordallo intended it to mean cooperating with different ethnic groups.

⁹² Kyon Shik Kim, "Message," in 1972 July 21st, 28th Anniversary of Guam's Liberation Day, 1944-1972: *Peace Through Brotherhood of Man* (Agaña: Guam Jaycees, 1972), 13.

Japanese in 1941 and liberated by the United States in 1945.”⁹³ Estrada concluded that “we know you well enough to say that you will carry on.”⁹⁴

In certain respects, the Liberation Day commemorations of the 1970s and 1980s attempted to present Guam as an island utopia of ethnic diversity. Bordallo’s efforts to unite the island’s population and to make Liberation Day a multicultural commemoration were lofty ambitions. In fact, Governor Ricardo J. Bordallo understood that Guam was in a state of economic, political and social crisis. The enthusiasm he brought to Liberation Day served to sanitize the growing problems of the island, such as increased theft, pollution, and domestic violence. Modernization, he argued in 1977, threatened the environment and the very survival of the Chamorro culture. “In the name of progress,” he wrote, “man has destroyed his environment, ignored the good of all for his own good. On Guam we often attribute the roots of the problems of delinquency and crime to the identity crisis—born out of confusion about who we are and what we want to become.”⁹⁵ As the consequences of modernization became more apparent, Chamorro leaders and educators questioned the value of the island’s political and economic systems. Groups such as *Para’ Pada Y Chamorros* (Stop Slapping the Chamorros) and The Organization of People for Indigenous Rights were formed in direct response to what some were now calling “American colonialism.”

For the most part, the commemoration of Liberation Day remained beyond the criticisms of Chamorro political activist groups. Bilingual education, political representation, and cultural sovereignty were some of the issues advocated locally and

⁹³ Jose S. Estrada, “Message,” in *Liberation Day 1968* (Agaña: Guam Junior Chamber of Commerce, 1968), 4.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 4.

⁹⁵ Ricardo J. Bordallo, “Remarks for the Chief Quipuha Park Dedication, July 18, 1977,” copy in Papers of Governor Ricardo J. Bordallo, Box 59, Speeches, Etc. (First Adm.), Richard F. Taitano Micronesia Area Research Center Manuscript Collection, University of Guam, 1.

internationally by these organizations.⁹⁶ It was not until the early 1990s that one group decided to protest publicly the celebration of Liberation Day, pointing to its colonial dimensions. In a letter to the *Pacific Daily News* in 1991, Angel Santos, then *maga'lahi* (male leader) of the United Chamorro Chelus for Independence Association, denounced the commemoration of Liberation Day.⁹⁷ He asserted that “the Chamorros of Guam must stop paying homage to a government that has never cared for us—the indigenous inhabitants of Guam.”⁹⁸ Santos urged Chamorros to abandon the idea of the American liberation of the island, and to rethink their historical and political relationship with America. No liberation exists, he noted, as long as America retains full political control of the island’s peoples and resources. Instead, Santos opted for a renaming of Liberation Day. “As painful as the following statement may be,” he wrote, “the 21st of July should be more appropriately called ‘Reoccupation Day.’”⁹⁹

Among the examples of American colonialism provided by Santos, one stood out in particular. He said that if America sincerely felt concern for Chamorros then why did the navy refuse to evacuate Chamorros with its military dependents on October 17, 1941, a few months prior to the Japanese invasion?¹⁰⁰ Santos reasoned that the navy knowingly withdrew its families without due consideration for the remaining Chamorro population. The war generations of Chamorros undoubtedly recalled this incident. Members of Santos’ organization, later renamed *Nasion Chamoru* (Chamorro Nation), similarly believed that such questions should be posed to the public, and especially to the elder

⁹⁶ For a discussion of Chamorro political activism in Guam, see Michael P. Perez, “Contested Sites: Pacific Resistance in Guam to U.S. Empire,” *Amerasia Journal* 27, no. 1 (2001): 97-115.

⁹⁷ *Maga'lahi* translates into English as leader, governor, chief or boss. Also, the United Chamorro Chelus for Independence Association was later renamed *Nasion Chamoru*, or Chamoru Nation. Members of the organization argued that *Nasion Chamoru* represented better their goal of decolonizing the island.

⁹⁸ Angel Santos, “U. S. Return was Reoccupation, not Liberation,” *Pacific Daily News*, 21 July 1991, 20.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 20.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 20.

wartime generations. As Eddie “Ed” L. G. Benavente explained, certain questions “beg answers.”¹⁰¹ He noted that in order to publicize their efforts, *Nasion Chamoru* waved signs at Liberation Day festivities. Their preferred site was the annual Liberation Day parade on Guam’s main throughway, Marine Drive. At the parades, stated Benavente, they bore signs that read, “are we truly liberated?” or “are we liberated or reoccupied?”¹⁰² The wording of the questions, he added, prompted “bystanders to look at that sign and, ah, reflect, ‘what does he mean by reoccupied?’ But, you know, those were the questions that we wanted our *manamkos* to answer, our elderlies to answer, ah, consciously or unconsciously.”¹⁰³ Benavente added that “some of the questions were just blatant like, ‘liberation, how could that be? They stole our lands.’ So, we wanted directness. We believe in direct action as well.”¹⁰⁴

Whether their views were phrased as questions or statements, *Nasion Chamoru* played an important role in informing the island’s public, Chamorro elders, and the American military about the lingering problems of American colonialism in Guam. The activist group chose an important site, Liberation Day, to stage its protests, knowing that the celebration received much attention and publicity. In contesting Liberation Day, *Nasion Chamoru* focused on examples of American colonialism such as land dispossession during the war and the degradation of Chamorro culture. As Eddie L. G. Benavente argued, part of the organization’s goals included “educating” others about the contradictions of American foreign policy. Much of the knowledge gained in understanding these contradictions, he noted, stemmed from the individual experiences of

¹⁰¹ Eddie L.G. Benavente, Interview by the author, Mangilao, Guam, 12 March 2002. During my interview with Eddie Benavente, he was the *maga’lahi* of *Nasion Chamoru*. He also taught the Chamorro language at John F. Kennedy High School.

¹⁰² Ibid.

¹⁰³ Ibid.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

the group members who were veterans of the United States armed forces. According to Benavente, these men, approximately three quarters of the organization, initially joined the United States military as a means to spread the precept of democracy. Many even served in the Korean and Vietnam wars. But later, commented Benavente, “they awoken themselves to that reality, ‘why am I fighting a war for liberty of peoples in foreign places? When I come to Guam I don’t need to do that because I can face the reality that I have been dispossessed from my lands for military purposes.’”¹⁰⁵ He elaborated that “you don’t need to go to foreign wars” when injustices and inequality already “exist in a place called America.”¹⁰⁶

One might assume that given *Nasion Chamoru*’s familiarity with the American military, their views might have been taken seriously. The organization’s activism was certainly instrumental in “winning a court case about the implementation of the public law on the Chamorro Land Trust Act.”¹⁰⁷ This law enabled the local government to distribute or lease federal or “excess military” lands to Chamorro landowners. Despite such accomplishments, *Nasion Chamoru* was not popularly received. Due to members’ vocally assertive protests, as well as their radical, even threatening, physical appearances, a substantial number of Chamorros shunned their tactics as disrespectful and shameful. The stereotypical image of *Nasion Chamoru* consisted of a group of bald, or long-haired, men wearing combat fatigues and sporting tattoos. The elder Chamorros, a key target audience for the organization, sometimes spoke out privately or publicly against *Nasion Chamoru*. In particular, the elder wartime generation did not appreciate these activists, almost all of whom were born after the war, instructing them on how to interpret their

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

¹⁰⁷ Stade, 196.

war memories.

Indeed, from Agueda I. Johnston to Reverend Joaquin Sablan, Chamorros of the wartime generation dictated, in large part, how the war should be remembered locally. Frequently, the elder wartime generation publicly stated their feelings about the meaning of the war in general and of Liberation Day in particular. They also showed no significant interest in debating how the war should be remembered nationally in Japan or the United States. On the other hand, *Nasion Chamoru* hoped that the elder Chamorros would listen to them, and perhaps change their way of thinking about the war, America, and ultimately their loyalties to the United States. The organization's members did not anticipate a refusal on the part of the *manamko* to listen to their views. Nor did they foresee the elders challenging their overall premise and authority to speak about the war and the island's involvement in it.

The *manamko* commonly responded to *Nasion Chamoru* by saying, "you weren't there, boy. *Taigue hao nai gue pues yanggen ti un tungo put I guerran I dispues munga mabumaba pachotmu sa ti hagu ma libre, na hami manlibre.*"¹⁰⁸ In short, the elders first reminded the organization's members that they were "boys," part of the younger postwar generation's lower rank in terms of familial hierarchies. The elders also scolded the organization's members for having the audacity to speak about a war they never experienced and, in effect, told them to "shut their mouths." In the elders' minds, they were the ones "liberated," not those of the postwar generations.

Consequently, those in *Nasion Chamoru* listened to the elders and revised their forms of protest, from public demonstrations to mainly written statements. As Eddie L. G. Benavente noted, "we really softened our attempt to continue protesting Liberation

¹⁰⁸ Benavente, Interview.

Day....Out of respect for the *manamkos*, we chose that the next protests we do in terms of our battles in paper, in editorials, letters to the editors.”¹⁰⁹ In a period of a few years, the elders successfully conveyed and reinforced their interpretation of Liberation Day’s significance to *Nasion Chamoru*. During the fiftieth anniversary of World War II in 1994, called “Golden Salute,” *Nasion Chamoru* offered a new look in terms of its contestation of Liberation Day. Out of respect for the elder wartime generations, as well as their deference to returning war veterans, the organization “put protesting Liberation Day in the back burner for now.”¹¹⁰ The activists realized, with the aid of their elders, that the American veterans were not responsible “for the problems caused by the federal government.”¹¹¹ As Angel Santos remarked, “these [American] veterans deserve the highest respect and honor for their unselfish sacrifice in saving our lives during the war.”¹¹²

Although its approaches slightly changed, *Nasion Chamoru*’s purpose continued. On the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary, activists “passed out fliers to the veterans on Liberation Day asking for their support in Guam’s quest for self-determination.”¹¹³ Amidst the commemorative activities of welcoming parties, dinners, island tours, and fireworks, the issue of Chamorro self-determination was raised among the veterans. Public meetings and even family barbecues were held for the veterans, hoping that they would support Chamorro political decolonization. While it remained unclear what the veterans generally felt about decolonization efforts in Guam, a few listened openly to members of *Nasion Chamoru*. Edward O’Bryan, for example, hoped that “you guys get

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.

¹¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹¹ Pam Runquist, “Santos Appeals to Chamoru Nation,” *Pacific Daily News*, 14 July 1994, 4.

¹¹² Quoted in Runquist, 4.

¹¹³ Gina Eclavea, “Departing Liberators Pledge Political Support,” *Pacific Daily News*, 23 July 1994, 6.

your land back.”¹¹⁴ William Putney, another veteran, stated, “I think your goal here is right. I understand your impatience. We didn’t liberate Guam to be a second-class group of people.”¹¹⁵ Reflecting on why he came to Guam in the first place, Joe Benak commented that “as a very young soldier landing near Agat beach, my personal vision was to help retake the island, free the imprisoned Chamoru people, and go home to farm-living from where I came.”¹¹⁶ “To my personal amazement,” Benak continued, “little did I know that the people of Guam were not given back their land after the war. Liberation? Put yourself in my shoes. When you come here willing to give your life, you come to free people that have been imprisoned....You don’t come here to take their soil.”¹¹⁷

Based on these remarks, it was apparent that some American veterans expressed concern about the injustices committed in Guam. They perceived their roles as “liberators” of an oppressed people, yet failed to realize that America’s expansion into the Pacific was not one of liberation. In any event, the veterans did not change the island’s political status. Nor could they, or anyone else, tarnish their image as “heroes.” For already half a century, American veterans enjoyed the privilege of being called “liberators.” The collective memory of Chamorros as a “liberated” people helped to perpetuate this image of American soldiers and sailors. Liberation Day likewise mediated the memories and histories of the war, as particularly expressed by Chamorros of the war and postwar periods. This has resulted in the dominant positioning of narratives of colonial triumph and indigeneous loyalty, both in the collective memory of Chamorros and in the annual, local commemoration of war in Guam. Equally compelling

¹¹⁴ Quoted in Eclavea, 6.

¹¹⁵ Quoted in Steve Limtiaco, “Chamoru Nation Calls Off Liberation Day Protests,” *Pacific Daily News*, 20 July 1994, 8.

¹¹⁶ Quoted in Barbara Ray, “Land Taking: A Liberation Irony,” *Pacific Daily News*, 21 July 1994, 54.

¹¹⁷ Quoted in Ray 1994b, 54.

stories of the island's war period, however, from those of comfort women to those of indigenous police, have been concealed by these celebratory narratives of war and survival. What are their memories of the war? And how might they be remembered or commemorated? The responses to these questions depend in part on the future of Liberation Day not only in Guam, but in the entire Mariana Islands archipelago.

CHAPTER 6
THE LAND WITHOUT HEROES:
THE COMMEMORATION OF THE WAR IN THE NORTHERN MARIANAS

Indigenous and colonial memories of World War II in Guam frequently center on the annual war commemoration called Liberation Day. This commemoration celebrates the return of American military forces on July 21, 1944, as well as the wartime survival of Chamorros loyal to the United States. The postwar loyalty exhibited by Chamorros helped to shape, in a variety of ways, the remembrance and commemoration of the war. In the northern Marianas, war commemorations also dictate in large part the ways in which people remember and understand the war, then and now. In particular, the island of Saipan sets the terms for commemorative activities in the northern Marianas.

Pilgrimages of mourning, civic ceremonies and national memorial projects represent some of the publicly recognized commemorations in these islands. The central war commemoration, likewise called Liberation Day, signifies not the invasion of American military forces on June 15, 1944. Rather, the commemoration celebrates the release of civilians from Camp Susupe on July 4, 1946. Unlike Guam's celebrated story of American liberation, most memories of the war in the northern Marianas generally invoke feelings of loss and apathy. This chapter explores the origins and historical development of Liberation Day, as well as the various commemorations created by Japanese and Americans, in a place more aptly called the "land without heroes."

THE "LIBERATION" OF CAMP SUSUPE

In Camp Susupe, Saipan, Chamorro and Refaluwasch families lived under the rules of the American military government. During the day, the military government granted them time to farm and fish, but they had to return in the evening. Under the

supervision of military officers, indigenous police guarded the perimeter of the camp grounds to ensure that the rules of the rehabilitation camp were met. The restrictions, argued military officials, protected Refaluwasch and Chamorros from the dangers of war, specifically unexploded ordnance and sniper fire from Japanese stragglers. The regulations also attempted to deter sexual relations between the large number of American soldiers and the small number of indigenous women. Meanwhile, the relatively safe surroundings of the camp provided opportunities for families enrolled in classes to gain fluency in the English language, as well as familiarity with the military's portrayal of American social and political life. But life inside camp grounds never matched life outside it. Many anticipated the day when they would be allowed to return to their family lands.

Finally, on July 4, 1946, after two years of internment, the military government released civilians from the camp. Gathered around the village Band Stand, military officials, with the aid of Chamorro translators, addressed the eager and excited crowd. Naval Commander L. G. Findley reiterated some of the achievements of the American rehabilitation project. "As you know," he said, "my duty here has been working with you—your problems have been mine and your gains have been a feeling of accomplishment to me."¹ Proud of the work of the American military government, the Commander stated that "we have covered a good piece on the right road during this period."² Findley spoke in particular about "highlights," such as the repatriation of Japanese, the increase in wages paid to postwar employees of the American occupation, the construction of new homes, and the demolition of Susupe's fences. "Best of all," he

¹ L. G. Findley, "To the Native People of Saipan," *Pregonero*, 2 May 1947, 2.

² *Ibid.*, 2.

claimed, “every one is free to engage in any sort of legitimate business or work.”³ In closing his speech, Findley praised the people and administration for striving to make Saipan a “model American island.”⁴ Two years of American military rule, he implied, had not only raised “native acceptance of American customs,” but had also succeeded in eradicating all forms of loyalty to and identification with Japan.⁵

The closing of Camp Susupe would not have been possible without the assurance that Chamorros were becoming more loyal and supportive of the American military rehabilitation project. Additionally, the declaration of surrender by Japan a year earlier in 1945 and the assurance of the island’s secure environment all contributed as factors to the discharging of civilians. Not surprisingly, Chamorros and Refaluwasch felt joyous to return to their residential and farm lands. *Tun* Manuel Celes described his exit from the camp in terms of a heart being set free.⁶ His “heart,” he exclaimed, no longer felt “*mañnot*,” or “tight.” Gesturing excitedly to his chest, *Tun* Manuel said that his “heart opened up.” A free heart, he said, allowed one to breath comfortably. In his own poetic way, *Tun* Manuel depicted the collapsing of Susupe’s fences as emancipation from the violence of war. Although the occasion provided reason to celebrate, other events tempered Chamorros’ feelings of happiness with sadness given the various problems that had yet to be addressed. Because of this, numerous Saipanese also considered July 4, 1946 the day “to reconstruct that which had been destroyed.”⁷ In addition to rebuilding homes and ranches, some of the unfortunate ones had the “pitiful tasks of locating the

³ Ibid., 2.

⁴ Ibid., 2.

⁵ United States Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, *Civil Administration Unit, Saipan District; Quarterly Report Number 1-48* (Saipan: Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, [1947?]), 15.

⁶ Manuel Celes, Interview by the author, Garapan, Saipan, 6 February 2002.

⁷ “Twenty Years Ago,” *District Panorama*, 8 July 1966, 5.

sites where their loved ones fell victims to the war.”⁸ Nevertheless, as the editors of the Saipan newspaper *Pregonero* observed, the dismantling of the fence around the camp “marked the beginning of freedom for the People of Saipan.”⁹ They realized, continued the editors, that “this day was their day of Liberation.”¹⁰

Chamorros in Rota, Tinian, and Saipan may have shared similar spiritual views of survival and perseverance with those in Guam. But the political, cultural and religious import of American liberation and loyalty, reflective of the general Chamorro war experience in Guam, found no early relevance or meaning in the northern islands. As military officials previously noted in their invasion and rehabilitation campaigns of the northern Marianas, Chamorro loyalties appeared predominantly, if ambivalently, “pro-Japanese.” In titling July 4, 1946 “Liberation Day,” the civil administrators of that time knowingly invoked the American holiday called Independence Day. They hoped to influence positively indigenous perceptions of Americans in the islands. This first Liberation Day introduced Chamorros, initially in Saipan and later in Rota and Tinian, to the tradition of American commemorations in general and to the significance of American loyalty in particular. The inaugural commemoration lacked, however, local traditions of commemoration such as special masses and processions. Various villages also failed to host elaborate feasts and parades in honor of the Americans, practices already familiar to those in Guam.

Based on the dearth of commemorative activities, it appeared that Liberation Day was an idea with little resonance among the Chamorros of the northern Marianas. Instead, many Chamorros directed their energies to returning to their homes rather than

⁸ Ibid., 5.

⁹ “July 4th Official Holiday for Saipan-Liberation Day,” *Pregonero*, 8 April 1947, 2.

¹⁰ Ibid., 2.

participating in a celebration which represented the peculiarly American principles of freedom and liberation. In certain respects, Chamorros in Saipan appreciated the newly granted freedom to resume their daily lives. Yet the concepts of freedom, liberation and even loyalty, as articulated and promulgated by the American military government, were novel ideas to the Chamorros of the northern islands. These terms needed to be instilled and adapted to preexisting and previously Japanized notions of national loyalty and collective identity among Chamorros. As evidenced in the American rehabilitation project of the northern Marianas, military officials publicized, with some success, an image of a generous America. The case of food and medical distribution clearly exemplified this image of a compassionate America and, in turn, greatly impressed upon Chamorros the cultural significance of Americans. In 1947, a year after the release of civilians from Camp Susupe, Liberation Day activities continued.

The organizers hoped that the commemoration would continue to perpetuate American political and social ideals originally introduced by the American rehabilitation project. Likewise, the organizers desired that Liberation Day, as a marker and maker of history, would help to release Chamorros from their Japanese past and introduce them to an American future. Adrian C. Sanchez, a Chamorro veteran from Guam, coordinated the second Liberation Day on July 4, 1947, a date often mistakenly considered the origin of the commemoration due to the presence of activities. Unlike the previous year's commemoration, composed principally of speeches on the significance of freedom and the American rehabilitation project, the second commemoration made available to the public festivities in which to participate. People ran relay races, climbed poles, wrestled, caught greased-pigs, and danced. The competitive spirit of the events found

accompaniment in the tunes of the navy band during the day and later at night. Food booths and exhibits of indigenous arts and crafts also caught the appetites and attention of passing visitors and guests. With the exception of these social activities, Saipan's Liberation Day barely resembled its similarly named war commemoration in Guam. Apparently, Sanchez produced a more civic-centered, less politicized approach to the commemoration of Liberation Day in Saipan.

Prior to Sanchez's tour of duty in Saipan, from 1944 to 1948, he worked as an enlisted steward in the United States Navy. He was a war veteran and, in some respects, a "liberator" among his people. On Saipan, the military government designated him a school administrator to assist in the teaching of English. As a military man, raised in American-occupied Guam, Sanchez knew he was dealing with a different population of Chamorros who rarely identified with the Americans. In crafting the second commemoration of Liberation Day, he viewed the celebration as a venue to strengthen social relations among Chamorros and Americans, as well as a place to instill pride in Chamorro culture. As one military report indicated, the commemoration "was planned...to revive native traditions and contests, neglected during the war years, and to acquaint island American personnel with native methods of living and working."¹¹

Although the celebration was deemed an achievement in terms of public participation, events did not go as planned. Sanchez later learned, for example, that the local Spanish priests discouraged public dancing. "Being from Guam," he explained, "a party without dancing was unheard of, but in Saipan, this was actually not the right thing

¹¹ "Island Commander to Commander Marianas," 8 July 1947, Pacific Trust Territories, RG 313, National Archives, 3.

to do.”¹² Sanchez failed to elaborate on why exactly the local clergy in Saipan opposed public dancing. Perhaps the clergy disapproved of the explicitly civic dimensions of the commemoration, as some of the elders and priests had argued in respect to Guam’s Liberation Day in the 1950s. Or perhaps the priests had moral reservations about the sexual attractions and desires the dancing may have evoked.

At any rate, Saipan’s Liberation Day would not be celebrated again for a period of nine years, placating anyone who might have been offended by its initial form and meaning. As a result of people’s indifference to the commemoration, it ceased from 1948 to 1957. The temporary absence of the commemoration, however, did not signal the demise of other ceremonies and *fiestas*. Catholic religious rituals resumed with the reconstruction of churches. People celebrated the coming of life in the form of baptisms with the same spiritual devotion and care they took to lament the passing of loved ones. Nor did the brief elimination of Liberation Day suggest that indigenous and colonial memories of the war had faded into obscurity. In fact, Chamorros increasingly began to share their memories of the war whenever important opportunities arose, but they did so privately. Generally reserved about their war memories, most Chamorros of the wartime generations rarely disclosed their stories to those outside the extended family, let alone to those in public spaces. Due in part to the existence of emotionally charged memories of death and strife, many preferred to stay silent. Moreover, they saw no need to share their stories of the war with Americans once believed to be their enemies.

In the early 1950s, several Chamorro leaders in Saipan challenged this prevailing notion that “America” held no significant or meaningful place among Chamorro memories of the war. Certainly, Americans garnered Chamorro appreciation for food,

¹² Adrian C. Sanchez, *The Chamorro Brown Steward* (Tamuning: Star Press, 1990), 20.

shelter, and medicine during the postwar era of rehabilitation. But Americans had yet to instill among Chamorros of the northern Marianas their self-proclaimed image as “liberators.” That objective shortly came to fruition, at least for some Chamorro leaders of that period. At a farewell party for naval personnel in 1951, Chief Commissioner Elias P. Sablan and Mayor Ignacio Benavente spoke to the departing military officials with the kind of compassion directed to well-respected people. In raising the importance of the Americans during the war, Chief Sablan stated that “my people prayed, and waited for the day when the Americans would come. They had faith in the American people. They had faith in the American principles of freedom and liberty.”¹³ “Many of my people,” Sablan lectured, “had never before seen an American. But on that unforgettable day, when from the hills and hiding places we watched the heroic Marines, Sailors and Soldiers streaming to our shores, God told us that we were safe, the Americans had come. Men from the other side of the world had come to free my home and my people.”¹⁴

Mayor Ignacio Benavente repeated many of Sablan’s pious descriptions of the Americans. Benavente openly regretted, though, the “blind or hard-hearted” behaviors Chamorros often exhibited toward Americans in the immediate postwar era.¹⁵ He thus addressed the crowd of navy officials in an apologetic manner. Moreover, Benavente assured them that negative attitudes toward Americans had largely diminished—attitudes concerning Americans that had been shaped by the mixed experiences at Camp Susupe. Due to an increasing sense of appreciation for American philanthropic and economic aid, Benavente further argued that Chamorros now cooperated more openly and easily with

¹³ Quoted in “Civil Administrator to High Commissioner,” 25 May 1951, Pacific Trust Territories, RG 313, National Archives, 2.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 2-3.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 5.

Americans. He praised in particular the contributions of doctors, the benefits of education, and the improved sense of political representation and governance granted to Chamorros. On behalf of the Chamorros of Saipan, and the entire northern Marianas for that matter, Benavente humbly asked military officials “for forgiveness of all our disobediences and negligence to your orders, for our lack of respect and gratitude towards you.”¹⁶ Ever appreciative of American generosity, Benavente pledged the island’s “allegiance to the flag of the United States of America.”¹⁷ “You will be gone from our Island,” he concluded, “but your memories will continue to live in our hearts for many years to come.”¹⁸ With these closing words, Ignacio Benavente attempted to refashion Chamorro memories of Americans, from wartime barbarians to peacetime humanitarians.

In their speeches to departing military officials on Saipan, Elias P. Sablan and Ignacio Benavente said more than farewell. Rather, they reinterpreted Chamorro wartime experiences and memories in ways that complemented the celebratory narratives of the American war effort and rehabilitation project. A decade earlier, most Chamorros in the northern Marianas viewed Americans as enemies of the Japanese empire and as suspicious people. Families prayed for the war to end, but it was highly unlikely that Chamorros prayed for the arrival of “heroic” Americans, as Sablan previously indicated. In fact, ambivalence characterized Chamorro spiritual views during the war, as neither Japan nor the United States captured the full religious attention of Chamorros. Cristino Sablan Dela Cruz remarked, for example, that “we prayed the good nation would win the

¹⁶ Ibid., 5.

¹⁷ Ibid., 5.

¹⁸ Ibid., 5.

war, and luckily our prayers were heard.”¹⁹ Herbert S. Del Rosario likewise noted that “maybe it was God’s blessing that the Americans came to save the Chamorros.”²⁰ Despite the uncertainty surrounding Chamorro spiritual and social views of Americans, Sablan and Benavente argued that Americans were fundamentally good people. If anything, implied these two Chamorro leaders, Chamorros should be ashamed of themselves for their histories of “disobedience” toward Americans.

These efforts to erase negative Chamorro memories of Americans indicated a change in indigenous perceptions of the war. At the center of these cultural and historical interpretations rested shifting and conflicting notions of loyalty and allegiance. As Chamorros in the northern Marianas gradually humanized Americans, a process which started during the rehabilitation period, they began to appreciate them as a people. Formerly accustomed to working under Japanese laws and regulations, Chamorros now adjusted to the American political system of governance. Before long, Chamorros, in particular the political elite, grasped the significance of the language of loyalty in the American context. By the early 1950s, Chamorro leaders understood the political power of the United States and the perceived economic, medical and social benefits attributed to it. Guam to the south served as the primary, though idealized, example of economic progress, wealth and prosperity, which some Chamorros in the north desired to replicate. The island’s acquisition of American citizenship in 1950, as well as the celebrated history of Americanization there, inspired some Chamorros of the northern Marianas to strengthen their political relationship with the United States.

¹⁹ Quoted in Mario S. Roxas, Jr., “WWII Veteran Recalls Liberation of Saipan,” *The Marianas Review*, 30 June 1989, 10.

²⁰ Hebert S. Del Rosario, interview by the author, Fajp, Saipan, 14 February 2002. Del Rosario is an archivist at the Pacific Collection, Northern Marianas College, Saipan, and an avid researcher of oral history.

On April 17, 1950, several prominent Chamorro leaders, many of whom were educated under the former Japanese mandate and recent American rehabilitation project, petitioned the United Nations for political integration with the United States. At the time, the northern Mariana Islands were part of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands (TTPI) and, based on this petition, some Chamorro leaders wanted to separate from it. "It is our fervent hope," they wrote, "that all of the islands of the Northern Marianas be incorporated into the United States of America either as a possession or as a territory."²¹ They desired that "someday these islands may be considered a part of the United States and its people attain American citizenship."²²

While the exact terms and conditions of this political process transpired later in the 1960s, with the onset of political status negotiations between the northern Marianas and the United States, Chamorro leaders of the immediate postwar era felt that "their goals of freedom and democracy could be best achieved in a relationship with the United States."²³ The glorification of Guam as an American territory, as well as an increasing acceptance of American political and social values, prompted Chamorro leaders in the northern Marianas to explore the question of sovereignty under the United States. As Olympio T. Borja explained, "our relationship with Guam isn't just the fact that we have relatives there....It is much more than this. We grew up in close proximity to American style of living. Our beliefs are much the same as the Americans."²⁴

²¹ "Petition from the House of Council and the House of Commissioners, Saipan, Concerning the Pacific Islands," 17 April 1950, Records of the Military Government/Civil Affairs Branch of the Office of the Commander of Naval Operations, Subseries R, Operational Archives, Naval Historical Center, Washington, D.C., 1.

²² Ibid., 1.

²³ Howard P. Willens and Deanne C. Siemer, *An Honorable Accord: The Covenant between the Northern Mariana Islands and the United States* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2002), 9.

²⁴ Quoted in "American Affiliation will give Equal Chance to All says Borja," *The Micronesian Star*, 24 April 1971, 14.

THEY CAME FOR THE DEAD

In an era of political and economic upheaval, several Chamorros from the island of Saipan strove to impart a sense of cohesiveness and certainty in terms of indigenous perceptions of war, memory and history. Among the presence of American military officials, some Chamorro leaders fashioned an image of an indigenous population appreciative of the American presence, both in times of war and peace. The influence of nearly thirty years of Japanese colonial history, as well as a history of indigenous loyalties to Japan, appeared to have disappeared altogether in the 1950s. Liberation Day, a commemoration that began as quickly as it ended, primarily represented American memories of military triumph and “rehabilitative” achievement in the northern Marianas. Not until 1958, after nine years of suspension, did Liberation Day festivities resume. Some Chamorros now seized the opportunity to demonstrate their new-found loyalties to the United States. After all, as a few attested, Chamorro beliefs were “much the same” as Americans.

While some struggled to represent all Chamorros as loyal subjects of the United States, Don Farrell asserts that “it is important to note that there was not complete cultural and political unity among the islands of the Marianas.”²⁵ The emerging rhetoric of American loyalty evaded the diversity in views about the United States, Japan, and the Mariana Islands. But the poor visibility of Liberation Day as a key commemoration of American valor, as well as the general lack of public support for sovereignty under the United States, ensured that attempts to express Chamorro loyalty for America remained marginal at best. In the early years of its appearance, Saipan’s Liberation Day failed to carve a niche among the larger tradition of religious commemorations, such as the *fiesta*.

²⁵ Farrell 1991A, 481.

As a commemoration of the war, Liberation Day existed in relative obscurity due to its failure to exhibit war memories and histories of the northern Marianas that resonated with the Chamorros there. Compared to Guam's Liberation Day, Saipan's version evidenced little in terms of an historical representation and interpretation of the war.

Unable to serve as an instrumental marker and maker of history, Saipan's Liberation Day quietly receded in the wake of increasing war commemorations emanating from Okinawa, Japan, and Korea. These new commemorations, primarily Japanese peace memorials and bone-collecting missions, spoke more directly to the politics of war remembrance and war commemoration in the Mariana Islands. As in the case of Guam, the removal of the Naval Security Clearance in 1962 allowed the government of Japan, as well as private organizations, to travel to the northern Marianas and begin the process of memorialization. The opening of these travel routes between the Marianas and Asia permitted numerous families, formerly sugar cane laborers or relatives of deceased soldiers, to return to the islands in a collective effort to memorialize the dead. Part of the wider peace movement in Japan, these bone-collecting missions and peace ceremonies would have never occurred without the official endorsement of the government of Japan. Due in part to Japan's rapid economic recovery from the war and increased political pressure from The Japan Bereaved Family Association, the Japanese government made it "publicly acceptable" to hold memorial services for those who had died in the war.²⁶ Private agencies and religious groups thus quickly took advantage of these opportunities to memorialize the war dead at home and abroad.

In Guam, Japanese war veterans, bone-collecting missions, and family members returned to the island only to meet a somewhat indifferent island population on the one

²⁶ Orr, 138.

hand and a hostile American war veteran coalition on the other. While Chamorros of the wartime generations often had bitter memories of the Japanese as “victimizers,” they rarely interfered with postwar Japanese peace and bone-collecting missions. Japanese efforts to memorialize the war, many of which involved religious rites and ceremonies, simply did not provoke contestation or curiosity on the part of Chamorros. Besides, many Chamorros, already committed to Guam’s Liberation Day, saw no relevance—spiritual, political, or otherwise—in these Japanese war commemorations. American war veterans and congressional representatives, however, believed that such Japanese war commemorations stood as an affront to the “sacrifices” of American soldiers.

These American groups expressed particular outrage at the fact that Guam possessed no American national war memorial. They argued that plans to build a Japanese peace memorial only further embarrassed and insulted American veterans of the war. Eventually, the inflamed rhetoric of American war veterans produced congressional legislation in 1964 to construct what would later be called the War in the Pacific National Historic Park. Content with the proposal to develop a nationally recognized American war memorial in Guam, American war veterans suspended their criticism of the Japanese. The Japanese, in return, never engaged in a public debate over these criticisms.

Seemingly oblivious to the American media assaults, the Japanese espoused the spread of peace, continued to pilgrimage to the island, collected remains and constructed peace memorials. Elsewhere in the northern Marianas, memorial projects, pilgrimages, and bone-collecting missions were well underway, and with a greater sense of fervor and commitment. Of the numerous factors involved in the spread of these religious and commemorative projects, two stood out.

First, the government of Japan sponsored a larger number of affiliated and non-affiliated bone-collecting missions, war veterans, and bereaved associations in the northern Marianas than in Guam. Many returned to Tinian, Rota, and Saipan as ex-sugar cane laborers or as families of deceased soldiers. They came back to the islands “to reminisce about shared experiences, to see what has changed on the island and in their lives, to right old wrongs.”²⁷ Eiichi Takashima regularly revisited Rota as a member of Rota Kai, or the Rota Remembrance and Friendship Association. The group, originally formed on August 20, 1978, “has continued to make an annual pilgrimage to the island of Rota to venerate the souls of lost family members and reconnect with the Rotanese community.”²⁸ Recounted Takashima, “Rota is an island...where my memories of good times as well as hard times are deeply engraved.”²⁹

Second, the islands were scattered with innumerable remains such that “it wasn’t uncommon to find untouched bones just a few feet off the side of Saipan’s northern roads.”³⁰ Due to the American military’s wartime tendency to leave soldiers of the Japanese Army untouched, buried in mass graves, or sealed in caves, a vast number of exposed and concealed skeletons littered the islands of Tinian and Saipan. As American military records attest, 37, 829 “Japanese” died in Tinian and Saipan, almost double the number of 18, 377 “Japanese” deaths in Guam.³¹ The history of the northern Marianas as a former Japanese colony, as well as the larger number of unaccounted deaths there,

²⁷ Poyer, Falgout and Carucci 2001, 340.

²⁸ Mark A. Ombrello, interview by the author, Honolulu, Hawai‘i, 4 November 2003. This author thanks Mark A. Ombrello for clarifying the origins and purpose of Rota Kai. He is presently a graduate student in the history department at the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa.

²⁹ Eiichi Takashima, “The Memorable Island of Rota,” *I Isla*, 5 August 1981, 2.

³⁰ Robert Kiener, “A Bulwark of the Pacific,” *Glimpses of Micronesia and the Western Pacific* 18, no. 1 (1978): 35.

³¹ Farrell 1991A, 387; Rogers, 194. American military statisticians often homogenized all Asian subjects and citizens of wartime Japan as “Japanese.”

encouraged the proliferation of Asian war commemorations. As Don A. Farrell writes, “the Japanese, Okinawans, and Koreans occasionally return to honor their dead and remember their years” in the northern Marianas.³²

Memorial planners, such as Tokuichi Kuribayashi, a prominent industrialist from Japan, understood the purpose and meaning of returning to the islands. For almost a half century, Japanese entrepreneurs and laborers had made the northern Mariana Islands a home for settlers like themselves. The former supervisor of Saipan’s sugar manufacturing company Nanyō Kohatsu Kaisha, Kuribayashi intended his memorial to be “all embracing.”³³ Although he clearly lamented the passing of the sugar company’s employees, he wanted a memorial that commemorated everyone, regardless of their ethnicity, who suffered during the war. “Through the erection of the Peace Memorial Statue,” he wrote, “the memories of the people who once contributed to the development and cultural advancement of the Pacific Islands, including those who died as a result of the last Pacific War, irrespective of nationalities, age and creed, will be forever enshrined.”³⁴ On January 22, 1972, Kuribayashi, like many before and after him, saw the memorial through to a relatively peaceful completion. From the 1960s to the 1970s, Asian war memorials surfaced without being publicly challenged. During this period, the memorials in the northern Marianas escaped scrutiny from what could be termed their primary critics, that is, American veterans. Okinawan, Japanese, and Korean cremation rituals, pilgrimages and memorial developments continued fairly uninterrupted.

³² Don A. Farrell, *Tinian* (Saipan: Micronesian Productions, CNMI, 1989), 66.

³³ “Tokuichi Kuribayashi to Neiman N. Craley, Jr.,” 4 May 1971, Japanese Memorials in Saipan, 0047:0076, Northern Marianas College, Pacific Collection, 1.

³⁴ “Tokuichi Kuribayashi to The Office of the High Commissioner,” 13 October 1969, Japanese Memorials in Saipan, 0047:0076, Northern Marianas College, Pacific Collection, 1.

The conceptual impetus for many of these commemorations originated from the work and direction of bone-collecting missions. As early as 1968, the government of Japan began sending bone-collecting missions to the then TTPI. At that time, Japan's Ministry of Health and the Welfare Graves Mission to Micronesia collected the remains of the "military dead." Unwilling to identify the remains, a process officially viewed as "impractical," the Japanese government "declared all who died during World War II as being 'military,' regardless of whether they were actually military or civilian."³⁵ Therefore, archaeological measures and methods were seldom used in the salvaging of remains. In many cases, the bone-collecting missions sent the unidentified cremated remains to the Chidorigafuchi Shrine, Japan's National Tomb for Deceased Soldiers, in Tokyo. If a body was identified, itself a rare occurrence, the mission then sent the remains to the family. By 1976, these missions had collected approximately 28,000 remains from the islands of Saipan and Tinian.³⁶

The rationale behind the refusal to distinguish between individual remains reflected more than a policy of practicality, a lack of monetary funds or a deficiency in archaeological resources. At root in the decision to cremate the remains immediately was the ardent desire, on the part of many volunteers and veterans, to reunite the deceased with the spiritual worlds of their families. The missions believed that the dead had already been deprived for years of a proper burial, and that any delay would only further aggravate the dead. Unfortunately, this rather loosely organized policy of locating and cremating human remains gave rise to a number of problems. As Scott Russell notes,

³⁵ "District Administrator to Deputy District Administrator," 24 May 1973, Documents Regarding (collection of bones of Japanese war dead) Japan Grave (bones) Mission to the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, 1973-1976, 0796:0164, Northern Marianas College, Pacific Collection, 10.

³⁶ James V. Hall, "Bulwark of the Pacific," *Marianas Review*, 24, no. 6 (1976): 50.

“the Japanese bone-collecting effort is kind of strange. Everything is done very unscientifically.”³⁷

As a result of not scientifically categorizing the remains, the missions indiscriminately gathered the bones of Koreans and Okinawans. In part, Japan’s official policy of treating all remains as presumably belonging to the Japanese military, as well as the predominant concern to cremate the remains at once, contributed to the missions’ inability to identify bones. In a sense, these missions replicated the colonial hierarchies of the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere, subsuming all of Japan’s wartime subjects into one homogenous, Japanized mass. In appropriating all of the war dead as “Japanese,” the Japanese government ultimately denied Koreans and Okinawans the opportunity to identify and mourn those lost during the war in the northern Marianas.

Consequently, the missions failed to generate documents as to how many “non-Japanese” remains may have been collected and cremated. This has created unsettled tension among groups such as the Koreans, who may never know what happened to their conscripted soldiers and laborers during the war. Further, the missions compounded the problem of identifying human remains by collecting ancient Chamorro skeletons in areas perceived to be Japanese wartime graves, such as shoreline caves. In Tinian, Russell explains that one mission, using a bulldozer, “ripped up” a *latte* site, an ancient Chamorro village area, in search of Japanese bones.³⁸ “It didn’t matter if they were four thousand years old,” he says, the remains “were Japanese bones in their eyes.”³⁹ Local archaeologists in Tinian intervened to prevent the mission from destroying the *latte* site

³⁷ Russell 2002, Interview.

³⁸ Ibid. For the sake of clarification, the *latte* are limestone pillars once used to raise houses above land. Today, Chamorros view the *latte* sites with respect, believing that ancient spirits still dwell there.

³⁹ Ibid.

and from inadvertently retrieving the remains of Chamorros. Since that event in the late 1970s, local historic preservation offices have required that every bone-collecting mission enlist the aid of an archaeologist to oversee digs.

Other than these instances of infringing upon Chamorro burial sites, as well as the unresolved issue of properly identifying war remains, the relationship between Japanese missions and local authorities remained cordial. In his assessment of the missions in 1971, for instance, District Administrator Francisco C. Ada stated that “the conduct and cooperativeness of the Japanese Governmental Mission, the Student Group and the Memorial Associations were of a very high level, and beyond reproach.”⁴⁰ A few Chamorros, such as the late Juan Sanchez and Antonio Benavente, the former Chief of police, assisted a variety of missions in locating human remains from the war period.⁴¹ Upon Benavente’s death in the summer of 1979, a Japanese mission even offered a “moment of silent prayer” to acknowledge their respect and reverence for the man.⁴² The cremation ceremony which recognized the passing of Antonio Benavente, as well as thousands of the Asian war dead, occurred in the Marpi area on the northern coast of Saipan. By the early 1970s, most cremation rituals took place in this general vicinity of the island. The favored areas included Banzai Cliff and Suicide Cliff, places where hundreds of Asians once committed *gyokusai*, or “honorable deaths,” during the war.

The missions cremated many remains in Marpi due in large part to the historical and spiritual significance of the area. Once again, as in the time of war, veterans and families of the deceased “faced north,” in prayer, not only to Japan, but to their respective

⁴⁰ “Francisco C. Ada to High Commissioner,” 7 December 1971, Correspondence, Dispatches and Documents Regarding Bone Collections of Japanese War Dead (WWII), Also to Construct Memorial Monuments, 0170:0000, Northern Marianas College, Pacific Collection, 4.

⁴¹ “Bone Collectors’ Mission a Hard One,” *Commonwealth Examiner*, 27 July 1979, 8.

⁴² “In Old Japan the Warrior always Carried Two Swords,” *Commonwealth Examiner*, 29 June 1979, 5.

homelands like Korea and Okinawa. Within time these missions, with the aid of their governments and private organizations, developed numerous memorials throughout the Marpi landscape. As Francisco C. Ada observed, “in the future, we are hoping that the entire area, encompassing the Peace Memorial, the Okinawa Memorial and the Last Command Post, can be fully developed into a public Peace Memorial Park.”⁴³ Aware of the “controversy” surrounding the construction of the Yigo Peace Memorial park in Guam, local administrators in Saipan hoped that nothing similar would arise there.⁴⁴ To reassure Japanese veteran and bereaved associations, Francisco C. Ada informed them that “the Marianas District Administration is very sympathetic with the worthy mission of the Government of Japan to recover the remains of the Japanese War Dead from the Marianas, and generally speaking, with the erection of appropriate memorials.”⁴⁵ By “appropriate,” authorities meant memorials that abided by local laws, respected local customs, and cooperated directly with the governments of Japan and the TTPI.

While these guidelines appeared straightforward, some local officials felt apprehensive about Marpi’s future image, given the proliferation of memorials. The memorials, they speculated, might create the impression that Marpi symbolically represented Japan. The unease felt by some of the local officials was further heightened by the fact that Japanese memorial planners referred to Marpi as Japan’s “Nippon Park” of the Pacific. Accordingly, the TTPI government reminded the Japanese and others that Marpi should not “be referred to as the ‘Nippon Park of Marpi,’ as the intention of this area is a general public park for the people of the Marianas (and visitors), and not an

⁴³ “District Administrator to District Management Officer,” 3 September 1974, Japanese Memorials in Saipan, 0047:0076, Northern Marianas College, Pacific Collection, 1.

⁴⁴ “Wyman X. Zachary to Tokuichi Kuribayashi,” 4 August 1971, Japanese Memorials in Saipan, 0047:0076, Northern Marianas College, Pacific Collection, 1.

⁴⁵ “Francisco C. Ada to the Honorable Chobiyo Yara,” 1 August 1973, Japanese Memorials in Saipan, 0047:0076, Northern Marianas College, Pacific Collection, 3.

exclusive 'Nippon' park, even if the Okinawa and Japan memorials are eventually located there."⁴⁶ On the other hand, some local entrepreneurs and leaders in Saipan believed that the memorials in Marpi possessed economic value as possible tourist sites. With the introduction of a tourist economy in the 1960s, including the completion of Saipan's Royal Taga Hotel in 1967, concerns for a viable economy soon superseded anxieties over the image of Marpi. Though the park retained the title of a public venue, some advocated that it be seen more as a tourist location.

Specifically, a few local leaders proposed to treat memorials and missions located at Marpi not only as religious ventures, but as advertisements for travel to the northern Marianas. As one administrator revealed, "it is felt that such a Park development would become a major tourist and historical attraction for Saipan. Government of Japan officials have indicated a great deal of enthusiasm as to this concept, and... local authorities...have displayed equal enthusiasm and pleasure."⁴⁷ Like Guam's political elite, leaders in Saipan, such as Governor Carlos Camacho, argued that tourism "will permit increased revenues to provide the necessary infra-structure and needed government services."⁴⁸ "Japanese people," insisted the governor, "can spend their holidays in a relaxed and friendly atmosphere."⁴⁹ Targeting a Japanese audience, local authorities in Saipan aggressively represented the northern Marianas as a promising tourist destination. Within a short period, increasing numbers of Japanese tourists began revisiting "Suicide and Banzai Cliffs to hold religious ceremonies and reminisce the

⁴⁶ Ibid., 1.

⁴⁷ "District Administrator to Deputy District Administrator," 5 June 1973, Documents Regarding (collection of bones of Japanese war dead) Japan Grave (bones) Mission to the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, 1973-1976, 0796:0164, Northern Marianas College, Pacific Collection, 3.

⁴⁸ Quoted in "Increased Japan/NMI Air Service Essential for NMI Economy," *The Commonwealth Newsletter*, March 1981, 3.

⁴⁹ Ibid., 3.

past.”⁵⁰ The economic appeal of Asian war memorials similarly drew Chamorros closer to a foreign economy predominantly managed by a familiar people. For instance, Concepcion Mangloña revealed that the areas Japanese hold dear in their memories of wartime Tinian should be beautified “so the Japanese will realize that we care about their ancestors.”⁵¹

Even before the recognition of Asian war memorials as tourist sites, Chamorros from the northern Marianas occasionally assisted the Japanese and others in accomplishing their commemorative endeavors. It was quite common for Chamorros to welcome Japanese, Okinawan and Korean organizations back to the islands, showing respect and sympathy for their families and friends lost in the war. In addressing a group of Okinawan mourners in 1986, for instance, Tinian Mayor Ignacio Quichocho said that Chamorros “share all the sorrows for which you had endured all throughout the long years since the war.”⁵² During Liberation Day festivities in 1980, Saipan Mayor Francisco M. Diaz, “clothed in a Japanese coat and handed a wooden sledgehammer,” participated in a *sake* ceremony of friendship.⁵³ At another event, Rota Mayor Benjamin T. Mangloña similarly expressed that “here, in this hallowed ground, are buried the ashes of some of our Asian friends and neighbors, our Asian brothers and sisters who did not go home.”⁵⁴ “They made the ultimate sacrifice for their country,” added Mangloña, dedicating their lives to “the great struggle.”⁵⁵ “We, too, love them,” he emphasized, as

⁵⁰ Larry Sakamoto, “27 Years Ago on Saipan,” *Micronesian Star*, 26 June 1971, 13.

⁵¹ Concepcion Mangloña, “Beautiful Tinian can still be Improved,” *Marianas Variety News and Views*, 13 June 1986, 16.

⁵² Quoted in “123 Attend Tower of Okinawa Rites,” *Marianas Variety News and Views*, 13 June 1986, 27.

⁵³ Jane L. Dickhudt, “Saipan’s Liberation Day,” *The New Pacific Magazine* 5, no. 5 (September/October 1980): 32.

⁵⁴ Benjamin T. Mangloña, “Remarks of Rota Mayor Benjamin T. Mangloña on the Occasion of the Visit to Rota of the Rota Kai Group,” June 2001, 2.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 3.

“they are part of our Island’s history.”⁵⁶ As these examples illustrated, the introduction of tourism and the renewed image of the Japanese as “tourists” did not alarm Chamorros in the north. In Guam, however, Chamorros of the wartime generation did not fully appreciate the development of a tourist industry that catered to Japanese. In contrast, demands for sensitive representations of and relations with the Japanese rarely disturbed Chamorros in the northern Mariana Islands.

These expressions of affection for the Japanese demonstrated that Chamorros from Rota, Tinian and Saipan respected the Asian veterans and survivors of the war. Despite memories of the political, economic and racial hierarchies of the Japanese government, the Chamorros of the northern Marianas chose to remember the peoples of Japan’s empire in personal terms of friendship. In contrast to Guam’s dominant wartime impression of the Japanese as “victimizers,” Chamorros in the northern Marianas viewed the Japanese in complementary and contradictory ways. Though the Japanese military later forced a “change in attitude” among Chamorros of the northern islands, Chamorros still remained loyal to a Japan whose image extended through the very fabric of Chamorro society. Loyalty to Japan meant more than an identification with Japanese imperialism. It suggested a deep and real connection, however ambivalent and uncertain that might be, to the peoples and politics of that vast empire. Intermarriage had occurred among Chamorros and Japanese, Koreans and Okinawans, in ways comparable to American-Chamorro relations in prewar Guam.

At the political level, Chamorros from the northern Marianas had petitioned for Japanese citizenship in 1938 in the same manner that Chamorros from Guam had lobbied for American citizenship in 1925. Their petitions, no matter how articulate and well-

⁵⁶ Ibid, 3.

meaning, fell on deaf ears. Yet these leaders all wanted to be citizens of a “state,” even though the reigning prejudices and policies of the time dictated otherwise. Discriminated against in almost every segment of American and Japanese colonial society, Chamorros throughout the entire Marianas archipelago remained in a marginal and frequently liminal state of loyalty. Not quite nationalists or citizens, Chamorros sought a sense of belonging that would grant them, a colonized people, improved economic, political and social status. The onset of World War II accentuated the language of loyalty among Chamorros, especially among those in Guam where indigenous and colonial loyalties clashed. At the end of the war, Chamorros in Guam praised America as their “liberator” and “savior.” On the other hand, Chamorros in the northern Marianas initially viewed the Americans as invaders, until altruistic efforts during the rehabilitation campaign began to alter indigenous notions of “America.”

The American rehabilitation project in the northern Mariana Islands succeeded in some respects by changing Chamorro attitudes about the United States and its peoples. In many ways, the peace of the postwar period and the image of a generous America helped to suppress Chamorro loyalties to Japan. However, Chamorro involvement in the spread of Asian bone-collecting missions and war commemorations indicated that loyalties to Japan had never been entirely repressed. Postwar loyalties to Japan in the northern Marianas rarely, if at all, reflected militarist dispositions of victory and greatness. Instead, Chamorro loyalties to Japan in the immediate postwar era can be described, in part, as local variations of *higaisha ishiki*, or “victim consciousness.” As John W. Dower notes, this idea of victim consciousness stems from the social processes through which Japanese have come to remember the war, principally as “victims” of

wartime propaganda and nuclear devastation in Hiroshima and Nagasaki.⁵⁷ In their shared sense of sympathy, respect and nostalgia for the war dead, some wartime generations of Chamorros, Okinawans, Japanese and Koreans recalled the war in terms of *higaisha ishiki*. Their representation of themselves as “victims” stemmed in part from a general negation of Japan’s wartime militarism, a focus on bereavement and mourning, and a common identification with Japan proper. For some Chamorros of the wartime generations, these issues of conciliation and commemoration illustrated what postwar loyalty to Japan meant in a time of increasingly shifting allegiances to the United States.

AMERICAN PATRIOTS UNBECOMING

As illustrated in the spread of missions and memorials in Saipan, war commemorations continued to serve as sites of historical and cultural representation. Through the development of these commemorations, peoples remembered the war, renewed social relations, and identified with a familiar colonial power. Japanese religious and commemorative activities particularly drew the attention of Chamorros in ways that Liberation Day could not. Indeed, the commemoration of Camp Susupe’s release of civilians on July 4, 1946 had yet to function as an important platform for indigenous views of the past and present. At best, some described Liberation Day as “subtly merging into the traditional American July Fourth activities.”⁵⁸ Dances, sporting events, beauty queen contests, parades, and feasts all demonstrated the American aspects of the commemoration. Perhaps the largest achievement of the commemoration, then and now, concerned its support for education. For several decades, from the 1970s to the 1990s, Liberation Day organizers raised monies for various local scholarships. These

⁵⁷ Dower 1996, 64.

⁵⁸ “July 4, 1980 Liberation Day,” *The Commonwealth Newsletter*, September 1980, 1.

monies benefited not only students but also local churches and various community projects.

At worst, the commemoration has been characterized as “dull” and as unappealing to the general public.⁵⁹ Referring to the commemoration of Liberation Day in 1973, Joaquin I. Pangelinan asserted that “this year ended with less candidates [for Liberation Day Queen], fewer floats and less money.”⁶⁰ “I don’t think,” said Pangelinan, “that the people are celebrating Liberation Day for its real meaning. Today the meaning of Liberation is fading away, and for the young generations it has no meaning, no value.”⁶¹ Pangelinan correctly ascertained the overall direction and significance of Liberation Day in the decades that followed the end of the war. It remained simply another day for Chamorros to rest, work or recreate. Further, the holiday had begun to lose its “explicit historical content, and young people may be unaware” of its origin and purpose.⁶² The commemoration lacked social, political and emotional meaning, explains McPhetres, “because the people who survived the liberation didn’t really talk much about it. It wasn’t a big deal...being liberated from the Japanese at the end of the war.”⁶³

Though Liberation Day specifically celebrated the war experiences of Refaluwasch and Chamorros, and was a holiday made in their honor, it was not an important day of remembrance and reflection. Prior to the fiftieth anniversary of World War II, Liberation Day remained a holiday for the officials and not for the peoples of the

⁵⁹ “Saipan’s Liberation Day Festivities,” *Marianas Variety News and Views*, 7 July 1976, A.

⁶⁰ Quoted in “Liberation Day with a New Attitude,” *Marianas Variety News and Views*, 13 July 1973, 2.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 2.

⁶² Poyer, Falgout and Carucci 2001, 338.

⁶³ Samuel F. McPhetres, interview by the author, Garapan, Saipan, 1 February 2002. McPhetres has worked in various capacities as an educator and archivist at the Northern Marianas College, Saipan. He presently teaches courses in United States government and history at the college. See his book, *Self-Government and Citizenship in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, U.S.A.* (Saipan: CNMI Public School System, 1997).

northern Marianas.

One group of people, though, wanted to change public perceptions of commemorations such as Liberation Day. Revisiting the islands on June 15, the anniversary of the American invasion of Saipan, American war veterans desired respect and recognition for their involvement in the war. They particularly aspired to see their military achievements etched into the commemorative landscape of the northern Marianas. A few veterans cared little about commemorations made in their honor, and a smaller number maintained contact with Chamorro families.⁶⁴ As a whole, however, veterans asserted that their military “sacrifices” and the physical histories of the war remains they left behind (e.g., tanks, buildings, and battlefields) should all be commemorated.

Given the abundance of American war sites in Saipan and neighboring islands in the Pacific, some American veterans argued that “it would be foolish to wait another twenty years before acknowledging the significance of these properties.”⁶⁵ Veteran Sam Weintraub likewise noted that “more Americans are returning to the islands where they spent their youth in uniform, and they want monuments and memorials and museums built in tribute to them.”⁶⁶ Appearing around the late 1970s, when Japanese missions and memorial projects waned in number, American war veterans arrived in the islands to find their lofty expectations unfulfilled.

Out of the approximately thirty war memorials and monuments on Saipan in

⁶⁴ A few Americans received warm, informal, welcomes by Chamorro families in the northern Marianas. These families often barbecued food for these veterans as a gesture of appreciation for being “saved” during the war. See “35 Years Ago: ‘Sgt. Engle Saved Three Saipan Families,’” *Commonwealth Examiner*, 29 June 1979, 3.

⁶⁵ Russell A. Apple and Jerry L. Rogers, “Historical Integrity and Local Significance in the Pacific Island Context,” *Guam Recorder* 6, no. 1 (1976): 34.

⁶⁶ Quoted in Anita Hook, “Sam Weintraub: Search,” *Mid-South: The Commercial Appeal Magazine*, 14 August 1983, 10.

1983, many of them dedicated by Okinawans, Koreans and Japanese, three commemorated the American war effort.⁶⁷ American veterans did not find this unequal distribution of war memorials amusing. Navy veteran, Charles Mathis, surmised that the general absence of American war memorials stemmed from Saipan's "deliberate" attempt to appease Japanese tourists.⁶⁸ Americans "did a lot here," he argued, and their military achievements should be remembered over those of the Japanese.⁶⁹ Veteran Len Maffioli similarly exclaimed that Saipan "had memorials to the Japanese, lots of 'em, and even to Korean laborers but not to my division."⁷⁰

Taking the initiative, Maffioli, with the assistance of local contractors and veteran associations, later erected a monument in honor of the Fourth Marine Division in the summer of 1986. Speaking at the unveiling ceremony for the monument, Marine Colonel Karl Miller remarked that "Saipan is part of the Marines and the Marines are part of Saipan. A Marine may not know where New York City is or Rome is but he does know about Saipan."⁷¹ Attempting to inform if not intimidate others about the Marines' military involvement in Saipan, some veterans even posted an American flag on Suicide Cliff. Located in Marpi, the cliff rose above an area called the Last Japanese Command Post, where Japanese, Korean, and Okinawan peace missions frequently gathered to pray for the dead. As McPhetres recalls, an unidentified person "repelled down that cliff and tacked the biggest American flag they could find right to the cliff...about in the late

⁶⁷ Ibid., 8. Three organizations—the Wives of the Trust Territory Administration, the 73rd United States Air Corps bomb wing, and the United States Park Service—separately financed the construction of these memorials.

⁶⁸ Quoted in Eugene A. Sylvester, "The Real Battle has just Began," *Marianas Variety News and Views*, 17 June 1983, 12.

⁶⁹ Ibid., 12.

⁷⁰ Quoted in "Absence of Monuments Shocks Veteran," *Marianas Variety News and Views*, 24 January 1986, 5.

⁷¹ Quoted in "Finally, a Local Monument for US Marines," *Marianas Variety News and Views*, 6 June 1986, 11.

'80s.... Their idea was, 'By God, we are going to let those Japanese tourists know who really won the war,' because by looking at all these monuments you have no idea who won the war."⁷²

Despite the relative success of these impromptu efforts to exhibit American valor and loyalty, American veterans continued to criticize Chamorros for their failure to develop comparable projects. In fact, the level of frustration exhibited by these veterans and their supporters increased to the point of attracting national media coverage in 1984. Clyde Haberman, a writer for the *New York Times*, stated that the 40th anniversary of war in the northern Marianas "came and went" without the grandeur of Normandy's commemoration.⁷³ "Here," observed Haberman, "no government leaders talked about liberty and sacrifice. No crowds gathered. No big guns boomed in salute, no honor guard paraded, no anthems sounded. Yet the events here four decades ago were as critical to the ultimate Allied success as the landings in northern France."⁷⁴

In reporting the scarcity of commemorative activities dedicated to the United States, American journalists and veterans alike focused on the absence of indigenous loyalty to America in the islands. They argued that tourism, an industry that catered to a Japanese audience, averted Chamorros and the local government from concentrating on the celebrated role of the United States in World War II. Many American veterans perceived the large presence of Japanese memorials as an offense to the "sacrifices" of American lives during the war. The ever-present Japanese war memorials, as well as a Japanese-centered tourist economy, aggravated the Americans. It did not matter that

⁷² McPhetres 2002, Interview.

⁷³ Clyde Haberman, "40 Years After Pacific D-Day, No Crowds and No Parades," *New York Times*, 16 June 1984, 1.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 1.

most of these Japanese war memorials represented religious offerings of peace. The memorials, in the eyes of American veterans, challenged notions of victory and glory in the war they won.

Quite frankly, American war veterans remembered the war in terms of their collective understanding of themselves as “liberators.” As such, veterans generally viewed the Japanese, tourists or otherwise, as a defeated, inferior people and Chamorros as a liberated, unappreciative people. Couched in the rhetoric of loyalty, American war veterans regularly expressed “themes of patriotic orthodoxy,” that is, “war as holy crusade, bringing new life to the nation and the warrior as a culture hero and savior, often likened to Christ.”⁷⁵ American veterans especially asserted that Chamorros should be grateful, given the American “liberation” of the northern Marianas, as well as the islands’ recent political affiliation with the United States.

From the signing of the covenant on February 15, 1975 to the establishment of a United States Commonwealth on January 9, 1978, the peoples of the northern Marianas democratically chose to be a part of what they often called the “American political family.”⁷⁶ The culmination of this political process resulted in the granting of American citizenship to the peoples of Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) on November 3, 1986. Yet for American war veterans, the Chamorros of the northern Marianas, supposed Americans, were an anomaly. While some Chamorros clearly expressed their loyalties to the United States, a key component in the political status talks of the time, others remained indifferent, uncertain or anti-American. As Sam Weintraub

⁷⁵ Edward Tabor Linenthal, *Sacred Ground: Americans and Their Battlefields* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1993), 4.

⁷⁶ For more on the northern Marianas’ quest for incorporation into the United States, see Leibowitz; Willens and Siemer; and Statham.

noted, the northern Marianas “are an American territory taken for military purposes, but they are not pro-American.”⁷⁷

As these American veterans soon realized, Chamorros of the northern Marianas did not exhibit any “pro-American” characteristics. Based on their assessment of Liberation Day and Japanese peace memorials, most American veterans believed that Chamorros were not patriotic. Given the polemical nature of some Chamorro criticisms of the United States, one did not have to turn to commemorations to appraise the contested nature of Chamorro loyalties. Referring to the Americans as capitalists, Daniel T. Castro, a writer for *The Micronesian Star*, asserted that Americans serve only one goal: to exploit the monies and labor of the northern Marianas.⁷⁸ Another author likewise noted that Americans were “imperialists” intent on controlling the islands.⁷⁹ These critiques of Americans as imperialists, as well as the absence of American patriotic commemorative activities, represented Chamorros as an anti-American population.

But the Chamorros of the northern Marianas, as a collective, were neither anti nor pro-American. What American veterans failed to grasp or recall was the ambivalent nature of colonial loyalties due to the recent histories of Japanese and American colonialisms. That Chamorros remembered the war in local terms, and not in terms exclusively restricted to the narrative of American liberation, eluded American veterans. As a result, Chamorros remembered the war according to their experiences under both Japanese and American colonial rule. In the first few decades after the war, from the 1940s to the 1980s, the meaning of war commemorations varied. Neither victimization nor liberation narratives totally dominated indigenous memories of the war. And no

⁷⁷ Quoted in Hook, 8.

⁷⁸ Daniel T. Castro, “The Crave for Apples?” *The Micronesian Star*, 30 July 1971, 5.

⁷⁹ “Wake Up Marianas,” *Free Press*, 11 October 1974, 11.

matter how successfully American veterans promoted their memories of the war, particularly their image of themselves as “liberators,” they could not alter indigenous collective memories of the war.

Nor could these Americans see themselves as conquerors. In presenting the story of American liberation, American veterans in Saipan, as well as in Guam, rarely saw their role as conquerors of lands and peoples. As some would attest, Americans arrived in the western Pacific as both “liberators” and “conquerors.” For instance, Lazarus E. Salii, later President of the Republic of Palau, once wrote that “if the Americans came as liberators, they were surely also conquerors.”⁸⁰ Challenging the notion that Americans “sacrificed” their lives for the liberation of Micronesia, Salii stated that the islands “were not and are not for sale for blood or money; that the blood which was spilled ‘coming over the reef’...was not spilled at the request, or for the benefit” of the peoples of Micronesia.⁸¹

Other than the exception of Guam Chamorros, Pacific Islanders throughout Micronesia—including Chamorros of the northern Marianas—did not envision the Americans as “liberators.” As Senator Joseph S. Inos observed, “I doubt that ‘Liberation’ in its traditional meaning was in the minds of most of our people, nor on their lips when the [American] guns opened up on that fateful June 15, 1944.”⁸² Rather, the idea of American liberation, thought Inos, seemed to appeal more “to our Guamanian relatives.”⁸³ Not widely accepted as wartime “liberators” in the northern Marianas, American war veterans usually left the islands disappointed by the actions of “ungrateful”

⁸⁰ Lazarus E. Salii, “Liberation and Conquest in Micronesia,” *Pacific Islands Monthly* 43, no. 6 (June 1972): 37.

⁸¹ Salii, 37.

⁸² Joseph S. Inos, “Be Ready to Guard Our Freedom Anytime—Inos,” *Marianas Review*, 5 July 1991, 4.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, 4.

Chamorros.

THE MAKING OF AMERICAN MEMORIAL PARK

The cold reception of American war veterans in the northern Marianas did not impede their return to the islands. Fast approaching their senior years, American veterans continued to visit the islands to show family members where they fought during the Pacific War. Seeking closure to an emotionally charged part of their past, American veterans simply wanted local recognition for their efforts. Realizing that the Chamorros of the northern Marianas did not regard them as “heroes,” many veterans expressed shock, anger, and disbelief. In an attempt to ease the discomfort shared by these veterans, local government officials of the CNMI informed the veterans that Chamorros did memorialize the American war effort. The commemoration of Liberation Day was provided as one example. But American veterans may or may not have understood that Saipan’s Liberation Day celebrated freedom from Camp Susupe, rather than the arrival of American military forces on June 15, 1944. Nevertheless, the lack of appropriate commemoration disappointed them.

To counter the veterans’ failed expectations of Liberation Day, local officials “pointed out that the CNMI has always taken the position that American Memorial Park in Garapan is to serve as a living memorial to the US forces involved in the battle for Saipan.”⁸⁴ Conceived in 1975 by federal and local officials, as part of the Covenant to Establish the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, the park included 133 acres of beach and coastal wetlands.⁸⁵ In its initial years of existence, the park encompassed a plant nursery and a few picnic tables. The park’s lone, “hard-to-find,”

⁸⁴ “Finally, A Local Monument for US Marines,” 11.

⁸⁵ Public law 94-241 designates 133 acres of land in Garapan to serve as an American Memorial Park for the American and Marianas war dead.

granite monument made it difficult for visitors to understand the area's significance in American military history.⁸⁶ The entire area bore little resemblance to an American national park; at times, trash littered the place.⁸⁷ Veterans therefore came across a park with neither the splendor nor symbolism indicative of the American "liberation" of the northern Marianas.

As anticipated, the unappealing appearance of the American Memorial Park insulted the veterans' expectations for a place "sacred" in their minds. Although American military forces actually landed in Chalan Kanoa, a village south of Garapan, veterans nonetheless regarded the park as an American battlefield. In the ensuing decades, to the surprise and satisfaction of American veterans, the image of the American Memorial Park would change according to the narrative of liberation. Like American battlefields elsewhere, from Gettysburg to the Alamo to Pearl Harbor, American Memorial Park served as a place where "the struggle for ownership, ...the right to alter a story, is a vibrant part of the site's cultural history."⁸⁸ But in order to generate the site's value as an American battlefield, planners of the park first had to convince its stewards, the Chamorros, of its utilitarian import. As Gordon Joyce explained, park rangers aimed to persuade the peoples of the northern Marianas "that it's their park" as much as it's a park for American veterans.⁸⁹ In this manner, founders of the park avoided plans that might instill "a morbid or heavy feeling to the park."⁹⁰ They wanted instead a "living memorial" comprised of "a pavilion, a visitor center, a museum, various recreational

⁸⁶ "Landscaping for Memorial Due," *Marianas Variety News and Views*, 15 July 1983, 17.

⁸⁷ "Ranger has no use for Skis in Saipan," *Marianas Variety News and Views*, 29 May 1980, 9.

⁸⁸ Linenthal, 215.

⁸⁹ Quoted in "Ranger," 9.

⁹⁰ Chuck Sayon, interview by the author, Garapan, Saipan, 16 February 2002. At the time of this interview, Sayon was the Site Manager and Unit Lead for the American Memorial Park.

facilities, and pedestrian and vehicle circulation and parking.”⁹¹ The living aspect of the memorial would encourage the public to use the park’s facilities, as well as invite visitors to reflect upon histories of the war.

The question of funding, though, prevented the rapid implementation of these plans. In 1979, already a few years after the opening of the park, some inquired, “will the U.S. Congress appropriate funds to develop this unique park?”⁹² As in the case of early postwar Liberation Day festivities, plans for the development of American Memorial Park waned for several years. Not considered an essential project, neither the local nor the federal governments aggressively sought monies for the projected costs of the park. It appeared, as American veterans often argued, that there was no place for American commemorative activities in the northern Marianas. Additionally, natural swamp habitats, with designated endangered species, surrounded the park.⁹³ Environmental considerations regarding these sites also hampered the construction of recreational and commemorative facilities. With the fiftieth anniversary of the end of World War II approaching, the future of both Liberation Day and American Memorial Park seemed less promising.

By the early 1990s, however, support for the American Memorial Park increased. Now, Chamorro leaders publicly acknowledged the significance of the park not in terms of its utility as a recreational site, but in terms of its value as an American war memorial. In the past, some Chamorros periodically praised the United States for its generosity in helping them survive during the immediate postwar era. At times, an even fewer,

⁹¹ Rafael H. Arroyo, “Inclusion of Park Funding in FY ’93 Budget Uncertain,” *Marianas Variety News and Views*, 11 June 1992, 11.

⁹² “An American War Memorial Park,” *The Commonwealth Newsletter*, November 1979, 9.

⁹³ United States Department of the Interior. National Park Service, *General Management Plan: American Memorial Park, Saipan* (Washington, D.C.: National Park Service and the Department of the Interior, 1989), 9.

marginal number of Chamorros called the American soldiers “heroes” in their memories of the war. The ambivalent character of indigenous loyalties to Japan and the United States ensured that no singular, dominant memory of the war existed for several decades. But with the passage of time and the passing of the war generations, more Chamorros embraced the narrative of American liberation.

Nearly half a century after the war, Chamorros such as Governor Lorenzo I. Guerrero urged the public to preserve the memory of the American “liberation” of the northern Marianas by supporting the American Memorial Park.⁹⁴ Seeking moral and financial assistance for the park, Representative Juan N. Babauta similarly stated that Saipan expects many American men “who fought on our beaches to return next June. We had hoped that they would find a fitting tribute to their courage and patriotism at the American Memorial Park.”⁹⁵ If the park failed to receive proper funding for its completion, Babauta inferred, American veterans “won’t see much in the way of a US memorial, just the rather impressive monuments established by the Japanese, Korean and Okinawans to honor their fallen.”⁹⁶ Criticizing the United States Congress for delaying the obligatory funding of the park, Benjamin T. Mangloña asserted that it would be “a shame for our fellow Americans to continue to ignore this memorial to all those who gave their lives in the defense of our freedom and liberty.”⁹⁷ Formerly criticized by American veterans for being anti-American, some Chamorro leaders of the 1990s strove to change this image by arguing for the completion of the American Memorial Park.

Faced with the approaching fiftieth anniversary and international commemoration

⁹⁴ “Public Urged to Support Memorial Park Project,” *Marianas Variety News and Views*, 1 June 1993, 5.

⁹⁵ Quoted in “Babauta Pushes Park Project,” *Marianas Variety News and Views*, 6 May 1993, 2.

⁹⁶ Quoted in “Lack of Funds for Local Park Disappoints Babauta,” *Marianas Variety News and Views*, 10 September 1992, 5.

⁹⁷ Quoted in Rafael H. Arroyo, “US Support for Park Urged,” *Marianas Variety News and Views*, 8 December 1993, 1.

of World War II, some Chamorros wanted the world to know their place in American history and America's place in northern Marianas history.⁹⁸ Of all the war stories available to them, many chose the story of American liberation. The fact that the northern Mariana Islands were now a commonwealth of the United States also contributed to the inclusion of the narrative of liberation; yet, the desire for a commonwealth did not necessarily resolve or suppress the ambivalent loyalties some Chamorros felt toward Japan and the United States.

Nevertheless, the push to complete the American Memorial Park demonstrated a significant shift in Chamorro memories about the war. As Senator Joseph S. Inos noted, the American Memorial Park "will for all times stand for the sacrifices of thousands of young men from an alien people who came to our shores and set us free."⁹⁹ These American soldiers, said Inos, "never heard of us and our islands, but nevertheless, they died for us. When they came ashore on June 15, 1944, charging through a man-made hell beyond description and imagination, it marked the beginning of a new era."¹⁰⁰ Invoking the once unfamiliar narratives of liberation and salvation, made popular and prevalent by the American military and the Guam war experience, Chamorros in Saipan gradually reshaped their memories of the war. The Chamorro commendation of the American war effort, as well as their prodding of the federal government, eventually proved a success. After several years of debate, the Department of Interior on March 3, 1994 granted the

⁹⁸ The political and economic stakes for commemorating the war in terms of American loyalty and liberation are great. Like Guam and Hawai'i, the CNMI's tourism industry often promotes the image of a stable and productive American island society in order to attract tourists from Japan and elsewhere in East Asia. By commemorating American Memorial Park and Liberation Day in ways that celebrate the American presence in the CNMI, planners for these commemorations engage in the production of this stereotypical and romanticized image of the archipelago and its peoples. For an economic analysis of tourism in the CNMI, see Wali M. Osman, *Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands Economic Report* (Honolulu: Bank of Hawaii, 1995).

⁹⁹ Quoted in Janet R. Rebusio, "\$18M Needed for Park Dev't.," *Marianas Review*, 28 January 1992, 7.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 7.

CNMI the \$3 million needed to see through the final architectural and construction phases of the park.¹⁰¹

With the major parts of the American Memorial Park slated to be ready by the summer of 1994, in time for the fiftieth anniversary of World War II, excitement and praised filled the air. Termed the “Golden Tribute—Year of Friendship,” the fiftieth Liberation Day in the CNMI sought to “stress the need for peace and harmony between all nations and, particularly, between the United States and Japan.”¹⁰² Despite the declaration to foster peaceful relations between the United States and Japan, the fiftieth Liberation Day primarily honored American war veterans from near and far. Among these veterans were a small group of Navaho Indians who served as Code Talkers during the war. In front of the Navajo Nation Inn, Window Rock, Arizona, Navaho veterans, family members and representatives of the CNMI gathered to commemorate the war.¹⁰³ They commemorated the war in Arizona because many could not pay the expenses needed to travel to the islands. Those fortunate enough to afford a trip to the northern Marianas encountered a population eager to treat them as “heroes.” Vern Steyer recorded a friendly conversation during his trip to Saipan with his brother Norman, a veteran. “A man came out of the store,” Steyer recalled, “walked across the parking lot and came on our bus. He said that he had just found out who we were, so he wanted to personally come to thank us for coming back to Saipan and for what the Americans did to give them

¹⁰¹ “Tenorio, Babbit Sign Park Accord,” *Marianas Variety News and Views*, 3 March 1994, 6. Some actually estimated the entire project to cost \$18 million, a substantial increase from the initial projections of \$13 million in the late 1970s. At the time of the fiftieth anniversary of the war, the park only needed \$3 million to complete the essential parts of the project, such as the memorial wall, visitor’s center and museum. Future plans for the park, such as a memorial for Chamorros and Refaluwasch, are still under consideration.

¹⁰² Froilan C. Tenorio, “Proclamation; Observance of the 50th Anniversary of World War II in the Northern Mariana Islands, 1994 June 15,” 6319:0149, Northern Marianas College, Pacific Collection, 1.

¹⁰³ Howard Graves, “Code Talkers Start Drive to Return to Islands,” *Pacific Daily News*, 11 July 1994, 3.

their freedom.”¹⁰⁴ Pleasantly surprised, Steyer observed that “after his little speech he left the bus, walked over to his car and drove away. Again the genuine appreciation shown to us by the native people was a highlight of our Saipan experience.”¹⁰⁵

Impressed by the hospitality and appreciation of Chamorros, American war veterans collectively felt, perhaps for the first time, comfortable returning to the islands. Ed Olson, a Marine veteran, said that the fiftieth anniversary “couldn’t have been better. Not only were the people at the hotels and at the events friendly and considerate, everyone else we met was great as well.”¹⁰⁶ “Everywhere we went,” added veteran Barney Brewer, “things were just perfect. The ceremonies were superb with the greatest degree of dignity. But the old guys really enjoyed the hospitality we were shown by Saipan’s people. There wasn’t one person who didn’t offer us cold drinks, food or anything else they could do for us.”¹⁰⁷ Another veteran, Cliff Farris, similarly exclaimed that he “never felt greater warmth and kinship” than with the peoples of the commonwealth.¹⁰⁸ Farris noted that their “outpouring of generosity is unparalleled and makes the sacrifices we made on this island 50 years ago all the more worthwhile.”¹⁰⁹ Equally enthusiastic about the return of the American veterans, Chamorros and the wider public of Saipan also expressed their gratitude for being “liberated” by the Americans.

John Angey, a corporal in the Marine Corps, stated, “I’m really grateful to them. The stories I heard about them as a child here on Saipan made me want to join the

¹⁰⁴ “Diary of Vern [Norman] Steyer’s Trip to Iwo Jima,” 6359:0215, Northern Marianas College, Pacific Collection, 7.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., 7.

¹⁰⁶ Quoted in John E. Scanlan, “Saipan Bids Farewell to 70 WWII Heroes,” *Pacific Daily News*, 18 June 1994, 3.

¹⁰⁷ Quoted in Scanlan 1994D, 3.

¹⁰⁸ Quoted in John E. Scanlan, “Fallen Comrades Remembered on Saipan,” *Pacific Daily News*, 16 June 1994, 4.

¹⁰⁹ Quoted in Scanlan 1994A, 4.

corps...I respect those men with all my heart. They're really my heroes."¹¹⁰ Venerated as symbols of American democracy and freedom, the veterans also received praise for introducing the ideas needed for Chamorros to create a local government. As Governor Froilan C. Tenorio revealed, American "actions on June 15, 1944, brought with it the seeds of this commonwealth's ultimate political union with the United States of America."¹¹¹ Lt. Governor Jesus C. Borja explained that "these ideas" of democracy and freedom specifically "took root" in Camp Susupe."¹¹² The sacrifices of American soldiers and the political ideas introduced by them, remarked Congressman Juan N. Babauta, had led to the "gratitude and recognition of a Pacific community that has since become a loyal member of the American family."¹¹³

As the fiftieth anniversary of war continued, the language of American loyalty appeared to be widespread. Local leaders even pressed the American Armed Services for official recognition of approximately 64 Chamorro and Refaluwasch men who served, as scouts, under American military forces during the war.¹¹⁴ Later, these men obtained the privileges and prestige of being considered "heroes" of the American military. Indeed, the atmosphere of the "Golden Tribute" appeared to indicate that the narrative of American liberation and the language of American loyalty suppressed competing memories and histories of the war. Certainly, the fiftieth anniversary of war represented

¹¹⁰ Quoted in John E. Scanlan, "Fallen Comrades, Former Enemies Honored," *Pacific Daily News*, 17 June 1994, 2.

¹¹¹ Quoted in John E. Scanlan, "Governor Offers Gratitude of Commonwealth," *Pacific Daily News*, 16 June 1994, 4.

¹¹² Quoted in Ferdie de la Torre, "Lib-Day '95: A CNMI Celebration of Freedom," *Marianas Variety News and Views*, 5 July 1995, 1.

¹¹³ Quoted in "National Rites Remembering the Marianas Campaign Set," *Marianas Variety News and Views*, 17 June 1994, 3.

¹¹⁴ On January 31, 2001, 64 Chamorro and Refaluwasch men acquired official recognition by the United States Marine Corps. Marine officials sworn in and discharged these men, honoring them for their service to the military during World War II. See Michael D. Wright and Lynn Knight, *Now for Then: The Marianas Marine Scouts* (Garapan: Office of the Resident Representative to the United States, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, 2001).

the largest representation of American loyalty to date. But, as Genevieve Cabrera asserted, Liberation Day “still causes a bit of confusion.”¹¹⁵ In the attempt to narrate a cohesive history of the war that emphasized American goodwill and generosity, many compromised the complexity and ambivalence of Chamorro war memories and loyalties. As much as the narrative of American liberation has come to dominate contemporary memories of the war, it should be noted that Liberation Day continues to “express the special sensitivity and unique viewpoint” of the peoples of the northern Marianas.¹¹⁶

Recent endeavors to develop a dominant narrative of the war risk the loss, alteration or exaggeration of many wartime memories. Camp Susupe is a case in point. There are Chamorros who perceive their rehabilitative internment as simply part of surviving the war. In the immediate postwar era, many expressed happiness at being freed from the camp grounds. Others later praised Americans for introducing them to the political concepts of democracy and freedom. Yet, over time, the camp has come to connote images of extreme hardship and deprivation, analogous to “the infamous German concentration camps in Europe.”¹¹⁷ For the younger wartime generations, Camp Susupe represented freedom denied to their elders, whereas others saw the camp as representing freedom itself. These conflicting memories of the past emerged as a direct result of the narrative of American liberation exerting its ascendancy over wartime and postwar generations. American veterans likewise participated in presenting a so-called objective history of the war in the northern Marianas. By forgetting or repressing their past disappointments with Chamorros, American war veterans enforced the rising notion that

¹¹⁵ Genevieve Cabrera, “Rediscovering Liberation: Celebrating Freedom,” in *Liberation Day 2001* (Garapan: 2001 Liberation Day Committee, 2001), 3.

¹¹⁶ Tenorio, 1.

¹¹⁷ Meller, ix.

the narrative of liberation always existed uncontested in the northern Marianas.

But, as noted previously, many Chamorro war memories did not embrace the narrative of American liberation. In fact, resistance to celebratory understandings of the war resurfaced, a year later, during the commemoration on Tinian. Initially, Tinian's role in the American bombing of Japan in 1945 did not figure prominently in Chamorro memories of the war. It was not until the postwar settlement of Chamorro families on the island that memories about Tinian's role in the war developed. Presently, some criticism has emerged in regard to the commemoration of the island. Rather than promote the island as a site of American nuclear warfare, *Taotao I Redondo*, a peace activist group, commemorated Tinian in ways that supported peace and reconciliation at the local and global levels.¹¹⁸

Comprised of educators and peace activists, *Taotao I Redondo* developed films, workshops, and peace gatherings to inform others about the harmful effects of war in general and nuclearism in particular. As Jesus C. Borja expressed, "the point of the ceremonies we have proposed is to defuse confrontation and offer an opportunity for persons of diverse beliefs regarding this anniversary to come together in a solemn, respectful atmosphere."¹¹⁹ "The opportunity to feel differently," Borja said, "is essential to the process of healing and conflict resolution is what the committee wishes to offer in the proposed ceremonies."¹²⁰ While the group could commemorate anywhere in Tinian, they specifically chose to arrange a peace gathering at the island's "exclusive military

¹¹⁸ "US Rejects Use of Tinian Land for Peace Ceremony," *Marianas Variety News and Views*, 9 June 1995, 41. The organization's full title reads, *Taotao I Redondo/Aramas'al Yeew Faw'uluul*, or "People of the Circle." This author thanks Cinta Matagolai Kaipat and Beret E. Strong for sharing information on the important role of *Taotao I Redondo*.

¹¹⁹ Quoted in Rafael H. Arroyo, "Borja Asks US: Allow Tinian Rites," *Marianas Variety News and Views*, 21 June 1995, 3.

¹²⁰ Quoted in Arroyo 1995, 3.

use” zone, otherwise known as the EMU. Located in North Field, the original location of the atomic bomb pits and airplane runways, the EMU fell under the control of the United States Navy. As a result, *Taotao I Redondo* requested permission from the navy to hold peace ceremonies on August 6, 1995, the date of the American bombing of Hiroshima.

The navy responded with an emphatic no. As Rear Admiral D.L. Brewer III explained, the navy discouraged any commemorative activity at North Field because “military support of such activities may cultivate” unfavorable criticism.¹²¹ Although the National Park Service had already declared Tinian’s North Field a “national historic landmark” in 1985, the Department of Interior granted the navy management and use of the area.¹²² Therefore, the “U.S. Navy’s official position regarding its long-term strategic needs for North Field is to continue its use for military training. And that this use precludes considering North Field as a national historic park administered by the National Park Service.”¹²³ Jerry Facey, chairperson for the fiftieth commemoration, noted that although Tinian would be recalled worldwide, “people will not be honored, people will not be recognized.”¹²⁴ Despite calls for a peaceful demonstration, the navy refused to grant *Taotao I Redondo* access to the atomic bomb pits. Fearing international and national criticism, as illustrated in the controversy around the Smithsonian’s exhibit of the *Enola Gay*, the navy declined to support the group’s efforts.

Reminiscent of Japanese peace missions, *Taotao I Redondo* wanted to promote peaceful, cooperative understandings of the war rather than to perpetuate accounts of

¹²¹ Quoted in Gaynor Dumat-Ol, “Tinian Won’t Get Military Support for Ceremonies,” *Pacific Daily News*, 9 June 1995, 3.

¹²² United States Department of Interior. National Park Service, *Special Study North Field Historic District: Tinian, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands* (Washington, DC: United States Department of Interior and National Park Service, 2001), 1.

¹²³ *Ibid.*, 1.

¹²⁴ Quoted in Gaynor Dumat-Ol, “Tinian Aims at Balanced View of Atomic History,” *Pacific Daily News*, 27 March 1995, 4.

military victories and triumphs. Regarding the role of the Japanese in the war, Senator David Cing asked, “are we afraid that we are going to offend the Japanese? I was born and raised [in Tinian] and I am not really happy to let the world know that I came from a place where the atomic bombs that destroyed Hiroshima and Nagasaki came from, but that is history....Are we doing justice to people who want to listen to history?”¹²⁵

Disappointed, Cinta Matagolai Kaipat replied, “as an indigenous person I can see the Navy’s decision as an attempt to deny us our right to participate in the healing process....It is an insult to my family and the people of the Marianas to deny them the right to acknowledge their pain and their attempt to heal their pain.”¹²⁶ Regardless of these outcries, the navy maintained its position to deny the organization’s access to the bomb pits. The CNMI government, dependent upon the Japanese tourist economy, also did not aggressively defend *Taotao I Redondo*’s goals.

Neither appeals for historical justice nor indigenous healing moved naval officials. Undaunted by these responses, *Taotao I Redondo* simply continued with its educational and commemorative activities in the Marianas and elsewhere in Japan. At the close of the fiftieth anniversary of World War II in the northern Marianas, organizations such as *Taotao I Redondo* strove to impart a more comprehensive and sensitive understanding of the war. Engulfed by the now imposing narrative of American liberation and the rising appeal of loyalty to the United States, though, no person or organization effectively offered critical insight into the war’s wider historical implications.

In a period of a few years, the commemoration of Liberation Day in the CNMI

¹²⁵ Quoted in Dumat-Ol 1995B, 4.

¹²⁶ Quoted in Gaynor Dumat-Ol, “Defense Decision Draws Fire from CNMI,” *Pacific Daily News*, 14 June 1995, 3.

became a celebration of American triumphalism in ways reflective of Guam's Liberation Day tradition. The northern Marianas was transformed from a "land without heroes" into a "land with heroes." Many praised the generosity of American soldiers, as well as the military service of Refaluwasch and Chamorro men in the war. Liberation Day now came to connote pride and loyalty to America in ways it could not in the past. But if the American veterans represented the island's "liberators," from what, then, had they "liberated" the Chamorros? Chamorros have posed this question since the war began on June 15, 1944, when American military forces arrived in Saipan. The changes in indigenous loyalties have, in part, influenced the ways in which Chamorros have come to remember, commemorate and ultimately understand not only the notion of liberation, but the entire war period and the diverse peoples involved in it.

Given the relative absence of Japanese participation in the fiftieth anniversary, it appeared that Chamorros, especially those of the postwar generations, have now come to represent Japan as an anomaly in the islands' history. Contemporary commemorations of Liberation Day, for instance, infrequently describe the role of Japan and the Japanese. It is as if the Japanese, as well as other Asian cultural groups, conveniently disappeared from a narrative of war that emphasizes American liberation. With the local government's dependency upon tourism, it seems reasonable to avoid offending the Japanese in any way.¹²⁷ But postwar relations among Japanese and Chamorros remained largely amiable, and continue to do so among the aging war generations.

What has in fact occurred in the northern Marianas is a change in indigenous perceptions of the American commemoration. During the immediate postwar era, Chamorros rarely embraced Liberation Day as a holiday they could call their own.

¹²⁷ Futani, White and Yoneyama, 22.

Throughout the following decades, Chamorros created no war commemorations, let alone memorials for Japan or the United States. Not until the early 1990s did Chamorros use war commemorations to stage their war histories to America and the world. Recognizing the significance in commemorative sites, such as Liberation Day and the American Memorial Park, Chamorros became active participants in the making and remaking of their own histories. In doing so, they contended among themselves over what memories of the war should be portrayed, altered, or suppressed. Like their relatives to the south, Chamorros in the northern Marianas intend to make a tradition around commemorative activities. And like their southern sisters and brothers, they, too, have suppressed controversial and compelling memories of the war.

CHAPTER 7
ON THE MARGINS OF MEMORY AND HISTORY:
CHAMORRO POLICE, INTERPRETERS, AND WOMEN OF WAR
IN JAPANESE-OCCUPIED GUAM

Since the onset of World War II commemorations in 1945, there has been a concerted effort to remember the war in the Mariana Islands. Liberation Day, among all of the commemorations, has emerged as the pivotal war celebration in the CNMI and Guam. Its significance lies precisely in the fact that it is an important site for the interpretation, mediation and representation of a diversity of war memories. But the commemoration of Liberation Day is also unique for what its organizers fail to remember. From its inaugural years in the late 1940s to its fiftieth anniversary in 1994, the planners for Liberation Day commemorations have made no attempt to remember the controversial events and figures of the war. Namely, committees for the commemoration of Liberation Day in both Guam and the CNMI have rarely celebrated the roles of Chamorros working for Japan's police and sex operations in wartime Guam. To put it another way, there has been a collective endeavor to forget the indigenous "collaborators" of Japan's military occupation of Guam, that is, the Chamorro police assistant, the Chamorro interpreter and the Chamorro "comfort woman."

The reasons behind the attempt to erase from collective memory and public scrutiny these agents of war are varied and complex. That these Chamorro women and men were called "collaborators" speaks to one of the primary reasons why they have been marginalized in commemorations of the war in the Mariana Islands. For implicit in any contemporary discussion of collaboration is the notion of "disloyalty" to one's ethnic group, the very concept that brings into public view the divergence in Chamorro loyalties to Japan and the United States. At stake in the remembering of these women and men are

not so much their individual behaviors and attitudes, but what their “disloyal” actions collectively mean within the wider American narratives of loyalty and liberation.

This chapter explores the histories of what might be understood as collaboration in the Mariana Islands. The purpose is to examine the wartime roles of Chamorro interpreters, police and comfort women from the northern Marianas working with the Japanese colonial administration in Guam. This island is chosen as a reference point because it is here where the greatest wartime contact among “Japanized” and “Americanized” Chamorros occurred. Through the intra-cultural contact fostered among these groups, the idea of collaboration as betrayal to the American nation and to the survival of Guam Chamorros emerges. The degree to which collaboration generated wartime violence and betrayal, as well as postwar amnesia and malaise, is the larger concern of this chapter.

THE JAPANESE POLICE SYSTEM IN THE NORTHERN MARIANAS

Wartime collaboration, as a synonym for cooperation, existed in a variety of forms throughout the Japanese-occupied Mariana Islands. This period lasted from the onset of World War II in 1941 to its final days in 1945. Chamorros under Japanese colonial rule served in a number of roles, including rice farmers, teacher aids, construction workers, cooks, house maids, and nurse assistants. Reflecting the racial hierarchy imposed by the Japanese, many Chamorros received low incomes in comparison to the Japanese, Koreans, or Okinawans. Yet a substantial number of Chamorros earned more monies than Palauans and Yapese, whom the Japanese considered lower in cognitive abilities and social status. Other Chamorros, especially during the height of the war in 1944, received no monetary compensation at all and found

themselves forced into mandatory labor camps. All these instances of employment—voluntary, compensated, or forced—indicated that Chamorros labored to varying degrees for the maintenance of the Japanese colonial empire in the Marianas and elsewhere in neighboring islands. No wartime roles, however, garnered the stigma of collaboration more than those of the indigenous police and the women of war. The indigenous police especially set “Chamorros against each other in a way that has had longstanding repercussions in the relations” among them.¹

The intra-cultural “repercussions” that would later be associated with wartime collaboration in Guam in general and the indigenous police in particular were not direct products of the war period. The infrastructure of an indigenous police service had already existed in Micronesia for a couple of decades prior to 1941. The Japanese police began with the establishment of the Nan’yō-chō in 1922. This police organization, comprised of indigenous attendants and Japanese supervisors, patterned itself after the police system first established in Taiwan in 1895. As Ching-chih Chen explains, the Japanese police system in Taiwan “became the model that the Japanese transferred and applied to their other colonies.”² Given the different administrative politics of Japan’s colonial empire in Korea; Kantō (southern Manchuria) and Nan’yō (South Seas), no true uniformity existed among its various police systems. In spite of this, argues Chen, Taiwan’s practice of consolidating a police hierarchy, employing indigenous peoples, and exploiting traditional leadership led to a structure of authority and surveillance that

¹ Poyer, Falgout and Carucci 2001, 39.

² Ching-chih Chen, “Police and Community Control Systems in the Empire,” in *The Japanese Colonial Empire, 1895-1945*, ed. Ramon H. Myers and Mark R. Peattie (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), 220. For an examination of the Japanese colonial police in Korea, see Chulwoo Lee, “Modernity, Legality, and Power in Korea Under Japanese Rule,” in *Colonial Modernity in Korea*, ed. Gi-Wook Shin and Michael Robinson (Cambridge and London: Harvard University Asia Center and Harvard University Press, 1999), 21-51.

organized succeeding police systems in Japan's colonial empire.³ The police force of the Japanese mandated islands of Micronesia therefore organized itself around these three general conditions.

As in Taiwan, the Japanese police hierarchy of the Nan'yō constituted "at the top ... a police section, *keimuka*, headed by a superintendent, *keishi*, under whom served police inspectors, *keibu*, and assistant inspectors, *keibujō*, and still farther down, policemen, *junsu*."⁴ The Japanese recruited *junkei*, or "native constables," to perform an array of duties. Some of these duties included collecting taxes, investigating misdemeanors and supervising construction.⁵ The *junkei* typically ranged in age from the twenties to the early thirties, while a few were recruited at even younger age. The Japanese trained these young men for a period of three months, outfitted them in white uniforms and paid them a monthly salary of twenty-five to thirty yen.⁶

These police assistants served as liaisons and interpreters for both the Japanese colonial administration and their respective island communities. By 1937, approximately 170 men comprised the police force of the Nan'yō-chō, with a ratio of 1.2 Japanese patrolmen to one *junkei*.⁷ The Japanese government then built police stations in each of its administrative capitals, such as Koror, Palau. Beyond the capitals, and in neighboring villages, substations were placed as well. The Japanese designated roughly five to eight *junkei* per island district. Supported by the *sosonchō*, or appointed Micronesian leaders, the indigenous police enforced Japanese civil, public health and legal regulations.⁸ Given these significant responsibilities, the indigenous police possessed a level of authority

³ Chen, 224-227.

⁴ Peattie 1988, 74.

⁵ Ibid., 74.

⁶ Hezel, 167.

⁷ Chen, 224 and 235.

⁸ Poyer, Falgout and Carucci 2001, 18.

unmatched by their elders and village chiefs. In Japan's colonies, and the Nan'yō was no exception, the police force was indeed the "backbone of the local administration."⁹

In the northern Mariana Islands, the indigenous police system followed the general patterns first created in Taiwan and eventually adapted in the mandated islands of Micronesia in 1922. As early as 1915, however, Chamorros began working as "patrolmen" for the then Japanese naval government of Saipan.¹⁰ The Japanese specifically chose Chamorros because of their so-called racial superiority over the Refaluwasch. As Peattie indicates, the Japanese "always tended to favor the Chamorros of the Marianas as the most advanced and adaptable of the Micronesian peoples."¹¹ Therefore, the majority of Refaluwasch "furnished the bulk of the labor for the pick-and-shovel work, yet received the lowest wages and the smallest food ration."¹² It was unlikely, then, that Refaluwasch collectively pursued or were given the opportunity to work as patrolmen. The Chamorros recruited by the temporary Japanese naval government received better salaries than those working in menial labor and, as a result, markedly improved their social-economic status.

Foremost among the various objectives of the Chamorro patrolmen was to assist the Japanese navy in enforcing sanitation regulations and punishing criminal offenders. The perceived state of sanitation and health among Chamorros and Refaluwasch attracted the attention of Japanese officials. Their goal was to locate and eradicate such diseases as yaws and dengue. On the other hand, the patrolmen equally devoted their time to detaining those found guilty of committing crimes. Some of the "criminal offenses"

⁹ Peattie 1988, 73-74.

¹⁰ "A Copy of Japanese Records," trans. William S. Reyes [1975?] copy in Mark Peattie's Nan'yō Papers, Box 2, Folder 3, Richard F. Taitano Micronesian Area Research Center Manuscript Collection, University of Guam, 9.

¹¹ Peattie 1988, 112.

¹² Ibid., 100.

included gambling, homicide, defamation, consumption of liquor, forgery of documents and theft. Given the segregated structure of Japanese colonial society in the northern Marianas, the “crimes” tended to be culture specific. No Chamorros and Refaluwasch, for instance, were charged for “forging documents” in 1934. How could they? Only a select few actually engaged in administrative service. But, in that same year, the police arrested ninety-six natives for drinking liquor, presumably *tuba*, a fermented sap from the stems of the coconut tree.¹³

After the abolition of naval rule in 1922, the duties of the patrolmen ended in favor of the newly established Japanese colonial police. The police performed similar duties and charged people for similar crimes. Under a civil administration and a centralized police hierarchy, the Japanese police created a main branch office in Saipan with one outlying station in Tinian and Rota, respectively. A staff totaling 17 employees modestly manned these stations, each including its own inspectors, indigenous assistants and police officers. In 1939, the now large police force consisted of 5 lieutenants, 4 assistant lieutenants, 49 Japanese police officers and 11 indigenous assistants.¹⁴ By this same year, the police force consisted of “four police stations on Saipan, three on Tinian and two on Rota.”¹⁵

Given a lack of data, the total number of Chamorros who served as patrolmen and police assistants cannot be accurately ascertained. What remains clear are the memories people have of the Japanese police officers and their Chamorro assistants. Fear of the police was particularly strong. For example, Manuel T. Sablan vividly recalled his

¹³ “A Copy of Japanese Records,” 17.

¹⁴ *Civil Affairs Handbook: Mandated Marianas Islands* (Navy Department: Office of the Chief of Naval Operations, 1944), x.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, x.

experience as a messenger for the police in Saipan during the early 1940s. Describing evening police duty in Garapan, he stated that “we had only two police officers on night duty at any one time. One stayed in the office, and one walked his beat in the whole Garapan area. That is how disciplined the people were before the war. People were afraid to commit any crimes.”¹⁶ Sablan also witnessed firsthand why people feared the police. “Working at the police station,” he said, “people were arrested and brought in. Many of them were Koreans who were rounded up at night. I don’t know why they were arrested, but the police would beat them up or sometimes just slap them.”¹⁷ Sablan wanted to know why the police punished these Koreans, but he never dared to question police motives or actions. “You see,” Sablan emphasized, “there is one thing about Japanese times—you don’t know and you don’t ask.”¹⁸ As former police officer Benigno Sablan put it, the “Japanese policemen were really crazy. They would hit you if you were bad.”¹⁹

Unable to request information on alleged criminal cases, the public remained ignorant of what the Japanese deemed good or bad behavior, innocent or guilty parties. This sense of vulnerability compounded the more general fears with which some Chamorros already regarded the Japanese police system. People “were presumed guilty on arrest and examinations of suspects took place in secret; the conception of *habeas corpus* (the individual’s right to have his or her case tried before a court) was not

¹⁶ Manuel T. Sablan, “Messenger Boy for the Japanese Police,” in *Saipan: Oral Histories of the Pacific War*, ed. Bruce M. Petty (Jefferson, North Carolina and London: McFarland and Company, Inc., 2002), 35.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 35.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 35.

¹⁹ Benigno Sablan, “The War Years on Saipan: Transcripts of Interviews with Residents,” interview by Ted Oxborrow and Associates (Mangilao: Micronesian Area Research Center, 1981), 33.

recognized, and the use of torture to extract confessions of guilt was the rule of thumb.”²⁰

The fear associated with the police during times of peace, however, would pale in comparison to the confusion and terror that would later ensue in time of war.

INDIGENOUS POLICE AND INTERPRETERS IN WARTIME GUAM

The years leading to the Japanese military invasion of Guam in 1941 had made the police system in the northern Marianas increasingly militaristic. Faced with new militarist objectives, the police system prepared itself for impending war with the United States and its Allies. The *Kempeitai*, or military police, emerged in secrecy. As an empire-wide police force, the *Kempeitai* aided the civilian police in arresting those determined to be spies or traitors to the emperor. By the late 1930s, the *Kempeitai* gained a reputation for interfering in the control of “speech, meetings and labour disputes, justifying intervention by the need to control anti-military and anti-war movements.”²¹ Although addressing the issue of espionage remained an important agenda for both the civilian and military police, the *Kempeitai* initially aimed to train indigenous interpreters for the wartime invasion of Guam.

The interpreters were chosen based on their strong grasp of the Japanese and Chamorro languages, as well as familiarity with administrative responsibilities. As Don A. Farrell notes, the proposed agencies for the Japanese occupation of Guam demanded that interpreters be “familiar with a similar agency on Rota, Saipan, or Tinian.”²² While some Japanese understood the local vernacular of Chamorro, official government policy discouraged the Japanese from learning indigenous languages, let alone the English

²⁰ Raymond Lamont-Brown, *Kempeitai: Japan's Dreaded Military Police* (Stroud: Sutton Publishing, 1998), 18-19.

²¹ Elise K. Tipton, *The Japanese Police State: The Tokkô in Interwar Japan* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1990), 120.

²² Don A. Farrell, *The Pictorial History of Guam: The Sacrifice, 1919-1943* (San Jose: Micronesian Productions, 1991), 223.

language of American-controlled Guam. Further, the *Kempetai* considered English “to be an ‘enemy’ language in Japan; thus, Kempei students were hardly ever encouraged by their mentors to learn foreign languages. Interpreters were, therefore, employed by the Kempei in Japanese-occupied territory.”²³

The fact that these indigenous interpreters would be used in the war provided enough reason for Chamorro families in the northern Marianas to feel further alarmed and confused. David Sablan, a young man at that time, remembered when his father, Elias Parong Sablan, departed for war with the Japanese. “I will never forget,” he said, “we were all crying because Dad was leaving to go to war.”²⁴ Others like Henry S. Pangelinan, himself an interpreter, recalled that he “was not very much interested” in going to war.²⁵ But he quickly clarified that “there was a rumor that if you refused to go the Japanese would kill your whole family.”²⁶ This rumor may have been not far from the truth considering that the Japanese police system openly sanctioned the threat and use of punishment—the kind of punishment that sometimes led to the death of a person. That the Japanese forcefully conscripted interpreters without advanced notification and, in some cases, without monetary compensation heightened the state of crisis present among Chamorros.²⁷

²³ Ma. Felisa A. Syjuco, *The Kempei Tai in the Philippines: 1941-1945* (Quezon City: New Day Publishers, 1988), 7.

²⁴ David Sablan, “Arrested by the Kempeitai,” in *Saipan: Oral Histories of the Pacific War*, ed. Bruce M. Petty (Jefferson, North Carolina and London: McFarland and Company, Inc., 2002), 41.

²⁵ Henry S. Pangelinan, “The Interpreter,” in *Saipan: Oral Histories of the Pacific War*, ed. Bruce M. Petty (Jefferson, North Carolina and London: McFarland and Company, Inc., 2002), 80.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 80.

²⁷ Antonio R. De Leon Guerrero, “Japanese Military Government Ordered Workers from Saipan and Rota,” February 8, 1984, in American Memorial Park, Saipan, Northern Mariana Islands, World War II, Virtual Museum. Available from http://www.nps.gov/amme/wwii_museum/chamorros_and_carolinians_wwii/nmi_natives_in_guam_wwii_01.html; INTERNET.

Vicente T. Camacho clearly recalled the day when the local police and the *Kempeitai* approached his mother's home. Then in his early teens, Camacho remembered that two Chamorro police assistants and a member of the *Kempeitai* instructed him to work for the secret military police. Concerned about her son's future, Camacho's mother "became very worried, wondering what was wrong. She began to cry and was very scared."²⁸ In response, the two Chamorro police assistants reassured Camacho's mother that "there was nothing to worry about."²⁹ The Chamorro police and *Kempeitai* officer told Camacho's mother that he would work at Guam for a period of six months, alternating with another Chamorro interpreter from Saipan. Challenging the instructions of the police, an act seldom done, Camacho's mother said "no to the *Kempeitai*."³⁰

According to Vicente T. Camacho, his mother reminded the police that her husband "had already been conscripted to work for the military at the 'X' unit, and no one else was left to support the family. Only me, since my younger brothers were still too young. So she cried and cried—she put on a real fuss, so that I wouldn't have to go to Guam."³¹ In a rare incident, the *Kempeitai* "took pity" and allowed Vicente T. Camacho to remain on Saipan.³² However, Camacho still had to work for the *Kempeitai* on Saipan, a job he considered very dangerous and secretive because of the reputation the police had among Chamorros. He indicated that he, along with others, never worked over one month on a *Kempeitai* mission. Camacho also revealed that he did not receive any information about future plans and orders. "Even though I worked there," he stated,

²⁸ Camacho 1992, 24.

²⁹ Ibid., 24.

³⁰ Ibid., 24.

³¹ Ibid., 24.

³² Ibid., 24.

“I didn’t know about all the things the *Kempeitai* were doing.”³³

While the mother of Vicente T. Camacho prevented him from traveling to Guam to work for the Japanese, the majority of Chamorros recruited for duty as interpreters had no choice but to comply. A total of seven groups of Chamorros left the northern Marianas for civil and military duty in Guam. From December 1941 to January 1942, the Japanese sent approximately seventy-five Chamorro men and three women from the islands of Saipan and Rota to serve as “staff assistants, police investigators, interpreters.”³⁴ All of the Chamorros from the northern Marianas dispatched to Guam worked in a variety of positions. Yet everyone assumed responsibility as interpreters for their Japanese employers when the need to work in the Chamorro vernacular arose. As Antonio R. De Leon Guerrero explains, “I had to interpret for the [South Seas Development Company], and then the police and the school teachers—all of them. Interpreting is really hard work.”³⁵

De Leon Guerrero notes that interpreters fulfilled a number of roles, including those as assistants to the Japanese police. In other words, interpreters sometimes became implicated in the duties and responsibilities of the civil and military police in Guam. Chamorros from the northern Marianas sometimes volunteered or unwillingly participated in the intimidation and persecution of their brothers and sisters in Guam. The indigenous police, in particular, engaged in these activities. Shortly after the arrival of military forces in Guam, the Japanese civilian police established their office and prison in the capital village of Hagatña. Police substations—all under the *Minseibu*, or civil

³³ Ibid., 25.

³⁴ Rogers, 172.

³⁵ Antonio R. De Leon Guerrero, “Served 23 Years as Saipan’s Vice-Mayor,” interview by Yoshiaki Kamisawa *Journal of the Pacific Society* 15, no. 4 (January 1993): 33.

administration—were subsequently placed in every village of the island. An unidentified number of Chamorros worked for the civilian police and at least four Chamorros fell under the direct authority of the *Kempeitai*. The four men were Henry C. Pangelinan, Antonio R. Camacho, Francisco T. Palacios and Felipe C. Mendiola. These *Kempeitai* employees performed work similar to their civilian counterparts and were part of a labor force of approximately 89 *Kempeitai* stationed throughout the Nan'yō.³⁶ In addition to these men, there were a few Guam Chamorros whose efforts lent support to the administrative and investigative aspects of the police force.

However, much of the work of the civil and military police forces fell on the shoulders of the interpreters and their Japanese supervisors. In their entirety, the police forces in wartime Guam aimed to assimilate Chamorros to Japanese ways of thinking. They also intended to deter any form of espionage and to eliminate any pro-American sentiment. As Henry S. Pangelinan recalls, the Japanese attempted to “convert” Guam Chamorros to the Japanese system.³⁷ But, as Pangelinan notes, this process proved difficult given the fact that Guam Chamorros were “real believers in America.”³⁸ Consequently, numerous Chamorros suffered various forms of punishment, most notably resulting from the failure or refusal to bow to Japanese buildings and officials. Other offenses included “stealing, assault and battery, gambling, intoxication and crimes involving sex.”³⁹ “So many people on Guam did nothing,” continues Pangelinan, “but being a suspect in Japanese custody was the same as being guilty.”⁴⁰ Everyday Chamorros, in short, faced numerous hardships, simply because of their prior affiliation

³⁶ Lamont-Brown, 35.

³⁷ Pangelinan, 80.

³⁸ Ibid., 80.

³⁹ Sanchez 1979, 92.

⁴⁰ Pangelinan, 80.

and persistent loyalties to the United States.

Lino and Regina Chargualaf refer to the Saipanese interpreter Nicolas Diaz as one of the men who openly delighted in humiliating and intimidating Chamorros in Guam. They say that “physical punishment was hard” working under the supervision of such men as Diaz. He, recalls the couple, “severely punished the one person who brought him tuba. And he hit the man just because he was late with the tuba.”⁴¹ Another Chamorro from Guam, Jesus Crisostomo, reconfirms the feelings of the Chargualaf family. Crisostomo states that Diaz, a supervisor among a crew of cave diggers, “made us work like animals.”⁴² In addition to Diaz’s harsh physical demands, he also required others to entertain him.

Quite often, Nicolas Diaz forced his crew to provide him with food, tuba, music and dance. He even compelled one subordinate to shower him at a nearby river. As Crisostomo notes, Diaz “was the interpreter for the Japanese, so all the things he did, all the things he wanted to be done, we were supposed to obey him. If he said that we were going to sing, and no one wanted to sing, they had to sing anyway because if we didn’t sing, he was going to give us a slap to the face.”⁴³ “It would have been better,” adds Crisostomo, “the treatment of one Japanese that was very cruel, than that particular man from Saipan.”⁴⁴ “Really,” he emphasizes, “we would have liked better the worst Japanese, the cruelest Japanese, than that Chamorro from Saipan.”⁴⁵ Concludes Crisostomo, Diaz “didn’t see that Guam Chamorros were his equals, his peers. He didn’t look at the Guam Chamorros as Christians just like him. His system was a very bad

⁴¹ Quoted in Kathleen R. W. Owings, ed., *The War Years on Guam: Narratives of the Chamorro Experience*, vol. 1 (Mangilao: Micronesian Area Research Center, 1981), 143.

⁴² *Ibid.*, 180.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 181.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 181.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 181.

system.”⁴⁶

Nicolas Diaz typified the negative demeanor of several indigenous police and interpreters. Some Chamorros from the northern Marianas, as in the case of Diaz, may have personally enjoyed inflicting trauma among others. Many more Chamorros, it can be argued, fulfilled their roles as interpreters and police as a matter of duty and obligation to the Japanese colonial government. Under the direct supervision of Japanese civil and military administrators, Chamorros from the northern Marianas had no choice but to enforce the laws and demands of the colonial government. Wherever they worked, from rice fields to mining operations to construction sites, the interpreters and police exerted a threatening authority. As Henry S. Pangelinan states, “we were tied down with the rules of the Japanese Empire.”⁴⁷ “Physical contact was not by will,” clarifies Pangelinan, “but by constant pressure from superiors.”⁴⁸ He also says that interpreters generally had “sympathetic” feelings to their extended families in Guam, but often felt restrained from helping them with their daily wants and needs.⁴⁹

Despite the existence of inter-island kin relationships, interpreters and police could not publicly sympathize with the “Americanized” Chamorros. Wartime conditions dictated that Guam Chamorros be identified, in principle, as ambivalent subjects of Japan’s Greater East Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere. But, in reality, Chamorro interpreters were “enemies” to those in Guam in ways that Guam Chamorros were “enemies” to the interpreters. Antonio R. De Leon Guerrero, a Saipanese Chamorro, explains that “we had been given Japanese education, and then been drafted by the Japanese, right? So even

⁴⁶ Ibid., 181.

⁴⁷ Quoted in Ken Phillips, “Saipan Translator: We had No Choice,” *Pacific Daily News*, 21 July 1984, 16.

⁴⁸ Ibid., 16.

⁴⁹ Ibid., 16.

though we were the same Chamorro people, we were enemies, since we had come at the orders of the Japanese.”⁵⁰ Additionally, former director of the General Affairs Department of the *Minseibu*, Kan’ichi Ogawa, says that “in times of peace, interpreters can be used to facilitate and gauge mutual understanding.”⁵¹ However, Ogawa notes, “during an occupation, the occupied become your enemy.”⁵² Therefore, he concludes, the “Saipanese Chamorros had to maintain the attitude of an occupying force even in times when they met members of their own clan or relatives who lived on Guam.”⁵³

Unlike the majority of Guam Chamorros, the interpreters and especially the indigenous police possessed tremendous authority and social mobility. “Although they were of no particular high rank,” states Hisashi Hirose, “employment by the military alone provided them with a sense of superiority.”⁵⁴ Due to their comprehension of the Japanese language and the expectations of their superiors, the interpreters attained positions of power over their Chamorro counterparts in Guam. In understanding the views of the occupying force, they clearly held an advantage over other Chamorros. At times, some interpreters exploited this inequitable relationship for social, economic and political advantage. Yet, as the racial hierarchy of Japanese colonial governance illustrated, the Chamorro interpreters always remained subordinate to the Japanese. In the words of one Japanese administrator, the Japanese often perceived the indigenous police as “*tora no i wo kariru kitsune*,” or “an ass in a lion’s skin.”⁵⁵ This condescending

⁵⁰ De Leon Guerrero 1993, 35.

⁵¹ Kan’ichi Ogawa, “The *Minseibu*/Administration,” in “Remembering the War Years on Guam: A Japanese Perspective,” ed. Wakako Higuchi. Translated by Mark A. Ombrello (Unpublished Manuscript, 2001), 25.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 25.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 25.

⁵⁴ Hisashi Hirose, “Search for George Tweed,” in “Remembering the War Years on Guam: A Japanese Perspective,” ed. Wakako Higuchi. Translated by Mark A. Ombrello (Unpublished Manuscript, 2001), 61.

⁵⁵ Ogawa, 25.

view of the indigenous police reflected but one aspect of Japanese colonial governance overseas. Indeed, these types of views showed the limits of authority granted to the interpreters. Nevertheless, the image of authority assigned to and perpetuated by Chamorro interpreters led to the deterioration of social relationships among Chamorros.

Without a doubt, the emergence of intra-cultural conflicts in Guam negatively impacted the maintenance of indigenous kin and familial relationships. Marikita Palacios Crisostomo, the wife of an interpreter, remembered the deteriorating nature of intra-cultural relationships in Guam. Reaching the island in 1943 and accompanied by her husband Luis, Crisostomo notes that “it was a bad situation there.”⁵⁶ As an indication of the severity of intra-cultural relations, she says that Guam Chamorros “would come to the chief of police and say that other Chamorros were hiding weapons or they were doing this or they were doing that. Sometimes they lied. Maybe they were jealous of somebody, or they were enemies for this reason or that.”⁵⁷ In her recollection of life on Guam, Crisostomo evaded talking about particular peoples and events. She purposely spoke in general terms, careful not to offend anybody who might have been implicated in these events. Defending her husband’s wartime role in the occupation, she noted that his work “never had a bad effect” on her extended family in Guam.⁵⁸

As Marikita Palacios Crisostomo observed, the state of local affairs in wartime Guam was in despair. It soon became evident that problems arose not only because of the imposition of Japanese assimilation and wartime policies. Rather, part of the social strife in Guam stemmed from the agents involved in the implementation of these policies,

⁵⁶ Marikita Palacios Crisostomo, “The Interpreter’s Wife,” in *Saipan: Oral Histories of the Pacific War*, ed. Bruce M. Petty (Jefferson, North Carolina and London: McFarland and Company, Inc., 2002), 84.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 84.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 84.

namely Chamorro interpreters, police and others from the northern Marianas. Kan'ichi Ogawa again called to mind the problem of employing Chamorros from the islands of Rota and Saipan. At times, he notes, Chamorros from Guam "entered the *Minseibu* office and suddenly came over to me to make an appeal."⁵⁹ "The Guam Chamorros," reveals Ogawa, "did not like to enlist the interpretive services of the Saipanese Chamorros to communicate."⁶⁰ He states that the Guam Chamorros "particularly resented the Chamorro civilian patrolmen."⁶¹ In response to the concerns voiced by those in Guam, Ogawa asserts that "my role as a bridge between the Japanese and Chamorro sides could only go so far. When a person told me that he/she had been struck by a Saipanese patrolman, all I could say was, 'You just have to bear with it.'"⁶²

THE JAPANESE "COMFORT" STATIONS

Due to the colonial administration's failure to resolve the problem of interpretive work, many Chamorros unfortunately had to "bear" with the wartime circumstances they faced. Indeed, the colonial administration knowingly perpetuated these circumstances in which Chamorros sometimes found themselves fighting rather than peacefully negotiating with each other and the Japanese. The enlistment of Chamorro interpreters and police from Rota and Saipan did not lessen the growing sense of discontent and uneasiness on the part of Guam Chamorros. Nor did the establishment of "comfort stations," or brothels for Japanese military personnel, minimize the increasing anxiety, confusion and violence among everyone on the island. Contrary to the term's connotations, the introduction of *ianjyo*, or comfort stations, simply underscored the

⁵⁹ Ogawa, 24.

⁶⁰ Ibid., 24.

⁶¹ Ibid., 24.

⁶² Ibid., 24.

violent, imperialist and gendered dimensions of Japan's wartime empire.

To some degree, the origins of the comfort stations coincided with the development of Japan's Army and police systems at the turn of the twentieth-century. The rise in military brothels, in other words, accompanied the rise in military and police activities in the Asia and Pacific regions. The *Kempeitai*, for example, administered the systems of prostitution in Korea and Manchuria.⁶³ As part of a longer tradition of Japanese prostitution at home and abroad, the logistical, economic and social dimensions of the comfort stations paralleled and imitated the Japanese sex industry. Yuki Tanaka argues that after the Meiji Restoration, or the creation of the modern Japanese nation state, the number of Japanese brothels proliferated overseas.⁶⁴ As Tanaka explains, these women were called *karayuki-san*, literally meaning "a person traveling to China."⁶⁵ "Originally coined by the people of northern Kyushu," continues Tanaka, "the term came to be applied specifically to the impoverished rural women sold into prostitution far from home."⁶⁶

By way of underground labor networks, the *karayuki-san* served Japan's military and police organizations, as well as civilian populations as far away as Australia, Hawai'i and South Africa.⁶⁷ As Chung notes, the Japanese Army employed the services of brothels as early as 1905.⁶⁸ The Japanese government's provision of prostitutes for its overseas military, police and even administrative personnel occurred at a later time. "It was not until late 1937," Chung elaborates, "that the Japanese government created an

⁶³ Lamont-Brown, 44.

⁶⁴ Yuki Tanaka, *Japan's Comfort Women: Sexual Slavery and Prostitution during World War II and the US Occupation* (London and New York: Routledge, 2002), 167.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 167.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 167.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 167.

⁶⁸ Chin Sung Chung, "The Origin and Development of the Military Sexual Slavery Problem in Imperial Japan," *Positions* 5, no. 1 (Spring 1997): 222.

official brothel policy and began to systematically establish brothels in areas where soldiers were stationed.”⁶⁹

At an international level, the Japanese government intended to avoid criticisms regarding the manner in which the military personnel, particularly Army soldiers, interacted with women abroad. Alerted by incidents of mass rape in Shanghai, China, in 1932, the Japanese government and the Ministry of War attempted to suppress all criticisms by developing comfort stations for the military. “As a result of its experiences in China,” writes Chung, “the establishment of military brothels in occupied areas was part of its plans....Brothels were ... created in Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia, and the Philippines, as well as in China.”⁷⁰ The purpose of these comfort stations was twofold. The first goal was to prevent the spread of venereal disease among the Japanese soldiers. As part of the military’s policy to control the biological exchange of such diseases, Japanese doctors lectured on hygiene, provided regular health checkups for the women and encouraged the use of contraceptive devices.⁷¹ The second objective for the use of comfort stations was to deter soldiers from raping women.

Theoretically, the purpose of these two goals was to reduce military forms of aggression toward women in particular and civilians in general. Providing soldiers with the opportunity to engage in sexual relations also boosted their morale and, it was believed, protected them from injury and death.⁷² Given the military’s seemingly benign position on comfort stations, Japan attempted, again, to promote itself as a “liberator” of

⁶⁹ Ibid., 223.

⁷⁰ Ibid., 224.

⁷¹ George Hicks, “The ‘Comfort Women,’” in *The Japanese Wartime Empire, 1931-1945*, ed. Peter Duus, Ramon H. Meyers and Mark R. Peattie (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996), 319.

⁷² Bonnie B.C. Oh, “The Japanese Imperial System and the Korean ‘Comfort Women’ of World War II,” in *Legacies of the Comfort Women of World War II*, ed. Margaret Stetz and Bonnie B.C. Oh (Armonk and London: M. E. Sharpe, 2001), 9.

Western colonial rule in Asia and the Pacific. By projecting the image of an organized sex industry in the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere, the Japanese government and its military aspired to create an idealized environment of mutual respect, cooperation and tolerance in its colonies. Nothing could be further from the truth, as Japan's two provisions for "comfort women did not function as an effective measure for either problem, and in particular for the problem of random sexual violence against civilians in occupied territories."⁷³

By 1942, approximately 400 comfort stations existed throughout Japan's wartime empire, with ten reportedly functioning in the Nan'yō.⁷⁴ Further, anywhere from 80,000 to 200,000 women served, in some sexual or social capacity, as *ianfu* or comfort women.⁷⁵ Initially involving Japanese women, the comfort stations soon employed or forced Korean and Taiwanese women to work as sexual slaves and domestic laborers for the Japanese military. Very soon after the introduction of the comfort stations, the Japanese government discouraged the use of Japanese women. The Japanese government argued that Japanese women should "bear and bring up good Japanese children, who would grow up to be loyal subjects of the Emperor rather than being the means for men to satisfy their sexual urges."⁷⁶ As a result, vast numbers of women from Korea and Taiwan, many of whom came from poor economic backgrounds, supplied the demands of the comfort stations. The Japanese military also enlisted the sexual services of women from its colonies in Asia and the Pacific. Methods of deceit, violence and intimidation

⁷³ Tanaka 2002, 32

⁷⁴ Chung, 224; Tanaka 2002, 27.

⁷⁵ Schmidt, 13; Tanaka 2002, 31.

⁷⁶ Tanaka 2002, 32.

were frequently used, as was the kidnapping of young girls and women.⁷⁷

While the term *ianfu* belies the exploitive nature of Japan's military sex industry, it was not the only term that replaced its predecessor, *karayuki-san*. Given the large mobilization of Korean women for the comfort stations, the term *teishintai*, or "volunteer corps," came into use. Although *ianfu* may have been the accepted and official term, other terms included "barmaid (*shakufu*), women in the drinking business (*shūgyōfu*), courtesan (*gijo*), or other professional women (*tokushu fujo*), all of which refer to prostitutes."⁷⁸ Much of this vocabulary regarding comfort women came from the *ianfu*, many of whom provided the most vivid and detailed depictions of themselves and the industry that exploited them. The histories of the Japanese comfort stations, however, remain unwritten as speculation and conjecture dominate much of the extant documentation. Thus, the wider political, economic and social motives and consequences of the comfort stations have yet to receive much critical examination. The lack of knowledge on comfort women and comfort stations partly stems from the "shame" that causes some survivors to remain silent.⁷⁹ According to David Andrew Schmidt, "shame associated with the sexual enslavement induced silence. In the conservative and Confucian societies of East Asia the silence was dominant. Women who returned home spoke rarely if at all of their past experiences."⁸⁰ Officially treated as "top secret," the materials on comfort stations and the *ianfu* exist in limited quantities or do not exist at all as a result of being destroyed by military officials toward the end of the war.⁸¹ While the comfort stations clearly publicized Japan's positions on sex, venereal disease and rape,

⁷⁷ Ibid., 29.

⁷⁸ Chung, 221.

⁷⁹ David Andrew Schmidt, *Ianfu—The Comfort Women of the Japanese Imperial Army of the Pacific War* (Lewiston, Queenston and Lampeter: The Edwin Mellen Press, 2000), 16.

⁸⁰ Ibid., 16.

⁸¹ Ibid., 15.

the particular details of the comfort stations remain largely veiled.

From the time of their establishment in 1937 to the twilight years of the war, the logistical and managerial operations of the comfort stations took place in relative secrecy. Apart from the military's visible, public and voluntary use of the comfort stations, not much is known regarding the actual agents involved in the rise and decline of Japan's sex industry in the Nan'yō. That the Nan'yō-cho used police officers to supervise the operation of comfort stations clearly reveals the interdependent relationship among the police and the brothels. It was not uncommon for some indigenous police, island elites and Japanese men to drink alcohol, smoke or visit "geisha houses," another comparable synonym for comfort stations.⁸² Before 1922, though, when the Japanese naval government ruled Micronesia, geisha houses and other forms of prostitution were outlawed. With the increase of Asian immigration to Micronesia in the 1920s and 1930s, prostitution became "an inevitable accompaniment."⁸³ Around this time period, notes Peattie, various bars, restaurants and geisha houses—all sites of prostitution—surfaced to cater to the sexual and social desires of Japanese and Okinawan men. From Tinian to Palau, adds Peattie, "every Japanese town in Micronesia had its *hana machi* 'flower quarters'—rather shabby little buildings with incongruously poetic names where men could eat, drink, and enjoy the company of women for an evening."⁸⁴

Clearly, not all brothels were restaurants, and not all restaurants could be considered brothels. Yet, it is estimated that as many as eighty brothels existed throughout Micronesia, not counting the ten official comfort stations that served the

⁸² Poyer, Falgout and Carucci 2001, 64.

⁸³ Peattie 1988, 209.

⁸⁴ Ibid., 209.

Japanese military there and in other areas of the Pacific.⁸⁵ Reportedly, some comfort women earned an average annual salary of one thousand yen, or \$2850.00.⁸⁶ While the sex industry in the Nan'yō evidently thrived, complementing other forms of social entertainment and festivities, not much is known about its impact in the island societies. Based on the histories of comfort stations elsewhere in Japan's empire, one can conclude that the comfort stations primarily catered to immigrant laborers, military and police personnel, island elites and Japanese administrative officials.

The wider indigenous populations, then, would have been excluded from frequenting the comfort stations or brothels. What can be said with certainty is that the Japanese military and the police played a major role in the administration of the comfort stations in times of peace and war. In the northern Marianas, no extensive research has been done that would indicate the level of indigenous political, sexual and economic engagement in the comfort stations. The secretive nature of the Japanese sex industry, the dearth of written materials on the subject of comfort stations, and the cultural sense of shame associated with prostitution all make it difficult to assess and understand the entangled relationships involving sex, empire and collaboration.

THE WOMEN OF WAR IN GUAM

In wartime Guam, the introduction of what Chamorros call *i guma ka'ku*, or the house of sex, reveals some insights into issues of sex, empire and collaboration. Of course, brothels existed in the northern islands of Rota, Tinian and Saipan. The issue of when the Japanese military and police specifically introduced comfort stations there during the war period (1941-1944) has yet to be addressed. To the south in Guam, the

⁸⁵ Ibid., 338, n.25.

⁸⁶ Ibid., 338, n.25.

establishment of comfort stations came on the heels of the arrival of the Japanese military and police. In terms of comfort stations' exact origin, Tony Palomo states that the Japanese created them "as early as a month after capturing" the island.⁸⁷ He speculates that a total of five homes were built to serve as comfort stations, with three situated in Agaña and the remaining two located in Anigua and Piti.⁸⁸ Anywhere from thirty to fifty women worked in these stations. While comfort women were typically Koreans, they did not comprise the sole group of comfort women in Guam. Okinawans, Chamorros, Koreans, Japanese and even Palauans supplemented the Korean sexual work force.

Some contend that Chamorros actually contributed the greatest number of women to the *guma ka'ku* of Agaña. A Chamorro elder with familial ties to Agaña, Concepcion M. Tolentino, recalls that "mostly Chamorros" worked in the comfort stations of this village.⁸⁹ She adds that "there were also Koreans . . . and Palauans and Saipanese," drawing attention to the possibility that Micronesian women worked as comfort women. Although not much information is known about the introduction of women from Palau and Saipan, it is known that not many Japanese women worked in the comfort stations of Guam. This conjecture stems in large part from the fact that only a few Japanese women worked in such a capacity in the first place; those who did work as comfort women did so as a service exclusively for Japanese military officers. As Wakako Higuchi notes, the building named Akashino doubled as "a first-class Japanese restaurant" and comfort station only for naval officers.⁹⁰

⁸⁷ Palomo 1984, 79.

⁸⁸ Ibid., 79.

⁸⁹ Concepcion M. Tolentino, interview by Dominica Tolentino, Hagatña, Guam, 10 October 2005. This author thanks Dominica Tolentino for interviewing her mother, Concepcion M. Tolentino, about the roles of "comfort women" in wartime Guam.

⁹⁰ Wakako Higuchi, "A Report on Ian-fu and Ian-jyo on Guam During the Japanese Occupation Period," (Mangilao: Micronesian Area Research Center, 1999), 6. This author appreciates Masami Tsujita's

Other comfort stations, usually located along the Agaña river, were reserved for enlisted soldiers and sailors. The central organization that supervised these comfort stations went by the name of Nan'yō Kohatsu. This private company specialized in the production of sugar and the mining of phosphate, among other economic ventures. In addition to catering to these economic needs, the company maintained an intimate relationship with the Japanese military, particularly the Navy. Since the time of its inception in 1921, observes Higuchi, the Nan'yō Kohatsu "advanced into the occupied territories in the South Seas under the command of the military."⁹¹ Not only did the company work with the military, the company also abided by the military's orders and objectives. In this respect, the company took on the managerial responsibilities for the comfort stations in Guam. Some of the responsibilities included the recruitment of women, the payment of their wages and the organization of their medical checkups

Still, as in many cases regarding the management of comfort stations, the financial structure of the comfort stations in Guam remains a mystery. While certain administrators of the Nan'yō Kohatsu can be identified, it remains difficult to highlight the economic relationships between the company, the military, the comfort stations and the police. These relationships, asserts Wakako Higuchi, are "uncertain."⁹² She adds that the "financial implications of Nan'yō Kohatsu for Korean and or old Japanese owners of *ianjyo* remain equivocal."⁹³ Even Kan'ichi Ogawa, a Japanese administrative official, knew about a "secret fund" that circulated among those in charge of the comfort

translation of Higuchi's research findings on the comfort women of Guam, from Japanese into the English language.

⁹¹ Higuchi 1999, 10.

⁹² Ibid., 9.

⁹³ Ibid., 9.

stations.⁹⁴ Yet, he could not recall where the monies originated, nor could he determine their exact purpose. One can argue that the confusion emanating may have served a particular objective, that is, to ensure that no single individual would be held accountable for what was essentially the management of sexual slavery in Guam. Despite the uncertainty surrounding the financial aspects of the comfort stations, other factors regarding their operation can be determined with greater clarity and conviction.

On the topic of recruitment, the Japanese military stationed on Guam “demanded to take mixed blood Chamorros of European ancestry, who were mostly from the upper-class, to become *ianfu* for the soldiers.”⁹⁵ Wakako Higuchi discovered that the civil administration “strongly opposed this idea because they thought that it would raise a riot among the people of Guam.”⁹⁶ Former employee of Nan’yō Kohatsu, Toraji Tanaka, agrees. He recalls that since “many high-class Chamorro women” had already developed relationships with some military personnel, there was no need to recruit them.⁹⁷ Instead, the military hired women “who formerly had sexual relationships” with Americans during the early 1900s when the United States Navy occupied Guam.⁹⁸ That the military eventually decided to recruit Chamorro comfort women from a group of prostitutes indicates a common fear expressed by Japanese officials in general. The majority of women recruited had to come from poor parts of their respective societies because Japanese officials feared that the public humiliation of “island elites” might result in

⁹⁴ Ogawa, 28.

⁹⁵ Higuchi, 1999, 13.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 13.

⁹⁷ Toraji Tanaka, “Nan’yō Kohatsu Kabubushiki Kaisha,” in “Remembering the War Years on Guam: A Japanese Perspective,” ed. Wakako Higuchi. Translated by Mark A. Ombrello (Unpublished Manuscript, 2001), 70.

⁹⁸ Higuchi 1999, 13.

social unrest.⁹⁹ Interestingly, the Japanese believed that abuse directed at island elites might generate public outcry and protest. Toraji Tanaka himself, among other Japanese in Guam, expressed such fear. Approximately fifteen Chamorro women, then, supplemented the estimated forty-two Asian comfort women, some of whom originally worked in Saipan. These women were called “Monday ladies,” or *famalaun lunes siha*, since they received medical checkups on Mondays, under the administration of the American navy.

As Monday women, they had earned a negative reputation for frequenting the American saloons of Agaña prior to the outbreak of war.¹⁰⁰ Specifically, their reputation as “prostitutes” stood in stark contrast to an environment of American naval discipline and Chamorro Catholic conservatism. Referring to the Monday women of Agaña, Laura Thompson states that the “few prostitutes on the island are not licensed. They are watched to some extent by the police, confined as vagrants and treated in the naval hospital.”¹⁰¹ She notes that some young men turn to “the ‘wild’ girls of the town—the prostitutes, bar girls and a few women with illegitimate children.”¹⁰² The reason behind such activity, Thompson argues, derived from the notion that the “older unattached women provide a sexual outlet for the bachelors, who occasionally keep a concubine and her illegitimate children in another part of town.”¹⁰³ From this context, the Monday women emerged as the first group of Chamorro comfort women for the Japanese. “By the middle of 1942,” writes Tony Palomo, “a number of local women were living with Japanese officers, including the Governor and the Chief of Police. These were generally

⁹⁹ Chung, 228.

¹⁰⁰ Rogers, 134.

¹⁰¹ Thompson 1941, 172.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, 219.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, 219.

the same women who hob-nobbed with American officials before the outbreak of war.”¹⁰⁴ To say that the Monday women “hob-nobbed” with the Japanese implies that some Monday women volunteered their sexual services or pursued meaningful relationships with the Japanese.

Tony Palomo speaks about one such incident. He recounts a conversation in which a wife of an American prisoner once accused a Monday woman of “lowering herself” by residing with a Japanese military officer. According to Palomo, the Monday woman responded by stating, “why is it that when a woman has an affair with a Japanese, she is lowering herself, but when she has an affair with a Chamorro or an American, she isn’t?”¹⁰⁵ “When God proclaimed the Ten Commandments,” she continued, “and demanded that ‘thou shalt not commit adultery,’ He did not say that adultery would be sinful only if one of the parties is a Japanese.”¹⁰⁶ Defending her position, the unidentified Monday woman reiterated that Chamorro women who married Japanese prior to the war did not lose their status. Besides, she said, “the Japanese are winning the war . . . so, how can you say they are lower than other men?”¹⁰⁷ Palomo concludes that this particular Monday woman would not only maintain relations with the Japanese, but would also resume relations with the Americans should they win the war.

What this example illustrates is that some Monday women willingly pursued the roles of comfort women. But others did not. For those who worked as comfort women, their motives remain unclear. One can say, though, that they may have acquired some level of political, social and economic power. As in the case of comfort women located

¹⁰⁴ Palomo 1984, 80.

¹⁰⁵ Quoted in Palomo 1984, 80.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 80.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 80.

elsewhere in Japan's empire, it is quite plausible that the Monday women provided sexual services "in return for food, cigarettes, medicines and the safety of their children."¹⁰⁸ In their individual acts of defiance to preconceived norms of Chamorro womanhood, some Monday women also resisted Guam Chamorro notions of loyalty and allegiance to America. The point is that some of these women clearly demonstrated that they were not simply objects of Japanese male desire and lust. In short, some actively and consciously chose what they believed were the appropriate paths for their lives.

On the other hand, the Japanese military and police forcefully or manipulatively coerced Chamorro women to work in the "pleasure quarters" of Guam. Based on the available evidence, the Japanese military enlisted the services of local "collaborators" to recruit women. Like the recruitment methods of the Japanese military in Indonesia and the Philippines, women in Guam were sometimes "duped into prostitution or abducted for sexual purposes by collaborators (including civil police) within their own ethnic groups."¹⁰⁹ Some allege that Samuel T. Shinohara, along with the assistance of several Monday women, recruited Chamorro women for the comfort stations. Prior to the onset of war in 1941, Shinohara married into a Chamorro family and became appointed as president of the island's Japanese association. Given his strong grasp of the English, Chamorro and Japanese languages, as well as his public allegiance to Japan, he became the most reliable candidate to recruit local women.¹¹⁰ Some believe that he forced an unidentified number of Chamorro women to serve the needs of Japanese military officers and enlisted personnel. Recollecting his role during the war, Agueda I. Johnston and Clyde M. Cramlet reveal that he was "regarded as a spy and despised by the loyal natives

¹⁰⁸ Lamont-Brown, 44.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., 44.

¹¹⁰ Higuchi 1999, 18.

for his willingness to do the dirty work for the Japanese.”¹¹¹ In borrowing various domestic items like bedspreads and sewing machines from local families, they presume that he “led native girls, who feared to refuse, to work as ‘maids’ for the Japanese officers.”¹¹² Hisashi Hirose, a former Japanese navy sailor stationed in Guam, confirms the role Shinohara played in the recruitment of *ianfu*. He remembers that “Shinohara gathered Chamorro women in dire straits,” adding that “all of the officers had their own exclusive Chamorro girlfriends.”¹¹³

It is highly doubtful that, as a collective, Guam Chamorro women courted Japanese military personnel. While some Chamorro women worked as “maids,” performing various domestic duties of the house, it can be argued that they were also subjected to some form of sexual exploitation. Once a Chamorro woman worked for the Japanese, fulfilling such roles as teacher assistants or rice patty workers, she sometimes became vulnerable to the sexual harassment of her male employers. Beautiful looking women felt especially worried. As Concepcion M. Tolentino remembers, the Japanese targeted “families with lots of pretty girls in their homes.”¹¹⁴ The fears Chamorro women associated with working with the Japanese soon became widespread. Anthony J. Ramirez, a Chamorro genealogy expert, recalls his grandfather’s response to the recruitment of young women. “What does a father do,” asks the younger Ramirez, “when you know that here’s the Japanese and the word is going around that atrocities are being committed against women?”¹¹⁵ “Well,” Ramirez states, “he rounded up all his

¹¹¹ Agueda I. Johnston and Clyde M. Cramlet, “Chamorrta,” copy in Agueda I. Johnston’s Papers, Box 7, Folder 42, 1 of 3, Richard F. Taitano Micronesia Area Research Center Manuscript Collection, University of Guam, 237.

¹¹² Ibid., 237.

¹¹³ Hirose, 63.

¹¹⁴ Tolentino 2005, Interview.

¹¹⁵ Anthony J. Ramirez, interview by the author, Hagatña, Guam, 13 August 2004.

family. Went up north and hid all his daughters from the Japanese men because they pleasure in women.”¹¹⁶ Although Ramirez does not explain what happened to his aunts, he stresses that many young women went to great lengths to avoid the comfort stations. Women, he says, purposely took few showers, wore dirty clothes and spread rumors that they were infected with various diseases.

If recruited, women feared most the possibility of being disgraced among their families. The shame placed on the women, assuming they were single, made it difficult for them to find suitable marriage partners. “If a woman is disgraced,” Anthony J. Ramirez states, “it is very hard for that particular woman to marry.”¹¹⁷ Further, the fact that the women deviated from their expected gendered norms also generated much concern on the part of the women and their families. As Ramirez observes, the sexual conditions for Chamorro women of that time were “really restrictive.”¹¹⁸ Many perceived male behavior in terms of “*checho lahi*,” literally meaning “male work,” but more precisely meaning the general attitudes and actions of men. In this regard, Chamorro cultural norms tolerated aggressive and promiscuous male sexual behavior with women. However, in respect to “*checho palauan*,” or “female work,” cultural norms demanded that women guard and protect themselves from sexual activities with men outside of marriage. This partly explains why the introduction of comfort stations in the context of colonial rule greatly impacted the women involved. It did not matter, to a certain degree, how Chamorro women perceived themselves in their relationships with the Japanese. The issue involved something much larger than individual attitudes and actions. As Anthony J. Ramirez rightly argues, “whatever you do by behavior reflects

¹¹⁶ Ibid.

¹¹⁷ Ibid.

¹¹⁸ Ibid.

your family.”¹¹⁹ That is why the women experienced disgrace, shame and tragedy on a profound level. Their behaviors—individually motivated or not—often shamed their entire families and clans.

The women of war in Guam, or *i famalaoan guerra siha*, have consequently been categorized into what Higuchi calls “three types of women.”¹²⁰ They include “those women who were local wives of Japanese servicemen; those who prostituted themselves; and those who were forced to accept sexual relations.”¹²¹ While these categories describe the general structure of Chamorro female relations with the Japanese and vice versa, one should note that each woman presented her own dynamic story of resistance, submission or adaptation. Also, some Chamorro women were girlfriends or lovers of Japanese military personnel, complicating further the range of social and sexual relations among Chamorro women and Japanese men. Even the label, “Monday women,” does not adequately address their behaviors and attitudes. As Ramirez states, Monday women “freely choose to be in association with a lot of men,” but this does not actually mean that all Monday women worked as comfort women.¹²² Some Monday women certainly volunteered their services, and perhaps many more were forced to work as the so-called women of comfort. Despite the daily threat of Japanese sexual violence, it should be remembered, too, that women in general persevered through these conditions. As many Chamorros understand, women played very important roles in helping their families survive through the war. As Rose S. N. Manibusan notes, “Chamorro women, from teenagers to grandmothers, cared for children and elderly family members. They ensured

¹¹⁹ Ibid.

¹²⁰ Higuchi 1999, 1.

¹²¹ Ibid., 1.

¹²² Ramirez 2004, Interview.

the families' survival by providing food through bartering, farming, and fishing at a time when food was scarce."¹²³

Tempering these stories of survival and domesticity were stories of tragedy and defiance. A few months prior to the American land invasion of Guam on July 21, 1944, Japanese violence and atrocities toward Chamorros rapidly increased. For example, Dolores Mesa, a young Chamorro woman, resisted the requests of a Japanese naval officer. Because of her unwillingness to succumb to his demands, "she was tied to a coconut tree in the hot sun for a full day without food or water, and while there, threatened with stabbing or decapitation with a bayonet."¹²⁴ She survived the ordeal, though her mother and others were not so fortunate. The Japanese rounded them into a hole and threw in grenades, killing approximately twenty-nine Chamorros. Dolores Mesa was not responsible for prompting these violent incidents, many of which stemmed from Japanese military brutality directed at innocent civilians throughout the island. Another group of Chamorro men and women died on July 18, 1944. Beatrice Emsley, then fourteen years old, survived the massacre. According to her, the Japanese bayoneted the men first, all of whom cried to God and their mothers as they were being executed. Presumably the Japanese also raped the women, though Emsley did not openly admit or deny such an incident.

On that same day, in the jungle area of Agaña, unknown Japanese military personnel brutalized the women. One officer "ripped off" the dress of one of the ladies

¹²³ Rose S. N. Manibusan, "The Mariana Home Front: Dealing with Adversity—Chamorro Life during the Pacific War," *Islander, Pacific Sunday News*, 11 April 1993, 10.

¹²⁴ "'Little Mother of Guam' Grows Up: Dolores Mesa Recalls Painful Memories of Japanese Occupation," *Guam News*, 1 February 1948, 1.

and “began to cut her breast with the saber.”¹²⁵ The sister then “rushed forward to save her,” but the “Japanese guards stopped her and bayoneted both sisters before throwing their corpses into the crater.”¹²⁶ The Japanese bayoneted the remaining women, including Beatrice Emsley, who recalls feeling nothing prior to her attempted execution. As she fell, dazed, into the ditch of moaning women, she only remembered what felt like a splash of water. When the Japanese left the scene, she surfaced, holding her wounded neck, to seek food, refuge and medicine. Dolores Mesa and Beatrice Emsley were two among a small group of people to survive such massacres in Guam.

It is misleading to suggest, though, that sexual violence occurred only between Chamorro women and Japanese men. The point is that wartime violence against Chamorro women cannot be framed solely in the context of Japanese sexual slavery, rape or murder. While histories of comfort women definitely warrant historical attention, scholars should also be aware of other local sources of violence. The violent environment of the comfort stations, as well as the shame and disgrace this line of work inflicted upon women, clearly illustrated the oppressive and indeed gendered dimensions of the Japanese wartime empire. At the same time, wartime violence against Chamorro women extended beyond the exploitive conditions of the comfort stations. Chamorro comfort women were not the only women who ran the risk of being shamed, disgraced and ostracized by their own families. The case of intra-cultural sexual relations among Chamorros, in particular, provided an equally complicated picture of sex, empire and loyalty in Guam. Specifically, Guam Chamorros generally looked down upon Chamorro women who pursued, willingly or through coercion, sexual relations with Chamorro men

¹²⁵ Paul Wiseman, “The Survivors: Woman Lives to Tell about Grisley Execution,” *Pacific Daily News*, 21 July 1984, 19.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, 19.

from the northern islands. Some labeled these women outcasts, disloyal to their culture and the American nation.

While oral histories of these events are scarce, some materials are available for comment and reflection. Letters written around the 1940s, for example, shed light on the issue of intra-cultural relations among Chamorros in Guam. In a letter dated 12 October 1944, Carmen O. Herrero wrote to her brother, E. J. Ojida, in New York. She informed him about several women, among them her sibling's "girlfriend," who had married men from Saipan.¹²⁷ Her letter, though brief in length, revealed the climate of anxiety, confusion and shame that surrounded some of these women. Referring directly to her brother, she asks, first, "have you heard that the Dinga girls . . . are married to pro Japs, fellows from Saipan?"¹²⁸ "Now I want you not to feel bad," she writes, anticipating her brother's response, "because your girl friend is also married to one from Saipan." Consoling her brother, she continues, "if she is that type, I won't feel bad about it." Carmen O. Herrero then informs her brother about the woman's family, stating how they responded to her marrying a Saipanese. She writes that "her family are against it very much but I guess she got fooled by all the Jap propaganda . . . because, you see, the Saipan guys were thought to be big shots, as they thought they were." "However," she concludes, the Saipan Chamorros "only fooled the foolish."

On the surface, Carmen O. Herrero's letter demonstrates that women from Guam may have married men from Saipan for political and economic gain. The women, after all, married "big shots." In marrying Japanese men or Chamorro interpreters, the women jeopardized their social standing among their Guam Chamorro counterparts. But a

¹²⁷ "Carmen O. Herrero to E. R. J. Ojida," 12 October 1944, Pacific Trust Territories, RG 313, National Archives, I.

¹²⁸ *Dinga* translates into the English language as "twins."

variety of motivations, rather than individual desires for material gain and higher status, may have existed. Some families voluntarily offered their daughters to men from Saipan and Rota. These families may have seen these intra-cultural marriages as lesser forms of social degradation, especially when compared to the stigma surrounding Chamorro women of comfort. Also, by marrying an interpreter one might be able to protect her family from physical harm by the Japanese military. Each case of intra-cultural marriage surely varied, as did the motivations and consequences. Nevertheless, no matter what those motivations might have been, the consequence of shaming one's family simply perpetuated the intra-cultural conflicts among Chamorros. Not even the alleged sacred sacrament of matrimony could overcome the social stigma attached to these marriages.

In another letter to Joseph L. G. Cruz, dated 25 September 1944, Jesus L. G. Cruz reflects upon the complicated nature of these intra-cultural marriages. In writing to his brother, he talks about the reconciliation, if any, between loyalty and love.¹²⁹ "Brother," Jesus L. G. Cruz writes, "you don't know what is going on. Our sis Flora she also had a bad luck." Recalling the Japanese wartime occupation, a period still vivid in his mind, he says that their sister "happen to be in love with a man from Saipan." Demonstrating the family's genuine love for their sister, Cruz states, "brother we don't blame her for being in love with the man." "But when she thought of marrying," he says, "we advise her to wait until the war is over." Referring to their sister's fierce sense of independence, Cruz notes, regrettably, that "she will never listen to any one of us. Even the Priest advise but she won't listen. Teachers of schools [sic] talk to her and also her best friends. But still she will never pay attention." "Brother," Cruz says, evidently saddened from the entire

¹²⁹ "Jesus L. G. Cruz to Joseph L. G. Cruz," 25 September 1944, Pacific Trust Territories, RG 313, National Archives, 1.

episode, “she really shame us all.” “But we can’t do anything,” Jesus L. G. Cruz finally states, as if to reassure his brother, “for on that moment I have found that love is blind.”

In his letter, Jesus L. G. Cruz realized that sometimes “love” precedes in importance even the most entrenched notions of familial and cultural obligation. Apparently, Flora Cruz not only refused to listen to her peers and family members but also to her teachers and a priest, an act considered highly disrespectful. By remaining committed to the unidentified man from Saipan, she resisted the collective beliefs of her particular island society. Namely, she opposed the ideas, implicitly stated in the letter, that Guam Chamorros should remain loyal to the United States and should avoid “collaborative” contact with Chamorros from Rota and Saipan. It is not known if she changed her loyalty to Japan, or if she considered such an idea in the first place. Flora Cruz’s actions defied the expected cultural, political and gendered norms of her time, and thus “shamed” her family. As in the case of Flora Cruz, the women of war in Guam have had to bear the burden of shame, then and now. Why have the stories of these women remained marginalized in histories of war? Why have the women, from the actual survivors to their descendents, not actively participated in war commemorations? What do their stories say, ultimately, about the making of history in the Mariana Islands?

COLLABORATION AND COMMEMORATION

Given the scope of these questions, one might think that *i famalaoan guerra siha*, or the women of war, lived separate lives and performed separate tasks under the Japanese colonial administration in Guam. That they sometimes found themselves in the dimly lit rooms of comfort stations, by force or personal choice, does not suggest they were isolated from the issues and events of that period. The women of war played very

important roles in the everyday happenings of the island. Historians have yet to examine, understand and truly appreciate these roles. This argument can be likewise applied to the non-Chamorro comfort women—the women whose lives scholars truly know little. As for the men who raped or engaged in sexual relations with the women, evidence reveals more about their official motivations than their personal emotions and thoughts. Indeed, some Japanese military officials saw the onset of the comfort stations in Guam as a normal and essential military procedure. Yet, they failed to grasp the fact that the institutionalization of sexual services and sexual slavery was anything but normal for others. The introduction of comfort stations profoundly impacted indigenous and colonial notions of sex and love, lust and rape. Situated within the context of wartime collaboration, the establishment of the comfort stations further complicated and constrained intra-cultural relations among all Chamorros. The impact of Chamorro police assistants and interpreters from the northern Marianas likewise contributed to the rise in intra-cultural conflict.

In the name of wartime assimilation policies, the Japanese colonial government did not intentionally create these intra-cultural divisions among the indigenous population. Nevertheless, they knowingly contributed to the severing of social relations in Guam among the interpreters, the women of war and the wider Chamorro population. This process resulted in the surfacing of alternative meanings for collaboration, a term originally associated with cooperation. In this respect, the idea of collaboration as a form of betrayal and disloyalty emerged with greater force, meaning and consequence. As demonstrated elsewhere in the military regimes of Nazi Germany, France and Italy, the

term “collaboration” generally signified the disloyalty produced by one’s social group.¹³⁰

In other words, the rise in fascist warring states and their local supporting “collaborators” gave shape to the meaning of collaboration as “an uneven distribution of power, an uneven partnership in which one party operates under duress or, even worse, betrays the interest of its own group.”¹³¹ Jan Thomas Gross describes collaborators as those “who would make the occupier the beneficiary of the trust vested in them by the population that had elected them to positions of authority, or those who are ready to accept posts that are traditionally vested with authority in a given community” and in service to the occupiers.¹³²

Since the Japanese colonial government discouraged the public election of colonial officials, the first of Gross’ descriptions of collaborators does not apply within the historical context of the Mariana Islands. Instead, the situation of accepting traditional forms of authority more closely resembled the dimensions of wartime collaboration on Guam. But what complicated definitions of collaboration was the fact that, prior to the outbreak of the war, conflicting notions of loyalty already existed among Chamorros. In the northern Mariana Islands, Chamorros expressed their loyalties to Japan in ways that paralleled Chamorro expressions of loyalty to the United States in Guam. Still, the prevailing view that collaboration meant betrayal persisted, primarily in Guam, as did all of the negative associations with the term. Understood as a collaborator in Guam, a comfort woman or interpreter became categorized as staunchly and strictly pro-Japanese. The idea of collaboration thus meant betrayal to the American war effort

¹³⁰ See, for instance, Robert O. Paxton, *Vichy France: Old Guard and New Order, 1940-1944* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1972).

¹³¹ Jan Thomas Gross, “Collaboration and Cooperation,” in *World War II, Crucible of the Contemporary World: Commentary and Readings*, ed. Loyd E. Lee (Armonk and London: M.E. Sharpe, Inc., 1991), 71.

¹³² *Ibid.*, 72.

in general and to the survival of Guam Chamorros in particular.

Much of the license given to the term collaboration also stemmed from its legal usage during war. By late August 1944, only a month after the invasions of Saipan, Tinian and Guam, the United States military conducted a series of investigations of those accused of collaborating with the Japanese in Guam. The military intelligence officers concluded that Japanese and “half-Japanese” civilians, Chamorro interpreters, Japanese military personnel, comfort women and others who worked directly with the Japanese colonial administration were considered collaborators. But in the war crime trials that followed these investigations, from 1945 to 1949, only those charged with perpetuating atrocities faced American Naval jurisprudence.¹³³ Among the various sentences administered, the military court found several Chamorro interpreters guilty of murder and attempted murder by torture. As Tim Maga notes, most of the Chamorros “found guilty in the collaboration trials were deported to Saipan or received short terms of hard labor in Guam.”¹³⁴ While some Chamorro comfort women were implicated in these cases, none received any court sentence. On the other hand, some Japanese officers received death sentences, held responsible for promoting war crimes, especially those committed against civilians and American prisoners of war.

What one finds particularly disturbing is not so much the sentencing of alleged collaborators. While the legal ramifications of collaboration in Guam beg further study, the wider, ongoing impact of collaboration with the Japanese remains the fundamental concern. For one, a collective, though suppressed, postwar malaise has emerged among

¹³³ The topic of war crime trials in Guam is beyond the scope of this dissertation, as it requires further investigation and analysis into the political, social and legal implications of “war crimes.”

¹³⁴ Tim Maga, *Judgment at Tokyo: The Japanese War Crime Trials* (Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 2001), 110.

the wartime and immediate postwar generations of Chamorros. This malaise manifests itself especially in memories about the violence done to the comfort women and the violence of the interpreters. Rick Castro, whose extended family resides in the village of Chalan Pago, Guam, recalls this feeling among his elders. He explains that “you couldn’t talk” about the comfort women because the elders could not “express the kind of horror of that defacement, physical, spiritual defacement to the women.”¹³⁵ “Looking back now,” says Castro, “it’s just a whole entire blanket for the most part, you know, a collective, mental, emotional malaise that was never dealt with.”¹³⁶

Some peoples in the Philippines also bear witness to this collective malaise. As David Joel Steinberg notes, the “quarantine of silence around collaboration is at least a partial contributor to the disturbing symptoms of social malaise in contemporary Philippine life.”¹³⁷ Comparing collaboration to a disease, Steinberg writes that “as with a cancer that is secretly feared but consciously ignored in the hope that it might vanish by itself, Filipinos have gone to some great lengths to avoid examining the consequences of collaboration.”¹³⁸ Steinberg’s assertion that memories of collaboration in the Philippines function like cancer illustrates the severity of the issue at hand. While nobody has likened collaboration with the Japanese to a disease in the Mariana Islands, the silence regarding the issue among Chamorros is widespread.

In the northern Marianas, memories of collaboration with the Japanese simply do not surface among Chamorros. Having experienced the war in terms of indigenous loyalty to Japan, for example, Chamorros in the northern Marianas did not develop

¹³⁵ Rick Castro, interview by the author, Mangilao, Guam, 10 January 2004.

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*

¹³⁷ Steinberg, 165.

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*, 164-165.

entrenched notions of betrayal in the way that Chamorros in Guam did. In this respect, Chamorros cooperated with the Japanese, rather than “collaborated” with them. This is not to say that Chamorros in the northern Marianas have not been affected by the idea of collaboration as betrayal. On the contrary, some Chamorros recognize that the interpreters sent to Guam in World War II have created an uncomfortable legacy very much felt in contemporary times in the northern Marianas. Herbert S. Del Rosario, a Chamorro archivist from Saipan, says that the memories of these men “hurt the northern Marianas very much. . . . I’ve heard that several of the Saipanese police were recruited and went down to Guam and they beat up a lot of people from Guam.”¹³⁹ “As a result,” he notes, a “bitterness” developed on the part of Guam Chamorros that “never went away.”¹⁴⁰ Samuel F. McPhetres, an educator in Saipan, asserts that even Chamorros of the northern Marianas have likewise been affected by the histories of interpreters and police in Guam. He says that “for the most part they are so ashamed” that nobody has come forward to talk about their roles as interpreters or police officers.¹⁴¹ The histories of interpreters, he adds, has created a “tremendous amount of hostility that is very deep, and that still exists.”¹⁴²

Henry S. Pangelinan, one of the few interpreters who, on occasion, openly talks about his memories, agrees that he has contributed to the emergence of intra-cultural conflicts among Chamorros. In his old age, he says that “I cannot remember everything from those days” in Guam.¹⁴³ “The little things I can forget easily,” Pangelinan

¹³⁹ Del Rosario, Interview.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid.

¹⁴¹ McPhetres 2002, Interview.

¹⁴² Ibid.

¹⁴³ Pangelinan, 81.

comments.¹⁴⁴ However, he notes that “those crimes against humanity I can never forget.”¹⁴⁵ Ashamed of his former role as an interpreter, Pangelinan now looks back at the violent actions committed against those in Guam in terms of “crimes against humanity,” rather than as his moral duty to the Emperor of Japan. Although he clearly shows remorse for what he did in Guam, Pangelinan says that he is “not interested in seeing any of the ones” he knew on the island.¹⁴⁶ Wanting to forget these aspects of the war, Pangelinan states that “I am eighty years old now. I am subject to go any time. I am just glad that this is behind me.”¹⁴⁷

While scattered memories of interpreters have surfaced from time to time as topics of discussion, the roles of comfort women continue to elude public reflection and debate. The women have kept quiet, despite the recent visibility generated by increasing numbers of former comfort women seeking apologies from the Japanese government. In the case of some Korean comfort women, for example, they “testify about their experiences of exploitation and violence in terms of the larger socioeconomic, cultural, and political issues—the difficult circumstances that they and their families faced under [Japanese] colonialism.”¹⁴⁸ As Hyun Sook Kim asserts, the “women survivors speak out by asserting their multivocal identities: they state that they are elders, women, poor, and subjects who were subordinated by both imperial/colonial and national governments because of their gender and ethnicity.”¹⁴⁹ Unlike some Korean comfort women who have aggressively sought international representation and economic compensation from the

¹⁴⁴ Ibid., 81.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid., 81.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid., 82.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid., 82.

¹⁴⁸ Hyun Sook Kim, “History and Memory: The ‘Comfort Women’ Controversy,” *Positions: East Asia Cultures Critique* 5, no. 1 (Spring 1997), 74.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid., 74.

Japanese government, no Chamorro elder has come forth publicly to voice her views. As Vicente M. Diaz notes, “not a single woman has stepped forward to participate in the war claims presently being made elsewhere in Asia.”¹⁵⁰ “These marginalized stories of life,” Diaz continues, “have the potential to disrupt the dominant paradigms but don’t because the social and political costs are tremendous and the returns have yet to present themselves.”¹⁵¹

As Diaz rightly suggests, the “costs” involved in the publicizing of such memories are too great. While it is possible, as he notes, that these memories “circulate in private circuits,” these same memories may not enter the public sphere because of their highly charged emotional, social and political content.¹⁵² It is already evident that the women of war, as well as interpreters, have become labeled as shameful people. Up to the recent 50th commemoration of Liberation Day in the Mariana Islands, the women of war and interpreters have received no mention in the islands’ official narrative of war. As Diaz implies, any effort to commemorate these survivors of war might, in fact, create further shame and disgrace for them and their families.

Thus, these women and men, their descendents and well-meaning people, may not commemorate their experiences for fear of re-inflicting undue pain and suffering. At the same time, however, the commemorations of World War II in the Marianas have not attempted to chart the memories and histories of these significant people. To do so would mean to talk about wartime collaboration and the origins of disloyalty and intra-cultural conflicts in the islands. It would be an effort to contest the concepts of American loyalty and liberation in the Marianas—concepts that also represent, suppress and alter the

¹⁵⁰ Diaz 2001, 159.

¹⁵¹ Ibid., 159.

¹⁵² Ibid., 159.

indigenous and colonial memories of the war in these islands. What would these contestations produce in terms of war commemorative activities? Under what premise would these contestations occur? To what extent would such efforts cause additional shame or much-needed reconciliation among Chamorros? These kinds of questions illustrate the dual process of “making history” in the Mariana Islands—a process that is as much about forgetting as it is about remembering. As Marita Sturken points out, “remembering is in itself a form of forgetting.”¹⁵³ The future of World War II commemorations in the Mariana Islands, and indeed the future of understanding the past, also depends on this process of remembrance and forgetting.

¹⁵³ Sturken, 82.

CHAPTER 8
ON THE LIFE AND DEATH OF FATHER DUEÑAS:
MOVING BEYOND WAR HISTORIES AND HISTORIES OF WAR

This dissertation opened with a discussion of Chris Perez Howard's novel *Mariquita*, a story about the tragic death of the author's mother, Mariquita, during the Japanese wartime invasion and occupation of Guam. It then examined the social construction of indigenous and colonial memories of World War II in the Mariana Islands. Employing an interdisciplinary approach, various chapters explored the construction of these memories through the entangled historical development of loyalty and liberation, colonial expansionist and occupational policies, indigenous cultural politics, rehabilitation programs and, lastly, commemorative activities. This dissertation has also endeavored to replicate the novel's comparative treatment of three areas of study: Japan, the United States, and the Mariana Islands. Few novels, let alone histories of the war, focus on the poetics and politics of the local and the global, the colonial and the indigenous, and the Pacific's "place" in the East/West dichotomy.

It is only fitting, then, that this dissertation commemorates the novel and its agents of war and survival, rather than simply end with a summary conclusion. For, as this project demonstrates, commemoration does not merely imply celebration, lamentation or closure. Commemoration also suggests, more pointedly, an active contestation and deliberation of the past by peoples of different cultural, economic and political traditions in the present. This chapter revisits these issues of war, memory and history as expressed in one central, though underdeveloped, historical figure in the novel, namely Father Jesus Baza Dueñas. As Howard states, on 12 July 1944, "Father Dueñas was one of several people beheaded in Tai by the *Kaikuntai* after suffering weeks of

torture. Many others were beaten, tortured and killed elsewhere—some were herded into caves and killed with grenades. In the midst of this inferno, Mariquita and the other girls awaited their fate.”¹ It is through an understanding of the life and death of Father Dueñas, as well as those around him, that scholars are able to reflect further not just upon the “fate” of war victims and, conversely, the “glory” of war victors. That is the stuff for the making of war histories. Instead, this chapter posits Father Dueñas as an ethnographic and mnemonic figure of the war that can help scholars think about the possibilities of and limitations on advancing comparative and indigenous studies on World War II.

ON THE LIFE AND DEATH OF FATHER DUEÑAS

In the Pacific Islands, some commemorative activities of the war focus on important figures of local and even transnational significance. As Geoffrey M. White explains, some of these individuals have been commemorated precisely because they “fit neatly into war narratives with their scripts of loyalty and liberation.”² These individuals are local figures in that they speak to various indigenous experiences of the war, yet they are transnational figures in that they also represent competing national narratives of victory and defeat, tragedy and triumph. Jacob Vouza of the Solomon Islands is one example. In the fiftieth anniversary commemoration of the war in 1994, observes White, he has been hailed a “war hero” because “his story could be assimilated so well into the dominant narratives of liberation in which local actors play the part of loyal native, ratifying the Allied epic of war.”³ American veteran associations have praised Vouza for

¹ Howard 1986, 78. The *Kaikuntai* was an agricultural unit established in Guam to provide food for the island’s military force.

² White 1995, 542.

³ *Ibid.*, 546.

being a courageous wartime aide, and numerous books and memorabilia about the war continue to see him as a war hero. Also, a civic statue has been recently built in his honor, the only one of an indigenous person “erected in Solomon Islands public space,” and second to the previously constructed statue of Christ at the Anglican cathedral in the capital.⁴

Yet, as White notes, Vouza also participated as one of the leaders in the anti-British Maasina Rule movement in the Solomon Islands, challenging British colonial authority and demanding local autonomy.⁵ Although British colonial officials arrested him in 1947, he was released and not charged with any criminal activity because of his status as a war hero. The memorialization of Vouza suggests, in part, that the indigenous actor in these memories of the war is “not portrayed as passively loyal but as a deft manipulator of the signs of dominance and submission.”⁶ Vouza likewise appropriated whatever roles he believed could have advanced his various interests, demonstrating that discourses of loyalty and disloyalty can be shaped and altered on both local and transnational terms.

While the narratives of American loyalty and liberation gain the most publicity in commemorations of the war in the Solomons, this does not mean that lesser-known memories of the war are insignificant. Although transnational remembrances of the war often draw from monolithic narratives of victory or defeat, marginal views of the past continue to contend for increased visibility, legitimization and reflection. The commemoration of World War II in the Mariana Islands similarly draws from narratives of loyalty and liberation, revealing that indigenous and colonial remembrances of the war

⁴ Ibid., 542.

⁵ Ibid., 552.

⁶ Ibid., 552.

compete for public reflection and representation. The story of the life and death of Father Dueñas, for example, raises questions about the future of commemorative activities of the war in the Mariana Islands, as well as the very theoretical and methodological grounds for studying these commemorations.

On 19 March 1911, Jesus Baza Dueñas was born to Josefa Baza and Luis Paulino Dueñas. Later, at the age of twenty seven, he became the second priest of Chamorro ancestry ordained in the Philippines in 1938.⁷ Returning shortly thereafter to Guam, Father Dueñas assumed, along with another priest by the name of Father Oscar Lujan Calvo, the shared duties of attending to the religious affairs of the island's Catholic population. From 1941 to 1944, Father Dueñas managed the spiritual needs of the southern half of Guam, with Father Calvo taking care of the northern villages. Under Japanese rule, the island became a wartime site of conflicting religious, cultural and political interests, with Dueñas sometimes situated at the center of these events. Unlike the more diplomatic Calvo, who adhered to the demands of the Japanese occupational forces, Dueñas had little reserve in the way he conducted affairs with the Japanese. Calvo believed that Dueñas lacked tact, but called him a "very brave man," not openly fearful of physical pain, cultural embarrassment or political persecution.⁸

But the war had created a new set of colonial conditions and circumstances in Guam, as it had elsewhere throughout the Mariana Islands and its neighboring regions. Despite or because of the threat of violence, Dueñas sometimes defied the expectations of the Japanese colonial government, seeking shelter in his faith in God and risking his life

⁷ Political Status Education Coordinating Commission 1995, 179. The first Chamorro ordained as a priest was Father Jose Bernardo Palomo Y Torres in 1859.

⁸ Oscar Lujan Calvo, Fr., interview by Vicente M. Diaz, Mangilao, Guam, 24 May 1994. This author thanks Vicente M. Diaz for sharing his interview transcripts of Father Calvo.

in the process. Indeed, he may have sought a form of martyrdom premised on resistance, rather than one based on sixteenth-century, Christian notions of conquest and conversion in the New World. Or, quite simply, Dueñas probably saw the Japanese, like other “children” of God, as his peers, neither lower nor higher in socio-economic rank and status. Perhaps he possessed a critical, indigenous perspective to interpret the war in local and global terms. As an actor in the theater of the Pacific War, perhaps Dueñas welcomed all forms of opposition for, in his mind, no one threatened his belief in God’s spiritual protection and intervention. Or perhaps people have come to remember him in these terms.

When asked, for example, by Catholic Japanese priests to encourage village parishioners to attend Japanese language masses, Dueñas openly denied their requests, stating in effect that Christian missionaries speak the Word of God and not the word of foreign lands and propaganda.⁹ He also “read American magazines in public when they were outlawed, burned candles in his church when he wasn’t supposed to, and continued to speak out against the invaders.”¹⁰ Knowing that Dueñas was a “poor collaborator,” Japanese colonial authorities thus contemplated the possibility of deporting him to the northern Mariana Islands of Rota or Tinian.¹¹ These plans never came to fruition because exiling Dueñas might incite the Chamorro population whose loyalties to Japan, it was believed, were already considered questionable. In the view of the Japanese colonial government, Dueñas did not bow properly to its demands. He consistently suffered, it

⁹ Julius Sullivan, *The Phoenix Rises: A Mission History of Guam* (New York: Seraphic Mass Association, 1957), 164.

¹⁰ “‘Quick, Like a Spark’: Again, the Story of A Priest who Died,” *Pacific Daily News*, 21 July 1973, 38A.

¹¹ Sullivan, 163.

had been claimed, from having a “stiffneck.”¹²

In his diary, furthermore, Dueñas privately reflected upon the contradictions of Japan’s “liberation” rhetoric of “Asia for Asians” and an Asia and Pacific region without Western colonial rule. He often indicted Japanese colonialism as violent and intrusive, citing that the Japanese military and civilian populations on the island have “the freedom to slap, to kick...even to kill.”¹³ Dueñas wrote that the Japanese call Chamorros “thieves,” yet it was the Japanese who forcefully displaced Chamorro families in the southern village of Sumay and indiscriminately expropriated locally farmed vegetables and livestock.¹⁴ In a section of his diary titled “Justice and Equality,” Dueñas described how an unidentified, presumably Chamorro, pregnant woman was forced to surrender her seat on a bus to a Japanese police officer.¹⁵ Evidently drawing from his Christian faith, as well as from American principles of democracy and egalitarianism, Dueñas portrayed a series of brief ethnographic sketches of life under Japanese wartime rule.

He criticized, it seemed, almost everyone around him. For example, his identification as a Chamorro of Guam did not deter him from calling attention to the “privileged” disposition of the island’s Chamorro elite.¹⁶ Dueñas mentioned that the island’s elite, many of whom held ties with the previous American Naval government, received “special” teachers, bus passes and rations from the Japanese colonial

¹² “History of the Death of Father Dueñas,” 1945, copy in “Father Dueñas” File, Government Collection, Nieves Flores Memorial Library, Hagatña, Guam, 1

¹³ Jesus Baza Dueñas, Fr., “Father Dueñas’ Diary,” [1942?], copy in “Father Dueñas” File, Government Collection, Nieves Flores Memorial Library, Hagatña, Guam, no page number.

¹⁴ Ibid., no page number.

¹⁵ Ibid., no page number.

¹⁶ Ibid., no page number. Dueñas used the term *mestizu*, a label of Spanish origin indicating the “mixture” of Amerindian and Iberian peoples. In the Marianas context, this term has come to signify the “upper class” of Chamorros, also called the *manakhilo*. Laurel Monnig, a graduate student at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign is currently studying the political, social and racial implications of *mestizu* in the contemporary decolonization movement in Guam. See her in-progress dissertation, “‘Proving Chamorro’: Indigenous Narratives of Race, Identity and Decolonization in Guam.”

government. He also expressed disappointment and disgust in the attitudes and behavior of some Chamorros from the northern Mariana Islands. But rather than focus on their loyalties to Japan, Dueñas scrutinized their loyalty to God. "Saipan people," he wrote, "boast of their Catholicity, yet they whipped, lashed, kicked, injured and even killed innocent people."¹⁷ "Out of 40 or 60," Dueñas noted, "only 6 go to Church and 3 or 4 received the Sacraments."¹⁸ "They marry in the civil courts," he noted with disdain, and with increasing dismay, he added, "with women of bad reputation."¹⁹ Dueñas concluded in a sarcastic manner that "they are good Catholics because they claimed to be so."

Given his partial account of Chamorro inter and intra-cultural relations in Guam, it is not clear if Dueñas felt "betrayed" by the privileged or violent practices of other Chamorros. Nor did he say much about the state of colonial affairs in the northern Mariana Islands, or explicitly contrast Japanese and American forms of colonialism. At the same time, he did not speak in terms considered "loyal" to either the Japanese or American nation-states. In many instances, Dueñas clearly judged others based on a strict moral code, as revealed in the beliefs and customs of Catholicism. In his personal diary, one wonders, though, why Dueñas made no explicit reference to the American navy sailor George R. Tweed. This navy sailor, along with five other Americans, escaped and, with the assistance of Chamorro families, tried to elude capture by the scout groups led by the Japanese police. As mentioned previously, only Tweed survived to see the end of the war. The other five Americans were captured, perishing by either Japanese bayonet or gun. Due to the unselfish efforts of numerous Chamorro families, Tweed was able to live beyond the war.

¹⁷ Ibid., no page number.

¹⁸ Ibid., no page number.

¹⁹ Ibid., no page number.

Recounted Tweed, "I'd have liked to be absolutely alone, but I had to trust at least one other person in order to obtain food."²⁰ Already suffering from limited resources, Chamorro families continued to aid Tweed because he symbolically represented the United States. They even gave him the best food, like corned beef, eggs, turkey, whiskey, cakes, and chickens. As Joaquin Limtiaco remembered, "Tweed was a symbol of the United States which was fighting in the war.... We were determined to fight, too, in our own way."²¹ Throughout the entire war period, then, Chamorro families from various parts of the island assisted Tweed in one way or another. As Evelyn Rose Flores explains, Tweed "began to obligate" Chamorros to provide resources for his survival.²² Notions of respect and generosity, writes Flores, "captured in the phrase *ina'fa'maolek*, demands that when one is approached with a request by a stranger, and especially one who has some authority behind him or one in need, one must try as far as possible to fulfill that request."²³

Tweed might have understood the Chamorro custom of *ina'fa'maolek*, taking advantage of Chamorro notions of respect, gratitude and assistance. Attesting to the widespread help of Chamorros, as loyal and even culturally obligated colonial subjects, Tweed lived in at least eleven locations in the central and northern parts of Guam. He often moved through the jungle and found refuge, all due to the help of Chamorros. But, by doing so, these Chamorro families risked their lives, as anyone found helping Tweed would be severely punished or executed by the Japanese colonial authorities. Dueñas knew this, as did many families residing on the island.

²⁰ George R. Tweed, *Robinson Crusoe, U.S.N.: The Adventures of George R. Tweed, RM1 on Japanese-held Guam* (Barrigada: Pacific Research Institute, 1994), 129.

²¹ "Because of Tweed: In They Came Again...and Back He went," *Guam Daily News*, 21 July 1960, 8.

²² Evelyn Rose Flores, "Rewriting Paradise: Countering Desire, Denial, and the Exotic in American Literary Representations of the Pacific," (PhD dissertation. University of Michigan, 2002), 322.

²³ *Ibid.*, 322-323.

Based on the diary alone, itself an incomplete narrative with missing pages and passages, it is plausible that Dueñas may or may not have extensively contemplated Tweed's impact on the island and on the Japanese colonial government. Still, they knew each other and the kind of spiritual and political capital each possessed. Dueñas remained a spiritual caregiver of the people as much as Tweed remained a symbol of America's possible return to the island. Both resisted Japanese colonial governance with Dueñas sometimes openly defying Japanese authority and with Tweed carefully avoiding it. They also understood, as many realized, that the life and death of Dueñas very much intertwined with the circumstances of Tweed's life. In 1943, a year before the American invasion of the Mariana Islands, the stakes in the survival of these two men increased, as did questions about Chamorro loyalties to the United States and Japan.

Tweed himself clearly knew that a strong, collective expression of Chamorro loyalty to the United States would guarantee his survival. Reflecting on his thirty-one months of hiding in Guam's jungles, he wrote that "I could not have survived one week if it had not been for the loyalty of the Chamorros."²⁴ Yet Tweed's perceptions of Chamorro loyalty remained inconsistent and contradictory, neither totally accepting nor rejecting the notion of Chamorro loyalty to the United States. In his memory of 1942, which marked a year into his hiding in Guam's jungles, Tweed noted that he "did not know how loyal the natives were."²⁵ On numerous occasions, he especially argued that "Chamorro gossip" nearly revealed his whereabouts to the Japanese military and police forces.

Tweed observed that Chamorros "would die to save me, but in their simple,

²⁴ George Ray Tweed, "31 Months Behind the Jap Lines," *The American Magazine*, December 1944, 19.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 20.

primitive way they could not resist telling others that they had seen me or helped me.”²⁶ He even began to equate Chamorro acts of gossiping with betrayal and disloyalty. In various caves and make-shift shelters, Tweed said that the “constant fear of betrayal marred my happiness.”²⁷ “But, again,” he emphasized, “like all those noble and innocent people, they talked too much. It seemed impossible to stop them. Once I counted ...²⁶ persons who had heard where I was or had been there to see me.”²⁸ “I warned them again and again,” said Tweed, “but still they talked.”²⁹ How could the Chamorros of Guam not talk about “Joaquin Cruz,” Tweed’s “underground name,” let alone the surrounding and impending perils of the war?³⁰ How could they not have reflected critically upon their cultural symbols of survival? How could they not have engaged in what they knew were political acts of resistance, cultural processes of obligation and historical events of profound implications? How could they not have embraced their roles as, in the words of Michel-Rolph Trouillot, the “actors and narrators” of historicity?³¹

Many Chamorros in Guam knew that their lives were interwoven with the lives of Tweed and Dueñas. Local stories about Tweed—whether big and small, false and true—helped Chamorros to interpret the global and local consequences of the war. If they failed in assisting Tweed, then Tweed failed in aiding them, and so too would the United States fail to return to the island. But Tweed also tried not to “fail” the Chamorros of Guam. As Tweed noted in retrospect in 1977, long after the war ended, “during the entire ordeal I realized that if I antagonized just one Chamorro who knew where I was

²⁶ Ibid., 20.

²⁷ Ibid., 104.

²⁸ Ibid., 108.

²⁹ Ibid., 20.

³⁰ Tweed 1994, 100.

³¹ Trouillot, 150.

hiding I would be finished very quickly.”³² “Therefore,” he said, “I took every precaution to remain on friendly terms with the people.” Tweed’s friendly approach probably only applied to the late Antonio Artero, the Chamorro farmer who sheltered Tweed for twenty one months, the longest time Tweed stayed in any one place. As an indication of their friendship, Artero likened Tweed to his “brother.”³³ And like other Chamorros, Artero helped him because of his lack of food and shelter, as well as because he symbolically represented the United States. But Tweed probably liked Artero less for his offerings of food and labor than for his ability to remain quiet. As Artero proudly claimed, “not even the finger of the Japanese come over to my body.”³⁴ “But you know why?” he asked.³⁵ Referring to the power of silence, Artero stated, “I took the needle and the thread and sew my mouth.”³⁶

Although Artero may have voluntarily “sewed his mouth,” perhaps lessening the chances of revealing the whereabouts of Tweed, the idea of silencing one’s views did not apply to all Chamorros, let alone the “gossip” network that crisscrossed the island. As much as Tweed proclaimed his gratitude and appreciation for Chamorro assistance, he still despised anyone talking about him—conversations, it is alleged, that later led to the death of Dueñas. On 31 August 1943, almost a year before the Japanese execution of Dueñas and the subsequent American invasion of Guam, Tweed wrote a letter to the late Agueda I. Johnston, signed “J.C.” as in Joaquin Cruz, and addressed to “J” as in Johnston.

³² “George R. Tweed to *Pacific Daily News*,” 7 June 1977, copy in Agueda Iglesias Johnston’s Papers, Box 14, Folder 8, 1 of 1, Richard F. Taitano Micronesia Area Research Center Manuscript Collection, University of Guam, 2.

³³ Quoted in Jim Leeke, “Antonio Artero: A Modest Guam Hero,” *Islander*, 9 October 1977, 2.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 3.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 3.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 3.

Johnston, it should be recalled, played an instrumental role as an educator in Guam, and created the island's first Chamorro-centered commemoration of the war, Liberation Day. Also, Tweed often secretly corresponded, or "gossiped," with Johnston. They shared news about the American military activities in the Pacific region, increasing Tweed's visibility and risk of capture, especially since messages and articles like magazines and food often traveled through their hands into the hands of others. Tweed even produced several editions of a typed, one-page, newspaper called the *Guam Eagle*, which he only briefly circulated in 1942 for four months because he soon realized that it posed a risk.³⁷ Further, he had a girlfriend by the name of "Tonie," whom he frequently saw until the final months of the war in Guam.³⁸ And Tweed wondered why many Chamorros talked about him? And yet he continued to write letters to others?

Josefa, Antonio's wife, eventually delivered Tweed's letter to Johnston at her residence in Hagatña. The letter expressed Tweed's deep consternation over what he believed were Chamorros disloyal to the United States. By this time in the war, the Japanese police had begun to interrogate and physically punish Chamorros disloyal to Japan, specifically those suspected of harboring Tweed.³⁹ As Japanese navy sailor Hisashi Hirose explained, investigations on suspected Chamorros were done in "secrecy."⁴⁰ "If we received information concerning [Tweed's] whereabouts," Hirose said, "we set up blinds on nearby hills to those locations mentioned."⁴¹ Thus, suspected "pro-American" Chamorros like B.J. Bordallo and Joaquin Limtiaco, among numerous others, experienced various beatings by the Japanese. In a humorous, but serious manner,

³⁷ Tweed 1944, 104.

³⁸ Tweed 1994., 96.

³⁹ Rogers, 178.

⁴⁰ Hirose, 62.

⁴¹ Ibid., 62.

Limtiaco stated that it “seemed that whenever the Japanese felt like clobbering someone, they’d pick me up at my ranch. Each time they got a tip as to the whereabouts of Tweed, in they come and back to the calaboose I go.”⁴² In the letter, Tweed intimidated Johnston with a comparable form of violence endured by those persecuted by the Japanese, that is, he threatened violence not at the hands of the Japanese, but at the hands of the Americans.

Warning Johnston to remain silent on matters pertaining to him, Tweed wrote, “consider what will happen when the Americans come, as they will in a short time now. Instead of being jubilant and celebrating with the rest of us, you would have a far more serious position to face.”⁴³ “I can name at least three men,” he continued, perhaps referring to Chamorro “collaborators” for the Japanese, “who will face a firing squad when they [the American military] arrive.”⁴⁴ Referencing not only her perceived connection to disloyal Chamorros, but also her gendered identity, Tweed emphatically asked, “Do you want to place yourself alongside of them? In war time, the U.S. Army officials have no compunction against shooting a lady, for a military offense.”⁴⁵ As if that threat did not suffice, he claimed that “even if you were fortunate enough to escape such a tragic end, it would mean long years in prison for you. Your own self-respect would be gone, also the love and respect of those whom you love and who love you.”⁴⁶ Finally, as if to silent the production of any indigenous narratives of the war, Tweed proclaimed that “the Japs would not even know I am in Guam if the people had not talked

⁴² “Because of Tweed,” 8.

⁴³ “J.C. to J.,” 31 August 1943, copy in Agueda Iglesias Johnston’s Papers, Box 14, Folder 8, 1 of 1, Richard F. Taitano Micronesian Area Research Center Manuscript Collection, University of Guam, 1.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 1.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 1.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 1.

so much.”⁴⁷ More words of rage, distrust, and terror filled the pages of the letter, which then concluded, rather cordially, “with sincere sympathy and admiration, your true friend, J.C.”

When asked in 1977 to recall her interactions with Tweed during the war, Johnston refrained from mentioning the letter and its contents. She simply stated that if Tweed “were any kind of hero, he would have turned himself in.”⁴⁸ Johnston, herself interrogated and beaten by the Japanese police, said that she would never have revealed anything about Tweed to the Japanese. “The Japanese could have killed me three or four times,” she firmly expressed, yet “I would not have given them the satisfaction of giving them information about Tweed.”⁴⁹ Johnston might have personally despised Tweed, but she could not deny his symbolism. Tweed still carried the hope that America, or another “liberating” force, would save the Chamorros of Guam from Japanese wartime rule.

After the war, Tweed also remained silent about the letter he wrote to Johnston. After all, the letter’s contents would have tarnished his reputation as a “war hero,” or as one correspondent put it, as a “man who survives against all odds, against time and despair, against the thousand, small, cruel indignities of war.”⁵⁰ Moreover, the letter would have suggested that Tweed was not an American symbol of wartime hope, trust, and survival. In fact, Tweed sometimes tried to distance himself from Chamorros, the same people offering him relatively safe refuge. He specifically refused to “go native,” attempting to uphold the civilized image of the colonizer.

Hiding in a cave, Tweed once remarked, “I was tired of squatting in front of the

⁴⁷ Ibid., 2.

⁴⁸ Quoted in Cherie Fichter, “Tweed and the Schoolmarm,” *Islander*, 11 September 1977, 2.

⁴⁹ Ibid., 2.

⁵⁰ George Mark Brown, “George Tweed—The Ghost of Guam,” *Guam Daily News*, 22 July 1966, 19.

fire like a savage, at mealtime, reaching into my kettle or frying pan for food.”⁵¹ Missing the civilized accompaniments of a western home, such as a chair and table, Tweed desperately wanted “to sit and read in a civilized and comfortable position, rather than cross-legged on my mat or with my back against the rock cliff, legs stretched out like ramrods in front of me.”⁵² He also shaved his beard once a week, or whenever he planned to meet somebody, but more importantly so he could “feel civilized.”⁵³ Did Tweed, then, not want to be like Chamorros? Or did he see himself becoming like them, but refused to identify locally with their indigenous culture? And did he envision Chamorros as like Americans or as unlike Americans?

One wonders, indeed, if the American sailor George R. Tweed truly appreciated Chamorro forms of assistance and if he saw Chamorro loyalties to the United States as meaningful and relevant forms of resistance to Japanese colonial rule. The attitudes and behaviors of Tweed, as well as Guam Chamorro understandings of him, illustrated the various and complex power relationships embedded in the everyday survival of people on the island. In attempting to understand the life and death of Father Dueñas, it is important to consider the various circumstances surrounding the wartime survival of Tweed and the Chamorros of Guam. Important issues of historical representation and erasure come to the fore in trying to explore the role Tweed played in the death of Dueñas. In the final days before the death of Dueñas on 12 July 1944, the politics of Japanese and American colonialism and indigenous Chamorro cultural agency forcefully converged upon the priest and those who wished to see him live or die.

Some claimed that Tweed killed Dueñas, even though the two probably never met

⁵¹ Tweed 1994, 164.

⁵² Ibid., 164.

⁵³ Ibid., 164.

face-to-face. Others said the Japanese police, the *Kempetai*, murdered Dueñas. Or maybe the “talkative” nature of Chamorro gossip silenced the priest. A few might have even argued that Dueñas was already dead, perhaps “reborn,” as the divine will of God had predetermined his life and death at an earlier time. No matter the case, Dueñas knew about Tweed and about his risking the lives of Chamorro families. At one point in the war, some recall that Dueñas traveled to the northern village of Yigo where Tweed hid to “tell the people that if Tweed kept on acting badly to tie him up.”⁵⁴ Overall, though, Dueñas cared little about the man, unless, of course, he endangered others. And whenever the Japanese police questioned Dueñas about the whereabouts of Tweed, he simply informed the Japanese that he, too, knew few details about the American. Tweed likewise initially had no interest in forging a relationship with Dueñas.

Of all the diverse actors and narrators of the war, it would be a “woman of bad reputation” who would merge the stories of Tweed’s life and Dueñas’ death. In the village of Inalahan, where Dueñas conducted many of his Catholic services at St. Joseph’s church, a “woman in his parish ... was not leading an exemplary life.”⁵⁵ Her name was Nettie Durham, a Chamorro woman who “became friendly” with a Japanese official by the name of Churima.⁵⁶ Churima worked as an official for the Japanese *Minseibu* office in Inalahan. Dueñas disapproved of their relationship, partly because Durham had already been married twice, both times to American sailors in the time before the war.⁵⁷ But Dueñas appeared particularly disturbed by Durham because

⁵⁴ ““Quick, Like a Spark,”” 38A.

⁵⁵ “History of the Death of Father Dueñas,” 1.

⁵⁶ Josephy, 85.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 85.

“everything she wanted, Churima had done for her.”⁵⁸ This meant that she wielded tremendous power, which she used for her own personal benefit. For example, people from the village worked for her, provided her with chickens and produce and, if they protested, the Japanese threatened them with arrest.⁵⁹

Eventually, Dueñas fielded complaints from the Chamorros of this village and related the news to the main office of the *Minseibu* in Hagatña. At the office, it is rumored, one of Churima’s colleagues overheard the reason for Dueñas’ visit. What was initially a complaint filed by Dueñas, regarding Durham’s abuse of local resources and labor, soon spiraled into a series of accusations against the priest. The charges that Dueñas disobeyed Japanese orders were not new. For example, some believed that Dueñas upset a Japanese police officer for not returning to Inalahan before sunset, due to his time spent at a baptismal in a nearby village. Another charge stated that Dueñas harassed a Japanese official to return his horse saddle. That Durham helped to arouse suspicion of Dueñas also attracted the attention of Japanese officials. But the allegation that Dueñas publicly met the American sailor George R. Tweed immediately sparked the interest of Japanese police officials and set in motion their interrogation of Dueñas and others deemed guilty with him.⁶⁰

The Japanese police sent an unnamed Chamorro interpreter from Saipan or Rota to inform Dueñas, ignorant of the charges directed against him, to go to the *Minseibu* office located in Inalahan. Dueñas complied, only to find that his nephew and local attorney Eddie Dueñas had been arrested. On 8 July 1944, Father Dueñas was taken into custody, as was Juan Pangelinan, who was suspected of harboring Tweed. Within hours,

⁵⁸ Ibid., 85.

⁵⁹ Ibid., 85.

⁶⁰ Ibid., 86.

the men suffered beatings from the Japanese. Repeatedly, the Japanese asked them if they knew where Tweed hid. Eddie Dueñas informed the Japanese that his uncle knew how to get to Tweed. The priest then replied that his nephew, already disoriented from the torture, spoke nonsense.

Later that evening, the Japanese police transferred the men to a Japanese police station in Tutuhon, a small mountain overlooking the village of Hagatña. There, the beatings resumed in a shack. Francisco G. Lujan, a neighbor who lived nearby, “heard everything that went on.”⁶¹ Lujan stated that “every time the priest denied that he knew the whereabouts of Tweed he was hit with a club.”⁶² The Japanese, recalled Lujan, made Dueñas “kneel on the floor, and they placed a club in the joints of his legs and they jumped on it.”⁶³ A few Chamorro interpreters, such as Antonio Camacho, participated in the interrogation of the three men. As Lujan noted, the “Japanese were hollering at [Dueñas] and yelling at the interpreters, and the interpreters were shouting at Father Duenas.”⁶⁴

After several hours of torture, the Japanese tied the men to wooden posts outside the shack. They remained in seated positions until they were moved to Tai on the evening of 12 July 1944. Earlier that afternoon, Juan Flores and Joaquin Limtiaco, men from Guam hired by the Japanese police to apprehend suspects, returned to the Tutuhon police station. They saw the poor condition of Dueñas and the other men. Without delay, Flores and Limtiaco asked Dueñas if he wanted to escape from the Japanese. Flores and Limtiaco offered to untie the men and to help them flee. In response to their

⁶¹ Francisco G. Lujan and Joaquin Aflague Limtiaco, “Political Martyr: Last Hours of Father Duenas,” *Pacific Profile*, July 1965, 10.

⁶² *Ibid.*, 10.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, 10.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 10.

kind suggestion, Dueñas is reported to have said that “the Japanese know they can’t prove their charges against me. I appreciate your offer, but we must also think of our own families. You must know what would happen to them if we escaped. I’m positive the Japanese will retaliate against them.”⁶⁵ Firmly, the priest instructed the men to “go and look after your families.”⁶⁶ Already weak from days of physical abuse and dehydration, the priest assuaged the young men about their concern for him and the other two prisoners. Finally, he said, “God will look after me. I have done no wrong.”⁶⁷

MOVING BEYOND WAR HISTORIES AND HISTORIES OF WAR

On the morning of 13 July 1944, news traveled quickly that Father Jesus Baza Dueñas, along with his nephew Eddie and fellow prisoner Juan Pangelinan, had been executed by the Japanese police at Tai. Notice about the death of these men came from a Saipanese interpreter by the name of Joaquin Dueñas. At the Manengon camp in the village of Yoña, Joaquin Dueñas, a possible relative of Father Dueñas, revealed to other Chamorro families that he had witnessed the murder of Father Dueñas. The Chamorro interpreter stated that the Japanese transferred the priest and the other two men to Tai, where the Japanese agricultural unit was stationed. The motives for transferring the men to another site were not clear, as numerous executions and massacres took place in different sites and for a variety of reasons in the summer of 1944.

A few days later, on 18 July 1944, Mariquita Perez Howard, the mother of Chris Perez Howard and the subject of the novel *Mariquita*, also disappeared in the same area. That she perished in the same village as Dueñas illustrates that many people shared a collective war story of life and death, triumph and tragedy. In this respect, memories of

⁶⁵ Joaquin Lintiaco, “The Last Days of Fr. Duenas,” *Guam Daily News*, 21 July 1960, 8.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 8.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 8.

the war in the Mariana Islands can be described as collective in that they reference a common war past. Japanese, Americans and Chamorros, all of varying generations, now share a collective memory of the war. To put it another way, the war has provided an important local and global reference point through which the colonizer and the colonized can come to terms with what are, in fact, diverse interpretations of the past.

By examining the figure of Father Jesus Baza Dueñas, one finds that the politics of colonialism, indigenous cultural agency and commemoration continue to inform the meaning and direction of these memories. Religious followers, for example, have described Father Dueñas as a “revolutionary, extremely dedicated to American democracy and ideals.”⁶⁸ Others claimed that he was a “simple, but aggressive priest.”⁶⁹ A college preparatory school and seminary for Catholic priests, named Father Dueñas Memorial High School, was built in memoriam for Dueñas in 1949. Located in Tai, the school boasts a life-size statue of the priest, who stands upright, with his arms and palms facing forward. The peaceful gesture welcomes visitors and students alike to the place of his wartime death and postwar memorialization.

On the other hand, the figure of the American navy sailor George R. Tweed has not received any central place in the commemoration of the war in Guam. Although many Chamorros interpreted him as a symbol of America during the war, not even the postwar commemoration of Americans as “liberators” could have “saved” Tweed from Guam Chamorro criticisms of him as a “betrayal” and “coward.”⁷⁰ After the war, many

⁶⁸ “Ten Years Afterward,” *Umatuna Si Yuus*, 11 July 1954, 5.

⁶⁹ “Who was Father Duenas?” *The Pacific Daily News*, 9 July 1970, 24.

⁷⁰ Another reason why some Chamorros refused to celebrate Tweed as a “hero” is because they felt that he had not adequately shown his appreciation to them. For example, George R. Tweed petitioned the Chevrolet Motor company to purchase and ship a car to Antonio Artero in Guam for his assistance in keeping the American sailor alive during the war. The company gladly obliged, sending Artero a vehicle in 1946. Some Chamorros might have misinterpreted the car as Tweed’s “gift” to Artero, when, in fact, the

Chamorros believed that had Tweed surrendered to the Japanese police nobody would have been unnecessarily persecuted and tortured. Because Tweed failed to give himself up, an act many Chamorros then discouraged him from doing, several Chamorro families suffered Japanese police cruelty. As B.J. Bordallo recalls, "I was hoping...that Tweed would appear before the Japanese officials and say, 'I'm the one you want; these people [Chamorros] are innocent; do not punish them anymore.'"⁷¹

In the northern Mariana Islands, not many Chamorros identify with the life and death of George R. Tweed. As Juan C. Camacho explains, Tweed represents "the history of Guam and not the history of the CNMI and that is why we in the CNMI don't know him."⁷² The case is different for Father Jesus Baza Dueñas. Camacho states that Chamorros in the northern Marianas still refer to Dueñas as "the one who was killed in Guam during the Japanese occupation."⁷³ The people remember the priest, he says, because of the shared Catholic tradition among Chamorros. Yet the older generations often hesitate to "elaborate" upon why the Japanese executed Dueñas. Perhaps the story of the life and death of Dueñas does not correlate to Chamorro narratives of loyalty to Japan in the northern Marianas. Or perhaps the story of Dueñas, cast in the light of a "victimized" Chamorro and Catholic, disturbs Chamorro notions of intra-cultural sameness and difference in the northern Marianas. Indeed, as Camacho notes, a "silent feeling" emerges when topics like Father Dueñas, interpreters and police assistants are remembered and discussed among friends and family.⁷⁴

Chevrolet Motor company paid for all of the expenses. Nevertheless, some Chamorros felt that their wartime generosity had been taken for granted and thus refused to celebrate the sailor as a celebrated figure. For more on this subject, see Flores.

⁷¹ Quoted in Cherie Fichter, "A Matter of Survival," *Islander*, 25 September 1977, 3.

⁷² Juan C. Camacho, interview by the author, Yigo, Guam, 30 March 2004.

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

These silences resonate not only in memory, but in history. For example, the reasons why the Chamorro interpreter from Saipan, in the climax of the war, chose to elaborate upon the death of Dueñas remains somewhat elusive. One wonders what happened to the interpreter Joaquin Dueñas after he revealed the passing of Dueñas. Did members of the camp embrace or assault him? Did his family in Guam and Saipan call him loyal or disloyal? And did he later choose to remember or suppress these memories of the war? Unfortunately, little is known about this man or about Nettie Durham, the Chamorro woman who ran the *Minseibu* office in the southern village of Inalahan and who helped to ensure the arrest of Father Jesus Baza Dueñas. Not much is known about her life and death, or about her rise to power in a time when women, let alone indigenous women, held no place in Japan's wartime empire. One desires to hear what other Chamorros and Japanese thought about this particular woman. One wishes them to speak, to tell their stories. Or, conversely, one yearns to know why these histories have been suppressed, asking instead what these silences from the past reveal about the possession and transmission of knowledge in the Mariana Islands.

Like their interpreter, "comfort woman," and police assistant counterparts, Joaquin Dueñas and Nettie Durham have been framed in the context of wartime "collaboration" with the Japanese. Indeed, one has to interrogate the sometimes taken-for-granted political connotations of collaboration in order to understand the motivations and consequences of Chamorro cooperation with the Japanese military and police forces in Guam. By doing so, one can come to terms with the ways in which Japanese and American colonialisms, as well as indigenous adaptations to colonial rule, fostered divergent loyalties and intra-cultural divisions among Chamorros. One then bears

witness to the notion that “stasis and change, tradition and innovation become not oppositional but dynamically interconnected” in the context of inter and intra-cultural relations in the Mariana Islands.⁷⁵

This has been one of the goals of this dissertation, that is, to assert that culture is a process of local and global identification and differentiation. In examining the various relationships among the colonized and the colonizer in the Mariana Islands, this project has shown that cultures resist and adapt to external forces, that cultures internally struggle with continuity and change, and that cultures shape the very local and global structures that sometimes govern them. These considerations must be taken seriously and critically as most histories of the war in the Pacific rarely acknowledge the politics of indigenous cultural agency, let alone the various exchanges and encounters among colonial and indigenous societies in the Pacific. In addressing representations of Pacific Islanders in the historical record, this project has demonstrated that Pacific Islanders are not a singular, cultural “type.” They are not the noble or ignoble savages of American imaginations, much as they are not the non-Sinic Others of Japanese imaginations.

These arguments are not new. But, in many ways, they demand attention in that histories and historiographies of the war continue to view Pacific Islander cultural agency in terms of the agent/victim binary. To this end, it is important and necessary to foreground the socially fluid and historically specific dynamics of culture. Challenging long-held assumptions about cultural identity in the Pacific, for example, David Welchman Gegeo states that “we often think of our identity as having been shaped primarily in remote times by our traditional cultures and secondarily by missionization.” “Yet,” he observes, “World War II was the most important turning point in the recent

⁷⁵ Diaz 1992, 16.

history of our islands and ourselves. This is because the war greatly increased contact with the First World in a dramatic and even violent way.”⁷⁶ The creation of “modern identities” has resulted from this increased contact among diverse peoples, new technologies and various ideas in the Pacific.⁷⁷ As Poyer, Falgout and Carucci note, Pacific Islander cultural constructions of themselves “depend in great part on local understanding of what makes people alike and different, of ‘who we are,’ but it has also been shaped by Spanish, German, and especially Japanese and American ideas” about what Pacific Islanders are or should be.⁷⁸ In addition to Pacific Islander notions of land, community, and kinship, Pacific Islander cultures have been likewise “shaped in response to what colonial powers have told them about themselves, and in response to the structures that these foreign administrations have established to rule them.”⁷⁹

Therefore, the conflicting and divergent loyalties expressed by Chamorros of the Mariana Islands reflect the different colonial histories of American and Japanese colonial governance in times of peace and war. Moreover, the fragmented loyalties among Chamorros demonstrate that “Chamorro culture” has been constructed by local and global forces, as well as by internal and external processes. On the one hand, the varying degrees of Chamorro notions of identification and differentiation illustrate a much longer history of cultural change and instability among this indigenous population, stretching farther back than the establishment of Spanish colonial sovereignty in the seventeenth-century. Tremendous diversity exists among this indigenous population, as well as among any other “cultural unit” or “cultural site.” With the exception of a shared

⁷⁶ Gegeo 1988, 8.

⁷⁷ Fujitani, White and Yoneyama, 10.

⁷⁸ Lin Poyer, Suzanne Falgout, and Laurence M. Carucci, “The Impact of the Pacific War on Modern Micronesian Identity,” in *Globalization and Culture Change in the Pacific Islands*, ed. Victoria S. Lockwood (Upper Saddle River: Pearson Prentice Hall, 2004), 316.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 316.

language and cultural tradition, themselves subject to intense flux and change, the diversity of Chamorro experiences and memories of World War II—and indeed loyalties—help scholars to understand that notions of cultural homogeneity, biological identity, and gendered sexuality are *also* socially constructed.

These interpretations of cultural change and continuity allow scholars to view colonialism as a network of relationships through which the colonizer and the colonized seek power and legitimization. This has been the second goal of this dissertation, which demonstrates that colonialism operates as an ambivalent process of control and resistance, as well as adaptation and mutation. The Chamorro political elite of Saipan and Guam, for example, used the rhetoric of loyalty to try to acquire what they perceived as increased political autonomy and perhaps recognition as “Japanese” or “American” “national-subjects.” Given the racist, militarist and imperialist nature of American and Japanese colonialisms, the cultivation of indigenous loyalties in the time before the war did not mean full incorporation into the American or Japanese nation-states respectively.

The politics of colonialism and indigenous cultural agency sometimes ensured that Chamorros acquired varying levels of authority and autonomy, but these attempts never detracted from the fact that American and Japanese colonialisms still imposed violent circumstances and conditions upon this indigenous population. Although this dissertation has examined colonialism as an ambivalent process of control, by no means does it suggest that American and Japanese colonialisms were benevolent acts of introducing Western and Asian forms of “modernity” to the Pacific. In the war’s aftermath, the politics of colonialism changed, as did indigenous bids for authority and sovereignty. The emergence of postwar rehabilitation projects in the wider cold war era

ushered in new conditions in the American colonial governance of Guam and what would later be called the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. The rise of World War II commemorations in the Mariana Islands has provided important and innovative sites for the study of the politics of colonialism and indigenous cultural agency. Japanese bone-collecting missions and peace pilgrimages, American National Historic Landmarks, and Liberation Day festivities all illustrate the various forms of war remembrance and commemoration that have emerged since the end of the war in 1945. Indigenous and colonial memories of the war, as reflected in these commemorations, are informed by the politics of the past and by the politics of the present.

By drawing scholarly attention to these histories of commemorative activity, this project has urged to move beyond what John W. Dower calls “triumphant” and “tragic” narratives of the war—narratives that continue to dominate scholarly and popular remembrances of the war in the United States and Japan.⁸⁰ This dissertation has demonstrated that no single narrative of the war has dominated the meaning and direction of Liberation Day, the now pivotal war commemoration in the Mariana Islands. It has also shown that the concepts of loyalty and liberation have undergone constant reflection, scrutiny and change; moreover, they are concepts that continue to mediate Chamorro memories of and social relations with a war past they have never really left behind.

That Chamorros annually commemorate Liberation Day does not necessarily connote an interest in the American narrative of wartime triumph, the economic value of tourism, the Japanese narrative of postwar victimization, or even indigenous memories of the war. Rather, Chamorros continue to commemorate Liberation Day because of its

⁸⁰ John W. Dower, “Triumphal and Tragic Narratives of the War in Asia,” *The Journal of American History* 82, no. 3 (December 1995): 1126.

ability to make real and relevant the idea called “history.” The stories of the lives and deaths of Father Jesús Baza Dueñas, Nettie Durham, George R. Tweed, Churima, Joaquin Dueñas and Mariquita Perez Howard, among others, give profound shape and meaning to the historical production of knowledge in the Mariana Islands because they are stories that matter. As evidenced in commemorative activities of the war, Chamorros are coming to terms with the power of the past to affect those in the present. And it is precisely through these engagements that they are starting to appreciate the significance of interpreting histories in local and global, indigenous and colonial, and even transnational terms.⁸¹

Thus, the third objective of this dissertation has been to demonstrate that Chamorros, along with Japanese and Americans, actively and consciously make “history,” as much as “history” makes them. Indeed, history is not only about fashioning empirical or postcolonial studies of the past. It is not solely about creating linear or cyclical narratives. Histories of colonization and decolonization warrant scholarly attention, too, though they need not be the only focus of discussion.⁸² In the Pacific Islands, the making of history is a vibrant process of contestation and celebration, as revealed in the commemorative activities of the war in the Mariana Islands since 1945. This author hopes that Chamorros use commemorative activities of the war, as they have had in the past, to foster more mutual grounds of understanding between themselves and others.⁸³ Indeed, it is a difficult and sometimes violent task to interpret the past with a common and compassionate view, but it is a view urgently needed in a Pacific Island

⁸¹ Sturken, 259.

⁸² Linda Tuhiwai Smith, *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous People* (London, New York and Otago, Zed Books Ltd. and University of Otago Press, 1999), 29.

⁸³ Trouillot, 150.

setting of twenty-first century American colonialism.

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